

Resolution 21GA 2023/21 – Indigenous Peoples' Inclusion throughout ICOMOS

Voted on online platform

The 21st General Assembly of ICOMOS,

Recognising the inherent authority of Indigenous Peoplesⁱ over their culture and heritage, that existed before and is empowered by their governance, and continues to be exercised regardless of constructs external to them shaped by others;

Recognising that there are both extrinsic and intrinsic rights and responsibilities for Indigenous Peoples to speak and act for their own custodial rights for places;

Recalling that the *United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) was adopted by the United Nations in the spirit of partnership and mutual respect in 2007 by 144 state parties, and later endorsed by Australia (2009), Canada (2021), New Zealand (2010) and the USA (2010);

Recognising in particular that the earth's diverse Indigenous Peoples have "the right to self-determination" (Article 3 of UNDRIP) as well as "the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present, and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artefacts, designs, ceremonies, sacred places and sites, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature" (Article 11 of UNDRIP), and the related right to identify and acknowledge the characteristics and elements that make heritage sites, landscapes and narratives of Indigenous value;

Acknowledging that ICOMOS can be aided in its work by the inclusion of Indigenous representation to identify and integrate Indigenous values;

Affirming, in the spirit of UNDRIP, that ICOMOS should also give effect to the principle enshrined in its Article 41 that "Ways and means of ensuring participation of Indigenous peoples on issues affecting them shall be established".

Asserting that Indigenous communities have the rights to Indigenous knowledge and practices as expressions of their intellectual property, with reference to Article 31 of UNDRIP which states that "Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions";

Recalling that ICOMOS is an associate partner of UNESCO, which is subject to Article 41 of UNDRIP, and that ICOMOS is an international non-governmental organisation concerned with furthering the conservation of cultural heritage, as well as an Advisory Body of the World Heritage Committee for the implementation of the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention, both of which may have effects on Indigenous heritage.

Recognising, in the spirit of UNDRIP, that Indigenous People must be part of decision-making processes that affect them, including identifying emerging Indigenous directives, concerns and perspectives on the protection and development of their heritage, including climate change, biodiversity loss, and issues relating to water quality;

Recognising the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework including Target 22ⁱⁱ and the Joint Programme of Work on the Links between Biological and Cultural Diversityⁱⁱⁱ, [the latter of which ICOMOS is invited to, and which includes the commitment to strengthening the links between biological and cultural diversity with the full and effective participation of Indigenous peoples.]

Recognising the ICOMOS Indigenous Heritage Working Group, the Australia ICOMOS Indigenous Heritage Reference Group, Tautiaki the Māori Committee of ICOMOS New Zealand, the Indigenous Perspectives and Knowledge Working Group of the ICOMOS-IFLA International Scientific Committee on Cultural Landscapes, the Caring for Country Committee of Australia ICOMOS, and other representation of Indigenous peoples in ICOMOS;

Resolves that ICOMOS encourage and support its National Committees to increase Indigenous membership, including through ICOMOS Mentoring programmes and contact with educational institutions, to encourage student and emerging members, where there is an Indigenous presence in that country;

Resolves that ICOMOS encourage and support the participation of Indigenous members within ICOMOS so that they provide an Indigenous voice throughout the decision-making levels and activities of ICOMOS;

Resolves that ICOMOS activities ensure that the significance and values of Indigenous tangible and intangible heritage, including cultural landscapes, and biodiversity are incorporated in practice and activities;

Resolves that the role of the ICOMOS Indigenous Heritage Working Group (IHWG) be encouraged and supported so that the diversity of Indigenous voices is broadly acknowledged within ICOMOS.