



# REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Submitted to the 2024 session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on  
Indigenous Issues  
United Nations, New York

## Executive Summary:

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the leading global authority on the environment. UNEP's mission is to inspire, inform, and enable nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. Civil society engagement within UNEP, including that of Indigenous Peoples, is guided by the Major Groups and Stakeholders modality as outlined in [Agenda 21](#). UNEP recognizes the importance of Indigenous Peoples' participation as well as the valuable inputs that these holders of Indigenous knowledge can contribute to sustainable ecosystem management and development. Engagement of Indigenous Peoples in the work and processes of UNEP is organized through the **Indigenous Peoples Major Group** to which 19 organizations are accredited. Additionally, an **Indigenous Peoples focal point**, currently within the Civil Society Unit, strives to protect and promote Indigenous Peoples' rights and participation and perspectives across the organization. A new focal point with a reinforced mandate, is anticipated for the first quarter of 2024.

Through the Indigenous Peoples Major Group, Indigenous Peoples representatives are invited and encouraged to participate in the **UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) and other intergovernmental processes emanating from UNEA**, in UNEP special meetings and other UNEP processes. Indigenous Peoples representatives are sponsored to attend the meetings as observers and can contribute with both written and oral statements before and during the meetings. Additionally, during the Intergovernmental Consultations on **Nature-Based Solutions** which took place in Nairobi in October 2023, a special meeting was arranged between Major Groups and Stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples, and the Chair of the consultations. This is anticipated also for the second **Open-Ended Working Group on a Science-Policy Panel** on the sound management of waste and chemicals taking place in Nairobi in December 2023. The **COP-5 of the Minamata Convention** on Mercury, which took place from 30 October to 3 November 2023 in Geneva paved a way forward to meaningfully

engage with Indigenous Peoples in the implementation of projects and programmes undertaken under the Minamata Convention. Furthermore, the **7<sup>th</sup> Global Environmental Outlook report** is for the first time incorporating Indigenous knowledge in the upcoming assessment through four rounds of dialogues with Indigenous Peoples which are all planned in the first quarter of 2024.

UNEP's **Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework** (ESSF) includes Safeguard Standards on Indigenous People to ensure the realization of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and other international instruments. Through the ESSF and its application, UNEP ensures the protection of the rights of Indigenous Peoples in the development and implementation of all UNEP-supported programmes and projects.

Lastly, UNEP strives to support the implementation of the UNDRIP, particularly in the context of environmental protection. In the past year UNEP has engaged in numerous reports and publications to raise awareness of Indigenous Peoples rights. Notably **the second edition of the Environmental Rule of Law Report**, published in November 2023, aims to strengthen the enforcement of the environmental rule of law to empower right holders in their efforts to safeguard the planet. The report includes strong references to Indigenous Peoples and meaningful ways in which states can enhance participation of Indigenous Peoples in environmental decision-making.

## **A. Recommendations of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and input to the 2024 session**

i. Please provide information on measures taken since your last update to the Forum on the implementation or planned implementation of the recommendations of the PFII.

16 recommendations listed in the report of the twenty-second session of the UNPFII were either directly or indirectly related to the work of UNEP.

Responding to the recommendations in paragraph 34., 77., 88., and 89., and as a part of UNEP's overall effort to raise awareness and support the implementation of the UNDRIP, ensure the implementation of FPIC in the context of environmental issues and sustainable development, and enhance the right to self-determination particularly the voice of Indigenous Youth, UNEP has in the past year engaged in the following publications and events:

- UNEP supported the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in the development of **General Comment No. 26 (2023) on children's rights and the environment with a special focus on climate change**. General Comment No. 26 boasts numerous references to Indigenous Peoples, in particular right to non-discrimination, right to social security and adequate standard of living, rights of Indigenous children and children belonging to minority groups, and adaptation measures, including disaster risk reduction, preparedness, response, and recovery measures.
- UNEP published **the second edition of the Environmental Rule of Law (EROL) Report**, titled "[Environmental Rule of Law: Tracking Progress and Charting Future Directions](#)"

in November 2023. The Report aims to strengthen the enforcement of the environmental rule of law to empower rights holders in their efforts to safeguard the planet. The report includes many references to Indigenous Peoples, inter alia, meaningful ways in which states can provide access to environmental information and enhance public participation in environmental decision-making, especially for Indigenous Peoples and other groups at risk of being marginalized. The report will also review the status of environmental rule of law and the legal protections for Indigenous Peoples and other groups at risk of being marginalized, in addition to discussing the global recognition of the right to a healthy environment, again considering the position of Indigenous Peoples.

- UNEP, together with OHCHR, has in November 2023 launched the **“Guidance Note for United Nations Resident Coordinators and Country Teams: Supporting Governments to Better Respect, Promote and Protect Environmental Human Rights Defenders”**. The Guidance Note, prepared as part of the Secretary-General’s Call to Action for Human Rights, provides a comprehensive list of actions that can be fruitfully applied to support environmental defenders. A recommendation is included in the note that governments should allow defenders to actively participate in decision-making processes by providing them with relevant information and ensuring compliance with the principle of FPIC.
- UNEP organized two **regional meetings on environmental human rights defenders** with the engagement of Indigenous Peoples: (1) Second Annual Forum on Human Rights Defenders in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, held from 26 to 28 September in Panama City, and (2) Third Asia-Pacific Environmental Human Rights Defenders Forum which took place in Bangkok from 20-21 September 2023.

Responding to recommendation in paragraph 28., UNEP supports Indigenous Peoples’ direct access to funding, and to engages in the design and implementation of the projects that contribute to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. As such, UNEP has engaged in the following activities:

- UNEP **supported representatives of the International Indigenous Forum for Biodiversity (IIFB)** to participate in the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management Annual Meeting, a voluntary partnership of 13 international organizations with substantive mandates and programmes to promote the sustainable use and conservation of wildlife resources.
- UNEP provided **support to the Network of Indigenous and Local Communities for the Sustainable Management of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa (REPALEAC)** to review their strategic framework, and to empower them to actively participate and defend their rights in land use planning and private sector engagement processes, and to gain institutional recognition of their land tenure rights and role in conservation and SFM.
- UNEP is developing a project aimed at **securing more financial benefits and income for Indigenous Peoples** living adjacent to the Bwindi and Volcanoes National parks in Uganda and in Rwanda, to enable them to sustain their biodiversity conservation actions.
- UNEP-WCMC recognises and promotes protected and conserved areas under the governance of Indigenous Peoples in the databases it manages and in terms of realizing the full implementation of target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global

Biodiversity Framework. The **Protected Planet databases** provide the headline indicator for target and will report on the coverage of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs). UNEP-WCMC is currently expanding the Protected Planet Initiative to encompass data on governance quality, including the extent of equitable governance for Indigenous Peoples.

- Furthermore, the **ICCA Registry** is a potential source of information in the global reporting of Target 3. The **ICCA Registry** is a dedicated global database of territories and areas conserved by Indigenous Peoples (sometimes known as ICCAs or territories of life) that are self-identified and reported by ICCA custodians. By working directly with Indigenous Peoples and their supporting organizations, UNEP-WCMC and partners assist them in providing their own data to the Protected Planet Initiative and ICCA Registry databases. UNEP-WCMC and partners have supported over 360 communities to self-report data on their ICCAs-territories of life to the ICCA Registry, and there are currently over 1,700 protected areas and OECMs reported to Protected Planet under the governance of Indigenous Peoples.
- Additionally, a **global partnership** is being set up, convened by the Secretariat of the Convention of Biological Diversity, focused on providing support to achieving Target 3. The partnership will play a vital coordination role ensuring that the partners' collective efforts, in supporting Parties and other rightsholders and stakeholders in implementing action towards the ambitions of Target 3, are targeted and complementary. The engagement of Indigenous Peoples is expected to be central to the Partnership's success. It is anticipated that Indigenous Peoples will be represented in the partnership through the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity and the Indigenous Information Network, among other groups.

