

INDIGENOUS CLIMATE ACTION

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES MEETING ON CLIMATE
CHANGE - JANUARY 24-26, 2016

Amiskwaciwâskahikan, Treaty No. 6 Territory. Edmonton, Alberta



FINAL MEETING REPORT

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September 2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from the steering committee	3
INTRODUCTION & SUMMARY	
About Indigenous Climate Action	4
Climate Change and the Rights of Indigenous People	5
The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)	6
Indigenous Peoples Meeting on Climate Change Summary	7
Outcomes from the Indigenous Peoples Meeting on Climate Change	9
DAY 1 SUMMARY, Welcoming, Registration & Entertainment	10
DAY 2 SUMMARY Introduction to Climate Change, UNDRIP & Indigenous Rights, and breakout sessions	11
Day 2 - Breakout Group Summaries	12
1. How is your community experiencing/dealing with climate change?	12
2. What is your community doing to address climate change?	14
3. What does your community need for the future in order to address climate change?	16
4. What are the gaps and challenges in utilizing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to address climate change?	18
5. What opportunities exist for utilizing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?	21
DAY 3 - SUMMARY: Review of breakout sessions, presentations on successful organizing and implementing solutions to climate change, breakout discussion on next steps for communities	24
Breakout Group Summaries - Day 3	25
1. What could be a shared vision, values & goals guiding and Indigenous Climate Change Action plan?	26
2. What kinds of action strategies would best resonate with and effectively mobilize your community?	30
3. What information, tools, and resources would your community need to be able to adopt and implement a climate action strategy?	32
CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS	34
APPENDIX A - SCHEDULE OF EVENTS	38
APPENDIX B - STEERING COMMITTEE, SPEAKERS, KEYNOTES & DISTINGUISHED ELDERS	40
APPENDIX C - ICA SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS	47

Letter from the steering committee

A committee - of all Indigenous women from tar sands impacted communities came together to coordinate and organize a meeting to develop educational, networking, and planning resources to encourage the development of Indigenous-led Climate Change Action Plans. This ground-breaking event happened from January 24th to 26th, 2016 in Amiskwaciwâskahikan, Edmonton, Alberta, Treaty No. 6 Territory. The event included panel presentations and keynotes from renowned Indigenous Rights Defenders and experts on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), climate change, and climate policy. Participants added to the collective wisdom through facilitated breakout discussions that encouraged critical conversations and strategy sharing.

Dear Esteemed Reader,

This meeting was coordinated and organized based on our belief that there was and still is an urgent need to engage Indigenous communities in Canada on the important topic of climate change, climate change policy, and the intersectionality of the rights of Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous Peoples are at the front lines of climate change and thus need to be at the forefront of policy development. Flooding, forest fires, displacement of traditional game and medicines are all too common an occurrence in our communities. Yet, our people are continually

forced to choose between maintaining healthy and sustainable environments for the future of our communities and the pursuit of economic development. Consequently, it was important for all of us to come together to learn about climate change policy and the opportunities found within the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

As a result of this meeting we now have a better ability to develop shared strategies and action plans to ensure the needs of our communities are met based on a solid foundation of knowledge and skills on our rights as Indigenous Peoples. We are grateful and honored to now move forward as we build a movement for Indigenous-led Climate Justice.

Sincerely,

The Steering Committee

Eriel Deranger, Jesse Cardinal, Melina Laboucan-Massimo, Crystal Lameman

INTRODUCTION & SUMMARY

About Indigenous Climate Action

Indigenous Climate Action (ICA) is an Indigenous-led initiative, that endeavours to fill the gaps between the lived experiences of Indigenous Peoples and current policies and strategies being developed to address climate change. We aim to ensure that an Indigenous worldview is upheld in climate discussions, and within the planning and implementation of each communities' climate solutions.

ICA, as a coalition and a network, further supports Indigenous-led and developed climate change strategies and mitigation plans that amplify the voices of Indigenous Climate Leaders. At the same time ICA petitions the Canadian provincial and federal governments to ensure Indigenous Peoples have full and effective opportunities to participate in decisions that directly impact their rights and future.

ICA recognizes there is a critical opportunity to engage with Indigenous communities to foster climate leadership and positions that work to address the current climate crisis. Currently national and provincial governments are in the process of developing climate

leadership plans and policies that have a real potential to impact the rights of Indigenous Peoples in this country.

Policies such as the Alberta Climate Leadership Plan¹ and the developing Canada's Way Forward on Climate Change are being developed in an attempt to meet the commitments outlined within the Paris Agreement² to keep global temperature at no more than 1.5 degrees above preindustrial levels of 1750³. These policies have coincided with the growing recognition of the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Canada, in particular, was not only a champion of these aggressive global climate targets but also of the inclusion of a preambular⁴ statement into the Paris Agreement that recognizes the rights of Indigenous Peoples which reads as follows:

"Acknowledging that climate change is a common concern of humankind, Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities

and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity." - *Paris Agreement Preambular statement*⁵

However, preambular texts are not binding for the signatories, which means that Canada can choose how to interpret their commitment acknowledging and recognizing the rights of Indigenous peoples to the agreement. Subsequently, these rights continue to not be adequately reflected in the decisions that are made about how to address issues of climate change and ensure survival for humanity in the future.

Now, more than ever it is imperative that governments take heed of the direction being provided by Indigenous Peoples and land dependent communities not only to address climate stabilization but to achieve true climate justice. Indigenous Climate Action exists as an initiative to put this vision into action.

1 - Alberta Government. Climate Leadership Report. November 2015. <http://www.alberta.ca/climate-leadership-plan.aspx>

2 - Paris Agreement. Paris, France. 12 December 2015, 21st Session Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC.(FCCC/

3 - Pre-industrial society refers to social attributes and forms of political and cultural organization that were prevalent before the advent of the Industrial Revolution, which occurred from 1750 to 1850.CP/2015/L.9/REV.1)https://unfccc.int/files/meetings/paris_nov_2015/application/pdf/paris_agreement_english_.pdf

4 - Definition of preamble: The introduction to a formal document that explains its purpose.

5 - Page 1, Ibid

Climate Change and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Climate change poses threats and dangers to Indigenous communities worldwide, even though they contribute the least to greenhouse emissions. In fact, Indigenous Peoples are vital to the many ecosystems in their lands and territories and help enhance the resilience of these ecosystems. In addition, Indigenous Peoples interpret and react to the impacts of climate change in creative ways, drawing on traditional knowledge and other technologies to find solutions that society at large can replicate to counter pending changes. (Statement of H.E. Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann, President of the United Nations General Assembly to the Indigenous Peoples' Global Summit on Climate Change)

The global community is racing to find solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions on the planet to help stabilize ecosystems and ensure the survival of humanity. Climate change is the largest challenge humanity has ever faced and it is Indigenous peoples and land based communities who are feeling the most dramatic impacts. Despite the detectable knowledge held at a community level, there has been little engagement work done to fully support Indigenous peoples to articulate the impacts, challenges, and opportunities of climate change on the rights, title, and survival of Indigenous cultures and identities.

Indigenous communities are on the frontlines of resource extraction and climate change and therefore can also be on the frontlines of solutions. Indigenous-led solutions are critical to addressing the growing impacts of climate change

and ensuring the sustainability of climate solutions.

Indigenous peoples represent 4 percent of the global population (250-300 million people), yet utilize 22 percent of the world's land surface for cultural and subsistence living⁶. Indigenous communities have maintained invaluable knowledge connected to culture, cosmology, and worldview that is becoming undeniably critical to building solutions, as well as mitigation and adaptation strategies to climate crises around the world. Indigenous communities now maintain 80 per cent of the planet's biodiversity in or adjacent to 85 per cent of the world's protected areas⁷. Not only are Indigenous peoples protecting the biodiversity of the planet but their traditional territories overlap with hundreds of gigatons of carbon sinks critical to climate stabilization.

The collective knowledge of Indigenous peoples, as the observers and interpreters of ecosystems, offers invaluable insights to guide and complement scientific data. It is critical for verifying climate models and evaluating climate change scenarios. These knowledge systems are vital at local and regional levels in order to ensure successful mitigation and adaptation within communities. If Indigenous communities do not start implementing these needed changes, decisions at the provincial, national, and international level will continue to be made outside of Indigenous communities and void of valuable traditional knowledge. Over and above this factor there is a larger question - How will newly developed climate change policies impact human rights, including the unique rights of Indigenous Peoples, if Indigenous peoples are not involved in the process?

6 - Sobrevila, Claudia. 2008. The role of indigenous peoples in biodiversity conservation : the natural but often forgotten partners. Washington, DC: World Bank. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/995271468177530126/The-role-of-indigenous-peoples-in-biodiversity-conservation-the-natural-but-often-forgotten-partners>

7 - Ibid; see <https://propresobama.files.wordpress.com/2014/07/indigenouspeoplemap.jpg>

Indigenous Peoples cannot continue to be on the sidelines of economic development and new economic paradigms that are being proposed to address the climate crisis. Indigenous Peoples cannot allow climate change discussions to support another process that holds them hostage to imposed economic and energy paradigms.

Currently, Canadian provincial and federal governments are developing climate change policies without the direct involvement of Indigenous communities. These policies will have lasting impacts on Indigenous lands, territories, and rights as Peoples. It is essential that history doesn't repeat itself and impose decisions on Indigenous communities that they have not made for themselves.

National and international governments are rising to the challenge of addressing the climate crisis by adopting aggressive climate targets outlined in the Paris Agreement (December 2015)⁸, with a clear recognition of the rights of Indigenous peoples⁹. It would be remiss if governments do not take the opportunities before

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

The government of the day has made commitments to address the climate crisis. They have made commitments to the recognition of the rights of Indigenous peoples through promises to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)¹⁰, and strengthen relationships with Indigenous peoples in Canada. The UNDRIP is founded on a premise of free, prior and informed consent - particularly when it comes to the development of legislative and administrative measures such as those created to address climate change. It would seem the government is neglecting its obligations as described in Article 19 which states:

States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.¹¹

8 - UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Conference of the Parties Twenty-first session, Paris, 30 November to 11 December 2015: Agenda item 4(b), Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (decision 1/CP.17) Adoption of a protocol, another legal instrument, or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention applicable to all Parties: Adoption of the Paris Agreement

9 - Ibid, page 1, paragraph 8 "...respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples..."

10 - Para. 9, Statement by Prime Minister Trudeau on Release of the Final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Report, Ottawa, Ontario, 15 December 2015 <http://www.pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2015/12/15/statement-prime-minister-release-final-report-truth-and-reconciliation-commission>

11 - Article 19, UN General Assembly, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples : resolution / adopted by the General Assembly, 2 October 2007, A/RES/61/295, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/471355a82.html> [accessed 2 September 2016]

Furthermore, Article 19, UNDRIP outlines the responsibility of government to compensate Indigenous peoples for use of Indigenous lands that have been confiscated, taken, occupied, used or damaged without their free, prior and informed consent; and the State responsibly to support Indigenous led environmental conservation and protection plans through direct assistance programmes within Articles 28.1 and 29.1¹². Numerous legal challenges have been launched by Indigenous Nations using the UNDRIP, and have successfully interrupted government policies and Industry proposals. By continuing to neglect the rights of Indigenous people, decision makers for climate policy are putting at risk the sustainability of their plans to address climate change and setting a stage for losing legal battles.

