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UNESCO POLICY ON ENGAGING WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

SUMMARY

UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy (2014-21) affirms that the Organization will implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples across all relevant programme areas (para. 20) and, to this end, develop and implement a UNESCO-wide policy on engaging with indigenous peoples (para. 46).

In this tenth anniversary year of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007-2017), this document presents a draft UNESCO Policy on Engaging with Indigenous Peoples.

Action expected of the Executive Board: Proposed decision in paragraph 18.



I. Introduction

1. Indigenous peoples live in all regions of the world and own, occupy or use some 22% of global land area. Numbering at least 370 million, indigenous peoples are “recognized as the stewards of the major part of the world’s biological, cultural and linguistic diversity”.¹

2. Recognizing that indigenous peoples “continue to be disproportionately represented among the most marginalized and impoverished segments of society”² and in line with the 2030 Agenda’s commitment to leave no one behind, UNESCO’s 2014-2021 Medium-Term Strategy affirms that the Organization will implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) across all relevant programme areas (para. 20) and, to this end, develop and implement a UNESCO-wide policy on engaging with indigenous peoples (para. 46).

3. UNESCO’s engagement with indigenous peoples is framed by its mission to promote peace by encouraging intercultural dialogue and reinforcing the role in sustainable development of education, the sciences, culture, and communication and information. Through its programmes, UNESCO addresses a number of key concerns of indigenous peoples, e.g. endangered languages, mother tongue education, education for sustainable development, indigenous knowledge in scientific and environmental decision-making, cultural diversity, and building knowledge societies. These issues cut across UNESCO’s mandate and necessitate an intersectoral approach.

4. The Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention³ and the Man and the Biosphere Programme’s nomination form and periodic review process⁴ make reference to the UNDRIP. The Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS) programme provides technical support to other United Nations bodies such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) as they consider how to create synergies with indigenous peoples’ knowledge. In 2016, the Global Education Monitoring report highlighted indigenous peoples’ contributions to sustainable development, the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity inscribed the democratic socio-political system of the indigenous Oromo of Ethiopia, and the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) of the United Nations Secretary-General issued a policy brief on “Indigenous and Local Knowledge(s) and Science(s) for Sustainable Development”. Recognizing UNESCO’s work on the Atlas of the World’s Languages in Danger, the General Assembly invited UNESCO to serve as the lead agency for the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages.⁵

5. The UNDRIP, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007, sets out the individual and collective rights of indigenous peoples, including their rights to culture, identity, language, education, indigenous knowledge, homelands, among other matters. It further emphasizes the important and continuing role of United Nations Member States and the United Nations, in promoting and protecting the rights of indigenous peoples, including through the development of relevant activities of the United Nations system. This commitment was reiterated at the high-level plenary meeting of the 69th General Assembly, known as the World Conference on

¹ UNESCO. 2014 37 C/4 2014-2021. Medium Term Strategy. Overarching Objectives. p. 17.

² <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002278/227860e.pdf>

³ *ibid*

⁴ World Heritage Convention. 2016. Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/>

⁵ UNESCO-Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme. 2013. Biosphere reserve nomination form. http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/SC/images/biosphere_reserve_nomination_form_2013_en.pdf

⁵ A/C.3/71/L.17/Rev.1

Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) that called on United Nations agencies to support implementation of national action plans, strategies or other measures to achieve the ends of the UNDRIP.⁶

6. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues has repeatedly encouraged United Nations agencies and programmes to develop their own policies on engaging with indigenous peoples in order to ensure that the UNDRIP is adequately reflected in all United Nations programmes. Numerous United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, including UNDP, UNEP, FAO, UNREDD and UN-HABITAT have adopted policies or other guiding instruments on indigenous peoples. This group also includes international financing institutions *inter alia* IFAD, World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the Asian Development Bank.

7. An increasing number of donor bodies, most notably the Global Environmental Facility, the Adaptation Fund and the Green Climate Fund, and some donor countries, require that partner agencies have their own environmental and social safeguard standards, including policies on indigenous peoples.

8. The General Assembly additionally requested the Secretary-General to develop a system-wide action plan (SWAP) to ensure a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the UNDRIP.⁷ The SWAP invites United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, including UNESCO, to report annually on how they implement and raise awareness on the UNDRIP, support indigenous peoples' rights in the 2030 Agenda, improve capacities of States, indigenous peoples, civil society and United Nations personnel in this area, and advance participation of indigenous peoples in their processes.

II. Aims, Structure, Process

9. On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007-2017), contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, and in line with UNESCO's mandate to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among nations in its fields of expertise, the UNESCO Policy on Engaging with Indigenous Peoples is developed with the following aims:

- (a) to appropriately position the Organization's programmes, procedures and activities with respect to the UNDRIP;
- (b) to build awareness and provide guidance to Member States, intergovernmental bodies and UNESCO staff in order to effectively reflect the UNDRIP in all aspects of UNESCO's work; and
- (c) to contribute to the UNESCO portfolio of environmental and social policies⁸, and fulfil donor requirements in this regard.

10. As the global standard-setting body in its fields of competence, the Organization will be guided by the Policy in its support to Member States and other partners in relation to implementing the UNDRIP. The Policy will consolidate the Organization's work involving or having potential benefits for or impacts on indigenous peoples, providing guidance at all stages of the Organization's programming.

11. Work on the Policy was initiated by the Director-General and undertaken through an intersectoral working group involving staff in Headquarters and in field offices. The working group

⁶ See paragraphs 7-8 of General Assembly resolution 69/2. Outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, A/RES/69/2 (25 September 2014) Available online at: <http://undocs.org/A/RES/69/2>

⁷ E/C.19/2016/5

⁸ Statement on UNESCO's Environmental and Social Policies. Available online at: http://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/statement_on_unesco.pdf

consists of focal points from all UNESCO Programme Sectors and support services including the Bureau of Strategic Planning (BSP), the Sector for External Relations and Public Information (ERI), the Africa Department and the Division for Gender Equality in the Office of the Director-General.

12. Developed over a period of four years, the house-wide consultative process involved:

- scoping UNESCO's activities of relevance to indigenous peoples;
- interviews with over 75 UNESCO staff members from all five programme sectors, AFR, BSP and ERI, and selected UNESCO institutes and field offices;
- dialogue workshops with UNESCO staff and indigenous peoples' organizations and networks in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

13. The principles were developed on the basis of the above activities and shared back to those who had participated for comment, ensuring a bottom-up and inclusive approach to the policy development. Interested experts and organizations were also invited to comment on the draft Policy.

14. Presented in the Annex to this document, the policy consists of: Part A – Guiding principles on engaging with indigenous peoples; Part B – implications of the principles for the Organization's mandated areas of work; and Part C – mechanisms for implementation.

III. Implications and future opportunities of the UNESCO Policy on Engaging with Indigenous Peoples

15. The policy supports the United Nations commitment to promote and apply the human rights-based approach in its programming, as defined in the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Guidelines on the Human Rights-Based Approach to Development Cooperation⁹ and the UNDG's Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues.¹⁰

16. The policy serves as a framework that guides UNESCO in the design and delivery of its programme. Additional financial support would be required, however, to ensure an effective coordination of UNESCO's work with indigenous peoples, and an appropriate monitoring system.

17. Through the policy and the intersectoral working group composed of focal points in all programme sectors, there is an opportunity for coordinating cross-sectoral projects on themes relevant for the implementation of the UNDRIP including, for example, preparations for the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages.

