

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



SUPPORTING
INDIGENOUS-LED
CONSERVATION
ACROSS TURTLE
ISLAND AND BEYOND



FEBRUARY 14, 2024

CONTENTS

Message from the Co-Founders	1
Message from the President	2
Purpose & Values	3
Leadership	4
Our Work in 2023: Projects and Events	5
Pacific IPCA Innovation Centre	6
Clayoquot Campus	7
International Partnerships	8
Knowledge Hub	9
IPCA Planning Certificate at VIU	10
Westcoast IPCA Support Program (WISP)	11
BigCoast Forest Climate Initiative	12
Westcoast IPCA Ambassadors Program	13
Indigenous-Led Westcoast Stewardship Corridor	13
Estuary to Old Growth Gathering	14
IPCA Knowledge Basket	15
IOF x RJC Engineers: Indigenous Projects Team	16
First Nations Dialogues on Culturally Significant Species	18
Conservation through Reconciliation Partnership	19
Partners & Supporters	20
Path Forward	21

MESSAGE FROM THE CO-FOUNDERS

Hishuk-ish-tsa'walk. Everything is one and everything is interconnected. This Nuu-chah-nulth worldview concept is at the heart of our work at IISAAK OLAM Foundation.

The projects and programs we lead and support are intentionally holistic; language, culture, species, lands and waters, housing and infrastructure are inextricably linked. Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) are a means to achieving long-term, sovereign visions for thriving communities and ecosystems, going far beyond conventional parks and protected areas.

Through each of our actions, our team is dedicated to building momentum for the We Rise Together movement, rooted in the 28 recommendations from the 2018 report by the Indigenous Circle of Experts for the Pathway to Canada Target 1. With a focus on education and knowledge mobilization, we have continued, through 2023, to bridge divides and foster generative spaces and programs that depend on relationships, trust, respect (IISAAK), reciprocity, and recognition that Ethical Space is key to moving forward in a good way.



IOF Team (August 2023)

2023 has been an abundant year. We are inspired by the Indigenous Peoples, Nations, governments and communities who are living their values despite all obstacles. The programs and projects about which you'll read in this report tell a story about this most recent leg of our journey to support initiatives that create a fertile ground upon which to establish, govern, and manage IPCAs.

Kleckooo Klecko (deep sense of gratitude) to our partners and collaborators for being on this journey with us, and to Creator and Mother Earth for providing all of our needs.

Chuu,



Eli (Hiyamalnii) Enns
Co-Founder
and CEO



Monica Shore
Co-Founder
and Executive Director

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Eli and Terry with the NaaWas Čiinuut, which tells a story of spiritual connection and cultural revival.

It has been an honour to be a part of the IISAAK OLAM Foundation at this extraordinary time in Ku-us (real live human being) history. By connecting with Indigenous leadership, Elders, youth, students, organizations, governments, and industry, I believe we are participating in the great shift of consciousness that has awakened our sacred roles and responsibilities to address today's climate issues. As the industrial revolution spins out of control and our Mother Earth begins the healing process, it has become a necessity that we strive for natural balances in an unbalanced world.

From coast to coast to coast, the important work of organizing Indigenous Peoples and our non-Indigenous allies has accelerated climate solutions into various actions. The IPCA movement and other Indigenous-led models of combining traditional knowledge systems with modern technology is a testament to our collective success in protecting biodiversity.

The IISAAK OLAM Foundation is deeply rooted in an Ethical Space that is respectful to ontological approaches and we invite universities, industry, and Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments to join us in exploring healthy solutions to the climate crisis. We continue to be grateful to our partners and collaborators who have shown us their love and concerns for the planet.



Terry (Seit-cha) Dorward
President and
West Coast IPCA
Conservation Director

PURPOSE & VALUES

We work at the intersections of nature, society, and culture, all of which come together in IPCAs.

IOF supports the establishment and long-term capacity of IPCAs and educates all sectors about their value and relevance. We do this by building relationships, supporting partnerships, incubating initiatives, and through knowledge mobilization and capacity building. We work with Indigenous Nations, governments, and communities and their partners, as well as with Crown governments, academia, civil society, and the private sector. We recognize that a paradigm shift in conservation requires the hearts, minds, and energy of many individuals, leaders, and governments.

IISAAK OLAM is an exercise in reconciliation and Ethical Space.

We are a values-driven organization guided by the principles and teachings of iisaak, olam, peace and friendship, and generosity.

What is “Ethical Space?”

Ethical Space is a relational approach to cross-cultural collaboration. It is based on understanding that all knowledge systems are of equal value. Holding Ethical Space creates forums for open-minded, respectful conversation between Indigenous and Western worldviews. It forms the foundations for relationship-building and effective co-development of working systems like policy and conservation projects.

