

10 Recommendations for Supporting Indigenous Cultural Heritage

Indigenous perspectives on cultural heritage reflect Indigenous Peoples' unique knowledge, experiences, languages and histories. Definitions of Indigenous heritage vary between nations and cultures, but generally include ideas and worldviews, objects, forms of expression such as art, dance, song and dress, spirituality, kinship ties, and land-based practices and values. Each of these concepts is inextricably connected, holds intrinsic value to the well-being of Indigenous Peoples and affects all generations.

REVITALIZING AND SAFEGUARDING INDIGENOUS CULTURAL HERITAGE (ICH) WILL REQUIRE:

1. INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP AND CONTROL

- Now is the time to reaffirm Indigenous Peoples as the stewards of their cultural heritage.
- Work to revitalize and safeguard ICH should be led and implemented by Indigenous Peoples and organizations. The principles of Indigenous access, possession, ownership and control over ICH must be abided by and respected throughout the work.
- First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) is the only organization in B.C. mandated to support the revitalization of ICH.

2. SUSTAINABLE, COMPREHENSIVE AND IMMEDIATE FUNDING

- Secure and sufficient funding is required to support the efforts of provincial organizations like FPCC, and national organizations like Indigenous Heritage Circle, which are working to safeguard, recover, restore and revitalize ICH.

3. CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PEOPLE AND THE LAND

- Meaningful and enduring connections between Indigenous Peoples and their lands are critical to the health and well-being of communities and cultural futures.
- Funding and long-term planning are needed to support and strengthen these connections.



4. EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- Investments and collaborative planning with Indigenous Peoples and organizations are needed to develop and deliver effective school-based and other Indigenous education programs.

5. INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPACITY

- Indigenous nations and communities often lack the infrastructure for preserving, housing and showcasing their cultural heritage materials. To address this, infrastructure development and capacity building are needed at the community level.

50%+

OF CANADA'S INDIGENOUS
LANGUAGES ARE IN B.C.

6. SPECIFIC FUNDING FOR REPATRIATION PROGRAMS

- Sustainable funding is needed to establish and maintain partnerships between Indigenous organizations and communities, and museums and archives to assist in the repatriation of ancestral remains, cultural objects, documents, archives, photos, videos and audio recordings.



Arrowhead, Keatley Creek Archaeological Site 📷 K.A.

7. ADDRESSING LAWS AND POLICIES

- Existing heritage laws and policies should be reviewed and revised to ensure the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in heritage management, and to enshrine the recognition and protection of ICH.
- Indigenous legal traditions should be advanced to support Indigenous Peoples' inherent right to control, manage and enjoy their heritage resources.

8. ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH HERITAGE PLANNING

- Changes on the landscape affect Indigenous Peoples' abilities to engage fully with their cultural heritage and to transmit this heritage to future generations. Climate change also impacts Indigenous health, identities, food security, economic stability and social cohesion.
- Concrete steps are needed to address these impacts and to promote resiliency strategies.



FIRST PEOPLES'
CULTURAL COUNCIL

APPROXIMATELY

242+

YEARS OF CULTURAL HERITAGE
BEING IMPACTED OR DESTROYED

43,121

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN BC

9. COMMEMORATE AND INTERPRET

- Commemoration and interpretation of places associated with Indigenous heritage are meaningful ways to acknowledge Indigenous Peoples' long – and continuing – presence on the land, and to acknowledge the negative effects of colonialism on Indigenous heritage and lifeways.

10. CONTINUED RESEARCH AND MONITORING

- Indigenous-led research should be supported in continued efforts to understand and monitor the status of ICH.



Smudging at Culture Camp 📷 A.A.

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