

# 4

## HOW IS OUR KNOWLEDGE OUR WAY BEING RECOGNISED GLOBALLY?

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### HIGHLIGHTS

- At an international level, Indigenous knowledge systems are gaining momentum as sophisticated ways of understanding that can contribute to efforts to fix the world's issues, and which are becoming normal for researchers to embed in project
- Australian Indigenous Peoples and their knowledge are well placed to lead and provide benefits and solutions to international issues through the long association and knowing and caring for Country
- Many Australian Indigenous Peoples are engaging internationally and linking their insights to global Indigenous knowledge movements
- The many international initiatives, agreements, protocols, statements and articles now available for the Australian Government are promoted through this chapter for Traditional Owners to know and understand

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## 4.1 LINKING UP WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES GLOBALLY

We are linking up with Indigenous Peoples all over the world who bring their own knowledge systems to look after their traditional territories. In 2013, the Australian Government and the World Indigenous Network National Advisory Group organised the very first World Indigenous Network (WIN) Conference in Darwin. WIN was first announced at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) in Brazil in June 2012 by the then Prime Minister of Australia, Julia Gillard, with the support of Brazil, New Zealand and Norway. Melissa George, Wulgurukaba Traditional Owner said:

*This was a proud moment. As I stood and listened to the Prime Minister's words, I felt the enormity and the possibilities of WIN across the world, and I knew I had to be a part of it.*

Melissa George, Co-chair of WIN National Advisory Group and Chair of the Australian Government Environment Minister's Indigenous Advisory Committee, June 2012<sup>142</sup>



Figure 4.1. Melissa George, World Indigenous Network National Advisory Group Co-chair, 2013.

*All the peoples of the world share a responsibility to join with the world's Indigenous peoples to protect and nourish the land and sea in the future. Protecting our shared environment is a shared task, and so we must come together. That is the purpose of the Network.*

Prime Minister of Australia, Julia Gillard, June 2012<sup>142</sup>

### World Indigenous Network

*I've had such an amazing time at WIN. The opportunity to meet and share stories with Indigenous peoples coming from 50 nations is incredible and I wouldn't change a thing! I was also honoured to be able to talk before the delegates, talking about my journey as a young Aboriginal man, my connection to land and sea and hopes for the future. Thank you to all involved for making this experience truly special.*

Conference delegate, Australia, 2013<sup>142</sup>

The WIN knowledge sharing network was fostered through an International Reference Group with representatives from Africa, Asia, North and South America and partner countries, Brazil, Norway and New Zealand. The group includes representatives from the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations University and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Indigenous Peoples from more than 50 countries across the world attended the conference<sup>142</sup>.

WIN aims to bring together Indigenous Peoples and local communities' land and sea managers to share stories, knowledge and ideas to better manage ecosystems, protect the environment, share cultural experiences, and to support sustainable livelihoods.

In 2014, WIN was part of another international event bringing together Indigenous land and sea managers in Australia. Together with The Traditional Owners of The Gully Aboriginal Place in Katoomba (the Blue Mountains), the Darug and Gundungurra Nations, the Girringun Aboriginal Corporation, the Kimberley Land Council, the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Blue Mountains City Council, the ICCA Consortium, United Nations Development Programme Global Environmental Fund's Small Grants Programme, the PAPER programme of Vancouver Island University, Macquarie University and CSIRO, they hosted:

**Communities conserving nature and culture – A gathering among Indigenous Peoples and local communities from five continents. 9-11 November 2014, just prior to the World Parks Congress**

This community dialogue brought together 150 Indigenous people from across the world and 150 Australian Indigenous people to meet, exchange experiences and ideas and strengthen each other's understanding and determination.



Figure 4.2. Yousria Rahman, Egyptian delegate to the World Indigenous Network Conference. Photo: Glenn Campbell © Sydney Morning Herald.



Figure 4.3. Patrice Sagbo of Benin, delegate to the World Indigenous Network Conference. Photo: Glenn Campbell © Sydney Morning Herald.



