



**First Nations – Canada**

**Joint Committee on Climate Action**

2023 Annual Report



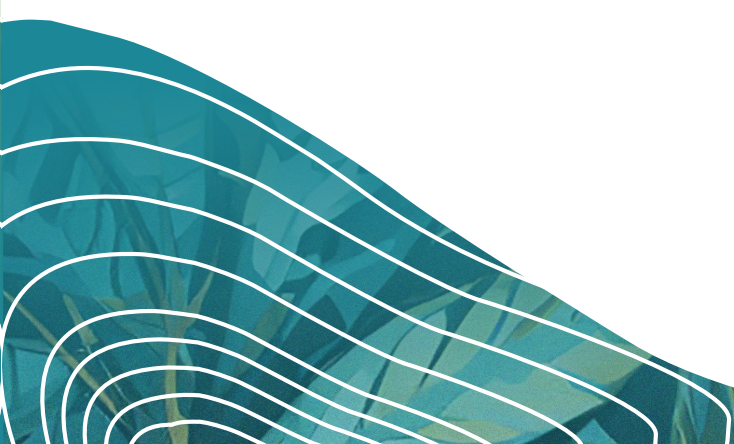






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## Elder Prayer

Hai'Cho K'agwaadhat / Thank you Creator God, we give you thanks for this day.

We acknowledge the traditional Territory of the First People's Lands on which we stand.

We acknowledge our Knowledge Keepers, Our Leaders, Youth, Women, Men, 2SLGBTQIAA+,  
and all who are in our circle continuing this good work.

We acknowledge the Sacred Lands, Waters, and all that lives on this Earth.

Hai'Cho to our Ancestors, our past and present Land Protectors, for caring for these Lands since  
time immemorial so that we can live in a good way. Let us be mindful that we carry on our  
teachings to serve our people.

While we continue to face challenges in our homelands, climate emergencies and biodiversity  
crises have become more intense for all of our people in Canada. These experiences are an  
urgent reminder for us to take stronger action in partnership.

We ask for strength to those working at the JCCA to promote our successes, advance high-level  
work, and continue in true partnership with all levels of Government. Together, we will forge a  
clear vision to eliminate systematic barriers and colonial policies, enabling self-determination  
for First Nations Peoples in Canada.

We pray for this work to continue so that our Leaders take concrete action. We pray that  
our leaders, the Prime Minister and the National Chief, meet to continue the support of our  
collective work, promoting wise examples of First Nations and federal partnerships.

Today, we ask that we do our work with a good mind, a good heart, and a good spirit.

We pray for love, courage, and commitment for all our Leaders and Decision Makers on this  
journey, that will impact us and all future generations to come.

Mahsi' cho K'agwaadhat, jidii tthak diiyeenjit gwiinzii nahsii

Thank you, Creator God, for making everything good for us.

Elder Lorraine Netro, Vuntut Gwichin





## Glossary of Terms

AFN - Assembly of First Nations

CIRNAC - Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada

CNZEAA - Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act

COP - Conference of Parties

ECCC - Environment and Climate Change Canada

ERP – Emissions Reduction Plan

FNCL - First Nations Climate Leadership

FNCLA - First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda

FPIC - Free, Prior and Informed Consent

ICL - Indigenous Climate Leadership

IKS - Indigenous Knowledge Systems

ILF - Indigenous Leadership Fund

JCCA - Joint Committee on Climate Action

LCEF - Low Carbon Economy Fund

NAS - National Adaptation Strategy

NRCan – Natural Resources Canada

OCAP™ - Ownership, control, access, and possession (Registered Trademark)

Parties – Countries that have ratified a UN agreement or convention are called “Parties”

PCF - Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change

UNDA – United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act

UNDRIP - United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

UNFCCC - UN Framework Convention on Climate Change



## Executive Summary

In 2023, we experienced the warmest year since global records began in 1850. From February 2023 to January 2024, the global average temperature was more than 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels over an entire year for the first time ever. With the adoption of the Paris Agreement in 2015, Canada and other countries agreed to pursue efforts to limit the global temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

In Canada, global warming brought the worst fire season on record, with fires raging from Nova Scotia to British Columbia to the Northwest Territories. Over fifteen million hectares burned, pushing wildfire smoke across Canada and into the United States. Amidst this, much was and continues to be done to prevent further catastrophic change. The Assembly of First Nations released its National Climate Strategy ('National Climate Strategy'), First Nations and federal representatives attended the Twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and hundreds of First Nations advocates joined Indigenous leaders from around the globe at the Adaptation Futures Conference in Montreal.


The Joint Committee on Climate Action (JCCA) met three times in 2023: two meetings in Ottawa, and one meeting in Wendake, Québec at the Hôtel-Musée Premières Nations. Each meeting offered an opportunity for relationships to be strengthened and re-established, demonstrating collective aspirations to advance First Nations Climate Leadership in federal climate policy and programming.

The JCCA Annual Report, detailing the full journey through this sixth year of collaboration, is organized into three sections:

- Introduction from the Co-Chairs
- Strengthening First Nations Climate Leadership - 2023 Action
- Our Path Forward in 2024

The second section, *Strengthening First Nations Climate Leadership*, summarizes the main activities and key takeaways, highlighting the role of the JCCA in accelerating positive, rights-based climate outcomes. A key area of focus during the year was the discussion of the outcomes and





experiences of the five-year review, a process committed to exploring the strengths and possible areas of improvement for the Committee. The section has maintained the practice of identifying key takeaways to capture enhanced implementation by federal governments, supporting the fair and funded participation of First Nations in climate action, while also maintaining transparency by annexing the previous year's takeaways (see Annex A).

The third and final section, *Our Path Forward*, looks to 2024, outlining five priority areas:

- 1. Advancing First Nations Climate Leadership**
- 2. Continuing to develop First Nations-specific indicators/criteria to report on the implementation of climate-related federal funding programs and outcomes for First Nations**
- 3. Strengthening the intergenerational and intersectional dialogue**
- 4. Updating and reviewing the JCCA Mandate**
- 5. Enhancing transparency and broadening the reach of the JCCA**

In 2024, the JCCA will take positive action to advance these priorities, in parallel to the ongoing work of the AFN National Climate Strategy. The Assembly of First Nations, the Government of Canada, and all JCCA members remain committed to a rights-based approach to climate action, recognizing and empowering First Nations to be climate leaders through their self-determined actions.




## Introduction from the Co-Chairs

As we reflect on our past year of work at the First Nations-Canada Joint Committee on Climate Action (JCCA), we express our deep gratitude to those who have supported our collaborative efforts to advance First Nations Climate Leadership and build a stronger partnership between First Nations and the federal government on climate action. The JCCA was established in 2017 and has experienced significant growth and development over the last six years of discussion. As Co-Chairs of the JCCA, we hear directly from our members about their priorities, challenges, and concerns and we have been privileged to learn about the inspiring initiatives underway to protect the lands, waters, and ice that have sustained First Nations since time immemorial.


Over the course of 2023, we experienced another year of severe climate impacts across the country. Canada experienced the worst wildfire season on record with wildfires burning from Nova Scotia to British Columbia, extending all the way into northern Yukon and the Northwest Territories. In total, over fifteen million hectares were burned. Wildfire smoke extended across Canada and beyond our borders into the United States. These impacts aren't exclusive to North America; severe flooding occurred in multiple countries, such as Libya, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda. Amidst this backdrop, First Nations advocates joined over 100 Indigenous leaders from across the country, representatives from all levels of government and more than 127 countries at the Adaptation Futures Conference hosted by Canada in Montreal in October, to gather and discuss opportunities to address climate change adaptation. The participation of Indigenous Peoples, including artists, and the emphasis on including Indigenous voices and knowledge in numerous sessions were a key part of the conference.

In December, government representatives, Indigenous Peoples from around the world, and a broad range of participants assembled in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, to attend COP28 of the UNFCCC, also known as the 2023 UN Climate Change Conference. The key area of discussion was the outcome of the Global Stocktake, a process to collectively reflect on progress and propose further action to uphold the Paris Agreement's goal to limit the global average temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. For the first time, consensus was reached on transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems.