Responding to the recommendation under paragraph 94., UNEP prepares to **involve Indigenous Peoples as active participants in the upcoming United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA)**. UNEA is the highest governance level of UNEP, and Indigenous Peoples representatives are to be invited as speakers in high-level segments of the Assembly. In addition, a **new Indigenous Peoples focal point** is currently being set up in the Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit, with a reinforced mandate to promote Indigenous Peoples' rights and involvement across the organization.

In terms of facilitating effective participation of Indigenous Peoples in the work of the International Negotiating Committee (INC) for plastics, as per paragraph 83 of the UNPFII report, UNEP has been **sponsoring Indigenous Peoples representatives to participate in the INC-meetings**. However, because the Rules of Procedure adopted provisionally for the negotiation process do not mirror the Major Groups and Stakeholders Modality of UNEP, Indigenous Peoples have not been able to participate in the negotiations as an Indigenous Peoples Major Group, but rather as part of the broader civil society network.

In response to paragraph 41 of the UNPFII report, UNEP supported the organization of a **side event on Indigenous Peoples and Water** at the 2023 United Nations Water Conference in New York. To build coherence among the four UN decades, the **Water Action Decade is referenced in the Ecosystem Decade** to which UNEP made a cross-reference during the 2023 Water

Conference. The [UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030](#) is a global initiative providing a platform for Indigenous Peoples to become integral partners in restoring our planet's ecosystems. This Decade presents a unique opportunity for Indigenous Peoples to contribute their invaluable knowledge and stewardship towards a sustainable future through technical [Task Forces](#), but also spotlighting [stories](#).

Reporting back on actions to implement the recommendation in paragraph 31, UNEP's SDG and Environment Statistics Unit is currently working on the development of a **Measuring Progress report** that focuses on proposing **meaningful disaggregation** to the 92 environment-related SDG indicators. The report will include considerations to the importance of using Indigenous knowledge in achieving the SDGs. The SDG indicators are national in nature and downscaling indicators from national level to community level will require sufficient allocation of resources. UNEP's proposal on thematic disaggregation and assessment of indicators' impact on policymaking will advance this agenda.

ii. The theme of the 2024 PFII session is "Enhancing Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination in the context of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples – emphasizing the voice of Indigenous Youth. Please include information on any publications, projects, reports, or activities relevant to this theme.

Civil society engagement within UNEP, including that of Indigenous Peoples is coordinated through the Major Groups and Stakeholders modality facilitated by the Civil Society Unit. In the Indigenous Peoples Major Group and the Youth and Children Major Group, Indigenous youth are encouraged to participate in the global environmental governance. Indigenous youth participants have therefore been sponsored to participate in UNEP organized meetings, such as the Intergovernmental Consultations on Nature- Based Solutions.

Additionally, through UNEP's reporting and overall efforts to raise the awareness and respect for Indigenous rights the voices of Indigenous Youth are emphasised. This is particularly true for General Comment No. 26 on children's rights and the environment, which emphasised Indigenous children's right to non-discrimination, social security, and adequate standard of living.

Lastly, UNEP is striving to lift the voice of Indigenous Youth in the upcoming Environment Assembly (UNEA) and is in the process of inviting Indigenous Youth to play an active role in UNEA-6 and its preceding self-organised and youth led Youth Environment Assembly.

iii. Please provide information on efforts to ensure the participation of Indigenous Peoples in the international decades declared by the General Assembly, such as the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development," the International Decade of Indigenous Languages and other relevant international decades and processes, including CEDAW General recommendation 39 on Indigenous women and girls.