Figure 4.4. Small group discussions at 'Communities conserving nature and culture – A gathering among Indigenous Peoples and local communities from five continents. 9-11 November 2014'. Photo: Ro Hill



Figure 4.5. Plenary discussions at 'Communities conserving nature and culture – A gathering among Indigenous Peoples and local communities from five continents. 9-11 November 2014'. Photo: Ro Hill

The collective made a number of important declarations about protecting their traditional homes and lifeways, that were subsequently taken forward into the World Parks Congress 2014, and helped shape [The Promise of Sydney](#)<sup>bf</sup>.

Our ideas about the links between nature-culture and culture-nature are getting more attention internationally. IUCN started a [Nature-Culture Journey](#)<sup>bg</sup> at their 2016 World Conservation Congress and ICOMOS continued it with a Nature-Culture journey at their General Assembly in 2017. The focus on understanding how relationships between people and the natural environment shape both our physical environment and belief systems is welcome, given the history in international intergovernmental arenas of treating nature and culture separately.



Figure 4.6. Drafting a collective statement at 'Communities conserving nature and culture – A gathering among Indigenous Peoples and local communities from five continents. 9-11 November 2014'. Photo: R. Hill

As well as hosting many Indigenous Peoples to Australia, we have travelled overseas to share our ideas and practices, such as our savanna burning (Case Study 4-1). A recent global assessment highlighted our savanna burning as best practice, delivering benefits to people through avoiding land degradation and conducting restoration<sup>96</sup>.

bf <https://www.iucn.org/theme/protected-areas/about/promise-sydney>

bg <https://www.iucn.org/news/world-heritage/201712/hawaii%E2%80%98delhi-iucn-congress-nature-culture-journey-continues-icomos-general-assembly>



CSIRO

# CASE STUDY 4-1

## Aboriginal fire knowledge informing international burning regimes

Authors: Robin Dann and Emma Woodward



- Australia's Indigenous fire management methodology exported to the world
- Wunggurr Rangers assisting a global community approach committed to action on wildfire and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions



International Savanna Fire Management initiative team, northern Australian rangers and international collaborators meet in Botswana to talk about adapting the northern Australian savanna fire method for southern Africa. Photo: Ariadne Gorring



Visiting the /Oabatsha community within the Tsodilo Hills Enclave to learn more about traditional fire management used historically by local hunter-gatherer Ju/hoansi San (Basarwa) communities within this important World Heritage Site. Photo: Ariadne Gorring

The Wunggurr Rangers come from the Wanjina Wunggurr Wilinggin Native Title Group. Their strong law and culture assists them to keep their Country alive, and they draw on their traditional knowledge to undertake conservation and land management activities: looking after cultural sites and waterways; controlling feral animals; and working to protect flora and fauna. They are based along the world-renowned Gibb River Road and are responsible for looking after 60,150km<sup>2</sup> of land in the heart of the Kimberley – an area the size of Tasmania. This includes the Wilinggin Indigenous Protected Area, declared on June 11, 2013.

Managing fire on Country the right way is central to their land management activities.

Burning at the right time of year, the right way, is one of the most important tools Ngarinyin people use to look after Country. Each year Wilinggin Traditional Owners and rangers undertake fire planning and operations. This helps Ngarinyin people to build skills in planning and looking after their Country. Traditional Owners are encouraged to participate in both aerial and ground burning operations, while agencies are directed by the Traditional Owners on when to burn, where to burn and who should participate.

.....  
*Combining ancient knowledge with modern science and technology, Indigenous rangers burn early, keep fuel loads down and reduce destructive wildfires. This leads to a decrease in greenhouse gas emissions and provides carbon market opportunities. It also delivers valuable jobs for poor and remote communities, while at the same time reinvigorating traditional culture*

Kimberley Land Council  
.....

The Wunggurr Rangers together with other Top End ranger groups, are now gaining international recognition for their successful fire management programs. Projects based on Australian Indigenous savanna fire management are being

piloted in Brazil's Cerrado; and the Tsilhqot'in Nation of British Columbia, Canada, is adapting the Australian model to develop a carbon accounting methodology appropriate to the forest ecosystems of the Dasiqox Tribal Park as a means to fund early-season fire management.

