



BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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NEWS RELEASE

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BCAFN WELCOMES BRITISH COLUMBIA'S CLEANBC PLAN

(Lheidli T'enneh Territory, Prince George, BC – Dec. 6, 2018) – The government of British Columbia's recent announcement of their CleanBC plan is welcomed by the BC Assembly of First Nations. It is necessary and timely to address the mounting devastating impacts of climate change. First Nations in BC will need to be part of the transition to the low carbon economy.

Regional Chief Teegee said, "First Nations are climate leaders and have legal rights to their resources and lands. The Chiefs in BC must be fully engaged and included as the international, national and regional environmental and economic landscapes begin to transform under this new vision."

Opportunities that arise as the CleanBC plan unfolds the low-carbon economy must be co-created with First Nations in BC to realize the protection and implementation of First Nations inherent and treaty rights. Also, revenues generated from land and water-based carbon projects, as well as taxation of earnings generated from projects impacting First Nations' resources and lands, must be shared with First Nations. These fiscal initiatives are required to be built into policies and legislation to affirm and guarantee First Nations peoples individual and collective rights, jurisdictions and right to self-determination.

Some of the highlights of the CleanBC plan which will directly impact First Nations governments include:

- creation of new economic opportunities for people and a push for innovation to grow world-leading technology and clean energy sectors;
- commitment to working in collaboration with Indigenous peoples to seize new clean economy opportunities and help communities adapt to the impacts of climate change. This will include collaboration on a climate change adaptation strategy to be developed for 2020;
- provide an effective blueprint to grow the BC economy by directing a portion of B.C.'s carbon tax paid by industry into incentives for cleaner operations, encouraging partnerships, and building a safe industry for carbon capture and storage, etc.;
- work with employers, Indigenous communities, labour groups and post-secondary institutions to analyze the labour market and identify where strong job growth will be and what skills will be needed.

BCAFN has developed a *First Nations Sustainable Economic Development and Fiscal Strategy* which includes climate change adaptation and clean growth in First Nations communities. Some First Nations in BC have begun the movement toward low carbon communities with implementation of solar and wind technologies. Understanding the serious impacts of climate change and developing and implementing solutions have been a priority for First Nations for a number of years now.

"We are encouraged and hopeful with the CleanBC plan and see it as a positive step towards addressing the impending ecological and economic disaster that the United Nations and scientists around the world have been warning all of humanity about," stated Regional Chief Terry Teegee. "We have a responsibility to open our hearts, our minds, and to listen... and then to make changes for this generation and those yet to be born."

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