

Article

Reviving the Sacred: How Indigenous Knowledge Systems Serve as a Path for Global Security, Peace and Prosperity

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Abstract

Planetary health, the interdependence of human well-being and the integrity of Earth's natural systems requires frameworks capable of integrating ecological stewardship, relational governance, intergenerational accountability, and equitable participation. This paper argues that Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS), long marginalized by colonial policies of suppression and assimilation, offer precisely such frameworks. Drawing on illustrative examples from the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, Amazonian Indigenous nations, Maasai communities of East Africa, the Mapuche of South America, and the first Global Summit on Indigenous Peacebuilding, the paper identifies three interlocking contributions of IKS to planetary health: (1) intergenerational ecological stewardship; (2) relational governance and community-centered peacebuilding; and (3) gender-balanced authority as a condition for flourishing. The paper concludes that the integration of IKS into planetary health scholarship and practice is not an exercise in cultural representation but a strategic necessity for addressing the interconnected crises of ecological degradation, social fragmentation, and institutional short-termism that define the present era.

Keywords: indigenous knowledge systems; assimilation policies; conflict resolution; cultural revitalization; indigenous geopolitics; diplomacy; peacebuilding; traditional ecological knowledge; global security

1. Introduction: Planetary Health and the Missing Inheritance

Planetary health, as defined by the Rockefeller Foundation Lancet Commission, encompasses the achievement of the highest attainable standard of health, wellbeing, and equity worldwide through judicious attention to political, economic, and social systems that shape the future of humanity and the Earth's natural systems that define the safe environmental conditions within which humans can flourish.

This definition is extensive, but its operationalization in scholarship and practice has remained incomplete. The frameworks most commonly mobilized in planetary health discourse to include systems ecology, epidemiology, global health governance, and sustainability draw overwhelmingly from Western scientific traditions. Yet for thousands of years, Indigenous Peoples have developed and refined knowledge systems organized precisely around the interdependence of human health, social organization, ecological integrity, and spiritual well-being. These systems are not historical artifacts. They are living bodies of knowledge, currently maintained by nearly 500 million Indigenous Peoples across 90 nations [1]. Peoples who, despite constituting roughly five percent of the global population, steward approximately 80 percent of the planet's remaining biodiversity [2].

The exclusion of Indigenous Knowledge Systems from planetary health discourse is not simply an oversight. It is a legacy of deliberate colonial policy. From the 19th century



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through the late 20th century, governments in the United States, Canada, Australia, and elsewhere enforced assimilationist policies designed to eradicate Indigenous languages, spiritual practices, and knowledge traditions. In the United States, more than 500 Indian boarding schools operated between 1801 and 1970 with the explicit goal of ‘civilizing’ Native children through forced removal from families and communities, prohibition of Indigenous languages and ceremonies, and the severing of intergenerational knowledge transmission [3]. Canada’s residential school system, described in 2015 by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada as a form of cultural genocide, operated for over 150 years. These policies generated what scholars describe as accumulated historical trauma. A multigenerational wound with documented consequences for mental health, cultural continuity, and community resilience that persists to the present day.

The significance of this history for planetary health is direct: the knowledge systems most capable of modeling sustainable relationships between human communities and ecological systems were among the principal targets of colonial suppression. That these systems have survived and that their holders have continued to steward landscapes of extraordinary biodiversity constitutes a form of resilience with profound implications for the field. This paper argues that the inclusion of IKS in planetary health scholarship is not a matter of cultural sensitivity but of epistemological completeness. Planetary health cannot be fully realized if the frameworks it employs systematically exclude knowledge traditions whose foundational orientation is precisely the interdependence of human and non-human flourishing [4].

The paper proceeds as follows. Section 2 establishes the conceptual framework, defining key terms and situating IKS within the relational ontologies that distinguish it from dominant paradigms. Section 3 examines intergenerational ecological stewardship through three geographically distinct examples selected to illustrate complementary dimensions of IKS that include the Haudenosaunee Seven Generations framework, Amazonian Indigenous land management, and Maasai pastoralism. Section 4 analyzes Indigenous peacebuilding and governance through the lens of community consultation, restorative justice, and the 2024 Global Summit on Indigenous Peacebuilding. Section 5 addresses the role of gender-balanced authority in Indigenous governance as a structural condition for planetary flourishing. Section 6 discusses implications for planetary health scholarship and practice, including the challenges of integration and the requirements of epistemic justice. Section 7 concludes.

