

The background image shows the interior of a wooden building. Several large, vertical wooden poles are visible, some of which are intricately carved with traditional Indigenous designs. The ceiling is made of horizontal wooden planks. A large, triangular skylight is positioned in the upper center, allowing natural light to enter the space. The overall atmosphere is warm and rustic.

Gathering of Indigenous-Led Organizations in Agriculture and Food Gathering Report - March 15, 2023

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Prepared for: **Ministry of Agriculture and Food**
Province of British Columbia

The Syilx Four Poles Creation Story at the En'owkin Centre. Penticton Indian Reserve.



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Photo credit: Ingrid Figueroa

1. Event Summary

The Gathering of Indigenous-Led Organizations was organized in collaboration between the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty (WGIFS) in an administrative partnership with the Kamloops Food Policy Council. The WGIFS accepted the contract to lead the planning, coordination and facilitation of the Gathering on March 15th, 2023 at the En'owkin Centre in Penticton, BC. The purpose of the Gathering was to gather input from a broader representation of Indigenous-led organizations involved in agriculture and food to inform how the Ministry can structure future programming that will meet the wide variety of needs of Indigenous-led organizations in a distinctions-based approach. The Gathering also intended to improve understanding and relationships between those present.

Gathering participants were welcomed into the space by En'owkin Centre President Jeanette Armstrong and Syilx Knowledge Holders Rose Caldwell, Cewlena (Leon Louis) and Chad Eneus, Chair of the Indigenous Knowledge Council with Bringing the Salmon Home: The Columbia River Salmon Reintroduction Initiative. The Gathering began with setting the cultural context for the discussions “in place” in Syilx territory, known to the settlers as the Okanagan Valley - one of the province’s most significant agricultural centers. Observing cultural/spiritual protocols concerning food included expressions of deep gratitude for the wisdom and ways that water holds the memory of our words and intentions and how both food and water are fundamental in transforming the life-giving energy in the land and food system.

The traditional Syilx welcoming included prayers, a water song, teachings, and a brief description of the Creation story symbolized by the four poles erected in the Gathering space. The story is a reminder of how the Creator gave the Syilx their foods and the importance of watching over and caring for the foods and the people that go out and harvest and care for their land and water. The story grounded participants in the context of the Syilx values of always remembering where they came from in the broader ecological, cultural and temporal scope and scale of Indigenous food systems that transcend beyond the agricultural narrative of colonial settler society.

Nk'lxwcin Chad Eneas provided a tour of the [k̓ł c̓pəlk̓ stih hatchery](#). The hatchery is a testament to the perseverance of the Syilx people to realize their dream of restoring the ntytyix (Chief Salmon) – one of their Four Food Chiefs – to their original habitat and rightful place in their territory.

The hospitality demonstrated by the En'owkin Centre staff and Syilx Knowledge Holders triggered memories of the relevance of the discussions in the same space at the first Indigenous Food Sovereignty Conference back in August 2006. Reflecting back on the relevance of past discussions reminds us how far we've come in our perseverance towards food security/sovereignty in Indigenous communities and how much farther there is yet to go in the efforts of overcoming the 'wicked' systemic problems underlying the structural barriers to Indigenous involvement in agriculture and food.





2. Representation

A total of two participants gave input in interviews that took place via Zoom meeting before the Gathering, where 31 participants represented 19 Indigenous-led organizations with diverse areas of focus as they are defined by geographical, cultural, socio-political scope, scale and/or discipline of practice. Representation by geography and the territorial boundaries of the 27 Indigenous Nations was limited. However, representation by diverse areas of focus was richly relational and intra-active. Participants in the Gathering represented organizations working in food security & Indigenous food sovereignty, small-scale farming/agriculture, education/training, policy, planning and governance, researchers, Indigenous health consultants, non-profit societies, and funding agencies.

An intra-active and relational review of the diverse areas of focus that emerged in the Gathering discussions highlights a full spectrum of interrelated activities with diverse programming needs. The review offers a baseline for analyzing gaps in existing programs and policy frameworks to address the diverse needs within the complex system of Indigenous biocultural heritage in agriculture and food.