Alongside negotiations at COP28, many events were held that continued to uplift the distinct contribution of Indigenous Peoples, including the Annual Knowledge Holders Gathering and the Indigenous youth roundtable, as well as a dedicated day for Indigenous Peoples on December 5th. Canada hosted a Canada Pavilion again, creating space for Indigenous Peoples throughout the two weeks of programming, including an Indigenous Climate Leadership Day on December 4th, which was organized in collaboration between Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and representatives of the AFN, the Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, and the Métis National Council.









The combination of these realities suggest we may be entering a new phase in our fight against climate change and the broader shift to living in greater balance with the natural world. It is clearer than ever that the leadership of First Nations is essential to finding a path forward to a just, equitable, and resilient future.

During 2023, the JCCA held three productive meetings that touched on a wide range of important issues, including discussions on how the Committee undertakes its work and the shared priorities we are seeking to address. All three meetings were held in a hybrid format, two in Ottawa and one in a First Nation region, enabling those members who were able to travel in person to benefit from the opportunity to build stronger connections again. The regional meeting was held in Wendake, QC at the Hotel-Musée Premières Nations and provided participants with an opportunity to hear directly from Québec and Labrador Regional Chief Ghislain Picard on the interwoven challenges of the climate and biodiversity crises.

The JCCA members are aware of the urgency and critical importance of the work the Committee is undertaking with the goal of advancing the First Nations Climate Lens in a way that guides the transition to a 'net-zero' economy through the uplifting of First Nations' self-determination, the alleviation of socio-economic inequities, and the full implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples ('UN Declaration'). This work enables the ethical and equitable engagement of Indigenous Knowledge systems in national climate policy through appropriate governance arrangements and upholds the Treaty and inherent rights of First Nations. The JCCA is an important space for identifying barriers, finding mutually beneficial solutions, and advancing joint climate priorities.

As part of our JCCA discussions in 2023, we had an opportunity to recognize the significant progress made by the AFN to advance First Nations climate solutions. Since 2019, the AFN has been working on the development of a National Climate Strategy ('Climate Strategy'), through two National Climate Gatherings, national and regional webinars, and two nation-wide surveys. In July 2023, First Nations-in-Assembly passed Resolution 36/2023, *Urgent and Transformative Climate Action through the AFN National Climate Strategy*, endorsing the AFN National Climate Strategy and reaffirming the declaration of a First Nations Climate Emergency from Resolution 05/2019, *Declaring a First Nations Climate Emergency*. After this important engagement with First Nations rights and title holders, the Climate Strategy was formally released on October 18, 2023. The Strategy contains seven priority areas, alongside 108 different strategies and actions. Underpinning the Climate Strategy is the First Nations Climate Lens which contains four circles – *Natural Law, Worldviews, Lived Reality, and Context*, encompassing four concentric spheres of activity to bring into focus the relationships between Natural Law, First Nations' climate impacts, climate action, and the broader climate landscape, and





emphasizing the role of First Nations as climate leaders and active drivers of transformative change. Together, they bring into focus First Nations climate solutions. Aligning the work of the JCCA with the Climate Strategy's priority areas will be key to advancing First Nations Climate Leadership within federal and international climate policy discussions.

In the coming pages, we adopt a similar format to previous Annual Reports. We begin with an overview of JCCA's progress in 2023, uplifting the discussions contained within the First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda process, as well as exploring the implementation of the *UN Declaration Act* into federal climate policy and programmes. A specific focus of the year was the completion of a 5-year review of the JCCA, assessing the group's successes, challenges, and opportunities to continue growing as a joint table. The process clearly demonstrated that, despite areas for improvement, all members shared a strong commitment to continuing the JCCA and strengthening its role in creating space for First Nations within federal climate policy.

After reporting on accomplishments for 2023, we explore the five priority areas of work that the JCCA identified for 2024. We encourage you to read the four regional Case Stories with care, as we continue to uplift examples of First Nations leading climate action in their lands, waters, and territories.

After more than five years of collaboration, we remain strongly committed to the ongoing work of the JCCA and working in partnership to achieve meaningful action on climate change, guided by the rights, knowledge systems, and solutions of First Nations.

**Tonio Sadik, PhD - Senior Director  
Environment, Lands &  
Water,  
Assembly of First Nations**

**Vincent Ngan - Assistant Deputy  
Minister, Climate Change  
Branch,  
Environment and Climate  
Change Canada**





## **Strengthening First Nations Climate**

### **Leadership – 2023 Actions**

Throughout 2023, members of the JCCA continued to collaborate on a broad range of climate priorities. Continuing the practice of in-person meetings in 2023 facilitated closer connections between First Nations and federal government participants. A special highlight was the reinstatement of regional meetings, where the JCCA met in Wendake, Québec, demonstrating the reality of First Nations and assisting in long-term relationship building among participants. In parallel to the activities of the JCCA, First Nations' presence in international fora, such as the 2023 UN Climate Change Conference (COP 28), and the release of the AFN's National Climate Strategy offered tangible opportunities to highlight the role of First Nations in advancing climate action.

**Within the 2022 Annual Report, the JCCA set the following five priorities for 2023:**

- Review federal clean growth and climate change policy and programs through the First Nations Climate Lens
- Empower First Nations leadership in climate action
- Foster greater transparency, accountability, and communication in JCCA activities
- Continue to develop First Nations-specific indicators/criteria to report on the implementation of climate-related federal funding programs and outcomes for First Nations
- Deepen the intergenerational and intersectional dialogue on climate change in all activities



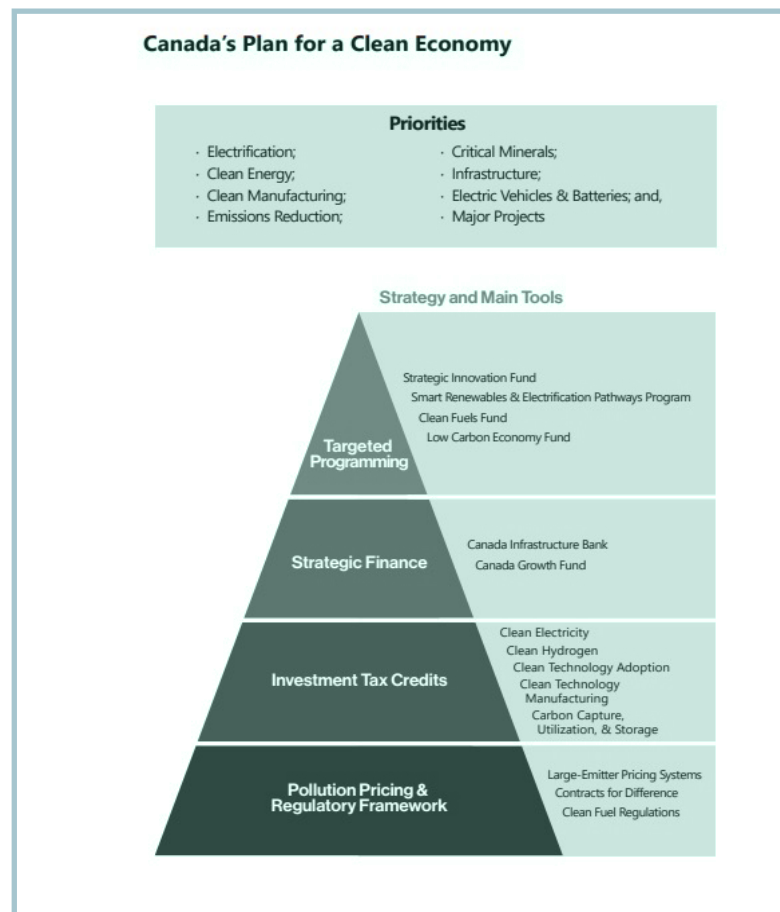
## 1. Review federal clean growth and climate change policy and programs through the First Nations Climate Lens

A longstanding focus of the JCCA has been the review of federal clean growth and climate policy and programs, having jointly developed several documents such as the Best Practices Guide for Federal Departments Working with First Nations on Climate Change (see [JCCA 2020 Annual Report: Annex 2](#)) and the [Indigenous Climate Leadership Decision-Making Guidance](#) that aim to improve federal processes and outcomes for First Nations. In the [2022 Annual Report](#), several Key Takeaways for the implementation of these documents were identified, including:

- the deployment of these guides in federal departments engaged in climate change and clean growth policy and program development, including in the implementation of the National Adaptation Strategy (NAS);
- the development of guidance for the preparation of the 2023, 2025, and 2027 Emission Reduction Plan (ERP) progress reports; and
- for federal departments to operation to realize the work of the JCCA in the development of new climate initiatives, as well as to identify concrete ways of enabling meaningful and respectful engagement (e.g., funding, reasonable timelines, capacity support, relationship-building).

