



## EducationForClimate - Youth Climate LAB 3

### How to include Traditional Ecological Knowledge into learning communities

#### Practical recommendations

The following practical recommendations have been co-created during the [EducationForClimate Coalition's 2025 Youth Climate Lab](#).

#### About

##### Title

*Practical Recommendations for Integrating Traditional Ecological Knowledge into learning communities*

##### Summary

*This document presents the outcomes of the Practical Recommendations made during the 3rd edition of the Youth Climate LAB. Traditional Ecological Knowledge should be integrated into learning communities as it promotes social justice, supports environmental sustainability, and enriches education. Despite its importance, TEK often receives little attention. The main reasons include limited awareness, lack of participation of indigenous communities in education, absence of TEK in school curricula, and limited availability of learning and e-learning resources. This document highlights these challenges and proposes solutions based on cooperation, intergenerational dialogue, and active participation of all societal groups.*

##### Keywords

*Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Intergenerationality, Collaboration, Inclusion, Education, Dialogue*

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## Introduction

The reflections during the LAB underscored the need to move beyond seeing TEK as a niche or optional area of knowledge, and instead recognize it as a fundamental resource for climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and intergenerational learning.

TEK is not simply a collection of practices but a way of seeing the relationship between humans and ecosystems, an approach validated by ecological sciences and supported by behavioural models showing that knowledge becomes transformative when it is contextual, participatory, and connected to lived experience.

School curricula today remain largely exam-centered, standardized, and compartmentalized, excluding holistic perspectives. To address this, TEK must be integrated into education systems and anchored in political agendas.

This document includes four Practical Recommendations created during the 3rd edition of the Youth Climate LAB. Each recommendation includes the general proposal, suggested activities, level of difficulty, and target groups.

### Recommendation 1 - Change the education orientation

*One of the main problems of integrating Traditional Ecological Knowledge is the difficulties in implementing changes due to bureaucracy, standardisation of education. We can tackle this problem by changing the exams centred structure of curriculum.*

#### Activity 1

- *Include traditional ecological communities to organize collaborative workshops or dedicated lectures to make kids more involved to be able to integrate TEK.*
- *Adding games and storytelling in traditional classes (history, science, chemistry, art).*
- *Turning theory into practice (for example by taking field trips to natural sites and engage in traditional indigenous activities that could be integrated into traditional classes).*
- *Include art as a valuable integration in learning modules.*
- *Present them to policy makers so that they can see the importance of TEK.*

*Add observation or questions for learning evaluation system so that the teachers can test the knowledge of the students after all of the activities.*

Level of difficulty:

*Medium to hard*

Target:

*Policy makers and Educators*

### Recommendation 2 - Be more collaborative with the indigenous and local people

*Another problem is the lack of knowledge on the topic by educators and students.*

*This can be solved by involving local and indigenous people as main teachers or collaborators in teaching these methods.*

#### Activity 2

- *Add photos, videos or successful stories in each class as an inspiration to remind the students about the importance of TEK.*

- Interviews with indigenous and local people in classrooms.
- Small scale activities for example field trips including the indigenous people.

*Students will be active in the TEK process. It boosts activity in participation. This action can have a positive impact in reducing the intergenerational gap and embracing dialogue.*

Level of difficulty:

*Medium to hard*

Target:

*Educators and Policy Makers*

### **Recommendation 3 - Learning materials focused on TEK available for everyone**

*Because of the limited resources provided there is a lack of knowledge on the topic by the students. This can be tackled through creating traditional and e-libraries.*

#### **Activity 3**

*Includes donated learning material by indigenous communities and drawings made by students related to TEK. This way youth learns how to research and have a broader aspect of TEK from different regions all over the world.*

Level of difficulty:

*Easy to medium*

Target:

*Civil society, Youth, Policy Makers and Educators*

### **Recommendation 4 - Raising awareness for TEK**

TEK's invisibility in mainstream political and public discourse can lead to lack of knowledge. That's why it is important for civil society organisations (ex. NGOs targeting youth & educators) to craft engaging messages using both traditional and modern media and methods to advocate why TEK should be present in political agendas. By this, TEK is being introduced to the general public, and it may lead to social and political change.

#### **Activity 4**

The methods used for this cause can differ, including storytelling, interactive workshops, small-scale activities, inspiring interviews and events like festivals.

Level of difficulty:

*Medium to hard*

Target:

*Civil society and Policy Makers*

## **Conclusion**

Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) can be among the solutions for a greener, sustainable way of production and consumerism. TEK education must earn its place in the educational process, supported by cooperation among policy makers, educators, civil society and youth. Only through this cooperation can we expect TEK to gain significance in today's society.

Raising awareness, engaging indigenous and local communities, combining theory with practice, and fostering research are key steps in integrating TEK into schools and learning communities. This process enables the youth's active participation, leading to a curious, active and dynamic youth that can be the bridge between traditional and modern science.

By breaking social, economic, and generational gaps, and promoting intergenerational dialogue and inclusion, TEK can transform education into a driver of climate resilience and social justice.