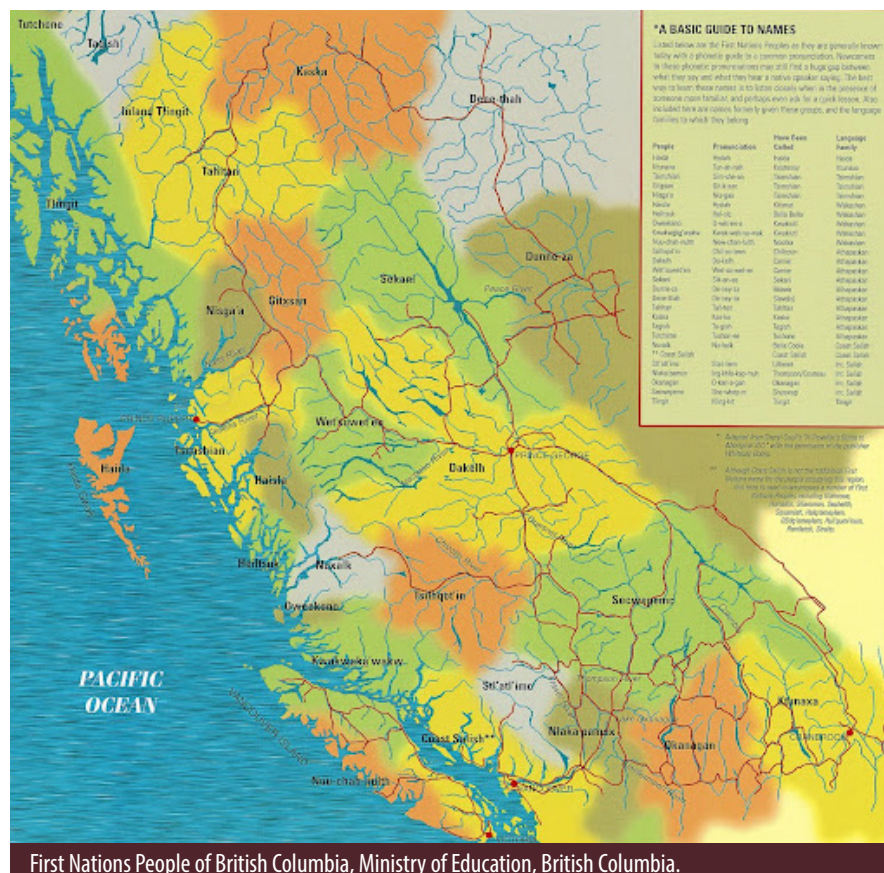
Representation - Areas of Focus

1. By nation/political affiliation

- a. 27 Nations - territorial**
b. Bands/communities

2. Culture and Language

- a.** Over 200 First Nations communities and 8 major language families in the province – food related knowledge is differentiated by each of the eight distinct language groups and cultures.
- b.** Subsistence harvesting and cultivation strategies and techniques
- i.** Hunting
 - ii.** Fishing
 - iii.** Gathering
 - iv.** Agriculture
- 
- The map displays the geographical distribution of various First Nations in British Columbia, color-coded by language family. Key regions labeled include Tutchone (green), Tsalil (blue), Inland Thompson (yellow), Kaska (orange), and Dene Duth (red). The map also shows major rivers and the provincial border with Alberta.
- *A BASIC GUIDE TO NAMES**
Listed below are the First Nations Peoples as they are generally known, with a phonetic guide to a common pronunciation. Note that these phonetic pronunciations may still find a huge gap (and what they say and what they hear a natural speaker saying). The way to learn these names is to listen closely when in the presence of someone from that area, and perhaps even ask for a quick lesson. Included here are names for First Nations groups, and the names of the people who belong to them.



3. By geography

- a. **Urban** - in reference to Indigenous involvement in urban agriculture and Indigenous food systems.
- b. **Rural** - extensive networks of Indigenous hunting, fishing, farming and gathering corridors (on and off reserve)
- c. **Peri-urban**¹ - The geographies where Indigenous hunting, fishing, farming and gathering corridors interface with urban areas
- d. **Place based**² - knowledge, wisdom and values in relation to agriculture and Indigenous food systems is contextualized within the place it is generated.
- e. **Bioregional** - regions defined by healthy associations between the diverse landscapes, cultures/language groups, and economies of focus.

4. Indigenous food land conservation

- a. Aboriginal Title & Rights
- b. Climate justice
- c. Indigenous land and water ethics
- d. Water rights
- e. Customary land tenure
- f. Agriculture land conservation - on reserve
- g. Wider application and promotion of Indigenous knowledge, wisdom and values
- h. Forest and Rangeland
- i. Fisheries
- i. Participatory

5. Governance - creating ethical spaces of engagement

- a. Governance and co-management
 - i. Tribal, Inter-tribal, Colonial
- b. Cross sectoral/Inter-ministerial coordination
- c. Legislation and Policy framework
- d. Planning frameworks
- e. Indigenous food sovereignty

1. For more information on the relevance of peri-urban analysis on Indigenous involvement in agriculture and food, view the UNESCO website address: <https://en.unesco.org/events/peri-urban-landscapes-water-food-and-environmental-security>

2. For a deeper understanding of how the specificity to place is relevant in the colonial reality visit: <https://compass.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/gec3.12376>

6. Social determinants of health

- a. Food security
- b. Social development and poverty reduction
- c. Infrastructure – irrigation and food procurement

7. Capacity building - Balancing the burden of cross-cultural capacity

- a. Education
- b. Research
- c. Youth knowledge transfer
- d. Wise practices in leadership development
- e. Skills training
- f. Finance/funding/administration
- g. Technical - information and communication
- h. Human relations

8. Business and economic development

- a. Subsistence
- b. Market oriented
- c. Capital intense

7. Scope and scale

- a. Micro
- b. Macro
- c. Local
- d. Community/ band/ village
- e. Territorial
- f. Bioregional
- g. Global