## **Decade on Ecosystem Restoration:**

The UN Decade Ecosystem Restoration acknowledges the pivotal role Indigenous Peoples play in ecosystem restoration. To ensure the participation of Indigenous Peoples in the UN a new **Advisory Board** has been established to incorporate the formal UNPFII-selected representative and addition Indigenous Peoples representatives and experts. This ensures diverse perspectives and direct involvement in decision-making processes. UNPFII has been invited to share a proposal for an ecosystem restoration workplan specifically by and for IP, including funding needs, through the 2021-2023 UNPFII representatives on the board. The Advisory Board issued a Call to Action at the closing ceremony of the 10<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Ecological Restoration. An important component of the Call to Action is recognizing and securing the rights of Indigenous Peoples to their land, territories, knowledge, and resources, and elevating their leadership and roles as agents of change at all stages of restoration.

Another significant initiative is the UN Decade Restoration 'Challenge' under its Action Plan, focusing on restoring equitable land and resource rights to Indigenous Peoples while recognizing them as essential stewards of ecosystem restoration. This challenge aims to empower these groups by supporting locally led ecosystem restoration, securing land and territorial rights as the foundation for community-led restoration, and increasing global recognition of their pivotal role in restoration efforts. The challenge also emphasizes integrating traditional knowledge into restoration practices and developing Indigenous-led Restoration Flagships and financing partnerships. This endeavour is co-led by the International Land Coalition (ILC) and collaborates with initiatives like LANDex and LandMark to leverage people-centred data for ecosystem monitoring. This collaboration highlights active restoration practices by communities and offers its formal monitoring platform, FERM. Additionally, Indigenous Peoples are invited to becoming integral partners in the effort to restore our planet's ecosystems.

These initiatives collectively aim to create an enabling environment for supporting tenure security in the context of restoration targets, ensuring Indigenous Peoples' active participation and recognition in global restoration endeavours.

## **Water Action Decade**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> High Level International Conference on the Water Action Decade, which was held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan in June 2022 with the support of UNEP, saw successful participation for Indigenous Peoples who advocated for greater inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in water policy, governance, and management, recognizing the full range of the importance of water for Indigenous livelihoods, cultures, health, and sustainability. The Dushanbe Conference, a meeting of UN Member States, adopted a Declaration which recognized these points and the importance of a human rights-based approach.

iv. Has your entity responded to the 2022 UNPFII recommendation<sup>1</sup> paragraph 85... The Permanent Forum urges all United Nations entities and States parties to treaties concerning the environment, biodiversity and the climate to eliminate the use of the term “local communities” in conjunction with indigenous peoples, so that the term “indigenous peoples and local communities” would be abolished.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2023, Executive Director of UNEP, Ms. Inger Andersen, responded to the letter from Ms. Lightfoot, Mr. Motalvo and Mr. Cali Tzay, dated 15 September 2023, with the request to eliminate the use of the term “local communities” in conjunction with Indigenous Peoples. In her letter, UNEP Executive Director ensures that concrete action is to be taken, including the dissemination of the request to all staff.

However, the intergovernmental nature of UN bodies and instruments – including already negotiated Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) - precludes unilateral changes to agreed text by UN system organizations without the agreement of Member States. Nevertheless, the request was shared with the Secretariats of MEAs.

## **B. System-Wide Action Plan to achieve the ends of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

i. The Permanent Forum will follow up on progress made on the SWAP implementation as part of its discussion on the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples during its 2024 session. Please provide an analysis of actions taken by your agency, fund and/or programme on the six key elements of the SWAP, since your last update to the Forum.

*1) Raise awareness of the UNDRIP; 2) Support the implementation of the UNDRIP, particularly at the country level; 3) Support the realization of indigenous peoples' rights in the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.*

As previously outlined, UNEP has in the past year engaged in the following publications and events to raise awareness and support the implementation of UNDRIP:

- UNEP supported the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in the development of **General Comment No. 26 (2023) on children's rights and the environment with a special focus on climate change.**
- UNEP published **the second edition of the Environmental Rule of Law (EROL) Report**, titled “Environmental Rule of Law: Tracking Progress and Charting Future Directions” in November 2023.
- UNEP, together with OHCHR, launched the “**Guidance Note for United Nations Resident Coordinators and Country Teams: Supporting Governments to Better Respect, Promote and Protect Environmental Human Rights Defenders**” in November 2023. The Guidance Note was prepared as part of the Secretary-General's Call to Action for Human Rights.

