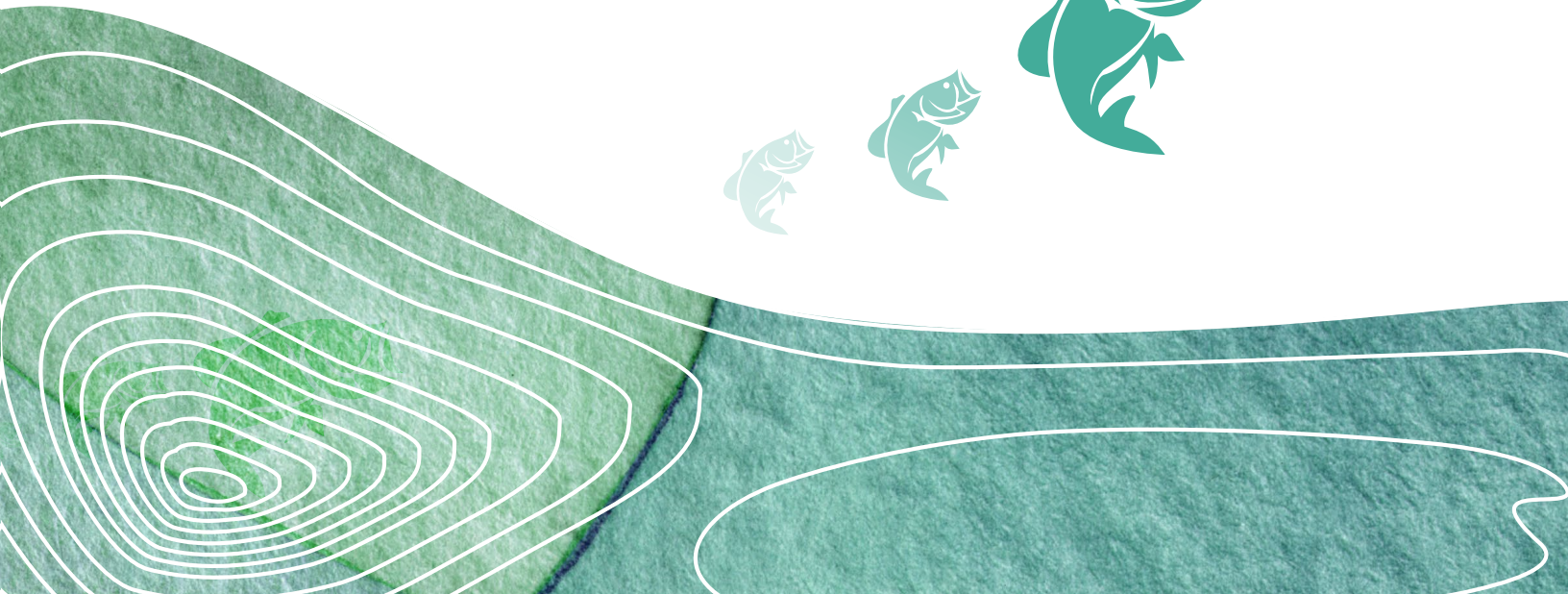




# Joint Committee on Climate Action Annual Report to the National Chief and the Prime Minister – 2022





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## Elder Prayer

Hai' Cho K'agwaadhat / thank you Creator God, we give you thanks for this day.

We acknowledge the traditional Territory of the First People's Lands on which we stand.

We acknowledge our Knowledge Keepers, Our Leaders, Youth, Men, Women, 2SLGBTQIAA+ and all who are in our circle continuing this good work.

We acknowledge the Sacred Lands, Animals and Waters.

Hai' Cho to our Ancestors, our past and present Land Protectors, for caring for these Lands since time immemorial so that we can live in a good way. Let us be mindful that we carry on our teachings to serve our people.

While we continue to face challenges in our homelands, climate emergencies and the biodiversity crisis have become more intense for all of our people in Canada. These experiences are an urgent reminder for us to take stronger action in partnership.

We ask for strength to those working at the JCCA to promote our successes, advancing the high-level work and continue in true partnership with all levels of Governments. Together, we will forge a clear vision to eliminate systematic barriers and colonial policies, enabling self-determination for First Nations Peoples in Canada.

We pray for this work to continue so that our Leaders take concrete action. We pray that the eventual meeting between the Prime Minister and National Chief supports the continuation of our collective work, promoting wise examples of First Nations and federal partnerships.

Today, we ask that we do our work with a good mind, good heart, and a good spirit.

We pray for love, courage, and commitment for all of our Leaders and Decision Makers on this journey, that will impact us and all future generations to come.

Mahsi' cho K'agwaadhat, jidii tthak diiyeejit gwüinzii nahtsii

Thank you Creator God for making everything good for us.

- Elder Lorraine Netro, Vuntut Gwichin

## Glossary of Terms

JCCA – Joint Committee on Climate Action

ECCC – Environment and Climate Change Canada

AFN – Assembly of First Nations

CNZEAA – Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act

CIRNAC – Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs

ERP – Emissions Reduction Plan

FNCL – First Nations Climate Leadership

FPIC – Free, Prior and Informed Consent

ICL – Indigenous Climate Leadership

IKS – Indigenous Knowledge Systems

ILF – Indigenous Leadership Fund

NAS – National Adaptation Strategy

LCEF – Low Carbon Economy Fund

COP – Conference of Parties

PCF – Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change

SCP – Strengthened Climate Plan

UNDA – United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act

UNDRIP – United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

UNFCCC – UN Framework Convention on Climate Change





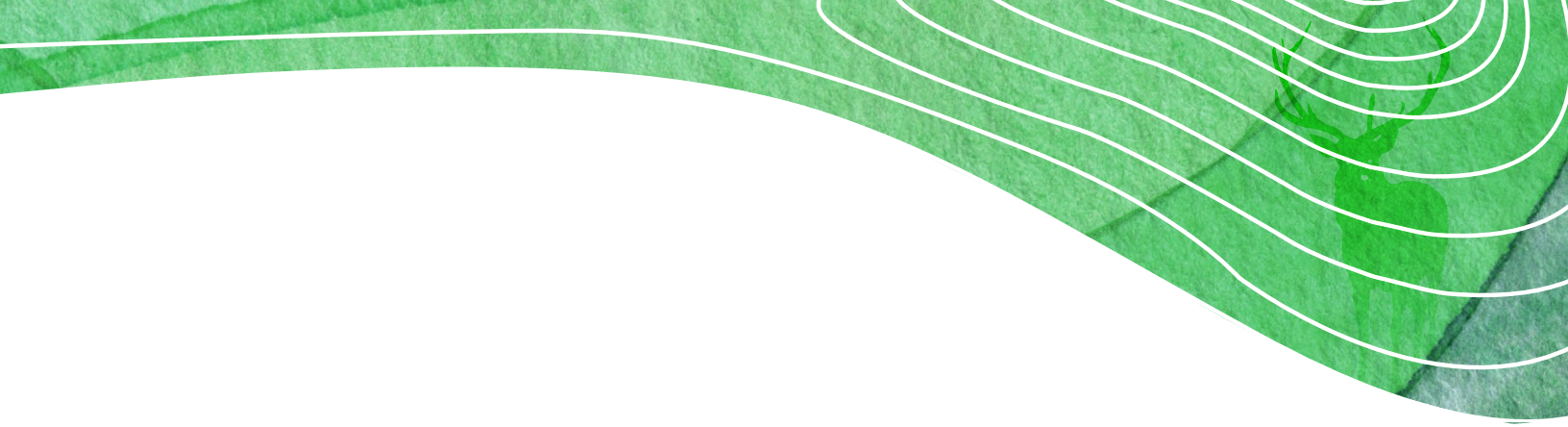
## Executive Summary

Across Canada, the first ten months of 2022 averaged almost a degree warmer than normal, marking 18 consecutive years of warmer than 'normal' temperatures. The year also saw the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic, among other respiratory illnesses, as well as devastating climatic events facing First Nations across Canada, such as flooding in Manitoba, wildfires in British Columbia, and Hurricane Fiona in the Atlantic region. The combination of these crises, including food insecurity—both climate and supply-chain induced—reinforces the need for wholistic responses that reflect First Nations knowledge systems. The Assembly of First Nations 2nd National Climate Gathering (September 2022), and the Canadian Pavilion at the twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties (COP 27) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (November 2022) offered unique venues to communicate these multidimensional solutions.

The Joint Committee on Climate Action (JCCA) continued to make progress on the inclusion of First Nations in federal climate policy and programming, holding 3 virtual sessions in 2022. This year marks the fifth year of providing First Nations' technical advice on real and meaningful approaches to position First Nations as leaders of climate action, offering a perfect opportunity for pause and reflection as discussed in the Path Forward. The full journey through this fifth year of collaboration is organized into three sections:

1. **Introduction from the Co-Chairs**
2. **Strengthening First Nations Climate Leadership – 2022 Action**
3. **Our Path Forward in 2023**

The second section, *Strengthening First Nations Climate Leadership*, summarizes the main activities in 2021 and discusses progress for accelerating positive, rights-based climate outcomes against the five main priorities that the JCCA identified in 2021. This year, the JCCA added *Key Takeaways* from each priority area to capture key discussions and messages. We hope this will spur federal processes to be more inclusive and meaningfully support First Nations with adequate resources to undertake collaborative planning and participation in decision-making. The final section, *Our Path Forward in 2023*, identifies priority areas for the long-term objectives of the JCCA, charting five specific priorities for the upcoming year.

- 
- Review federal clean growth and climate change policy and programs through the First Nations Climate Lens.
  - Empower First Nations leadership in climate action.
  - Foster greater transparency, accountability, and communication in JCCA activities.
  - Continue to develop First Nations-specific indicators/criteria to report on the implementation of climate-related federal funding programs and outcomes for First Nations.
  - Deepen the intergenerational and intersectional dialogue on climate change in all activities.

These priorities reflect deep discussion at the JCCA, seeking out ongoing and emerging opportunities for the JCCA and joint climate action. Through the JCCA, both the Assembly of First Nations and the Government of Canada demonstrate their continued commitment to partnership-driven climate solutions, where First Nations are recognized and empowered as leaders of climate action.





