



Indigenous Centre for
Cumulative Effects



WEAVING KNOWLEDGE

WHAT WE HEARD REPORT



Weaving Knowledge: What We Heard Report
from the ICCE Knowledge Exchange Gathering, February 10 to 12, 2026, Tin Wis, Tofino, B.C.

Indigenous Centre for Cumulative Effects, September 2026

The views reflected in this what we heard report are those expressed at the knowledge exchange, but do not necessarily reflect those of the Centre or individual participants.

We respectfully acknowledge the unceded territory of the Tla-o-quiaht First Nation,
the caretakers of the lands and waters where this gathering was held.

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This report is available **en Français**



Indigenous Centre for
Cumulative Effects

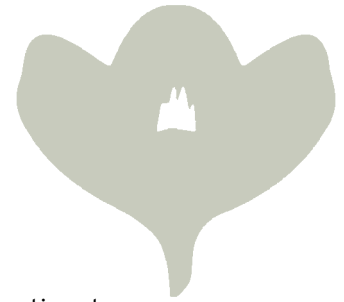
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INTRODUCTION



In February 2026, the Indigenous Centre for Cumulative Effects (ICCE) convened a national knowledge exchange gathering in Tofino, British Columbia, on the territory of Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation. Indigenous leaders, practitioners, Elders, youth, and partners from across Canada came together to advance Indigenous-led approaches to cumulative effects – an area of growing urgency and national importance in a time of increasing development pressures on Indigenous lands.

Cumulative effects continue to pose significant challenges for Indigenous peoples, whose air, lands, waters, food sources, and rights are impacted by the expanding and accelerated development pressures, climate change, and regulatory streamlining efforts that are dramatically compressing engagement timelines. Despite this, federal policies, funding mechanisms, and assessment processes are narrowly focused, project-based, time-limited, and do not always align with Indigenous knowledge systems, law, and jurisdiction. This gathering created a critical space for the ICCE network to articulate shared priorities and solutions – grounded in Indigenous practices, governance, and stewardship responsibilities.

Over 10 Indigenous communities and organizations contributed to the dialogue, including a strong youth presence with over 20 youth participants. Youth voices were central, with Land-Based Learning students and ICCE Youth Ambassadors from three different Indigenous communities helping to shape forward-looking solutions rooted in intergenerational knowledge and responsibility.

Participants reflected the geographic and governance diversity of cumulative effects contexts across Canada, including through representation from the Tł̓ch̓q Government, T̓silhqot'in National Government, Wabun Tribal Council, Grassy Narrows First Nation, the host Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation, and partners such as the Arctic Eider Society and SIKU.

Discussions throughout the gathering underscored a consistent message: Indigenous Nations are leading innovative, place-based cumulative effects work, but require sustained, flexible, and distinctions-based federal support to do so effectively. Participants identified the need for long-term funding models, recognition of Indigenous jurisdiction, integration of Indigenous knowledge alongside western science, and policy reform that moves beyond siloed, project-by-project approaches.

This report reflects not only the knowledge shared at the gathering, but also a collective call to action for all of Canada, particularly the provincial and federal governments and regulatory agencies to support and address Indigenous-led cumulative effects work. Advancing cumulative effects in a meaningful way requires a fundamental shift – from reactive, short-term processes to proactive, Indigenous-led approaches grounded in our rights and responsibilities and rooted in our relationships to the land and the people. By weaving Indigenous knowledge and values into the fabric of cumulative effects, we strengthen the landscape where future generations will walk.

WHY WE GATHERED

Participants came together from across Canada to share their experiences, knowledge, stories, and expertise in Indigenous-led cumulative effects work, creating a space for mutual support, collaboration, and planning.

WHO WAS IN THE ROOM

Participants represented Nations and organizations spanning Canada's geography and diversity of cumulative effects contexts, including:

- 10+ Nations and organizations from across Canada;
- 30+ participants practitioners, Elders, and youth; and
- 20+ youth participants, including 18 land-based learning high school students and their two instructors.

Participants represented Nations and organizations spanning Canada's geography and diversity of cumulative effects contexts (see map on the following page).



Participants represented Nations and organizations spanning Canada's geography and diversity of cumulative effects contexts



- Tłıchǫ Government (Northwest Territories)
- Tsilhqot'in National Government (British Columbia)
- Wabun Tribal Council (Northern Ontario)
- Grassy Narrows First Nation (Ontario)
- Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation (British Columbia – host)
- Arctic Eider Society (Nunavut)
- ICCE network team and advisors (National)
- Youth ambassadors from Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation (ACFN), York Factory First Nation (YFFN), and Barren Lands First Nation (Alberta and Manitoba)
- Ucluelet Secondary School Land-Based Learning Program (18 students and two teachers)

DAY 1 SUMMARY

The first day of the Indigenous Centre for Cumulative Effects (ICCE) Indigenous Knowledge Exchange Gathering brought together Nations from across Canada, including the Tłıchʔ (NWT), T̓silhqot'in Nation (BC), and Wabun First Nations from Northern Ontario, Grassy Narrows First Nation, to name a few of the places represented. Each took time to present and share their wisdom, tools, experiences and strategies around cumulative effects monitoring and environmental stewardship. The day opened with a deep historical welcome from Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation who shared about the history of the lands that hosted the gathering.

Carol Crowe, ICCE-TAC member, opened the session with remarks that grounded the group in shared intentions and helped create space for open dialogue and reflection. This allowed for participants to acknowledge the ongoing and difficult work Indigenous communities face as increasing development expands across their territories, requiring them to manage the resulting environmental and community, and socio-economic and social impacts. Examples raised included the drastic decline in Caribou populations across northern regions due to increasing industrial activity, including road expansion and traffic. In northern Ontario, participants pointed to mining impacts that were equally as urgent, including a 100-year history of extraction and mounting permitting pressures. Participants recognized the mounting strain on capacity caused by the sheer volume of work facing Indigenous organizations and environmental practitioners alongside a deteriorating federal relationship, cuts to environmental departments, changes to Species at Risk legislation, and a growing recognition that communities cannot rely on the provincial/territorial and federal governments for resources and must secure their own resources.

One of the key strategies identified to address these increasing challenges to manage cumulative effects was through allyship. The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation demonstrated the ways that relationship building, cross cultural education and allyship have been key strategies for their Nation.