Proposed decision

18. In light of the above, the Executive Board may wish to take the following decision:

The Executive Board,

1. Having examined document 201 EX/6 and its Annex,
2. Stressing the importance of the UNDRIP as the reference document for indigenous peoples,

⁹ http://www.undg.org/archive_docs/6959-The_Human_Rights_Based_Approach_to_Development_Cooperation_Towards_a_Common_Understanding_among_UN.pdf

¹⁰ http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/UNDG_training_16EN.pdf

3. Expresses its gratitude to the Director-General for the efforts made to propose a UNESCO policy on engaging with indigenous peoples;
4. Notes the recent United Nations General Assembly proclamation of 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages and welcomes the Director-General's decision to accept the invitation for UNESCO to serve as lead agency for the year, within existing resources;
5. Approves the UNESCO policy on engaging with indigenous peoples contained in the Annex to the present document 201 EX/6;
6. Calls on Member States to make voluntary financial and in-kind contributions to support the implementation of UNESCO policy on engaging with indigenous peoples;
7. Invites the Director-General and Member States to seek extrabudgetary resources to enable the full implementation of the UNESCO policy on engaging with indigenous peoples, including through the development of intersectoral projects;
8. Requests the Director-General to implement the UNESCO policy on engaging with indigenous peoples and report on progress made thereon through statutory reports on programme implementation.

ANNEX

UNESCO POLICY ON ENGAGING WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES¹¹

1. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) contributes to the alleviation of poverty, the building of peace, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information. As stated in its Constitution, UNESCO pursues this purpose to reinforce “universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion”.¹²
2. As part of the United Nations system, UNESCO is also committed to promote the human rights based approach in its programming, as defined in the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Guidelines on the Human Rights Based Approach to Development Cooperation¹³ and its Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples’ Issues.¹⁴ These include the rights of indigenous peoples as laid out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP),¹⁵ the Convention 169 of the International Labour Organization (ILO 169), and related human rights documents.
3. The UNESCO policy on engaging with indigenous peoples supports the efforts of Member States to implement the UNDRIP across all relevant programme areas, as outlined in the Overarching Objectives of the current Medium-Term Strategy (37 C/4 2014-2021, para 20)¹⁶ and confirms the application of these universal standards for indigenous peoples rights within UNESCO. It reinforces UNESCO’s contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the United Nations system-wide action plan for ensuring a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.¹⁷
4. The policy consists of:
 - Part A. Guiding principles on engaging with indigenous peoples
 - Part B. Implications of the principles for the Organization’s mandated areas of work
 - Part C. Mechanisms for implementation

Part A. Guiding principles on engaging with indigenous peoples

5. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the General Assembly in 2007. The following eight principles, which are based upon the

¹¹ Nothing in this policy may be construed to diminishing or extinguishing the rights indigenous peoples have now or may acquire in the future.

¹² UNESCO. 2016. Basic texts. A. Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Available online at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002439/243996e.pdf>

¹³ UN Development Group. 2003. The Human Rights Based Approach to Development Cooperation Towards a Common Understanding Among UN Agencies Available online at: https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/6959-The_Human_Rights_Based_Approach_to_Development_Cooperation_Towards_a_Common_Understanding_among_UN1.pdf

¹⁴ UN Development Group. 2008. Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples Issues. Available online at: https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/UNDG_Guidelines_indigenous_FINAL-01FEB08.pdf

¹⁵ United Nations. 2007. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 13 September 2007. A/RES/61/295. Available online at:

<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N06/512/07/PDF/N0651207.pdf?OpenElement>

¹⁶ UNESCO. 2014. 37 C/4 2014-2021. Medium-Term Strategy. Available online at: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/bureau-of-strategic-planning/resources/medium-term-strategy-c4/>

¹⁷ United Nations. 2016. System-wide action plan for ensuring a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. E/C.19/2016/5. Available online at: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/2016/15th-session/SYSTEM-WIDE-ACTION-PLAN-FOR-ENSURING-A-COHERENT-APPROACH.pdf>

articles of the UNDRIP, guide UNESCO's engagement with indigenous peoples and the Organization's contributions to the implementation of the UNDRIP within its mandated areas of work.

6. **Non-discrimination, equity and equality** – Indigenous peoples have the collective as well as individual right to the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms as recognized in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights law (UNDRIP, Article 1). Indigenous peoples and individuals are free and equal to all other peoples and individuals and have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination, in the exercise of their rights, in particular that based on their indigenous origin or identity (UNDRIP, Article 2). UNESCO ensures that its activities abide by these basic human rights principles. UNESCO will not engage in actions that will result in forced assimilation or erosion of indigenous peoples' socio-cultural, political-economic integrity.
7. **Self-determination** – Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination (UNDRIP, Article 3). This includes *inter alia* the right to self-governance and autonomy in matters relating to their internal and local affairs (UNDRIP, Article 4), the right to define their own decision-making processes as regards social, cultural and economic development and the right to maintain and develop their own governance structures, traditional authorities and self-selection of representatives. UNESCO will recognize and respect indigenous peoples' decision-making processes and governance structures.
8. **Free, prior and informed consent** – Effective participation and inclusion leading to empowerment, as well as the right to self-determined development and rights over their lands, territories and resources, require free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) of indigenous peoples (see, among others, UNDRIP, Articles 10, 19, 28, 32). Obtaining FPIC is a process that respects indigenous peoples' institutions, including their mechanisms for representation, decision-taking processes and conflict resolution.
9. **Development with culture and identity** – Development initiatives affecting indigenous peoples will be grounded in, and respectful of, their identity, integrity, cultural heritage, traditions and beliefs, and values and resources, an approach sometimes referred to as culturally-appropriate development or self-determined development. This includes the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions, and provide education in their own languages in an appropriate manner (UNDRIP, Article 14). Furthermore, development should be community-driven, based on local ownership, on local capacity to maintain the leadership over this development, on indigenous knowledge and, as far as possible, be administered through their own institutions (UNDRIP, Article 23). UNESCO will promote a sustainable development agenda that respects culture and identity.
10. **Rights to lands, territories, resources, languages, knowledge, and cultural heritage** – Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control their lands, territories and resources and to maintain, control, develop and protect their intellectual property over their cultural heritage, languages, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions (see UNDRIP Articles 13, 26 and 31). UNDRIP also stipulates that indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories or relocated without their free, prior and informed consent and after agreement on just and fair compensation and, where possible, with the option of return (UNDRIP, Articles 10 and 28). UNESCO will recognize and respect indigenous peoples' rights to their lands, territories, resources, knowledge, and cultural heritage in all of its activities, including the implementation of its Conventions.
11. **Participation and inclusion** – United Nations agencies shall establish ways and means of ensuring the participation of indigenous peoples in issues affecting them (UNDRIP, Article 41). To ensure that indigenous peoples benefit from and are not harmed by UNESCO's activities, full and effective participation and inclusion leading to empowerment will be

developed at all levels, including the decision-making and strategic levels, and at all stages, including planning, programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This includes continued and direct dialogue and interaction with indigenous peoples through their freely chosen representatives.

12. **Gender equality** – Indigenous women and girls may face multiple discrimination, both within their local communities and externally, due to their gender as well as their indigenous identity. It is essential to recognize and respect the different roles, needs, priorities, knowledge, perspectives and contributions of indigenous women, girls, men and boys within their communities and society as a whole. UNESCO will promote the economic, social and cultural empowerment and agency of indigenous women and girls grounded in a human rights-based approach.
13. **Empowerment and strengthening capacity** – In order to ensure compliance with this policy, capacity-building and empowerment may be required so that indigenous peoples can engage effectively with development processes in an empowered and inclusive manner. Capacity-building for indigenous peoples, as well as for UNESCO Member States and the Secretariat dealing with indigenous issues, will be incorporated into UNESCO's activities at all levels, including planning and decision-making.

