

Station Note

World Café at TD 1.3

Station 2: Indigenous Community Leader

Facilitator: Gunn Britt Retter (Saami Council)

Expert: Grace Balawag (Indigenous Peoples' Partnership on Climate Change)

Indigenous people from my community have been caretaking the surrounding ecosystems for generations. Our lives are marked by seasonal rituals and rites of passage, all designed to emphasize our profound ties to nature – relationships we liken to kinship (e.g. cosmological kinship) and regard nature as Mother Earth.

Our shared understanding acknowledges the intricate harmony between natural elements, recognizing that it is this very harmony that sustains all life forms. We also understand that the appropriate position of humanity exists within, and not above, nature. Every community gathering begins and closes with expressing our gratitude to nature, instilling a culture of gratitude and a deep sense of belonging both to nature and to each other in our younger generations today and in the future. While indigenous peoples inhabit diverse ecosystems and have distinct cultures, our ways of life revolve around collective gratitude for nature and a deep sense of community.

As a community leader, my mission is to promote practices that highlight our responsibility as caregivers of nature, not just within my immediate community, but also in the broader global context. This is particularly important as the global community restores the health of nature for the enduring well-being of all, including nature and future generations (seventh generation).

Scenario One

My community holds a shared deep sense of belonging to the surrounding ecosystems. We understand restoring and maintaining the health of nature is the ultimate transformational climate action. Our community led the country to pass legal measures to give rights to nature, recognizing nature's values beyond monetary values.

Challenge

Current societal narratives often interpret values through a narrow lens focused almost exclusively on monetary considerations. This perspective neglects the broader appreciation of nature and humanity's non-material needs. The wisdom and values of indigenous peoples, accrued over generations of living in harmony with nature, are often undervalued.

Question for the Advisors:

- a) How can indigenous peoples' approach to nature guide efforts to update and upscale climate actions? What immediate steps can be taken toward this end?
- b) How can we collectively expand our understanding and valuation of nature, learning from indigenous peoples, to fundamentally transform how we interact with nature?
- c) What do you envision value-based climate policies and actions looking like? What immediate steps can we take, individually and collectively, to implement transformative climate actions rooted in values?

Scenario Two

My community is committed to contributing to the national effort to update and upscale nationally determined contributions, formulate and implement national adaptation plans, and address loss and damage associated with the adverse impact of climate change. Indigenous peoples in my community have first-hand experience of climate impact on our ecosystems and livelihoods. We have practices developed over generations including diversifying plant and livestock species to adapt to evolving ecological conditions and cultivating native plants along waterways to prevent soil erosion and prevent contamination of waterways from sediment accumulation.

Challenge

Climate policymaking processes have yet to fully tap into the collective and complementary power of diverse knowledge systems, even though Article 7 of the Paris Agreement calls for climate action based on and guided by the best available science, and as appropriate, traditional knowledge, knowledge of indigenous peoples, and local knowledge systems.

Question for the Advisors:

- a) What specific, evidence-based advice should the indigenous community leader bring to the Parties to help shape climate mitigation and adaptation actions?
- b) What could the indigenous community leader do to foster collaboration with Parties to formulate climate actions that are rooted in universal values (e.g. reciprocity with nature, intergeneration considerations)?