

## LAND RELATIONSHIP PLANNING THEMES AND ACTIONS

YLUPC Indigenous Planning and Traditional Knowledge Advisory Group

**Part 1: Themes** (pages 1 – 10). This section describes the main themes that emerged from the discussions at the November 24-25, 2021 Land Relationship Gathering. It reports on the themes that came up repeatedly about Yukon planning – its past, present, and future. These were subsequently presented and discussed with the IPTK Committee.

**Part 2: Actions** (pages 11 – 15). This section is based on the context of the Land Relationship Gathering Proceedings, the discussions at the Gathering, and the themes arising from those discussions. It presents a series of actions related to changes to reframe the approach to Chapter 11 regional planning in Yukon so it can return to the original spirit and intent of Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow and the Yukon Final Agreements. This section is intended to reflect the scope of the discussion and experience shared at the Gathering, while recognizing that further discussions among all planning partners on actions to move forward is needed. These concepts were subsequently presented and discussed with the IPTK Committee.

### Part 1: Themes

#### A. YUKON FIRST NATIONS

**Who we are, what we believe in, what values we live by, what we are taught, what we teach.**

We are part of the land, part of the water and the land is part of us. “Our identity is formed from and with the land”. Land means land, water, animals – all that is on the land. We live as part of this circle of life. Without the land, we lose part of our soul.

We live in Relationship with land, not as users or owners of land.

We live with Respect for the land.

We practice Reciprocity. The reciprocal relationship means we protect the land, the land protects us.

We have the Responsibility to protect and care for the land. We are the original stewards of the land.

We are grounded in spirituality and in our connection with the land and each other.

We work together for future generations.

We are flexible and responsive to change. Our ways follow the seasons.

We learn from the land.

We learn from our Elders. They are our traditional knowledge keepers. They teach us how to survive. We are guided by ancestors, stories, language. They hand down to us the teachings about who we are and where we are from.

## B. YUKON LAND CLAIM AND SELF-GOVERNMENT AGREEMENTS

Yukon First Nations (YFN) knew we needed to deal with changes we saw such as increased newcomers, depleted wildlife, losing land that had sustained us and was fundamental to our identity. In two grievance statements by Kishwoot and *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow* we expressed our concerns, our needs, our responsibilities. Over many years, we worked out our Final Agreements to address these matters. The Agreements are both the expression of our spirit and intent, and a statement of our rights and responsibilities.

### ***Land Relationship Gathering Video*** **Video Summary of Spirit and Intent of Final Agreements**

The video explains the history of the Final Agreements and the spirit and intent behind them. It explains how the Agreements came about and what they were based on. The video tells how Yukon First Nations were losing land and resources that had sustained us for generations. We wanted land back because it was essential for cultural survival “to be separated from land was to lose part of our soul”.

We knew change was coming and we accepted the need to share. We wanted to work together for future generations. Kishwoot prepared the first statement of grievance. The second one was presented by Elijah Smith and the delegation of Chiefs as *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow*. This document expressed our foundational spirit and intent, which we carried forward into the Agreements:

- collaborative effort to plan and manage the land through a stewardship framework;
- boards and committees, including YLUPC as a strong voice for Yukon First Nations on our Traditional Territory;
- all chapters work together with Chapter 11 land use planning as the hub

Through the UFA, YFNs ensured:

- YFN have fair share of territorial power;
- recognition of YFN needs, knowledge, and commitment to Yukon Territory;
- care for the land that sustains us.

**Spirit and intent of Agreements.** These Agreements hold the spirit and intent of our people, our Elders and our leaders when they originally undertook the Agreements. Their spirit and intent is the foundation of our Agreements.

Anyone participating in planning needs to understand the spirit and intent that underly the Agreements. They also need to understand the history of the Agreements, their significance to YFN and how they are to be followed. They need to understand the significance of Chapter 11, land use planning, as being about our identity, our spiritual, emotional, and physical relationship with the land, and our inherited responsibilities, and that we have lived with this relationship over the continuity of generations.

### **Content of Agreements**

The Agreements have carefully negotiated legal clauses that set out obligations and direction. Final Agreements gave the clarity on control of land and resources the YFN were looking for. They are for all Yukoners. The Agreements set out an integrated system of land and resource management for the Yukon, for which Chapter 11 - land use planning - is the hub.

## **C. TRUTHS OF IMPLEMENTING THE AGREEMENTS**

Based on YFNs' years of experience in implementing the Agreements, certain truths have emerged.