Part B. Implications of the principles for the Organization's mandated areas of work

B.1. Policy principles as they relate to UNESCO's work in education

14. Education is essential for the full development of the human personality, talents, mental and physical abilities to reach one's full potential, as well as for the strengthening of the respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and for the principles enshrined in Charter of the United Nations. UNESCO promotes education as a human right as well as a foundation for peace-building and inclusive sustainable development. Through its humanistic and holistic approach to education, the Organization strives to foster the development of balanced education systems, in which everyone has equal opportunity for meaningful lifelong learning, delivered through multiple formal, non-formal and informal pathways. It seeks to ensure that education and learning systems are inclusive, rights-based and reflect the diversity of all learners. It gives particular attention to achieving gender equality in education by mainstreaming gender in and through education, and through gender-specific programming in targeted programme areas. In addition, UNESCO gives priority to those countries or population groups considered most in need or lagging behind in reaching internationally-agreed development goals.
15. UNESCO's work on engagement with indigenous peoples in education is grounded in its mid-term strategy (C/4) and programmes (C/5), and guided by relevant normative instruments and evolving international policy frameworks, notably the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) and the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/69/2) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2014.
16. Indigenous peoples are entitled to the right to education – both as individuals and as collectivities – as stipulated in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) and in the ILO Convention Number 169 on the Rights of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (1989). Any activities that create hatred, systematic discrimination or marginalization against indigenous peoples shall be avoided. Most of them, however, are denied their full right to quality education due to multiple, and often interlinked, reasons of social, economic, political and cultural nature. Typical barriers resulting in their educational marginalization include long distances to school or learning centres; work demands; limited access to electricity and the Internet; the use of inappropriate language in teaching, rather than the mother tongue; insufficient relevance of learning content to their culture and lives;

limited financial means; and discrimination in schools. Indigenous children are less likely to enrol in school and more likely to repeat than non-indigenous children. Indigenous girls tend to be more marginalized, being often expected to perform domestic chores and care for children and siblings. In many places, learning programmes for indigenous youth and adults are far from sufficient both quantitatively and qualitatively. Even if indigenous persons are enrolled in school or educational programmes in and outside school, the quality of provision is not always adequate. Deprivation of access to quality learning opportunities tends to create a vicious circle, by contributing to further social marginalization, poverty and dispossession of indigenous peoples and the reproduction of social and cumulative disadvantages.

17. Hence, it is essential to effectively include their knowledge, holistic worldviews and cultures in the development of education policies, programmes, projects and practices and to promote their perspective, if meaningful learning opportunities are to be equally available, accessible, acceptable and appropriate for all indigenous peoples. This requires an inclusive, holistic approach to education, as well as corresponding education systems and institutions that can embrace a culture of peace, indigenous languages and lifestyles, knowledge systems, histories, spiritual values, physical activities, diverse identities, and indigenous peoples' worldviews to foster their self-determination and empowerment. Such an inclusive, holistic approach will also enable indigenous peoples to share their cultural, spiritual, linguistic and traditional knowledge and techniques, which represent substantial pieces of human wisdom and heritage, to enrich education systems.
18. In recognition of the above-mentioned challenges and particularities, UNESCO adheres to the normative and policy framework mentioned in the introduction and to the more specific policy principles listed below. Since education is a key catalyst for positive development and transformation in economic, social, political and cultural domains, these principles are applicable beyond the Organization's work in education, while its work in education will pay due respect to relevant policy principles of other UNESCO sectors. In so doing, UNESCO ensures inclusion¹⁸ and the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples to enhance holistic education systems, governance, policies and programmes to meet the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially its Goal 4 on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. A particular focus is given to achieving gender equality in education.

Equitable access to lifelong learning

19. Ensuring the equitable access of indigenous peoples to quality lifelong learning opportunities through improving infrastructure and learning environments so as to fit with cultural practice; promoting both conventional and innovative modes of delivery in formal, non-formal and informal settings, including the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in education.
20. Enhancing education systems so that learners can move within and across formal, non-formal and information pathways through building frameworks for recognition, validation and accreditation of learning outcomes and prior knowledge and skills.
21. Supporting countries in developing inclusive national education policies to respond to the learning needs of everyone, including indigenous peoples.

Quality and relevance of teaching and learning

¹⁸ Inclusion is seen as "a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all children, youth and adults through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing and eliminating exclusion within and from education". (UNESCO 2009, "Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education").

22. Promoting quality teaching and learning that are sensitive to indigenous peoples' culture, languages, lifestyles, traditions, diverse identities, world views, aspirations and knowledge systems, as well as gender equality, in particular through the following:
- Supporting indigenous peoples' mother tongue-based education in a multilingual education approach in formal, non-formal and informal settings.
 - Ensuring that education models and practices, including curricula, teaching and learning materials, pedagogies, teaching and learning environments, are non-assimilatory, and are respectful and sensitive to indigenous peoples' rights, identities, perspectives, cultures, traditional knowledge, experiences and aspirations, as well as their contexts and profiles, including gender, age and their geographical location.
 - Ensuring that education models and practices are non-assimilatory, culturally sensitive and respect and support indigenous peoples' identities, cultural integrity and rights.
 - Recognizing and facilitating the integration, where desired by, and with the free, prior and informed consent of the knowledge holders, of traditional knowledge into curriculum and teaching practice for both indigenous and non-indigenous learners and promoting the inter-generational transmission of such knowledge.
 - Promoting education related to human rights, peace, tolerance, intercultural understanding and citizenship to enable both indigenous and non-indigenous peoples to live together without prejudice, discrimination, violence and conflicts.

Monitoring the right to education

23. Promoting a human rights-based approach to education for indigenous peoples and reinforcing monitoring of the implementation of the right to education through regular consultations with Member States and examination of their reports on the implementation of the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960) and other normative instruments.
24. Recognizing and striving for reinforced integration of issues related to indigenous peoples in monitoring work related to normative instruments, internationally agreed goals and other frameworks, including Goal 4 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Enhancing a knowledge and evidence base

25. Strengthening a knowledge and evidence base on education and learning for indigenous peoples through the research of their participation in education, the relevance and outcomes of education and learning, related policies, programmes and curricula, and the obstacles faced in accessing and benefiting from learning opportunities, as well as through the collection and dissemination of effective policies and practices.

Advocacy and awareness-raising

26. Using different opportunities (e.g. International Days, including the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, and meetings such as the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) to raise awareness of the specificities of indigenous peoples and their educational aspirations, needs and challenges.
27. Advocacy for increased attention and resources to meet the learning needs of indigenous peoples through enhanced education systems, governance, policies and practices.

