



BRITISH COLUMBIA  
ASSEMBLY OF  
FIRST NATIONS

1004 Landooz Rd.  
Prince George, BC  
V2K 5S3

Ph: 778-945-9910  
Fx: 778-945-9916



FIRST  
NATIONS  
SUMMIT

1200-100 Park Royal South  
West Vancouver, BC  
V7T 1A2

Ph: 604-926-9903  
Fx: 604-926-9923  
Toll Free: 866-990-9939



UNION OF  
BRITISH COLUMBIA  
INDIAN CHIEFS

401 - 312 Main Street  
Vancouver, BC  
V6A 2T2

Ph: 604-684-0231  
Fx: 604-684-5726

# Climate Change and the Right to Self-Determination: Political Advocacy in British Columbia

Patricia Roja Caro, BC AFN

Josh Kioke, UBCIC

Kukpi7 Judy Wilson, Secretary-Treasurer of UBCIC

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# Acknowledgements

- Ta'an Kwäch'än Council & Kwanlin Dün First Nation
- Assembly of First Nations
- Gathered leaders, experts, and delegates

# Purpose of Presentation

- Overview of BC-FNLC Technical Working Group on Climate Change
- Advancing the development of a First Nations Climate Change Strategy
- Implementation of the *UN Declaration* in climate change actions

# Background

- There are 203 diverse First Nations in BC, most living on unceded territories.



# Background

- **First Nations Leadership Council:**



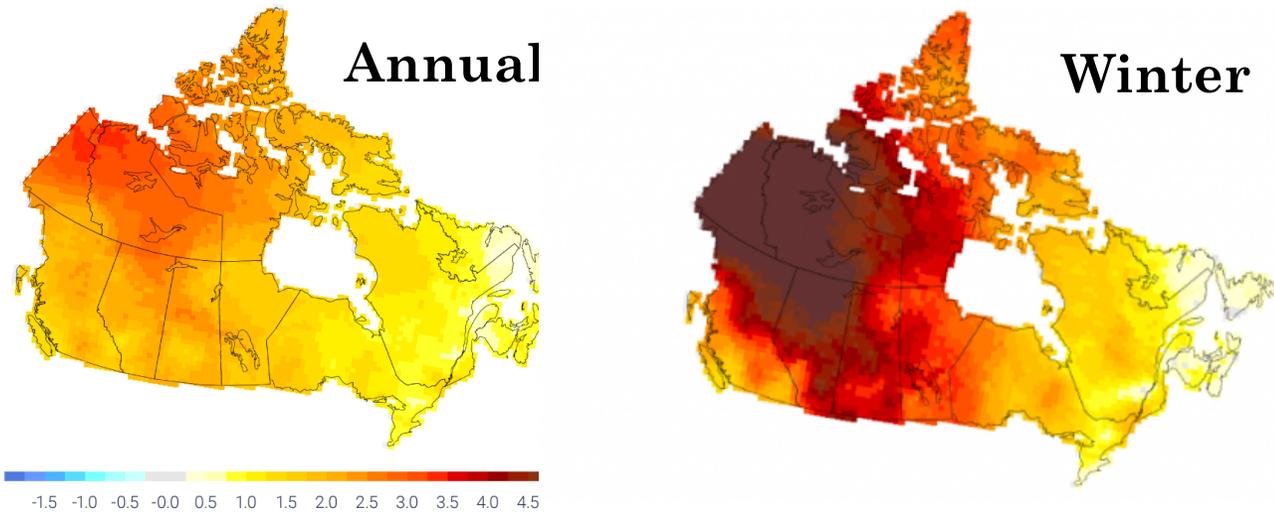
Since 2005, this group works together to develop coordinated approaches to issues relevant to First Nations communities throughout the province, such as **CLIMATE CHANGE**

The FNLC is not an Aboriginal Title and Rights or Treaty Rights holder and cannot engage in processes to establish and provide free, prior and informed consent on behalf of individual First Nations.