## Introduction from the Co-Chairs

The First Nations-Canada *Joint Committee on Climate Action* (JCCA) is a unique forum where First Nations representatives from across Canada and federal officials meet to strengthen First Nations inclusion in federal climate policy and programming. The JCCA has been an active forum since the fall of 2017, following the launch of Canada's first climate plan, the [Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change](#) (PCF). Within the PCF, Canada committed to strengthening its collaboration with Indigenous Peoples as partners in climate action. Following joint commitments made by the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and the Prime Minister of Canada alongside the release of the PCF, a First Nations-specific senior bilateral table on climate change, also known as the JCCA, was established based on the recognition of rights, co-operation, and partnership. Across all priorities, the JCCA remains committed to fostering and enabling First Nations leadership in climate action, which will lead to a healthier and more sustainable future for current and future generations.

Since the launch of the JCCA, First Nations representatives and federal officials from various departments have met every few months to discuss climate priorities and to collaborate on climate policy and programs. The JCCA has sought to foster an Ethical Space, recognizing the importance of this concept coined by Willie Ermine, promoted by Elder Dr. Reg Crowshoe, and introduced to the JCCA by Dr. Danika Littlechild, as a space in which knowledge systems can interact with mutual respect and kindness and in which no knowledge system has greater legitimacy than the other. The work of the JCCA has been heavily informed by a joint recognition of First Nations' inherent, Treaty, and constitutionally protected rights. It is also informed by the minimum standards of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), including the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, the *Constitution of Canada*, and Canadian jurisprudence. Ethical Space asks for us to work in line with these agreements, along with key principles, such as the JCCA's Best Practices for Policy and Programs, and the JCCA's Terms of Reference. As Canada continues to advance implementation of the *UNDRIP*, these wise practices will inform implementation at multiple scales of climate policy.

For the first three years, the JCCA met in person across Canada. Moving into a virtual space in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the JCCA adjusted to a new way of working together. In 2022, the JCCA held all three meetings online. The continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic, among other respiratory illnesses, remained a concern for the JCCA in 2022 as First Nations across the country continued to experience devastating climate events—flooding in Manitoba, wildfires in British Columbia, and Hurricane Fiona in the Atlantic region. Across Canada, the first 10 months of 2022 averaged almost a degree warmer than normal, making it 18 consecutive years of warmer than normal temperatures.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Furious Fiona strikes Eastern Canada." Canada's top 10 weather stories of 2022, Environment and Climate Change Canada, December 21, 2022, <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/top-ten-weather-stories/2022.html>






## Hurricane Fiona

Hurricane Fiona made landfall on September 24<sup>th</sup> bringing wind gusts exceeding 100km/h to Atlantic Canada and Eastern Quebec, resulting in limited loss of life, as well as violent winds, torrential rainfall, large waves, flooding and storm surges, downed trees, damage to infrastructure and widespread power outages. Environment and Climate Change Canada assessed Fiona's maximum sustained winds at the time of landfall to be around 105 mph (165 km/h); winds that would be comparable to a Category 2 hurricane and representing the strongest storm in Canadian history as gauged by barometric pressure—a pressure of 932.7 mbar (hPa; 27.54 inHg). It was also the costliest extreme weather event ever recorded in Atlantic Canada, with estimates above C\$800 million by Catastrophe Indices and Quantification Inc (CatIQ). For many First Nations, the impacts were severe as they faced power outages lasted up to two weeks and struggled to rebuild following the devastating storm. Through Indigenous Services Canada's Emergency Management Assistance Program (EMAP), the federal government supported initial investments to manage the costs of clean-up and is supporting the long-term recovery of affected First Nations communities.

The AFN planned its 2<sup>nd</sup> National Climate Gathering, "*Preserving our Earth, Land and Water for Future Generations*," to take place from September 27–29 in Fredericton, New Brunswick, the traditional unceded territory of the Wolastoqiyik, Mi'kmaq and Peskotomuhkati Peoples. This was immediately following hurricane Fiona; fortunately, Fredericton was minimally affected allowing the Climate Gathering to go ahead, although several participants from Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island were unable to attend as planned. The Gathering brought together over 550 First Nations, as well as experts, leadership, youth, women, men, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and officials from across Canada to discuss the most urgent concerns about climate change including food insecurity, retaining land rights, clean water, and many other interrelated issues. It was also an opportunity for First Nations to come together to explore solutions to the rapid change of climate at the local, regional, national and international scales. Many members of the JCCA, both First Nations and federal officials, were able to meet each other in-person for the first time since the onset of the pandemic, which helped to strengthen relations and build new connections. The Minister of Environment and Climate Change, the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, also attended the Gathering, and was able to meet with participants from across Canada who are advancing First Nations Climate Leadership. The opportunity to meet in-person and to be warmly welcomed by the Woslatoqey reinvigorated relationships and partnerships on climate. The Gathering also gave an opportunity for First Nations youth from across Canada to discuss their climate solutions, as highlighted in the case stories of this report. A video and report can be found on the AFN website ([www.afn.ca](http://www.afn.ca)).

On the international stage, 2022 was an eventful year in the climate change sphere as a number of JCCA members were able to attend the Twenty-Seventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 27) in Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt. There, over 49,000 participants gathered to turn years of finalization of the Paris Agreement into



concrete climate action. The decision on the establishment of a Loss and Damage Finance Facility was one significant win for the most vulnerable developing countries. Nearly 270 Indigenous delegates attended, representing the highest number of Indigenous Peoples in recent memory, participating in activities of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform, such as the Annual Knowledge Holders Gathering and the inaugural Indigenous youth roundtable, advocating for greater protections for human rights and the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and participating in opportunities to share Indigenous climate leadership at the Indigenous Peoples Pavilion. First Nations participants, alongside Canadian representatives, had a special opportunity to share this leadership as Canada hosted its first Canada Pavilion<sup>2</sup> supporting gender-diverse peoples, youth, civil society, provincial, territorial, Indigenous, and federal representatives from Canada to bring their climate solutions to the global stage. The Canada Pavilion hosted an Indigenous Climate Leadership Day that was organized in collaboration between Environment and Climate Change Canada and representatives of the AFN, the Inuit Circumpolar Council of Canada, and the Métis National Council.

In the coming pages, we outline the JCCA's progress over 2022, ranging from the advancement of the Indigenous Climate Leadership Decision-Making Guidance for climate policy/programing, to the co-development of the First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda, as well as the progress made on the preparation of the JCCA Website to be housed on the AFN Website. Together, this work is vital to advance the JCCA's commitment to advance First Nations Climate Leadership in a manner that recognizes the role of First Nations on the ground. We've taken special care to use Case Stories to highlight examples of First Nations youth leading climate action in their lands, waters, and territories. As we reflect back on this significant amount of work undertaken by JCCA members during a difficult time, we reiterate our commitment to working together in partnership to achieve meaningful action on climate change.

**Tonio Sadik, PhD - Senior Director  
Environment, Lands  
& Water, Assembly of  
First Nations**

**Vincent Ngan - Assistant Deputy  
Minister, Climate Change  
Branch, Environment and  
Climate Change Canada**

<sup>2</sup> The full list of events at the Canadian pavilion can be found here: [COP27 Canada Pavilion - Event Program Schedule - GLOBE Series](#)



## Strengthening First Nations Climate Leadership— 2022 Actions

In 2022, the JCCA worked together to strengthen First Nations Climate Leadership within climate policy through various measures. [The Strengthened Climate Plan](#), released in 2020, set a commitment to “position Indigenous Climate Leadership as a cornerstone of Canada’s strengthened climate plan” as well as “partner with First Nations to set an agenda for climate action and a framework of collaboration” (pg. 69).

### **Within the 2021 Annual Report, the JCCA set five priorities for 2022:**

1. Accelerate First Nation’s full and effective participation in clean growth and climate change programs, including the National Adaptation Strategy
2. Advance the development of First Nations Climate Leadership through meaningful dialogue with First Nations
3. Monitor and evaluate progress on First Nations Climate Leadership and the full and effective participation of First Nations in climate change programs
4. Develop new communication tools to improve transparency, accountability, and engagement throughout JCCA activities
5. Embed an intergenerational and intersectional dialogue on climate change in all JCCA activities

While meeting virtually continued to impact the pace of implementation of these five priorities, the JCCA focused on making progress on the priorities, as summarized below. This year, the attendance at COP 27 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> AFN National Climate Gathering offered important opportunities to demonstrate and highlight these priorities. Across all priorities, the JCCA remains committed to foster greater First Nations leadership in climate action, which will lead to a safer future for current and future generations.

## 1. Accelerate First Nations' full and effective participation in clean growth and climate change programs, including in the National Adaptation Strategy

For the last five years, the JCCA has focused on creating opportunities for First Nations within federal climate action. A key focus of this work has been the development of multiple Best Practices guides: one focused on outlining what meaningful engagement with First Nations in federal climate policy looks like (Annex 1) and a second explores opportunities to improve the awareness and accessibility of federal funding for First Nations. These guides informed the development of the "Indigenous Climate Leadership Decision-Making Guidance"; a tool that supports federal departments in orienting federal climate actions and programming towards self-determination and the empowerment of Indigenous climate leadership. In 2022, the JCCA turned its attention towards multiple commitments contained within the package of federal climate policy and legislation, including the 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan, the National Adaptation Strategy, and other new federal programs. Key to these discussions is ensuring that these processes live up to the standards of full and effective participation that the JCCA developed over the course of its collaborative work.

**Key Takeaway:** Pursue additional opportunities to support the deployment of the JCCA Best Practices Guides, both the Federal Funding Accessibility and Meaningful Engagement with First Nations Guide, as well as the Indigenous Climate Leadership Decision-Making Guidance, in federal departments engaged in climate change and clean growth policy and program development.


### 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan

A key area of discussion for the JCCA was the development of the [2030 Emissions Reduction Plan](#) (ERP), as part of the implementation of the *Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act* (CNZEAA) which received royal assent in June 2021. The 2030 ERP provides a sector-by-sector approach for Canada to reduce emissions by 40 to 45 percent below 2005 levels by 2030 and to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. The CNZEAA stipulates that the Minister must take Indigenous Knowledge into account when setting a greenhouse gas emissions target and take UNDRIP into account when establishing a greenhouse gas emissions reduction plan.

Various elements of engagement were used to solicit feedback on the ERP. A general call-out for written and oral submissions through an

engagement portal and phone line occurred over a four-week period (mid-December to mid-January 2022) with no specific capacity support for First Nations to participate. On the JCCA side, this included: an ad hoc JCCA meeting for an initial discussion about next steps (November 2021), a discussion during which federal representatives provided a general update and presented an opportunity for review of and input into an Indigenous-specific chapter of the ERP (February 2022), and a one-week timeframe for JCCA members to submit comments on the Indigenous-specific chapter and an annex to the ERP (March 2022).