The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation reflected on the Meares Island Injunction of the 1980's and the how they stand up for their rights and stand up to protect the environment. The inspirational advocacy of the Nation led to the establishment of the Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks and Tla-o-qui-aht Guardians program. Knowledge sharing and establishing respectful working relationships with allies, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, has proven a great success in addressing local fish decline, restoring the sea kelp forest and ultimately, supporting the return of keystone species, such as the sea otter.

The T̓silhqot'in National Government shared some of the approaches the Nation is taking to help fulfill the sacred obligation to steward the nen (the land and natural resources on and in it) and address nenqay detelʔaš (how our land changes and impacts the Nation's cultural security). The Nation is working to ensure that future generations will be able to continue to practice, preserve and strengthen, and transmit T̓silhqot'in language, culture and cultural practices effectively.

“

“We need to build allies and champions on the other side ...”



The T̓silhqot̓in Nation's approach is grounded in the voices of their community members through community-led N'en Planning processes that are working towards a sustainable, holistic, and integrate living plan for current and future generations.

The T̓silhqot̓in National Government has defined cumulative effects as 'changes to the environmental, social, cultural, spiritual, health and economic values caused by the impacts of the past, present and potential future human activities and natural processes.' Over the past few years the T̓silhqot̓in National Government has been developing and refining a CE tool that prioritize T̓silhqot̓in values and is designed to enhance the Nation's ability to exercise jurisdiction across the territory and improve the process of engagement with neighbouring communities, external governments and proponents. The T̓silhqot̓in credits strong leadership and community validation to a strong environmental stewardship program.

The Tłıchǫ representatives also shared cumulative effects strategies tied to traditional methods for environment stewardship and protection that involves the community being on the land. Other presentations ranged from hearing the struggles of mercury contamination in Grassy Narrows, to learning about Arctic Eider's SIKU app. The ICCE has also featured webinars with Grassy Narrows and Arctic Eider, demonstrating the cumulative effects relevance in further detail (see ICCE resources and video library).

The first day also marked a meaningful evolution in how the ICCE continues to grow and network as an Indigenous-led cumulative effects community. Participants discussed the potential of updating the organization's name to the National Indigenous Community Cumulative Effects, reflecting the National scope and community-centered nature of the work.

From these regional realities, four themes emerged:

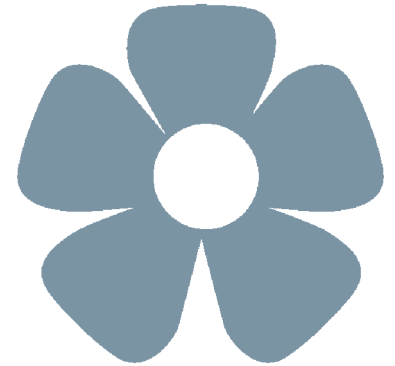
1. Cross-cultural **allyship and partnership, and capacity building** that upholds, supports and centers Indigenous sovereignty and Indigenous laws.
2. Indigenous **data sovereignty** and the need for community-owned data sets and monitoring systems; mapping, visibility, and asserting presence on territories. Tools like the SIKU app and networks like the Arctic Eider Society were held up as models of communities taking control of their own information.
3. Breaking down silos to build **cross-Nation synergies**; and
4. Ongoing dialogue about the tension between economic needs and ecological values. Continuing to explore the diverse ways communities and Nations honour the **balance of ecological stewardship and preservation with economic realities** and socioeconomic benefits getting to communities remains an important tension to hold – that was expressed most clearly in how, or whether the terms of partnerships and benefit agreements serve communities.

The day concluded with a shared sense of purpose and urgency, that unity across Nations is powerful, that guardianship of the land is a deep cultural responsibility, and that building the right tools, alliances, and data systems is essential to protecting territories for future generations, as the correlations between the struggles of the lands and animals and their wellbeing is interconnected with the deep struggles of Indigenous youth.

“Hearing from all of you and about your work is heartwarming and heartbreaking... seeing the impacts of colonization and resource destruction. Seeing and feeling the way our young people struggle. The high rates of suicide of our youth, seeing them struggle is an indicator of genocide.”
– Judy De Salva, Elder, Grassy Narrows First Nation



DAY 2 SUMMARY



IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES AND NEEDS

A '1-2-4-All' Dialogue on Cumulative Effects, Community Vision, and What's Needed to Move Forward

In the morning small group conversations were designed as an adaptation of the 1-2-4-All participatory method, an intentional shift from the World Café format to better centre the participation of high school youth joining the gathering alongside community members and ICCE Knowledge Exchange participants. The 1-2-4-All structure moves from individual reflection to paired conversation, then small group dialogue, and finally collective sharing. The 1-2-4-All approach ensures every voice has an entry point, regardless of experience or confidence in larger group settings.

Participants were invited into two generative questions:

- What are the opportunities or possibilities you are seeing for your community and this network?
- What do we need? What resources are needed to move forward?

What emerged was not a list of answers, but a living map of interconnected priorities, shaped by the wisdom of participants from across the ICCE network and the observations of the young people from Ucluelet Secondary School who, without always consciously knowing it, are active participants in cumulative effects in their community in the ways that they are watching their world change around them.



SMALL GROUP CONVERSATIONS – WHAT WAS SHARED

OPPORTUNITIES AND POSSIBILITIES

Across the dialogue, five interconnected themes emerged when participants reflected on what's possible for their communities and this network.

- **Cross-cultural learning and relationship.** Participants consistently named the importance of learning from each other not just about issues, but about ways of knowing, living, and relating to land. This was understood not as an add-on but as foundational to doing anything else together.

"It is important to learn about each other's culture."

"To learn each other's cultures and traditions and values."

- **Indigenous governance, language, and law.** Strengthening Indigenous-led decision-making and reclaiming language and law as living tools was identified as both an opportunity and an urgent priority. Participants saw these not as separate streams but as deeply linked: language carries law, law grounds governance.

"Indigenous governance and law."

"Take ownership and decision-making roles."

"Reclaim knowledge of language."

- **Youth engagement and intergenerational responsibility.** The presence of high school youth in the room gave particular weight to this theme. Participants, including the youth themselves, named the responsibility of sharing knowledge across generations as central to any vision of the future.

"Help our younger generation learn about cumulative effects."

"Sharing for future generations."

