



INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND THE UNITED NATIONS POST-2015 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

One of the main outcomes of the United Nations (UN) Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012, was the agreement by UN Member States to launch a process to develop Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs are the basis for the UN's development agenda post-2015.

A 30-member Open Working Group (OWG) was established on January 22, 2013, by decision 67/555 (see [A/67/L.48/rev.1](#)) of the UN General Assembly. The OWG is tasked with presenting a proposal for the SDGs to the UN General Assembly by September 2014. Member States decided to use a new constituency-based system of representation so most of the OWG member seats are shared by several countries. High level discussions will continue for the next year and the final draft will be presented for adoption by the UN General Assembly in its 2015 session.

NINE MAJOR GROUPS INCLUDING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The first UN Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, the Earth Summit, recognized that sustainable development could not be achieved by States alone. The Summit's outcome document [Agenda 21](#) identified nine Major Groups with important contributions in this field: Women; Children and Youth; Indigenous Peoples; Non-governmental organizations (NGOs); Local Authorities; Workers and Trade Unions; Business and Industry; Scientific and Technological Community; and Farmers. These Major Groups continue to be directly engaged in the SDGs process through participation in OWG meetings, High Level Political Forums for Sustainable Development, various online initiatives, and other related processes.

The Rio + 20 outcome document [The Future We Want](#) reaffirmed that the meaningful involvement and active participation of these Major Groups and all relevant decision makers in the planning and implementation of sustainable development policies is essential. Key Major Groups' networks were invited by the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) Bureau to form a facilitating group called the Organizing Partners, which coordinates the preparations and assists the Secretariat in generating and guiding the engagement of stakeholders/rights holders for each Major Group sector globally. The International Indian Treaty Council is one of three Organizing Partners for the Indigenous Peoples Major Group, along with Tebtebba Foundation based in the Philippines and the Indigenous Information Network based in Kenya.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' PRIORITIES FOR THE SDG's

One of the major criticisms of the UN's Millennium Development Goals (the MDGs will conclude in 2015) was that Indigenous Peoples' rights, perspectives and concerns about development were not addressed. Indigenous Peoples have committed to be actively involved this time to ensure that their concerns are reflected and their rights are protected in the SDGs. Based on the Declaration from the **Indigenous Peoples Rio+20 International Conference on Self Determination and Sustainable Development** (June 2012) as well as broad input from Indigenous Peoples around the world before and since, the Indigenous Peoples Major Group has identified the following key priorities, along with targets and indicators in each area, for the SDGs:



Indigenous Peoples address the impacts of Extractive Industries at the Rio+ 20 Indigenous Peoples International Conference, June 17 – 19, 2012, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

- 1) A rights-based approach, incorporating international human rights standards including the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- 2) Ensuring recognition and respect for Indigenous Peoples' rights to land, water, seeds and other resources, self-determination, Treaty rights and free, prior and informed consent;
- 3) Respect and protection for traditional and local livelihoods, food sovereignty and subsistence practices;
- 4) Recognition for culture as an essential component of sustainable development; and
- 5) Full participation of Indigenous Peoples in decision-making in sustainable development programs and policies at all stages and on all levels.

For more information on the Indigenous Peoples Major Group visit: <http://bit.ly/IITCSDGs>

Join the Indigenous Peoples Major Group listserv at: <http://bit.ly/IPMGSDGs>

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The International Indian Treaty Council (IITC), founded in 1974, is an Indigenous organization working for the protection of human rights, cultures, treaties and traditional lands from the local to the international levels. In 1977, IITC was the first Indigenous organization to receive Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, and in 2011 was the first to be upgraded to General Consultative Status.

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