The final 2030 ERP includes a chapter on Indigenous Peoples, as well as



an annex prepared by AFN, in addition to annexes prepared by the two other National Indigenous Organizations (NIOs). The 2030 ERP was developed under a tight statutory timeline and could not fully address all the applicable principles of UNDRIP. Moving forward, additional efforts will be made to align the emissions reduction plan development process with UNDRIP (e.g., advance reconciliation) and further take into account Indigenous Knowledge when implementing the [CNZEAA](#). The AFN annex to the 2030 ERP, adapted from AFN's initial submission to the ERP in January 2022, focused on the application of the First Nations Climate Lens to net-zero and the 2030 emissions target. It can be found in Annex 1 of this report.

First Nations representatives raised concerns about the proposed approach and engagement on the 2030 ERP, citing a clear lack of capacity funding and expedited timelines due to

the 2021 federal election, which prevented meaningful engagement with First Nations. Further, despite a legislative commitment to take into account Indigenous Knowledge and UNDRIP into account, it was unclear where these commitments manifested substantively in the sectoral chapters of the 2030 ERP. There was, however, a commitment in the 2030 ERP to *“...work with Indigenous partners to co-develop an approach to enable a stronger presence of the Indigenous perspective in other elements of emission reduction plans”* (p.21). ECCC is committed to improving the engagement process for developing future emissions reduction plans, as well as for developing the progress reports planned for 2023, 2025, and 2027, taking into account the Best Practices guides developed by the JCCA. This will be an important area of focus for the JCCA moving forward.

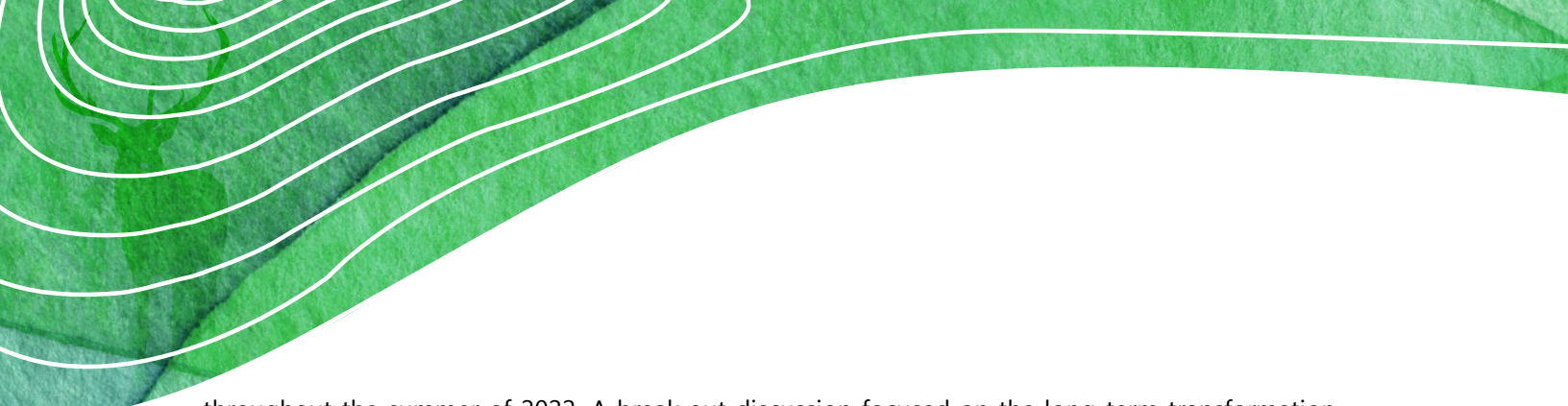
**Key Takeaway:** Monitor and follow-up with ECCC's Horizontal Policy Division, who led preparation of the 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan, to support meeting the 2030 ERP commitment to *“work with Indigenous partners to co-develop an approach to enable a stronger presence of the Indigenous perspective in other elements of emissions reduction plans”* (2030 ERP, p.21).

The development of guidance for the 2023, 2025 and 2027 progress reports will be needed to ensure thoughtful reflections of the legislative commitments to Indigenous Knowledge and UNDRIP, as well as the JCCA Best Practices Guides, the Federal Funding Accessibility and Meaningful Engagement with First Nations Guide, as well as the Decision-Making Guidance.

## National Adaptation Strategy

Throughout 2022, the JCCA continued its work on the National Adaptation Strategy (NAS). This included regular updates at the JCCA meetings, along with a JCCA NAS Working Group that met





throughout the summer of 2022. A break-out discussion focused on the long-term transformation goals and medium-term objectives of the NAS, concepts that arose from the Expert Advisory Table process in late 2021, took place at the fall JCCA meeting prior to the release of the NAS.<sup>3</sup>

First Nations representatives stressed several key messages in this process including, but not limited to:


- shorter-term accountability by 2030 and continuous;
- two-way engagement throughout the NAS process;
- the importance of operationalizing the guiding principles, noted below, in implementation activities;
- the recognition of First Nations governments and their jurisdiction; and
- the need to address the structural determinants of adaptation including inequity and colonialism, among many others.

These comments informed the development of a discussion paper and opportunities for public engagement through LetsTalkAdaptation.ca over summer 2022. The NAS Working Group stopped meeting in late summer 2022 as the NAS was being considered by Cabinet. The federal government then released the NAS for final comments on November 24, 2022, entitled *National Adaptation Strategy (NAS): Building Resilient Communities and a Strong Economy*. The Strategy outlines a shared path and sets common direction for a more climate resilient Canada. The federal government also released an *The Government of Canada Adaptation Action Plan*, which outlines how it is contributing to the implementation of the National Adaptation Strategy. Discussions at the JCCA helped to inform the development of the official Guiding Principles currently reflected in the NAS and the Adaptation Actions:

- Respect jurisdictions and uphold Indigenous rights;
- Advance equity and environmental justice;
- Take proactive, risk-based measures to reduce climate impacts before they occur; and
- Maximize benefits and avoid maladaptation.

Provincial, territorial, and Indigenous partners were invited to submit comments on the draft NAS until March 31, 2023. The JCCA NAS Working Group met in January 2023 with a view to providing additional input into the NAS; efforts include drafting a discussion paper focused on the targets, the application of guiding principles, and the medium/long-term goals.

<sup>3</sup> More about the National Adaptation Strategy process, including the composition and report from the Expert Advisory Tables can be found here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/weather/climatechange/climate-plan/national-adaptation-strategy/engagement.html>



**Key Takeaway:** Explore additional opportunities in the implementation of the NAS to address some of the outstanding First Nation concerns, and to align policies programs, and bilateral plans with provinces and territories in a way that upholds the minimum standards of UNDRIP as well as the JCCA Best Practices Guides, both the Federal Funding Accessibility and Meaningful Engagement with First Nations Guide, as well as the Indigenous Climate Leadership Decision-Making Guidance.

## Climate Plan Implementation

The number of federal climate initiatives of interest to First Nations, and Indigenous Peoples more broadly, continues to rise as efforts accelerate within Canada to reduce GHG emissions. According to First Nations representatives, this number grew in 2022 because of new commitments to support the transition to a net-zero economy announced in the 2030 ERP and Budget 2022. In June 2022, the JCCA met virtually and held a session on climate plan implementation, which focused on sharing information and providing updates on new federal initiatives of interest to First Nations.

First Nations representatives reiterated comments and questions on the impact of the federal government's commitment to implement and uphold the principles of UNDRIP (as legislated through the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (UNDA)), as well as the JCCA's Best Practices Guides and Indigenous Climate Leadership Decision-Making Guidance, when developing federal climate programs and/or policies. JCCA members recognized that many

federal departments are continuing to advance climate initiatives in a way that does not fully reflect the guiding documents developed by the JCCA, as well as the principles of UNDRIP. This feedback motivated the JCCA to focus future discussions on the intersection between the federal government's commitment to implement UNDRIP and efforts to advance climate policies and programs in support of the transition to a net-zero economy.

**Key Takeaway:** The application of the principles of UNDRIP, the JCCA Best Practices Guides, both the Federal Funding Accessibility and Meaningful Engagement with First Nations Guide, and the Indigenous Climate Leadership Decision-Making Guidance lags in the development of federal climate policy and programs. Additional work to reflect these documents, as well as engagement with First Nations early in the processes, will be key for federal departments to operationalize the work of the JCCA in the development of new climate initiatives, as well as to identify concrete ways of enabling meaningful and respectful engagement to happen (e.g., funding, reasonable timelines, capacity, relationship-building).

## 2. Advance the development of First Nations Climate Leadership through meaningful dialogue with First Nations

First Nations Climate Leadership<sup>4</sup> has been emphasized and championed at the JCCA as a critical component of a solutions-oriented approach to Canada's response to climate change. Discussions at the JCCA continuously emphasize the need to shift federal climate policy and programming to better enable First Nations climate priorities and leadership. These discussions continued in 2022. Following the recognition of Indigenous Climate Leadership within the Strengthened Climate Plan as a "cornerstone" of Canada's climate response, momentum continued with an announcement of federal funding in the 2030 ERP and Budget 2022, demonstrating a clear federal commitment to Indigenous climate leadership.

### Indigenous Climate Leadership

The 2030 ERP and Budget 2022 announced new federal investments in Indigenous Climate Leadership (ICL), for a total of \$29.6 million over three years. The funding includes support to work in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis on a distinctions-basis to advance an Indigenous Climate Leadership agenda which builds regional and national capacity and progressively vests authorities and resources for climate action in the hands of Indigenous Peoples. This announcement builds on the work of First Nations and the JCCA through the previous three years, as well as parallel conversations with Inuit and Métis.

Through 2021 and early 2022, First Nations and federal representatives at the JCCA developed the First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda, focused on the development of a Governance Framework, which outlines a governance model and measures to ensure successful outcomes and develop actionable solutions. In early 2022, the AFN National Chief and Minister of Environment and Climate Change endorsed the proposed governance framework, which includes AFN and ECCC political leadership and oversight, a working-level steering committee responsible for developing the agenda's content and strategic direction, oversight of this initiative by the JCCA, implementation of solutions and outcomes for First Nations, as well as dialogue with First Nations rights-holders, communities, and governments. The Governance Framework was modified once the budget commitment identified Crown-

Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) as a key federal department, adding the Minister of Crown Indigenous Relations to the leadership table.

The First Nations Climate Leadership Steering Committee, comprised of First Nations regional representatives and officials from the AFN, ECCC and CIRNAC, had its first meeting in late 2022. The Committee has started to explore funding options and a national engagement process that supports the development of recommendations on Indigenous Climate Leadership by the end of 2024-2025. A key element of this will include operationalizing the Government's commitment to UNDRIP in all activities of the climate agenda, including how it interacts with other, non-Indigenous federal funding policies and programs.

