

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Province of B.C.

What is the UN Declaration?

The Declaration is a comprehensive statement addressing the human rights of Indigenous peoples. It emphasizes the rights of Indigenous peoples to live with dignity, to maintain and strengthen their own institutions, cultures and traditions and to pursue self-determination.



History of the UN Declaration

Indigenous relations have evolved since Aboriginal rights were enshrined in Canada's Constitution Act of 1982.

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada developed 94 Calls to Action to address the legacy of residential schools and improve relationships. These Calls to Action included the adoption and implementation of the UN Declaration as the framework for reconciliation.

The UN Declaration was approved by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007 and is a comprehensive document outlining the universal rights of Indigenous peoples around the world. In 2016, the federal government announced its commitment to fully implement the UN Declaration followed by a similar commitment by British Columbia in 2017.

The Commission's Commitment to Implementing The UN Declaration

- The BC Oil and Gas Commission is committed to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and to implementing the UN Declaration, the Draft Principles that Guide the Province of British Columbia's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples, and the TRC Calls to Action.
- Since the Province committed to implementing the UN Declaration and the TRC Calls to Action, and released its 10 Draft Principles to guide the respective commitments, the Commission has integrated these elements into its policy framework.
- The Commission continues to work with Indigenous Nations to build these reconciliation commitments into its operations.



For Further Information

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What is B.C. Legislation on the UN Declaration?

- The legislation provides a legislative framework for recognizing the constitutional and human rights of Indigenous peoples and aligning B.C.'s laws with the internationally recognized standards of the UN Declaration, as well as the legal rights of British Columbia's Indigenous peoples.
- The legislation is not prescriptive but rather enables the Province, agencies, Indigenous communities and industry, to establish new approaches in working together. For the Commission this means continuing to pursue tailor made approaches and remaining open to change, as well as enhancing programs to facilitate joint collaboration on stewardship, monitoring, restoration, and emergency management.
- The Province is targeting key legislation such as the Environmental Assessment Act to ensure alignment with the UN Declaration. The Commission has and continues to review regulations, policies, procedures, and guidelines and seeks Indigenous insight in applicable updates, as was done with the development of the Dormancy Regulation.
- Though operationally there is no anticipated immediate changes, the commitment to developing arrangements and agreements with Indigenous Nations is intended to help establish predictable and collaborative approaches to doing business better together.

The Commission implements the UN Declaration by way of its Indigenous Relations mandate which seeks to integrate the principles of the UN Declaration into every aspect of Commission business, through robust relationship building programs, the alignment of policies and procedures, and a commitment to increasing cultural awareness.

