

*Report On the
First Peoples'
Cultural Council
Indigenous Cultural
Heritage Forum*

Reflections and
Recommendations from
the Indigenous Cultural
Heritage Forum



FIRST PEOPLES'
CULTURAL COUNCIL

This report was drafted in the
traditional territories of the Musqueam,
Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh.

AUGUST 2020

The First Peoples' Cultural Council is grateful to have our home in the beautiful traditional unceded territory of the W̱SÁNEĆ Nation people, in the village of W̱JOŁŁP. We have an additional satellite office at Tk'emlups within the traditional territory of the Secwepemc people. Our leadership and staff are honoured to travel, conduct our work and provide support throughout Indigenous homelands across what is now called British Columbia and beyond.

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Artist and Musician Kym Gouchie offering songs of inspiration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was drafted in the traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh, and Waututh Peoples. The Forum was hosted in the beautiful traditional unceded territory of the W̱SÁNEĆ Nation people, in the village of W̱JOŁEŁP.

The Forum was organized by First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC), with guidance from the FPCC Indigenous Cultural Heritage Advisory Council (CHAC), and with input and financial support from the Heritage Branch of B.C. (HB). FPCC would like to acknowledge the dedication, guidance and collaborative spirit of specific individuals without whom this project would not have been possible, namely:

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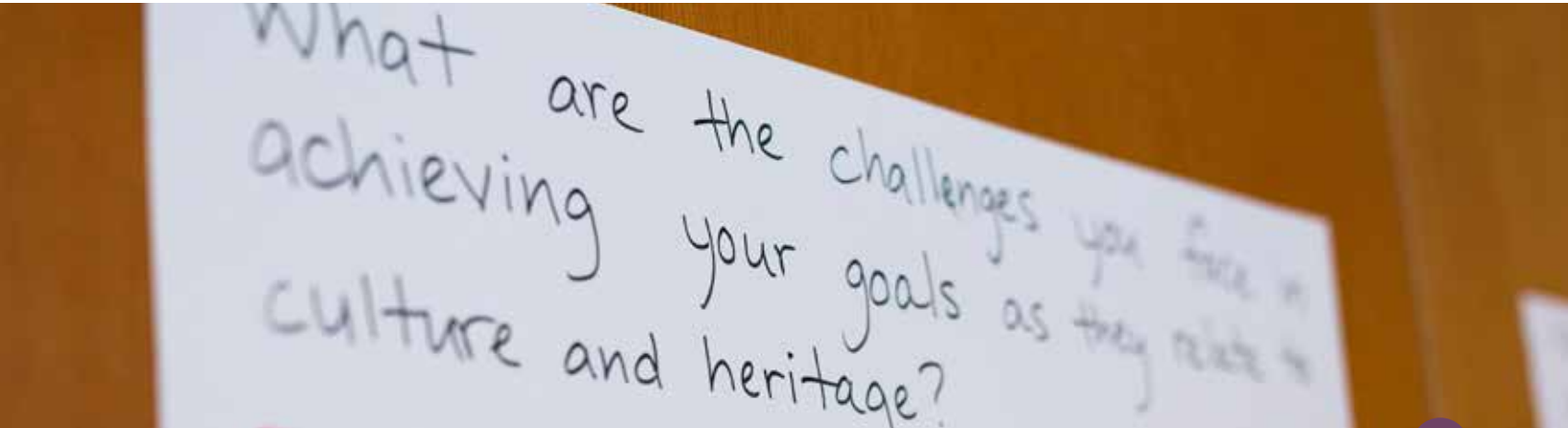
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Note: The quotes contained within this report were taken from the written responses offered by Forum Participants to the poster questions listed in the Forum Agenda in Appendix A.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2020, the First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) hosted a gathering of 43 Indigenous cultural heritage experts to share experiences and challenges, build networks, and discuss the future of Indigenous Cultural Heritage (ICH) in British Columbia. These dialogues were intended to be the beginning of a long overdue conversation on how to better understand ICH in B.C, the challenges faced by Indigenous Peoples to safeguard their heritage, and ways to improve provincial cultural heritage policies to support Indigenous Peoples' stewardship of cultural heritage.

The Heritage Branch (HB) of B.C. provided input and financial support for the Forum as a collaborative project under a Memorandum of Understanding between HB and FPCC, which was established to share expertise and knowledge in ICH planning, management, and conservation in B.C.

FPCC and the HB identified three objectives for the Forum:

1. Develop a deeper understanding of Indigenous perspectives and expectations.
2. Establish respectful practices of engagement with Indigenous Peoples on cultural heritage.
3. Build and maintain relationships with ICH practitioners and organizations.

This is a report of the discussions that took place at the March 2020 Indigenous Cultural Heritage Forum. It is intended to provide a record of the discussions at the Forum and to offer guidance to the Province of B.C. for future development of cultural heritage policies and initiatives. The report belongs entirely to FPCC. It is not a public statement from Heritage Branch and does not represent the views of the Government of British Columbia.



Photo by Alycia Aird.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were drawn from the forum participant discussions about steps that B.C. and Canada should undertake to recognize, protect, and ensure the vitality of ICH in B.C.

1. Acknowledge that the cultural heritage of Indigenous Peoples belongs to and should be managed by Indigenous Peoples.
2. Recognize that Indigenous understandings of ICH are both tangible and intangible and are holistic, integrated, fulsome, and inclusive.
3. Support Indigenous communities' and their Knowledge Keepers' efforts to revitalize and maintain all forms of ICH.
4. Develop a framework, action plan and timeline to fully implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and Bill C-41/Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA).
5. Eliminate any influence of colonial doctrines on Provincial policies and legislation.
6. Support anti-racism initiatives and education for and about Indigenous Peoples.
7. Establish and enhance relational versus transactional connections between governments based on Indigenous rights recognition, Government-to-Government and/or Nation-to-Nation foundations of equality, and through development and implementation of shared decision-making processes.
8. Set out measures for special identification, recognition, and protection of intangible heritage in Provincial policy and legislation.
9. Harmonize statutory and operational relations between provincial agencies such as the Archaeology Branch and Heritage Branch of the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development.
10. Harmonize relations, approaches, legislation, policies, and funding opportunities between Canada and B.C. to support Indigenous Peoples in managing their cultural heritage to establish a more cohesive, holistic, and integrated approach.
11. Support efforts to understand, document, and record Indigenous place names.
12. Support efforts to map ICH traditions across the province, with due care for cultural sensitivities and protocols.
13. Recognize and protect ICH places of significance and places that are endangered by working in collaboration with Indigenous communities.
14. Formalize initiatives to inventory Indigenous cultural heritage facing imminent threats related to climate change.
15. Work with Indigenous Peoples and all federal, provincial, and municipal agencies to revise narrow, inaccurate, and harmful interpretations of Indigenous Peoples and histories.

16. Work with Indigenous organizations and museums to develop grant funding to support Indigenous Peoples in the repatriation of their tangible and intangible cultural heritage and ancestral remains.
17. Support Indigenous Peoples to have the resources needed to develop and administer their own cultural heritage laws, policies, and practices.
18. Provide support for a committee of qualified Indigenous experts to advise B.C. on a case-by-case basis on shared Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultural heritage interests.
19. Establish a special program to support scholarships and internships for Indigenous students and early-career professionals.
20. Hire Indigenous people experienced in Indigenous cultural heritage.
21. Provide specific funding for Indigenous-led initiatives to commemorate and interpret Indigenous cultural heritage.
22. Contribute funding and effort for a detailed needs study to inform the development of:
 - a. Programs and grants to build capacity, support skills development in Indigenous heritage professionals, and support infrastructure development;
 - b. Training programs for Indigenous people interested in heritage work;
 - c. Exchange programs;
 - d. Mentorship programs; and
 - e. Awards or campaigns to recognize and celebrate leaders in Indigenous cultural heritage work
23. Provide sustainable and yearly funding for Indigenous organizations to continue this important work.