While the JCCA is continuing to make ongoing progress on these commitments, federal representatives acknowledge that there are still significant barriers to enabling the meaningful and respectful engagement of First Nations in climate policy and regulatory processes. In many cases, federal departments still cannot offer adequate engagement funding, may be constrained by tight timelines and colonial processes for seeking First Nations feedback, and may lack tools and resources to support relationship-building with First Nations. While certain departments have been successful in implementing best practices with respect to program delivery, a lot of work is still needed to fully apply these same principles to the advancement of the federal government's key clean growth and climate plans and policies, which are summarized in Figure 1. Throughout JCCA meetings in 2023, First Nation representatives noted that First Nations perspectives, worldviews, and experiences are still not well-represented in the proposed approach for achieving Canada's transition to a net-zero economy.






**Figure 1.**

*Source: Budget 2023, Government of Canada*

More specifically, the JCCA held important discussions on elements of the above-mentioned plan and the broader clean-growth priorities identified in Budget 2023, including the design and implementation of targeted programming (e.g. related to the Low Carbon Economy Fund and clean energy initiatives under Wah-Ila-Toos), the impacts of carbon pricing generally, and broad concerns related to the government's broader regulatory framework. Many JCCA members noted that clean growth initiatives are continuing to be advanced in ways that are not respectful of First Nations rights and governance systems, particularly with respect to clean electricity, critical minerals, and major projects, many of which have the potential to affect First Nations lands and waters.

As a result, the JCCA remains committed to continuing to advance First Nations Climate Leadership and further aligning federal climate action with implementation of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (UNDA).



**Key Takeaway:** The JCCA will continue to explore mechanisms to support federal officials in applying the First Nations Climate Lens to the design, implementation, and evaluation of federal climate policies and programs. This includes the ongoing work associated with the development of the First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda.

## National Adaptation Strategy

Following the public release of the National Adaptation Strategy (NAS), a Working Group of JCCA members sought to develop a series of First Nations targets and indicators to inform the implementation of the NAS, as well as the development of its monitoring and evaluation framework. The Working Group noted several concerns with the existing targets, proposing additions that reflected the ethical engagement with First Nations' knowledge systems and science; the need to reflect First Nations' role in emergency management, including support for prevention; First Nations' perspectives and understandings of health and well-being; and First Nations' traditional economies. These recommendations informed the addition of two new targets in the NAS to address the infrastructure gap and access to tools for addressing climate risks, as well as the amendment of existing targets to ensure that Indigenous partners were specifically included. These recommendations will continue to inform the advancement of First Nations indicators in the ongoing development of the monitoring and evaluation framework of the NAS. Other conversations from the Working Group and from the broader JCCA included the promotion of existing frameworks (such as the [NAS Guiding Principles](#) and the [Indigenous Climate Leadership Decision-Making Guidance](#)) to inform the design and implementation of federal adaptation programs; developing concrete guidance on incorporating NAS Guiding Principles into decision-making on adaptation policies/programs; and leveraging new governance structures to ensure NAS guiding principles inform priority setting/decision making.

**Key Takeaway:** Explore additional opportunities in the implementation of the NAS to advance First Nation adaptation priorities and efforts, and to align policy development and program eligibility in a way that upholds the minimum standards of UNDRIP as well as JCCA guidance including the Best Practices Guide for Federal Departments Working with First Nations on Climate Change (see [JCCA 2020 Annual Report: Annex 2](#)), as well as the [Indigenous Climate Leadership Decision-Making Guidance](#).






## Carbon Pricing

Recognizing the long-standing concerns that First Nations have expressed around the federal government's approach to carbon pricing and requests for an exemption to the federal fuel charge for First Nations, the JCCA's objective in 2023 was to explore options for respectful JCCA engagement on this issue. A joint presentation was shared that noted some of the key issues that have previously been raised regarding the federal approach to carbon pricing and provided a high-level overview of current opportunities for partnership/engagement. During the meeting in June, representatives from ECCC provided an update on the return of fuel charge proceeds to First Nations in jurisdictions where federal fuel charge programming is in effect and discussed the opportunity to work collaboratively on a research proposal to explore carbon pricing impacts on First Nations communities and households. Carbon pricing remains a sensitive and critically important issue, with the Chiefs of Ontario and Attawapiskat First Nation submitting an application for Judicial Review of the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act in December 2023. As the legal process moves forward, there may be ongoing opportunities to share information and perspectives on carbon pricing at future JCCA meetings.

## Low Carbon Economy Fund - Indigenous Leadership Fund (LCEF-ILF)

During the JCCA's February 2023 meeting, ECCC presented an update on the LCEF-ILF and requested JCCA input on governance options for making decisions over which First Nations projects should be funded with the available First Nations set-aside of \$73.9M over six years. With program funding set to end in 2029, ECCC sought feedback regarding First Nations' needs during and after the program and committed to working with partners to track and understand funding gaps. ECCC emphasized that efforts would be made to prevent projects being driven by industry over community interests and to explore how to apply UNDRIP to LCEF-ILF, for example by ensuring that projects are Indigenous-led, and that they are not required to contribute to federally established GHG-related targets.

A challenging but necessary discussion accompanied the presentation, during which First Nations appointees presented many concerns in response to Canada's approach, especially with regards to the allocation of funding, as well as the level of support required for deeper engagement at a community level. Issues were also raised about program accessibility and equity for those communities needing more support, where project planning and community-based decision-making is a challenge in the context of insufficient funding.

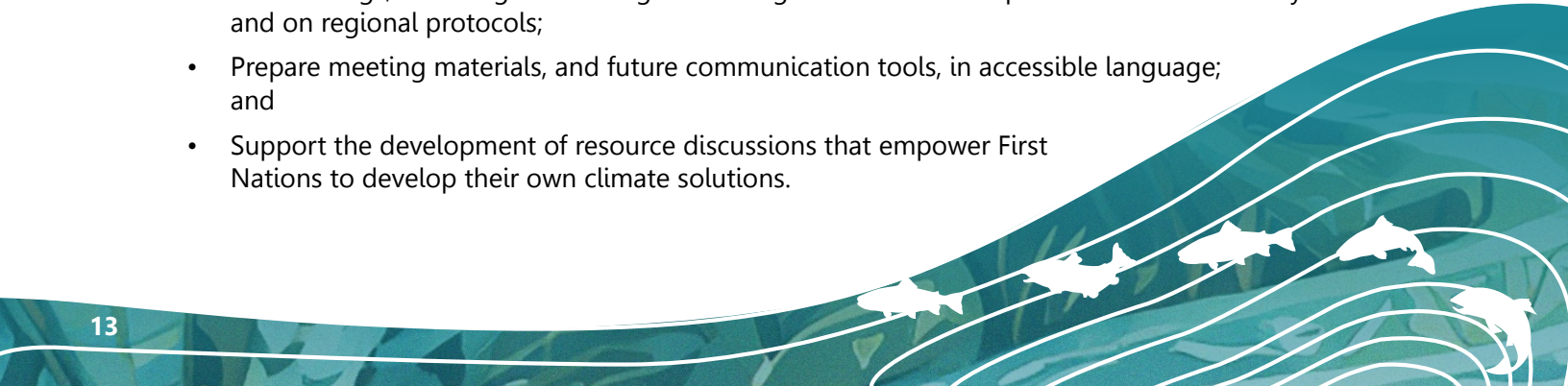


First Nations members of the JCCA recommended that a separate governance committee for LCEF-ILF be established, which would report back regarding the allocation of \$73.9M in funding for First Nations-led projects from 2023-24 to 2028-29. They also recommended that questions of governance be taken to the leadership of First Nations.