- **Network building and collective action.** Participants saw real potential in the ICCE Knowledge Exchange as a site of alliance, a place to find common ground across different territories and contexts, and to move from exchange into coordinated action.

"Opportunities for building allies, our common ground and working together."

"Opportunities for deeper exchange taking land visioning exercise is a great tool to incorporate their values and future vision."

- **Environmental balance, economic sustainability, and land-based healing.** Woven throughout was a persistent question about balance between development and protection, between economic need and ecological integrity. And underneath both, a deep, embodied relationship to land as a source of healing, identity, and sustenance.

"How can we use cumulative effects tools and management approaches to support sustainable eco-tourism?"

NEEDS AND RESOURCES TO MOVE FORWARD

When participants turned to the question of needs, much of what surfaced deepened and confirmed what had already been named as possibility, a sign that these are not just ideas shared and talked about but lived priorities. Three areas rose to the top:

- **Land-based programs and knowledge transfer.** The desire to grow land-based programming was palpable, especially in connection with youth. Participants were visibly moved by what they witnessed from each other and expressed a strong desire to bring models home.

"Learning more about the land-based program the youth are involved in, essentially teaching youth land-based activities. It is amazing and inspiring. We want to bring this back to my Nation."

"We are excited to share our knowledge and work with the youth. They are so important. They are so eager to learn."

- **Youth engagement that takes root at home.** Participants named an honest tension, youth engagement at gatherings like this one is meaningful, but it needs to translate into something sustained within communities. This was not a criticism; it was a call to go further.

"We need more youth engagement and that needs to come from our youth. We can get facilitators in for youth, but we need to find a way, back at home, to get youth to talk about cumulative effects."

- **Working together in complexity, a holistic, collective approach.** Participants were clear-eyed about the scale and difficulty of cumulative effects work. Rather than retreating from that complexity, they named the need to center an Indigenous worldview of interconnection and wholeness – by honouring the cultural, economic and ecological diversity across the country. The work of finding balance while being mindful of diverse context, keeping local while not losing sight of the bigger picture – is what is being articulated as an approach to moving the work of cumulative effects forward together; bringing all available tools, across all scales, and with a shared commitment to the land and the people through collective stewardship and responsibility.

"We are all in this together and need to consider a more holistic approach. Bring all tools and approaches together, the land base is collective."



"I come out with more questions than answers when we come to managing cumulative effects. When we look at smaller areas and then step back and look nationally across all of Canada, what are ways we are balancing priorities that allow for economic development and environmental sustainability?"

WISDOM CATCHERS

Rooted in Indigenous ways of being and drawing from Potlatch governance and coastal ceremony, the wisdom catcher is a practice of deep listening, witnessing, and carrying forward what matters most. At the ICCE Knowledge Exchange, participants volunteered in this role, not as passive note-takers, but as active listeners, witnesses, reflectors, and gratitude givers, receiving wisdom and returning it as a gift to the circle.

For a network where knowledge must flow across communities, between generations, and through lived experiences, the wisdom catcher approach ensures no voice gets lost, shifts the gathering away from extractive information models, and grounds knowledge sharing in the Indigenous principles of reciprocity and collective responsibility that are essential to navigating the complexity of cumulative effects.

MID-DAY REFLECTIONS – IN THEIR OWN WORDS

After lunch, wisdom catchers paused to share one insight from the morning conversations and one gratitude back to the circle.

Sileema: *“I was in a couple of groups, a lot of knowledge sharing, in the positions they hold in cumulative effects and the jobs that they hold. Explaining why, how, and what makes it work. The land-based learning program. Thankful for those knowledge keepers.”*

Brandon (youth): *“Today I really noticed how connected our waters are to our identity, our survival, and our future. When we talked about the cumulative effects happening in northern Manitoba communities such as Churchill, Lac Brochet, and Brochet, and in BC, fish farms, proposed pipelines, Arctic Gateway development, it made me think about how decisions made far away can deeply impact Indigenous lands and communities. Water isn't just a resource. It's life. And when it's threatened, it affects culture, food systems, health, and spirit. Another insight for me was the importance of awareness and education.*

A lot of people don't fully understand how these large projects can compound over time – it's not just one fish farm or one development. It's the layering of impacts. And when communities aren't properly heard or respected, that adds another level of harm. It reminded me that being informed and speaking up matters.

I want to offer gratitude to everyone who shared their knowledge and experiences today, especially those who spoke about land and water protection. That takes courage. These conversations aren't always easy, but they're necessary. Thank you for trusting this space with those truths.”



Christine: *"Shout out to the students and everyone at the tables. The students engaged with us openly, sharing what is happening in their communities in a thoughtful and honest way. This increased our awareness of local issues, where we engaged in brainstorming, and problem solving "*

Charley: *"It feels important, finding balance between environmental stewardship and resource development. Gratitude for the conversations, the sharing, and especially to the youth for coming, being a part of this, and sharing so openly."*

Aaran (Ucluelet Secondary School – Land Based Learning instructor): *"They spend a lot of time outside and chose a program to be outside – and then came into this space and were respectful. Thank you for welcoming us and sharing the space. I heard repetitive themes come up throughout the day.*

While we are individuals with territories, Nations, and things at the forefront, behind all of that are a lot of recurring themes. We can be isolated, and the modern world makes us feel that way a lot of the time.

Spaces like this help us see we are all interconnected – we all are as one."



"It feels important, finding balance between environmental stewardship and resource development. Gratitude for the conversations, the sharing, and especially to the youth for coming, being a part of this, and sharing so openly."

PARTICIPANT-LED AGENDA – OPEN SPACE ACTIONS AND NEXT STEPS

In the afternoon, a participant-led agenda using the Open Space Technology method was facilitated. Participants collaboratively raised the topics and questions they most wanted to address – issues and topics important to them. Participants set their own agenda across two 45-minute sessions with up to six concurrent dialogues each, moving freely between groups as they wished. Participants connected deeply about topics that mattered most to them, hosting fulsome conversations and collaboratively developing actions and next steps.

Conversations spanned a wide range of topics including:

- Building programs under conditions of limited capacity;
- Continuation of an Indigenous Centre for Cumulative Effects network;
- Meaningful engagement of Indigenous knowledge holders and Elders;
- Funding and administration challenges;
- Strategies for communicating Indigenous cumulative effects perspectives externally;
- Indigenous ways of knowing and understanding both cumulative effects and science;
- Land protection declarations;
- Guardian Programs;
- Indigenous leadership capacity development and involvement; and
- Commitments to healing.

