

Indigenous peoples and local knowledge

EXPLANATORY NOTE FOR THIS DRAFT: This has been taken directly from UNEP's IEA guidelines.

https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/33498/IEA_2017_02_17.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Indigenous peoples and local knowledge holders serve as primary sources of data and information that may be of direct relevance to GEO assessments. The challenge is to identify how best to integrate the relevant aspects of traditional and indigenous knowledge into GEO. While much knowledge is shared and familiar to all, acknowledged experts or specialists who exist within most indigenous and local communities may be specific older men or women, highly skilled and respected hunters, fisherfolk or gatherers, agriculturalists, crafts persons or traditional health specialists with unique knowledge of medicinal plants. GEO participants will work with networks such as the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), to identify relevant Indigenous and Local Knowledge holders.

Relevant Indigenous and Local Knowledge experts for inclusion in the GEO process may include, but are not limited to:

- a. indigenous and local persons with first-hand and/or inherited expert knowledge about an environmental domain;
- b. formally trained scientists from Indigenous and Local Knowledge holder communities;
- c. individuals (indigenous or non-indigenous) with expert knowledge about local community networks, and who can assist in identifying the locally-recognized Indigenous and Local Knowledge experts (men and women) for a specific biodiversity or ecosystem service domain;
- d. individuals with expert knowledge of the scientific and grey literature on Indigenous and Local Knowledge related to the targeted environmental domain;
- e. individuals (indigenous or non-indigenous) with expertise in working with indigenous knowledge holders to record/compile/analyse relevant Indigenous and Local Knowledge; and
- f. individuals (indigenous or non-indigenous) with expertise in facilitating a constructive dialogue between Indigenous and Local Knowledge holders, natural scientists and/or policy-makers.

Indigenous and Local Knowledge complements science and provides valuable additional data and understandings to improve environmental decision-making; it is however developed, owned, stored, shared, accessed and transmitted in ways that are very different from scientific knowledge. For this reason, procedures identified to incorporate Indigenous and Local Knowledge in GEO assessment processes will differ from those designed for incorporation of scientific knowledge. Specific procedures will be further developed by the MESAG in consultation with <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002252/225242E.pdf> relevant experts. Lessons on how to incorporate Indigenous and Local Knowledge into assessments can also be gleaned from the field of medicine and efforts to identify and verify Indigenous and Local Knowledge related to medicinal plants.

Whereas scientists separate science from technology and technique, and differentiate theory from practice, indigenous and local knowledge holders recognize that knowledge is linked to practice, and through this (seeing and doing), knowledge is transmitted and problems are resolved. When bridging between different knowledge systems, GEO may thus consider relevant knowledge that is expressed through practice and techniques.

Information may be presented in different ways in the GEO assessment. On the advice of the MESAG and in consultation with the GEO Secretariat, selected experts may be asked to create narratives and storylines based on Indigenous and Local Knowledge for inclusion in the GEO report. Storylines may then be verified and evaluated against criteria such as verifiability, specificity and relevance.

