



**INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S AND GENDER DIVERSE VOICES ON
CLIMATE CHANGE, CONSERVATION, AND BIODIVERSITY**

ONLINE ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

TRANSCRIPT

NOVEMBER

2021

Native Women's Association of Canada

L'Association des femmes autochtones du Canada





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ANNEX D: SESSION #1 TRANSCRIPT

QUESTION #1:

What is a healthy environment?

- ◆ A grandmother's memory of the Red River as a child. The water was clear, the earth on the bottom was red, you could drink it, you could see through it. That is a healthy environment.
- ◆ The water, air, earth, are all clean; health in plants, animals, our relatives, and us.
- ◆ You could once walk on the backs of sturgeon during the spawn, that is how dense the rivers once were with the population.
- ◆ A true measure historically was when the traditional governance was not interfered with.
- ◆ Everything was plentiful.
- ◆ Listening to Mother's generation, clean drinking water used to be just down the bank, along the lake. Now, the lake is polluted. A healthy utilize the environment around you to sustain you to survive.
- ◆ How your environment is socially, in the family unit.
- ◆ Mother Earth having her natural flow and ability to heal herself.
- ◆ Up north, the water is no longer clear.
- ◆ Dams have impacted by the community, with the environment and socially.
- ◆ Fish was so abundant, that no one was on welfare. People were self-sustaining.
- ◆ There was so much fish to sell and to feed your family.
- ◆ Hydro dams ripped away people's pride as environment was negatively impacted.
- ◆ Alcoholism, depression, have negative impacts in community.
- ◆ Nowadays you have to have a boat, motor, and gas to be able to go far to hunt. As people can't afford that, now people just buy processed food, as that is all they can afford at the northern store.
- ◆ Honoring the sacred relationship that exists with the land and our people, transfer of Intergenerational Knowledge between Elders and youth, how we take care of the land, plants, animals, and our medicines. How that Knowledge is carried on for the next seven generations.



- ◆ Why should they care if they have a healthy environment and clean drinking water and air?
- ◆ A lot of critical issues being dealt with in communities; forest fires, flooding, drought and pandemic.
- ◆ Understanding the impacts of climate change on the environment and people is critical and understanding the linkages between the environment and health.
- ◆ Can the earth renew herself? Can all our relatives renew themselves? Are they able to go through the cycles to renew and replenish themselves every year?
- ◆ Being raised in the city, we were able to go play on the street, in the park, on the field and had to be home by dark. That was a sense of safety in our city. Now raising my own kids in the city, do not have that same sense of safety. There is a greater sense of danger from other people, traffic, what garbage may be on the ground. You drive your kids everywhere.
- ◆ When you are on the reserve, the freedom was there. You ran around in the bush, eating berries off the trees. We're outside all day and night, there wasn't anything you were afraid of.
- ◆ Avoiding sacred areas, where there was offerings on trees, where the little people were, areas that were tied to stories.
- ◆ Mother would take her out to area, dug into ground for clay to put on houses. That clay provided certain minerals not in diet, that people used to eat it.
- ◆ What is in animals, that affect us.
- ◆ Muskrat is full of medicine due to eating the rat root.
- ◆ We eat these animals, what is inside them now? As they come from land and water, perhaps from polluted areas.
- ◆ Grandmother comes to mind, to be healthy is to live off the land. To eat animals, drink the water, never bought anything from the store. Fish, using everything off the land.
- ◆ Water and land are now polluted. Fish are sick because water is polluted.
- ◆ Northern stores provided the people with processed foods, people started getting sick.



QUESTION #2:

Is Mother Earth in Crisis? What does climate change look like in your community/territory?

- ◆ So many people are developing cancer now. One of the healing medicines comes from the water, if it becomes a carcinogen, what then?
- ◆ There is always going to be a natural cycle, whether it is species going extinct or extreme weather events. It is a natural process.
- ◆ We are seeing an increase in frequency in the intensity of weather patterns and climate. So much more flooding, flash flooding, with more intense changes with it being sunny one day and shoveling yourself out of snow on the next.
- ◆ Humans are causing a great impact on Mother Earth in the way they live on the land. Our imprint is much harsher than that of our ancestors.
- ◆ There is a shift in peoples' awareness; the way the way we are treating one another and taking care of one other. The earth is cleansing herself, she is going through a ceremony; a fast. Even people helping one another.
- ◆ We all have an equal responsibility to care for Mother Earth.
- ◆ A lot of garbage and disrespect to the land.
- ◆ We are all in crisis, including the earth, and all of us.
- ◆ Our ancestors signed treaties to protect the trees, yet after they were signed, the trees were all cut down. There was massive deforestation. The moose is gone, there was wild rice and now it is minimal.
- ◆ We could sustain ourselves off the land in the past. When we took a life, it was taken with respect, it was to sustain ourselves, life.
- ◆ Harvesting was taken with respect, now people are taking from the land to make money. There is a lot of waste that is happening. There is no honour in leaving enough for animals or plants; for everyone.
- ◆ What is being taken is not being taken without regard or respect for our overall responsibilities. We are creating the crisis. Everyone else is in crisis, because we are not honouring what we know about life and what is necessary for life. How life flows, how we are all depended on each other. We are not honoring that.