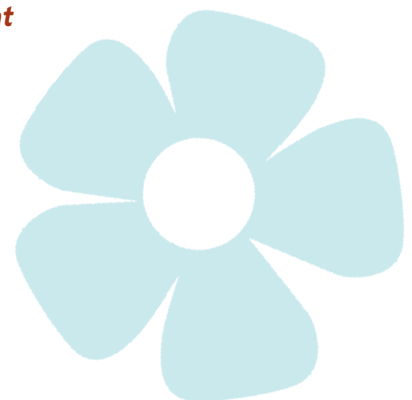
The following section highlights key actions and next steps gathered from participants' notes.

It draws on both the action items listed in the note-taking templates and those mentioned throughout the discussion summaries. A full summary of all Open Space conversations hosted by network members can be found in the appendix.

Although the Ucluelet Secondary School youth had to leave before the dialogue sessions, their contributions are important in lifting up youth voices and perspectives.

Topic: *How to build a program with limited capacity and engagement*

- Find the right consultants;
- Support community workforce;
- Form alliances and partnerships;
- Be patient; and
- Establish priorities.

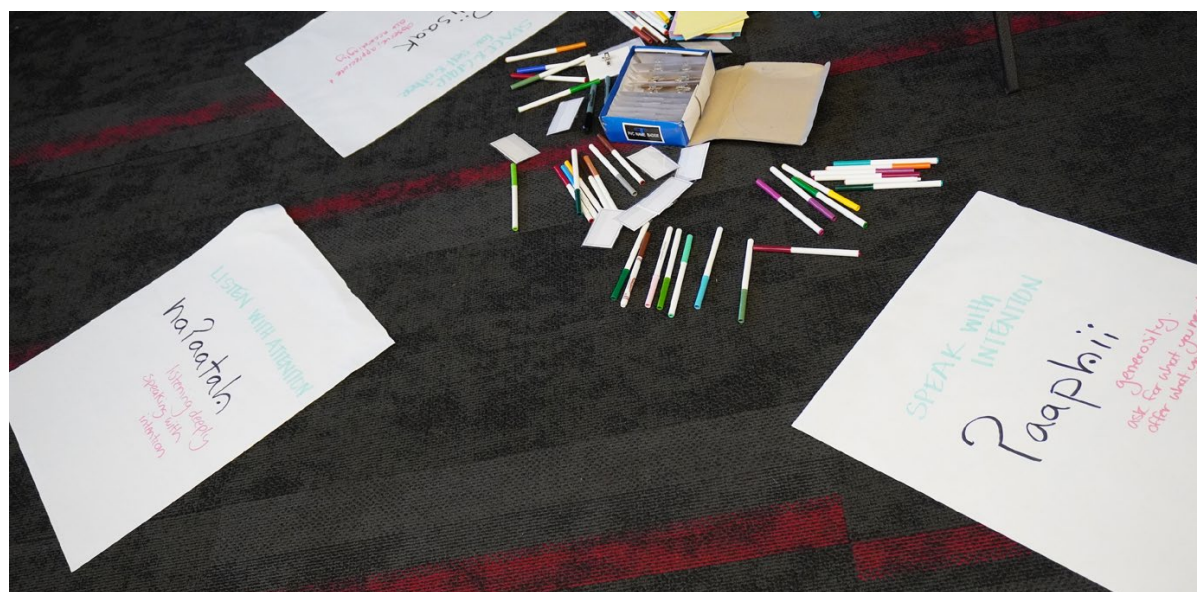


Topic: Indigenous Centre for Cumulative Effects: Starting a network

- Continue building the ICCE Network;
- Create video and media content of the gatherings;
- Share projects, tools, resources, and success stories;
- Continue youth engagement and land-based teachings;
- Connect outside;
- Meet in-person;
- Centre communities;
- Centre cultural traditions in cumulative effects work; and
- Commit to long-term planning.

Topic: Engaging with local Indigenous knowledge holders, Elders, and knowledge keepers

- Get back to Indigenous governance, protocols, and roles (Chief speakers, Elder helpers), Indigenous people are experts and specialists;
- Acknowledge Indigenous knowledge same as “technical” experts (fishing, water protection);
- Bring back mentorship with Elders, including Elders in residence;
- Pass along knowledge to the next generation;
- Encourage youth to go to school, especially in the sciences, encourage their participation at all stages of projects and activities;
- Feature Indigenous role models (e.g., Dr. Evan Adams);
- Support land-based learning in our way and that fits our needs; and
- Support and help each other and show kindness, “see” our people.



Topic: *What strategies to communicate Indigenous CE perspectives/priorities externally?*

- Share storytelling and imagery of impacted environments and communities;
- Have expectations of extractive industries to respect protocols and values;
- Assist communities in spot monitoring and evaluations, have this in public records; and
- Support communities to hold industries accountable.

Topic: *Knowledge/understanding there are many Indigenous knowing/understanding "CE" and "science"*

- Deliver, offer, teach in Indigenous languages (use placenames);
- Allow Nations, Indigenous peoples, and communities to create strategic plans;
- Have "research protocol" and/or "protocols" in place;
- Use plain language, as much as possible;
- Have image and video waivers and agreements;
- Ensure you speak to the right Nations, Indigenous people in the area; and
- Assert data sovereignty.

Topic: *Land protection declaration*

- Turn protests into a movement, say NO as a community;
- Protest Bill-5;
- Use media and websites, develop catchphrases;
- Empower youth to use tools and share knowledge;
- Find funding for and have youth initiatives, engagements, and connections (leadership mentoring, connecting to the land, building capacity);
- Have legal defense fund; and
- Connect land defenders.

Topic: *What helps you in your healing journey?*

- Normalize starting over;
- Be brave to talk;
- Normalize wellness and healing;
- Create accessible services – including counselling, nature and culture, listening to Elders' songs and stories, breathwork, and journaling;
- Create safe spaces;
- Offer youth programs on the land, grounded in nature and culture, that build skills; and
- Have a women's group.

