



Domains	Details
Sources of Indigenous ways of knowing	• Knowledge comes from the relationships of the individual with the world, which has both a material dimension and an inseparable spiritual dimension • Sources of knowledge include plants, animals, other humans, and elements of the land (such as mountains and rivers), as well as dreams, spirits and other manifestations of the spiritual world • The world of water, for example, includes lakes and rivers and also the spirits that inhabit them. More generally the physical territory where a culture of Indigenous people was born and developed over centuries is inhabited by many 'things' that possess spirit, making them 'beings' (and this makes forced relocation particularly damaging) • The physical environment can serve as a prompt or inspiration for the spiritual dimension to help shape a course of action (e.g., watching a river flow can allow an approach for addressing an issue to come to the fore) • Learning comes from doing alongside someone who holds the knowledge about the 'secret' in how to do it
Characteristics of Indigenous ways of knowing	• Indigenous knowledge is holistic and connected with the history, culture and territory of each people (e.g., their creation stories and how they relate to other 'beings') • 'Knowing' manifests itself in the experiences or 'being' of individuals (e.g., rites of passage are processes in which the experience of discovering the nature of things is 'lived' by individuals) • Knowledge is shared within and across Indigenous peoples and with others, and is refined over time (e.g., a canoe is made differently today than it was a few centuries ago) • Knowledge can be acquired through the use of one's own senses (in the traditional sense of the physical senses, but also through clothing, dreams, drawings and songs) and through both speaking (what can be said) and contemplation (what cannot be said)
How 'things' are classified within Indigenous ways of knowing	• Categories are perceived differently by different individuals and by different Indigenous peoples in relation to their culture, history or territory (e.g., a plant may be classified one way by one Indigenous people based on its use in healing, and be another based on its association with death) • Categories can shift over time (e.g., some plants were once people) and be understood in terms of their intrinsic 'spirit'