# Background Warming in Canada and BC

Canada has warmed double the magnitude than the rest of the globe, and Northern Canada is warming about three times. In the north of BC, the average temperature increased between 3.0 to 3.8°C in winter.

## Canada

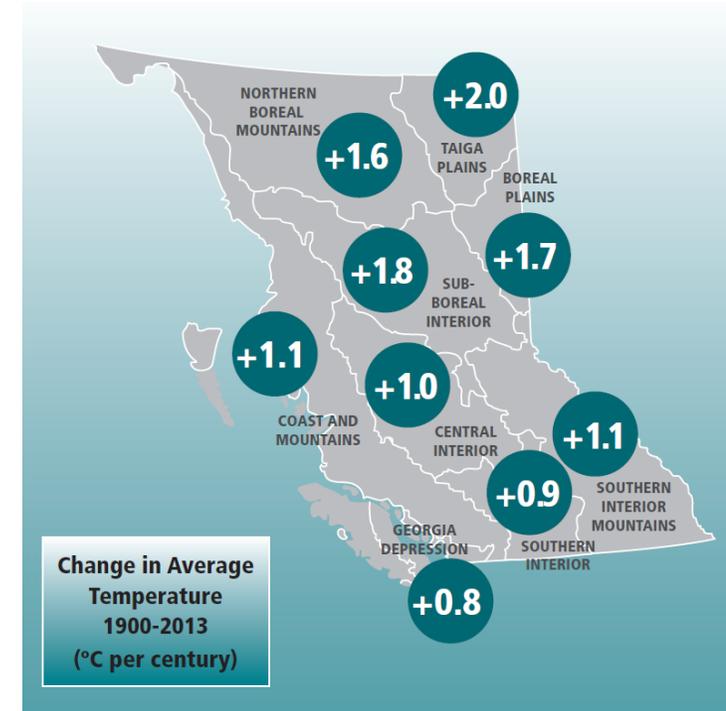


Annual average temperature increased by 1.7°C (1948 -2016)

Winter average temperature increased by 3.3°C

Source: Canada's Changing Climate Report (2019)

## British Columbia

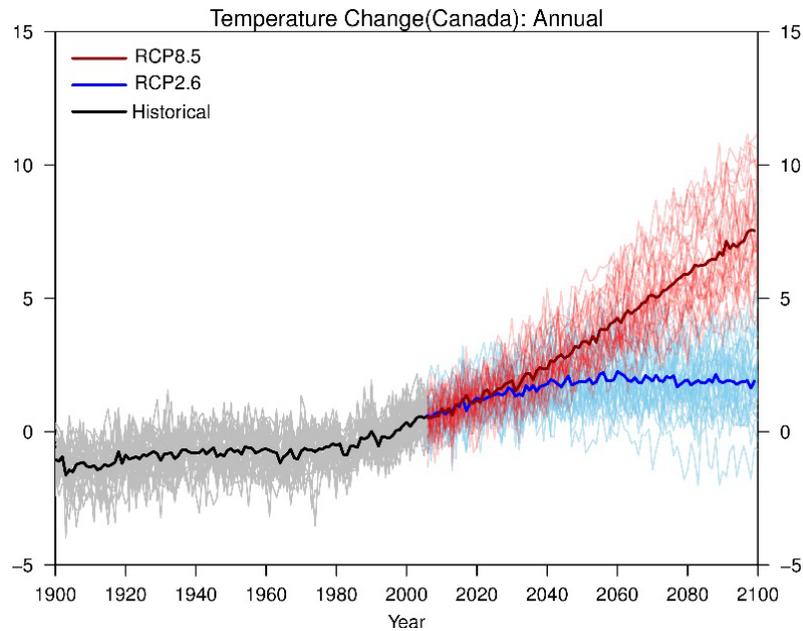


Annual average temperature increased by 1.4°C (1900 – 2013). In Winter is 2.2°C.