3. Appreciating and Building on the Work of the Indigenous Advisory Council on Agriculture and Food

A summary review of the work commissioned by the Indigenous Advisory Council on Agriculture and Food (IACAF) to date was provided. The summary included the strategic priorities in the 2021/2022 Strategic Plan and the key points of contention outlined in the Draft Gaps³ Analyses on Funding and Water. An update on the status of the Discussion Paper and Indigenous Food Sovereignty mapping initiative undertaken by Tea Creek Enterprises was also provided. The summary presentation provided a basis for understanding the complex challenges concerning Indigenous identity & representation, food insecurity, and challenges of expanding agricultural operations in communities due to lack of access to land, water and capital

The funding gaps analysis included a distinctions-based review of Indigenous identity. It acknowledged the diversity in models and narratives along the spectrum of engagement with capital-intensive models of the economy (small-scale market for food versus global export for trade). The analysis highlighted the need for building community/organizational capacity through peer-to-peer learning and Indigenous-led service delivery. The need for an Indigenous-led-funding administration and extension agency was identified, as well as more flexibility in timelines and processes for proposal-driven funding deadlines and reporting requirements. The gaps analyses³ identified the lack of access to capital and many structural challenges with existing funding programs. E.g. Funding cycles, timelines, and support for successfully gaining support.

3. Two gap analyses were referenced: *Gap Analysis of Funding for Indigenous Agriculture and Food*, Osier Consulting for IACAF (2022) & the *Gap Analysis of Water Needs for Indigenous Agriculture in BC*, Elucidate Consulting Inc for IACAF (2022)



Photo credit: Billie Jean Gabriel

Irrigation system in disrepair on Neskonlith Indian Reserve.

The water gaps analysis highlights the crisis surrounding the lack of irrigation infrastructure programs and infrastructure to support irrigation for food security and climate change (wildfire protection and response). The following gaps in access to water for agriculture in communities were identified as they relate to community capacity and systemic problems.

- » Training, monitoring, and infrastructure improvements (dams and irrigation systems
- » Lack of regenerative funding to maintain trained staff, current staff take on multiple roles. Limits of proposal-driven funding
- » Challenges associated with community planning and engagement to gather oral history related to Indigenous water ethics and governance
- » Unsustainable uses of water for hay, hemp, and other cash crops, with some cases extending for over 100 years in the same land lot
- » Climate change impacts on watersheds - droughts, flooding
- » Lease land to outside leaseholders - not paying for water, financialization of land, water, and infrastructure



Photo credit: Ingrid Figueroa

4. Summary Analysis of Gathering Discussions and Interviews

Deep systems transformation is needed to address the gaps in disparity, and repair the harm and trauma caused by the fragmentation and erasure of Indigenous food systems narratives in the provincial and federal frameworks for agriculture and food. More clearly defined culturally relevant methodologies for research and development led by and for Indigenous Peoples is essential for transforming structures and narratives for future programming. Deep and meaningful truth and reconciliation with preexisting Indigenous land and water laws, ethics, and wise practices are needed to balance imbalances of power and privileges in agriculture and food.

The “ethical space” is formed when two societies with disparate worldviews are poised to engage each other. It is the thought about diverse societies and the space between them that contributes to the development of a framework for dialogue between human communities. Ethical space of engagement proposes a framework as a way of examining the diversity and positioning of Indigenous peoples and Western society in the pursuit of a relevant discussion on Indigenous legal issues and particularly to the fragile intersection of Indigenous law and Canadian legal systems. Ethical standards and the emergence of new rules of engagement through recent Supreme Court rulings call for a new approach to Indigenous-Western dealings. The new partnership model of the ethical space, in a cooperative spirit between Indigenous peoples and Western institutions, will create new currents of thought that flow in different directions of legal discourse and overrun the archaic ways of interaction. (Ermine, 2007)

The Decolonizing Food System Framework⁴ is a critical, transformative and forward-looking tool that takes us to a social learning edge to create ethical spaces of engagement and realize more fully the potential for structural change in research, action, policy and programming. The framework provides structure, tools and terminology to guide an intra-active review of the dynamics that emerge within a system of relationality between the Indigenous Nations, the province of BC and the social actors⁵ who dominate global finance (governments, investors, brokers and banks), and contribute to the success of Canadian capital in the global food system.

The intra-active review seeks to assess the agency - the ability of Indigenous-led organizations to transcend wicked systemic problems, and provides a non-exhaustive framework for analyzing dynamics that emerge in the interface between Indigenous food systems and agriculture. The analytical process includes examining the key points of entry into a journey of understanding more deeply how Indigenous food systems and agriculture are expressed in cultural, socio-political and economic frameworks. The process also includes identifying key points of interface that highlight how they interface in complementary and contentious ways.