B.2. Policy principles as they relate to UNESCO's work in the Natural Sciences

28. UNESCO works to advance and promote science in the interests of peace, sustainable development and human security and well-being. It does this by catalysing international cooperation in science; promoting dialogue between scientists, policy-makers and stakeholder; assisting countries in formulating, reviewing and implementing their national STI policy; building capacity in science; advocating for science; acting as a platform for sharing ideas and standard-setting; and implementing programmes and projects in science throughout the world. UNESCO hosts major international programmes in the freshwater, ecological, earth and basic sciences. Two of these programmes, the Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB) and the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme (IGGP) involve UNESCO-designated sites that may include protected areas.¹⁹ Science policy at the national and sectoral levels is a key part of UNESCO's work in the natural and basic sciences. Emphasis is given to developing countries, in particular to Africa, and to ensuring gender equality in science. Themes of relevance across the sector's programmes include disaster risk reduction, biodiversity conservation, geodiversity, engineering, science education, climate change and sustainable development in small island developing States (SIDS). UNESCO's Natural Sciences Sector also houses the Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS) Programme.
29. The Natural Sciences Sector also collaborates with other intergovernmental processes and agencies to improve the science-policy-society interface. While the Natural Sciences Sector covers some of the thematic areas from which indigenous peoples have been most excluded, it has recognized that making the scientific endeavour more responsive to and inclusive of indigenous peoples benefits not only them, but also science. By engaging in an empowering manner with indigenous peoples, understanding of major global environmental issues, such as biodiversity loss and climate change, can be advanced and solutions may be grounded in the realities of those people whose lives are most immediately dependent upon understanding and managing environmental factors. By recognizing and valuing other knowledge systems, science and technology may develop new insights of relevance to engineering, water management and sustainable development among others. But scientific advances and innovations must also benefit indigenous peoples. Therefore, positive steps must be taken to overcome the multiple barriers that indigenous peoples face to full enjoyment of the benefits of science, technology and innovation.

Indigenous peoples' knowledge

30. UNESCO recognizes indigenous peoples' knowledge as an equally valid knowledge system across all scientific programmes and activities. UNESCO recognizes indigenous peoples' resource management systems, know-how, practices and governance structures as valuable resources that provide the foundation for sustainable development activities in their communities.
31. UNESCO, particularly through its LINKS, MAB and IGGP programmes, will encourage the dialogue and co-production of knowledge between indigenous peoples and scientists to identify, understand and address economic, environmental, ethical, cultural and societal challenges, including global environmental changes. These initiatives will be undertaken when desired by and with the free, prior and informed consent of the knowledge-holders.
32. UNESCO will work to ensure appropriate consideration of indigenous knowledge in international processes and environmental assessments, including the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples.
33. UNESCO will support the transmission, revitalization, safeguard and protection of traditional knowledge as desired by and taking into account the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples.

¹⁹ For World Heritage properties, see chapter on Policy principles as they relate to UNESCO's work in Culture.

Science, technology and innovation

34. Indigenous peoples are under-represented at all levels in the sciences. Not only do few indigenous individuals study and pursue a career in the sciences, but their concerns and priorities are often not reflected in national and international science, technology and innovation (STI) policies, strategies and action plans.
35. UNESCO, through its International Basic Sciences Programme (IBSP) will support measures to improve inclusion and full and effective participation of indigenous peoples, particularly youth and women, in the basic sciences and engineering.
36. UNESCO will support capacity-building for scientists, policy-makers and indigenous peoples to improve mutual understanding, dialogue and create more effective partnerships among these various constituencies.
37. UNESCO will support, promote and, where appropriate, require the application of high ethical standards in the design, implementation and distribution of scientific research. Respecting the principles of free, prior and informed consent, and access and benefit-sharing (ABS), as outlined above, but also the most rigorous ethical standards for research on and with human subjects.
38. UNESCO will require that ethical standards applicable to the documentation, research or other use of indigenous peoples' knowledge and genetic or biological resources, and the obligation to seek the concerned indigenous peoples' free, prior and informed consent, are adhered to by researchers and industry at all times.
39. UNESCO commits to effectively engage indigenous peoples in its priority focus of improving collaboration and information exchange between science, policy and society, and promoting a more equitable and open dialogue about priorities and the responsibilities of science.
40. UNESCO will work to ensure respect for the rights of indigenous peoples, in particular their effective participation at all levels of the STI endeavour, including the design, implementation and monitoring of STI policies.
41. In its work to support the development or implementation of national STI policies, UNESCO will require that such STI policies:
 - recognize the role and value of indigenous knowledge and to that end are designed and implemented with the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples;
 - require full free, prior and informed consent before engaging in scientific research that involves or affects indigenous peoples, their knowledge, or their lands, territories and resources; and
 - stipulate ways and means for greater inclusion of indigenous peoples in science.
42. To monitor and map the participation of indigenous peoples in STI, UNESCO will aim at including information on their participation in STI in the framework of the UNESCO Science Report series. In order to obtain the necessary information, a specific project will be developed in cooperation between the SC Sector and UIS.
43. UNESCO, in partnership with the global and regional networks of science museums and centres, will promote the development and implementation of science communication tools, such as travelling exhibitions, in indigenous languages and aimed at raising scientific literacy with indigenous people, in constant dialogue between science and indigenous knowledge systems. Similar approaches will be taken towards Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education.

Biodiversity, ecology and earth sciences, including UNESCO-designated sites

44. In accordance with Article 26 of the UNDRIP regarding indigenous peoples' rights to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, UNESCO underscores that:
45. In all its relevant activities, and in the implementation of its normative instruments, UNESCO will respect the rights and role of indigenous peoples and their knowledge in the creation, maintenance and enrichment of biodiversity and the maintenance of ecosystem services. This includes pursuing the maintenance of both cultural and biological diversity and safeguarding the relationship between the two. It also includes recognizing indigenous peoples' sacred sites, and taking appropriate steps to ensure that these remain intact and are not used or treated inappropriately.
46. UNESCO will not support the removal of indigenous peoples from their lands and territories in any conservation or sustainable development project or programme in which UNESCO is involved, including the World Network of Biosphere Reserves of the Man and the Biosphere programme and UNESCO Global Geoparks.
47. UNESCO will support the right of indigenous peoples to free, prior and informed consent and their full and effective participation in decision-making and management of biodiversity and ecosystems, including genetic resources and protected areas, in their lands and territories.
48. UNESCO supports the right and principle of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in particular Articles 7 and 12 relating to traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources.
49. UNESCO's MAB programme is requiring cultural and social impact assessments in the application for biosphere reserve designation. In doing so, indigenous and customary rights relating to land and cultural heritage as described in the UNDRIP are the primary, applicable standards.
50. UNESCO Global Geoparks, through the IGGP, will ensure the effective participation of local communities and indigenous peoples as key rights-holders in UNESCO Global Geoparks, among others through the development and implementation of co-management plans that provide for the social and economic needs of local populations, protect the landscape in which they live and conserve their cultural identity. Indigenous knowledge, practice and management systems should be included, alongside science, in the planning and management of the area.

Climate change

51. UNESCO recognizes that indigenous peoples are often among the first to become aware of and are the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Indigenous peoples' cosmovision, knowledge, innovations and practices can contribute to innovative approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
52. UNESCO will support indigenous peoples in initiating and sharing innovative approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation based on their cosmovisions, knowledge, innovations and practices.
53. UNESCO will not undertake or support climate change mitigation or adaptation activities in indigenous peoples' lands and territories without their active and empowered participation in the full process, including free, prior and informed consent.

54. UNESCO will also seek to ensure that indigenous peoples' rights are duly reflected in UNESCO Strategy for Action on Climate Change.