Wunggurr Rangers are also part of a ground-breaking project that has seen Indigenous fire experts travel to Botswana for a two-week period to work with Botswana Government Rangers, facilitated by the *International Savanna Fire Management Initiative*<sup>bh</sup>. The purpose of the trip was to introduce a new way of managing and thinking about fire, and reduce their incidence of wildfire which is impacting on wildlife, tourism and other economic opportunities.

Wunggurr ranger Robin Dann, from Gibb River Station, says the Botswanans were blown away by the Australian rangers' skills:

.....  
*I feel really good knowing that I passed on something.*

*When they were trying to put out a fire, they'd be running around, lots of people and fire trucks, not much leadership and not much knowledge of fire, and it ended up a real big hot fire.*

*But for us, we used the wind, and ours was less intense, less heat, hardly any smoke.*

*We're different cultures, but for both of us, fire is so important, and once upon a time the fire regime in Australia was the best in the world I reckon.*  
.....

With funding of \$3.87 million over four years, the project is also facilitating Indigenous knowledge exchange between Kimberley Aboriginal people and communities in Botswana.

Following on from the successful visit to Botswana in May 2019, a Botswanan delegation participated in the 2019 *Kimberley Land Council Healthy Country Forum*<sup>bi</sup> in the north west corner of Australia.

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bh [www.isfmi.org](http://www.isfmi.org)

bi <https://www.klc.org.au/international-partnerships?rq=Botswana>

## 4.2 BRINGING OUR VOICE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

We have also been very active in bringing our voice to the United Nations (UN) through the *UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples*<sup>bj</sup>. Les Malezer from the Gubby Gubby Batchula language group near Fraser Island is a member of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples from 2017 to 2019. He has brought attention to climate change, highlighting that:

*We believe that we have to be interacting with the environment in order for the environment to be healthy and strong and similarly in order for us to be healthy and strong ... a big part of it is in fact for governments to recognize the knowledge, the expertise, the skills that Indigenous peoples have in terms of being able to read the climate and understand the situation of the flora and fauna and how they're best managed<sup>143</sup>.*

We have long sought international support in our efforts to retain our rights to our identities, ways of life, traditional territories and natural resources. For example, between 1923 and 1925 Haduenonsuanee Chief Deskaweh and Maori religious leader T.W. Ratana travelled at different times to the headquarters of the League of Nations to make submissions on their rights. Both were denied access to speak.

Many key events since then mark the increasing efforts to strengthen visibility of Indigenous issues on the international stage and within UN forums (Box 4-1).

The UNPFII was established as a high-level advisory body to the UN Economic and Social Council in 2000, and is now the most important annual global meeting among Indigenous Peoples. The UNPFII recognises seven socio-cultural regions for Indigenous Peoples: Africa; Arctic; Central Asia and Transcaucasia; Central and South America and the Caribbean; North America; Central and Eastern Europe; and the Pacific, which Australia is a part of. It provides regular reports on the State of the World's Indigenous Peoples according to these regions, with the most recent report in 2017 focused on Education<sup>144</sup>. The Forum usually meets for 10 days each year. The 18th Session of the UNPFII held from 22 April – 3 May 2019

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bj <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/unpfii-sessions-2.html>

focussed on the theme *Traditional knowledge: Generation, transmission and protection*.

*Box 4-1 Timeline of Indigenous rights recognition in international arenas. Source: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/Indigenouspeoples/about-us.html>*

**1923-25:** First International Involvement

**1981:** UN Special Rapporteur Martínez Cobo's study into Discrimination against Indigenous populations

**1982:** Working Group on Indigenous Populations

**1989:** International Labour Organization Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (No. 169)

**1993:** International Year of the World's Indigenous People

**1994:** International Decade of the World's Indigenous People

**1994:** International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, 9th August

**2000:** UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

**2001:** UNHCR Rapporteur on the Rights on Indigenous Peoples

**2005:** Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples

**2007:** UNHCR Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP)

**2007:** UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

**2014:** World Conference on Indigenous Peoples

**2019:** International Year of Indigenous Languages (IYIL)

**2020:** International Decade of Indigenous Languages

In 2001, The UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) established the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2001, who prepares both annual and special reports, such as the 2017 *Report on Impacts of climate change and climate finance on Indigenous Peoples' rights*<sup>bk</sup>.

