



FIRST NATIONS  
MAJOR PROJECTS  
COALITION

# “The Only Road to Net Zero Runs Through Indigenous Lands”: *Indigenous equity ownership of major projects*

*Toward Net Zero by 2050 Conference Findings and Report, April 25-26, 2022*



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## About the First Nations Major Projects Coalition

The First Nations Major Project Coalition (Canada) is a national 90+ Indigenous nation collective working towards the enhancement of the economic well-being of its members, understanding that a strong economy is reliant upon a healthy environment supported by vibrant cultures, languages, and expressions of traditional laws, and in particular to support members to:

- a) Safeguard air, land, water and medicine sources from the impacts of resource development by asserting its members' influence and traditional laws on environmental, regulatory and negotiation processes;
- b) Receive a fair share of benefits from projects undertaken in the traditional territories of its members, and;
- c) Explore ownership opportunities of projects proposed in the traditional territories of its members.

FNMPC is currently providing business capacity support to its members on 8 major projects located across Canada, each with a First Nations equity investment component, and a portfolio exceeding a combined total capital cost of over \$20 billion. FNMPC's business capacity support includes tools that help First Nations inform their decisions on both the economic and environmental considerations associated with major project development.



## First Peoples Worldwide

First Peoples Worldwide is an Indigenous-led organization that translates on-the-ground impacts of investment and development affecting Indigenous Peoples to corporate decision-makers.

Having started the flywheel of Indigenous-centered corporate engagement in the 1990s, First Peoples Worldwide is now a leader in deploying strategies to move the market towards respect for the rights of Indigenous Peoples through the intersection of business, law, and finance.

Through its mission to work from a foundation of Indigenous values to achieve a sustainable future for all, First Peoples Worldwide increases corporate accountability and builds the business case for the respect for the rights of Indigenous Peoples.



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## Executive Summary

Canada and the United States are both accelerating their energy transition to net zero. This transition is a response to worsening global climate change and is part of the global transition toward a net zero emissions of global greenhouse gases.

A simultaneous and long-standing crisis in both Canada and the United States is the legacy of colonization that continues to be present for Indigenous peoples in both Canada and the United States. Colonization has long burdened, and continues to burden, economic, social, cultural, and environmental circumstances for Indigenous nations in both countries. The deviation of the dominant society away from Indigenous knowledge systems has resulted in unambiguous human-caused global heating, and now presents an existential risk to the earth's ecosystems.

The net zero transition presents a unique opportunity during which facets of these two challenges/crises can be addressed with a single solution: Indigenous self-determination and economic reconciliation through opportunities for Indigenous equity ownership of energy and climate solutions infrastructure.

The *Toward Net Zero by 2050* conference hosted by the First Nations Major Project Coalition (Canada) and First Peoples Worldwide (US) on April 25-26, 2022 in Vancouver, Canada presented ideas that together laid new ground on what Indigenous nations, industry sectors, and governments can each do to achieve this solution and vision: a new reality in which Indigenous nations own, or are presented with the opportunity to own, equity ownership in net zero-focused energy and climate solutions infrastructure projects.

*“As First Nations people, often times it’s, how do our worldviews and our cultures and our teachings fit into the world of money, and economy, and trade... But from our understanding, it’s how does the finance community, how does money, the economy, fit into our First Nations worldview.”*

- Sheldon Wuttunee, CEO, Saskatchewan First Nations Natural Resource Centre of Excellence

*“We’re now at a point where everybody agrees about the urgency of addressing climate change. Nobody knows it better, or I guess worse, than the Indigenous people about what the effects of climate change have been on the natural environment.”*

- Todd Malan, Chief External Affairs Officer and Head of Climate Strategy, Talon Metals

The conference, which convened over 1,300 attendees, continued the First Nations Major Project Coalition and First Peoples Worldwide's work to influence thought leadership in Canada and the United States on a progressive approach to Indigenous leadership in major projects. Both countries are on the forefront of opportunity for global leadership in the clean energy and natural resources sectors.

Expert panelists and keynotes from Indigenous nations, industry sectors, and governments laid out a roadmap of a new future wherein our countries realize net zero targets. The emergent ideas, examples and outcomes from the *Toward Net Zero by 2050* conference outlined in this post-conference paper paint the picture of exactly what this new future looks like:

**Canada and the United States at the leading edge of producing critical battery minerals. This means supply that:**

1. Is timely to gain a competitive edge on the global market and meet supply needs.

2. Includes equity ownership partnerships with Indigenous nations.
3. Is powered by clean energy sources.
4. Embraces a new ethic of socially and environmentally responsible mining.
5. Keeps pace with the now booming electric vehicle market.

**A net zero transition in Canada and the United States that successfully integrates:**

1. A just transition.
2. Indigenous self-determination within net zero.
3. Recognition of Indigenous nations’ rights and thus key to net zero success.
4. New clean power generation and transmission in partnership with Indigenous nations.
5. Options for, and development of, carbon credits and carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS) in partnership with Indigenous nations.

**Indigenous values and input prioritized in ESG standards, including:**

1. The business sector investing in Indigenous talent and exploring existing Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Criteria, and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) compliant free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) policies established by Indigenous nations.
2. Understanding and incorporating Indigenous expert views on ESG+I (Indigenous) such as Indigenous inherent responsibility and what an Indigenous values-driven economy looks like.

The *Toward Net Zero by 2050* conference revealed many important, sector-specific best practices for the journey to Indigenous-centred net zero economies:

Sector	Best Practices in Indigenous Net Zero Participation and Project Ownership
<b>Indigenous</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Indigenous nations are leaders in the net zero transition.</li> <li>2. Own-source revenue, own-source community decisions.</li> <li>3. Consider joining leadership positions such as board member, advisory, and/or upper management.</li> </ol>
<b>Industry</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Always build-in equity access options for Indigenous nations.</li> <li>5. Hire and support Indigenous women into leadership positions.</li> <li>6. Hire and support Indigenous people into leadership positions.</li> <li>7. Invest in Indigenous-led net zero infrastructure.</li> <li>8. Accelerate and de-risk net zero infrastructure projects by centering Indigenous leadership/ownership.</li> <li>9. Attributes of strong and successful industry-Indigenous partnerships.</li> </ol>
<b>Government</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Stand behind Indigenous entrepreneurship in net zero.</li> <li>11. Implement capacity supports for Indigenous nations.</li> <li>12. Seize net zero as an opportunity to build Canada-US unity and competitive advantage.</li> <li>13. Support Indigenous nations in accordance with each of their diversities and circumstances.</li> </ol>

This report also summarizes highlights from the five keynote speakers:

- » **Brett Isaac:** Co-founder and CEO of Navajo Power
- » **Mark Cutifani:** Former CEO of Anglo American
- » **Mark Trahan:** Editor-at-large of Indian Country Today
- » **Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson:** Canadian Minister of Natural Resources
- » **Honorable Jennifer Granholm:** United States Secretary of Energy Secretary


*“The active participation of Indigenous Peoples is critical to achieving net-zero emissions. Indigenous knowledge systems carry the experience and careful consideration of thousands of years of observation and interaction with sensitive ecosystems and the stewardship responsibilities embedded in many Indigenous cultures are a clear reminder that we can do more to protect the environment. We need to ensure that Indigenous Peoples have a seat at the table as we move towards a decarbonized economy and there is no better way to do that than through equity ownership and shared decision-making.”*

- Catherine McKenna; Chair of the United Nations High Level Expert Group on the Net-Zero Emissions Commitments of Non-State Entities



*“I’m so hopeful for the futures of all of our many communities, I’m hopeful for our young people who are being presented with so much opportunities from all of the hard work, that my fellow Indigenous people, women and men, to show our young people what the future can look like...as we all work together to build that future and to build a more just economy for Indigenous people in this country and in the world.”*

- Jaimie Lickers, Vice President, Indigenous Markets, CIBC

An aerial photograph of a multi-lane bridge crossing a river. The water is dark and turbulent, with white foam from rapids. Several cars are visible on the bridge, including a white car and a blue car. Utility poles with power lines run parallel to the bridge. The surrounding landscape is rocky and forested.

*“Hold on to your land. Make use of the land. For the benefit of all generations to come. For us, we live that every day in the work that we do for our people.”*

- Wikitoria Hepi-TeHuia, Deputy Chairperson, Tauhara North No.2 Trust, Aotearoa/New Zealand



# An Indigenous net zero future for the United States and Canada

*“It’s not about us right now, it’s about our children, and our children’s children... How are we going to be leaving [the world to] the children of tomorrow, and the children’s children of tomorrow. What are we leaving behind?”*

-Kluane Atamek, Yukon Regional Chief, Assembly of First Nations

The United States and Canada’s energy transition to net zero presents these two countries with a compelling opportunity to solve two simultaneous crises: (1) worsening global climate change linked to the livability of planet earth, and (2) the legacies of colonization that continue for Indigenous peoples in both countries.

These two concurrent and ongoing crises underpin the two corresponding international commitments made by the United States and Canada: (1) the *Paris Agreement* targets for net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, and (2) the United Nations Declarations on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) commitments to Indigenous peoples regarding Indigenous self-determination and reconciliation.

In Canada and the United States, the energy transition to net zero presents a unique opportunity for these two challenges/crises can be addressed with a single solution: Indigenous self-determination and economic reconciliation through opportunities for Indigenous equity ownership of net zero energy generation and critical battery mineral mining infrastructure, including free, prior, and informed consent.

The *Toward Net Zero by 2050* conference hosted by the First Nations Major Project Coalition (Canada) and First Peoples Worldwide (US) on April 25-26, 2022<sup>1</sup>, in Vancouver, Canada convened professionals interested in the Indigenous-led net zero transition (Table 1):

*“It’s been an interesting journey in my life to witness firsthand not only how extractive and exploitive business has been for Indigenous people, but also be at the forefront of climate change in the desert and see our land and see the weather dramatically change.”*

-Jaime Gloshey, Co-Director, Native Women Lead

*“When we’re talking about net zero, I think about climate change. And we were ground zero last year. One just has to drive through the [Fraser] Canyon [in BC], and you see the devastation of what climate change can do. The many fires last year. The heat dome that took 600+ lives in British Columbia. And the atmospheric rivers. Who would have thought that would be a part of our lexicon last year? The devastation, the billions of dollars... we are in a crisis... it’s that type of motivation we need for this, the climate crisis.”*

- Terry Teegee, BC Regional Chief, Assembly of First Nations

<sup>1</sup> For a full conference agenda including panel topics, keynotes, and speakers, please see: [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5fb6c54cff80bc6dfe29ad2c/t/62634021734e426e75aa310d/1650671654832/FNMPC\\_Agenda\\_04222022.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5fb6c54cff80bc6dfe29ad2c/t/62634021734e426e75aa310d/1650671654832/FNMPC_Agenda_04222022.pdf)



Table 1. Toward Net Zero by 2050 Conference Attendees by Category

Attendee Category	Count
Energy & Resources Industry	435
Indigenous Organization	397
Governments	140
Finance & Accounting, Investment Services	91
Services/Consulting	90
Academia/Universities/Think Tanks	78
Legal	25
Media/Newspapers	9
Business Groups/Associations	15
Non-profit/NGO	6
Uncategorized	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,318</b>

Experts, chiefs, politicians, Indigenous leaders, c-suite executives, and investment professionals presented ideas that together laid new ground on what Indigenous nations, industry sectors, and governments can each do to achieve solutions to climate change and Indigenous economic reconciliation, specifically, a new reality in which Indigenous nations own, or are presented with the opportunity to own, equity ownership in energy infrastructure projects.<sup>2</sup>

This conference was made possible through the support of the First Nations Major Projects Coalition's Sustaining Partners<sup>3</sup> and conference sponsors.<sup>4</sup> Table 2 outlines the sponsorship by category:

Table 2. Toward Net Zero by 2050 Conference Sponsors by Category

Sponsor Category	Number of Sponsors
Government	5
Banking Sector	7
Law Firms	3
Mining Sector	9
Consulting	11
Non-profit/NGO	6
Oil and Gas	12
Service Provider	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>

<sup>2</sup> Quotations from speakers featured in this report were transcribed but not verified. Quotations may contain inaccuracies, errors, and in some cases have been edited for minor grammatical errors.

<sup>3</sup> CIBC, Colliers Project Leaders, COWI, Gowling WLG and New Gold Inc.

<sup>4</sup> For information about sponsoring the First Nations Major Project Coalitions future industry engagement events please visit: <https://www.fnmpcindustryevent.com/sponsorshipnew>



## Part 1: The leading edge of producing critical battery minerals

### Battery mineral supply

*“I think you really need to throw all darts at the board on [battery mineral supply]. We can’t have simply just mines; we can’t have simply just companies that upgrade for mines. We need this full value chain from mines through to end uses, and then as much recycling as we can have along the way.”*

– Ryan Castelloux, *Founder and Managing Director, Adamas Intelligence*

This conference emphasized that the transition to net zero involves a massive increase in the supply of critical battery minerals – e.g., lithium, nickel, cobalt, manganese, graphite, tellurium, and others – for the purposes of clean technologies such as electric vehicle batteries and solar technologies. While battery recycling and mineral extraction from industrial processes can help meet global supply for these critical minerals, the ramping up of new and existing mines is a new partner to saving the earth from further heating:

*“I think we have the opportunity because we have everyone globally focused now. We have an energy security issue that’s enormous.... but that’s also an opportunity. An energy security issue can be solved through a shift to clean energy and the actual metals and minerals that we have been talking about. There is an enormous opportunity to grasp this and pursue a clean economy and energy security at the same time.” (Scott Maloney, Vice President, Environment, Teck Resources Limited)*

These global, macroeconomic shifts are putting a spotlight on the Canadian mining industry. Canada is already a global producer of some critical minerals, but has the capacity to produce much more, de-emphasizing focus on international suppliers of batteries minerals. This spotlight is not just on the mining companies themselves, but also on the “owners and custodians of the lands on which these mines are on. And the world’s eyes are on this in a lot of different ways” (Michael Meehan, Chairman, UK Sustainable Investment & Finance Association).