IISAAK

iisaak is a Nuu-chah-nulth word and reflects the highest law of the Nuu-chah-nulth constitution, represented at the top of the totem by the sun-moon crest. *iisaak* roughly translates as “To observe, appreciate and act accordingly.”

PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP

Canada is a multinational Euro-Indigenous state built upon sacred treaty relationships between European and Indigenous Nations in the spirit and practice of peace and friendship.

OLAM

Olam means ‘world’ and ‘forever’ in Hebrew, and the Hebrew phrase ‘*Tikkun Olam*,’ means “to repair, heal, or perfect the world.” It is a Jewish ethic of responsibility for the health of people and nature.

GENEROSITY

Respect that which has been provided, walk in the world with a grateful heart, and be generous with others.

LEADERSHIP

The IISAAK OLAM Foundation is an Indigenous-governed not-for-profit society registered in British Columbia (B.C.). Since our establishment in 2017, our team has grown significantly and includes an Indigenous Circle of Advisors, an Indigenous Board of Directors, staff, interns, project collaborators, and partners.

We operate with a blend of project funding (grants and contribution agreements), contracts for services, and by hosting tailored productive retreats, trainings, and workshops on topics including IPCAs, Ethical Space, and reconciliation.



CIRCLE OF ADVISORS

Dr. John Borrows (Anishinabe/Ojibway)
Marilyn Baptiste (Xeni Gwet'in First Nation)
Levi Martin (Tla-o-qui-aht Nation)
Chief Gordon Planes (T'Sou-ke Nation)
Barbara Todd (Métis/Cree)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Terry Dorward (Tla-o-qui-aht), incoming President
Eli Enns (Tla-o-qui-aht and Dutch Mennonite)
Carol Anne Hilton, (Hesquiaht)
Art Napoleon (Cree and Dane Zaa)

We raise our hands to Pierre Iachetti who served on our board from 2019 to 2023. Klecko Klecko!

We are grateful to our past and present team of advisors, directors, and collaborators.

IN THE FIELD

2023 CORE STAFF

Eli Enns, CEO

Monica Shore, Executive Director

Terry Dorward, Director of West Coast IPCA Conservation

Dr. Justine Townsend, Director of IPCA Partnerships and Knowledge Mobilization

Dr. Soudeh Jamshidian, Director of Education and International Relations

Eric Wilson, Director of IPCA Infrastructure and Systems Design

Abby Sparling, West Coast IPCA Conservation Coordinator

Isabel Simons, Project Lead and Administrative Coordinator

Melanie Lacelle, IPCA Knowledge Basket Digital Engagement Coordinator

Carl Haynes, Administrative Coordinator

2023 COLLABORATORS

Many incredible people supported our work on specific projects this past year. We extend special thanks to:

Allison Bishop, Allyson Menzies, Anaïs Brusel, Andrew Paul, Astra Lincoln, Ben Hazel, Candice Steven, Carlos Silva, Christina Enns, Curtis Scurr, Dana James, Dawn Morrison, D'Arcy Cyre, Don Carruthers Den Hoed, Eduardo Sousa, Elizabeth Braker, Ambassador Elizabeth Williams, Emily Chu, Erin Myers, Gerben Deinum, Graham Sakaki, Gregg Brill, Hannah Whittman, James Boyle, Jennifer Royer-Collard, Jeremy Williams, Jessica Hum, Jessica Lukawiecki, Joe Martin, John Cheechoo, Kate Fenton, Kelly Foxcroft Poirier, Kelsey Scarfone, Kris Dubrawski, Kristy Tomkinson, Lauren Bernardi, Michelle Thut, Moses Martin, Olivia Sylvester, Pam Shaw, Robin Roth, Sofía Rodríguez, Urpi Castañeda Willca, Will Goodon

OUR WORK IN 2023

PACIFIC IPCA INNOVATION CENTRE: CLAYOQUOT CAMPUS

The Pacific IPCA Innovation Centre is the first of what will become a network of regional IPCA Innovation Centres across the country. These centres are places of learning and inspiration for IPCAs. The Clayoquot Campus, a satellite campus of the Pacific IPCA Innovation Centre, is a 10-acre property in Tla-o-qui-aht territory (Tofino BC) that hosts on-the-land programming and learning on IPCAs.

Read about the **Clayoquot Campus** [here](#).



