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International Workshop on Indigenous Communities and Government Partnerships for Protected Area Management: Workshop Summary Report

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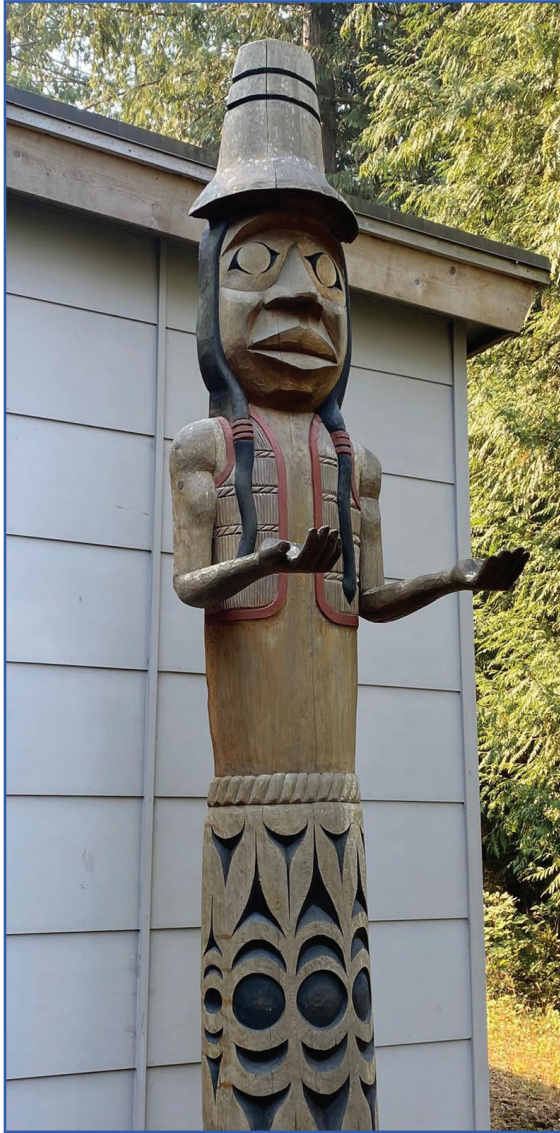
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# International Workshop on Indigenous Communities and Government Partnerships for Protected Area Management: Workshop Summary Report





**“What is needed is to shift and change our current paradigm so that Indigenous Peoples can fully uphold their inherent rights and responsibilities within their traditional and customary lands and waters.”**

**“As Indigenous People, we need to find and clarify our traditional cultural practices within a [protected area] management plan. We need to begin with governance based on our tradition of cultural practices.”**

**“Would like to be able to control the borders of the protected area without having to go through the government.”**

**“We belong to the place.  
We are the resources and the place.”**

**“Indigenous Peoples should participate in determining what questions need to be asked.”**

**“Hire Indigenous Peoples to aid in bringing in the unique skills, perspectives, and languages that they have to offer.”**

**“From our perspective, our way of living is part of nature. This needs to be recognized. We are facing a global problem of climate change — we know this is a result of industrialization but we as native people, if we want to keep our way of life, we don’t overexploit . . . .”**

**“On our lands, we already manage them. So, when the government comes along to make changes, and ignores our presence and ongoing management, it’s not right. How we have managed an area over time should be considered and take precedence.”**

**“Not all Indigenous Peoples are the same. Not everyone agrees with conservation measures put forward. But could agree to co-management.”**

**“There is a lack of funding to support equitable involvement; to support implementation of conservation from an Indigenous perspective.”**

**“Address the need to constantly educate both tribal council and government employees as they frequently change.”**

**“Would prefer to have the government just provide technical support. The government wants to take all of the plans made by the indigenous people (their management plan) and take it over, managing the area.”**

**“There is often a focus on extracting knowledge of indigenous peoples and not returning anything — at least not returning to our lands.”**

**“Sometimes the people who want to protect a place, they think that everything is theirs — “everything is mine.” Reality is that nothing is yours — everything belongs to the creator.”**

**“We have been put into very uncomfortable situations with the government where we would have to decide what our ancestors are worth? How do you put a value on that?”**

**“There needs to be a balance in the decision-making roles or higher representation of the respective Indigenous Peoples of a given space.”**

## INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' REPRESENTATIVES

**U.S.:** Aleut Community of St. Paul Island Tribal Government, Hoh Tribe, Hoonah (Tlingit) Indian Association, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, Makah Tribe, Native Hawaiian Community, Northern Chumash Tribal Council, St. George Traditional Council, Quileute Tribe, Skokomish Tribe, Quinault Indian Nation, and Yurok Tribe.

**Canada:** Haida Nation.

**Mexico:** Maya.

**Chile:** Kawésqar, Lafkenche, Mapuche-Huilliche, Rapanui, and Yagán.

## PARTICIPATING AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES

**U.S.:** Department of State, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, and National Park Service.

**Chile:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National Forest Corporation, and Undersecretary of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

**Canada:** Parks Canada.

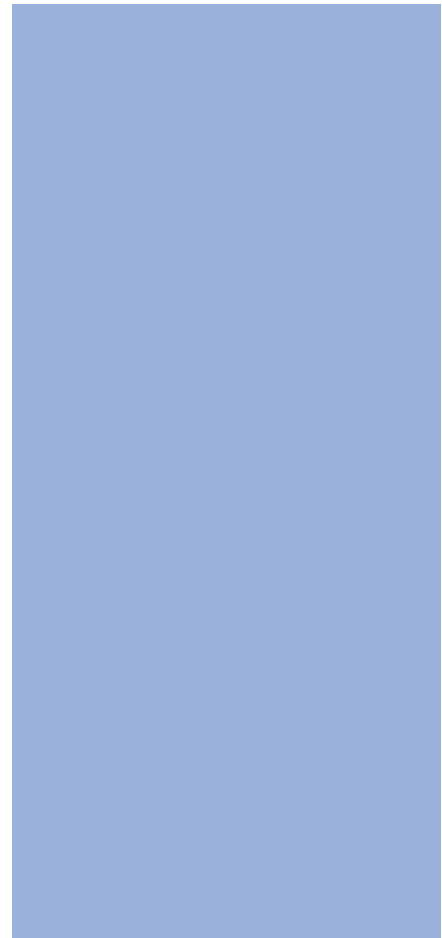
**Mexico:** National Commission of Protected Natural Areas.

## OTHER PARTICIPANTS

George Wright Society, National Estuarine Research Reserves System, and PUP Global Heritage Consortium (Spanish Interpreters).

## PHOTOS

All photos are credited to Gonzalo Cid / NOAA or are otherwise noted under the photo. All photos taken at the ʔaʔkʷustəŋáwtxʷ House of Learning, Peninsula College Longhouse except as noted.



## MESSAGE FROM CHAIRWOMAN FRANCES CHARLES

In early September 2022, fifty-five representatives of Indigenous communities and federal agencies from the United States, Canada, Chile, and Mexico, who share a common interest in the long-term health and protection of coastal ecosystems, came together at the Peninsula College Longhouse in Port Angeles, Washington. These coastal systems, which have sustained our communities since time immemorial, face unprecedented global threats associated with climate change, pollution, development, and overfishing. This gathering offered us the opportunity to share and celebrate our diverse cultures, while recognizing that these threats to our lifeways must be addressed through collaborative management with our federal partners.

We applaud the efforts of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Park Service in organizing this historic event and greatly appreciate the time and effort of those Participants who traveled to our ancestral lands, many from great distances, for this workshop. We thank you for sharing your stories, struggles, and thoughts on how Indigenous Peoples can engage, influence and work with government agencies responsible for managing these irreplaceable resources. We look forward to continued dialogue and progress on these issues.

Frances Charles  
Chairwoman  
Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The International Workshop on Indigenous Communities and Government Partnerships for Protected Area Management was held on September 2022 on the homelands of the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe. This event, hosted by the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, gathered approximately 55 Indigenous and government representatives from the U.S., Chile, Canada, and Mexico. The Participants represented Indigenous communities, organizations, and Tribal governments<sup>1</sup> involved with marine, coastal, and terrestrial protected areas, as well as federal government representatives selected for their existing relationships with the Indigenous communities and the associated protected areas. The workshop, the first of its kind, was organized to facilitate dialogue among the Indigenous community and government representatives to share their unique experiences, identify and address concerns, and collectively develop recommendations to advance shared governance and collaborative management of protected areas with their respective federal government agencies.

The workshop's agenda was co-developed with Participants' input through pre-workshop exercises and personal engagement in the months prior to the event. The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, who hosted the workshop, established the cultural context for engagements and participation and offered insights that inspired a place-based format for discussions. Based on this input, the organizers developed discussions and activities that responded to the Participants' expressed concerns and interests and focused on the needs of co-management from the perspective of the Participants' own lived experiences. The workshop's format and welcoming environment encouraged the Participants to express their concerns and share their experiences freely.

Over the 3-day workshop, the Indigenous-led agenda included customary ceremonies, presentations of case studies, and culturally responsive group exercises that helped to identify existing and future opportunities to include Indigenous communities in the management processes of protected areas. During discussions, Participants shared their perspectives on resource conservation, the use of traditional knowledge, the protection and promotion of cultural heritage, and active and equitable participation in the management of protected areas.

Some of the most salient messages from the dialogue among Participants at the workshop focused on pursuing long-term collaborative management in protected areas between Indigenous communities and governments included the following:

- We must create spaces and devote time for **healing and reconciliation**. Every Indigenous community is in a different “place” in the overall grieving process, and each individual and collective community is undergoing their own unique healing journey, which sometimes requires government representatives to participate in the healing process through reconciliation. Together, we must recognize the past injustices and the negative impacts that colonizers forced on Indigenous communities. We must acknowledge the intergenerational trauma and resentment from past experiences with government policies and actions, which have resulted in the inherited mistrust of government representatives and government-led activities. This includes truth-telling and not shying away from discussion of painful historical events. We must create spaces and devote time for healing and reconciliation.
- Environmental, economic, social, and cultural needs must all be considered and addressed.
- Participants acknowledge that this workshop is a good start to address best practices and build capacity for collaborative management of protected areas between Indigenous communities and government agencies. However, **additional resources and actions are essential** to building on what the workshop has started, such as building and facilitating an international collaborative network to support Indigenous communities.

