



Decolonizing Climate Action


A Tool Kit
for *ENG*Os in So-called Canada

Summer 2024

ACCORDING TO INDIGENOUS CLIMATE ACTION, DECOLONIZING MEANS:

“...transforming the power imbalance where settlers and their governments have control over Indigenous lands and Peoples. It means restoring and reinvigorating Indigenous cultures, languages, self determination, sovereignty and relationships with lands. It means settlers relinquishing control over Indigenous lands and people”






Deep down, most of us feel like the climate movement is stuck and even worse, that we're losing ground. Despite raging wildfires, droughts and other climate disasters, more Canadians are turning to false solutions¹. It's clear that we need to rethink our approaches and find more powerful ways forward.

In recent years, Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS) have started to recognize what Indigenous people have been saying for decades: the driving causes of the climate crisis are colonialism, capitalism and extractivism. However, in grassroots and frontline communities, these acknowledgements from ENGOS have often felt opportunistic and hollow, paying lip service to a moral obligation, but not making the material changes that would make a difference. In some cases, ENGOS perpetuate colonial relations that harm trust building and undermine Indigenous movements. You can learn more about that [here](#).

For those looking to take real steps to decolonize your approaches and to meaningfully support Indigenous movements, this tool kit is here to guide you. Our goal is to make clear the necessity and value of decolonizing climate action and its transformative potential for movement-building.

¹Indigenous Climate Action considers solutions "false" if they: do not acknowledge, reinforce, or advance the rights of Indigenous Peoples; have unintended or unknown side effects that can make greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) worse; or rely on market-based, capitalist notions & mechanisms, without addressing consumption or emissions; delay effective action and lead to unsuccessful efforts to try and maintain the system of fossil fuel extraction and consumption that is driving climate change. (Source: [Indigenous Climate Action, 2023](#))

²"One could simply define extractivism as a productive process where natural resources are removed from the land or the underground and then put up for sale as commodities on the global market. But defining extractivism is not really this easy. Extractivism is related to existing geopolitical, economic and social relations produced throughout history. It is an economic model of development that transnational companies and states practice worldwide and that can be traced back more than 500 years all the way to the European colonial expansion." (Source: [Diana Vela Almeida, 2020](#))



If Canada's ENGOs fully got behind this vision, it could be a major game changer. Decolonizing climate action is not just the right thing to do, but it is how we, together, become powerful enough to win.

This resource was written by a group of intersectional climate justice activists, organizers and researchers who deeply believe that decolonizing climate action is the most effective and transformative approach to addressing the climate crisis. This project echoes what many Indigenous people and groups have been saying for a long time. We've taken the time to compile this in order to bring many helpful resources and ideas into one concise document. It has been reviewed and revised by Indigenous organizers and educators. This is a living document that we will continue to improve and build on as we receive feedback. To stay in touch about updates and to provide feedback, email DecolonizingClimateAction@gmail.com.

A note about self-care:

Just as ecosystems require nurture and adaptation, the work of decolonization requires ongoing care and reflection. Being perfect is not necessary, in fact, perfectionism is a known manifestation of white supremacy³. Know that mistakes are inevitable and part of the learning process.

Know that this work is uncomfortable. As you read and work through this tool kit, recognize the vital role of self-care in this challenging work. Engage in practices that promote resilience, such as boundary-setting, regular breaks, and seeking support when needed.

Thank you for engaging in this journey!

³<https://overcomingracism.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/HANDOUT-SHARED-Characteristics-of-White-Supremacy-Culture-original-1.pdf>

Groups and organizations and individuals that contributed to drafting, reviewing and editing this tool kit include:



Indigenous Reviewers:

- ★ Alexa Metallic, Listuguj Mi'gmaq First Nation.
- ★ Kahsennóktha, Kanéhsatà:ke Kanien'kehà:ka First Nation.
- ★ Onagoshi Haymond, Kebaowek First Nation, Indigenous Climate Action.
- ★ Sakej Ward, Mi'kmaq, Esgenoopetitj First Nation.
- ★ Tori Cress from the Anishinaabe Nation is currently serving as the Communications Manager for Keepers of the Water. Tori lives and works from her home community, G'Chimissing on Georgian Bay in Williams Treaty territory.