- UNEP organized two **regional meetings on environmental human rights defenders** with the engagement with Indigenous Peoples as detailed in the section A(i).

*4) Map existing standards and guidelines, capacity, training materials and resources within the UN system, international financial institutions and the members of the IASG for the effective implementation of the UNDRIP; 5) Develop the capacity of States, Indigenous Peoples, Civil Society and UN personnel*

UNEP's Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework (ESSF) includes Safeguard Standards on Indigenous People to ensure the protection of Indigenous Peoples's rights and realization of the UNDRIP and other relevant international instruments. UNEP is committed to work in partnership with Indigenous Peoples and support their right to determine and develop priorities and strategies to exercise their right to development. Through the ESSF and its application, UNEP ensures the protection of the rights of Indigenous in the development and implementation of UNEP-supported programme and projects. This is done mainly through meaningful consultation and participation of Indigenous Peoples; FPIC; prior assessment and avoidance of negative impacts; ensure culturally appropriate benefits; support right to lands, territories and resources: respect people living in voluntary isolation or initial contact; consider special considerations; avoid relocation; respect cultural heritage; prepare plans to address impacts and benefits; ensure grievance mechanism. For the operationalization of this commitment, UNEP developed the detailed guidelines on Indigenous Peoples and provided training on ESSF, that included the discussion on Indigenous Peoples and their human rights. Diverse range of capacity building efforts are provided to enhance UNEP's ESSF compliance and better integration of human rights, land rights, and respect for technical and scientific knowledge of Indigenous People.

*6) Advance the participation of indigenous peoples in UN processes.*

### **Intergovernmental Consultations on Nature-Based Solutions**

Indigenous participation in the Intergovernmental Consultations on Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) is crucial to compile a comprehensive list of examples of best practice in NBS and to assess potential new proposals, criteria, standards, and guidelines. Indigenous Peoples were therefore encouraged and sponsored to participate in the consultations. The third and final round of consultations which took place 9 – 13 October at UNEP's HQ in Nairobi saw active participation from Indigenous Peoples representatives. Along with other civil society participants, Indigenous Peoples representatives was also invited to a meeting with the Chair of the consultations and UNEP secretariat to discuss meaningful engagement.

### **Minamata Convention**

The Minamata Convention on Mercury is an international treaty springing out of the work of UNEP. In a landmark decision on the effects of mercury pollution on Indigenous Peoples, COP-5 paved the way to meaningfully engage Indigenous Peoples in the implementation of projects



and programmes undertaken under the Minamata Convention and to address their specific vulnerabilities to mercury pollution from all sources. Among others, the COP requested the Convention Secretariat to compile views on the needs and priorities of Indigenous Peoples with regard to the effects of mercury in their health, livelihoods, culture and knowledge and to report to COP-6 for its consideration of future work to identify possible solutions. Several Indigenous Peoples observers attended the COP and made meaningful contributions to the discussions in plenary.

Additionally, COP-5 reviewed progress in the implementation of article 7 of the Convention on artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) and called upon the relevant Parties to submit their final national action plans (NAPs) to the Secretariat as soon as possible, as well as those Parties, which have submitted their NAPs, to provide a review of the progress made in meeting obligations under article 7. The COP invited GEF to support Parties in undertaking their reviews. In the same decision, the COP requested the Secretariat to prepare supplemental guidance on the effective engagement and participation of Indigenous Peoples in the development and implementation of NAPs and emphasized their specific needs and priorities in relation to mercury use in ASGM.

### **Global Environmental Outlook – 7 (GEO-7)**

The Global Environmental Outlook (GEO) is a series of reports that review the state and direction of the global environment. It is a global process conducted by UNEP at regional, national, and local levels around the world. The process provides an assessment of the current state of the environment, an evaluation of the effectiveness of policies and actions taken to address environmental issues, and projections of future environmental trends.