Photo by Alycia Aird.

OVERVIEW

Background

The land that we now call British Columbia is home to an exceptionally diverse Indigenous population. There are 34 distinct Indigenous languages in B.C., with at least 93 different dialects of those languages. Indigenous languages in B.C. make up more than 50% of the approximately 61 Indigenous languages of Canada.

In B.C. there are 203 First Nations whose citizens originate from these lands. There are people of Indigenous heritage from other parts of Canada who have made their homes in B.C., sometimes for many generations.

Understanding Indigenous Cultural Heritage

ICH is fundamental to the well-being of Indigenous Peoples and is part of a community's ongoing relationships with, and continuity upon, their lands. Cultural practices and expression are the building blocks of personal identity and social cohesion. The link between ICH and the mental, physical, and social well-being of Indigenous Peoples is well-established. Maintaining a strong link to one's culture creates resilience and connectedness, contributes to the social determinants of health, and acts as a protective factor against mental and physical health challenges and the breakdown of social systems. ICH strengthens inter-generational relationships as knowledge is shared between generations. ICH is also inseparable from Indigenous arts, languages, laws, governance, and knowledge systems that are embedded in every aspect of ICH.

There is difficulty in finding a clear translation for the expression 'cultural heritage' in Indigenous languages. The closest versions often relate to the sacred, or to knowing one's self. FPCC believes that Indigenous Peoples understand and describe cultural heritage according to their laws, perspectives, traditions, protocols and languages. Through engagement with Indigenous People across Canada, in 2018 the Indigenous Heritage Circle created this definition of ICH:

“In an Indigenous context, cultural heritage refers to ideas, experiences, objects, artistic expressions, practices, knowledge and places that are valued because they are culturally meaningful, connected to shared memory, or linked to collective identity. Indigenous cultural heritage is not separate from Indigenous identity and Indigenous life. It is inherited from ancestors as a gift to next generations, but it can also be created by this generation as a legacy for future generations.”

The participants of the Indigenous Cultural Heritage Forum reiterated much of what is expressed in Indigenous Heritage Circle's definition. In particular, participants discussed the importance of the beliefs that:

- > Everything is interrelated (land, objects, stories, laws, etc.) and one idea cannot be addressed without others;
- > All things come from the same beginning (people, trees, mountains, etc.) and are part of the same family;
- > Looking after these family relatives is important and key to maintaining cultural heritage; and
- > Stories make us who we are - they are the foundation of Indigenous worldviews and laws and facilitate the transmission of Indigenous cultural heritage.

These principles are some of the many that underpin Indigenous cultural heritage and provide the basis for Indigenous Peoples' approach to the practice, preservation, and celebration of this heritage.

First Peoples' Cultural Council and Heritage Branch Partnership

In July 2019, the Heritage Branch (HB) of B.C. and the First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) formalized a Memorandum of Understanding with one-time funding for several projects. Funding for the Indigenous Cultural Heritage Forum (Forum) was made possible through this partnership and funding agreement.

FPCC

FPCC was established as a crown corporation in 1990 with a mandate to provide leadership for the revitalization of Indigenous languages, cultures, arts and heritage in B.C. We are an Indigenous-led organization and input from Indigenous communities is used to guide our policies and practices through the Board of Directors and Advisory Committee, peer review committees, community engagement, focus groups, and planning and decision-making using a community-development model.

FPCC's role is to act as an advocate and technical expert for the revitalization of Indigenous languages, arts, and cultural heritage. We conduct research and monitoring, develop models based on best practices, distribute funding and resources to communities, and provide training and support in the implementation of successful approaches. We also develop partnerships with funders and governments to increase funding for communities and develop strategies and policy recommendations that promote the revitalization of Indigenous languages, arts, cultures, and heritage.

Heritage has always been a central part of FPCC’s mandate. We were formed as a crown corporation to administer the First Peoples’ Heritage, Language and Culture Program, which is supported by the [First Peoples’ Heritage, Language and Culture Act \(FPHLC Act\)](#). As stated in the FPHLC Act, FPCC’s legislated mandate includes the responsibility to “protect, revitalize and enhance First Nations heritage, language, culture and arts.” Despite this clear mandate to support ICH, the FPCC only received dedicated funding for ICH in 2018. Until that time funds were allocated either to arts or languages, creating a lack of opportunities to support ICH in a comprehensive way. It has only been in the last few years that governments have recognized the importance of funding Indigenous cultural heritage in its own right.

Although FPCC’s cultural heritage team is relatively new, they have already made notable achievements, including:

- > Developing funding partnerships with the Heritage Branch of the B.C. government and Indigenous Services Canada;
- > Developing and launching two new grant streams (Sense of Place Grants and Micro-grants);
- > Developing numerous research and resource-related documents, including a comprehensive policy paper on ICH and a paper for UNESCO on living heritage;
- > Establishing an Indigenous Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee made up of Indigenous experts in ICH;
- > Participating in advocacy and educational events to promote greater understanding of and support for ICH;
- > Providing expertise and guidance for projects that aim to decolonize approaches to heritage and include ICH; and
- > Initiating and organizing this Forum on Indigenous Cultural Heritage with Indigenous experts from across the province.

Heritage Branch

The Heritage Branch (HB) in the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development supports the conservation, recognition, and protection of historic places and their associated tangible and intangible heritage values throughout B.C. The HB includes the Offices of the B.C. Register of Historic Places, B.C. Geographic Names, and B.C. Fossil Management. The HB works closely with the B.C. Archaeology Branch, which is responsible for maintaining and distributing archaeological information and deciding if permits can be issued to allow development to take place within protected sites. Both the HB and the Archaeology Branch are governed by the *Heritage Conservation Act (1996)*.

The Government of British Columbia has committed to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, and the Draft Principles that Guide the Province of British Columbia's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples. In November 2019 the Government of British Columbia passed Bill 41 – 2019: Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act DRIPA, which is designed to ensure that all B.C. laws are consistent with the 46 articles of the UNDRIP.

The MOU between the HB and FPCC is an expression of the B.C. Government's commitment to true reconciliation and of FPCC's and HB's desire to form a mutually beneficial partnership.

Purpose of the Forum

In March 2020, First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) held a gathering of Indigenous cultural heritage practitioners to provide perspectives on the current context of Indigenous cultural heritage in B.C. These discussions were intended to share knowledge and understandings of Indigenous cultural heritage across Indigenous communities in B.C. and to help the HB understand how provincial cultural heritage policies can be improved to better support ICH.

The HB provided input and financial support for the Forum as a collaborative project under a Memorandum of Understanding between HB and FPCC, which was established to share expertise and knowledge in Indigenous cultural heritage planning, management, and conservation in B.C.

FPCC and the HB identified three objectives for the Forum:

1. Develop a deeper understanding of Indigenous perspectives and expectations;
2. Establish respectful practices of engagement with Indigenous Peoples on cultural heritage; and
3. Build and maintain relationships with Indigenous cultural heritage practitioners and organizations.

Design and Delivery of the Forum

A committee of six Indigenous cultural heritage leaders in B.C. was formed to guide this work. This Indigenous Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee helped to set the agenda for a provincial Indigenous Forum and identify invitees.

This is a report of the discussions that took place at the March 2020 Forum. It is intended to provide a record of the discussions at the Forum and to offer guidance to the Province of B.C. for future development of cultural heritage policies and initiatives.

The report belongs entirely to FPCC. It is not a public statement from Heritage Branch and does not represent the views of the Government of British Columbia.

The Forum was held on March 5th and 6th, 2020 in the traditional unceded territory of the WSÁNEĆ Nation people, in the village of W̱JOLEŁP. Forty-three participants gathered for an evening feast on March 5th to get to know each other and set the tone for further discussions.

The following day, participants came together for a full day of presentations and round table discussions on a variety of topics relating to the Province’s role in Indigenous cultural heritage. (See Appendix A for full agenda).



