



Press Statement

2021 6th IPCC report: Nature and Indigenous Rights Go Hand in Hand

August 11th 2021 (Ottawa, ON) – The 6th The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report was released on August 9th in Geneva, Switzerland. The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples was honoured to be invited to contribute as part of the Canadian delegation team. This report¹ highlights the international consensus on the scientific facts underlying climate change issues.

Indigenous people face additional vulnerabilities due to climate change, due to existing poverty, discrimination, and connection to local ecosystems. According to the IPCC 6th Report:

It is unequivocal that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, ocean and land. Widespread and rapid changes in the atmosphere, ocean, cryosphere and biosphere have occurred.

Human-induced climate change is already affecting many weather and climate extremes in every region across the globe.

Global warming of 1.5°C and 2°C will be exceeded during the 21st century unless deep reductions in carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gas emissions occur in the coming decades.

“This report leaves no debate, climate change is a clear and present threat to all human beings, and in particular to the way of life of countless Indigenous peoples around the world” said CAP National Chief Elmer St Pierre. “Every government must take every available step to stop this climate process, and mitigate the effects”.

The United Nations ECOSOC has highlighted how Indigenous peoples, using traditional knowledge not only sustainably live in their traditional lands, but also enhance and support the ability of those ecosystems to absorb carbon, adapt and mitigate the impacts of climate change². Protecting Indigenous rights is not simply a matter of acknowledging the rights of people living on their traditional lands, but also a crucial step for surviving climate change and mitigating the damage of carbon emissions.

¹ The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, SIXTH ASSESSMENT REPORT <https://www.ipcc.ch/>

² United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Indigenous Peoples, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/climate-change.html>

“CAP is calling on the government of Canada to listen to the science. An election is coming, and this is the time to make sure all parties promise to address climate change and protect Indigenous rights in Canada” said CAP Vice Chief Kim Beaudin. “These are two sides of the same coin, and we won’t achieve one without achieving both.”

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The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples is the national voice representing the interests of Métis, status and non-status Indians, and Southern Inuit Indigenous People living off-reserve. Today, over 70% of Indigenous people live off-reserve.

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