Topic: *Guardian Programs*

- Educate over enforcement;
- Have grant proposals and reporting training and education;
- Apply for funding; and
- Create plans and land vision – where you are at, where you want to go, protected land divisions, and funders.

Topic: *How to get leadership involved*

- Mentor women in politics;
- Have an Elder in residence;
- Involve youth early;
- Have a workshop here towards youth and Elders (ask youth what they want to hear and see);
- Gather Indigenous people and scientists together;
- Expand education and sciences; and
- Encourage youth in sciences – show them other Indigenous people in sciences.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS RAISED

Participants suggested several additional topics that were not placed into the agenda to be hosted in Open Space discussions but still highlight important issues people are thinking about.

Additional topics included:

- How to bring cumulative effects into broader conversations;
- What aspects of Indigenous cumulative effects need to better understand by external agencies;
- Whether the ICCE could connect Nations across Canada to strengthen CE management – especially around shared elements like water, air, soil, and fire that support fish, wildlife, plants, and lands;
- The impacts of oil and gas pipelines on First Nations; and
- How to involve more youth in on-the-land programs.

Youth participants from the Ucluelet Secondary School – Land Based Learning program also shared topics based on their lived experiences:

- Fishing;
- Land-based healing;
- The role of land as a teacher for youth;
- Shifting priorities to care for the environment over individual interests; and
- The challenges of reclaiming Indigenous lands.

Although the Ucluelet Secondary School youth had to leave before the dialogue sessions, their contributions are important in lifting up youth voices and perspectives.

PATTERNS AND INSIGHTS – WHAT WE HEARD ACROSS DAY 2

REPEATING THEMES

Across both the small group morning conversations and afternoon Open Space sessions, a handful of themes surfaced repeatedly and from many different voices:

- Water as life, identity, and survival – not as a resource;
- Youth engagement appeared in nearly every conversation, both as an urgent need and as a living source of hope already present in the room;
- Land-based learning emerged as both a healing practice and a governance tool;
- Capacity and funding needs;
- Engagement with Elders and community knowledge holders on Indigenous knowledge, protocol, laws, and ways;
- Communication and storytelling including through the media;
- Land protectionism via monitoring and working with scientists, allies and legal teams; and
- Underneath it all, a persistent recognition that we are not alone in this, that despite different territories, Nations, and contexts, the cumulative effects communities are interconnected, and we share common threads as we weave the fabric of this landscape that sustains us.



TENSIONS WE ARE HOLDING

The gathering did not resolve, nor did it try to, the tension between environmental protection and economic development and interests. Communities need both, and the pressure to choose sits unevenly on Indigenous shoulders. There was also a tension between Indigenous knowledge and western technical expertise: participants named clearly that Indigenous peoples are scientists and experts, yet that recognition is still not reflected in how projects are governed or how “evidence” is weighted. A quieter tension that emerged: women are driving this work, yet often leadership structures—in politics, in science, in governance, often do not yet reflect that.

YOUTH VOICE

WHAT YOUTH TAUGHT US

The planning committee stated from the outset the importance of youth inclusion: “we’re speaking about a future that they are inheriting.”

What no one could have fully anticipated was how much the students would shift the room simply by being in it. Their presence during the first half of Day Two of the Knowledge Exchange Gathering was not a program add-on, it provided grounding and care. Conversations that had been technical became personal. Themes that had felt abstract became urgent. Participants who had spoken with authority about cumulative effects found themselves listening differently, seeing their work reflected through the eyes of young people who already know what is changing on the land and in the water, because they live it.

The Ucluelet Secondary Land Based Learning students were invited not only as observers but as contributors. They came with their own knowledge, shaped by their own observations and lived experiences, some sharing about what they have watched disappear, and brought questions expressing the heart of the work. Wisdom catchers and participants alike noted that the youth brought honesty and that was both grounding and galvanizing.

One participant reflected: “the presence of the youth for the first half of day two made an impact, it shifted the conversation.” It did. And that shift mattered.

YOUTH PERSPECTIVES

The questions and topics the students brought forward named key tensions in cumulative effects work. They asked about fishing. They asked about land. They asked about litter and recycling. They asked how we can learn to think more about the environment than ourselves. These were not the questions of people who need to be taught about cumulative effects. They were the questions of humans who are already living with them.

Youth observation shared in morning session:

“What is happening locally?

– lack of snow, fires, fishing

– the size of fish getting smaller.”

Although they had to leave before hosting or joining the sessions, a few students also proposed Open Space topics of their own. The questions from the youth remained present in the room throughout the afternoon.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Brandon Hart, Youth Ambassador for ICCE, served as a wisdom catcher throughout day two, a role he held with generosity. To begin day two, he shared a video he had made about hunting in his community, starting the Land Based Learning students time at the gathering with a powerful youth-led piece. Brandon’s voice was a vivid example of the voice of our youth emphasizing that cumulative effects are not policy ideas but lived realities connected to identity, food, and belonging.

In his wisdom catcher reflection Brandon named what many in the room were feeling: that decisions made far away compound over time, that water is not a resource but life, and that being informed and speaking up matters. Brandon’s leadership was a demonstration of what it looks like when youth are not just invited into a space but given space and leadership within it.

WHAT YOUTH NEED

Across the day, the theme repeated, youth engagement cannot only happen at gatherings. Youth engagement is needed everywhere, at home, in community, on the land. In this space, the youth participants displayed leadership skills and an eagerness to participate. Youth need invitations to participate and opportunities to be included in discussions. Youth need pathways to connect to their lands, territories and communities. Opportunities to have Elders teaching alongside youth would support the intergenerational transfer of knowledge. Youth don’t just want to be in the audience; they want to be involved in the process.

The students’ presence at this gathering was invited with respect and consent. Their contributions belong to them. What we can say, with confidence, is that every person in the room left knowing that the future of this work is already here – and these youth are asking important and good questions.

YOUTH-PROPOSED OPEN SPACE TOPIC, DAY TWO

“How can we think more about the environment than ourselves?”

[Note: If any Ucluelet Secondary students wish to be named or have their contributions attributed, this section can be updated following consent review with the teacher and students.]

Across two days and a day on the land together, with deep listening, honest exchange, and collective visioning, participants arrived at a shared sense of inspiration and connection.



The Tofino ICCE Knowledge Exchange gathering generated real momentum. Across two days and a day on the land together, with deep listening, honest exchange, and collective visioning, participants arrived at a shared sense of inspiration and connection. This section captures some of the concrete commitments, emerging structures, and calls to action that came out of the gathering.

