



30 years  
Convention 169



## International Labour Organization's submission to the UNFCCC in relation to the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples' Platform

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has dedicated standards, strategies and programmes concerning indigenous and tribal peoples, which are an integral part of its Decent Work Agenda. It recognizes that indigenous peoples' knowledge is fundamental for combating climate change, and that indigenous women and men, and their communities are critical agents of change for effective climate action and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The ILO therefore welcomes the efforts towards operationalizing the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples' Platform (LCIPP).

The **ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169)**<sup>1</sup> is the only international treaty open for ratification that is exclusively dedicated to addressing indigenous peoples' issues, which is celebrating its [30<sup>th</sup> anniversary](#) in 2019. It has been playing a key role in shaping laws, policies and institutions in both ratifying and non-ratifying countries. The *ILO Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*<sup>2</sup> have also emerged as an important framework for addressing the threats faced by people and communities from climate change. Furthermore, the ILO's 2015 Strategy for action concerning indigenous and tribal peoples places the protection of indigenous peoples' rights in the context of inclusive and sustainable development, while also stressing on the linkages to environmental protection.<sup>3</sup> More generally, the Decent Work Agenda, which is underpinned by the broader body of ILO Conventions and Recommendations, has been playing a critical role in empowering indigenous women and men, and ensuring that indigenous peoples' traditional occupations and knowledge are protected and can thrive.

Indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge and ways of life are closely intertwined with the world of work. From traditional occupations or subsistence activities dependent on lands, forests and natural resources such as agriculture, hunting-gather, among others, to activities related to formal enterprises such as cooperatives, including with regard to ecotourism, natural resource management, handicrafts production, among others, indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge, and the world of work, reinforce each other. Consequently, indigenous peoples' access to lands and natural resources, livelihoods and employment opportunities, decent working conditions, social protection, and access to training and services are critical for protecting traditional occupations and knowledge, as well as ensuring that these can thrive and be further innovated upon, and serve as a foundation for generating sustainable sources of income, green jobs and enterprises, and in turn, for empowering indigenous women and men as well as strengthening climate action. In this regard, the Decent Work Agenda, including Convention No. 169, provide important guidance for addressing the vulnerabilities that indigenous women and men face in the world of work, including from climate change, and for ensuring that, as agents of change, they can contribute to achieving sustainable development and combating climate change.

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<sup>1</sup> Full text of Convention No. 169 available at:

[http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=normlexpub:12100:0::no::p12100\\_instrument\\_id:312314](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=normlexpub:12100:0::no::p12100_instrument_id:312314)

<sup>2</sup> Full text of the Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all available at: [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/documents/publication/wcms\\_432859.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/documents/publication/wcms_432859.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> The strategy is available at [www.ilo.org/indigenous](http://www.ilo.org/indigenous)



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The ILO would like to propose the following considerations for the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples' Platform:

1. With the aim of strengthening, protecting and preserving traditional knowledge, the Platform should take into consideration the world of work aspects of traditional knowledge and the important relationship shared between traditional knowledge, occupations, skills, livelihoods and employment.
2. Guided by the Decent Work Agenda, including ILO Convention No. 169, the Platform should address capacity gaps among indigenous peoples, Parties and other stakeholders regarding the importance decent work opportunities that would protect and promote traditional knowledge in various economic sectors of importance to climate action. This should include a specific focus on the situation of indigenous women, especially given that they are often the custodians of traditional knowledge and engaged in multiples forms of economic activities.
3. The Platform should explore the importance of traditional knowledge in the context of labour market policies and skills development policies, within the framework of climate policies, to promote a just transition and green jobs creation for indigenous women and men, while encouraging innovation based on traditional knowledge that also supports indigenous-led enterprises (including cooperatives).
4. The platform should enhance its engagement with the ILO as an interlocutor, particularly regarding the world of work issues, Decent Work Agenda and ILO Convention No. 169, the only international treaty open for ratification that is exclusively dedicated to addressing indigenous peoples' issues.

The ILO stands ready to contribute actively in operationalizing the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples' Platform.

**For more information:**

ILO: [Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change: From Victims to Change Agents through Decent Work](#)

ILO: [Sustainable Development Goals: Indigenous Peoples in Focus](#)

ILO: [Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all](#)

ILO: [Topical web-portal on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples](#)

ILO: [Topical web-portal on Green Jobs](#)

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