### **Truth: Current Problems with Chapter 11 Planning.**

First Nation values are not being recognized to the extent needed for the successful implementation of the agreements. One response has been for First Nations to do planning that will assist those implementing Chapter 11 that reflect their values (How We Walk, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Land Stewardship).

We have inherited colonized approaches that are now ingrained in methods, process, legislation.

Predominantly western scientific knowledge and western worldviews influence planning.

Western approaches are centred on resource use and interests and conflict negotiation.

In conflict negotiation, YFN can lose the essence of our values.

Maps, zoning, planning documents are static, not flexible and adapting to seasonal changes like we traditionally manage ourselves.

People doing planning and issuing permits are not always connected with the region - may not live there or come from there.

Conflict arises when there are inconsistent priorities, e.g., needs of multi-generations vs. immediate needs; place-based need for land relationship vs. resource-based economic gain and growth; working together vs. individual needs.

Planning has a power imbalance because of YFN not having control over decisions and funding; systems rooted in western values not Indigenous values; funding and capacity limitations; and continuation of colonial attitudes, approaches, and inequities.

Growing pressure on land, inequities, and conflicts from the increasing Yukon population makes it harder to build and sustain the necessary relationships.

Chapter 11 funds are not enough for the planning that is needed.

Final Agreements have limitations that don't match First Nation ways and don't accommodate our needs. For example, the artificial boundaries between Province and Territory means having to deal with two planning systems. Some Final Agreement sections are limited to Settlement Land only and separate land, water, and animals, which makes it harder to take a holistic approach.

Planning currently uses western approaches and is overly technocratic.

Traditional knowledge is "extracted", then used in a plan, which does not allow an approach of working together with traditional knowledge keepers to fully understand what is being said.

Chapter 11 provides for other forms of planning than at a regional scale, but few examples exist.

Chapter 11 planning doesn't include YFN without Final Agreements. Kaska has to come up with their own means to be involved in activities happening in their Traditional Territory.

Yukon is falling short with planning compared to other jurisdictions, for example in:

- collaborative planning;
- respecting and applying Indigenous values, knowledge, and ways;
- meeting Chapter 11 objectives.

Chapter 11 planning has primarily been implemented using western approaches and science. However, the Chapter and entire Final Agreement are rooted in *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow*, so the spirit and intent of the Agreement need to guide planning.

**Truth: Times have changed. Lessons have been learned.**

From the time when the first Yukon Final Agreements were signed and the first Yukon regional plan – the North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan - was completed, the cultural, social, legal, political, ecological, and economic context for planning has changed.

Given TRC, MMIWG, UNDRIP, and the Peel Plan Supreme Court ruling, we are in a time of truth and reconciliation, where we have to right the wrongs of the past.

Western values, unsustainable economic gain and growth, and approaches based solely on western science are not working well. Climate change and the Covid pandemic teach us that these ways are not working. We have dehumanized the earth and the earth is speaking back.

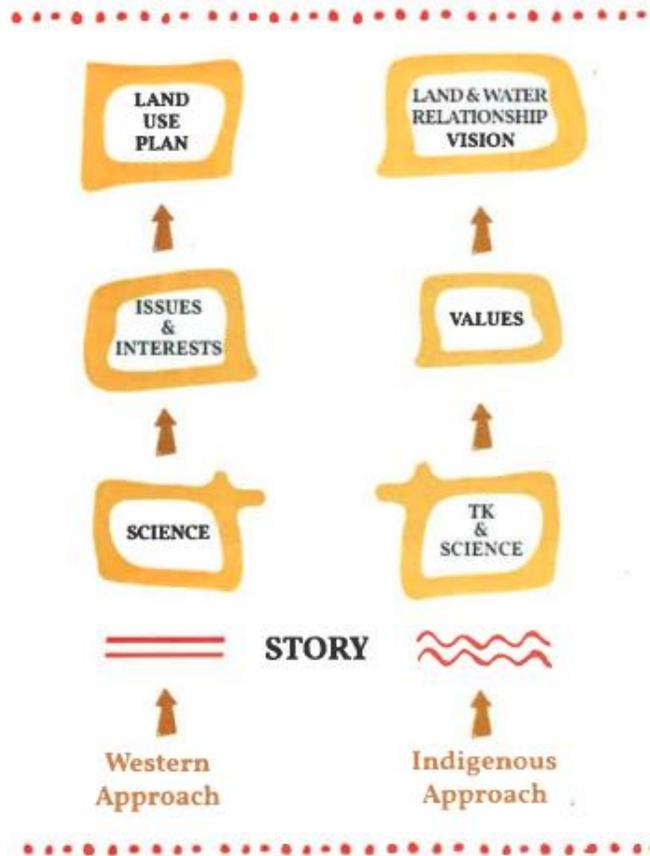
**Comparison of conventional land use planning and Dän K’e. Jocelyn Joe-Strack**