The key points of entry seek to understand more deeply the diverse cultural concepts, assumptions, values, themes, and ideas and the Gathering discussions. The key points of interface outline the contradicting cultural beliefs, worldviews/paradigms, harvesting and cultivation strategies, and socio-economic strategies. The key points of interface also highlight how the diverse realities intra-act in both contentious and complementary ways.

While points of complementarity highlight the ways that diverse ideas, concepts, and values can inform action with little or no contention, key points of contention are seen as opportunities for transformation, change, and potential for transcending wicked systemic problems. Key points of contention and complementarity thereby contribute to the ethical spaces of engagement by shining a light on the potential strategies and structures for future programming and policy frameworks.

The Coyote questions below apply an Interior Salish pedagogy of transformation and change. The pedagogy seeks to embrace and transcend the contradictions underlying the wicked questions posted below. The questions were posed to all Gathering participants in a critical, proactive, forward-looking inquiry process to reflect on the potential to inform the structural changes needed.

4 The creative commons license for the Decolonizing Food System Framework requires permission from the Creator, Dawn Morrison, and prohibits use for business purposes.y

5. Social actors include - financial institutions, funds, brokers and banks and governments who enable them.

Some of the most sustainable adaptation strategies of subsistence hunting, fishing and gathering cultures and economies have been made ‘invisible’ in settler colonial narratives of agriculture research and resource extraction. Many innovative strategies lie dormant in these gaps of cross-cultural knowledge.

Transformative Coyote Questions:

Coyote the trickster teaches morals and ethics through his own bad behaviours and contradictions that can lead us to ask unanswerable questions and find new and innovative ways of understanding the underlying complex issues and wicked systemic problems.

Coyote questions - Household level

How can families and communities balance time spent growing, harvesting, preparing and sharing food with time spent in the capitalist wage economy and agriculture business development?

How can income-based solutions to food security support the oldest living memories of subsistence cultural and economic strategies?

Coyote questions - Systems Level

How can climate justice models address the disproportionate impacts of climate change in the intersections of Indigenous food sovereignty and climate change?

What are the barriers to implementing integrated, decolonizing, regenerative agriculture models within colonial land use planning processes?



Photo credit: Billie Jean Gabriel

5. Key Points of Contention and Contradictions: Structural Barriers and Wicked Systemic Problems

Much of the feedback provided by participants affirmed the challenges, gaps and limitations of the capital-intensive model of agriculture to address the food security and climate crises. The key points of contention and contradictions highlighted how the financialization of Indigenous land, territories, and nature is exacerbated within the “Aboriginal industry” of consultants who are failing in their ability to address the huge gaps of disparity experienced by Indigenous farmers, fishers and harvesters in highly competitive and fragmented funding programs. Deregulation and tax havens enable corporations to benefit from the “investments” in the land and channel money into agribusiness, mining, energy and infrastructure projects. Indigenous Peoples are forced to engage in an expensive legal system and undertake complicated research projects to identify outside investors/funders, brokers and banks who are grabbing unceded land and water for highly extractive industrial agriculture projects that have increasing cumulative impacts on Indigenous land food systems. In addition, Gathering participants highlighted the need to balance the burden of time and capacity carried by Indigenous-led organizations in response to the increasing number of requests to educate and address the huge gaps of disparity in food security outcomes and access to funding and water.

“ We show up “again and again and again” yet no funding to support this critically important work within our Nations. This puts quite a demand and pressure on me and our Staff, our organizations, whether Band Offices, Tribal Councils, or other coalitions and groups (tribal government) to ensure our voice is heard. For example, we have fish biologists, hatchery specialists, technicians and social workers, and health advocates raising Indigenous food security and sovereignty issues from the sides of their desks. Not to mention how I just have to step up when called. This is huge system change work that we step up again, again and again.” **Pauline Terbasket, Executive Director, Okanagan Nation Alliance.**

Any meaningful analysis of developing structures for future programming to support more Indigenous-led organizations involved in agriculture and food must be framed by its colonial ambition. This includes analyzing the existing conceptual frameworks/narratives for agricultural policy, planning and governance and their inability to consider Indigenous food systems' holistic health and integrity. A new framework for funding and water policy, planning and governance calls for dismantling racist structures and processes that not only favour social actors and their ability to consolidate land, water and infrastructure but also serve to further erase the significant contributions of Indigenous Peoples in enhancing and maintaining biodiversity in the land and food system.

The burden of balancing time spent navigating the imposed system of capital-intensive agriculture, science and technology development with time spent persisting in ancient subsistence harvesting has eroded the social fabric of Indigenous cultures and economies. Among humanity's most sustainable adaptation strategies, gathering participants highlighted the critical role that subsistence cultures and economies play in responding to the multiple overlapping crises of our time. I.e. climate change, COVID-19, and racial capitalism.

Furthermore, the non-recognition of Aboriginal Title and Rights under section 35(1) of the Canadian Constitution, combined with the over-exploitation of land, labour and resources such as water, salmon, berries, mushrooms etc., from Indigenous territories, constitutes a subsidy by Indigenous Peoples to the success of Canada's capital in the global economy. The over-exploitation of Indigenous land and labour in Canada and abroad, particularly in Latin America, has significantly contributed to Canada's reputation as one of the most imperialistic countries in the world⁶.