Graphic Designer and Artist:

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Settler drafters and project leads:

- ★ Dr. Jen Gobby, Affiliate Assistant Professor, Concordia University, Coordinator and Founder of Research for the Front Lines.
- ★ Emily Lowan, Fossil Fuel Supply Campaigns Lead for Climate Action Network Canada and volunteer with Research for the Front Lines.

Settler Reviewers:

- ★ Dr. Emily Eaton, Department Head and Professor at University of Regina, co-author of *The End of this World: Climate Justice in so-called Canada*.
- ★ David Gray-Donald, co-author of *The End of this World: Climate Justice in so-called Canada*.
- ★ Bronwen Tucker, co-author of *The End of this World: Climate Justice in so-called Canada*.
- ★ Sara Adams, Director, Climate Justice Organizing Hub.
- ★ Tom Liacas, Founder, Climate Justice Organizing Hub.
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- ★ Amanda Harvey-Sanchez, Climate Justice Organizing Hub.
- ★ Nicolas Chevalier, Climate Justice Montreal.



Decolonizing climate action is how we win. Here's why.

Reason
#1

Indigenous Peoples, not settlers, hold the knowledge, relationships and solutions that are needed to address the climate crisis.

In stark contrast to the track record of European settlers on Turtle Island, who in just a few hundred years have brought us to the brink of ecological and climate collapse, Indigenous communities here and across Mother Earth have built time-tested, powerful and inspiring relationships with lands and waters. “Through advanced practices, grounded in Indigenous law, these ways of knowing and being have supported abundant, thriving ecosystems⁴”. Indeed, despite being only 5 percent of the global population, Indigenous communities steward 80% of the planet’s remaining biodiversity⁵. **It’s time for settlers to step aside and find active ways to support Indigenous communities** in reclaiming their relationships with Creation, reclaiming their original languages, and reclaiming their roles and responsibilities to the lands and waters of their traditional territories, on their own terms.



⁴<https://raventrust.com/indigenous-stewardship-is-true-conservation-we-need-to-move-beyond-eco-colonialism/>

⁵<https://www.iisd.org/articles/deep-dive/indigenous-peoples-defending-environment-all>

Decolonizing climate action is how we win. Here's why.

Reason **#2**

Indigenous people can see more clearly the profound injustice of the current systems and can better envision real alternatives.

Settlers have benefited and continue to benefit from the ongoing settler colonial regime in Canada. Settlers benefit from unearned social and economic privilege, including disproportionate access to power, land and wealth. Consequently, settlers' views of what is wrong and what needs to change may be constrained and biased by self-interest imposed through the dominant economic system (Nelson, 1997). Alternatively, Indigenous people have been systematically targeted over and over by settler colonialism, and can therefore clearly perceive the profound injustice and unsustainability of colonial capitalism, its connection with climate change. **It is these communities, elders, land defenders, and water protectors who are best positioned to envision alternatives, set strategic directions and lead climate efforts.**



Decolonizing climate action is how we win. Here's why.

Reason

#3

Canadian extractive industries exist due to the violation of Indigenous rights. Therefore, fighting for Indigenous sovereignty is a powerful climate strategy.

During early settlement, the Crown, which eventually became the Canadian state, displaced Indigenous Peoples from their lands and suppressed any resistance in order to build an empire based on the settlement of white farmers and the extraction of natural resources. The economic wealth of so-called Canada is deeply rooted in the exploitation and appropriation of Indigenous lands and resources, and legitimized by legal fictions such as Terra Nullius. Indeed, Canada's fossil fuel industry was only made possible by land theft, genocide, cultural annihilation, and continuous violation of Indigenous rights and sovereignty. It makes sense, then, that **Indigenous-led resistance to fossil fuel expansion is the most promising climate mitigation strategy**. Over the past decade, Indigenous resistance to oil and gas projects in North America has saved nearly 1.6 billion tonnes of annual greenhouse gas emissions ([Indigenous Environmental Network, 2021](#)).





Decolonizing climate action is how we win.
Here's why.

Reason

#4 Land Back will help reduce emissions!

If Indigenous Land Back efforts continue to grow with cross-movement support, there could be critical government concessions and court wins that recognize full jurisdiction of Indigenous territories, including the public lands currently claimed by the Crown. This would mean that industrial projects that Indigenous communities are currently fighting could be canceled for good (Alook et al., 2023). **Indigenous jurisdiction over their territories would be an incredible win for Indigenous rights and for land, water, climate and our collective wellbeing.**





Decolonizing climate action is how we win. Here's why.