Ms. Victoria Tauli Corpuz<sup>bl</sup>, an Indigenous leader from the Kankana-ey Igorot people of the Cordillera Region in the Philippines, has been the Special Rapporteur since 2014.

In 2007, the UNHRC also established an *Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP)*<sup>bm</sup>, comprised of seven independent experts. Professor Megan Davis<sup>bn</sup>, an Australian Aboriginal woman, is currently one of the seven independent experts, with her term extending till 2022. The EMRIP holds an annual session and prepares many reports and studies, which underpin statements e.g. *Statement on the International Year of Indigenous Languages (IYIL) 2019*<sup>bo</sup>.

The IYIL was created to draw attention to the importance of the estimated 7,000 Indigenous languages spoken around the world. Forty percent of these languages are considered to be in danger of disappearing, placing the cultures and knowledge systems to which they belong at risk<sup>145</sup>.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was prepared in 2004 by the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. It recognises Indigenous ownership of Indigenous cultural expression, and in 2007 was voted on and accepted by the UN. Australia, along with three other countries, originally did not accept UNDRIP. However, in 2009 Australia reversed its position and accepted it as a non-legally binding document.

bk <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/59c2720c4.pdf>

bl <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IPeoples/SRIndigenousPeoples/Pages/VictoriaTauliCorpuz.aspx>

bm <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IPeoples/EMRIP/Pages/EMRIPIndex.aspx>

bn <https://www.law.unsw.edu.au/staff/megan-davis>

bo <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24122&LangID=E>

### 4.3 SPEAKING UP FOR COUNTRY THROUGH THE CONVENTIONS ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND WORLD HERITAGE

We have also linked up our caring for Country with international efforts through the [Convention on Biological Diversity \(CBD\)](#)<sup>bp</sup> and the [Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage](#)<sup>bq</sup>. Chrissy Grant, a Kuku-Yalanji Traditional Owner on her mother's side and a Mualgal Traditional Owner in the Torres Strait on her father's side, is a member of the [International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services \(IIFBES\)](#)<sup>br</sup> and frequently speaks up on Indigenous issues at meetings of the CBD (Fig 4.7). Chrissy also chaired the recent meeting of the International Indigenous People's Forum on World Heritage where [Budj Bim Cultural Landscape](#)<sup>bs</sup>, created by the Gunditjmara People, was added to the World Heritage List. Gunditjmara stories and oral histories show how their extensive and complex aquaculture network with modified channels and diverted water, channel kooyang (short-finned eel) into holding ponds. Their oral histories record the eruption of the Budj Bim volcano thirty thousand years ago, where the Ancestral Being, Budj Bim (Big Head) transformed himself into part of the landscape.



Figure 4.7. Chrissy Grant, member of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB) at a Convention on Biological Diversity meeting, 4 July 2018, Montreal Canada. Photo by IISD/ENB | Francis Dejon

The IIFBES links Indigenous Peoples interested in involvement in the CBD, and more recently the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). IPBES was established by the UN in 2012, with an overall goal to strengthen the biodiversity and ecosystem services science-policy interface, for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term human well-being and sustainable development. IPBES has committed to promote effective engagement with Indigenous and local knowledge (ILK) holders in all relevant aspects of its work, including through ensuring that ILK is recognised in its assessments. The IPBES Pollinators, Pollination and Food Production Assessment, released in 2016, was the first global environmental assessment to include Indigenous and local knowledge, and the 2018 comprehensive global biodiversity assessment highlighted the importance of Indigenous Peoples in caring for the natural world across our planet<sup>146</sup>.

The Assessment highlighted many pollinator-friendly practices of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, such as totems, sacred places, home gardens, rotational cropping and fallows. The Assessment highlighted that Indigenous Peoples and local communities have many unique practices to keep bees – by far the most important food pollinator – and collect honey, like the Gurung people of Nepal whose innovative rope ladder technology allows them to harvest honey from wild honey bee colonies, rather than moving them to hives (Figure 4.8).