At the Ad-Hoc Open-ended Meeting on the scoping of GEO-7, to be published in March 2025, Member States requested for the first time that **Indigenous Knowledge** and local knowledge should be **incorporated across the upcoming assessment**. UNEP and co-chairs of the GEO-7 assessment have addressed this request by first forming a taskforce of scholars with indigenous expertise, to provide advice on the best process to respond to this request. The taskforce has recommended the following main steps which UNEP will follow up:

1. Engage first with Indigenous knowledge-holders through a conceptualization workshop, intended to define how the structure and content of GEO-7 could be adapted to include Indigenous Knowledge in a credible and legitimate way.
2. Next, hold an Indigenous Peoples Dialogue where Indigenous knowledge-holders can provide suggestions and input on the various sections of the GEO-7 from an Indigenous perspective.
3. In addition to the Indigenous Peoples Dialogues, issue a call to various Indigenous communities and knowledge-holders to submit knowledge and information to be incorporated into the GEO-7 by the experts in the taskforce for the Second Order draft of the report.
4. Next, hold a third Indigenous Peoples Dialogue during the peer review of the Second Order draft, so that Indigenous knowledge-holders can consider the way that Indigenous issues have been considered in the draft report and how Indigenous Knowledge has been incorporated. During the dialogue, Indigenous knowledge-holders may provide suggestions to the authors on adjustments or corrections to be made on the draft.

5. Lastly, hold a final Indigenous Peoples Dialogue at the end of the GEO-7 process to review the key Indigenous Peoples findings from the GEO-7, allowing Indigenous knowledge-holders to understand how the GEO-7 report could affect or impact their communities and allow for feedback on whether the findings are aligned with what they would have expected from GEO-7.
6. A call for nominations of indigenous experts will go out soon. Please get in touch with UNEP Secretariat if you are interested in receiving the communication [laetitia.zobel@un.org](mailto:laetitia.zobel@un.org).

### **GEF Projects**

UNEP is one of the Global Environment Facility's (GEF) Agencies, with dedicated GEF technical teams in the areas of Biodiversity, Capacity Development, Climate Change Adaptation, Climate Change Mitigation, Chemicals & Waste, International Waters and Land Degradation. As a GEF agency, UNEP works closely with project proponents to design, develop and implement GEF-funded projects and programs. A number of these projects address Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) under the Nagoya protocol, in which the principles of Prior Informed Consent (PIC) and Mutually Agreed Terms (MAT) are core components. Additionally, the GEF Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy also establishes project support for capacity building among Indigenous Peoples for access to genetic resources and benefit sharing.

An overview over GEF projects administrated by UNEP that work with Indigenous Peoples have been compiled in Annex 1 of this report.

### **Other UNEP Processes**

Indigenous Peoples are permanently represented in UNEP process through the Indigenous Peoples Major Group. Leading up to UNEA, Indigenous Peoples organizations accredited to UNEP are encouraged to participate in Regional Consultative Meetings and in the Global Major Groups and Stakeholder Forum to coordinate civil society engagement and statements in the upcoming Assembly. The Indigenous Peoples Major Group is represented with its own placate and are able to provide written and oral statements during UNEA and other special meetings. The currently elected Indigenous Peoples Facilitators are Lena Estrada Anokazi and Rodion Sulyandziga who are coordinating among the accredited UNEP observers representing Indigenous Peoples.

## **C. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

i. Please describe any activities your entity has organized since the last reporting period to accelerate progress across a range of SDGs, demonstrating the interlinkages across goals and targets and if applicable, providing examples of translating global goals into local actions. In your response, please consider referring to SDGs relevant to the theme of the 2024 session of the Forum.