This workshop was the beginning of a long and challenging journey to define, embrace, and implement effective and meaningful collaborative management of protected areas that encompass the traditional homelands and waters of Indigenous Peoples. These three days of sharing knowledge and experiences, which included truth-telling and discussion of painful historical events, demonstrate that the potential value of such collaborations is undeniable.

1. “Indigenous communities, organizations, and Tribal governments” hereinafter may be collectively referred to as “Indigenous communities” or “Indigenous Peoples.”



## INTRODUCTION

The International Workshop on Indigenous Communities and Government Partnerships for Protected Area Management was held on September 2022 on the homelands of the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe. This event, hosted by the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, gathered approximately 55 Indigenous and government representatives from the U.S., Chile, Canada, and Mexico. The Participants represented Indigenous communities, organizations, and Tribal governments<sup>2</sup> involved with marine, coastal, and terrestrial protected areas, as well as federal government representatives selected for their existing relationships with the Indigenous communities and the associated protected areas. The workshop, the first of its kind, was organized to facilitate dialogue among the Indigenous community and government representatives to share their unique experiences, identify and address concerns, and collectively develop recommendations to advance shared governance and collaborative management of protected areas with their respective federal government agencies.

## BACKGROUND

The workshop was organized under the umbrella of the current U.S.-Chile Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Collaboration for the Conservation and Management of Terrestrial and Marine Protected Areas (signed by the National Park Service, National Ocean Atmospheric Administration-National Ocean Service, and Chile's Ministry of the Environment, Undersecretariat for Fisheries and Aquaculture, and the National Forest Corporation). Since 2013, the MOU partners have worked to advance bilateral cooperation on protected areas, from the establishment of "sister park" arrangements to training and study tours for protected area managers. The role of Indigenous communities in the establishment and management of protected areas was identified as a priority activity by the partners during the establishment of sister park arrangements between Glacier Bay National Park and Francisco Coloane Marine Protected Area, as well as Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument and Rapa Nui Marine Protected Area. The intent to organize a gathering between Indigenous leaders from Chile and the U.S. to address common issues on protected areas collaborative management was identified in 2017 as a result of the request from the partner communities and agencies from Chile working under initiatives promoted by the MOU. The idea and conceptual framework for the gathering were formulated in 2018 with the goal of providing a platform for dialogue on how to improve the collaborative management of protected areas between Indigenous communities and national and local government agencies.

The workshop represented a timely opportunity to exchange experiences of the recent national and local processes of more meaningful involvement of Indigenous communities in managing protected areas in Chile and the U.S. This brought together partners that helped the organizers to broaden this bilateral protected area partnership to engage Indigenous communities of the U.S. and Chile and invite representatives from Canada and Mexico, to share, develop, and advance solutions that support greater involvement of Indigenous communities in the management of protected areas. This includes recognition of cultural values and knowledge, honoring sovereignty and self-determination, more explicit recognition of the heritage of Indigenous nations, and use of traditional practices in the management of protected areas.

The workshop provided an opportunity for Indigenous community representatives to share their knowledge and recommendations on how to acknowledge and include native heritage and culture in the conservation of nature and the management of protected areas more effectively. The meeting facilitated a dialogue among Indigenous representatives working on protected areas. For the participating national government agencies, it provided an opportunity to support, listen, and learn.

The workshop was funded with resources provided by the U.S. Department of State through a grant under the U.S.-Chile Environmental Cooperation Agreement. The organizers also secured support funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS), the National Park Service (NPS), the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation, the Government of Canada, and the

2. "Indigenous communities, organizations, and Tribal governments" hereinafter may be collectively referred to as "Indigenous communities" or "Indigenous Peoples."





- Reflect on the evolution of various co-management, collaborative, and cooperative arrangements and partnerships to identify the enabling factors for successful outcomes that benefit Indigenous communities while also advancing conservation goals; and
- Identify how cooperative management can serve as a foundation for sharing the benefits of protected areas with Indigenous communities and addressing these communities' economic, social, and cultural needs.

**Long-Term Activities: In planning the workshop, the following potential long-term results were identified:**

- Create a community of practice for Indigenous cooperative management.
- Develop recommendations to advance Indigenous priorities within protected area management.
- Establish a post-workshop plan of action for continued relations and dialogue, including working groups to further develop and implement this plan.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND APPROACHES

Guiding Principles were identified to foster efficient and effective conversations, keeping on time and on task, setting expectations for Participants, and offering session facilitators an overarching framework for guiding discussions. The Participants were offered and embraced the following guiding principles:

- **Reaffirm our Context** — Remember why we are coming together and what you want to achieve during the workshop and afterward. Knowing the purpose and parameters of our meeting enables each of us to consider and choose the most important elements to share, acknowledging our goals and objectives. For instance, you should be part of the conversation, identify the most pertinent themes or questions, and determine what sorts of “harvest” (outcomes) will be more useful for the individual and the collective group. If you state a problem or disagree with a proposal, try to offer a solution.
- **Create Hospitable Space** — We collectively emphasize the power and importance of creating a hospitable space that feels safe and inviting. When people feel comfortable being themselves, they do their most creative thinking, speaking, and listening, producing valuable outcomes. Consider how your invitation and physical presence create a welcoming atmosphere. Be respectful.
- **Be Curious and Explore Questions that Matter** — Knowledge emerges in response to compelling questions, both internal and external. We have the gift of listening, and often in what we share verbally, we find our own lessons too. Find questions that are relevant to the real-life concerns of the group. Powerful questions that “travel well” help attract collective energy, insight, and action as they move throughout a system.
- **Encourage Everyone’s Contribution** — As leaders, we are increasingly aware of the importance of participation, but more than this, we want active contributions that help to make a difference. It is important to encourage everyone to contribute their ideas and perspectives while allowing anyone who wants to participate by simply listening.
- **Connect Diverse Perspectives** — Carry key ideas or themes to new discussions, exchange perspectives, and enrich the possibilities for surprising new insights.
- **Listen Together for Patterns and Insights** — Listening is a gift we give to one another. The quality of our listening is perhaps the most important factor determining the success of our work together. By practicing shared listening and paying attention to themes, patterns, and insights, we sense a connection to the larger whole. We encourage ourselves to listen for what is not being spoken and what is being shared.
- **Share Collective Discoveries** — Conversations at one table reflect a pattern of wholeness that connects with the conversations at the other tables.<sup>3</sup>

The workshop was grounded in the ethical space approach. An “Ethical Space” is a way for two or more worldviews to come together in a manner that is intentional and respectful of different cultures, governance structures, and ways of knowing to co-create a space (Ermine 2007; Littlechild and Sutherland 2021) (see Figure 1). The Ethical Space approach supports bringing together pluralistic worldviews to shape the meeting, activities, or relationships.

■ 3. Adapted from <https://conversational-leadership.net/world-cafe/>.

The approach requires being flexible and not having an agency-centric agenda for meetings (e.g., very rigid, time-centered agenda focused on outcomes) and being open to receiving diverse information (e.g., written, oral, song, chant, etc.). Being more flexible and intentional supported Participants to reflect and absorb what has been shared. It is important in ethical spaces to listen, not listen to tell or respond. Working in an ethical space allows the Indigenous community and the agency to work together to find pathways forward that may not otherwise be found. The Ethical Space approach was reflected in the meeting's introductions, breakouts, and sharing sessions.

Working within an Ethical Space for this meeting, after ceremonies and protocols were conducted, the Workshop began with personal introductions offered through a “Circle of People and Places.” All Participants were asked to briefly introduce themselves, share their culture and traditions, and offer some perspective and insight about the places to which they were deeply connected.

### THIS REPORT

Part of the learning process of this workshop was selecting methods to capture important messages from discussions without compromising the safe space specifically created so Indigenous representatives could share their experiences and opinions as honestly as they felt comfortable. The workshop was not recorded through audio or video to foster safe and open communication. Notes were taken through traditional typed notes in real-time, main points were recorded on flip charts, and takeaways were authored by workshop staff. The method used varied according to the session; because of this and the sensitive nature of many of the discussions, these different writing styles are all used in this report. To be transparent and ensure we do not speak for Indigenous Participants, these two categories are readily apparent. Throughout the document,

- Quotes captured as directly as possible without recording equipment, not attributed to individuals are in quotations.
- Narratives, summaries, and synthesis reflect the handwritten notes and main points taken on flip charts taken by Rapporteurs and scribes (i.e., agency and non-profit organization representatives and, at times, Indigenous Participants) during the sessions.

The following sections summarize the rich discussions and invaluable knowledge and perspectives shared throughout the workshop. The report is organized to reflect the agenda and chronological order of the discussions and is shared under the following section, **Summaries and Synthesis of Workshop Sessions**. The sessions are shared under the following headings:

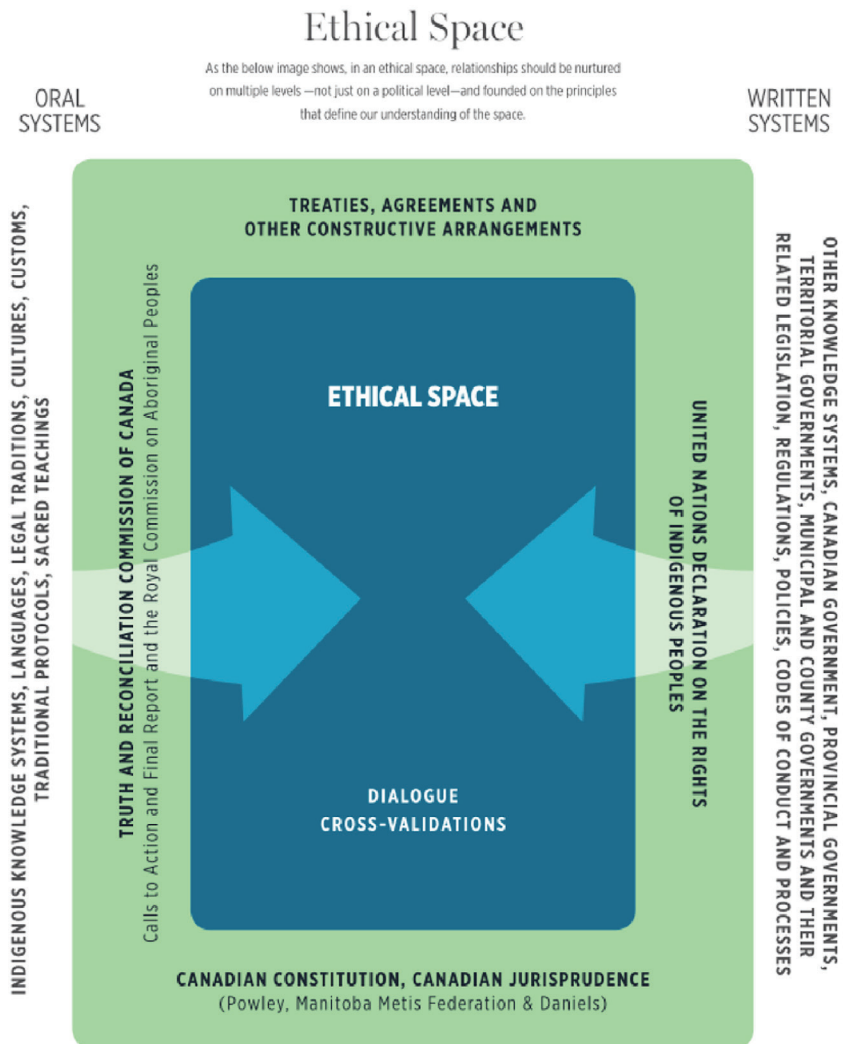


FIGURE 1. Ethical Space. Model demonstrating the application of an Ethical Space Approach (Ermine 2007).