Conventional land use planning	Dän K’e
Focuses on land	Focus on people, relationship, the way we work together
Planning for land use	Planning to reclaim our roles as stewards and caretakers of the land
See land and people as separate	We are part of the land, part of the water, talk to the animals
Resource development – what can we take Conservation	Land offerings – what the land has to offer us in return for what the land needs from us
Wildlife – something you measure	Our relatives
For today’s generation 5 – 25 years; maps of today and models and projections of tomorrow	Future generations, the story of yesterday to today, every action is to make a better future for my grandchildren and their grand-children
Map based – power based on ownership, borders, title	Story-based – connection, obligation and care for a shared place; share what we are working towards

**Western Science, Traditional Knowledge, Land Relationship Model. Joe Copper Jack**

Western Science	Traditional Knowledge
20 years	1000 years, 15 generations
scientific method	stories
conflict resolution	relationship building
facts	values
scientific terminology	language connected to land
data on issues, interests	use past to plan for future
boundaries, zoning	thresholds

## DIFFERENT APPROACHES



There has always been change with the land, but the scope of climate change and the pandemic is making us see it, and see the need to work together. We need to change this way we relate to the environment and to each other.

We need more than one knowledge system and worldview for today's complex problems like climate change. We need the values and knowledge of people who come from the land to build our systems and processes.

First Nations are in a period of Resurgence. We have greater social agency. We are prepared and organized. We are aspirational for our future.

Planning practice - as with many colonial institutions - is changing. First Nations are taking the lead in new approaches, such as with "How We Walk With the Land and Water", Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Land Stewardship and the Land Relationship Model.

First Nations need to maintain our responsibility as original stewards of the land. We need to remain a key voice in planning.

The new generation is rising up with youth driven desires and needs. Taku River Tlingit Elders told their people to “be bold!”

#### D. DECLARATION OF A RE-VISION OF PLANNING

- ◆ We plan in a way that is guided by our ancestors, is in keeping with our times today, and is for our future generations.
- ◆ We plan by following our values of Respect, Care, Share, Relationship, Reciprocity.
- ◆ We plan with the Responsibility to manage ourselves to protect the land, water, animals we are in relationship with.
- ◆ We plan with Indigenous values and ways honoured and upheld.
- ◆ Planning creates a space of relationship with each other, where we work together to live in ongoing relationship with land. Planning is a space that supports living in relationship with land.
- ◆ Planning is a space to exercise our responsibilities to care for the land.
- ◆ Planning creates a space of relationship between all participants, including those with no voice.
- ◆ Planning is a space where fundamental Indigenous identity and inter-generational well-being based on respect, relationship, and reciprocity are affirmed, not diminished. Where laws of respect, care, share are upheld, not portrayed as “conflicting interests” to be resolved through trade-offs or negotiated away in our relationship with others.
- ◆ Planning is a space of reconciliation, where all participants have the opportunity for decolonizing and healing ourselves and our relationships.
- ◆ We learn from the examples of Indigenous-led planning here in Yukon, and in Canada.
- ◆ Through planning, all Yukoners meet our shared responsibilities under the Final Agreements.

#### E. PLANNING ROOTED IN INDIGENOUS VALUES, WAYS, WORLDVIEW

##### Fundamental Principles that Shape How We Plan

- **Respect, Care, Share.** We practice inner and outer respect in our thoughts, words, and actions.
- **Relationship.** We live in relationship with the land, not land use. We have deep love and respect for the land. To maintain this relationship with the land, we must work together in relationship with each other - between governments, land users, newcomers and between Indigenous and western science knowledge systems
- **Responsibility.** To protect the land, water animals. To future generations. To each other. To the past, to teach and pass on knowledge. To act to care for land. To actively take responsibility how we act, manage ourselves, and in our ways of doing and speaking. To learn.
- **Reciprocity.** If we take from the land, we give back to the land. We give back what is gifted to us, we are intrinsically interconnected.
- **We work together.** We are stronger together. Everyone has a voice and every voice matters. As humans on this earth, we are meant to work together.
- **Holistic.** Land means land, water, animals and all that is on the land. They cannot be separated.

