



# AFN 3<sup>rd</sup> National Climate Gathering

*Catalyzing First Nations Climate and Conservation  
Leadership for Transformative Change*



# L'APN 3<sup>e</sup> rassemblement national sur le climat

*Catalyser le leadership des Premières Nations en matière de climat  
et de conservation pour un changement transformateur*

# SHARING OUTCOMES AND LOOKING FORWARD: FIRST NATIONS CLIMATE ACTION TOOLKIT

*February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
Ottawa, ON*

*Nik, Graeme, Mel*





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## Agenda

Time	Agenda Item
1:00 – 1:10 PM	Welcome and Opening Prayer
1:10 – 1:30 PM	Presentation by Assembly of First Nations: <i>Outcomes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> National Climate Gathering</i>
1:30 – 2:50 PM	Presentation by Assembly of First Nations: <i>National First Nations Climate Action Toolkit</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Update from Concurrent Session at 3<sup>rd</sup> National Climate Gathering</i></li><li>• <i>Breakout Groups</i></li></ul>
2:50 – 3:00 PM	Next Steps and Closing Prayer



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# Let's try it out: Where are you attending this discussion from?

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## Introduction - Mandates

- Resolution 05/2019, *Declaring a First Nations Climate Emergency*
- Resolution 36/2023, *Urgent and Transformative Action Through the AFN National Climate Strategy*

**“...climate change constitutes a state of emergency for our lands, waters, animals, ice, and peoples”**

ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
July 23, 24 & 25, 2019, FREDERICTON, NB Resolution no. 05/2019

**TITLE:** Declaring a First Nations Climate Emergency  
**SUBJECT:** Climate Crisis; Environment; Emergency  
**MOVED BY:** Chief Dana Tizya-Tramm, Vuntut Gwitch'in First Nation, YK  
**SECONDED BY:** Chief Aaron Sumaxhelzta, Lower Nicola Indian Band, BC  
**DECISION:** Carried by Consensus

**WHEREAS:**

A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) states:

- Article 25: Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.
- Article 29 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for indigenous people for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.
- Article 32 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources.
- Article 32 (2): States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources.

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of July 2019 in Fredericton, New Brunswick

PERRY BELLEGARDE, NATIONAL CHIEF

Assembly of First Nations Assemblée des Premières Nations

55 Metcalfe Street, Suite 1020  
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6L5  
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ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
JULY 11, 12, & 13, 2023; HALIFAX, NS Resolution no. 36/2023

**TITLE:** Urgent and Transformative Climate Action through the AFN National Climate Strategy  
**SUBJECT:** Environment, Lands and Waters  
**MOVED BY:** Judy Wilson, proxy, Ojicoyos Indian Band, B.C.  
**SECONDED BY:** Chief Terry Richardson, Papiheas First Nation, N.B.  
**DECISION:** Carried by Consensus

**WHEREAS:**

- A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) states:
- Article 25: Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.
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  - Article 32 (2): States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of July 2023 in Halifax, Nova Scotia

JOANNA BERNARD, INTERIM NATIONAL CHIEF

36 - 2023  
Page 1 of 4

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# AFN National Climate Strategy

- Guiding Vision: Elders' Statement
- Introduction & Objectives
- First Nations Climate Leadership (incl. the First Nations Climate Lens)
- Priority Areas
- Conclusion



ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

## NATIONAL CLIMATE STRATEGY



# AFN 3<sup>rd</sup> National Climate Gathering

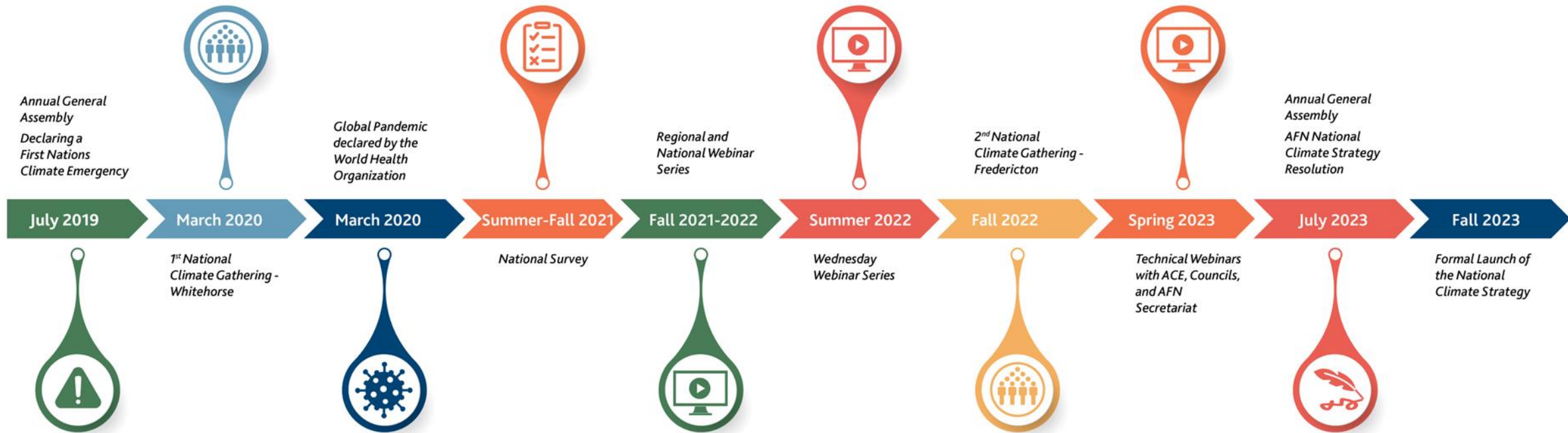
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## Timeline





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## National Climate Gatherings



2020 Whitehorse, Yukon



2022 Fredericton, New Brunswick



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## Guiding Vision: Elder's Statement

*“With our spiritual laws, practices, experiences, and relationships with our Lands and territories, First Nations peoples have a vital role in defending and healing Mother Earth...”*

### A Guiding Vision: Elders' Statement of the Advisory Committee on Climate Action and the Environment ('ACE')

*We, as First Nations Peoples declare, consistent with the AFN Charter, Mother Earth Accord, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:*

*First Nations Peoples are in a unique position to be leaders in climate change initiatives because of our knowledge of the sacred teachings of the Land, and must be situated as agents of change in climate action, rather than as passive recipients of climate change impacts;*

*The Creator gave us the responsibility to preserve and protect Mother Earth and laws that govern all our relationships for us to coexist interdependently with nature and humanity, defining our rights, responsibilities, and obligations to the Land as men and women;*

*The Creator gave us our spiritual beliefs, languages, cultures, freedom, and a place on Mother Earth to provide us with all our needs;*

*Mother Earth is in a climate crisis. We therefore insist on an immediate end to the destruction and desecration of the sacred elements of life based on the human obligation to care for the Land and for future generations;*

*With our spiritual laws, practices, experiences and relationships with our Lands and territories, First Nations peoples have a vital role in defending and healing Mother Earth. This is our obligation;*

*The unbreakable and sacred connection of Land, Air, Water, Sun, Plants, Animals, and our human communities is the material and spiritual basis for our existence;*

*The impacts of climate change now transcend our Lands and territories, requiring free, prior, and informed consent among First Nations peoples to protect Mother Earth for future generations.*

October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Fort St John, British Columbia



# First Nations Climate Lens

**Circle 1: Natural Law**  
*Our Original Instructions*

**Circle 2: Actions**  
*A First Nations' Worldview*

**Circle 4: Context**  
*The Legislative Legal  
and Policy Ecosystem*

**Circle 3: Impacts**  
*A First Nations' Lived Reality*





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## Priority Areas For Action

*“... the AFN National Climate Strategy is intended to be an enabling document that creates space for First Nations at the local and regional level to advance their self-determined climate strategies and priorities.”*

*AFN National Climate Strategy*





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# Planning

- Started planning in September 2023
- Created a cross-sectoral planning Committee at the AFN
- Launched a Call-for-Session, receiving over 100 applications
- First Nations designer for the Gathering Logo
- Worked with Regional organizations to bring in Regional Representatives and local First Nations on protocol
- Collaborated with AFN Health Sector on Accessibility & Disability Inclusion
- Call out for local Indigenous artisans and musicians





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## Key Highlights



- Over 800 participants from every province and territory, except Nunavut
- Opening Remarks, 5 Plenary panels, and a networking session on access to finance
- 50 Concurrent Sessions, related to AI, Accessibility, Water Security, Clean Energy projects, local Climate Strategies, health, and more!
- Concrete examples: Tsuu Tina Buffalo Paddock Project, Piikani Aqua Ponds and Biocultural Species Preservation



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## Key Highlights (...)