The Clayoquot Campus from above. (March, 2023)



IISAAC LEARNING LODGE: GREEN ENERGY AND ACCESSIBILITY RETROFIT

This project will upgrade the Pacific IPCA Innovation Centre in Tofino, BC. Geothermal and solar energy systems, safety and accessibility upgrades, and a kitchen expansion will help the space welcome groups and minimize its ecological impact. This project will support up to 10 Indigenous Nations per year with IPCA development, host academic and professional groups, and act as a community hub for educational programs and gatherings.

The retrofit will benefit Indigenous leaders, policymakers, builders, and planners, and Indigenous Peoples across Canada, as the Lodge will host visitors to the Clayoquot Campus of the Pacific IPCA Innovation Centre for gatherings focused on cultural, linguistic and ecological revitalization through Indigenous-led conservation. The Clayoquot Campus will welcome 10,000 non-Indigenous Canadians and visitors per year to learn about sustainable building, ecosystem restoration, reconciliation, and Nuu-chah-nulth culture.

Read the **federal announcement** [here](#).

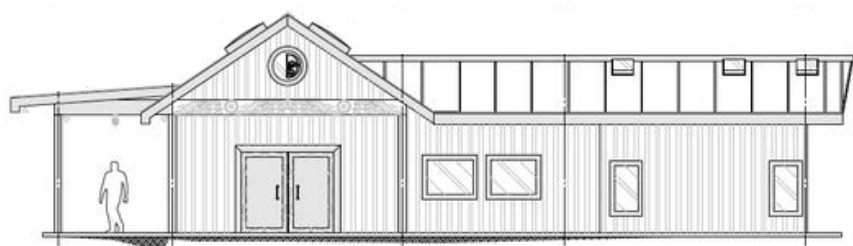
OUR WORK IN 2023

PACIFIC IPCA INNOVATION CENTRE: CLAYOQUOT CAMPUS

NEW CARVING FACILITY



FIRST PEOPLES'
CULTURAL COUNCIL
Heritage Program



Carvers have been working in a tent prior to the construction of the state-of-the-art facility.

IOF received support from the First Peoples' Cultural Council Heritage infrastructure fund to design and build a carving facility to better serve both visitors and resident carvers. The current carving location, repurposed from an old open-air barn, lacks suitable storage for carvings and tools, affecting six Nuu-chah-nulth carvers who've used the space for 18 months, producing significant cultural pieces. Interviews conducted with carvers identified the need for a new facility with proper insulation, secure tool storage, a covered area for public interaction, and nearby washrooms. Addressing these needs is crucial, supporting aging carvers and promoting Nuu-chah-nulth heritage to the public. Collaboration with the University of Victoria's Civil Engineering Department and RJC Engineers has been key in project planning, aligned with IOF's initiatives.

Replacing the carving shed is vital for supporting Indigenous artists, fostering community ties, and revitalizing culture. The upgraded facility, essential for year-round use, provides comfort, preserves intergenerational knowledge, and expands accessibility for knowledge sharing.



Tla-o-qui-aht Master Carver Joe Martin shares a canoe in progress.

OUR WORK IN 2023

PACIFIC IPCA INNOVATION CENTRE: CLAYOQUOT CAMPUS

The Clayoquot Campus is a hub for of systemic innovation in the spirit and practice of reconciliation. Onsite programming ties together Indigenous cultural and linguistic revitalization, stewardship of lands and waters, food sovereignty and regenerative economic development. In 2023, IOF continued laying the groundwork for the Campus to support educational programming.



Tla-o-qui-aht Elder Levi Martin blesses the NaaWas Čiinuut. From left to right: Eli Enns, Levi Martin, Tsimka Martin, and Joe Martin.



NAAWAS ČIINUUT TOTEM RAISING

AUGUST 1 2023, TLA-O-QUI-AHT HA'HOULTHEE

The NaaWas Čiinuut (Totem) was raised in ceremony at the Naa'Waya'Sum Gardens during the sturgeon full super-moon. The NaaWas totem was carved on site at the Clayoquot Campus from the same tree as the Hinaaqsuuqʷa totem. Hinaaqsuuqʷa was raised on July 1 2022 in Opitsaht, and was the first totem raised in the area since 1993. The carving and raising of Hinaaqsuuqʷa in Opitsaht last July 1st and carving and raising of the NaaWas Čiinuut on August 1st are part of ongoing efforts to revitalize Tla-o-qui-aht knowledge systems and culture. Over 300 local community members and friends and allies from afar came together for the momentous event.



Joe Martin directs event attendees as they raise the totem together (August 1, 2023).

OUR WORK IN 2023

PACIFIC IPCA INNOVATION CENTRE: INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



Supported by the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI), IOF and the Organization for Tropical Studies (OTS) partnered with members of the Ngäbe Indigenous community on a bio-cultural heritage project at the Wilson Botanical Gardens in San Vito de Coto Brus, Puntarenas, Costa Rica.

