

# **Call to Action:**

A Resource Guide to Support  
Environmental Organizations  
in Decolonization Work

# Author

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## Acknowledgments

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# Project Description and Intentions

The colonization of the land we now call Canada requires a widespread decolonization effort in order to achieve a just society. Colonization created a complex path for Indigenous justice and autonomy that is not going to be solved by anyone individually – it needs to be at the center of everything in all fields of work and study and in all communities. Decolonization and reconciliation cannot be Indigenous issues; they need to be a focus for all peoples. The history of environmental conservation is closely connected to colonization (Indigenous Climate Action, 2021); the environmental sector therefore has a vital responsibility to challenge and deconstruct the systematic colonial structures that are still utilized today.

As a non-Indigenous person and an undergraduate student, I was initially hesitant to take on the task of developing a resource guide for decolonization. I did not know what the right thing to do was, and I did not feel qualified to be the one doing it; this discomfort was what motivated me to keep trying. I knew that I wanted to create something that encouraged greater action among non-Indigenous peoples without burdening Indigenous Peoples. There are existing resources and tools created by Indigenous knowledge holders, communities and individuals that provide insight into and support for decolonization work. I wanted to add to the body of resources without placing the work on Indigenous Peoples. When starting out, my initial plan was to learn about different initiatives and projects that non-Indigenous environmental organizations are leading to support Indigenous justice, equality and equity in Atlantic Canada. My goal was to inspire further action within the environmental field and to facilitate co-learning and knowledge-sharing. However, I quickly realized the limitations of this idea. Many of these valuable projects and initiatives are centered around the relationships built with a specific community. By looking solely at projects and initiatives, I was overlooking the most important element of decolonization: the relationships.

I attempted to quantify solutions to a complex issue whereby there is no individual solution that works for every context. After speaking with a handful of individuals currently working for a diverse group of non-Indigenous environmental organizations, I observed an emphasis on the internal work organizations are doing and how it both

influenced and motivated their external work to be possible. Although there is value in learning about what others are doing, I want to center this paper on the learning that needs to be in place to support and enable successful and informed action towards reconciliation.

## What is this project?

- **A reminder that everyone has the responsibility to fight for Indigenous autonomy, justice and equity.** This work looks different for every individual, organization and sector. Additionally, within this responsibility, there is a need to learn about what this work looks like in your context. Although this may feel daunting, there is a diverse array of resources and tools available to support this process. It is a learning process, and during the process there may be mistakes, discomfort or a lack of success. However, this is a natural part of the process of decolonization. By taking informed actions we are acknowledging and living up to our responsibilities.
- **A document that highlights some of the resources and tools created by experts and knowledge holders, with a focus on Indigenous-created sources.** This compilation of useful reports, essays and additional tools is available to aid in the learning process as well as to encourage the continuation of self-directed study to broaden your understanding of the entire environmental sector. This document does not provide answers; it does, however, point you in the direction of places whereby you can learn.
- **A recognition that environmentalists, especially those working with land, have a role in reconciliation that is different from others.** When looking at the history of environmentalism and conservation in Canada, their role in perpetuating colonial systems needs to be at the forefront.
- **An advocate for earning and sustaining allyship, beyond tokenism and statements without commitment.** A guiding intention in developing this project was to support Indigenous autonomy without putting the burden solely on Indigenous Peoples to do this work. As an environmental community, we can strengthen allyship by putting intentions into action and integrating Indigenous autonomy into all aspects of our work.

The writing and creation of this project took place across Turtle Island on the unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq Peoples, Wolastoqiyik Peoples, Coast Salish Peoples and the traditional territory of the Seminole Peoples. Turtle Island is “the name the Lenape, Iroquois, Anishnaabe, and other Woodland Nations gave to North America. The name comes from a story about Sky Woman. Many Indigenous people, Indigenous rights activists, and environmental activists now use the term for North America” (Wilson, 2014). Turtle Island was occupied and cared for by Indigenous Peoples for many thousands of years. Meaningful acknowledgment of the land that each of us reside on and the history of why that is, is an important step in the decolonization process. The acknowledgment that this land is still Indigenous land needs to go beyond a statement and into action.

### **Content Warning:** Residential Schools

This document contains content that could be triggering. As these issues are addressed, well-being and mental health need to be cared for. Take the time to reflect on how you are feeling and if you need support please know that there are resources available for you. The following phone numbers are a few of the supports you can reach from anywhere across Canada.