- ◆ We are not taking care of each other. When a life is taken, we are not sharing with everyone, and that is a fundamental violation with our relationship with the earth.
- ◆ The earth is definitely in crisis because of what is happening on the land.
- ◆ With what we harvest, what we call natural food, wildgame and fish and don't know if it is even healthy, but it is the healthiest we have.
- ◆ We have to travel far to harvest medicines in clean areas.
- ◆ A lot of the stuff we harvest is making us sick.
- ◆ There is not enough health in the water, in the land, for there to be health in any of us.
- ◆ There is such a disconnect with our earth mother that has led to a loss of identity, loss of purpose as Earth Keepers, and poor mental health.
- ◆ The earth does not depend on us to survive. We depend on Mother Earth to survive.
- ◆ When we destroy Mother Earth, she will replenish herself; even if the two legged are wiped out.
- ◆ Everything we do to Mother Earth, we are doing to ourselves and destroying ourselves.
- ◆ We are destroying other things.
- ◆ The destruction of what we are doing with our environment and Mother earth, the diseases that are coming, heart attacks are new, diabetes, kidney disease, which are all new and not there before.
- ◆ The food we are eating, the water we are drinking. More chlorine has to be put in water to kill the bacteria, the leading cause of cancer is chlorine.
- ◆ Our environment is not replenishing itself as quickly as we need it to be. We are dependent on Mother Earth to survive. She is not dependent on us.
- ◆ We are not taking Mother Earth's gift of life respectfully, we are destroying her. We are the one's that are destroying ourselves.
- ◆ Our communities are impacted. A lot of our community go to the land for wellness, and when you can't go to the land for wellness, to hunt, fish, or trap because it is no longer sustainable.
- ◆ So much violence, drugs, alcohol are all great changes. This environment is a great change.



- ◆ There is no transferring of Knowledge right now and that causes a lot of social problems. People are moving away from what they did historically. It is not peoples' fault, but what is happening to the earth.
- ◆ There are a lot of people praying for the earth to heal and making offerings for this.
- ◆ Flooding, drought, global warming, air and water pollution, acidic rain, plant and wildlife extinction, urban sprawl and ozone layer depletion.
- ◆ Traveling from northern Manitoba to Winnipeg, left the north with no snow only to drive to the south into a treacherous snowstorm.
- ◆ Polar shift, could be from global warming.
- ◆ Mother Earth is in crisis, but so is everyone.
- ◆ Cannot roam freely outdoors anymore. The dangers that keep you inside or close to home are also all around us. A lot of people are lost, seeking their identity, a lot of options available are very harmful and hurtful, especially with women, the vulnerable.
- ◆ The beautification of yards in the city and chemicals used to ratify what are considered weeds, yet are medicines.
- ◆ All the catastrophic changes worldwide, will that bring healing and renewal or destruction?
- ◆ Hearing about the tar sands and the destruction it causes, whereby the First Nations in the area are observing the muskrat leaving, that they are migrating south.
- ◆ Teachings were shared about the muskrat. The people promised the muskrat that when the earth was renewed after the great flood, the muskrat was always promised to always have a place for their grandchildren to live. That has been violated.
- ◆ This makes a big difference when we depend on our relatives to show us to live in a balanced way.
- ◆ Our ancestors always relied on the plants and animals to know better than us. We were taught that when there is a sickness coming, certain plants, medicines will grow plentiful, the stuff we will need. The medicine people would see this and harvest more, knowing there is a reason why more is growing and store it away.