As follow-up to this discussion, consideration might be given as to whether the First Nations Climate Leadership agenda could address gaps in funding support. NRCan and CIRNAC shared additional information on Wah-Ila-Toos Initiative, which is leading a separate funding hub (\$283M) to support clean energy initiatives (e.g., biomass, wind, hydro) in Indigenous, rural, and remote communities that are not connected to the grid. The intent is to respond to self-determined needs of First Nations and the particulars of projects, with a requirement that projects lead to fossil fuel displacement. A Governing Board, comprised of external Indigenous representatives and federal representatives from NRCan, CIRNAC, and ISC, was set up to provide endorsement for projects to be funded.

## UNDA Action Plan

Throughout its meetings and activities in 2023, the JCCA spent considerable time exploring the implications of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (UNDA), including the priority action measures outlined in the [UNDA Action Plan](#). This discussion predated the formal release of the UNDA Action Plan (June 2023) to explore the opportunities presented within the implementation of UNDA for those federal departments that participate in the JCCA. Focused conversations were held on the five items identified in the Path Forward section of the JCCA's 2022 Annual Report and explored their potential to respond to components of the UNDA. Key recommendations generated through this exercise were to:

- Develop guidance materials, with corresponding training, to support federal officials in implementing the articles of the UN Declaration into federal clean growth and climate policy and programs;
  - Strengthen discussions and materials that deepen the intergenerational and intersectional dialogue, including a special focus on First Nations youth, women, and gender-diverse individuals;
  - Empower First Nations leadership in climate action both in substance, but also in design of the meetings, including the hosting of meetings in First Nations spaces based in ceremony and on regional protocols;
  - Prepare meeting materials, and future communication tools, in accessible language; and
  - Support the development of resource discussions that empower First Nations to develop their own climate solutions.
- 





Following these discussions, the UNDA Action Plan was released in June 2023 and includes Measure #46, which focuses on advancing the Indigenous Climate Leadership Agenda, building on the First Nations Climate Leadership process that the JCCA has helped move forward for the past several years. These constructive discussions on the UN Declaration were helpful in considering how the JCCA internalizes activities linked to the implementation of UNDA and their connections to federal revisions of climate policies and programs. This work will continue in 2024 as part of the federal government's broader commitment to reconciliation and its simultaneous efforts to advance decarbonization and decolonization.

**Key Takeaway:** The JCCA will continue to explore the implications and mechanisms for advancing UNDA implementation in its work, including through the development of concrete additional products to support the design, implementation, and evaluation of federal clean growth and climate change policies.



## REGIONAL CASE STORY #1

### Historical Forest Fire Season in Québec First Nations

For the First Nations of Québec, the climate challenge is significant: coastal erosion and submersion, flooding, change in the abundance and distribution of species, loss of ancestral sites, food insecurity, health problems, etc .



*Photo of fire 334 taken on June 6, 2023 © SOPFEU | Geneviève Poirier*

But this year, in the summer and fall of 2023, Quebec experienced a historic forest fire season. Fires devastated over 4.5 million hectares, which represents more than the sum of the last 20 years. The Cree, Atikamekw, Anishinabe Algonquin, and Innu Nations were the most affected by the fires. Several communities had to declare a state of emergency and more than 10,000 people, within thirteen communities, were evacuated.

Fortunately, there is currently no loss of human life. But the fires resulted in unprecedented losses of hunting cabins and cultural infrastructures, as well as some outfitters. During the fires, we saw a lot of mutual aid between communities. Some made all the arrangements to welcome the evacuated sister communities: Chisasibi welcomed Wemindji and Pessamit welcomed Uashat mak Mani-utenam. The Wabanaki (formerly Grand Waban Aki Nation Council) also offered support to communities to set up clean-air shelters and provide respite for members.

These fires will have other direct and indirect impacts, notably on water quality, the protection of caribou, and the economic benefits of communities. Moreover, these forest fires are a direct consequence of the combination of several events related to climate changes, including droughts, extreme heat, increased winds, and the general intensity of weather systems. It is estimated that nearly 30 million cubic metres of wood were burned in Québec in 2023. The 2024 season, influenced by El Niño, is anticipated to continue the warm and dry trend, which could further exacerbate these impacts.



## 2. Empower First Nations leadership in climate action

In 2023, the work on advancing First Nations leadership in climate action continued in earnest. The release of the [AFN National Climate Strategy](#), based on endorsement from the First Nations-in-Assembly at the Annual General Assembly in July 2023, outlined seven priority areas (described in Figure 2), each with their own specific goal, a set of objectives, and a detailed list of strategies and actions. Altogether, the strategy presents 107 strategies and actions, each complemented with recommendations for implementation partners. To achieve the vision set out in the Climate Strategy, the First Nations-in-Assembly were clear that federal, provincial, and territorial governments must work directly and in full partnership with First Nations rights and title holders to implement self-determined First Nations climate priorities. This includes providing sufficient and sustainable funding for each First Nation. The JCCA received a presentation on the specifics of the Climate Strategy in November 2023, following its official release in October 2023, and are now exploring how these priorities can inform the ongoing work of the JCCA, in all relevant areas.

### Seven Priority areas

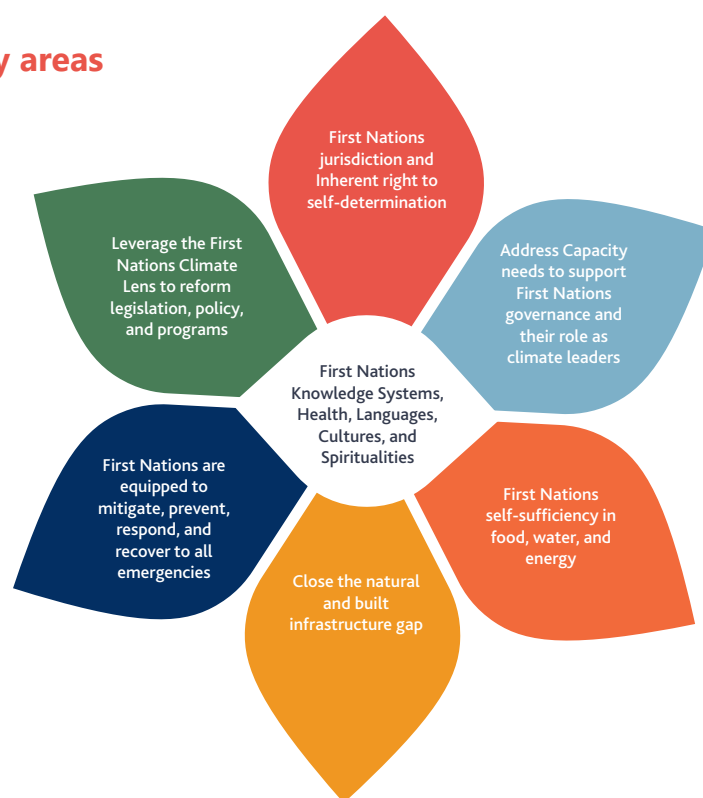



Figure 2: Seven Priority Areas in the AFN National Climate Strategy



In addition, the shared efforts to advance the FNCL Agenda picked up in 2023, as Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) and ECCC worked with First Nation regional leads to distribute funds for regionally-led engagement processes. The first stage of formal FNCL engagement activities was launched in March 2023 through a Leaders meeting between AFN Regional Chief Kluane Adamek, the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, and the Honourable Marc Miller, the former Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations. This work continued to be informed by members of the FNCL Steering Committee, which was established in 2022 under the FNCL Governance Framework that identifies the key principles and processes for advancing this initiative.