2. Conceptual Framework: Defining Indigenous Peoples, Planetary Health, and Relational Ontology

2.1. Defining Indigenous Peoples

The term ‘Indigenous Peoples’ carries both descriptive and legal weight. In international law, the working definition developed by Special Rapporteur José Martínez Cobo for the United Nations remains foundational, Indigenous Peoples are communities having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, considering themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, and determined to preserve, develop, and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories and their ethnic identity. This definition is anchored in self-identification, historical continuity, and relationship to ancestral land without establishing rigid criteria that would exclude communities across diverse legal and political contexts.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) builds on this framework, affirming the rights of Indigenous Peoples to self-determination, to maintain and transmit their cultural heritage, and to free, prior, and informed consent

regarding decisions affecting their lands and resources [5]. Critically, this paper does not treat Indigenous Peoples as a uniform category. The knowledge systems discussed included the Haudenosaunee, Amazonian, Maasai, and the Mapuche. Each is a distinct, context-specific tradition chosen to illustrate particular dimensions of the paper's argument. Each example is explained in terms of its relevance and the limits of what it can represent.

2.2. Indigenous Knowledge Systems: Structure and Epistemology

Where Western scientific paradigms typically segment knowledge into discrete disciplines and distinguish politics from ecology and economics from culture, Indigenous knowledge is typically organized around what scholars describe as relational ontology. An understanding that humans exist within networks of reciprocal relationships involving land, water, animals, ancestors, and spiritual forces [6]. From this ontological foundation, knowledge is not abstract. Instead, it carries responsibilities and obligations. Questions of epistemology are inseparable from questions of ethics and governance [7].

This relational orientation has direct implications for planetary health. Where dominant frameworks frequently treat nature as an object of study, extraction, or management, Indigenous knowledge systems treat the natural world as a relational partner, one that carries moral status and to which humans bear obligations. This is not merely philosophical. It has produced empirically demonstrable outcomes in ecological stewardship, as reviewed below. The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report explicitly acknowledges that Indigenous and local knowledge 'provides critical insights for understanding climate change impacts and developing context-specific adaptation strategies,' though institutional mechanisms for integration remain underdeveloped [8].

2.3. The Planetary Health Frame Applied

Planetary health scholarship increasingly recognizes that ecological degradation, social inequity, and institutional failure are not separate phenomena but expressions of a single underlying crisis. The breakdown of sustainable relationships between human communities and the systems that support life. This paper situates IKS within this framework by examining three interconnected contributions: ecological stewardship as an expression of relational responsibility; peacebuilding and governance as mechanisms for sustaining community and ecosystem integrity; and gender-balanced authority as a structural condition for equitable and resilient decision-making. Each of these contributions maps directly onto recognized dimensions of planetary health, including ecological interdependence, governance for sustainability, cultural values, and human and planetary flourishing.

3. Intergenerational Ecological Stewardship: Three Illustrative Examples

3.1. The Haudenosaunee Seven Generations Framework

The Haudenosaunee Confederacy, known as the People of the Longhouse, comprising the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, and Tuscarora nations, is selected as a primary example here because its governance framework, the Great Law of Peace, represents one of the most fully documented and institutionally developed expressions of intergenerational ecological responsibility in the historical record. The Great Law has governed the Haudenosaunee for an estimated millennium and explicitly requires that leaders evaluate how their decisions will affect the well-being of people seven generations into the future [9].

This principle commonly called Seven Generation Thinking transforms the temporal horizon of governance. Rather than optimizing for immediate political advantage or seasonal resource extraction, it mandates consideration of cumulative, multigenerational

consequences. In the planetary health context, this framework directly addresses one of the field's central challenges: the mismatch between ecological timescales and political decision cycles. Current policy instruments that include electoral mandates, fiscal years, and quarterly budget reporting systematically discount long-term ecological costs. Seven Generation Thinking institutionalizes the opposite orientation, requiring that such costs be made visible and politically accountable [10].

