



*The views expressed in this presentation are the views of the author/s and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Asian Development Bank, or its Board of Governors, or the governments they represent. ADB does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this presentation and accepts no responsibility for any consequence of their use. The countries listed in this presentation do not imply any view on ADB's part as to sovereignty or independent status or necessarily conform to ADB's terminology.*

# Indigenous Peoples and the Circular Economy

*Kala!!!!*

**Maria Cleto**

Senior Safeguards Specialist (Social)





# Who are Indigenous Peoples? (ADB ESF)



- Self-identification, recognition by others
- Collective attachment – geographically distinct areas, and to natural resources
- Distinct customary cultural, economic, social, political institutions, laws, regulations
- Distinct language/dialect





# Indigenous Peoples in Asia

- 2017: Two thirds of world's IPs (approx. 260 million people; 2,000 distinct civilizations and languages)
- Terms differ at national level: “hill tribes”, “indigenous nationalities”, “tribal peoples”, “ethnic minorities”, and “natives”

*“It has become clear that **important socio-economic gaps** are found between indigenous and non-indigenous segments of the populations in the region, which need to be addressed for ensuring sustainable development where no one is left behind. This is all the more critical as **indigenous peoples’ contributions are increasingly being recognized as fundamental for combatting climate change and enhancing environmental sustainability, particularly through their traditional knowledge and occupations, and ways of life.**”*

- ILO. March 2017. “The Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Asia”.

[https://www.ilo.org/gender/Informationresources/Publications/WCMS\\_545487/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/gender/Informationresources/Publications/WCMS_545487/lang--en/index.htm)





# **Indigenous Peoples and the Circular Economy framework**





## Traditional Knowledge Systems

- Emphasis on resource cycles, natural regeneration limits
- Practices that maintain ecological balance

