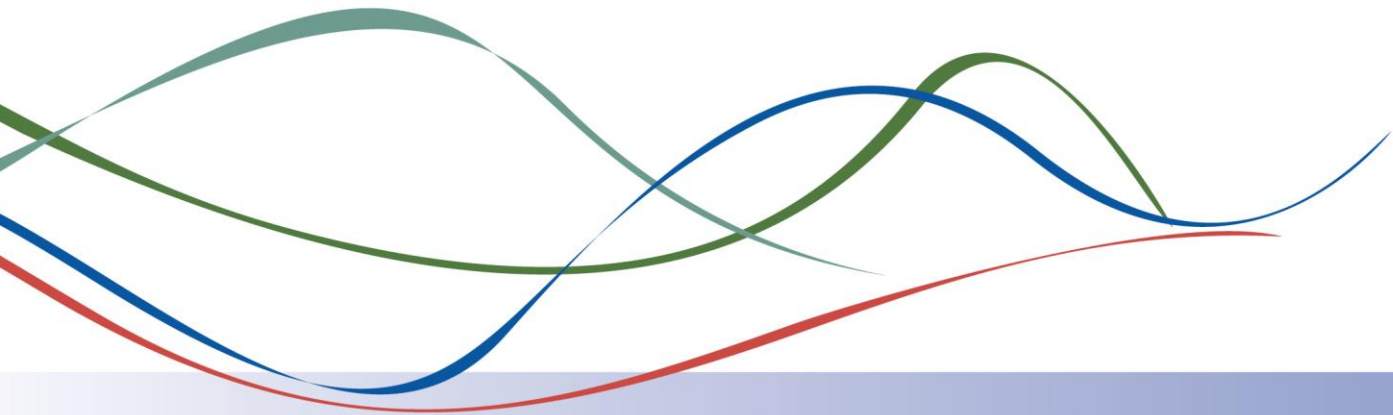




NATIVE WOMEN'S
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

L'ASSOCIATION DES FEMMES
AUTOCHTONES DU CANADA



The national voice of Aboriginal women since 1974.

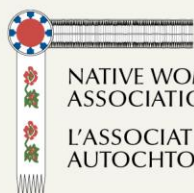
Aboriginal Women and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK):

Input and Insight on Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge



Aboriginal women represent and maintain cultures rich in knowledge, history, skills, and environmental stewardship. Aboriginals' close relationships and dependence on the land and environment comes from their understanding that their life and livelihood is dependent upon the nurturing and caring of them.



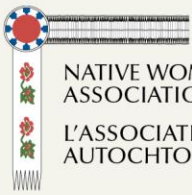


Aboriginal Women and ATK

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AUTOCHTONES DU CANADA

Background

Aboriginal women represent and maintain cultures rich in knowledge, history, skills, and environmental stewardship. Aboriginals' close relationships and dependence on the land comes from their understanding that their life and livelihood is dependent upon the nurturing and caring of the land and the environment. In many communities, Aboriginal women are entrusted with knowledge to care for the environment and their families and communities, but their responsibilities for the knowledge are often neglected or forgotten. This includes when Aboriginal women are discussing natural resources associated with traditional medicines, and Aboriginal livelihoods, health and well-being. For this reason, the lack of recognition for Aboriginal women's roles in the transmission of knowledge to care for the environment, their families and communities must be examined and then reconsidered and transformed accordingly. Any proposed actions that the Government intends to take relating to the environment should ensure thorough consultation and involvement of Aboriginal women and men, youth and Elders. This project was completed over a short period of time with limited involvement of our members and does not constitute consultation, but is merely the beginning of a conversation that needs to continue between Environment Canada and Aboriginal Peoples, including Aboriginal women.

The common term for this representative knowledge is Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK). There is no agreed-upon definition of ATK because it is diverse and often region specific. The Canadian Institute of Health Research, the Natural Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada jointly describe ATK as:

The knowledge held by First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples, [and] the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. Traditional knowledge is specific to place, usually transmitted orally, and rooted in the experience of multiple generations. It is determined by an Aboriginal community's land, environment, region, culture and language. Traditional knowledge is usually described by Aboriginal peoples as holistic, involving body, mind, feelings and spirit.

Environment Canada (EC) recognizes the value of ATK and the importance of respectful engagement with ATK holders. EC is committed to respectful engagement with Aboriginal peoples in the performance of its responsibilities to the environment. ATK is a recognized

valuable contribution that can aid EC in carrying out its responsibilities in a respectful and healthy way. EC regularly employs ATK within four categories:

1. Wildlife research
2. Decisions made under the Species at Risk Act
3. Environmental and ecosystem monitoring
4. Other environmental and wildlife conservation activities

Recently, EC has begun an initiative to improve its guiding principles and approach to respectfully engaging with Aboriginal communities to access and employ ATK. In recognition of the valuable role Aboriginal women play in the preservation of the environment and environmental knowledge, EC has sought to ensure the inclusion of Aboriginal women's perspectives in the development of its guidance document for respectful engagement with ATK holders. To this end, EC has collaborated with the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) as a first step in working together on these issues. To gather input from Aboriginal women on ATK, as well as EC's guiding principles and proposed approach to ATK inclusion, NWAC has conducted a summary literature review and carried out a survey with its constituency over a few weeks this September and October 2014. The resulting analysis, feedback, and recommendations are intended to provide EC with the information needed to continue improving their efforts for respectful engagement of Aboriginal peoples and ATK, and help improve efforts to continue including gender considerations in any collaboration with Aboriginal peoples.

While this report provides guidance from Aboriginal women, as well as their concerns and priorities in regards to Canada's policies for access to traditional knowledge, NWAC reiterates that the use of the survey, literature review, or this report does not constitute consultation. This is a first conversation between Environment Canada and NWAC and its membership on Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge, and does not constitute the principles that quantify consultation or Aboriginal peoples' express consent or permission in any way to move forward on any initiatives by the Government of Canada pertaining to the environment, and/or Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge.

Literature Review

Exploring the Term ATK

In reviewing the literature on Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK), one thing becomes immediately clear: there is no one set definition for what constitutes ATK. Environment Canada recognizes this on their website:

ATK is a body of knowledge built up by a group of people through generations of living in close contact with nature. ATK is cumulative and dynamic. It builds upon the historic experiences of a people and adapts to social, economic, environmental, spiritual and political change [Emphasis Added] (Environment Canada, n.d.)

While there is no one definition, different definitions tend to share certain traits. ATK is knowledge developed through Aboriginal peoples' own ways of knowing, experience, and communal effort. The term can be very broad and encompass a broad array of categories and methods of continuance, for example: "storytelling; ceremonies; traditions; ideologies; medicines; dances; arts and crafts; or a combination of all of these" (Crowshoe, 2005, p. 2). ATK resists one-size-fits-all descriptions. In a discussion paper meant to aid working with ATK, Assembly of First Nations suggests that ATK is, "any and all knowledge that is Aboriginal in nature, content, origin, or character" (AFN, n.d., p. 4). The AFN discussion paper continues to describe ways in which ATK has been employed, as knowledge applied to, "skills, understandings, expertise, facts, familiarities, beliefs, revelations and observations" (p. 4). While there is a clear historical aspect to ATK both in terms of its origins and the maintenance of certain practices, the AFN also provide that ATK is not only how things were done or continue to be done, but also is composed of new ways or philosophies by Aboriginal peoples that "respect their traditions, cultures and practices" (p.4).

ATK can also be found under a few related terms such as Indigenous Knowledge (IK) and Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). In the case of TEK, that is Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge that is specifically rooted in the environment. ATK encompasses more than TEK; however, TEK as a subcategory will be of greater interest to those engaging in environmental assessment. EC suggests that TEK does not as directly connect to "cultural, environmental, economic, political and spiritual inter-relationships," (Environment Canada, n.d.) as ATK does.

For this review we used an emphasis on TEK to help guide our review for applicability, while maintaining an ‘eye’ for the broader categories, as indicated by EC, of what ATK encompasses that still ties to EC operation.

Values of ATK

To understand how Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge can be applied, it is important to first look at how its value is ascribed. It has already been shown that ATK may be broadly defined and flexible to each community, but its value is consistent and considerable. Some of our research defined ATK as a compliment to science (Turner, Ignace, & Ignace, 2000), with roots in what can be said to be scientific method, that is, through experimentation and observation. ATK is a communally constructed knowledge derived over time and close proximity to the environment.

Because the development of ATK relies so much upon a relationship with nature, it is also in part a process of enculturation that reinforces the value of nature and the interdependence of different species, be they plant, human, or natural resources. In Turner et al., researchers studied Aboriginal groups in British Columbia to explore how the characteristics and application of traditional knowledge (in their case their focus was TEKW – Traditional Ecological Knowledge & Wisdom) impacted Aboriginal interaction with the environment. Among their findings, they witnessed that the traditional knowledge, developed over time, when practiced led to an ecological instruction for children that achieved several goals at once: children learned how to manage and preserve local resources; they listened to stories and were taught the importance of nature and its interconnectedness; and they also learned valuable social skills of interaction and communication. As a science instruction, it was comprehensive in terms of developing the whole person.

The idea of interconnectedness as both an anchor for viewing nature and viewing how we must interact with it is shared broadly amongst Aboriginal peoples. In an emic-based ethnographic examination of this relationship, Dannenmann, an Anishinaapekw from Namekosipiink in northern Ontario, explains the view that she uses to approach the environment as well as to impart Indigenous Knowledge through the Indigenous Knowledge Instructors Program she is responsible for.

Traditional teachers tell us [. . .] our homes, our canoes, our tools and equipment, are not ours but are on loan to us. Even the articles of our clothing are is [sic] on loan to us. [. . .] We are very carefully taught that everything on loan to us must be cared for and then returned in the condition, or even better condition, than it was when we acquired it. (p. 214)

She continues with the identification of the environment as part of Mother Earth, and is tied to our other relationships, including with family, animals, plants, rocks, and so on. This is a relationship, “characterized by a spirituality and sacredness, an intimate knowledge and huge reciprocal respect and reverence where we all know our rights and responsibilities” (p. 214). Essentially, the environment, and its interconnectedness, is a part of our instruction, for people to learn from it as another teacher.