The relevance of this framework extends beyond the Haudenosaunee context. Seven Generation Thinking has informed contemporary governance innovations in multiple jurisdictions, including Canadian public finance legislation, UNDP guidance on Indigenous participation in environmental governance, and the emerging practice of 'generational impact assessments' advocated by Indigenous-led mining reform movements in Latin America. The selection of this example is therefore intended to illustrate not a single cultural tradition but a governance logic with documented applicability across institutional contexts.

3.2. *The Amazon: Biodiversity Stewardship as Sacred Responsibility*

The Brazilian Amazon is selected as a second example because it offers the most rigorously documented empirical record of differential outcomes in Indigenous versus non-Indigenous land management. In regions under Indigenous governance, deforestation rates are less than 10 percent of those in non-Indigenous areas. A difference attributable not only to protective legislation but to fundamentally distinct resource management philosophies [11].

Amazonian Indigenous peoples possess ecological knowledge of extraordinary sophistication, including understanding of nurse species relationships that support forest regeneration, of animal migration patterns that track seasonal and climatic changes, and of human activity thresholds calibrated to maintain ecological balance [12]. As Brazil's inaugural Minister of Indigenous Peoples, Sonia Guajajara, has articulated, 'For non-Indigenous observers, the forest often represents timber, land for cattle ranching, and resources for extraction. In contrast, Indigenous communities perceive the forest as a source of medicine, nourishment, education, spiritual connection, and, ultimately, as the essence of life itself. This is our place of worship.' [13].

This distinction in orientation between the forest as resource and the forest as relational partner is precisely the ontological shift that planetary health scholarship identifies as necessary for sustainable ecological governance. The Amazon case demonstrates that this shift, when embedded in governance practice, produces measurable biodiversity outcomes. It also illustrates the risk as Indigenous land rights face ongoing legal and political challenge; the ecosystems they sustain face accelerating pressure.

3.3. *The Maasai: Pastoralism as Adaptive Planetary Stewardship*

The Maasai communities of Kenya and Tanzania are selected to illustrate the application of IKS outside of forest ecosystems and in the context of human–wildlife coexistence. A dimension of planetary health of growing significance, particularly as species range fluctuates and climate-driven habitat changes intensify conflict between agricultural communities and wildlife populations [14].

Maasai pastoral traditions involve the seasonal rotation of cattle herds across landscapes in patterns that prevent overgrazing while maintaining grasslands critical to both livestock and native wildlife. Ecologists describe the resulting environment as a 'cultural landscape' shaped by human activity yet maintaining ecological integrity [15]. Maasai pastoralists demonstrate the capacity to forecast rainfall patterns months in advance by ob-

serving animal behavior, plant phenology, and atmospheric indicators, a form of ecological monitoring that has been formally integrated into regional climate modeling [16].

The Maasai example is significant for planetary health for two reasons. First, it demonstrates the integration of empirical observation, cultural practice, and ethical orientation that characterizes IKS across diverse biomes. Reinforcing the argument that the planetary health relevance of IKS is not specific to one region or ecosystem type. Second, it illustrates the concept of the cultural landscape as a form of ecosystem governance, one in which human and non-human flourishing are understood as interdependent rather than competing.

3.4. The Mapuche and Critical Minerals: Indigenous Sovereignty at the Planetary Frontier

The Mapuche, the largest Indigenous nation in Chile and Argentina, are selected to address a dimension of planetary health that has received insufficient attention in current research that includes the intersection of Indigenous sovereignty, mineral extraction, and energy transition. As demand for lithium and other critical minerals accelerates in response to national security policies and global decarbonization goals, the territories of Mapuche and other Indigenous nations are under intensifying pressure [17].

The Mapuche oppose extraction initiatives that proceed without free, prior, and informed consent, and that fail to account for the sacred and ecological significance of the land to be affected. In regions across Chile, Bolivia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indigenous peoples are calling for ‘generational impact assessments’ prior to extraction. Thereby requiring states and corporations to evaluate not only immediate economic returns but also hundred-year ecological and cultural consequences [18].

This example illustrates a crucial point for planetary health governance. The energy transition, if pursued without Indigenous consent and knowledge integration, risks reproducing extractive relationships under a green banner. Indigenous sovereignty is not an obstacle to planetary health—it is a structural requirement.