The first of three National meetings on FNCL was held in Vancouver from May 2-5, 2023. The National meeting was the first opportunity for First Nation Regional Leads to come together in person and discuss the scope, timelines, and outcomes of the FNCL Agenda process. A proposal was brought forward to include additional First Nation leaders and federal Ministers in the next FNCL Leaders meeting planned for 2024. A meeting summary and graphic recording of the meeting was prepared to inform the ongoing work of the Steering Committee.

Regular updates were also provided to JCCA members throughout the year on the FNCL engagement process and the broader Indigenous Climate Leadership initiative.<sup>1</sup> Throughout various discussions, it was clearly communicated by First Nations partners that a comprehensive approach to FNCL that avoids the siloing of issues is important for the success of this initiative. Further FNCL Steering Committee meetings took place in September and November 2023, building upon the first National meeting. Key elements, timelines, and processes of the FNCL Steering Committee were explored and a governance and accountability framework were developed. The FNCL regional leads network is beneficial to continuing to direct the national process, to understand what is successful in regional work, and to share best practices. This FNCL work includes self-governing First Nations, and discussions are ongoing regarding how best to reflect their unique positions in this work.

**Key Takeaway:** As a part of the Implementation phase of the National Climate Strategy, AFN is working in partnership with the Advisory Chiefs Committee on Climate Action (ACE) to develop an implementation plan. AFN will also be hosting the 3<sup>rd</sup> National Climate Gathering in Calgary, Alberta, on October 7-10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, to further these discussions.

<sup>1</sup> For example, the AFN and other National Indigenous Organizations provided input to an overview section on Indigenous Climate Leadership in the 2023 Progress Report on the [2030 Emissions Reduction Plan](#), which was a federal document prepared with input from First Nations, Inuit and Métis partners. A dedicated section on Indigenous Climate Leadership recognized the importance of improving the partnership between First Nations and the federal government on climate change.





### 3. Foster greater transparency, accountability, and communication in JCCA activities

All three meetings of the JCCA in 2023 were held in person, with hybrid capacities. This was important for the JCCA to reestablish in-person relationships that helped advance the components of a made-by-JCCA Ethical Space.<sup>2</sup> A key area of discussion revolved around how to leverage the new JCCA website (which is near completion) to improve members' engagement with the work of the JCCA and make it easier to share updates and distribute products, including the Annual Report. We continue to consider additional ways to communicate the Committee's work to First Nations and to support their process of influencing policies and programs. This year, we have considered what alternate formats of the Annual Report may look like, including translating the Annual Report into Indigenous languages, developing visual methods of presenting the Annual Report such as videos and infographic material, and socializing the work of the JCCA by presenting the Annual Report to different audiences. In addition, there is strong interest from JCCA members in seeking feedback and guidance from the Prime Minister and National Chief on the work of the JCCA and its priorities.

#### JCCA Website

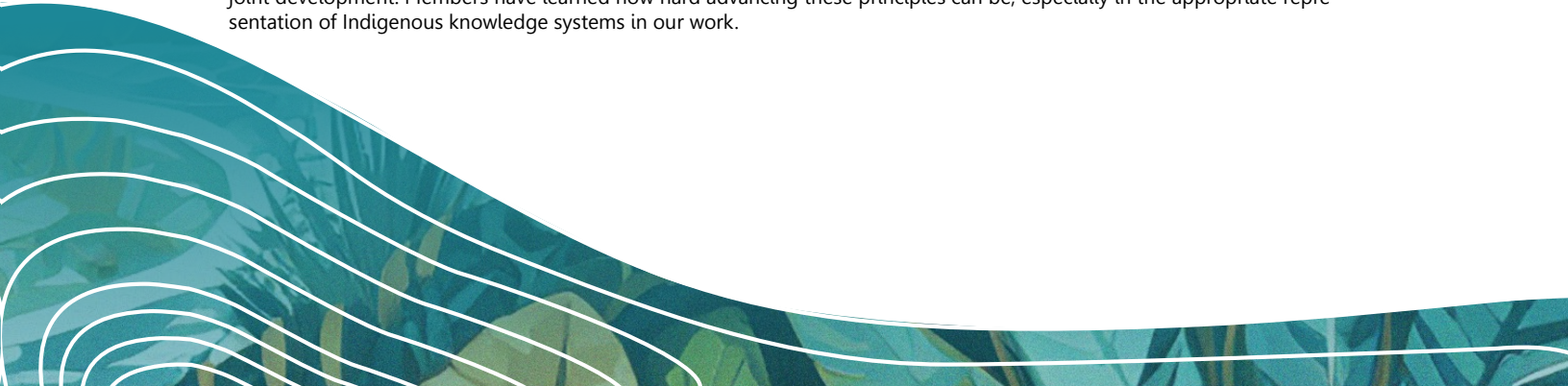
An important focus for the JCCA in 2023 has been the ongoing development of the JCCA's new public facing website, housed on the AFN website, to promote transparency and communicate the work of the JCCA. Noteworthy progress was made over the course of 2023 towards finalizing the JCCA website, including several presentations of the wireframe to JCCA members for their reflections and comments. The website has four sections: Our Work; First Nations in a Changing Climate; Membership and Governance; and Working Together. The JCCA is now considering how to launch and socialize the website to elected officials, government officials, First Nations, and other relevant actors.


#### Five-Year Review

In recognition of the lessons learned over the first five years of JCCA operation (2017 to 2021), the

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<sup>2</sup> The JCCA has been facilitated by a significant and ongoing investment of time in development of an Ethical Space - a concept that the JCCA believes is a journey that will require time, commitment, the building of relationships, and flexibility, guided by the teachings of Elder Dr. Reg Crowshoe of the Piikani Nation. Five guiding principles have emerged to orient the Committee's work: a rights-based approach, trust and kindness, mutual respect and fairness, good faith and honesty, and joint development. Members have learned how hard advancing these principles can be, especially in the appropriate representation of Indigenous knowledge systems in our work.





JCCA engaged in a structured review of its modes of operation, the relationships that have been built, and any tangible (or intangible) outcomes. This process was led by a former member of the JCCA, Mark Hopkins, and involved a series of interviews (nearly 20 in total), in-depth discussions at two JCCA meetings in June and October, and a review of Annual Reports and Records of Discussions. The process was conducted in the spirit of Ethical Space, seeking opportunities to reflect on areas of stronger and more limited progress, and exploring opportunities to improve the content and functioning of the JCCA for the next five years. Key objectives of this process were to describe JCCA members' views of its impact over the past five years and areas to change that might help it maintain relevance and extend its impact. The outcomes of this exercise will inform concrete proposals for updating the JCCA's mandate and operations in advance of the proposed meeting between the National Chief and the Prime Minister.

In general, the JCCA five-year review process reflected strong support for the mission of the JCCA, but also recognized the challenges ahead. The next five years will be a consequential period for climate action in Canada and globally. And as JCCA members chart a way forward, there are three broad challenges to be answered:

- How to amplify the JCCA's impact by making connections outside the JCCA, particularly to senior decision-making levels within the federal government, but also within the AFN and in regions and communities?
- How to maintain and strengthen the practices which have progressively centred conversation around First Nations rights, knowledge systems, and the right to self-determination? and
- How to manage the growth of the JCCA in a way that does not overwhelm its processes or its participants?

The five-year review process generated a broad range of recommendations and potential measures for positioning the Committee to continue playing a meaningful and productive role in advancing partnerships between First Nations and the federal government on climate change and clean growth.

**Key Takeaway:** Explore opportunities to internalize the five-year review recommendations and findings, with a focus on updating and modifying the way JCCA meetings are designed and organized, propose potential updates to membership, and consider potential improvements for managing the meeting agendas.





## REGIONAL CASE STORY #2

### British Columbia Spiritual Knowledge Keepers Gathering on Climate Change

The BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), with the vision and leadership of Chief Darrel Bob (Xaxli'p First Nation), brought together Knowledge Keepers from across BC in ceremony to Tsleil Waututh territory from November 17-19, 2023. The Gathering discussed the roots of climate change, its impacts on the Land and all living beings, as well as solutions and responsibilities.

