



Reconciliation in B.C.

**Financial Management Institute
Victoria Chapter**

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Indigenous Peoples in B.C.



Ministry of
Indigenous Relations
and Reconciliation

- More than 270,000* people in B.C. identify as Indigenous – representing one in six Indigenous people in Canada. (*2016 census data)
- There are 203 First Nations in B.C. (of approximately 600 in Canada)
- Indigenous Peoples in B.C. are the most culturally and linguistically diverse in the country.
- 60% of all Indigenous languages in Canada are in B.C. – 34 distinct languages and 90 dialects.
- Indigenous Peoples includes First Nations, Métis and Inuit – each with specific rights and interests and unique cultures, histories, and governments.



Truth and Reconciliation



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- Legacy of inter-generational trauma as a result of colonialism and the treatment of Indigenous Peoples, compounded today by entrenched racism and bias.
- Indigenous Peoples do not share the same quality of life as other British Columbians.
- Reconciliation requires recognizing these truths – and real and meaningful systemic change.

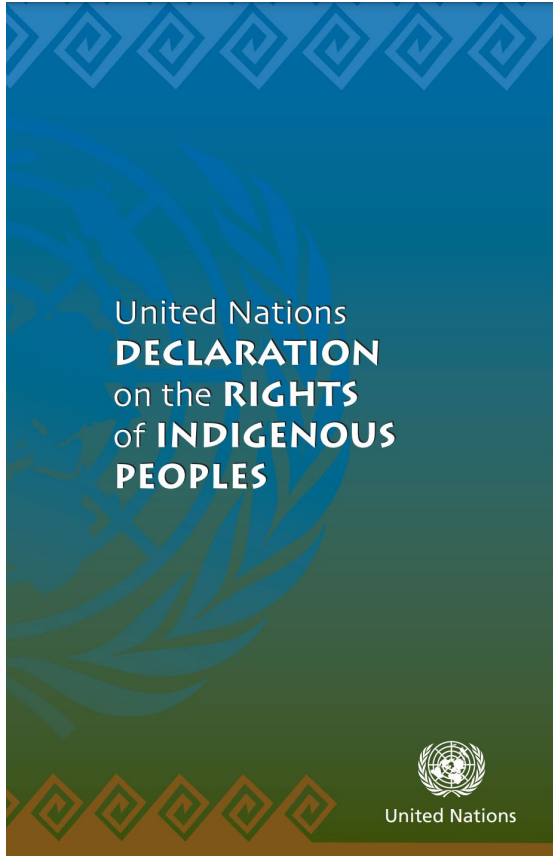
Understanding this context is important – so is acknowledging the strength of Indigenous communities, and the opportunity to leverage Indigenous knowledge and perspectives to improve outcomes for all British Columbians.



United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples



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- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) called upon all governments to implement the UN Declaration as the framework for reconciliation.
- International instrument adopted by the United Nations in 2007.
- Enshrines the rights that “constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the Indigenous Peoples in the world”.
- Acknowledges “situation of Indigenous Peoples” varies in the world.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission



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- Resulted from the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (largest class action settlement in Canadian history).
- Mandate to inform all Canadians about Indian Residential Schools.
- Engaged and documented the truth of survivors, families, communities and anyone personally affected.
- Released its findings and 94 Calls to Action in June 2015, under two broad areas of 'Legacy' and 'Reconciliation':
 - 'Legacy' recommendations reflect on 'what was lost'.
 - 'Reconciliation' recommendations reflect opportunities to improve relationships and outcomes.

B.C.'s Commitments



- Reconciliation is a provincial imperative.
- **Mandate letters** include specific commitments to reconciliation and equity and anti-racism:
 - Every ministry expected to work towards lasting, meaningful and ongoing reconciliation as a shared responsibility
 - Every ministry has a role in tackling systemic discrimination in all its forms
- Tangible and meaningful reconciliation actions will be guided by the UN Declaration, in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples.
- 10 Draft Principles (BC Public Service)

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act – 2019



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- Co-developed with Indigenous leadership and legal experts.
- Establishes the UN Declaration as the framework for reconciliation.
- Enables legislative, regulatory, policy and operational transformations.
- Creates space for B.C. Government to enter into agreements with a broader range of Indigenous governments.
- Requires government, in **consultation and cooperation** with Indigenous Peoples, to:
 - Ensure new and existing laws are consistent with the UN Declaration
 - Develop and implement an Action Plan
 - Fulfill annual public reporting