Ensuring Indigenous Peoples rights and knowledge are valued in the decisions about climate change is the only way climate policies and solutions will be effective and sustainable for the long term.

Indigenous Peoples Meeting on Climate Change Summary

An ICA steering committee comprised of the following members made an inaugural meeting in January 2016 possible: Eriel Deranger (Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation), Jesse Cardinal (Kikino Metis Settlement), Crystal Lameman (Beaver Lake Cree Nation), and Melina Laboucan-Massimo (Lubicon Lake Band).

All of these members are Indigenous women from tar sands impacted communities.

The meeting also included Indigenous women as facilitators to guide the group discussions. These facilitators were Michelle Myers, Sharon Baptiste, Leslie Saddleback, Kiera Dawn Kolson, Erin Konsmo, Rena Squirrel, Heather Milton Lightening, and Jacqueline Fayant.

The inaugural meeting served to



bring Indigenous voices together to discuss the current failures of the Canadian government to uphold and affirm the rights of Indigenous Peoples in accord with inherent Treaty Rights and the UNDRIP in the wake of the current climate crisis.

At this meeting participants were encouraged to share their individual experiences with climate change and local solutions that address the problems. Panel presentations and keynote presentations were structured to provide briefings

on current local, national and international processes carried out by various UN and Government bodies to address climate change through adaptation and mitigation policies and frameworks. Topics included climate change 101; regional, national and international climate change policy; successful Indigenous led climate solutions; and the intersectionality of the rights of Indigenous peoples as described within UNDRIP and Treaty¹³.

12 - Article 28.1. Indigenous peoples have the right to redress, by means that can include restitution or, when this is not possible, just, fair and equitable compensation, for the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used, and which have been confiscated, taken, occupied, used or damaged without their free, prior and informed consent.

Article 29.1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.

13 - See Appendix A, B & C for Schedule of Events, Steering Committee, Speakers, Keynotes and Distinguished Elders, and conference sponsors

In addition, participants discussed the challenges and opportunities for participation in the development of climate change solutions and policy. Participants looked deep inside of themselves and their community needs to determine how to best employ adaptation strategies and to become directly involved in the development of regional climate change strategies.

The overarching themes that emerged from the meeting were as follows:

- Impacts of climate change
- Effects and under utilization of current mechanism on addressing climate change such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples (UNDRIP), Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)
- Challenges to meaningful participation as Indigenous peoples in current climate change discourse at the local, national and international levels
- Solutions and opportunities to address challenges faced at the local, national, and international levels
- Next steps necessary for the development of an Indigenous Climate Action Plan

At the conclusion of the Meeting, participants made commitments towards continuation of work towards the development of an Indigenous Climate Action Plan through additional gatherings, educational events, and webinars supported by ICA.

Due to the nature of the discussion and limited resources, the inaugural meeting was by invitation only. The Steering Committee chose participants based on gender, age, existing climate change issues/campaigns, and regional representation. In addition, to honor the land and waters of the Treaty territories of Alberta where the meeting was held, the Steering Committee sent invites for two representatives from all First Nations and Metis Settlements in Alberta and encouraged Elder and Youth selection. In the end 130 people registered from across all provinces and territories. 41 identified as women, 13 as youth and 8 as Elders. Participants represented elected leaders, technicians, and grassroots community members. They all brought a variety and wealth of experience in the area of attending to climate change.



Outcomes from the Indigenous Peoples Meeting on Climate Change

Participants at the gathering concluded that future climate change action and policy must uphold Indigenous rights and ensure that Indigenous communities are informed about the important conversations and negotiations that are being made to address climate change and the potential impacts they have on Indigenous rights and future opportunities.

Furthermore, to effectively address climate change, it is clear that Indigenous peoples must be vested with decision making power to develop policies and mitigation strategies. Additionally, there needs to be a more robust and rigorous process to adequately include Indigenous peoples in the development of any and all measures to understand climate change, to reduce or mitigate climate change, and adapt to the impacts of climate change. This can be done through the following:

- Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples (UNDRIP) at all levels of decision making and government.
- Increased access to resources (funding and capacity) for Indigenous communities to undertake the necessary research and studies to develop sovereign and independent climate change adaption and mitigation strategies.
- Increased public education on the direct and indirect impacts of climate change, climate change policies, and proposed mitigation and adaptation strategies on the rights of Indigenous peoples.
- Increased implementation of renewable energy projects in Indigenous communities
- Direct community engagement within Indigenous communities using an Indigenous Rights-based framework to learn about climate change and develop climate solutions.



The following pages compile a summary of the meeting's group discussions. It outlines in detail the day-to-day outcomes of this meeting and includes input from participants during the thematic breakout sessions. The clear and strategic outcomes, and next steps defined by the participants provide relevant information and guidance towards the future work of Indigenous Climate Action and others working on climate justice issues.

This summary is full of insight and guidance, and can serve as a useful tool for all people interested in furthering the goals for Indigenous led climate-justice.

DAY 1 SUMMARY

Welcoming, Registration & Entertainment

Day 1 of the conference introduced participants to the overall themes and desired outcomes of the gathering. The evening began with a welcome dinner emceed by Cliff Whitford of the Beaver Lake Cree Nation. The Steering Committee and Organizing Team: Eriel Deranger, Crystal Lameman, Jessie Cardinal, Melina Laboucan-Massimo, Clayton Thomas-Muller, Ananda Lee Tan and Sheila Muxlow, provided opening comments

and introductions that outlined the unique and critical nature of the gathering and set the tone for the meeting to build unity and understanding for future Indigenous-led climate change action.

Grand Chief Tony Alexis of the Treaty No. 6 Confederacy provided an official territorial welcome, followed by Chief Stan Grier of the Piikani Nation as proxy for Grand Chief

Charles Weaselhead of Treaty No. 7, and Councillor Michelle Voyageur as proxy for Grand Chief Steve Courtoreille of Treaty No. 8. Our evening wrapped up with inspiring and energetic presentations by DJ Creeasian¹⁴, and dancers James Jones¹⁵, and Conway Kootenay¹⁶, along with award winning singer songwriters Phyllis Sinclair¹⁷ and Nathan Cunningham¹⁸.



14 - www.biggentertainment.ca/creeasian

15 - www.hooping.org/2013/09/james-jones-hoop-dance

16 - www.imdb.com/name/nm7098351/bio

17 - www.phyllissinclair.com

18 - www.reverbnation.com/nathancunningham

DAY 2 SUMMARY

Introduction to Climate Change, UNDRIP & Indigenous Rights, and breakout sessions

Day 2 brought the participants into deep discussion on climate change, climate policy and the challenges they face in their communities. Participants were introduced to the history of climate change and intersectionalities with Indigenous rights on local, national and international levels. The day was grounded in Indigenous protocol, starting with a Pipe Ceremony and opening comments from Elder Jimmy O'Chiese.

The morning of Day 2 consisted of panel presentations that created a common foundation of information to guide the afternoon breakout sessions/discussions on climate change challenges at the community level.

The morning panel presentations included an overview on Climate Change Policy at a local, national and international levels. Eriel



Deranger and Mike Hudema outlined the overarching themes, gaps, and challenges of the newly developed Alberta's Climate Leadership Plan¹⁹. Clayton Thomas Muller emphasized the shifting landscape at a Federal level²⁰, and opportunities for amplifying Indigenous perspectives on climate change. Tom Goldtooth provided a historical overview starting with the 1992 Rio Earth Summit²¹. In addition, he discussed the growing international focus on developing climate change policy, as well as the essential information and work being provided by Indigenous peoples worldwide.

Over lunch Grand Chief Stewart Phillip with the Union of BC Indian Chiefs shared his first hand experience in dealing with project proposals for the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline and the Site C Dam. In the afternoon Ron Lameman spoke about his involvement in the creation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) followed by Art Manuel, who emphasized how critical it is to use an Indigenous rights-based framework and honor traditional



knowledge holders and land defenders. Ellen Gabriel spoke passionately about her work out of Kanehsatà:ke and her hope for a future with revived Indigenous Sovereignty. Lastly Danika Littlechild shared her work as a lawyer and in the United Nations, the successes, challenges, and opportunities she has witnessed while using UNDRIP and other rights-based strategies.

The afternoon brought the participants into deep discussion on climate change, climate policy and the challenges they face in their communities. Participants were introduced to the history of climate change and intersectionalities with Indigenous rights on local, national and international levels.

Day 2 wrapped up with Crystal Lameman of the Beaver Lake Cree Nation hosting the documentary, 'This Changes Everything' by Avi Lewis and Naomi Klein²².

19 - www.alberta.ca/climate-leadership-plan.aspx

20 - www.climatechange.gc.ca

21 - www.un.org/geninfo/bp/enviro.html

22 - <http://thischangeseverything.org>

Day 2 - Breakout Group Summaries

Participants were asked to form small groups guided by group facilitators to discuss a series of thematic questions which included climate change issues, community work, and challenges and opportunities for moving forward. The questions put to the groups were as follows:

1. How is your community experiencing/dealing with climate change?
2. What is your community doing to address climate change?
3. What does your community need for the future in order to address climate change?
4. What are the gaps and challenges in utilizing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to address climate change?
5. What opportunities exist for utilizing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?

The following summaries provide an overview of the robust discussions and answers to the questions posed within the smaller groups.

1. How is your community experiencing/dealing with climate change?

Participants described a diversity of issues and troubling experiences they have endured due to climate change. They spoke of increasing intensity of the sun, inconsistent and heavy rains, and warmer winters. All of which have a direct impact on the local environment, physical health, economic opportunities, and cultural practices of community members. These experiences provide insight into the intersectionality between a changing environment and socio-economic outcomes.

Participants described the

destabilization of biodiversity on Indigenous lands and territories and the degradation of the waterways and air sheds that communities rely on. They discussed the disappearance of plants and animals utilized for traditional food such as salmon, moose, bison, rabbits, pronghorns, caribou and muskrat. In addition, it was pointed out that as a result of changing environments, new invasive species are posing real threats to the health and conservation of long-established Indigenous species. Participants spoke of the

drastic decline in the numbers of animals and of the alarming changes seen in the animals such as tumors, mutation, and discoloration. They tied the decline in wild game to the devastating impact oil and gas industry has had on the land and waterways. Participants also reflected on radically altered seasonal patterns caused by increasing CO2 emissions and the larger climate change crisis.