- The Indian Residential School Survivors Society toll-free number: **+1 (800) 721-0066** or 24-hour Crisis Line **+1 (866) 925-4419**.
- The Hope for Wellness Help's 24-hour Line: **+1 (855) 242-3310**.
- The Canadian Suicide Prevention Service 24-hour Crisis Line: **+1 (833) 456-4566**.

# History of Conservation in Canada

Modern environmentalism is heavily rooted in western scientific and Eurocentric ways of knowing (Slocombe, 1984). These western roots tend to characterize humans as separate from the environment within which they live. Canada's national parks are born from this concept of separation and the idea that conservation can only exist where humans do not. With the goal of preserving the wilderness, "many Indigenous communities were forcibly displaced within the newly-established park boundaries" (Light & Phillips, 2019, p. 2).

*"This separation of Indigenous Peoples from their natural environments was a crucial component of colonization, one that persists in contemporary conservation strategies, with devastating consequences for Indigenous Peoples and the environment" (Domínguez & Luoma, 2020, p. 1).*

Indigenous perspectives offer contrasting views on the relationship between humans and the environment. Although there is no consensus surrounding the definition of Traditional Ecological Knowledges (TEK), or if TEK can be defined, there is a shared understanding across TEK that humans and nature are fundamentally interconnected (McGregor, 2004). As Squamish and Duwamish Chief Seattle said in 1854, "Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect" (Adams, 2018, p. xi). This interconnectedness between humans and nature highlights how vital land is to the foundation of Indigenous culture, knowledge, spirituality, history and far more than can be summed up into words.

These opposing views on the relationship between humans and land are summarized by scholars Aikenhead and Ogawa: "Indigenous peoples' notion of land-as-identity differs dramatically from the Eurocentric notion of land-as-a-commodity to be bought, depleted, and sold" (2007, p. 560). While environmentalists are against the depletion of resources, the Eurocentric ways in which land is valued builds the system in which conservation was formed. It is common to attribute the buying, depletion and selling of land to colonization, however, it is less common to talk about the preservation and conservation of land in the context of colonization.

Although there can be overlapping interests, “[t]he ultimate goals of [I]ndigenous activists - which tend to include political empowerment, self-determination, environmental health, and economic development in addition to environmental protection - often differ dramatically from the wildlands preservation orientation of most mainstream environmentalist” (Willow, 2012, p. 373). The preservation foundation of environmentalism can be explored through a commonly used conservation practice called fortress conservation.

The concept of fortress conservation, also known as colonial conservation (Domínguez & Luoma, 2020), is a method that is used in much of Canadian conservation. This method, as identified by Robbins, “is a conservation model based on the belief that biodiversity protection is best achieved by creating protected areas where ecosystems can function in isolation from human disturbance” (2007). In the context of rapidly industrializing and developing societies, this model intuitively made some sense as a counter to the widespread and intensive resource exploitation that was occurring. However, this model tends to lump all resource use under the same umbrella, whether sustainable or not, traditional or otherwise. As such, indigenous occupants and land users were often forcibly displaced, from newly created parks.

## We Are Still Here: National Parks, Colonial Dispossession, and Indigenous Resilience

Poster by Nancy Kimberley Phillips Essay by Wacey Little Light, 2019



“Many Canadians see the country’s system of national parks as a point of pride and a commendable effort to conserve and protect ‘pristine’ wilderness for the enjoyment of future generations. This poster highlights a different perspective: many Indigenous peoples experience the “conservation” of Canada’s national parks as a continuation of the violent process of settler colonialism” (p. 2).

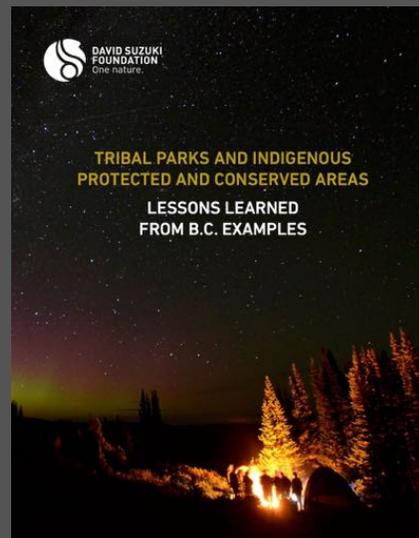
Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, the UN's Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples from 2014 to 2020 in regard to fortress conservation declared:

*"This model favoured by governments for over a century ignores the growing body of evidence that forests thrive when Indigenous Peoples remain on their customary lands and have legally recognised rights to manage and protect them" (Hill, 2018).*

With the increase of scientific evidence supporting the need for an alternative approach to land management that centres Indigenous rights, there is a growing push for Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) and Indigenous-led conservation. IPCAs "are a model for land management in Canada that supports both ecosystems and human use of the land. These lands are managed by the Indigenous communities on whose traditional territory the protected areas are established, in ways that are culturally appropriate and sustainable. IPCA designations link Indigenous communities to the land through active practices of Indigenous ways of life" (David Suzuki Foundation, 2018, p. 7).

