

PROJECT NAME: Resilience of Indigenous Peoples Traditional Food Systems

1. **Project duration:** 24 months

2. **Two-year budget (C\$):** C\$300,000

3. **Short statement of the issue(s) under this topic, need/gap identified; the project objective(s) and activities to address the issue; and expected outcomes and benefits/beneficiaries:**

Food security is one of the major global challenges facing humanity today. The climate crisis and the depletion of natural resources have put an increased strain on food production. Therefore, promoting and ensuring diverse and sustainable food systems that contribute to human well-being and avoid the deterioration of nature are now more than ever top priorities. The food systems of Indigenous Peoples have existed for thousands of years and are recognized for being sustainable and respectful of nature. While Indigenous peoples have demonstrated resilience and leadership in maintaining their traditional food systems, most North American Indigenous communities face traditional food system shortages and crises. Through the activities below, the CEC will support the greater inclusion of Indigenous leadership and Indigenous Knowledge, often referred to as Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), in activities and decisions affecting Indigenous Peoples' traditional food systems.

The main objectives of this initiative will be to:

- 1) Better understand the current state of traditional food systems of Indigenous Peoples in North America;
- 2) Support the revitalization of networks and relationships among Indigenous Peoples across North America to foster knowledge exchange and partnerships; and
- 3) Raise awareness and promote the respect of Indigenous resiliency and leadership in policies, activities, and decisions affecting Indigenous Peoples' traditional food systems.

The project's activities will include:

- a) A research report on the state of Indigenous Peoples' traditional food systems across North America, including an overview of these systems, examples, challenges, and opportunities (note: the report will not be exhaustive but will provide a snapshot that includes proportional geographic representation in all three countries);
- b) An Indigenous-led Forum on North American Indigenous Peoples' traditional food systems; and
- c) A final project report, with a summary of activities, findings, and recommendations, including possible areas of work for the CEC on the integration of Indigenous Knowledge (IK), Indigenous perspectives, and food system resiliency.

4. **Select the strategic pillar(s) from the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan that the project addresses:**

- Clean air, water, and soil
- Pollution prevention and abatement in the marine environment
- Circular economy and sustainable materials management
-

Shared ecosystems and species

Resilient economies and communities

Effective enforcement of environmental legislation

5. Describe how the project uses strategic cross-cutting approaches in its implementation: Innovative and effective solutions and/or diverse and inclusive stakeholder engagement and public participation (including gender and diversity effects and opportunities, and youth):

This project will focus not only on the identification of the resilient strategies and approaches taken by Indigenous peoples to maintain and advance their traditional food systems, but will take an innovative approach in fostering dialogue, relationships, and potential collaboration among Indigenous peoples in the three countries. These efforts will lead to strengthened and unified Indigenous voices that can improve the integration of IK into environmental activities and decisions.

The North American Indigenous Peoples' Traditional Food Systems Forum will allow for the exchange of experiences and knowledge related to traditional food systems and the appropriate inclusion and protection of IK, that encourages the participation of women, youth, children and elders. In particular, since many Indigenous cultures and communities have gender-specific roles and responsibilities related to land, water, ice, wildlife, and food, a gender-based approach that distinguishes and emphasizes the important role of women and elders in traditional food systems will be incorporated into the Forum.

6. Explain how the project can achieve more impact through trinational cooperation:

Based on the secondary research project and analysis of the current state of Indigenous Peoples traditional food systems in North America, the research will assist the three countries in identifying potential opportunities for shifts in policy and for collaboration. Under a trilateral ethical framework of reciprocity and respect, and with the participation of different Indigenous communities and other key actors, the Forum will provide a space for dialogue to promote knowledge regarding Indigenous food systems and allowing participants the opportunity to exchange their knowledge, experiences, and strategies for the recovery and preservation of their IK.

7. Describe how the project complements, or avoids duplication with, other national or international work:

Although there is information on the resilience of traditional food systems worldwide, there are few reports with a trilateral focus. Indigenous peoples across North America historically had trading routes and relations with other Indigenous peoples that were not limited to the current boundaries of Canada, Mexico, and the United States. Most initiatives, forums, or gatherings on this topic are domestic in scope, which limits the ability to foster transboundary dialogue and collaboration. This project provides an opportunity for Indigenous peoples across North America to learn from one another and revitalize historic transboundary connections.