- **Flexible resilient, and responsive to change.** We have always lived with the seasons. Things always change, but we don't leave our culture behind. Climate change is changing the rules we make for ourselves.
- **Learn from the land.** We are always learning from the land as it changes. Plans change in response to what is happening with land, e.g., seasonal changes. We understand our relationship with land, water, animals and how we do things (traditional management practices). We can build on those to know our stewardship obligations. We learn and teach by doing.
- **Look back to be able to know where you are going.** Learn from past to create vision for future. Planning is like a blaze on a tree that shows where we have come from and our way forward.
- **We are always thinking of the next generations.** We do the work for our youth. Make sure land can continue to provide, that we can continue to fulfill responsibility to protect land as always in the past.
- **We do not own or manage land but manage ourselves.** We consider how we behave and conduct ourselves on the land.
- **Elders are the foundation of anything to do with the land.** Their knowledge of how to protect the land, laws about respect, care, share, stewardship, responsibility, reciprocity. They give guidance in all areas.
- **Listen to our youth.** Elders are counting on youth to step up. They are knowledgeable, experienced, educated.
- **Teaching, Learning.** YFN have responsibility to pass on knowledge, to educate the next generations, newcomers so that the land will be taken care of. As we work together, we share learning from each other and take on the responsibility to listen and understand.

### Value-Centred Planning Process

YFNs are leading the way forward with value-centred planning. The examples of How We Walk with the Land and Water, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Land Stewardship, and the Land Relationship Model are rooted in ways YFNs have used for thousands of years living in relationship with the land. They show an approach grounded in Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing, working together, community engagement, flexibility, diversity, creativity, being informed by two knowledge systems. They show a path forward for continuing to protect the land, water, and animals so future generations can continue to thrive.

These initiatives provide many lessons on how to build planning process, methods and tools centred around foundational values. Some examples are in the following table.

Values	Planning Process	Planning Methods, Tools
Respect Learn from the past Work together	Apply both Indigenous knowledge and western scientific knowledge together. Plan is like a blaze on a tree – shows us both what is behind us and a way forward.	Use diverse ways to gather, learn from knowledge. Story, place names, digital records.

Values	Planning Process	Planning Methods, Tools
Respect Care Share	Undertake planning not just as a technocratic exercise – of maps, measurements, data – but to create space of respect, relationship and sharing as a sacred space.	Come together on the land. Ceremony. Use diverse and creative ways to communicate, share our knowledge, reconcile our differences.
Relationship	Prepare a land relationship plan not a land use plan.  Planning as a process of place-based collaboration not interest-based negotiation.  Relationship-building is an early stage of planning to ensure trust, understanding.  Educate all land users, governments, industry on shared responsibilities of the Final Agreements.	Develop collaborative agreements on process and methods like project charter, information sharing and financial agreements.  Educate all Yukoners on Final Agreement spirit, intent and content.
Work together to protect land, water, animals. Relationship.	Set up structures that bring people together. Engage Elders and youth. Enable and empower all participants to teach, listen, understand, dialogue, collaborate.	Traditional knowledge keepers circle. Elders advisory committee. Youth panel. Link Chapter 11 planning with other Final Agreement boards and committees. Planning Commissions continue after the plan. NationsConnect online portal.
Flexible	Plan for adaptability and resilience to change, not for one static period of time.  Focus on a cyclical planning process as much as the plan document. Through the process, we come together to work out our collective way forward.	Plans based on seasons. Use traditional management practices on how we dealt with change. Consider the longer time frames needed to protect habitat.

## F. GOALS FOR REFRAMING CHAPTER 11 PLANNING

1. To meet our responsibilities to live in relationship with the land, water, and animals and with each other in ways that protect the land, water, and animals for future generations.
2. To ensure planning recognizes and protects the YFN people's way of life that is based on an economic and spiritual relationship between YFNs and the land, and encourages and protects the cultural distinctiveness and social well-being of YFN, as intended and directed by the Yukon Final Agreements.
3. To ensure Yukon is a leader in value-centered, collaborative relationship planning that respects, and is guided by, Indigenous worldviews, values and ways of being, knowing, and doing.

