



Aboriginal Peoples

This section is for individuals and organizations that support, deliver, or provide environmental and sustainability education to **Aboriginal Peoples**.

Outcomes

Aboriginal Peoples will:

1. Value their cultures and preserve their **traditions**, especially concerning their connection to the environment

Sample Indicators:

- The percentage of **Aboriginal Peoples** who value and maintain a traditional connection to the land increases.
 - They pass on **traditional ecological knowledge**.
 - The environmental health of Aboriginal Peoples is markedly improved.
 - They integrate environmental issues with language and culture into programs in Aboriginal education.
2. Be full participants in environmental protection and advocacy efforts

Sample Indicators:

- Aboriginal Peoples play an integral role in environmental monitoring and decision-making processes.
- They are recognized as distinct representatives at environmental forums and meetings.
- They are represented and involved in environmental initiatives, programs, and processes, as well as the activities of environmental organizations.
- They research and submit proposals for environmental projects to appropriate government and non-governmental agencies.
- Aboriginal environmental values are protected.
- Aboriginal Peoples are employed as environmental professionals.



3. Be positive role models and mentors concerning environmental issues

Sample Indicators:

- Aboriginal Peoples adapt their living habits to respond to ecological concerns.
- Elders are advisors at environmental forums and meetings.
- Aboriginal Peoples write environmental articles on a regular basis.
- They are graduates of post-secondary Native studies and environmental studies programs, and they apply their professional skills in the community

Needs

Aboriginal Peoples need:

- Honour and respect for their traditional knowledge
- More human and financial resources to review and respond to environmental information
- More human and financial resources to deal with their environmental issues
- Expanded Aboriginal content in the kindergarten–grade twelve curriculum, which includes history, treaties, and current Aboriginal issues
- An increase in environmental and Native studies programs
- Improved support, resources, and programs to enrol and retain Aboriginal students in post-secondary education
- More flexible, open university environments that suit the needs of Native students
- Linguistic and culturally appropriate educational resource materials
- Specific and accurate resources based on the Aboriginal world-view of the environment
- Information that is current, scientifically accurate, and bias-balanced about environmental issues and emerging sustainable technologies and practices
- Support to review and act upon current information about environmental issues
- Opportunities to participate in public forums and public relations within the Native and non-native communities



Strategies

Programs, Projects, and Policies

1. Organize events for sharing knowledge with families and communities about living ecologically and taking positive action.
2. Offer programs in environmental and sustainability education, including week-long forums for First Nations youth, to learn about **traditional ecological knowledge** (TEK) and current environmental issues.
3. Create local, environmental, volunteer projects for Aboriginal Peoples.
4. Offer more experiential learning opportunities based on Aboriginal perspectives about the environment from kindergarten to grade twelve.
5. Offer more outdoor, environmental school field trips from kindergarten to post-secondary level.
6. Provide workshops to develop cross-cultural and environmental awareness.
7. Employ Aboriginal teachers and people in universities and colleges.

Resources

1. Create Native language and culture curriculum that involves both ecological concepts and traditional teachings about the environment.
2. Develop traditional language and cultural resources based on relationships with the environment.
3. Develop and disseminate resources related to Aboriginal world perspectives on the environment.
4. Create information sources about careers and training in the environment sector.
5. Provide and publicize a website that acts as a clearinghouse of environmental resources.
6. Develop a list of individuals, organizations, communities, and programs that provide positive environmental models and mentors.
7. Gather and offer information about environmental agencies, programs, organizations, issues, and alternatives, and list various environmental projects, such as water management planning and fish stock assessments.
8. Collaborate to design a communication system for Ontario's university and college counsellors, program coordinators, and other frontline workers to use themselves or with their students.

Support

1. Engage Aboriginal Peoples who have **holistic** and traditional knowledge in research and planning projects.
2. Develop a mechanism to evaluate Aboriginal participation in environmental monitoring and decision-making processes.



3. Monitor the health of the environment: observe and maintain data on the state of the animals, birds, fish, and other natural inhabitants of our environment for changes in their living habits and conditions.
4. Develop a State of the Environment Report using the expertise of Aboriginal Peoples.
5. Establish Aboriginal groups to write proposals to specific funding sources for Native initiatives.
6. Create funding sources to support Aboriginal Peoples in dealing with environmental issues, and for Aboriginal educational professionals at all levels.
7. Organize family-oriented events at the sites of environmental areas in jeopardy to fundraise for their protection.
8. Organize community poster drives to increase environmental awareness.
9. Offer rewards, incentives, and recognition to those who create and offer environmental projects to improve community environmental practices.
10. Offer rewards, incentives, and recognition to those individuals, organizations, businesses, and offices that engage in ecologically sustainable practices in their community.

Please see Appendix 1 for a list of useful websites.