**Cornered by Protected Areas:** Replacing 'Fortress' Conservation with Rights-based Approaches Helps Bring Justice for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, Reduces Conflict, and Enables Cost-effective Conservation and Climate Action  
*A report by Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, et al., 2018*

**Tribal Parks and Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas**  
*A report by the David Suzuki Foundation, 2018*



This motivation for change, although vital, has been caused by the introduction of western scientific findings. The hierarchy of knowledge that was introduced with colonization, directly values western knowledge over Indigenous knowledges. With this hierarchy, Canadian society views the quantitative aspect of environmental science with greater value and legitimacy than Indigenous ways of knowing (King, 2019). Therefore,

acknowledging the criticisms of conservation practices in Canada solely from a western scientific lens, the hierarchical structure of knowledge is left uncriticized. In response to the knowledge hierarchy created by colonization, Grand Chief Jerry Daniels stated: "What people need to understand is that Indigenous knowledge is science as well. It is through trial and error that we have developed our knowledge. And it is for that reason that Indigenous Peoples need to be a part of the conversation" (Monkman, 2019).

### **Definition of the term "settler"**

"It is not enough to simply state that Settler people are "non-Indigenous," as is often done; this ignores the complexity of Settler society and culture itself and normalizes non-Indigenous society, preventing much useful analysis. Settler people in this context include most peoples who occupy lands previously stolen or in the process of being taken from their Indigenous inhabitants or who are otherwise members of the 'Settler society,' which is founded on co-opted lands and resources" (Barker, 2009, p. 328).

The hierarchy of knowledge is an expression of the all-encompassing oppression, abuse and exploitation against Indigenous Peoples. Land was at the center of colonization. Whether that land was for depletion of resources or conservation, the land was stolen from Indigenous Peoples and profited off of by settlers. Indigenous land was additionally used for Residential Schools and the associated cultural genocide (Amir, 2018). The Church-led and government supported Residential School system, which had the goal of assimilation and acculturation through exploitation and dominance (Woolford & Benvenuto, 2015), created a standard of injustice for Indigenous Peoples.

When addressing and learning about the impacts of colonization on Indigenous Communities and Canadian society, it is vital to acknowledge and learn about Residential Schools. Abuse on every level – sexual, physical and psychological – was engineered by the settler government and the Church with the aim of cultural destruction. This abuse took the form of experimentation on the children, exploitation of labour and tragic individual violations caused by the people in power. The introduction of the Indian Act of 1876 segregated Indigenous Peoples from Canadian settlers on a legal level (Milloy, 2008). Indigenous peoples were prohibited from freedom of movement, ownership of land, speech, naming, choice of partner and accessibility of basic needs, all in order to gain complete paternalistic control of every

aspect of Indigenous life. The Indian Act has been amended over time, however, the systems and society developed by the Canadian government, created economic dependency and lifelong challenges for Residential School survivors and all Indigenous Peoples (Wilson, 2014).

### **The Indian Act Timeline**

*An infographic created by the Native Women's Association of Canada, 2018*

"The Indian Act was created to control and assimilate Indigenous Peoples and their communities. Throughout history, a number of shocking and discriminatory measures have been in place."

The colonial pursuit of land, resources and power has left long-lasting impacts that include intergenerational trauma and deep-rooted systemic inequalities (Wilk et al., 2017). Canada's land is directly tied to these atrocities against Indigenous populations, and it is time that this history is put at the forefront of conservation.

### **Canada, Aboriginal Peoples, and Residential Schools: They Came for the Children**

*A Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Report, 2012*

"For over a century, generations of Aboriginal children were separated from their parents and raised in overcrowded, underfunded, and often unhealthy residential schools across Canada. They were commonly denied the right to speak their language and told their cultural beliefs were sinful. Some students did not see their parents for years. Others—the victims of scandalously high death rates—never made it back home. Even by the standards of the day, discipline often was excessive. Lack of supervision left students prey to sexual predators. To put it simply: the needs of tens of thousands of Aboriginal children were neglected routinely. Far too many children were abused far too often" (p. 1).

### **Stolen Children**

*A short documentary shared by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2008*

"Stolen Children explores the impact of residential schools on former students and their children and grandchildren. Survivors share their harrowing experiences and discuss the legacy of fear, abuse and suicide being passed down from generation to generation."

