

First Nations sessions at World Water Week 2023

GRATIS online: Att ta del av konferenssessionerna online utan avgift är möjligt efter registrering.

FREE online access is available after registration.

[World Water Week 2023: Online pass - Full week access \(trippus.se\)](https://trippus.se)

[World Water Week 2023: Explore the programme \(trippus.net\)](https://trippus.net)

Samiska inlägg kan förväntas i session 1, 2 och 3. Session 3 sänds inte online.

1. Session Title: Respect, Reciprocity, Relatedness: Indigenous Peoples and Living Waters

Time: 21 August 16:00 - 17:30

Location: C2

Convenors: Carcross/Tagish First Nations, Himalayan Peace Foundation, Karen Environmental and Social Action Network, Northern Maasai, Stockholm International Water Institute, UNDP-SIWI Water Governance Facility, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, University of Manitoba

Summary

Innovation emerges in many forms, including the application of traditional approaches in new contexts. This session offers the opportunity for the water sector to begin a deep rethink on our societies watery relationships and water governance, led by Indigenous Peoples.

Session Description

Indigenous Peoples are critical actors in water governance and sustainability and there is growing acknowledgement that Indigenous rights and self-determination and Indigenous Peoples should play a significant role in decision-making about water. Yet, these communities continue to be underrepresented in international water policy. In this session, we ask what is needed to better engage and respect Indigenous peoples, their knowledge, their values, and their governance to address global water challenges? Traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples encompass an estimated 38 million square kilometres (approximately 25% of global terrestrial land), and includes many important headwaters, water towers, wetlands, and other inland and coastal waters and many other communities have benefitted from their governance. Indigenous governance, law and knowledge are a growing theme for decision-makers about water and there are valuable lessons to be learnt by the water sector, but Indigenous Peoples continue to lack a voice in many international forums, with low visibility and are marginalized by historical and ongoing colonialism, and this session seeks to redress this balance and is led by Indigenous Peoples

This session also serves as the official launch of a new publication by the Water Governance Facilities "Yaa Heen Koosge: Indigenous Peoples and Water Governance".

2. Session Title: Two-eyed seeing: Indigenous values for climate-resilient water management

Session schedule: Tuesday, 22 August 09:00-10:30 (CET)

Location: C2 and online

Convenors: Australian Water Partnership, University of Canberra, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)

Summary

First Nations, Aboriginal, Indigenous and Traditional knowledge of surface and ground water as well as cultural and spiritual values are an incommensurable contribution to water management internationally. Indigenous Peoples' need support to action their strength, savviness, and know-how, requires support, resources and decision-making power in water management.

Session Description

Across the world, First Nations' participation in water management is increasingly viewed as an opportunity to address contemporary and future issues. Lessons of engagement with First Nations Peoples from the Indo-Pacific and beyond will be shared to inform how growing recognition of the importance of First Nations' spiritual, social and customary values can influence water policy and management, along with the protection of those values. Case studies of diverse journeys from Australia, New Zealand, South East Asia and the Pacific will demonstrate how First Nations values in water management have been included through statutory mechanisms and tailored engagement processes with communities. Challenges will also be shared, including clean water access for Indigenous Peoples living in remote communities.

Climate impacts can result in Indigenous communities losing traditional sources of food and medicines, affecting sacred sites and reduced economic development opportunities. Yet, these communities are not simply victims of the effects of climate change, but also agents of environmental conservation, water management and drivers of adaptation. Traditional ecological knowledge has often been developed from living in marginal and challenging environments, where mitigation and adaptation strategies are implemented as part of ancestral or traditional natural resources management passed down over generations.

Convenors

Australian Water Partnership

Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

Stockholm International Water Institute

University of Arizona

University of Canberra

3. Training Event: An Introduction to Indigenous Water Governance and Two-Eyed Seeing

Session schedule: Tuesday, 22 August 11:00-12:30 (CET)

Location: Workshops, 26, site only

Convenors: Carcross/Tagish First Nations, Kaipara Moana Remediation Programme, Karen Environmental and Social Action Network, UNDP-SIWI Water Governance Facility, United Nations Development Programme, University of Arizona, University of Manitoba, **Australian Water Partnership**

Summary

Indigenous experts are water experts. Indigenous Peoples have been managing and governing water resources since. This session presents a hands-on opportunity for water professionals to learn from Indigenous expert about place-based and values approaches to water governance, the application of Indigenous knowledge, co-governance principles, and the use of two-eyed seeing.

Session Description

Indigenous experts are water experts. Though there has been some research on Indigenous knowledge of water, overall, most of the traditional and contemporary efforts, values, capacity and commitments remain undocumented or little known to decision-makers and water professionals.

The training is focussed on Indigenous-led approaches, cooperation strategies, capacity development activities, two-eyed seeing approaches that can transform the way communities think and act, and how non-Indigenous communities can better understand the role of relationships in governance. Experts from Indigenous peoples as diverse as the Northern Maasai, the Karen from Burman/Myanmar, and Carcross/Tagish First Nations from Canada and many others will be on hand to transmit knowledge. It is anticipated that this training event will be part of a wider focus on the role of Indigenous Peoples within the WWW.

