

EIPCCP

ENGAGEMENT
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
IN CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

SEPTEMBER
EDITION

Newsletter

CHANGES / INNOVATIONS / CLEAN TECHNOLOGIES / ADAPTATION AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE



The Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change

Current Status of Federal Engagement with Indigenous Peoples (the PCF context)

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The Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change

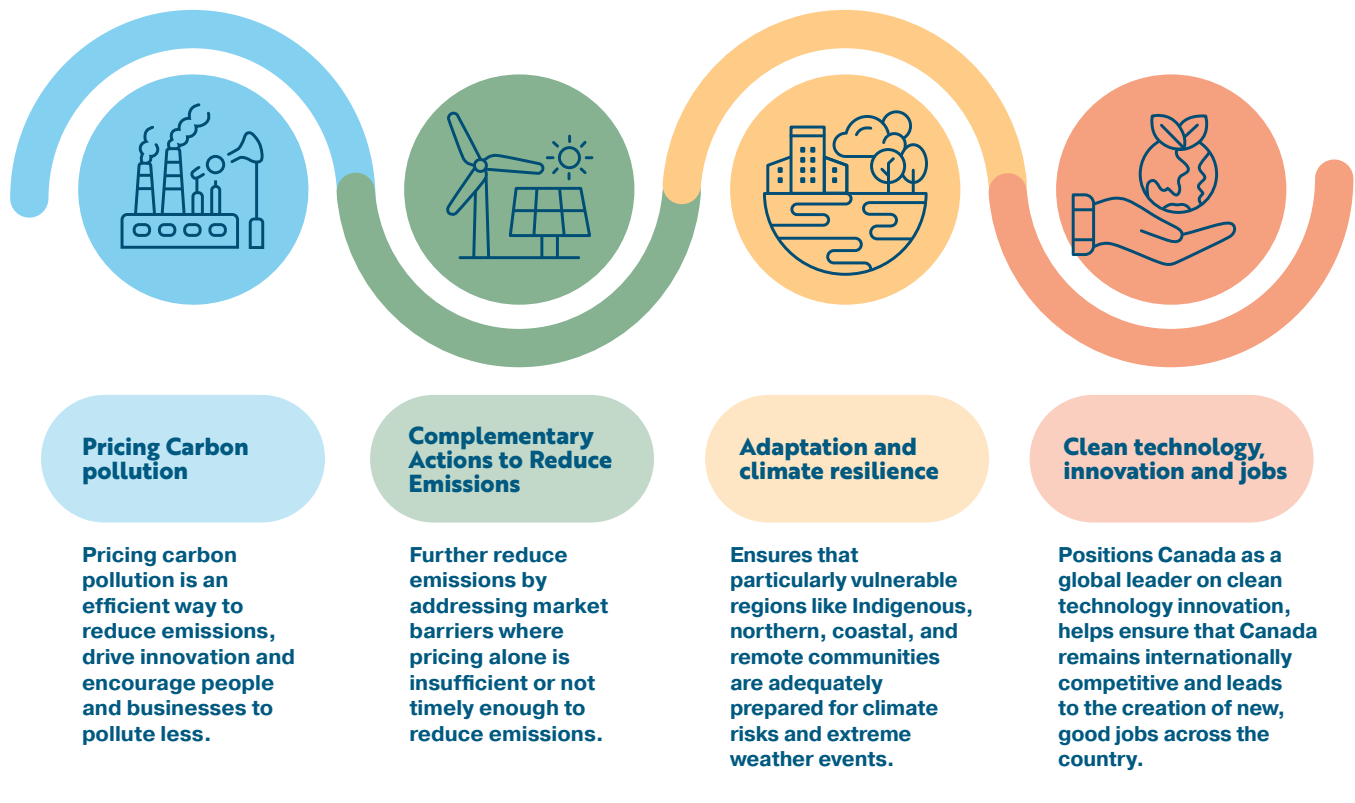
The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) is working in collaboration with Environment and Climate Change Canada to engage Indigenous Peoples in Climate Change Policy (EIPCCP).