- ◆ There was a balance that was beyond us. The beavers would take care in knowing what was needed for the medicines for us.
- ◆ We are not in balance with nature. We are no longer aware, especially in the way our Elders were.
- ◆ COVID is here for a reason, illnesses, drought, floods. It is showing we need to stay close to home in the winter, not to gather. That it is safe only outside in the summer, to gather outside on the land to breath the air. We always did that, gathering in the summer and staying away, close to home in the winter. COVID is showing us to go back to the old ways.
- ◆ We have a relationship with the trees. When there was any kind of pandemics, the trees saved the people by keeping the sickness in the roots. These sicknesses are coming because we are cutting the trees.
- ◆ Our plant and animal relatives are showing us we are not listening, or watching, or giving them that respect, to follow what they are showing us.
- ◆ The lack of winter road access is a huge issue in northern Manitoba, as it is how supplies gets into communities. This is due to global warming. Causes high prices of food and fuel. There is a strong push for a northern food sovereignty.
- ◆ Food sovereignty crisis, especially with COVID, where freezers and flash freezers are being purchased.
- ◆ Communities were not prepared for a pandemic.
- ◆ Muskrat is considered an indicator species. You can tell the health of an environment by the number of species in the area. Muskrat depend on wetlands.
- ◆ Wetlands are being drained for agriculture, and are now facing drought.
- ◆ Removing wetlands, removes the ability for the land to have the ability to heal itself.
- ◆ Need for access roads. Forced relocation due to fires and flooding.
- ◆ Pandemic is bringing forward a dependency on a unsustainable colonial system.
- ◆ How connected we are to our environment.



- ◆ We feel the anxiety of Mother Earth.
 - When everything was shut down due to COVID, we felt anxiety. Likely what Mother Earth was feeling.
 - ◆ Can see the stars now.
 - ◆ Air is clearer, cleaner.
 - ◆ Maybe the pandemic slowed everything down.
 - ◆ Mother Earth slowed down.
 - We are destroying ourselves when we don't care for Mother Earth.
 - What does anxiety mean? What does it feel like?
 - ◆ It is unsettling. No sense of calm or peace.
 - ◆ Depression, mental health is unstable with our people, with ourselves.
 - ◆ Suffocating.
 - ◆ Witnessing the new generation suffering from depression and anxiety.
 - ◆ Comes up when you are out of natural cycles, by going by a clock, calendar, schedules and not the natural clock. Take time when you are grieving. Slow down, pay attention to your body and family, to have a balanced life. One's moon time, sleeping more in winter, taking the time we need.
 - ◆ Our roles are not respected in governance, decision making, what is a good life. It's just about making money, having money. It's assumed if you can make money you can everything you need in life. Money is not a replacement for life.
 - ◆ Kids in school are cutting out leaves in the fall instead of going outside to collect leaves. It is so artificial to know fall this way, to learn in this manner. There is no connection to the "living" life.
 - ◆ During pandemic, child learned to go on the land, snare a rabbit, skin and eat it. Dropping off food for Elders, food that was good.
 - ◆ The lifestyle we are living is not good nor healthy for anyone. We need the connection to the land, our way of life, our medicines, our relatives, each other, our language, our culture. That is sustainable and has a purpose.



- ◆ Need to have a healthy relationship with each other in the territory we live in; making time to harvest.
- ◆ Direct relationships with each other is a big part of our wellness, health, and way of life.
- ◆ Having to live in artificial systems that are not designed for our health; only to get things out of us.
- ◆ **We are being treated the same way the land is being treated, regardless of roles and purpose.**
- ◆ Not being recognized for our role and what we have to contribute. Our culture, ways, and life, are valuable.

QUESTION #3:

What are key issues affecting Indigenous women and gender-diverse people in Manitoba?

- ◆ As a 22 year high school teacher, have never seen such an increased rate of depression, violence, anxiety, and fear.
- ◆ There was a community grieving the loss of an elderly man, who died of diabetes, who was grieving the loss of his livelihood as a fisherman when he lost his legs due to diabetes.
- ◆ Reclaiming Indigenous women roles instills fear and anxiety.
- ◆ Indigenous women and gender-diverse and violation to them coincides with violation to Mother Earth with construction. Violence from coming from camps, development camps. The construction workers are huge violators to us and Mother Earth, our land.
- ◆ All kinds of violence, internal/external, white men, patriarchy.
- ◆ Man camps and their exploitation of the land and women.
- ◆ Immigrant workers coming into Canada to work at camps, historically a difference in culture, belief systems, have women who are submissive. With our women, they are dominant. They become a conquest to these workers just to feed their own ego.
- ◆ Men getting paid more than women, a disparity that exists.