The environment, (and its resources), are seen as teachers, to be engaged with respectfully (which, in this case, means sustainably). The science of ATK includes the “culturally and spiritually based way in which Indigenous peoples relate to their ecosystem” (LaDuke, 1999, p. 127, as cited in McGregor, 2005, p. 2). ATK is more than knowledge about a system; it is recognition of one’s place within the system, and the teachings of a lifestyle that respects that interdependence. When the nature of ATK is so intimately tied to relationships and interactions, it should come as no surprise that ATK is often described as action or behaviours, or codes of conduct. McGregor’s 2005 paper examining the issues related to TEK (including the problem with naming an Aboriginal epistemology with a non-Aboriginal term) re-affirms the requirement of specific lifestyles that constitute ATK: “*Minobimaatisiwin* (a word she borrows from LaDuke and which roughly can be equated with TEK) is so much more than *knowledge* about how to live sustainably. Rather, it is *living* sustainably. It is not just about understanding the relationship with Mother Earth, *it is the relationship itself*” (p. 3). Dudgeon and Berkes (2003) elaborate on the impact of this approach to understanding the influence and role of ATK. After a review of the different definitions, approaches, and applications of Indigenous Knowledge (which is essentially ATK) and TEK as a subgroup, they reference an earlier author when writing their conclusions that, “Just as biodiversity provides the raw material for ecological evolution, cultural diversity provides the raw material for the evolution of sustainable relations between humans and their biophysical environment” (Dadgil, 1987, as referenced by Dudgeon & Berkes, 2003, p. 90).

In short, the approach that many Aboriginal peoples share with the environment also guides the way they live their lives, and thus the value of ATK is not just to understand the environment, and not just to preserve the environment, but also to help negotiate relationships and approaches to broader aspects of living and interacting with the environment.

Even when somewhat distanced from TEK, ATK represents similar principles of a holistic approach that reflects interconnected values and applications. Under the category of Indigenous Knowledge, Skye (2010) reviewed literature on traditional Aboriginal midwifery in Canada. Based on her review of the literature, she found that modern forms of Aboriginal midwifery in the regions discussed (Inuulitisivik Health Center in Puvirmituq, Quebec; Rankin Inlet Center in

Nunavut; and the Tsi Non:we Ionnakeratsha Ona:grahsta: Six Nations Maternal & Child Welfare Centre in Ohsweken, Ontario) combined Western practices with traditional Aboriginal ones to provide a prenatal, birthing, and post-natal care that, “exemplify how traditional Aboriginal knowledge and medicine can be bridged with contemporary practices to better meet the medical, cultural and spiritual needs of Aboriginal women” (p. 33). It was not made clear the specific medicinal boosts provided by traditional medicines, but the article did identify that there were physical health boosts in addition to overall benefits when applying trained Aboriginal midwives in the community, improving “the prenatal care and birth experiences of Aboriginal women as well as improv[ing] overall community health and healing” (Skye, 2010, p. 33). Part of the positive impacts had to do with empowering people in the community and providing more rounded services (beyond strictly medicinal). One of the key benefits was the option for some of having their birthing in their own home or community. Implementing traditional Aboriginal midwife initiatives, however, is also a matter of power dynamics and valuation of ATK, or IK as it is named in the case of Skye’s article.

Aboriginal Women’s Engagement with ATK

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has been working towards greater protections for the environment globally since 1948. It describes itself as the largest professional global conservation network, and has an extensive track record of working in countries around the world to bring about conservation and sustainability. Recently, they published a document intended to support individual countries in implementing strategies for sustainable biodiversity and conservation. In the background to their report they identify the critical need to involve women in any discussion of environmental impacts and concerns. Referencing the findings of the United Nations Development Programme (2011), IUCN stated that:

Women’s participation in decision-making at higher levels has specifically benefitted environmental policy, such that countries with more women in their parliaments are more likely to set aside protected land areas and ratify international environmental treaties. In fact, new data reveals that there is a causal relationship between environment and gender; when gender inequality is high, forest depletion, air pollution and other measures of environmental degradation are also high. [Emphasis Added]. (UNDP, 2011, as cited in IUCN, 2012, p. 8)

Because gender equality and women’s involvement at the decision-making table leads to better environmental outcomes and actions, the IUCN’s report walks readers through the development process of a Climate Change Gender Action Plan, or CCGAP. While the IUCN does not frame

the discussion using the term ATK, it is clear that one very important aspect of their involvement of women has to do with the unique insights and knowledge that women have, that is often regionally-based, and transformative for the well-being of their communities and community resources. In terms of representation and participation, IUCN frames gender equality as a necessary pre-condition for sustainable development (2012, p. 15). From their gender roles and household and community involvement, women provide a unique, protective role for the environment.

From a more specific ATK focus, because of the connection of ATK with culture and social dynamics, it is not uncommon to see certain knowledge categories or responsibilities taken up by specific groups. For example, in our reading of the literature on ATK, Aboriginal women were most frequently linked to water (McGregor, 2005, 2012; Kattau, 2006; Chiefs of Ontario, 2007; Szach, 2013). According to McGregor's work in traditional knowledge, Aboriginal women are more likely to notice changes in water because of their close ties to it. The Chiefs of Ontario report identified the tradition of Aboriginal women to look after the water in most communities. Because ATK is developed over a great deal of time through observation and experimentation, this would suggest that Aboriginal women involved in ATK over time may have critical knowledge of an area's water. For this reason, the Chiefs of Ontario report advocated that it was "imperative that women are well represented in discussions about water protection." (2007, p. 10)

The practice of handing knowledge down through certain groups of people and/or families within Aboriginal communities can be seen in other areas of ATK. Skye notes that, "The profession of a traditional midwife was a respected role within Aboriginal communities and was considered an art that was passed down through familial generations of women" (2010, p. 31). As has been seen above, sharing and teaching is an integral aspect of ATK. While the responsibilities of a particular knowledge may rest with one group, it does not seem to stop there. According to Szach's interviews with Anishinaabe and Métis women in Ontario, sharing and teaching is an integral part of one's responsibility as a water keeper (2013, p. 73). And while they may be the water keepers, they will learn from many as well, including, "grandparents, aunts and uncles." (p. 73)

Once again the interconnectedness of ATK is highlighted in participants' dialogue from the studies. Szach reports that participating women seemed to consider the complex water knowledge and associated teachings and stories as a part of their identity. There is a power dynamic there as well that Szach acknowledges. She found that some of the participants indicated there was a link between reclaiming water ATK and the act of decolonization (p. 121). Knowledge of ATK then may not only promote healthier and more sustainable ways of being but

also, in the case of water, can be “empowering because it can be by turns liberating, political, culturally reaffirming, about choice and decision-making, and defining what womanhood means.” (p. 122) Many Western scholars would agree that knowledge is power, but perhaps not so explicitly that it may be a collective power that, when at its best, seems to provide a healing and well-being for its keepers, and also provides an approach that respects and empowers others.

ATK Concerns

Unsurprisingly, threats to ATK are the familiar cornerstones of colonization from the State. ATK has been described as not only a knowledge-base but also a code of conduct, or a way of living. In conducting a case study in the province of B.C. on the impacts of the loss of traditional knowledge, Turner and Turner (2008) identified a thorough list of factors eroding ATK:

Reasons for this loss include compounding influences of changing knowledge systems owing to religious conversion and residential schools, loss of indigenous languages, loss of time and opportunity for traditional practices owing to participating in the wage economy, increasing urbanization of Indigenous populations, loss of access to traditional resources, restriction of management practices for sustaining these resources, and most recently, forces of globalization and industrialization. (2008, p. 103)

With the assault on traditional practices represented in this list, consequently the power roles Aboriginal women may have enjoyed in earlier times have been undercut, as “women’s traditional roles and contributions to sustainability have been undermined by the forces of colonization. [Aboriginal women] have to interact with a society that functions in reductionist, compartmentalized ways and that struggles to see the whole.” (2005, p. 6)

Loss of knowledge about the environment, medicines, and other traditional knowledge has had an impact the depths of which are difficult to measure. Nonetheless, some holders of ATK estimate the impact to health has been very serious: “The loss of Indigenous knowledge and medicine in Aboriginal cultures has been described by many leaders and Elders as the root of many contemporary health and well-being issues, faced by Aboriginal peoples” (Skye, 2010, p. 32). Loss of ATK may also have a broader impact than strictly physical health, though that alone is a substantial concern. The loss of ATK can also be seen as an erosion of a healthy lifestyle.

When it comes to adapting ATK into Western practice and frameworks, the issue of compartmentalization and disconnection happens because they are fundamentally different. In much of the research when participants express their concern, they reference the process of incorporating traditional knowledge into Western initiatives. Too often they feel it disconnects ATK, attempting to turn a holistic, deeply relational knowledge-pool into categorization, reductionism, and distinct beginnings and ends (AFN, n.d; Chiefs of Ontario, 2007; McGregor, 2004, 2005, 2008, 2012; Skye, 2010; Szach, 2013). This is a concern for several reasons: for the distortion of the intentions of ATK; for the lack of regard for ATK that this refitting to Western frameworks represents; and for the lack of control Aboriginal peoples have at the end of the project.

Sometimes framed as an effort to avoid exploitation of their knowledge (McGregor, 2004; Szach, 2013), and sometimes discussed as a barrier made of opposing worldviews (Szach, 2013), if not respectfully carried out, the relationship between ATK holders (individuals, groups, or communities) and those representing more Western approaches can seriously impede cooperation and working together. This can result in negative impacts to the environment, as well as negative impacts to the needs, concerns, and priorities of impacted Aboriginal peoples.

Currently, concerns for ATK and its use in environmental initiatives and research describe its application as “unsatisfactory from an Aboriginal perspective.” (McGregor, 2008, p. 144) McGregor neatly sums up much of the perspective of those feeling discontent, that ATK, or TEK, “from its definition to its utilization, has been for the most part controlled by interests external to the Aboriginal communities from which it originates.” (2008, p. 144)

Methodology

The purpose of this report was to gather input and perspectives from Aboriginal women on Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge that would inform EC’s ongoing development of a guidance document that would enhance EC’s respectful engagement with Aboriginal peoples on matters involving ATK. For the requirements and limitations of the project, it was determined that a survey and interviews would be efficient methods for gathering input from NWAC’s constituents, many of whom were gathered together for the National Aboriginal Women’s Summit in Membertou, Nova Scotia.

To help determine relevant survey and interview questions, a review of the literature was used to identify likely themes or topics for questioning. The literature search used related terms for ATK (Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge; Traditional Ecological Knowledge; Traditional Knowledge)

and Aboriginal women (also, Native, American Indian, and Indigenous). The timespan we considered was a 10-year limit, but we allowed a few exceptions for relevance, the limited resources available on the topic, and for the fact that little changed in the perspectives from the earliest paper to most recent.

