



Network Canada



# Decolonizing Organizational Practices for Reconciliation

**17 September 2025**



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Lead, Social Sustainability  
**UN Global Compact Network Canada**

# Walking The Path of Reconciliation

## A Business- Focuses Webinar Series:

1. **Decolonizing Organizational Practices for Reconciliation | 17 September 2025**
2. **Economic Reconciliation in Corporate Strategy | 11 November 2025**
3. **Building Ethical and Equitable Indigenous Partnerships | 20 January 2026**
4. **Implementing Reconciliation into Business | 21 April 2026**





# Agenda

- Introduction, Land Acknowledgement and Opening Prayer
- Presentation: Decolonial Theory, the TRC and UNDRIP
- Panel Discussion
- Q&A

# Introduction and Opening Prayer

At the beginning of each webinar series, we will ask a different Elder to offer an opening prayer to start the session, serving as both an educational opportunity and an introduction to this practice.





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# Welcome: Elder Barbara Nepinak

Barbara Nepinak, a member of Pine Creek First Nation is retired after serving 35 years of federal public service. Barbara is active in the Urban and surrounding areas serving on Advisory Councils and Boards as Elder and Cultural Advisor.

Presently, Barbara serves on the Standing Indigenous Advisory Council to the Canadian Human Rights Museum, Board member of The Forks Foundation Board and National Board member for the Cultural Human Resources Council in Ottawa as well as providing Elder teachings in the 7 Oaks School division.

Barbara has also received recognition awards such as the Recipient of the Keeping the Fires Burning through Ka ni Kanichuik which is an acknowledgement of being a Traditional Knowledge and Wisdom Keeper. She was twice recognized with the Citizenship Award by previous Mayors. Barbara is also an interpreter/translator for CanTalk a national organization that provides language services. Barbara is on the Board of Directors of Graffiti Gallery and Age & Opportunity Centre. Clarence and Barbara were also Spiritual /Cultural Advisors for Staff for APTN - Aboriginal Peoples Television Network. They are also Elders for the First Peoples Investment Inc. which provide training and developments opportunities for First Nations and Metis organizations. Both have been recognized with the Order of Manitoba July 2019 Both Barb & Clarence have been recognized as Traditional Wisdom Keepers by the Circle of Educators of Manitoba. Both received the Queens Golden Jubilee Awards. Both have been appointed to a National Board for Climate Change initiatives with federal government and First Nation Representatives based in Ottawa. Both were members for the National Elders Gathering hosted by Peguis First Nation.



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# Meet Today's Speakers: Kevin Sandy

Entrepreneur & Director at Haudenosaunee Lacrosse.

Kevin Vincent Sandy belongs to the Lower Cayuga Nation, Wolf Clan, of the Haudenosaunee, and resides on the Six Nations of the Grand River Territory.

Mr. Sandy is the Visionary CEO, Otahyoni Management, a business group specializing in governance planning, strategic planning, relationship building, Indigenous cultural awareness training and business development. The company has been in existence since 2001; its head office is located on Six Nations of the Grand River. He's the Director/Founder of Haudenosaunee Lacrosse, which supports sports and cultural development by facilitating youth sports events and providing opportunities for youth to connect and participate in activities they love. Mr. Sandy believes in the passion and spirit of culture, business and sport. Each has a strong connection community and the people.



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# Meet Today's Speakers: Joseph Bastien

Associate Director at the Reconciliation & Responsible Investment Institute,  
[www.rrii.org](http://www.rrii.org)

Joseph is Anishinaabe (Ojibway) from Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory and has over 15 years of experience working with Indigenous communities and organizations across Canada and internationally, including the independent Electricity System Operator (IESO), the British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines, the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centre's (OFIFC), the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB), and the Organization of Canadian Nuclear Industries (OCNI).

Joseph has also advised municipal, provincial, federal, and foreign governments on stakeholder relations and economic development strategies.







