



INDIGENOUS PEOPLES INDIGENOUS VOICES

Backgrounder

Studies by Special Rapporteurs presented to the Ninth Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Each year, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues receives studies from Members appointed as Special Rapporteurs on specific issues. This year a record number of studies will be presented before the Forum, briefly summarized here:

Indigenous peoples and corporations (Elisa Canqui, Carlos Mamani and Pavel Sulyandziga)

Corporations in extractive industries, such as those involving mineral, oil or gas extraction, are often involved in abuses of the rights of indigenous peoples to their lands, territories and resources, their civil and political rights and their right to development. Such violations occur in all regions of the world and are frequently permitted and tolerated by States. This continuing study examines the impacts of extractive industries on indigenous peoples, and existing mechanisms and policies relating to corporations and indigenous peoples.

Climate change policies and the UNDRIP (Hassan Id Balkasm and Paimaneh Hasteh)

Climate change continues to threaten indigenous peoples' livelihoods, yet the participation of indigenous peoples in climate change law and policies remains deficient. This study examines whether climate change policies and projects adhere to the standards in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Indigenous fishing rights (Carsten Smith and Michael Dodson)

For indigenous peoples living along coastlines, fishing and other uses of the ocean have been their main livelihood and the material basis for their culture. However, there are no rules or principles in international law dealing specifically with indigenous rights to salt sea fishing. This study presents an analysis of the potential protection of indigenous fishing rights provided by existing international framework. Case studies from Australia and Norway, both with large interests in fisheries, are presented to enable comparison between these States and with international law.

Mother Earth rights (Bartholome Clavero and Carlos Mamani)

Indigenous peoples who hold the view that nature is Mother Earth, endowed with rights, are committed to promoting that world view in all aspects of their internal administration. However, there are still prejudices that are preventing the exercise of such indigenous rights within individual countries and in the world at large. This study presents indigenous peoples' concepts of Mother Earth and the consideration and recognition of the rights of Mother Earth.



United Nations



The ‘Doctrine of Discovery’ on indigenous peoples (Tonya Gonnella Frichner)

The international legal construct known as the “Doctrine of Discovery” and a holistic structure called the “Framework of Dominance” have resulted in centuries of virtually unlimited resource extraction from the traditional territories of indigenous peoples. This, in turn, has resulted in the dispossession and impoverishment of indigenous peoples, and the host of problems that they face today on a daily basis. This preliminary study examines the impact of the Doctrine of Discovery on indigenous peoples, which establishes that the Doctrine of Discovery has been institutionalized in law and policy, on national and international levels, and lies at the root of the violations of indigenous peoples’ human rights, both individual and collective.

Impact of climate change on reindeer herding (Lars-Anders Baer)

Climate change has an impact on all aspects of life in the Arctic region, including reindeer husbandry. Reindeers have major cultural and economic significance for indigenous peoples of the Arctic. This study looks at reindeer herding and the sustainable management of Arctic ecosystems that are based on generations of experience, and how climate change adaptation and mitigation measures affect reindeer herding.

Indigenous peoples and boarding schools (Andrea Smith, outside expert)

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, thousands of native children were forced – and in some case forcibly abducted from their homes – to attend Christian and Government-run boarding schools as a matter of state policy. The strategy was to separate children from their parents in order to assimilate them into the dominant society. This study provides a historical overview of boarding schools, including their ideologies and practices as well as their worldwide locations. It also focuses on current boarding school practices and their purposes for remaining active for indigenous children.

For more information on the UN Permanent Forum in Indigenous Issues, please visit:
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