Experts at the conference connected Indigenous partnerships, in the United States and Canada, to success in ramping up critical battery mineral supply:

*“One example of where partnerships will be particularly critical, is the area of critical minerals, as minerals are essential to developing clean technologies, and driving the global transition to cleaner and renewable energy. Canada is already a global producer of some of these critical minerals and has the capacity to produce much more.” (Jesse Unke, Vice President, Canada, COWI)*

*“Collectively, when we look at the outlook for expected primary production for mines coupled with expected production from recycling for things like lithium, nickel, cobalt, manganese – this bouquet of different battery minerals materials – we don’t foresee a near-term or medium-term future where collectively that mine supply and recycling will be enough to keep up with the rapid demand growth that we’re looking at. So, we need to leverage all sources of supply to try and meet that demand going forward.” (Ryan Castilloux, Founder and Managing Director, Adamas Intelligence)*



## **Time is of the essence**

There is not a lack of critical minerals in Canada and the United States, but the challenge of our current moment is “just getting those resources out of the ground, getting them upgraded into the materials that are needed for batteries, motors, in enough time” (Ryan Castilloux, Founder and Managing Director, Adamas Intelligence). Given that there is an up to 15 year lead time to develop a new mine from discovery through to initial output, time is of the essence to meet the critical mineral demand for clean technologies to rapidly replace fossil fuel sources.

Meeting supply of battery mineral in a timely manner hinges, at least in the Canadian and American contexts, on doing it right in the first place:

*“To the point of nothing for us without us: it doesn’t mean [just an Indigenous] seat at the table or a seat at the board, it means doing things totally differently. And this conversation about net zero, really interesting to have this conversation while the world is literally on fire. So, we know we don’t have time, but we also don’t have time to get it wrong, because we’ve been getting it wrong for a really long time. So, there’s a hard way, or a harder way, so let’s take the hard way so it’s not going to be even harder.” (Kluane Adamek, Yukon Regional Chief, Assembly of First Nations)*

As emphasized by many experts on this topic, timeliness of critical battery mineral supply is inextricably linked with Indigenous partnerships:

*“It really is about partnerships, and it’s about not forgetting that we need to build these relationships, and that we also need to challenge each other, because in a lot of ways, **2050 is really too late**. And how can we accelerate and challenge in a way that is healthy and drives change?” (Fred Gersdorff, Senior Manager, Socially Responsible & Sustainable Supply Chains, General Motors)*

*“We’re at a moment where time isn’t necessarily our friend. We’re in a competitive environment internationally, we are collectively confronting a climate crisis that requires all of the talents that we have available to us to be directed at what is in our collective interest. ...we need to be thinking through frameworks and make sure that we’re drawing off of all of us. And we need to be doing it relatively quickly.” (John Hannaford, Deputy Minister, Natural Resources Canada)*

**We are behind on achieving our climate goals.** *We are behind on building out the supply chains we need to reach our goals for electrification and for renewable power. So, there is literally no time to spare, meaning the cooperation and collaboration are perhaps the most critical elements of the critical materials industry – without which we’re going to face long delays to perhaps never see projects come to fruition. But with cooperation and collaboration, we can get mines into production...”*  
(Ryan Castilloux, Founder and Managing Director, Adamas Intelligence)



*“The toughest piece is... timelines and permitting, and how long it takes us to get a mine that enters a process through to final approval and construction. And people talk about the fact that [in Canada] it can take up to 10 years for that to happen. Somehow, we have to work together to find a way for that to move quickly, or others will beat us at this race – because it is a global competition. ...How do we move forward in a way that we can succeed at this...? **That’s probably the hardest part – how do we act faster in a responsible way?**” (Pierre Gratton, CEO, Mining Association of Canada)*

In addition to bringing battery minerals to markets sooner, and in partnership with Indigenous peoples, faster supply will (1) more quickly meet the demand for manufacturing clean technologies, (2) give first-moving countries a competitive advantage in the booming critical minerals market, (3) put pressure on jurisdictions to more ethically source their minerals in competition (e.g., Democratic Republic of the Congo), (4) diversify global supply of critical battery minerals to buffer unforeseen geopolitical matters (e.g., Russia as a supplier of nickel), and (5) minimize global mining that is fueled by fossil fuels (e.g., by coal in China).



## Partnerships/Indigenous

*“Partner or parish.”* – Mark Podlasly, Director of Economic Policy, FNMPC

Partnerships with Indigenous nations done right was a major theme at this conference as it relates to the timely supply of critical battery minerals. According to expert panelists, doing it “right” in terms of Indigenous partnerships included at least the following elements (Table 3):

Table 3. Elements of Partnering on Major Projects with Indigenous Nations

1. Informed decision making	Free, prior, and informed consent by Indigenous nations, leadership, and their membership to make decisions about not only whether to implement a project, but also throughout the lifecycle of the project.
2. Co-development	Indigenous nations co-developing projects with proponents, rather than being included tokenistically, and after project visioning, design, or permitting.
3. Access to capital	Ensuring Indigenous nations have the capital access they need to participate in projects, as well as the resources they need to negotiate terms of projects ahead of equity ownership or participation.
4. Opportunity for equity participation	<p><i>“It has to be more that impact benefit agreements (IBAs), it has to be equity partners so that there’s equitable opportunities for community.”</i></p> <p>- Kluane Adamek, Yukon Regional Chief, AFN</p>
5. Relationships	Establish meaningful relationships with Indigenous nations that span from project idea, through operations, and past the lifetime of the project.
6. Accountability	<p>Accountability to Indigenous nations by proponents from their leadership, board, and managers, and throughout their entire workforce. <i>“[There needs to be] a shift in accountability, and the awareness of leaders and really our entire work force, understanding their role and the importance of that relationship and that connection.”</i></p> <p>- Ivan Vella, Chief Executive, Aluminum, Rio Tinto</p>
7. Innovation	Proponents and governments taking the approach of doing things differently with all ideas and everyone involved and listening to what it means to Indigenous nations to get there together.
8. Respecting rights-holders	Proponents respecting, but also far surpassing, the inherent and legal rights of Indigenous nations.

Panelists and experts provided further insight into these elements of partnering with Indigenous nations, revealing a deepening understanding of the importance of **relationships** with Indigenous nations:

*“We believe from day one you need to establish relationships, and the fact that this is [Indigenous] territory and we need their permission to be able to come on to it before we do anything. ... without that foundation, you’re not going to be able to achieve any of the objectives that we really want to achieve together.” (Mark Selby, Chairman, CEO & Director, Canadian Nickel)*

*“Renewable projects, power plants, transmission lines, distribution lines, and critical mineral mines all occur in and on Indigenous territories. Indigenous communities have a unique voice in this drive to net zero. Not only because of their inherent and legal land rights, but also because of the Indigenous worldview of place-based identity. Indigenous project ownership, governance, environmental stewardship will be fundamental to this success of any critical mineral strategy in our country.” (Paul Poscente, Chief Executive Officer, Axxcelus Capital Advisory)*

*“It’s about those relationships, it’s about having personal relationships with everyone involved, understanding needs that are not like yours, but treating them as if they were yours... We all need to recognize that we need to learn from each other.” (Fred Gersdorff, Senior Manager, Socially Responsible & Sustainable Supply Chains, General Motors)*

*“This has to be done in a way that is sustainable. And in this country, that of course means that this is done in a way that is inclusive of Indigenous peoples and have Indigenous peoples involved from the very beginning and are the major beneficiaries of anything that takes place. If we can have those two things come together, then I think as a country, we can make a huge contribution to the fight against climate change, and benefit from it at the same time.” (Pierre Gratton, CEO, Mining Association of Canada)*

Indigenous leaders and panelist throughout the conference emphasized and held-up the importance of proponent relationships with Indigenous nations in partnering on projects that begin at project idea formation. This sentiment is expertly characterized by Dwight Sutherland, Director of Lands and Resources, Taykwa Tagamou Nation:

*“...just start from day one. Usually mining companies come and approach us when ...they already have all the plans done. That’s when they usually come and see us and tell us about some of the things that they want to do. But now, we’re right there from day one and we’re kind of giving them better ideas on how we can do things, environmentally. I think that’s something that is really important is that the First Nation is really involved right from day one, especially when it comes to the environment.”*

## Clean Energy in the Critical Battery Mineral Supply Chain

*“Part of climate solution not only through what we are mining, but also how we are mining.”*

- Sophie Bergeron, *Managing Director, Diamonds, Technical and HSEC, Rio Tinto*

Expert panelists made clear at the conference that, in the context of mining critical minerals to meet net zero targets, doing so while emitting greenhouse gas emissions in excess of those saved from clean technologies, defeats the purpose. Put more plainly: **mining for the minerals needed for electric vehicles and clean technology should not make the climate change problem worse by emitting additional greenhouse gases.**

In addition to proponents of critical mineral suppliers/miners having meaningful relationships with Indigenous nations, it is clear they must also address the problem of greenhouse gas emissions:

*“The shareholder is saying ‘we don’t want to support your mine if it’s continuing to run on diesel, we want to see clean power there.’ This is super encouraging because it’s a clear path trajectory for young people, future opportunities for all of us, and it’s a path to net zero. 2050 is not that far away.” (Hillary Thatcher, Senior Director Indigenous and Northern Infrastructure, Canada Infrastructure Bank)*

Some high-impact areas that would improve clean energy supply for the critical battery mineral supply chain include:

- » **Decarbonizing the mineral supply/value chain:** *“...delivering the metals needed for a clean transition but also ensuring our operations and our value chain are low carbon as well.”*  
- Scott Maloney, *Vice President, Environment, Teck Resources Limited*
- » **Decarbonizing mineral processing and smelting:** *“Particularly when we’re talking about mines and minerals, so much of the [greenhouse gas] output is in the processing point. At the mine level, it’s incredibly important we try to bring those down, but not so it becomes the only issue...”*  
- Aimee Boulanger, *Executive Director, IRMA*
- » **Interjurisdictional strategies:** *“We’ve got a US-Canada joint action plan on critical minerals, and we’re very excited about that.... Especially with gas prices being so high right now, we want to help accelerate that transition to electrification. And the only way we can do that is to be able to make the batteries for those vehicles. And the only way to do that is to be able to get the critical minerals that go in the batteries for those vehicles. So, we want to have a North American strategy on that to power this clean energy revolution in North America.”*  
- Honorable Jennifer Granholm, *Secretary, United States Department of Energy*

- » **Leveraging existing clean power sources:** *“It’s mind-boggling the volumes of minerals and metals we’re going to need to electrify the planet and to fight climate change. One of the key advantages that Canada has is its abundance of clean power, or at least power that is non-GHG emitting. In that respect, we’ve got one of the cleanest grids on the planet. So that means when people think about the volumes of materials that we’ll need for the climate transition, people will say yeah but then, the mining industry uses a lot of energy to get those materials. ... But if you’re operating in a jurisdiction or in a country that has clean power then your GHG emissions are much less...”*

– Pierre Gratton, CEO, Mining Association of Canada

- » **Partnering with customers to decarbonize their contribution to upstream and downstream supply chain greenhouse gas emissions<sup>5</sup>**
- » **Switching to renewable power<sup>5</sup>**
- » **Moving toward electric mobile equipment mining fleets<sup>5</sup>**
- » **Investing in R&D and other major investments in decarbonizing mining<sup>5</sup>**

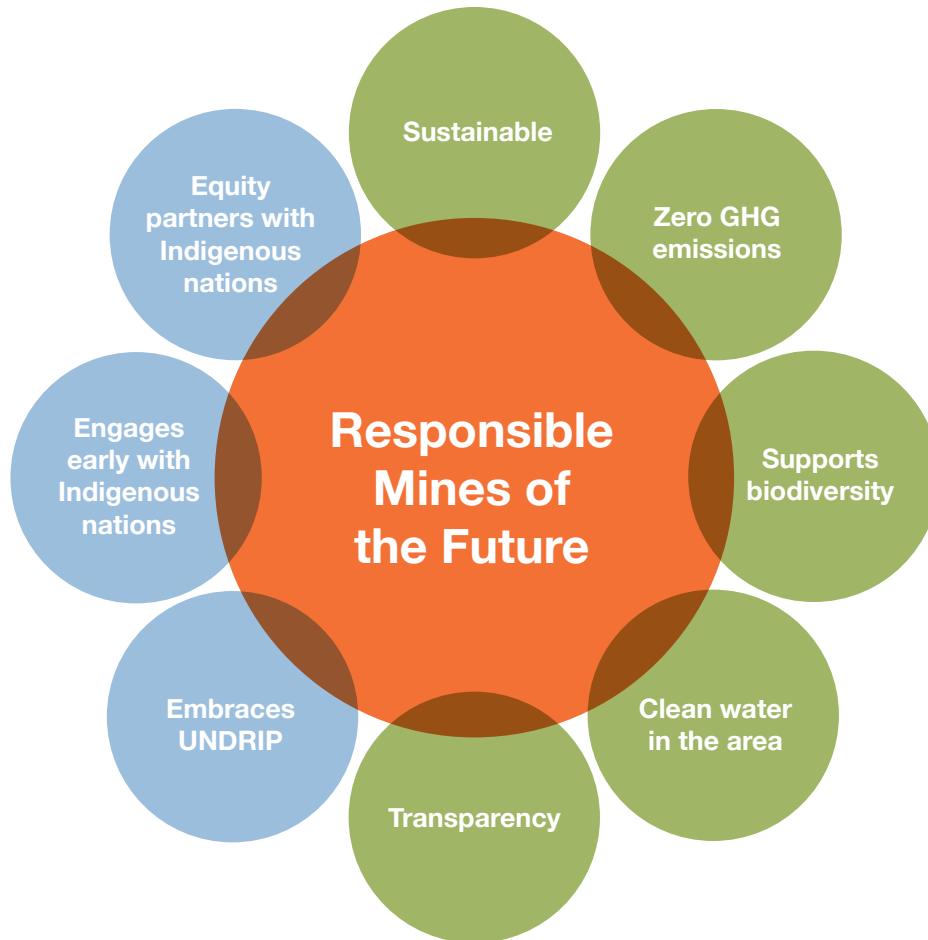


<sup>5</sup> Sophie Bergeron, Managing Director, Diamonds, Technical and HSEC, Rio Tinto

## Socially and Environmentally Responsible Mines of the (Near) Future

Conference panelists talked about what the socially and environmentally responsible mine of the future looks like: the following infographic (Figure 1) captures some of the characteristics of what was outlined.

