

Item 2 a. Secretariat Update on progress in the preparations for the special session.

Statement by the Institute for Planetary Synthesis.

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Thank you, Madame Chair,

Our question regards UNEP's interpretation of what "science" is.

When we use the word "science", we often refer to a process whereby we **stand apart** from what is being observed in order to gain objectivity. But our attempts to distance ourselves from Nature lie at the very root of the escalating global problems we are contending with. These are different facets of our war with Nature.

For we cannot separate ourselves from Nature. We are an integral part of our natural environment through the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat and the thoughts we think. Each of us is, as it were, a node within Earth's systems. Moreover, the systems within each of us (respiratory system, the dietary system, etc.) constitute parts of the planetary systems and these, in turn, are connected to the systems of the Universe, itself.

It is not possible to stand outside of Nature.

Science, in the context of UNEP's work requires us to use a completely different way of knowing our natural environment. One that acknowledges that we are an integral part of Nature. Not separation, but direct knowing, based on sensing, intuitive insight--the type of knowing that is used by those living close to Nature, and/or those who retain their intuitive connection with their natural environment, including indigenous peoples.

What role is played by indigenous peoples and others who are able to communicate with Nature in UNEP's science/policy interface to ensure that the science/policy interface, helps us to live in harmony with Nature?