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INDIGENOUS ENVIRONMENTALISM: RESTORING BALANCE FOR HEALTH AND SUSTAINABILITY
*Indigenous-led public health organizations partner to explore pathways
to build climate and ecosystem resilience.*

TUCSON, AZ – Indigenous communities are among those most adversely affected by climate change, despite contributing very little to its causes. Two Indigenous-led organizations: Red Star International, Inc. and Seven Directions, A Center for Indigenous Public Health based at the University of Washington (Partners), seek to identify ways to better connect Indigenous knowledge, practices and voices across the globe to inform regulatory and policy approaches to climate mitigation and environmental protections.

Through support from a grant from the [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#), the Partners have launched an exploratory- and participatory-process to identify pathways to help stop ecosystem collapse and move towards sustained health equity across the globe. According to a recent [United Nations, Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services](#) (IPBES) report, biodiversity is declining less rapidly in lands that are traditionally owned, managed, used or occupied by Indigenous people. “Colonial mindsets continue to be centered on resource-taking. Outside the U.S., Indigenous peoples have acted to mitigate and restore ecosystem balance through the institutionalization of Indigenous climate approaches. We need to do the same here at home,” says Aleena Kawe, Red Star CEO, and project lead.

The UN IPBES Report also cites the importance of promoting inclusive governance approaches through stakeholder engagement and the inclusion of Indigenous peoples and local communities to ensure equity and participation. Dr. Myra Parker, Seven Directions, Executive Director and project co-lead, expressed, “A major limitation to the report is the continued invisibility of Indigenous voice and participation in conducting the assessment, drafting the results, and disseminating its findings. We need to be more than “engaged”, we need to lead.”

The Partners are committed to ensuring the wellbeing of humanity and the environment through a systems-oriented approach to knowledge creation, applied thought and collective action.

[Red Star International, Inc.](#) is a non-profit organization based in Tucson, Arizona, with an office in New Zealand. Advancing Indigenous self-determination for healthy and vibrant Indigenous communities is its mission.

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