Indigenous Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee Members

Karen Rose Thomas, Leslie LeBourdais, Angie Bain, and Dianne Hinkley (L to R). Missing from photo are Diane Calliou and Jordan Coble (both pictured right).



Discussion topics included:

1. UNDRIP, DRIPA and Reconciliation;
2. Intangible Indigenous Cultural Heritage;
3. Indigenous Place-Naming in B.C.;
4. Indigenous Cultural Heritage Curation; and
5. The Future of Indigenous Cultural Heritage.



Committee members gave presentations throughout the Forum, sharing information and experiences from their cultural heritage work in their communities across B.C.

Prior to the Forum, participants were provided with a Welcome Package that included a detailed agenda, details on recording and reporting, travel and logistics for hotels, and other important information. The Forum began with a casual evening session where participants had the opportunity to meet each other, gain a better understanding of the Forum's objectives, listen to an insightful keynote presentation by Knowledge Keeper Harold Joe, and enjoy a live performance by renowned and cherished Saulteau/Cree entertainer Art Napoleon.

The following day included an opening prayer and presentation by Knowledge Keeper John Elliot, a welcome by Karen Aird, and two panel presentations in the morning and afternoon by the FPCC Indigenous Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee. Discussion topics were divided into three breakout sessions in which tables, assigned with a facilitator, discussed a series of questions under specific themes. More on what was heard in the discussions of each theme is shared below.

Participant Consent

Participants were told in the Welcome Package that FPCC would take written notes throughout the gathering. These notes would not be attributed to specific individuals. The notes would inform the creation of a final report which would be shared among participants prior to the completion of a final draft.

In addition, FPCC shared that we would be taking photographs during the session to record the work we are doing. Only photos of individuals who have given permission would be shared.

The Forum facilitator also asked Individuals during the Forum if they had any concerns about note taking or photographs.

Information was recorded by hand on flip charts and in notebooks by assigned note takers throughout the Forum, and then transcribed into a Raw Notes report that was sent out to all participants two weeks after the Forum. These raw notes were used to inform the drafting of this report and the development of recommendations.

Forum Participants

The Forum brought together forty-three attendees who were selected based on specific criteria, such as:

- > Having significant cultural heritage knowledge or expertise;
- > Holding senior positions or titles such as Elder, Knowledge Keeper, Executive Director, Curator or elected official, cultural advisor or representative from Indigenous governments, communities or nations;
- > Self-identifying as Indigenous;
- > Having a broader understanding of the Indigenous landscape in B.C. and Canada and have networks outside of their own community.
- > Having a group of individuals with a diversity of skills and experience in the heritage field; and
- > Having a group of individuals selected from across B.C., striving to have no more than one member originating from each region/territory.

Selection Process

With the above selection criteria in mind, the Advisory Committee recommended potential Forum participants to the selection committee. From this pool, a Selection Committee, comprised of staff from First Peoples Cultural Council and the B.C. Heritage Branch, developed a list of participant invitees and reviewed the list with the Advisory Committee. This list was finalized through the Selection Committee.



Secwepemc pictograph of a Coyote Pack. Representing a vision or possible encounters.



WHAT WE HEARD

Key Challenges and Opportunities

In addition to understanding basic principles of ICH, it is important to understand the current context in which Indigenous Peoples in B.C. live and work. Canadians are all living and working within the historical and ongoing impacts of colonialism that has not valued Indigenous Peoples, cultures, lands and laws. These issues arose throughout the discussions at the Forum and were often identified as significant barriers to the successful practice and preservation of Indigenous cultural heritage. The most prominent issues that came up were:

Colonial Systems of Government

Current systems of government have in place a number of colonial ideologies that disadvantage Indigenous Peoples. Among those identified as particular barriers were:

- > Government silos that treat heritage objects, heritage places, archaeology, land use, water use, etc. as separate jurisdictions. These divisions don't recognize that for Indigenous Peoples everything is interrelated and necessitate spending significant resources to navigate to achieve Indigenous cultural heritage objectives.
- > Policies that privilege Western science over Indigenous science and cultural understandings and devalue Indigenous ways of knowing and Knowledge Keepers.
- > Lack of Indigenous representation in organizations, resulting in a deficiency of basic knowledge of Indigenous perspectives. This can mean Indigenous Peoples must educate people within government before meaningful work can take place.

“Always having to reaffirm our heritage to colonial government structures is a key issue for Indigenous heritage.”

- Quote from Forum Participant

Indigenous communities continue to struggle with many issues caused by past and present colonial policies. In particular, these policies have caused:

- > Displacement from [and damage to] traditional lands;
- > Dishonouring of Indigenous laws and protocols;
- > Loss of cultural knowledge; and
- > Limited resources to make change.

Self-determination of Indigenous Communities

Indigenous communities are working to restore self-determination - a human right - which would allow Indigenous Peoples to improve current government practices and restore control and care over their cultural heritage. Communities with established self-determination can help each other and share strengths across communities.

To achieve self-determination, Indigenous communities must ensure the people in their communities are healthy to fight racism and colonialism. This will also require community members to continue restoring and upholding their community laws and traditional governance as they build unity.

Building Capacity to Support Indigenous Cultural Heritage

Indigenous Peoples want to practice and preserve their cultural heritage within their communities. To do this requires ongoing support to build and strengthen their capacity (funding, infrastructure, and people) and knowledge (traditional knowledge and professional skills).

Educating and mentoring Indigenous young people is key to building this capacity. Young people need to see and experience cultural heritage opportunities happening now. This will develop a passion for identity and create connections with other Indigenous Peoples and communities.

Communities often have a limited number of people with the skills needed to undertake the work of cultural heritage and respond to government or other requests. Consultations and referrals can put a strain on community capacity to meet these demands.



Lack of Funding

The practice and preservation of cultural heritage requires funding. The practice and preservation of Indigenous cultural heritage has been de-valued and eroded through colonial impacts and attitudes. Participants identified a number of areas where additional funding is required, including support for work in the areas of:

- > Cultural heritage repatriation, ceremony, and caretaking;
- > Implementation of UNDRIP;
- > Truth-telling and Reconciliation; and
- > Self-determination.

Public Education About Indigenous Peoples and History

Public education at all levels for everyone living in B.C. is needed to combat societal racism, to create new understandings of history and unlearn false colonial teachings, and to better appreciate the current context of Indigenous People in the province. Education can help the wider public remember that Indigenous People own their cultural heritage and the ways in which it is safeguarded and shared.

Educating the public is essential to ensure a broader understanding of:

- > The truths of where Canada came from;
- > Indigenous worldviews and relationships to the land;
- > Ongoing structures of colonial oppression (not only past wrongs);
- > The political context that Indigenous Peoples live in, e.g. treaties, Indian Act;
- > Elected councils and hereditary chiefs; and
- > The history and legacy of the residential school system.

This education must happen at multiple levels in all communities, from mainstream media to professional development courses, and from immersion pre-schools to courses for new Canadians. This undertaking needs to be properly resourced, so institutions are equipped with knowledge and tools, and curriculum is developed for delivery in many forms. Elders and other Knowledge Keepers are important to this work, and should be acknowledged, included, and resourced.

Combating Racism

Racism against Indigenous Peoples continues to exist across Western society. Combating racist ideology at every turn creates exhaustion for Indigenous Peoples and often requires a significant investment of time and energy to teach non-Indigenous people before other work can take place. Other levels of government need to recognize, call out, and address ongoing racism affecting Indigenous Peoples.

“Racism and colonial ideas of history create challenges to achieving my cultural heritage goals.”

- Quote from Forum Participant



Drum made by Sarah Rhude,
art work by Alysha Brown.

REFLECTIONS ON KEY FORUM THEMES

Theme 1: UNDRIP, DRIPA, and Reconciliation

What does reconciliation mean?

Reconciliation is a process, not an end result. It is:

- > The creation of a new long-term understanding on everyone's part,
- > Meaningful, respectful relationships – not transactional interactions,
- > More than an apology – it is based in principles of human rights and consent,
- > First Nations on equal footing with everyone else in Canada, and
- > Nation-to-nation relationships with federal and provincial governments.