Figure 4.8. Gurung man collecting the *Apis dorsata laboriosa* honeycombs on cliffs in Nepal. Photo: Andrew Newey

bp <https://www.cbd.int/>

bq <https://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext/>

br <https://iifb-fiib.org/>

bs <https://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/places/world/budj-bim>



# CASE STUDY 4-2

## Karen people host sharing across knowledge systems for pollinator conservation in Hin Lad Nai, Thailand

Authors: Prasert Trakansuphakon, Chaiprasert Phokha, Nutdanai Trakansuphakon, Pernilla Malmer, Maria Tengo and Rosemary Hill



- Karen Indigenous community hosted and co-organised a dialogue across knowledge systems about pollinators in January 2019
- The walking workshop approach excited participants
- Karen Peoples' cultural protocols and rituals provided a safe space for sharing for all

Pollinators such as bees are an integral part of traditional farming of the Karen people of Hin Lad Nai in the Chiang Rai province of Thailand. There is even a local Karen saying: *We should walk like the bees*. As community leader Chaiprasert Phokha says:

.....  
*When the bees fly, they fly better together and look after each other and the interest of the whole community of bees. They live in harmony together and increase the biodiversity in the forest with their actions, like we do. Our community has been revitalizing our forest since it was heavily damaged by the logging concession in the 80s. We are requesting the government to recognize the rights of the Karen people to continue our customary and sustainable use of biodiversity.*  
.....



Experts sharing information walking through the landscape talking together in Thai, English and Karen, with ongoing translation. Photo: Jitirapa Bumroongchai

In 2010, the Thai Government declared the Hin Lad Nai territory a Special Cultural Zone, to recognise Karen cultural rights and ancestral territories, including practices to sustain pollinators and produce valuable products such as forest honey and tea, while protecting the rich forest biodiversity.

Experts from Indigenous, local, and scientific knowledge systems who visited the Karen community of Hin Lad Nai in January 2019 agreed that the community provided an excellent example of how rotational farming systems nurture biodiversity. The experts were hosted by the community for a *Dialogue across Indigenous, local and scientific knowledge systems reflecting on the IPBES Assessment on Pollinators, Pollination and Food Production*<sup>bt</sup>. The Dialogue was co-convened and jointly designed among the Hin Lad Nai community, the Inter Mountain Peoples Education and Culture in Thailand Association and Pgakenyaw Association for Sustainable Development together with SwedBio at the Stockholm

bt [https://swed.bio/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/7017-0033-SRC-Report-Pollinators-dialouge\\_WEB.pdf](https://swed.bio/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/7017-0033-SRC-Report-Pollinators-dialouge_WEB.pdf)

Resilience Centre, UNESCO Natural Science Sector and CSIRO Land and Water.

The Dialogue brought together 52 participants from 19 countries, including Indigenous and local knowledge (ILK) holders, ILK experts and scientists engaged in the IPBES Pollination Assessment, with local Indigenous pollinator experts, and representatives from local, national, regional and global institutions and UN agencies.

Shaman Hpa tij Poonoo Papa led rituals on the arrival and departure of the visitors to ensure their safety and well-being. The welcoming session ended with traditional music played on the 'kwaé', a musical instrument made from buffalo horn and wood, played by the Karen Elder Jorni Odochao. Local leaders Preecha Siri and Chaiprasert Phokha, together with the shaman Hpa tij Poonoo Papa, then gave some glimpses into the local history of the community. In the evenings, many stories, songs and practices were shared, and Karen Elder Jorni Odochao and others showed traditional weaving. Many participants commented on how the Karen cultural protocols uplifted their spirits and created a safe space for sharing and learning.

Karen people led the workshop by walking participants through their traditional territories and explaining how they protect pollinators and pollination. Being in the Karen community allowed participants many opportunities to link the findings of the Assessment with the local contexts and identify similarities with their own community's work – back in places like Mexico, Africa and South America.

Key messages from the Assessment were displayed on posters at the Hin Lad Nai walking workshop. Participants sat together in the forest to talk about the scientific messages displayed on the posters, and how they linked with their own knowledge systems. Following requests, the *posters have been made available online*<sup>bu</sup> so they can be

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bu <https://research.csiro.au/multipleknowledges/category/posters/>

translated into other languages and used in workshops all over the world, empowering further community action on handing-back the messages from the Assessment.