Disaster risk reduction

55. UNESCO recognizes that indigenous peoples are disproportionately vulnerable to and affected by disasters. However, their knowledge and practices may offer innovative solutions to minimize their risk, for example in fire management or tsunami warning. Indigenous peoples, through their experience and traditional knowledge, can make an important contribution to the development and implementation of disaster risk reduction (DRR) plans and mechanisms, including for early warning.
56. UNESCO will ensure that indigenous peoples are given targeted and culturally appropriate support to ensure their full and effective participation in better disaster risk reduction at all stages and levels, including the design and implementation of DRR strategies and projects.
57. UNESCO will ensure that it works and coordinates with indigenous peoples in disaster risk management at the regional and local level.
58. In post-disaster, post-conflict situations, UNESCO will support and, where appropriate, assist in the revitalization of indigenous peoples' culture, knowledge and social and governance structures, recognizing that they are fundamental to indigenous peoples' resilience.
59. UNESCO will ensure that indigenous knowledge and practices, as appropriate and with the free, prior and informed consent of the knowledge-holders, are used to complement scientific knowledge in disaster risk assessment and in the development and implementation of context-specific DRR policies, strategies, plans and programmes.

Water

60. Indigenous peoples' perspective of protection and access to all sources of water and its sacred role as well as the human right to water is all too often denied to indigenous peoples, who are particularly vulnerable to marginalization, displacement, water pollution and the neglect of their rights to water. UNESCO will work with indigenous peoples to address the risks that may jeopardize their water security.
61. UNESCO recognizes that indigenous peoples have developed sustainable and sophisticated systems of managing water for personal use and livelihoods. Those systems often enshrine important keys to sustainability valid beyond the cultural sphere that conceived them. The safeguarding and development of these systems will be valued and indigenous peoples' knowledge will be considered in UNESCO's activities related to water while respecting their intellectual property rights. This includes the effective inclusion of indigenous peoples in decision-making and strategic-level processes.
62. As follow-up to the Indigenous Peoples Kyoto Water Declaration and related statements, UNESCO will promote the rights of indigenous peoples and the inclusion of relevant issues in the water-related international development agenda, scientific and policy-making processes and standard-setting instruments (such as ethical guidelines).

B.3. Policy principles as they relate to UNESCO's work in relation to the Ocean

63. Livelihoods of many indigenous peoples are associated with marine and coastal areas and their ecosystems. UNESCO and its Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) recognize, respect and value corresponding knowledge and strategies of indigenous people.
64. Indigenous peoples' knowledge will be considered in UNESCO's activities related to the ocean at the same time fully recognizing and respecting their intellectual property rights.

65. UNESCO requires the effective inclusion of indigenous peoples' knowledge of the ocean and seas into the development of science-based approaches to sustainable management of marine and coastal regions, their ecosystems and protection of living and non-living resources of the ocean.

B.4. Policy principles as they relate to UNESCO's work in the Social and Human Sciences

66. The Social and Human Sciences Sector (SHS) aims at advancing social science knowledge, implementing international standards and fostering intellectual cooperation with a view to facilitating social transformations conducive to the universal values of justice, freedom and human dignity. Social transformations may also lead to growing social instability, rising inequalities, marginalization and intolerance. Regarding indigenous peoples, the work of SHS is informed by the realization that this group continues to be confronted with marginalization, poverty and other human rights violations. Through partnerships with indigenous peoples, SHS seeks to support them in addressing the multiple challenges they face, while acknowledging their significant role in sustaining the diversity of the world's cultural and biological landscape.
67. The following selected work streams take into account the promotion of the inclusion, rights and needs of indigenous peoples, drawing from relevant international human rights instruments.

Social inclusion and rights

68. The work on inclusion and rights addresses all forms of discrimination and fosters a culture of inclusion, rights and citizenship through advocacy and awareness-raising initiatives as part of an integrated approach to programme delivery, in partnership with Member States, civil society and other stakeholders and interest groups. The work focuses on fostering human rights, gender equality and a sense of global citizenship, particularly through city-level policy and practice; promoting inclusion and diversity by fighting discrimination and racism; and promoting the rights of indigenous peoples by tackling persistent and emerging stereotypes and prejudices.
69. Through the International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities – ICCAR, the various regional and national 10-Point Plans of Action (such as the ones of Latin American and the Caribbean, and of Canada) make strong references to indigenous peoples. A good example is the introductory manual on "Anti-racism and anti-discrimination for municipalities", prepared by the Ontario Human Rights Commission that provides good practices at municipal level that favour indigenous peoples in several areas, such as data collection, monitoring and reporting, and policy development.

Research, policy, foresight

70. The UNESCO Inclusive Policy Lab offers an analytical framework for assessing policies as well as web-based tools to compile information, share expertise and provide practical support to policy design and implementation. Its focus on the multidimensional and intersectional aspects of social inclusion, as well as the connections between inclusive objectives and outcomes and participation of policy design and implementation, lends itself to application to the specific issues of indigenous peoples.

Intercultural dialogue

71. An important dimension of the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures is to encourage increased awareness of history and the relationships developed between cultures and civilizations, and highlight processes which have spurred intercultural dialogue and the

rapprochement of cultures, particularly in regards to the effective roles of women, youth and minorities and indigenous peoples, whose effect on societies has often been overlooked. The Action Plan for the Decade therefore includes the promotion of the rich body of traditional and indigenous knowledge systems within and beyond nations as a resource of values, attitudes and behaviours to inform policies and practices for resilient and sustainable ecosystems.

Sports and anti-doping

72. The Preamble of UNESCO's International Charter on Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport, 2015, acknowledges *inter alia* that cultural diversity in physical education, physical activity and sport forms part of humanity's intangible heritage and includes physical play, recreation, dance, organized, casual, competitive, traditional and indigenous sports and games. Indigenous peoples practice an uncountable variety of such cultural expressions. Some manifestations of this kind also figure on the Lists of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. As part of its endeavour to guide Member States in the design and development of integrated national physical education and sport policies, UNESCO will pay particular attention to the safeguarding and promotion of these traditional sports and games.

Youth

73. The Operational Strategy on Youth (2014-2021) pays specific attention to vulnerable, including indigenous, youth. In this framework, UNESCO works to ensure that the views, needs, expectations and aspirations of vulnerable youth groups are integrated into policies and programmes aimed at young women and men. Thus, the UNESCO framework and policy checklist advises that youth policies be based on disaggregated data on the youth cohort, including potentially vulnerable and at risk youth, and that the process includes the prior identification and participation of such groups. As a specific example, UNESCO has provided technical advice and support to the Government of Costa Rica on the inclusion of indigenous and Afro-descendant youth in social and political life, with a focus on employment and violence prevention.

Bioethics

74. Indigenous peoples' concerns have been a crucial consideration in some of UNESCO's work on the ethics of science and bioethics. For example, the preamble of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights recognized that health does not depend solely on scientific and technological research developments but also on psychosocial and cultural factors; and that a person's identity includes biological, psychological, social, cultural and spiritual dimensions. In 2013, the International Bioethics Committee (IBC) issued a report on Traditional Medicine Systems and their Ethical Implication, which contains recommendations that resonate with the concerns of indigenous peoples.

Shared history and memory for reconciliation and dialogue

75. Indigenous peoples and people of African descent are the most marginalized and vulnerable populations in different parts of the world. They continue to be subject to racism, racial prejudices and discrimination inherited from a history marked by extermination, enslavement, colonization and exploitation. Through its Slave Route and General and Regional Histories projects, UNESCO is developing scientific knowledge on this legacy and its impact on these two categories of populations and is encouraging the formulation of public policies to redress these historical injustice and inequalities.
76. Through the Organization's "Policy on Engaging with Indigenous Peoples", SHS endeavours to:

- (a) encourage the development of public policies with the free, prior and informed consent of concerned indigenous peoples, as well as their effective participation in a culturally-appropriate manner, with a particular focus on young women and men;
- (b) promote the creation and strengthening of national structures for young people which ensure the representation of indigenous youth at local, national and global levels, including leadership and capacity-building opportunities in all spheres of society;
- (c) encourage cities and municipalities in the International Coalition of Inclusive Cities and Sustainable Cities – ICCAR, to adhere to their commitments in their Ten-Point Plan of Action to promote respect and safeguard diversity, including dialogue with diverse communities and indigenous peoples; and
- (d) reinforce international cooperation in bioethics, taking into account, in particular, the needs of indigenous peoples, recognizing that unethical scientific and technological conduct has had a particular impact on indigenous peoples.

