

**Web Annex 1:**  
**Biennial UN Global Indigenous Youth Forum**

1. The biennial United Nations Global Indigenous Youth Forum (UNGIYF) is the only high-level forum in the United Nations dedicated to articulating the voices of Indigenous Youth from the seven sociocultural regions. The UNGIYF provides a platform for dialogue that shapes recommendations from Indigenous Youth to influence global discussions on Indigenous Peoples' food and knowledge systems, Indigenous Youths rights, climate change and biodiversity conservation.
2. The UNGIYF is co-organized by FAO and the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus (GIYC) and takes place at FAO headquarters, in Rome, every two years. The establishment of the UNGIYF follows [recommendation number 90](#) made to FAO by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)/United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) in 2019.
3. This recommendation from UNDESA/UNPFII led to the creation of the UNGIYF in FAO and was the result of the previous work started in 2016 by FAO with Indigenous Youth.
4. FAO's work with Indigenous Youth was fuelled by the publication of a thematic paper prepared by the UN Indigenous Peoples Inter-Agency Support Group (IASG) in preparation for the 2014 World Conference on Indigenous Peoples.
5. The thematic paper highlighted how Indigenous Youth are at higher risk of depression, self-harm and suicide compared to non-Indigenous Youth. Experiences of colonization, racism, cultural and ethnic marginalization, tension between traditional and dominant cultures' values, and limited access to resources and information were identified as some of the root causes of these problems.
6. In 2017, FAO organized a meeting in Rome with Indigenous Youth to discuss this thematic paper in relation to FAO's mandate. At this meeting, the GIYC co-Chairpersons and all of the seven regional representatives met in person for the first time at FAO headquarters, discussing with the FAO Director-General, senior Management and technical officers about how to incorporate Indigenous Youths' views into FAO's work.
7. The recommendations from Indigenous Youth were summarized in the 2017 "Rome Statement on the Contribution of Indigenous Youth towards a World without Hunger", giving way to a new pillar of FAO's work with Indigenous Peoples on "Traditional Knowledge and Climate Change" and to the FAO internship programme for Indigenous Youth.
8. Following the 2019 UNDESA/UNPFII recommendation 90 to organize a United Nations Global Indigenous Youth Forum, dialogue started between the FAO Indigenous Peoples Unit (PSUI) and GIYC to define the nature of the forum, the governance structure, the secretariat role, the advisory roles and the agenda of the first UNGIYF in FAO.
9. In this spirit, the UNGIYF was established in 2020 to bring Indigenous Youth from the seven cultural regions together and provide them with a space to voice their concerns and recommendations, with the ultimate goal to strengthen their food and knowledge systems, culture and languages, and thus contribute to addressing the root causes of suicide and self-inflicted harm that Indigenous Youth are suffering.
10. It was agreed to have the UNGIYF every two years, with the first Session of the UNGIYF held online in 2021, given the travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
11. The UNGIYF marked a milestone in fostering strong dialogue between 136 Indigenous Youth representatives, FAO Members, UN agencies and academia, thus providing a new avenue within the UN System through which to channel Indigenous Youth recommendations and game-changing proposals to the world.
12. Their recommendations were encapsulated in the [Indigenous Youth Global Declaration on Sustainable and Resilient Food Systems, endorsed in Rome in 2021](#).
13. In October 2023, PSUI organized the II Session of the UNGIYF, at FAO headquarters. This II Session was organized with support from: GIYC; the Association of World Reindeer Herders; the

Coalition on Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems; the Rome Group of Friends of Indigenous Peoples; the Global-Hub on Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems; Canada; New Zealand; Norway; the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH; and organizations such as the Indigenous Peoples' Centre for Documentation, Research and Information (DOCIP); Arramât; the University of Leeds; Indigenous Peoples Pandemic Observatory Network (IPON); LUSH; the PEW Charitable Trust; Pew Bertarelli Ocean Legacy; Blue Nature Alliance; Keystone; Wildlife Conservation Society; and Office of Hawaiian Affairs. Additionally, the support from the Restaurants La Cucaracha and El Tiburon, enabled 14 international chefs to cook Indigenous Peoples foods at UNGIYF.

14. This II Session of the UNGIYF assembled 186 Indigenous Youth from the seven sociocultural regions, 60 percent of whom were women, speaking 93 different languages, representing 54 countries and 97 different Indigenous Peoples' groups.

15. The II Session of the UNGIYF officially started with a high-level opening ceremony attended by FAO's Director-General, the President of the International Fund for Agriculture Development, the Deputy Executive Director of the World Food Programme, the President of the Sámi Parliament in Norway, the Chairperson of the UNPFII, the Vice-Chairperson of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the co-Chairpersons of the GIYC, and the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the UN Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) and the Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations in Rome, including FAO.