At the end of the workshop, all the co-organisers reflected that the dialogue method created excitement for everyone through:

- Respecting and recognising multiple knowledge systems
- Karen cultural protocols and rituals that gave cultural safety to everyone
- The 'walking workshop' approach
- The use of mobile posters, which made key scientific messages easy to discuss
- Being in the Karen People's biocultural landscape made key messages about community forest management and rotational farming easy to discuss.



Discussing the key scientific messages summarised in posters while learning about Indigenous and local knowledge from the Karen community and biocultural landscape. Photo: Ro Hill © CSIRO

## 4.4 THE CBD AND THE NAGOYA PROTOCOL

The CBD has been involved in supporting and recognising the contributions of Indigenous knowledge to biodiversity since its establishment, particularly through Articles 8j and 10c, which commit governments (who are members) to:

8 (j) Subject to its national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of Indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge, innovations and practices;

10 (c) Protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation or sustainable use requirements.

The CBD has developed many resources and activities aimed at supporting delivery of these commitments, including:

- The [Traditional Knowledge Portal](https://www.cbd.int/traditional/guidelines.shtml)<sup>bv</sup>, a web-site to promote awareness and enhance access to relevant information
- The adoption of [four indicators on traditional knowledge](https://swed.bio/focal-areas/themes/biocultural-diversity/cbmis/)<sup>bw</sup>, and support for a self-organised Community Based Monitoring and Information Systems<sup>147</sup> network to implement these indicators
- Several guidelines on aspects of working with Indigenous knowledge including the [Mo'Otz Kuxtal Voluntary Guideline](https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-13/cop-13-dec-18-en.pdf)<sup>bx</sup> (regarding free, prior and informed consent, adopted 2016); the [Tkarihwaié:ri Code of Ethical Conduct](https://www.cbd.int/traditional/code.shtml)<sup>by</sup> (to ensure respect for cultural and intellectual heritage when working with Indigenous knowledge); and the [Akwe:Kon](https://www.cbd.int/traditional/code.shtml)

[Guidelines](https://www.cbd.int/traditional/guidelines.shtml)<sup>bz</sup> (about assessment of impacts on traditional cultural and social values)

- Hosting many events and workshops, including the [Nature and Culture Summit](https://www.cbd.int/doc/publications/cbd-csu-en.pdf)<sup>ca</sup> just prior to the Conference of Parties to the CBD in November 2018
- [A Plan of Action on Customary Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity](https://www.wipo.int/publications/en/details.jsp?id=4235)<sup>cb</sup>, based on case studies conducted with Indigenous Peoples and local communities from Bangladesh, Cameroon, Guyana, Suriname, and Thailand
- Support for the World Intellectual Property Organisation<sup>148</sup>, to produce a [Toolkit on Documenting Traditional Knowledge](https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/)<sup>cc</sup>.

Within the CBD's Strategic Plan 2011-2020, the [Aichi Targets](https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/)<sup>cd</sup> highlight the relevance of Indigenous knowledge, particularly Target 18:

By 2020, the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of Indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their customary use of biological resources, are respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with the full and effective participation of Indigenous and local communities, at all relevant levels.

The [Nagoya Protocol](https://www.cbd.int/abs/doc/protocol/nagoya-protocol-en.pdf)<sup>ce</sup> under the *CBD* places obligations on governments to work fairly with Indigenous knowledge – under Article 7:

In accordance with domestic law, each Party shall take measures, as appropriate, with the aim of ensuring that traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources that is held by Indigenous and local communities is accessed with the prior and informed consent or approval and involvement of these Indigenous and local communities, and that mutually agreed terms have been established.

bv <https://www.cbd.int/tk/>

bw <https://swed.bio/focal-areas/themes/biocultural-diversity/cbmis/>

bx <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-13/cop-13-dec-18-en.pdf>

by <https://www.cbd.int/traditional/code.shtml>

bz <https://www.cbd.int/traditional/guidelines.shtml>

ca <https://www.cbd.int/tk/nature.shtml>

cb <https://www.cbd.int/doc/publications/cbd-csu-en.pdf>

cc <https://www.wipo.int/publications/en/details.jsp?id=4235>

cd <https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/>

ce <https://www.cbd.int/abs/doc/protocol/nagoya-protocol-en.pdf>

Some benefit-sharing agreements that relate to traditional knowledge have now been made, including for the San people and the villages of Nourivier and Paulshoek to receive royalties from the market release of Elev8, a product for stress release that incorporates *Sceletium tortuosum*<sup>149</sup>. This agreement has been identified as good for balancing risks and benefits<sup>150</sup>.

