

## Executive Summary

This report and the associated website ([www.indigenouseved.ca](http://www.indigenouseved.ca)) were developed as part of a study supported by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Insight Development Grant led by Dr. Greg Lowan-Trudeau, an Associate Professor of Métis, Swiss, and Norwegian descent with the University of Calgary's Werklund School of Education, into the experiences of Canadian educators who are interested, but at times challenged, in incorporating consideration of Indigenous environmental knowledge, rights, issues, and activism into their teaching practice.

During the fall of 2015 and winter of 2016, interviews were conducted with ten educators from across Canada. Participants were both Indigenous and non-Indigenous and came from a range of personal and professional backgrounds; they included those with extensive K-12 experience, university professors, collaborative community-based artists, and land-based educators. One message that was communicated by several participants was that they lacked confidence in introducing Indigenous environmental knowledge and issues for discussion with their students due to limited foundational knowledge and curricular support in this area. They also expressed difficulty in staying up to date with contemporary events in a manner that would allow them to incorporate discussion in their classrooms and other educational settings. This report was produced in response to such concerns to provide increased access to foundational knowledge and curricular links for interested educators from both within and beyond their own regions.

A review of provincial and territorial curricula was conducted by Teresa Fowler, Doctoral Candidate and Research Assistant of mixed Indigenous and European ancestry, in the fall of 2016 and winter of 2017 with a view to understanding each province and territory's approach to explicitly or implicitly supporting educators in engaging with Indigenous environmental knowledge and issues in various subject areas including, but not limited to, science, social studies, math, and English. This was a significant task and, while we recognize that it is inevitably imperfect, we hope that we have provided a starting point for further inquiry, discussion, and refinement. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or clarifications.

## Terminology Practices

We acknowledge the complex and living nature of terminology with regards to Indigenous peoples. Whenever possible in this report, we favour the terms Indigenous and/ or Aboriginal when speaking generally about First Peoples with Indigenous being an internationally recognized term (e.g. in the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007) and Aboriginal being commonly used in Canada (see below). We also favour and encourage the use of tribally and regionally specific names whenever possible (e.g. Kainai, Anishnaabe, Mi'kmaq, Inuvialuit, Cree-Métis, Bigstone Cree).

We also follow unconventional capitalization practices for culturally related terms such as Elder, Medicine Wheel, or the Land to acknowledge their importance and demonstrate respect.

Finally, we acknowledge and respect that Indigenous peoples and organizations may hold individual and collective preferences that do not align with the practices described above for a variety of reasons. We encourage individuals who are uncertain of the appropriate term to use in a given situation or relationship to ask, with humility, what those being described prefer.

## Key Concepts and Terms

Familiarity with the following concepts and terms may assist readers in developing and fostering a deeper understanding of critical Indigenous land, environmental, and educational issues in Canada.

**Aboriginal Peoples:** As defined in Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution (1982), includes First Nations (Indians = still employed as a legal term), Métis, and Inuit peoples.

- **Aboriginal Rights:** General rights held by Aboriginal peoples to practice Indigenous cultures (and languages), conduct harvesting activities (hunting, fishing, gathering berries and firewood) in one's traditional territory, and establish agreements such as treaties and land claims. Have been and continue to be clarified through several court cases (e.g. R v. Sparrow, R v. Calder).
- **Treaty Rights:** Rights specifically outlined in a given treaty or similar (e.g. modern day land claim agreements).

For more, see:

<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/page-16.html>

[http://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/constitution\\_act\\_1982\\_section\\_35/](http://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/constitution_act_1982_section_35/)

[https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/socstud/foundation\\_gr6/blms/6-3-2c.pdf](https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/socstud/foundation_gr6/blms/6-3-2c.pdf)

Relevant Case Law:

Calder v. BC: <https://www.canlii.org/en/ca/scc/doc/1973/1973canlii4/1973canlii4.html>

Daniels v. Canada <https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/15858/index.do>

R. v. Marshall: <https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/1739/index.do>

R. v. Sparrow: <https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/609/index.do>

**Decolonization:** The process of developing critical understanding of the historical, contemporary, and ongoing impacts of colonization while also considering possible counter-approaches.

**Indigenization:** A process wherein Indigenous philosophies, languages, cultures, and practices are introduced and/ or prioritized in institutional and societal contexts.

For more, see:

Battiste, M. (2013) *Decolonizing education: Nourishing the learning spirit*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Holmes, A. P., Grimwood, B. S. R., King, L. J., & the Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation. (2016). Creating an Indigenized visitor code of conduct: the development of Denesoline self-determination for sustainable tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 24(8–9), 1177–1193. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2016.1158828>

Little Bear, L. (2000a). Jagged worldviews colliding. In M. Battiste (Ed.), *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision*, (pp. 77-85). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

St. Denis, V. (2007). Aboriginal education and anti-racist education: Building alliances across cultural and racial identity. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 30(4), 1068-1092.