From a review of the literature and to fulfill the needs of EC for feedback, it was determined to focus questions on the following topics:

- Role of Aboriginal women in ATK;
- Limitations Aboriginal women face to engaging with EC on ATK;
- Ways to improve the relationship between EC and Aboriginal women as ATK holders; and,
- Feedback on EC's principles guiding engagement with Aboriginal groups

NWAC technical staff drafted the survey, which was then approved by Environment Canada, and then it was translated into French. The survey was circulated within NWAC's networks, distributed at the National Aboriginal Women's Summit (NAWS) held in Membertou, Nova Scotia, and posted on NWAC's web site. Participants from NAWS were delegates coming from across Canada to participate in a summit focused on promoting equity, empowerment, and leadership in Aboriginal women in Canada. Online participants were reached through NWAC's networks and website and would have been open to Aboriginal women across Canada but because it was for a limited time, the participation was quite limited. Responses were collected over a period of 16 days. In total there were 31 participants who completed the survey. 15 Interviews were conducted and those responses have been included in the analysis completed. The survey was created in Survey Monkey and can be viewed in the Appendix to this report.

Survey/Interview Results & Analysis

Although the survey and interview results are not representative of the entire target population, they should provide some input into Environment Canada's proposed Vision, Guiding Principles, and Strategic Objectives, as well as whether engagement with Aboriginal women on ATK is currently being undertaken effectively by EC in executing its mandate.

Of the 32 respondents, there was a wide range of ages represented:

What is your age?	Answer
16-20 years	2
21-25 years	3

26-30 years	2
31-35 years	3
36-40 years	4
41-45 years	5
46-50 years	4
51-55 years	5
56-60 years	2
61-65 years	1
Skipped the question	1

28 women identified as First Nations, 2 as Métis, 1 as Inuit, and 1 skipped the question. Over half (18) lived on-reserve, with 13 living off-reserve. 6 women stated that they had an excellent grasp of ATK (19% of respondents), 11 identified themselves as having an above average understanding (35%), 5 indicated average knowledge (16%), 8 indicated below average (25%), 1 indicated a poor understanding (3%) and 1 skipped the question (3%).

Participants were presented with Environment Canada's statement on Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK) as "the knowledge held by First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, as well as rooted in the culture and experiences of multiple generations. As it relates to the work of Environment Canada such knowledge includes community analysis and observations related to wildlife and the environment as a whole" (NWAC survey/interview). Participants were invited to add to Environment Canada's understanding of the meaning of ATK. 16 people responded by offering the following additions:

- Source of benefits, jobs, economic resources
- Generated over a long period (life experience-based research), shared between generations and within extended family networks; culturally transmitted over an extended time period across genders;
- There is specific knowledge held by women and men. There are women
- Everything in the air, water and land; ATK should be recognized legally;
- Protect all creation that lives on the land;
- Water;
- Uses of gathered medicines – spiritual connection to the land;
- The above description is too wordy;
- Chief Seattle speech of 1854 is a great

- specific medicines;
- Recognized by Treaties and oral traditions;
- Language;
- The continued research of traditional medicine and protection of this medicine;
- Indigenous Traditional Knowledge (ITK);
- lesson for environmentalists;¹
- Free, prior, informed consent of Aboriginal Peoples² must be obtained when affecting any Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge or resources; and,
- The concept of oneness and energy.

Following this, the surveys/interviews outlined Environment Canada's principles for working with ATK holders:

A: build and strengthen trust-based relationships with communities;

B: respect and value ATK as a distinct, valid knowledge system;

C: recognize and support Aboriginal interests in working together.

Participants were then invited to provide additional principles that Environment Canada should include in their approach to ATK. 16 participants added (and a 17th respondent wrote 'I don't know'):

- Consent and consultation
- Women's knowledge is unique and is often related to specific lands and ancestral territories;
- The principles of UNDRIP – Free, prior, informed consent. First Peoples need to be consulted, accommodated, and their consent obtained for mutual economic benefit in partnerships;
- Include youth and Elders and women;
- Get approval from community throughout any process together;
- C: recognize and support Aboriginal interests in working together to protect the water from fracking;
- Create a working understanding of ATK;
- Build, strengthen, and support Aboriginal working relationships – respect and value ATK as a distinct

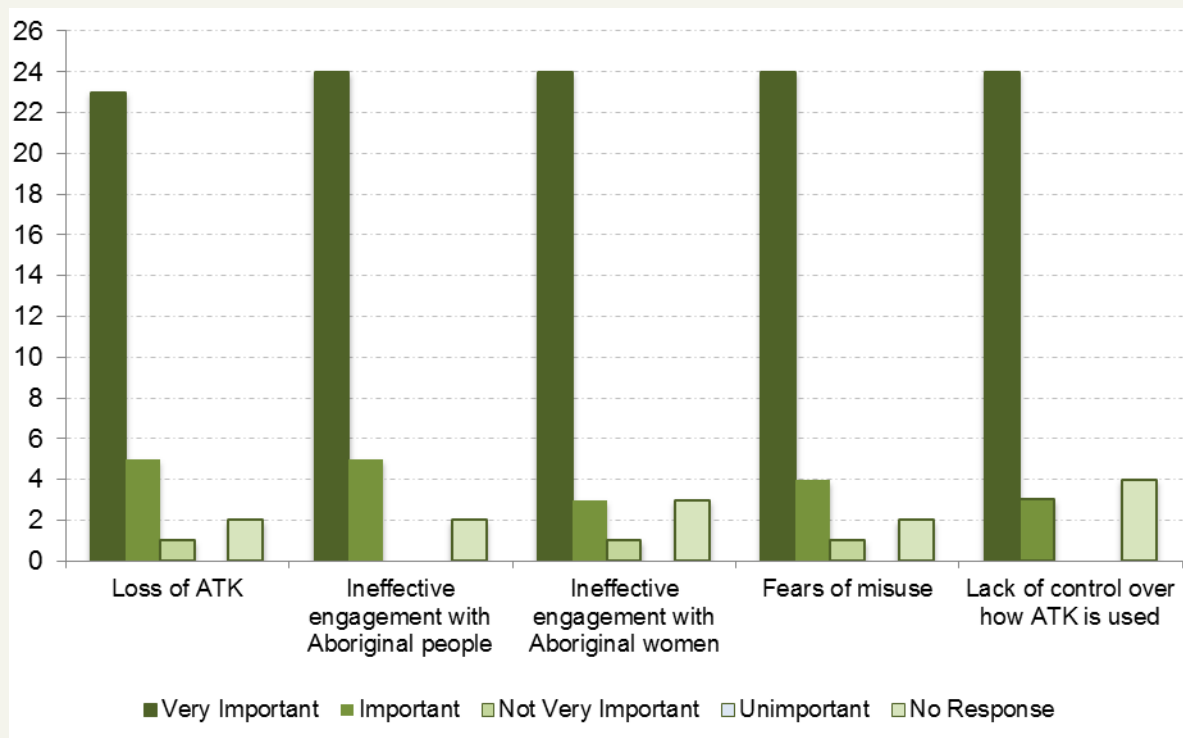
¹ Please see Appendix II to read the text of Chief Seattle's Speech.

² Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) as well as the related topic of Consultation came up repeatedly throughout the survey. Because of their importance for understanding survey participants' answers, we have included relevant information on FPIC and Consultation in appendix III

- A, b, c, more communication among each other, more networking is needed;
- Free, prior consent, respect, involvement of First Nations;
- Consent and constant control by First Nations peoples;
- Should be recognized as legitimate;
- Have consent and participation by youth, elders, women;
- valid knowledge system – recognize that ATK has spiritual/emotional connection to wildlife and the environment as a whole;
- How are you going to ensure that Aboriginal women are included?;
- The earth is [sacred]. We are part of the earth and the earth is part of us. Respect the land and the environment.; and,
- Benefit Aboriginal peoples equally!

Despite their different backgrounds and levels of understanding, respondents similarly ranked challenges preventing ATK from being shared with Environment Canada:

Figure 01: BARRIERS TO SHARING ABORIGINAL TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE



For the 5 who chose to add additional comments, they provided the following:

- Control and consent;
- Women-specific meetings of committees;
- Crafting Indigenous Knowledge and art;
- A lot of ATK is not meant to be shared outside of the Nation; and

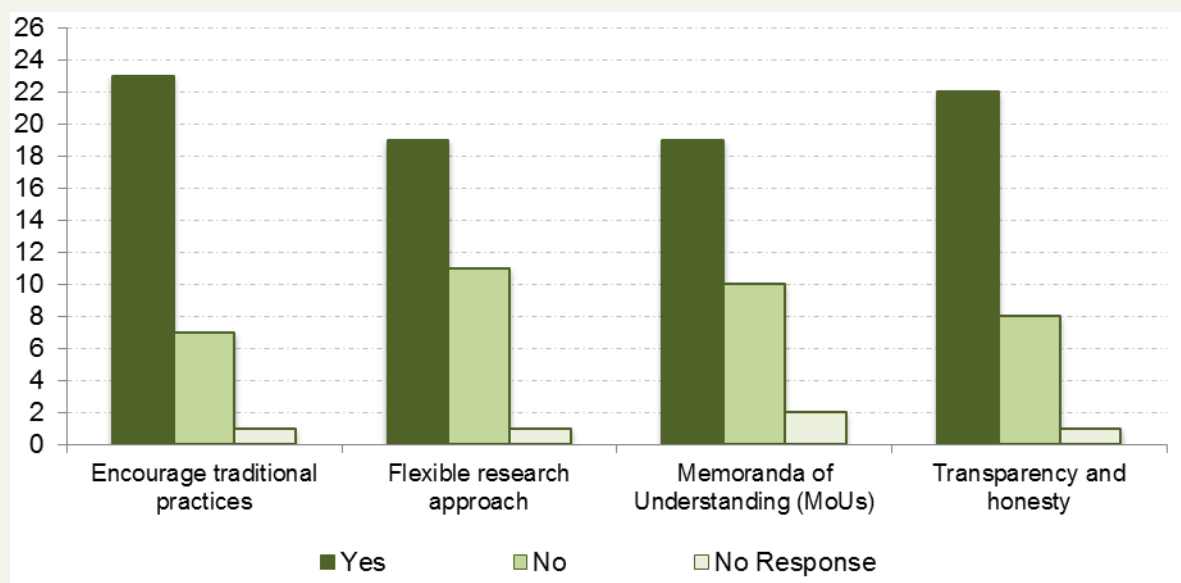
- Free, Prior and Informed Consent from Aboriginal Peoples – proper

consultation is necessary!

Most women ranked the loss of ATK from cultural suppression and assimilation policies, lack of effective engagement with Aboriginal peoples and women, fears that ATK will be misused or exploited, and lack of Aboriginal control in how ATK is used as important and/or very important barriers to sharing ATK.

When asked to select actions or strategies that would improve federal and Aboriginal collaboration in regards to ATK, the majority of respondents identified the following for Environment Canada to consider implementing in its approach towards ATK:

Figure 02: FEDERAL APPROACHES TO ADDRESS BARRIERS TO SHARING ATK



5 respondents provided commentary for the category of ‘Other’ strategies not listed in the survey:

- Benefit Aboriginals;
- Have specific meetings for the role of women;
- Fair economic benefit & consent from our Peoples;
- Reflexivity; and,
- Ensure that Aboriginal Peoples benefit equally in all aspects.