Australia as a member of the CBD is now bound by the Nagoya Protocol, and legislative change is underway to ensure we follow it. For example, the Queensland Government has established a Traditional Knowledge Roundtable, bringing together key Indigenous leaders (including Gerry Turpin, Aboriginal ethnobotanist highlighted in Case Study 3-2) to advise on changes to the *Biodiscovery Act 2004 to comply with the Nagoya Protocol*<sup>cf</sup>.

Colin Saltmere, a member of the Traditional Knowledge Roundtable, is Chief Executive Officer of Dugalunji Aboriginal Corporation (based in Camooweal) who recently entered into partnerships with the University of Queensland to engage in biodiscovery. An overarching commercial agreement with four sub-agreements underpins collaboration on a process that turns native spinifex grass into diverse commercial applications, from super-strong roads and tyres to super-thin condoms and surgical gloves. The Traditional Owners lead on the local activities, including fire and other management of spinifex, harvesting spinifex and the initial processing of the nanofibers, and are constructing a bio-processing plant at Camooweal in north Queensland<sup>151</sup>.

## 4.5 INDIGENOUS AND LOCAL KNOWLEDGE CENTRES OF DISTINCTION

In 2016, the *International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IIFBES)*<sup>cg</sup> established a network of Indigenous and Local Knowledge (ILK) Centres of Distinction, which now includes:

- Center for Support of Indigenous Peoples of the North (CSIPN) ILK Centre, Russia
- The Tulalip Tribes ILK Centre, USA
- SOTZ'IL Centre, Guatemala

- Fundacion para la Promocion del Conocimiento Indigena (Foundation for the Promotion of Indigenous Knowledge), Panama
- MELCA ILK Centre, Ethiopia
- Indigenous Information Network (IIN)
- African Biodiversity Network
- Pgaz K' Nyau Association for Sustainable Development, Thailand
- Institute for Culture and Ecology, Kenya
- Indigenous Peoples and Biodiversity Program, Tebtebba Foundation, Philippines
- Te Kopu – Pacific Indigenous and Local Knowledge Centre of Distinction, based in New Zealand
- Indigenous Earth Wisdom Working Group on Indigenous knowledge
- Forest Peoples Programme (global).

In 2017, the Te Kopu Centre hosted a Dialogue for IPBES which brought together Indigenous people from across the Pacific to contribute important information to the Asia-Pacific Regional Assessment<sup>152</sup>. The ILK Centres of Distinction also work alongside the Community Based Monitoring and Information Systems network. This is a self-organised global alliance of Indigenous Peoples and local communities working on monitoring trends in the health of their lands and seas. One of the members, Tebtedda, have produced a *Training Kit for CBMIS*<sup>ch</sup>. The IIFBES, with support from the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), produced *Local Biodiversity Outlooks*<sup>ci</sup>, which complements the Fourth Global Biodiversity Outlook<sup>153</sup> by presenting Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities' contributions to realising the goals and targets of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

cf <https://environment.des.qld.gov.au/licences-permits/plants-animals/biodiscovery/biodiscovery-act-reform>

cg <https://iifb-fiib.org/>

ch <http://www.tebtebba.org/index.php/content/358-basic-course-on-community-based-monitoring-a-information-systems-cbmis-for-community-trainers-a-organizers>

ci <https://beta.localbiodiversityoutlooks.net/>

## 4.6 INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ORGANISATIONS IN THE IUCN

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) recognises the vital role that **Indigenous Peoples play in conserving<sup>ci</sup>** the Earth's lands, seas and natural resources and as a source of valuable traditional knowledge to inform biodiversity conservation. During a landmark decision at the 2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress, a new members category, Indigenous Peoples' Organisations (IPOs), was established to strengthen the recognition of the rights, participation, voice and role of IPOs. IPO Members have since developed a **self-determined strategy<sup>ck</sup>** identifying joint priorities for advancing Indigenous rights and issues in conservation and engaging with each other and the IUCN.