- ◆ Trying to find a balance between the male and female energies within gender-diverse and for society to understand those energies.
- ◆ The binary role and women, where do gender-diverse people fit? Having an understanding that the binary approach to everything has to change.
- ◆ The buffalo teaching, regarding the relationship between our governance and the buffalo livelihood systems. Historically, many of our societies were matrilineal, meaning the women were in the position of decision making and sat at the head of the clan systems. That was similar to how the natural governance of buffalo happened. Settlers started to infiltrate a lot of our settlements and communities wanting to understand hunting and trapping to exploit those resources for the fur trade. They realized the buffalo herd is led by the matriarch; the grandmother buffalo. That the Cree and Anishinaabe were also followed the natural laws of the buffalo in being matriarchal societies. That was how they hunted the buffalo in masses, focussing on the grandmother buffalo and drove her off the cliff and all the other buffalo would follow because instinctively it was their natural law to follow the grandmother. As Cree people, we always went to negotiations we always went with our matriarchs. Negotiations never happened without the presence of a matriarch. That was how the settle infiltrated that negotiation system and those natural laws. Once they started destroying the grandmother buffalos, they started convincing the men, the warriors, they did not need their grandmothers or women to be apart of the negotiations, so they would negotiate with the fur traders without the matriarch. That was how a lot of the roles were displaced, it was done first done with the natural environment and then that shifted the energy of the people. Explains the displacement of women, even with our connection to Mother Earth.
- ◆ As women we have a sacred responsibility to protect the water, and it extends to the land.





QUESTION #4:

How are Indigenous women and gender-diverse being included in climate change adaptation?

- ◆ We are not currently included; very patriarchal only men with suits making substantial amounts of money.
- ◆ We, as Cree people, depend on the natural environment to survive, where as white men in suits are capitalistic approach. They have the money, they buy the food, they are able to do that.
- ◆ Cree don't do that, they are not poor, but can survive.
- ◆ Women are not included in discussions, though are very connected to Mother Earth. We are the vessel that brings life here, onto Mother Earth.
- ◆ Women and gender-diverse people are integrated into community positions as apart of climate adaptation plans. In the federal sense, there are a lot of women that are apart of the decision making for proposals selections.
- ◆ This is the first time I seen gender-diverser people involved in these discussions (Sheyanne).
- ◆ Indigenous women and water keepers are very aware, and have raised awareness along with the teachings.
- ◆ For Indigenous women and gender-diverse people, there is not a high level of inclusion.
- ◆ Historically our grandmothers stood up in the lodge and were called upon to provide direction, to take the roll and then gathered with each other, and took the responsibility and made that space for themselves.
- ◆ Women's water counsel was established, Assembly of First Nations now has Grandmothers counsels, but the grandmothers had to stand up for themselves to be there. It is still not inclusive at the level it needs to be at.
- ◆ Historically there was a space and a role for women, you could not make decisions without women. There were roles and responsibilities that came with that.



- ◆ In government systems, if women are there is it because of something she has done, there is no natural space for her to be there.
- ◆ Women have to fight their way to be a part of the government systems.
- ◆ The patriarchal systems are what is happening. Front line faces is women just to make a recommendation, someone else makes the decision.
- ◆ Inclusion of women is not the same as respecting the roles as women, in making decisions or carrying out traditional roles.
- ◆ Women need to be a part of the process to decide how money should be spent and what should happen with the land and comment on the social structure.
- ◆ This is the first time a participant of the forum ever participated in a session like this, though has been involved in gatherings with women.
- ◆ Women do the work in this area and may not be recognized.





ANNEX E: SESSION #2 TRANSCRIPT:

QUESTION #1:

How are we, the Transmitters of Knowledge, related to climate change for future generations? And, why is it important?

- ◆ Recycling and teaching children, grandchildren, and others as much as possible.
- ◆ Always ensuring water is present at ceremonies.
- ◆ Women are children's first teachers.
- ◆ We are able to nurture our children to understand their relationship with the environment, their environment, and how that is changing with the climate changes.
- ◆ We are still able to teach our the traditional ways of living on the land and being with each other and our relationships with our families.
- ◆ Leave the land in the same manner you find it, and carry that as a teaching.
- ◆ Teach children this when picking medicines or berries: To leave the seeds. Teaching children the importance of planting for rejuvenation.
- ◆ our ancestors learned through language, which connected our families, identity, and the land. The language has so much teaching. Residential Schools took children away, severing them from the language, thier parents, connection to the land, all the teachings.
- ◆ It is critical to bring back the language to establish the connections with our families, communities, and the land, once again.
- ◆ The land identifies who we are. It will always heal and provide for you. We have to look after the land, you have to be the caregiver, the teacher.
- ◆ It is so important to teach those around us, as women, as we intuitively have that nurturing ability that is second nature to us. When it comes to the environment, take every opportunity to exchange Knowledge with those wanting to know. It is not just Indigenous, it is everyone.