Participants described how the shifting weather patterns have resulted in direct impacts to

waterways, snowpack, spring run-off, water levels (high in areas that are usually low, and low in places that are usually high) resulting in both floods and droughts. The change in weather patterns has decreased the accessibility of activities such as traditional hunting, fishing, trapping, and gathering of traditional medicine and berries.

as oil sands, coal, natural gas, forestry, agriculture, fracking and hydroelectric projects have contributed to local or upstream contamination which has increased levels of PAHs, arsenic, benzene, and mercury in ecosystems. Furthermore, the decreasing availability and contamination of traditional foods has drastically affected the diets of many of the participants. Many

issues. People who have continued on traditional diets described how the food tastes much different, and they are now witnessing and experiencing higher rates of cancer, autoimmune disease, reproductive issues, and other negative health effects in their communities.

Participants identified the effects of degraded air quality from industrial pollution and increasing greenhouse gas emissions. They indicated that lowered air quality ultimately affects human, animal, and ecosystem health in several ways. Lung conditions, illness, and difficulty breathing has become common in Indigenous communities that are located close to large industrial development. Many communities are witnessing declining populations in songbirds, small and large mammals, waterfowl and medicinal plants. Participants believe water and air quality are factors contributing to this decline.



Participants further discussed how traditional foods have been negatively affected. Many discussed how surrounding industrial development such

communities do not have access to affordable, healthy food in standard grocery stores and thus end up surviving on highly processed foods which contribute to increased rates of diabetes and other health-related

Additionally, critical community infrastructure like winter roads, which rely on a stable, cold climate to maintain their integrity, have become dangerous with rising





global temperatures in the north. The loss of reliable access to winter roads puts communities at risk, often restricting their ability to travel and access health, education, and economic services.

Participants agree that the cumulative impacts of a changing environment have had a serious impact on Indigenous Peoples and the maintenance of food security and sovereignty. This contributes to the socio-economic impacts

linked to the changing climate. Another issue faced by Indigenous Peoples in their communities is an influx of non-Indigenous peoples in traditional lands and territories to study changing climates. One participant described it like being 'A canary in a coal mine' with visiting academics, journalists and film-makers parachuting in to report on the negative experiences in the community, but failing to contribute anything meaningful to support the community to address the impacts they are facing.

Further discussion expanded on the loss of identity being felt within communities as traditional lands, foods, and customs are lost to the changing climate. Many participants raised alarms about the loss of identity. Some of them directly related their culture and

identity to the land and felt that climate change was compounding the effects already experienced from colonization. In addition, serious concerns were raised about the increase of death by suicide amongst youth and links were elicited connecting loss of Indigenous culture as a key factor in these suicides.

As one participant aptly described: "The change in climate has made our one true Mother so sick that she has become unable to provide our people with a healthy livelihood. Communities are faced with the murder of their traditional lifestyles at the hands of other people's abusive actions towards Mother Earth and feel this abuse in all realms of Indigenous culture."

2. What is your community doing to address climate change?

Participants discussed a range of activities that are being taken within different Nations and communities to address climate change as they try to mitigate the impacts faced at a local level. The discussion began with a collective expression of pride around how Indigenous communities have maintained much of their traditional knowledge, and how they tend to be proactive in stewarding traditional territories, despite limited resources and challenges presented by the ongoing legacy of colonization.

Participants described how they were applying community-based monitoring and land use studies



to better understand the severity of impacts on the water, land, air,

and species. Members of different Nations discussed work they are

doing to collect and preserve oral history and map territory, animals, plants and sacred sites by conducting interviews with Elders as they use technology such as GIS mapping, and working with governments to sustain local protection initiatives like the Guardian Watchman Program²³ on the West Coast. Some communities are in the process of developing local environmental governance policies, using local land codes and co-management agreements. In some cases, communities have imposed restrictions on activities like fishing and hunting to address the depletion of animal and fish populations. In instances where there has been extreme environmental pollution, such as oil spills, communities have taken it upon themselves to continue to monitor and clean up after corporate and government agencies have left.



Many communities are exploring partnerships with universities, unions, and allied environmental organizations (i.e. Keepers of the Athabasca) to undertake research, promote environmental campaigns and support local Indigenous climate leadership. Some communities chose to engage with international institutions such as the United

Nations, while others with local businesses and grassroots activists.

As part of the work at the community level many participants discussed the need to occupy territories and spaces to stop projects, like the blockades at Site C Hydro project²⁴, Grassy Narrows blockades²⁵, protests at the Northern Gateway Pipeline hearings²⁶, and the many different demonstrations during Idle No More.



In discussions about monitoring and recording information, participants emphasized a common lesson learned: A community must maintain ownership of their knowledge. It must not become property of a third party, such as government or project proponents.

Participants shared that there are a number of community initiatives that are focusing on educating youth,

23 - www.coastalguardianwatchmen.ca/guardian-watchmen-programs

24 - <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/site-c-protesters-arrested-1.3392884>

25 - <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/grassy-narrows-12-year-blockade-against-clear-cutting-wins-award-1.3085692>

26 - <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/northern-gateway-pipeline-hearing-1.3251780>

and promoting and preserving traditional teachings to build capacity for the future. Social media has been commonly used as a means of communication, organization, and engagement and has been effective in engaging more youth. Many Nations are hosting culture camps to bring together young people to learn

from Elders and celebrate their Indigenous identity.

Participants from many Nations mentioned the use of legal action to address the failure of the Canadian Government to uphold the spirit and intent of the Treaties, and to ensure Indigenous rights are protected.

Finally, participants brought to light that many communities are exploring and implementing renewable energy installations such as solar and wind energy as a way to build sustainable economic development that is owned and operated by the community.

3. What does your community need for the future in order to address climate change?

Participants expressed the need to be empowered to develop, implement, and assess their own responses to climate change that are grounded in Indigenous spirituality, culture, and worldview. This demands a process of decolonization which addresses the imbalanced

relationship between Indigenous communities and the Canadian Government; this includes but is not limited to funding arrangements under the Indian Act which are allocated by pre-determined mandates from the Canadian Government. At the moment,

those mandates do not expressly include climate change.

Participants indicated that new forms of funding and support for Indigenous-led initiatives need to be initiated in order to diversify from the dependency on



Lubicon Solar Project



Canadian Government funding, i.e. self-generated funding streams. However, many participants also raised the challenges they face when they oppose the current fossil fuel economy. They articulated that due to the nature of revenues afforded to their communities, oil and gas, and other high carbon producing sectors perpetuate Indigenous dependency on fossil fuel economies.

One participant stated that it was critical to “...End the Jobs Vs Environment mentality...” and that it is essential to move away from fundamentally broken capitalist models. The question was then brought up about how carbon market mechanisms could or could not be rolled out while using the same systems of capitalism.

As participants discussed future needs, they stressed a need for resources to revitalize Indigenous language, culture, and worldview to ensure Indigenous sovereignty. Participants also indicated that

adequate support for youth to learn local knowledge and assume leadership is essential, as is the recording and collection of data and other relevant information to create ‘institutional memory.’

Participants discussed how land-use planning could help communities to better understand energy use, explore sustainable building design, passive energy systems, water metering and monitoring, and establish independent and proper monitoring within Indigenous jurisdictions. This could occur through collection of land-use planning data which could in turn help communities design better regulations, prepare for climate change, implement local strategies for reducing emissions, and address food and energy security for the future.

For many communities there is limited exposure to renewable energy projects and their economic benefits. Participants expressed a great desire for presentations

and workshops at the local level on the benefits of a renewable energy economy for First Nations communities and Peoples. Many of them felt that current Indigenous leaders were unaware of other economic opportunities in renewable energy (i.e. solar panels, electric vehicles, wind energy, etc.) and lacked the knowledge that these new economic systems could indeed support communities to become more self-sustaining.

Participants acknowledged the need for reflection on, and recognition of dependency and benefits from, the resource extraction industry such as jobs and health care. They also felt there is a need to pursue renewable energy options and planning strategies through the use of traditional knowledge as a means to guide a way forward for water protection and food sovereignty. Current structures of benefits from the fossil fuel industry may offer economic and social advantages; However, they do not often reflect the desired protection for Indigenous rights and the environment. Therefore, many participants stressed a need for a new framework that includes these components of assessment, and that Impact Benefit Agreements be negotiated on First Nation, Metis and Inuit terms.

During the course of the discussions, a theme emerged around a practical need for a physical space to gather and do this work. There was a strong desire from participants to ensure that all Indigenous communities are made aware of economic trends, stewardship and conservation

practices, as well as awareness of training opportunities in these fields. Many felt a training center rooted in traditional knowledge and ceremony along with western science would be beneficial and could add to a shared vision towards the creation of traditional healing centres.

Finally, participants believed that it

is important to support one another and work together in healing and organizing work. They also discussed the importance of working alongside allies who share similar values and worldviews. Participants believed that education on a community level is critical to achieving long term success for communities as they address climate change. Many are examining championing

leaders who are willing to take strong stands for the environment at the community level.

4. What are the challenges and gaps for utilizing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to address climate change?

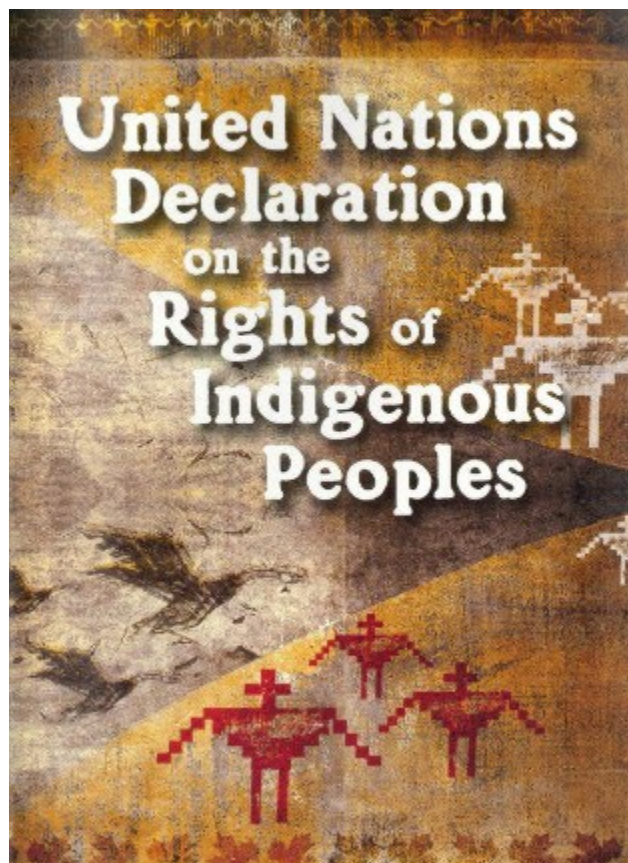
Participants voiced concern about the lack of desire to understand climate change and the United Nations Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples at the community level. A discussion then followed about how UNDRIP and climate change terminology are not always accessible to Indigenous community members, and how this terminology could be reimagined to “speak to” community members more effectively. One participant stated “Mother earth is alive and should be treated that way.” Many visualized a ‘translation’ of UNDRIP and climate change terminology into local languages carried out through a partnership with Elders and traditional knowledge holders to ensure that the ideas were effectively translated. Participants emphasized the need to not merely translate the words but to illustrate the real meaning and intent for people.