- World Indigenous-Centered Café: Truth Telling, Solutions, and Guidance
- Learning from Each Other and Across Countries
- Discussions and Sharings
  - Journey of Co-management
  - Indigenous-led “Open Space”
- Reflecting and Workshop Closing
- Next Steps: Workshop Follow-ups
- Conclusions

The people that came together represented a broad diversity of backgrounds, cultures, communities, and personal experiences. Acknowledging and considering this diversity of each Participant’s knowledge and experiences is important. This report provides a summary and synthesis of all that was shared by Participants during the workshop. Discussions at the workshop were recorded in notes taken by Rapporteurs tasked with this responsibility, capturing the powerful and revealing insights and perspectives shared by the Participants as accurately and respectfully as possible. By agreement with the Participants, no attributions of specific quotes are provided to ensure the anonymity of particular speakers who freely and candidly shared their experiences, knowledge, and recommendations.

The intent of this report is to:

- assist readers in gaining a better understanding of the challenges and barriers that Indigenous Peoples face to equitably engage in the governance of protected areas;
- learn from successful examples of co-management and collaboratively working together;
- to inspire the implementation of some or all of the many solutions offered by the Indigenous Participants of this workshop.

Full Group circle and table discussions during the workshop sessions.



## SUMMARIES AND SYNTHESIS OF WORKSHOP SESSIONS

### World Indigenous-Centered Café: Truth Telling, Solutions, and Guidance

A “*World Café*”<sup>4</sup> is a structured conversational process intended to facilitate open and intimate discussions to connect ideas within a larger group to access the collective intelligence and wisdom that is present. The session was organized across four sessions; each session began with guiding questions. Focus was placed on hearing from Participants who represent Indigenous Peoples; while the guiding questions aided in beginning conversations, discussions were Participant- and Indigenous-led. Below is a list of the guiding questions included in each session.

The four sessions were described as:

- *Session 1:* From an Indigenous perspective, what would it mean to be fully and completely responsible for the management of a protected area that is a part of (or fully within) your traditional, customary, and ancestral lands and waters?
- *Session 2:* a) What does it mean for Indigenous Peoples’ nations and colonial nation states (countries) to share governance and management of protected areas equitably? b) Might conservation goals be more likely to be met over the long term if Indigenous Peoples had an effective role in decisions concerning protected area goals and management?
- *Session 3:* a) Can protected areas become places where countries and international conservation organizations respect Indigenous Peoples’ rights and responsibilities to their territories and peoples and acknowledge their conservation contributions while providing support when asked to, including helping buffer external threats? b) Can Indigenous Peoples benefit from protected areas? c) Can they be a means to realize territorial, livelihood, and cultural integrity and security? d) Can they provide economic opportunities and be a means of avoiding unwanted culturally and environmentally destructive “development”?
- *Session 4:* a) From an Indigenous perspective, how would these arrangements work for Indigenous Peoples? b) Are there current models or future alternatives to address or realize items that have already been discussed? c) What are we not considering that is critical to highlight? d) Are there factors that are often overlooked that need more attention for us to move forward?

The *World Indigenous-Centered Cafe* facilitated an open and intimate discussion amongst Participants through small group discussions. Key points from these discussions were then shared within a larger collective discussion and aided in informing the next two days of the workshop.

Participants shared through discussions came from diverse cultures, histories, geographies, and worldviews. A Participant from Chile shared, “Different tribes have had different experiences. There are nine different realities. Some have experienced genocide, and some have not.” All Indigenous Participants shared realities from their perspectives, knowledge, and experience. The next section summarizes the identified barriers, challenges, solutions, and key points shared by the Participants.

#### Truth Telling – Sharing concerns, barriers, and challenges

Participants were open in sharing many concerns and barriers that have arisen from a colonized history and continue through the present day. Many concerns and barriers are a result of a lack of equity within processes, a lack of honoring Indigenous Peoples’ sovereignty, ways of life, knowledge systems, philosophies, and approaches to managing reciprocal relationships between people and the environments in which they have lived and sustained themselves since time immemorial.

Some Participants shared philosophies and approaches behind protected areas that, at times, conflict with Indigenous approaches. For example, protected areas can be fragmented and split between a marine and terrestrial environment.

■ 4. Adapted from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World\\_caf%C3%A9\\_\(conversation\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_caf%C3%A9_(conversation)).

These environments are connected and cannot be separated. Participants also shared continuing challenges faced today from traditional uses taken away from Indigenous Peoples and the impact on environmental health. Some Participants expressed feeling cornered into a box and not having the space needed to fulfill cultural needs.

Fragmentation of land and waters can occur within protected areas, further exacerbating this. Below is a brief listing of some of the barriers identified. **Note:** This listing is not exhaustive of all shared during the discussions.

- Federal governments propose a governance structure as opposed to working with Indigenous Peoples to co-develop a structure.
- The foundation isn't secure for co-management because rights, recognition, or self-determination do not exist to reach collaborative governance goals.
- The U.S. is not required to follow the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) because Congress does not codify it. Indigenous human rights are not recognized nor integrated into federal government and management processes.
- There are many different agencies managing and regulating protected areas. The agencies hold different mandates and rules. For example, Tribes' access to lands and waters differs in different protected areas. This is confusing and difficult to understand.
- Federal systems often lack consistency across agencies in their agreements with Indigenous Peoples.
- Exclusion of Indigenous Peoples within decision-making processes.
- Indigenous Peoples' engagement is limited to an advisory role.
- Indigenous Peoples' involvement requires playing by their [federal government] rules, definitions, and parameters.
- Lack of support for Indigenous businesses and economic opportunities.
- Tourism taxes are used to support an agency instead of the area's Indigenous government.
- In some areas, funding is provided only from tourists, soft money, and donations.
- Being treated like a "stakeholder."
- Lack of funding to support equitable involvement to support the implementation of conservation from an Indigenous perspective.
- Impact of stakeholders' (i.e., non-Indigenous interests from environmental groups, sports fishers, industry) perspectives and approaches to managing areas which may conflict with Indigenous interests and ways of knowing and being.
- Federal governments often do not take responsibility for the past or policies that continue to demonstrate a colonial approach. Challenges with conservation approaches that take an "ownership" perspective and controlling approach that conflicts with Indigenous Knowledge and Indigenous approaches.
- Indigenous Peoples often hold a different understanding of conservation than those reflected in policies or implemented by agencies.
- Racism.
- Systemic biases within existing policies and regulations written by specific populations to benefit those populations or through the singular knowledge system.
- Not considering that we don't begin from a position of equality. Don't have equal authority.
- Taking a singular knowledge and cultural-based approach.
- Not all Indigenous Peoples are recognized by federal governments. They are then not engaged in the federal process as Indigenous Peoples.
- The government does not always ask the right question(s). But they always expect a response.
- Conflict in uses between federal governments and Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Peoples need to continue to use and be part of the environment, as it is critical for cultural continuity. This is also in reference to Indigenous food security.
- Participation in NGOs [non-governmental organizations] can pose challenges: they don't have the same understanding of Indigenous rights and culture.
- Demonstrated lack of respect for Indigenous Peoples.
- Power dynamics have resulted in a lack of equity.
- The need to constantly educate Tribal Council/Leadership and government employees as they frequently change.

## Solutions – “Begin with Respecting Indigenous Peoples’ Rights and Sovereignty”

*“Indigenous perspectives are constant. They do not shift with politics, economy, etc. Therefore, the management of protected areas under Indigenous leadership would be consistent, unwavering, and values-based, driven by the health and vitality of the environment.” — Meeting Participant*

Throughout all these discussions, Participants provided invaluable solutions and ways to move forward. These solutions come from an Indigenous perspective, a desire to work collaboratively through equitable approaches, and a desire to continue to safeguard the environments of which the Participants are part. In many situations, the Indigenous Peoples continue to hold these relationships rooted in reciprocity with their environments regardless of what regulations are present.

Participants offered many observations regarding partnerships with federal governments. A participant shared, “Collaborating on protected areas provides some degree of control over external commercial enterprises.” Others felt that “true partnerships were not possible at this point in time due to the continued disrespect for Indigenous Peoples’ way of life and knowledge.”

Another Participant shared that “They prefer no government intervention because they oppose ancestral knowledge. The ancestors knew where there was imbalance and could shift use to rebalance. Indigenous Peoples have the option to use their knowledge. The government opposes everything.” Many Participants also stressed that different approaches are needed in different areas and that use-restrictive protected areas are not always the best solution. Others shared that sometimes federal government protection is valuable. As one Participant commented, “The addition of a protected area with federal government protection is proving to protect biodiversity within their area. It is also aiding to regulate tourist activities.”

Hailing from another area of the world, a Participant observed that the federal government’s approach to conservation is “*Impacting* the environment in a negative way and resulting in the overpopulation of federal government-introduced species.” It was suggested that this partially reflects “Overlapping regulations under different federal agencies. It was also noted that there is a need to look beyond protected areas, recognizing that everything is interconnected.”

The bulleted list below is categorized by key themes raised by the Participants. This list is not exhaustive of all that was shared, but it does provide a robust list of solutions that would aid in building a strong foundation for co-stewardship. These solutions begin with a collective sharing of the sense that before we can do anything,” We need a shift and change in our current paradigm to have Indigenous Peoples’ rights and self-determination supported and respected.”