Source: Ministry of Environment (2016). Indicators of climate change for British Columbia

# Background

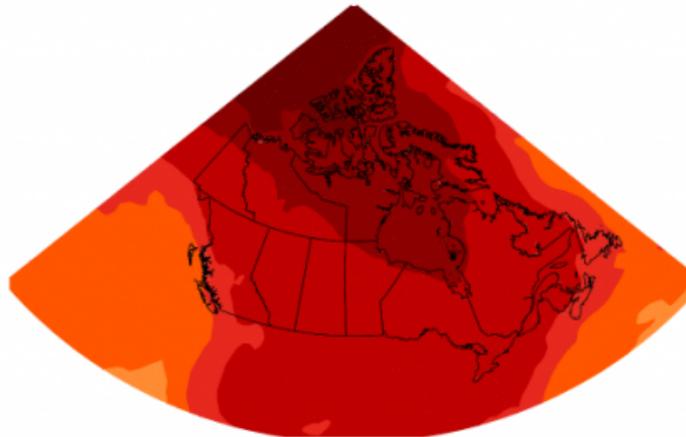
Canada's climate will warm further in the future, driven by human influence



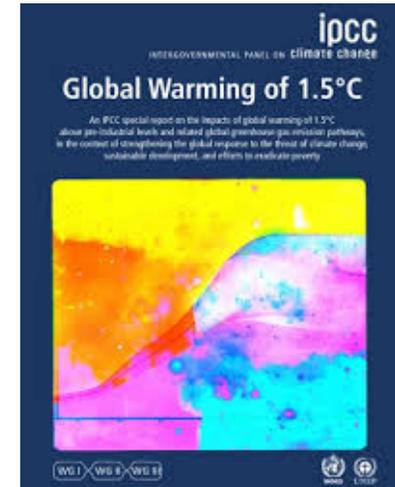
**Low emissions scenery:**  
2°C is projected by mid-century, with temperatures steady after that

Source: Canada's Changing Climate Report (2019)

Temperature change RCP8.5 (2081-2100)  
Annual



**High emission scenario:**  
temperature increases will continue, reaching more than 6°C by late century



Maintaining the global temperature increase below 1.5°C is vital for a safe and sustainable world

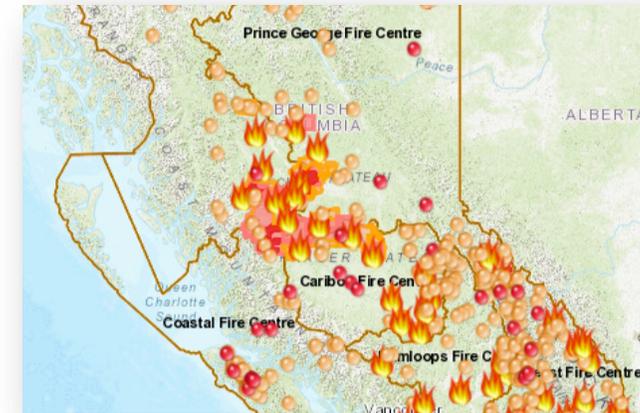
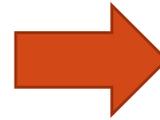
**Future warming in Canada depends directly on global emissions**

# Background

## Effects of the warming climate

- more extreme heat,
- less extreme cold,
- longer growing seasons,
- shorter snow and ice cover seasons,
- earlier spring peak streamflow,
- thinning glaciers,
- thawing permafrost and rising sea level, etc.

intensify



# Background

- CleanBC released December 2018: vision for a low-carbon economy with greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets of **40% by 2030, 60% by 2040 and 80% by 2050**
- The Province **did not meaningfully include Indigenous Peoples in the development of CleanBC**, but the plan does make commitments to “work in collaboration with Indigenous people to seize new clean economic opportunities and help communities adapt to the impacts of climate change”

