



EIPCCP

ENGAGEMENT
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
IN CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

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Newsletter

ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE, CONSERVATION, AND BIODIVERSITY NEWSLETTER



anaana

Pronounced /an.a:.na/
Means mother in
Inuktitut

Indigenous Matriarchs:

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Message from the Author



HANNAH PATRIE
Metis Anishinaabe



MOTHERHOOD IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE:

Early October, I was given the opportunity to attend the [Adaptations Future](#) Conference in Montreal. This international event brings together researchers, policymakers, and experts from around the world to share knowledge on ways that we can overcome the climate crisis.

Amongst this impressive crowd, myself being Metis-Anishinaabe, I could not help but be drawn to the profound Indigenous presence that flowed through every space.

Whether it be at a presentation podium or down an unspecific hallway, I was completely moved to see Indigenous Peoples take up their rightful space at such a conference.

I had the honour of speaking with many of these Indigenous attendees, but one conversation, in particular, still replays in my mind. When walking along the Indigenous exhibition, I stopped to admire some [baby carrying belts](#) which were hand made by elders from the Northwest Territories. One of whom graciously explained to me the use of the belt, which led into a conversation about motherhood.



She discussed how the simplicity of life she so deeply appreciates up North is constantly under threat

- HANNAH PATRIE



Like other women, she carried a feeling of sorrow for the world that awaits myself and future generations if climate resolutions are not properly implemented. She spoke about her children, and the cultural experiences that they are losing due to climate change, and those which her grandchildren may never inherit. She discussed how the simplicity of life she so deeply appreciates up North is constantly under threat – for instance, there is a reduced access to traditional food

sources and worrisome changes in landscape – and how each year it seems that new chaotic conditions loom over her community. She also acknowledged the daunting reality that no one can truly predict what sort of world we will be living in years from now.

She made a remark that I regrettably have heard many times before: “we didn’t know we’d be bringing you into a world like this...” – a world of global warming, biodiversity loss, catastrophic





“we didn’t know we’d be bringing you into a world like this...”

– a world of global warming, biodiversity loss, catastrophic wildfires, melting glaciers, and all the other expressions of Mother Earth’s intolerance for human-led destruction.

- NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ELDER

wildfires, melting glaciers, and all the other expressions of Mother Earth’s intolerance for human-led destruction. This is a sentiment that is shared by mothers and fathers around the world.

As she spoke to me, I saw both sadness and pride in her eyes. Sadness for the loss that has already passed, and that which may still come; but pride in that I and many other Indigenous youth were at such an event, boldly speaking on behalf of our Nations and acting in culturally guided ways.

While I cannot speak for everyone, I think that many women feel the same way as her: a heavy-heartedness for not being able to protect us from this unpredictable, uncontrollable environmental ruination. Like mothers so often do, she took on a degree of responsibility for something that was completely out of her hands - an admirable disposition but one that is terribly unfair.

Indigenous women and mothers, have and continue to be these incredible environmental stewards and role models. But perhaps this sentiment of sorrow, which weighs on Indigenous women everyday, is not acknowledged enough when we discuss their experience of climate change. How many Indigenous women, mothers, grandmothers, or aunts are simultaneously juggling these feelings of anguish, whilst doing everything in their capacity to fulfill their roles and resolve the troubles which are impacting our People?

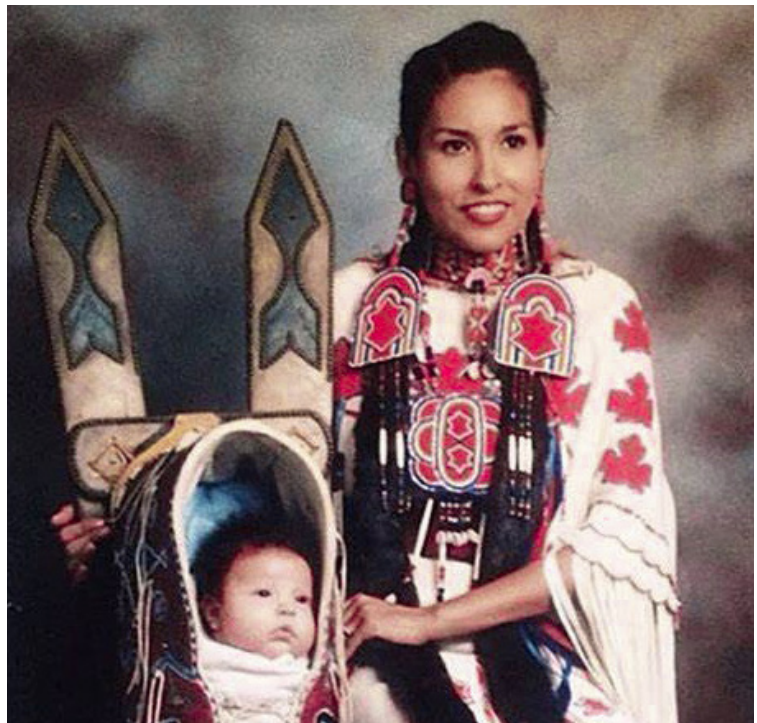
An Indigenous woman’s experience of climate change is unique. In addition to her concern for the wellbeing of those around her, she fears for the preservation of Indigenous ways of life: our Traditional Knowledge, medicines, food sources, and connection to the land. She worries whether or not the culture which has been passed down for centuries and through every era, will survive today’s obstacles and be experienced generations from now.





As Indigenous women, we are the image of our ancestors.
 - HANNAH PATRIE

As I spoke to this elder, I felt something that I feel when I speak to my own mother – a fiery ambition to do right by her and by my lineage; to battle the worldly forces that continue to afflict our Peoples. As Indigenous women, we are the image of our ancestors. We are the successors of all the water carriers, land protectors, healers, and women before us. Which is why it is so important that Indigenous women realize their value and break the colonial glass ceiling. Not just for ourselves or the generations after us, but also to rectify this sorrow that haunts the honourable women around us.





CLICK IMAGE FOR DETAILS 

LEFT PHOTO:

▶ **LAND AND BODY: INDIGENOUS GROUPS FIGHT ENVIRONMENTAL VIOLENCE**

Indigenous people and allies will take to social media this week with the hashtag #LandBodyDefense to raise awareness about the violent impacts of extractive industries.

RIGHT PHOTO:

▶ **RED DEER POWWOW**

Marrisa Mitsuing
Cradleboard Special
2023

WOMANHOOD IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE:

For the Adaptations Future conference, some amazing young Indigenous women had submitted testimonials to display. These women are incredible examples of the strength and determination that Indigenous women embody – qualities which are critical in climate activism. As

their testimonials reflect, these women walk in the footsteps of their ancestors, in order to preserve a pathway for their descendants. It is a mission shared by Indigenous women across Turtle Island, and something that should inspire hope that we will achieve climate resolution, so long as women, especially Indigenous women are taking charge.

▶ **STEVIE SALAS ON THE WATER WALKER WITH INSPIRING YOUTH AUTUMN PELTIER**

Posted by Erica Comanda,
October 02, 2020





▶ **JANNA WALE**
Gitxan Cree-Metis

[CLICK IMAGE FOR DETAILS](#)

“

Working in climate change is a part of my responsibility to both the Land and to the generations coming after me. Gitxan people have lived in relationship with the Land since time immemorial. When I was growing up, a part of how I felt connected to my community and my culture was when we would

traditionally harvest salmon with my family on our territory. As I got older, I noticed fewer and fewer salmon returning every year. Since salmon are such a large part of our culture, losing the salmon would mean that it would fundamentally alter the way we are able to live and be, as Gitxan people...

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▶ **AIYANA LOUIS**
Ojibwe

“

Water is fundamental to all life on Earth. In our creation story, water was here before land, animals, and people. We are held in the water within our mother’s womb, and through its current, we are delivered into this physical world. We cannot exist without it and therefore it is our duty to take care of it. For the water walk, I carried a copper pot of freshwater from one shoreline to the other, my aunt, mother, and Nookmis beside me. Once we reached the other shoreline, we offered prayers and thanked the spirits in all 4 directions, before releasing negative feelings that no longer served us as we plunged into the water...

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► **SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR DEB HAALAND** waves to the crowd after speaking during a welcome ceremony for a totem pole carved by the House of Tears Carvers of the Lummi Nation. Photo Courtesy: Drew Angerer/Getty Images

CLOSING:

Motherhood: one of the most beautiful, complicated, rewarding, yet challenging things a woman could do.

But one thing is for certain: Indigenous women have conquered worldly obstacles time and time again.
— HANNAH PATRIE

Motherhood will transform under the impacts of climate change. Responsibilities will expand, fears will be unlocked, and there will be a new set of monsters to brave for the sake of one's children. But one thing is for certain: Indigenous women have conquered worldly obstacles time and time again. Indigenous women are equipped with the strength and resiliency of our ancestors

and will without a doubt find refuge for our future generations. And so, for this edition of our newsletter, I want to pause and commemorate the women who have remaining resilient in the face of destruction; and I want to speak on behalf of Indigenous youth that we honour and cherish their efforts more than words could describe.

Miigwech.