More fair and equitable distribution of loans and financing from revenue generated on Indigenous lands and territories will require nation-to-nation partnerships to decolonize wealth and disrupt the existing systems of moving and controlling capital in the land and food system. Partnerships are not charity. More flexible structures, processes, and timeliness for existing funding programs, combined with more financial, technical and human support for Indigenous-led research and relationships that link Indigenous Peoples in Canada with migrant workers from Latin America in their common experiences with colonialism, poverty and industrialization.

6. For more information read: Canada, Empire, and Indigenous Peoples in the Americas at URL: <https://doi.org/10.18740/S4GS38>

Syilx knowledge holder, Chad Eneus asks the question

“What is the measurement of success?” He continued to affirm that within the broader ecological and cultural context of Indigenous subsistence hunting, fishing, farming and gathering, “clean water, clean food to eat, nutrition, connection to the land and social values like a sense of community, helping each other. Language and culture and the emotional transfer of knowledge that instills responsibility and social values of sharing and caring for food and our people. You can’t put a monetary value on that”

The key contradictions outlined below provide a basis for unpacking the cultural biases and assumptions and identifying gaps of knowledge and values in the cross-cultural interface where the settler colonial narrative of agriculture meets Indigenous food systems.

key contradictions

Table 1: Agriculture ◀ VS ▶ Indigenous Food Systems

Worldview/Mindset Underlying Management Systems	
Techno-bureaucratic	◀ VS ▶ Indigenous management systems
Production	◀ VS ▶ Regeneration
Reductionist	◀ VS ▶ Holistic
Domestication of plants and animals	◀ VS ▶ Nature directed

Land Ethics	
Preservationist	◀ VS ▶ Conservation
Resource based	◀ VS ▶ Relational

Table 1: Agriculture ◀ VS ▶ Indigenous Food Systems

Harvesting and Cultivation Strategies and Practices

Domestication of plants and animals	◀ VS ▶	Hunting, fishing and gathering
Intensive scale	◀ VS ▶	Extensive scale
Intensive production of Cattle and livestock	◀ VS ▶	Regenerating buffalo and Wild ungulate species
Introduced species	◀ VS ▶	Growing native species
Technological solutions such as genetically modified seeds	◀ VS ▶	Seed adaptation
Production agriculture	◀ VS ▶	Decolonizing Regenerative agriculture

Socio-Economic Strategies

Subsistence (Learning to live with less)	◀ VS ▶	Extractive and exploitive
Global export for trade	◀ VS ▶	Making small scale markets Work for communities
Resource based/extractive	◀ VS ▶	Giving, sharing, traditional trade, cooperation, and food security
Capitalist Values	◀ VS ▶	Socialist values



Photo credit: Dawn Morrison

6. Embracing and Transcending Contradictions: Principle-based Frameworks and Approaches

Deep and meaningful truth and reconciliation cannot happen in the same frameworks for colonial policy and programming that were designed to dispossess Indigenous Peoples⁷. Conceptualizing accountability frameworks that embrace the contradictions and transcend the wicked systemic problems of balancing out privilege and power calls for principles-based frameworks that are accountable to the vast diversity of needs and values in agriculture and Indigenous food systems. It cannot be motivated by profit only. Indigenous Nations work under duress in the colonial system of funding, finance, policy, planning and governance while at the same time persisting in subsistence cultures and economies that are not just motivated by profit. They uphold sacred values, principles and responsibilities to the land, water, people, plants and animals that provide them food in forests, fields and waterways. Conceptualizing policy frameworks that support programming for contradicting economic strategies and values of giving, sharing and trading and profit-motivated challenges leadership in community economic development to find innovative solutions to transcend the unanswerable question of:

“*How can frameworks for capital-intensive, resource-based economy in agriculture support subsistence hunting, fishing, farming and gathering narratives that persist in Indigenous food systems.*”

7. Read CBC's article titled: Tracking Implementation of Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action is Important: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/opinion-action-accountability-reconciliation-ry-moran-1.4568339>

Wise practices

In contrast to 'best practices' that assume there is one set of leadership and development practices that are best for all nations/communities, wise practices build more specifically on the knowledge, wisdom and values and practices that are responsive to each of the respective 27 distinct cultures and nations in the province. [Wise practices](#) can support more effective leadership in community economic development and the core competencies needed to navigate the contradictions and challenges in leadership.

Trauma-Informed - Indigenous Land-Based Leadership Tools for Living

Trauma-informed approaches enable a more health-relational approach to balancing the burden of learning to rest in the intergenerational trauma of separation from Indigenous foodlands, territories and cultures.

Place-based, distinctions-based

A place-based, distinction-based approach will assist in advancing Indigenous food sovereignty and addressing specific underlying policy, planning and governance issues on a higher-level nation-to-nation basis.