Reconciliation does not forgive the past but creates more awareness of past injustices and their impacts. Successful reconciliation is based on countless small personal decisions.

The process of reconciliation will be challenging and take years. Pushback in society is strong and some indigenous people are skeptical about the government's intentions around reconciliation, within a history of tokenism, assimilation, and underfunding.

How can we advance reconciliation?

To advance reconciliation, work is needed in many areas across society. Successful reconciliation means real public and government change and requires:

- > Government recognition of Indigenous rights and title and acknowledgment of unceded territories;
- > Government recognition of Indigenous sovereignty;
- > Governments telling the truth about what happened – in particular, the Provincial government must be open about its history of land use; and
- > Increasing open, safe, and on-going dialogue.

“Recognition of rights and the diversity of laws particular to each respective nation is a key issue for Indigenous heritage.”

- Quote from Forum Participant

To achieve this success, everyone must learn new ways of thinking and develop language around reconciliation. This may be even more true for colonizers. Institutions need to look at their structures to make them work for Indigenous People – not vice-versa.

Work is also needed within Indigenous communities. Indigenous communities are deciding how they will proceed with reconciliation. Each community may approach the process differently and may require time and support to:

- > Strengthen their community through cultural revitalization;
- > Nurture strong potlatch and governance structures;
- > Pass on political history to have informed leadership;
- > Build negotiation skills;
- > Encourage young people to learn their cultural heritage;
- > Extend their reach beyond own communities; and
- > Understand UNDRIP and what it means for them.

What steps must be taken to support the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)?

UNDRIP is for humanity and supporting human rights, however it only provides a foundation to build on. To develop policy that supports the principles of UNDRIP, the following steps must be taken by the Province:

1. Increase communication with Indigenous Peoples and communities.
2. Formally adopt UNDRIP;
3. Support education for Indigenous leadership before discussions with provincial or federal governments begin;
4. Assist the establishment of Indigenous grassroots bodies that offer a mechanism for support, information sharing, and advocacy between Indigenous communities;
5. Work with Indigenous groups, jointly negotiate the ground rules for policy development and implementation from scratch;
6. Create cultural heritage policies that:
 - a. Balance economic development and culture;
 - b. Accept Indigenous ways of knowing;
 - c. Recognize that everything is connected;
 - d. Recognize that communities have different stories and laws and may be governed by different treaties; and
 - e. Include protection for more than objects and places, also living heritage, ceremony, continuity.
7. Create an accountability process to demonstrate how is government making progress.
8. Properly resource policy implementation so that all governments can provide appropriate information/services.
9. Undertake public education about policy to ensure buy-in and support enforcement.

Theme 2: Intangible Indigenous Cultural Heritage

What is Indigenous intangible cultural heritage and why is it important?

Indigenous worldviews assert that everything is interrelated - from an Indigenous perspective it is not possible to separate intangible heritage from tangible. With this in mind, one can consider the following as key intangible aspects of Indigenous cultural heritage:

- > Connection to the land – land is where the knowledge comes from;
- > Languages and place-names;
- > Oral storytelling;
- > Stories, including sacred place knowledge and origin stories;
- > Dances and songs;
- > Governance, including customs, laws, beliefs, community protocols, and alliances;
- > Lineage – the ability to trace lineage is inherently linked to Indigenous cultural heritage and to language;
- > Spirituality;
- > Ceremonies, such as naming ceremonies; and
- > Food and medicine knowledge.

The intangible aspects of ICH are the foundation for interactions with the tangible world. For this reason, intangible Indigenous cultural heritage, can facilitate very impactful, very tangible and life-shifting cultural experiences.

How is Indigenous intangible cultural heritage at risk?

Heritage is a right and a central part of identity. Its neglect is a form of cultural violence. ICH across Canada has historically been neglected and still today is at risk for a number of reasons that include:

“Cultural heritage means being more in touch with the lifestyle or practices of my ancestors.”

- Quote from Forum Participant



Secwepemc pictograph for the Family Spirit Guide, the Eagle.

- > Loss of people who know traditional ways (languages, laws, protocols, practices, etc.) making it challenging to access knowledge;
- > Displacement of communities from traditional lands meaning connections to traditional practices are broken or people must travel farther to learn them;
- > Loss of traditional places due to encroaching development or climate change;
- > Erosion of Indigenous cultural heritage when contemporary Western society:
 - > Undermines the value of Elders and traditional knowledge – viewing Traditional Knowledge as myths, fake, or just stories;
 - > Erodes the gender structures that support traditional practices (e.g. single men would trade for learning how to make baskets, bracelets, shoes, etc. but today men don't participate);
 - > Draws people away from communities, causing them to lose opportunities to learn language and culture;
 - > Romanticizes and commodifies Indigenous ways of life;
 - > Takes time away from learning and practicing traditions;
 - > Attracts the attention of youth away from traditional teaching;
 - > Devalues traditional protocols because they don't seem relevant to modern communities; and
 - > Doesn't value care for Elders.

How are communities working to steward Indigenous intangible cultural heritage?

Indigenous communities are asserting rights to care for and control cultural heritage, based upon ownership of their own cultural heritage. From an Indigenous perspective this stewardship is an obligation, not an option, and is essential to each community's cultural strength and revitalization. To effectively steward ICH, Indigenous communities are finding ways to practice, preserve, and transmit cultural knowledge through living it, speaking about it, putting it into practice, and enforcing it.

Practice is culture, tradition, identity and this is done by:

- > Incorporating language in stewardship and into music;
- > Holding potlatches;
- > Restoring/maintaining place names;
- > Continuing cultural practices and teaching children those practices;
- > Honouring spiritual sanctions, which are more powerful than legal sanctions; and
- > Talking to young people in traditional languages.

Preserving traditional knowledge is done in many ways, including:

- > Documenting cultural heritage in writing and in film in traditional languages;
- > Creating art and design that represents a story; and
- > Safeguarding objects in non-Indigenous collections and curating those that have been repatriated (e.g. Bill Reid's whaling canoe in Port Alberni).

Lastly, practices and knowledge must be kept alive through their transmission. Sharing is key to revitalizing cultural heritage in Indigenous communities. Some ways this is being done include:

- > Building capacity and relationships to facilitate sharing (e.g. supporting the people with the knowledge to share and enabling learners to live/make a living while learning);
- > Increasing awareness of the importance of stories – stories of what happened historically on the land, where traditional practices occurred, and how stories are connected to names;
- > Bringing confidence back to people to share the stories and sing the songs;
- > Open-source sharing of Indigenous cultural heritage, e.g. people practicing powwows in Newfoundland; and
- > Using humour to reconnect people and stories.

What can the Province and local governments do to support Indigenous communities in protecting intangible cultural heritage?

Governments must engage with Indigenous governments and communities, moving away from colonial approaches where power and authority over the management of Indigenous cultural heritage resides with government and Indigenous Peoples are engaged with on a transactional basis. This means moving towards a shared decision-making model that empowers Indigenous communities to steward their cultural heritage with the ultimate goal

of Indigenous Peoples managing their cultural heritage without government interference. Some of the strategies that can support this fundamental shift in how ICH is managed include:

- > Provincial and federal governments should share or completely turn over decision-making powers and lawmaking powers to Indigenous Peoples. That is the central thing, the key principles, to “let go of that power.” Governments need to recognize, in law, the right and authority of Indigenous Peoples to govern and take care of their heritage;
- > Governments need to work with cultural committees from each Nation – to develop collaboration between Nations and agreements on how to move cultural heritage forward, based upon what is important to each community. This will help build a foundation to work from;
- > There should be legislation especially for Indigenous heritage, as a major priority. Legislation must provide a mechanism for the protection of ICH Indigenous Nations should control protection;
- > Indigenous archaeology should be under Indigenous control;
- > Government should not interfere with or legislate spirituality; and
- > Indigenous teachers in school districts should be supported to teach Indigenous language and knowledge.