B.5. Policy principles as they relate to UNESCO's work in Culture

77. As the only specialized agency of the United Nations with a specific mandate in the field of culture, UNESCO has a primary role to play in protecting and promoting culture in all its diversity. UNESCO is fully aware that achieving these objectives requires the effective involvement of all actors and stakeholders concerned and, in particular, indigenous peoples, who are recognized as stewards of a significant part of the world's biological, cultural and linguistic diversity.
78. UNESCO has elaborated several conventions and recommendations in the field of culture, which constitute the cornerstones of international heritage law. These include:
- The Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954)
 - The Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970)
 - The Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972)
 - The Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001)
 - The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003)
 - The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001)
 - The Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005)
 - The Recommendation concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society (2015).
79. While each legal instrument has a specific history, focus and goals, all are driven by UNESCO's ethical mandate to promote culture in its diversity, through international cooperation and dialogue, based upon respect for shared values, human rights and the dignity of all cultures.

80. The UNESCO General Conference forcefully reiterated its mandate in the field of culture in 2001 with the adoption of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, which contains specific references to the relationship between cultural diversity and human rights. It points to human rights as guarantees for cultural diversity, affirming that the defence of cultural diversity implies “a commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular the rights of persons belonging to minorities and those of indigenous peoples”. It states that “No one may invoke cultural diversity to infringe upon human rights guaranteed by international law, nor to limit their scope” (Article 4). Thus, from 2001 onwards, indigenous peoples were recognized in UNESCO’s standard-setting work and their cultures were considered as part of the world’s cultural diversity; the defence of this diversity, according to the UNESCO Declaration, is an “ethical imperative”.
81. For UNESCO, and in line with the UNDRIP and general provisions of this Policy, indigenous peoples must therefore be considered as stakeholders and rights-holders in social, human and cultural development.
82. The UNESCO Declarations, Conventions and Recommendations contain important provisions regarding human rights, participation, community stewardship, customary law and benefit sharing. Further to the above-mentioned Declaration on cultural diversity, two of the more recent Conventions, i.e. Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions mention indigenous peoples explicitly. In addition, even if provisions are not explicitly attributed to indigenous peoples, they also apply to them.
83. The most recent culture-related legal instrument, although non-binding, the Recommendation on Museums and Collections adopted in 2015 has a specific paragraph (18) urging Member States, when appropriate, to engage in dialogues concerning the management and possible return of heritage which can be initiated between indigenous peoples and museums in possession of collections relating to them. It further advocates for the adoption of ethical standards in museums and professional conducts, implying the policies relating to acquisition (21).
84. In this regard, the governing bodies of UNESCO’s Culture Conventions as well as the governments of States Parties at country level can play an important role in developing relevant standards, guidance and operational mechanisms to ensure full and effective participation and inclusion of indigenous peoples in the processes of these instruments. Therefore, the implementation of UNESCO’s legal instruments in the field of culture can help advance indigenous peoples’ right to, among others, “maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage” as stipulated in Article 31 of the UNDRIP. In this regard, and in light of the holistic worldview of indigenous peoples, UNESCO shall seize opportunities to strengthen synergies between the UNESCO Culture Conventions and programmes if and where appropriate and raise awareness about the ways that different forms of heritage, both tangible and intangible, and contemporary cultural expressions are connected.
85. Many indigenous peoples face specific challenges related to culture, such as threats to their cultural integrity, distinct lifestyles, languages or customary law, often aggravated by assimilatory policies, practices, and development strategies that do not, or insufficiently, take into account culture. They experience discrimination or unfair treatment related to their cultural identity, expressions and heritage, or use of their traditional lands, territories and cultural and natural resources. These challenges are also a reason for UNESCO to ensure that its actions uphold, or at least do not negatively affect, the rights of indigenous peoples.
86. In line with all relevant articles of the UNDRIP, UNESCO commits to respect, protect and promote the following policy principles in its work in the field of culture:

- (a) All cultures, including the cultures of indigenous peoples and minorities, should be treated with equal dignity and respect.
- (b) Indigenous peoples have the right to culture, cultural integrity and identity, and hence to full and effective participation in all matters affecting their lives and cultures, taking into account the needs of different groups, including different gender groups.
- (c) Indigenous peoples have the right to freely pursue their cultural development and not be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture.
- (d) Indigenous peoples have the right to take part in the development of policies concerning their cultures, cultural expressions and heritage, including through effective participation in relevant consultative bodies and coordination mechanisms.
- (e) Indigenous peoples have the right to aspire, maintain, strengthen and transmit to future generations their distinct identity, customs, practices, oral traditions – including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage – and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in cultural life nationally.
- (f) The freedom of indigenous peoples to create, disseminate and distribute their cultural expressions should be respected and the vitality of their cultures recognized.
- (g) Appropriate measures should be taken to protect and preserve their cultural expressions in situations where they are at risk of extinction, under serious threat, or otherwise in need of urgent safeguarding.
- (h) Indigenous peoples have the right to create and disseminate their cultural goods, services and traditional expressions in a fair environment, so that they might benefit from them in the future.
- (i) Indigenous peoples' knowledge, cultures, traditional practices and innovations, which they consider in many cases as part of their intangible cultural heritage, are sources of intangible and material wealth and play an important role as a driver and guarantee of sustainable and equitable development.
- (j) Indigenous peoples – communities, groups and individuals – are the primary agents in the production, safeguarding, maintenance and re-creation of their intangible cultural heritage, and have the right to manifest, practice, revitalize, develop and transmit their traditions, customs and ceremonies.
- (k) Indigenous peoples have the right to free, prior and informed consent regarding activities that concern their heritage and cultural expressions and all interactions with regard to their future development should be characterized by transparent collaboration, dialogue, negotiation and consultation.
- (l) Indigenous peoples should play a significant role in determining what constitutes threats to their cultural (tangible and intangible) and natural heritage and in deciding how to prevent and mitigate such threats.
- (m) Indigenous peoples' access to specific aspects of their intangible cultural heritage, including the instruments, objects, artefacts, cultural and natural spaces and places of memory whose existence is necessary for expressing the intangible cultural heritage, should be ensured, including in situations of armed conflict.
- (n) Customary restrictions on access to their heritage sites and the related indigenous peoples' right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious, spiritual

and cultural sites, should be fully respected even where these may limit broader public access.