Figure 1. Characteristics of Responsible Mines of the (Near) Future



These mines of the “future” are perhaps the new normal starting soon, hereafter, or even right now:

*“This is a sea change moment. It’s a moment of radical transparency, and I’ve heard so many industries say the same thing. For a while we have been guided by communications or lawyer... who have said ‘all is good, we use these materials everyday’... **it’s time for a new narrative that says, ‘we use materials that come with real harm in getting them, and what are we going to do to mitigate that harm.’ ... We need that more honest accounting. I think communities will have more confidence when they’re told not just ‘we’re going to leave it better than we found it’ but ‘here are the likely impacts, and here’s what we’re doing.’**”*

-Aimee Boulanger, Executive Director, IRMA

Mining sector experts on multiple panels from the conference, are already talking in these terms – i.e., that mines will have to be environmentally and socially responsible herein, rather than a distantly future mine to work towards. Within that, panelists also repeated additional themes within this new model (Table 4):

Table 4. Additional Themes in the Responsible Mines of the Future

### Indigenous Consent

*Whether you're in government or whether you're in industry, we need to bring people together, because the most important thing for me is that seven generations have opportunity. What I've found is that when corporations come to our community, we get left behind. **But when we have equity ownership, it's the truest form of consent.** We really have an opportunity to really provide a generational opportunity for our members, but also nobody gets left behind when Indigenous nation is involved in a major project meaningfully and with equity."*

- Sharleen Gale, Chair, FNMPC & Chief, Fort Nelson First Nation

*"We as an industry need to stop and pause and say this is no longer just about us. That we are talking about partnerships, we are talking about actually doing this in an equitable way, that we should be making sure that we are pulling the curtain back, actually having those conversations, not being afraid of the word **consent**, not being afraid of UNDRIP, but actually thinking this is the way the world is going, so how do we embrace that."*

- Bethany Borody, Director, Sustainability, New Gold

### Mining Standards

*"For any [mining] company out there today, if you're not looking at IRMA or [the Mining Association of Canada], and you're not committing to that or something as good, then you're operating in the wrong century, and you've got to get with it. We've spent an awfully long time developing guidance, developing standards, working collaboratively with Indigenous peoples ... that stuff exists now. There's no turning away from it. **You can't pretend [mining standards/guidance are] not there or you're going to be met with failure...** So at least start from the right starting point."*

- Pierre Gratton, CEO, Mining Association of Canada

### Partnering

*"We need to shift toward being a better neighbour. From the beginning... we need to engage very early in the process. And until the tail end.... we need to share the ideas and listen ... We need to bring more to the communities where we operate... It's being a good neighbour, someone that people will call and say, 'hey look we want to partner, and **we want to do projects with you**'"*

- Sophie Bergeron, Managing Director, Diamonds, Technical and HSEC, Rio Tinto

## Electric Vehicle (EV) Battery Minerals

*“EV minerals must be sourced in a manner that is respectful of Indigenous rights and protects the environment for all citizens.”*

- Jordan Peterson, Principal, Affinity North

The electric vehicle market is booming:

*“...electric vehicle sales are growing exponentially, and automakers and governments are increasingly laying out timelines to phase out sales of gasoline- and diesel-powered vehicles. Here in Canada and in the US, likely to happen by 2035. To facilitate the shift to a cleaner electrical grid, and to move to replace the 1.5 billion gas guzzlers driving around on roads today with electric vehicles in the decades ahead, is going to require unfathomable amounts of lithium, nickel, cobalt manganese, graphite, copper, rare earth elements, and much more. It’s going to require the development of dozens and dozens of new mines here in Canada, in the US, and beyond.”*

- Ryan Castilloux, Founder and Managing Director, Adamas Intelligence

*“As one of the few western nations with significant deposits of every mineral needed to manufacture batteries, we are in a position to be an integral player in this transition. If you think about electric vehicles for example in Canada, domestic sales are about 55,000 units a year presently. We know that this number will grow exponentially, in fact Canada has pledged that **there will be no new passenger vehicles sold that will have internal combustion engines after 2035.**”*

- Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Natural Resources Canada, Government of Canada

Automakers are the primary buyers of critical battery minerals and will increasingly influence how these minerals are sourced. To remain competitive within this boom, automakers will increasingly have to answer to their customers about where and how the minerals for EV batteries were sourced. This answer will have to include what the role of Indigenous nations in mineral extraction has been. According to Fred Gersdorff (Senior Manager, Socially Responsible & Sustainable Supply Chains, General Motors), automakers can begin to ensure materials they are buying are ethically sourced by:

- » Signing contracts directly with mines, growing visibility throughout supply chain and to getting in early and develop contracts with ESG standards language.
- » Leverage industry associations.
- » Forging new partnerships (e.g., IRMA), thus driving mines to have strong certifications.
- » Building relationships, including conversations with NGOs, mining companies, mining locations.





## Part 2: The Net Zero Energy Transition

### Just Transition: We Have a Chance to Get it Right This Time

Many “transitions” of the past have moved forward without the input and participation of Indigenous nations, and in spite of Indigenous objection. Examples of such transitions in Canada and the United States are colonization in the first place, as well as how educational, health, economic, and energy systems were built. For today’s transition to energy and economic systems with net zero greenhouse gas emissions, and as Dave Archambeault II (45th Chairman for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe) articulates, we have a chance to get it right this time:

*“When I think about clean renewable energy, it’s not any different than any other industry. Throughout history, anytime an infrastructure project ...or any kinds of projects development has taken place... the impact on Indigenous communities has always been, we pay the cost. We are the ones that pay the costs.... We don’t want to just pay the costs when it comes to renewable energy development. And for Indigenous individuals to become leaders, let’s not let that happen to us. Let’s not be the ones where resources are there... that’s where the wealth lies. And when it comes to renewable energy, if we don’t try to develop it in a responsible way, it’s going to be forced on us and we’re going to pay the cost for the benefit for the rest of the nation, for the rest of the world. So as a leader, as Indigenous peoples, we want to be participants and have a say from the very beginning, from the scoping and have influence on the decisions that every government we have to deal with are at the table.”*

Some elements of an Indigenous-centric, just transition to net zero that were noted by conference panelists included:

**Inclusion of Indigenous cultural values**

*“When you think about the just transition, when you think about the strategy to net zero, it has to really understand the [Indigenous] community’s needs, it has to really understand the cultural value too, and history of the people. As Indigenous people we have a connection to everything, and I think that’s really beautiful.”*

- Wahleah Johns, Director of the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Indian Energy Policy, and Programs

**Supporting Indigenous leadership in the energy transition**

*“Indigenous communities are actually at the forefront. They’re leading the energy transition. ... So how do we support the capacity from those communities that already have created those experiences, those understandings and knowledge, and support each other. So how does government create that capacity. I think the FNMPC is a great example of that in terms of that of how we, as government, can step away and communities really have that experience to drive that forward.”*

- Angie Bruce, Assistant Deputy Minister, Nòkwewashk, Natural Resources Canada

**Broadening the reach of those involved in the transition**

*There’s a lot of nonsense out there in the marketplace. There are special interest groups. One of the things about renewable energy, and all the great things we’ve talked about at this conference today, one of the biggest threats are the people that we don’t have in this room. The people who are not engaged in the narrative that we are, who don’t understand or question the importance of a sustainable future.*

- Matt Jamieson, President & CEO, Six Nations of Grand River Development Corporation



## Self-Determination in Net Zero

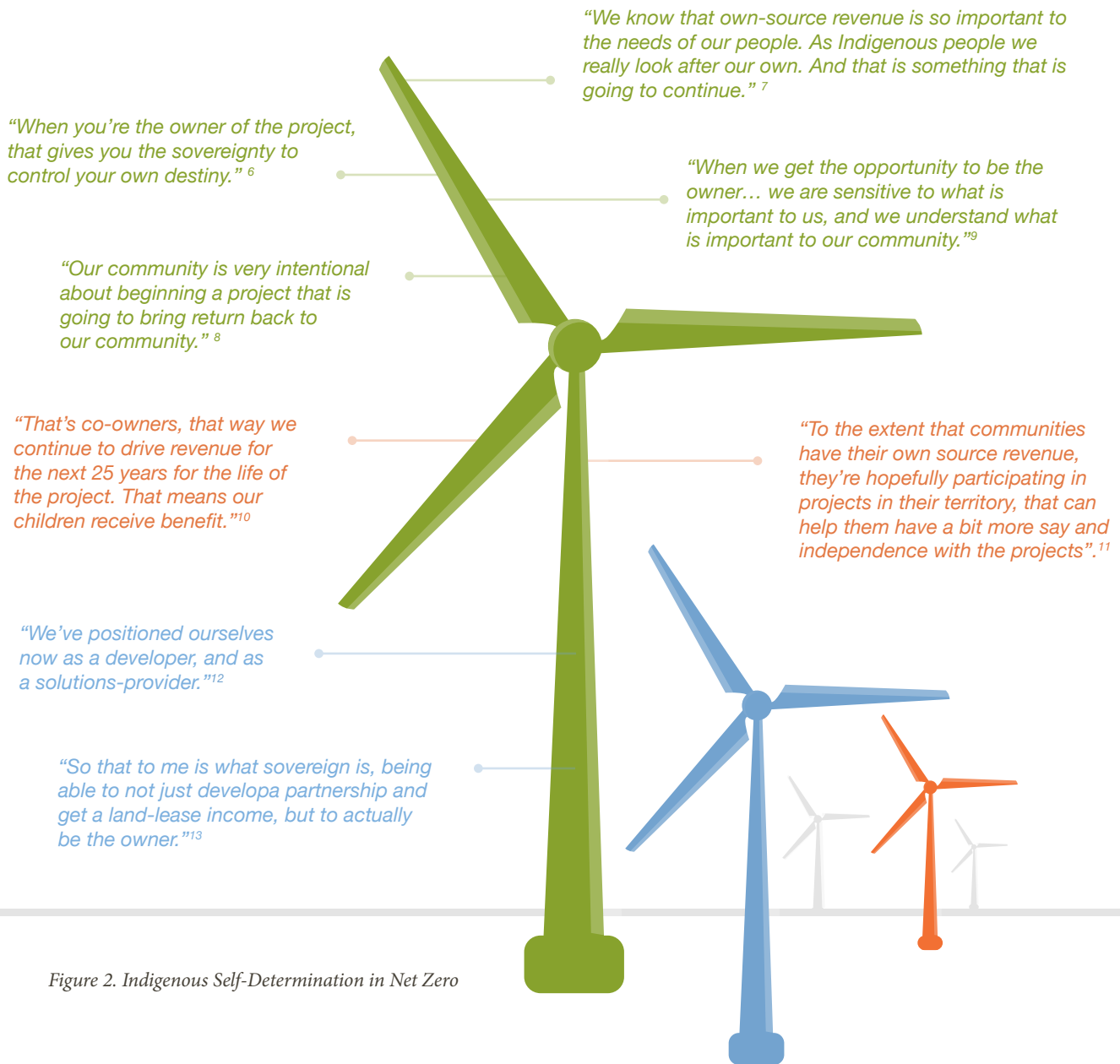


Figure 2. Indigenous Self-Determination in Net Zero

<sup>6</sup> Dave Archambeault II, 45th Chairman for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe  
<sup>7</sup> Chief Sharleen Gale, Chair, FNMPAC & Chief, Fort Nelson First Nation  
<sup>8</sup> Joseph McNeil, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, General Manager, SAGE Development Authority  
<sup>9</sup> Dave Archambeault II, 45th Chairman for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe  
<sup>10</sup> Joseph McNeil, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, General Manager, SAGE Development Authority  
<sup>11</sup> Jason Calla, Skwxwú7mesh Nation, Technical Team, First Nations Infrastructure Institute  
<sup>12</sup> Matt Jamieson, President & CEO, Six Nations of Grand River Development Corporation  
<sup>13</sup> Dave Archambeault II, 45th Chairman for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe

In addition to the quotations in Figure 2 that characterize Indigenous self-determination in the net zero transition, three themes stood out in connection at the front edge of Indigenous self-determination:

**Indigenous nations  
as first movers**

*“We looked at the system and we thought, energy storage is the next logical move for the province of Ontario. And we went through an unsolicited process with the province, we brought the solution to them. **We’ve positioned ourselves now as a developer, and as a solutions-provider.** Which does put money at risk: but ultimately, we believe we have a product here that will ultimately harness the value of the things we already have, so we don’t have to go and build new transmission lines and other assets when we’re not even utilizing the things that we have. That’s our evolution of our energy participation in the market.”*

– Matt Jamieson, President & CEO, Six Nations of Grand River Development Corporation

**Own-source revenue to  
support Indigenous  
assertion of independence**

*“Sometimes communities are reliant on federal transfers to build some of their community infrastructure. And so, I think to the extent that communities have their own source revenue, they’re hopefully participating in projects in their territory, that can help them have a bit more say and independence with the projects they’d like to have. **Having your own money to bring to the project will be helpful in asserting and having your own standpoint.**”*

– Jason Calla, *Skwxwú7mesh Nation*, Technical Team, First Nations Infrastructure Institute

**Own-source revenue  
to support Indigenous  
values alignment**

*“We know that own-source revenue is so important to the needs of our people. As Indigenous people we really look after our own. And that is something that is going to continue. And when we make decisions about projects, we make decisions based on the land.... **So, when we get involved in major projects, it has to align with our values, it has to align with our language and our culture because everything that we get involved in has a spirit. And when we take, we give back, and we always have done that, as Indigenous people.**”*

– Sharleen Gale, Chair, FNMPC & Chief, Fort Nelson First Nation

## Net Zero Targets: The Indigenous Key to Success

*“The only road to net zero runs through Indigenous lands.”*

– Mark Trahant, *Editor-at-large of Indian Country Today*<sup>14</sup>

For Canada and the United States to implement their *Paris Agreement* commitments, an unprecedented amount of new clean energy infrastructure will have to be built to support the transition to net zero by 2050. Reaching net zero by 2050 will require fundamental transformation in virtually all aspects of our economy with Indigenous nations and communities are, in many respects, at the centre of it. In at least the Canadian and American contexts, Indigenous support for clean energy infrastructure such as hydro dams and transmission lines through their lands may be the difference between success and failure for the United States and Canada to meet their net zero commitments.

The First Nations Major Project Coalition’s pre-conference report *Indigenous Leadership and Opportunities in the Net Zero Transition*<sup>15</sup> pointed to three pillars of Indigenous net zero: (1) Indigenous ownership, (2) Indigenous lands, and (3) free, prior, and informed consent. These pillars were not only held up, but were further developed by Indigenous expert panelists at the conference:

### 1. Indigenous ownership



“ I believe in [Indigenous] equity [ownership].... Give us 20 years and we will show you how equity transforms our communities. We will show you how, giving us a chance to finance a project, will springboard us into all sorts of areas of the economy.”

Cherie Brant, *Partner and National Leader, Indigenous Law at Borden Ladner Gervais LLP & Independent Director at Hydro One Networks and TD Bank*



“ First Nations are leading the transition to Net Zero projects. We’re doing that across this country and we’re the biggest owners of those projects other than government and municipalities. So, let’s not forget that: we’re leading this transition.”

Sharleen Gale, *Chair, FNMPCC & Chief, Fort Nelson First Nation*



“ The one thing in hindsight that has made us successful in the energy space, is partnering with the right companies who understand, or who we made sure understood, the importance of Indigenous rights and our interests to take care of our future generations.”

Matt Jamieson, *President & CEO, Six Nations of Grand River Development Corporation*

<sup>14</sup> Trahant, M., 28 April 2022. The only road to Net Zero runs through Indigenous lands. *Indian Country Today*. <https://indiancountrytoday.com/news/only-road-to-net-zero-runs-through-indigenous-lands>

<sup>15</sup> von der Porten, S., Podlasly, M., and Csicsai, P., April 2022, *Indigenous Leadership and Opportunities in the Net Zero Transition*. First Nations Major Project Coalition, [https://secureservercdn.net/45.40.145.201/14x.5f4.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/FNMPCC\\_Primer\\_04132022\\_final.pdf](https://secureservercdn.net/45.40.145.201/14x.5f4.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/FNMPCC_Primer_04132022_final.pdf)

## 2. Indigenous lands



*“As Indigenous peoples, we’ll be on the land long after the project is gone. So, it’s important that even as we’re meeting this urgent moment... we’ll be here. So, let’s recognize that and bring in values that have been there since time immemorial.”*

Kate Finn, Executive Director,  
First Peoples Worldwide



*“Most, if not all, of these projects here in Canada, will occur in the traditional territories of an impacted Indigenous community. Historically, Indigenous communities... have borne the brunt of economic development and resource extraction. And more often than not, Indigenous communities have enjoyed very few, if any of the associated benefits of these projects. Today as we face a renewed challenge to energy security... we have to wonder what our obligations are to ensure that the much-needed energy transitions benefit as many as possible and while impacting few.”*

Chief David Jimmie, Chair & VP of  
Finance, Chinook Pathways



*“This is where the real work happens. And if we’re going to build a great country, with renewable projects, that are accessing Indigenous lands for natural resources, then we can’t be left behind, then you will not have any access without us going forward.”*

Sharleen Gale, Chair, FNMPC & Chief,  
Fort Nelson First Nation

## 3. Indigenous free, prior, and informed consent



*“We don’t want to have a conversation about getting to yes, we want to have a real conversation about climate. And no, we don’t want to just invest in diesel projects, we want to invest in green and clean technology, that’s what we want to talk about.... Showing up to a community just to get to yes, that’s just not going to work for you. So, it’s re-approaching it, it’s learning about who you’re working with, and understanding the ways in which decisions are made from an Indigenous worldview.”*

Kluane Adamek, Yukon Regional Chief, Assembly of First Nations



“ How can we actually get to our [net zero] targets if we have legal challenges that are in the way, and we can't get projects done? We still have a real duty to consult challenge in this country...”

*Cherie Brant, Partner and National Leader, Indigenous Law at Borden Ladner Gervais LLP & Independent Director at Hydro One Networks and TD Bank*

“ This is so essential because it's something we have to get right in order to meet the goals of net zero by 2050. If we don't figure this out and figure out how to engage communities in ways that have not been done before now, we're not going to get there. It's that simple.”

*Mark Trahant, Editor-at-large, Indian Country Today*



## Clean Power Generation and Transmission

### Clean Power Generation

*“We have to look at the electricity sector. It’s a key venue for economic reconciliation.”*

– Cole Sayers, Advisor, *First Nations Clean Energy & Innovation, Clean Energy BC*

In the coming years there is going to be a huge spike in demand for clean electricity in the United States and Canada. This demand will be driven by industries working to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions from their supply chains, governments trying to meet their net zero targets, and as electric vehicles start to outnumber their combustion engine counterparts.

Further driving growth in new, clean electricity infrastructure, are rural and remote Indigenous nations increasingly trying to rid their communities of fossil fuel-driven electricity, as well as those Indigenous nations supplying the market with clean electricity to the grid. We’re at the outset of the transition “in the way that we generate, store, and use power. Global electrical grids are increasingly transitioning from the coal and gas of yesteryear to the renewable power sources of today and tomorrow” (Ryan Castilloux, Founder and Managing Director, Adamas Intelligence).

Using British Columbia as a touchstone for thinking about the transition to clean electrical generation as it relates to Indigenous nations, Cole Sayers (Advisor, First Nations Clean Energy & Innovation, Clean Energy BC), points to several notable barriers to Indigenous clean electricity production, as well as solutions. All of these may be generalizable to other jurisdictions:

#### **Barriers to Indigenous clean energy generation in BC:**

1. Underestimation by BC Hydro for the upcoming demand in electricity.
2. Assertion by BC Hydro that British Columbia has a surplus of power as an argument to deny Indigenous nations more opportunities to sell power.
3. Colonial/outdated approach to working with Indigenous nations on power generation arrangements.

*“We need to see more investment into clean energy infrastructure that’s Indigenous-led, that deal with getting communities off diesel, and looking at some of the challenges related to technology in clean energy projects, and challenges related to technology in clean energy projects.”*

– Jason Rasevych, *Partner, National Indigenous Client Services Lead, Deloitte*

#### **Solutions to supporting Indigenous clean energy generation in BC:**

1. Indigenous partnerships with industry.
2. BC building a framework similar to the Saskatchewan Power Authority, where a utility model could function as an operator, collector, and other services, that would collect First Nations power and that could either sell it to BC Hydro or a third customer such as industry.
3. BC supporting virtual retail access for First Nations that privileges First Nations utilities to have access to the grid.



## Benefits

Some of the resulting benefits of supporting the ramping-up of Indigenous nations supplying clean power include:

1. Enabling governments to meet their greenhouse gas reductions targets.
2. Enabling governments to meet their UNDRIP commitments.
3. Enabling governments to meet their reconciliation commitments.
4. Energy supply meeting the anticipated demand spike for electricity by industry and consumers.
5. The material benefits to Indigenous nations of supplying electricity.
6. Indigenous energy sovereignty.
7. Reliable power to First Nations for economic development.

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*“The main thing is that we need access to the grid, to sell to customers so we can build these projects and create revenue. It’s going to be needed for things like mining in remote areas.”*

- Jason Rasevych, Partner, National Indigenous Client Services Lead, Deloitte

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## Transmission

*“There is no transition without transmission.”*

- Paisley Sim, Réseau Canada Grid Lead, The Transition Accelerator

Intimately tied to the demand for clean electricity is the concurrent need for the growth of electrical transmission lines. In other words, clean power supply is only effective if it can reach users and decarbonize those users. Within and among many jurisdictions in Canada and the United States:

*“...the heart of this transition is electrification. There’s a small mountain of studies that are projecting a minimum of a doubling of demand or electrification, which means the system capacity has to expand by something like 2.4-3.4 times. ... grid integration is becoming a necessary component of reaching net zero.”*

- Paisley Sim, Réseau Canada Grid Lead, The Transition Accelerator

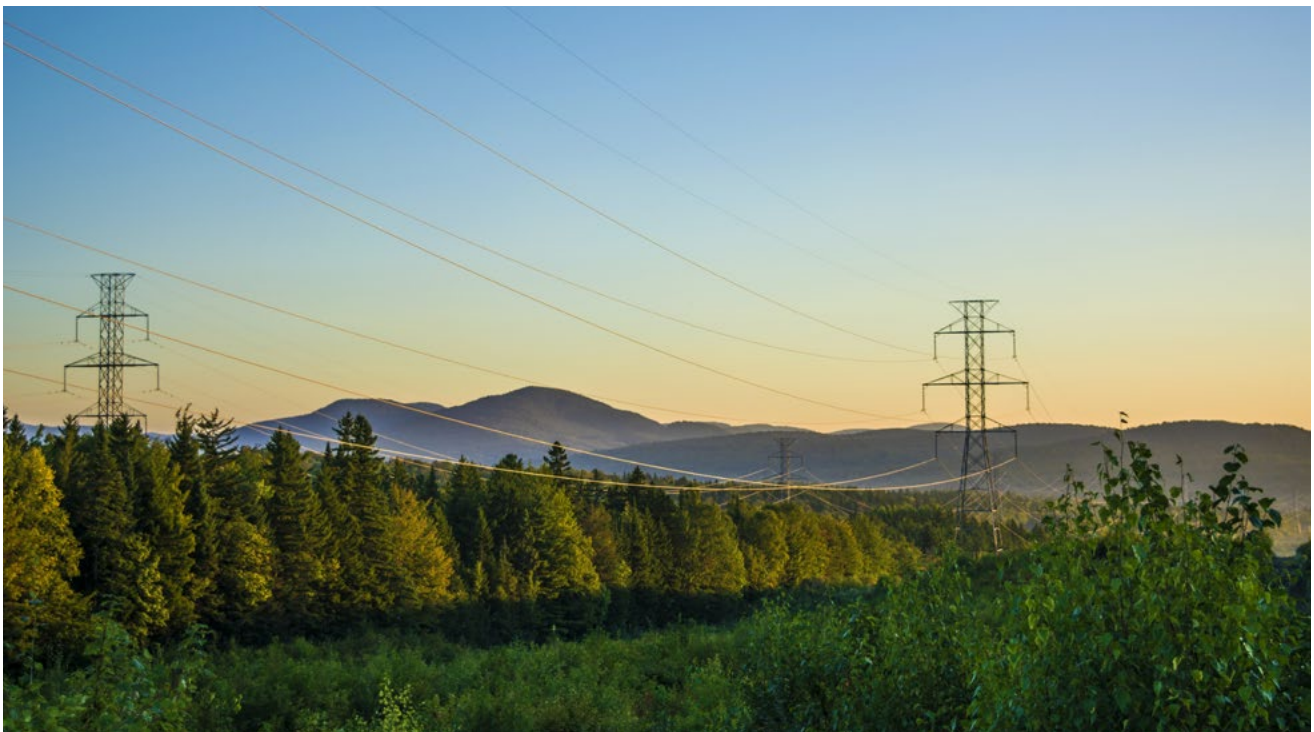
As with ramping up clean electricity generation, building more and better transmission lines, all of which do and will run across Indigenous lands, have barriers and solutions noted by expert panelists:

### **Barriers to building new transmission lines in the United States and Canada:**

1. Regulatory systems and lack of existing transmission preventing Indigenous nations from entering the clean electricity supply market.<sup>16</sup>
2. Geographic diversity and the need for transmission that connects different geographies across Canada, North America, and even globally.<sup>17</sup>
3. The need for clean power to reach rural and remote areas, including emission-intensive industries such as mining.<sup>18</sup>

### **Opportunities and benefits from building new transmission lines in the United States and Canada:**

1. Allows a diversification in actors/proponents of transmission projects, e.g., Indigenous nations.
2. Spurs innovation around how regulators and utilities are shaped, e.g., in a more Indigenous-centric way.
3. Access to Indigenous jobs and leadership on the transmission line.
4. Huge investment opportunity.
5. Increased the share of clean electricity on the grid new project proponents.
6. Displaces greenhouse gas-emitting sources of electricity.
7. Lower rates for ratepayers through bigger “balancing pools”.
8. Connects hydro[electric]-endowed jurisdictions with fossil-endowed ones.