16. The II Session of the UNGIYF took place inside two Sámi nomadic tents installed in FAO premises, where Indigenous Youth gathered in concomitance and coordination with the World Food Forum, the FAO Science and Innovation Forum (SIF) and the FAO Hand-in-Hand Investment Forum (IF).

17. For five days the Indigenous Youth held joint sessions with the Coalition on Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems; the Committee on World Food Security (CFS); the Global-Hub on Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems; the SIF; the IF; and the Rome Group of Friends of Indigenous Peoples.

18. The UNGIYF 2023 resulted in the [Rome Declaration 2023 Statement - Safeguarding Seven Generations in times of Food, Social, and Ecological Crisis](#) (2023 Rome Declaration), which was read at the 51st Session of the CFS, and officially presented in Dubai at the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

19. The 2023 Rome Declaration was presented at the United Nations Economic and Social Council Youth Forum held from 16 to 18 April 2024, in New York, as well as to the UNPFII Indigenous leaders and UN Agencies during the 23rd Session of the UNPFII held from 15 to 26 April 2024. The main theme of the UNPFII in 2024 was on Indigenous Youth, namely "Enhancing Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination in the context of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: emphasizing the voices of Indigenous Youth".

20. The 2023 Rome Declaration voices Indigenous Youth proposals and builds on their global ["My food vision is..." campaign](#), launched in FAO in 2022 to protect Indigenous Peoples' food and knowledge systems, along with the FAO *four betters* and in the context of climate action and biodiversity conservation.

21. Since the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit, Indigenous Peoples are recognized as key allies by FAO in the transformation towards more sustainable and resilient agrifood systems, considering Indigenous Peoples' food and knowledge systems as game-changers.

22. Indigenous Peoples' food and knowledge systems are not only critical to ensuring the food security and well-being of Indigenous Peoples worldwide, this game-changing nature of their food and knowledge systems can also provide valuable solutions to the multiple challenges faced by humanity in terms of climate change and biodiversity conservation.

23. Indigenous Peoples are guardians of a large proportion of the remaining terrestrial biodiversity in the world. Indigenous Peoples' territories overlap with more than one third of protected areas in the world, and with the regions identified as centres of origin of crops and crop diversity. Indigenous Peoples' food and knowledge systems can generate hundreds of nutritious foods. In some cases, these foods can cover close to 100 percent of adults' dietary energy needs.

24. However, Indigenous Peoples' food and knowledge systems will be put at a higher risk of disappearance if efforts to better understand, preserve and strengthen them are not further pursued. The loss of Indigenous Peoples' knowledge, associated practices, know-how, culture, languages and spirituality will not only lead to increased food insecurity and biodiversity loss but will also lead to the dramatic erosion of Indigenous Peoples' well-being.

25. In their 2023 Rome Declaration, Indigenous Youth emphasized the need to look seven generations behind and seven generations ahead when making decisions about food, climate and biodiversity. With their unique ability to navigate different knowledge systems combining ancestral views, cosmogony and traditions with innovations and technology, Indigenous Youth recognize themselves as the future of Indigenous Peoples' food and knowledge systems.

26. In this context, this 2023 Rome Declaration is enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the right to self-determined development and the right to free, prior and informed consent. It provides 49 recommendations to Members, UN Agencies, universities, and Indigenous Peoples, particularly on: i) the future of Indigenous Peoples' food and knowledge systems in the context of climate and biodiversity action; ii) the impacts on Indigenous Peoples of pesticides, extractive industries and ultra-processed foods; iii) the protection of Indigenous plant genetic resources; and iv) the importance of Indigenous-led education.

27. One of the requests made by Indigenous Youth regards the writing of a dedicated report on the impacts of ultra-processed food on the health of Indigenous Youth, for which the Global-Hub on Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems has mobilized its expertise to start gathering evidence and kickstart a process of co-creation of knowledge with formal and Indigenous scientists.

28. The UNGIYF 2023 Rome Declaration is a valuable document with recommendations to UN organizations, Members and Indigenous Peoples to advance the work during the intersessional period in the path towards the 2025, III Session of the UNGIYF.

29. FAO remains committed to working closely with the GIYC, FAO Members, RBAs, UN agencies, the Coalition on Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems, and the Global-Hub on Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems. FAO will continue supporting processes of co-creation of knowledge and intercultural discussions that blend tradition with innovation on Indigenous Peoples' food and knowledge systems, looking seven generations behind and seven generations ahead, while being guided by Indigenous Peoples' cosmogony to provide harmony and peace for all humankind across the world.