**Traditional Territory:** The geographical area traditionally used and occupied by a given Indigenous group. Increasingly documented through Traditional Land Use Studies (TLUS) as described below.

- **Traditional Land Use Study (TLUS):** The methodical documentation of an Indigenous group's traditional use and occupancy of a given territory. May include techniques such as interviews with Elders and other community members documented by audio and/ or visual media along with physical markings on topographical maps, other digital media such as interactive maps, spending time on the Land with community representatives, consulting historical written sources, and others.
- **Use:** Pertains specifically to traditional activities such as, but not restricted to, hunting, fishing, trapping, berry, plant, and firewood collection, other cultural and/ or spiritual activities, and travel. Often used to establish a community's rights (as opposed to title) to a given area (see below).
- **Occupancy:** Geographical area occupied on a regular basis by a given community; may be a long-standing village or encampment or extend, as recently established in Tsilhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia, to the broader area used (see below) on a routine/ rotational/ seasonal basis, depending on the community and region.
- **(Land) Title:** Often linked to demonstration of occupancy; includes surface and sub-surface rights in resource negotiations.
- **(Land) Rights:** Often linked to demonstration of use (see above); includes surface rights, but not typically sub-surface.
- **Overlap:** A geographical area traditionally occupied and/ or used by two or more Indigenous groups.

For more, see:

[https://www.ubcic.bc.ca/chief\\_kerry\\_s\\_moose](https://www.ubcic.bc.ca/chief_kerry_s_moose)

[https://www.ubcic.bc.ca/living\\_proof](https://www.ubcic.bc.ca/living_proof)

Relevant Case Law:

Tsilhqot' in Nation v. BC: <https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/14246/index.do>

**Duty to Consult (and Accommodate):** The fiduciary (legal) duty of the Crown (federal and/ or provincial government) to adequately consult and accommodate Indigenous communities that will be potentially affected by a given resource development or other disruption of their traditional territory (e.g. mining, hydro, or forestry activity; installation of a power line or road)

For more, see:

[http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-HQ/STAGING/texte-text/intgui\\_1100100014665\\_eng.pdf](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-HQ/STAGING/texte-text/intgui_1100100014665_eng.pdf)

Natcher, D.C. (2001). Land use research and the duty to consult: A misrepresentation of the Aboriginal landscape. *Land Use Policy*, 18, 113-122.

**Co-Management:** Co-management by an Indigenous group and government of the social and ecological aspects of a given geographical area such as a national or provincial park, coastal region, designated resource development zone, or similar.

For more, see:

<http://coastalguardianwatchmen.ca/nation/haida>

<https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/pn-np/nt/naatsihchoh/info/plan>

Menzies, C.R. (Ed.) (2006). *Traditional ecological knowledge and natural resource management*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

**Impact-Benefit Agreement:** An agreement between an Indigenous community, industry stakeholder (e.g. resource company), and, sometimes, government body, that outlines the anticipated social and ecological impacts of a given development or extraction project, proposed social and ecological monitoring framework, and agreed upon benefits that will be provided to the Indigenous community. Benefits may include service contracts, guaranteed training and employment of community members, guidelines for healthy work environments (e.g. shift work schedules), regular monetary payments to the community, construction of community buildings such as schools or health centres/ hospitals, among others.

For more, see:

[https://www.foa.ca/afoadocs/L3/L3a%20-%20IBA\\_toolkit\\_March\\_2010\\_low\\_resolution.pdf](https://www.foa.ca/afoadocs/L3/L3a%20-%20IBA_toolkit_March_2010_low_resolution.pdf)  
<https://lop.parl.ca/Content/LOP/ResearchPublications/2015-29-e.html?cat=aboriginal#a2>

Whitelaw, G. S., McCarthy, D. D., & Tsuji, L. J. S. (2009). The Victor Diamond Mine environmental assessment process: a critical First Nation perspective. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, 27(3), 205–215.

**Further Case Law of Note:**

Delgamuukw v. British Columbia: <https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/1569/index.do>

Mikisew Cree First Nation v. Canada (Minister of Canadian Heritage): <https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/2251/index.do>

## Curriculum Review

Within the scope of this pan-Canadian review of curricular outcomes related to critical Indigenous environmental issues, publicly available curriculum documents were reviewed from each province and territory within the subject areas of English, Math, Science, and Social Studies for each grade in the Kindergarten – Grade 12 system. Other subjects were also scanned for relevance to the project but the primary focus of the review was the aforementioned subject areas.