One of the most tangible outcomes of the gathering was the strengthening and formalization of connections between participants and their communities. Participants arrived from across Canada representing diverse Nations, territories, and approaches to cumulative effects work, and left with new relationships and shared language.

NETWORK STRUCTURES

Key network structures emerging from the gathering include:

- A shared email list to maintain connection and enable ongoing information exchange between participants across regions.
- Regional connections surfaced through the Open Space sessions, with participants identifying opportunities to collaborate with nearby Nations and organizations on shared cumulative effects challenges.
- Working group interest expressed around specific themes, including youth engagement and land-based learning, Guardian program development and funding, and strategies for engaging external agencies and industries.
- A growing base of success stories and community tools ready to be compiled and shared across the network.



ACTIONS AND COMMITMENTS

Participants left Tofino with specific, self-identified next steps rooted in the full arc of the gathering. The priorities, actions, and commitments below did not emerge from the Open Space sessions alone, they are the distillation of two days of deep dialogue, surfacing first in the morning small group conversations, continuing through the participant-led Open Space sessions, and woven throughout the shared reflections documented across this report. What follows represents the network's own articulation of where the work goes next, organized by theme.

- **Network and communication:** Document the gathering and share it widely; circulate success stories; build a shared platform for tools and resource exchange.
- **Youth and land-based learning:** Create real pathways for youth to engage with cumulative effects work in their own communities; bring land-based learning models' home; connect Elders and youth around what they are seeing change on the land and water.
- **Governance and leadership:** Mentor Indigenous women into environmental and political leadership; formalize Elder-in-Residence roles; bring Chief and Council into Cumulative Effects work earlier, framed as a governance and rights issue.
- **Funding and program sustainability:** Build grant writing and reporting capacity inside Nations; diversify funding sources; share what works across the network so no one starts from scratch.
- **Accountability and advocacy:** Set clear expectations for extractive industries; support communities to monitor and document impacts publicly; establish data sovereignty agreements with any researchers working with Indigenous communities and knowledge.

FUTURE GATHERINGS

There was a strong consensus that in-person gatherings are essential, not just useful. The relationships formed, the depth of conversation, and the sense of collective purpose that emerged in Tofino cannot be replicated through digital channels alone.

Participants identified the following priorities for future ICCE convenings:

- A follow-up national gathering within the next 6 to 12 months to maintain momentum and move from shared vision to strategic planning.
- Regional gatherings allow Nations in closer proximity to work on shared cumulative effects challenges, build place-based relationships, and reduce the travel burden for community members.
- Youth-specific convenings or dedicated youth tracks within future gatherings, building on the powerful contribution of the Ucluelet Secondary School outdoor leadership students at this gathering.
- Ongoing virtual touchpoints (calls, webinars) between gatherings to sustain connection, share resources, and track progress on committed actions.

"We are all interconnected and we all are as one."

– Aaran, Ucluelet Secondary School Land Based Learning instructor

WISDOM CATCHERS: END OF DAY REFLECTIONS

Just before closing for the day, our wisdom catchers paused to share one insight from the day's conversations and one gratitude back to the circle.

Sileema: *"Thank you for allowing me to speak in my language, which gives me pride to speak it, and allow you to hear my language. Amazing to see everyone sharing their perspectives and knowledge, and the language you use, your language or technical being able to have a better understanding we have modern treaties and land back. And our treaty is implemented well, and to better understand how we can help you. Amazing to see we have differences; we have a lot in common. Provides an understanding of gratitude, hearing your languages."*

Charley: *"There has been so much, and I feel so full. Overall, we were talking about the noticing of similarities and differences and how they complement each other. The opportunity to listen, hear, and share."*

Brandon: *"Grateful for Judy's story, the mercury poisoning in Grassy Narrows. Grateful for knowledge and her story."*

Christine: *"The witnessing experience is an honour and heavy load and feels good when you are in a safe space"*

Candice: *"Grateful to be invited to come and be with all of you. Grateful to learn more and everything you taught me. It was a safe space. Grateful to be able to attend. I appreciate being able to crochet and the safe space."*

Judy: *"My son doesn't talk much but I want to hear more from the younger generations. It is important. Also, important we remember our ways of doing things are connected to our spirituality."*

CLOSING AND GRATITUDE

Through the gathering we confirmed that the work of cumulative effects is not only technical, it is deeply personal. The connection to the land, the language, health and identity comes forward across all participants' culture and geography. Over the two-day gathering participants from across Canada brought their full selves: their grief for lands and waters under pressure, their pride in their communities, and their commitment to keep going. Extending gratitude to participants who attended, the Elders and knowledge keepers who grounded the gathering in protocol and purpose, especially Tla-o-qui-aht Elder Barb Audet, and to the Ucluelet Secondary School Land Based Learning students whose presence and honesty reminded every person in the room why this work matters and for whom it is being done. Thank you also to the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation, to the first day's facilitation team; Saya Masso and Carole Crowe for gifting a powerful start point, and to the entire ICCE organizing team for the care they brought to every aspect of this gathering.

This gathering is a beginning, not an end. The conversations started in Tofino we know, are travelling home in the hearts and minds of all who joined.



"Amazing to see we have differences; we have a lot in common." – Sileema, wisdom catcher, Tofino 2026

For questions, follow-up, or to join the ICCE network email list, contact the organizing team at info@icce-caec.ca

APPENDIX 1

ICCE OPEN SPACE BOOK OF PROCEEDINGS

Topic: *How to build a program with limited capacity and engagement*

Convener: Charlie

Summary of discussion: Right consultants and they can't be used for engagement ■ Bringing it back to cumulative effects ■ Education is a cumulative effect – support community workforce ■ Starting small ■ Thread of bigger story ■ Rights of community – how does cumulative effects relate back to their individual and personalized rights? ■ Alliances – forming alliances and partnerships

Actions and next steps: Be patient ■ Establishing priority.

Topic: *National Indigenous Centres for Cumulative Effects network continuation*

Convener: Dawn Hoogeveen

Summary of discussion: Carol Crowe says yes to a network ■ Youth engagement remains important to mobilize ■ Consider climate change ■ Face-to-face is important ■ Tools and resources from group via in-person meetings, getting different perspective ■ Share projects across communities ■ Having community present was useful, in terms of keeping momentum ■ Keep projects going amidst changes in community leadership through long-term planning ■ Keep the (ICCE success stories going – outcomes, who? How?).