Participants selections indicated that Environment Canada consider encouraging traditional practices, such as harvesting, first-food ceremonies, and potlatches, in order to ensure Aboriginal

children can gain ATK and practical experience; as well as adopt a research approach that respects local knowledge, perspectives, and ideas.

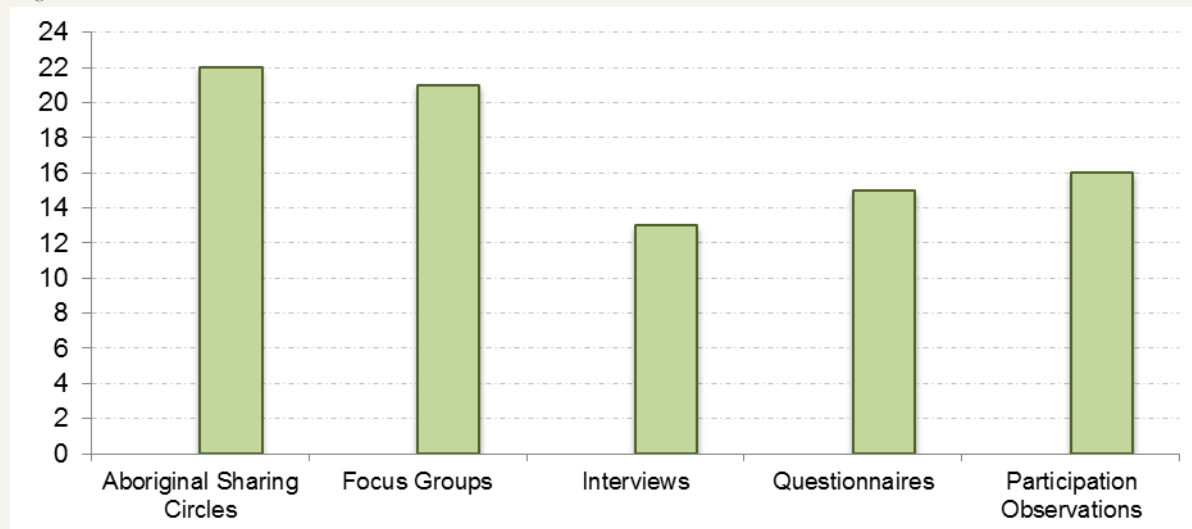
Participants also identified more transparency when EC discusses its programs in relation to the opportunities and limitations of Aboriginal involvement, as well as the role of ATK. Comments were made about the lack of trust Aboriginal peoples have toward the Federal Government, particularly with respect to free, prior and informed consent by them when discussing issues about the environment affecting Aboriginal and Treaty rights. Aboriginal women supported the idea of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) that would outline the commitments and protocols for applying ATK to Environment Canada projects and implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as ways to build better agreements with Aboriginal peoples. They further emphasized the need to ensure that Aboriginal peoples, not just those accessing ATK, equally benefit from the sharing of ATK.

When asked whether in their own community ATK was entrusted to specific groups, respondents answered either Yes (9 respondents or 29%), No (4 or 13%), Some Is (12 or 40%), or Not Sure (6 or 20%), and 1 skipped the question (3%).

In the follow-up question, “Is there a special role for women in your community/region in protecting, controlling and applying Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge?” respondents answered either Yes (17 or 54% of respondents), No (2 or 6%), Unsure (9 or 29%), or Other (3 or 9%). 2 of those 3 said that for their community, there was no special role, but there should be. The third respondent said for their community, women were frontline protectors, and 1 skipped the question (3%).

Several respondents stated, “First peoples must be consulted and accommodated, and their consent obtained for mutual economic benefit in any partnerships.” (NWAC survey, 2014) When asked about specific methods for engaging with ATK holders and ATK, participants emphasized multiple approaches as opposed to just choosing 1 or 2. That being said, Aboriginal Sharing Circles and Focus Groups were selected more often than any of the other options.

Figure 03: ENGAGEMENT OF ATK HOLDERS

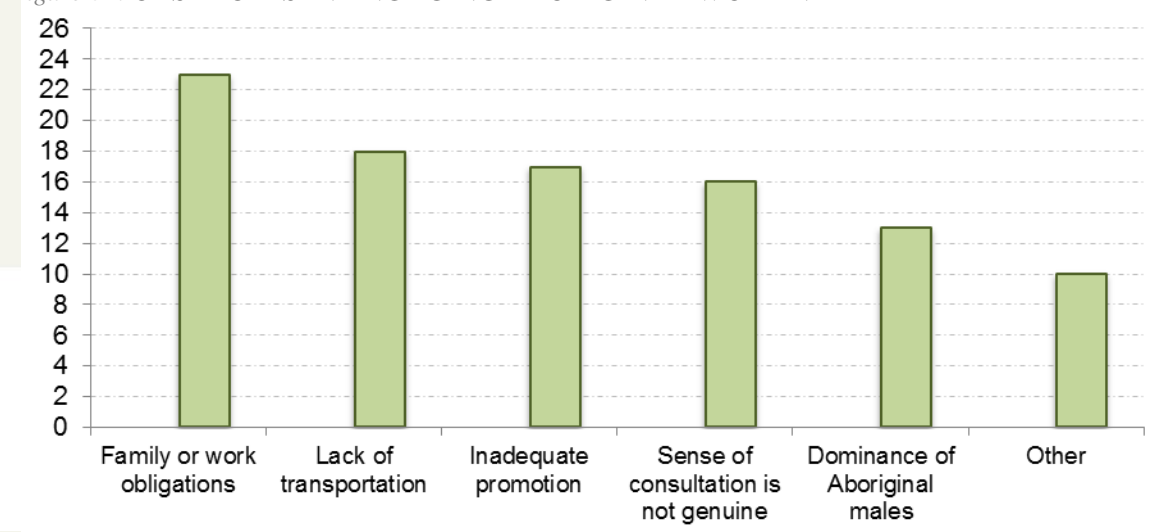


By embracing different methods to engage First Peoples, Environment Canada can improve the quality and quantity of engagement and get closer to a fuller representation. 7 respondents provided additional suggestions in the 'Other' category:

- All [provided options];
- More time on issues;
- Spend time and look at pictures, maps, and listen to Elder's stories;
- Have specific meetings with Elders (women then men);
- Tea diplomacy and meeting Elders;
- All the above sound great but the first step is to discuss with the Chief and Band Council and ask for their permission and direction; and,
- Targeted meetings with Elders, Women, and Youth.

When Aboriginal women were asked about obstacles to participation, they indicated several obstacles, but at the forefront were family and work obligations:

Figure 04: OBSTACLES IN ENGAGING ABORIGINAL WOMEN



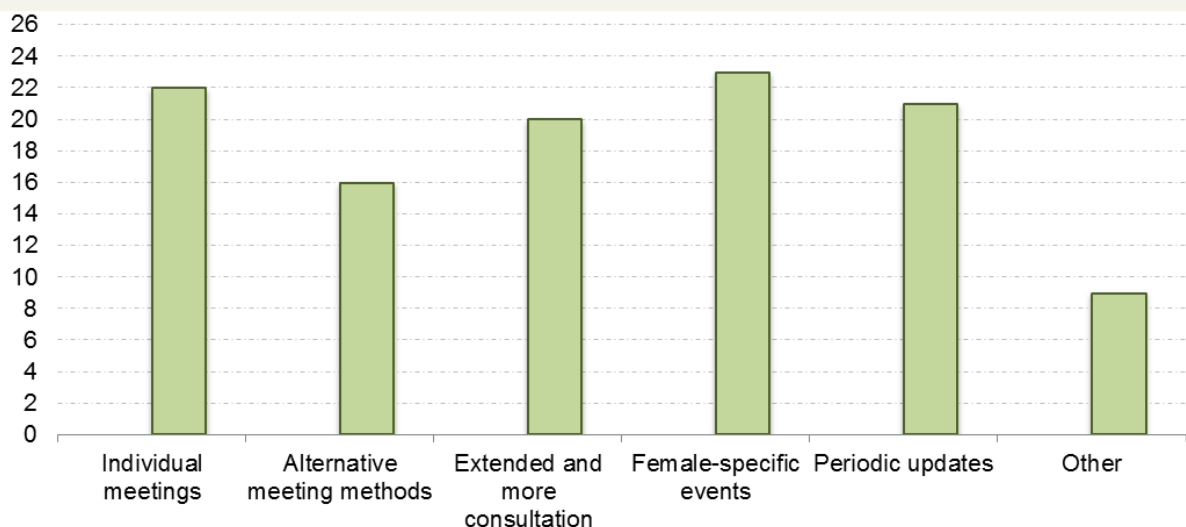
Additionally, they provided 10 more obstacles in the ‘other’ category:

- Need for more meetings;
- Not enough meetings;
- More time for consultation;
- Build relationship with Aboriginal women;
- No Elder care;
- Low self-esteem that they are knowledge is worthy;
- Advertisement;
- History and oppression, have taken women’s voices, insecurity;
- Dominance of Chief & Council; and,
- Inability to leave community for extended time.

Participants indicated that all of the options were a concern. In addition to family and work obligations, a lack of transportation, insufficient promotion and lack of information about events, the sense that consultation is not genuine, and dominance of Aboriginal males as the reasons that prevent Aboriginal women from participating in such dialogue; however, they added that Environment Canada needs to hold more meetings and strengthen relationships with Aboriginal women outside of the relationships they currently have. As well, the Department should consider how Aboriginal women have “low self-esteem” regarding whether their knowledge is worthy because of the many impacts of past practices leaving them out of discussions. (NWAC Survey, 2014)

When presented with viable options for overcoming the above barriers for engaging Aboriginal women on ATK, participants ranked the suggested solutions in the following way: Female-specific events (23), individual meetings (22), periodic updates (21), extended and more consultation (20), and alternative meeting methods such as teleconferences or e-meetings (16).

Figure 05: FEDERAL APPROACHES TO ENGAGE ABORIGINAL WOMEN



9 people supplied additional suggestions in the category of ‘Other’:

- Provide meals and childcare at meetings;
- Build trust/improve relationships over time. Be honest about EC’s intent with the meetings;
- Report back to the community after the meetings have happened;
- Check in with community about the report, to see if EC got it right;
- Face-to-face story-telling, walking through territories;
- Have community liaisons to build relationships and trust and EC be trustworthy. No tricks;
- Using social media to inform;
- Provide child care and transportation to meetings; and,
- Deal with all members of community not just Chief and Council.