Photo credit: Billie Jean Gabriel

7. Recommendations/Calls to Action: Governance and Co-Management

Cross-sectoral coordination

The complexity of Indigenous food sovereignty transverses multiple agencies' jurisdiction, so the status quo 'siloed' approaches to governance and management of operating systems will continue to fall short. The most meaningful governance and co-management interventions for Indigenous food sovereignty require inter-ministerial/cross-sectoral coordination between the Indigenous Nations and the Ministries of Agriculture and Food, Forestry & Rangeland, Social Development and Poverty Reduction, Health, Environment & Business and Economic Development and others. An inter-ministerial approach would demonstrate a meaningful willingness to balance the burden of the cross-cultural capacity of Indigenous Peoples attempting to operate within the imposed system of the Western science-based techno-bureaucratic framework for agriculture, knowledge, science, and technology development. Provide core funding to transcend beyond the highly unsustainable proposal-driven funding in annual cycles.

- Cross-sectoral collaboration between funders and delivery agents.
- https://www.chapman.edu/law/_files/publications/CLR-8-arthur-manuel-and-nicole-schabus.pdf

Indigenous Land Title and Rights & Indigenous Foodland Conservation

Section 35 (1) of the Canadian Constitution and [United Nations and the Declaration of Indigenous Peoples](#) highlights the importance of recognizing Indigenous people's rights to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development (Article 23); to conserve their vital medicinal plants, animals and minerals (Article 24); the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess because of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, with

legal recognition and protection (Article 26); and the right to conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands, territories and resources (Article 29). Conceptualizing new accountability frameworks that transcend beyond a charity model to support government-to-government partnerships that adequately compensate Indigenous nations for extracting land, water, and culturally significant plants and animals used as foods and medicines on Indigenous territories. Monitoring and measuring impacts on Indigenous land and food systems is also a necessary interim step to conceptualizing accountability frameworks that reconcile Aboriginal Title and Rights and the UNDRIP and protect Indigenous foodlands from further harm.

Inclusive decision-making

Including the voices and vision of subsistence harvesters who are either under-represented or wholly excluded from decision-making matters impacting Indigenous foodlands is needed to increase the agency of individuals and communities to respond to their own needs for food.

Integrated conservation methods

The development of tools for community based monitoring and assessing environmental and human rights can support the wider promotion and application of subsistence harvesting strategies and techniques as integrated methods of conserving Indigenous foodlands. Development tools and strategies for subsistence harvesters are needed to support subsistence harvesters in gathering, storing, applying, and maintaining data in safe, secure and sovereign spaces where Indigenous knowledge, wisdom and values interface with meta-data of the various jurisdictions⁸.

Peri-urban threats and deterritorialization

Indigenous foodlands, both on and off, reserve face threats from urban expansion. Protecting and stewarding traditional harvesting areas needs to be seen by the Province with similar urgency as the current protection of agricultural lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve. They must be protected from further privatization and industrial impacts in the forests, fields and waterways. Indigenous foodland conservation includes protecting some of the last remaining intact ecosystems from investors and financialization of the broader hunting, fishing and gathering corridors that extend outwards from agricultural land on reserve.

8. For example Mapeo was built with and for Earth Defenders to easily document environmental and human rights information and to collect data about their land. <https://www.earthdefenderstoolkit.com/toolkit/mapeo-monitor-and-document-the-world-around-you/>

Water ethics and governance

Further development and implementation of water stewardship protocols guided by Indigenous water ethics hold potential for climate justice in territories where Indigenous Peoples are disproportionately impacted by climate change. This could include the establishment of community water committees and recruitment and retention of ‘water bosses’ for monitoring, reporting and watershed management, as the primary cycle being impacted by fires, droughts and floods. Two examples of water governance partnerships in a place-based, distinctions-based approach include the [Nicola Watershed Governance Project](#) and [Syilx siwłkʷ Strategy](#).





Photo credit: Billie Jean Gabriel

8. Support for Building Internal Organizational Capacity

Further development of Indigenous-led organizational capacity is critical in the realization of reconciliation in Indigenous food systems and agriculture. While some leadership capacity does exist with many organizations supporting work in Indigenous food sovereignty, funding for this work is inconsistent, unreliable, and coming from a variety of sometimes disparate sources. Consistent, meaningful levels of support for effective Indigenous leadership development are crucial to advancing Indigenous food sovereignty.

Deep Reflections for Transformative Strategies for Building Internal Capacity in Nations

- ▶ Develop wise practices for leadership development in a trauma-informed approach.
- ▶ Prioritize knowledge transfer and mentoring of the next generation of leadership in the Indigenous food sovereignty movement.
- ▶ Build expertise specific to Indigenous food sovereignty and security in Indigenous-led development trusts and funding organizations.
- ▶ Develop generational funding plans & convene funders' collaboratives to minimize bureaucratic barriers and advocate for core funding.
- ▶ Leverage inter-tribal partnerships and administrative cooperatives within Indigenous food system networks.
- ▶ Build relationships between Indigenous Peoples in the Americas and develop link socially just labour strategies (research, policy and action) that include livable incomes and living conditions for farm workers and mixed economic strategies of subsistence and decolonizing regenerative agriculture.
- ▶ Facilitate transformational learning in networks with Indigenous Peoples in the Americas in a trans-local discourse of place-making, and the create relational spaces to respond to contestations of authenticity of Indigenous identities in urban spaces, and the exploitation of labour in rural agriculture.