Actions and next steps: Create video/media content from gathering ■ Produce more success stories ■ Continue youth engagement ■ Land-based teachings ■ Cultural and traditions in cumulative effects work ■ Connecting outside.

Topic: *Engaging with local Indigenous knowledge holders by Indigenous knowledge holders, keepers, Elders, and knowledge keepers*

Convener: Christine

Summary of discussion: Young people want to know! Continual, constant inclusion at all aspects/stages of projects/activities. ■ Monitors on site before and during. Sharing Kennedy Lake Highway had an observer recording some technical “experts” Information is accepted over IK that was also provided. It's not respected. IK not being used in some cases (frog habitat). ■ We need more Indigenous scientists? Women – trust, credibility. We are scientists really. We can pass along to the next generation. ■ We need to encourage young people into sciences, role models – Evan

Adams ■ Concerns about youth struggling in colonial schools – flip it and have them on the land to fish, learn about waters (have these systems do things our way, to fit our needs, where we are at). ■ Land based learning – still ask elders our phibros (ways of thinking). ■ Indigenous peoples are experts/knowledge experts on different topics/areas e.g., one river. ■ Let's start getting back to it First Nation specialists e.g., Indigenous protocols (Chief speakers). Indigenous governance, Elders help important role. These are roles that work for us.

Actions and next steps: Elders in residence ■ Encourage youth to go to school (sciences) ■ Land-based to include always Elders (pass along philosophy) as well as ways of doing ■ Bring back mentoring through elders' helper role ■ Acknowledge local expert- fishing, water protectors ■ Support each other – Help! ■ Show kindness “see” our people.'

Topic: What strategies to inform external about Indigenous CE perspectives/priorities

Convener: Danielle

Summary of discussion: Discussions about values with large industries – language, culture, stewardship... ■ Capitalist vs Indigenous values – gap in between ■ Do you value Indigenous peoples and human rights? Felt forgotten and marginalized ■ Support communities for holding industries accountable.

Actions and next steps: Share storytelling and imagery of impact event and communities ■ Expect industries to have proclamation and values of extractive industries ■ Assist communities in spot monitoring, evaluations in public records.

Topic: Knowledge/understanding there are many Indigenous knowing/understanding “CE” and “science”

Summary of discussion: Different ways of storytelling – life lessons etc. vs western academia ■ Different ways of teaching ■ Practical learning vs classroom learning ■ Delivering/ offering/teaching in their Indigenous language us understanding that Indigenous languages are more direct ■ Use/try to use plain language in English as much as possible ■ “Place names” used rather than English names ■ There are distinctions between each Indigenous peoples and communities ■ “Traditional knowledge” vs “local knowledge” vs “western knowledge” ■ Ensure to understand that Indigenous knowledge is powerful ■ “Protocol” for “research protocol” with everyone ■ There may be “MOU”, “agreement” between Nations and researchers ■ “Fire influences” – Indigenous knowledge on fire influences.

Actions and next steps: Allow Nations/Indigenous peoples/communities to create their strategic plan ■ “Research protocol” / “protocol” in place ■ Image/video waivers/ agreements ■ Data sovereignty ■ Ensure you speak to the right nations/Indigenous people in the area.

Topic: Land protection declaration

Convener: Natalie

Summary of discussion: Claim staked send letter to proponent with SO questions ■ Challenge the government decision to issue permit ■ Legal defense fund ■ Connecting land defenders ■ Youth

leadership mentoring ■ Connect to the land ■ Capacity for youth (protect traditional land) and needs ■ Youth initiative, engagement, and connect ■ Funding to teach the youth.

Actions and next steps: Say NO as a community ■ Protest with a voice; become a movement ■ Media/website ■ Catchphrases ■ Empowering youth tools and share knowledge ■ Protest Bill-5.

Topic: What helps you in your healing journey?

Convener: Candace and team

Summary of discussion: Grounding in nature and culture ■ Listening to Elders' songs and stories ■ Normalizing a safe space and showing up as yourself, having accessible services such as counsellors and learning to be OK with uncomfortable ■ Healing is a way of life – normalize wellness and healing, create space to feel safe, show up as yourself, counselling services, having accessible services/spaces, Be OK being uncomfortable ■ Everyone is in different stages of healing ■ Breath, journal ■ Taking youth on the land to change their paths and build skills and be grounded in culture. Youth our future ■ Women's group – heal ourselves and we can heal mother Earth ■ Grounding in nature – youth land programs – transforming youth.

Actions and next steps: It's okay to start over ■ Be brave to talk about it.

Topic: Guardian programs

Convener: Petter

Summary of discussion: Travel Park guardians – BC: Education and outreach over enforcement, observe notes, offer to put fire out or call enforcement cops, garbage – Illegal dumping ■ Having to secure multiple funding sources to keep operations going ■ Applying for funding and grants is a lengthy process that makes a barrier to smaller organizations ■ Creating documents such as land divisions are important to lead the work and show funders that there is a plan ■ Funding to get staff: hire over summer and not work in winter, \$10k grants – trail extensions, outdoor rec orgs that fund trails ■ Salmon hatchery – funded by DFO ■ Piecing together multiple funding sources (a lot of grant writing and reporting) ■ Create land vision – where you want to go? Funders and endowment fund, protected areas', protected areas – prevent deforestation (bought out loggers) (protected to access culture) ■ Revenue streams related to lands (carbon credits) – finance team that does funding stuff ■ Try not to take money from Nation – instead get funding ■ Rangers program: administrative person to organize schedules (multiple funding pockets), ongoing training for rangers and continually developing tools to support monitoring and reporting (e.g., forms in survey 123), support with spatially referenced data collection, Rangers support fisheries teams (e.g., on stock assessments and water monitoring) and wildlife teams (e.g., kill assessments of dead wildlife provides info on predator-prey dynamics and hunting pressures), National Guardians Network (Federal funding source) ■ Seed \$\$ Indigenous Leadership Initiative (federal funding source) ■ Funding – funding applications – deliverables – reporting = a lot of work.

Actions and next steps: Grant proposal education ■ Applying for funding sources ■ Training – reporting.