<sup>4</sup> First Nations Climate Leadership is a concept that promotes a new way of thinking about climate solutions, a paradigm shift towards the positioning of First Nations' climate priorities and leadership at the core of climate action. This includes flexible, nations-based funding arrangements that directly transfers resources, capacity, and authority to First Nations.





### 3. Monitor and evaluate progress on First Nations Climate Leadership and the full and effective participation of First Nations in climate change programs

In the 2021 Annual Report, the JCCA articulated a goal of working together in 2022 to explore how it can track progress on First Nations Climate Leadership with indicators that measure access to federal funding opportunities and meaningful First Nations engagement in federal policy and program development. Due to capacity constraints, the JCCA did not develop these indicators. However, the JCCA did continue to pursue opportunities to improve the full and effective participation of First Nations in climate change programs through communication tools, the Indigenous Climate Leadership Decision-Making Guidance (DMG), and the First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda.

Building on the work of the JCCA in 2021 to develop the DMG, in 2022, CIRNAC and ECCC made efforts to widely socialize the DMG across government through senior management committees, interdepartmental presentations, and ongoing collaboration. The DMG is a tool intended to support federal departments in applying best practice in program design and implementation to ensure federal climate actions are inclusive and accessible to Indigenous Peoples and promote and advance self-determination. Federal officials also continued to explore how best to formalize the DMG as a mandatory tool for departments delivering climate-related programming. The implementation of the guidance tool is ongoing.

While efforts have been made to improve First Nations' access to federal funding, such as the Best Practices Guide on Federal Funding Accessibility prepared by the JCCA, climate investments do not always address the outstanding barriers faced by First Nations, including the programmification of First Nations climate action, insufficient funding envelopes for First Nations' needs, and competitive funding. The co-development of the First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda, described above, will help to identify alternative means of delivering federal support that is long-term, predictable and responsive to First Nations-led climate strategies and plans.



## REGIONAL CASE STORY #1

# The Yukon First Nations Reconnection Vision



The idea to create the Yukon First Nations Climate Action Fellowship originated at the first-ever Yukon First Nations (YFN) Climate Action Gathering in February 2020. At the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre, Yukon First Nation Chiefs signed a Climate Change Emergency Declaration, which included endorsement of the development of a Yukon First Nations Climate Vision and Action Plan. Key to doing this, according to Yukon First Nations leadership, was ensuring it be youth-led as “it is their future at stake, and they will inherit the decisions made now.” This led to the creation of the Climate Action Fellowship, a cohort of 13 First Nations youth from across the Yukon.

Working, growing, and reconnecting together since January 2021, the Fellowship is in the final stages of developing their Reconnection Vision (RV). The RV identifies the dominant approach to climate action is to treat the symptoms of climate change (e.g., rising carbon dioxide emissions) rather than the root causes—Disconnected relationships. Their response is to emphasize the concept of Reconnection, framing Reconnection—the practice of getting back into good relationship with spirit, self, each other and the Land—as climate action. The tools of Reconnection are held in First Nations cultures. The Reconnection Vision guides people to nurture their whole selves (spiritual, emotional, physical, mental), so they can transform how they make decisions that shape our society — our Wellness, Housing, Food, Energy, Extraction, Economy, Governance, and Education. After extensive engagement, the next step for the Fellowship is to share the RV with Yukon First Nation Leadership, their communities and the world.



## 4. Develop new communication tools to improve transparency, accountability, and engagement throughout JCCA activities

In an effort to promote greater transparency and communication of the Committee, the JCCA is finalizing a public-facing website, housed on the AFN website.

The website has been jointly developed by AFN and ECCC outlining key elements of JCCA's work:

- general information on the JCCA;
- JCCA's activities and how we work together;
- JCCA resources;
- information about First Nations addressing Climate Change; and
- communications.

There are two phases to the development of the JCCA website: the first includes general information about the JCCA for public audiences, and phase two of the website includes an internal collaborative workspace for the JCCA, as well as a document library, to enhance communication and collaboration between First Nations and federal representatives. Phase one of the JCCA website is anticipated to be completed in spring 2023 with phase two in fall 2023.

In addition, federal officials continued to update the [Indigenous climate and environmental funding webpage](#) with new federal funding opportunities and up-to-date program information relevant to First Nations. ECCC is keeping this webpage evergreen and is sharing it widely to help advance awareness and access to information on federal climate programming and contribute to the

strengthening of resources and capacity and First Nations climate leadership. With a view to enabling the full and effective participation of First Nations in climate programs, policies, and initiatives, the JCCA also continued to provide information on upcoming and ongoing federal climate engagement opportunities to First Nations regional climate coordinators at all JCCA meetings.

## 5. Embed an intergenerational and intersectional dialogue on climate change in all JCCA activities

The JCCA has continually explored how to uplift and meaningfully include First Nations youth and intergenerational voices within its work throughout 2022. The past year has demonstrated the continued challenges with capacity that First Nations youth face, as well as their important and necessary role in climate action. A focused discussion at the November meeting, explored additional opportunities for First Nations youth voices in the work of the JCCA. This built off the success of the AFN National Climate Change Gathering, which reaffirmed the importance of youth within First Nations climate action as well as those of women, Elders and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples.

## REGIONAL CASE STORY #2:

# Teaching Our Keepers – Treaty 3 Youth Climate Strategy Development



The Treaty #3 Youth Climate Strategy Development Teams project was developed and launched in 2019.

Nootkamegwanning, Asubpeeschoseewagong, and Onigaming First Nations were selected to participate, allowing them to hire a community-based youth mentor (aged 20-29). The youth mentor was responsible to teach up to 12 youth in their community about climate change and to host climate change workshops for the youth through a 24-week program developed by the Grand Council Treaty #3 (GCT3) Territorial Planning Units Climate Specialist. The program focused on specific technical and practical skills for the youth, including Environmental Monitoring, Weather Monitoring, Water Monitoring (pH levels, oxygen levels, water salinity, turbidity, etc.), Healthy Habitats, Developing a Community Based Climate Strategy, Project Management, Facilitating Skills.

The workshops were organized into five blocks, focused on the following topics:

- Weeks 1-5: Introduction to Climate Change, Greenhouse Gases, the Greenhouse Effect, Global Warming.
- Weeks 6-10: Climate Change, Global Climate Change, Weather Changes, Weather Monitoring, Water Monitoring, Local Climate Change.
- Weeks 11-14: Adaptation Methods, Global Adaptation, Local Adaptation, Emergency Preparedness, Climate Change and Effects on Health.
- Weeks 15-19: Climate Change and Ecosystems, Introduction to Ecosystems, Ecosystem Adaptation Management, Governmental Policy regarding environmental management.
- Weeks 19 - 24: Strategy Development.

The project connected the youth with the history of their community and their roots as First Nations by connecting them with several Elders (i.e., hunters, medicine keepers). The intergenerational knowledge sharing included Elders passing on their knowledge to the youth, as well as allowing the youth to learn of how the Elders experienced life as a youth in their time before climate change had drastically changed their home community.



## Our Path Forward in 2023

### 1. Review federal clean growth and climate change policy and programs through the First Nations Climate Lens

The implementation of federal policies and programs is ongoing; however, work remains to ensure First Nations' full and effective participation is considered in the forefront of decision-making. To do this, the JCCA will build on the Best Practice Guides and Decision-Making Guidance, as well as the First Nations Climate Lens and the government's commitment to implement UNDRIP, to explore mechanisms to ensure that federal clean growth and climate change programs are building from the lessons learned of their predecessors.

- The *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* received Royal Assent in June 2021. Since then, the Government of Canada, led by the Department of Justice, has been developing a draft Action Plan to implement the Declaration, informed by priorities identified through engagement with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. The draft action plan is set to be released by June 2023, highlighting an important opportunity for JCCA members to consider how it will inform all work under the JCCA, including the First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda. The Action Plan may also have insight for other related work of the JCCA, opening an important opportunity for the JCCA to take stock of how federal clean growth and climate change programs and policies are upholding the Government's commitment.
  - One key element of this priority is the *Canadian Net-Zero Accountability Act* which stipulates that the Minister of Environment and Climate Change should take Indigenous Knowledge into account when setting an emissions reduction target and take UNDRIP into account when establishing an emissions reduction plan. The JCCA is committed to exploring opportunities to advance this work, as the
- 2030 ERP is required to release progress reports in 2023, 2025, and 2027, prior to the 2035 ERP being developed.
  - With the release of the National Adaptation Strategy in November 2022 for a final round of comments, a priority for the JCCA is to use the NAS Working Group to provide constructive input on the Strategy and its implementation, including in the areas of targets, objectives, and the application of the guiding principles to federal, provincial, and territorial action plans. Parallel to this process is the development of the First Nations adaptation plans, a process connected to the work of the First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda.
  - The JCCA will continue to engage with relevant federal climate initiatives such as the Low Carbon Economy Fund's Indigenous Leadership Fund to support the design and implementation of First Nations-led emissions reduction initiatives.





## 2. Empower First Nations leadership in climate action

The First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda continues to be an important mechanism for the advancement of self-determined climate action that uplifts First Nations-led priorities. The implication of this work for federal climate policy, programs, and decision-making is clear; however more work must be done to identify and jointly develop recommendations for how to operationalize changes to the First Nation-federal partnership on climate, as well as determine how these changes influence broader Canadian climate policy and programs, such as carbon pricing. The JCCA expects that the partnership to develop the First Nations Climate Leadership (FNCL) agenda will be a significant area of work for the upcoming year.

- The approach for advancing the FNCL Agenda will be informed by discussions with the FNCL Steering Committee and the JCCA. This will include a process of rotation between national meetings (with all regions) and regional workshops (that are designed and co-hosted with regional leads). The first stage of activities is being launched in 2023, beginning with a Leaders meeting between AFN Regional Chief Kluane Adamek, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, and the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, the Honourable Marc Miller. The Leaders meeting will be followed by a multi-day national meeting with representatives from the AFN, First Nations regional leads, and ECCC and CIRNAC officials in spring 2023. This national meeting will support the launch of the engagement process by identifying national priorities and vision, drafting work plans, and developing common tools that will help support development of a First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda.
- Throughout the rest of 2023 and into 2024, a series of regional and community-level engagement workshops will be undertaken by First Nations regional leads, with the support of the First Nations Climate Leadership Steering Committee. This engagement will focus on identifying regional/local barriers and priorities for a First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda and to inform the development of recommendations by the end of 2024-25.
- Another key component of advancing First Nations leadership in climate action is the development of the AFN's National Climate Strategy. Since 2019, the AFN has been working on the development of the Strategy, informed by multiple Climate Gatherings, two rounds of surveys, and over ten webinars, as well as regular engagement with the Advisory Committee on Climate Action and the Environment ('ACE'). Building on all these efforts, 2023 will be the year that the Strategy will be presented to the First Nations-in-Assembly, offering an important opportunity for the JCCA to begin considering how to consider the identified objectives and priorities empower First Nations leadership in the climate discussions.