While these approaches would allow for greater flexibility and thus address the aforementioned challenges, survey/interview respondents notably proposed that Environment Canada could use social media more often, have ongoing reporting back on their progress, as well as send “community liaisons” that would build trust and improve relationships between the federal government and communities. Requests for meals, childcare, and/or transportation while at meetings for the participants were also made to ensure higher accessibility and participation by women members.

Participants were asked at what points of the consultation process Aboriginal women should be involved. Participants were able to select all answers that applied:

Prior to engagement vis-à-vis developing questions, promotion, and other logistical work	22 (75%)
Participation in actual discussions	21 (72%)
Following consultations to provide feedback on draft policies	15 (51%)
After process by offering input regarding how actual policies or programs are implemented	17 (58%)

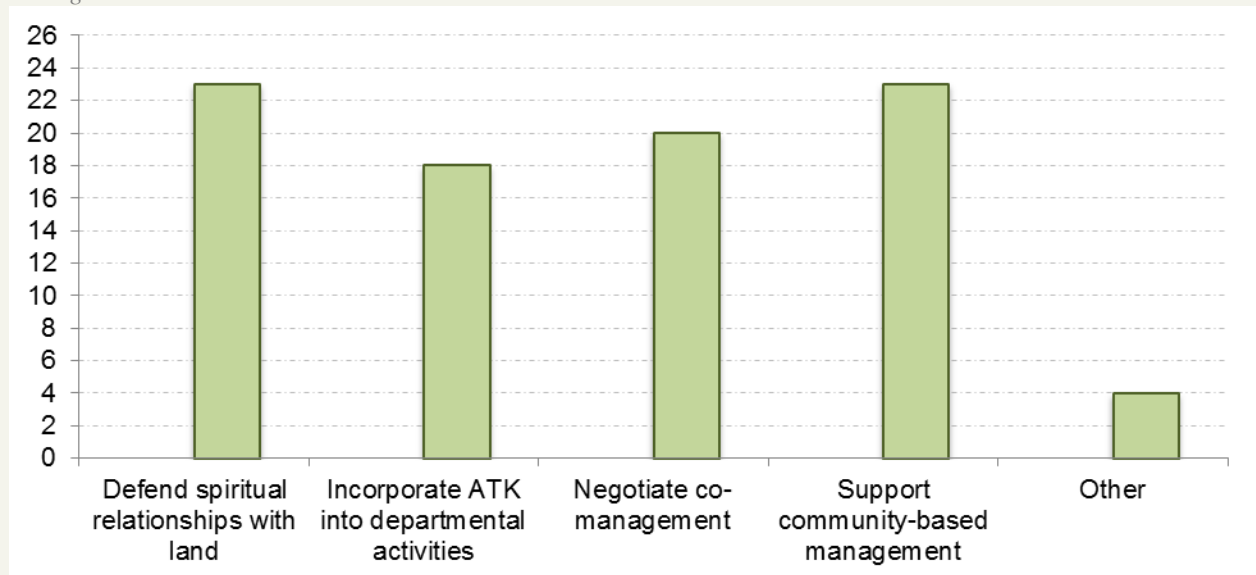
9 respondents provided additional commentary in the ‘Other’ category with a very similar theme to all of the answers regarding when Aboriginal women should be involved:

- All processes;
- Throughout the process;
- Always;
- All stages;
- At beginning and throughout!; and,
- Close to start of process or

- All levels; immediately upon starting

Regarding how the Federal Government can promote ATK and First Nations` resource management, Aboriginal women responded favourably to all the options, emphasizing somewhat more approaches that defend spiritual relationships with the land (23) and supporting community-based management (23):

Figure 06: FEDERAL APPROACHES TO PROMOTE ATK & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT



There were 4 respondents who supplied comments under ‘other’:

- Our People need have control and input into processes;
- Implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;³
- Ensure our people benefit economically; and,
- Support national Aboriginal organizations to work on these issues with their membership.

The Federal Government could also negotiate co-management agreements that would allow Aboriginal communities, governments, and public development agencies to apply their knowledge together or support community-based management in which Aboriginal peoples have direct control over resources. Again, respondents emphasized the importance of ensuring that

³ To view the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, go to the following link:
<http://www.nwac.ca/files/download/un-postereng.pdf>

Aboriginal communities receive input, control and equal economic benefit in any proposed arrangement.

The final survey/interview question asked how the Federal Government should address conflicting observations and analysis of ATK. Respondents were able to select all that apply. 24 respondents (92%) selected, “Create flexibility in policies and programs so that local differences in ATK are acknowledged and incorporated.” 19 respondents (73%) selected, “Present opportunities for stakeholders to engage and reconcile these differences.” 6 respondents (23%) chose ‘Other’ and provided additional commentary:

- Have sessions with women;
- Take the time to come to build common solutions;
- Support face-to-face meetings, interviews; support projects; support conference. Aboriginal women haven’t had time, opportunity, option to meet to discuss practices, concerns,
- ideas, successes, etc. This has to happen;
- Understand that there are different Nations, so there is no one-size fits all approach;
- Talk to youth and Elders; and,
- I don’t think the government should be addressing this at all.

Recalling the diversity between First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, as well as their communities, there was a general consensus that the federal government should present opportunities for stakeholders to engage and reconcile these differences, including face-to-face meetings, conferences, and support projects; as well as create flexibility within their programs so that local nuisances are acknowledged and incorporated. It is important to remember, as one woman wrote, “Understand that there are different Nations, so there is no one-size fits all approach.” (NWAC Survey, 2014)

Recommendations

The recommendations are divided into those provided by participants in the survey/interviews and those collected from a review of the literature.

Recommendations from the Survey/Interviews

Survey/Interview participants provided recommendations throughout on the various topics presented in the survey. Overall, their recommendations emphasized being inclusive (engaging multiple groups of ATK holders, such as youth, Elders, and women), building trust and a lasting relationship, involving Aboriginal women throughout the process of consultation and initiatives,

taking the time needed to have thorough and meaningful consultation and being flexible in one's approach to ATK; and recognizing that there are diverse communities with specific needs and a rigid approach will not facilitate collaboration.

When respondents were presented with a definition and meaning for ATK that Environment Canada is guided by, they responded to requests for recommendations by suggesting Environment Canada implement a more explicit recognition of ATK as a source of resources, including employment. Such recognition may strengthen efforts by EC (or other groups) to give ATK the same level of regard as the Aboriginal peoples they are interacting with. Judging from how often more trust and a better relationship between ATK holders and outside parties was mentioned, such a declaration on the part of EC and/or the implementation of the relevant clauses in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples may well give a boost to opening dialogues with ATK holders, and fostering good relations with Aboriginal peoples, including Aboriginal women.

Participant responses for the EC definition and meaning also echoed the themes from the literature that ATK is a knowledge that was cultivated over a long period of time and is a protected knowledge (meaning that one requires consent to access it). ATK should be recognized as a lifestyle as well and a set of values: ATK is about protecting creation and respecting what it provides, including medicine. Also, recognize its gendered elements.

Responding to EC's Guiding Principles for working with ATK holders, participants put forward the following recommendations: Once again, they require that processes and protocol be rooted in achieving consent and consultation with Aboriginal peoples. Be inclusive in discussions; this includes youth, Elders, and women. Processes for engaging with ATK should have an end goal of ensuring Aboriginal peoples also benefit from engagement. Again, this reconnects to themes of trust-building and collaboration: the underlying themes seemed to be that for a productive and positive ATK consultation, Environment Canada or other parties would want to ensure that they heard from multiple representatives and provided for a long-term engagement process. These were the sorts of practices that would cultivate trust, sharing, and collaboration. They are also the practices that would likely lead to better shared benefits for all parties. It would be difficult to ensure that Aboriginal ATK holders were benefitting from the process as well if they are not even at the table to discuss the issues.

Although the Federal Government may be tempted to shorten engagement processes due to financial constraints and budgetary cutbacks, by taking the time needed with all those impacted could seriously improve relationships, thereby avoiding law suits or blockades that end up not

only damaging relationships but costing governments and often third parties millions of dollars that were unanticipated being spent. Taking the time for fair, equitable, and transparent processes is always the better, more cost-efficient option.

To improve collaboration between Aboriginals and EC, participants supported all of the provided solutions (Encourage traditional practices; take a flexible research approach; use Memoranda of Understandings; and use transparency, honesty and integrity, and true partnerships). They made additional recommendations, including holding specific meetings with Aboriginal women and ensuring all parties will benefit from engagement. Overall, their recommendations for strategies suggest an underlying theme of communication, mutual benefit, and real inclusivity.

In terms of methods of engagement, Aboriginal women emphasized more face-to-face type approaches (Aboriginal Sharing Circles and Focus Groups were the most selected of the provided possibilities). Interestingly, interviews ranked the lowest of all of the possibilities on that survey/interview question (aside from the category ‘other’). Perhaps because it may be seen as the least dynamic and sharing that it ranked much lower. There seemed to be a preference process in a lot of the answers throughout the survey (and the literature) for a natural flow of dialogue as the better consultation practice, an approach that perhaps would not be as viable in an interview format. In the additional recommendations provided for this question, participants maintained a strong dialogical theme in their recommendations, including urging for “tea diplomacy and meeting Elders”, and, recommending that representatives from the Federal Government needing to “spend time and look at pictures, maps, and listen to Elder’s stories.” (NWAC Survey, 2014)

When polled on solutions to obstacles preventing Aboriginal women from participating in ATK engagement, the top 4 answers (23-20 participants out of 32 circled the choice) either encouraged face-to-face interaction or emphasized strong lines of communication, such as periodic updates. Alternative meeting methods (described as teleconferences and e-meetings) in comparison were significantly lower at 16 participants. Recommendations provided in the category ‘Other’ reflect this preference to avoid digital dialogue and emphasize face-to-face, trust building, and other supports to enable Aboriginal women’s attendance. Some of these include providing childcare at meetings, developing trust between community members and EC, and repeatedly checking back with the community to build those relationships. Not surprisingly, when asked when Aboriginal women should be involved in a consultation process, the general recommendation was “throughout every process.” (NWAC Survey, 2014) This includes before, during, and after engagement/consultation.

When asked about how the Federal Government can promote ATK and First Nations resource management, the theme in the recommendations by respondents was one of partnership and collaboration. The most popular recommendations chosen from the survey/interview were to assist in defending the spiritual relationships with the land and to support community-based management. Added to this in the category 'Other' were calls for ensuring economic benefit of Aboriginal peoples and supporting national Aboriginal organizations in working on these issues with their constituents. Overall, there was a strong role for Environment Canada, or the federal government, to play in supporting the continuance of ATK.