- (o) Many natural and cultural heritage sites constitute home to or are located within land managed by indigenous peoples, whose land use, knowledge and cultural and spiritual values and practices may depend on, shape or constitute part of the heritage. In such places, indigenous peoples have the right to their traditional lands, territories and resources, and are partners in site conservation and protection activities that recognize traditional management systems as part of new management approaches.
- (p) Forced relocation of indigenous peoples from their cultural and natural heritage sites is unacceptable and in violation of human rights.
- (q) Policies, interventions and practices of conservation and management in and around cultural and natural heritage sites²⁰ should:
 - o Improve the ability, opportunities and dignity of all, irrespective of age, gender, disability, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic or other status;
 - o Promote equity and reduce social and economic inequalities and exclusions of all, irrespective of age, gender, disability, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic or other status;
 - o Recognize, respect, and take into account the spiritual and cultural values, the interconnections between biological and cultural diversity as well as cultural and environmental knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities;
 - o Ensure adequate consultations, the free, prior and informed consent and equitable and effective participation of indigenous peoples where nomination, management and policy measures of international designations affect their territories, lands, resources and ways of life;²¹ and
 - o Actively promote indigenous and local initiatives to develop equitable and inclusive governance arrangements, collaborative management systems and, when appropriate, redress mechanisms.
- (r) Consideration in the context of UNESCO's work is given solely to such cultural and natural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities.
- (s) Indigenous peoples have the right to access and/or have repatriated ceremonial objects and human remains through fair, transparent and effective mechanisms developed in conjunction with the indigenous peoples concerned.
- (t) Cultural property should not be used for military purposes and acts of hostility directed against cultural property in the event of armed conflict or occupation should be prohibited, including the cultural property of indigenous peoples.
- (u) The protection of cultural property in occupied territory should be ensured, for example, by applying measures that prohibit and prevent illicit export, other removal or transfer of ownership of cultural property; any archaeological excavation, save where this is

²⁰ For World Heritage sites, see Policy Document for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention, endorsed by the World Heritage Committee (Decision 39 COM 5D, Bonn, 2015) and adopted by the General Assembly of the States Parties to the World Heritage Convention (Resolution 20 GA 13; UNESCO, 2015, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/20ga/>).

²¹ See also paragraphs 40 and 123 of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, specifically in relation to the nomination process (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/>).

strictly required to safeguard, record or preserve cultural property; and any alteration to, or change of use of, cultural property which is intended to conceal or destroy cultural, historical or scientific evidence.

B.6. Policy principles as they relate to UNESCO's work in Communication and Information

87. UNESCO plays a leading role in building inclusive knowledge societies, which are open, inclusive, diverse and participatory and based on four main pillars:
- (a) freedom of expression;
 - (b) access to quality education for all;
 - (c) respect for cultural and linguistic diversity; and
 - (d) universal access to information and knowledge, especially in the public domain.
88. The Organization plays a leading role globally in the promotion of freedom of expression, press freedom, media development, and universal access to information and knowledge, for building inclusive knowledge societies, as embraced by the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) including through the work of the intergovernmental Information For All Programme (IFAP), as well as the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace, adopted in 2003, and other relevant international normative instruments.
89. UNESCO defines inclusive knowledge societies as societies in which people have the capabilities not just to acquire information but also to transform it into knowledge, understanding and goals, which empowers them to enhance their livelihoods and to contribute to the cultural, social and economic development of their societies.
90. UNESCO believes that the free flow of information is essential to human experience and progress as it promotes human rights, openness and enhanced livelihoods, and enables sustainable development, social inclusion, democratic governance and a culture of peace. This necessitates supporting the right to freedom of expression, including its corollaries of press freedom, freedom of information, freedom of opinion without interference, and the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media, information and memory organizations and the internet, such as libraries and archives and regardless of frontiers, as stated in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Knowledge-driven economies, where freedom of expression is ensured, play a growing role in global economic growth, sustainable development and poverty reduction.
91. Furthermore, information and communication technologies (ICTs) have considerably increased the capacity of all communities, including those of indigenous peoples, to access information and to share experience and practices in almost any part of the world. Technological evolution in the past years has created unprecedented conditions for the exchange of information and ideas, as well as exceptional opportunities for knowledge sharing, strengthening democratic governance, and creating accessible, inclusive, also for persons with disabilities and less used language speakers, participatory and responsive political and social processes, and a culture of peace. But they also transform societies and human behaviour in a manner that requires rethinking existing policies and practices in many spheres, including media, the Internet and education. Therefore, the focus of international attention is shifting from ICT infrastructural development to questions that relate to the use of ICTs, providing opportunities to communities to make their own decisions on integrating ICTs, drawing on local competencies and multilingual content.

92. For indigenous peoples, it is of special importance to maintain, strengthen and participate in inclusive knowledge societies for this allows them to have greater access to and share information and education resources, generate income and reinforce self-reliance. Drawing on its substantial expertise, UNESCO is working to facilitate the development of knowledge societies that are diverse, inclusive, open and participatory for all, especially for indigenous peoples, who are facing specific challenges in terms of communication and information.
93. One of the ways UNESCO works is to empower local communities to access, preserve and share information and knowledge concerning all of UNESCO's domains. In this regard, and in keeping with its full commitment to the implementation of the UNDRIP, UNESCO will:

Freedom of expression through policies and practice

94. Design and implement projects and programmes on awareness-raising, monitoring and advocacy for freedom of expression and access to information as a basic human right; and ensure enforcement of related internationally-recognized legal, ethical and professional standards that respect, protect, support and promote the rights and interests of indigenous peoples.
95. Ensure that the design and implementation of its projects and programmes on empowerment of journalists through international and national campaigns and on capacity-building to ensure their safety also take into account the dangers of impunity, and respect, protect, support and promote the rights and interests of indigenous peoples.

Pluralistic media institutions

96. Ensure that the design and implementation of its projects and programmes on enhanced media and information literacy (MIL) competencies respect, protect, support and promote the rights and interests of indigenous peoples.
97. Respect, protect, support and promote the right of indigenous peoples to establish their own media in their own languages and to have access to all forms of non-indigenous media without any discrimination.
98. Support and promote the right of indigenous peoples to have access to information in indigenous languages through all mediums, including radio and television. Community radio, which is a powerful tool for facilitating social communication and supporting democratic processes within societies, has the potential to reach out to people with little or no access to information with broadcasts in different local languages, including indigenous languages, while allowing them to participate in public debate and transmit their own culture, information and knowledge.

Universal access to information, and preservation of indigenous cultural diversity and knowledge through the use of the Open Solutions for Knowledge Societies programme and ICT accessibility

99. Ensure that the rights of indigenous peoples, including their individual and collective intellectual property rights, are respected, protected, supported and promoted in the design and implementation of projects and programmes supported or led by UNESCO; for example, relating to:
 - (a) National policies for universal access to information and knowledge, and provisions contained in normative instruments, such as the Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace (2003).
 - (b) The development and implementation of the Roadmap to transform UNESCO's Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger into a global platform – World Atlas of Languages,

for sharing language resources and technological solutions, monitoring and promoting the world's languages.

- (c) Specific policy frameworks for the use of ICTs and Open Solutions: open educational resources, open access, free and open source software, open training platforms, open data and accessible information, including for persons with disabilities, with special emphasis on indigenous teachers, learners, researchers, information professionals and/or scientists.
- (d) Encouraging the use of ICTs in teaching, in order to support quality learning environments, for example through the use of the ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (ICT CFT).
- (e) Policy support initiatives for open, distance, flexible and online (e-learning) education, capitalizing on open solutions, especially in indigenous communities.
- (f) Developing and sharing knowledge resources, including through broadband-enhanced ICTs, mobile devices and Open Solutions including in indigenous languages.

100. UNESCO will respect, protect, promote and support the right of indigenous peoples to have access to information respectful of cultural diversity.

Preservation of and accessibility to indigenous documentary heritage in all its forms

101. Ensure that the rights of indigenous peoples, including their individual and collective rights, cultural expressions, cultural and documentary heritage, are respected, safeguarded, promoted and made universally accessible by designing and implementing relevant national, or international projects and programmes that are, initiated, supported or led by UNESCO. For example, these include UNESCO's contribution of libraries and archives to support the preservation of documentary heritage, including an emphasis on indigenous heritage, especially in the light of the 2015 UNESCO Recommendation concerning the preservation of, and access to, documentary heritage that will help build partnerships for identifying appropriate solutions to threats, such as the ravage of time, natural disasters, human behaviour, technology obsolescence, mobilizing resources, so that valuable collections and records, including of indigenous peoples, may never be lost.

Implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)

102. Ensure that the rights and perspectives of indigenous peoples are respected, protected, supported and promoted in UNESCO's support for WSIS cooperation, for knowledge-sharing and multi-stakeholder partnership building, including indigenous peoples. UNESCO facilitates WSIS Action Line C8 that has explicit reference to indigenous people; and

Universal access to information, including through the Information for All Programme (IFAP)

103. Ensure that IFAP National Committees include representatives from indigenous peoples.

104. Ensure that formal partnerships established with intergovernmental organizations, international non-governmental organization, the private sector and academic institutions to promote cooperation, outreach programmes and policy implementation have a specific focus on indigenous peoples' rights, interests and issues in IFAP priority areas.

B.7. Policy principles and Gender Equality

105. UNESCO is committed to ensure that gender equality as a crosscutting objective is woven tightly into all initiatives related to indigenous peoples and within this framework to recognize

and to encourage the distinct and crucial contribution of indigenous women, their knowledge and their vital roles, responsibilities and potential in their families, communities and in society as whole. In compliance with its Gender Equality Action Plan 2014-2021, UNESCO has a two-prong approach to promoting gender equality in its work with indigenous peoples:

- (a) *Gender mainstreaming*, i.e. taking into account both indigenous women's and indigenous men's perspectives, needs, opportunities and challenges in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all programmes and projects within UNESCO's fields of competence involving/affecting/targeting indigenous peoples; and
- (b) *Gender-specific programming* i.e. which specifically targets indigenous women, or men – as the case may be – aiming at reducing or eliminating specific forms of discrimination and inequalities faced by indigenous women or men in a given context.

106. In addition, in its work with indigenous peoples, UNESCO will apply the related human rights-based approach in promoting gender equality, adhering to the applicable human rights norms and instruments, including, in particular, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

107. In its development programmes related to indigenous women, UNESCO will focus on stimulating awareness, encouraging effective participation and involvement, as well as strengthening capabilities for decision-making concerning indigenous women's own lives. UNESCO's programmes will also actively seek to create new and appropriate opportunities for social change and to foster the empowerment of both indigenous women and men.

108. Within each major thematic programme (education, natural and social sciences, culture and communication and information) specific gender equality elements related to indigenous women's and men's issues will focus on the following common features:

- (a) Respecting, promoting and protecting the rights of indigenous women in all programme initiatives and actions.
- (b) *Multiple and intersectional discriminations* that indigenous women may be subject to: as indigenous (from surrounding societies); as female (from within their own communities); as poor, illiterate or with limited formal education: as rural, etc., the result being that indigenous women often face harsher conditions than indigenous men and non-indigenous women in terms of poverty levels, access to education, health and economic resources, political participation, access to land, etc.
- (c) *Cultural sensitivity* in promoting gender equality in the specific contexts of indigenous women and men.
- (d) Promotion of positive gender images to fight undesired gender stereotypes within indigenous communities.
- (e) Ensuring that programme components address issues of indigenous women's rights and empowerment of indigenous women at both *formal* (i.e. laws, policies) and *informal* (i.e. customs and cultural factors) levels.
- (f) Domestic and other forms of *gender-based violence* in an indigenous peoples' context.
- (g) Highlighting the key role indigenous women play in *building peace, conflict-resolution and bridging differences* within their own, or with surrounding, societies; and similarly the crucial role of indigenous women in the preservation, enrichment and transmission of culture and practices, and of traditional knowledge and wisdom.

- (h) Capacity-building for *effective participation and leadership of indigenous women in policy and decision-making processes* both within indigenous communities and at local, national and regional levels.
- (i) Developing and supporting *partnership with and between indigenous women's groups* at local, national, regional and international levels and encouraging their inclusion in project, programme and policy initiatives.

Part C. Mechanisms for implementation

C.1. Programme coordination

109. To improve programming and field activities that benefit indigenous peoples, and to aid in information dissemination, the Organization will utilize the following modalities:

- (a) The Organization coordinates its work on indigenous issues by vesting a house-wide focal point role with the Assistant Director-General (ADG) of a Programme Sector. The first Sector focal point was the Culture Sector. The current lead ADG is the ADG for the Natural Sciences, with the Chief of the Section for Small Islands and Indigenous Knowledge (SC/PCB/SII) as the coordinating focal point.
- (b) The UNESCO working group on indigenous peoples will be the main hub for coordinating in-house on indigenous issues. This intersectoral working group on indigenous peoples that consists of focal point representatives from UNESCO's Programme Sectors, Sectors – namely External Relations and Public Information (ERI) sector, and Central Services – namely the Africa department and Bureau of Strategic Planning (BSP). It also includes field colleagues who are already engaged in projects with indigenous peoples.
- (c) Within the United Nations system, there are three main bodies that promote indigenous peoples' rights – the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In addition, there is an Interagency Support Group on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples that consists of representatives from United Nations programmes and specialized agencies. Interagency commitment has been further strengthened by the System-wide action plan for ensuring a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted in 2014 by the UN Secretary-General. UNESCO will continue its engagement with these bodies through its focal point and intersectoral working group on indigenous peoples.

C.2. Information sharing

110. To improve understanding of the work of the Organization and the dissemination of data and policy-relevant analyses, UNESCO will support the following communication modalities:

- (a) Provide consolidated updates that concern indigenous peoples to the annual sessions of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.
- (b) Provide input to studies and research conducted by the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples when such studies and research involve areas of UNESCO's mandate.
- (c) Provide input to the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples upon request.

- (d) Support the Indigenous Fellowship Programme of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights through provision of briefings on UNESCO and its areas of mandate.
- (e) Host a dedicated page on the Organization's web portal that contains information directly relevant for indigenous peoples, including an online interactive knowledge hub containing data, analyses and tools that are of relevance for promoting indigenous peoples' rights within areas of the Organization's mandate.

111. On the occasion of the annual celebration of the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, promote indigenous peoples in UNESCO's mandated areas and provide relevant online resources on a web page dedicated to the day. Promote indigenous peoples on the occasion of other International Days such as International Women's Day, Cultural Diversity Day, Youth Day, Peace Day, Human Rights Day, among others. This may include dedicated seminar or dialogue with indigenous peoples who are in partnership with UNESCO.

112. Encourage countries' and partners' translation of policy documents and written materials (e.g. documents papers, guidelines, tools) into indigenous languages

C.3. Resource mobilization

113. The Organization provides opportunities to work with indigenous peoples through its mandates in education, the natural sciences, the social and human sciences, culture, and communication and information. To enhance avenues for working with indigenous peoples, UNESCO will take action to:

- (a) Improve participation of indigenous peoples' organizations through promoting official partnerships between their organizations and UNESCO. This includes raising awareness of flagship partnership modalities such as the Participation Programme.
- (b) Encourage the development of extrabudgetary funded project proposals, including intersectoral projects that directly benefit indigenous peoples.
- (c) Encourage Programme Sectors to allocate and decentralize funds to relevant field offices that promote the rights and knowledge of indigenous peoples.

C.4. Monitoring of the implementation of the policy

114. Within existing resources, the policy may be reviewed periodically to strengthen it and provide a progress report on its implementation as part of the statutory reporting on programme implementation.