### 3. Foster greater transparency, accountability, and communication in JCCA activities

Moving towards 2023, the JCCA is excited to meet in-person again, following two years of virtual meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This will be a key opportunity to return to the principles of Ethical Space and foster solid relationship-building opportunities.


- Discussed in previous years, there has been an appetite among JCCA members to develop alternate formats of the Annual Report to the National Chief and Prime Minister by exploring options that would be more accessible to a public audience. This year, the JCCA Secretariat and the JCCA Annual Report Working Group, a subset working group of the JCCA, will work together to consider some different options, with a focus on reaching and connecting with federal and First Nations audiences.
- Another planned milestone for 2023 will be the launch of the JCCA's new public-facing website, which will be housed on the AFN website, as a way to promote better transparency and communicate about the work of the Committee.
- Lastly, to ensure the JCCA is remaining accountable to its priorities and deliverables, the Committee will be developing a work plan at its first table meeting of 2023. The goal is to better track the JCCA's progress and activities throughout the year. After a few years of missed and shortened meetings due to the Pandemic and capacity considerations, the JCCA is making it a priority to stay on track to meet its goals throughout 2023.

### 4. Continue to develop First Nations-specific indicators/criteria to report on the implementation of climate-related federal funding programs and outcomes for First Nations

In the 2021 JCCA Annual Report, there was great ambition for this area of work, recognizing the importance of being able to measure progress regarding the implementation of climate-related federal funding programs and outcomes for First Nations. The JCCA did not significantly advance this work in 2022, therefore the Committee will be continuing to work on the outlined priorities throughout 2023. Along with continuing this work, the JCCA will also push forward on the following commitments:

- The JCCA will work with federal departments to explore ways of tracking the status of unsuccessful climate funding applications, with a view to addressing accessibility challenges.
- The JCCA will seek First Nations' perspectives on how they have been engaged on federal climate policy and programs, either positively or negatively. This line of inquiry will contribute to the reflection of First Nations knowledge systems in federal climate actions and will be needed to ensure that the best practices are being taken into consideration in support of the full and effective participation of First Nations.



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- The JCCA will explore privacy implications to best respect First Nations' privacy and data sovereignty throughout the data collection and analysis process..

Within 2023, the JCCA will look for alternate sources of climate-related programming data to complete data analysis on First Nations outcomes within these programs. Accurate and current data on First Nations, following the standards of OCAP™, is necessary for the JCCA to make decisions on climate-related policy and initiatives. The JCCA will continue this important work, making use of tools such as Open Government, and various databases across departments.

## 5. Deepen the intergenerational and intersectional dialogue on climate change in all activities

Throughout 2023, the JCCA will explore options to better and more meaningfully include the unique perspectives of youth, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, gender-diverse and other intersectional identities within the JCCA's work. The AFN's National Climate Gathering in September 2022, as well as the Regional Case Stories in this report, recognized the significant role that First Nations youth, and all future generations, play in advancing urgent and transformative climate action. It is clear that the JCCA needs to continue making space for these perspectives, both within the context of their shared work, as well as their institutional work. The AFN and ECCC remain committed to explore connections with existing intergenerational forums and youth networks with the work for the JCCA, ensuring appropriate space for youth, men, women, gender-diverse, Elders and Knowledge Keepers. This could include exploring new ways to design JCCA meetings, as well as building on existing processes and opportunities for engagement, such as the First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda.

In 2023, the JCCA will explore options for regular youth and Elder sessions on the JCCA meeting agendas and events. It is important that the inclusion of intergenerational and intersectional voices is pursued in a meaningful way through the Committee and its activities.



REGIONAL CASE STORY #3:

## Lessons from the File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council



The File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council (FHQTC) represents 11 First Nations: Nekaneet First Nation; Wood Mountain Lakota Nation, Piapot First Nation, Muscowpetung Saulteaux Nation, Pasqua First Nation, Standing Buffalo Dakota Nation, Little Black Bear's Band of Cree & Assiniboine Nations, Okanese First Nation, Star Blanket Cree Nation, Peepeekisis Cree Nation, Carry The Kettle Nakoda Nation and over 17,000 Citizens in the Treaty Four Territory. FHQTC Nations are comprised of distinct and diverse multilingual cultural identities of the Saulteaux (Anishinaabe), Lakota, Dakota, Nakoda, and Cree (Néhiyaw) Nations.

In 2022, the FHQTC Land, Resources, Environment & Stewardship Department developed a Youth Climate Advisory Council mandated to build capacity within their Member Nations' Youth and mobilize climate action initiatives in cooperation with the AFN's National Climate Strategy. This Youth Climate Advisory Council Project aims to empower the FHQTC Youth to be Leaders in bringing attention to climate change and its impacts on their Inherent and Treaty

Rights. Central to this work is to recognize and strengthen the connection of the FHQTC Youth to their ancestral lands and environment as it relates to their identities as First Nations Peoples and their Natural Laws. Activities include analyzing the effects of climate change on their lands and environment and identifying the adaptation opportunities and challenges that their Nations face through the lens of Indigenous Knowledge and evidence-based approaches.



## Concluding Remarks

As seen throughout this report, First Nations and federal representatives are working through an Ethical Space to make progress on supporting First Nations as climate leaders and enabling their full and effective participation in federal climate action. The work, supported by political mandates, continues to have salience at the local, regional, national, and international level, working to operationalize a new approach to working in partnership with First Nations on the simultaneous commitment of decolonization and decarbonization. Throughout 2022, JCCA members faced many challenges, including the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, capacity issues and the real, current impacts of climate change and extreme weather events such as Hurricane Fiona, but the JCCA reaffirms its commitment to take transformative action in addressing the climate crisis. On the road to 2030 and net-zero by 2050, there is significant potential to prevent the most catastrophic impacts on First Nations, and the JCCA remains a vital mechanism to do this and mainstream a rights-based approach to climate action, protecting the Land and Water for many generations to come.



# Annex 1

## 1. Assembly of First Nations' Submission to the 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan

### Assembly of First Nations (AFN)

AFN appreciates the opportunity to provide an annex to the Emissions Reduction Plan (ERP), but the time to do so has been inadequate. In preparation for future ERPs, we suggest building on the Best Practices Guide for Federal Departments Working with First Nations on Climate Change (2020), developed by the Joint Committee on Climate Action (JCCA), to ensure the process is supportive of the full and effective participation of First Nations. To be clear, this annex does not prejudice future input by First Nations, nor is it intended to represent the perspectives of rights and title holders.

### 1. Introduction

The evidence is clear: we are facing a joint climate and biodiversity crisis. The most up-to-date science, according to the *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, projects that we have less than ten years to avoid locking in a future where our children are facing the consequences of catastrophic climate change. The *United Nations Emission Gap* report (2021) projects that we might hit a global annual temperature of 2.7 degrees by 2100 unless we take transformative action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 55% by 2030 and reach net-zero by 2050 to keep warming under 1.5 degrees. These statistics align with the observations that First Nations knowledge keepers have been sharing for decades.

In Canada, the situation is urgent. Irreversible warming trends have now been confirmed by the *Canada in a Changing Climate Report* (2019), identifying that Canada's climate has warmed by 2.3°C since 1948 and will warm further, on average, at about double the magnitude of warming globally.<sup>5</sup> This comes as no surprise, as First Nations' knowledge keepers have been raising their voices, sharing information about the changes that they are observing: changes in species migration, weather, and irreversible impacts to the land. These observations are being formally captured as a growing number of First Nations are adding their voices to the call for rapid de-carbonization to meet the target

of the Paris Agreement. One such example is the Vuntut Gwitch'in First Nation (VGFN), in Old Crow, Yukon. Their declaration, entitled "Yeendoo Diinehdoo Ji' heezrit Nits'oo Ts' o' Nan He' aa," which translates into "After Our Time, How Will the World Be?" laid the foundation for the Chiefs-in-Assembly to declare a national climate emergency, in 2019.<sup>6</sup>

In July 2019, the Chiefs-in-Assembly declared a *First Nations Climate Emergency*, recognizing that "...climate change constitutes a state of emergency for our lands, waters, animals, and peoples." The resolution laid out some immediate steps for AFN to plan a National

<sup>5</sup> For more details, please refer to *Canada in a Changing Climate*, found here: <https://changingclimate.ca/>.

<sup>6</sup> From the Chiefs-in-Assembly, the AFN is mandated by eleven resolutions since 2016. Most recently, in Resolution 05/2019: *Declaring a First Nations Climate Emergency*. The full list of resolutions can be found on the AFN website: [www.afn.ca/resolutions](http://www.afn.ca/resolutions)

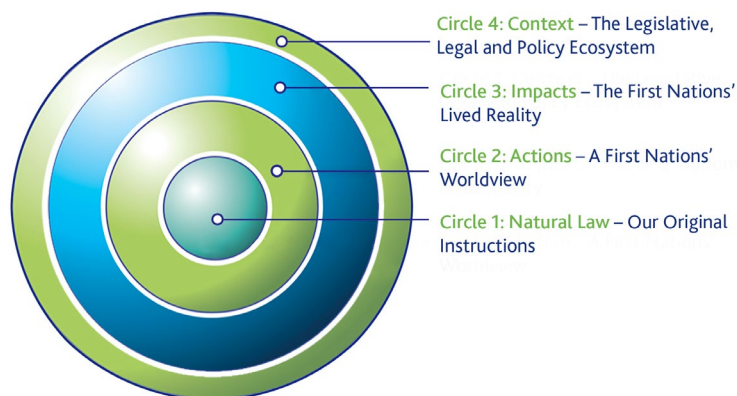
Climate Gathering and develop a National Climate Strategy. It directed the Strategy to stress urgent and transformative climate action that reduces emissions in Canada by 60% below 2010 levels by 2030 and reach net-zero emissions by 2050, while simultaneously addressing income inequality within First Nations as part of the mobilization for a just transition. Given this clear mandate, First Nations were pleased to see the Speech from the Throne's references to Indigenous Peoples and the climate crisis. In December 2020, a new climate plan was released, *A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy*, committing to "...position Indigenous climate leadership as a cornerstone of Canada's strengthened climate plan." In doing this, the plan recognized that "...[s]upporting self-determined climate action is critical to advancing Canada's

reconciliation with Indigenous peoples." (p. 68-69) Soon after, Canada released an updated greenhouse gas emission reduction target: 40 to 45 percent by 2030.