## Part 2: ACTIONS

1. **Shift the common land use planning process under Chapter 11 to Land Relationship Planning** as a value-centred, collaborative process founded on relationships with and responsibilities for the land, water, and animals, and each other. Develop a Land Relationship Planning Process under Chapter 11 that:
  - Respects and is guided by Indigenous worldviews, values and ways, and honours and meets the spirit, intent, and directives of the Final Agreements, which include all Yukoners.
  - Respects, upholds, and is guided by the relationship of YFN as being part of the land, and as having responsibility for protecting the land.
  - Is centered around key values of respect, relationship, reciprocity, and by working together.
  - Requires innovative change from colonized, western science approaches to process and tools that respect and apply the foundational principles.
  - Engages all Yukoners to work together on our shared responsibility to protect the land, water, and animals so future generations continue to thrive.
  - Is informed by both Indigenous and western scientific knowledge systems.
  - Connects us to our past, is in keeping with challenges of today, and prepares for those generations still to come.
  - Defines the vision and foundational values and key process elements for Chapter 11 planning to meet the Chapter 11 objectives and directives, and the spirit and intent of the Final Agreement.
  - Is flexible to be adjusted to the unique characteristics of each planning region.
  - Looks to examples such as How We Walk, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Land Stewardship, the Land Relationship Model and other Indigenous-led planning across Canada to guide the development of the process.
  - Sets out the Chapter 11 approach to planning that replaces the current Common Land Use Planning Process. The process provides direction for commissions' terms of reference, for planning process and methods, and expectations for all partners, planners, and participants in planning.
- a. Develop a joint agreement on the Land Relationship Planning Process between Yukon First Nation, Territorial [??and Federal governments] that sets out the government commitments to the Process.
  - The process agreement addresses all stages through plan preparation to plan implementation.
  - The process agreement is to ensure shared understanding of values and worldviews as a basis for trust and collaboration in planning.
  - The process agreement is to ensure adequate funding and capacity to develop the Process.

- b.** Ensure adequate funding and capacity to develop and implement the Land Relationship Planning Process.
  - Demonstrate governments' commitments to successful development and implementation of the Process through providing the necessary resources and capacity.
  - In their key role in supporting planning commissions, ensure YLUPC has adequate funding and capacity to support development and implementation of the Process.
  - YFN engage in 2024 funding negotiations for Chapter 11 funding.
  
- c.** Establish an advisory structure of YFN planning expertise, which informs the Process development and implementation, and supports YLUPC, planning commissions, planners, and planning partners as planning progresses.
  - Ensure both Elders and youth are part of the advisory structure.
  - Look to the examples of the Yukon Indigenous Planning and Traditional Knowledge Committee (IPTK), the Indigenous Circle of Experts (ICE) with Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas, and the Indigenous Leadership Initiative.
  - This structure would contribute to the continuous learning around planning to ensure the Process is flexible and adaptive to change.
  
- d.** Support the development of Yukon as a leader in value-centered, collaborative Land Relationship Planning.
  - Engage the YFN planning advisory body in developing Yukon's planning excellence.
  - Define YLUPC's roles, responsibilities and capacity needs to elevate the standard of excellence in planning in implementing the model, for example, in identifying and staffing Indigenous planning positions.
  - Undertake relationship building with other planning bodies, Indigenous nations, and academics, especially in northern Canada, to network and learn from current experience and research.
  - Identify lessons learned from previous planning commissions and analysis of existing plans that can be applied to future regional planning.
  - Develop and provide training on the Yukon Chapter 11 model for commissions, planners, planning parties, and all participants in planning.
  
- e.** Empower all Yukoners through education and example to work together in planning, to develop relationships of trust and collaboration, and to fulfill our collective responsibilities to protect the land, water, animals for our future generations.
  - Use tools such as the video to educate all Yukoners, especially in the schools, about the spirit, intent, content of Yukon Final Agreements, and Chapter 11 in particular.
  - Educate those who work in land and resource management and regulation on the integrated, holistic intent of the of the Final Agreement, and the central role of Chapter 11.
  - Support First Nations' responsibility to educate others as well as all Yukoners' responsibility to listen and learn.