While outcomes were initially evaluated based on their connections to contemporary Indigenous environmental activism, we also looked for outcomes that may not have immediately appeared relevant to this focus, but could still provide foundational opportunities to engage with related topics such as Indigenous land and environmental knowledge, philosophies, rights, and historical and contemporary issues. As such, this document is offered as a flexible resource to support K-12 teachers and others who hope to engage with critical Indigenous environmental topics in a manner that connects with provincial and territorial curricula.

In recognition of the dynamic nature of curricula across Canada and, in particular, provinces such as Alberta that are currently undergoing system wide curricular revisions, this resource is not meant to be prescriptive—we have not provided suggestions for curriculum revisions; rather, we hope that this will serve as a generative resource that invites educators to make connections to curricula from various perspectives within and between regions even after minor or significant curricular shifts may have occurred.

## General Trends

While most provinces and territories maintain unique and regionally connected curricula, we also observed certain broad similarities. For example, many cited the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Education (WNCP) and the Pan-Canadian Framework of Science Learning Outcomes K-12 in their curricular documents, specifically with respect to Math and Science. We also observed that:

- Math curricula in each province follow similar scope and sequences as well as Science but with differences in ability groupings in high school.
- Certain provinces also have additional Science courses beyond the common choices of Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. For example, Environmental Science, Earth Science, and Earth and Space Science.
- There are also variations within some high school Math subjects with respect to some content such as data analysis, statistics, and probability, but overall Math is fairly consistent across the provinces/territories.
- English offers similar scope and sequences as well, however some provinces/territories have more specialty English courses at the high school level.
- Social Studies revealed more variation with some provinces keeping a Social Studies focus while others split into more specific content within, for example, Geography and History frameworks.

Delving deeper into particular subject areas, we found that each province and territory has locally responsive content that is often reflective of their respective dominant ideologies and the natural resources that drive their economies. For example:

- Newfoundland and Labrador, and Alberta have more connections to petroleum based natural resources whereas British Columbia and Nova Scotia have a stronger focus on forestry, mining, climate change, and renewable energy.
- Each province also offers language courses relevant to their provincial identity such as Mi'kmaw and Gaelic streams in Nova Scotia and Anglophone and Francophone curricula in New Brunswick and Quebec.
- The territories (Yukon, Nunavut, NWT) all variously borrow from the curricula of southern provinces as outlined in the report below. However, each territory has also generated locally developed language streams, resources, and supplemental curricular materials that complement the main documents.

### **Curriculum Redesign**

Several provinces have recently redesigned, or are in the process of redesigning, their curricula. For example, Alberta is currently undergoing a redesign with implementation expected in 2020; Nova Scotia, Quebec, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia have all redesigned their curricula to be more focused on competencies with broader learning outcomes that allow teachers flexibility to be more locally responsive to their communities.

Saskatchewan and British Columbia have also thoroughly Indigenized their curriculum in each subject area with British Columbia having an entire English stream in high school devoted to English for First Peoples which explores Indigenous knowledge and literature more extensively than the regular English program. High School Social Studies curriculum in Saskatchewan, however has not yet been Indigenized at the time of this report. Other provinces that have not Indigenized their curricula still often include places and spaces with Indigenous knowledge in specific subjects, primarily in Social Studies, but also in Math, the sciences, and English, and certain electives such as Environmental Science.

We also noticed significant variation in grand narratives and dates relating to the trajectory of Canadian history. For example, some provinces mark the beginning of Canadian history as the point of contact with Europeans such as in Quebec, while others, as seen in Manitoba, acknowledge the pre-contact history and journey of Indigenous people. We also noted that, while we found few explicit references to Indian Residential Schools, provinces such as British Columbia are leading the way in developing robust revised curricula that includes content related to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. We further observed that the front matter in many subjects across jurisdictions has some references to diversity, Indigenous learners, and environmental education.

Some documents have very explicit curricula that include lesson and unit plans with direct connections to textbooks and are very expansive as seen in Newfoundland and Labrador and Prince Edward Island, while others, like redesigned curricula in Nova Scotia, British Columbia, and Quebec, are concise and succinct and provide overviews of previous and upcoming grades. Some of the curricular documents reviewed include cross-curricular connections and others encourage teachers to teach outdoors with suggestions for appropriate weather conditions. Some of the newer documents, especially the recently redesigned curricula,

have more environmental education connections with consideration of renewable energy and climate change. However, some provinces with a deep economic focus on petroleum-based resources still lean towards knowledge within those industries.

This report is broken into the general, but not definitive, geographical areas of the Eastern Provinces, Central Provinces, Western Provinces, and Territories. Each provincial sub-section also contains general and subject-specific summaries as well as relevant curricular expectations related to critical Indigenous environmental topics.