

Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer Urges Biocultural Approach to Restoration at 9th World Conference on Ecological Restoration

Success in restoration requires complementary insights from Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Western scientific knowledge

WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, UNITED STATES, June 21, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer, Distinguished Professor of Environmental and Forest Biology at State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry and enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, today gave an urgent and impassioned plea to repair the 'broken relationship between land and culture'. During the opening ceremony for [SER2021](#), the 9th World Conference on Ecological Restoration, Dr. Kimmerer offered a biocultural approach to restoration that draws on Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) in complement with Western scientific knowledge.

"Repair of ecosystem structure and function alone is insufficient - restoration of a respectful, reciprocal relationship to the natural world is also essential for long term success," said Dr. Kimmerer, addressing the largest virtual gathering of restoration scientists, practitioners, policy-makers and students at SER2021, the biennial World Conference of the [Society for Ecological Restoration](#) (SER). "In many cases it is not only the land that has been broken, it's our relationship to land that has been broken. So our work in



Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer, Opening Ceremony speaker at #SER2021



#SER2021 - the 9th World Conference on Ecological Restoration

restoration needs to heal [that] relationship, as well as the land.”

Dr. Kimmerer described the necessity of a biocultural approach to ecosystem restoration as, “a framework for a broader, decolonizing vision of restoration, which is grounded of the indigenous worldview, [through which] repair of ecosystem services contributes to cultural revitalization, and renewal of culture promotes restoration of ecological integrity”.

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-Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer



Dr Robin Wall Kimmerer urges us to heal our relationship to land, as well as healing the land

Taking place at the start of the UN

Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, SER2021 has brought together over 1,300 participants from 68 countries to share knowledge and innovations in support of the UN Decade’s ambitions to restore 1 billion hectares of degraded lands worldwide, with similar commitments encouraged for marine and coastal areas.

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Over 750 symposia, talks, posters, workshops, field trips, and training sessions are exploring a diversity of restoration topics across all continents, ecosystems and scales. Participants are presenting and discussing indigenous and local restoration knowledge, field-based restoration innovations, global databases, innovative eco-technologies, community engagement, inspirational approaches, and much more.

The conference also kicks-off a public [consultation](#) on three new restoration tools and resources developed in

April and May by SER, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature’s Commission on Ecosystem Management (IUCN CEM), and more than 50 global restoration experts. These tools include:

- 1) A definition of ‘net gain’ for restorative activities;
- 2) A draft framework for prioritizing restorative activities and interventions to help achieve the greatest possible beneficial impact, and eventually net gain, for people and nature; and
- 3) The creation of nine common principles as well as standards of practice applicable across all types of ecosystem restoration activities and at all scales.

The Consultation will remain open through the end of July and final products will be presented at

the IUCN World Conservation Congress in September.

“Scientific expertise must work hand-in-hand with local and indigenous communities and alongside practitioners and policy-makers to drive action and change both from the ground up and from the top down,” said Karma Bouazza, Co-Chair of SER2021. “And if we do this, we can begin to rebuild the reciprocity between people and nature that Robin Wall Kimmerer so eloquently articulates.”

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About the Society for Ecological Restoration

The Society for Ecological Restoration (SER) advances the science, practice and policy of ecological restoration to sustain biodiversity, improve resilience in a changing climate, and re-establish an ecologically healthy relationship between nature and culture. An international non-profit organization with over 4,000 members in more than 85 countries, we actively promote participatory, knowledge-based approaches to restoration. Learn more about our work at www.ser.org.

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