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## NNPBC Blog

### Nurses for Planetary Health: A Call to Action

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Indigenous populations have inhabited the lands across the globe for tens of thousands of years. From this experience, human health and civilizations have learned to depend upon natural systems of traditional laws. According to the World Health Organization, (WHO) (2007), Indigenous Peoples globally have retained social, cultural, economic, and political characteristics distinct from the dominant societies in which they live. Over 370 million Indigenous peoples are acknowledged as the original descendants, inheritors, practitioners, and holders of unique cultural ways of relating to other people and their environment yet remain among the poorest and most marginalized populations.

Despite experiencing such hardships, Indigenous people in Canada remain steadfast in their resurgence and desire to reclaim traditional lands and protecting resources to support the restoration of community wellness through Indigenous sovereignty<sup>[1]</sup>. When biological and cultural systems are degraded, biodiversity, fresh water, food production, and human health are all threatened.<sup>2-4</sup> We do not need to look far to see how extreme changes in the environment impact health locally and globally. Whether we consider the wildfires displacing thousands of people in western Canada, Brazil and Angola; or look at salmon suffering the consequences of riverbed drought in Canada or mud slides in Sierra Leone, it is clear that the climate crisis carries dire consequences for global health. Coping with the impacts on human, animal, and plant health can compound the problem, leading to increased greenhouse gas emissions, and water and energy use.