



Goals for the International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022-2032

Prepared by First People's Cultural Council, February 2020

First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) is an Indigenous-led provincial organization with a mandate to support the revitalization of First Nations languages, arts, cultures and heritage in British Columbia, Canada. Operating since 1990, we provide funding and resources to communities, monitor the status of languages, arts and heritage, and develop policy recommendations for First Nations leadership and government. The following are 10 goals proposed by FPCC for the International Decade of Indigenous Languages.

GOAL 1: Indigenous communities have full control of their own language data

- Indigenous communities have access to tools and methods which allow them to maintain control over their languages, recordings of their languages, and language data. Tools like *FirstVoices.com*, which allow communities to retain control of language data, are promoted.
- Linguists, anthropologists, and other researchers in possession of Indigenous language data actively repatriate this data to the relevant language communities. Copyrights on Indigenous language data are held by the language community, not by external parties.

GOAL 2: Indigenous communities have access to international research and resources for language revitalization

- UNESCO supports and promotes the international exchange of knowledge and resources related to Indigenous languages and their revitalization by supporting Indigenous language leaders at the grassroots level.
- There is funding and support for the translation of relevant resources into multiple languages for improved access.

GOAL 3: Indigenous language access is supported by sustainable technologies

- States and technology companies commit to supporting shared, sustainable technology and make long-term commitments for the maintenance and protection of language data. This includes providing funding and support for Indigenous-led technologies.
- UNESCO promotes rigorous, appropriate, and (where possible) Indigenous-led atlases and databases on Indigenous languages, such as the Endangered Languages Project and the First Peoples' Map of British Columbia

GOAL 4: Indigenous language learners have access to mother-tongue-based education

- Indigenous communities have access to language teacher training and investment for education in Indigenous languages, built on the mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) proposals UNESCO has advanced in the past.
- States develop national and regional strategies, policies and legislation for MTB-MLE.
- Academic institutions and governments promote and expand MTB-MLE at national and community levels.

GOAL 5: Nations and states are supporting and investing in Indigenous language revitalization

- Nations and states have developed strategies for the protection, promotion, and revitalization of Indigenous languages. States are invited to begin developing 10-year national strategies that coincide with the Decade.

COMMITTED TO THE REVITALIZATION OF B.C.'S ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES, ARTS AND CULTURES



- UNESCO supports states with these initiatives by sharing and promoting successful work in legislation and strategic planning for Indigenous languages, such as FPCC's legislative recommendations for supporting First Nations languages in Canada.

GOAL 6: States that succeed in supporting Indigenous languages are celebrated and acknowledged

- UNESCO and partner organizations develop mechanisms to recognize, at the international level, work by states that create positive change in support of Indigenous languages. For example, such states could receive recognition at international events.

GOAL 7: A convention is adopted for the promotion of Indigenous languages and linguistic rights

- A Convention for the Safeguarding of Indigenous Languages is established to ensure a legacy from the Decade. This could be a 'sister convention' to the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention and could include principles from the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights.
- The Convention addresses the inherent conflict of interest between states and Indigenous language revitalization, to redress cultural genocide at the state level.

GOAL 8: Effective assessment mechanisms are implemented to demonstrate outcomes of the Decade

- Clear assessments for the International Decade of Indigenous Languages are established in order to determine whether and how the Decade's goals are being met.
- Indigenous language champions are supported to develop thorough, culturally-informed tools to assess community-based language projects, and to share those tools internationally.
- The Endangered Languages Project's Revitalization Helpdesk program can include the development of such assessments, in partnership with successful initiatives such as the First Peoples' Cultural Council's Language Programs and the Smithsonian Institution's Recovering Voices program.

GOAL 9: Indigenous-led language work is supported through long-term adequate funding

- Indigenous communities have access to funding and support for capacity-building and networking as they take control of their own language work.
- Funding agencies offer an expanded scope of grants, beyond simply small, short-term individual projects, to support longer-term projects and infrastructural work led by Indigenous language champions.
- Corporations, technology companies, private trusts, and philanthropic foundations engage in long-term collaboration, funding and in-kind contributions to language work.

GOAL 10: Indigenous knowledge and expertise is recognized and honoured

- Indigenous language champions have access to funding and recognition which is not restricted to those with academic credentials – e.g., grants which do not require the holding of an advanced degree.
- Community-based expertise and Indigenous ways of knowing are acknowledged equally to the knowledge held within Western educational structures, both within UNESCO and in partner states and organizations.