Note: Two examples of organizations supporting administrative and social enterprise development for Indigenous small-scale fishers, farmers, and harvesters include the [Masifundise Development Trust](#) in South Africa and [Coast Trust](#) in Bangladesh.

Mixed economic strategies

Embracing the contradiction between capitalist and subsistence economic systems and traditional social values of giving, sharing, and trading can enable the emergence of innovative strategies and opportunities that hold the potential for increasing food security and making small-scale markets work for Indigenous vendors. Mixed economic strategies can include farm gate sales, small-scale/ value-added markets, and free food for the community by activating a network of mutual aid and solidarity in times of crisis. Facilitating transformational cross-cultural learning in networks is the strength of building inter-tribal partnerships for developing cooperatives for buying, selling and providing food-related labour, knowledge and services on a bioregional scale.

De-colonizing wealth - Supporting Indigenous Food Systems in the Non-Profit Industrial Complex

In addition to the need for capital finance to consolidate infrastructure and equipment for water and food procurement, there is also a need for operational funding and non-profit funding to support agricultural education and training program development informed by the broader ecological, cultural and social scope and scale of Indigenous food systems. Much government-led support for Indigenous agriculture and food has had a limited scope and scale focused on euro-centric agriculture models of business development. For a reconciled approach to be taken, support must include Indigenous-led and Indigenous-determined scope and scale in frameworks for future programming. Recommendations for additional support may consist of inter-tribal trade relations and cooperative enterprise development of buying, selling, and trading of food and services, knowledge, labour, and food. Redefining structures and processes to minimize structural barriers and address gaps in access to non-profit funding should include:

- ▶ Indigenous proposal review committees at an arms-length from the Crown.
- ▶ Flexible funding proposal intake cycles and minimized reporting requirements.
- ▶ Dismantle fiscal year funding cycles.
- ▶ Building trust in relationships – transparent fiscal reporting on funding earmarked for Indigenous agriculture and food.

Glossary of Terms

Wicked' problems

A wicked problem⁹ is a complex systemic problem that can seem unachievable because of the scale, depth and multiple factors associated. The climate crisis, institutional racism - the erasure of Indigenous subsistence cultures and economies from land and food system policy, planning and governance are examples of wicked problems. Systematic approaches to re-designing and decolonizing can address wicked problems.

Intra-active

The Intra-active Review (IAR) is a qualitative and reflective process that applies the principles of entanglement and relationality to review and help us understand more deeply the ways that the agency is entangled in relationships between social actors.¹⁰ Actors in the land and food system are Indigenous Peoples, governments, conservation NGO's, non-profits, finance, banks, brokers, stakeholders, non-Indigenous farmers etc.

In this context, an IAR can serve as a systematic approach to addressing the wicked problem of deconstructing structural barriers needed to fill the gaps in access to water and funding needed to support Indigenous involvement in agriculture and Indigenous food systems. Visit the World health Organization website for more information about the IAR process they applied to a review of the methodology and available resources available to countries around the world in their responses to COVID-19.

Peri-urbanization

Peri-urbanization is a category used by planners to develop geographical areas adjacent to urban areas. Increasing densification of cities are increasing pressure on peri-urban spaces to function as ecosystem services and food security for cities. However, a more

9. For a case study on a systematic approach to transformational change, wicked problems, and Indigenous peoples health care read: *A retrospective on reconciliation by design* by Alik T. Lafontaine, MD, FRCPC and Christopher J. Lafontaine, MEd. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0840470418794702>

10. For a deeper understanding of this topic read *Entangled" Social Change: From Inter-action to "Intra-Action*. <https://interactioninstitute.org/entangled-social-change-from-inter-action-to-intra-action/>

critical question planners are asking is “how the socio-spatial expansion will challenge the governance and land use policy?”¹¹ This is especially important to consider in peri-urban spaces where Indigenous food systems corridors interface with urban areas.

Deterritorialization

Financialization of Indigenous Foodlands and nature by corporate elites who control global finance and are therefore favored in their ability to consolidate land, water and infrastructure for agribusiness displaces Indigenous Peoples from their hunting, fishing and gathering corridors in their traditional territories.

Techno-bureaucratic frameworks

Techno-bureaucratic frameworks are western science based resource management systems that favor techno-cratic elites through deregulation, tax havens, and their ability to navigate big bureaucracy and its legal frameworks, meta-data, and digital technology.

Trans-local

Trans-local refers to place making, meaning making, and the creation of relational spaces between Indigenous Peoples and new migrants who are migrating to urban areas around the world in response to coloniality, climate change and capitalism.