4. Peacebuilding, Governance, and Planetary Flourishing

4.1. The Logic of Indigenous Consultation

Indigenous conflict resolution frameworks share a common structural feature that distinguishes them from dominant Western models. These models prioritize the restoration of relationships over the assignment of blame, and the achievement of consensus over the determination of winners and losers. Across diverse traditions, this orientation is expressed through deliberative practices that bring together those harmed, those responsible, and the broader community in structured processes of dialogue and accountability [19].

Central to many of these frameworks is the principle of consultation. Understood not as a procedural requirement for stakeholder input but as a sacred and cooperative process through which collective insight is pursued. In contrast to adversarial debate, consultation in Indigenous epistemology encourages participants to offer their perspectives with humility and detachment, without self-interest, seeking what ‘Abdu’l-Bahá describes as the condition in which the ‘shining spark of truth emerges from the clash of differing opinions.’ [20].

The relevance of this model lies in its applicability to precisely the governance challenges that undermine planetary health. The management of shared resources under conditions of conflict, the integration of diverse knowledge systems and interests, and the cultivation of sustained collective commitment to long-term ecological outcomes. Where adversarial governance models tend to produce fragmented, short-term, and politically contingent agreements, consultative models create conditions for durable, community-supported action.

4.2. Peacemaking Circles and Restorative Justice

Peacemaking Circles represent one of the most widely documented Indigenous conflict resolution practices, employed across many distinct Indigenous nations in North America and beyond. In these forums, victims, perpetrators, and community members come together to address harm collectively, not through punishment alone, but through processes designed to repair social bonds, acknowledge accountability, and address underlying causes of conflict [21].

Peacemaking Circles are selected because they represent a systematic rather than anecdotal governance innovation with documented applications in contemporary justice systems, including Canadian provincial courts, tribal justice programs in the United States, and school-based conflict resolution programs internationally [22]. Their relevance to planetary health lies in their capacity to address the social fragmentation and loss of community cohesion that both drive and result from ecological degradation, displacement, and resource conflict.

4.3. Rwanda's Gacaca Courts: IKS at National Scale

Rwanda's adaptation of the traditional Gacaca system following the 1994 genocide provides the most extensively documented large-scale application of Indigenous restorative justice principles in the contemporary period. Rather than relying exclusively on the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, a distant formal mechanism, the Gacaca process brought justice into the communities most devastated by the atrocities, through open forums in which survivors, perpetrators, and community members collectively reconstructed events, identified responsibility, and determined accountability [23].

As Gacaca scholar Dr. Phil Clark observes, 'Gacaca addresses the conflict in terms of the people that lived and witnessed it firsthand.' The process was not without limitation. Critics have noted its inconsistent application and the pressure placed on survivors to participate in reintegration processes before adequate healing had occurred [24]. Yet its legacy lies in demonstrating that community-centered restorative frameworks can operate on a national scale. Producing forms of accountability and social reconstruction that punitive systems alone cannot achieve [25].

The planetary health implications are significant as post-conflict recovery and community-level resilience are increasingly recognized as preconditions for effective ecological governance. Communities fractured by violence, displacement, and institutional distrust cannot sustain the collective action required for long-term stewardship. Indigenous restorative justice frameworks address this precondition directly.

4.4. The First Global Summit on Indigenous Peacebuilding

In April 2024, the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) convened the first Global Summit on Indigenous Peacebuilding, bringing together more than 100 Indigenous representatives from 30 countries and territories. This landmark event, and more recent follow-up initiatives, developed under the leadership of Binalakshmi Nepram, former Senior Advisor for Indigenous Issues at USIP, provided the first dedicated international forum for sharing and affirming Indigenous peacebuilding traditions on a global scale [26].

Participants presented frameworks including Peacemaking Circles, the Great Law of Peace of the Haudenosaunee, the female-led Siingee Institute from Ethiopia, Manaakitanga and Whanaungatanga traditions from Aotearoa New Zealand, and the Loiyunmba Shinyen—a 12th-century written constitution from the Meitei people of Manipur, India. The Summit produced the International Declaration on Indigenous Peacebuilding, signed by representatives from seven socio-cultural regions and subsequently shared as a foundation

for eight separate articles on Indigenous peacebuilding with the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at its 23rd Session [27].