# Environmental Justice

Justice is at the center of the environmental sector's work. "Environmental justice describes the strategies or remedies for addressing environmental racism and envisions what is achievable when the condition is treated through a variety of targeted policies" (Waldron, 2020, p. 9). This definition addresses the interconnection of environmental work and social justice. However, environmental work does not always equate to the definition of environmental justice.

## **Definition of environmental racism**

Environmental racism refers to any policy, practice or directive that differentially affects or disadvantages (whether intended or unintended) individuals, groups or communities based on race or colour (Bullard, 2004, p. iii).

## **Environmental Racism in Canada**

*A Report Prepared for the Canadian Commission for UNESCO By Ingrid Waldron, 2020*

*"Limitations of the environmental justice lens in Canada include the tendency to conflate race and class, the focus on pollutants rather than the effects of social and environmental stressors on health, and the lack of consideration of traditional ecological knowledge in environmental decision-making. A sound environmental justice framework should be based on procedural justice, geographic justice, and social justice" (Waldron, 2020, p. 9).*

Efforts from the environmental sector addressing the climate crisis, when paired with Indigenous justice advocacy and action, enable both the acknowledgment of colonial history as well as the movement towards a more equitable society. Environmentalist and Indigenous groups have worked together for various causes whereby both interests do align. With the overlapping aims for environmental protection, there have been successful collaborations for ecosystem protection and management across Canada. However, environmental interests need to encompass Indigenous justice on a greater scale. Without the recognition that "Slowing climate change can only happen through ensuring that Indigenous Peoples remain the primary caretakers of the land" (Herteis, 2021), we are doing our planet, environment and all Peoples a great disservice. Indigenous autonomy can both support the environment and promote reconciliation.

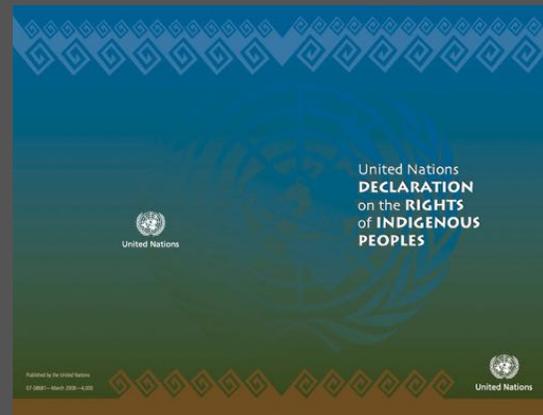
It is valuable to acknowledge a continuous assumption of this document: that all Indigenous interests align. However, it is important to acknowledge that, like any community, Indigenous Nations are not homogenous groups with the same interests. Nevertheless, there is a shared value placed on land and the environment across nations (Willow, 2012). Alongside the diversity within Indigenous Nations, it is vital to recognize that colonization has immensely impacted Indigenous communities.

Going forward, there needs to be an understanding of how conservation has continuously oppressed Indigenous Peoples on cultural, social, political and economic levels. With this understanding, relationships and partnerships can be built in each individual context with the supporting foundation for systematic change. “The places Canada has made into parks are filled with our stories—every mountain, every valley has a name and a history for Indigenous Peoples” (Jago, 2017) and it is time that the

environmental sector confronts its colonial roots. The intersectionality of environmental work with Indigenous autonomy, highlights that Indigenous justice is environmental justice. This connection only increases the responsibility the environmental sector has to become informed about the history and the continual impacts of colonization and take action in every capacity possible. The continual fight for the rights and autonomy of Indigenous peoples is environmental work. Anti-racism work is environmental work.

## **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

*A United Nations published report, 2008*



## **Groundworkforchange.org**

*An informational volunteer-based website, n.d.*

“Groundworkforchange.org is here to gather information to help non-Indigenous/settler peoples grow relationships with Indigenous peoples that are rooted in solidarity and justice. The site is meant to support people who are asking questions and looking to learn more in ways that are respectful of, and useful to, Indigenous Peoples.”

# Internal Work and Relationships

Partnerships are based on the relationships formed by individuals, established by trust and communication (John Snow Inc., 2012). In partnerships between non-Indigenous settler peoples and Indigenous Peoples, the misuse of trust, beginning with colonization, has created complexities when attempting to establish new relationships (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). “[A] trusting relationship cannot be formed if non-Indigenous individuals do not respect and acknowledge Indigenous culture and practices” (Relationship Building with First Nations and Public Health Research Team, 2017, p. 16). This respect starts with internal education, dialogue and reflection, both personally and within the workplace.