Central to supporting Indigenous Peoples in caring for their intangible cultural heritage is the provision of funding. Some of the key areas, projects, and initiatives where funding is needed include:

- > Communities need funding for a team of community members responsible for revitalizing language, arts, and culture;
- > Research grants in various areas (e.g. use of artificial intelligence for language revitalization);
- > Grants for Indigenous language revitalization;
- > New technology (such as virtual reality programs) that offer new ways for elders to teach young community members; and
- > Truth telling – taking responsibility for the historical and ongoing impacts of colonialism and mismanagement of ICH.



Photo of (L to R) Kym Gouchie, Laura Webb, Diane Calliou/Desjarlais and Harold Joe.

Theme 3: Indigenous Place-Naming in B.C.

What is the significance of Indigenous place names?

Names represent the intangible heritage of a place – the stories of that place and the people who are part of that place. Place names and stories must be kept together to keep the cultural heritage of a place alive. Names should not be shortened, or part of these stories and the cultural significance can be lost.

Places are named because they are special, and they reflect Indigenous Peoples' deep relationships with their lands and waters. Often places have many names for different unique features and these names can exist in relationship to each other and the landscape.

Indigenous place names can be very political. They are important to affirming Indigenous systems of governance, protocols, identity, and cultural continuity. When places are given names it identifies that place as territory. Official place names are important for recognition of Indigenous Peoples' rights and title, and for land claims as they are used to validate legal arguments.

Renaming places with their Indigenous names is an important part of reconciliation.

What are the challenges around Indigenous place names?

There are numerous challenges associated with Indigenous place-naming:

- a. The process of mapping with precise lines and points is itself a colonial process that is not part of Indigenous traditions. It is more confining than Indigenous practice, making it challenging to apply Indigenous names and understandings of land to colonial mapping;

- b. Indigenous communities have different dialects and protocols that must be honoured when naming a place;
- c. Indigenous place-naming requires an understanding of historical relationships between Indigenous communities;
- d. Mapping names and associated stories is years of work and current consultation and processes don't always allow for this time;
- e. Indigenous communities are challenged to have resources to respond to place name consultation requests;
- f. Societal pressures on name pronunciation discriminate against Indigenous names; and
- g. The land is changing due to development and climate change making it more difficult to attribute traditional Indigenous names to places.

How can we support Indigenous Place-Naming?

Indigenous place-naming is a complicated issue. While specific questions were asked during the Forum, most participants did not have the deep knowledge or experience with place-naming required to provide answers. However, some suggestions were made to improve government processes of naming and re-naming.

- > Ask groups to agree on one word and come back with that name in each of their languages;
- > Include names of surrounding places;
- > Include the stories associated with names and use these for education; and
- > Better align sign installation with discussions about place names so new signs with old names don't go up when discussions are taking place. This can undermine discussions.

In addition to comments around government process, much of the discussion focused on the challenges from the general public relating to pronunciation of Indigenous names. Suggestions to overcome this common argument included:

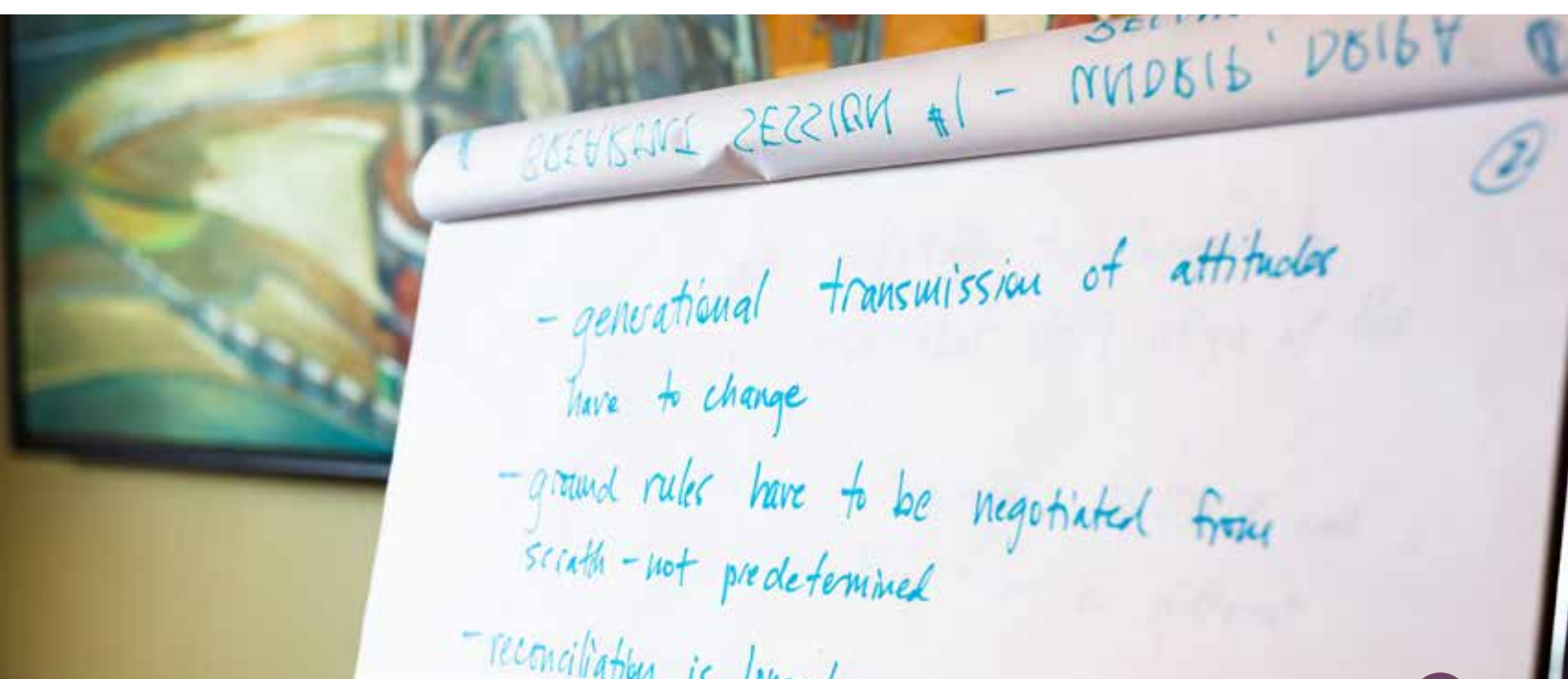
- > Undertake public education with name changes;
- > Encourage audio pronunciation with new place-name proposals and track in the government name record;
- > Use QR codes to provide audio pronunciation online, e.g. Kamloops trail – signage and stories; and
- > If choosing new names for things, work with groups to choose simple words (e.g. Blackfoot names for Calgary Highways).

Theme 4: Indigenous Cultural Heritage Curation

What are the most pressing issues with respect to the safeguarding of Indigenous cultural objects and collections?

The management and curation of Indigenous cultural material has in post-contact history been predominantly in the hands of non-Indigenous governments and cultural institutions. Indigenous cultural materials belong to Indigenous Peoples and should be managed by Indigenous communities to allow for the development of nuanced and culturally appropriate approaches to curation practices that are in accordance with community needs and protocols. Several challenges were identified throughout the Forum discussions on the subject of caretaking of Indigenous cultural materials, including:

- > Determining who is safeguarding what, for whom, and for what purpose is a key challenge with regards to managing collections and cultural objects;
- > Developing a shared language – What does it mean to safeguard? Perhaps caretaking is a more appropriate term;
- > Determining and following cultural protocols. There are some cultural materials Indigenous communities may not want to preserve;
- > Culturally appropriate archeological/curation methodologies; following traditional protocol with guidance from the community;
- > Determining proper care for cultural objects and collections by asking “Is it preserving or bringing back to the community for use?” and “Is it accessible to the public?”;



- > Raising awareness that each Nation has their own interpretation about what curation is and what is appropriate for different items (for example, not everything should be on display);
- > Educating dominant cultural institutions regarding culturally appropriate curation and protocol;
- > Having appropriate storage facilities to accommodate cultural objects with different needs and having educated curators from the community to look after those belongings;
- > Safeguarding of Indigenous objects that are already in non-Indigenous collections;
- > Balancing museum practices and cultural protocols;
- > Repatriation of Indigenous cultural materials;
- > Mislabeling of Indigenous cultural materials; and
- > Need for curatorial knowledge and capacity in Indigenous communities and need for transmission of knowledge.