- f. Acknowledge, affirm, support, and undertake the changes needed both at the institutional level and at the planning practice level to shift Yukon regional planning to Land Relationship Planning and to develop and implement the Process.
    - Shifting Yukon planning to a Land Relationship Planning requires more than just developing a new process.
    - Taking action to change planning requires acknowledging the truths of the current approaches to planning, taking risks, relinquishing control, and trusting in the process of change.
- 

## **2. Actions at the institutional level**

These actions are directed at the institutional structures set up for governance and decision-making in planning (the Parties, YLUPC, Senior Liaison Committee, Technical Working Group, Commissions).

- a. Build relationships between all planning participants, with the intent to build trust and to establish understanding of the values foundational to planning.
- b. Build relationships and support the network between Chapter 11 YLUPC and the other Boards and Committees under the other Chapters of the Final Agreements, to support the integrated system of land and water management in the Final Agreements.
  - Hold an annual gathering of all the Boards and Committees including YLUPC to exchange updates and approaches to the work each other is doing, to identify opportunities for working together, sharing knowledge, and efficient use of resources.
- c. Confirm the role, responsibilities, and accountabilities to the Chapter 11 Land Relationship Planning Process for each of YLUPC and the Yukon and First Nation government planning parties.
- d. Continue planning commissions after a plan is written to support ongoing plan implementation and review. The commission provides the opportunity to champion the plan and to continue region-based relationships with First Nations and traditional knowledge keepers, and with those implementing the plan in their land and resource management work.
- e. Carry out training of all participants in developing a regional plan on the Land Relationship Planning process to ensure the respect, understanding, and application of the foundational values, principles, and knowledge systems.
- f. Ensure adequate timing and resources to enable appropriate relationship building and training early in the process of developing a regional plan.
- g. Decentralize the planning functions so they are rooted in the region being planned.

- h. First Nations and other governments consider the pros and cons of planning outside Chapter 11.
  - i. Ensure accountability and responsibility to those First Nations without Final Agreements who want planning in their Traditional Territory.
- 

### **3. Action at the planning practice level**

These actions are directed at those developing a regional plan (the commission, planners, and participants of a region).

- a. Use methods and tools that respect and are consistent with the value-centred, collaborative Land Relationship Process, and that are appropriate to the unique characteristics of the region. Ensure all aspects of planning, including visioning, seeking information about the region, identifying issues and options, dealing with conflict, plan timelines, and the plan document itself reflect the Land Relationship Planning process.
- b. Ensure an early relationship-building phase among participants in the planning, with the intent to build trust, and shared learning of the foundational values and Indigenous and western science knowledge systems that inform the planning.
  - At the beginning of the planning process, Commission, planners, Parties should gather together on the land to get to know one another and the region being planned. Invite those who spend time on the land and know the land to share their knowledge and orient everyone to the territory. By being together on the land, participants would become comfortable and equitable in working together, feel respect for the significance of caring for the land, and understand their responsibilities in planning.
- c. Ensure Elders and youth are key to this relationship-building early and throughout planning so as to learn from the past before planning the future. They can convey the history and significance of the guiding values, convey and ensure understanding of traditional knowledge, and maintain the relationship between yesterday, today, and tomorrow in planning.
- d. Ensure the planning is informed at all stages by both Indigenous and western science knowledge. Ensure Indigenous knowledge is not extracted to be used for planning but is understood through traditional knowledge keepers.
- e. Identify and consider the values and needs of those from the land and water with no voice so they have a place in all planning.
- f. Establish planning timelines that provide for relationship building, ceremony, Indigenous knowledge sharing and learning.
- g. Learn from the land, from stories, from ancestors' teachings, and from current examples to create planning methods and tools.

- h. Use diverse methods to engage, communicate, gather knowledge to reflect the diverse participants working together in planning.
- i. Work together on the land.
- j. Feel as much as you think.
- k. Practice ceremony and respect the spiritual space of planning.
- l. Consider the needs of multiple generations and longer time frames of the land, water, and animals.
- m. Address land values of healing, spirituality, ceremony, revitalizing culture, as well as sustenance.
- n. Consider stories, place names, the mountains, lakes, trees as maps that show the importance of the place and that give direction.
- o. All participants work to decolonize themselves by listening and learning to respect and understand Indigenous values, ways, laws. Ensure the onus is not only on First Nations to explain values and knowledge systems – but also on non-Indigenous participants to take responsibility to learn, to decolonize, and to respect, listen and learn from other worldviews.
- p. Identify ways to rekindle relationships with the land by getting out there and doing. Broaden planning direction to include building relationship through on-the-land education and cultural revitalization.