Assignment: Land Use, Climate Change Adaptation and Indigenous Peoples

Physical Geography

Indigenous/ Aboriginal Terminology:

1. First Nations – the first people on this land before contact with settlers.

2. Inuit – the arctic aboriginal population who arrived from Asia in Canada after the First Nations and settled

3. Metis – The aboriginal group that was created after French settlers had relationships with the First Nations

Assignment:

In Canada, there are more than 600 First Nation groups, and over 60 Aboriginal languages spoken. This number does not include the many different Inuit groups across Canada and the Metis aboriginal groups. The Inuit have many different languages across Canada, and the Metis speak a language called the Michif.

You will be researching ONE Indigenous group from the one area in Canada. You will research WHERE they are located in the Canada (and pinpoint it on a map), and HOW changing climates or land patterns have affected them and WHAT we can learn from indigenous traditional knowledge.

Once you chose a region in Canada, you will do research on your aboriginal group with the materials provided to you, and help from the Internet. You will gather your information about the WHERE, HOW, and WHAT questions above, and create a presentation. Your presentation can be via PowerPoint, Prezzi, or bristle board.
Requirements for Presentation:

- A map of Canada with your indigenous group located on it
- Bullet points on HOW changing climates or land patterns have affected your group
- Bullet points on WHAT we can learn from indigenous traditional knowledge
- No spelling errors
- Titles for everything
- A main title
- Your name
- The date
- Visuals (3-5 pictures)

Aboriginal Groups to Choose From:

1. Pacific Coast (Coast Salish People, Squamish, Haida)
2. Plains (Anishinaabe, Blackfoot, Nakoda)
3. Centre (Cree, Ojibwa, Algonquin, Haudenosaunee)
4. Arctic (Inuit, Dene)
5. Atlantic Coast (Innu, Beothuk, Mi’kmaq)
Lesson:

1. Watch Land Use Adaptation (Traditional Knowledge) Video (18 minutes)

For indigenous peoples, resilience is rooted in traditional knowledge, as their capacity to adapt to environmental change is based first and foremost on in-depth understanding of the land. As climate change increasingly impacts indigenous landscapes, communities are responding and adapting in unique ways. In a recent statement to the Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC) stated:

“…[W]e reiterate the need for recognition of our traditional knowledge, which we have sustainably used and practiced for generations; and the need to integrate such knowledge in global, national and sub-national efforts. This knowledge is our vital contribution to climate change adaptation and mitigation.”

Local resilience depends on local knowledge

The connection to their land is an important source of resilience for indigenous communities, but this resilience depends on an ability to nurture and manage this relationship. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Executive Director of Tebtebba (Indigenous Peoples’ International Centre for Policy Research and Education), points out that indigenous knowledge is “…locally fine-tuned, which is essential for climate change adaptation and long-term community resilience”.

Speaking at a recent conference in Mexico, her colleague Willy Alangui presented their joint paper outlining the results of three case studies on traditional forest management, as practised by the indigenous peoples of Loita Maasai (Kenya), Miskitu (Nicaragua) and Dayak Jalai (Indonesia). For the indigenous peoples in each of these case study areas, the forest is not only a source of sustenance and livelihoods, but also the very basis of their identities, cultures, knowledge systems and social organizations.

These community-based forest management strategies involve setting aside conservation areas, woodcutting and watershed management zones, which have an important role to play in reversing the process of deforestation, thereby sequestering carbon and promoting rural development.
The Miskito of Nicaragua maintain three land-use types: cultivated fields, pastures and forest areas; in Indonesian Borneo, a typical Dayak Jalai village territory creates a shifting mosaic land-use pattern including patches of natural forest, managed forests, rotating swidden/fallow, and permanent fields. The multiple land-use systems that underpin these forest management strategies are both a livelihood scheme and a source of resilience. But a common problem in each of these communities is a lack of political control over their land and forests. For the Loita Maasai, forest resources are held in trust by the Marok County Council on behalf of the Kenyan government. For the Miskitu, access to, and use and control of, natural resources are impacted by government norms and regulations and external settlers are causing deforestation. The Dayak Jalai are faced with government-promoted expansion of palm plantations and the continued operations of mining companies.

“Undermining local control over these land resources increases the vulnerability of these communities,” say Tauli-Corpuz and Alangui. “Security of land tenure and the resulting ability to access, manage and extract natural resources is a pre-condition for maintaining the resilience of local communities.”