How can government and cultural organizations be more effective in working with Indigenous communities to share control or repatriate cultural objects? What could shared decision-making practices look like?

At the very core of these questions is the notion of ownership. Collaborative approaches to the caretaking of Indigenous cultural objects [belongings] must be informed by the shared understanding that ICH belongs to Indigenous Peoples. As such, Indigenous governments and communities should have full ownership and decision-making authority over their cultural materials. Establishing this shared understanding, in governments, institutions, and their policies and laws, is fundamental to the development of effective practices and relationships between colonial governments, cultural institutions, and Indigenous communities.

Throughout the Forum discussions, participants articulated a number of actions that colonial governments and cultural institutions can take to support the stewardship of Indigenous cultural objects, including:

- > If cultural organizations are going to align with UNDRIP, they have to start from scratch to rethink their relationship with Indigenous cultural materials. It goes back to reexamining the issue of control over these objects and the legal framework that is in place to support government in having control;
- > Government must have a total shift in understanding its relationship to the ownership of Indigenous cultural items;
- > Meaningful engagement with communities, with the understanding that government does not own Indigenous cultural materials;

- > Government should go through the process of identifying what Indigenous cultural materials are in its possession and be asking communities what they want to do with their cultural objects;
- > Pass control over to communities to care for cultural items according to their own practices and traditions;
- > Pass laws that support Indigenous ownership over their cultural objects, and repatriation;
- > Examine processes that lead to excavation and curation of cultural objects to determine if it makes sense before it happens. A good place would be to start engagement with the communities at the earliest stage and determine what their research questions are;
- > If items are curated they should be made accessible to the community and used for teaching;
- > Support Indigenous communities with the creation of inventories;
- > Museums need to acknowledge Indigenous ownership of objects;
- > Make funding available for the repatriation of cultural objects. Repatriation should be unconditional;
- > Allow for community specific approaches instead of one-size fits all;
- > Shared decision-making must be meaningful and practical. It is often just tokenism;
- > Acknowledge Indigenous ownership then let the community decide if they want “expert” advice;
- > Governments and cultural institutions need to recognize diversity of Indigenous communities and protocols; and
- > It all comes down to relationships – museums and governments need to reach out and build relationships with Indigenous communities. There is a need for genuine dialogue.

How can government and cultural organizations support Indigenous Peoples’ rights to determine what proper mitigation measures and curation of cultural materials they deem culturally appropriate in accordance with their principles and protocols?

The conversation around appropriate mitigation measures and curating of cultural materials has to start with Indigenous communities. Indigenous Peoples should be either leading or steering the implementation of curation projects to ensure that they are carried out in accordance with their principles and protocols. One of the first steps is determining the ownership of the cultural materials in questions.

Positive examples of repatriation initiatives have been carried out by the Haida Gwaii museum, the Nisga'a museum, U'Mista, and Cape Mudge.

Where is the most urgent need for funding?

There is a critical need for funding, particularly in the areas of training, education, and organizational staffing capacity. It is anticipated that the impacts of climate change will further increase the need for funding related to the stewardship of Indigenous cultural materials.

“Cultural sovereignty (having a cultural centre) is a key issue for Indigenous heritage.”

- Quote from Forum Participant



Frame of a sweatlodge in Northern B.C.

Theme 5: The Future of Indigenous Cultural Heritage

How can we collectively support the stewardship of Indigenous cultural heritage?

Governments at all levels and cultural organizations across Canada have an important role to play in the revitalization of Indigenous cultural heritage. This starts with recognizing the right and authority of Indigenous People to govern and care for their heritage. This means that governments and cultural organizations must acknowledge Indigenous ownership and pass control to Indigenous communities to care for Indigenous cultural sites and objects.

It is recognized that this process will take many years and must be supported by strong relationships and ongoing dialogue between leaders within government and cultural institutions and Indigenous communities.

The following policy and program recommendations were made to facilitate moving toward this goal.

For all institutions:

- > Build relationships with Indigenous communities and people – go to communities, have a potlatch together;
- > Work with cultural committees from each Nation;
- > Undertake truth-telling to take responsibility for the past actions of government or organizations that have undermined and devalued Indigenous Peoples;
- > Work with Indigenous communities to understand who, what, and how cultural heritage is safeguarded before undertaking cultural heritage work;
- > Employ people from Indigenous communities to care for Indigenous cultural heritage;



Photo by: D Bain. Dinosaur Track in Peace River

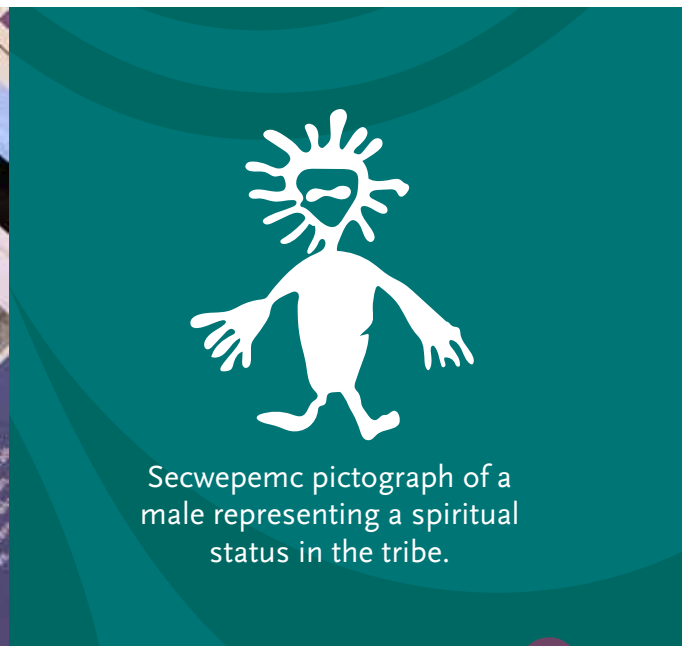
- > Provide support to build cultural heritage skills within Indigenous communities;
- > Ensure Indigenous perspectives and cultural sensitivity training are taught to cultural heritage workers;
- > Provide education within institutions to better understand protocols relating to cultural heritage;
- > Ensure stories are kept with Indigenous cultural heritage names, objects, and sites;
- > Recognize Indigenous place names; and
- > Recognize and value Indigenous Knowledge Keepers.

Relating to policy and legislation:

- > Enact legislation to protect ICH and resource this legislation adequately;
- > Support intellectual property rights around ICH;
- > Reduce barriers to accessing cultural property;
- > Provide legal protections for harvesting;
- > Safeguard Indigenous cultural heritage against development and loss of land; and
- > Support the inclusion of Indigenous education in schools.

Relating to cultural institutions:

- > Ensure all visitors to Indigenous cultural heritage sites understand protocols in land use;
- > Work with Indigenous communities to put in place appropriate curation methodologies;



- > Work with Indigenous communities to create teams of community members responsible for revitalizing language, arts and culture;
- > Construct storage facilities to accommodate objects with different needs;
- > Support people in urban areas to have a connection to ICH;
- > Provide space for Indigenous communities to participate in ICH; and
- > Share Indigenous stories with Indigenous communities.