The SDG and Environment Statistics Unit of UNEP is currently working on the development of a **Measuring Progress report** that focuses on proposing meaningful disaggregation to the 92 environment-related SDG indicators. In addition to proposing thematic disaggregation, their impact to policymaking and the impact of formulated policies on humans, environment and economy are presented. The report will include considerations to the importance of using Indigenous knowledge and the role of Indigenous Peoples in achieving sustainable development and the SDGs.

ii. Please describe any activities your entity organized in support of the 2023 UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and SDG Summit and/or reports and activities that supported SDG reporting and monitoring or a VNR process at the national, regional, or global level.

During the 2023 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People (HAC N&P), the Global Ocean Alliance (GOA), and the Leaders' Pledge for Nature (LPN), organized a side event co-hosted by UNEP. The event entitled "High-Level Event for Nature and People: From Ambition to Action", urged continued ambition and accelerated action at the highest level to reverse biodiversity loss and achieving a nature positive world by 2030. The event presented an opportunity for a number of ambitious countries and non-state actors to showcase domestic and international actions, both on land and in the ocean, to ensure successful implementation of biodiversity agreements. The crucial role of Indigenous Peoples in successful and sustainable implementation efforts was highlighted, and participation was sought from Indigenous Peoples.

During the high-level thematic sessions of the Climate Action Summit 2023, UNEP organized a session on "Accelerating Decarbonization through Collaboration and Implementation". The decarbonization segment addressed three interlinked issues critical to advancing the green transition; industrial decarbonization; super charging global battery storage deployment; and critical energy transition minerals. The discussion featured representatives from Indigenous groups.

## Final Remarks

The above report provides a summary and overview over the most relevant avenues in which UNEP has engaged with Indigenous issues and sought the active participation of Indigenous Peoples. As the world's leading body on environmental issues, UNEP strives to promote and respect Indigenous rights in all our activities and continuously explore new avenues for synergies and meaningful partnerships with Indigenous Peoples and their communities.

For any questions, please email us: [unep-civilsociety@un.org](mailto:unep-civilsociety@un.org) with the subject line: Indigenous Issues/ PFII.

## Annex 1: Overview over GEF Projects

**Table 1:** Overview over current UNEP-GEF projects that include Indigenous Peoples.

GEF ID	Project Title	Country	Objective	Indigenous People Component
<b>10316</b>	Effective implementation of Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing from use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge in Madagascar.	Madagascar	The main objective of the project is to establish a national ABS framework and operational capacity to enable the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol in Madagascar.	The strengthening of the ABS mechanism will contribute to the development of social inclusion and gender equality, foster clear and transparent provisions, and strengthen the capacity for Indigenous Peoples and their communities to benefit from the use of their traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, thereby generating opportunities benefit sharing while reinforcing the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The benefits shared will be applied in biodiversity conservation actions and benefits for Indigenous Peoples and traditional small farmers, taking into account their organizations and including consideration of gender dimensions.
<b>10228</b>	Capacity support for accession to and implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization in South Sudan.	South Sudan	The project objective is to assist South Sudan to prepare all necessary documentation to accede to the Nagoya Protocol and subsequently to establish conditions for enabling South Sudan to fully implement its obligations as a Party to the Protocol.	The project had been engaging all the communities in consultation and will use the partnership approach with Indigenous Peoples to ensure full involvement in the project.
<b>10442</b>	The project had been engaging all the communities in	Niger	To establish favorable conditions for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on ABS through the establishme	This project will outline the broader institutional apparatus with potential roles in the ABS sphere in Niger, the roles of Indigenous communities, the private sector as well as

