

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

<b>DIALOGUE DATE</b>	Thursday, 1 April 2021 14:00 GMT -06:00
<b>DIALOGUE TITLE</b>	Turtle Island Dialogue: Grief, Trauma, Care
<b>CONVENED BY</b>	Denisa Livingston - Appointed Member of the Champions Network of the UN Food Systems Summit; Mikaila Way - Indigenous Peoples' Liaison for North America, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
<b>DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE</b>	<a href="https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/10190/">https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/10190/</a>
<b>DIALOGUE TYPE</b>	Independent
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS</b>	Canada, Mexico, United States of America

The outcomes from a Food Systems Summit Dialogue will be of use in developing the pathway to sustainable food systems within the locality in which they take place. They will be a valuable contribution to the national pathways and also of interest to the different workstreams preparing for the Summit: the Action Tracks, Scientific Groups and Champions as well as for other Dialogues.

# 1. PARTICIPATION

## TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

22

## PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

1

19-30

13

31-50

3

51-65

4

66-80

1

80+

## PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

4 Male

17 Female

1 Prefer not to say or Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

9 Agriculture/crops

2 Fish and aquaculture

1 Livestock

2 Agro-forestry

22 Environment and ecology

9 Trade and commerce

13 Education

9 Communication

10 Food processing

5 Food retail, markets

5 Food industry

3 Financial Services

10 Health care

7 Nutrition

1 National or local government

6 Utilities

Industrial

1 Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

3 Small/medium enterprise/artisan

Large national business

Multi-national corporation

6 Small-scale farmer

Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

10 Local Non-Governmental Organization

2 International Non-Governmental Organization

18 Indigenous People

7 Science and academia

1 Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

1 Local authority

Government and national institution

Regional economic community

3 United Nations

International financial institution

3 Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

Consumer group

1 Other

## 2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

---

### HOW DID YOU ORGANIZE THE DIALOGUE SO THAT THE PRINCIPLES WERE INCORPORATED, REINFORCED AND ENHANCED?

The dialogue was organized with the Principles of Engagement in mind, and the moderators shared the Principles as part of the beginning of the Dialogue.

### HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

All participants were very respectful, recognizing the complexity of the topics, embraced inclusive dialogue, and worked to build trust through our conversations by building understanding and appreciating each other's presence.

### DO YOU HAVE ADVICE FOR OTHER DIALOGUE CONVENORS ABOUT APPRECIATING THE PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT?

It is important to share these Principles for every dialogue to help set the space and remind participants of the diversity and need for inclusion with respect and honor.

# 3. METHOD

---

The outcomes of a Dialogue are influenced by the method that is used.

**DID YOU USE THE SAME METHOD AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CONVENORS REFERENCE MANUAL?**

**Yes**

**No**

# 4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

## MAJOR FOCUS

The main focus of this dialogue was recognizing the grief, trauma, and care of Indigenous Peoples across North America. As the first dialogue in a series, it was about acknowledging and recognizing where we are collectively with the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of it, including environmental destruction, climate change, food system destruction, and nutritional trauma over generations. We connected our dialogue to Action Track 5: Building Resilience to Vulnerabilities, Shocks and Stress. Denisa Livingston, (Diné Nation), UNFSS Champion hosted this dialogue and co-moderated with Dialogue Curator, Dr. Rod McCormick is an Indigenous mental health clinician and researcher at Thompson Rivers University in British Columbia, Canada. He opened the dialogue by introducing concepts related to the theme, including challenging the terminology of resilience, Indigenous “relational lens” and Traditional Ecological Knowledge, ecological grief, the importance of grief ceremonies and the concept of the “backswing” in going forward.