The objective of this collaboration is to engage **Indigenous Women, Girls, Two-Spirit, Transgender, and Gender-Diverse (WG2STGD) Peoples** with the **Pan-Canadian Framework (PCF)** on clean growth. PCF aims to position Canada to meet its current Paris Agreement, economy-wide, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction target of 40 to 45 percent, which would place Canada below 2005 levels by 2030.

Effective national action requires meaningful local participation. One of the most important tasks for policymakers concerned with improving effectiveness of global

governance is enabling constructive participation in governance at the global level. Increased participation of non-governmental factors can accomplish more effective and efficient development, increase equity, legitimacy, transparency, and accountability, as well as enhance diversity and resilience.

Indigenous Women, Girls, Two-Spirit, Transgender, and Gender-Diverse+ (WG2SGD+) Peoples—as well as their Ways of Life, Traditions, customs, healthy relationships with the lands, and protection of the next generation—place them at the heart of efforts made to address impacts of climate change.





While Indigenous WG2SGD+ Peoples have diverse Knowledge and Language Systems, a common sense of history and experience binds them. Ceremonies, stories, songs, Oral Traditions, natural and customary laws, governance, Inherited Knowledge, and wisdom, provide a foundation for collaboration and partnership with the Government of Canada.

Local engagement improves decision-making. In a climate change context, research has found adaptation programmes and policies designed to reduce vulnerability and enhance adaptive capacity are more successful when developed in cooperation with local representatives. This is because the community is likely to trust them and find the interventions consistent with local values and aspirations. Engagement with local peoples also improves the likelihood of effective outcomes of decision-making and policy implementation, by enabling identification of key stakeholders, institutions, and facilitate Knowledge Transferring.

What appears to be lacking in the PCF is a specific focus on voices of Indigenous WG2SGD+ Peoples. Ongoing collaboration between NWAC and ECCC seeks to fill this gap. In 2020, the Yukon Government

launched a [Youth Panel on Climate Change](#) to engage young people on climate change related issues, and to guide the Government of Yukon on climate change actions. Further engagement of this type needs to take place so Indigenous WG2SGD+ Peoples—who are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change—are heard, acknowledged, and present at decision-making tables. Indigenous WG2SGD+ Peoples' Traditional Roles as primary users, managers, protectors, and keepers of natural resources, reinforces the fact that they possess intimate Knowledge and understanding for creating effective and sustainable change to benefit their communities, and Mother Earth.

[Programs and initiatives](#) such as:

- 1 [Climate Change and Health Adaptation program](#),
- 2 [Climate Change Preparedness in the North program](#),
- 3 [First Nation Adapt program](#),
- 4 [Northern REACHE program](#),

are underway to reduce harmful impacts of climate change on human health and wellbeing. In addition, these initiatives support a transition to clean technologies in Indigenous northern and remote communities. New projects were funded to study

and identify knowledge gaps in climate-driven, foodborne, water-borne, and zoonotic diseases. In addition to recognizing effects of climate change in accessing Traditional Foods, the Yukon delivered two projects to understand how communities are adapting to changes in Traditional diets. Though framework is heavily focused on clean economic growth, it strives to limit negative impacts on global environments by providing space and funding for initiatives to reduce carbon emissions, such as those mentioned above. Doing so results in improved climate change adaptation and increased resilience to climate change impacts across the country. Through engagement and involvement of Indigenous voices, it ensures local perspectives on sustainably living in harmony with the natural world are incorporated into helping heal the planet.

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◀ PRICING CARBON POLLUTION

Efficient way to reduce emissions, drive innovation and encourage people and businesses to pollute less.



Current Status of Federal Engagement with Indigenous Peoples, within the context of the PCF:

The engagement process seeks to include views of as many Indigenous voices, leaders, and community members as possible.

Doing so ensures legislation is compatible with, and respectful of, rights and law-making powers described in Treaties and agreements—which are usually distinctions-based, recognizing First Nations, Inuit, and Métis each have distinct communities with their own histories. This engagement process is guided by the *Act Respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to **Action**, the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls to **Justice**, and the Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's **Relationship with Indigenous Peoples**.