- **Indigenous-led Management and Ways of Knowing**
  - Trust and respect for Indigenous Peoples, their knowledge, governance structures, and approaches are needed to be able to move forward.
  - Re-define conservation and co-management from an Indigenous perspective.
  - Recognize that many protected areas are within Indigenous Peoples’ homelands.
  - Refer to areas as Indigenous Peoples homelands as opposed to a “park” or “sanctuary.”
  - Take actions to recognize, respect, and support Indigenous food sovereignty and security.
  - Indigenous Peoples need to have the authority and jurisdiction over all their homelands and for self-determination to be respected.
  - Indigenous leadership and representation on protected area management boards to exercise rights and responsibilities.
  - Shift to understanding “use” as a reciprocal part of maintaining relationships with water and land. This requires a shift in many non-Indigenous-led conservation efforts that focus on strict “protection” measures without understanding people as part of the environment and reciprocity.
  - Respect and honor the conservation approaches and management practices Indigenous Peoples continue to practice today.

- Respect Indigenous knowledge as an important contributor to the understanding of place.
- **Evidence-Based Information**
  - Recognize and respect Indigenous Knowledge.
  - Utilize a co-production of knowledge approach to ensure Indigenous Knowledge is reflected in policy, decision-making, and evidence-based information used to inform our collective understandings.
  - Ensure adequate funding for the co-production of knowledge approaches.
- **Indigenous Peoples Rights**
  - Park, Sanctuary and World Heritage designations need to include the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples and implement a standard for building from Indigenous human rights.
  - Implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) within protected areas such as parks, reserves, sanctuaries, and national monument areas.
  - Support Indigenous-led economic initiatives and opportunities.
- **Indigenous Peoples within Co-stewardship Protected Areas**
  - Indigenous Peoples need to define consultation objectives and intentions, with the recognition that this often differs from those of the federal government or stakeholders.
  - There needs to be a balance in the decision-making roles or higher representation of the respective Indigenous Peoples of a given space.
  - Shift from a consultative structure to a cooperative management structure with Indigenous Peoples as part of the decision-making process.
  - Development of long-term funding mechanisms to support Indigenous Peoples' implementation of their views of conservation and equitable participation within co-management and management of protected areas.
  - Develop co-management and information-gathering processes that are rooted in reciprocity, respect, Indigenous Knowledge, historical practices, and science.
  - Develop partnerships between Indigenous Peoples and federal governments with true co-management and equitable approaches.
  - Equitable partnerships require Truth Telling and reparations. Focusing on recognizing the truth of what has occurred and policies that continue to cause harm will bring healing for everyone.
  - Indigenous Peoples should participate in determining what questions are needed.
  - Indigenous-led identification and decision-making on areas where fishing or related activities should take place.
- **Consultation and Institutionalization — Long-term Change to Support Holistic Management**
  - Consultation needs to be meaningful and responsive to what Indigenous Peoples share.
  - Need to institutionalize change to support equitable approaches and partnerships with Indigenous Peoples.
  - Previously made agreements need to be reviewed and updated to identify where changes are needed.
  - Federal governments need to take accountability for historical actions and continued policies that reflect these actions.
  - Need for federal governments to be willing to change.
  - Develop and employ holistic and flexible management across different types of protected areas, bringing together governing agencies and governments (Indigenous and federal) under joint management.
  - Recognize that not all areas are the same and that “one size does not fit all.”
  - NOAA to implement the Executive Orders put forward by the Biden Administration including but not limited to: those related to social justice, racial equity, climate change, consultation, and Indigenous Knowledge.
  - Develop long-term relationships to support relationship-based solutions in addition to policies and practices that support Indigenous Peoples' equitable partnerships.
  - Laws should reflect and include Indigenous Peoples' values, knowledge, and perspectives.

- It is important to learn from failures, to have evaluations, time for reflection, flexibility, and willingness to make adjustments and changes as needed.
  - Recognize Indigenous Peoples' food security and food sovereignty, as defined by them.
  - Ensure transparency in the decision and policy-making processes.
  - Continuous and consistent communications are required to move forward in equitable partnerships.
- **Indigenous Peoples' Self-Identified Means and Ability**
    - Ensure employment for Indigenous Peoples. Providing financial support directly to Indigenous governments for their employment of identified needed staff.
    - Establish a Tribal co-management foundation.
    - Importance of Indigenous Peoples being able to share experiences working with or leading the management of a protected area.
- **Federal Government Capacity Building**
    - Hire Indigenous Peoples to aid in bringing in the unique skills, perspectives, and languages that they have to offer.
    - Consider benefits that flow to Indigenous partners to support effective roles.
    - Do your homework to understand Indigenous Peoples' histories.
- **Accessibility**
    - Ensure Indigenous Peoples' access to an agreed-upon protected area. Ensure traditional and customary use within the area and surrounding areas.
    - Need a sustainable source of management funds beyond fees from tourists, soft money, and donations.
- **Prioritize Topics that Need to Be Addressed**
    - Climate change from an Indigenous perspective.
    - Food security and food sovereignty from an Indigenous perspective.
- **Future Meetings and Moving Forward**
    - Future workshops should include materials related to Executive Orders put forward by the Biden Administration.
    - Would like the questions and information ahead of time to prepare answers and wants all representatives, Indigenous and agency, to provide responses so we know where we are starting from and where the middle ground is.

Full Group table and circle discussions during the workshop.





- Learn from other countries. Look at different approaches, equitable partnerships between Indigenous Peoples and federal governments, and areas that continue to be under Indigenous-led management to learn.
- Ensure transparency in follow-up actions and discussions.

### LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER AND ACROSS COUNTRIES

The discussions held within the Indigenous World Café aided in shaping the conversations that were held throughout the rest of the workshop. Additionally, discussions were informed by presentations and sharings provided by different countries and Participants. The following section highlights examples provided by Parks Canada and a case study focused on the Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve.

#### A National Perspective: Shared Governance at Parks Canada (PC) – An Evolving Spectrum

Nadine Spence, Executive Director for Indigenous Affairs at Parks Canada, presented an overview of Parks Canada’s current spectrum of shared governance, as well as lessons learned from colleagues across the country about existing challenges and opportunities. These lessons are continuously informing policy work to expand the current basket of tools to support new and evolve existing arrangements.

#### Situating the Work: Canada’s Indigenous Stewardship Framework

Parks Canada proposed a framework on Indigenous Stewardship to advance reconciliation and achieve positive results. Indigenous perspectives informed this proposal and provided a framework for the co-development of approaches to protected area management that will contribute to implementing the United Nations Declaration on

Nadine Spence, Executive Director for Indigenous Affairs, Parks Canada.



the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, incorporating shared governance as a core element in this Indigenous Stewardship framework.

The system of protected areas administered by Parks Canada overlays the traditional territories, ancestral homelands, and treaty lands of Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous and Crown governments assert jurisdiction and are responsible for these lands, waters, and ice. As the rights recognition and reconciliation landscape evolves, Indigenous Peoples expect and demand greater decision-making authority. The policy opportunity was identified by Parks Canada as an opportunity to respond to and work positively with Indigenous partners expressing interest in greater decision-making authority.

#### **Shared Governance at Parks Canada: A Relationship-Based Approach**

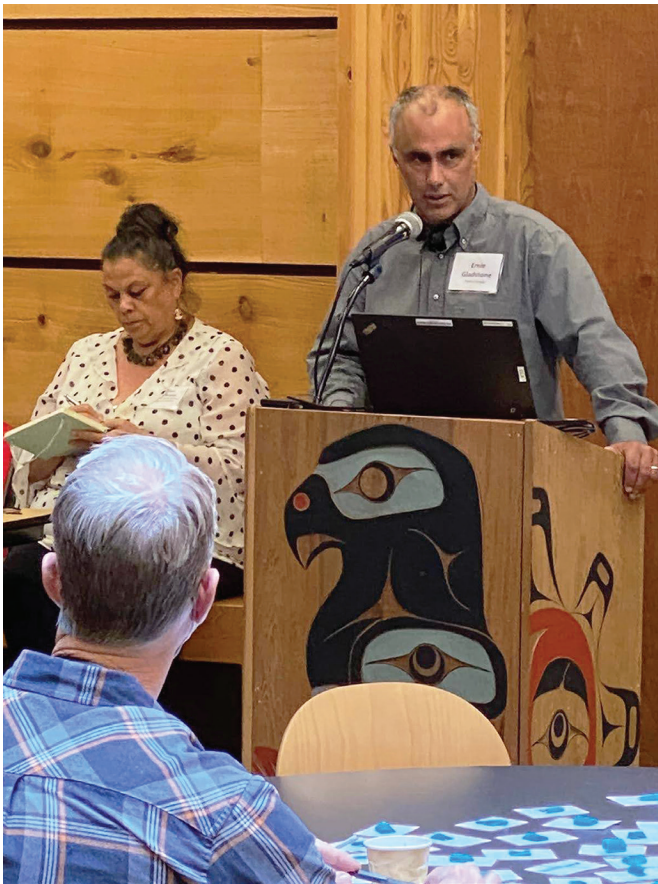
Parks Canada's approach to shared governance has been and will continue to recognize there is no "one size fits all" model. All arrangements are grounded in relationships, shared interests, and local contexts; just like relationships, cooperative management structures, and agreements evolve over time. Cooperative management arrangements reflect local contexts, interests, and relationships; the latter is never "complete," and positions along the spectrum are not static. As Indigenous interests change, and as Indigenous communities and nations continue to define what self-determination means to them, shared governance arrangements must evolve over time.