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<sup>16</sup> Joseph McNeil, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, General Manager, SAGE Development Authority

<sup>17</sup> Mark Poweska, President and CEO, Hydro One Limited

<sup>18</sup> Scott Maloney, Vice President, Environment, Teck Resources Limited

## Carbon Credits and Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage (CCUS)

*“There’s two areas - carbon storage and removing carbon from the atmosphere - that I think tribes can really have a big role in.”*

- Todd Malan, Chief External Affairs Officer and Head of Climate Strategy, Talon Metals

The benefits to and barriers of carbon credits and carbon capture, as they relate to Indigenous nations in the United States and Canada are outlined in the First Nations Major Project Coalition’s pre-conference report *Indigenous Leadership and Opportunities in the Net Zero Transition*<sup>19</sup>. The following subsections summarize additional points tabled by expert panelists at the conference that further thinking and opportunities in this area for Indigenous nations.

### Carbon capture, utilization, and storage

- » **Indigenous nations as a first mover in the CCUS industry:** *“Many tribal leaders have repeated that, ‘we want to be there at the beginning, we don’t want to have the plan developed without us at the table from the very beginning.’ When you think about carbon removal and carbon storage, there is such an amazing opportunity for tribal governments, tribal people, tribal governments to be at that starting point and shape how this industry – if it turns into an industry, and I think it’s a big “if”: there’s a lot of science to be done yet.”* - Todd Malan, Chief External Affairs Officer and Head of Climate Strategy, Talon Metals.
- » **Geographic equitability:** Carbon from the atmosphere can be captured anywhere, not always at the point source of the emissions. Thus, unlike other geographically based industries (e.g., forestry, oil & gas, hydroelectric), CCUS has the potential to be more equitable for Indigenous nations in terms of the inputs required.
- » **Potential to reduce emissions:** For the industries where emissions are difficult to eliminate (e.g., steel, concrete), Indigenous nations have potential to be a major industrial player in what is still a nascent market for the industries looking to CCUS and carbon credits to decarbonize.
- » **Utilization:** Some Indigenous nations may have the potential to be players in the carbon utilization end of the market, for example, using “carbon as a feedstock combined with, for example, renewable hydrogen to synthesize hydrocarbons like jet fuel or diesel.” – Adrian Corless, CEO, Carbon Capture.
- » **Upturn in the CCUS industry:** Some Indigenous nations may be able to benefit from some recent changes in the CCUS industry over the past year: (1) Canada and the United States providing the underpinnings, regulations, and incentives for direct air capture to go quickly, (2) new technologies (3) huge investment coming into the CCUS space, and (4) customer demand driving up the price for credit.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> von der Porten, S., Podlasly, M., and Csicsai, P., April 2022, Indigenous Leadership and Opportunities in the Net Zero Transition. First Nations Major Project Coalition, [https://secureservercdn.net/45.40.145.201/14x.5f4.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/FNMPC\\_Primer\\_04132022\\_final.pdf](https://secureservercdn.net/45.40.145.201/14x.5f4.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/FNMPC_Primer_04132022_final.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Adrian Corless, CEO, Carbon Capture

## Carbon Credits and Carbon Offsets

Carbon credits and carbon offsets have significant potential for Indigenous nations' participation in net zero projects, particularly those who do not want new or expanded infrastructure projects in their territories. Notable comments related to this by panelist Bryan Van Stippen (Program Director, National Indian Carbon Coalition) included:

- » **Growth in the carbon credit markets:** *“We’re seeing the value of a carbon credit is beginning to rise over time, and there are more organizations ...the Amazons, the Microsofts, the Spotifys of the world are purchasing these carbon credits. And as those organizations acquire the credits, they want to ensure that they are purchasing high-quality, high-integrity credits that are capturing and removing carbon from the atmosphere and storing it in those nature-based solutions – whether it be forest lands, grass lands, grazing lands, pasture lands, and rural crop lands.”*
- » **Range of carbon credit potential for Indigenous nations:** *“Everybody’s in a different gamut of what they can actually develop and build. We have certain tribal nations in Washington State that have access to hundreds of thousands of acres of forested lands, to small tribes in California that have five acres of urban areas.”*
- » **Gap in knowledge and support from governments:** *“Indigenous communities can lead the way that this marketplace is going because we have the capacity to do so. We just need the know-how and the support organizations, from federal governments, from state governments, from Canadian governments to do so.”*

The First Nations Major Project Coalition’s pre-conference report *Indigenous Leadership and Opportunities in the Net Zero Transition*<sup>21</sup> describes the opportunities in this area of net zero.

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<sup>21</sup> von der Porten, S., Podlasly, M., and Csicsai, P., April 2022, Indigenous Leadership and Opportunities in the Net Zero Transition. First Nations Major Project Coalition, [https://secureservercdn.net/45.40.145.201/14x.5f4.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/FNMPC\\_Primer\\_04132022\\_final.pdf](https://secureservercdn.net/45.40.145.201/14x.5f4.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/FNMPC_Primer_04132022_final.pdf)



## Part 3: ESG+I

### ESG+I Recommendations for the Business Sector

*“It’s imperative that we get right in Canada not only for the investment community or Canadian First Nations, but also for the good of all Indigenous peoples around the world... Speaking as a representative of the institutional finance in Europe, we are very concerned about ESG and the inclusion of Indigenous values in ESG.”*

- Michael Meehan, *Chairman, UK Sustainable Investment & Finance Association*

Some elements of an Indigenous-centric, just transition to net zero that was noted by conference panelists included:

#### **1. Prioritize Indigenous peoples from the beginning.**

*“If we try to establish a trajectory on ESG to reach net zero by 2050, we’re not going to do it if we don’t ensure that Indigenous people are at the front end. If we try to do this as an ESG+I, I think we’ve lost the game already. We don’t have that kind of time. We really need to get to the heart of the issues. ... The whole [Indigenous] nationhood discussion has to be brought to the forefront. So, I’m going to suggest perhaps it’s an order of priority.”* (Isadore Day, Founder and CEO, Bimaadzwin)

## 2. Decolonize your corporate frameworks.

*“When we consider the ESG framework for assessing risk, the frameworks are missing the mark when it comes to including the Indigenous component within environmental, social and governance, of how that Indigenous voice is involved in corporate decisions. [Our report is calling on] corporations across Canada that have been operating in this country is to decolonize your processes, and to consider the Indigenous worldview into how you operate.”* (Jason Rasevych, Partner, National Indigenous Client Services Lead, Deloitte)

## 3. Explore what ESG and FPIC policies Indigenous nations already have.

*“The question is beginning to shift from whether a company, or the private sector have an Indigenous peoples policy, having an FPIC policy, having an ESG policy, (and I think that’s good and important and a good place to be), but now it’s time for the private sector to ask ‘what’s your FPIC policy? How do you want to be engaged? What are your values? What is your statement?’ And then it is time for the private sector to reflect and understand and integrate that as part of the relationship.”* (Kate Finn, Executive Director, First Peoples Worldwide)

## 4. Defer to each Indigenous nation on metrics of success.

*“The traditional approach has been statistical analysis with respect to the number of jobs, or the number of procurement contracts, or the dollars that are shared through wealth generation or earned via partnerships. I think we’re missing the mark when we measure just those criteria, ...perhaps we start looking at attendance rates in schools for the youth in community,... the number of Indigenous youth or people who end up going to college or university and doing skills training, ... family harmony and statistics around domestic violence, ... health outcomes. That is not for the industry player to dictate. When you’re partnering with communities ... Ultimately, it is up to [Indigenous communities] to say what is really incentivising them for wanting to ensure there are more jobs and opportunities.”* (Alicia Dubois, Co-Chair, Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business)

## 5. Level the playing field.

*“What the [ESG] standards aren’t about is not a checklist. It’s not about saying you need to consult Indigenous communities once every three years as part of materiality analysis. While I think we applaud some of the initiatives like supplier diversity and looking Indigenous hiring targets around some of these projects, that’s not enough. But what the [ESG standards do] is levels the playing field. And much like the finance community, we start with excluding people that don’t even want to play to that bar. And we exclude those projects, and we exclude those companies. It gives us room to grow.”* (Shelly Gilberg, ESG Markets Leader, PWC)

*“They say don’t hate the player, hate the game. But the game has been... very tilted over the last 150 years. And so, we need to have Indigenous voices there, creating a more level playing field. I think we need to be involved both at the international level, as well as with this made-in-Canada solution.”* (Geordie Hungerford, Chief Executive Office, First Nations Financial Management Board)

## 6. Commit to investing in Indigenous talent.

*“Companies that try to stick the Indigenous part into the S are doomed for failure, because it needs to be integrated throughout. There needs to be a way to not just develop your Indigenous relations strategy or reconciliation action plan, you really have to structure your organization to be able to commit to invest in the talent, in the people, and to the Indigenous leaders that are going to be able to help the company drive that strategy in the long term, and also measure and demonstrate social impact.”* (Jason Rasevych, Partner, National Indigenous Client Services Lead, Deloitte)

## Indigenous Observations about ESG Standards

*“I don’t believe that poverty is a First Nations cultural value.”*

- Bill Lomax, Vice President, Goldman Sachs

### 1. Re-centering ESG on how it affects the earth.

*“ESG as a framework, we have struggled to help not only our community leaders identify what is the best impact when looking at ESG as a measurement, but also when we really look at how ESG is discussed, we are often discussing it from a place of: how does ESG affect the company, not the earth. That question has to be reversed.”* (Vanessa Roanhorse, Co-Director, Native Women Lead)

### 2. Balancing the needs of Indigenous nations, the environment, and future generations.

*“When we come to a conference like this, we are looking to balance what’s going on with our needs as a nation, with the environment and our future generations. That is really what this whole thing is all about.”* (Bill Lomax, Vice President, Goldman Sachs)

### 3. Honoring Indigenous worldviews.

*“The current [investment] frameworks are not allowing us to thrive. We can actually challenge and change the sector at the same time and make it better. I think the Indigenous worldview is finally being honored and seen as viable pathway forward for all people.”* (Jaime Gloshey, Co-Director, Native Women Lead)

### 4. Ancestral inherent responsibility.

*“When I think about Indigenizing ESG, we also have to be careful not to look at it from the ambiguity of the UNDRIP concept as well, because it is a part of the ancestral, inherent responsibility that is sacred. And that is not a right that needs to be recognized legally, or by a government, or by a company. This is a responsibility that was there before the doctrine of discovery that our Elders talked about. So, when we think about that responsibility, that is an important part of ensuring that we’re not limiting the ‘I’ in ESG to just the Indigenous rights that are recognized.”* (Jason Rasevych, Partner, National Indigenous Client Services Lead, Deloitte)

### 5. These values are not new to Indigenous peoples.

*“The principles underlying sustainable finance and ESG are not new to Indigenous peoples... our cultures are founded on respect for the environment, our social relations – both human and non, and traditional governance systems that have always ensured that no one is left behind.”* (JP Gladu, Principal, Mokwateh)

*Our communities have always thought about these issues, and about the concept of development and economics in a much more holistic fashion. It was never for our communities a blind pursuit of profit in the name of growth, or wealth, or accumulation. Those concepts were always balanced against the consequences. And not just the consequences for a business or for a group of people, but the consequences for other elements of our world that we depend on, like the environment.”* (Jaimie Lickers, Vice President, Indigenous Markets, CIBC)

## Part 4: Sector-Based Concepts in Indigenous Net Zero Projects

### New Bar Set: Best Practices in Indigenous Participation and Ownership

Experts, keynotes, and panelists together articulated core principles related to Indigenous equity participation and ownership that set a new bar for what major projects look like on Indigenous lands in the United States and Canada. This new bar applies not only to net zero projects, but for any new infrastructure or projects on Indigenous lands. The best practices that emerged from the conference as they related to the three main categories of attendees at the conference (industry, Indigenous, government) are outlined and discussed below.