The Summit's outcomes are significant for planetary health in two respects. First, it demonstrates the institutional feasibility of elevating IKS into global governance forums not as auxiliary input but as core contributions. Second, it underscores the empirical significance of the observation that more than 80 percent of the world's conflicts take place in regions of high biodiversity, which are also disproportionately home to Indigenous Peoples [28]. The connection between conflict, Indigenous sovereignty, and ecological integrity is not coincidental. It reflects the same dynamics of dispossession and resource extraction that drive both violence and environmental degradation. Peacebuilding that centers Indigenous governance is, simultaneously, a strategy for planetary health. Despite this longstanding stewardship, Indigenous peoples have historically been systematically excluded from the formal arenas, international negotiations, and peace summits where decisions are made that directly impact their lands, communities, and well-being [29].

5. Gender-Balanced Authority as a Condition for Planetary Flourishing

A structural feature of many Indigenous governance systems that has been insufficiently examined in planetary health literature is the institutionalization of gender-balanced authority, not as an aspiration toward equal representation within existing structures, but as a foundational dimension of governance architecture itself. The role of women in Indigenous societies provides vital lessons for reimagining leadership and governance, particularly within the context of global geopolitics. Unlike conventional systems where women's participation is often limited to symbolic or token positions, Indigenous women's leadership, found in diverse Indigenous communities around the world, is deeply rooted and integral, shaping fundamental structures of power and community decision-making in various Indigenous societies around the world.

The Haudenosaunee Clan Mother system illustrates this principle most fully. In Haudenosaunee governance, Clan Mothers hold supreme political authority which includes selecting leaders, removing them from office when warranted, and historically making final determinations on matters of war and peace [30]. This authority is not ceremonial but rather substantive and institutionally grounded in an obligation to safeguard future generations. As Wakerahkahtste Louise McDonald Herne, Bear Clan Mother of the Mohawk National Council, states, "Before any decisions are made about our lands or the future of our people, the chiefs consult with the Clan Mothers. We carefully consider the long-term impacts on our descendants, ensuring that choices support the well-being of generations yet to come." [31].

This system embeds what might be described, in planetary health terms, as an inter-generational health impact assessment into governance itself. Where decisions affecting the community's ecological and social future must pass through an institutional authority specifically charged with long-term custodianship. The result is a form of decision-making that structurally resists the short-termism that planetary health scholarship identifies as among the field's central governance challenges.

The global significance of women's inclusion in governance and peacebuilding is supported by substantial empirical evidence. International peace agreements are 35 percent more likely to endure for at least fifteen years when women are actively involved in negotiation processes. Yet women remain significantly underrepresented in international diplomacy, comprising only approximately 20 percent of peace negotiators in recent years [32]. Dr. Rigoberta Menchú Tum, Nobel Peace laureate and Mayan K'iche' leader from Guatemala, frames this not as a matter of representation but of epistemological access as she has articulated, "When I speak at the United Nations or meet with government

officials, I'm not just representing my own opinions. I carry the voices of Indigenous women throughout the Americas who have maintained our cultures despite centuries of oppression." [33].

In the planetary health context, the exclusion of Indigenous women from decision-making is not a neutral omission. Indigenous women are disproportionately responsible for the preservation and transmission of traditional ecological knowledge across generations. Knowledge of medicinal plants, water systems, seasonal indicators, and ecosystem relationships is essential to community-level climate adaptation. Eliminating this knowledge from governance processes removes a critical informational foundation for planetary health response [34].

6. Discussion: Toward Epistemic Justice and Structural Partnership

6.1. Integration Challenges

The integration of IKS into planetary health scholarship and practice encounters well-documented institutional obstacles. These include the dominance of positivist epistemologies within academic and policy institutions, insufficient representation of Indigenous scholars in leadership roles, the absence of frameworks capable of validating IKS on their own terms rather than only as supplements to Western science, and the persistent conflation of 'traditional' with 'pre-modern,' a framing that obscures the living character of Indigenous knowledge.

The Inuit experience in Arctic climate monitoring illustrates both the potential and the limitations of current approaches. Inuit hunters' observations of ice behavior, animal migration, and weather patterns, developed through generations of experiential knowledge, detected Arctic environmental changes earlier than satellite monitoring systems. These observations are now formally incorporated into the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change assessments [35]. Yet, the institutional mechanisms through which Inuit knowledge is incorporated remain asymmetric. Indigenous knowledge is often treated as data to be validated by Western scientific frameworks, rather than as a co-equal system of knowing with its own methodological integrity.