- ◆ We have to be careful who we allow in, as often the intent of those wanting to learn may not have good intentions. When, where, and with who you share Knowledge with, must be honoured.
- ◆ Recreating ties of where you were raised, by ceremony, like the honouring of the afterbirth. Giving roots to the newborn
- ◆ Reuse, recycle, and share what you have with others.
- ◆ Regrowing plants, identifying medicines, using all parts of the animals, as everything has a purpose. This has to be taught to all the future generations and not to overkill. To leave things to rot.
- ◆ Knowing the weather patterns, looking at the clouds and wind to know what kind of weather that is coming. Always giving thanks for everything that you take from the land. Being able to read the land.
- ◆ Bridging relationships between the youth and Knowledge Keepers. We are shaping the leaders of tomorrow. We are the leaders of today. We are strong, empowered and have Knowledge. We can gather the Knowledge from the Elders and share with the youth. Helps youth understand historic and contemporary relationships with the land, and all living things, as it is a sacred relationship. On the land, education programs are so important, especially when science is tied in with culture.
- ◆ Leading by example. Teaching and sharing what you know with the next generation, and promoting ways to reuse what we already have. Not to throw things away, not to be wasteful.





QUESTION #2:

What is our role in environmental conservation?

- ◆ Human interactions with the environment. Understanding our footprint on Mother Earth. What are the environmental implications, impact of food security based on human behavior, and interaction?
- ◆ Recycling, reducing, and reusing cycle. Are your behaviours and interaction impacting food security?
- ◆ Honour the water, using it with respect, not to waste it. Do not let leaking taps run, fix them. Always be prepared by having water supply in hand in case of contamination or freezing pipes.
- ◆ We do not consider our relationship with the environment as sacred, a lot of people are disconnected. We are leaders, we must share awareness and Knowledge with our youth, with others. Our Elders were so aware, they conserved. Today there must be a shift with relationships with each other; the land, the water. There is so much work, it is massive. The disconnection is huge. Without the connection, we do not care. Indigenous women are at the forefront in protecting the water, the land. They are leading and setting examples. We must start saying no, for the matter of protection.
- ◆ How can it be done, to build relationships with industry?
- ◆ Earth is our mother. What happens to her, happens to us. She is the life giver. It is our responsibility to stand up for Mother Earth, for us. We have to make better decisions and sacrifice to do without. We need to think about how much we are taking, share what you have, and take only what you need, leave some for the rest. Learn it early, this is the foundation of a healthy, sustainable relationship. That is our role as women to reclaim our place.
- ◆ Women are the centre and it goes out from us. Every action we take to honour ourselves, to honour each other as women, and to insist upon that, and that it is our role to speak to the value of life itself.
- ◆ Not just life for one, for all, for each and every one of us. What are the relationships each one of us has to honour the value we all have to each other, and to all?



QUESTION #2A:

How can we be more represented in decision making bodies related to climate change?

- ◆ Speak up at different forums, by word of mouth, doing research projects, getting involved in policy actions, putting yourself out there to share good ideas.
- ◆ Being a leader in an organization starting a recycling program within the workplace.
- ◆ Doing landbase, Traditional Healing.
- ◆ Taking care of the land, as she takes care of us. Land will bring healing with medicines, include programming with teachings. That teaching becomes a habit and are taken into the home.
- ◆ The education systems within First Nation communities can be expanded from N-12 within modules in the school.

QUESTION #2B:

What suggestions would you like to make to the Government of Canada?

- ◆ These topics are lacking within the education system. There is an opportunity to build upon curriculum to educate.
- ◆ Government allow for pilot communities to develop these types of modules. The land is the greater teacher of all. Kids intuitively know things are coming even before we do. Kids have taught us a lot.
- ◆ Our people are so crippled in expecting someone to always have someone do everything for them.
- ◆ Tell them not to ask the question if you are not going to do anything about it. So much consultations with Aboriginal Peoples, and nothing being done. Where government becomes the barrier in prohibiting change. There has to be an entire shift within the world on how we are connected to our mother. Criminalization of the protection of land and environment; the pressure government gets from industry, makes the Indigenous look like criminals to enable them to continue to extract resources.