Table 5. Summary of Best Practices in Indigenous Net Zero Participation and Project Ownership

Sector	Best Practices in Indigenous Net Zero Participation and Project Ownership
<b>Indigenous</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Indigenous nations are leaders in the net zero transition.</li> <li>2. Own-source revenue, own-source community decisions.</li> <li>3. Consider joining leadership positions such as board member, advisory, and/or upper management.</li> </ol>
<b>Industry</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Always build-in equity access options for Indigenous nations.</li> <li>5. Hire and support Indigenous women into leadership positions.</li> <li>6. Hire and support Indigenous people into leadership positions.</li> <li>7. Invest in Indigenous-led net zero infrastructure.</li> <li>8. Accelerate and de-risk net zero infrastructure projects by centering Indigenous leadership/ownership.</li> <li>9. Attributes of strong and successful industry-Indigenous partnerships.</li> </ol>
<b>Government</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Stand behind Indigenous entrepreneurship in net zero.</li> <li>11. Implement capacity supports for Indigenous nations.</li> <li>12. Seize net zero as an opportunity to build Canada-US unity and competitive advantage.</li> <li>13. Support Indigenous nations in accordance with each of their diversities and circumstances.</li> </ol>



## Indigenous

*“Indigenous people have a way of describing our areas as reservations or reserves, because that was what we were told, that ‘this is a set-aside for you’. It’s not actually true. Those are strongholds, those are areas that we were forced back into, to regroup, to recalibrate, and to put a foothold in going forward.... that’s the piece of earth we can put our hands on and our feet on and push back against all these challenges that are facing us today.”*

- Brett Isaac, *Founder and Executive Chairman, Navajo Power*

### Indigenous nations are leaders in the net zero transition.

“Indigenous nations are leaders of the net zero transition” is a new best practice because of the work that has been done in Canada and the United States by innumerable Indigenous nations to build and own new net zero projects on their lands – examples of such projects are laid out in the First Nations Major Project Coalition’s pre-conference report *Indigenous Leadership and Opportunities in the Net Zero Transition*<sup>22</sup>. For any Indigenous nation striking out on the journey to explore new net zero infrastructure on your lands, understand that Indigenous-led and Indigenous-owned infrastructure are the new baseline, and project proponents should work with Indigenous nations accordingly.

*“We already decided that we’re going to lead this transition, and we’re not going to be left behind. So how do we bring people in to be a part of it. And I think our people are demonstrating that on the ground.” (Sharleen Gale, Chair, FNMPC & Chief, Fort Nelson First Nation)*

*“We’re doing it, we’re not waiting for it to be done.” (Joseph McNeil, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, General Manager, SAGE Development Authority)*

*“... And that is when Ontario got off coal, and that would not have happened without Indigenous ownership and partnership on these major projects.” (Hillary Thatcher, Senior Director Indigenous and Northern Infrastructure, Canada Infrastructure Bank)*

*“The development of projects in which [an Indigenous] community is a part of the project and is a partner in the project, it aligns the interest of both communities and investors and the actual mining operation. ... the communities are right in the driver’s seat with the investors.” (Jeff Labonté, Assistant Deputy Minister, Lands and Resources Sector, Natural Resources Canada)*

*“We’re starting to see, especially in the clean energy space, more projects being 100% owned by Indigenous communities. We’re starting to see more Indigenous entrepreneurship within that space. So how do we build on that and continue to move that forward.” (Angie Bruce, Assistant Deputy Minister, Nòkwewashk, Natural Resources Canada)*

*“We need to remind ourselves that Indigenous peoples have always been incredibly entrepreneurial, shifting and pivoting to nature and unforeseen circumstances.” (Jaime Gloshey, Co-Director, Native Women Lead)*

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<sup>22</sup> von der Porten, S., Podlasly, M., and Csicsai, P., April 2022, Indigenous Leadership and Opportunities in the Net Zero Transition. First Nations Major Project Coalition, [https://securerervercdn.net/45.40.145.201/14x.5f4.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/FNMPC\\_Primer\\_04132022\\_final.pdf](https://securerervercdn.net/45.40.145.201/14x.5f4.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/FNMPC_Primer_04132022_final.pdf)

*“For First Nations, where I really want us to give, is that I really want us to work together. I want us to say ‘we are going to put down our pasts ... and say ‘it’s us, we’re going to do this’ and show that we did it. And then we’re going to see the incredible feeling of accomplishment and confidence and inspiration.” (Cherie Brant, Partner and National Leader, Indigenous Law at Borden Ladner Gervais LLP & Independent Director at Hydro One Networks and TD Bank)*

## **Own-source revenue, own-source community decisions.**

In addition to mitigating climate change, Indigenous-led and -owned net zero infrastructure projects can provide “own-source revenue” (revenues generated by an Indigenous nation rather than from government funding). Many expert Indigenous panelists point to the importance of these revenues from the perspective of sovereignty, Indigenous self-determination, and Indigenous community decision-making on how those monies are spent:

*“We [Tauhara No.2 Trust] have a major commercial interest in power generation. We use that money to benefit, or as an enabler, to benefit our people in all the social programs that we deliver.” (Wikitoria Hepi-TeHuia, Deputy Chairperson, Tauhara North No.2 Trust, Aotearoa/New Zealand)*

*“As tribal nations, everything was built around us and taken away from us. But there is a lot of momentum out there now to help tribal nations get these types of projects started. Because we’re taking the biggest risk, we’re spending the most risky dollar into proving these projects. And if we can show that they’re really working to benefit the community, then we’re doing something that no one else can do... us as people taking control of what our revenue stream is going to look like and how we decide on a community level how we want to disperse that by community voices and grassroots ways, making that bit of difference that’s going to make a big change.” (Joseph McNeil, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, General Manager, SAGE Development Authority)*

*“There’s an opportunity to reframe how business can be done. It doesn’t have to be business as usual; it doesn’t have to be exploitative of people and planet, or extractive.” (Jaime Gloshey, Co-Director, Native Women Lead)*

*“...so, they’re carrying on their business of just doing nickel, and us [the FN] we can build the transmission, build the hydro dams, then we can just deliver to the power to our transmission lines to Canadian Nickel and we’ll be just like a service provider to the mine site. It kind of sets the bar a little higher for our community, and it also brings the wealth into our community, and people have choices in our community of what they want to do with all that wealth we develop on the rez there. So, we look at it differently, and being a true business partner is really something that we wanted to be, and we wanted to make people understand that being a true business partner at the table and being able to make decisions, really smart business decisions, when it comes to our community, our reserve, and our debt on our resource.” (Dwight Sutherland, Director of Lands and Resources, Taykwa Tagamou Nation)*

*“We didn’t just want jobs, jobs, jobs, but we wanted more, like to be involved and to be at the table when these decisions are made and to not just be at the back of the bus bouncing around, but to make sure we’re right there in the driver’s seat saying this is what we want to do. Our community came from living out of a food bank to generating wealth for our community.” (Dwight Sutherland, Director of Lands and Resources, Taykwa Tagamou Nation)*

*“The cultural and traditional values of each of our communities has existed since we’ve been here, and we’ve got to get back to utilizing them to work with the solutions to the issues we’re dealing with and speak up about it. Because for too long, **we’ve been allowing others to impose their values on us and trying to solve our problems with their solutions.** They’ve been existing for a long time, and we’re trying to get back to that.” (Mark Sevestre, Senior Advisor and Founding Member, National Aboriginal Trust Officers Association)*

*“This is part of our self-determination and sovereignty, is that ability to go from a planning process to coming up with a strategy on how to do the implementation of a plan. And the right consensus with the decision-making process that a Tribal community or Nation goes through. And that’s important, to have a strategic energy plan that is inclusive, and that takes voices of the community, Tribal leaders, folks that work in schools, teachers, and also the young generation and the Elder folks.... Seven generation planning is really key.” (Wahleah Johns, Director of the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs)*



## Consider joining leadership positions such as board member, advisory, and/or upper management.

Throughout this conference, panel members from all sectors spoke about the importance of hiring Indigenous people to all ranks, particularly as board members, advisory and/or upper management. The corollary of this effort by companies is that Indigenous nation members consider joining such positions in order to make their nation's values known – either widely within a company, or for a particular project that affects their Indigenous nation's lands. Panelists' points in support of this idea included:

*“There is a role for Indigenous perspectives at every level, of every institution, and until we have that representation in lines of business like our asset management business, we’re not going to get there.”*  
(Jaimie Lickers, Vice President, Indigenous Markets, CIBC)

*“There’s a difference between being a political leader and being a leader. We look to leadership if Indigenous communities who are doing amazing work every day on the ground, whether it’s getting off diesel, whether it’s looking at solar, whether it’s leading their own projects on their own territories if they choose to do so. And... as frustrating as it can be for the investor that is just trying to like not to see red that year in their financial statements... money makes the world go round, but if we don’t take care of the world, then the world is not going to be going around.”* (Kluane Adamek, Yukon Regional Chief, Assembly of First Nations)

*“A sustainable future and sustainable economic growth and development has to involve a combination of Indigenous-led and -owned and controlled institutions, but also, and appropriate representation of Indigenous views within other institutions. Because we can’t do it without the cooperation of all of these institutions... ..Until we have Indigenous representation across the board, we’re always going to face barriers.”* (Jaimie Lickers, Vice President, Indigenous Markets, CIBC)



### Always build-in equity access options for Indigenous nations.

A new bar has set by Hydro One in Ontario, which has offered Indigenous nations an option to purchase an equity stake in the new Chatham to Lakeshore transmission line. Indigenous options for equity can and should be built-in to new or existing infrastructure projects by governments or corporations for new net zero projects or other project on Indigenous lands. Panelist expertise on this best practice:

*“What we heard from Indigenous communities when we went and talked to the communities... is the desire to have equity participation in assets that we’re building on their traditional territory, and that this is a step forward in economic reconciliation in Canada... At Hydro One, we operate on the traditional territories of over 100 nations in Ontario. We recognize that Indigenous peoples are the stewards of the land and were the stewards of the land long before we built right-of-ways and transmission lines and substations.” (Mark Poweska, President and CEO, Hydro One Limited)*

*“[The Chatham to Lakeshore transmission line] is going to allow us to be self-sufficient in some way where we have that own-source revenue in our hands, to be able to make our own decisions in terms of how we’re going to use that revenue to support our community and our members.” (Chief Jackie French, Chippewas of the Thames)*

*“Hopefully the [Chatham to Lakeshore transmission line in Ontario] will set a precedent for British Columbia and how we’re going business between First Nations and BC Hydro moving forward.” (Scott Smith, Partner, Gowling WLG)*

### Hire and support Indigenous women into leadership positions.

Industries within the private sector should hire and find ways to support Indigenous women in positions such as board members, advisory, and/or upper management positions. Hiring requires education and equity-diversity-inclusion training within existing leadership ranks in order to create work environments in which the voices of Indigenous women are heard and respected. Panelist expertise on this best practice:

*“[Since I was younger] I decided that I deserved the same opportunities as every other citizen of this country. I took up accounting and joined Deloitte in 1996. Today I’m a partner who leads our western Indigenous client service practice that supports First Nations in their journey of economic independence.” (Jolain Foster, Partner, Deloitte)*

*“...in the United States, Indigenous native women are building companies two times faster than our white female counterparts. We make 60 cents to the dollar, and yet we are an [US]\$11 billion industry totally unsupported. Imagine what happens when we look at the investment strategies from that perspective, and not only including the Indigenous worldview, but the imbalance on the gender lens, investing perspective that needs to also be included.” (Vanessa Roanhorse, Co-Director, Native Women Lead)*

*“I would love to see the transition of the senior executives within the natural resource sector, to see more Indigenous people at those executive levels, including in government. ...Many times, I’m the only Indigenous woman in the room as we’re talking about whether it be mining, whether it be electrification, whether it be LNG or hydrogen strategies. So, a transformation for me, and where we need to go, is yes to see [Indigenous] ownership but also to see it at the decision-making tables, and that means at the highest level and at every level through the entire sector.” (Angie Bruce, Assistant Deputy Minister, Nòkwewashk, Natural Resources Canada)*

*“We know that there are still not enough women...in the STEM sectors. We need more women in math and engineering. We need more women in finance. We need more Indigenous people in these sectors. There’s a real collaboration where industry and governments can work with community to figure out what is the skills gap and how do we fill those skills at the very early onset of project planning and development.” (Hillary Thatcher, Senior Director, Canada Infrastructure Bank)*

### **Hire and support Indigenous people into leadership positions.**

Across all industries, the private sector should hire and find ways to support Indigenous peoples in positions such as board members, advisory, and/or upper management positions. This could include nation members, knowledge-holders, youth, Elders, and/or hereditary or elected leadership. Hiring requires education and equity-diversity-inclusion training within existing leadership ranks in order to create work environments in which the voices of Indigenous people are heard and respected. Panelists’ expertise on this best practice:

*“We are actually going to companies through shareholder proposals, and saying you should be doing this... If companies are doing this voluntarily because they understand that this is a good path for them...making better decisions, more diversity of thought amongst the boards and the hiring of our people not just hiring a bunch of guys with shovels at the front line. It’s who is making the decisions with your organization at the board level, at the senior management, and at the middle and lower management.” (Mark Sevestre, Senior Advisor and Founding Member, National Aboriginal Trust Officers Association)*

*“Hire Indigenous people into every organization, into all of your institutions. If you’re not in a position in your institution to influence the hiring decisions, then do us the favour and refuse to speak on behalf of Indigenous people when you’re asked. And if you’re asked to speak on behalf of Indigenous people, go back to the people in charge or your organization, and tell them that they need to engage directly with Indigenous people. That is how our voices are going to be heard, and I think it’s the most important thing you can all do.” (Jaime Lickers, Vice President, Indigenous Markets, CIBC)*