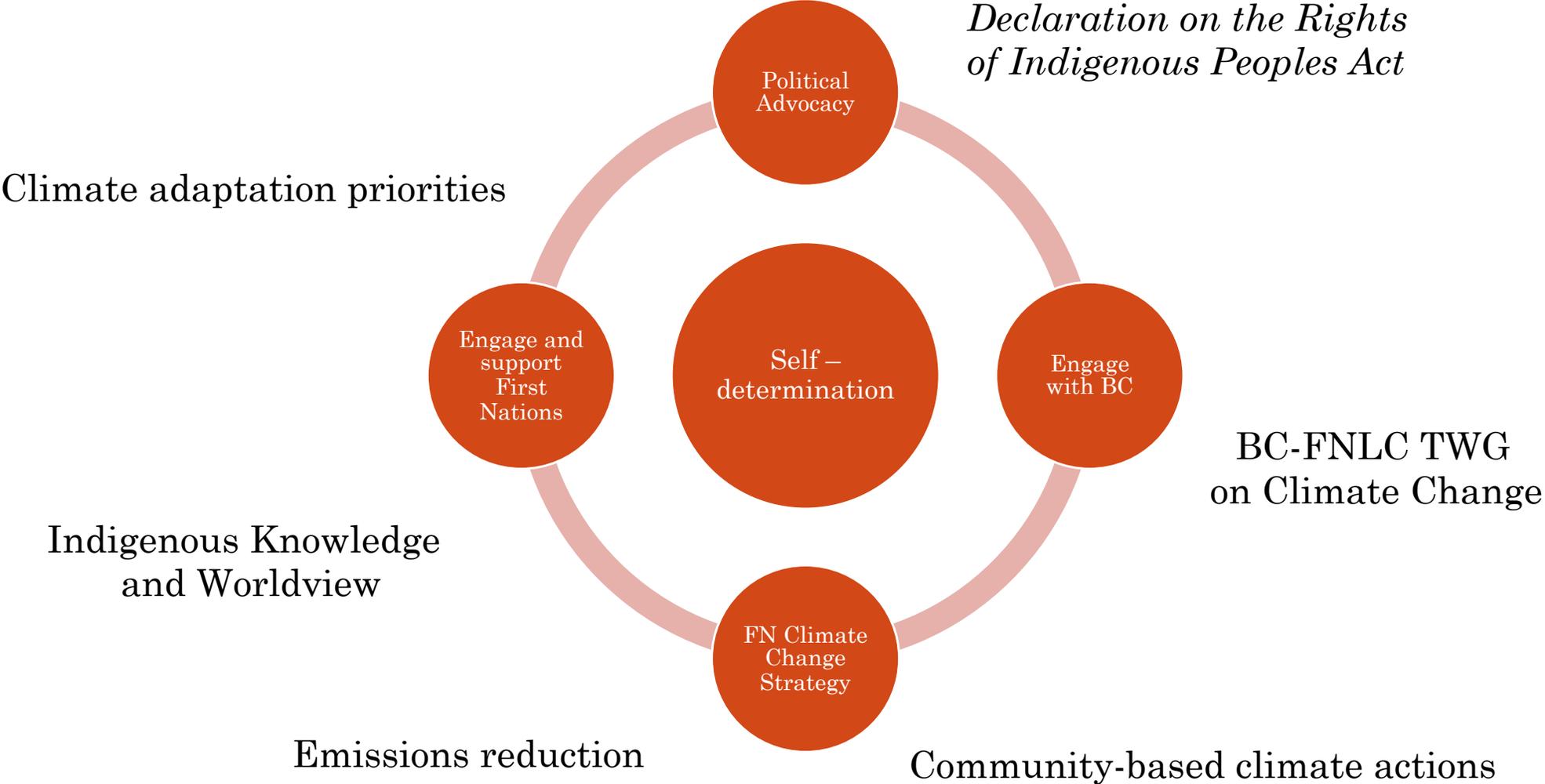


# FNLC Current Mandate

FNLC member groups passed resolutions calling for:

- Future plans to be developed in conjunction with Indigenous peoples and recognize and respect First Nations' inherent and constitutionally protected Title, Rights and Treaty Rights
- Collaboration between UBCIC, BC Assembly of First Nations, and First Nations Summit to prepare a bold Just Transition Plan, aligned with IPCC recommendations and Indigenous Knowledge, and co-created with First Nations in BC.
- **Resolutions:**
  - Resolution No. 4/2019 (BCAFN) & Resolution 2019-02 (UBCIC)