- Tradeshow (34 vendors)
- Opening Reception
- Wednesday Night Entertainment – Cikwes and CreeAsian





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## Youth Gathering

October 7, featuring local drum group Baby Flatz, Treaty 7 Dancers, and opening prayer from Elder Charlie Crowchild



Day featured opening remarks from NYC Co-Chairs and Portfolio Holders, breakout discussions, and structured networking with climate change professionals



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## Key Themes

- **Youth:** Uplifting the role of First Nations youth in climate and conservation leadership
- **Conservation:** Highlighting the terrestrial and marine leadership of First Nations
- **Implementation of the AFN National Climate Strategy**
- **Act of Gathering as a climate action in itself**



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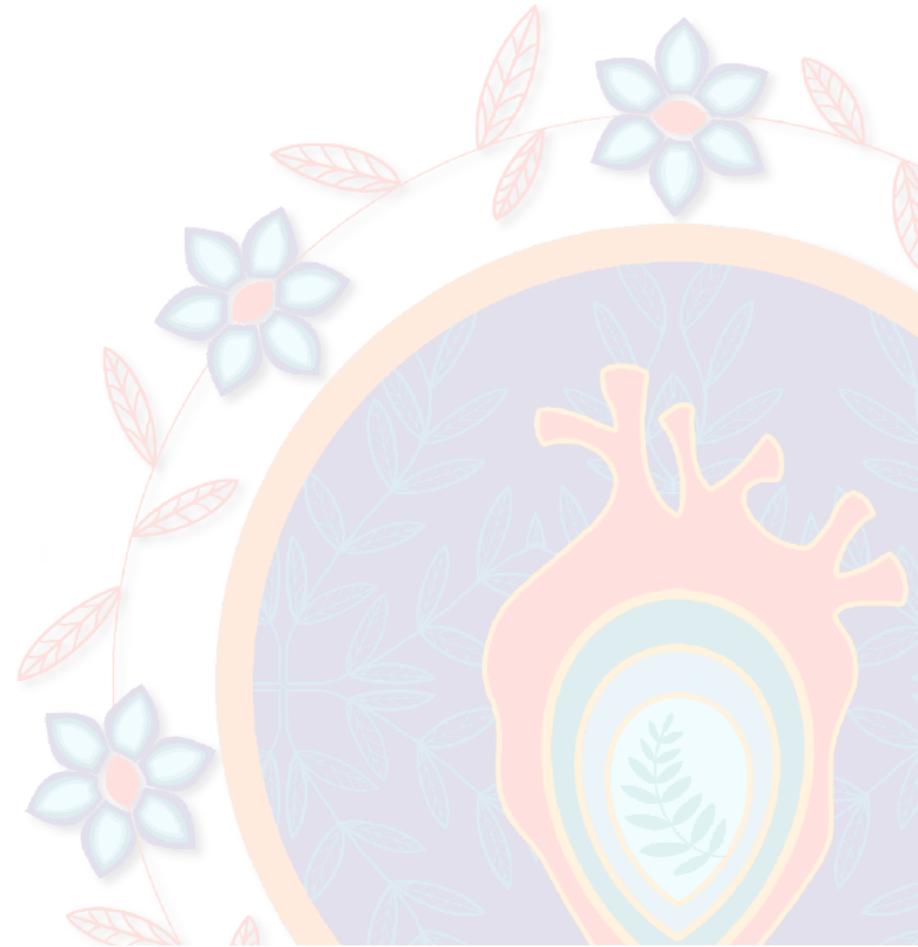


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## Next Steps

- Reports
  - General Gathering Overview
  - Youth Gathering
- Video Project
  - Gathering Overview
  - Others?
- Gathering in 2026





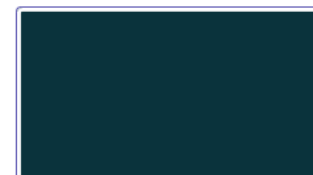


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# Update on National First Nations Climate Action Toolkit