### **Invest in Indigenous-led net zero infrastructure.**

As the Canadian and American economies transition to net zero, all of the new net zero infrastructure will be built on Indigenous lands. Investments now and going forward should be in Indigenous-owned and/or Indigenous-led projects. Panelists’ expertise on this best practice:

*“There is intent: I have clients who want to get to put capital to work. Who want to get returns, but to change things and to make things better. That’s new. And we’ve got new tools, and it’s very exciting.”*  
(Roger Beauchemin, CEO, Addenda Capital)

*“Come to Indigenous communities, invest, put your money in there, and we will show you profitable projects, we’ll bring really good jobs, and we will develop a workforce. We’ll create all the incentives that we have promised our communities.”* (Brett Isaac, Founder and Executive Chairman, Navajo Power)

*“If the investment community doesn’t get a streamlined sense of where Canada is at, and where First Nations are setting policy. ... As a first order of priority, investor relations, I think we need to discuss Indigenous relations. Set the context, identify the complexities and the issues, and then let’s run the ESG lens. I think we’ll accurately be able to identify issues that we need to work on as a business community.”* (Isadore Day, Founder and CEO, Bimaadzwin)

*“The companies understanding that they’re on their own reconciliation journey, and what is their reconciliation action plan. The beautiful part of the work that I get to do is that on one hand helping Indigenous communities make sure that they’re using their voice at the shareholder table, we’re not just merely stakeholders in the path of business, we’re actually the owners of these companies and demanding they do better based on the ownership.”* (Mark Sevestre, Senior Advisor and Founding Member, National Aboriginal Trust Officers Association)

## **Accelerate and de-risk net zero infrastructure projects by centering Indigenous leadership/ownership.**

All new energy and mine infrastructure in Canada and the United States can be delayed or even halted when environmental protection regulations are not met and/or when proponents fail to work directly with Indigenous nations in the early days or inception of the project. Net zero infrastructure in these two countries can be de-risked from project inception for companies who embrace an early engagement approach. Panelists’ expertise on this best practice:

*“We have to look at the bottom line and ask ourselves, if the Dakota Access Pipeline had been properly engaged, had properly built relationships with the community members, the [US]\$7.5 billion that they had to overspend could’ve actually gone to community, could’ve actually gone directly to building community health centers, [etc.]”.* (Vanessa Roanhorse, Co-Director, Native Women Lead)

*“When we deal with a lot of the regulatory environment related to permitting, whether it be in lands and resources in the mining or the forestry sector, much of that is behind when it comes to the concept of inclusion of Indigenous traditional knowledge, or values or shared decision making within that process. This is very important for institutional investors, very important to the banking industry, very important to insurance companies, and pension funds. Because when we think about some of the risks that are identified, projects could be de-risked if Indigenous peoples are leading or partnering in part on those projects.”* (Jason Rasevych, Partner, National Indigenous Client Services Lead, Deloitte)

*“There is a lot of red tape in the system. A lot of it is necessary, and it’s there to protect both the consumer as well as companies and the nation... One of the ways we can, maybe not reduce the red tape, but we can make it easier to go through the process is through ... through partnering, and getting alignment with the stakeholders, and with the First Nations, and Indigenous communities where we work. ... So, I’m not going to fix red tape, but I think there is a pathway through it, but it is again through collaboration, through partnership, through collaboration, through transparency, in building longer-term trust.” (Mark Poweska, President and CEO, Hydro One Limited)*

*“Companies are now realizing that [Indigenous nations] can be their key to success, they can move things forward... On the company side, they see bringing the communities in and providing these sources of benefits can actually ensure the project moves ahead.” (Jordan Hatton, Director of Economic Development, Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek)*

### **Attributes of strong and successful industry-Indigenous partnerships.**

Many experts and panelists spoke about the attributes of strong industry-Indigenous partnerships. What is a “best practice” is likely going to always be what suits the circumstances, industry, and individual Indigenous nation. Further, the best practices of these partnerships are likely to take shape over the coming years with the rapid expansion of net zero projects. However, some particular attributes of strong and successful industry-Indigenous partnerships included companies that:

1. Educate their entire workforce about the history Indigenous peoples.
2. Increase their Indigenous workforce to be more representative.
3. Support job training in advance of the project to ensure Indigenous nation members have the opportunity to be job ready.
4. Build a partnership model as a framework for future projects.
5. Develop relationship framework agreements for each project.
6. Respect Indigenous nations, their communities, knowledge-holders, leadership, and sovereignty.
7. Incorporate Indigenous values, worldviews, and knowledge into decision making.
8. Relocate offices closer to Indigenous nations where applicable.
9. Seek guidance from Indigenous-led organizations (such as the FNMPC or First Peoples Worldwide).

*“We have to be out there talking early, we probably didn’t do that [before]. We have to be out there listening, we have to listen a lot better, what is important to people, what are we going to do, what does equity look like. ... We have to learn from our past, what do we do better going forward, and how do we gain that trust?” (Brian Johnson, Vice President Gas Transmission & Midstream, Commercial, Enbridge)*



### Stand behind Indigenous entrepreneurship in net zero.

This conference made clear that government support of Indigenous entrepreneurship in building and owning new net zero infrastructure is a win-win-win for Indigenous nations, government, and industry. This approach puts Indigenous nations in the driver's seat of what occurs on their lands and channels revenues to their nation's communities. Government can come closer to their net zero targets and begin to build economic reconciliation with Indigenous nations. And finally, industry can de-risk their projects and minimize uncertainty using consent-based agreements as a baseline.

*"As States, and as the federal government starts looking forward to solutions, and what to do with net zero, Tribes have the answers. [Indigenous] entrepreneurs have the answers... There's a huge place for First Nations and Tribes to step in and to provide those solutions, and they're ready... This isn't a vision anymore, this is real, and we're stepping in right now." (Kate Finn, Executive Director, First Peoples Worldwide)*

*"Indigenous communities are actually at the forefront. They're leading the energy transition. ... So how do we support the capacity from those communities that already have created those experiences, those understandings and knowledge, and support each other. So how does government create that capacity. I think the FNMPC is a great example of that in terms of that of how we, as government, can step away and communities really have that experience to drive that forward." (Angie Bruce, Assistant Deputy Minister, Nòkwewashk, Natural Resources Canada)*

*"If we're not willing, as government and leaders, to acknowledge and validate Indigenous wisdom, ecological and economic as valid ... we do not need more research, we do not need more data, what we need to do is build partnerships so when we create these investment opportunities, we're coming from a place that starts from the ground to the sky." (Vanessa Roanhorse, Co-Director, Native Women Lead)*

*"We need government, the central bank, and Indigenous leadership to be involved in that discussion to include a process where it's not just a blanket approach or a cookie-cutter approach, to addressing the UNDRIP and FPIC principles, but also looking at consent-based agreements, and also looking at honouring treaties and looking at honoring specific rights holders' interests that are specific to individuals that are on the land." (Jason Rasevych, Partner, National Indigenous Client Services Lead, Deloitte)*



## Implement capacity supports for Indigenous nations.

Colonial practices and laws have long thwarted fair economic development by Indigenous nations, as discussed in the First Nations Major Project Coalition's paper *National Roundtable on Indigenous Access to Capital in Canada: Roundtable Primer*<sup>23</sup>. This paper also recommends how, in the Canadian context, governments can provide material support to Indigenous nations to explore and/or expand net zero infrastructure on Indigenous lands. Recommendations included an Indigenous Infrastructure Bank that would provide debt to projects; an Indigenous Loan Guarantee Program that would back Indigenous equity purchases in major projects in their Indigenous territories, and Indigenous access to business capacity and negotiation supports for Indigenous nations at the earliest possible stage of a project. Panelists at the conference provided additional points and perspective on supporting Indigenous nations' capacity:

*"Grants have played a critical role for us to get started on the initial analysis of what our resources are, and then we talked to foundations and friends of friends of friends, and talking to other tribes in particular about what is it that we want our communities to look like, and how we want to save our environment in our home for our children..." (Joseph McNeil, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, General Manager, SAGE Development Authority)*

*"One of the things we've been working on is building capacity so that communities have the ability to engage with the right resources and the right expertise, to work with proponents, to work with the government and the consultation duties as well. And we're pushing for a partnership at that ground zero." (Jeff Labonté, Assistant Deputy Minister, Lands and Resources Sector, Natural Resources Canada)*

*"[The Province of Alberta] has a capacity fund too. So, if a First Nation isn't as advanced as others, we'll actually give them a business program...we just advanced \$600,000 up where I live for doing a solar farm for a couple of the First Nations." (Honorable Rick Wilson, Minister of Indigenous Relations, Government of Alberta)*

*"When we think creatively in this country, Canada is really at the forefront of thinking about communities as part of the solution, pushing to try and push that in policies and programs. There's definitely a lot more work to do, and there will always be work to do, but that work is very worthwhile in doing. And a lot of these projects are 10, 20, 30 year horizons. They have long streams of opportunity, and they create the opportunity to create a generation of employment and benefits, and opportunities to grow those businesses outside of the communities in which they find themselves." (Jeff Labonté, Assistant Deputy Minister, Lands and Resources Sector, Natural Resources Canada)*

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<sup>23</sup> von der Porten, S., Edwards, N., Vickers, B., Mullen, D., and Podlasly, M., April 2022, National Roundtable on Indigenous Access to Capital in Canada: Roundtable Primer. First Nations Major Project Coalition, [https://secureservercdn.net/45.40.145.201/14x.5f4.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/FNMPC\\_BCBC\\_ACCESS\\_TO\\_CAPITAL\\_05102022.pdf](https://secureservercdn.net/45.40.145.201/14x.5f4.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/FNMPC_BCBC_ACCESS_TO_CAPITAL_05102022.pdf)

## Seize net zero as an opportunity to build Canada-US unity and competitive advantage.

The potential for net zero to become a competitive advantage in the United States and Canada, particularly in the critical minerals sector, is discussed in the First Nations Major Project Coalition's pre-conference report *Indigenous Leadership and Opportunities in the Net Zero Transition*<sup>24</sup>. Conference panelists added new angles regarding competitive advantage and more depth to opportunities on the horizon:

*“Bring it south of the border. We need a level of unity that is represented in this room in the United States. We haven't seen it, we're all islands unto ourselves, and we as leaders... we're willing to share... what we're trying to do is something that we're willing to share, because it doesn't belong to us, it belongs to our children. I'm very happy to be here and see this type of unity, and comradery with federal agencies, with business agencies. We have a level of exposure to business agencies, and some level federal recognition and states, but it needs to be cohesive.” (Joseph McNeil, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, General Manager, SAGE Development Authority)*

*“Canada's credentials and our ability to be measured and tested against how our environmental standards how, how Indigenous communities, how Indigenous partnerships are part of the equation – is a differentiator that makes us more competitive. And makes us stronger as we get to that net zero future. How things are produced, who produces them, how they find their way to supply chains, and how it makes its way to the market is fundamentally being reconstructed, and that's an opportunity that Canada can seize if it works its way through this and builds those frameworks right from the beginning, in the right way.” (Jeff Labonté, Assistant Deputy Minister, Lands and Resources Sector, Natural Resources Canada)*

*“How do we make Canada the place where investment happens so that we can develop the resources here, and build the infrastructure that can set the stage for all the other energy goals in Canada. And that's going to take the right kind of policy environment, both in terms of investment attraction – so around tax, around policy certainty, and around Canada communicating its goals around some of these things to bring the projects here. On the climate site, things like the investment tax credit that were announced in the budget. Really important for us also, [in] continuing to pursue our goal in low emissions source of energy.” (Shannon Joseph, Vice President, Government Relations and Indigenous Affairs, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers)*

*“Canada, as a strong stable democracy, can be a leader here, but only if the mistakes of the past, particularly with regard to Indigenous communities are addressed and overcome.” (Chief David Jimmie, Chair & VP of Finance, Chinook Pathways)*

*“We need to inherently have a made-in-Canada approach, and that Indigenous people have to be invited to the table. They have to be invited to the table internationally, they have to be invited at the federal and provincial level as well.” (Geordie Hungerford, Chief Executive Office, First Nations Financial Management Board)*

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<sup>24</sup> von der Porten, S., Podlasly, M., and Csicsai, P., April 2022, *Indigenous Leadership and Opportunities in the Net Zero Transition*. First Nations Major Project Coalition, [https://secureservercdn.net/45.40.145.201/14x.5f4.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/FNMPC\\_Primer\\_04132022\\_final.pdf](https://secureservercdn.net/45.40.145.201/14x.5f4.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/FNMPC_Primer_04132022_final.pdf)

## Support Indigenous nations in accordance with each of their diversities and circumstances.

The diversity in culture, landscape, population, history, language, circumstances, jurisdiction, politics, and resource potential range widely among Indigenous nations in Canada and the United States. Therefore, any best practices or projects considered as the countries build-out net zero infrastructure must duly consider and fit in with this diversity. Several panelists captured the importance and nuance of this best practice:

*“We’re not taking a national-level view. Because as the deputies mentioned, regional perspectives are so critical. Every community is different, capacity is different, priorities are different, how they want to engage in benefit sharing is different. So, we really need to look at it from a regional basis.” (Angie Bruce, Assistant Deputy Minister, Nòkwewashk, Natural Resources Canada)*

*“These projects are often the only game in town for communities such as mine who do not have many options for other sources of economic development.” (Carrina Leween, Chief, Cheslatta Carrier Nation)*

*“I’m from a community on the south coast of Newfoundland where we’re isolated, and that’s the same story as many of the communities that we’ve heard today. We have a limited land base, but we’re right on the water, so we’ve got access to the offshore and great historical jobs in the offshore. So that’s what we want to leverage.... We need to create legacy jobs for our community and if we want to continue our own source revenue and our 100% employment, we’re going to need that revenue from LNG.” (Andrew John, Director of Justice and Legal Affairs, Miawpukek First Nation)*

*“We need to go out, we need to walk the land with community, we need to understand where they’re at. So, incorporating that into the culture of our department as we move forward.” (Angie Bruce, Assistant Deputy Minister, Nòkwewashk, Natural Resources Canada)*

*“It will be important for every community to not necessarily think that equity’s the answer, it may be, it may be a wonderful way to get involved in a project. But there are other times where frankly, you tell the mining company, you take the risk, we’ll take the contracts. ... Make the best choice you can for your community, there’s never going to be one single answer to that question.” (Pierre Gratton, CEO, Mining Association of Canada)*

## Part 5: Highlights of Conference Keynotes and Announcements

The *Toward Net Zero by 2050* conference hosted by the First Nations Major Project Coalition (Canada) and First Peoples Worldwide (US) featured five keynote speakers. Highlights from these presentations are outlined here.