Overview of the Declaration Act

Interpretation and implementing the UN Declaration

- Section 1 includes key interpretative provisions and terms for the Act
- Section 2 establishes the three purposes of the Act
- Sections 3, 4 and 5 set out requirements for government regarding the implementation of the UN Declaration in British Columbia

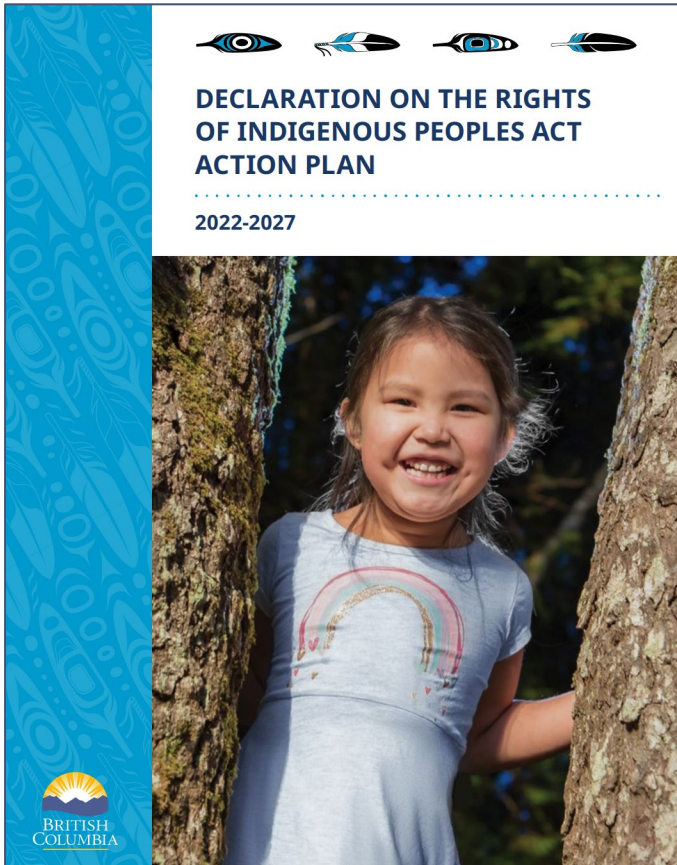
Entering into agreements with Indigenous governing bodies

- Sections 6 and 7 create space to enter into agreements with a broader range of Indigenous governments, including decision-making agreements

Offence Act and regulation making power

- Section 8 ensures *Offence Act* sanctions do not apply to the Declaration Act. Instead, *Judicial Review Procedure Act* can be used to oversee requirements
- Section 9 contains a modest regulation making power (e.g. dealing with administrative and procedural matters)

Action Plan



- Legislative requirement (Declaration Act).
- Collective, long-term vision for the implementation of the UN Declaration in B.C.
- Developed in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples.
- Includes 89 priority actions over the next five years.
- Four themes:
 - Self-determination and self-government
 - Rights and title
 - Ending anti-Indigenous racism
 - Enhancing social, cultural and economic well-being

Treaties and Other Agreements



- Government focussed on long-term agreements that advance self-determination, decision-making and economic priorities.
- Both modern and historic treaties in B.C.
 - Modern treaties are constitutionally protected agreements.
 - Tri-partite agreements (include Government of Canada).
 - New Recognition and Reconciliation of Rights policy in 2019.
- Other comprehensive agreements generally adopt incremental approaches to reconciliation of rights and title – and may represent incremental progress to treaty.

New Fiscal Framework



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- Action Plan commits the Province to co-develop with Indigenous Peoples:
 - a new distinctions-based fiscal framework that supports the operations of Indigenous governments, and;
 - a new framework for resource revenue sharing/other fiscal mechanisms.
- Goal is to align the new fiscal framework with the UN Declaration.
- Work underway since 2018 – commitment with FNLC (Concrete Actions) and Draft 10 Principles.
- Gaming Revenue Sharing in 2019.

Reconciliation and the Economy



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- Reconciliation is essential to grow the provincial economy.
- Important and unique component of B.C.'s Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) profile.
- Economic prosperity is a key goal of B.C. government and Indigenous communities.
- Engaging Indigenous Peoples as respected partners in the economy leads to increased confidence and an environment of relationships.
- Working in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples makes B.C. a destination of choice for sustainable investment.