	consultation and will use the partnership approach with Indigenous Peoples to ensure full involvement in the project.		nt of a national regime for access to genetic resources and traditional knowledge in Niger.	regional, continental and / or international partnerships in these choices. Moreover, enhanced and effective involvement of all actors including Indigenous Peoples and their communities in, not only the formulation and / or revision of the various regulatory and administrative tools, codes of conducts, model contractual clauses etc., but also in their operationalization and in the decision-making processes pertaining to access to GRs and aTK for their utilization.
<b>9481</b>	Title “Institutional Capacity Strengthening for Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit Sharing in Uganda”.	Uganda	To strengthen institutional capacity for effective implementation of the Nagoya Protocol and to conduct an effective awareness campaign on Access Benefit Sharing (ABS) in Uganda	<p>Component 3: Strengthening ABS Management at the Local government and Community Level</p> <p>Outcome 3.1: Effective working models for ABS at the local community level Outcome 3.2: Effective participation of men and women in benefit sharing</p> <p>Output 3.1.1: Model contractual clauses and codes of conduct on best practices on ABS developed and piloted. Output 3.2.1: Guidelines for gender mainstreaming in ABS for local communities developed and implemented.</p> <p>The targeted Indigenous Peoples are the Karimojong in eastern Uganda and the Batwa community in western Uganda.</p>
<b>5626</b>	Title: Developing the Microbial Biotechnology Industry from Kenya's Soda Lakes in line with the Nagoya Protocol	Kenya	Project Objective: The utilization of microbial genetic resources within the protected Kenyan Soda lakes for research, Development and commercialization of industrial enzymes and bio-pesticides for	Component 4: ABS agreements developed to build the capacity of the Kenyan authorities to engage with users of genetic resources.

			improved resource management and livelihoods in compliance with the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing.	<p>Outcome 4.1: A model ABS agreement between provider and user in compliance with Nagoya Protocol in place for Kenya.</p> <p>Output 4.1.1. At least 1 ABS agreement between provider (KWS and Soda lakes communities- county government), local Kenyan institutions (KIRDI, Moi University, University of Nairobi Science and Technology Park Ltd and the JKUAT Enterprise Ltd), DSMZ and the industrial partner, Verenum Corporation) resulting from research and development of microbial samples taken from the Soda lakes executed;</p> <p>Output 4.1.2 Prior Informed Consent (PIC), Mutually Agreed Terms (MAT) and Material Transfer Agreements (MTA) developed and operationalized in line with the Nagoya Protocol;</p> <p>See link below:  <a href="#">How Kenya's Lake Bogoria in Kenya is feeding the global biotech industry</a></p>
<b>9673</b>	Strengthening South Africa's capacity to comply with enhanced transparency reporting requirements under Article 13 of the Paris Agreement	South Africa	This project seeks to address South Africa's needs to enhance data collection mechanisms, institutional capacities as well as building South Africa's pool of experts to support international transparency processes.	This project has included Indigenous Knowledge Systems as part of climate change information systems. How different cultures use their knowledge to describe the events that are about to happen and how to mitigate the risks. The stories included early warning systems and mitigation measures.
<b>10581</b>	Implementing Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) Site Conservation and	Chile, Colombia, Dominican	The project's objective is to improve the conservation of Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) sites in Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic,	Plans have been made to engage vulnerable or marginalized people in an informed, inclusive, transparent, and equal manner. This project has an Indigenous People Plan. For example, in Chile plans are underway to hire two

	Preventing Global Extinctions	Republic, Madagascar	Madagascar. The main strategies to be pursued by the project includes the improvement of the conservation status of 20 AZE sites and associated AZE trigger species in focus countries, the mainstreaming of AZE site conservation at global and national levels, and the promotion of Knowledge Management to enhance understanding of and interest in AZE site conservation across sectors.	Indigenous coordinators to ensure the equal representation and inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in project activities.
10269	Transformational Change in Sustainable Forest Management in Transboundary Landscapes of the Congo Basin	Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Republic of Congo	The regional component of the Congo Basin Sustainable Landscapes Impact Program (hereinafter referred to as Congo IP) is built on the rationale that several interrelated factors drive deforestation and degradation in the Congo Basin, and that, without collaborative action among neighboring countries to tackle common threats and to take advantage of regional opportunities, it would be difficult to maintain forest cover and the flow of ecosystems services over the long term.	One of the components of this project is to empower Indigenous Peoples to actively participate and defend their rights in land use planning.