



CENTRE FOR LOCAL PROSPERITY
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Indigenous and Faith Leaders A Pugwash Declaration

September 25, 2019

*Earth and all of Creation is Sacred and at risk.
We are all children of the Earth – made of Earth, Water and Air.
Our very existence is in question.*

*We live, grow, play, work, wash, cook, drink, rest, pray and celebrate with Earth, Water and Air.
What we do to the Earth, Water and Air
we do to ourselves.*

Earth, Water and Air are vulnerable and need to be protected, and shared freely and fairly. Earth, Water and Air are not commodities or merely resources. They are not owned by anyone. They are unique conditions, life givers and dynamic beings with creative and healing powers unlike any other powers in the world, and the human family. While we differ in the names we give to the Sacred, and in the symbols and ceremonies that we use to ground us and give us life, we the Indigenous and Faith Thinkers are united in this view.

Humanity has lost its spiritual roots in the Earth and its connection to the original teachings of living in balance with all of Creation. The Earth is calling us to awaken to who we really are, to live lives shaped by reflection, intention, compassion, respect and humbleness. Just as a healthy forest is a diverse ecosystem, we as humans can create a healthy society by embracing the diverse gifts and talents of all of humanity.

The many ways of knowing, including Indigenous knowledge and scientific evidence, confirm that the earthly habitat, upon which we are completely dependent, is in jeopardy. We agree a new consciousness must be the foundation on which we build our common future. Justice and equity for all peoples must be guiding principles, as we make choices at individual, collective and governmental levels about use of Earth, Water and Air.

It will take love and courage, and even sacrifice, to move forward. For centuries, spiritual communities have nurtured these qualities. We, the Indigenous and Faith Thinkers are committed to offer spaces where we can dialogue, grieve, learn, inspire one another, and find support together through our uncertain future.

Leaders of Indigenous and diverse faith communities, having spent several days listening to the teachings of both Mi'kmaq'ki and Wolastoqiyik Elders, commit to collaborating in Atlantic Canada to address the climate crisis.

We believe the Peace and Friendship Treaties of 1725-26 and 1752 provide a strong framework for living together in the Atlantic region, and for addressing the common challenge of the climate crisis in our world and in our region. These treaties, similar to covenants or samayas of some faith traditions, are a sacred trust with our Creator, whatever we understand that to mean, and remind us of our commitment to respect all peoples, the land, the water, the oceans and atmosphere and all living things.

At this time in human history when climate change threatens humanity's survival, we humbly and urgently call upon our fellow sisters and brothers in Atlantic Canada to join with others throughout the world to reflect deeply and act swiftly to address what we believe is essentially a spiritual problem.

We acknowledge that nature has rights and we have responsibilities. Based on this common understanding, we the Indigenous and Faith Thinkers hereby encourage you to join us in the following call to action:

1. Conduct inter-generational Indigenous and interfaith visioning sessions about our future in light of the climate crisis.
2. Provide evidence-based resources to support the most viable individual, community and institutional solutions to climate change, such as Drawdown (drawdown.org).
3. Raise public awareness of the climate threat, readiness and actions through media articles, social media, libraries, workshops, lectures, films and gatherings.
4. Support, guide, educate and protect youth climate change activists by all means possible.
5. Promote harmonious relationships between Indigenous, faith and spiritual groups by regular collaborative activity, such as the Interfaith Harmony Week (worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com), and introduce climate change actions.
6. Encourage, support and provide networking resources for groups and individuals interested in starting public and community food gardens.
7. Partner with member-based environmental charity organizations to help track and implement these actions.
8. Challenge local and provincial governments to meet or exceed the actions of Indigenous, faith-based and all other community groups and individuals.

In order to be accountable and to measure progress, we commit to support, communicate and track climate change actions completed by Indigenous and faith-based communities, community groups and individuals within Atlantic Canada through a shared website. For information about this proposed website tracker, contact: Ben Grieder, bengrieder@ecologyaction.ca

Drafted at the Thinkers Lodge, Pugwash, Nova Scotia by twenty-one Faith and Indigenous Leaders who gathered about the Climate Crisis from September 22 to 25, 2019. **This is a living document.**

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Spiritual resources:

Season of Creation <https://seasonofcreation.org/>

<https://seasonofcreation.com/worship-resources/liturgies/>

Canadian Foodgrains Bank <https://foodgrainsbank.ca/>

Faith Climate Action Week <https://www.faithclimateactionweek.org/prayers-and-climate-blessings/#targetText=Hindu%20Prayer,The%20supreme%20Lord%20is%20peace.>

Green Faith Spiritual Resources <https://greenfaith.org/ecospirituality>