It was further discussed that the

INAC structure of governance within our communities poses a challenge, because it disproportionately empowers the elected Chief and Council of a Nation. It was felt that application of the full intent of the UNDRIP demands that the Chief and Council of a Nation need to share in the political will to include the broader community in discussions and strategies towards its implementation.

Some people raised concerns that the UNDRIP is a by-product of the United Nations. They, reminded others of the role this international organization has played in the process of colonization. Many participants stated that

decolonization was a key process in unpacking the implementation and interpretation of UNDRIP. Decolonization, as discussed in the groups, is rooted in the



establishment of Indigenous peoples in leadership roles in decision making processes as they challenge current power and privilege dynamics. In addition, decolonization incorporates the revitalization of Indigenous languages, sacred cultural ceremonies, and practices, while simultaneously drawing attention to how colonization and the legacy of residential schools has created real-world barriers that disrupt current lifestyles and livelihood choices.

Another underpinning concern is the current role of non-Indigenous environmental organizations - and the funding models that support them - in moving forward the discussions about climate change and Indigenous rights without direct participation from Indigenous communities. Again, many participants stressed the need for a decolonization approach to redistribute decision-making power and privilege to the people most directly affected. There was a feeling that while many of these groups may have similar end goals (i.e. protecting lands, territory, biodiversity, waterways, etc.), they often do not recognize the integral role that the rights of Indigenous Peoples provides for their campaigns, nor do they consistently support Indigenous peoples efforts to speak for themselves.

Participants articulated how many of the challenges to fully utilize UNDRIP are rooted in a lack of resources, capacity, and funding available at the community level. Many of them stated there is a need to undertake their own



independent analysis of UNDRIP and climate change in order to begin to discuss and unpack interpretation and implementation. Without community input and accountability, participants raised concern that they would be repeating the same poor consultation that is currently occurring in communities by corporations and governments. In addition, due to the lack of community understanding and access to prior information about climate change and policy, many

communities are feeling pressured and coerced by corporate and government interests to move quickly on these issues. This in itself prevents free self-determining processes.

Many participants felt that the foundational element of the UNDRIP, free, prior and informed consent (FPIC), is being compromised by capitalism and serves as a pillar to the Canadian government participation in the United Nations.

They also felt that capitalism was foundationally at odds with Indigenous worldview as seen in the externalization of environmental degradation and violations of human rights. The issue of carbon markets was raised as an example of a controversial solution to climate change. A solution that provides environmental protection and economic opportunity for some communities, but results in the destruction of others. In addition to describing how capitalism poses challenges to incorporating Indigenous knowledge and worldview within climate solutions, many participants felt that the

rushed processes with unrealistic timelines and lack of resources allocated to communities to meet them, continues to entrench unjust, colonial processes to address climate change and utilize UNDRIP. In addition to FPIC, many participants were curious on how collective rights, as recognized by UNDRIP, challenged Canada's and global communities continued standardization of individual rights.

Once participants were able to discuss the foundational barriers of colonialism, capitalism and existing governance structures, they began to unpack some of the more

nuanced challenges and obstacles to utilizing UNDRIP. They had major concerns around specific policies and jurisdictional challenges for implementation of UNDRIP from municipal (urban), provincial, and national government's assertion of its governance. Furthermore, existing laws, legislation (Natural Resource Transfers Acts), government structures (INAC and provincial boundaries) and historical ideologies (Doctrine of Discovery) are obstacles to the implementation and utilization of UNDRIP, because these antiquated ideologies and structures remain functional and continue to be



instruments for colonization and the suppression of Indigenous sovereignty.

Many participants stressed a need for development of independent, sovereign, and collective approaches to the understanding of UNDRIP and ways to address climate change outside of the defined restrictions of existing colonial structures in Canada.

As participants discussed climate change policy, they articulated the need to examine lands and resource management and the challenges Indigenous Peoples face in involvement in those processes. They felt their involvement is already hampered by the Natural Resources Transfers Acts (NRTA) at the provincial level, and by provincial assertion of control over lands

and resources. The NRTA in the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba is enforced as law and mandates the dealings that happen on the land. As described by one group's members: "We need to be accountable to our people and the potential impacts of talking about agreements like the NRTA that create serious jurisdictional challenges to implementing UNDRIP and addressing climate change."

Participants raised questions about who would be representatives "at the table" when they discussed UNDRIP, the implications of its articles, and how UNDRIP would be enforced at the local, regional, and national levels. They asked who was going to enforce violations of UNDRIP and who would lead this process. Participants stated there were many communities like the

Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation who utilize UNDRIP to uphold work to protect and preserve their rights, lands and territories. This should be held up as a best practice when examining what implementation may look like.

Participants emphasized that it should be acknowledged that any consultations on the implementation of UNDRIP is not finalized until full free, prior and informed consent from all affected Nations is obtained. Governments often interpret and utilize what is said in individual conversations without confirmation and follow up from communities. This leads to long term 'interpretation' issues (i.e. historical treaty interpretation challenges that are still ongoing today).

5. What opportunities exist for utilizing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples to address climate change?

A few themes emerged in discussions about opportunities from UNDRIP. It was stated that UNDRIP is both a sword and a shield and it has the ability to assert Indigenous authority and could serve to protect against further colonization and climate change. Participants examined specific articles in the document to explore potential opportunities. They felt the four most prominent opportunities for utilizing the UNDRIP are as follows:

- To support the expression of Indigenous laws for incorporation and inclusion in the development of climate change action
- To better inform climate change strategies and solutions through the upholding of traditional teachings.
- To understand the critical role Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and cosmology have in addressing climate change through education of the UNDRIP and use this as a strategy to engage communities and not just leadership in this understanding.
- To rely on the reputation of the United Nations to engage with a broader audience to ensure the rights of Indigenous peoples are upheld in the face of ongoing colonization.



Participants felt that a fundamental opportunity within UNDRIP is that it could be used to leverage recognition and revitalization of Indigenous laws and teachings, and this would be beneficial in addressing climate change adaptation and mitigation. If Indigenous laws and teachings were implemented and recognized as viable governance and management within Indigenous territories, this could repair and build amenable relationships with industries and non-Indigenous governments (such as Canadian federal, provincial and municipal governments) while simultaneously allowing for an integration of Indigenous worldview into the development of climate change action strategies.

The UNDRIP supports this type of action through Article 5 which states:

'Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic,

social and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State.'²⁷

Further to article 5, articles 18, 19, 23, 26, & 31 support the assertion of unique Indigenous governance structures and laws. Most specifically articles 23 & 26.2 which state the following:

Article 23 - Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development...through their own institution

Article 26.2 - Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.

Article 31.1 - Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions...²⁸

Participants felt that UNDRIP supports the recognition and use of Traditional Law/ Right to Self-Governance. They mentioned examples of Indigenous laws that could be reinforced by the UNDRIP, including water laws, land use agreements, and specific Indigenous legal orders such as the Save the Fraser Declaration. Although this sentiment is threaded throughout the UNDRIP, articles 27, 29 & 32 make specific mention of the rights for Indigenous control of their lands and how resources are managed..

Article 27 - States shall establish and implement, in conjunction with indigenous peoples concerned, a fair, independent, impartial, open and transparent process, giving due recognition to indigenous peoples' laws, traditions, customs and land tenure systems...

Article 29.1 - Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources...

Article 32.1 & 32.2 - Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other

27 - Article 5, UN General Assembly, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples : resolution / adopted by the General Assembly, 2 October 2007, A/RES/61/295, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/471355a82.html> [accessed 2 September 2016]

28 - Article 18, 19, 23, 26.2, 31.1, Ibid

resources. 2. States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources...²⁹

Participants felt another essential opportunity of the UNDRIP is that it upholds traditional teachings, which includes the right to access traditional medicines and conduct ceremony. This requires a healthy ecosystem and thus enables protection of Indigenous lands from the onslaught of proposed industrial expansion, such as existing oil, gas, hydro and mining projects. The industrialization of Indigenous lands without full Indigenous participation and consent has allowed continued growth and mismanagement of finite natural resources while simultaneously exacerbating climate change through increasing greenhouse gas emissions (i.e. carbon and methane).

The UNDRIP supports this primarily through Articles 24 which states, 'Indigenous peoples have the right to their traditional medicines and to maintain their health practices, including the conservation of their vital medicinal plants, animals and minerals.'³⁰

And is further supported through language in articles 11, 25 & 32³¹.

In recognition of the many challenges participant's discussed a need was identified to make UNDRIP and its principles accessible to communities' youth, Elders, grassroots, and leadership to assist in development and assertion of Indigenous and community based climate solutions.

A further opportunity participants explored was ways to make UNDRIP accessible to communities at the grassroots and leadership levels. Many felt that it would be beneficial if community members were better engaged and equipped with a holistic understanding of the document, how it was developed, and the authority for its designation by the United Nations. Participants felt that informing communities about the details of the document

and generating more expansive interpretations would allow for opportunities for action to assert Indigenous rights in relation to climate change.

Participants discussed how understanding the UNDRIP could support the development of community best practices to climate adaptation and mitigation and enable and support more community involvement – particularly within Elder and youth sectors- in decision making. They put a strong emphasis on the opportunity for elected leadership to incorporate this into the current administrative structures more effectively in order to ensure fair and open processes that address a broader spectrum of issues.



Lubicon Solar Project

29 - Articles 27, 29, 32, Ibid

30 - Article 24, Ibid

31 - Articles 11, 25 & 32, Ibid

Participant sentiment indicated that supporting collective ownership over community decision-making would help lead the way to a post Indian Act era and aid Nations in addressing core community needs such as energy consumption, housing, production of waste, recycling, food and water security, education, and health policies more effectively.

This option is fully supported within the UNDRIP through article 35, which states 'Indigenous peoples have the right to determine the

responsibilities of individuals to their communities.'³²

And subsequently supported throughout the declaration and more specifically within articles 38, 41, and 42³³.

The final opportunity participants discussed was how communities could use the United Nations arena to reach a broader audience and uphold traditional practices. Canada is proud of its reputation on the international stage as a champion of human and Indigenous rights.

Yet the Canadian government has not been honest about its legacy of colonization, industrialization and the disproportionate impacts that climate change is having on First Nations, Metis and Inuit people. Participants stressed that if their concerns and voices were amplified, the reputational risk to Canada at the global level might motivate the federal, provincial and municipal governments to take direct action to address the needs of Indigenous Peoples.

DAY 3 SUMMARY

Review of breakout sessions, presentations on successful organizing and implementing solutions to climate change, and breakout discussion on next steps for communities

The final day focused on existing and potential solutions for communities to combat climate change and to develop independent and sovereign climate action plans.

The day began with opening remarks by Elder Francois Paulette, who engaged participants into a conversation about building solutions from their own people and communities, and rooting themselves in language and

culture. Following Elder Paulette, participants were presented with further information about how their rights, culture and identity can be used to challenge projects, and protect and preserve their lands, through a keynote speech by Winona LaDuke of Honor the Earth. Winona complemented Elder Paulette by speaking to the importance of Indigenous knowledge and the power of culture and connection to the land.