8. Describe how the project engages Indigenous Knowledge (IK) experts or Indigenous Peoples and communities, if applicable:

The project will be driven by the priorities, interests, rights, leadership, and knowledge systems of Indigenous Peoples of North America. Indigenous cultures, languages, and ceremony will be featured throughout the project, including the Forum. Through the North American Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems Forum, ideas and best practices will be generated and promoted to support and promote the resilience of Indigenous traditional food systems, which will generate a better appreciation of Indigenous perspectives for environmental management in North America.

9. Describe how the project engages new audiences or partners, if applicable:

The project, and specifically the Forum, will help create a broader platform for dialogue between Indigenous Peoples and other key actors, including nongovernmental organizations, academic institutions, government, and research agencies, around the resilience of Indigenous food systems, while recognizing their needs and aspirations. In this initiative, women will play a crucial role in food systems, as they are often the ones who learn traditional practices and pass the knowledge along. The CEC can support the implementation of outreach activities with women and girls.

The project, including the Forum, will also engage and examine economic Indigenous businesses (i.e., Indigenous agricultural and farming industries) that focus on traditional food systems. These partners could raise awareness of opportunities for trade and the appropriate inclusion of IK in trilateral trade affecting Indigenous traditional food systems.

10. Identify the designated partner agencies or organizations committed to implementing this project, as well as other organizations that could be involved or benefit from it, including through outreach efforts, collaborations or partnerships (e.g., federal agencies, other levels of government, academia, NGOs, the private sector, civil society, and youth):

Lead agencies or organizations	Country
Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources (Semarnat)	Mexico
National Institute for Indigenous Peoples (INPI)	Mexico
Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development	Mexico
National Water Commission (Conagua)	Mexico
Undersecretary of Food Self-Sufficiency, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	Mexico
National Institute of Forestry, Agriculture and Livestock Research (INIFAP)	Mexico
Office of International and Tribal Affairs (OITA) of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	United States
Natural Resources Canada	Canada
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)	Canada

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)	Canada
--	--------

Other potential organizations or individuals, such as:	Country
Research centers and universities on Indigenous Peoples and food sovereignty [Ecosur, Cinvestav]	Canada, Mexico, United States
NGOs	Canada, Mexico, United States
Provincial and state agencies and organizations	Canada, Mexico, United States
Private sector representatives (to be determined)	Canada, Mexico, United States
Assembly of First Nations	Canada
Métis National Council	Canada
National Institute of Ecology and Climate Change (<i>Instituto Nacional de Ecología y Cambio Climático—INECC, Semarnat</i>)	Mexico
Crown-Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada	Canada
The Centre for Indigenous Peoples' Nutrition and Environment (CINE), McGill University	Canada
Center for Indigenous and Environmental Studies	Canada

11. In the following table, describe: the project objective(s) and the activities and subtasks planned to achieve the objective(s); the corresponding outputs, expected results and how they will be measured (performance measures); baselines (if known), and targets by end of the project; and the timeline and budget:

OBJECTIVE 1	Document the state of Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems in North America, including examples of challenges currently experienced by Indigenous Peoples with respect to their traditional food systems.
Activity 1 Budget \$60,000	Compile existing literature regarding the use of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) in Indigenous Peoples' food systems throughout North America.
Output(s)	Report on Indigenous Peoples' traditional food systems: Secondary research will be conducted highlighting the importance of Indigenous traditional food systems across North America, their current states, plans and approaches for maintaining the food systems, identifying

	challenges, opportunities, and successful examples.	
Expected results, performance measures	Recommendations on how IK, wisdom, and practices of Indigenous Peoples can be applied to food processes in North America. This report will also help define the main topics to be addressed during the Indigenous Forum.	
Baseline (current status), if known	Indigenous Peoples, their knowledge, wisdom, and practices, provide evidence on the importance of resilient food systems and how they may help to preserve biodiversity, ecosystems, linguistic diversity, and traditions. However, we are lacking a general overview of the state of Indigenous traditional food systems in North America.	
Target	An analysis that illustrates the current state of traditional Indigenous food systems in North America. Recommendations for the North American Indigenous Peoples Traditional Food Systems Forum’s participants, objectives and design.	
Subtask 1.1	Collect and document existing information that is developed by or in partnership with Indigenous Peoples regarding traditional food systems of Indigenous Peoples in the three North American countries.	Estimated period: January–October 2024
OBJECTIVE 2	Create a space for dialogue to promote traditional Indigenous practices, and the sharing of traditional knowledge on food systems through a Forum on North American Indigenous Peoples’ Food Systems.	
Activity 2 Budget \$210,000	Organization of the North American Indigenous Peoples’ Food Systems Forum.	
Output(s)	An Indigenous partner to host the Forum will be sought in one of the three countries. The public Forum will serve as a platform for the exchange of knowledge and experiences on Indigenous Peoples’ traditional food systems in North America.	
Expected results, performance measures	Participation of Indigenous communities and governments, nongovernmental organizations, academia, national and subnational government representatives, and other key actors in the Forum.	

