



ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
July 9, 10, 11, 2024, Montreal, QC

Resolution no. 30/2024

TITLE:	Protection of the Bathurst Caribou Herd
SUBJECT:	Conservation & Biodiversity - Environment
MOVED BY:	Chief Byron Louis, Okanagan Indian Band, BC
SECONDED BY:	Judy Wilson, Proxy, Osoyoos Indian Band, BC
DECISION	Carried by consensus.

WHEREAS:

- A. The Dene are the original Peoples of their territory, called Denendeh; they are primarily harvesters and have relied on the Bathurst caribou herd for sustenance since time immemorial.
- B. The Dene have protected, conserved, and sustainably looked after their environments, lands, waters, and biodiversity since time immemorial, through the exercise of Inherent rights and responsibilities, associated knowledge systems, and traditional laws granted by the creator, which still exist today.
- C. There is a growing recognition, domestically and internationally, of the critical leadership role of First Nations and Indigenous Peoples in achieving positive conservation outcomes.
- D. The Bathurst Caribou herd faced numerous historic and current threats, including but not limited to:
 - i. A plummeting population—in recent years, the herd population has decreased from approximately 500,000 individuals to approximately 6,000;
 - ii. An ice road through the homeland of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN), Chief Drygeese Territory, which bisects the migration route of the herd and grants low-effort access to all harvesters;
 - iii. Bathurst herd caribou are reported killed each year inside the mobile protected zone, including reports of animals killed and left unrecovered, in part or whole;
 - iv. Young and inexperienced hunters accessing the herds for harvesting.

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THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the First Nations-in-Assembly:

1. Support the Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN) in its efforts to create its own Bathurst Caribou Conservation Plan.
2. Support the YKDFN to hold a meeting of the Chiefs of the surrounding communities that use the winter road for caribou harvest to discuss:
 - a. The potential for a complete caribou hunting ban along the winter road; and,
 - b. Training programs for of young hunters who wish to hunt along the winter road.
3. Call upon Canada to provide funding for the Dene Chiefs to meet and discuss a potential hunting ban of caribou along the winter road.
4. Call upon Canada to assist the YKDFN and Dene Nation to create training programs to train new and young hunters in proper caribou hunting techniques.
5. Direct the AFN to assist the Dene Nation in seeking funding from the Government of Canada to create and implement the YKDFN Bathurst Caribou Conservation Plan.
6. Direct the AFN to further assist the Dene Nation in seeking funding to host a Caribou Summit in collaboration with the Indigenous Peoples of the Northwest Territories and the Inuit from Nunavut who harvest from the Bathurst herd.

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