The Knowledge Keepers shared personal experiences, stories, prophecies, songs, and teachings to support healing and guide our collective work on climate change, particularly the implementation of the [BC First Nations Climate Strategy and Action Plan](#) and the [BC First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda](#). Alongside the Spiritual Knowledge Keepers, drummers, and dancers, more than 80 observers from Provincial and Federal governments, First Nations, the private sector, NGOs, and academia joined to witness, listen, heal, reflect, and carry back the teachings to their lives, workspaces, and communities.

*"We need to come together as one, connect Nation-to-Nation, and dismantle silos. There are too many silos, but only one Mother Earth."*

-Chief Darrell Bob, Xax'lip First Nation

The Gathering provided an important ceremonial space to guide our work on climate change and move forward on healing ourselves, the Land, and Mother Earth. The Knowledge Keepers emphasized that climate change is just a symptom of a larger problem of humans placing themselves above other beings in a hierarchy of existence. There was a consistent message: We are one with the Land. We are the same as the grasshopper, the squirrel, the bear, the trees, and the rocks. Hereditary Chief Dr. Robert Joseph, Gwawaenuk Tribe shared that "there's room for us, the people that care about Mother Earth...It's spiritual, not just scientific."



*"Ceremony is how we maintain the connection to Mother Earth and all living beings."*

-Knowledge Keeper Shane Point, Musqueam Nation

As the world moves towards irreversible destruction, the Knowledge Keepers were clear in their mandate: we need bold action to restore the natural balance and reciprocal relationships with Mother Earth, our decisions must be rooted in ceremony with Seven Generations in mind, solving this crisis doesn't start in science, it starts in our hearts, and policy development and reform must be focused on healing and building true relationships with each other, and guided by First Nations values, natural laws, teachings, and traditional ways of knowing.

*"We have to be humble! We don't own the earth, we need to take care of it. This doesn't belong to me. It belongs to the people, to Creation."*

-Robert Nahanee, Squamish Nation Elder







#### 4. Continue to develop First Nations-specific indicators/criteria to report on the implementation of climate-related federal funding programs and outcomes for First Nations

Recognizing the continued commitment and strong interest in this work as an ongoing priority for the JCCA, federal JCCA members undertook significant internal work in 2023 to advance understanding of federal climate expenditures and how grants and contribution funding have been distributed to First Nations. This work was not shared with JCCA members in 2023, but an update was provided on the analysis and research being undertaken at the November 2023 meeting of the JCCA. It is anticipated that the outcomes of this analysis will be presented at planned JCCA meetings and FNCL meetings in 2024, with further research and discussions to be undertaken as needed. JCCA members continue to express strong interest in better understanding the federal funding landscape for clean growth and climate change, and what First Nations outcomes have been associated with federal climate programs to date.

The expenditures analysis undertaken in 2023 by federal officials builds on the inventory of Indigenous climate and environment funding programs ([Indigenous climate and environmental funding - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/indigenousaffairs/page/indigenous-climate-and-environmental-funding)), which continues to be updated on a semi-annual basis. While this remains an important resource, some JCCA members have expressed interest in creating a visual overview of the federal governments' climate programs. Further consideration as to how to best represent and share this information will be explored and could align with recommendations flowing from the JCCA's 5-year review exercise, UNDA implementation discussions, and the FNCL engagement process. While efforts to track and gather information on the status of unsuccessful climate funding applications have been challenging due to limited information available across federal departments, there may be ongoing opportunities for dialogue with federal program leads as part of the FNCL process to better understand potential barriers to First Nations applicants.

**Key Takeaway:** Further discussions at the JCCA will be needed in 2024 to explore what indicators and information are currently available, to take stock of the federal analysis undertaken on climate expenditures in 2023, and to consider gaps and follow-up work may be required to track progress and results for the JCCA.



## 5. Deepen the intergenerational and intersectional dialogue on climate change in all activities

In 2023, the JCCA continued to explore options to meaningfully include the unique perspectives of youth, Elders, women, Knowledge Keepers, gender-diverse and other intersectional identities within the JCCA's work. Each of the meetings in 2023 closed with youth sharing circles enabling youth to connect with one another and share their perspectives on the agenda and discussions. The conversations and ideas from these meetings create space for youth to meaningfully participate in the JCCA and ensure that they are comfortable sharing. Key messages from youth circles include:

- Support is needed for youth representatives joining the JCCA, including briefing sessions, pre-meetings, and daily check-ins;
- Deliberate space should be provided within the meetings for youth representatives to share their perspective in a supported way;
- Strategies should be put in place to address the tokenization of Indigenous youth, including how to ensure they are appropriately briefed and prepared for the subject-matter discussions, additional support for regional First Nations youth, and appropriate support from Elders and knowledge holders; and
- Resources should be created to introduce intersectional and gender-diverse approaches into the discussion.

In addition, Elder Lorraine Netro continued to play an important role throughout 2023 to provide direction to the Table and offer spiritual and cultural guidance to all JCCA members through her kind and generous leadership and the sharing of her stories.





## REGIONAL CASE STORY #3

### The Nagwichoonjik Water Summit 2023

On March 13 - 17, 2023, delegates from the Dene Nation, Inuvialuit, North Slave Metis Alliance (NSMA), and Northwest Territory Métis Nation met in Inuvik to attend the Dene Nation Nagwichoonjik Water Summit. The Water Summit was called to address the many outstanding concerns and issues associated with water in the north, including the recent tailings pond spill from the Alberta Tar Sands. Dene, Métis, and Inuit traditional lands cover approximately 20% of Canada's land mass and 25% of the Boreal Forest. These homelands, which are Treaty 8 and Treaty 11 lands and the homelands of the Inuvialuit, include the Mackenzie River watershed to the coastal waters of the Arctic Ocean between the Yukon/NWT border and Kugluktuk, Nunavut.

A monumental, joint statement between the Dene Nation, Inuvialuit and Northwest Territory Métis Nation was released, outlining shared concerns, recommendations, and guidance on how to move forward. The full statement, as well as other relevant work at the Summit, can be found here: [Nagwichoonjik Water Summit](#).

Of note, the Statement touched on the following points relevant to the work of the JCCA:

- The respect and inclusion of Traditional/Indigenous Knowledge to better understand the impacts on our lands and waters, and to guide any future studies;
- The full participation of Dene, Inuvialuit, and Northwest Territory Métis Nation as leaders on all transboundary water issues;
- Seeking commitments from Canada, Alberta, and other respective governments, including support for Indigenous-led monitoring efforts, accountability from Alberta and industry on monitoring and management of tailing ponds, and investigation of downstream impacts of tar sands pollution on water and air quality and human health; and
- The development of a database for sharing observations among our peoples on climate change and its impacts on our lands and waters.

A second Water Summit will be hosted in the coming years.





## Our Path Forward in 2024

Recognizing the significant commitment of First Nations and the federal government to strengthen the effectiveness of the JCCA and ensure its relevance, the following priorities have been identified for 2024:


- Advancing First Nations Climate Leadership
- Continuing to develop First Nations-specific indicators/criteria to report on the implementation of climate-related federal funding programs and outcomes for First Nations
- Strengthening the intergenerational and intersectional dialogue
- Updating and reviewing the JCCA Mandate
- Enhancing transparency and broadening the reach of the JCCA

### 1. Advancing First Nations Climate Leadership

The concept of First Nations Climate Leadership (FNCL) has been a key guiding principle for the JCCA's work, both with respect to reviewing and commenting on federal clean growth and climate policy, and creating space for distinct, First Nations-led solutions and proposals. This will continue to be a key priority in 2024, reflecting on the convergence between the implementation of the AFN National Climate Strategy, the FNCL Agenda, and the ongoing implementation of the UNDA. Key to this convergence, the JCCA will identify and jointly develop recommendations for how to operationalize changes to the partnership between First Nations and the federal government on climate and consider how these changes can influence broader federal climate policy and programs, such as carbon pricing. Recognizing this convergence, the JCCA will focus on the following priorities for 2024:

- Support engagement and decision-making processes related to the implementation of the NAS, carbon pricing, and other relevant initiatives that uphold the minimum standards of UNDRIP, and align with JCCA-specific guidance, including the *Best Practices Guide for Federal Departments Working with First Nations on Climate Change* (see [JCCA 2020 Annual Report: Annex 2](#)) and the [Indigenous Climate Leadership Decision-Making Guidance](#).
- Explore how to support the implementation of the AFN National Climate Strategy, including the 107 strategies and actions, within the work of the JCCA, and within federal climate policy and programs.







