

NEW UNITED NATIONS REPORT 2025

STATE OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES. CLIMATE CHANGE

August 2025

In April 2025 the Division for Inclusive Social Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat published the new [Report State of the World's Indigenous Peoples. Climate Crisis.](#)

The sixth edition of the State of the World's Indigenous Peoples focuses on Climate Crisis. It focuses on the vital role of Indigenous peoples in addressing the impacts of climate change. Although Indigenous Peoples account for only around 5 per cent of the world's population, they effectively manage and protect an estimated 80 per cent of the Earth's biodiversity and about 40 per cent of protected areas and ecologically intact landscapes. Since Indigenous Peoples first came to the United Nations, they have emphasized the fundamental importance of their relationship with their lands, territories and resources, which hold a deep cultural and spiritual significance within their societies.

This publication focuses on the climate crisis, its impact on Indigenous Peoples, and the role Indigenous Peoples can and do play in mitigating the effects of climate change. It aims to provide a comprehensive overview of current and emerging issues in the context of the climate crisis from the perspective of Indigenous Peoples. Drawing on illustrative examples from across the seven sociocultural regions, the publication highlights both challenges and good practices linked to Indigenous Peoples' experiences with and responses to the ongoing climate crisis. Ultimately, the report is intended to serve as an authoritative reference and advocacy tool for Indigenous Peoples and civil society organizations and to contribute to the broader conversation around climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience.

The preparation of the State of the World's Indigenous Peoples: Climate Crisis, has been a collaborative effort. The Indigenous Peoples and Development Branch/ Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues within the Division for Inclusive Social Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat oversaw the preparation of the publication.

In the Foreword of the Report Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim,



State of the World's Indigenous Peoples

Climate Crisis

Volume VI



Chairperson of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues highlights: “Throughout the long history of humankind, Indigenous Peoples have maintained the equilibrium of the ecosystem, showing themselves to be protectors of Mother Earth. Our knowledge, expertise and wisdom, passed down through the generations from our elders to our youth, have taken care of our people and our planet.

But today our existence as Indigenous Peoples is under threat. The climate crisis is leading to worrying levels of biodiversity loss and the destruction of vital ecosystems, which in turn are endangering Indigenous Peoples’ livelihoods, cultures, and languages. Indigenous Peoples across the world are on the front lines of climate change and are often among the hardest hit by its impact – despite having contributed the least to carbon emissions.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples provides a global framework for dialogue and cooperation between States and Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration acknowledges the important contributions of Indigenous Peoples’ knowledge, cultures and traditional practices to sustainable and equitable development and effective environmental management. The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues has on numerous occasions highlighted the critical role Indigenous languages play in the transmission of knowledge systems, practices, and beliefs that can and do, contribute to addressing the climate crisis. The Forum also recognizes that the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment goes hand in hand with Indigenous Peoples’ collective right to self-determination and autonomy.

So-called green solutions often pose as much of a threat to Indigenous Peoples as the climate crisis itself. The growing demand for minerals critical to the green energy transition has led to heavy mining activity of Indigenous Peoples’ lands and territories – very often without their free, prior and informed consent. If the disruption of the natural equilibrium continues, Indigenous Peoples around the world will continue to actively resist mining projects and other environmentally disruptive practices in these lands and territories. The green transition can be a just transition. Indigenous Peoples have much to offer in terms of concrete solutions to tackle the climate crisis. Indigenous-led conservation can restore soils, reduce carbon emissions, and ensure sustainable food production. Indigenous Peoples’ stewardship of the natural environment prioritizes human and planetary health and values equity, justice and sustainability. We have proven that our economies are resilient and that our foods and goods can be produced in a sustainable and equitable manner. Our ways of living have shown how it is possible to live in harmony with Mother Earth rather than destroying her.

The sixth edition of the *State of the World’s Indigenous Peoples* is timely, given the growing urgency of the climate crisis and the need for action. Indigenous Peoples are



steadily gaining recognition on the global stage, including at climate change conferences, and there is broader acknowledgement of the critical knowledge and invaluable solutions they can bring to the table to combat climate change. While growing recognition is a step in the right direction, the best way to support Indigenous Peoples in their efforts to protect our planet is to ensure that they have direct access to the financial resources needed to ensure their self-determination in addressing the impacts of climate change through actions such as managing the environment responsibly and achieving a sustainable economy and food sovereignty. Direct, long-term funding to Indigenous Peoples is essential for scaling up climate mitigation efforts, realizing the aims of the Paris Agreement and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and delivering on the promises of the Sustainable Development Goals.

In my role as Chairperson of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, I will continue to use my voice to call for greater participation of Indigenous Peoples in future Conferences of the Parties to the United Nations Framework on Climate Change and to strive for climate justice for all Indigenous Peoples across the globe. Although we are disproportionately affected by the climate crisis, Indigenous Peoples are not victims. We are custodians of the natural world who are committed to maintaining the natural equilibrium of the planet for the generations to come. We are in the best position to offer solutions based on our Indigenous knowledge and technology, which can contribute to slowing and even reversing the effects of climate change for the benefit of all. We just need the world to listen.”

To know more

[Report *State of the World's Indigenous Peoples. Climate Crisis.pdf*](#)

[Report presentation in \[social.desa.un.org\]\(https://social.desa.un.org\)](#)

[Article about the Report in \[un.org\]\(https://un.org\)](#)

