

# Indigenous Knowledge Systems

A Review of Key Points in the Chapter & Knowledge Framework Considerations

## Scope & Applications

To whom are we referring when we use the term "Indigenous?"



The United Nations' define "**Indigenous Peoples, Communities & Nations**" as having these typical characteristics

- Have a historical continuity with pre-invasion, pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories
- Consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them
- Form at present non-dominant sectors of society
- Determined to preserve, develop, and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories and their ethnic identity, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions, and the legal system

The United Nations' define "**Indigenous Knowledge**" as having these typical characteristics

- Locally bound; indigenous to a specific area
- Culture-specific & context-specific
- Non-formal
- Orally transmitted, and generally not documented
- Dynamic & adaptive
- Holistic in nature
- Closely related to survival

## How did Indigenous KS earn a spot as an AOK?

— There has been a shift paradigm with the intent of understanding knowledge outside of the traditional western knowledge systems to enhance the preexisting systems.



## Methodology

How do approaches in these knowledge systems compare?

What ways of knowing are used to create knowledge?

## Science & Indigenous KS

- Natural Sciences generally seek to decontextualize and depersonalize knowledge (as a goal), but the trend now is to look holistically at the complexity of systems (like in ecology)
- This has led to a greater appreciation of indigenous knowledge and its potential contributions to scientific investigation and understanding
- <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-06-03/indigenous-knowledge-and-western-science-unite-to-save-reef/7466488>

## Science & Indigenous KS

- Alessa's "Scales of Knowledge": The Natural Sciences and Traditional Knowledge (p.385)
- Freeman's "Traditional Ecological Knowledge" (p.386)

## Journal #26

Concepts & Language / Methodology

- **How reliable are "oral traditions" in preserving cultural heritage in Indigenous KS? How are certain ways of knowing crucial in constructing knowledge in indigenous knowledge systems?**

## Media: What the People of the Amazon Know That You Don't

- Guiding Question
- **What aspects of indigenous culture are lost and/or gained from the introduction of outside cultural influences?**

## Journal #27

Historical Development / Links to Personal Knowledge

- **What gets lost in translation when conveying ideas from one language to another? What might this mean when indigenous people are assimilated into the dominant culture?**

## Elements of Culture

- Cultural Universals: Elements, patterns, traits, or institutions common to all cultures regardless of their history, location, or origin

- Symbols
- Language
- Values
- Norms
- Beliefs





## Illegal Logging & Mining



- As much as 59% of Brazil's entire territory is part of the Amazon Rainforest and is threatened by activities such as deforestation, logging, mining and infrastructure.
- Some native tribes have staged protests and fought to secure their rights.
- Illegal logging and mining damages and pollutes the Amazon which is the same land these Indigenous tribes have inhabited for many generations.

## Exploitation of Land

- Yanomami tribes of Northern Brazil & Southern Venezuela - Miners have regularly exploited and killed tribe members in recent years.



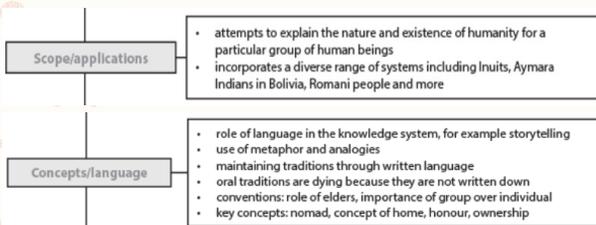
## So what is lost and gained?

- **Lost** - Indigenous culture and cultural "purity".
- **Gained** - New cultures and ideas, and diversity (geneological, cultural, ideological).
- Due to assimilation and intermarriages, we are left with new cultures and ethnicities.
- Other contributions/thoughts on this?

## Gained & Lost



## Knowledge Framework Considerations - IKS



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