Finally, when tasked with advising the federal government on how it should address conflicting observations and analysis of ATK, respondent recommendations strongly reflected a flexible approach. 92% of respondents selected, "Create flexibility in policies and programs so that local differences in ATK are acknowledged and incorporated." (NWAC Survey, 2014) Added to that were the additional comments that nearly all represented some additional aspect of a flexible approach, from incorporating gender and expanding consultation to multiple groups, to the recognition that, "There are different Nations, so there is no one-size fits all approach." (NWAC Survey, 2014)

Recommendations from the Literature

The recommendations from the literature are somewhat diverse and directed towards the particular focus of the given research paper. Still, the recommendations bear some relevance towards anyone engaging in the fields of Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge.

For recommendations specifically addressing Aboriginal women, the Chiefs of Ontario report (2007) recommended that women be better represented in discussions about water and conservation. This recommendation was based on the large role that women have in Aboriginal communities. Participants in this report were from Ontario and included Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), Anishinaabe (Ojibway and Oji-Cree) and Mushkegowuk (James Bay Cree). Reed and Christie (2009) urge more feminist consideration in the management of resources and in how we examine resource management and environmental protections. They make this recommendation because the consideration of gender roles and gender relations to environmental change has been grossly overlooked: "A recent search through all items (articles, book reviews, commentaries, etc.) published by the top interdisciplinary environmental social science journals between 1980 and 2005 revealed that only 3.9% of all items contained the words 'sex', 'gender', or 'feminism'" (p. 247). They also make this recommendation because negative environmental changes tend to fall hardest on women who are poor. While much of their focus is on

environmental disaster rather than general processes, they ask a compelling question about the role of women in environmental considerations: “If gender is so significant a factor in understanding the geographies of environmental disasters, is it not also relevant to other forms of human-environment relations, environmental management, policy, and practice?” (p. 247)

McGregor and Dannenmann share a perspective on ATK. Much of McGregor’s research looked into power dynamics and the use of ATK inside of Western frameworks. She emphasizes that what is labeled as Traditional Knowledge is actually a way of life, and she cautions against the ‘colonizer’s labels when seeking to understand TEK and employ it (2004, 2005). Dannenmann likewise advocates that ATK is a lifestyle that is lived rather than an abstract, and urges others to cultivate their own relationship with it (2008). To some degree, Skye (2010) is attempting to show how one expands that lifestyle to approaches in non-environmental scenarios that nevertheless still fall within the broad category of Traditional Knowledge. Applied to midwife programs instead of the environment, for a model that is healthy or holistic, she calls for, “Attention, resources, the acknowledgement of indigenous knowledge and medicine are required to facilitate the development of culturally significant health care services for Aboriginal Peoples.” (p. 34) While her approach may run into conflict with the concerns of others working in Traditional Knowledge, Skye discusses merging Traditional Knowledge with the current Canadian public health system in a way that alters the Western framework: “If the health policy in Canada is going to address the Aboriginal health crisis, that attempt requires a fundamental restructuring of the health system to encompass the appropriate respect and dignity of indigenous knowledge and medicine.” (p 35) We are cautious about over-stretching her recommendation. Nevertheless, it does reflect a somewhat differing view on the adaptation of ATK to frameworks outside of Aboriginal communities.

Conclusion

The Aboriginal women participants who completed the survey/interview provided many insightful and valuable recommendations on the issue of Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge and the role that Environment Canada can play in engaging them. The literature review suggested various themes of respect, ongoing dialogue between parties, and inclusiveness in terms of what groups to consult in order to craft an effective consultation process and engagement for ATK holders. The most prevalent finding from the literature was the perspective that ATK was not just knowledge, but also a lifestyle or approach/process. Advocates for collaboration encouraged processes that would cultivate respect between parties as well as an on-going dialogue as opposed to an extraction process of getting the information in a rigid interaction and leaving to

commence with whatever initiative had instigated the consultation in the process. And so it was with survey participants for NWAC's ATK survey.

Currently, there is a dearth in research and scholarship into Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (or Traditional Ecological Knowledge, or just Indigenous Knowledge) and gender. It is clear from the reports that have been published and from the content produced in NWAC's own survey/interview for this paper that Aboriginal women are vital holders and protectors of ATK and have their own unique relation to it. It is also becoming more apparent globally that the inclusion of women into any meaningful initiative at the community level or more is essential for both the success of the initiative and to ensure its balance. This can be seen in the UN finding that female representation in government is a precursor to a nation more active in protecting its natural resources (IUCN, 2012).

If we can set aside the argument of relevance for Aboriginal women to the ATK table as settled in a strong affirmative, we can then begin to discuss how to practice respectful, effective engagement with Aboriginal women, and how to overcome the obstacles and barriers to their participation. This report attempts to join that discussion and provide meaningful insight into increasing Aboriginal women's participation in Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge while specifically addressing the concerns and strategies that Environment Canada has raised for their own processes.

The results of the surveys/interviews suggest that Environment Canada's Guiding Principles for working with ATK holders are practical, useful, and lay the foundation for what is required to building a strong foundation in working with Aboriginal peoples. These principles emphasize building trust with communities, respecting ATK among Nations as a valid knowledge system, and recognizing and supporting Aboriginal interest in working collaboratively with Government. While a step in the right direction, there is much more that Environment Canada needs to consider in enacting a more realized gendered process. Female participants in the survey have provided a great deal of content, with many suggestions on how those principles might look with tangible examples and strategies for engaging Aboriginal women who are ATK holders and communities.

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Appendix I

NWAC Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Survey

Sex of participant:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Female	100.0%	32
Male	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		32
<i>skipped question</i>		0

What is your age?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
15 years and under	0.0%	0
16-20 years	6.5%	2
21-25 years	9.7%	3
26-30 years	6.5%	2
31-35 years	9.7%	3
36-40 years	12.9%	4
41-45 years	16.1%	5
46-50 years	12.9%	4
51-55 years	16.1%	5
56-60 years	6.5%	2
61-65 years	3.2%	1
66 years or older	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		31
<i>skipped question</i>		1

Do you identify as First Nation, Inuit, or Metis person?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
First Nation	80.6%	25
Metis	6.5%	2
Inuit	3.2%	1
Other (please specify)	9.7%	3
<i>answered question</i>		31
<i>skipped question</i>		1

Number	Response Date	Other (please specify)	Categories
1	Oct 29, 2014 7:44 PM	Mi'kmaq	
2	Oct 29, 2014 7:37 PM	Mi'kmaq	
3	Oct 29, 2014 7:26 PM	No answer	
Are you a Status Indian?			
Answer Options		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		87.1%	27
No		12.9%	4
<i>answered question</i>			31
<i>skipped question</i>			1
Please specify the community of which you consider yourself a member.			
Answer Options		Response Count	
		23	
<i>answered question</i>			23
<i>skipped question</i>			9
Number	Response Date	Response Text	
1	Oct 31, 2014 7:21 PM	St. Mary's Band	
2	Oct 31, 2014 7:02 PM	Lennox Island	
3	Oct 31, 2014 6:59 PM	Indianbrook	
4	Oct 29, 2014 8:05 PM	Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan	
5	Oct 29, 2014 8:01 PM	Listuguj	
6	Oct 29, 2014 7:51 PM	Membertou	
7	Oct 29, 2014 7:48 PM	Eskasoni	
8	Oct 29, 2014 7:44 PM	Eskasoni First Nations	
9	Oct 29, 2014 7:41 PM	Indian Brook	
10	Oct 29, 2014 7:39 PM	Paqtakek	
11	Oct 29, 2014 7:39 PM	Sipekne'katik (Indian Brook)	
12	Oct 29, 2014 7:35 PM	eskasoni/ mashpee (USA)	
13	Oct 29, 2014 7:33 PM	Membertou	
14	Oct 29, 2014 7:31 PM	Eskasoni	
15	Oct 29, 2014 7:31 PM	Patinkek Mikmaw Nation	
16	Oct 29, 2014 7:26 PM	Membertou	
17	Oct 29, 2014 7:24 PM	Membertou	
18	Oct 29, 2014 7:24 PM	Listuguj	
19	Oct 29, 2014 7:21 PM	Membertou	
20	Oct 29, 2014 7:17 PM	Elsipogtog	

21	Oct 29, 2014 6:50 PM	Bigstone Cree, Alberta
22	Oct 28, 2014 4:26 PM	Conne River, Newfoundland
23	Oct 28, 2014 3:50 PM	Listuguj, Quebec
Do you live on-reserve or off-reserve?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
On-Reserve	60.0%	18
Off-Reserve	40.0%	12
<i>answered question</i>		30
<i>skipped question</i>		2
What is your highest level of school that you have completed?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
No schooling completed	3.2%	1
Elementary School	0.0%	0
Some High School, no diploma	9.7%	3
High school graduate, diploma or equivalent	12.9%	4
Trade or vocational training	9.7%	3
College, University, no diploma	32.3%	10
Associate degree	3.2%	1
Bachelor's degree	9.7%	3
Masters Degree	12.9%	4
Professional Degree	3.2%	1
Doctorate Degree	3.2%	1
<i>answered question</i>		31
<i>skipped question</i>		1
How would you describe your employment status?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Full-time employment	40.0%	12
Part-time employment	20.0%	6
Self-employment	23.3%	7
Unemployment and looking for work	6.7%	2
Unemployment but not looking for work	0.0%	0
Retired	3.3%	1
Military	0.0%	0
Student	6.7%	2
Unable to work	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		30
<i>skipped question</i>		2

How would you rate your understanding of Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent	19.4%	6
Above average	35.5%	11
Average	16.1%	5
Below average	25.8%	8
Poor	3.2%	1
<i>answered question</i>		31
<i>skipped question</i>		1

Environment Canada recognizes Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK) as the knowledge held by First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples, as well as rooted in the culture and experiences of multiple generations. As it relates to the work of Environment Canada such knowledge includes community analyses and observations related to wildlife and the environment as a whole. What, if anything, would you add to Environment Canada's definition?