# FNLC Framework for Addressing Climate Change



# BC – FNLC Technical Working Group on Climate Change

- November 2019: a Technical Working group was established, comprised of representatives of FNLC's member groups and Provincial ministries (Environment and Climate Change, Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, Energy, Mine, & Petroleum Resources).
  - Terms of Reference (December 2019)
  - BC support for FNLC participation: funding for the 2019 fiscal year

# BC – FNLC Technical Working Group (TWG) on Climate Change

The TWG aims:

- to engage in dialogue,
- exchange information,
- develop recommendations,
- provide strategic advice and review progress on Provincial climate change actions undertaken by the Province.



**The TWG does not replace the engagement that BC must do with every First Nation in BC**

# BC – FNLC Technical Working Group (TWG) on Climate Change

Draft Work Plan:

- Engagement principles
- Gap analysis of climate-related programs
- Advanced communications and briefings



# BC – FNLC Technical Working Group (TWG) on Climate Change

## **FNLC's Strategic Aims with the TWG:**

- BC to support community-based climate actions led by First Nations
- Aligning climate policy and climate-related legislation with *DRIPA*
- Include First Nations' worldviews and Indigenous knowledge in BC policies, plans, report and legislation – holistic approach
- Provincial recognition and respect of Title, Rights, and Treaty Rights
- First Nations included in the production, transmission, and distribution of clean energy-

## **Challenges:**

- FNLC and First Nations' Capacity
- Provincial agenda for economic development & resource extraction

# Advancing Development of a First Nations Climate Change Strategy

**First Nations  
Climate Change  
Strategy and  
Action Plan**



- will be informed by First Nations' priorities and knowledge (made with First Nations)
- will guide climate emergency response,
- will communicate to partners about priority areas.

**Engage First Nations**

Academic expert circle

BC – FNLC Technical  
working group

Climate emergency  
Survey

All-Chiefs sessions

First Nations Advisory Group (Elders,  
youth and FN expert on CC)

# Advancing Development of a First Nations Climate Change Strategy

## **FNLC Climate Emergency Council Survey**

- Hosted in August-September 2019
- Target audience: First Nation communities and Tribal Councils in British Columbia, including the Chiefs, Elders, Youth, Women, staff and community members
- It offers insights regarding the perspectives of First Nations on the climate emergency and related impacts, concerns, barriers and priorities
- 139 First Nations and Tribal Councils across all eight regions of British Columbia
- A total of 244 people began the questionnaire of which 221 completed

# Advancing Development of a First Nations Climate Change Strategy

## **Two BC All Chiefs' Meetings on Climate Emergency Action**

The all Chief's meetings will highlight the fundamental needs to address vulnerabilities that First Nations face from climate impacts, as well as options for emissions reduction and clean growth economic opportunities.

## **First Nations Advisory Group**

- provide general technical advice and review the draft of the Strategy
- Up to 10 participants: Elders, youth, FN from other organizations with knowledge about climate change and/or First Nations.

# Advancing Development of a First Nations Climate Change Strategy

## Top priorities for First Nations Climate Change Strategy:

- Inherent Rights, Title, and Treaty Rights recognized, respected, and affirmed
- Traditional knowledge informs climate actions
- Strengthening community capacity to work on climate actions
- First Nations develop climate actions plans and have the sufficient resources are in place Renewable energy as a main source of electricity
- Communities are enabled to be leaders in the transition to a green economy
- Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are reduced.
- Education programs.

# Next Steps

- All-Chiefs Meeting on Climate Emergency Action in BC – Envisioning a fair and just transition for Indigenous communities and workers to a low-carbon economy
- Continue advocating for Title and Rights Holders through the TWG
- Major changes possible if provincial and federal climate legislation and policy is made to align with *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*

Questions?