## **Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action** 2015

This history and its policies of cultural genocide and assimilation have left deep scars on the lives of many Aboriginal people, on Aboriginal communities, as well as on Canadian society, and have deeply damaged the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples” (p. 19).

Reflection and understanding supports trust to an even greater extent when paired with action. However, “[A]s small as the moments of trust can be, those are the moments of betrayal as well. To choose to not connect when the opportunity is there is a betrayal” (Brown, 2015). Although this quote refers to trust in general, it can be applied to the role of inaction. Trust can be broken by settler people not taking the time, creating the space and doing the internal work. Issues Indigenous Peoples

face cannot be ignored by settlers. Throughout each individual internal learning process, we need to be asking ourselves difficult questions in order to ensure we are holding ourselves accountable. Personal reflection is an essential piece of this process, challenging the systems and mindsets that may have subconsciously been a part of settler life is likely going to be emotionally arduous. Reading, learning, thinking, writing, discussing and other forms of reflection, is a requirement to understand the dramatic inequalities that colonization created in Canada.

## The Wabanaki Collection

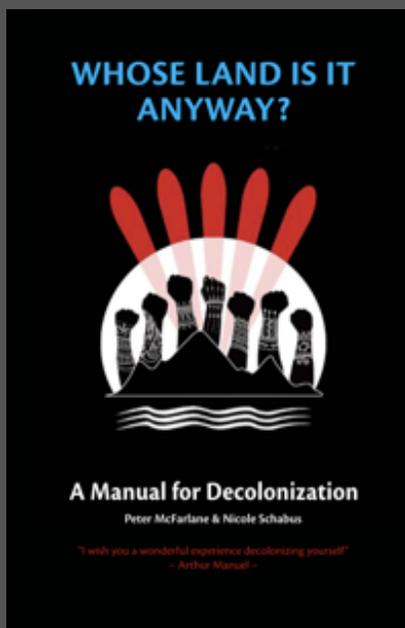
*A collection of resources relating to Wabanaki worldviews, including history, culture, language and education by the Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Centre, 2020*

## Decolonizing Conservation: A Reading List

*Resource collection, with a focus on academic articles, compiled and managed by Sara Cannon, 2019*

## Whose Land is it Anyway?

*A Manual for Decolonization, Edited by Peter McFarlane and Nicole Schabus, 2017*



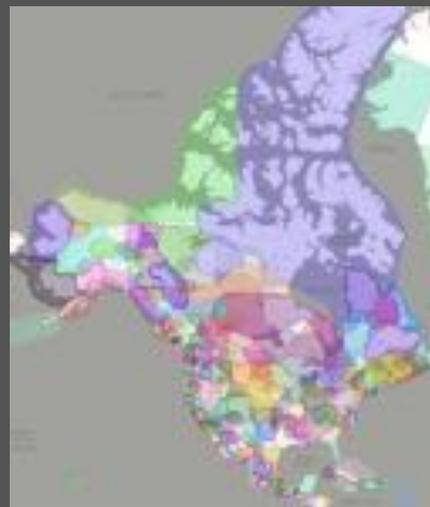
“[This handbook] brings together some of the most important Indigenous academics, activists and allies to explore the impacts of colonization on Indigenous peoples and to look at paths toward decolonization that can right those wrongs and may, some day, lead us toward true reconciliation” (p. 8).

## Canadian History Books by Indigenous Authors

*A reading list compiled by Raven Reads: An Indigenous and women company, 2018*

## Whose Land

*A “web-based app that uses GIS technology to assist users in identifying Indigenous Nations, territories, and Indigenous communities across Canada”.*



## Indigenous Canada

*An online course offered by the University of Alberta, n.d.*

“Indigenous Canada is a 12-lesson Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) from the Faculty of Native Studies that explores Indigenous histories and contemporary issues in Canada. From an Indigenous perspective, this course explores key issues facing Indigenous peoples today from a historical and critical perspective highlighting national and local Indigenous-settler relations.” The course is free, with an optional fee for certification.

In the environmental sector, we need to be centering trust, relationships, and all of the vital work that enables successful partnerships. In theory, this may seem obvious, however, there are many barriers. “The biggest barrier is that we are working within a provincial system of a colonial government. Much of non-profit funding is coming from a colonial source, and they have the power to decide which projects or groups receive the funding” (Jazwicki, 2021). Additionally, these funding sources often influence project timelines and deliverables, which can challenge an organization’s priorities. This internal work may not be visible to the public and cannot be externally validated. Building trust cannot be put on a timeline, looks different for everyone and is ongoing. A priority must be: “Centering relationships – relationships are more important than your timelines” (Bull, 2021). It is not a quantifiable process; however, it is a critical one.

