



A Note on Terminology: *Inuit, Métis, First Nations, and Aboriginal*

(Adapted from the Report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples)

The term *Aboriginal People* refers to the indigenous inhabitants of Canada when describing in a general manner the *Inuit*, and *First Nations (Indians)*, and *Métis* people, without regard to their separate origins and identities.

The term *Aboriginal Peoples* refers to organic political and cultural entities that stem historically from the original people of North America, rather than collections of individuals united by so-called "racial" characteristics. The term includes the *Indian, Inuit* and *Métis* peoples of Canada (see section 35(2) of the Constitution Act, 1982):

(2) In this Act, "aboriginal peoples of Canada" includes the Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada.

Following accepted practice and as a general rule, the term *Inuit* replaces the term *Eskimo*. As well, the term *First Nation* replaces the term *Indian*.

For greater clarity:

Aboriginal is an all-encompassing term that includes *Inuit, First Nations (Indians)*, and *Métis*.

"First Peoples" is also an all-encompassing term that includes *Inuit, First Nations (Indians)* and *Métis*.

Aboriginal and *First Nations* are **NOT** interchangeable terms.

"Aboriginal" and "First Peoples" **ARE** interchangeable terms.

Inuit is the contemporary term for "*Eskimo*".

First Nation is the contemporary term for "*Indian*".

Inuit are "*Aboriginal*" or "*First Peoples*", but are not "*First Nations*", because "*First Nations*" are *Indians*. *Inuit* are not *Indians*.

The term "Indigenous Peoples" is an all-encompassing term that includes the Aboriginal or First Peoples of Canada, and other countries. For example, the term "Indigenous Peoples" is inclusive of Inuit in Canada, Maori in New Zealand, Aborigines in Australia, and so on. The term "Indigenous Peoples" is generally used in an international context. The title of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is a prime example of the global inclusiveness of the term "Indigenous Peoples".

Difference between Inuit and Innu:

Innu are a *First Nations (Indian)* group located in northeastern Quebec and central Labrador. ITK frequently receives requests regarding *Innu*, however they are represented by the *Innu Nation*. Here is contact information for the *Innu*:

[The Innu Nation](#)

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