In addition, Winona provided an overview of the work that Honor the Earth has done to challenge industrial projects that threaten food security, culture and identity, and ultimately the climate of the planet.

Following the opening remarks and keynote address the advisory committee presented an overview of outcomes from Day 2 breakout discussions in order to share the

32 - Article 35, Ibid

33 - Ibid

diversity of stories, challenges, and solutions identified by the group as a whole. Clayton Thomas-Muller and Heather Milton-Lightening augmented the discussion by providing an overview of national and international declarations that affirm and support principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and call for immediate action to address climate change. Links to the reviewed declarations are available on the Indigenous Climate Action website.

Participants were then guided into the first thematic breakout sessions of the day that would examine what shared vision, values, and goals should inform the development of independent and sovereign Indigenous climate action plans.

Over lunch participants were inspired by a panel of community success stories moderated by Jesse Cardinal. Chief Gordon Planes, Melina Laboucan-Massimo, and Barb Wilson, spoke to the power of community-led initiatives that address energy and food security.

The panelists highlighted the need for development of protocols and governance at the local level in order to guide work and bring communities to success.

The day wrapped up with people participating in breakout groups to discuss what they wanted to see in future Indigenous climate action plans and to make commitments to assert Indigenous rights as they continue working together on an Indigenous climate action strategy.

Day 3 - Breakout Group Summaries

Questions for Day 3 Breakout Groups:

1. What shared vision, values and goals should guide an Indigenous Climate Change Action plan?
2. What kinds of action strategies would best resonate with and effectively mobilize your community?
3. What information, tools, and resources would your community need to be able to adopt and implement a climate action strategy?



1. What shared vision, values & goals should guide an Indigenous Climate Change Action Plan?

During the last day participants were asked to discuss the idea of an Indigenous Climate Change Action Plan (ICCAP). This brought up many recurring themes as well as overlapping ideals shared by communities who voiced their concerns during the meetings.

In these discussions many participants raised concern that a national or pan-Canadian plan creates a challenge due to the various differences in socio-economical, geographical and legal frameworks across the vast regions of Turtle Island.

Thus, conversations focused on the vision, values and goals that could help serve as a starting point for building independent and sovereign Indigenous climate action plans at community and/or regional levels. Many of the suggestions shared similar themes and goals in regards to what visions and values should be addressed in an ICCAP. One of the most prominent visions shared by a large number of participants was the need to be accountable to their communities as well as to be grounded in traditional and cultural teachings and ceremonies.



VISION:

In order to discuss a vision for an Indigenous Climate Change Action Plan, participants were invited to share the ideal outcomes that an ICCAP could achieve. All participants agreed that it is important for any ICCAP to uplift original Indigenous laws and reconnect with the laws from the land that guide Indigenous Peoples. Participants expanded the conversation to affirmed that an ICCAP must have a mandate that reflects the protection and conservation of the land, air, water, sacred fire, forest, animals, fish, medicines, and plants which would ultimately protect people, children, and the future generations. One of the visions that was largely agreed on is that an ICCAP needs to address the immediate need to move Indigenous Nations and communities away from the paternalistic mandates and controls of Canadian (European) economic 'culture' as Indigenous Peoples begin controlling how their lands are being cared for. Participants outlined opportunities that could come through an ICCAP to build capacity in communities, protect Indigenous livelihoods, and provide support for neighbouring communities throughout Turtle Island to bolster the strength of all Indigenous Nations.

As one participant eloquently depicted a vision for an Indigenous Climate Change Action Plan (ICCAP):

To nourish stronger relations with the one true Mother by implementing cultural and traditional place-based values into environmental protection and management planning that is geared towards Indigenous sovereignty, independence, and self-sustainability on a community level.



VALUES:

Participants discussed that the values of Indigenous Peoples need to be the core principles of an Indigenous Climate Change Action Plan. They emphasized that these values need to be rooted in ceremony.

Participants identified the following values to guide an Indigenous Climate Action Plan:

- Indigenous Original Laws, Values and Practices
- Elder direction and youth involvement at all levels of decision making for an ICCAP
- Celebration of diversity of experiences and expertise
- Nation to Nation agreements
- Share and Learn from each other's experiences
- Celebrate Successes
- Be conscious of socio-economic barriers within communities, and make an effort to ensure accessibility and inclusivity
- Local control over territory by Indigenous Peoples

A discussion on these values ensued that highlighted the importance of an ICCAP to support strong representation of cultural and traditional Indigenous laws, values, and practices within communities' land use management efforts. Participants also acknowledged that there is an array of experiences, expertise, and inputs that need to be recognized as strengths in tackling environmental issues effectively. They also stressed the importance of returning to the original laws of Mother Earth, traditional community stories, and teachings shared by community Elders. Furthermore, participants impressed upon the need to encourage, listen, and involve youth throughout the process of the development of climate change action plans.

Discussion by participants also emphasized the need to create and maintain strong relations with each other; honour diversity, advocate for Nation to Nation alliances, and offer support to others where needed. While a focus on collaboration was clear, participants all voiced a strong need to recognize that barriers caused by colonialism and climate change affect communities differently on their ability to engage on climate change issues. The participants also recognized the benefits that come from learning about the successes achieved by other communities who are revitalizing their natural relations to the land.



An additional value emerged from participant discussion that emphasized the importance of working towards Indigenous self sufficiency and sovereignty through reclamation of original territories. Collectively, participants also agreed that they want to see a future where federal governments respect traditional practices, and the caretaking of traditional lands by original occupants.

GOALS:

The goals for an Indigenous Climate Change Action Plan emerged more as the ideal specific outcomes. They are outlined below.

Build local capacity and expertise in climate change related issues

- a) Provide education and skills development opportunities for community members.
- b) Showcase Indigenous stewardship and assert Indigenous laws and Indigenous culture.

Maintain harmony with the environment around us.

- a) Strengthen the presence of cultural and traditional knowledge within the community, based on respect and reverence for teachings of the land.
- b) Protect the local ecosystems, waterways and existing traditional medicines, wild game, and fish.

Utilize UNDRIP effectively

- a. Participants outlined some of the manners in which they could use UNDRIP in their communities.
 - i. To assert legal authority of Indigenous laws, teachings, values and culture within government and industry laws and legislation. Articles 5, 18, 19, 23, 26, & 31³⁴.
 - ii. To ensure flexibility that respects the unique needs of individual communities to create and enact their own responses and solutions to climate change. Articles 27, 29 & 32³⁵.
 - iii. To support changes to Canadian legislation to recognize the rights of Indigenous communities and Peoples to say no (veto power). Article 19³⁶.
 - iv. To demand transparency from industry and governments on environmental impacts caused by development and resource extraction, and ensure that Indigenous teachings are fully upheld in Government of Canada and industry court proceedings. Article 29³⁷.

34 - UN General Assembly, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples : resolution / adopted by the General Assembly, 2 October 2007, A/RES/61/295, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/471355a82.html> [accessed 2 September 2016]

35 - Ibid

36- Ibid

37 - Ibid

2. What kinds of action strategies would best resonate with and effectively mobilize your community?

A brainstorming session guided participants’ discussion on this question. Participants from all the break out groups brought forth a range of experience in community mobilization. Many participants used this session to discuss different strategies that already work and those they would like to see happen in their respective communities.

Participants agreed that there is a need to evaluate those strategies that not only achieve clear outcomes and motivate people, but also those that lessen dependency on government and create community sustainability. In addition, there

was an emphasis on the creation of sovereign Indigenous legal institutions based on free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC). Many people felt this could be supported by incorporating UNDRIP into decision making processes, policies, and mandates at local, regional, and national levels. Next, participants discussed challenges to the actual creation of sovereign Indigenous community based strategies and institutions. Challenges included lack of capacity in people power, financial dependency on government, and finding ways and means to access sustainable alternative funding.

Themes that emerged from

these breakout sessions included food sovereignty, independent governance models; ecosystem and water protection; renewable energy and energy democracy plans economic regulation; cultural and language preservation; education and awareness; and general survival and adaption. Participants in each group realized that potential action strategies were valuable. However, concern emerged on how strategy work would be supported, researched, and controlled by the communities.

The table below contains group brainstorm ideas.

Food Security	Independent Governance	Collaboration	Community Owned Ecosystem and Water Protection
Food sovereignty Securing own lands Garden and Fisheries Local Food Harvest Protection of food source from land & water Facilitate the Healing Reconcile with Mother Earth Leaving legacies	Community Governance Boards Retention of Original Indigenous Laws & Creation Stories Having a network to share information between communities Meet w/ Minister of Climate Change on our terms Promote & Protect the Declaration of the rights of Mother Earth	Treaties with other Indigenous peoples (Buffalo protection as an example) Indigenous people helping Indigenous people Work with existing organizations who share common values. (i.e. Keepers of the Athabasca)	Water protection plans Teaching Conservation Methods Documenting and monitoring changes Traditional conservation methodology Community based monitoring and guardian programs (including youth) Partnership with Environment Canada air quality measurement Tree Preservation policies

Renewable energy/ Energy democracy	Economic Renewal	Culture and language	Education & awareness
Transition away from Fossil Fuel era Solar Panel Installation Renewable Resources Economic benefit based from & developed on survival Housing Strategies & Local Materials Innovation Energy Conservation Alternative Energy Options Electrical vehicle charging stations (Municipal partnerships) Energy + to Positives	Polluter Pay Legislation Incentives for renewable energy development	Live traditionally on land Taking Youth onto land (cultural revitalization) Retention of language Ceremony Practicing the Old Ways i.e. fasting Strategic use of skills (botany, housing) Follow Creator's Laws Reconcile with Mother Earth Reconcile Family - Healing	Data Collection (Traditional & Identify environmental conservation) Own university to get people ready to train Share knowledge - best practices Education models that include climate strategies starting early on (kindergarten) Indigenous Education philosophy Make Climate Change 'language' understandable to all communities. Strategy to meet people: Marketing and Translation



Participants identified the benefits of using media to inspire people through showcasing successful work, highlighting the importance of Indigenous rights and visits from the United Nations Special Rapporteur, and a Canada review under United Nations mechanisms,

etc. They mentioned that media can also provide a valuable avenue for public education on the importance of Indigenous rights inclusion in climate change planning, action and policy development.

Toward the end of this breakout session participants began to focus on a need to provide community healing from the legacy of colonization and at the same time create spaces that support people to move out of their comfort zones. In the discussion on community healing, participants emphasized that youth involvement is essential in all aspects of building and implementing climate change strategies. Participants also agreed that they need to examine and explore all available climate change

strategy options. Some participants discussed the need to explore direct action and civil disobedience such as those presented by Chief Stewart Phillip and Winona LaDuke.

Strategies brought up by participants varied by community, region, and current political structures. While there was a variance of strategies, the central theme was the preservation of Indigenous culture and language with an emphasis on ensuring intergenerational leadership and involvement in all aspects of building and implementing any and all strategies.

3. What information, tools, and resources would your community need to be able to adopt and implement a climate action strategy?