#### **What are we learning?**

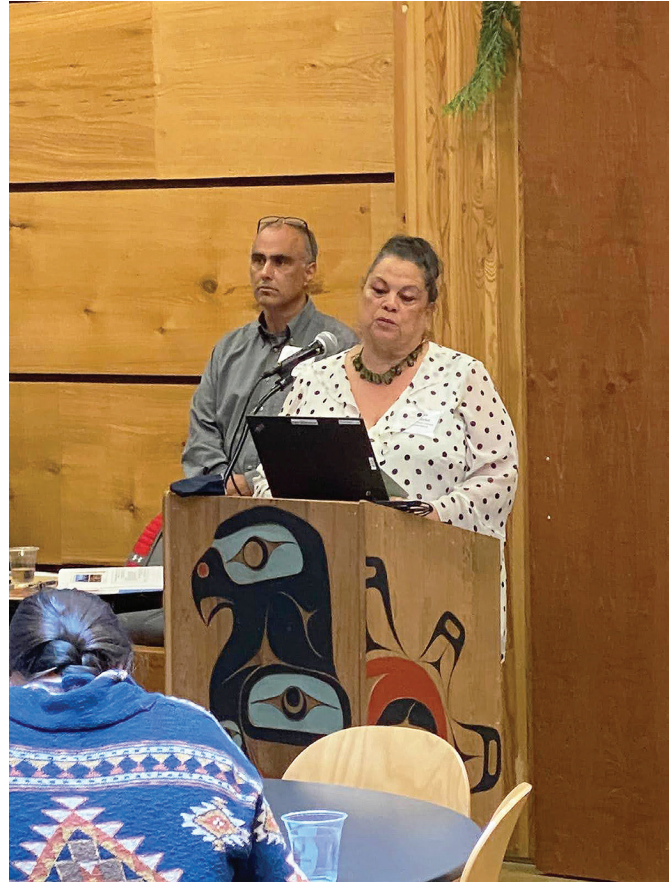
- *Human and fiscal capacity, within both Parks Canada and Indigenous communities and governments* — There are variations in how challenges present. Where management boards were set up through impact-benefit agreements or newer park establishment agreements, there is greater capacity for the operation of these boards much more so than where field units attempt to support cooperative management, either through core or program-based funding. Indigenous capacity challenges may be related to community size and administrative capacity and compounded by competing priorities. In many cases, limited Indigenous capacity is linked to colonial legacies that systematically eroded Indigenous systems of governance and law.
- *Readiness and continuity/cultural competencies* — We acknowledge the need to build readiness and continuity for shared governance amongst Parks Canada management and staff, and to support Indigenous partners to do the same. This includes building cultural competencies such as understanding Indigenous governance and legal systems and working alongside and across systems. Even where relationships and cooperative arrangements are well-established, these challenges can emerge due to staff turnover.
- *Jurisdictional complexities* — These are often related to overlapping territories and asserted claims amongst Indigenous governments. Where there are conflicts between Nations, these often have origins in colonial tactics of divide and conquer, so finding pathways forward as an Agency to support the healing of relationships is complex. Jurisdictional complexities are, in some places, also linked to adjacent or co-existing federal authorities i.e., [the Department of] Fisheries and Oceans in National Marine Conservation Areas.
- *Legislation* — Legislation that does not usually enable the application of Indigenous authorities is an ongoing issue. When working together within an ethical space, there is a need for recognition of the existence of multiple legal systems including common law, civil law, and Indigenous law.

#### **Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, National Marine Conservation Area Reserve, and Haida Heritage Site.**

Cindy Boyko (Co-Chair of the Gwaii Haanas Archipelago Management Board) and Ernie Gladstone (Superintendent at Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve) shared stories of their homelands, Haida Gwaii, as well as the establishment and ongoing implementation of the National Reserves. Gwaii Haanas has been the homeland of the Haida People since time immemorial. Haida stories have been passed down for many generations and show a history going back 14,000 years. Gwaii Haanas is a place where Haida communities travel to gather food, and visitors from around the world come to experience an intact ecosystem and Haida culture. It is also a place that supports commercial fishers; sometimes referred to as "Canada's Galapagos Islands," Haida Gwaii is also home to six native land animals, including the Haida Gwaii black bear (a subspecies found nowhere else in the world). There are an estimated 1.5 million seabirds that nest annually along the shores of Gwaii Haanas, such as puffins, auklets, and murrelets (known to Haida as "Night Birds").



Ernie Gladstone, Superintendent, Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve.



Cindy Boyko, Co-Chair of the Gwaii Haanas Archipelago Management Board.

In 1985 Gwaii Haanas was first designated as a Haida Heritage Site. At the same time, the Haida Nation led a protest to stop logging activities that were taking place in the area. Soon after, Canada and British Columbia agreed the area would be set aside as a protected area. This led the way to Canada’s designation of a National Park Reserve in the 1990s. In 1993 Canada and the Haida Nation began cooperatively managing Gwaii Haanas; in 2010 Canada designated Gwaii Haanas a National Marine Conservation Area Reserve, the first of its kind in Canada.

Gwaii Haanas is managed through the 1993 Gwaii Haanas Agreement and the 2010 Gwaii Haanas Marine Agreement. Through this agreement, both Canada and Haida “agree to disagree” on ownership and jurisdiction, but agree on the need for protection. In the Gwaii Haanas Agreement, Gwaii Haanas and Canada disagree on sovereignty and the title/ownership of Gwaii Haanas but agree on the objective concerning the care, protection, and enjoyment of Gwaii Haanas. The agreement includes a clear division in views (see Table 1).

For years the Haida people and the Government of Canada have co-managed Gwaii Haanas with an understanding that they have diverging views and a common view. In 2021, Canada and British Columbia recognized the inherent Haida Title over Haida Gwaii in “GayGahlda” Changing Tide. Work is now underway to align areas of past disagreement.

**TABLE 1.** Division and views between the Haida Nation and the Government of Canada.

Haida Nation	Government of Canada
The archipelago is Haida Lands, subject to the collective and individual rights of the Haida citizens, the sovereignty of the Hereditary Chiefs, and the jurisdiction of the Council of the Haida Nation.	The archipelago is Crown land, subject to certain private rights or interests, and subject to the sovereignty of Her Majesty the Queen and the legislative jurisdiction of the Parliament of Canada.

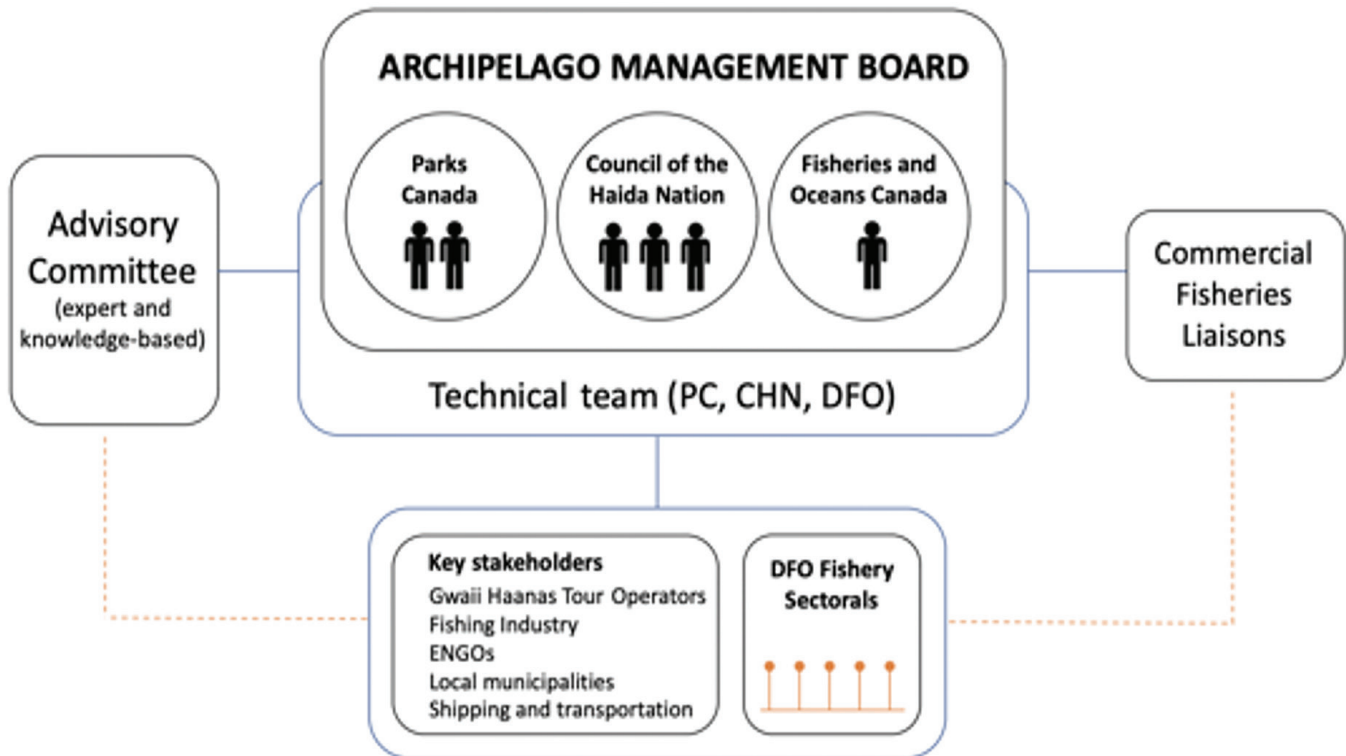










FIGURE 2. Gwaii Haanas: Archipelago Management Board.

The management structure of Gwaii Haanas includes the Archipelago Management Board (see Figure 2, above), which includes equal representation of the Haida Nation and the Government of Canada. The Board works through a consensus structure to provide recommendations to various authorities. Presenters shared the following key lessons learned throughout this process:

- *Culture first* — The protected area is viewed as Indigenous Peoples’ homelands first. Indigenous Knowledge is used as a starting point to inform decisions. An Indigenous language is prominently used and reflected in place names that are rooted in guiding principles from Haida values, including Respect, Balance, Interconnectedness, Giving and Receiving, Responsibility, and Seeking Wise Counsel (Figure 3).

FIGURE 3. Haida Guiding Principles. The Presenters shared that all this collaboration is grounded in Haida guiding principles, including respect, balance, interconnectedness, giving and receiving, responsibility, and seeking wise council.

<p><b>Yahguudang—Respect</b></p>  <p><b>Gina 'waadluxan gud ad kwaagid—Interconnectedness</b></p>  <p><b>'Laa guu ga kanhlins—Responsibility</b></p> 	<p><b>Giid tiljuus—Balance</b></p>  <p><b>Isda ad dli gil isda—Giving and Receiving</b></p>  <p><b>Gina k'aadang.nga gil uu tll k'anguudang—Seeking Wise Counsel</b></p> 
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Canada  Designs created by Tyson Brown  HAIDA NATION

- *Cooperative governance is an opportunity, not a burden* — It is important to recognize and respect each party’s authority, empower decision-makers to work cooperatively, use each organization’s strengths, and understand what’s available in each other’s toolboxes.
- *Find common ground* — Focus on areas of agreement, “don’t sweat the small stuff,” and avoid conflict that can undermine trust and create additional barriers.
- *Build trust* — Make time to build relationships on a professional and personal level by speaking frankly and honestly. Live or spend time in the community and find people who have a genuine desire to make the partnership work.