NAILSMA was the first IPO to join the IUCN under the new category. Ricky Archer, NAILSMA CEO, is playing a leading role in establishing the IPO program of work within the IUCN.

## 4.7 STRENGTHENING INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE GLOBALLY

In 2016, the Conference of Parties (COP) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change agreed to, and have since established, a Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP), which aims to:

strengthen the knowledge, technologies, practices, and efforts of local communities and Indigenous Peoples related to addressing and responding to climate change, to facilitate the exchange of experience and the sharing of best practices and lessons learned on mitigation and adaptation in a holistic and integrated manner and to enhance the engagement of local communities and Indigenous Peoples in the UNFCCC process.

In 2018, the COP established the **LCIPP Facilitative Working Group<sup>cl</sup>**, including seven representatives of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and seven representatives of governments, which will guide implementation of the Platform. The International **Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change<sup>cm</sup>**, established in 2008 as the caucus for Indigenous Peoples participating in the **United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change (UNFCCC)<sup>cn</sup>** processes, is closely following the establishment of the LCIPP.

The Pacific will be afforded a section in the upcoming **Sixth Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change<sup>co</sup>** Assessment Report, due out in 2022. Indigenous Peoples from both Australia and New Zealand will prepare evidence and knowledge on the advances of climate change impacts and what mitigation strategies can assist into the future.

Australian Indigenous Peoples have been very active on climate change. At the **National Indigenous Climate Change Dialogue<sup>cp</sup>** held on the Country of the Yorta Yorta Nation in 2018, 50 Traditional Owners from across Australia shared their climate knowledge and adaptation practices, explored the opportunities to build capacity through two-way learning and led, and continue to lead, the Dialogue. The Kimberley Land Council spoke about their roles in negotiating at the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris and other summits. As part of the Dialogue, Traditional Owners prepared a statement about the threats of climate change for their people, culture and Country, and called on governments to listen and learn with them to meet the challenges.

ci <https://www.iucn.org/theme/governance-and-rights/about/indigenous-peoples>

ck [https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/iucn\\_esms\\_standard\\_indigenous\\_peoples-2.1.pdf](https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/iucn_esms_standard_indigenous_peoples-2.1.pdf)

cl <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/bodies/constituted-bodies/facilitative-working-group-of-the-lcipp/modalities-and-procedures-of-the-lcipp-facilitative-working-group>

cm <http://www.iipfcc.org/>

cn <http://unfccc.int/2860.php>

co <https://www.ipcc.ch/>

cp <http://nеспclimate.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/191209-NICCD-report-final.pdf>

## 4.8 LESSONS TOWARDS BEST PRACTICE FROM THIS CHAPTER

### Important ideas and guidance from and for Indigenous Peoples:

- Australian Indigenous Peoples are contributing to global networks of Indigenous Peoples bringing forward their knowledge and practices to solve international environmental challenges
- We are part of several international forums for building knowledge sharing between Indigenous groups, including the World Indigenous Network and the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
- The Indigenous and Local Knowledge Centres of Distinction are promoting Indigenous-led knowledge practices globally.

### Resources and guidance for Partners:

- As a signatory to the Nagoya Protocol, Australia has committed to working with Indigenous knowledge holders to preserve and maintain Indigenous knowledge and practices related to the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity
- Many resources are available to guide good practice
- The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to which Australia is a signatory, recognises Indigenous rights to their knowledge, and requires free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) before implementing any legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.

### Guidance for Indigenous people and partners in working towards best practice:

- Key tools under the Convention on Biological Diversity such as the Nagoya Protocol and Aichi Biodiversity Targets can be used as a framework for fair and equitable negotiations about the use of Indigenous knowledge, FPIC and benefit sharing
- There are many resources available which can help Indigenous Peoples and their partners pursue best practice for working with, strengthening, and preserving Indigenous knowledge and knowledge systems (see p.120).



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