Participants identified a wide range of needs that would assist them in their ability to adopt and implement climate action strategies. Some people identified a need for basic supplies, such as stationary or internet access, others focused on increased financial and human resources which includes the specific need to hire organizers and technicians from the community.

All participants identified the need for increased education and skills development. They showed interest in obtaining training on things such as community organizing, using web-based resources for communication and research, developing Land and

Traditional Use Studies, and using GIS mapping and climate modelling technology. Participants further indicated that while most people in the community speak English, the technical language in climate change policy and development isn't always easy to understand or translate. They indicated a strong desire to have materials 'translated' into community level languages, in English and Indigenous languages. In addition, participants thought it would be helpful to have accessible ways to engage youth, grassroots community members, leaders, and Elders in processes that inform policies and provide input on solutions. The engagement of all community representatives

in these processes could serve to inform policies, such as polluter pays policies, mitigation strategies, rights based approaches, (i.e. UNDRIP), and health standards. This process could also build community confidence for development and implementation of corresponding local action strategies.

In essence, participants felt that opportunities for intergenerational learning and exchange is integral to the adoption and/or implementation of any strategies to address climate change at a local level.



NEXT STEPS

Participant raised questions and had deep discussion on potential next steps to guide the way forward for Indigenous Climate Action.

QUESTIONS

Participants recognized that there is a need to work collectively to create progressive and aggressive climate change plans and policies to address the current climate crisis. At the same time, many of the participants questioned the process and validity of what's being developed. Some of the main questions they raised were as follows:

- Would new plans effectively mitigate emissions enough to halt or lessen the impacts of climate change on the rights of Indigenous peoples?
- How are communities supported in the transition to sustainable and renewable energy?
- How is community capacity ensured (i.e. funding, people power)?
- Will there be access to information to better inform community engagement in climate change plans and policies?
- How do communities undertake the necessary research, studies and training of community members on the topic of climate change and proposed solutions to climate change?

NEXT STEPS FOR ICA

Participants also outlined some potential next steps for Indigenous Climate Action to continue to advocate at the regional, national and international level for the following outcomes:

Implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) at all levels of decision making and government.

- Increase access to resources (i.e. funding and capacity building) that will allow Indigenous communities to undertake necessary research to develop sovereign and independent climate change adaption and mitigation strategies.
- Increase public education for the general public on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples within direct and indirect impacts of climate change, climate change policies, and proposed mitigation and adaptation strategies.
- Increased implementation of renewable energy projects in Indigenous communities
- Engage Indigenous communities in education about climate change and climate solution development from an Indigenous Rights based framework.

CONCLUSION

Indigenous communities have been the most impacted by climate change, and yet these communities are the least involved in planning the solutions. As the global community seeks to keep temperatures from rising above 1.5 degrees from pre-industrial levels, wisdom and guidance can be found in cultures and value systems that thrived in the pre-industrial era. As Indigenous Peoples enter into the age of reconciliation from the legacies of colonization, they must be at the forefront of determining the choices of the future.

The Indigenous Peoples Meeting on Climate Change held in Amiskwaciwaskahikan, Edmonton, Alberta, Treaty 6 Territory was a significant step towards addressing Indigenous Peoples rights and roles as well as the disconnection between the lived experiences of Indigenous Peoples and the efforts to address climate change.

One hundred and thirty (130) Indigenous people from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Northwest Territories and New Brunswick, as well as participants from the United States came together to discuss climate change, climate policy, and independent and sovereign rights as Indigenous Peoples.

Over the course of the meeting, participants shared a range of stories and evidence in regards to impacts of climate change, and the exclusion of Indigenous Peoples from current climate change policy discussions and strategies. During the meeting participants also shared a variety of successful adaptation strategies built on traditional knowledge. These contributions were essential to the overall meeting discussions and goals of the conference.

Participants also voiced that the status quo of decoupling of

Indigenous rights, the environment and decision-making processes is no longer acceptable. Involvement after production as a norm has led to countless court battles and the marginalization of Indigenous peoples from current economic and governance systems.

Some prominent themes and points featured throughout the meeting included the following:

- Indigenous peoples have contributed the least to climate change.
- Climate change affects Indigenous Peoples more than any other population in Canada. Indigenous Peoples live on the land, are further impacted by current socio-economic conditions, and by the impacts of climate change.
- Indigenous rights, knowledge, and experience need to shape climate change and be incorporated into all proposed policies and actions.
- Indigenous Peoples are faced with a lack of relevant and readily available information on



the impacts of climate change for them and their communities. This is also true for Indigenous Peoples' climate change mitigation, adaptation strategies, and actions.

- Indigenous Peoples have opportunities to build complementary Indigenous Climate Change Action Plans through Nation to Nation collaboration.

Participants were unified in their stance that future climate change action and policy must uphold Indigenous Law, ensure that Indigenous communities are informed in regards to important conversations/negotiations that are being made to address climate change, and informed of potential impacts they have on rights and future opportunities.



Participant direction and discussion guides the ICA. This direction and discussion as outlined below. Climate change has become one of the current leading political narratives and yet to date, climate change as a discourse has not been inclusive of Indigenous values, knowledge and voices.

There has been a disconnect in the development of climate

solutions and real life experiences for communities who live with the impacts of fossil fuel extraction and climate change.

Now more than ever, it is imperative that governments take heed of the direction being provided by Indigenous Peoples and land dependent communities not only to address climate stabilization, but towards achieving true climate justice.



Currently national and provincial governments are in the process of developing climate leadership plans and policies (i.e. Alberta Climate Leadership Plan and the Canada's Way Forward on Climate Change) that have a real potential to impact the rights of Indigenous Peoples in this country. These plans and policies are being developed in an attempt to meet the commitments outlined within the Paris Accord to keep global temperature at no more than 1.5 degrees above preindustrial levels. Consequently, there is a critical opportunity to engage with

Indigenous communities to foster climate leadership and positions that work to address the current climate crisis.

Due to the extensive resource extraction taking place on Indigenous lands and territories, Indigenous Peoples have become the frontline of both environmental destruction and climate change. They continue to benefit the least from carbon-intensive resource extraction and yet are the first to feel the harmful impacts of these industries. This injustice is amplified by the fact that Indigenous communities have contributed the least to climate change yet bear the most severe consequences. Furthermore, there has been little research or engagement work done to fully understand the true impacts of climate change on the rights, title, and survival of Indigenous land based cultures and identity. Moreover, there is inadequate support for Indigenous-led initiatives that are enacting climate solutions. It has become clear that addressing



climate change is about more than just stabilizing the climate. It is an opportunity to change the trajectory of the economy, lend to a divestment in heavy fossil fuels, and redirect to a just transition that respects the rights of Indigenous Peoples and the environment.

Furthermore, to effectively address climate change, it is clear that Indigenous Peoples must be empowered with decision-making

authority to develop policies and mitigation strategies. This is essential and needs to be a priority that is legally grounded in the protection of the future generations' guarantee of energy, food, and water security.

Indigenous Climate Action recognizes that it is critical to engage with Indigenous communities to ensure they are informed on the changing political landscapes, current solutions, and opportunities for engagement on climate change issues in Canada. It is clear there are many unanswered questions and yet there exists a clear pool of resources that has yet to be tapped into by Indigenous communities. Therefore, there needs to be a more robust and rigorous process to adequately include Indigenous Peoples in the development of any and all measures to understand, reduce or mitigate, and adapt to the impacts of climate change.



In conclusion, Indigenous Climate Action is committed to act as an

organization that is Indigenous-led and prioritizes direct engagement with Indigenous community members to achieve next steps for actions to address climate change. To ensure that its work is relevant and driven by diverse Indigenous perspectives, the next step is to bring together a steering committee of action oriented leaders to build a work plan, search for resources and opportunities that prioritize direct engagement and empowerment of Indigenous Nations to lead Indigenous climate action plans.

Further, ICA will use existing network and opportunities to influence existing climate change policy within government and regional organizations, including but not



limited to, the Assembly of First Nations, the Federal Government of Canada, and the Provincial Government of Alberta in order

to influence and champion the inclusion and direction of grassroots Indigenous Peoples.

Finally, climate change is the most critical threat of our lifetime. Time is of the essence for actions to mitigate the harm from polluting industrial projects, prevent further greenhouse gas emissions, and adapt for future community, water, and food security.

ICA has taken one step and will follow with many more to come. Together we can and will become a strong Indigenous voice for a healthy, clean, bountiful world for ourselves and the future generations.



APPENDIX A

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Indigenous Climate Action, supported by Keepers of the Athabasca, the Confederacy of Treaty 6, Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, 350.org and various other supporters, held a three day meeting January 24th to 26th, 2016 in Amiskwaciwâskahikan, Edmonton, Alberta, Treaty 6 Territory. This event included panel presentations and keynotes from renowned Indigenous Rights Defenders and experts on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), climate change, and climate policy. The gathering also included break out discussions ensuring ample space for participants to share strategies and have critical conversations about the future.

Pre-Meeting Webinar

A pre-meeting webinar was held on January 19, 2016 to help spark conversations and curiosity for the broader face to face meeting the following week. The topics for the webinar were identified by participant feedback in a survey included in the invitation letter. The webinar was hosted by Melina Laboucan-Massimo and Eriel Deranger.

The presentation focused primarily on the history of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the key outcomes of the 2015 COP Paris Climate Talks, and the challenges with proposed solutions like Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD).

A copy of the webinar is available online at www.indigenousclimateaction.com

Meeting Daily Agenda

Indigenous Peoples Climate Change Meeting - January 24th to 26th, 2016

Day 1: Sunday, January 24th

3:30pm Registration Begins

Throughout registration, participants given sticky notes to fill out and place on a wall map and invited to answer three questions:

Which community are you from?

How is your community experiencing climate change?

What are you doing in your community to address climate change?