#### “JOURNEY OF CO-MANAGEMENT”

This exercise is based on “A Ladder of Citizen Participation” (Arnstein 1969) and adapted to better reflect the relationship of Indigenous communities with their respective government agency partner(s). The exercise began with the following questions posed to all Participants, Indigenous and government representatives:

1. Which best describes your community’s/agency’s **current relationship** with the community(ies), organization(s), Tribe(s), and/or nation(s) related to the protected area that you are associated with?
2. Which best describes your agency’s **ideal relationship** with the community(ies), organization(s), Tribe(s), and/or nation(s) related to the protected area that you are associated with?

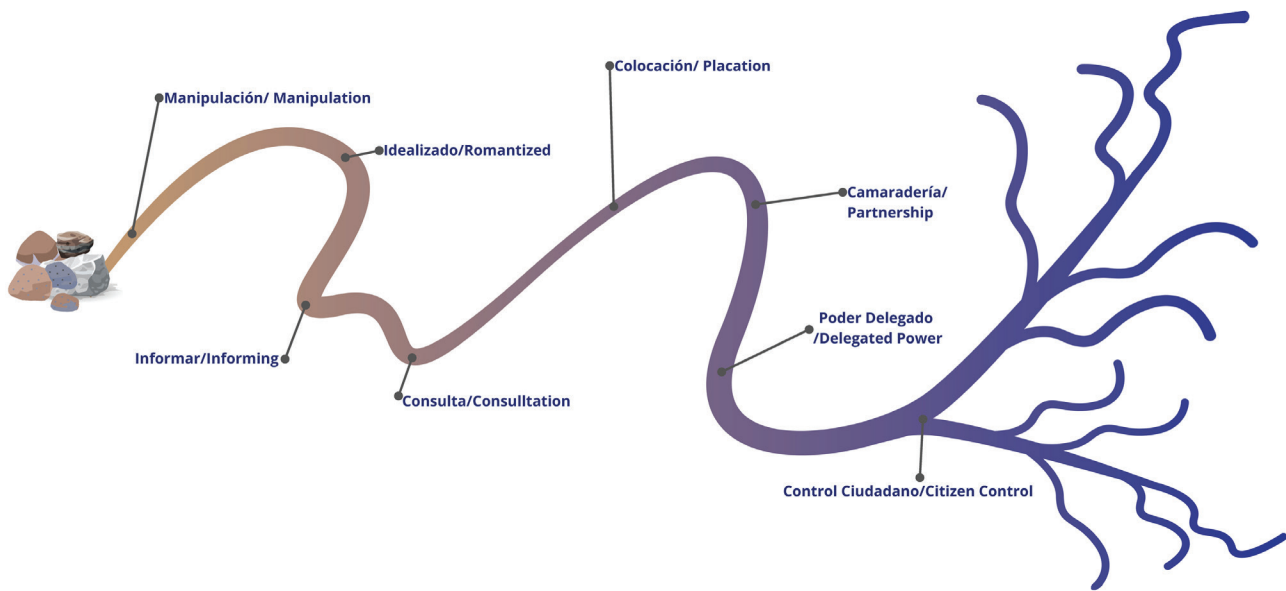
Responses to these key questions were to be framed in this (suggested) hierarchy of relationships:

- *Citizen Control* — Indigenous Peoples handle the entire job of planning, policy-making and managing a protected area. These projects empower Indigenous Peoples by building off the expertise of the government agency and enabling them to make their own partnerships.
- *Delegated Power* — Indigenous Peoples initiate and direct a project or program. The government is involved only in a supportive role or decision-making is shared between Indigenous People and the government. Indigenous Peoples have the power to assure accountability.
- *Partnership* — Power is redistributed through negotiation power between Indigenous Peoples and the government. Projects may be initiated by the government but there are shared decision-making responsibilities.
- *Placation* — Indigenous Peoples give advice on projects or programs designed and run by the government. Indigenous People are informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of the decisions made by the government.
- *Consultation* — Indigenous Peoples are assigned a specific role and informed about how and why they are being involved. Allows Indigenous Peoples to advise but the government retains the right to judge the legitimacy or feasibility of the advice.
- *Informing* — One-way flow of information; from the government to Indigenous Peoples.
- *Romanticized* — Indigenous Peoples are used to help or “bolster” a cause in a relatively indirect way.
- *Manipulation* — Government uses Indigenous Peoples to support causes and present that the causes are inspired by Indigenous groups.

To better visualize the possible flow and interconnection of these various types of relationships, the “ladder” image was then replaced with a river (Figure 4), and the “steps” with points along the water’s flow. The river metaphor was used with the respect that the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe was the workshop host. Particularly, the idea of a dam that prevents water flow at the head of the river and the dynamic river mouth and increased productivity following dam removal (the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe was instrumental in the removal of the Elwha River dams). Given the collaborative management efforts, led by the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, in the removal of the Elwha River dams, the river metaphor seemed appropriate.

Participants were asked to review and discuss the placement of “Tree,” “Canoe,” “Flow,” and “Eddy” icons along the river that were identified by the Participants in pre-workshop engagement activities.

The Participants were split into two groups, an Indigenous caucus, and an agency caucus, where the following elements were introduced to assist in locating responses to the questions posed.



**FIGURE 4.** River: Journey to Co-management. Model adapted from Arnstein 1969.

Answers from the survey given prior to the workshop were populated on each caucus copy of the River. Participants within each caucus were then asked to go through the exercise and place their responses (via laminated elements on a laminated poster) on the River; Flows and Eddies had space to allow notes of these events/tools/etc. The remaining time in the caucus was devoted to asking Participants to expand on their Flow and Eddy responses and share where there might be commonalities and learning opportunities between communities. Responses were anonymous and any notes recorded were broken into these two caucus categories. After the discussion, the caucuses were brought back together into a single group for sharing and reflection.

### INDIGENOUS CAUCUS

Given the low response rate to the pre-Workshop survey, there was not a clearly defined place to begin the discussion. However, the framework allowed the group to explore diverse experiences and common themes and understandings regarding successes, challenges, and enabling and disabling factors. There was some confusion about the exercise and how it should be conducted, and not enough time to sort out the challenges. The issue of the English/Spanish language barrier tended to offer additional challenges in communication among the group Participants for things such as a common understanding of certain terminology and how each Participant conceptually understood the exercise and the river analogy. The exercise did seem to engender discussion that evoked deeper, meaningful dialogue on the depth and breadth of histories, challenges, and generational trauma that Indigenous People are still in the healing process. It was offered that deconstruction of historical experiences is needed to understand **how to move forward, and what we should be moving toward.**

In the report-out from the session, the consensus of the group seemed to be reflected in the statement, “There’s a lot to work on and what started here at the workshop ... we have to continue working, continue talking, and continue moving forward. I hope that we can continue to collaborate.”

### AGENCY CAUCUS

For agency representatives that completed the pre-workshop information poll, many felt that their current relationship with Tribal and Indigenous communities was at the Consultation or Partnership stage. Agency representatives’ ideal relationship would shift towards Consultation and Delegation of Authority. However, Citizen Control was not thought to be an ideal relationship at this time.

Discussion around Flows (enabling factors or opportunities) were centered around relationship and trust building (which take time), identifying shared goals, transparency, and flexibility as to the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge

systems and approaches and being informed of and acknowledging true and complete histories of the land and peoples. Discussions around the Eddies (disabling factors or challenges) were centered around capacity limitations of both Indigenous communities and agencies, lack of requirements around engagement, changes in administration, repairing damaged relationships, and lack of trust.

Often agencies are reluctant to go beyond minimum requirements (i.e., consultation); however, the workshop attendees were all supportive of going beyond these minimum requirements and brainstorming ways to institutionalize the concepts of this workshop. There was broad consensus on the need for capacity building for both agencies and Indigenous Partners to achieve shared goals. Relationship building, which tends to stem from individual staff, is essential to building trust beyond administrative changes especially if staff are part of the community. Additionally, it was broadly acknowledged that the agency staff in attendance are the individuals who already go above and beyond and prioritize Indigenous engagement in their work; discussions concluded with how to conduct in-reach to agency staff to institutionalize and sustain these concepts and relationships beyond administrative changes.

### INDIGENOUS-LED “OPEN SPACE”

*Open Space* is a meeting method where the Participants create and manage the agenda themselves. This method is ideal if you want Participants to gain ownership of an issue and come up with solutions. Participants agree on the areas of discussion that have importance for them and then take responsibility for facilitating the sessions. Open Space works best when the worktop be done is complex, the people and ideas involved are diverse, the passion for resolution and potential for conflict is high, and the time to get it done was yesterday. It’s been called passion, bound by responsibility, the energy of a good coffee break, intentional self-organization, spirit at work, chaos, creativity, evolution in organization, and a simple, powerful way to get people and organizations moving together — when and where needed most. Additionally, Participants were asked to work within an Ethical Space, relying on the seven principles that guide this approach.

Participants proposed topics and signed up for topic groups. Each group that gathered to discuss the topic was responsible for posting a report of the session. At the sessions, the Participants uniformly expressed their desire to continue this collaboration into the future. The discussions were broad ranging and touched upon more clearly defining the group’s identity, what specific topics might be discussed at future gatherings that would be most meaningful and valuable, and who was not in the circle at this meeting who could both benefit and contribute. The summary below shares points highlighted and shared by the Rapporteurs taken within each of the sessions. Each session summary is shared under the following themes (provided by Participants):

- Who We Are
- How We Grow

#### Discussions during “Open Space” sessions.



- How We Engage/Protocols for Indigenous Engagement
- What We Are Saying

#### “WHO WE ARE”

The Indigenous Caucus provided numerous suggestions for working collectively beyond this workshop. As a Participant shared, “We do have common struggles. Can we create a lasting commitment to each other and build each other’s capacity ... share information and call to action to support each other?” The discussions and suggestions highlighted commonalities and possible actions following the workshop. Commonalities shared included:

- All are Indigenous
- Coming together across an international geographic area
- Need for including youth, providing youth training and mentorship
- All connected to the Pacific Ocean: Shared waters connect all
- Community use of canoes and similar water vessels
- Similar connections to animals, such as whales
- All are guardians and stewards
- Share journeys to healing
- Act as bridges

**Moving Forward with Action.** The group shared thoughts and ideas to develop a group or network of Indigenous Stewards connected to the Pacific Ocean. The following ideas for actions were shared during the discussion.

