Recommended books on Indigenous Peoples

By IFAD

April 22, 2019.- The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues [1] (UNPFII) will be held on 22 April to 3 May in New York. Here is our shortlist of books on the diverse issues affecting Indigenous Peoples around the world that will be discussed at the Forum.

If you have some more suggestions let us know on Twitter [2].

The Indigenous World 2018 [3]

This compilation by IWGIA [4] is the result of a collaborative effort between indigenous and non-indigenous activists and scholars who voluntarily share their valuable insights and analysis. For 32 years the purpose of The Indigenous World has been to give a comprehensive yearly overview of the developments indigenous peoples have experienced. Rising tensions between States and indigenous peoples are reaching a tipping point and The Indigenous World 2018 adds to the documented records, highlighting the increase in attacks and killings of indigenous peoples while defending their lands.

Indigenous Youth in the Brazilian Amazonia - Changing Lived Worlds by Pirjo Virtanen [5]

How do Amazonian native young people perceive, question, and negotiate the new kinds of social and cultural situations in which they find themselves? Virtanen looks at how current power relations constituted by ethnic recognition, new social contacts, and cooperation with different institutions have shaped the current native youth in Amazonia.

Indigenous Peoples' food systems: the many dimensions of culture, diversity and environment for nutrition and health [6] by Harriet Kuhnlein, Bill Erasmus and
Dina Spigelski

Food systems of Indigenous Peoples who retain connection to long-evolved cultures and patterns of living in local ecosystems present a treasure of knowledge that contributes to well-being and health, and can benefit all humankind. This book seeks to define and describe the diversity in food system use, nutrition and health in 12 rural case studies of Indigenous Peoples in different parts of the world as a window to global Indigenous Peoples’ circumstances.

International handbook of research on indigenous entrepreneurship [7] by Léo-Paul Dana and Robert B. Anderson

The comprehensive and thoroughly accessible International Handbook of Research on Indigenous Entrepreneurship aims to develop a multidisciplinary theory explaining entrepreneurship as a function of cultural perceptions of opportunity. The Handbook presents a multitude of fascinating, superbly illustrated studies on the facets of entrepreneurship amongst indigenous peoples.

Indigenous cultures in an interconnected world [8] by Clair Smith and Graeme K. Ward

Indigenous Cultures in an Interconnected World is a comprehensive, thought-provoking discussion of the challenges that globalization presents for Indigenous peoples everywhere. It outlines successful strategies that have been used by Indigenous peoples to promote their identities and cultural values. It looks at their role as equal and active participants and, indeed, as innovators and leaders in an interconnected world. The authors present a truly global perspective on Indigenous issues. They feature a cross-disciplinary integration that takes a holistic approach and includes vignettes of Indigenous cultural practices.


This report provides an overview of the present state of play of the extractive industries in relation to Indigenous Peoples, taking as its point of departure the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in 2007, together with the 2009 UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues International (UNPFII) Expert Group Meeting on Extractive Industries, Indigenous Peoples’ Rights and Corporate Social Responsibility, and the 2009 International Conference on Indigenous Peoples and the Extractive Industries. The report is divided into four chapters and concludes with a set of recommendations.

Land rights of Indigenous Peoples in Africa [10] by Albert Kwokwo Barume

This book looks at the issue of land and land rights in the context of Central, Eastern and Southern Africa. A special focus of the book is to analyse some of the land cases filed by indigenous peoples in order to draw some lessons learned and recommendations that may benefit indigenous peoples and their organizations in the future, but also help those who want to support their cause. In this regard, the book also intends to consider existing international legal frameworks relevant to the rights of indigenous peoples over their lands in order to see how African indigenous peoples can make better use of international law and existing jurisprudence to defend or protect their rights in courts.


Higher temperatures, wildlife extinction, rising sea levels, droughts, floods, heat-related diseases and economic losses are among the consequences of climate change. Climate change disproportionally affects the poorest and most marginalized communities living in vulnerable regions, among them indigenous peoples, whose livelihoods depend on natural resources.
Indigenous Peoples’ knowledge can provide important insights into the processes of observation, adaptation and mitigation of climate change consequences.


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