



BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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Prince George, BC V2K 5S3
Website: www.bcafn.ca

BCAFN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

October 8, 9 & 10, 2024

Hybrid - In person & online via Zoom

Resolution 21/2024

SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR FNLC RELATIONSHIP PROTOCOL WITH THE PACIFIC INSTITUTE
FOR CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

MOVED BY: CHIEF LYNDAL PRICE, ULKATCHO FIRST NATION

SECONDED BY: CHIEF JAMES HOBART, SPUZZUM FIRST NATION

DECISION: CARRIED

WHEREAS:

- A. Human-caused climate change threatens the security and way of life of First Nations across British Columbia (BC) by intensifying climate-related disasters and disrupting the ecological conditions essential to their livelihoods and development.
- B. Human-caused climate change and environmental destruction have exacerbated systemic social, environmental, and economic injustices for First Nations in BC.
- C. The Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS) is a collaborative and user-engaged institute that convenes and networks with diverse research partners to catalyze climate solutions for B.C., Canada, and the world;

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- D. PICS is hosted and led by the University of Victoria, in collaboration with the University of British Columbia, the University of Northern British Columbia, and Simon Fraser University. PICS is committed to collaborative research and change-making that benefits scholars, communities, and decision-makers. PICS is approaching the future with a focus on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion and values diverse ways of knowing, especially the knowledge of First Nation Elders, Knowledge Keepers, youth, and leaders;
- E. the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration)*, which the government of Canada has adopted without qualification, and has, alongside the government of B.C., passed legislation committing to implement, affirms

Article 5: Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State.

Article 8(2): States shall provide effective mechanisms for prevention of, and redress for: (b) Any action which has the aim or effect of dispossessing them of their lands, territories or resources.

Article 25: Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

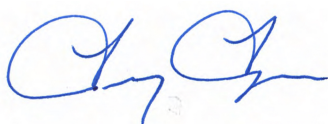
Article 26(1): Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.

(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.

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;

- F. the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) and the First Nations Summit (FNS), working together as the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC), in collaboration with PICS have developed a draft Relationship Protocol with the purpose of:
- Establishing a collaborative, constructive, and voluntary working relationship through a joint dialogue process that focuses on climate solutions that uphold First Nations title and rights in British Columbia.
 - Advancing First Nations climate leadership and priorities that safeguard the integrity of the land and environment and generate benefits for First Nations in British Columbia;

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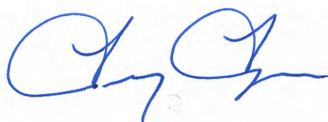
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- G. the Parties recognize that the FNLC, mandated by and working in collaboration with First Nations in B.C., developed the B.C. First Nations Climate Strategy and Action Plan and the Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction by First Nations in B.C. (2023-2030) that articulate the shared vision and goals for First Nation-led climate solutions and resilience within BC.
- H. the Parties believe that fostering enhanced, respectful cooperation and communication is essential for advancing climate solutions that recognize and uphold First Nations' inherent title, rights and Treaty rights and directly contribute to the self-determination and well-being of First Nations in B.C.;
- I. the agreement is guided by the spirit of cooperation, respect, partnership, and the understanding, recognition, and application of the UN Declaration and is fortified by the provincial *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* legislation of British Columbia; and;
- J. the agreement aims to create a path forward that respects and recognizes the human rights of Indigenous peoples while introducing better transparency and predictability in the work we do together, guided by the following principles:
 - 1. The Parties recognize First Nations spiritual, social, cultural, and economic practices associated with the land, which respect environmental and natural resources that generate health, resilience, and prosperity for current and future generations.
 - 2. The Parties acknowledge the historical and present-day impacts of academic institutions on First Nations, which necessitate the dismantling of persistent colonial systems and barriers, and renewed approaches that honor and support First Nation knowledges and decision-making.
 - 3. The Parties will work collaboratively to share their respective knowledge, expertise, and experience to serve First Nations in B.C. with a focus on promoting climate action and resilience-building priorities and interests.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- 1. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly direct BCAFN to sign the draft Relationship Protocol between the B.C. Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, and the First Nations Summit (FNS), working collectively as the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC), and the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions. The Relationship Protocol must support capacity-building within First Nations in BC, such as engaging with youth and Elders for mentorships and intern programs;

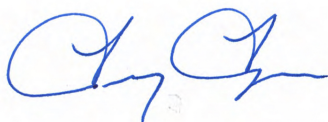
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2. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the Regional Chief and staff to communicate to the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions that successfully transforming relationships and partnerships between First Nations and educational or research institutes must:
 - start with explicit respect for First Nations sovereignty and self-determination, uphold OCAP principles and ensure that free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) is obtained from First Nations title and right holders before starting any research or partnership.
 - acknowledge and respect Indigenous knowledge systems, Indigenous laws, and value First Nations' ways of knowing, scientific knowledge, and cultural practices as equal to Western academic frameworks;
3. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the Regional Chief and staff to clearly articulate to the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions that the Relationship Protocol is not a substitute for direct engagement or consultation with First Nations rights and title holders and is not a delegation of authority in any way; and
4. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the BCAFN, working with the UBCIC and FNS as the FNLC, and the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions to provide regular reports to the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly on the ongoing collaborative objectives and efforts as identified in the Relationship Protocol.

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