HANDBOOK

A Toolkit for Local Electeds Climate Action

INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES, KNOWLEDGE, & SOLUTIONS

A part of the Nature Based Solutions Handbook

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Reports
3. Indigenous Programs / Organizations
4. Indigenous Communities x Municipalities Solutions

Did you know Climate Caucus offers an "Ask Us Anything' service for elected officials in the network?

You could ask questions like "can you help me find this resource?" "Do you know of funding for X?" "Do you have examples of X policy language?" or "can you connect me with an expert in X?"

Send us your questions here!

Introduction

Climate Change has heavily impacted Indigenous communities across Canada. The ecosystems Indigenous communities rely on have been heavily altered; increasing food insecurity, housing insecurity, fear of displacement, socio-economic impacts, and impacts on health and well-being. Past conservation efforts have often failed to include Indigenous communities, even though they have been the guardians of our environment for thousands of years, protecting the earth with traditional knowledge.

In Canada, there has been an increase in Indigenous leadership in climate and conservation policy. Listed below are some resources and examples of successful municipal partnerships with Indigenous communities on nature-based solutions.

Reports

🔗 Report on "Nature-Based Solutions: Indigenous-led Conservation and Carbon Storage in Canada"
🔗 How Indigenous Activists Are Championing Nature-Based Solutions to Climate Change

Indigenous Programs / Organizations

1. Indigenous Guardians Toolkit
    a. A central repository and resource for sharing and connecting around knowledge and experiences related to Indigenous Guardian programs
2. Guardian and Watchman Program
    a. Indigenous Guardians program supports Indigenous land management and oversight in their territories based on a cultural responsibility for the land.
    b. The program provides training and career opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to work as equal partners with governments and industry on the protection and management of land and resources.

3. Indigenous Leadership Initiative

Indigenous Communities x Municipalities Solutions

Indigenous Peoples Garden, Winnipeg MB

- Through careful planning, led by Indigenous landscape and architectural designers, this will be a place that serves as a crossroads of cultures, a place for sharing knowledge, where people can discover or rediscover the culture of Canada's first inhabitants, while offering an opportunity for Indigenous peoples to share their traditions, wisdom and connection with the land.
- The garden's design was created over the course of several years through a collaborative process involving Indigenous elders, designers, and community leaders.
- The beliefs and traditions of Indigenous peoples reflect a deep philosophical understanding and respect for nature. Their stories, dances, music, art, clothing, and spiritual rituals reflect the belief that spirits exist among the natural world. Here, in the Indigenous Peoples Garden, the relationships of Indigenous cultures with the environment, both past and present, will be explored.

City of Vancouver and Musqueam Integrated Stormwater Management Plan

- The City of Vancouver and Musqueam First Nations have partnered together to develop an integrated stormwater management plan for the Musqueam Creek watershed
- The plan will examine factors that influence stormwater, like trees and landscapes, public infrastructure, and building design.
- The goal is to balance land use and development planning with environmental protection.

The Musqueam Garden, Vancouver BC

- From growing fresh food to medicine making and mentoring youth, this ancient and ongoing stewardship of the land and the garden translates into a presence and knowledge that goes on to benefit UBC and the entire greater community.

Living Dike City of Surrey and City of Delta and the Semiahmoo First Nation

- To protect the salt marsh and nearby communities - coalition between Surrey, Delta, and the Semiahmoo First Nation to create a living dike
- In a pilot project at Boundary Bay, a 250-kilometre stretch of seashore that spans the three jurisdictions, the partners plan to deposit sediment in the marsh over three decades to raise its elevation and create a natural dike that can survive sea level rise. The gradual pace will allow plant life to adapt. Adding sediment too fast could bury plants and affect animals that use those plants for food or shelter.

Kingsclear First Nation - Shoreline Reclamation and Indian Brook Enhancement (Dillon Consulting Limited), NB

- Phase 1 was to restore original shoreline conditions after a significant erosion event and worked to reclaim lost land. Phase 2 worked to reinstate and enhance Indian Brook, which had recently suffered a breach in the natural meander due to a significant rainfall event.

Sipekne'katik Habitat Restoration Initiative (The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq), Sipekne'katik First Nation, NS

- This project improved and restored fish habitat via the installation of instream restoration structures (i.e. digger logs, log cribs and bank stabilization) in Sipekne'katik First Nation, NS.
- Other projects

Ha'uukmin Tribal Park in Clayoquot Sound on the west coast of Vancouver Island, BC

- Ha'uukmin means 'like a great feast bowl', which speaks of its former abundance.
- The tribal park encompasses the entire watershed known today as Kennedy Lake. Its boundaries extend far beyond the shores of Kennedy Lake, encompassing 500 sq km of mountain peaks, backcountry trails, ancient forests and salmon rivers.

Lake Country Indigenous Cultural Centre and Nature Park

- The Indigenous Cultural Centre and Nature Park will be built to meet the British Columbia Energy Step Code and will provide a local facility that will enhance and celebrate Okanagan Indian Band culture, history and language. The centre will contribute to promoting tourism as well as further understanding of the traditional and continued land use of the Syilx Okanagan people. It will be constructed adjacent to the Okanagan Rail Trail, a 50 km multimodal trail that will provide connections to other communities to experience the cultural centre and nature park. A new stormwater treatment wetland will also be incorporated into the design which will result in restoration and enhancement of the wetlands and grassland habitat.

Climate Caucus Resources:

Climate Caucus Municipal Grants List - detailed list of relevant municipal grants

Policies and Resources Library - list of motions, bylaws, council reports and briefing notes