Topic: How to get leadership involved?

Convener: Barb

Summary of discussion: Women are driving this, men coming into space ■ More education and sciences ■ Women come to gatherings ■ Room for women and politics, mentorship for women in politics ■ Women hold society together, women are the fabric of society ■ Encourage youth and sciences show other Indigenous people in sciences.

Actions and next steps: Mentorship for women in politics ■ Elder in residence ■ Involve youth early ■ Workshop here towards youth and elders and asking youth what they want to hear and see ■ Gather Indigenous people and scientist together.

Other open space topics that were provided but not placed in the marketplace for discussion: How do we bring the topic of cumulative effects to minds and conversations ■ What about Indigenous cumulative effects do we need to help external agencies understand? ■ Are there ways we as a network can connect Nations across Canada to enhance cumulative effects management approaches? – water, air, soil, fire – these connect us all and connect us to fish, wildlife, plants and lands ■ What are the cumulative impacts by gas or oil pipeline to First Nations? ■ How do we get youth more involved in the land-based programs?

Youth: Fishing ■ Land-based healing (youth teacher) ■ How can we think more about the environment than ourselves? ■ Why is it so hard to claim back your land?



APPENDIX 2

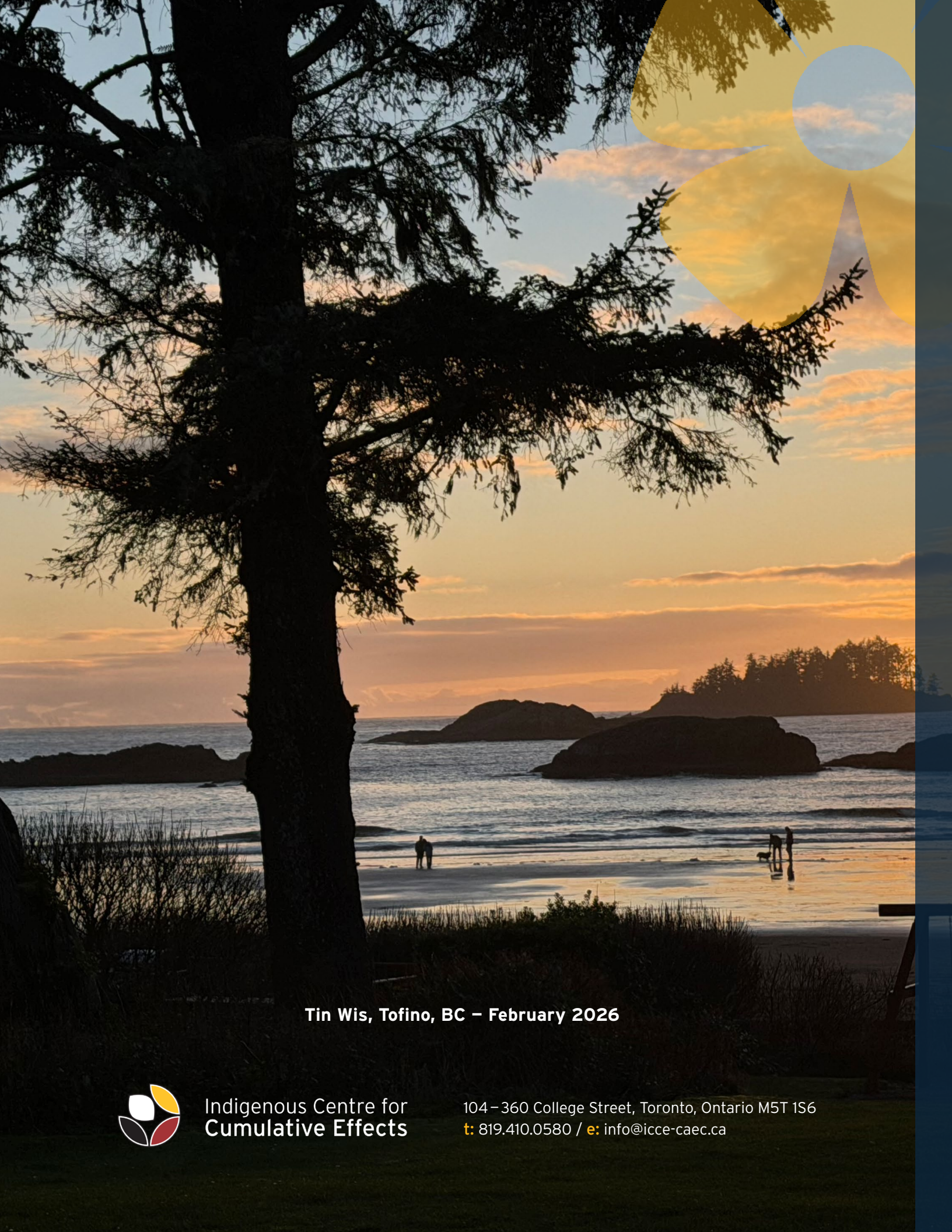
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ICCE team members	Participants	Youth network & youth participants
■ Danielle Wilson ■ Christine Hutchinson ■ Dawn Hoogeveen ■ Sileema Angoyuak ■ Leah Harrison ■ Kayla Karn ■ Carol Crowe (ICCE Advisor member and facilitator)	■ Cynthia Fell (Tsilhqot'in National Government) ■ Jeremy Boyd (Tsilhqot'in National Government) ■ Natalie Lajeunesse (Wabun Tribal Council) ■ Charley Goheen (Wabun Tribal Council) ■ Stephanie Behrens (Tłıchq Government) ■ Petter Jacobsen (Tłıchq Government – Technical Advisor & Expertise) ■ Saya Masso (Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation Lands Department) ■ Judy Da Silva (Grassy Narrows First Nation) ■ Tedje Da Silva ■ Dan Mossip (Grassy Narrows First Nation, Technical Advisor) ■ Barb Audet, Tla-o-qui-aht Language Speaker & Elder	■ Janelle Flett (ACFN, Youth Ambassador) ■ Brandon Hart (Youth Ambassador) ■ Candice Sudlovenick (Arctic Eider & SIKU) ■ Ucluelet Secondary School Land Based Learning class (18 youth and two teachers)



In honour of the
70th Anniversary of the
Haida



Tin Wis, Tofino, BC – February 2026



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