Answer Options	Response Count
	16
<i>answered question</i>	16
<i>skipped question</i>	16

Number	Response Date	Response Text
1	Oct 31, 2014 7:22 PM	Benefits to our people; jobs; resources; \$
2	Oct 29, 2014 8:07 PM	Generated over a long time (a way of life experience-based research); shared between generations and within extended family networks; and culturally transmitted over an extended time period across genders
3	Oct 29, 2014 8:02 PM	There is specific knowledge held by women & men. There are women's medicines.
4	Oct 29, 2014 7:45 PM	I would add something like "recognized by treaties and oral tradition" to validate knowledge of our peoples
5	Oct 29, 2014 7:42 PM	Language
6	Oct 29, 2014 7:42 PM	the continued research of tradition medicine and protection of all of this medicine
7	Oct 29, 2014 7:40 PM	ATK -> Indigenous Traditional Knowledge (ITK)
8	Oct 29, 2014 7:36 PM	everything in air, water and land
9	Oct 29,	The ATK be recognized legally

	2014 7:32 PM Oct 29, 2014 7:25 PM	10	Protected all creation that live on the land
	Oct 29, 2014 7:22 PM	11	Water? - Uses of gathered medicines
	Oct 29, 2014 7:18 PM	12	- Spiritual connection to the land It is too wordy: "Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK) is the knowledge held by First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples, as well as rooted in the culture, experiences of multiple generations, community analyses, and observations related to wildlife and the environment as a whole."
	Oct 29, 2014 7:13 PM	13	
	Oct 28, 2014 4:29 PM	14	Chief Seattle Speech of 1854 - Great lesson for environmentalist.
	Oct 28, 2014 3:51 PM	15	Free, prior, informed consent of Aboriginal Peoples must be obtained when affecting any Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge or resources.
	Oct 28, 2014 3:48 PM	16	the concept of oneness and energy
Environment Canada has identified the following principles to follow when working with ATK holders: a. Build and strengthen trust-based relationships with communities b. Respect and value ATK as a distinct, valid knowledge system c. Recognize and support Aboriginal interests in working together What other principles should be included in Environment Canada's approach to ATK?			
Answer Options		Response Count	
		17	
<i>answered question</i>		17	
<i>skipped question</i>		15	

Number	Response Date	Response Text
1	Oct 31, 2014 7:26 PM	Consent and consultation
2	Oct 29, 2014 8:08 PM	Women`s knowledge is unique and is often related to specific lands and ancestral territories
3	Oct 29, 2014 8:02 PM	The principles UNDRIP = FREE, PRIOR, INFORMED consent. First peoples need to be consulted, accommodated, and their consent obtained for mutual economic benefit in partnerships.
4	Oct 29, 2014 7:51 PM	Include youth and Elders and women
5	Oct 29, 2014 7:43 PM	a.
		b.

		c.			
		communication among each other, networking needs to be taken more resource			
6	Oct 29, 2014 7:37 PM	free prior consent, respect, involvement of F.N.			
7	Oct 29, 2014 7:33 PM	Consent and constant control by First Nations peoples			
8	Oct 29, 2014 7:32 PM	should be recognized as legitimate			
9	Oct 29, 2014 7:31 PM	Have consent and participation by youth, elders, women			
10	Oct 29, 2014 7:27 PM	Get approval from community throughout any process together c. recognize and support aboriginal interests in working together			
11	Oct 29, 2014 7:26 PM	protect the water from fracking			
12	Oct 29, 2014 7:22 PM	idk			
13	Oct 29, 2014 7:18 PM	Create a working understanding of ATK - Build, strengthen, and support Aboriginal working relationships - Respect and value ATK as a distinct, valid knowledge system			
14	Oct 29, 2014 7:14 PM	- Recognize that ATK has spiritual/emotional connection to wildlife and the environment as a whole			
15	Oct 29, 2014 6:54 PM	How are you going to ensure that Aboriginal women are included?			
16	Oct 28, 2014 4:33 PM	The earth is Scared. We are part of the Earth and the Earth is part of us. Respect the land and the environment.			
17	Oct 28, 2014 3:52 PM	Benefit Aboriginal Peoples equally!			
What are some challenges preventing Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge from being shared with Environment Canada? (Please rate each section)					
Answer Options	Very important	Important	Not very important	Unimportant	Response Count

Loss of ATK due to cultural suppression, assimilation, and/or residential school system;	23	5	1	0	29
Lack of positive relationships or effective engagement with Aboriginal Peoples;	24	5	0	0	29
Lack of positive relationships or effective engagement with Aboriginal women;	24	3	1	0	28
Fears that ATK will be misused, misinterpreted or exploited by those outside the community;	24	4	1	0	29
Lack of Aboriginal input or control in how ATK is used, such as for environmental research or resource management	24	3	0	0	27
Other:					5
<i>answered question</i>					29
<i>skipped question</i>					3

What approaches could the federal government take to work more effectively with Aboriginal communities to apply ATK to its programs and activities. (Please select all that apply)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Encourage traditional practices, such as harvesting, first-food ceremonies, and potlatches; through which Aboriginal children gain ATK and practical experience;	76.7%	23
Adopt a research approach that is flexible and respects local knowledge, concepts, and ideas;	63.3%	19
Develop Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) to promote clear understanding of commitments and protocols for applying ATK to Environment Canada activities;	63.3%	19
Be transparent and honest about opportunities and limitations of Aboriginal involvement and the consideration of ATK in its projects and decisions related to the environment;	73.3%	22
Other:	16.7%	5
<i>answered question</i>		30

<i>skipped question</i>			2
Is Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge in your community entrusted to specific groups? (i.e. some knowledge for men, some for women/ some for healers; some for ceremony)			
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Yes	26.7%	8	
No	13.3%	4	
Some is	40.0%	12	
Not sure	20.0%	6	
<i>answered question</i>			30
<i>skipped question</i>			2
Is there a special role for women in your community/region in protecting, controlling and applying Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge?			
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Yes	54.8%	17	
No	6.5%	2	
Unsure	29.0%	9	
Other:	9.7%	3	
<i>answered question</i>			31
<i>skipped question</i>			1
What method would best increase the engagement of ATK and ATK holders during policy and program development? (Please select all that apply)			
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Community meetings and Aboriginal sharing circles that include federal officials;	75.9%	22	
Focus groups with appropriate community members or leaders (i.e. subject experts or implicated persons);	72.4%	21	
Semi-structured interviews with individuals;	44.8%	13	
Surveys and/ or questionnaires to community councils, organizations or associations;	51.7%	15	
Participation observations;	55.2%	16	
Other:	24.1%	7	
<i>answered question</i>			29
<i>skipped question</i>			3
What obstacle(s) prevent Aboriginal women from participating in these discussions? (Please select all that apply)			
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Family or work obligations;	79.3%	23	
Lack of access to transportation;	62.1%	18	
Inadequate promotion or information about the event;	58.6%	17	

Sense of consultation is not genuine;	55.2%	16
Dominance of Aboriginal males;	44.8%	13
Other:	34.5%	10
answered question		29
skipped question		3
How can the federal government help address such barrier(s)? (Please select all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Offer to meet individually with female participants to accommodate for children and transportation issues;	75.9%	22
Incorporate alternative meeting methods, such as teleconferences or e-meetings;	55.2%	16
Present extended and more opportunities for consultation;	69.0%	20
Design events that specifically target female community members;	79.3%	23
Provide periodic updates so that participants know if and how their input is used;	72.4%	21
Other:	31.0%	9
answered question		29
skipped question		3
At what point(s) of the consultation process should Aboriginal women be involved? (Please select all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Prior to engagement vis-a-vis developing questions, promotion, and other logistical work;	75.9%	22
Participation in actual discussions;	72.4%	21
Following consultations to provide feedback on draft policies;	51.7%	15
After process by offering Input regarding how actual policies or programs are implemented;	58.6%	17
Other:	31.0%	9
answered question		29
skipped question		3
How can the federal government promote First Nations' resource management and ATK? (Please select all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Re-affirm their commitment to domestic and international legislation that defend Aboriginal people's right to strengthen their "distinctive spiritual relationship" with traditional lands;	79.3%	23
Incorporate ATK into departmental research, decisions under the Species at Risk Act, environmental and ecosystem monitoring, as well as conservation activities;	62.1%	18

Negotiate co-management that would allow Aboriginal communities, governments, and public development agencies to co-apply their knowledge;	69.0%	20
Support community-based management in which Aboriginal communities directly monitor and control their resources;	79.3%	23
Other:	13.8%	4
<i>answered question</i>		29
<i>skipped question</i>		3
How should the federal government address conflicting observations and analyses of ATK? (Please select all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Present opportunities for stakeholders to engage and reconcile these differences;	73.1%	19
Create flexibility in policies and programs so that local differences in ATK are acknowledged and incorporated;	92.3%	24
Other:	23.1%	6
<i>answered question</i>		26
<i>skipped question</i>		6

Appendix II

A Speech by Chief Seattle of the Dwamish Tribe in 1854⁴

The Great Chief in Washington sends word that he wishes to buy our land. The Great Chief also sends us words of friendship and good will. This is kind of him, since we know he has little need of our friendship in return. But we will consider your offer, for we know if we do not so the white man may come with guns and take our land. What Chief Seattle says you can count on as truly as our white brothers can count on the return of the seasons. My words are like the stars - they do not set.

How can you buy or sell the sky - the warmth of the land? The idea is strange to us. Yet we do not own the freshness of the air or the sparkle of the water. How can you buy them from us? We will decide in our time. Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clearing, and every humming insect is holy in the memory and experience of my people.

We know that the white man does not understand our ways. One portion of land is the same to him as the next, for he is a stranger who comes in the night and takes from the land whatever he needs. The earth is not his brother, but his enemy, and when he has conquered it, he moves on. He leaves his father's graves and his children's birthright is forgotten. The sight of your cities pains the eyes of the redman. But perhaps it is because the redman is a savage and does not understand.

There is no quiet place in the white man's cities. No place to listen to the leaves of spring or the rustle of insect wings. But perhaps because I am a savage and do not understand - the clatter only seems to insult the ears. And what is there to life if a man cannot hear the lovely cry of the whippoorwill or the arguments of the frogs around a pond at night? The Indian prefers the soft sound of the wind itself cleansed by a mid-day rain, or scented by a pinõn pine: The air is precious to the redman. For all things share the same breath - the beasts, the trees, and the man. The white man does not seem to notice the air he breathes. Like a man dying for many days, he is numb to the stench.

⁴ Text provided from: <http://www.rainbowbody.net/Ongwhehonwhe/CHIEFSEA.htm>

If I decide to accept, I will make one condition. The white man must treat the beasts of this land as his brothers. I am a savage and I do not understand any other way. I have seen thousands of rotting buffaloes on the prairie left by the white man who shot them from a passing train. I am a savage and do not understand how the smoking iron horse can be more important than the buffalo that we kill only to stay alive. What is man without the beasts? If all the beasts were gone, men would die from great loneliness of spirit, for whatever happens to the beast also happens to the man.

All things are connected. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons of the earth.

Our children have seen their fathers humbled in defeat. Our warriors have felt shame. And after defeat they turn their days in idleness and contaminate their bodies with sweet food and strong drink. It matters little where we pass the rest of our days - they are not many. A few more hours, a few more winters, and none of the children of the great tribes that once lived on this earth, or that roamed in small bands in the woods will remain to mourn the graves of the people once as powerful and hopeful as yours.