While great strides have been made through collaborative and distinctions-based engagement with Indigenous Peoples, engagements have taken place with senior leaders of Indigenous councils and assemblies. A level of engagement with Indigenous WG2SGD+ Peoples has not been easily distinguishable. It is vital these vulnerable voices are heard, and are considered to be, "Full and effective partners," according to the Government of Canada's commitment for ongoing and meaningful engagement, based on recognition of rights, respect, cooperation, and partnerships consistent with the *United Nations Declaration of Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, including free, prior, and informed consent.

► **ROUND DANCE**
First Nation community participates in a round dance.
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The following table includes

information from *fourth annual synthesis report on the Status of Implementation of the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change*. It provides details of the outcomes of federal engagement with Indigenous Peoples, leading up to the fourth annual synthesis report and the federal government's action areas going forward.

It is vital that Indigenous WG2SGD+ Peoples vulnerable voices are heard.



Working with First Nations:	Working with First Nations:	Working with First Nations:
<p>Priority areas include:</p>	<p>The federal government's support will continue to help advance Inuit-led activities and initiatives in the following areas:</p>	<p>Priority areas include:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Ensuring First Nations' full and effective participation in federal clean growth and climate change programs. 2 Empowering First Nations' leadership in emerging opportunities for climate action. 3 Enabling meaningful participation of First Nations in carbon pollution pricing system. 4 Developing First Nations-specific indicators/criteria to report on the implementation of climate-related, federal funding programs and outcomes for First Nations. 5 Creating spaces for an intergenerational dialogue on climate change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Advancing the use of Inuit capacity and Knowledge in climate decision-making. 2 Improving Inuit health and environmental health outcomes through integrated wellness, education and climate policies and initiatives. 3 Reducing climate vulnerability of Inuit and market food systems. 4 Closing the infrastructure gap with climate-resilient new builds, retrofits to existing builds, and Inuit adaptation to changing natural infrastructure. 5 Supporting regional and community-driven energy solutions, leading to Inuit energy independence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Capacity building. 2 Collecting Métis Traditional Knowledge. 3 Conducting research and collecting data to guide Métis Knowledge. 4 Nation-specific policy development and implementation. 5 Education and training opportunities in climate change. 6 Environmental stewardship and nature-based solutions. 7 Emergency management and disaster-risk mitigation. 8 Climate change and health. 9 Renewable energy and energy-efficient retrofits.



Highlights from the First Annual National Climate Change Survey:

The first annual national climate change survey was held to measure impacts of climate change on Indigenous WG2STGD+ Peoples in Canada.

From June 28 to July 20, 2021, 724 Indigenous WG2STGD+ Peoples over the age of 18 completed the survey.

Key Highlights:

- 1 **Indigenous WG2STGD+ Peoples** are far more vulnerable to impacts of climate change due to spiritual connection to the land, responsibilities as household managers and keepers of culture, and experience more poverty and financial challenges compared to non-Indigenous peoples and men.
- 2 **Most respondents** are very worried about various impacts of climate change, especially droughts and wildfires, and decreasing access to safe, clean water.
- 3 **Most respondents** said their communities are not involved in any climate-related activities. The biggest need for support is, by far, more education and awareness on how climate change affects their communities.
- 4 **The most common tools** to fight climate change, seen across multiple questions, are education and awareness. This needs to happen through various social media channels for various age groups.

Respondents identified **several barriers to engaging in climate-related activities**. Several respondents spoke about negative impacts of logging industries and harms caused by tailings ponds in oilfields. Others spoke about limited impacts of government initiatives, including recycling programs made available only in certain neighbourhoods, or male-dominated councils rejecting collaborative, community approaches to climate change plans. Further to this point, many respondents spoke about an **expectation of women's climate change/environmental leadership**, but lacked resources to make a substantive difference (e.g., being 'heard' and having an adequate platform to raise concerns both within Indigenous community contexts and beyond).

Many respondents spoke about an expectation of women's climate change/environmental leadership, but lacked resources to make a substantive difference.



Indigenous WG2STGD+ Peoples must fight against not only external sources of resistance (e.g., extractive industries, corporations, governments) but also **male-dominated band councils and leadership**. The catch-22 of being tasked with leading the way without granted the ‘powers and resources’ necessary to lead, is a key barrier.

