



# BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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BCAFN SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY

Resolution 13/2020

Vancouver Island Conference Centre, 101 Gordon St., Nanaimo, BC  
March 4 & 5, 2020

**SUBJECT:** SUPPORT FOR FIRST NATIONS IN BC FOOD SECURITY, SOVEREIGNTY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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**MOVED BY:** COUNCILLOR RYAN OLIVERIUS, PROXY, OKANAGAN INDIAN BAND

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**SECONDED BY:** KUKPI7 WAYNE CHRISTIAN, SPLASTIN

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**DECISION:** CARRIED

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## WHEREAS:

A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) states:

*i. Article 29 ( 1): Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources, States shall establish and implement assistance programs for indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.*

*ii. Article 26 ( 2): Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.*

*iii. Article 36 ( 1): Indigenous peoples, in particular those divided by international borders, have the right to maintain and develop contacts, relations and cooperation, including activities for spiritual, cultural, political, economic and social purposes, with their own members as well as other peoples across borders;*

B. The universality, inalienability, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights should inform any human rights analysis. This includes Indigenous Peoples right to access and use food resources in a way that supports their sovereignty and security;

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Terry Teegee, BC Regional Chief

- C. The Government of Canada released its first ever “Food Policy for Canada,” which names “Strong Indigenous Food Systems” as one of its main priorities, among others that include: improved capacity and resilience to food-related challenges, improved food-related health outcomes, sustainable food practices and inclusive economic growth;
- D. The long- term health of BC First Nations communities and individuals, including spiritual, economic, cultural and political, relies upon their ability to secure their food sovereignty through, but not limited to, exercising their control over the harvesting and trade of food resources;
- E. First Nations in BC are experiencing the effects of the climate crisis on their territories at extreme rates compared to mainstream society which, directly impacts their food security and sovereignty;
- F. First Nations in BC carry the responsibility to safeguard the livelihood, security, cultural identity, territorial integrity and biodiversity protection for seven generations;
- G. Traditionally, First Nations across the country hunted and gathered plants for food and medicinal purposes. Each First Nations' diet depended on what was available in their natural local environment;
- H. First Nations have used various forms of agricultural practices for the purposes of sustainable cultivation of both terrestrial and aquatic plant species. The cultivation of Camas to both increase size and yield was undertaken by Southern Vancouver Island Nations and the cultivation of Wapato in waterbodies along the lower Frazer River by the Sto:lo are examples of long established practices going back for thousands of years in the Pacific Northwest;
- I. In the Interior of BC, controlled burns across whole eco-zones and different elevations were used to increase species, flora and fauna which are long established practices of Indigenous agricultural technologies that supported food security for our Nations and communities;
- J. Indigenous Peoples food sovereignty movement is a movement to re- establish pre -contact foods, with related protocols;
- K. Support from the Government of Canada for economic activities related to the First Nations food economy continues to increase economic development activity on First Nations traditional territories;
- L. The growth of Indigenous tourism and a global conscious traveler, especially in BC, is increasing the number of visitors, businesses and representative business associations that experience and consume First Nations foods in the province; and
- M. Trade in First Nations food products represents a unique opportunity to create economic benefits for businesses, communities and First Nations governments.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

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**Terry Teegee, BC Regional Chief**

1. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly directs the Regional Chief and staff to:
  - i. advocate for the development of funding and other industry support programs for First Nations to maintain and re-establish their food security and sovereignty; and
  - ii. promote food-focused research to better understand the intersection of First Nations food security, sovereignty and sustainability.
2. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly calls on the AFN Chiefs Committee on Economic Development to establish a First Nations Food Security and Sovereignty working group to:
  - i. draft a framework and develop a position paper(s) outlining First Nations' positions; and
  - ii. develop and advocate for First Nations-specific communication tools and workshops to raise awareness.
3. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the Regional Chief and staff to investigate advocacy opportunities regarding food security and sovereignty according to United Nations (UN) mechanisms relating to rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, various opportunities administered via the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and
4. The BCAFN continue to participate in the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, facilitated by the Convention on Biodiversity.

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**Terry Teegee, BC Regional Chief**