Baseline (current status), if known	N/A	
Target	By creating a platform for dialogue, the Forum will disseminate efforts to conserve and revitalize traditional Indigenous food systems. It will provide an opportunity for Indigenous Peoples to share their knowledge, experiences, and best practices, and to learn from each other. This exchange of knowledge can lead to the development of innovative solutions and strategies to address the challenges facing Indigenous food systems in the region.	
Subtask 2.1	Open call to Indigenous communities and representatives to participate in the Forum and share their experiences.	Estimated period: October–December 2024
Subtask 2.2	Selection of topics of interest	Estimated period: January–February 2025
Subtask 2.3	Organization of the Forum	Estimated period: Mid-late October 2025
OBJECTIVE 3	Assess potential opportunities to integrate TEK, Indigenous Peoples' perspectives and traditional food practices in CEC operations and across North America	
Activity 3 Budget \$30,000	Compile, analyze information and prepare a final report describing the outcomes and findings obtained from the previous activities, including experiences shared during the Forum.	
Outputs	<p>The report will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The analysis of Activity 1 and Activity 2. - Specific recommendations to the CEC on how to become more involved in Traditional Ecological Knowledge and issues pertaining to traditional Indigenous food systems 	
Expected results and performance indicators	The final report will provide next steps for applying Indigenous perspectives and participation in relation to food systems and their implementation in the three countries, including challenges and opportunities, and help inform future CEC initiatives.	
Baseline (current status), if known	N/A	
Target	To have a clearer picture on how to integrate Indigenous approaches and IK in the projects and activities of the organization.	

Subtask 3.1	Disseminate information on the work carried out by participating Indigenous communities—with prior authorization/permissions, including the final report, throughout the CEC's communication platforms.	Estimated period: November-December 2025
--------------------	---	---

12. Describe post-project expected impacts:

Expected impact (by when: month, year)	SMART performance measure(s)
The project will ensure a better understanding of the key elements that have enabled or limited the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge and practices related to food systems, in North American political and scientific spheres.	<p>Number of publications that have used Indigenous approaches and perspectives.</p> <p>Number of times Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and IK have been used as part of CEC activities and policy recommendations.</p>
<p>The Forum will highlight Indigenous food systems perspectives in relation to their traditional knowledge in the North American region.</p> <p>The Forum will be a gathering of Indigenous peoples across North America to showcase and celebrate their resiliency in protecting or revitalizing their traditional food systems and foster collaborative relationships between Indigenous peoples.</p>	<p>Number of participating North American Indigenous groups in the Forum.</p> <p>Number of partnerships, networking or collaboration opportunities stemming from the Forum.</p>
<p>By the end of 2024, shared experiences will contribute to a multi-stakeholder project platform for the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge.</p> <p>Recommendations to Indigenous peoples, national and subnational government governments, academia, industry, and stakeholders will be provided to promote greater inclusion of Indigenous voices and IK in environmental activities and decisions.</p>	<p>Lessons learned, challenges, and ways to overcome barriers for the integration of Indigenous knowledge, wisdom, and practices are put into action.</p> <p>Statistics and traffic reports from the TEKEG online portal.</p> <p>Outreach campaigns are implemented, with emphasis placed on women and girls.</p> <p>Strategic considerations and recommendations to promote the respect of Indigenous resiliency and leadership in CEC and national and subnational government policies, activities, and decisions affecting Indigenous Peoples' traditional food systems.</p> <p>Implementation plans for the forthcoming CEC Indigenous Strategy</p>

	and Protocol will include reporting requirements for CEC activities and policy recommendations.
--	---