We questioned the term “resilience” from Indigenous versus western worldviews. Noting that Indigenous Peoples internationally are opposing “resilience terminology” when describing Indigenous Peoples, because it applauds people for surviving and makes it easy for policy makers to avoid looking for real solutions. It shifts responsibility for both the cause of the crises and the solutions. For example, the Maori criticism of resilience theories “is that by definition they assume an acceptance of responsibility for our position as disadvantaged individuals. That is by examining and developing theories and models of resilience we buy into the idea that this is the way it is and we need to simply get better at the idea of bouncing back and being resilient. Resistance, however, represents an approach of collective fightback, exposing the inequitable distribution of power, and actively opposing negative social, political, and economic influences.”

Adopting the Indigenous “relational lens” makes things look different and compels investigation into different dynamics in system relationships, such relational lenses are central to Indigenous Peoples’ Traditional Ecological Knowledge systems and healing practices that have sustained their populations since time immemorial.

We explored the topic of Ecological Grief. Dr. McCormick has been focused on ecological grief in his clinical work and research, and “Anticipatory Grief” - the emotions, actions and mourning stimulated by awareness of impending loss/death. He shared examples of the ecological and anticipatory grief that Indigenous Peoples’ communities are experiencing as their traditional fishing rivers dry up, the loss of sea ice in the Arctic, as species go extinct, as forests burn, or as lands are cleared or destroyed by extraction. He shared specific examples of farmers in India and reindeer herders in Norway and Sweden are committing suicide at alarming rates.

The importance of Grief Ceremonies: Dr. McCormick explained he and his partner developed a grief support program many years ago, and incorporate ceremony as one of the important approaches to grief; further describing that Grief ceremonies help move families through three important tasks: 1. Recognize the loss; 2. Reaffirm the continuance of the family/community; 3. Recognize the altered relationship with the deceased.

The concept of the “backswing”. The backswing is needed to generate the power to move an object forward (like a hammer, broom, golf club, baseball bat). The backswing leads to contact and the follow through leads to good results - this metaphor applies to healing. “Re-search” is a search again for what we once knew. In order to proceed on a healing journey, we must first collect the medicines and resources we need. When our families, communities and organizations are facing a crisis then they too need to look back to rebuild their confidence and strength. They too need to review past accomplishments, identify skills and communal attributes and healing resources to prepare themselves to move forward with increased motivation and direction.

### ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- ✓ Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- ✓ Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

### KEYWORDS

- Finance
- ✓ Innovation
- ✓ Human rights
- ✓ Women & Youth Empowerment
- ✓ Policy
- ✓ Data & Evidence
- ✓ Governance
- Trade-offs
- ✓ Environment and Climate

## MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings and conclusions that emerged from our Dialogue are as follows:

**Generational and Intergenerational Grief and Trauma:** There is generational and intergenerational grief and trauma experienced by Indigenous Peoples being separated from each other, from homelands, from cultures, from languages, from food ways, from their health and stories of their elders. There is shared trauma of separation, and also direct and ongoing violence, mistreatment, marginalization, targeted destruction, and disproportionate impacts from COVID-19, poverty, lack of resources, lack of infrastructure, and imposed dependence on unhealthy, commodified, highly-processed foods.

**Anger and confusion as Indigenous Youth:** Many Indigenous participants expressed common experiences of feeling anger and confusion in their youth. Their experiences had to do with not understanding themselves as an Indigenous person, having to navigate other non-Indigenous people seeing/thinking Indigenous Peoples are extinct, not being understood or able to express themselves, and watching how Indigenous Peoples are conquered and attached in different ways of current-day society (through business, economy, food) and the trauma from that. All of this has a harmful effect on Indigenous Peoples' communities across North America.

**Stuck in Unhealthy Situations:** As a result, many Indigenous youth, adults and elders are stuck in unhealthy situations, many involving drug and alcohol addiction, abuse, broken homes and families.

**Hard to express grief:** Some participants expressed it is hard to express the grief, ask for help, and drop the burden they carry in the patriarchy, and that many of them are seeing their elders and parents struggle with this healing. There was a common agreement that they need to reclaim their intergenerational connections in their communities, and to be able to look forward together.