Indigenous biocultural heritage

Indigenous biocultural heritage is a complex system of interdependent parts centered on the relationships between Indigenous Peoples and their relationships to the natural world. It includes biological, genetic, landscape, and ancestral knowledge, wisdom and values that have been adapted over thousands of years. The concept evolved in response to colonial policies that have tended to only protect the intellectual component of knowledge systems. International Institute for Environment and Development. <https://biocultural.iied.org>

11. For more information read: <https://www.stockholmresilience.org/research/research-news/2017-04-11-no-longer-on-the-fringes.html>

Appendix 1

Participant's Information			
Participant	Organization	Nation/Community	Job Title
Jeanette Armstrong	En'owkin Centre & UBC Okanagan	Penticton, Syilx	President and Assistant Professor
Chad Eneas	En'owkin Centre & Bringing the Salmon Home: Columbia River Salmon Reintroductions Initiative	Penticton, Syilx	Coordinator, Syilx Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) & Chair of the Indigenous Knowledge Council
Cewelena (Leon Louis)		Lower Similkameen	Chair of the Indigenous Knowledge Council
Rose Caldwell (Syilx Elder)	En'owkin Centre & School District #67	Westbank First Nation, Syilx	Resident Elder & Nsyilxcən Language Teacher
Tracey Kim Bonneau	En'owkin Centre	Syilx, Penticton	Manager Arts Culture & Adult Higher Learning
Dixon Terbasket	Farm	Lower Similkameen	Hunter, Fisherman, Gatherer, & Farmer
Pauline Terbasket	Okanagan Nation Alliance	Syilx, Penticton	Executive Director at Okanagan Nation Alliance

Participant	Organization	Nation/Community	Job Title
Harold Aljam & Mary Louis	First Nations Agriculture Association	Coldwater Indian Band, Nlaka'pamux	President/Economic Development Coordinator
Stephanie Tooke	First Nations Health Authority	West Kelowna	Environmental Health Officer
Dawn Morrison	Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty	Secwepemc mixed ancestry, Secwepemculecw - Neskonalith	Vision Holder and Curator of WGIFS
Shawn Billy	Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty	Shuswap and St'at'imc, Secwepemculecw - Neskonalith.	Project Manager - Watchman Program
Janice Billy	Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty	Secwepemc, Secwepemculecw - Neskonalith	Language Coordinator and Board member of WGIFS
Ingrid Figueroa	Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty	South of Mexico, East Vancouver.	Solidarity Economy Activator Internal Evaluation Finance/ Administration and Program Development
Atlanta Grant	Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty	Anishinaabe, Vancouver	Communication Coordinator
Kriss Becerril	Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty	Central Mexico, East Vancouver.	Traditional Kitchen Coordinator
Michael Wesley	Indigenous Health and Nutrition Consulting	Dane-zaa, Okanagan.	Indigenous Health and Nutrition Consultant

Participant	Organization	Nation/Community	Job Title
Beangka Elliott	Indigenous Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation Council (I-SPARC)	Tsartlip First Nation	Food Systems Program, Manager
WSÁNEĆ traditional knowledge holder	Her heritage is from Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, but grew up in Tsartlip, immerse in Wsanec family, culture and traditions.		
Lara Hill	Consultant for ISPARC, Food Systems Program	lives at Tsawout First Nation in WSÁNEĆ territory	Food Systems Program, Manager and consultant.
Jessie Williams	New Relationship Trust	Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw, Squamish Nation	Director Business Development & Communications
Marie Alaimo	New Relationship Trust	Musqueam Indian Band	Director of Operations
Lisa Paull	New Relationship Trust	Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw, Squamish Nation	Director of Programs & Services
Lorna Shuter	LNIB	Merritt, Lower Nicola Indian Band	Production Supervisor at Lower Nicola Indian Band - Shulus Gardens
Tiffany Traverse	4 th Sister Farm	Shuwap Family. Rides in the Peace Region.	Indigenous Researcher, Land Steward, Native Seed & Cultural Advocate
Peter Kok	Tea Creek Enterprises	European ancestry, Okanagan	Trained Farmer and Mental Health Worker

Participant	Organization	Nation/Community	Job Title
Seanna Johnston	Naut'sa mawt Tribal Council	European ancestry, Vancouver	Food Security Advisor
Debbie Minton - Ohshpaapineese	Naut'sa mawt Tribal Council	Anishinaabe	Executive Assistant at Naut'sa mawt Tribal Council
Addison Fosbery	Alderhill Planning	Okanagan	Planner and Biologist
Laura Prada	RAMA (Radical Action for Migrants in Agriculture)	Colombia, Kelowna,	Higher Education Quality Assurance Practitioner
Melissa West Morrison	Youth, Dunna'eh House of Healing Society	Chinese and Kwakwaka'wakw, Vancouver	Intertribal Relationship Builder and Youth Coordinator
Aleesha Jones	Youth/AgriFood Canada	Chilliwack	Research Affiliate with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Nikki Lorentz	Okanagan Indian Band	Okanagan	Youth representation.