Ngäbe knowledge holders, youth, and project partners worked together to:

- Design a community garden and install a collection of 44 plant species of medicinal and cultural significance
- Hold workshops and cultural exchanges
- Host an inauguration event to share the collection and enable intercultural dialogue



Left to right: Alejandro Palacio (traditional doctor). María Bejarano (traditional midwife), Terry (Seitcha) Dorward & River Dorward.

LAS CRUCES & NAA'WAYA'SUM: SISTER GARDENS AGREEMENT



Sofía Rodríguez (OTS) and Terry (Seitcha) Dorward (IOF) sign the sister garden agreement.

The Sister Garden Agreement between OTS and IOF establishes a collaborative tie between the Wilson Botanical Garden at Las Cruces and the Naa'Wayá'Sum Coastal Indigenous Gardens at the Clayoquot Campus in Tla-o-qui-aht Territory (Tofino BC).

The agreement's purpose is to strengthen nature conservation and bio-cultural heritage preservation at international, national, and local scales. IOF hopes that this relationship will build upon and expand the initiatives that the CFLI Funding enabled us to co-create with our Ngäbe and Costa Rican partners.

OUR WORK IN 2023

PACIFIC IPCA INNOVATION CENTRE KNOWLEDGE HUB



Kickstarted by funding from the Canadian Mountain Network from 2021 to 2024, the Pacific IPCA Innovation Centre Knowledge Hub (Hub) fosters relationships and brings together the best of Indigenous and western knowledge systems for the restoration and conservation of biocultural diversity. The work of the Hub serves Indigenous Nations and governments in the establishment of IPCAs by coordinating knowledge sharing activities, curriculum, research, and events with partners from academia, Indigenous NGOs, civil society, all levels of government, and the private sector.

Collaborators include experts in conservation biology, ecology, ethnoecology, ecological restoration, Indigenous knowledge and food systems, governance, and Indigenous languages and cultures.

Established during the Covid-19 pandemic, most of the Knowledge Hub's engagements have been virtual, but many projects and programs spawned from the conversations and idea sharing facilitated by meetings of Hub collaborators.

IOF and Vancouver Island University are the Hub's co-leads. Collaborators include:

The University of Victoria's Civil Engineering Department and Indigenous Law Faculty, the Conservation through Reconciliation Partnership, the IPCA Innovation Program at MakeWay, the David Suzuki Foundation, the Department of Environment and Development of the University for Peace in Costa Rica, the Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty, the Assembly of First Nations' Environment Sector, T'Sou-ke First Nation, RJC Engineering, West Coast Environmental Law, the Canadian Parks, Protected, and Conserved Areas Leadership Collective (CPPCL) and Roots to Roofs.



Learn more about the Pacific IPCA Knowledge Hub [here](#).

OUR WORK IN 2023

IPCA PLANNING CERTIFICATE WITH VIU



IOF and Vancouver Island University (VIU) launched the Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas Planning Certificate in 2022 with financial support from the Real Estate Foundation of BC. It is the first post-secondary program specializing in IPCAs in Canada. The program supports the next generation of IPCA leaders to plan, establish, and manage IPCAs in BC and across Canada.

Students complete one field course in Tla-o-qui-aht territory (Clayoquot Sound, BC) and five online courses over one year. Courses focus on history, law, and politics; Indigenous knowledge systems and planning, and; ecological, socio-economic and cultural opportunities in IPCAs.

The program is delivered by 6 learning facilitators from IOF's team who plan the courses and coordinate with Indigenous knowledge holders to deliver the content.



Eli Enns speaking with students during the field course in Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks.



Apply at:

viu.ca/ipca

2023: 1ST GRADUATES & A 2ND COHORT

In September 2023, IOF and VIU welcomed Cohort 2, seen to the left by the NaaWas totem. We gathered for the field course at the Clayoquot Campus of the Pacific IPCA Innovation Centre in Tla-o-qui-aht territory (Tofino, BC).

Students have diverse backgrounds and include land managers, band administrators and staff, planners, referral coordinators, conservation practitioners, public servants, and consultants. Most students are Indigenous or are working for or with Indigenous governments.

Applications are currently open for the 2024-2025 cohort, which begins in September 2024.



IOF congratulates the students of Cohort 1 (2022-2023) on their graduation!



OUR WORK IN 2023

WESTCOAST IPCA SUPPORT PROGRAM (WISP)



WISP
WESTCOAST IPCA
SUPPORT PROGRAM

First Nations on Vancouver Island,
Source: [Vancouver Island Economic Alliance](#)

To better leverage opportunities in service of First Nations' conservation priorities on the west coast of BC, IOF, together with the Canadian Indigenous Conservation Innovation Centre Association (CICICA) and T'Sou-ke First Nation, established the Westcoast IPCA Support Program (WISP).