Despite this barrier, a handful of responses highlighted Indigenous WG2STGD+ Peoples in positions of leadership, where outcomes may differ from those noted above. For example: One respondent spoke about how, “Overall, the women organize themselves. We also have a matrilineal, Traditional governance, which always examines the up-to-date concerns regarding our community and other nations in the confederacy.”

We asked the Indigenous WG2STGD+ Peoples surveyed what support they feel their community needs to work on in terms of climate change-related activities. While they spoke to a variety of supports, the most common need, by far, is for **more education and awareness on how climate change affects their communities**.

Most of these responses were general in nature; however, others focused on how to live and work with the impacts of climate change, including education on how to be self-sufficient and live off the land. One respondent suggested developing Elder-to-youth programs to share Knowledge on food sourcing and hunting.

“Overall, the women organize themselves. We also have a matrilineal, Traditional governance, which always examines the up-to-date concerns.”

► **RESPONDENTS SPOKE**

about an expectation of women’s climate change/environmental leadership





Case Study: Building Climate Resilience and Adaptation in the Kainai First Nation:

The Kainai Reserve is the largest reserve in Canada with a population of over 12,000 registered members, most of which live below the poverty line.

The Kainai First Nation worked with scientists and practitioners from 2014 to 2018 in developing a project to increase climate change Knowledge and skills of their Tribe. Female members of the Tribe had roles in the process and in the decision making, with one of the women taking the lead on the project.

The first phase of the project was focused on capacity building, with goals to:

- 1 Build capacity to address risks, and plan for an uncertain future, through a vulnerability assessment and adaptation plan.
- 2 Increase overall Knowledge about climate change through education.
- 3 Create an internal, Tribal, Climate Change Coordinator position.
- 4 Create climate-related engagement opportunities for youth and Elders to share Knowledge, such as through Traditional Plant Use and The Art of Climate Change initiatives. This is proposed to be a year-long collaboration for selected youth to work with a Blackfoot artist to create visual representations of their learning on climate change.
- 5 Enable the Tribe to share its journey with others. For example: Share with others in the Blackfoot Confederacy, Nama Tribe in South Africa, and at local and global conferences.

Over 100 community members from the Kainai First Nation participated in this initiative. To help facilitate the initiative, an in-tribe, Climate Change Coordinator position was created. A database of Traditional Plants was developed to help the community collect and store invaluable Traditional Ecological Knowledge, with an intent that the database would help guide future land use decisions. By bringing together Indigenous values and Knowledge, combined with the science of climate change, trust was built as partners worked together to create community-relevant action plans and engagement activities. Tribal-specific climate education tools have been developed, which will be used to build the Tribe's Knowledge Capacity and will allow for further work in climate risk assessment and adaptation planning. This project led to meaningful change and inspired the community to engage in the second phase of the project, which saw the implementation of the climate risk assessment and adaptation planning.



► **KAINAI FIRST NATIONS** developing a project to increase climate change Knowledge and skills.



Second Annual National Survey Update:

Planning is underway for the second annual national survey.

► CONSERVATION TOOLKITS

provide Indigenous WG2STGD+ Peoples, and their communities, with guide documents outlining climate change impacts and many more

Building on the previous survey, this one will track national trends, changes, and improvements in climate change and conservation awareness—along with regional best practices. The annual national survey also serves to measure awareness of Indigenous WG2STGD+ Peoples in terms of climate change impacts and adaptations (altering and adjusting behaviours and systems) due to impacts and mitigations efforts. These help to avoid, and reduce, production of more green house gas emissions on an annual basis. Open-ended questions will be incorporated so survey participants are able to provide valuable information on regional efforts and potential concerns in both rural/remote and urban areas. Work continues on the climate change and conservation toolkits.

Toolkits have been developed and are available online. Both toolkits are living documents and will be expanded upon based on regional Provincial Territorial

Member Association (PTMA) and grassroots feedback, as well as from survey feedback and continued research. These toolkits provide Indigenous WG2STGD+ Peoples, and their communities, with guide documents outlining climate change impacts, adaptations, mitigations, conservation efforts, and best practices for local and regional use.

Open-ended questions will be incorporated so survey participants are able to provide valuable information on regional efforts and potential concerns in both rural/remote and urban areas.