One thing we know that the white man may one day discover. Our God is the same God. You may think that you own him as you wish to own our land, but you cannot. He is the Body of man, and his compassion is equal for the redman and the white. This earth is precious to him, and to harm the earth is to heap contempt on its Creator. The whites, too, shall pass - perhaps sooner than other tribes. Continue to contaminate your bed, and you will one night suffocate in your own waste. When the buffalo are all slaughtered, the wild horses all tamed, the secret corners of the forest heavy with the scent of many men, and the view of the ripe hills blotted by the talking wires, where is the thicket? Gone. Where is the eagle? Gone. And what is it to say goodbye to the swift and the hunt? The end of living and the beginning of survival.

We might understand if we knew what it was the white man dreams, what hopes he describes to his children on long winter nights, what visions he burns into their minds, so they will wish for tomorrow. But we are savages. The white man's dreams are hidden from us. And because they are hidden, we will go our own way. If we agree, it will be to secure your reservation you have promised.

There perhaps we may live out our brief days as we wish. When the last redman has vanished from the earth, and the memory is only the shadow of a cloud passing over the prairie, these shores and forests will still hold the spirits of my people, for they love this earth as the newborn

loves its mother's heartbeat. If we sell you our land, love it as we have loved it. Care for it as we have cared for it. Hold in your memory the way the land is as you take it. And with all your strength, with all your might, and with all your heart - preserve it for your children, and love it as God loves us all. One thing we know - our God is the same. This earth is precious to him. Even the white man cannot escape the common destiny.

Appendix III

Joint Submission: Renewing the Federal Comprehensive Land Claims Policy⁵

The right of Indigenous peoples to own, control and use their traditional lands, territories and resources is directly and explicitly protected in international human rights law. Indigenous land rights are also understood to be an indispensable foundation for the full and equal enjoyment of a wide range of other human rights, including rights to culture and identity, the right to health, the right to subsistence, and the right to livelihood. All states have a positive obligation to recognize and provide effective legal protection to the territories of Indigenous peoples. This obligation must be met in a manner that is consistent with Indigenous peoples' unique cultures and histories, and which does not discriminate against them in any way.

Indigenous peoples' rights to own, control, use and develop their lands, territories and resources are further elaborated in Article 26 [of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples]:

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.
3. States shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources. Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions and land tenure systems of the indigenous peoples concerned.

In all, more than 19 articles in the *Declaration* address Indigenous peoples' land rights either directly or indirectly. This includes Article 3 (self-determination); Article 4 (self-government);

⁵ The following excerpts came from a joint submission by multiple Non-Government Agencies in a letter in response to the department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada's new policy entitled, "Renewing the Federal Comprehensive Land Claims Policy." To view it go to: <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1405693409911/1405693617207>

Article 10 (prohibition of forcible removal); Articles 11, 12, 13 and 31 (rights to cultural practice and cultural heritage); Article 20 (right to their own means of subsistence and development, and to engage freely in all their traditional and other economic activities); Articles 23 and 32 (right to determine priorities and strategies for exercising the right to development, including any development of their lands, territories and resources); Article 24 (right to traditional medicines); Article 29 (right of conservation and protection of the environment); Article 30 (limitations on military activities on their lands or territories); Article 34 (right to maintain and develop distinctive institutions and juridical structures); and Article 37 (right to observance and enforcement of treaties and other constructive arrangements with states).

Indigenous systems of land ownership and management must be respected

Recognition of Indigenous land rights must be accompanied by effective protection. As the Inter-American Court of Human Rights has stated, “the mere possibility of recognition of rights through a certain judicial process is no substitute for the actual recognition of such rights”ⁱ and “merely abstract or juridical recognition of indigenous lands, territories, or resources, is practically meaningless if the property is not physically delimited and established.”ⁱⁱ

This ruling by the Inter-American Court is part of an extensive body of jurisprudence recognizing a positive state obligation to work with Indigenous peoples to ensure effective formal protection of their land rights. The *Declaration* calls on states to “give legal recognition and protection” to Indigenous peoples’ lands, territories and resources” and states that “Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions and land tenure systems of the indigenous peoples concerned.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Effective interim protections are required – including meaningful participation of Indigenous peoples in decision making

Effective interim protection of Indigenous peoples’ land rights necessarily includes Indigenous peoples’ meaningful involvement in decisions over how that land will be used. In the *Saramaka* decision, the Court ruled that, as a safeguard “to preserve, protect and guarantee the special relationship that the members of the Saramaka community have with their territory, which in turn ensures their survival as a tribal people” the State must “must ensure the effective participation of the members of the Saramaka people, in conformity with their customs and traditions, regarding any development, investment, exploration or extraction plan... within Saramaka territory.”^{iv} The Court went on to state that:

in addition to the consultation that is always required when planning development or investment projects within traditional Saramaka territory, the safeguard of effective participation that is necessary when dealing with major development or investment plans that may have a profound impact on the property rights of the members of the Saramaka people to a large part of their territory must be understood to additionally require the free, prior, and informed consent of the Saramakas, in accordance with their traditions and customs.^v

The Inter-American Commission has similarly described the requirement of free, prior and informed consent “as a heightened safeguard for the rights of indigenous peoples, given its direct connection to the right to life, to cultural identity and other essential human rights, in relation to the execution of development or investment plans that affect the basic content of said rights.”^{vi}

The right of free, prior and informed consent is similarly well established within the UN human rights system. In a general recommendation interpreting the *UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination*, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has called on states to ensure that “no decisions directly relating” to the rights and interests of Indigenous peoples should be taken without their informed consent.^{vii} The *UN Declaration* states that free, prior and informed consent should be the precondition for state approval of “any project” affecting Indigenous peoples’ lands, territories and resources:

Article 32(2): States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources.

Aboriginal Title and Consent

In addressing Aboriginal title, the Supreme Court of Canada repeatedly emphasized the requirement of obtaining Indigenous peoples’ “consent”.^{viii} The right to “control” title land “means that governments and others seeking to use the land must obtain the consent of the Aboriginal title holders.”^{ix} If the Aboriginal group does not consent to the use, “the government’s only recourse is to establish that the proposed incursion on the land is justified under s. 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.”^x

The Court's ruling on "consent" is reinforced by the *UN Declaration* 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."

"Consent" is not limited to Aboriginal title and applies to other Aboriginal rights.^{xi} As described by the Supreme Court of Canada in *Haida Nation*, the high end of the spectrum of consultation requires "'full consent of [the] aboriginal nation' on very serious issues. This applies as much to unresolved claims as to intrusions on settled claims."^{xii}

Former UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, James Anaya, has concluded: "Indigenous peoples' free, prior and informed consent [FPIC] is required, as a general rule, when extractive activities are carried out within indigenous territories."^{xiii} In his July 2014 report on Canada, Anaya concluded:

In accordance with the Canadian constitution and relevant international human rights standards, as a general rule resource extraction should not occur on lands subject to aboriginal claims without adequate consultations with and the free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous peoples concerned. Further, Canada should endeavor to put in place a policy framework for implementing the duty to consult that allows for indigenous peoples' genuine input and involvement at the earliest stages of project development.^{xiv}

Indigenous peoples' "consent", as elaborated by the Court, appears to reflect "free, prior and informed consent" in international law. "Consent" must always be "free", that is, obtained without duress. It must also be "prior and informed" in that all necessary information must be provided in a timely manner,^{xv} so that a decision can be made with full knowledge of the risks involved.

ⁱ IACHR. *Case of the Saramaka People v. Suriname*. Judgment of November 28, 2007. Para 105. Cf. *United Nations Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law*. General Assembly resolution 60/147 of 16 December 2005, Principle 11. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 31, *Nature of the General Legal Obligation Imposed on States Parties to the Covenant*, 80th sess., UN Doc. CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.13 (26 May 2004). Para. 8.

ⁱⁱ IACHR. *Case of the Indigenous Community Yakye Axa v. Paraguay, Final Decision*. Judgment of June 17, 2005. Para 143.

ⁱⁱⁱ *UN Declaration*, Art. 26.

^{iv} IACHR. *Case of the Saramaka People v. Suriname. Interpretation of the Judgment of Preliminary Objections, Merits, Reparations and Costs*. Judgment of August 12, 2008. Series C No. 185. Para. 129.

^v *Ibid.*, Para. 137.

^{vi} IACHR. *Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Rights Over Their Ancestral Lands and Natural Resources: Norms and Jurisprudence of the Inter-American Human Rights System*. OEA/Ser.L/V/II. Doc. 59/06. 2010. Para. 333.

^{vii} UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, *General Recommendation XXIII concerning Indigenous Peoples*, CERD/C/51/Misc.13/Rev.4, (adopted by the Committee on August 18, 1997).

^{viii} *Ibid.*, paras. 2, 5, 76, 88, 90-92, 97 and 124.

^{ix} *Ibid.*, para. 76. In regard to the right to “control”, see also paras. 2, 15, 18, 31, 36, 38, 47, 48, 50, 75 and 76.

^x *Ibid.*

^{xi} E.g., African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, Communication No. 276/2003, *Centre for Minority Rights Development (Kenya) and Minority Rights Group International on behalf of Endorois Welfare Council v Kenya*, Twenty-Seventh Activity Report, 2009, Annex 5, at para. 291: “any development or investment projects that would have a major impact within the Endorois territory, the State has a duty not only to consult with the community, but also to obtain their free, prior, and informed consent, according to their customs and traditions.”

^{xii} *Haida Nation v. British Columbia (Minister of Forests)*, [2004] 3 S.C.R. 511, para. 24 (where Supreme Court quotes *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia*, [1997] 3 S.C.R. 1010, para. 168). In regard to consent, the Court has yet to fully elaborate as to what “very serious issues” may entail.

^{xiii} Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, James Anaya: Extractive industries and indigenous peoples*, UN Doc. A/HRC/24/41 (1 July 2013), para. 84. Anaya adds: “Indigenous consent may also be required when extractive activities otherwise affect indigenous peoples, depending on the nature of the activities and their potential impact on the exercise of indigenous peoples’ rights.” [emphasis added]

^{xiv} Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, James Anaya: Addendum: The situation of indigenous peoples in Canada*, UN Doc. A/HRC/27/52/Add.2 (4 July 2014), Annex (Conclusions), at para. 98. [emphasis added]

^{xv} Such full and timely information must be provided by the Crown in carrying out its duty to consult: see, e.g., *Halfway River First Nation v. British Columbia (Ministry of Forests)*, [1999] 178 D.L.R. (4th) 666 (B.C.C.A.), at para. 160, cited with approval in *Mikisew Cree First Nation v. Canada (Minister of Canadian Heritage)*, [2005] 3 S.C.R. 388, para. 64