The objective of this work in 2024 will be to enhance, not detract from, work to improve existing federal climate and climate adjacent policy and programs. A key element of this will be the ongoing collaboration to finalize and move into implementation of the FNCL Agenda, which offers an important mechanism for the advancement of self-determined climate action that uplifts First Nations-led priorities. The JCCA expects that the partnership to develop the FNCL Agenda will remain a significant area of work for the upcoming year, with a view to finalizing recommendations and moving forward incrementally on their implementation.

- In 2024, regional and community-level engagement workshops will continue to be undertaken by First Nations Regional Leads, with the support, where relevant, of the FNCL Steering Committee. Engagement will focus on identifying regional and local barriers and priorities for a FNCL Agenda and to inform the development of recommendations by the end of 2024-25.
- In 2024, federal departments and AFN will work together to organize and prepare for the next meeting of Ministers and First Nations leaders on efforts to advance FNCL.

## **2. Continuing to develop First Nations-specific indicators & criteria to report on the implementation of climate-related federal funding programs and outcomes for First Nations**

Dating back to the 2021 JCCA Annual Report, and mirrored in the 2022 JCCA Annual Report, there has been great ambition for this area of work, recognizing the importance of being able to measure progress regarding the implementation of climate-related federal funding programs and outcomes for First Nations. The JCCA did not significantly advance this work in 2022 or 2023, however work has continued within the context of the FNCL Agenda process. The Committee will continue to work on the outlined priorities throughout 2024, building on the analysis and research undertaken by federal JCCA members in 2023. Along with continuing this work, the JCCA will also push forward on the following commitments:

- The JCCA will continue to explore ways of tracking the status of unsuccessful climate funding applications, with a view to addressing accessibility and capacity challenges.
  - The JCCA will develop monitoring practices for the implementation of the [\*Indigenous Climate Leadership Decision-Making Guidance\*](#), and where necessary, seek First Nations' perspectives on how they have been engaged on federal climate policy and programs. This inquiry will contribute to the reflection of First Nations knowledge systems in federal climate actions and will be needed to ensure that the best practices are being taken into consideration in support of the full and effective participation of First Nations. Potential
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improvements will also be explored that could be advanced through the FNCL agenda and through discussions on the implementation of the National Climate Strategy.

- The JCCA will explore privacy implications to respect First Nations' privacy and data sovereignty throughout the data collection and analysis process.
- Accurate and current data on First Nations, following the standards of OCAP™, is necessary for the JCCA to make decisions on climate-related policy and initiatives. In 2024, the JCCA will continue to look for alternate sources of climate-related programming data to complete data analysis on First Nations outcomes within these programs, making use of tools such as Open Government, and various databases across departments.
- In 2024, the JCCA will consider ongoing work to reflect First Nations rights, jurisdiction, and knowledge systems in the ongoing development of the monitoring and evaluation framework of the NAS, building on the JCCA's Working Group recommendations from 2023.


### 3. Strengthening Intergenerational and Intersectional Dialogue

In 2024, the JCCA will continue to explore options to more meaningfully include the unique perspectives of youth, women, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, gender-diverse and other intersectional identities within the JCCA's work. The JCCA will make space for these perspectives, both within the context of their shared work, as well as the implementation of the work of members within their own institutions. Through the JCCA Secretariat, the AFN and ECCC will explore potential connections with existing intergenerational forums and youth networks with the work of the JCCA, including, the proposed First Nations Youth Advisory Council on Climate Change outlined in the AFN's National Climate Strategy. As part of the JCCA's efforts to implement recommendations flowing from the five-year review process, this also could include exploring new ways to design JCCA meetings to foster intergenerational and intersectional dialogue. In addition, there are opportunities to strengthen existing processes and opportunities for inclusive engagement, such as those being undertaken through the FNCL Agenda.

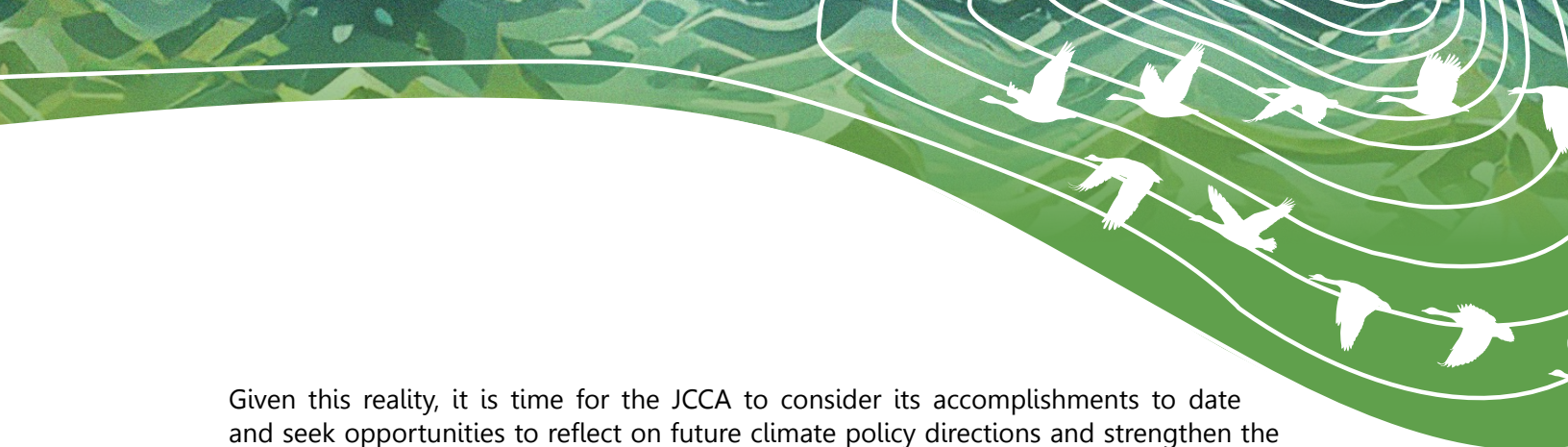
- The JCCA will continue to host youth sessions on the JCCA meeting agendas and events, and potential opportunities for intergenerational sharing with Elders.

### 4. Updating and reviewing the JCCA Mandate

Between 2017 and 2023, the JCCA has gathered twenty times. Discussions have covered the range of federal climate policy, beginning with the implementation of the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change, and transitioning to the planning and reporting regime established under the *Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act* with mandated timelines for establishing emissions reduction targets, plans, and progress reports on implementation.







Given this reality, it is time for the JCCA to consider its accomplishments to date and seek opportunities to reflect on future climate policy directions and strengthen the mandate of the JCCA to contribute to technical discussions.

As part of the five-year review exercise completed in 2023, JCCA members discussed how the mandate could be updated to reflect emerging priorities for the JCCA, including the Government's adoption of the UN Declaration Act and emerging principles. This has translated into ongoing discussion on how to build on the relationships generated within the JCCA to bring more senior representation into the discussion, as well as how to better construct meeting agendas to create space for dialogue and substantive input into the identified tasks.

- The JCCA will engage in a process to update its Terms of Reference (TORs) to better reflect the state of federal climate and Indigenous policy.
- The JCCA will engage in a process to update its membership list to better reflect the state of and mandate of the JCCA.