As a program of the Pacific IPCA Innovation Centre, WISP aims to galvanize a thriving Indigenous-led regional economy that generates social, ecological, and economic value through culturally-informed approaches to stewardship and development. WISP fosters opportunities for collaboration, strategic visioning, and alliances among First Nations interested in working together on our shared responsibilities.

This year, WISP united three projects that offer opportunities to First Nations on the west coast of BC: the BigCoast Forest Climate Initiative, the West Coast IPCA Ambassadors Program, and the Indigenous-Led Westcoast Stewardship Corridor.



Left to right: IOF partner Jessica Hum facilitates a breakout group during the Estuary to Old Growth gathering; Chief Gordon Planes (T'Sou-ke First Nation) welcomes gathering participants to his territory; performance by Nuuchahnulth cultural group Naa'u.

Learn more about **WISP** [here](#).

OUR WORK IN 2023



BIGCOAST FOREST CLIMATE INITIATIVE

The BigCoast initiative is a partnership between Mosaic Forest Management and IOF's sister charity CICICA. Mosaic has adopted a nature-based carbon system, voluntarily removing 40,000ha of old growth forest from their logging plan for the long-term; an area that overlaps with the territories of 31 First Nations.

CICICA's role is to support interested Nations in the development of an "IPCA Strategy*" that will protect the old growth areas and contribute to both ecological and community health and well-being in the context of Nation re-building. This year, CICICA began outreach and engagement with the 31 First Nations by inviting them all to the Estuary to Old Growth Gathering, and will deliver tailored engagement sessions to each interested Nation in 2024.

*What does an IPCA Strategy encompass?

The interference of Indigenous governance systems by colonial objectives has undermined the resiliency of our ecosystems and caused biodiversity decline on the west coast of BC. IPCAs are a corrective measure, rooted in culture and language. An IPCA Strategy is a holistic approach that can include: alternative economic development, sustainable housing solutions, language and culture revitalization, food sovereignty, ecosystem research and monitoring, and more!

Visit the BigCoast website [here](#).

OUR WORK IN 2023



Ambassadors in circle with Terry (Seitcha) Dorward

WESTCOAST IPCA AMBASSADOR PROGRAM



Funded by the Mastercard Foundation, the Westcoast IPCA Ambassador Program is designed for Indigenous peoples ages 18-35 that are members of First Nations whose territories encompass the BigCoast and Corridor projects above. The program's aims were:

- **Capacity development**
 - Achieved by informing participants about IPCAs and the WISP initiatives.
- **Knowledge mobilization**
 - Providing participants with the tools and resources to communicate opportunities and challenges of WISP initiatives, and become IPCA Ambassadors in their communities.

In 2023, the program successfully engaged 7 participants from 5 First Nations and was delivered in two, in-person one week training sessions, the first on August 8-11 and the second on October 16-20.

INDIGENOUS-LED WEST COAST STEWARDSHIP CORRIDOR



In 2022, IOF was engaged by T'Sou-ke Nation to coordinate the Indigenous-led West Coast Stewardship Corridor project funded by Parks Canada. The Corridor project aims to engage 13 First Nations on southwestern Vancouver Island to strengthen relationships and foster collaboration, working towards the creation of a cultural and ecological corridor based on shared responsibilities. This year, the Corridor initiative supported Redd Fish Restoration Society by funding 3 Indigenous-led conservation initiatives in Tla-o-qui-aht, Toquaht, and Hesquiaht territories. The Corridor also funded an Elder-youth video project with the Yuuʔuʔiʔaṭṭṭ Government and partnered with the University of Victoria to engage youth from Tla-o-qui-aht, Huu-ay-aht, Tseshah, and Yuuʔuʔiʔaṭṭ in a Youth Warrior Mapping Project.

Learn more about the **Indigenous-Led West Coast Stewardship Corridor** [here](#).

OUR WORK IN 2023

ESTUARY TO OLD GROWTH GATHERING: CONNECTING WISP INITIATIVES AND NATIONS

NOVEMBER 15-17 2023, T'SOU-KE TERRITORY

To strengthen relationships between First Nations who wish to collaborate on shared goals, WISP coordinated the 'Estuary to Old Growth Gathering,' co-hosted with T'Sou-ke Nation from November 15 to 17, 2023. We brought together over 80 delegates from 20 First Nations on Vancouver Island as well as Haida Gwaii. Dialogue was about what each is doing in their territory to steward and protect important species and habitats. The gathering also served to inform Nations about IPCAs.