5:00-5:30pm Introduction of Steering Committee & Team, Housekeeping. Emceed by Cliff Whitford

5:30-6:00pm Welcome address by the Treaty 6, 7 and 8 Grand Chiefs

6:00-7:00pm DINNER

7:00-9:00pm Entertainment by James Jones, Creeasian, Conway Kootenay, Phyllis Sinclair, Nathan Cunningham



Day 2: Monday, January 25th

- 7:30-9:00am Pipe Ceremony and Opening Prayer led by Elder Jimmi O'Chiese
- 9:30-10:30am Panel 1: Climate Change: Tom Goldtooth, Mike Hudema, Eriel Deranger, Clayton Thomas-Muller. Moderated by Crystal Lameman
- 11:00-11:45am Break Out Discussion Groups
Guiding Questions for Breakout Groups:
How is climate change impacting your community?
What local actions, solutions are being taken/pursued in your community?
What forms of climate action would best serve the needs of your community
How are you currently engage in climate policy development?
What are the gaps and/or challenges for your community to meaningfully engage?
- 12:00-12:45pm Keynote Address: Grand Chief Stewart Phillip
- 1:30-2:30pm Panel 2: UNDRIP and Rights-based Frameworks: Ron Lameman, Art Manuel, Ellen Gabriel, Danika Littlechild. Moderated by Eriel Deranger
- 3:15-4:15pm Breakout Discussion Groups
Guiding Questions for Breakout Groups:
How can UNDRIP be strategically leveraged to tackle climate change?
How can a rights based climate action framework deliver the most critical community needs?
What are some strategic opportunities in your community to take action using UNDRIP?
What gaps and/or challenges (if any) do you see with using UNDRIP?
- 6:00-8:00pm Film Presentation: 'This Changes Everything' with Crystal Lameman

Day 3: Tuesday, January 26th

- 8:45-9:15am Opening Prayer & Remarks led by Elder Francois Paulette
- 9:15-10:00am Keynote Address: Winona LaDuke. Moderated by Melina Laboucan- Massimo
- 10:15-10:45am Report-backs and summary of breakout groups
- 10:45-11:15am Review past Indigenous Peoples Statements on Climate Change: Clayton Thomas-Muller & Heather Milton
- Lightening
Anchorage Alaska Declaration
Cochabamba Mother Earth Rights Declaration
Bali Principles of Climate Justice
Durban Declaration on Carbon Trading
- 11:15-12:15pm Breakout Discussion Groups: Indigenous Climate Action Plan
Guiding Questions for Breakout Groups
What should be the shared vision, values and goals guiding an Indigenous Climate Action Plan?
What kinds of climate action strategies would best resonate with, and effectively mobilize your community?
What (information, tools, resources) would your community need to be able to adopt and implement such climate action strategies?
- 12:30-1:15pm Lunch Community Successes Panel: Chief Gordon Planes, Melina Laboucan-Massimo, Barb Wilson. Moderated by Jesse Cardinal
- 1:25-1:55pm Report back from Breakout Groups
- 4:00pm Closing Remarks & Prayer led by Elder Alsina Whiskeyjack (White)

38 -The Anchorage Declaration. 24 April 2009, <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2009/smsn/ngo/168.pdf>

39 - Proposal - Universal Declaration on the Right of Mother Earth, World Peoples Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth, <https://pwccc.wordpress.com/programa>

40- Bali Principles of Climate Justice, International Climate Justice Network August 28th, 2002, <http://www.corpwatch.org/article.php?id=3748>

41 - Climate Justice Now! The Durban Declaration on Carbon Trading, 10 October 2004, Glenmore Centre, Durban, South Africa, <http://globalforestcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Durban-Declaration1.pdf>

APPENDIX B

STEERING COMMITTEE, SPEAKERS, KEYNOTES & DISTINGUISHED ELDERS

Steering Committee and Organizing Team

The Indigenous Climate Action consists of a coalition of individuals that represent different organizations and communities. They came together with a shared vision & mission to provide Indigenous leaders who have been engaged in addressing the impacts of fossil fuels with knowledge about climate change and climate policy to ensure the solutions of the future will not only be sustainable and just, but that the legal foundations of our rights will be upheld for generations to come.

Jessica Cardinal is from the Kikino Metis Settlement in Northern Alberta and employed as a coordinator for Keepers of the Athabasca⁴², a watershed protection group working to raise awareness of impacts to water, land, air and living beings. Jesse has helped install a solar project in Fort Chipewyan and is now working with other communities to support solar installations. She was also a central organizer for the annual Tar Sands Healing Walk outside Fort McMurray, Alberta. Jessica is a strong believer that Indigenous communities can become food producers, distributors, manufacturers and leaders in renewable energy and sustainable living. She believes that we can once again live in harmony with Mother earth, while becoming self sufficient.

Eriel Tchekwie Deranger is an Indigenous rights advocate and member of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation (ACFN)⁴³, Treaty No. 8 of Northern Alberta, Canada. She works to raise awareness about the negative climate, human and Indigenous rights impacts of the extractive industry in her Nation's traditional lands and territory. Eriel has worked with various Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations, including the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, Indigenous Environmental Network, Sierra Club, Rainforest Action Network and the UN Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change. She is married and mother of two currently residing in Edmonton, AB.



42 - <http://www.keepersofthewater.ca/athabasca>

43 - <http://www.acfn.com>

Crystal Lameman is a member of the Beaver Lake Cree Nation⁴⁴, Treaty No. 6, Alberta where she also works as the Intergovernmental Affairs & Industry Relations Treaty Coordinator and Communications Manager. Crystal uses her formal academia and her Indigenous ways of knowing and being to articulate the damaging impacts of industrialization and resource extraction on her homelands. BLCN launched legal action in 2008 aimed at protecting their traditional lands, treaty rights and important global carbon sink. Lameman cites her Nation's legal action as an example of how First Nations people can assert their rights while offering a solution.

Melina Laboucan-Massimo is Lubicon Cree from Northern Alberta. Melina has worked on social, environmental and climate justice issues for the past 15 years including in her current role as a Climate & Energy campaigner with Greenpeace in Alberta. Melina has studied and worked in Brazil, Australia, Mexico, and Canada focusing on Indigenous rights, resource extraction, and media literacy. Melina has also been vocal on the issue of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women in Canada after the suspicious death of her sister Bella whose case still remains unsolved. Melina recently finished her Masters degree in Indigenous Governance at the University of Victoria with a focus on Renewable Energy in First Nation communities. This past summer Melina completed a 20.8kW solar installation in her home community of Little Buffalo.



Clayton Thomas-Muller is a Winnipeg based Indigenous rights activist and a member of Mathias Colomb Cree Nation. He is currently the Stop It At the Source Campaigner with 350.org. He has previously worked as an organizer for the Defenders of the Land & Idle No More, and Co-Director of the Indigenous Tar Sands (ITS) Campaign of the Polaris Institute. He has campaigned across Canada, Alaska and the lower 48 in hundreds of Indigenous communities to organize against the encroachments of the fossil fuel industry and the banks that finance them.

Sheila Muxlow was our tireless Conference Coordinator. She is a settler of Dutch, Irish and English descent. She was born in Chilliwack, BC on the unceded territories of the Sto:lo & Coast Salish. She obtained an International Development & Globalization BA degree from the University of Ottawa and has nearly a decade of experience in community engagement and campaign management focused on environmental and climate justice with numerous nonprofits, like the Council of Canadians, Sierra Club Prairie and WaterWealth Project. She is an aspiring herbalist and mother to a beautiful son.

Ananda Lee Tan played a critical role in crafting the Agenda and providing support to our facilitation team throughout the meeting. Since 1986 Ananda Lee Tan has been organizing campaigns and building activist coalitions, networks and alliances on land defense, labor rights, environmental justice, climate change, sustainable forestry and food justice issues around the world. Presently, he is actively involved with the Labor Network for Sustainability, the Ruckus Trainers Network, the EDGE Funders Alliance, and the Climate Justice Alliance.

44 - <http://www.blcn.com>

Keynote Presenters

Over the course of the three day meeting we invited two keynote speakers to bring forward their expertise and share their experience in developing community based solutions that address climate change and ensure the protection and preservation of our inherent and treaty rights. Our keynote speakers included **Grand Chief Stewart Phillip** with the Union of BC Indian Chiefs and Winona Laduke a member of the Mississippi Band Anishinaabeg. Both keynote speakers have a long history advocating for the recognition and rights of Indigenous peoples at the local, national and international levels with a special interest in the protection and preservation of the lands, waterways, species, and the systems that ensure the culture survival of Indigenous peoples.

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip is an Okanagan Indigenous leader who has served as President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs⁴⁵ since 1998. As Chief of the Penticton Indian Band⁴⁶ in British Columbia from 1994 until 2008, as well as Chair of the Okanagan Nation Alliance⁴⁷, he has advocated for Indigenous rights for the First Nations in that province and particularly in the Okanagan region.

In 2002, Phillip drew media attention when he successfully forced a film project about the Indigenous legend of the Ogopogo to be renamed MeeShee: The Water Giant⁴⁸. He did this by claiming that "It's an international concern among Indigenous people about the exploitation of spiritual entities... for commercial purposes."

On November 26, 2014, Phillip told delegates at the B.C. Federation of Labour convention that he would get arrested as a matter of principle to protest Kinder Morgan's plans to expand the Trans Mountain pipeline. The following day Phillip joined protesters at a Kinder Morgan borehole site on Burnaby Mountain, "We are making a very clear public statement that we do not support the Harper and Clark governments when it comes to resources," he said before his arrest.

Winona LaDuke is an Anishinaabekwe (Ojibwe) enrolled member of the Mississippi Band Anishinaabeg who lives and works on the White Earth Reservations⁴⁹, and is the mother of three children. Winona LaDuke is an internationally renowned activist working on issues of sustainable development, renewable energy and food systems.

As program director of the organization Honor the Earth, she works nationally and internationally on the issues of climate change, renewable energy, and environmental justice with Indigenous communities. And in her own community, she is the founder of the White Earth Land Recovery Project, one of the largest reservation based nonprofit organizations in the country, and a leader in the issues of culturally based sustainable development strategies, renewable energy, and food systems. In this work, she also continues national and international work to protect Indigenous plants and heritage foods from patenting and genetic engineering.

A graduate of Harvard and Antioch Universities, she has written extensively on Native American and environmental issues. She is a former board member of Greenpeace USA and is presently an advisory board member for the Trust for Public Lands Native Lands Program as well as a board member of the Christensen Fund. The author of five books, including *Recovering the Sacred*, *All Our Relations*, and a novel, *Last Standing Woman*, she is widely recognized for her work on environmental and human rights issues.

45 - <http://www.ubcic.bc.ca>

46 - <http://pib.ca>

47 - <http://www.syilx.org>

48 - <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0243462/>

49 - <https://whiteearth.com/history/>

Panel Presenters

The steering committee brought together a wide range of speakers to discuss the complex political and cultural landscape of climate change, climate change policies, and the intersectionalities with the rights of Indigenous peoples. The panel presenters walked participants through local, national and international negotiations on climate change policy as well as an introduction to a rights-based approach to developing solutions within our own communities.

Tom B.K. Goldtooth, Executive Director of the Minnesota headquartered Indigenous Environmental Network⁵⁰, has been a social change activist for over 35 years. He is internationally recognized as an environmental and climate justice leader, working with many Indigenous Peoples and organizations around the world. Tom has launched a campaign advocating for Indigenous communities to reclaim their future, build power for just transitions and apply Indigenous knowledge for changing the system and not the climate. Tom presented on the International Climate negotiations and the intersectionality of the rights of Indigenous peoples.

Mike Hudema was born in Medicine Hat, Alberta in 1976 from Ukrainian and English origin parents. He graduated from the University of Alberta with a bachelor of education, majoring in drama, and a bachelor of law degree, specializing in labour and environmental law. Mike Hudema has been a longtime creative activist in Alberta and beyond, although most of his work has been on Treaty 6 and Treaty 8 territory. Mike is currently a climate campaigner with Greenpeace Canada working on issues like tar sands development, climate, and renewable energy. For his work, he was named one of Alberta's 50 Most Influential People in 2014 by Alberta Venture and was one of the Globe and Mail's tar sands 'difference makers'. Mike walked participants through the recently developed Alberta Climate Policy Framework announced in November of 2015.