Convenors

Carcross/Tagish First Nations
Kaipara Moana Remediation Programme
Karen Environmental and Social Action Network
UNDP-SIWI Water Governance Facility
United Nations Development Programme
University of Arizona
University of Manitoba

4. Session Title: Indigenous Voices in Water Governance

Time: 22 August 14:00 - 15:30

Location: C1 & Online

Convenors: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, University of Arizona Water Resources Research Center, Water and Tribes Initiative

Summary

The social, cultural, and environmental relationships of Native Americans with the Colorado River are often overlooked in discussions framed by the governing resource management paradigm. With the basin facing critical shortages and tribes' water rights comprising an estimated 25 percent of the water, their voices must be heard.

Session Description

This session will bring to the WWW stage voices from tribal leaders in the Basin like this one: "We've been farming for over 1,000 years, and the only time that was disrupted was when that water was taken away from us." Native Americans constructed a massive system of irrigation canals to support the cultivation of cotton, corn, and other crops in the area beginning about 1,400 years ago. But in the 1870s and 1880s, new canal systems built primarily by white farmers drained the Gila River, devastating the farms and leading to famine and starvation. The Indian Community has, in fact, spent much of the past 150 years trying to win back water its members had long depended on. Congressionally approved settlements have awarded substantial Colorado River water rights to the community. Elevating indigenous voices will forge new ways of thinking and acting together as a community. Tribal members' participation in WWW will highlight key voices on innovations in water governance and management and create opportunities for exchange with other indigenous peoples through a potential Indigenous Peoples' Day or Focus Area within the conference. We are coordinating with Australia's First Nation Network and SIWI, among others, to facilitate this exchange.

Convenors

Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

University of Arizona Water Resources Research Center

Water and Tribes Initiative

5. **Session Title: Indigenous and Local Community Water Tenure: Innovations in Water Governance**

Time: ~~21 August 09:00 – 10:30~~

Time: 23 August 16:00 – 17:30 (according to [World Water Week 2023: Explore the programme \(trippus.net\)](https://www.trippus.net/))

Location: Rum C4 & Online

Summary

For water governance to be truly inclusive and sustainable, it must account for community-based and customary water tenure rights. This session highlights evidence-based governance mechanisms for improving recognition and protection of these rights and facilitates interactive discussion on the principles and priorities for the forthcoming Global Dialogue on Water Tenure.

Session Description

For the governance of water tenure to be truly inclusive and sustainable, it must account for the diverse community-based tenure systems employed by Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) worldwide. Despite traditionally holding approximately half the world's lands and the natural resources therein, communities legally own just 10 percent of global land and the full extent of their freshwater rights is unknown. Communities' water tenure security therefore frequently hinges on the interface between customary laws and state laws that may or may not recognize these rights. While concerted advocacy has led to widespread acceptance of the centrality of legally recognizing and securing community-based land and forest tenure for advancing multiple SDGs, the Paris Agreement, and international standards, IPLC's water tenure rights have yet to receive the same acknowledgment. This session will highlight increasing advocacy efforts around community-based freshwater tenure, and showcase diverse water tenure research, assessment tools, and community experiences that demonstrate the critical role of water tenure in ensuring equitable, socially inclusive, and sustainable water governance. It will also facilitate discussion of how emerging principles and priorities drawn from this evidence base should inform the Global Dialogue on Water Tenure, to be launched at the UN Water Conference 2023.

Convenors

Environmental Law Institute

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

international Association for Water Law

International Water Management Institute

Rights and Resources Initiative

The Nature Conservancy

6. **Session Title: New frontiers in water governance**

24 augusti

Time: 14:00 - 15:30

Location: C4

Summary

The session will challenge the boundaries of our prevalent models of water governance by exploring different approaches, practices and ways of thinking. We will have a strong focus on indigenous approaches to water governance, and will draw insights from feminist and decolonising perspectives.

Session Description

Many of our time's greatest challenges are linked to water. Climate change is primarily and increasingly felt through floods, droughts, and water contamination – affecting all beings in every part of the globe. Current governance arrangements often are no longer able to match the complexity and uncertainty of the challenges we face. As the world is not on track to achieve SDG6, increasingly calls are made to change the frameworks that guide our way of thinking about and governing water.

Governance is inherently complex, and well-established institutional arrangements seem difficult to change. However, recent thinking on how societies govern themselves shows that nothing is inevitable or predetermined about existing arrangements. Many societies and communities used to govern themselves differently – so different approaches to water governance should be possible.

With a range of experts, we will explore diverse approaches and new frontiers for governing water in the Anthropocene. The session will include a focus on examples where new and different institutional arrangements are starting to emerge. This will include drawing from:

- Indigenous water governance
- Feminist and post-human approaches
- Decolonising perspectives
- 'Rights of nature' and 'Rights of rivers'

Programme

Convenors

Arup

Stockholm International Water Institute