Indigenous consultation is one aspect of environmental work that needs to be incorporated both by those working in the sector and by those governing the funding sources. It should be an automatically acknowledged part of project processes. Furthermore, consultation should be accurately compensated. Indigenous knowledge, knowledge holders and experts need to be treated the same as all consultants brought in to work on environmental projects. There needs to be more than honorariums to hear Indigenous perspectives, stories and advice. Internal mindsets surrounding project costs need to accommodate compensation for consultation. This internal shift will help challenge the greater priorities of funding sources. It cannot be just up to Indigenous Peoples to break down the systematic roots of colonization, it is the responsibility of all peoples to take action.

# Land back: Decolonizing our Structures

“Canada is built on the dispossession of Indigenous Lands” (David Suzuki Foundation, 2021). Evelyn Korkmaz, St. Anne’s Residential School Survivor stated: “Canada’s actions need to match their words” (Jewell & Mosby, 2020, p. 3). With increasing conversations, statements, goals and commitment to reconciliation and decolonization, there needs to be action. However, like Evelyn Korkmaz identified, there is a huge discrepancy between what is being said and what is being done. The land back movement proposes tangible outcomes that are based on action.

*“Decolonization brings about the repatriation of Indigenous land and life; it is not a metaphor for other things we want to do to improve our societies and schools” (Tuck & Yang, 2012).*

There needs to be dramatic changes to our systems. “Systems of land governance under our current provincial and federal governments not only exclude Indigenous Peoples from decision-making tables where choices about land use are made, they also fail to set limits for industrial activities and development, driving wildlife decline and ecosystem degradation.” (David Suzuki Foundation, 2021). The needed changes have been identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Calls to Action. Although the Truth and

## What is Land Back?

*The David Suzuki Foundation’s ‘What is Land Back?’ webpage, 2021*

“According to journalist and Canada Council for the Arts chair Jesse Wentz, Land Back is ‘about the decision-making power. It’s about self-determination for our Peoples here that should include some access to the territories and resources in a more equitable fashion, and for us to have control over how that actually looks”

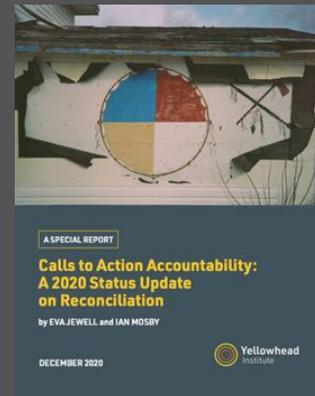
This webpage includes a comprehensive explanation of the Land Back movement as well as a short documentary series ‘Land Governance’. It was created “to understand how re-establishing Indigenous governance models can support better land-use” and “promote conversations about land governance in Canada”. The three videos look at the past, present and future through the following titles: Canada’s colonial history, Current crisis and rise of Land Back and Honouring rights and responsibilities.

Reconciliation Commission has identified and documented the needed actions and the Canadian government agreed, “that commitment has not materialized” (Jewell & Mosby, 2020, p. 2),

## **Calls to Action Accountability: A 2020 Status Update on Reconciliation**

*A Yellowhead Institute report, 2020*

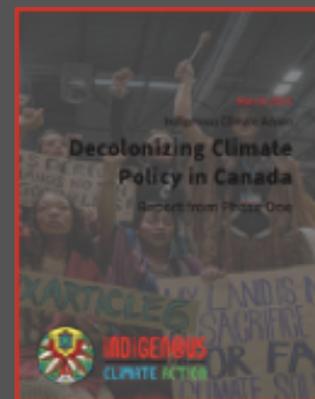
“Governments committed to work with provincial, territorial, and municipal counterparts to, ‘fully implement the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.’ But five years later, that commitment has not materialized. In 2020, a tumultuous year for many reasons, our analysis reveals that just 8 Calls to Action have been implemented, this is down from 9 in 2019.” (p. 2)



