



Summary of the Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC) Meeting

March 29, 2021

Virtual Meeting

Meeting Objectives

To gather IAC feedback on the Collaboration Agreement Sub-Committees' work on "Principles to be considered in Collaboration Agreements" and to discuss forward planning.

Agenda item: Introduction & opening remarks

The meeting began with a cultural welcome and an opening prayer from an Indigenous Elder. IAC co-chairs provided a welcome to members and opening remarks recognizing the Committees work over the past year and introduced the meetings topic for discussion on high level principles to be considered in collaboration agreements. The Ex-Officio member provided opening remarks and clarified the scope and mandate of the newly formed Ministers Advisory Council on Impact Assessment (MINAC). An IAC co-chair delivered a presentation at MINAC's last meeting, which was an overview of the IAC's three priority areas: IK, Collaboration Agreements and Assessing Impacts to Rights. An overview was also provided for recent meetings of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to advance work of their three sub-committees on health, social and economic effects, positive and cumulative effects and the joint sub-committee on Indigenous Knowledge (IK) and Science. The TAC will be meeting again in May 2021.

Agenda item: Presentation from the Collaboration Agreement Sub-Committee

The Champion for the Collaboration Agreement Sub-Committee provided an update on work to date including collaboration research and work on draft principles for collaboration, drafted by the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER) under the guidance of the Sub-Committee. To help build the principles, CIER's methodology included reviewing documents and expert input, working closely with the sub-committee to solicit their input, reviewing the

IACs notes from a breakout session on the topic and working with an academic researcher. The draft principles document has been shared with IAC for input on the five overarching principles that are proposed to be reflected in collaboration agreements including:

1. **Expression of self-determination** – Collaboration agreements should fundamentally be an expression of Indigenous peoples’ inherent right to self-determination to the satisfaction of the Indigenous part to the Agreement;
2. **Relationship-based** – building a mutual evolving relationship between parties;
3. **Reflect advancements in the decolonization of law & policy** – contribute to Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, the United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples, established agreements and governance arrangements and rights affirmed in s. 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*;
4. **Reflect good process** – embed procedural principles (i.e. openness, transparency, timeliness, accountability, consent-based) to ensure fairness and create conditions to achieve effective outcomes.
5. **Ensure good decision-making outcomes** – assessment framework is co-designed and co-implemented, based on value of both Indigenous and Western science and knowledge, sustainable, long term positive outcomes for all parties and monitored.

IAC members were appreciative of the succinct document and the way in which the overarching five main principles were presented. Members noted following edits and considerations for the Draft Principles document:

- Principles 2 (Collaboration Agreements should be Relationship-based)
 - Cultural revitalization vs. cultural resurgence – cultural resurgence was the preferred term.
 - Add language as important factor for developing relationships
- Principle 3 (Collaboration Agreements should reflect advancements in the Decolonization of law and Policy)
 - UNDRIP language is framed well and articulates meaning of free and informed consent
- Principle 4 (Collaboration Agreements should reflect good process)
 - Add language on credibility to first paragraph (to create conditions to achieve effective and credible outcomes...). This includes credibility for the Minister as well as Indigenous Peoples.
- The Agency would be interested in hearing specifically what the challenges are when working with proponents and how these agreements could address them.

Agenda item: Forward Work planning

The Committees Co-Chair sought feedback on the final draft response letter to the Agency's President. It was agreed co-chairs would add an additional paragraph reflecting challenges of legislated timelines. Co-Chairs discussed logistics for future meetings, noting the preference towards longer less frequent meetings. A monthly calendar of meetings and sub-committee meetings will be provided to members as well as a forward work plan (evergreen).

An Agency official walked through the Agency/IAC forward thinking placemat to inform planning for 2021-22. Several priority areas will continue next fiscal year (collaboration and Assessing Impacts on Rights). A sub-committee on the topic of Assessing Impacts on Rights will be discussed at the next meeting. The focus of the Sub-Committee will be best practices and guidance for proponents for early planning, building off of IAC's recent breakout session.

Members looked at parking lot items previously identified and suggested potentially re-visiting the following topics:

- IK and Western Science – Building on the joint work with the TAC, understanding the two knowledge systems
- Indigenous Participation - advice to communities on the IA process
- Assessment on Impacts to Rights – Métis and Inuit perspectives

An overview of two potential new priorities was provided for next year:

1. Reconciliation Framework/UN Declaration - Comprehensive Framework that speaks to how the IAC is pursuing Reconciliation in all its work and incorporating UNDRIP principles.
2. Guidance and tools in the consideration of IK in IA

Agenda item: Next steps

Members agreed to revisit the workplanning priorities at the next meeting in April.

The meeting ended with a closing prayer from an Indigenous Elder.

Indigenous Advisory Committee

Action Items from March 29

Secretariat Action Items:

- Prepare meeting summary for Members to review and finalize;
- Circulate IAC co-chair presentation from MINAC meeting.
- Send placeholders for all IAC meetings for 2021-22.

- Circulate examples of Reconciliation Frameworks in other federal Departments.

Members' Action-items:

- Review meeting summary;
- Review and provide additional input to the Collaboration –Sub-Committee on the deliverable “Principles to Inform Collaboration Agreements Between Indigenous Peoples and the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (April 14, 2021).
- Add paragraph to draft Response Letter on challenges of legislated timeline (to be completed by email, with Co-Chairs holding the pen).

Attendees

IAC Co-Chairs

- Sue Chiblow
- Kyle Vermette

IAC Committee Members

- Deana Sappier
- Paul Jones
- Jocelyn Gosselin
- Rachel Olson
- Angel Ransom
- Melody Lepine
- Suzie O’Bomsawin
- Stanley Oliver
- Elmer Gohstkeeper

Impact Assessment Agency

- Brent Parker
- Susan Winger
- Janice Zeitz
- Emily Fairbairn
- Alana Green
- Kayla Carman

Date modified:

2021-05-25