### Brett Isaac

Brett Isaac is the co-founder and CEO of Navajo Power. Brett was born and raised on the Navajo Nation. A member of the Navajo People (Diné). Brett grew up in a culturally rich part of the world with scenic landscapes and vibrant history. This shaped Brett's view on creating opportunity while ensuring to carry messages of reverence for culture, conservation, and preservation of our ecosystem. This led Brett to a career in renewable energy, economic development, and entrepreneurship. This route eventually led to the creation and purpose of Navajo Power.



*“Indigenous communities have been sounding the alarm on [climate change] for decades. Only recently has it been realized that ‘you’re right’. We had an accurate idea of what we’re looking at and predicting.”*

*“[Exiting industries] left our communities in a lurch, because our families became dependent on those revenues, and they became a bit more jaded by energy, every single industry that came out [to our lands]. So, we created Navajo power because we couldn’t do that with clean energy. And if we didn’t do anything that’s what was going to happen, is that those same folks that came through before with the same promises, with the same commitments, would make those same offers to the leaders today. In order for us to move forward, we needed to be the face of what did the work rebuild, restore, and be regenerative.”*

*“We never gave up the fight, we’re still here. From those strongholds, we still have a fighting chance at improving our earth, at improving our mother. So that is one of the things we used to create Navajo Power, is this idea that we needed to recalibrate our thought. We do belong at the table. We do belong sitting in the board rooms negotiating those deals. We need to make sure that when we negotiate them, we consult our communities. We work with the ground up: so, we start at a level where we look at the people who are using the land, where ancestrally, this has been a place they’ve depended, they’ve cultivated, they have reverence for. And we ask them, what does success look like?”*

*“Communities want good jobs. They want to feel safe in their own environment. They want to know we’re not doing more harm, that we’re not taking away more than we’re putting back in. Navajo Power is essentially created to be that interpreter – we understand those financial terms, we understand that world, we know how to raise capital, we can bring those things back into the community. We can sit down at a kitchen table and work out issues that have plagued their communities for decades and come up with solutions that we commit to.”*

*“We’re working on over 3 GW of projects right now. Hopefully we’ll expand that into 10 GW by 2030. Because that’s the type of speed we need to keep up with meeting our net zero objectives.”*

*“With Navajo Power, the idea behind creating that equity is really about consulting people in a way that they understand, meeting them where they are. Taking that position and cultivating growth”.*

*“I wanted to streamline that process. Creating a company that then focused on how we get the autonomy to make decisions right here.”*

*“There is a reverence for land and for home that Indigenous people have. There isn’t really a word to describe it. It’s a sense, it’s an emotion, it’s something we’ve been trying for years to describe. It’s not a place, it’s not a monument, but it’s an existence. When we talk about that reverence, we talk about doing all the things we need to do to protect to honour and to continue to move forward. Because although we are facing a really heavy burden and a challenge, most of us were born into it, we weren’t here when those challenges were started and created.... One of the things that we have to own where we’re going from here. We have to own those solutions, because no matter how we got here, through our neighbours and our allies, we are only going to get out of here if we collaborate together in some way.”*

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## Ivan Vella

Prior to being appointed Chief Executive, Aluminium in 2021, Ivan was Interim Chief Executive, Iron Ore. During his nearly 20 years with the business, Ivan has held senior leadership positions in our Copper, Coal and Iron Ore product groups and several support functions. Before being appointed as the interim Chief Executive, Iron Ore following the destruction of the Juukan rock shelters, he spent four years as Managing Director Rail, Port & Core Services, Iron Ore. Ivan is passionate about the energy transition and the role aluminium plays as a green and critical material for the future. He also continues to focus on building capability in Rio Tinto to enhance the long-term positive role mining can have partnering with First Nations and Indigenous people, along with the host communities we operate in.

*“I think there’s an opportunity for mining companies ...to co-design, co-develop, and co-manage from the outset. And that means to understand the intent of the mine, understand its impacts, work through those together with the First Nations in a practical way, so that when get to the final stage of actually wanting to permit and approve that mine, we’ve got an advocate with us. We can go forward together, I mean, what regulator is going to say no at that point? So, there’s a huge win-win here, if we think about the energy transition and commitment to net zero, we want to move fast but we want to do that with First Nations.”*



*“Our production is actually very energy intensive... if I look at aluminium as an example, it’s a great paradox. Because aluminium is absolutely fundamental in the energy transition, and yet it’s very carbon intensive. And so, we need to deal with our own problems first... we want to be seen as part of the solution not part of the problem, but that means we need to deal very rapidly do deal with those underlying issues.”*

*“Ultimately for me it comes down to relationships. It doesn’t matter what agreements you’ve got, it doesn’t matter what governance processes you’ve got, fundamentally, if that relationship is not meaningful, protected, celebrated, and held widely across the business, then we are going to make mistakes. And that’s what happened [at the Juukan Gorge in Australia]. And we will take years to work through this.... Ultimately, a great relationship will continue to evolve. You can update it, but the essence of that connection is critical. The ability for a First Nation or a traditional owner to pick up the phone and say ‘I’m really worried about this’.... shouldn’t need someone to reference an agreement. Call me, text me, we’re in touch. That’s what a relationship looks like. And we’re meeting regularly, we’re talking about things that go well, and when something doesn’t go well, we work together to solve it.”*



*Mark Podlasly and Ivan Vella at the Toward Net Zero by 2050 Conference in Vancouver, BC*

## Mark Cutifani

Mark Cutifani is an Australian businessman and the former chief executive of the diversified mining group, Anglo American and a member of their Board and Group Management Committee. He is also a non-executive director of Anglo American Platinum, and chairman of De Beers.

*“Indigenous, First Nation groups understand the earth better than any of us.”*

*“Value is always in the eye of the beholder. We think that you need x, y, z. That logic survives the first engagement when you realize the first thing people need are not the thing people want. So, if we can put that aside and start engaging in a very constructive and open way and take the time to understand how we can make a positive difference to that community in the long term, then I think we frame a different conversation.”*

*“It’s not about collaboration or involvement, it’s actually about co-design, it’s co-creation. We have to do this together or it won’t work. Because it actually has to work for the community for 100, 200, 300 years. For us [the mining company] it’s a 30-50 year issue. Get that right and you’ve got the answer, you’re well on the way.”*

*“Like most relationships, you’ll be judge on what you do, not what you say. For us it’s a long hard road. We’ve made mistakes on the way.”*



*“In my experience, if you haven’t got the local community on board, you’re not going to mine. You need to understand what’s needed for that to work. So, it’s a different mindset, a different positioning, and it’s a matter of understanding what you’re going to do.”*





*“You got to make some moves; you’ve got to push the industry towards a different outcome if the industry is going to be what it needs to be for the community.”*

*“We put too much on politicians in my view. It’s probably the toughest job I can imagine and in the end we’re always critical. But if as business leaders we don’t stand up and take accountability for making a difference... as business leaders we’ve got to step right out there. I think as business leaders, we have to take accountability for playing our role in society and that is to help find solutions for these intractable problems. But that means that that conversation here today is not a government problem, it’s us trying to work out what we can do, and then helping the government understand how they can play their part.”*

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## Mark Trahant

Mark Trahant is the editor-at-large of *Indian Country Today*. Trahant is a former Charles R. Johnson Professor of Journalism at the University of North Dakota. He is a citizen of Idaho’s Shoshone-Bannock Tribe, and a former president of the Native American Journalists Association. Trahant was chairman and chief executive officer at the Robert C. Maynard Institute for Journalism Education. He is a former columnist at *The Seattle Times* and has been publisher of the *Moscow-Pullman Daily News* in Moscow, Idaho; executive news editor of *The Salt Lake Tribune*; a reporter at the *Arizona Republic* in Phoenix; and has worked at several tribal newspapers. He was an editor in residence at the University of Idaho.



*“We need to redefine our measurements... We’re trying to come up with an Indigenous GDP, and we’re building in a set a metrics that we can then measure. That’s part of it, figuring out how you can measure things that you then can translate to a larger audience.”*

*“The thing I think would be really remarkable, is to share history. It’s something you don’t think about with mining, but a lot of Indigenous peoples have long histories of mining, 10,000 years or more. And how that is shared could really be a part of the equation.”*

*“The more you put into the front end, the more it’s going to save you time down the road. So, investing up front is really critical.”*

*“The good thing about climate action is that so much is being done by the private sector, so it’s almost irrespective of what government does. They’re going to be behind the curve.”*

## Canadian Minister of Natural Resources Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson

The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson was first elected as the Member of Parliament for North Vancouver in 2015. He has previously served as Minister of Environment and Climate Change and Minister of Fisheries, Oceans, and the Canadian Coast Guard. Raised in Saskatchewan, Minister Wilkinson spent more than 20 years in the private sector, holding leadership positions with a number of companies dedicated to the development of green technologies.



*“I am pleased today to announce that the government of Canada will be investing \$300 million towards capacity building initiatives, and for the development of clean energy projects such as energy efficiency, wind, solar, geothermal, hydro, biomass, projects that reduce the use of fossil fuels for heat and power in Indigenous communities from coast to coast to coast.”*

*“In addition to this, the recent federal Budget 2022 included \$103 million to develop a national benefits sharing framework, and to expand both the Indigenous partnership office, and the Indigenous natural resources partnerships program that are housed in my department at Natural Resources Canada. At least \$25 million of this funding is to be dedicated to engagement and Indigenous communities’ capacity building to support participation in the critical minerals strategies.”*

*“Going forward, to be truly successful in our efforts to build sustainability and prosperity in our resource sectors, we must ensure that we are working in collaboration, and in partnership with Indigenous peoples during project planning, project development, and project operations phases.”*



## United States Secretary of Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm

Jennifer M. Granholm was sworn in as the 16th Secretary of Energy on February 25, 2021, becoming just the second woman to lead the U.S. Department of Energy. Prior to her nomination as Secretary of Energy, Jennifer Granholm was the first woman elected Governor of Michigan, serving two terms from 2003 to 2011.



*“Congress has given us this mandate to deploy clean energy and expand access to these technologies. And the best way for us to make sure that every community finds their place in the clean energy economy is to hire people from those communities to carry out that work. We recognize that [Indigenous] communities understand the urgency of the climate crisis better than anyone – [Indigenous] communities are often on the front lines of droughts and fires and floods.”*

*“As we think about North America and how we can be stronger and energy independent, making sure that we’ve got the full [critical mineral] supply chain, including extraction and processing... but we do it in a responsible way. We do it in a way that respects our partners, whether it’s tribal lands or communities that may be sitting on resources. We do it in a way that respects the earth and the air and the water. So, we are looking for guidance on the most effective use that comes out of the bipartisan infrastructure law. This was something we discussed during our tribal consultation in March. So along with our attention to treaty rights and sacred sites, we’re in conversation on how we can involve tribal communities in these really important projects.”*


*“There’s not a one-size-fits all strategy for the transition. Different communities are doing to face different challenges, and that’s particularly true for Indigenous communities which are often rural and remote. So, our Office of Indian Energy’s sole mission is to ensure that tribal communities are not left behind in this transition. They have a really great track record of working alongside tribal communities to develop what we call place-based strategies for clean energy deployment.”*

## What's Next: Remaining Questions to Answer

### Feedback from the conference was centred around a few critical questions:

1. How can an Indigenous **values-driven economy** be a driver for new way of doing business on Indigenous lands?
2. What are the steps needed to create a level playing field for Indigenous nations to be business ready?
3. What steps do industry and government need to take to close the gap on building finance-deal support for infrastructure and other projects on Indigenous lands?
4. What is the organizational, legal, and financial structure of an entity created to finance Indigenous equity ownership in projects?





*“We have to think about things differently. The Indigenous worldview cannot just be something that is seen as this sort of fluffy way of being, it is actually who we are. And for industry partners to understand that... it is the intrinsic connection that we have to the land is so important. ... We take only what we need – if that concept were to be true for development, wouldn't the world be such a different place? That is challenge for all of us, to continue to think about the way in which we advance with those values and learning from Indigenous peoples around values and principles and reciprocity and balance and looking at each nation very differently with respect to rights holders, because we all have different processes.”*

*- Kluane Adamek, Yukon Regional Chief, Assembly of First Nations*





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