- ◆ Our people have been studied and surveyed to death with no action. Where Indigenous are totally disregarded after being consulted with. Consultations is just for show. Mother Earth truly is a healer. When children are taken out on the land, she becomes their regulator.
- ◆ Canadian education fails our people. We need our connection to the land, and language, identity needs, to be in there. What they took away with assimilating policies. Some communities do have land base education.
- ◆ The responsibility for everyone is water. Water is life. Raising awareness is not protesting. The weather is providing Mother Earth with a voice; the storms. During this pandemic, everyone talked about how clean the air was when the earth stood still. Media removes society responsibility when reporting on Indigenous. How do we calm the water within us, the water has been shaken. Our children are growing up with that shaking water within them. Do not take water for granted. How water is disrespected daily, with peeing and putting our human waste in it, we drive over bridges like we can walk on water.
- ◆ We need everyone else to walk with us to lead this fight.
- ◆ Make it mandatory to have Indigenous perspectives to tie in our culture and acknowledge our Elders, who should be involved in curriculum development. To have a variety of people, not just scholars.
- ◆ Government is so aggressive selling off rights to mine. Deforest on one hand and then trying reconciliation on the other hand. Indigenous are not included as decision makers with government. What is the Indigenous goal for environmental standards versus government, when they base it on money. Indigenous women need to take every opportunity to strengthen our voices. We need to take every opportunity to revitalize our relationships with each other, the land, animals, and waters. Kids need to be reintroduced back into the Traditional Ways. There are a lot of colonial impacts on us, which does not make things easy.

Water Teaching Song—value of life, life comes from water. Give thanks for water at all times. Water Song, by Doreen Day, link shared. Every woman has a water song and will come to you. It is our role to speak to the value of life.



QUESTION #3:

How can Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and Elders help resolve current environmental issues? What are they teaching us now? How can we support, or learn from, these efforts?

- ◆ How to survive off the land, passing on their teachings. Too many of us are urbanized, even when living on the reserves. Formal education means nothing. To survive off the land, we need those people who know how to live off the land. We have become so dependent on modern ways.
- ◆ Elders are being left out in governance within communities ourselves. When elected officials are put in place, we should ensure, and make it a standard, that the Elders are a part of the process and discussion. Currently our Elders are not even invited to the table; not even considered. We should be mandating that Elders are a part of the process. Becoming so westernized that PCHs are a norm in our communities; that Elders are losing their place in our own homes.
- ◆ Elders need to be a part of the political voice. We need to honour our Elders, they should be included with government in community.
- ◆ Teachings of how to respect Mother Earth, and what Creator provided for us. Cultural camps for youth, families, communities, with Knowledge Keepers. Have the cycle of harvest, moose and caribou hunt.
- ◆ Train the trainer. Youth being employed to bring community together and speak on behalf of environment, backed by leadership and Elder support. Youth leadership, junior councils, youth shadowing Elders, and how to live off the land. Holding Elder Knowledge the same as scientific based and Technical Knowledge and compensating it as such.
- ◆ We need to continue to listen to, and record, our Knowledge Keepers for now and future use. This can then be shared with kids in schools. Elders are coming into schools to allow for the children to model them. We need to support this in schools for Traditional Teachings.

Other Comments:

- ◆ There is no Cree, nor Ojigway ways; only Creator's way.



ANNEX F: SESSION #3 TRANSCRIPT:

QUESTION #1:

How are Indigenous women and gender diverse individuals in your community helping to address the harmful emissions that contribute to climate change? And, how are they helping address adverse, climate-related impacts?

- ◆ Car pooling.
- ◆ I find this as a gap of Knowledge. What would be a barrier to encouraging more women and gender-diverse peoples to participate in climate change initiatives?
- ◆ When women go back to the camps or old community sites, they go back to the old ways—cooking over an open fire, smoke houses, staying in tents.

QUESTION #2:

How can Indigenous women and gender diverse individuals work toward solving issues related to climate change?

- ◆ By learning from each other. Not to keep it to ourselves, we need to share with each other. For example, women in SIL.
- ◆ We all know things to share. We can share with other communities and let others know what we know to do.
- ◆ Less travelling—driving, flying, emissions.
- ◆ Some things are better to meet in person, especially transfer of Knowledge. Information sharing can be done online.
- ◆ I haven't traveled in two years. Not traveling does save emissions, but I do miss face to face interactions. Some communities still request face to face meetings before they'll initiate relationship building for a project.
- ◆ Using higher density travel—motorcoach buses, long distances, especially.
- ◆ Initiative must start from us. We cannot wait for the elected leaders to make the decision. Ask ourselves—how are we going to address climate change?



