

## **Tribes Use Western and Indigenous Science to Prepare for Climate Change**

Teodora Hasegan

Assistant Editor, *IK: Other Ways of Knowing*

---

Northwestern tribes and the Climate Impacts Group at the University of Washington have joined forces to help protect salmon, roots, trees, and other important resources, as announced in the article “Tribes Use Western and Indigenous Science to Prepare for Climate Change.”

A collaborative effort by Meade Krosby (a conservation scientist with the Climate Impacts Group at the University of Washington), Don Sampson (climate change project manager for the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians— a group of 57 tribes in 6 western states), and other regional tribal partners, are putting indigenous communities in the US northwest at the forefront of climate adaptation planning. The project uses advanced computer modeling to help tribes understand the precise impacts climate change will have in their territories, so they can plan to adapt.

The result of the two-year project is an online tool that provides 50 tribes with high-resolution climate forecasts showing how specific resources, such as salmon, berries, and roots, will be affected in their area. The tool is “pure Western science,” says Krosby, but the site also provides examples of tribes using traditional knowledge, or a combination of traditional knowledge and Western science, to develop climate adaptation plans. As explained on the project’s website, “A vulnerability assessment is a process for evaluating how the things we care about (e.g., a place, community, or resource) could be affected by climate change. Tribal vulnerability assessments use a variety of approaches, from those that use primarily indigenous methodologies, to others that rely primarily on Western science, and those that braid these two approaches together.”