Nuu-chah-nulth Elders Tim Paul and Archie Little shared stories, surrounded by the silhouettes and Indigenous names of culturally-important species.



Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis chiefs celebrate the Hada & Kakweikan IPCA Declaration (November 16, 2023).

WITNESSING AN IPCA DECLARATION

On the second day of the gathering, Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis First Nation (KHFN) hereditary chiefs shared songs and dances with delegates and supporters, marking their declaration of the **Hada & Kakweikan IPCA**. KHFN reasserted their sovereignty over two neighbouring watersheds whose mountaintop-to-seafloor reach spans more than 40,000 hectares of lands and waters.

KHFN's press release for the Hada & Kakweikan IPCA can be found [here](#).

The full **Estuary to Old Growth Gathering report** can be found [here](#).

OUR WORK IN 2023



IPCA KNOWLEDGE BASKET

A library of stories and guides about Indigenous-led conservation.

Along with the [Conservation through Reconciliation Partnership](#) (CRP), we continue to support, maintain, and grow the [IPCA Knowledge Basket](#). The digital space honours, celebrates, and catalyzes Indigenous-led conservation pathways in Canada, including IPCAs. The IPCA Knowledge Basket has over 600 resources and counting on Indigenous-led conservation.

In 2023, the IPCA Knowledge Basket published a number of featured resources including Communication Guidelines for Indigenous-led Conservation, Building Public Understanding for Indigenous-led Conservation, and stories about Métis- and Inuit-led conservation initiatives. We have also initiated a process to review and evaluate the platform in 2024 to ensure its continued relevance and reach.



A REVIEW OF CROWN LEGISLATION FOR PROTECTED AND CONSERVED AREAS IN CANADA: A GUIDE FOR INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP

Indigenous governments can and have created IPCAs using their own laws and authority without the formal recognition of Crown law. However, if an IPCA is not officially recognized by Canadian federal, provincial, or territorial law, it does not have protection within the Canadian legal system.

This guide describes pathways for establishing IPCAs using federal, provincial, or territorial protected or conserved area designations.

The report was prepared for the CRP by Victoria Kacer with contributions from Leora Gansworth, Larry Innes, Kerry Lee Cormier, Kelsey Scarfone, Ian Attridge, and Matthew Green. Artwork by Nicole Burton.

Read the guide [here](#).

FEATURED RESOURCES

INDIGENOUS-LED CONSERVATION READING LIST

The Indigenous-led Conservation Reading List is an open-access bibliography that lists academic literature relevant to the Indigenous-led conservation movement. This includes literature about IPCAs and Indigenous-led co-governance that elevate Indigenous rights, responsibilities, and legal traditions.

The list was compiled and is managed by Megan Youdelis, Kim Tran, and Elizabeth Lunstrum.

Access the reading list [here](#).



OUR WORK IN 2023

IOF & RJC ENGINEERS - INDIGENOUS PROJECTS TEAM

We extend gratitude to Terry Bergen, Eric Wilson, Steven Agranove and Bruen Black for directly supporting our collaborative projects.

This team comprises four engineers with technical expertise who, with the guidance of the IOF, engage with Indigenous Nations respectfully in Ethical Space. Since its inception, this visionary collective has diligently steered its focus toward bolstering Indigenous Projects. The team has three primary domains of work, disaster recovery, deep energy retrofits, and buildings that support cultural revitalization. This relationship embodies a harmonious blend of technical expertise and cultural sensitivity, cultivating solutions that honor traditional wisdom while embracing modern engineering advancements. Through their collaborative efforts, this team stands as a beacon of empowerment, dedicated to fostering resilience, sovereignty, capacity development, sustainability, and cultural resurgence within Indigenous communities.

NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION WEBINAR



[The Survivors' Flag](#) is an expression of remembrance, honouring residential school survivors and others impacted by the residential school system in Canada..

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION (TRC) CALL TO ACTION 92

We call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources.

IOF and RJC Engineers hosted the third annual **"Building a Foundation for Reconciliation" Webinar** on September 29th, centred around the theme "Braiding Relationships, Community, and Trust." The event is a pivotal step in addressing part the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)'s Calls to Action. An array of influential speakers delved into the topic of relationships, community building, and trust in the context of the construction, engineering and design sector. The webinar explored how fostering trust leads to robust design projects, offering participants insights into their role in solving industry challenges through reconciliation efforts.

Watch the webinar [here](#).