- **Develop a network** amongst the people represented at this workshop.
- **Name** the group to recognize the value of coming together and fostering collective action. Participants shared themes related to Indigenous Leadership, Canoe, Stewardship, Alliance, and the Pacific Ocean in discussing possible names. Participants also suggested considering what language is used for the name. Given that this is an Indigenous International group, using one of their languages in the name may be ideal.
- Participants also suggested **avoiding** using some words in choosing a name, such as “protected areas,” “heritage,” and “sanctuaries.” Participants shared that “protected areas” is often perceived to exclude Indigenous Peoples based on experiences and history or are perceived by fishermen to be confrontational. The word “heritage” is often associated with World Heritage sites, and many Indigenous Peoples are concerned with how these sites are designated and managed. Participants shared that the word “sanctuaries” in a name can be misleading.
- The group ended the discussion with the following **proposed name**, “*International Indigenous Stewards of the Pacific Ocean.*”

The group also discussed potential mechanisms for meeting again. While all the Participants would like to meet in person, it was also noted that bringing everyone together across a large geographic area is very expensive. The groups suggested that they consider:

- Utilizing Zoom as a platform for meeting throughout the year
- Meet annually, and identify potential venues and hosts for the next gathering.
- Should the next meeting be held in a Spanish-speaking country?
- Ask an agency to develop a single point of contact to keep the group organized and bring them together annually.

The Participants further articulated recommendations that should be considered for the next meeting. Including:

- Involve youth:
  - Invite youth from the area where the meeting is being held.
  - Develop a youth mentorship program, perhaps including a Youth Guardian Program to foster the next generation of leaders.
  - Partner with existing programs and initiatives, providing support for the engagement of Indigenous youth.
  - There is a need to support and find ways to expand the intergenerational transfer of Indigenous Knowledge.



- Find and secure sustainable support for Participant travel.
- Adequate and appropriate food when they do meet in person. For example, salmon needed to be shared at this workshop.
- Ensure outings (e.g., field trips).

The Participants also discussed thoughts on sharing the information, and stories shared through this and future workshops with the people back home. As a Participant shared, “Stories of successes like that from Gwaii Haanas are inspiring to us.” Participants also indicated that many of them have common struggles and experiences in addressing these challenges that would be valuable to share.

Participants raised many points throughout the discussion, including the interconnections of concerns and potential topics for future discussions. Some of these points were:

- Focus on the healing of places and communities.
- Embrace the “7 generations concept.” Bring the three past generations’ wisdom to the present, and pass it on to the future.
- Call for implementing the United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP). A Participant shared, that this group could sign off on it [UNDRIP].
- The Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians and Nation to Nation International have urged for the UNDRIP to be signed.
- Violence against Indigenous Peoples. A Participant shared, “The protection of our people is part of this too (human trafficking of Indigenous Peoples on ships and fishing vessels, violence, etc.)”
- Pollution concerns. A Participant shared, “Cruise ship pollution issues in Hawai‘i. Turning the ocean into a toilet. The Law of the Sea doesn’t apply to this in Hawai‘i.” Another Participant shared, “Timber and sawmills want to keep sending their chemical-laden waste waters into local creeks and rivers. Tribes are opposing that. Quileute put a stop to this for one project.”
- Organization of the group and working together. A Participant shared, “Haida Nation has Hereditary Chiefs for territories. But we developed the Haida Accord that puts all the land together so all the Chiefs can be together. Each time a new Chief comes in, this is reaffirmed when they sign on. Maybe this is what our group here can stand for too.”
- Working Together. A Participant endorsed supporting international “sister sanctuary” relationships between us.

Discussions of group identity, the challenges to be confronted, the potential opportunities to explore, and the need for actions and not just words are essential in identifying the broad range of issues and ideas that can focus the future deliberations of such international collaborations to purpose.

#### “HOW WE GROW”

Throughout this discussion, Participants shared thoughts on moving forward, future meetings, and how the group could collectively advocate for and support capacity building, protocols, and engagement. Below is a summary of the actions taken from notes provided by Indigenous Participants engaged in the discussion. The actions are directed toward both Indigenous Peoples and federal governments.

- **Actions Related to Moving Forward from this Meeting and Into the Future:**
  - Apply what has been learned at this workshop. Bring the messages and results from the workshop back to families and communities to share what was achieved.
  - Define the type of leadership needed. With this action, it was noted that the federal agencies are complicated. One Participant said, Engaging with the agencies is a beast.
  - Ensure that Elders and youth attend meetings and are part of the larger initiative.
  - Respect each other’s time.
- **Actions Related to Building Capacity:**
  - Create a curriculum for Tribal youth. For example, a Native American Civics class to teach the realities of

Tribal perspectives and the complicated system that we work within (i.e., relationships between Indigenous governments and federal governments).

- Create training for all youth and citizens (mainstream) to learn about and understand Native American histories.
  - Create a week-long course to train federal agency staff and leadership on the realities of who Tribal People are, their homelands, and their responsibilities.
  - Communities consider developing a history packet that you can provide to agencies ahead of time for the communities you are working with.
- **Actions Related to Protocols, Bills of Rights, Consultation, and Engagement:**
- Tribes/Communities/Indigenous governments develop protocols or bill of rights for how federal agencies work with them.
  - Federal agencies need to be aware of and respect Indigenous Peoples' protocols; to be respectful of those protocols and flexible. Within this discussion, a Participant shared, Agencies can't be the ones to decide how the meeting can be held.
  - Federal agency staff need to come to Indigenous communities and speak with people.
  - Respecting each other's times and the need for flexibility. Within this discussion, a Participant shared, Tribes need to respect the government's time too (two-way street) due to limited time; we need to make the best of it. Which is why doing the pre-homework is so important. You need to meet agencies where they are and be able to frame your history in a Western framework.

Within the discussion, a Participant shared, "It should be ok to say we [Indigenous government] don't have protocols and not feel ashamed about it because the federal government stomped them out so long ago. Another Participant shared, "Researchers or institutions would come and talk about us without consultation. We developed this protocol for these people to work with us and provide guidance on doing this more appropriately. We have seen some improvements on this." It was also shared that there is a need to plan for transitions within both communities and agencies to aid in community agency partnerships.

Participants also shared points about the different cultures and how this applies to the work being done. For example, it was noted that "Culture is infused within Indigenous Peoples' work; that this is innate to how Indigenous Peoples are. However, this is different for Westerners."

#### **"HOW WE ENGAGE/PROTOCOLS FOR INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT."**

Participants in this discussion shared thoughts and proposed actions for moving forward. The actions relate to organizing future workshops and the impacts of colonialism and federal government relationships with Indigenous communities.

Participants suggested organizing two future workshops. One workshop would be for Indigenous communities, Peoples, and Tribes/Nations; the second should be amongst Indigenous Peoples and Federal and State government representatives. The Participants suggested that the following topics be discussed:

- Legal frameworks of the different countries
- Elaboration of model contracts (commitment statements)
- Orientations/recommendation of protocols/guidelines for protocol creation
- Creation of educational materials with the guidelines for Indigenous communities; instructional materials for Indigenous communities (protocols and guidelines);
- Flexible methodologies.

Throughout these discussions, Participants raised points about the need for protocols and federal agencies to build capacity. The protocols will aid federal agencies in their engagement with communities and have stronger connections. As a Participant shared, in reflection on developing protocols, "So we have better tools to guide the government or private entities to come and work with us in the right ways considering the needs of the

community. Another Participant shared, “We want to share work done with the community — best practices protocols for protecting cultural indigenous heritage.”

Considering developing protocols, it is also important to recognize the uniqueness of Indigenous Peoples, communities, and governments. Some Participants stressed that different Indigenous Peoples have different realities and that there is not one universal protocol that would reflect all Indigenous Peoples.

This discussion also raised points about the relationships between Indigenous Peoples and federal governments. One Participant said, “I keep getting stuck on this dependency relationship between the Tribes and the federal government. It is this glass ceiling that keeps us from full independent sovereignty. How do we change the relationship to be more dynamic and less dependent? That is a step we need to get to for agencies is real sovereignty. Not sure how to get there other than rewriting legislation.”

Another Participant shared, “The trust relationship and that dependence part. One of the barriers that prevents that from fully becoming a reality, is the legal statute. During the Marshall Trilogy, it was said that we were government wards. That holds true today even from treaty Tribes. Sovereign up to a point. Only trusted to operate in a certain space that the government defines. Changing that part is a big task, but we are having these conversations. Meaningful consultation.”

Working together, collaborating, and supporting each other were also stressed through this discussion. As a Participant shared, “Banding together is something we always try to get off the ground. We are set up to fight amongst ourselves. Because then you do leave out peoples’ rights and recognition.”

#### “WHAT WE ARE SAYING”

Below is a summary of the actions taken from notes provided by Indigenous Participants engaged in the discussion. The actions are directed toward both Indigenous Peoples and federal governments.

Participants shared thoughts and ideas about developing a Declaration throughout this discussion. It was suggested that the Declaration include:

Beach area near the mouth of the Elwha River.



- A statement of purpose.
- A foundational section that focuses on who the Indigenous Peoples are that developed the Declaration and where they come from. The section should also focus on Indigenous Knowledge, Cultural Expression, and Art Forms common to all involved.
- The third section should focus on scientific research as we move forward. With consideration of this section, a Participant shared, “As we move forward, we have experienced what has occurred in our past, what is presently happening, and what will happen in the future; list our positions on this kind of use for research on Indigenous Peoples, their places, and resources.”
- The fourth section should be a statement asserting a balance and sharing that Indigenous Peoples have their own interests and are equal to others’ interests and knowledges.

The Participants developed no formal statement or declaration, but it was generally agreed that had the group had sufficient time, such a statement or declaration would have been useful.