It is in the recognition that Canada must do its part to address the joint crises of biodiversity loss and climate change<sup>7</sup> that we share our submission, with recommendations grouped as responses to the questions identified by Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC). To begin, we introduce the First Nations Climate Lens, explore its implications for net-zero and the 2030 emissions target, and then transition into concrete recommendations to improve First Nations considerations in the ERP.


## 2. A First Nations Climate Lens

First Nations face unique climate risks because of how colonialism, in conjunction with capitalism, has shaped where we live, our socio-economic conditions, and how we exercise our relationships with Mother Earth. These experiences and interconnections cannot be overlooked when contemplating climate related solutions for (or by) First Nations. To better understand this reality, and to advance First Nations climate solutions, the AFN has developed the concept of a First Nations Climate Lens (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.**

<sup>7</sup> Canada remains a high emitter ranking [10th highest-emitting country globally](#) and the [fifth highest-emitting country on a per capita basis](#)



This Climate Lens seeks to challenge conventional conceptualizations of First Nations as ‘vulnerable’ populations and the ‘passive recipients’ of climate impacts. Indeed, our unique connections to the land, water, air, and non-human beings have enabled us to live reciprocally and in balance with all of Creation. The cultural, spiritual, and social connection to the land may increase First Nations’ exposure and sensitivity to climate change impacts, but it also provides a unique source of strength,

understanding and resilience. The First Nations Climate Lens is based on an alignment of three concentric spheres of activity to help bring into focus the relationships between First Nations’ climate impacts, climate action, and the broader climate context.<sup>8</sup> It stresses the fact that First Nations are climate leaders and, as such, are active drivers of positive change.

## 2.1. Applying the First Nations Climate Lens to Net-Zero

The concept of a First Nations Climate Lens has important procedural, conceptual, and substantive applications to the understanding and implementation of net-zero commitments, including the role of the *Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act*. This involves three interrelated considerations.

First, that the commitment to net-zero must not be interpreted as an end goal, where the only focus is on arriving at a point when “... anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere are balanced by anthropogenic removals of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere over a specified period.”<sup>9</sup> Instead, net-zero must be conceptualized as a process leading to a just, equitable, and resilient future for our future generations, founded on the First Nation’s right to self-determination. The federal climate plan acknowledges this perspective, committing to “[support] self-determined climate action is critical to advancing Canada’s reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.”

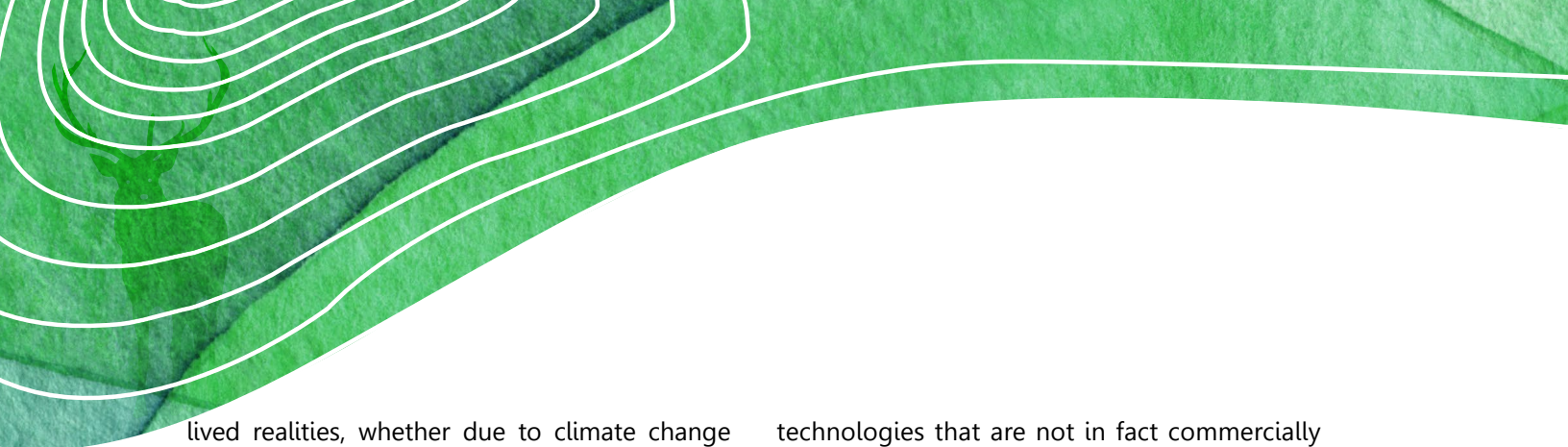
(p. 68-9) To do so, the process to arrive at a just, equitable, and resilient future must be grounded in the leadership and direction of First Nations (see specific comments in Section 3).

Second, that a First Nations approach will confront the conventional “mitigation-adaptation” dichotomy – the separation between discussions on mitigation or adaptation action – rampant in federal climate perspectives. This is underlined by the absence of references to adaptation in the *Net-zero Emissions Accountability Act*.<sup>10</sup> As highlighted by our Climate Lens, the impacts of climate change are inseparable from First Nations

<sup>8</sup> For a full description of the First Nations Climate Lens, please refer to the AFN National Climate Gathering Report found here: [https://www.afn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Climate\\_Gathering\\_Report\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.afn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Climate_Gathering_Report_ENG.pdf) and refer to a video from the Gathering here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICZh6uYTh1E&t=2s>

<sup>9</sup> These are definitions in the legislation, found here: <https://parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/43-2/bill/C-12/first-reading>

<sup>10</sup> There are different approaches in the United Kingdom legislation, including specific provisions on the creation of an Adaptation Committee that is required to produce a climate change risk assessment every five years as well as a National Adaptation Programme. More detail can be found here: <https://climatechoices.ca/publications/climate-legislation-in-the-united-kingdom/>.



lived realities, whether due to climate change or the ongoing legacy of colonialism. For this reason, the conventional mitigation-adaptation dichotomy rarely considers the complex and multi-dimensional nature of First Nations climate solutions – such as returning to the land, a focus on food sovereignty, locally generated power systems, and language revitalization. Given the interconnections between the sectors and systems upon which First Nations rely (e.g., health, food, energy, transportation, etc.), this false dichotomy must be challenged to enable an acknowledgement of holistic, integrated, and systems-based solutions that must address the existential threat that is climate change.

And third, that there is a need for a new narrative that does not rely on technological solutions and market-based approaches that presume a continuation of the structurally inequitable and racist systems that have led us to this compounding environmental crisis in the first place. Rather, instead of embedding a model of tweaking where Canadian oil and gas production increases and is offset by an overreliance on

technologies that are not in fact commercially viable,<sup>11</sup> the Climate Lens offers an opportunity to shift our focus towards the interrelationship between the three C's – carbon, colonialism, and capitalism – centering an approach rooted in relationships that value the nexus of people and land, and their mutual reciprocity. This approach seeks to enable a reset with the systems and structures that seem to trap us in an unproductive cycle, while advancing the self-determination of First Nations to reclaim their rightful place as Nations.

By applying these considerations to the objective of reaching net-zero by 2050 we hope to deploy the First Nations Climate Lens so as to garner a more progressive and innovative dialogue about climate action; a dialogue that avoids lapsing into failed narratives about balancing economy and environment, or quick-fix technological solutions, and takes up a focus that is rooted in Indigenous ways of knowing and First Nations climate leadership.


## 2.2. Applying the First Nations Climate Lens to the 2030 Emission Reduction Plan

In the context of this first ERP, the First Nations Climate Lens brings useful insights to the process and scope of future emissions reduction plans. These insights could help to amplify First Nations Climate Leadership and the development of solutions that address both decarbonization and decolonization.

First, while there is now a legislative requirement for the consideration of Indigenous Knowledge in the setting of emissions targets, there is limited opportunity in this brief process to

consider what this would mean substantively. For example, based on an understanding grounded in First Nations knowledge systems that we are 'one with the land and water' – rather

<sup>11</sup> A recent report, *Correcting Canada's "one eye shut" climate policy*, uses Government of Canada data (drawn from the Canadian Energy Regulator) to show that more oil and gas is expected to be produced in 2050 than in 2019—the oil and gas sector in Canada will still be emitting some 200 megatonnes of CO2 equivalent in 2050. This raises an important concern for Canadian climate policy



than compartmentalized units apart from nature – all discussions would need to center on the reciprocal relationships that embody our global ecosystem. Such an approach recognizes that First Nations knowledge systems, while unique to each individual First Nation, problematize the drivers of the climate crisis differently than mainstream systems. Put another way, a more meaningful application of the First Nations Climate Lens would begin with establishing a shared understanding of what is driving the climate crisis, and based on that shared understanding, the determination of appropriate actions using this starting point. This deeper conversation is lacking in the current process and may be detrimental to future emission reduction plans by, for example, locking in an ontological path of dependency that force's First Nations knowledge systems to 'fit' into mainstream knowledge systems focused on technology and markets. We seek to broaden this process to be more inclusive in its consideration of Indigenous Knowledge systems.


Second, this ERP must take the Government's commitment to the implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration) seriously. In this way, solutions proposed for the specific sectors of emissions reductions (i.e., built environment, electricity, industry, oil and gas, transportation, forestry, and agriculture and waste) cannot be separated from the required implementation of the minimum standards contained within the UN Declaration. For

instance, and as outlined above, an over-reliance on the development of technological and market-based solutions, without a critical investigation of the inequitable and structurally racist ways that these solutions interact with First Nations-lived realities, will further harm First Nations and may contribute to what has been described as a new form of 'climate' colonialism.<sup>12</sup> This is particularly acute in the context of forestry, agriculture, and other nature-based solutions, where discussions have largely neglected the presence of First Nations' jurisdiction, rights, and legal systems. Solutions for these sectors cannot disregard their role in advancing decolonization.