- ◆ As women start finding their voices and strength with each other, that's when the change will come. We need more women leaders in leadership and decision-making positions
- ◆ Domestic violence rates demonstrate that women are not being respected. We have to start by restoring the respect for women and the importance of their leadership.
- ◆ Women are intuitively nurturing. We are starting to see more non-masculine energy leading important changes in the community.
- ◆ Recycling program—started by young woman in Pinaymootang.
- ◆ Learned helplessness—blaming CNC, especially when it comes to the land.
- ◆ Garbage everywhere, why?
 - So worried about poverty. They don't think about things like climate change. They are worried about hydro and just living.
 - Other communities have rules around their waste disposal sites. People come to our First Nations disposal sites because there are no rules and they can dump anything; no recycling.
 - We are so stuck in poverty.
 - People in my community would love to recycle.
- ◆ Start small. Start it ourselves in our communities.
- ◆ It's a behavioural change that needs to happen with collective effort. People need to feel ownership and pride in clean communities.
 - For example: Peguis and Fisher River—clean communities, landscaping, no garbage.
 - ◆ Those two communities have champions, and well taken care of recycling facilities.
 - ◆ They also cultivate partnerships with green action centre and the pathfinder programs.
- ◆ Clothing exchanges, toy exchanges, passing stuff down to other children in family.
- ◆ Communities can have the recycling program, transfer station, equipment, and staffing, but without a champion advocating for the program and bringing awareness, it's hard to get support.



- ◆ Empowerment–fish camps are immaculate. So much pride in their cabins, organized, comes from their own blood, sweat, and tears. They built it and have everything they need there. They have to be prepared. If you don't do it–no one will do it for you.
- ◆ Look in our communities–houses provided by First Nations, everything fixed by band. There's no empowerment there. Stop doing the things that do not empower our people. Focus on the empowerment and ownership.
- ◆ Ownership–build pride and maintain accountability. Our people were not like this. Oppressive systems and policy took away from our way of life, our independence. For example: Taking care of camp, strong sense of ownership. Making an investment into their own livelihood and sustainability of their livelihood.

QUESTION #2A:

How do we get women into leadership positions?

- ◆ Anyone will believe they can do anything as long as they have the support. Women need to have the support. We must remove the gossip and backstabbing.
- ◆ Looking beautiful and taking care of oneself is perceived or judged as them "acting better."
- ◆ Jealousy has to go!
- ◆ Women Supporting Women–we need more. There is a target toward us as soon as we leave our homes.
- ◆ If we support each other, compliment each other, build up other women, be open to her coming to you for guidance and support.
- ◆ We need to be the change. I want to be on my best behavior when my children are watching me. Lead by example and support other women.
- ◆ lateral violence is a huge issue and also "adult bullying." When someone does not like someone or has a conflict with another woman, they recruit others to join their cause.
- ◆ Colonialism–women's voices were suppressed. We want them to speak.
- ◆ Having positive mentors. Becoming an executive. I was able to move up



because I had women within the organization that were very positive and I was able to learn from them. Having the support system; boss always building me up. I worked for my community and there was so much lateral violence and I knew I never wanted to be like that or be a part of people treating each other like that.

- ◆ Being aware of lateral violence—training for staff and board. When you are aware of what it is, you become aware of yourself, so you don't unintentional hurt someone (body language, tone). Not to internalize things or take things personal.
- ◆ Not many will have the courage to tell you how they have been impacted by your words, or tone, or body language.
- ◆ I agree with mentorship. It's very important to have role models. my organization is led by a powerful women who is gender diverse and 80 percent of the teams I am on are majority women.
- ◆ Supports for the home fire such as child care, cleaning, organizing, ceremonies to support women leaders, recognition of good work women do within the community.
- ◆ Trauma-informed leadership. As a Nation, we have gone through historical trauma. Even with best intentions, we are triggered, or we trigger others.
- ◆ To always keep in mind, you don't know what you are walking into. As leaders, there's going to be someone who doesn't like your decisions. As long as you are making in the best interests of the community and help them understand why the decisions are being made. Women leaders have to make decisions that impact the whole community. That is difficult; to feel the weight of it on your shoulders. How to balance home and work life.
- ◆ Lived and intergenerational experiences contribute to trauma—and the root issues.
- ◆ I find some men still struggling with women as their bosses!
 - it slows down progress.