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## Climate Action Toolkit at the Climate Gathering



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### National First Nations Climate Action Toolkit

- Explored existing toolkits focus on adaptation and monitoring, clean energy, and specific disciplines (i.e., infrastructure or carbon offsets).
- Highlighted the perspectives of youth, women, persons with disabilities, and gender-diverse individuals as essential.
- Discussed three themes: Objectives; Scope and Audience; and Elements



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Proposed Objectives	What We Heard...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uplift the reciprocal relationship First Nations have with the Land and Water to communicate an <i>actionable</i> First Nations lens to climate action</li><li>• Provide frameworks, resources, data sources, and partners to empower First Nations to develop, and implement, First Nations-led climate strategies from a First Nations worldview.</li><li>• Ensure First Nations knowledge systems' ethical and equitable engagement with climate science to develop solutions.</li><li>• Weave a lens of gender, accessibility/disability inclusion, and youth leadership throughout.</li><li>• Share case stories of First Nations climate solutions.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have a support technician for the toolkit application.</li><li>• Include active feedback mechanisms.</li><li>• Ensure tools feel actionable + solution oriented.</li><li>• Weave in impacts of history and climate impacts on First Nation communities.</li><li>• Center Land and Water as sacred and essential beings in ecosystems.</li><li>• Consider land-based education and a rights-based approach.</li><li>• Incorporate flow charts and templates for communities.</li><li>• Center health and well-being of community and environment.</li><li>• Language is important; terms should be defined.</li></ul>



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## Scope & Audience

- National-in-scope, complementary to existing and proposed Climate Strategies.
- Action-oriented, grounded in First Nations leadership and knowledge systems.
- Weave some elements of policy analysis and advocacy.
- Emphasis on First Nations technicians, community members, and leadership who are interested in, or in the process of developing climate strategies.

## What We Heard...

- Include three aspects: a) Policy b) Implementation c) Education
- Baseline studies and case stories.
- Include three levels of jurisdictions: i) First Nations ii) Federal iii) Provincial–Territorial–Municipal.
- Make it an evergreen document.
- Identify potential partners in specific regions.
- Shift the paradigm—offer First Nations worldview + perspective.
- Importance of addressing “human values” and “system of imbalance” root causes of climate change.
- Transforming climate action through ceremony, language, and wise practices.
- Consideration of the knowledge gaps—generational, technical, and cultural gaps.
- For the community, develop a toolkit. For First Nations leadership, develop a policy, governance, and stewardship guidelines.
- Include the lessons learned section.
- Be explicit to include Elders and Knowledge Holders.
- Recognize and represent the different capacities and readiness in communities.
- Offer toolkit training and capacity support.



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## Key Elements

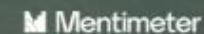
- Grounded in spirituality, ceremony and legal orders, guided by our Knowledge Keepers.
- Ensure a framing of Inherent Rights and Responsibilities uplifting First Nations governance and authority.
- Center First Nations Knowledge Systems to articulate wholistic and interconnected climate solutions, as well as an understanding of the root causes of the climate crisis.
- Not a 'one-size-fits-all' approach, rather enabling for place-based and community-led strategy development.
- Actionable, providing concrete resources, data sources, and partners to action community-led solutions.
- Introduce frameworks of First Nations-led practices of monitoring and evaluation.

## What We Heard...

- Consider Treaties, Land claims, Land code
- Guidance for building a restorative, adaptative, reciprocal-based economy.
- Include a monitoring and evaluation section.
- Develop accessibility as a key element.
- Consider toolkits for kids, parents, youth leaders, community, family, education-based approach.
- Space for exchange or sharing of research needs to bridge research and practitioner fields.
- Climate change risks section (fire, flood, etc.)
- Provide direct links to current data sources.
- Consider how methods evaluate success.



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# Anything to add? What resonated with you?