Finally, decisions made on the process and scope of the current ERP, for better or for worse, will influence future emissions reductions discussions. To this end, 'getting it right' here could help to support the inclusion of First Nations thinking and leadership into the future. In this way, for example, the ERP could internalize the tenets of Seven Generation thinking<sup>13</sup> to guide how this ERP is prepared and how an appropriate amount of space is created to ensure future and ongoing discussions that inform the accountability mechanism. A Seven Generation decision-making model requires comprehensive critical thought on balancing benefits in the present with those of future generations. Together, we must ensure these future generations (including the plants, animals, medicines, etc.) have all the benefits and gifts of Mother Earth – such as clean water, a stable food supply, and a livable environment – so that they too can live a rich

<sup>12</sup> For more, see: Cameron, L., Courchene, D., Ijaz, S., & Mauro, I. (2021). 'A change of heart': Indigenous perspectives from the Onjisy Aki Summit on climate change. *Climatic Change*, 164(3), 1-21 and Reed, G., Gobby, J., Sinclair, R., Ivey, R., & Matthews, H. D. (2021). Indigenizing Climate Policy in Canada: A Critical Examination of the Pan-Canadian Framework and the ZÉN RoadMap. *Frontiers in Sustainable Cities*, 78.

<sup>13</sup> Seven Generations Principle is attributed to the Great Law of the Iroquois Confederacy and is a tenet practiced by many First Nations.



and meaningful life. All proposed activities in the specific sectors of emission reductions must be

explored through this lens, especially those that are predicated on further resource extraction.

### 3. Response to Guiding Questions

These applications of the First Nations Climate Lens bring into focus the issues and conversations required to uplift First Nations climate solutions and support the re-framing of the climate conversation towards more transformative and systemic changes. Below, we have outlined preliminary responses to the two guiding questions (see Sections 3.1 and 3.2) but stress that meaningful conversations directly with First Nations rights and title holders must inform further elaboration and responses.

#### 3.1. How can Canada's first ERP account for the unique circumstances, ambition and leadership of First Nations with regards to mitigating climate change?


This question overlooks the essential role that First Nations' jurisdiction, rights, and legal systems play in climate change mitigation. To be clear, the source of First Nations jurisdiction is independent of Canada, stemming from the Creator, who placed us on Turtle Island – it is an *inherent* jurisdiction. In so being, we were instructed on how to interact and make decisions that respect our obligations of stewardship and responsibility for all of our waters and lands. The ERP must reflect and honour this jurisdiction, and the duty to the right to self-determination in structuring climate governance and accountability in Canada. In practice, this means that First Nations jurisdiction, rights, and legal systems cannot be undermined by colonial interpretations. Instead, First Nations must first interpret and describe their inherent rights, grounded in Indigenous law, Indigenous

legal traditions, and customary law. These legal orders, which lay the foundation for First Nations' concepts of self-determination and sovereignty, are essential to initiating true "Nation-to-Nation" dialogues and expressing the respect for our rights and title. A rights-based and responsibilities-based approach to climate accountability is essential to support First Nations Climate Leadership, acknowledging that decarbonization is not a-political, nor an exclusively technocratic exercise.

The ERP must internalize the recognition that First Nations face unique vulnerabilities because of the historical and ongoing legacy of colonization. These practices require climate plans to consider the intersectional and diverse impacts that face First Nations when considering climate solutions.<sup>14</sup> A framing of Indigenous

<sup>14</sup> These policies are numerous, such as forcibly locating First Nations' reserves in ecologically sensitive areas, removing children, and forcing them into Indian Residential Schools, banning languages and ceremony. A description can be found in the Truth and Reconciliation's Final Report (2015).





'climate justice'<sup>15</sup>, while not captured in this Act, could inform how all sector-specific policies are analyzed prior to their release. In Aotearoa New Zealand, similar legislation requires their Minister to include a strategy to recognize and mitigate the impacts of reducing emissions on Indigenous Peoples and to ensure their adequate consultation. It also directs the Minister and the Climate Change Commission to have regard to "the distribution of [impacts of actions to achieve the emissions budget and the 2050 target] across the regions and communities of New Zealand, and from generation to generation" when considering how the emissions budget and 2050 target may realistically be met." This process would attempt to pre-emptively avoid the disproportionate and intersectional potential

of harm faced by First Nations.


Finally, First Nations' sacred responsibility to the planet guides how we interact with, protect, and respect Mother Earth. Though 'scientific knowledge' and 'Indigenous Knowledge systems' are two distinct forms of knowledge, and one should not be used to validate the other, there are existing collaborative frameworks, such as 'Two-eyed Seeing' and 'Ethical Space', that could be used to operationalize the braiding of diverse knowledge systems for our collective and future benefit. While there is a legislative commitment, it remains unclear how this is reflected or appreciated in the framing of the current question, and the tight timelines.

## Recommendations:

1. *Review all proposed sector-specific emissions reductions activities through the First Nations Climate Lens, considering the minimum standards of the UN Declaration, the principles of equity, justice, and decolonization, and Seven Generations thinking.*
2. *Ensure that all emission removal methods contemplated – such as nature-based solutions and carbon capture, utilization, and storage – uphold First Nations right to self-determination, including the minimum standard of free, prior, and informed consent.<sup>16</sup>*
3. *Acknowledge the inherent limitations of the current process and create space for direct First Nations involvement with equitable and sustained funding, including in aligning with the exploration of a First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda.*
4. *Develop clear operational guidance for the braiding of First Nations and mainstream*

<sup>15</sup> For further reading, refer to McGregor, D., Whitaker, S., & Sritharan, M. (2020). Indigenous environmental justice and sustainability. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, 43, 35-40; and Whyte, K. (2020). Too late for indigenous climate justice: Ecological and relational tipping points. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*, 11(1), e603.

<sup>16</sup> To be clear, this is not an endorsement of any emission removal technology. First Nations believe emission reduction must be prioritized over removal, however given the emphasis in the most recent federal budget, any pursuit of emission removal approaches or technologies must be done with the free, prior, and informed consent of First Nations.



*knowledge systems, informing the conceptualization of the drivers of the climate crisis and the emission reduction targets.*

5. *Align all future ERP processes with the eight-principles outlined in the Best Practices Guide for Federal Departments Working with First Nations on Climate Change.*

### **3.2. Are there any First Nations-led plans, policies, and strategies on climate change which you think should be reflected in Canada's ERP?**

The Chiefs-in-Assembly have been clear in their expectations for Canada's updated emission reduction target by calling for: *urgent and transformative climate action that reduces emissions in Canada by 60% below 2010 levels by 2030, and to reach net-zero emissions by 2050.* As such, we strongly recommend the following:

6. *Update the 2030 target to align with the Chiefs-in-Assembly Declaration of a First Nations Climate Emergency.*

Given the time constraints, we did not have sufficient capacity to survey First Nations-led plans, policies, and strategies on climate change, however, we stress that this must be a central part of the plan for the full and effective participation of First Nations in the future development of subsequent ERPs. That said, there may be some lessons that can be drawn from the series of concurrent dialogue sessions held at the inaugural AFN National Climate Gathering in Whitehorse (2020), summarized in the Gathering Report.<sup>17</sup>



<sup>17</sup> A small glimpse can be found on the Online Program found at [events.afn.ca](https://events.afn.ca), as well as each presentation and accompanying materials. Additional information on the Gathering can be found in the Report found on the AFN website.



## 4. Conclusion

The magnitude of this challenge will require a transformational shift in the approach that Canada and the world take to address the climate crisis. Current approaches are failing, as emissions and inequality rise exponentially. We have laid out some recommendations to respond to the two guiding questions, as well as some applications of the First Nations Climate Lens to net-zero and the emissions reduction plan. Combined, this application of the First Nations Climate Lens to federal climate accountability must enable more meaningful conversations about how First Nations' solutions can re-frame the conversation and lead to transformative systems change.



# Annex 2

## 2. First Nations Climate Leadership Governance Framework

### First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda

#### Draft Governance Framework

##### What is this document?

In November 2020, Canada’s A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy plan confirmed the government would “partner with First Nations [...] to set an agenda for climate action and a framework for collaboration”, which is intended to position Indigenous climate leadership as a cornerstone of Canada’s strengthened climate plan.

In June 2021, First Nations-Canada Joint Committee on Climate Action (JCCA) members met to discuss the co-development of the First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda. While highlighting the importance of this initiative, members noted limitations pertaining to the involvement of rights-holders, accountability to federal and First Nation leaderships, and identified other barriers that could prevent the successful co-development of the agenda.

The 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan and Budget 2022 announced new investments to support Indigenous Climate Leadership. This includes \$29.6 million over three years, starting in 2022-23, to support the co-development of an Indigenous Climate Leadership Agenda to support self-determined action in addressing Indigenous peoples’ climate priorities. The funding will also support the phased implementation of distinctions-based climate strategies.

Over the next three years, Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and Crown-Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) will work closely with First Nations at the national, regional, and local-level to co-develop the First Nations element of this Agenda: a First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda (FNCL Agenda).

This document seeks to outline a jointly developed governance model to support this work that is conducive to success. It is the first step in the co-development process.

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## 1. Objectives, scope, and relationship to other initiatives

### 1.1 Objectives

To create a governance framework supporting the co-development of the FNCL Agenda for climate action and a framework for collaboration.

The FNCL Agenda will provide a roadmap, consisting of recommendations, policy directions and concrete deliverables, to ensure that federal climate policy:

- Is respectful and supportive of First Nations' exercise of self-determination and constitutionally protected rights;<sup>18</sup>
- Empowers First Nations' meaningful involvement in national climate governance; and,<sup>19</sup>

- Ensures appropriate federal support for First Nations, consistent with Canada's fiduciary obligations to First Nations.<sup>20</sup>

As a results-oriented and evolving collaboration framework, the FNCL Agenda will also inform the implementation of Canada's statutory requirements to engage with First Nations under the Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act.

<sup>18</sup> Whereby "self-determination" includes the recognition that First Nations exist outside of federal arrangements and relationships and that federal perspectives and approaches to partnership with First Nations need to be founded on recognition of rights, respect, and co-operation. This means working with First Nations, guided by the United Nations Declarations on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to open a menu of new institutional arrangements enabling climate solutions by and for First Nations. Arrangements could range from self-government (i.e. legal agreements), to self-administration (i.e. devolution), to continued collaboration with federal departments (i.e. federal programs). This work extends to the removal of barriers to self-determination in relation to climate (i.e. legal, administrative, policy, financial, jurisdictional, etc.). Also, for involvement to be meaningful, the federal government needs to acknowledge and open space for First Nations-led processes, as well as First Nations' participation in federal decision-making.