- ◆ Our women all lead in different ways. In our homes, we have to teach our sons that this is where you came from: A woman who first fed you, showed you, taught you. Sometimes men need to be reminded where they came from, feeding them—in every way. Nourishing mind, body and spirit—to be taken back and humbled. It's hard to keep leaders, such as Chiefs, humble because who do they answer to?
- ◆ If we could help each other, as women, then men can help each other, too.
- ◆ Nourishing our partners and our children mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

QUESTION # 2B:

How do we protect their energy?

- ◆ As we have women leaders rise, we have to look at who hasn't risen up. A lot of times, women lose their light—not being trained, supported. We have to ensure the women around them are strong as well. Empower all the women around you. Surround yourself by women who will want to protect you.
- ◆ Create “train the trainer” and opportunities for young girls to learn from leaders of today.
- ◆ Communities to partner with academia to bring environmental programs that are accredited to communities.
- ◆ Supporting with kindness, sharing opportunities for being with other women leaders, ceremonies, recognition, and promotion of women.

QUESTION 2C:

Who were your role models?





QUESTION #3:

How can Indigenous women and gender diverse individuals promote sustainability?

- ◆ Recycling.
- ◆ Reducing emissions, such as driving, flying, etc.
- ◆ Reusing things such as clothes, toys.
- ◆ Sustainable thrifting—proud of sustainable consumption; good for the environment; no shame.
- ◆ Teach our children to be environmentally conscious.
 - Learning online, it can be scary, world in 30 years will be so different.
- ◆ Water conservation.
- ◆ Energy efficiencies—reduce use.
- ◆ Wood stoves.
- ◆ Educating ourselves about these things. Using social media and the internet. Netflix—gather, minimalist.
- ◆ Gardening—growing your own food; garden beds.
- ◆ Home cooking and eating out less.
- ◆ Growing gardens and creating your own soil through composting (recycling food waste).
- ◆ We have to push for this to be taught in schools, incorporated within the workplace, and practiced in the home. We have to ask ourselves, “What do we really need?” We have to lead by example and show our children absolutely every one of our actions impacts the environment.
- ◆ Supporting local business, bartering, etc.





QUESTION #4:

How can Indigenous women and gender diverse individuals help promote responsible, economic growth and development?

- ◆ Buy local. Support Indigenous, sustainable, businesses, like Cheekbone Beauty; whose packaging is sustainable.
- ◆ Economic development that supports social programs in community; using local products.
- ◆ Revitalize our languages in language that has key terms in messages for fostering feminine energy.
- ◆ Green design, green space; walking paths.

QUESTION #5:

What environmental best practices have been developed by Indigenous women and gender diverse individuals in your communities, with regard to solutions to address climate change?

- ◆ Pinaymootang: Recycling program.
- ◆ Peguis, Fisher River.
- ◆ NCN: Gardening initiatives.
- ◆ Fisher River: Solar farm.
- ◆ NCN: Sustainable, medium density housing, with solar power.
- ◆ Bee farms.
- ◆ Greenhouses.
- ◆ Composting.
- ◆ Waste management: NCN.
- ◆ Local community markets, like farmers markets but with food, beadwork, regalia, housewares, cricut products. Support local community members to make money, and keep money, in the community.
- ◆ Feast bundles at meetings and gatherings; no more styrofoam.
- ◆ Have place for recycling at the ceremonies and gatherings.



- ◆ There is a second hand clothing store in Winnipeg called, Closet Space, to help 2-Spirit+ find affordable clothing in a safe, supportive environment.
- ◆ There's a huge, national, plastic reduction strategy happening to reduce single-use plastics, because China is not taking our recyclable plastics anymore. So, as a country, we need to reduce its production.
- ◆ Metal straws.
- ◆ Teaching people how to reupholster and recycle furniture.
- ◆ Mother Earth–beds, also provide tours.

WHAT NEXT?

- ◆ Share the report and make it public. We could also share it nationally.
- ◆ Share the report and include actions women can take to implement change.
- ◆ Share the report with all the women in the group.
- ◆ Transparency in how it is put together: Give an opportunity to review and add to it. Include the messaging that they wanted to get in there.





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ONLINE ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS



TRANSCRIPT

Native Women's Association of Canada

L'Association des femmes autochtones du Canada