Relating to archaeology:

- > Make archaeological permitting and approval processes more accessible to Indigenous People;
- > Work with Indigenous communities to put in place-appropriate archaeological processes;
- > Document sites of ICH and make a public registry available to property owners; and
- > Give Indigenous communities the lead in permitting, recording, and enforcement.

In addition to these policy and program recommendations, significant funding is required to support real change in ICH. In particular, funding is required for:

- > Network building to support ICH through regional meetings, email lists, future forums, webinars, etc.;
- > The creation of Indigenous cultural heritage inventories;
- > An ICHAC of First Peoples' Cultural Council;
- > Private land owners to care for and protect ICH;
- > Indigenous language revitalization;
- > Technological initiatives that support language revitalization;
- > Training and education for Indigenous People and communities;
- > Protecting ICH sites against climate change impacts;
- > Repatriation; and
- > The establishment of more cultural centres in communities.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Key Considerations

For generations, Indigenous Peoples lived immersed in their cultures, governance, economies and languages, in an environment of incredible diversity and deep connection between land, people, and animals. This rich and beautiful heritage provides immense strength and value, but colonial attitudes dismissed its importance and implemented systems that created incalculable damage. Currently, there is little to no government support for Indigenous cultural heritage. Continuing on this pathway will lead to many ongoing and new impacts:

Loss of invaluable cultural knowledge and Knowledge Holders: Language, art, and culture are what make us human; they connect us with our neighbours, ancestors, and traditions. The cultural heritage of Indigenous Peoples in B.C. reflects a diversity of histories and identities that are central to their own self-determination and cultural continuity, and are woven into the cultural fabric of our province and our nation. Each language group has their own distinct culture and worldview, and the loss of cultural knowledge if Indigenous heritage is not protected is immeasurable. Due to the impacts of colonialism this knowledge is severely endangered. Climate change and resource development and now Covid-19 impose further threats. So much cultural knowledge has already been lost. If intentional action is not taken, Indigenous People will experience further loss of their cultural heritage and it will prove extremely difficult to restore this knowledge later.

Loss of economic opportunities: Investments in Indigenous cultural heritage create economic opportunities. Failure to support Indigenous art and culture revitalization will impede Indigenous Peoples' economic revitalization and result in lost job opportunities in the arts and culture industry, particularly given the recent upsurge in Indigenous tourism. Indigenous languages and cultures also contain valuable ecological knowledge that is essential for the well-being of our planet, including environmental sustainability, weather forecasting, and pharmaceutical production. The loss of ICH will involve the loss of important environmental management strategies needed to navigate the climate emergency the world is facing.

Impacts on cultural and social systems: Loss of language and culture has been linked to high rates of youth suicide and diabetes in First Nations communities, and research shows that Indigenous languages, arts, and cultures function as protective factors for community health and wellness. Revitalizing ICH is a key aspect positive social well-being in Indigenous

communities. Not investing in this revitalization will lead to increases in the costs of community health and wellness.

Continued colonial approach: If governments continue to devalue and overlook ICH, and do not support opportunities or Indigenous-led work, they will be continuing the colonial pattern of the last 150 years. Government commitments to reconciliation (through the TRC Calls to Action) and UNDRIP (through DRIPA/Bill 41) demand that governments must support the rights of Indigenous People to reclaim and rebuild their cultural systems. This work is an essential component of countering generations of assimilative policies and is necessary to place control back into the hands of Indigenous People.

Recommendations

Efforts to repair damaged relationships and restore Indigenous Peoples' control over their cultural heritage will not be easy. It will involve much collaboration, conversation, reflection, development of new relationships, learning, and knowledge sharing. It will take time and it will take effort. It will cause us to rethink our values and examine our approaches. But its value is clear. Diversity of cultures is essential to humanity, and Indigenous cultural heritage deserves protection and respect. This work cannot be done without strong partnerships—with governments, heritage bodies, post-secondary institutions, and Indigenous communities. FPCC is hopeful for a future in which Indigenous cultural heritage is thriving with Indigenous Peoples as the stewards of their cultural heritage, and in which this heritage is valued and embraced by all.

Provided below are recommendations that came out of the Forum dialogues.

1. **Acknowledge that the cultural heritage of Indigenous Peoples belongs to and should be managed by Indigenous Peoples.** Without exaggeration, 99.9% of archaeological sites in British Columbia, extending back in time more than 10,000 years, are those of Indigenous Peoples. Yet Indigenous Peoples have had little say in or control over decisions made concerning their study, preservation, or destruction.
2. **Recognize that the Indigenous understandings of Indigenous cultural heritage are both tangible and intangible and are holistic, integrated, fulsome, and inclusive.** This will require moving away from the narrow focus on 'archaeological' material culture currently common to the interpretation of the heritage legislation such as the Heritage Conservation Act and the delineation of a set date of 1846 as archaeological in nature.
3. **Support Indigenous communities' and their Knowledge Keepers' efforts to revitalize and maintain all forms of Indigenous Cultural Heritage.** This support should be



Photo by Julie Harris

through funding for strategic planning and monitoring efforts, capacity building and training, networking and learning opportunities, research and documentation, and infrastructure development.

4. **Develop a framework, action plan and timeline to fully implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Bill C-41/Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA).** UNDRIP recognizes the right of Indigenous Peoples to “maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage.” The Province of B.C. has committed to implementing UNDRIP and DRIPA/Bill 41, and investment in this plan will align with that commitment by providing opportunities for Indigenous-led management of Indigenous cultural heritage. This framework and action plan must establish jurisdiction and statutory decision-making authority over Indigenous cultural heritage by Indigenous Peoples. For this to be successful, it will require decentralizing power and developing or activating mechanisms for extending authority within existing legislation to Indigenous Peoples. British Columbia’s current Bill C-41 / Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) provides a mechanism for developing such legal mechanisms, processes, and relationships.
5. **Eliminate any influence on Provincial policies and legislation of colonial doctrines including the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius in relation to Indigenous cultural heritage and more generally.** This includes removing the 1846 distinction date for recognition and protection of archaeological sites, properties, and objects under the Heritage Conservation Act.
6. **Support anti-racism initiatives and education for and about Indigenous Peoples** by working with the Ministry of Education and developing resources for public education at all levels.

7. **Establish and enhance relational versus transactional connections between governments based on Indigenous rights recognition, Government-to-Government and/or Nation-to-Nation foundations** of equality, and through development and implementation of shared decision-making processes addressing Indigenous Cultural Heritage. This requires displacing the current standards of engagement / consultation / accommodation, based on unilateral government decision-making and strength of claim assessments, and replacing them with new standards as set out above. It also requires significant education, training, and revised hiring practices to ensure government have the capacity to undertake these processes in an effective way.
8. **Set out measures for special identification, recognition, and protection of intangible heritage.** It is recommended that B.C. support the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (the Convention) by articulating in legislation and regulations the means by which intangible Indigenous cultural heritage is identified, recognized, and protected.
9. **Harmonize statutory and operational relations between provincial agencies such as the Archaeology Branch and Heritage Branch of the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development.** This requires better communication and strengthened relations between provincial agencies dealing with Indigenous cultural heritage, including the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation as a key facilitator of relations.
10. **Harmonize relations, approaches, legislation, policies, and funding opportunities between Canada and British Columbia** to support Indigenous Peoples in managing their cultural heritage to establish more cohesive, holistic, and integrated approach.
11. **Support efforts to understand, document, and record Indigenous place names by:**
 - a. Establishing a working group of Indigenous Peoples experienced with the place-name process;
 - b. Funding Indigenous communities to undertake dialogue and engagement; and
 - c. Providing funding and staffing resources to the B.C. Geographical Names Office of the Heritage Branch to process and evaluate Indigenous place names applications, including engagement with Indigenous communities.
12. **Support efforts to map Indigenous cultural heritage traditions across the province** through the provision of funding for training and capacity building, research and documentation, learning and knowledge transfer, and informational infrastructure development.
13. **Recognize and protect Indigenous cultural heritage places of significance and places that are endangered** yearly through the application of legislative tools for heritage recognition and protection and through provision of funding for projects and

initiatives designed to safeguarding such places. This must include a public registry of Indigenous cultural heritage places that allows Indigenous communities to control which places may be publicly known.