<sup>19</sup> Whereby "meaningful involvement" refers to the active contribution of First Nations in policy decisions of national or regional interest (e.g. GHG emission reduction target and measures). Central to these efforts is the recognition of First Nations' knowledge systems and opening up space for First Nations-led processes and decision-making as an essential part of a successful national response to climate change. In practice, this could include new arrangements for shared decision-making, development of new mechanisms for nation-to-nation partnerships, adopting permanent models of engagement, support for the mobilization of First Nations knowledge systems in national dialogues, First Nations-led climate research, etc.

<sup>20</sup> Whereby "appropriate" refers to the alignment of federal support (e.g. programs, funding opportunities) with First Nations climate priorities, as expressed at the national, regional or local levels. This also means applying the decision-making guidance, best practices for engagement, program design, and implementation across federal measures, while streamlining how Canada offers support to First Nations.



## 1.2 Scope

The FNCL Agenda is a federal commitment to strengthen the government's partnership with First Nations in relation to climate change through the co-development of national solutions. It is grounded in the recognition that First Nations' successful response to climate change is inseparable from a legal and policy environment that is free of barriers, enabling in nature, and attuned to First Nations' worldviews.

The FNCL Agenda is not meant to replace the development or implementation of climate strategies and actions by and for First Nations, nor is it meant to replace federal climate initiatives established across departments. Rather, the agenda will provide a roadmap to address the root causes of barriers to the exercise of First Nations' self-determination in the climate space.

While national in scope, the roadmap and its proposed solutions will accommodate place-based approaches, be driven by community-level objectives, and support the creation of a framework of collaboration that accounts for regional, social, cultural, and spiritual differences. The FNCL Agenda will evolve in tandem with First Nations' exercise of climate leadership and self-determination, reflecting evolving practices and worldviews.

## 1.3 Linkages and whole-of-government approach

The co-development of the FNCL Agenda is intended to inform all federal climate measures moving forward, notably the Indigenous Climate Leadership Agenda initiative. Explicit linkages will also be made with flagship federal initiatives throughout its development, including Canada's National Adaptation Strategy; carbon pollution pricing and return of revenues to First Nations in backstop jurisdictions; Emissions Reduction Plans and 2050 5-year GHG-reduction milestones; conversation and protection of biodiversity; and National Infrastructure Assessment, Indigenous Guardians, Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas, and Addressing the Critical Infrastructure Gap by 2030.

To facilitate a coordinated approach to federal-First Nations engagement, representatives from existing engagement forums or advisory bodies of relevance to the JCCA's work will be invited to contribute to the co-development process, and information on the FNCL Agenda will be proactively shared with them on a regular basis.

## 2. Guiding principles

### 2.1 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

First Nations' climate priorities, self-determination and the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, including Free, Prior and Informed Consent, will guide all aspects of the co-development process. This extends to federal obligations stemming from the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.



## 2.2 First Nations Knowledge Systems and Ethical Space

The co-development of the FNCL Agenda will be held in a safe, mutually respectful, shared, and collaborative space known as an Ethical Space. The application of Ethical Space will ensure the goals of the FNCL Agenda are achieved, while honouring distinct First Nations and Western knowledge systems throughout the process. The inclusion of, and active support for First Nations knowledge systems along with Western knowledge systems in the FNCL Agenda will produce outcomes that are conducive to both rights- and title-holders and federal officials. Though very diverse in nature, First Nations knowledge systems are often embedded in place, the land, language, stories, histories, and legal traditions, which will provide essential perspectives in the FNCL Agenda to promote self-determination and First Nations-informed climate action.

## 2.3 Direct engagement with rights and title-holders

Rights holders, communities and governments are the main beneficiaries of the FNCL Agenda and those primarily concerned by its development and implementation. While improvements to First Nations' wellbeing in relation to climate change are expected to flow indirectly from the development of the FNCL Agenda, the unrestricted participation of rights- and title-holders is understood to be a prerequisite for success.

The JCCA can be a catalyst for engagement with regions, First Nations governments, tribal councils, and right-holders, but the committee does not, in itself, replace direct engagement with rights- and title-holders. Federal officials

must deploy additional efforts to interact directly with First Nations and establish lasting relationships, thus implementing a process that is community-led, regionally facilitated, and nationally coordinated.

## 2.4 Mandate of federal officials

Federal officials must preserve the discretion of Cabinet, the Minister of Finance, and the Prime Minister at all times, and must work within their mandate, policy directions, [code of values and ethics](#), and applicable legislative and regulatory frameworks. Although this means federal officials will be unable to provide certainty about the outcome of the co-development process, this does not compromise officials' commitment to transparency, accountability, and upholding the principles of Ethical Space.

## 2.5 Appropriate timelines

Members will strive to co-develop and implement all elements of the FNCL Agenda, while providing flexible timelines that respond to the evolving realities of First Nations. The development will unfold in a staged approach, with priority being given to elements that have the potential of delivering the most meaningful and rapid improvements to First Nations' experience of climate change (e.g. capacity funding). While being deliberate and without compromising the quality of the process, JCCA members understand the importance of rapid and transformative changes.



## 2.6 Fiscal stewardship

Federal officials will need to consider the fiscal context throughout the co-development of the FNCL Agenda, including in any co-developed funding submissions. In practice, this implies that recommended measures and resource needs must be prioritized and documented, and be as efficient and effective as possible in achieving desired objectives. Equally important is the consideration of historical gaps in funding for First Nations, and the ongoing impacts of colonization on First Nations' prosperity.

## 2.7 Legacy of colonization and land dispossession

The co-development of the FNCL Agenda will be informed by and will contribute to remedy the legacy of colonization and the resulting socio-economic conditions, historical underfunding of First Nations, and dispossession of First Nation lands. At the same time, participants understand that the scope of the initiative, and any solutions that may ensue, will be primarily targeted at addressing climate change and its negative impacts on First Nations' wellbeing.

## 3. Governance model

### 3.1 Leadership oversight

The immediate output of the co-development process will consist of joint recommendations to federal and First Nations leaderships (i.e. Ministers and Chiefs). Subject to the agreement of leaders, the JCCA will support the implementation and monitoring of their joint decisions.

The AFN, ECCC, and CIRNAC will work with their respective leadership to organize a minimum of one meeting of leaders at the beginning, middle, and end of the co-development process. The Minister of Environment and Climate Change and the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations will be the lead representatives of the Government of Canada at these meetings and will act as the sponsoring Ministers of the FNCL Agenda. This does not preclude the

participation of other Ministers.

In addition, the JCCA will report on the development and implementation of the FNCL Agenda through its Annual Report to the Prime Minister and the National Chief, and will invite the Prime Minister and the National Chief to discuss the advancement of the agenda at the Permanent Bilateral Mechanism.


### 3.2 Steering Committee

The Steering Committee will be responsible for developing the FNCL Agenda's content and strategic direction, and validating recommendations and outcomes with the JCCA and with leadership, as appropriate.

The Steering Committee will be overseen by the co-chairs of the JCCA, and the Assistant Deputy Minister of CIRNAC's Northern

Affairs Organization. At their discretion, the Committee will be





comprised of national and regional First Nations members of the JCCA, and ECCC and CIRNAC officials. With AFN's approval, ECCC or CIRNAC

may invite officials from other departments to contribute to the Steering Committee.

### 3.3 First Nations – Canada Joint Committee on Climate Action (JCCA)

The JCCA will oversee the work of the Steering Committee, including the co-development of the FNCL Agenda, the implementation of solutions, and outcomes for First Nations. In doing so, the JCCA will continue to report to the National Chief and the Prime Minister on an annual basis. The JCCA may invite external participants and observers, including representatives from provincial and territorial governments when appropriate.


### 3.4 First Nations rights holders, communities and governments

The AFN, ECCC, and CIRNAC will ensure that the co-development of the FNCL Agenda is informed by, and responsive to, the priorities, rights, and knowledge held by First Nations rights holders, communities, and governments. CIRNAC and ECCC, on behalf of the Government of Canada, and the Assembly of First Nations will each conduct engagement with First Nations, together and separately, as needed, to support the co-development of the FNCL Agenda.

The co-development of the FNCL Agenda will be leveraged to open up a space for First Nations to reflect on their experience of climate change, define their needs, and develop their own solutions. Engagement will be leveraged to generate momentum for climate action, providing First Nations with the time and resources needed to advance their own work.

A diversity of actions will support the engagement of rights-holders throughout the development process, including but not restricted to the following:

- JCCA activities
  - Subject to the agreement of First Nation hosts, and as permitted by public health guidelines in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the JCCA will meet on the lands of First Nations communities as often as possible.
- Joint federal/First Nations engagement activities:
  - Federal officials, in partnership with First Nations regional members, will hold in-person regional visits, engagement sessions, and workshops when possible and in accordance with public health guidelines.
  - Information on the development of the FNCL Agenda will be made available online, and will be proactively shared with an evolving list of individuals and communities. A platform for two-way communication will be established to enable regular feedback (e.g. JCCA mailbox, online engagement platform, open teleconferences). Information will be disseminated in ways that reflect First



Nations' traditions, including through visuals and storytelling.

- o Information on the development of the Agenda will be integrated in all federal climate engagement initiatives with First Nations, thus ensuring that specific engagement activities are informed by efforts made to advance self-determination.
- First Nations engagement activities:
  - o Members of the JCCA will identify opportunities for in-person interactions, and may support the participation of federal officials in First Nation events when appropriate (e.g. side events, National Climate Gatherings, regional gatherings).

The Steering Committee will assess the involvement of rights- and title-holders according to the following, non-exhaustive principles:

- All elements of the FNCL Agenda will be informed by communities' on-the-ground experience of climate change, their daily realities and their priorities. This will require

communities to have access to resources and communication channels to articulate those needs;

- All aspects of the Agenda will be explicit in how they contribute to meaningful improvements for communities. The JCCA will measure progress against First Nations' climate strategies and local priorities;
- Perspectives from self-governing First Nations, First Nations communities, First Nations climate experts, and a diversity of rights-holders must inform all elements of the FNCL Agenda;
- The co-development process must be transparent and inclusive by default, with federal officials maintaining open lines of communication with rights- and title-holders; and,
- With support from regional coordinators, federal officials will meet First Nations on the ground, in their communities, to discuss their experience of climate change and the solutions they envision for their communities. Learnings from these dialogues will be reflected in all elements of the FNCL Agenda.

#### 4. Next steps

In addition to existing resources and contribution agreements established to support engagement in the Pan-Canada Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change, CIRNAC will make funding available on an annual basis from 2022-23 to 2024-25 to support the co-development process, utilizing Budget 2022's investment in Indigenous Climate Leadership.

The Steering Committee will make recommendations on the allocation of available funding on an annual basis. Federal officials are required to respect governmental standards and procedures pertaining to the administration of public funds.



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