OUR WORK IN 2023

IOF & RJC ENGINEERS - INDIGENOUS PROJECTS TEAM

HALALT HOME REPLACEMENT

In response to the 2021 atmospheric river's impact on homes within the Halalt First Nation, a project was launched to replace or retrofit 32 homes in the community. Led by Halalt First Nation, the IOF/RJC Indigenous Projects Team and Citizen Design Build, this endeavour focuses on a collaborative design process that deeply engages families affected by the disaster. The team works with Nation members to discover the meaning of "home" for each family, co-creating custom homes that reflect their visions and cater to their lifestyle needs. Presently there are five homes under construction and two in the design phase, with the completion of the first home achieved in December 2023.

Sixteen Indigenous apprenticeships have been established, aiming to support these individuals through a five-year journey to become journeyman carpenters. Nine positions have been filled, including five by Halalt Nation members contributing to the rebuilding of their own community — a testament to the project's commitment to community empowerment and sustainable development.



PENELAKUT HOME REPLACEMENT

The 2021 atmospheric river also inflicted damage on structures within Penelakut Tribe. A critical initiative was undertaken to conduct Building Condition Assessments on ten buildings. This comprehensive assessment aimed to evaluate the extent of the damage incurred and strategize plans to enhance the Nation's resilience against future natural disasters.

Through secured funding, six homes are slated for replacement, while an additional four will undergo elevation to a level beyond the 200-year flood plain. This strategic approach not only addresses the immediate need for structural rehabilitation but also proactively fortifies the community against potential future challenges, ensuring greater resilience and safety for Penelakut Tribe.

OUR WORK IN 2023

IOF & ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS (AFN)



FIRST NATIONS DIALOGUES ON CULTURALLY SIGNIFICANT SPECIES

FEBRUARY & MARCH 2023



Graphic recording by Kelly Foxcroft-Poirier of White Raven Consulting brought the dialogues to life with captivating art and key quotes from Elders and participants.

In February and March of 2023, IOF and AFN co-hosted three regional dialogues. This was the third year of online sessions focused on First Nations perspectives and approaches to species conservation. Participants included First Nations technicians, leaders, and Elders involved in protecting biocultural diversity, especially regional efforts to protect and recover stewardship of SAR, CKSP, and culturally significant species and places.

The dialogues included:

- Presentations on key topics for discussion
- Facilitated small group discussions
- Polls to collect knowledge and feedback from participants throughout the dialogues
- Graphic recording by an Indigenous artist
- An opening and closing by a youth or Elder
- A participant feedback survey

View the 2023 summary report [here](#).

OUR WORK IN 2023

CONSERVATION THROUGH RECONCILIATION PARTNERSHIP



**conservation
through
reconciliation
partnership**

The IISAAK OLAM Foundation is a host partner of the Conservation through Reconciliation Partnership (CRP). The CRP is an Indigenous-led network that brings together a diverse range of partners to advance Indigenous-led conservation, including Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs), and transform the conservation sector in Canada. It is a collective of Indigenous leadership, environmental conservation organizations, academic institutions, scholars and researchers, and communities acting on and building from the recommendations set out by the Indigenous Circle of Expert's report [We Rise Together](#).

The Conservation through Reconciliation Partnership aims to:

- Support the conservation sector to take up recommendations set out by the Indigenous Circle of Experts in the [We Rise Together](#) report.
- Establish and contribute to our [three legacy projects](#). These projects will support Indigenous Nations and governments with the development and implementation of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs).

The IISAAK OLAM Foundation and the Indigenous Leadership Initiative provide strategic guidance and identify opportunities to support Indigenous-led conservation in Canada and beyond. The University of Guelph coordinates research, administration, and knowledge mobilization.

IOF has contributed to the CRP through representation on the Leadership Circle, co-hosting the Virtual Campfire Series webinars, and co-creating the Cultural Keystone Species blog series. IOF has led two of CRP's legacy initiatives through founding the Pacific IPCA Innovation Centre Knowledge Hub, and hosting, incubating, and stewarding the IPCA Knowledge Basket.



**INDIGENOUS
LEADERSHIP
INITIATIVE**

**UNIVERSITY
of GUELPH**

PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

We work diligently to build leadership and momentum for the “**we rise together**” movement. We work across sectors, organizations, and cultures and could not achieve our goals without the support of many allies.

We give thanks to the following allies for collaborating with us and supporting our work in 2023.

