



National EPA-Tribal Science Council (TSC)

Collecting Examples of Indigenous Research Frameworks, Protocols and Methodologies

Materials for Discussion with the R10 RTOC

March 2021

TSC Mission

“...the mission of the National EPA-Tribal Science Council is to provide a forum for the interaction between Tribal and Agency representatives of mutual benefit and responsibility to work collaboratively on environmental science issues...*The Tribal Science Council is committed to the development of sound scientific and cultural approaches to meet the needs of tribes.*”

—TSC Organizational Overview Document

TSC Overview

- Established in 2001 at National Tribal Caucus (NTC) request to provide scientific support in Indian country
- Forum for interaction between tribes and EPA to collaborate on key science issues
- Supported by the Office of Research and Development (ORD)
- Only tribal partnership group with both EPA and tribal scientists and expertise
- Coordinates with National Tribal Caucus to integrate science priorities into EPA's annual planning and budget process



TSC Membership

- Members include representatives from:
 - A federally recognized tribe in each EPA region, plus a member from the Alaska Native communities
 - Each EPA program and regional office
- Current Co-Chairs
 - **Neil Patterson, Jr.**, Tuscarora Nation, Region 2
 - **Brenda Rashleigh**, EPA ORD, Narragansett, RI



Purpose of This Effort

1. Better Understand Data and Research Needs From a Tribal Community Perspective
 - Exploring Indigenous Research Frameworks
 - Data Sovereignty—Collection, Ownership and Application (usindigenousdata.org)
2. Identify Examples of Data Partnerships Between EPA and Tribes
3. Gather Available Tribal Data Agreements and Protocols
 - Assessing Tribal Research Capacities: How Many Tribes Assert Sovereignty Over Data?
4. Analyze Gathered Information
 - Identify Threads and Focus Areas
5. Collate Information to Serve as a Repository
 - Share and Make Available for Tribes and Data Partners (EPA)

Tribal Research Policies

Tribal research frameworks and policies for engagement with non-tribal scientists are expressed in many ways, including:

- Tribal Resolutions
- Research Agreements
- Data Management Plans
- Quality Assurance Project Plans
- Cultural Committee Review Process
- Institutional Review Board (IRB) Agreements
 - Tribal College and University IRBs
- Non-Disclosure Agreements

Request for Action

- Please help the TSC to identify any such research frameworks and policies employed in Indian country
 - Do you know of any?
 - Can you share this request with your networks?
 - Are there other resources/actions you can think of?

Why develop an Indigenous research framework?

- PROTECT Tribal knowledge
- CENTER Tribal research priorities
- ASSERT Tribal sovereignty
- CONTROL access to Tribal data
- BENEFIT Tribal communities
- SUPPORT ethical research in Tribal communities

Contacts

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