## 5. Enhancing transparency and broadening the reach of the JCCA

In 2024, the JCCA is excited to continue gathering in-person and in-community again. This will be a key opportunity to return to the principles of Ethical Space, foster solid relationship-building opportunities, and create space for regions to share directly with the JCCA. The JCCA intends to alternate between meetings in the Capital region and meetings within regions.

JCCA members continue to discuss alternate formats of the Annual Report to the National Chief and Prime Minister by exploring options that would be more accessible to a public audience. The JCCA Secretariat and the JCCA Annual Report Working Group, a subset working group of the JCCA, will continue to consider different options, like visual reporting and/or reporting in First Nations languages, with a focus on reaching and connecting with federal and First Nations audiences.

To ensure the JCCA remains accountable for its priorities and deliverables, a 2024 work plan will also be developed to ensure the JCCA remains aligned with its mandate and priorities. Our objective is to better predict work and track the JCCA's progress and activities throughout the year. Further efforts to plan meeting agendas around priority themes and to ensure appropriate participation from First Nations and federal representatives at those meetings will also be explored.





## REGIONAL CASE STORY #4

### The Impact of Extreme Weather Events on Atlantic First Nations

The weather patterns borne out of the Atlantic Ocean have been largely consistent and predictable for generations, allowing Atlantic First Nations to adapt and thrive alongside strong storms, winds, and ocean currents. However, with the planet warming at an unprecedented rate, everything is changing all at once, including the frequency and intensity of weather events in Atlantic Canada. In July 2023, over 200 millimeters of rain covered Nova Scotia within six hours, causing an extreme flooding event. Mi'kmaq communities, especially Sipekne'katik First Nation, were completely stranded with many roads being completely washed out and/or impassable. Just in the last two months alone, New Brunswick experienced three major storms with extremely strong winds causing week-long power outages impacting Wolastoqey communities.

On Epekwitk (Prince Edward Island), the community of Lennox Island First Nation remained in trauma from the most powerful post-tropical storm to make landfall in Canada in recorded history. While no fatalities occurred, Hurricane Fiona contributed coastal erosion in some parts of Lennox Island that equaled over 50 years of accumulated coastal erosion. Downed trees from Hurricane Fiona's Category 2 winds remain strewn across Lennox Island presenting a forest fire hazard should drought conditions return in the Spring and Summer of 2024.

Over the last year, the abovementioned weather events mostly affected Nova Scotia and New Brunswick; but in the last decade, every Atlantic First Nation community has been impacted in some way by extreme weather. These events can leave First Nations quite disconnected from the land and their traditional way of life as it can take from a couple of months to a few years to fully recover and rebuild communities. Atlantic First Nations and organizations have developed emergency management operations to be better prepared for extreme weather, regardless of whether financial support is available from the Canadian government. Atlantic First Nations must be included in the conversation to prepare for extreme weather, as well as within the Canadian climate action process.





## Concluding Remarks

Throughout 2023, First Nations and federal representatives collaboratively advanced the concept of First Nations Climate Leadership in federal policy and programmes. The results of the five-year review of the JCCA indicate that the table and the relationships it fosters continue to generate positive and proactive work to mobilize First Nations' perspectives at the local, regional, national, and international level.

The JCCA, supported by the regional engagement of the First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda and the AFN National Climate Strategy, can play a critical role in advancing partnerships between the federal government and First Nations to move forward with the simultaneous commitments of decarbonization and decolonization. As reflected in measure 46 of the UNDA Action Plan, these commitments are expressed in shared efforts to empower self-determination for First Nations on climate action and advance reconciliation objectives, including a rights-based approach to partnership on climate change.

As we look ahead to priorities for 2024, the JCCA reaffirms its commitment to take transformative action in addressing the climate crisis. On the road to 2030 and net-zero by 2050, there is significant potential to prevent the most catastrophic impacts on First Nations and to move towards a new model of partnership where First Nations' worldviews and teachings inform climate decision-making. The JCCA remains a vital mechanism for mainstreaming a rights-based approach to climate action, while protecting the Lands and Waters for many generations to come.



## Annex A

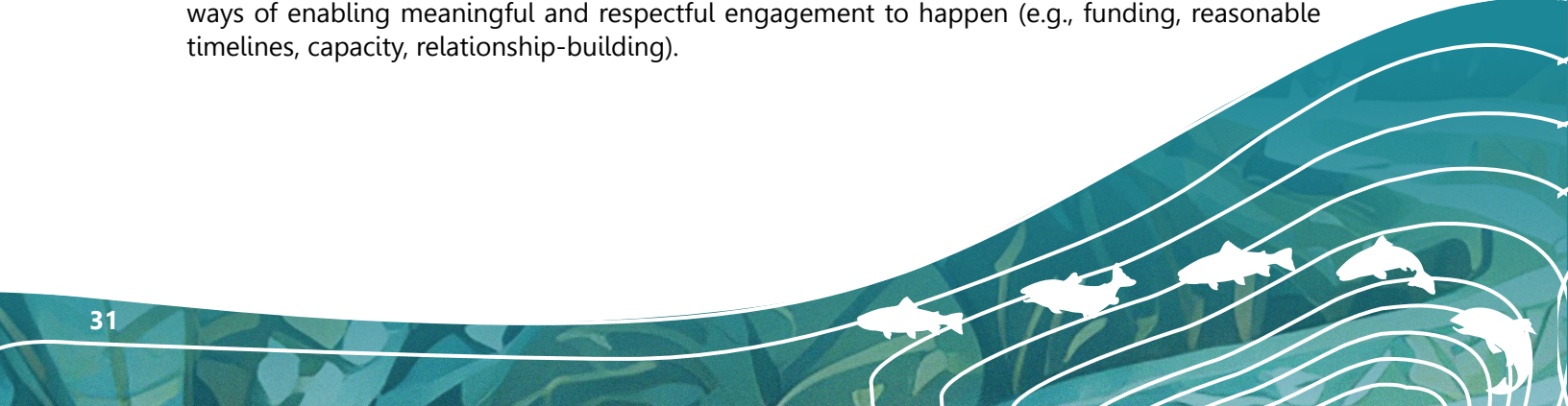
### Key Takeaways - 2023

**Key Takeaway:** Pursue additional opportunities to support the deployment of the JCCA Best Practices Guides, both the Federal Funding Accessibility and Meaningful Engagement with First Nations Guide, as well as the Indigenous Climate Leadership Decision-Making Guidance, in federal departments engaged in climate change and clean growth policy and program development.

**Key Takeaway:** Monitor and follow-up with ECCC's Horizontal Policy Division, who led preparation of the 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan (ERP), to support meeting the 2030 ERP commitment to "work with Indigenous partners to co-develop an approach to enable a stronger presence of the Indigenous perspective in other elements of emissions reduction plans" (2030 ERP, p.21). The development of guidance for the 2023, 2025 and 2027 progress reports will be needed to ensure thoughtful reflections of the legislative commitments to Indigenous Knowledge and UNDRIP, as well as the JCCA Best Practices Guides, the Federal Funding Accessibility and Meaningful Engagement with First Nations Guide, as well as the Decision-Making Guidance.

**Key Takeaway:** Explore additional opportunities in the implementation of the National Adaptation Strategy (NAS) to address some of the outstanding First Nation concerns, and to align policies programs, and bilateral plans with provinces and territories in a way that upholds the minimum standards of UNDRIP, as well as the JCCA Best Practices Guides (both the Federal Funding Accessibility and Meaningful Engagement with First Nations Guide, as well as the Indigenous Climate Leadership Decision-Making Guidance).

**Key Takeaway:** The application of the principles of UNDRIP, the JCCA Best Practices Guides, the Federal Funding Accessibility and Meaningful Engagement with First Nations Guide, and the Indigenous Climate Leadership Decision-Making Guidance lags in the development of federal climate policy and programs. Additional work to reflect these documents, as well as engagement with First Nations early in the processes, will be key for federal departments to operationalize the work of the JCCA in the development of new climate initiatives, as well as to identify concrete ways of enabling meaningful and respectful engagement to happen (e.g., funding, reasonable timelines, capacity, relationship-building).











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