## **Decolonizing Climate Policy in Canada**

*A report by Indigenous Climate Action, 2021*

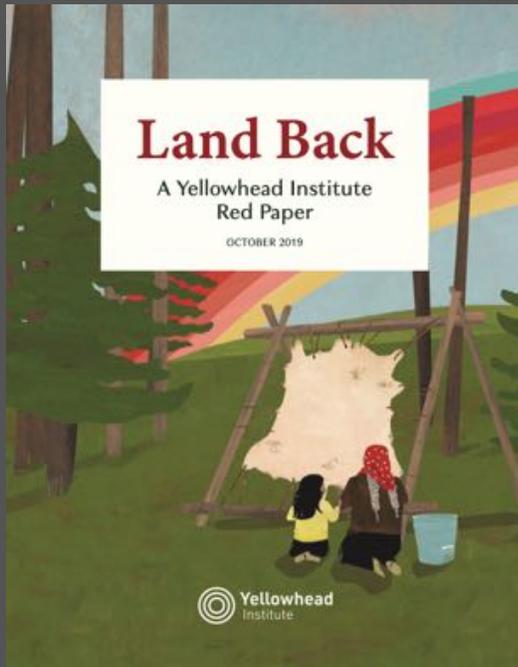
“To effectively address climate change, policies and solutions need to take aim at the ongoing drivers and root causes of the crisis and should center the voices, needs and leadership of the people most impacted by the crisis” (p. 5).



“To envision a better future, we must explore and acknowledge our collective histories and ask ourselves how does this future build on the rights and responsibilities of Indigenous Peoples and their longstanding governance of their territories?” (David Suzuki Foundation, 2021). The environmental sector has the opportunity to put land back into practice. As organizations that hold land, there is a responsibility and opportunity to reunite Indigenous stewards with the land. The following resources identify the need and power behind land back, institution back, and cash back. The autonomy that was brutally taken away from Indigenous people from colonization needs to be restored. Settler Canadians have and continue to benefit from the wealth that was created through the theft of resources and land.

## Land Back

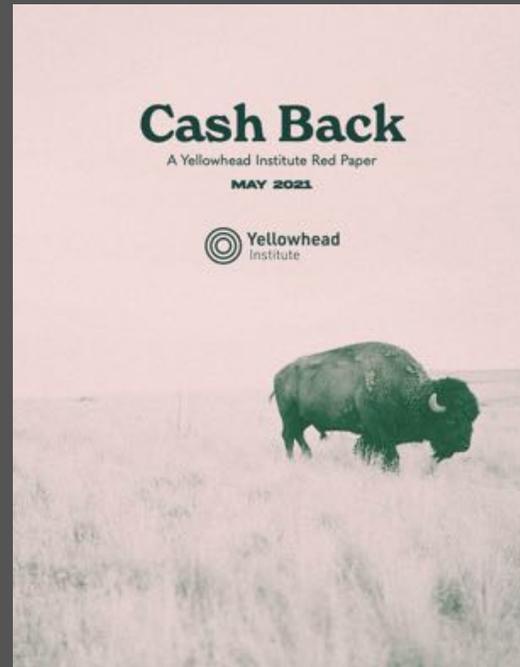
*A Yellowhead Institute Red Paper, 2019*



“Our report, ‘Land Back,’ breaks down the current status of land dispossession in Canada, focusing on alienation through resource extraction. We examine various forms of redress and recognition by governments and industry to incentivize Indigenous participation in resource development, while pointing to the gaps in these models. Finally, we consider meaningful Indigenous economies outside of federal and provincial policies and legislation to foreground examples of land reclamation. This report is ultimately about Indigenous consent” (p. 2).

## Cash Back

*A Yellowhead Institute Red Paper, 2021*



“This report is about the value of Indigenous lands. Picking up from Land Back, the first Red Paper by Yellowhead about the project of land reclamation, Cash Back looks at how the dispossession of Indigenous lands created a dependency on the state due to the loss of economic livelihood. Cash Back is about restitution from the perspective of stolen wealth” (p. 5).

### **Community Tools and Resources**

(Yellowhead Institute, n.d.)

Additional resources and tools about Land Back and Cash Back can be found [here](#).

# Earning and Sustaining Allyship

As people and organizations address systematic decolonization, both within the environmental sector and in Canada as a whole, allyship becomes a part of the process. When I spoke with Tzomi Jazwicky, they brought up the idea of allyship that is something that needed to be earned, cannot be self-acknowledged and can be lost at any point in time (2021). “If everyone was trying to earn the title of an ally, the world would be a much better place” (Jazwicky, 2021). This notion of earning and sustaining allyship brings Indigenous rights, autonomy and current inequalities the surface in all settings. Indigenous issues cannot be isolated from others. The interconnectedness of justice highlights the inability to look a one sole issue at a time. By focusing on the earning and sustaining piece of allyship, there is an applied accountability required. “Being in solidarity is something we can strive for, but in the end, it is the choice of those we are attempting to ally ourselves to as to whether they trust us enough to call us an ally” (Utt & Allen, 2019).