**Creating better opportunities:** There was a common agreement and commitment expressed by many participants to create better opportunities for the younger generations and stay connected to their elders, to serve as role models to their peers, and focus on healing and service for family and culture.

**Indigenous Spaces for Youth:** There was a shared agreement that it is important to create Indigenous spaces of belonging, respect and safety for Indigenous youth so they can learn, express and find confidence in their cultures.

**Water-rights, Land-Rights, and Climate Change:** There was a shared agreement that many Indigenous Peoples' communities represented on the call of the need to improve access to water-rights and land-rights; and that the impacts of climate change are making access issues even more difficult, dire, and critical. For example, the dry-land farmers can no longer depend on the rain for their crops to receive enough water. The rains are not coming in the same way, and they are needing to rely on irrigation to keep their crops alive.

**Indigenous Seed Security:** There was a shared agreement that Indigenous Peoples need seed security, and this is critical for all Indigenous Peoples' food systems to survive and be sovereign.

**Traditional "Transition" Foods for times of Grief and Illness:** There was a shared agreement that having access to traditional foods are so important for grieving ceremonies, and during times of illness and death. Many traditional foods are known as "Transitional Foods" like blue corn mush for the Diné. Participants expressed the absence or presence of Traditional Foods is really being felt during the COVID-19 pandemic in their communities.

**Nutritional Trauma:** Participants shared the need to address the on-going lack of access to healthy traditional foods or healthy foods. There was concern of the unhealthy food distributions in Native communities during the pandemic. This is a continual concern to address the food systems that can bring healing foodways and restoration.

**Unresolved grief, On-going Trauma is connected to Action Track 5 and goals of UNFSS:** The unresolved grief, ongoing trauma, marginalization, and resulting impacts on Indigenous Peoples' communities are barriers to their ability to revitalize and sustain healthier, more equitable, resilient and sustainable food systems. AND the creation and revitalization of their food systems is essential to Indigenous Peoples' healing, restoration and long-term, generational health in North America (and globally).

## ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- ✓ Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- ✓ Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

## KEYWORDS

- Finance
- ✓ Innovation
- ✓ Human rights
- ✓ Women & Youth Empowerment
- ✓ Policy
- ✓ Data & Evidence
- ✓ Governance
- Trade-offs
- ✓ Environment and Climate

## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/2

During our breakout sessions, facilitators asked participants two questions:  
How are you and your communities coping and handling grief and trauma?

Are our Indigenous communities, your communities, your tribe empowered to prepare for, withstand, and recover from instability or heal from the experiences of the pandemic? What is needed? Are we ready and able to recover? What will it take to achieve that? What will it take to see sustainable food systems in our Indigenous nations?

Indigenous-led, community sustained initiatives to heal grief, trauma and provide care in culturally-appropriate and meaningful ways: Many Indigenous participants shared information about the community-led non-profits they have created that are leading to support community needs and create new, supportive opportunities for the youth and stay connected to the elders. To mention a few: Diné Introspective, Inc., Diné Community Advocacy Alliance, OMO, and Elderberry Wisdom Farm.

Building curriculum for Historical Trauma: This time during COVID has been transformational. One of the participants who leads a Native led nonprofit in Oregon, and during this time focused on building a curriculum for historical trauma as an important way to reach people who are working through grief and trauma. Through her experience, it's been a positive experience for those who come out of this type of grief and trauma work, and hardship often strengthens resilience. Created improved relations for those in her community who were overwhelmed by grief and trauma. During this time, she realized that her organization is learning, growing and strengthening ability to help others, and strengthening individual protection for social, health, political challenges. Building cultural connections to land, plants, animals, and food is part of this curriculum.