Canadian Committee for the IUCN
 Canadian Indigenous Conservation Innovation Centre Association
 Canadian Mountain Network
 Canadian Parks Protected and Conserved Areas Leadership Collective
 Canadian Red Cross
 Clayoquot Biosphere Trust
 David Suzuki Foundation
 District of Sooke
 Dossier Creative's Railyard Lab
 Environment and Climate Change Canada
 First Peoples Cultural Council
 Global Environment Facility
 Indigenomics Institute
 Indigenous Leadership Initiative
 Indigenous Services Canada
 IPCA Innovation Program at MakeWay
 Manitoba Métis Federation
 Mastercard Foundation
 Métis National Council
 Mosaic Forest Management
 Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Research Institute
 Movement Strategy Centre
 Natural Resources Defense Council
 Nature United
 Naa?uu
 Organization for Tropical Studies
 Parks Canada
 Pawanka Fund
 Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia
 Redd Fish Restoration Society
 RJC Engineers
 Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary
 T'Sou-ke Nation
 Tla-o-qui-aht Language Keepers Society
 University for Peace, Costa Rica
 University of British Columbia
 University of Victoria
 University of Guelph
 Vancouver Island University
 West Coast Environmental Law
 White Raven Consulting
 Wilfrid Laurier University
 Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty



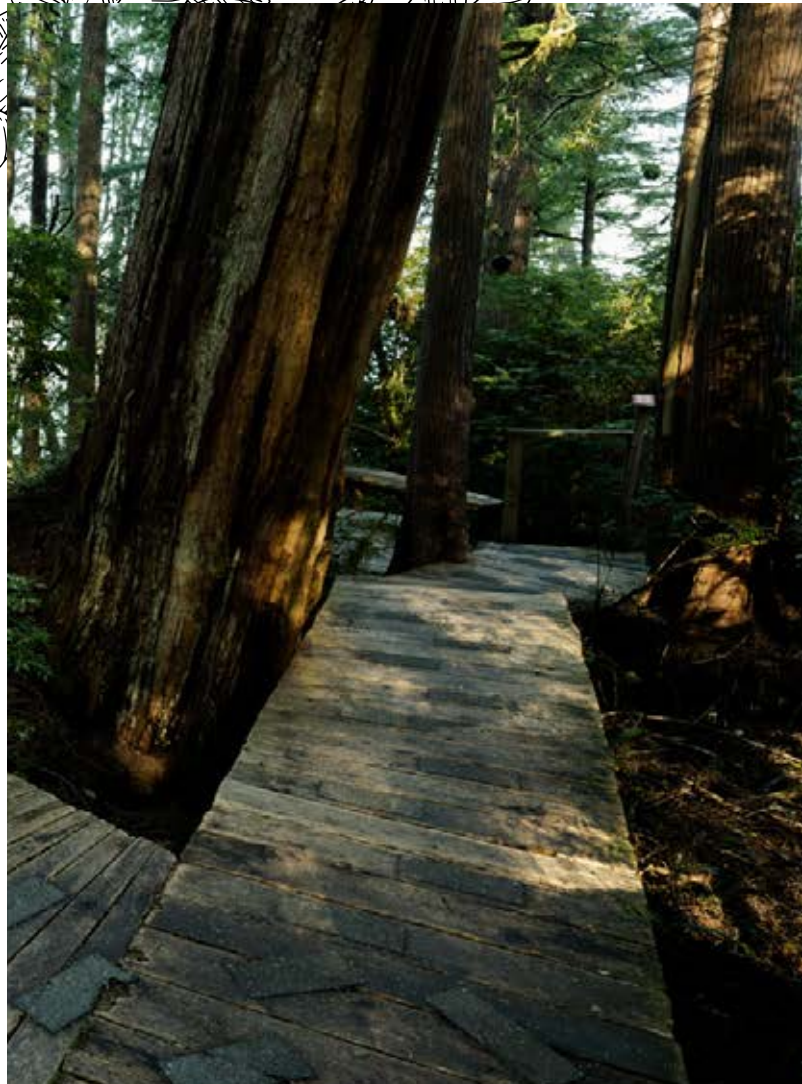
PATH FORWARD

As we step into 2024 and deeper into the decisive decade, we look forward to continuing our work in Ethical Space, guided by *iisaak*, *olam*, peace and friendship, and generosity. We will continue to expand our circle of collaborators and partners in the journey to inspire and build capacity for Indigenous-led conservation and IPCAs.

We welcome opportunities to deepen existing relationships and foster new ones.

As we learn and grow, we will continue to reflect the wisdom of Mother Nature and Creator in our work. We will continue to walk the talk of our ancestors who observed nature and replicated it in their social structures to increase resilience.

We will continue to act as an incubator, convener, facilitator, and leader that empowers Indigenous-led conservation.



**As we evolve,
we seek new collaborations
with like-minded and
like-hearted individuals and
organizations to multiply our
collective impact.**



facebook.com/iisaakolam



twitter.com/iisaakolam

Visit our website at iisaakolam.ca

Contact us at management@iisaakolam.ca to have a conversation about how we can work together.