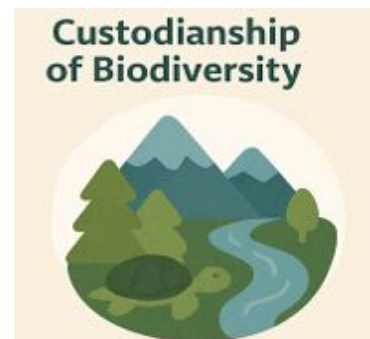
## Zero Waste Lifestyles

- Use entire animals and plants
- Repurpose/returning materials to land



## Communal Use and Sharing Economies

- Non-extractive and community-based



## Custodianship of Biodiversity

- Maintenance of diverse ecosystems
- Land management practices



## Worldviews and Governance

- Responsibility to future generations
- Consideration of ecosystem impacts

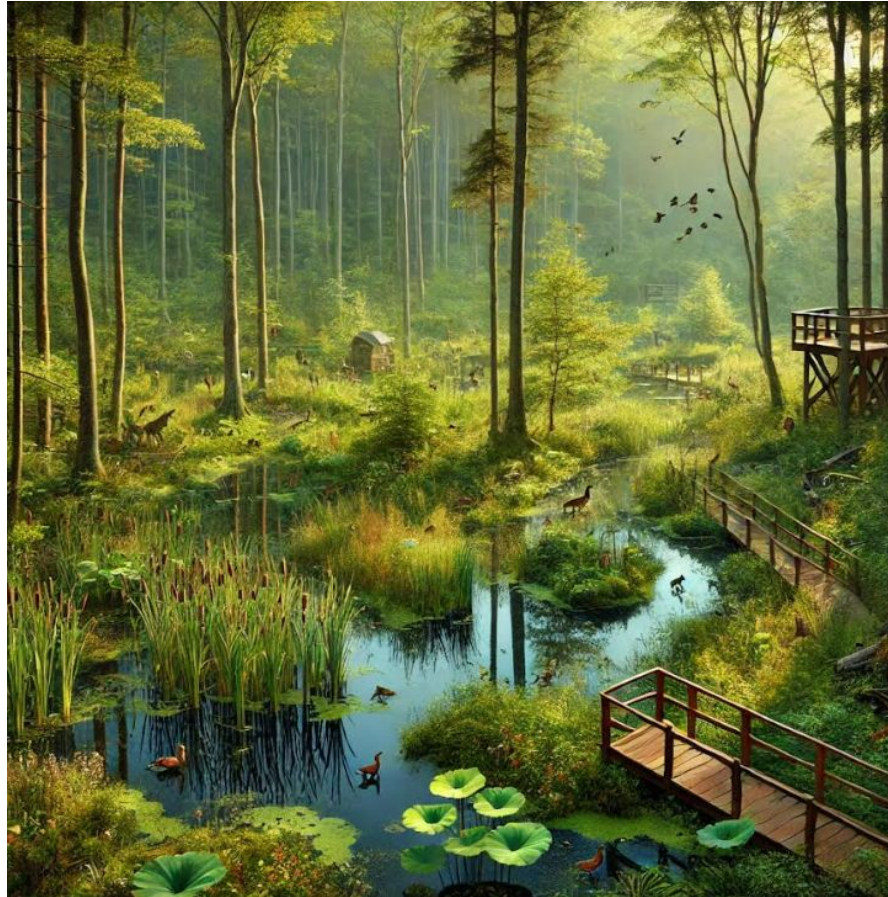


## Cultural Revitalization and innovation

- Indigenous entrepreneurs and modern circular business models
- Reviving food systems



# Specific Examples





## **Adi (Arunachal Pradesh, India) – Agroecological system of Traditional Irrigation and Rice-Fish Farming**

- **Practice:** Adi communities manage **gravity-fed irrigation** systems and **integrated rice-fish farming**, promoting soil fertility and protein-rich food security.
- **Circular Principle:** **Nutrient recycling, resource efficiency**





## Santal (West Bengal, India & Northwestern Bangladesh) – Seed Preservation and Community Farming

- **Practice:** The Santal manage **seed banks** (rice, millet, vegetables), **collective farming**, **organic inputs** (compost, ash, cow dung) to maintain soil fertility.
  - Women as custodians
  - Traditional knowledge transmission
- **Circular Principle: Resource recirculation, community economies, soil regeneration**



## Kankanaey (Cordillera, Philippines)

- **Value:** *Ayyew* – nothing should be wasted
- **Practice:** livestock raising to consume kitchen waste and provide farm fertilizer
  - Baguio Ba-eng network
  - Payeo Indigenous Farmers Organization, Besao





# Indigenous engagement





# Indigenous Engagement

- Process of actively involving and collaborating in decision-making processes, policies, programs, and projects.
- Recognizes the rights, perspectives, and unique contributions of Indigenous Peoples.

**4 R's: *respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility.***

Source: Indigenous Perspectives in Climate Action, Simon Fraser University





## Indigenous engagement (continued)

- **Am I going about this respectfully?**
  - understand history
  - what has already been done
  - understand leadership structure
  - prepared to hear and respect the answer of 'no'





## Indigenous engagement (continued)

- **Is my project **relevant** to this community?**
  - Relevant from community point of view
  - Is this something they want to devote time to?
  - Is there something more important to them?
  - prepared to hear and respect the answer of 'no'





## Indigenous engagement (continued)

- **Does my approach ensure reciprocity?**
  - How is the community benefitting?
  - Have I asked them what they want?
  - Is there a reciprocal relationship?
  - Am I going into this work thinking I am the only holder of knowledge or am I willing to learn something?
  - Is the teaching and learning a two-way process?
  - Am I prepared to hear and respect the answer of 'no'?





## Indigenous engagement (continued)

- **Am I approaching this work responsibly?**
  - Are there potential harms?
  - Do I have systems in place to protect the community ?
  - Am I communicating transparently?
  - Am I behaving accountably?
  - Does my work contribute to misconceptions?





# Meaningful and effective Indigenous engagement

- **Meaningful**: consultation with Indigenous communities including regular seeking of and consideration of feedback;
- Obtaining **Free, Prior, Informed Consent**
- **Effective** engagement: cultural competency.
  - Recognize importance of Indigenous knowledge systems and practices.
  - Recognize diversity of Indigenous communities – differing goals, protocols, governance structure.
  - Diversity of community members
- Create **Engagement Plan**





## Meaningful and effective... (continued)

- **collaborative decision-making processes**
- At earliest stages of a project conception, Indigenous communities are included in critical ways
- **Relationship-building** is crucial for sustainable collaboration (this takes time!)
- **Support capacity building**
  - Resources, training
- **Mechanisms for conflict resolution**





# Moving Forward... ADB Environmental and Social Framework (ESF)

## ESS3: Resource Conservation and Pollution Prevention

- Requirements for resource conservation, pollution prevention, integrating circular economy approaches.

## ESS7: Indigenous Peoples

- Design, implement projects that foster full respect for **Indigenous Peoples'** identity, dignity, human rights, livelihood systems, and cultural uniqueness as defined by IPs themselves
- Meaningful consultation >> improve project design and implementation, promote IP participation and support
- Recognize, respect, and preserve the culture, knowledge, and practices of Indigenous Peoples where possible in a project context





Thank you