### REFLECTING AND WORKSHOP CLOSING

Concluding this time together, the Participants assembled into a circle around the Longhouse to share not only their final thoughts, ideas, and observations regarding the discussions and deliberations conducted at the workshop but also their hopes and aspirations for what the future might bring for co-management of protected areas. The concluding remarks offered by many Participants embodied the hope of governments acting in ways that truly honor their often-stated commitment to respecting Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination, as well as acknowledging the intergenerational trauma so evident in words expressed and the need to heal these wounds inflicted by many broken promises. Arising from reconciliation and relationships of trust and respect beginning to be built and fostered at gatherings such as this, there was also hope often expressed that we are setting off on a good path toward resolving past conflicts and into a time when governments and Indigenous Peoples can engage in meaningful collaboration and co-management of places we collectively value.

Of particular note was the generosity of spirit extended to the government representatives present by the Indigenous People participating, warmly welcomed into the circle those who represent the same governments that have, since colonization, oppressed their people and dispossessed their lands and cultures. Despite this long and troubling history, such generosity was something that also offered hope that reconciliation was possible. Future relationships of trust and respect, meaningfully acknowledging Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination, might appropriately serve as the foundation for moving forward through expanding respectful engagement and collaboration in these protected areas to which we are deeply connected and are all committed to protecting and preserving for future generations.

#### SENSE OF PLACE: LOWER ELWHA KLALLAM TRIBE

The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe brought workshop attendees to two sites relevant to the Elwha dam removal project. First, a visit to the Aldwell Reservoir, highlighting changes in the lakebed prior to and after dam removal and eventual system recovery. The second site visit was to the mouth of the Elwha River, which has shifted significantly since dam removal. We heard from tribal members and staff, including Vice Chairman Russ Hepfer, on the significance of the dam removal and return of salmon to the river.



## NEXT STEPS: WORKSHOP FOLLOW-UPS

### Finding a Path Forward toward Meaningful Co-Stewardship

There was a clear and unambiguous sentiment expressed throughout the workshop by Participants that moving toward meaningful co-stewardship of protected areas was not only an aspiration of the Indigenous communities represented but a clearly stated expectation. Most if not all protected areas were established within traditional homelands and waters, often through the removal and dispossession of Indigenous Peoples who had a deep connection to these places since time immemorial. There was much sharing of intergenerational trauma during the workshop sessions. This legacy of dispossession and the need for healing these deep wounds from the longstanding and challenging relationship between Indigenous Peoples and the governments who made promises they did not keep and commitments they did not honor was mentioned often by Participants. The possibility that we may be entering a time when this traumatic history is being acknowledged and that Indigenous voices and perspectives on establishing and managing these places in their traditional homelands and waters were often a positive element of Participant observations. That Indigenous communities are now being respectfully acknowledged and heard and that there may soon come a time when Indigenous Peoples would have a meaningful role and opportunities for sharing their knowledge and wisdom through shared stewardship seemed to be viewed by Participants as a faint glimmer of hope, but where we collectively go from here is yet to be tangibly demonstrated.

In the United States, the Government is offering, through guidance to agencies that manage protected areas, many avenues to reach this shared goal of meaningful co-stewardship, acknowledging and respecting the valuable knowledge and experience acquired in these places, often over millennia, and that Indigenous Peoples can contribute to achieving effective co-stewardship of protected areas. While some of this guidance was still being developed when the workshop was held and only briefly discussed at the workshop, it forms elements of the foundation for how the U.S. government agencies are moving forward. Examples of such guidance (recommended by some workshop Participants to be highlighted in this workshop summary) include but are not limited to:

- Executive Order 14031 (2021) — *Advancing Equity, Justice, and Opportunity for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders*
- Executive Order 14008 (2021) — *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad*
- Executive Order 13985 (2021) — *Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government*
- Executive Order 13175 (2000) - *Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments*
- Joint Secretarial Order 3403 - *Fulfilling the Trust Responsibility to Indian Tribes in the Stewardship of Federal Lands and Waters*
- OTEP/CEQ (2021) — *Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Federal Decisionmaking*
- OTEP/CEQ (2022) — *Guidance for Federal Departments and Agencies on Indigenous Knowledge*
- OTEP/CEQ (2022) — *Implementation of Guidance for Federal Departments and Agencies on Indigenous Knowledge*
- *United Nations (2007) - United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*

This overarching guidance related to co-stewardship is also leading to the development of department and agency-specific guidance, such as DOI Policy Memorandum 22-03 — *Fulfilling the National Park Service Trust Responsibility to Indian Tribes, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians in the Stewardship of Federal Lands and Waters*. Therefore, while the policy landscape surrounding co-stewardship in the U.S., and other countries represented at the workshop, has been evolving too rapidly to be a focus of extensive discussion at the workshop, it bears mention here as context for the findings of these discussions and perhaps a demonstration of the current commitment of governments to address the significance of this topic as expressed and illuminated by the workshop Participants.

Some follow-up activities reflected in the workshop objectives include the creation of a community of practice on Indigenous affairs and protected areas among the Participant communities and the development of a platform to facilitate a dialogue among Participants. These activities are not restricted to the workshop Participants only; they should include other communities in Chile and the U.S. and other potential partner nations. Current national policies on the inclusion and integration of local and Indigenous communities in the Americas provide a unique



Scenes from field trip led by Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal representatives to the beach at the mouth of the Elwha River.

opportunity to advance in developing regional partnerships, exchanging experiences, supporting integration processes, and developing an international community of practice for indigenous communities.

The organizing team of the Workshop had the opportunity to present some of the initial outcomes of the event at a session hosted during the 5th International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC5) (Vancouver, Feb. 3–9, 2023). During the session, workshop Participants highlighted the value of the gathering, how much they learned and the lessons they brought back to their communities, and the importance of replicating these kinds of opportunities to share with other Indigenous communities. IMPAC5 also helped strengthen the U.S.-Chile bilateral relationship by serving as the venue to announce and formalize a collaborative sister park framework between the communities of Rapa Nui and Hawai‘i.

A proposed follow-up activity, sponsored by the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), will take place in September 2023. As a result of the priority activities identified during the Workshop, NOAA proposed an IVLP-on-demand activity to the U.S. Department of State to facilitate the travel of Indigenous leaders from Chile to visit peers and protected areas in the United States to advance the dialogue on collaborative management between communities and local- and state-level governments. This program has preliminary approval, and we are currently seeking sponsors to fund international travel for Participants. The details of the visit and the communication with the selected communities in Chile will be finalized in the next few months, led by the Department of State.

After several post-workshop briefings to NOAA and Department of State leadership (in late 2022), members of the organizing team are currently looking to establish partnerships and funding opportunities to support new gatherings among communities, exchange visits, strengthen sister-park relations, and help advance the dialogue among the community of practice. There are some regional opportunities to explore, such as the national-level implementation of the 2022 Joint Declaration on “Americas for the Protection of the Ocean,” signed by Chile and the U.S., among other countries, during the ninth Summit of the Americas. This declaration calls for promoting the engagement of local and Indigenous communities in managing MPAs and exploring cooperation with Indigenous Peoples and non-governmental entities.

## CONCLUSION

The Participants at this gathering acknowledged that this was just the beginning of a collective journey, but also one that Indigenous Peoples have been traveling for many centuries since their lands and waters, their spirit, cultures, and traditions were dispossessed by colonization. There are so many challenges, and opportunities to confront them, that continuing to work together with a common mission and purpose is not just a good idea, but necessary. As “International Indigenous Stewards of the Pacific Ocean,” there was clear intent expressed that this group could contribute to addressing this critical need.

This journey began with the proposed destination that included the following activities:

- Create a community of practice for Indigenous cooperative management.
- Develop recommendations to advance Indigenous priorities within protected area management.

- Establish a post-workshop plan of action for continued relations and dialogue, including working groups to further develop and implement this plan.

On every journey, along the way companions share stories and experiences, learn more about each other, themselves, and the path they are following, encounter obstacles, and discuss which alternative routes might get them to the destination more successfully. This journey was no exception. The Participants came from many different geographic regions, representing Indigenous communities throughout four different countries, bringing with them their own experience, traditions, and knowledge. What became most evident was that they had many experiences in common and that the intent to build a sustainable “community of practice” was useful — indeed necessary — as both a forum for sharing ideas and the deep knowledge they hold, as well as to foster collective action to address these common challenges. As demonstrated by the unambiguous aspiration to continue and expand these gatherings, relationships were forged, and the opportunity to continue to collaborate, share, heal, and perhaps strengthen each other was embraced by the Participants. While the Western terminology embodied in the concept of “community of practice” may not be the way the Participants would choose to describe this collaboration, the essence of such a community, and the intent to continue to follow this path, was achieved.

As to the other intended workshop objectives, regarding recommendations and a plan of action, this report contains many ideas and proposed collaborative actions developed by the Participants. Acknowledging that this workshop represents the beginning of a journey that the Participants intend to continue, the recommendations and actions developed are not simply those that only this group would implement but ones that the agencies that identify and manage protected areas should also give serious consideration in their future plans and initiatives. Of particular importance is the evolution of protected areas toward co-management, which was very much a shared aspiration among all Participants. The excellent workshop presentation from the Haida and Parks Canada leadership about building and implementing their successful co-management arrangement for the protected area reserves on and around Haida Gwaii, which encompass much of the traditional lands and waters of the Haida Nation, was extremely well received, and elicited a great deal of enthusiastic discussion at the workshop. Clearly, what has been achieved by the governments of Canada and the Haida Nation can serve as both a model for and an inspirational example of the many benefits of effective protected area management that accrue from such co-management arrangements. Finding support to continue this and other similar Tribal and Indigenous collaborations to share knowledge and begin to implement these recommendations is necessary to sustain the momentum built from sharing of Participants in the

Workshop group photo taken on the final day of the workshop and reflective of the collective relationships built and journey undertaken together throughout the discussions.



Longhouse circle. The stories and knowledge shared in that circle are gifts that should be gratefully received, listened to very closely, and acknowledged through reciprocity by those who are positioned to support Indigenous Peoples' sovereignty and self-determination.

## REFERENCES

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## APPENDIX A – WORKSHOP RESOURCES

Many resources were made available in preparation of the workshop. The resources are on the George Wright Society workshop webpage <https://www.georgewrightssociety.org/indigenous-workshop> and will remain available through this site.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

This report reflects the discussions, barriers, and solutions shared at the meeting in 2022. Appreciating the dynamic world we are all part of, some government structures may have changed since these discussions, and many remain the same. This does not take away from the importance of the discussions, barriers, and solutions shared and the need to learn from and uplift what is shared here for the collective well-being of all.