6.2. Epistemic Justice as a Planetary Health Requirement

Addressing these challenges requires what scholars have termed epistemic justice. Understood as the recognition and validation of Indigenous ways of knowing as equal in legitimacy to Western scientific paradigms, without requiring that they conform to Western methodological criteria to earn that recognition. This is not a claim that all knowledge systems are equivalent for all purposes. Rather, it is a claim that different knowledge systems illuminate different dimensions of complex phenomena, and that planetary health, defined as it is by complexity and interdependence, requires access to the full range of human knowledge and experience [36].

The sharp separation between spirituality and science is largely a Western modern construct, not a universal epistemological framework. Across Indigenous societies, spiritual practice, empirical observation, ethics, and governance are inseparable components of a unified knowledge system. As scholar Leroy Little Bear writes, the 'jagged worldview' produced by the collision between Indigenous relational ontology and Western dualist paradigms is a source of ongoing epistemic harm that has consequences not only for Indigenous communities but for the broader human capacity to navigate ecological crisis [37].

6.3. From Consultation to Co-Architecture

The evidence reviewed in this paper suggests that the integration of IKS into planetary health will not be achieved through improved consultation mechanisms alone. Consultation, even well-designed consultation, places Indigenous knowledge in the position of responding to frameworks built without it. What is required instead is co-architecture, the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge holders, elders, educators, community leaders, and youth as designers of planetary health frameworks from the outset, not as reviewers of frameworks designed elsewhere.

The 2024 Global Summit on Indigenous Peacebuilding, and the adoption of its recommendations by the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, represents one institutional model for this kind of inclusion. The Summit was not structured as a consultation on existing peace processes; it was convened as a forum for Indigenous-led analysis and recommendation. Its outcomes were not incorporated into pre-existing frameworks; they were adopted as new recommendations to member states and UN agencies [38]. Replicating this model in the planetary health domain through Indigenous-led co-design of research agendas, governance frameworks, and implementation strategies is both achievable and necessary.

7. Conclusions: Reviving the Sacred for a Planetary Age

This paper has argued that Indigenous Knowledge Systems offer foundational contributions to planetary health, empirically grounded frameworks for ecological stewardship and community-centered governance models that sustain social and ecosystem integrity. To include institutional designs that embed intergenerational accountability and gender-balanced authority into decision-making structures. These contributions are not supplements to planetary health scholarship. Instead, they are, in many respects, the missing core.

The word ‘sacred’ in the title of this paper is intentional. Across the knowledge systems reviewed here such as the Haudenosaunee, Amazonian, Maasai, Mapuche, and Rwandan Gacaca model, the sustainability of relationships between human communities and the ecological systems that sustain them is understood not merely as a technical challenge but as an ethical and, in many traditions, a sacred obligation. ‘Reviving the sacred’ in the context of planetary health means restoring to our governance and scientific frameworks a sense of obligation toward the living world that transcends the immediate, the measurable, and the politically convenient. As Indigenous scholars and practitioners have long argued, and as planetary health scholarship is now only beginning to formalize, ‘Excluding Indigenous knowledge systems is therefore not neutrality; it is a form of collective self-limitation.’ [39].

The path forward requires institutional courage, intellectual humility, and structural reform. It requires planetary health scholars to examine the epistemological foundations of their field with the same rigor they bring to its empirical questions. It requires journals, funding agencies, and governance bodies to create the conditions under which Indigenous knowledge holders can engage not as informants or consultants but as co-investigators and co-authors of planetary health’s future.

The evidence reviewed in this paper, from Amazonian deforestation differentials to Maasai climate forecasting to the outcomes of the 2024 Global Indigenous Peacebuilding Summit, suggests that the inclusion of IKS in planetary health does not require choosing between scientific rigor and Indigenous wisdom. It requires recognizing that planetary health, as the field has defined it, cannot be fully achieved without both. As the Baha’i Universal House of Justice observed, humanity’s collective security and prosperity depend on recognizing Indigenous communities ‘as a significant element in the construction of a unified world, and the establishment of a global civilization.’ [40]. That construction

has never been more urgent. The knowledge required to achieve it has never been more available—if only the field is prepared to receive it.

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