Chief Gordon Planes' traditional name is **HYAQUATCHA**, named after his great grandfather from Scianew, (CHEEANEW), the Salmon People. He is a Coast Salish artist, carver, traditional singer and captain of T'Souke traditional dug out canoes. He is the elected Chief of T'Souke nation⁵¹ and sits on many boards including the Land Advisory Board. Gordon has been a logger, commercial fisherman, pipe fitter and manager with Federal parks. He and his wife, Marcella, live in SCIAOSUN, have six children and six grandchildren. He works closely with his community on renewable energy, food and water security, cultural renaissance and economic development. Chief Planes introduced participants to alternative economic systems being explored by T'Souke Nation.

Barbara Wilson is a Skidegate Haida Elder. She is currently enrolled at Simon Fraser University, Faculty of Education completing her masters with a focus on 'Educating/Mobilizing Communities in a Changing Climate: Initiating Action on Haida Gwaii.'⁵² Barb comes from a long line of prominent Haida Elders and is a prominent figure in her community. She brings with her the successes and experiences of one of the leading self governing First Nations. Barbara presented on her work and research that explores themes of sovereignty and Indigenous governance.

Danika Billie Littlechild is a lawyer from the Ermineskin Cree Nation⁵³ in Treaty 6 (Alberta), Ms. Littlechild lives and practices law in Maskwacis with Indigenous peoples in several areas of expertise: governance,

50 - www.ieneearth.org

51 - www.tsoukenation.com

52 -Kii'iljuus (Barbara Wilson), Master Candidate, Faculty of Education/Simon Fraser University/ Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions. "Educating/Mobilizing Communities for Action in a World of Changing Climate: Initiating Action on Haida Gwaii" <http://pics.uvic.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/fellows/Wilson-Poster.pdf>

53 - <http://www.erminekskin.ca>

indigenous legal systems, environment, water and international law. Danika is currently the Vice-President of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO⁵⁴. She is consulting legal counsel with the International Indian Treaty Council⁵⁵, an Indigenous Non-Governmental Organization (General Consultative Status, ECOSOC) and through this position has made several submissions, presentations and engaged in advocacy within the United Nations system. Danika presented on navigating the United Nations system, and utilizing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) to protect and preserve Indigenous rights in Canada.

Arthur Manuel grew up on the Neskonlith Reserve in the interior of British Columbia. Art has held positions as both a chair and the elected chief of the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council. He also co-chaired the Assembly of First Nations Delgamuukw Implementation Strategic Committee (DISC)⁵⁶ that was mandated to develop a national strategy to compel the federal government to respect the historic Supreme Court decision on Aboriginal title and rights. Art has been active at the international and UN level as part of the the North American Indigenous Peoples caucus with a heavy focus on Economies and Trade in relation to violations of Indigenous peoples rights. He is published author and father. Art presented on the importance of using rights-based strategies to confront the legacy of colonization and ensure Indigenous peoples are at the forefront of climate solutions.

Ellen Gabriel is well known for her role in the 1990 “Oka” Crisis. She was chosen by the People of the Longhouse and her community of Kanehsatà:ke to be the spokesperson to protect the Pines from the expansion of a ninehole golf course. Ms. Gabriel has a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Concordia University where she graduated in May 1990. She is presently an active board member of Kontinón:sta’ts – Mohawk Language Custodians⁵⁷ and First Peoples Human Rights Coalition⁵⁸. She continues to advocate for human rights and the rights of Indigenous peoples at local, national, and international levels. She believes education is one of the ways our people can overcome oppression while still maintaining our languages, culture, traditions and traditional forms of political structure. She has a bachelor in arts, is president of the Quebec Native Women Association⁵⁹, and has been awarded many distinctions over the years. Ellen spoke to participants on the importance of implementing the UNDRIP as a comprehensive document to recognize and affirm Indigenous Rights.

Ronald [Ron] Lameman is a citizen of the Beaver Lake Cree Nation, Treaty No. 6 Territory, Alberta, Canada, southeast of Lac La Biche. Ron has been a lifetime proponent of the Treaty, focusing on upholding and enforcing the Rights of the Indigenous Nations of Treaty No. 6 in Alberta and Saskatchewan, Canada. Ron was the former Executive Director of the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations and currently works for the Confederacy as the Bilateral Treaty Coordinator. Ron was active in each phase of the development of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and has attended a majority of the sessions for the development of the OAS “Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of the Americas”⁶⁰ including the last two Quests for Points of Consensus which culminated in the walkout of the Indigenous Caucus due to the intransigent position of some of the States who insisted on having the OAS Declaration conform to their domestic laws. Ron provided participants with his experience in the development of the UNDRIP and provided insight on how it can be utilized in a rights-based strategy to address climate change.

54 - www.unesco.ca

55 - www.treatycouncil.org

56 - <http://www.turtleisland.org/news/disc1.pdf>

57 - www.kanehsatakevoices.com

58 - www.firstpeoplesrights.org

59 - www.faq-qnw.org

60 - www.oas.org/en/iachr/indigenous/activities/declaration.asp

Chief Germaine Anderson, Beaver Lake Cree Nation (BLCN)⁶¹, Treaty No. 6 is a mother and a grandmother who takes great pride as a member and a leader, language speaker and in the place she calls home. She has held many positions within the Nation since the early 1980's; those positions consisted of Receptionist, Bookkeeper, Social Worker, Adult Care Coordinator, BLCN Council Member for eleven years, and most recently BLCN Chief. Chief Anderson's education centers around Indigenous pedagogy and includes Treaty and Sovereignty knowledge-based around BLCN's inherent right to self determination, and their right to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent as the original people of turtle island. Chief Anderson spoke about the legal battle of her Nation as an example of Indigenous sovereignty in action.

Grand Chief Tony Alexis is a driven, dynamic, sought after business and cultural leader. A desire to make a difference, coupled with strong leadership skills has lead Tony to earn a number of accolades throughout his career. Chief Tony was first elected to council at his home community of Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation⁶² when he was just 25 years old. He was appointed by former AFN National Chief Phil Fontaine to the National Youth Council, earned an Alberta Aboriginal Leadership award and has worked with Alberta chiefs through the former First Nation Resource Council. He was then elected Chief of Alexis Nakota in 2013 and enjoys serving his community, specializing in business and policy development. Chief Tony keeps connected to his culture through promoting native heritage, encourages ongoing Treaty dialogue with governments and practices a traditional way of life. He believes the keys to success are through consistent focus, faith in the Creator, and hard work. Chief Alexis provided us with a territorial welcome to Treaty 6 Territory.

Distinguished Elders

To ground our meeting in Indigenous cosmology and culture we invited Elder's to open and close our meeting each day. In addition to opening and closing remarks and prayers, we were fortunate enough to have the meeting opened with a traditional pipe ceremony.

Jimmi O'Chiese works as an Elder, Eminent Scholar, and Instructor with Yellowhead Tribal College (YTC)⁶³ in Edmonton, AB. He is currently co-facilitating a course with Dr. James Makokis called INST 306: Annishinaabe mîteiw pimatisiwin - An Introduction to Indigenous Health and Traditional Medicines. Jimmi opened the gathering with a pipe ceremony and welcoming remarks and prayers.

Francois Paulette is a Dene Suline and member of the Smith's Landing Treaty 8 First Nation⁶⁴, Francois Paulette survived the residential school system before going on to become the youngest Chief in the NWT Indian Brotherhood⁶⁵ in 1971. In 1972, along with sixteen other chiefs from the Mackenzie Valley, he challenged the crown to recognize Treaty and Aboriginal rights and title to over 450,000 square miles of land in the historic Paulette case⁶⁶. He remains a passionate and outspoken advocate of Treaty and Indigenous rights in all matters affecting his people, and is recognized in the courts as an expert witness on historic treaties. Francois opened the second day of the meeting bringing his expertise as an advocate for the environmental and Treaty and Indigenous rights for people of the north.

Alsina Whiskeyjack (White) is an Elder from Saddle Lake Cree First Nation⁶⁷. Alsina still speaks fluent Cree despite going through the residential school system. She is a mother, grandmother, and great grandmother

61 - www.beaverlakecreenation.ca

62 - www.ansn.ca

63 - www.ytced.ab.ca/

64 - www.slfn196.com

65 - Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories Information Package, www.capekrusenstern.org/docs/brotherhoodpk_1973.pdf

66 - Supreme Court of Canada, Paulette et al. v. The Queen, [1977] 2 S.C.R. 628, Date: 1976-12-20, <https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/5866/index.do>

67 - www.saddlelake.ca

and has been happily married for 63 years. In addition to her family life, Alsina drove bus for seventeen years and then spent fifteen years working with the seniors of Saddle Lake. She is a doula, and learnt to harvest roots from her grandmother. She works part-time at Saddle Lake School and serves as a Resident Elder at Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. Alsina closed the meeting with words of wisdom and a prayer for participants to have safe travels home.

Elmer Courchene is an Elder from Sagkeeng First Nation⁶⁸ in Treaty 1 and 3. Elder Courchene is fluent in the Ojibwe and English languages. Elder Courchene attended the Fort Alexander Residential School where he received his education until Grade 8. He travelled extensively working in several fields but continues to maintain his strong connection with the Anishinaabe traditional customs and practices and is a pipe carrier, sundancer and continues to help at traditional ceremonies. He was instrumental during the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood in the 1960 - 1970's and was involved in the discussions of the 1969 White Paper⁶⁹, *Wahbung: Our Tomorrows*⁷⁰ including the movement of education in 1972 for Indian Control of Indian Education. In 1997, Elder Courchene served as the Elder Advisor and Spiritual Giver to then National Chief Phil Fontaine at the Assembly of First Nations (AFN)⁷¹. Elder Courchene currently sits as the Manitoba Elder representative to the AFN Senator Council. Most recently, Elder Courchene has served as the Elder Advisor to the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC)⁷² Executive Council of Chiefs and has been appointed to the AMC Council of Elders. Elmer shared his experience and wisdom on the benefits of working together as diverse Nations.



68 - www.sagkeeng.ca

69 - Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian policy (The White Paper, 1969), Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100010189/1100100010191>

70 - Position Paper - *Wahbung: Our Tomorrows*, Indian Tribes of Manitoba, October 1971, <http://amc.manitobachiefs.com/images/pdf/wahbung%20-%20position%20paper%20-%20a%20return%20to%20the%20beginning%20for%20our%20tomorrows.pdf>

71 - <http://www.afn.ca>

72 - <http://www.manitobachiefs.com>

APPENDIX C

INDIGENOUS CLIMATE ACTION SUPPORTERS AND SPONSORS

The event was financially supported by Treaty 8 Livelihood Office, Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, Beaver Lake Cree Nation, Keepers of the Water, Honor the Earth, Indigenous Environmental Network, 7th Generation Fund, Womens Donor Network, Global Green Grants, Lush Cosmetics, and 350.org. Additional support was contributed from the Council of Canadians and Greenpeace Canada.



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