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### Moving the Climate Action Toolkit Forward

- Reflecting on the initial discussion, have turned our mind to the goal, objectives, and broad outline of the Climate Action Toolkit.
- **Goal:** *Support First Nations to develop their own climate strategies and solutions*
- An introductory chapter will introduce the guiding principles, objectives, sources of information, and additional resources / toolkits



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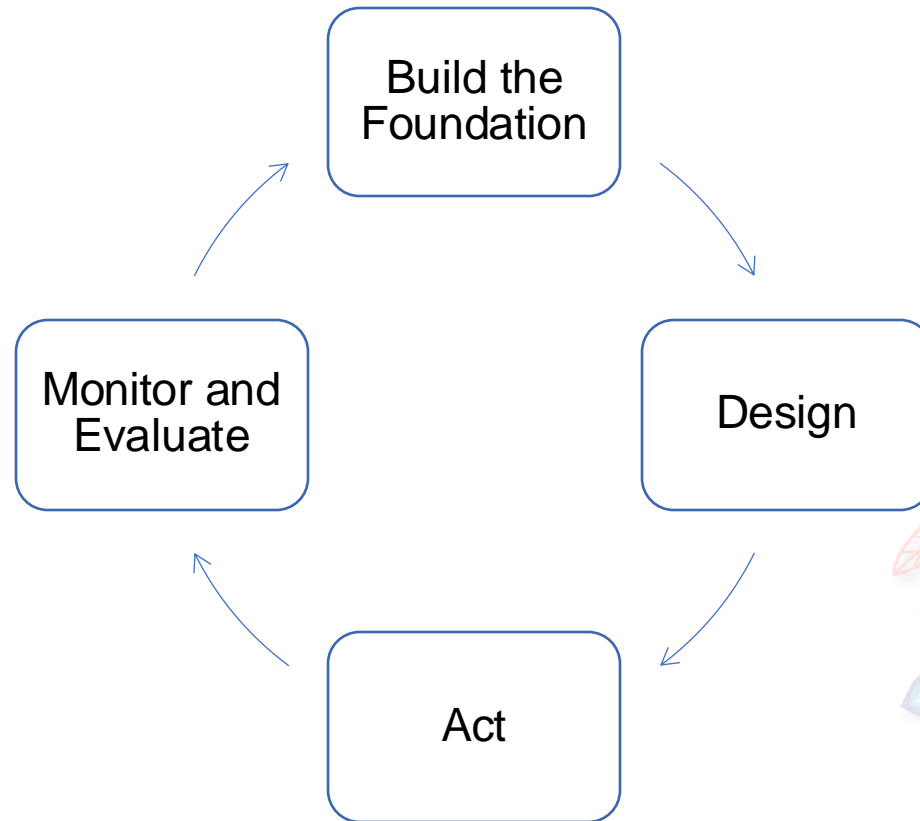
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## First Nations Climate Action Toolkit - Outline





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## First Nations Climate Action Toolkit - Outline

STAGE	STEPS	RESOURCES
Build the foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Understanding Climate Change, Risks and Impacts</li> <li>○ Research and Information</li> <li>○ Supporting Community Climate Champions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Climate Atlas and Climate Data</li> <li>○ Other regional climate risk maps (fire, flood, drought, etc)</li> <li>○ Toolkit Examples (such as UpNorth Adaptation Checklist and Workplan)</li> </ul>
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Community Engagement &amp; Process</li> <li>○ Develop a climate framework &amp; action plan (incl. emergency management)</li> <li>○ Methods of monitoring and evaluation</li> <li>○ Determine role of other governments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Identify community resources, technical and human supports</li> <li>○ Existing toolkits</li> <li>○ Mapping role and responsibilities of municipal, provincial, territorial, and federal governments</li> <li>○ Accessibility emergency management plans</li> </ul>



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## First Nations Climate Action Toolkit - Outline

STAGE	STEPS	RESOURCES
Moving into Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Develop Implementation Plan</li><li>○ Implement</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Government or other funding sources</li><li>○ Technical support and other networks of support</li></ul>
Monitor and Evaluate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Test</li><li>○ Review and update, as necessary.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ First Nations Information and Governance</li></ul>



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## Path Forward

- Preparing the Climate Gathering Report (Winter 2025)
- Ongoing implementation of the National Climate Strategy & Climate Action Toolkit
  - Hold open, dedicated workshops with First Nations from coast-to-coast-coast.
  - Work with Advisory Committee on Climate Action and the Environment ('ACE')
- Development of the First Nations Youth Advisory Council on Climate Change (in collaboration with the National Youth Council)



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Anything to add? What resonated with you? / **Quelque chose à ajouter ? Qu'est-ce qui vous a touché ?**

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