Creating positive, safe, cultural spaces and opportunities for Indigenous Youth: Indigenous-led nonprofit, Diné Introspective, Inc. is focused on creating positive opportunities for younger generations, serving as role model to peers, healing for family and culture, cultivating respect for land and animals, relationship with Creator, having a safe and cultural place to learn songs, prayers, and soaking up as much as possible from culture. Space holding and teaching through tribal communities and experience, growing through our clanship. Addressing the reality that so many youth are stuck in similar situations of not being able to express selves.

Offering Cultural Ecology Art and Design Programs for Communities, Youth and Elders: OMO is an Indigenous-led nonprofit organization looking at cultural ecology art and design, finding ways to incorporate youth and elders into programs. The project includes working at a studio to build and create. It also includes exploring Indigenous knowledge and philosophy using art and design to express one's emotions and traumas as a way to get voices and feelings into the world. Art projects manifest in different activities, including farming, painting, drawing, and sculpting. The participant creating this non-profit works in his community which is in an economically depressed and socially isolated area. Through this work, they are activating lands and getting youth back into community farming. The community has been involved in architecture as a design process and a great way to manifest feelings of trauma and grief through this work. As an example, the interdisciplinary program set up as part of the nonprofit allows youth to design something (chicken coop or greenhouse) and through this process building and creating art through design. They bring families into the process and ecology into the process.

### ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- ✓ Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- ✓ Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

### KEYWORDS

- Finance
- ✓ Innovation
- ✓ Human rights
- ✓ Women & Youth Empowerment
- Policy
- ✓ Data & Evidence
- ✓ Governance
- Trade-offs
- ✓ Environment and Climate



## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/2

continued - During our breakout sessions, facilitators asked participants two questions:  
How are you and your communities coping and handling grief and trauma?

Are our Indigenous communities, your communities, your tribe empowered to prepare for, withstand, and recover from instability or heal from the experiences of the pandemic? What is needed? Are we ready and able to recover? What will it take to achieve that? What will it take to see sustainable food systems in our Indigenous nations?

The discussion outcome topics resulting from our conversations included sharing of on-going actions/initiatives in addition to forward-looking actions urgently needed.

Interacting and connecting with one another, sharing the grief and acknowledging what our people [Indigenous Peoples] go through; finding ways of healthy expression. What is weaponized against us- make that clear and known. Ways we are traumatized via food- the suffering involved and lack of assistance available. Through healing with our culture we can help it, but through colonialism still we are unable to identify our true selves lacking our Languages, practices, etc. Without fully expressing ourselves and connecting/living through our culture, we have difficulty understanding what we are capable of. But at same time- we are a hidden pillar, the US would not be where they are without us. We have given so much and still in a place of teaching, giving, and providing. No autonomy for us. Extraction of our people, resources, and wisdom. This space is helpful- truly able to express self. Living in 2 different worlds. Finding ways for healthy self-expression (especially for our young people).

Cross-cultural Exchanges and Bridging: Sacred Land, Food and Farming program and Curriculum is focused on interfaith communities and public health through building bridges between Christianity and Indigenous perspectives- spirituality and connections to land, food, and identity. Through the programs and curriculum they are increasing awareness and understanding- especially for those that may not realize the impact of Indigenous spirituality and land/food/identity.

Working with Cities to Create Learning Spaces: Inspired by the community-environment of Standing Rock, participants shared experiences and encouragement to work with city governments and municipalities to create community learning spaces in the city where Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members can organize, teach, share, and reconnect to land and each other. In many cities and surrounding public lands, Indigenous Peoples have special access to lands/opportunities for acquiring lands in some places like Ft. Collins, Colorado, USA. Through their initiatives, they are bridging Native communities in urban settings and from reservations, creating opportunities for these communities to come together. They are finding ways to make those spaces shift from food banks to seed banks, and creating community cultural centers.

Gathering safely outside with Kids and Community to make it through the pandemic and other stressors: One strategy to cope with COVID-19 has been to get kids into fields to begin building and creating together. Community members have been dealing with trauma by being outside, building, playing, learning from the land.