## Indigenous Ally Toolkit

*Created by the Montreal Indigenous Community Strategy Network, 2019*

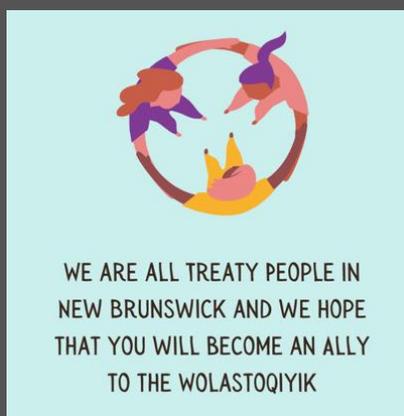


## How to Be an Ally of Indigenous-led Conservation

*An informative website by Land Needs Guardians, n.d.*

## Ally Toolkit

*Created by the Wolastoqey Nation of New Brunswick, 2021*



## Equity Toolkit: Inclusive Teaching and Learning

*Engaging in Ongoing Self-Inquiry created by Jamie Utt and Brenda J. Allen*

# Conclusion

This resource guide is not meant to provide you a clear path of what to do, however, I hope that it highlights opportunities in your context for valuable changes. This reminder that everyone has the responsibility to fight for Indigenous autonomy, justice and equity, showcases that no one is alone in this fight. The connections and relationships built through informed action are mutually beneficial for both Indigenous justice and the fight against the climate crisis. The resources and tools created by experts and knowledge holders, especially Indigenous-created sources, are there to help navigate through reconciliation process. As environmentalists, especially those working with land, we have a role in reconciliation that is different to others. This unique responsibility provides opportunity for earning and sustaining allyship, beyond tokenism and statements without commitment. Decolonization work and reconciliation is not a process that has an end date. Informed action for justice, in a process that needs to be continuously integrated into all aspects of work in every sector. My hope is that this document can support you in determining how you can integrate Indigenous autonomy, justice and equity in your surrounding communities and inspire you to transform those ideas into informed actions.

# Recognition

Thank you to Community Forests International for supporting the undertaking of this project. I have felt personally inspired and supported by each and every one of you. I especially want to thank Daimen Hardie for taking the time to support me in the project development process and the emotionally challenging journey in figuring out what I could do to support Indigenous justice.

I would like to recognize Margaret and Patrick Augustine for inspiring the internal reflection that motivated this project. Thank you both for taking the time to share your stories, kindness and knowledge with me. It was an honour to learn from you both. I additionally would like to thank Bradley Walters for the advice, feedback and academic supervision in the creation of this document. Furthermore, I would like to thank everyone that I interviewed for your time, energy and knowledge. This project has been a learning experience for me, and it is truly because of all you, thank you for giving me this opportunity.

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# The Complete List of Resources

- **Ally Toolkit** (Wolastoqey Nation of New Brunswick, 2021)
- **Calls to Action Accountability: A 2020 Status Update on Reconciliation** (Jewell & Mosby, 2020)
- **Canada, Aboriginal Peoples, and Residential Schools: They Came for the Children** (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2012)
- **Canadian History Books by Indigenous Authors** (Raven Reads, 2018)
- **Cash Back** (Pasternak, et al., 2021)
- **Community Tools and Resources** (Yellowhead Institute, n.d.)
- **Cornered by Protected Areas** (Tauli-Corpuz, et al., 2018)
- **Decolonizing Climate Policy in Canada** (Indigenous Climate Action, 2021)
- **Decolonizing Conservation: A Reading List** (Cannon, 2019)
- **Environmental Racism in Canada** (Waldron, 2020)
- **Equity Toolkit: Inclusive Teaching and Learning** (Utt & Allen, 2019)
- **Groundworkforchange.org** (Groundworkforchange.org, n.d.)
- **How to Be an Ally of Indigenous-led Conservation** (Land Needs Guardians, n.d.)
- **Indigenous Ally Toolkit** (Swiftwolfe & Shaw, 2019)
- **Indigenous Canada** (The University of Alberta, n.d.)
- **Land Back** (Pasternak, et al., 2019)
- **Stolen Children** (2008)
- **The Indian Act Timeline** (Native Women's Association of Canada, 2018)
- **The Wabanaki Collection** (Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Centre, 2020)
- **Tribal Parks and Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas** (David Suzuki Foundation, 2018)
- **Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action** (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015)
- **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** (United Nations, 2007)
- **We Are Still Here: National Parks, Colonial Dispossession, and Indigenous Resilience** (Light & Phillips, 2019)
- **What is Land Back?** (David Suzuki Foundation, 2021)
- **Whose Land** (Whose Land, n.d.)
- **Whose Land is it Anyway? A Manual for Decolonization** (McFarlane & Schabus, 2017)

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