14. **Formalize initiatives to inventory Indigenous cultural heritage facing imminent threats related to climate change** (e.g., heritage at risk of damage or destruction due to flooding, erosion, fires, temperature change), and develop response plans. Conduct research about how Indigenous Peoples coped with significant environmental changes in the past, and how this might help Indigenous communities and their neighbours plan climate change responses today.
15. **Work with Indigenous Peoples and all federal, provincial and municipal agencies, such as B.C. Parks, Parks Canada, and Canadian Heritage, to revise narrow, inaccurate, and harmful interpretations of Indigenous Peoples and histories.** These agencies should work with local Indigenous Peoples to identify gaps and needs for research and storytelling related to lands managed by B.C. and Canada. Begin the process



Participant, Margaretta James, offered gratitude to FPCC Manager of Heritage Programs, Karen Aird, for her work in championing ICH.

of truth-telling in accordance with applicable Indigenous legal traditions at Indigenous cultural heritage sites and places managed by B.C. and Canada. This telling should be an honest and authentic written account of the history with Indigenous Peoples that is produced in collaboration with Indigenous Peoples.

- 16. Work with Indigenous organizations and museums to develop grant funding to support Indigenous Peoples in the repatriation of their tangible and intangible cultural heritage and ancestral remains.**
- 17. Support Indigenous Peoples to have the resources needed to develop and administer their own cultural heritage laws, policies, and practices; and to establish agreements that clarify relations with and between federal and provincial governments.**
- 18. Provide support for a committee, such as the FPCC Indigenous Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee, of qualified Indigenous experts to advise B.C. on a case-by-case basis on shared Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultural heritage interests.**
- 19. Establish a special program to support scholarships and internships for Indigenous students and early-career professionals to conduct and present research on Indigenous cultural heritage related to B.C.'s heritage sites, programs and collections.**



Tse'k'wa National Historic site in Treaty 8 territory of BC. Photo by Julie Harris.

20. **Hire Indigenous People experienced in Indigenous cultural heritage** to foster new ways of thinking within government and to develop common understandings between government and Indigenous communities.
21. **Provide specific funding for Indigenous-led initiatives to commemorate and interpret Indigenous cultural heritage.** Such funding should be broadly distributed according to each Indigenous Nation's current capacity and needs. For example, there is a need for Indigenous communities to work internally in the form of committees or working groups to decide how they want to commemorate sites of trauma, such as residential schools, and how the process of commemoration should unfold.
22. **Contribute funding and effort for a detailed needs study to inform the development of:**
 - a. Programs and grants to build capacity, support skills development in Indigenous heritage professionals, and support infrastructure development for the caretaking of cultural objects and intellectual property;
 - b. Training programs for Indigenous People interested in heritage work. This could be done in partnership with universities and colleges, or museums through coursework and internships in Indigenous communities and organizations;



Cultural landscape in Peace River

- c. Exchange programs for Indigenous heritage professionals to learn about international best practices and share approaches and methods with international Indigenous organizations and institutions doing ground-breaking work to protect and revitalize Indigenous cultural heritage;
 - d. Mentorship programs partnering experienced Indigenous heritage professionals from museums, universities, or other well-resourced institutions, with those more junior; and
 - e. Awards or campaigns to recognize and celebrate leaders in Indigenous cultural heritage work. This could attract more Indigenous People to the field by putting a public face on Indigenous People leading heritage protection work and normalize and publicize Indigenous leadership in heritage work to the broader public.
23. Provide sustainable and yearly funding for Indigenous organizations to continue this important work. Grants can be provided through a third-party Indigenous organization, to support Indigenous Peoples' revitalization of laws and practices concerning the stewardship and control of Indigenous cultural heritage and in identifying, understanding, and managing their heritage.



Dianne Hinkley (l) and Lenora Starr (r)

APPENDIX A - FPCC Indigenous Cultural Heritage Forum Agenda

Thursday, March 5th - Brentwood Bay Resort Meeting Room

4:30pm	Arrive, Register and Mingle
5:30pm	Welcome and Prayer
5:45pm	Dinner Buffet
6:15pm	Keynote Speech
7:00pm	Entertainment and performance by Art Napoleon
7:45pm	Wrap-up

Friday, March 6th - Brentwood Bay Resort Meeting Room

7:30am	Breakfast Buffet
8:45am	Welcome
9:00am	Opening Prayer and Keynote Speech by John Elliot
9:25am	Introductions and Forum Overview
9:45am	Sharing Stories about Indigenous Cultural Heritage - Panel Presentation and Discussion with Angie Bain, Jordan Coble, and Karen Rose Thomas
10:15am	Refreshment Break
10:45am	Breakout Discussions (Round 1) 1) UNDRIP, DRIPA and Reconciliation <ul style="list-style-type: none">- What does reconciliation mean to you and how does UNDRIP fit into that?- How can UNDRIP implementation best support the recognition, inclusion, and protection of Indigenous cultural heritage?- What steps must governments (provincial, local) take to implement cultural heritage related UNDRIP provisions? What matters most?- How can governments (provincial, local) be kept accountable for commitments made under UNDRIP, DRIPA?- Recommendations? 2) Intangible Indigenous Cultural Heritage <ul style="list-style-type: none">- What is part of your community's intangible cultural heritage?- How does your community safeguard intangible cultural heritage?- What intangible cultural heritage is at risk of being lost and why?- What can the province and local governments do to support Indigenous communities in protecting intangible cultural heritage?- Where is the most urgent need for funding?- Recommendations?

- 12:00pm Lunch Buffet
- 12:45pm Sharing Stories about Indigenous Cultural Heritage – Panel Presentation and Discussion with Diane Calliou and Dianne Hinkley, Leslie LeBourdais
- 1:15pm Breakout Discussions (Round 2)
- 1) Place-Naming in B.C.**
- In cases where more than one Indigenous community has a distinct name for a geographical feature, should more than one official name be recognized?
 - How should decisions about multiple geographical names be made when there is a lack of consensus or disagreement between Indigenous communities that have an interest in the feature? If more than one official name is recognized:
 - How should these names be ordered?
 - Should all of the official names appear on all versions of maps, signs and documents or should only the official name in the language of the map, sign or document be used?
 - Should multiple spellings of the same name for the feature be officially recognized as separate names?
 - What other implications should be taken into consideration about multiple geographical names?



Photo of Ursula Pfahler from the Heritage Branch.

2) The Curation Crisis

- What are the most pressing issues with respect to the safeguarding of Indigenous cultural objects and collections?
- How can government and cultural organizations be more effective in working with Indigenous communities to share control or repatriate cultural objects?
- What could shared decision-making and best management practices look like?
- How can government and cultural organizations support Indigenous Peoples' right to determine culturally appropriate mitigation measures and curation of cultural materials?
- Where is the most urgent need for funding?
- Recommendations?

2:30pm

Refreshment Break

2:45pm

Breakout Discussions (Round 3)

1) The Future of Indigenous Cultural Heritage

- What are the most pressing issues in recognizing, including and safeguarding Indigenous cultural heritage?
- What can governments (provincial, local) do to support Indigenous communities in safeguarding their cultural heritage?
- What can governments and cultural organizations do to support the revitalization and promotion of Indigenous cultural heritage?
- Where is capacity building needed the most?
- What funding is required most and where to support the recognition, inclusion and protection of Indigenous cultural heritage?
- Recommendations/next steps?

4:00pm

Closing Remarks

4:15pm

Drumming

Questions on the poster board available for the duration of the Forum:

- > What does cultural heritage mean to you and your community?
- > What are some of the successes you've had in the area of cultural heritage?
- > What are some of the challenges you face in achieving your goals/objectives as they relate to culture and heritage?
- > What are some of the key issues that exist now related to Indigenous heritage?



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