



UN BIODIVERSITY  
CONFERENCE  
COP13-COPMOP8-COPMOP2  
CANCUN, MEXICO 2016  
MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY FOR WELL-BEING

## Traditional Knowledge

### COP13 highlights about traditional knowledge and indigenous peoples and local communities

Many significant decisions on traditional knowledge and indigenous peoples and local communities and events will be taken at the UN Biodiversity Conference.

COP13 will consider for adoption along with addressing various thematic areas:

- The voluntary guidelines to recognize, safeguard and guarantee the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities over their traditional knowledge, innovations and practices. These guidelines would help Parties develop legislation preventing the unlawful use of traditional knowledge, and are meant to insure that private and public institutions obtain prior informed consent from communities when accessing traditional knowledge, and insure the fair and equitable sharing of the resulting benefits.
- The principles of the Rutzolijirisaxik Voluntary Guidelines for the Repatriation of Traditional Knowledge, currently under development. These guidelines aim to help facilitate the recovery of traditional knowledge by indigenous peoples and local communities.
- A revised glossary of relevant key terms and concepts to be used within the context of Article 8(j) and related provisions will assist international negotiators regarding appropriate terminology when working on these issues.

Furthermore, Parties will consider the recommendations made by the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, pertaining to the formal adoption of the use of the term “indigenous peoples and local communities” by Parties when discussing the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization.

The Múuch’tambal Summit on Indigenous Experience: Traditional Knowledge and Biological and Cultural Diversity, to be held from 9 to 11 December ([www.cbd.int/tk/summit.shtml](http://www.cbd.int/tk/summit.shtml)), is expected to include some 300 representatives of the Parties, indigenous peoples, local communities, and international organizations, among others from all regions of the world. Its objective is to present and share experiences from indigenous peoples and local communities, Parties and International Organizations on the contributions of traditional knowledge and cultural diversity across the Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry and Tourism sectors, and for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Many countries with the highest levels of biodiversity, particularly the “mega-biodiverse countries”, like Mexico, also rank among the most culturally diverse. The loss of cultural diversity (including local languages, gastronomy, clothes and medicines) is closely linked to the loss of biodiversity.

### Key topics at COP13

- Guidelines to recognize, safeguard and guarantee the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities over their knowledge
- Guidelines for the repatriation of traditional knowledge Rutzolijirisaxik for knowledge and cultural restoration



Convention on  
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- Draft Glossary of Relevant Key Terms and Concepts to Be Used Within the Context of Article 8(j) and Related Provisions
- Adoption of the term “indigenous peoples and local communities” with regards to the Nagoya Protocol and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

### Key messages

- The full and effective participation of Indigenous peoples and local communities is crucial for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity
- Traditional knowledge is fundamental with regards to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and this knowledge owners and holders need to be engaged in conservation and sustainable use for it to be successful
- The recognition, respect and protection of traditional knowledge is essential in achieving the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Targets, particularly target 18
- The development of guidelines on repatriation of traditional knowledge will assist communities to restore knowledge systems necessary for conservation and sustainable use.

### Background

The CBD and its Protocols recognize the crucial role of indigenous peoples and local communities and their traditional knowledge for the protection of biodiversity worldwide. Indigenous peoples and local communities live in areas where most of the world’s vital ecosystems and genetics resources can be found and are thus primary stakeholders in their preservation and restoration. Importantly, their customary sustainable management practices contribute to the conservation and protection of biodiversity. Traditional knowledge is defined as the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities, transmitted orally through generations for practical purposes such as the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. These extensive and unique insights into local environments are a vital part of indigenous peoples and local communities’ lives, but can also assist in developing effective biodiversity policies and activities greatly contributing to national and global conservation efforts. The importance of traditional knowledge is specifically enshrined in article 8 (j) and related provisions of the CBD. The article compels Parties, subject to national legislation, to respect, preserve and maintain traditional knowledge relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. Parties are also encouraged to promote the wider application of traditional knowledge, with the approval and involvement of its holders, while insuring the equitable sharing of benefits. Aichi Biodiversity Target 18 also focuses on traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use (of biodiversity) as cross-cutting issues in sustainable development and conservation. The participation of indigenous people and local communities to decision-making and policy planning is essential, as biodiversity and traditional knowledge preservation are codependent in many instances and can be beneficial to all people.

### Important links

Convention on Biological Diversity: [www.cbd.int](http://www.cbd.int)

More on Article 8(j) - Traditional Knowledge, Innovations and Practices: [www.cbd.int/traditional/](http://www.cbd.int/traditional/)

CBD Traditional Knowledge Information Portal: [www.cbd.int/tk/](http://www.cbd.int/tk/)

New and emerging issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity: [www.cbd.int/emerging](http://www.cbd.int/emerging)

Aichi Biodiversity Targets: [www.cbd.int/sp/targets](http://www.cbd.int/sp/targets)

Global Biodiversity Outlook 4: [www.cbd.int/gbo4](http://www.cbd.int/gbo4)

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