Taking a systems thinking approach that includes looking at communities, cultures, ecology, and arts. These are systems that allow the community to continue to function, and food systems are one vital component of the entire system.

Land Access and Land Connection for Indigenous Peoples: There has also been a greater recognition among the group of the importance of being on the land and connecting to it.

### ACTION TRACKS

- ✓ Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- ✓ Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- ✓ Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

### KEYWORDS

- Finance
- ✓ Innovation
- ✓ Human rights
- ✓ Women & Youth Empowerment
- ✓ Policy
- ✓ Data & Evidence
- ✓ Governance
- Trade-offs
- ✓ Environment and Climate

## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

We questioned the term “resilience” from Indigenous versus western worldviews. Noting that Indigenous Peoples internationally are opposing “resilience terminology” when describing Indigenous Peoples, because it applauds people for surviving and makes it easy for policy makers to avoid looking for real solutions. It shifts responsibility for both the cause of the crises and the solutions. For example, the Maori criticism of resilience theories “is that by definition they assume an acceptance of responsibility for our position as disadvantaged individuals. That is by examining and developing theories and models of resilience we buy into the idea that this is the way it is and we need to simply get better at the idea of bouncing back and being resilient. Resistance, however, represents an approach of collective fightback, exposing the inequitable distribution of power, and actively opposing negative social, political, and economic influences.”

### Strengths and vulnerabilities within food systems:

For each of these topics, when in place and well-functioning these attributes are strengths. When these factors are missing, unresolved, and insufficient they are vulnerabilities within Indigenous Peoples’ food systems: water rights, land rights, seed security, community space for supportive, cultural connections, intergenerational connections and learning, respected Indigenous knowledge systems, and working with state/local/national municipalities. Furthermore, unresolved and perpetuated grief, trauma, stressors and shocks to Indigenous Peoples, their cultures, their lands/waters/natural resources, food systems/food sovereignty are all vulnerabilities within their food systems and the global food systems.

### Areas that need further exploration:

Some of the non-Indigenous participants on the call explained that they are involved with food systems work under government grants, which do not talk about trauma when it comes to healthier food environments. They are interested in figuring out ways to blend the government food system grant work with Indigenous perspective. Nutrition science background and also recognizes the grief and trauma of People of Color from religious institutions and interested on how to create spaces to address that trauma and set up opportunities to share.

### Practices that are needed for food system sustainability:

Culturally intact communities with access to water, land, seeds, technologies and traditional knowledge. Intact practices of passing on Indigenous knowledge and teachings from older generations to younger generations. Engaging with and using cultural practices that help community members move through and heal from trauma and grief, with historical and current traumas, grief, shocks and stressors.

### Stakeholders whose interests should be prioritized:

Indigenous Peoples of North America, and in all 7 Socio-Cultural regions of the world are Rights Holders who should be, and must be prioritized. Indigenous Peoples are key allies in achieving the outcomes of the Summit and all the Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, Indigenous Peoples are among the most affected with the most to lose with inaction or ineffective action when it comes to transforming food systems. Additionally, Indigenous participants emphasized how critical it is to make known and clear how they have been criminalized and harmed by disproportionate violence, arrests, and injustices. Indigenous participants in the dialogue expressed both the frustration and reality that Indigenous Peoples of the United States (and globally) are a “hidden pillar” that have given so much and been extracted from to make the United States of America (and global wealth) what it is today. There is a deep and harmful contradiction between all that Indigenous Peoples have given/all that has been extracted from their cultures, peoples, and natural resources and the severe lack of autonomy/health that Indigenous Peoples have in the United States. Indigenous participants asserted that healing with their cultures, language and ways of life intact they can help the larger work, but through colonialism they will still be unable to identify their true selves and capacity.

### ACTION TRACKS

✓	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
✓	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
✓	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

### KEYWORDS

	Finance	✓	Policy
✓	Innovation	✓	Data & Evidence
✓	Human rights	✓	Governance
✓	Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate