

EIPCCP

ENGAGEMENT
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
IN CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

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Newsletter



CHANGES / INNOVATIONS / CLEAN TECHNOLOGIES / ADAPTATION AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE

FOCUS ON COP15

NWAC Takes on COP15, UN Biodiversity Conference

NWAC Takes on COP15

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NWAC Takes on COP15

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Revolutionary Ideals for Protecting Agrobiodiversity

With passion and integrity, the women on this panel shared a powerful discussion around agrobiodiversity, Indigenous leadership, and the value systems that drive conservation practices within Indigenous communities.

Revolutionary Ideals for Protecting Agrobiodiversity

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Written by **Hannah Patrie**, with contributions from **Alvin Thompson**, **Carlyn Allary**, and **Anita Murdock**.



NWAC Takes on COP15

Biodiversity is extremely important for life on planet Earth. Everywhere we look, from the soil beneath our feet to the mysterious depths of the ocean, there exists complex and interwoven ecosystems.

▼ COP15, MONTRÉAL

The United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP15) ended in Montreal, Canada on 19 December 2022

These ecosystems are composed in such a way that all life forms are sustained, and equilibrium remains. However, humans have greatly compromised the stability of this system. In fact, biodiversity is declining faster than at any point in human history, with a [million species](#) facing extinction.

As part of its **Conserving Nature Biodiversity** project, NWAC hosted a side event at the *Conference of the Parties* to the United Nation's Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) which was facilitated by *Environment and Climate Change Canada*, ECCC. A panel of five Indigenous women collectively voiced their concerns for Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous territories, and life beyond humankind.

The theme of NWAC's event was titled **Beyond Biodiversity Targets: Insights from Indigenous Biodiversity Research and Practice**. It was an opportunity to emphasize the strides that Indigenous Peoples have taken to conserve biodiversity in Canada, despite national reports failing to recognize such efforts. To showcase this work, NWAC partnered with two panellists from the [Center for Indigenous Environmental Research](#) (CIER). With passion and integrity, the women on this panel shared a powerful discussion around agrobiodiversity, Indigenous leadership, and the value systems that drive conservation practices within Indigenous communities.



NWAC's event at COP15 was an opportunity to emphasize the strides that Indigenous Peoples have taken to conserve biodiversity in Canada, despite national reports failing to recognize such efforts.



NWAC's participation at COP15 focused on two levels of biodiversity policy; the **global level** and the **Canadian federal level**.

“ Working together to conserve biodiversity ”

▼ NWAC AT COP15

A panel of five Indigenous women collectively voiced their concerns for Indigenous Peoples.

1 AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL, NWAC's contribution to COP15 was located within the wider global context of targets 21 and 22 of the **post-2020 global** biodiversity framework, and the **AICHI Global** Biodiversity goals and targets; particularly, Goal E and Target 18.

Target 18 states that:
 “By 2020, the traditional knowledge, innovations, and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their customary use of biological resources, are respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the convention with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, at all relevant levels.”

2 AT THE CANADIAN FEDERAL LEVEL, NWAC's participation at COP15 was guided by the **Summary of Canada's 6th National report** to the Convention on Biological Diversity in achieving targets 12 and 15 as outlined in the **2020 Biodiversity Goals** and Targets for Canada.

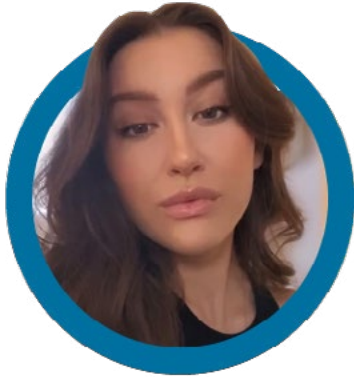
Target 12 states that:
 By 2020, customary use by Aboriginal [Indigenous] peoples of biodiversity resources are maintained, compatible with their conservation and sustainable use.

Target 15 states that:
 By 2020, Aboriginal traditional knowledge [Indigenous Knowledge] is respected, promoted and were [sic] made available by Aboriginal [Indigenous] peoples, regularly meaningfully and effectively inform biodiversity conservation and management decision-making.





Revolutionary Ideals for Protecting Agrobiodiversity



Hannah Patrie

Hannah is a recent graduate from the University of Alberta where she acquired a bachelor's degree in Sociology and Political Science, and she now works at NWAC within the Environmental Department as a project coordinator under the mentorship program.

As one of the women on NWAC's COP15 panel, Hannah delivered a speech that truly embodied the event's purpose. And for that reason, we have decided to link the entire monologue [here](#). As a young woman who hopes to establish an activist career, she used this opportunity to send a message to society and decision makers at large.

"I HAVE COME TO REALIZE the privilege I have as a homo-sapien. Witnessing the institutionalization of fellow animals who reside in vertical cages, experience forced insemination, and are genetically modified to the point that they frequently seizure, have heart attacks, or suffer leg fractures due to the abnormally enlarged size of their bodies. I have heard the wailing sound of mother cows grieving the theft of their babies. I have witnessed habitats being destroyed for elite profit.

As an Indigenous woman, the experience of animals is frighteningly similar to that of my people. Like animals, our people have been deemed as non-human others. Indigenous women have been objectified like property, forcefully relocated, isolated, and manipulated; and as the incredible Dr. Shirley Anne Tate has argued, racialized women have historically and presently been seen as flesh rather than bodies-used, and abused much like our animal relatives (Tate, 2015).

The colonial argument is that our people are not civilized, thereby justifying the assimilation and destruction of our livelihood. That same supremacist ideology has led people to believe that domesticated animals have entered a sort of evolutionary social contract, in which their dependence on human care justifies specieist suppression. For far too long we have been subjugated under man-made hierarchies that devalue non-human-enough beings. But in my culture, we see animals as our relatives..."





Panel Highlights:



Lisa Smith

Bio:

Lisa Smith, of Inuk and Settler heritage, was the moderator of NWAC’s panel. She is currently the Interim Advisor to NWAC’s President, and was previously the Senior Director of Governance, International, and Parliamentary Affairs. She has dedicated her career and expertise to implementing UNDRIP and to the advocacy of Indigenous Peoples in International and Parliamentary arenas.



“I THINK IT IS SO IMPORTANT
to recognize the situation that we are in...the MMIWG report does link resource extraction and violence against women, girls, and gender-diverse peoples. Often times, people think the violence against our people is in the past and the closing of the last residential school is kind of the end of it, but it is still happening. And we need to think about that in everything we do, and that includes this discussion and biodiversity.”



- ▲ **COP15, MONTRÉAL**
 Delegates from nearly 200 countries gathered in Montréal, Canada in December, 2022 for the UN biodiversity conference, COP15.
- ▲ **GENDER EQUALITY BOOTH**
 Lisa Smith and Madeleine Redfern.

“ *Canada’s values and Indigenous values are not opposite to one another, so often that is the myth.* **”**

LISA SMITH,
 INTERIM ADVISOR TO
 NWAC’S PRESIDENT



Madeleine Redfern

Bio:

Madeleine Redfern is an Inuk woman from Iqaluit, Nunavut. She is involved in high-tech innovations and is actively involved in transformative technologies in telecommunications, transportation, and energy. Madeleine has acquired many important roles and honourable credentials throughout her career. To name a few: she is President of the Ajungi Consulting Group, Chair of the Nunavut Legal Services Board, Advisor to the Canadian Nuclear Laboratories, and she was the first Inuk woman to be given a Supreme Court of Canada clerkship. As one of the panellists, Madeleine shared impactful wisdom and guidance on all subject matters; it was an honour to have her.

► MEMBERS OF THE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY

Take part in a march for biodiversity for human rights at COP15 in Montreal, Canada. Photo: ©Alexis Aubin

“WE [INDIGENOUS WOMEN] have our own unique perspectives. And in my experience for the last 30 years...in these co-management boards or negotiations of land use and rights, especially development... it is very male centric. And I keep having to remind the different levels of government, including even our own Indigenous organizations, that we need to have women, youth, and elder perspectives... [to bring] our unique knowledge [and] our unique perspectives into the conversation.

Co-management isn't just a male-centric area, it needs to span all our genders and all our ages, and we need to be able to do it together. Because the more perspectives that we have around the table, it's been proven time and time again, the better you are at being able to make decisions, and the better the outcomes.”



WE [INDIGENOUS PEOPLES]

do think more holistically, we break down the sort of siloes, we understand the interconnections. When we are doing something ...we really are paying attention to the fact that decisions we're making on policy, legislation, [and] on land use can be done much better than we have been doing. My concern is that because we do things in isolation of each other, as sort of the Western primary construct... we make these monumental mistakes that are incredibly harmful for our environment.”



LINK TO PANEL

To watch the full NWAC event at COP15, click [here](#)



A Message from Our Youth



Carlyn Allary

Bio:

Carlyn is from Treaty 1 territory and is a proud member of the Manitoba Metis Federation. At CIER, she works on numerous climate change and biodiversity related projects, ranging from the management of federal contaminated sites on Indigenous lands, to the protection of pollinators in Indigenous communities.

[Click here](#) to check out the work she is currently doing.

▼ NWAC AT COP15

Left to right:
Hannah Patrie, Anita Murdock,
Lisa Smith, Madeleine Redfern,
Carlyn Allary



Carlyn Allary and Anita Murdock are two young Indigenous women who presented on NWAC's panel. Both women represented **CIER** as they shared some of the projects which they are involved in to conserve biodiversity.

These women are the next generation of land and water protectors. By embracing their Indigenous roots, their work embodies a Two-Eyed seeing approach to climate solutions, in that they blend Traditional

Knowledge with modern science. It is incredible to see our youth taking necessary action to protect Mother Earth, and it is admirable to see them speak so profoundly on a national stage.

Carlyn and Anita have written their own testimonies which reflect on their COP15 experience, but even more so, these testimonies affirm their valuable perspectives as young Indigenous women on the frontline of biodiversity loss and climate change.

“FOR MY COP 15 PRESENTATION,

I shared about the Collaborative Leadership Initiative (CLI), which was established in 2017 in southern Manitoba by The Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER), the Southern Chiefs' Organization and Winnipeg Metropolitan Region. CLI focuses on building collaborative governance between Indigenous and municipal leaders in order to determine regional solutions to shared challenges surrounding water, waste management, biodiversity loss, climate change and economic development.

The reason I wanted to share the CLI project, and in particular the water quality work that's being done to help clean up Lake Winnipeg, is because of how rooted it is in achieving Canada's 2020 Biodiversity Goals, specifically Targets 12 and 15. Indigenous communities in the CLI region are working with municipal governments to establish a network of natural infrastructure projects to address excess nutrients flowing into Lake Winnipeg. They are doing so in accordance with their systems and values, ensuring that traditional activities such as fishing, hunting, and harvesting are protected and maintained for current and future generations. To support this work, virtual workshops were held with various southern Manitoba Indigenous communities to develop an Indigenous Knowledge and Natural Infrastructure Guidebook, as a way to meaningfully incorporate Indigenous Knowledge into the design and construction of natural infrastructure projects as well as biodiversity conservation and management decision-making at large.

I want to thank the Native Women's Association of Canada for this amazing opportunity, and express my gratitude and admiration for the four incredible women I had the privilege of speaking alongside.”



Anita Murdock

Bio:

Anita is a proud member of Long Plain First Nation in Treaty 1 with family roots in Fisher River Cree Nation in Treaty 5.

As a research associate at **CIER**, she works on the National Species at Risk Act (SARA); consultation, cooperation, and accommodation projects; and key biodiversity area projects.

▼ CIER AND SARA PROJECTS

These two projects take strides to amplify Indigenous capacity in order to protect our plant and animal relatives.

“FOR MY COP 15 PRESENTATION, “As a research associate at CIER, I’m fortunate to engage with members of Indigenous communities on various environmental projects. As stewards of the lands, Indigenous Peoples have already been leveraging their knowledge to protect their land’s biodiversity.

Target 12 and 15 of Canada’s 2020 Biodiversity Goals are reflected in two CIER projects. 1) Species At Risk Act, Cooperation, Consultation and Accommodation (SARA CCA) Project and 2) Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) Project. The SARA CCA project workshops on species at risk continues to be a massive endeavour! Indigenous communities across Canada have been carrying out their proposed work with SAR in their areas using their own methods of conservation. Often blending western knowledge and relational Indigenous Knowledge, they are working on land-based conservation for SAR. The KBA project stems from a global biodiversity tool being reimaged for Canada. In the first stages of Indigenous

engagements, researchers found significant overlaps with areas important for Indigenous peoples, thus the aim for this work is to listen to communities about how this tool can be used to support Indigenous-led conservation across Canada. I have seen these two projects take strides to amplify Indigenous capacity in order to protect our plant and animal relatives. Graphic recordings of workshops provide powerful depictions of Indigenous emphasis for fair treatment and involvement in proactive protection for mother earth. ECCC and WCS Canada are concentrating Canadian conservation work to weave a new process for bringing Indigenous values and knowledge to the forefront of their biodiversity conservation work.

Chi-migwech to the Native Women’s Association of Canada, the amazing women whom I was able to share a stage with, and to our in-person and virtual audience at the COP15 NWAC presentation. This was an experience I won’t soon forget. Ekosi.

You can explore our work with SARA CCA [here](#) and KBA’s [here](#).”



“Graphic recordings of workshops provide powerful depictions of Indigenous emphasis for fair treatment and involvement in proactive protection for mother earth.

ANITA MURDOCK,
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE
AT CIER