**Muskoka Group**



**Wayne Kaboni**  
Director Founder



**Dr. Martina  
Jakubchik-Paloheimo**  
Postdoctoral Researcher

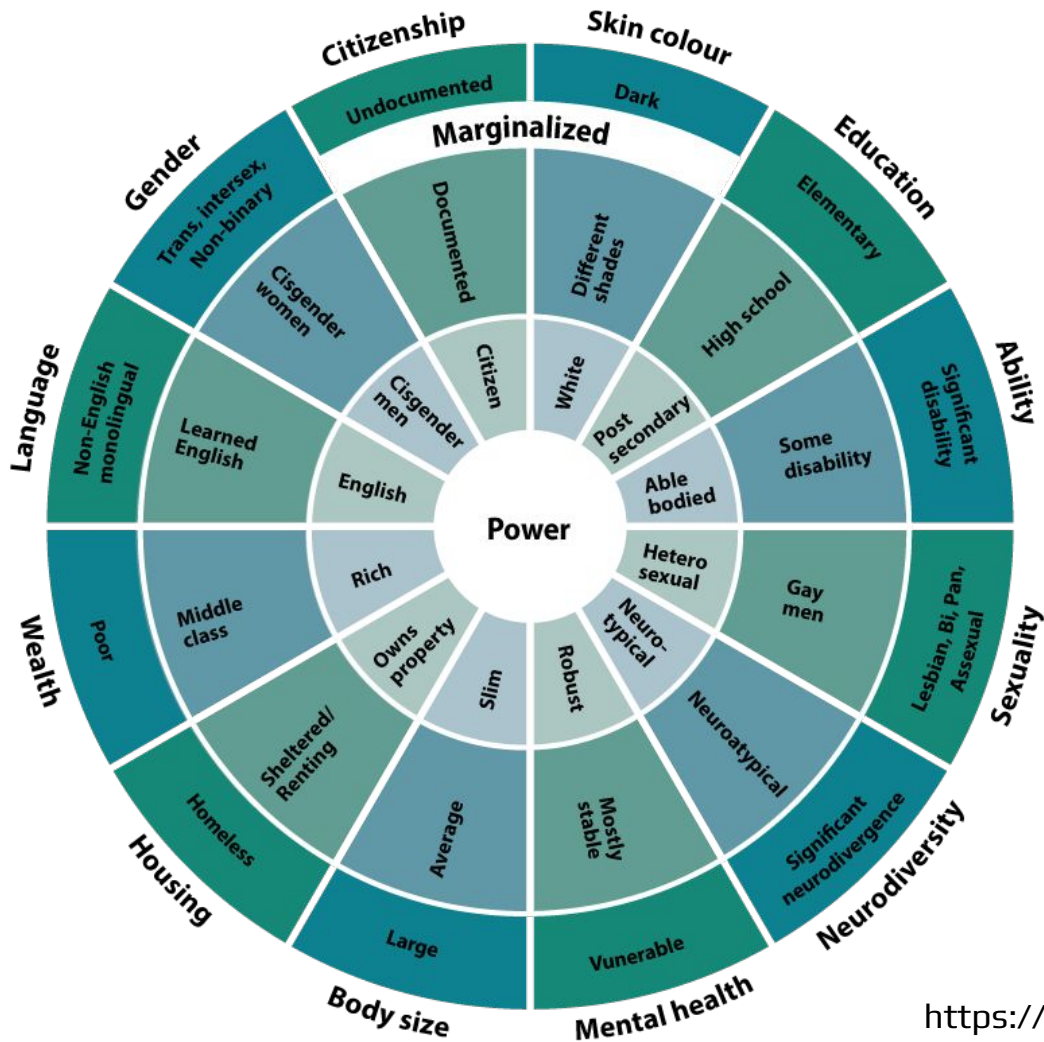


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# Chat and Q&A Guidelines

- Please feel free to introduce yourselves and connect with one another in the chat function throughout the session
- Direct all questions to the Q&A function on the bottom of your Zoom screen
- This is a safe learning environment - any comments shared in the chat or Q&A should be respectful and non-judgemental



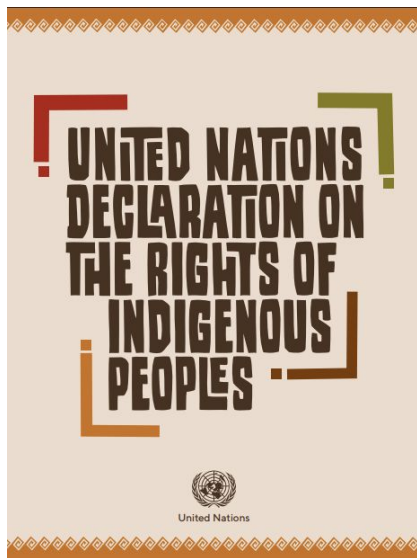


# Positionality in this work

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Truth and  
Reconciliation  
Commission of Canada



# Orientation and Guiding Principles

## Truth and Reconciliation Report, Call to Action 92:

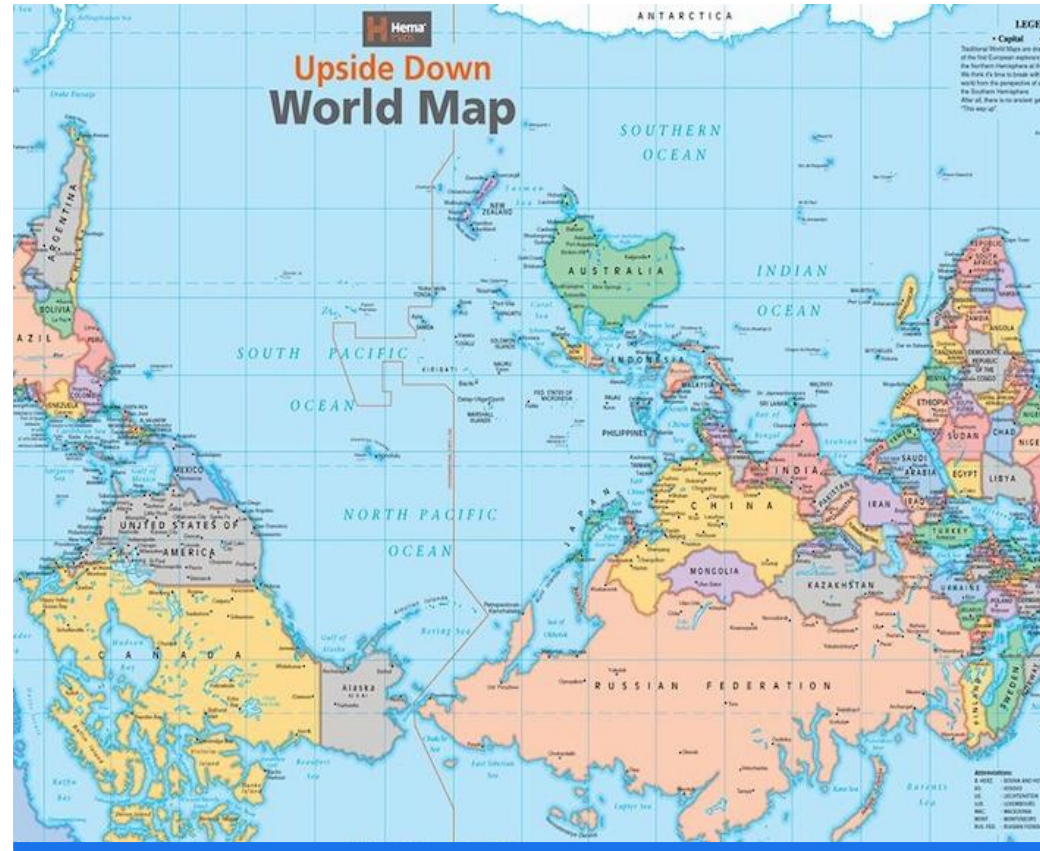
- a) “We call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources.”

## United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

- a) **Article 41:** The organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations shall contribute to the full realization of the provisions of this Declaration through the mobilization, inter alia, of financial cooperation and technical assistance. Ways and means of ensuring participation of indigenous peoples on issues affecting them shall be established.
- b) **Article 42:** The United Nations, its bodies, including the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and specialized agencies, including at the country level, and States shall promote respect for and full application of the provisions of this Declaration and follow up the effectiveness of this Declaration.

# Introduction to Decolonial Theory

- **Decolonial Theory:** Decolonial theory seeks to counter the global colonial world order and the hegemony of knowledge production systems (Bhambra, 2014). It recognizes that the range in ways of thinking across cosmologies is diverse (Simpson, 2011); the ways of being vary from the region, within a community, and across temporalities.
- It effectively critiques the historical and contemporary contexts of colonialism, revealing the complex systems of knowledge and land erosion that result from its oppression.
- Decoloniality seeks to undo the economic development that still operates within the broader system of exploitation, which upholds capitalism and Western-centred thinking (Curiel, 2021).
- Deconstructs the myth of Western civilization (Miñoso et al., 2021)

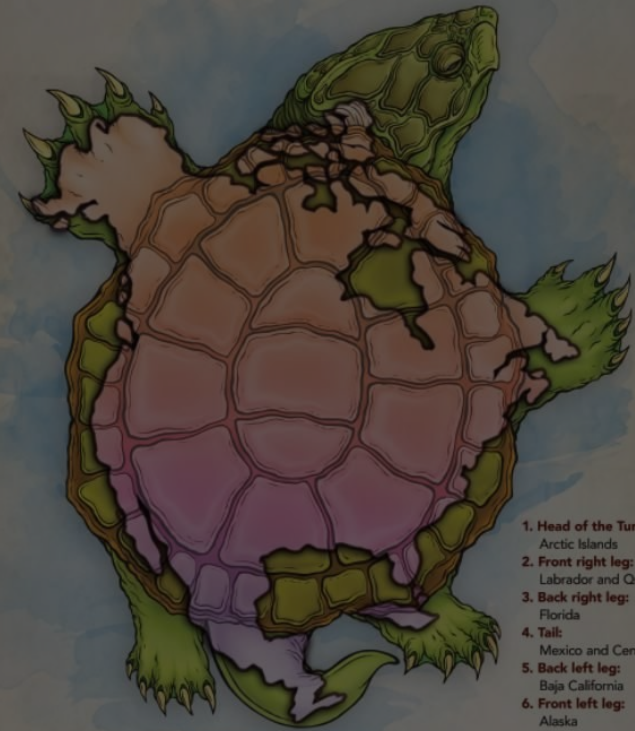




# Canadian & Global Context

[HTTPS://NATIVE-LAND.CA/](https://native-land.ca/)

## The Legend of Turtle Island



1. Head of the Turtle: Arctic Islands
2. Front right leg: Labrador and Quebec
3. Back right leg: Florida
4. Tail: Mexico and Central America
5. Back left leg: Baja California
6. Front left leg: Alaska

Long ago the world was covered with water, many creatures lived in the sea and the air above them. There came a time when Mother Earth was ready to give birth to her new children, but these new creatures were not water creatures and they needed somewhere new to live. The sea creature wanted to help Mother Earth. They had heard stories of earth far below the water and the turtle agreed that if they could get some earth he would hold up the land for Mother Earth and her new children. Each animal took a turn trying to reach the bottom of the waters and each animal failed. Finally the brave little muskrat swam and swam until he saw the bottom, he knew that he couldn't make it there and back to the surface but he kept swimming until he was able to grab some of the earth. The other animals waited and waited until they saw poor muskrat reach the surface. All of the animals were sad but they saw that muskrat was able to do what none of they could; he had gathered some earth in his little paw. They took the earth and placed it on turtle's back and turtle began to grow and grow. Mother Earth now had a place for her children to live, she cast seed about and the land became beautiful and full of life. Turtle's back became a huge island that sits in the middle of the waters and is known today as America.

# Understanding what can decolonization mean in a business context

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@ISAACMURDOCH



# Decolonization and Business

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- “Decolonizing is more about dismantling colonial structures and systems. It requires examining policies, practices and procedures at a business level to see if there is a way to change them up, as well as better incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing. This is where it is connected to Indigenization — because if decolonization is about dismantling and undoing colonial practices, then Indigenizing can be seen as the redoing or reaffirming of Indigenous ways of knowing and being, as well as incorporating Indigenous practices into business.” – Lindsay Brant
- Create space for Indigenous Voices, Employees or Board Members
- Procurement practices. Are you able to purchase from Indigenous-owned businesses or from businesses that provide opportunities for Indigenous people?
- Create actionable steps for yourself and your business
- Be Transparent and Follow Through
- Multiple ways of knowing and being open up new doors of possibility
- Drive Innovation and problem solving





# *Honouring the Truth, reconciling for the Future*

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/gallery-in-photos-events-across-canada-on-national-day-for-truth-and/>

# Call #92 Business and Reconciliation (p. 10)

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#92: We call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources. This would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- (i) Commit to meaningful consultation, building respectful relationships, and obtaining the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous peoples before proceeding with economic development projects.
- (ii) Ensure that Aboriginal peoples have equitable access to jobs, training, and education opportunities in the corporate sector, and that Aboriginal communities gain long-term sustainable benefits from economic development projects.
- (iii) Provide education for management and staff on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism



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## Introduction to Indigenous Reconciliation Action Plans (IRAPs)

Indigenous Reconciliation Action Plan (IRAP) reflect an unwavering commitment to action, transparency, and meaningful collaboration with Indigenous communities.

Some topics to consider including:

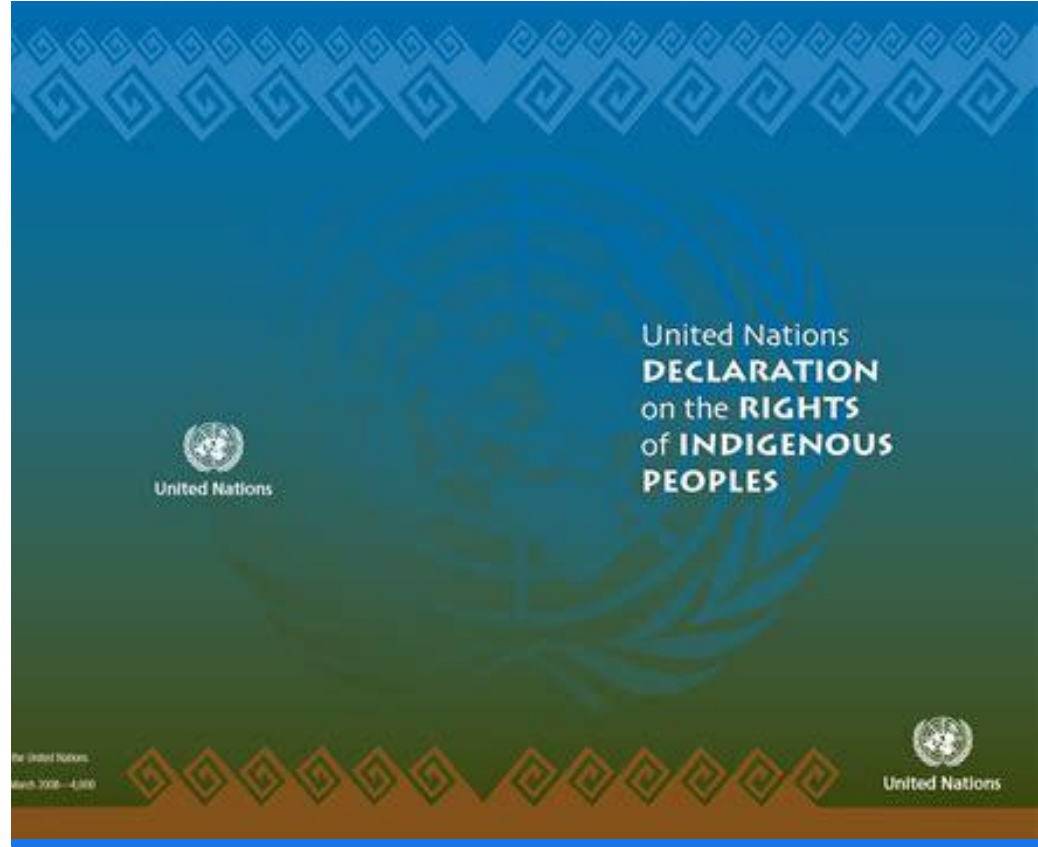
- Procurement and Partnerships
- Recruitment – Hiring, retention and advancement
- Acknowledging past mistakes
- Reviewing existing Policies to remove barriers and add support – DEI, HR, ESG&I, Ops, zoning, Development applications, engagement plans, etc.
- Accountability and transparency – monitoring, reporting and updating.
- Training and Education



# UNDRIP

On June 21, 2021, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* received Royal Assent in Canada.

- This Act requires the Government of Canada, in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples, to take all measures necessary to ensure the laws of Canada are consistent with the Declaration prepare and implement an action plan to achieve the Declaration's objectives table an annual report on progress to align the laws of Canada and on the action plan



# Panel Discussion



# Understanding colonial legacies in corporate structures

Promote Consultation in UNDRIP Implementation Setting the Standard for Engagement Indigenous businesses are uniquely positioned to guide the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) by modelling genuinely meaningful consultation practices. Their leadership and expertise ensure that engagement with Indigenous communities is both respectful and effective. Key Contributions by Indigenous Businesses

- **Advocating for Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC):** Indigenous businesses insist on processes that uphold FPIC principles, ensuring communities are well-informed, can participate freely, and have real decision-making power before any project proceeds.
- **Developing Culturally Appropriate Consultation Frameworks:** By designing engagement protocols that reflect Indigenous values, languages, and traditions, Indigenous businesses ensure that consultations respect cultural norms and community priorities.
- **Build Community Capacity:** Invest in local training, education, and employment, empowering communities to participate actively in consultation processes and negotiations.
- **Draw from Indigenous-led businesses as Intermediaries:** Indigenous businesses often facilitate dialogue between external organizations and Indigenous communities, helping translate expectations, resolve misunderstandings, and build trust on both sides.
- **Draw from well-established Guidelines and Best Practices:** For example, Indigenous-run enterprises set benchmarks for transparent communication and ongoing feedback, which external partners can learn from and adopt.

# Panel Discussion



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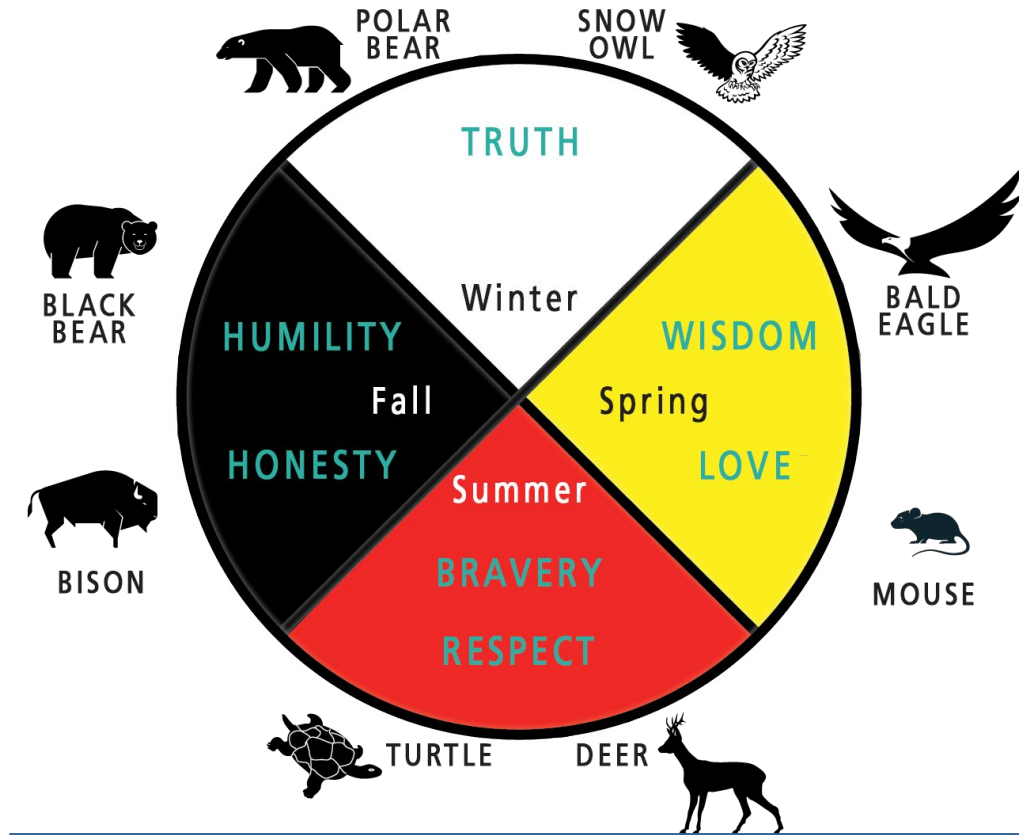
# What can your organization do?

- Avoid tokenistic gestures
- Create flexible funding structures and engagement strategies
- Invite collaboration at the start
- Ensure projects, IRAP's etc., are responsive to community needs
- Identify organizational factors that can affect progress and real change, such as racism, burnout, isolation, excess labour, and inequitable funding/opportunities.
- Create a plan and stick to it!



**Grounding cultural values and cosmology of each community we work with or territories you are on**

For Example: **The Seven Grandfather Teachings** include Love, Truth, Wisdom, Humility, Respect, Courage, and Honesty



# Strategies to Promote Meaningful Consultation Strategy How Indigenous Businesses



Contribute FPIC Enforcement Advocate for and operationalize FPIC in all projects



Culturally Relevant Protocols Develop and implement consultation processes based on local customs



Capacity Building Provide resources, jobs, and training to empower communities

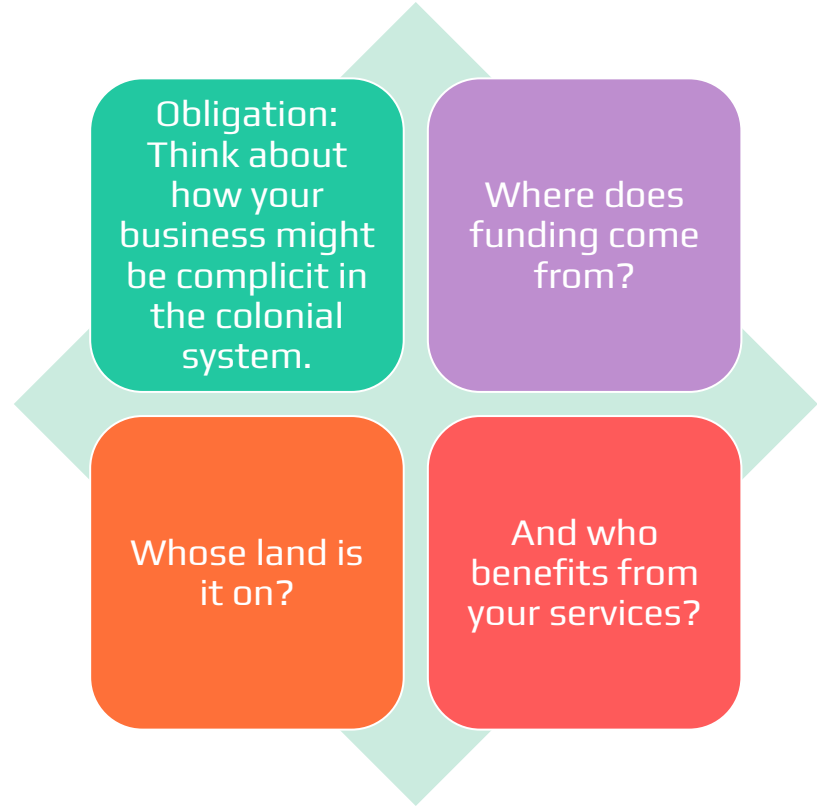


Bridge Building Facilitate understanding and collaboration with external businesses Knowledge



Sharing Share success stories, frameworks, and lessons learned

# The role of businesses in Reconciliation: Obligations vs. Opportunities



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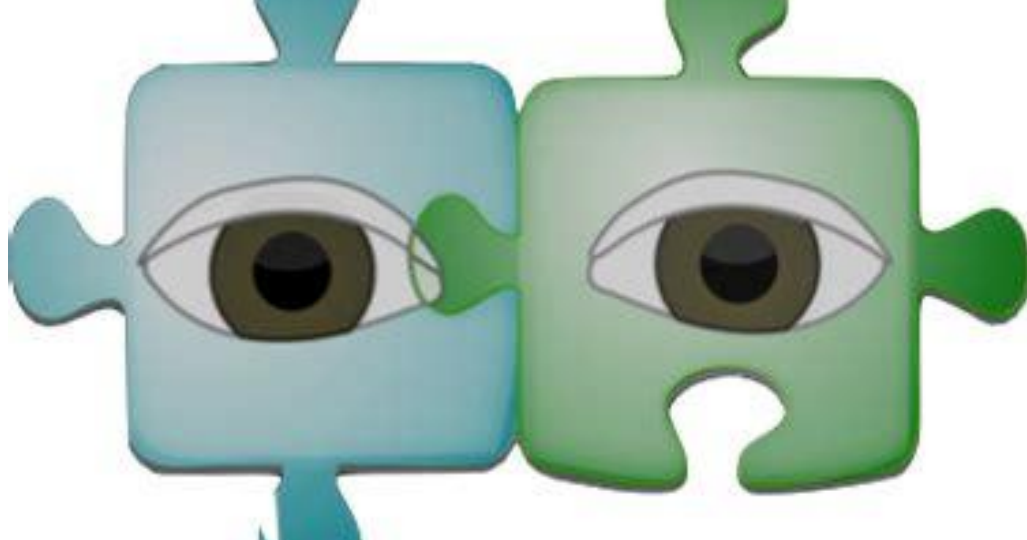
# Pluralistic Thinking

- Indigenous knowledge is increasingly being sought in both basic and applied sciences, for example: Fire Management, sustainability and conservation.
- Benefits of Decolonization for Businesses- Two-Eyed Seeing (Mi'kmaq Elder Albert Marshall).
- Makawalu: Iliterally meaning “eight eyes,” represents the need to see real world problems and solutions through multiple lenses and many angles and knowledge forms at the same time
- Relational thinking



makawalu

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# Example: Water Teaching

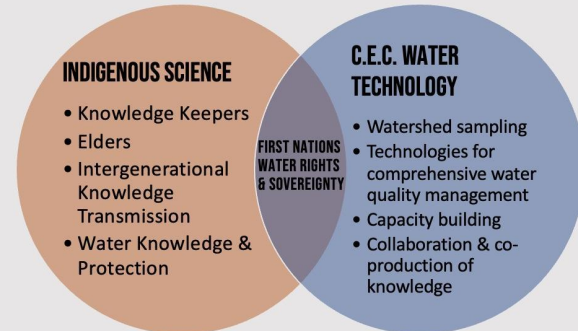
Water is considered sacred in many indigenous communities and cultures around the world. For these communities, water is more than just a resource, it is a way of life and a crucial aspect of their cultural identity. Indigenous peoples have relied on water for their livelihood, spiritual practices, and traditional knowledge for generations. They have a deep understanding of their interconnectedness between water, land, and all living things. In many indigenous cultures, water is seen as a living entity with its own spirit, and it is believed that humans have a responsibility to protect and care for it. For Indigenous peoples, water is not just a commodity, but a language, a community, and a source of knowledge and law.

- Native Women's Association of Canada

As Grand Chief Stewart Phillip of the Union of BC Indian Chief notes,

***"Water is the lifeblood of Mother Earth. Its everything to us. Water is sacred, and it's a symbol of our sovereignty."***

## COLLABORATIVE WATERSHED MODEL



Based on Bartlett, C., Marshall, M., Marshall, A. (2012). Two-eyed seeing and other lessons learned within a co-learning journey of bringing together Indigenous and mainstream knowledges and ways of knowing. *J Environ Stu Sci*, 2(331-340).

# Panel Discussion

# Further Resources, Links and Reading

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- University of Alberta's Course: Indigenous Canada is a 12-lesson Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) from the Faculty of Native Studies that explores the different histories and contemporary perspectives of Indigenous peoples living in Canada. <https://www.ualberta.ca/en/admissions-programs/online-courses/indigenous-canada/index.html>
- The First Nations' principles of OCAP® establish how First Nations' data and information will be collected, protected, used, or shared. Standing for ownership, control, access and possession. OCAP® is a tool to support strong information governance on the path to First Nations data sovereignty. Given the diversity within and across Nations, the principles will be expressed and asserted in line with a Nation's respective world view, traditional knowledge, and protocols <https://fnigc.ca/ocap-training/>
- Listen to the Indigenous Planetary Health Podcast: <https://heclab.cmpstudios.ca/>
- <https://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/concordia/offices/oce/docs/Projects/EN-Educational-Pathway.pdf>



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**For More Information**

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**Visit our Website:**

**[www.muskokagroup.com](http://www.muskokagroup.com)**

# Audience Q & A

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A low-angle, upward-looking shot of several tall skyscrapers in a city, likely New York City, with the Empire State Building visible on the right. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark blue filter.

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# JOIN US

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If you are ready to deliver impact that matters and unite for a more sustainable and equitable future for all, join us. Visit [unglobalcompact.org/participation/join/application](https://unglobalcompact.org/participation/join/application) to apply



# **Global Compact** Network Canada

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