

Agenda item 4 Discussion on the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum (economic and social development, culture, environment, education, health and human rights), with reference to the UNDRIP, the outcome document of the WCIP and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Chairperson of the 21th Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues,
Distinguished representatives and delegates,
Elders and Honorable Members of the Permanent Forum,

On behalf of FAO, congratulations to Dario Mejía Montalvo for your election as chair of the UNPFII. Que la fuerza de los ancestros y su pueblo Zenu le guíen con éxito en su presidencia. Nuestro apoyo total desde la Unidad de Pueblos Indígenas y desde la FAO.

Along with welcoming Dario, we feel obliged to acknowledge Anne Nuorgam for her leadership and tireless work. The difficulties in the past two years with the pandemic have been overcome thanks amongst others to your leadership in guiding the Forum.

As you often say, Quiitos Anne.

Your leadership and perseverance made possible that one of the 33 coalitions resulting from the UN Food systems summit was about Indigenous Peoples.

This Coalition on Indigenous Peoples food systems is important. It provides a space of collective work between Indigenous peoples, Countries, and UN agencies and the joining of UNEP, UNESCO, IFAD and WFP to the coalition is good news.

The size of the challenges ahead of us and the speed at which changes are taking place, in special climate crisis, call for the urgent need to create spaces of collective work where our efforts converge together. Only then we will have enough traction. The Global-Hub on Indigenous Peoples' food systems and its group of 20 indigenous and non-indigenous organizations is one of this collective efforts.

The Global-Hub proved the world that Indigenous Peoples' evidence can change the way scientists and practitioners perceive Indigenous Peoples knowledge.

The recognition for the first time by scientists of Indigenous Peoples food systems as game changers for sustainability and resilience, confirmed the power of the White/Wiphala paper in changing perceptions through collective efforts.

More importantly it broke the argument that oral knowledge cannot be taken into account in policy making. I want to take this opportunity to thank the 60 Indigenous and non- Indigenous experts from 6 socio cultural regions who made the Wiphala paper possible.

FAO has been working on Indigenous Peoples food systems since 2007. The last publication: Indigenous Peoples' food systems sustainability and resilience from the front line of climate change won an award as best 2021 sustainability book.

So I would like to announce today here, that it is possible. If we work together, it is possible.

The Indigenous Youth Forum co-organized by the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus and FAO in June 2021, brought to the attention of the countries in the group of friends and to scientists the importance for indigenous youth of Biocentric restoration, and ancestral food systems.

Scientists, practitioners, media, they do listen when we set up collective processes of co-creation of knowledge and evidence gathering that challenge the current narratives on food.

The time is now to work together and ensure that Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and food systems, influence the upcoming Egypt COP 27 about food systems.

Please count on FAO's full support to these collective efforts on Indigenous Peoples food systems.

I thank you.