Reason

#5


Full sovereignty would help widen community livelihood options beyond extractive, polluting projects.

Colonial governments have put many Indigenous communities between a [rock and a hard place](#) – intentionally siphoning wealth and imposing colonial rule through the state design of reservation systems, [economic “support” programs](#), resource exploitation and governance structures. Today, this **constrains economic opportunities available to communities, creating the precarious conditions that privilege extractive, polluting projects to earn short-term revenues** (e.g. Liquefied Natural Gas, pipelines and new oil extraction). Colonial governments collaborate with industry to promote, often only extractive, projects as “[economic reconciliation](#)”⁶, while blocking paths that would widen options and enable full assertion of sovereignty (e.g. Land Back and other major reparations). Many Indigenous sovereignty advocates have argued that colonial governments’ current approach is a form of “redwashing”⁷ and [economic coercion](#)⁸, and therefore fails to meet

⁶<https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/economic-reconciliation-indigenous-people-canada-1.6919721>

⁷“Similar to “greenwashing” this is a generally corporate response to an urgent social and or legal issue that merely co-opts language and symbols but offers little transformative or meaningful change. Redwashing is an attempt to craft an appearance of reconciliation, or being generous — reconciliation in a purely superficial conceptualization.” ([Yellowhead Institute, 2022](#)).

⁸<https://cashback.yellowheadinstitute.org/>



Indigenous Peoples' rights to Free, Prior and Informed Consent ([FPIC](#)). ENGOs have a role to play here, to use their political capital and government access to help promote and mainstream Land Back, major reparations and other transformative demands that would expand community options and support the full expression of Indigenous sovereignty.

“REDWASHING”: “Similar to ‘greenwashing’, [redwashing] is a generally corporate response to an urgent social and or legal issue that merely co-opts language and symbols but offers little transformative or meaningful change. Redwashing is an attempt to craft an appearance of reconciliation, or being generous — reconciliation in a purely superficial conceptualization” ([Yellowhead Institute, 2022, p.4](#)).



Decolonizing climate action is how we win. Here's why.

Reason

#6

The fossil fuel industry fears, for good reasons, the power of real alliances between Indigenous communities and environmentalists.

Indigenous-led resistance, with robust solidarity from diverse settler communities, is precisely what colonial governments and industry are afraid of. In 2009, Tom Flanagan, a conservative academic known as “the man behind Stephen Harper,” warned of a potential “apocalyptic scenario” for the fossil industry if environmentalists and Indigenous communities could “make common cause and cooperate with each other,” because **our coordinated movement would be capable of blocking resource development on a large scale** (Alook et al., 2023).



Decolonizing climate action is how we win. Here's why.

Reason

#7

Unlike typical ENGO approaches, Indigenous resistance and resilience actually threatens capitalism, a root cause and driver of the climate crisis.

Phasing out the fossil fuel industry, on the timeline that the climate crisis demands, is a direct challenge to colonial authority and profit-driven capitalist logics, and will therefore require a suite of action that extends beyond the typical ENGO wheelhouse.

“We cannot solve the climate crisis with the same industrialized concepts and infrastructures that created it. **The very systems and ideas that have led us to this point are incapable of providing the solutions we need.** True progress demands a shift to Indigenous-led approaches and a decolonized perspective, recognizing that the knowledge and stewardship of Indigenous communities are crucial to restoring balance and achieving genuine climate justice”⁹.



⁹This wording was offered by reviewer Onagoshi-Lila Haymond, paraphrasing her colleague at Indigenous Climate Action, Carole Monture.

Decolonizing climate action is how we win. Here's why.

Reason

#8

Decolonization helps heal relationships, builds trust and the climate justice movements we need.

Addressing the climate crisis and transforming this country, and eventually world, will require big and beautiful movements made of strong alliances between Indigenous Nations, Indigenous grassroots communities, environmentalists, unions and more. But the kinds of relations required to build such **powerful movements are not possible if settlers continue to harm and weaken relations by upholding settler colonialism and hold onto disproportionate power, wealth and land** (Gobby, 2019). More to the point, coalitions built with Indigenous Peoples and other directly impacted communities are less at risk of reproducing the colonial logic that has historically led mainstream environmentalism (Chiro, 2020).





Indigenous Resilience as a Call to Action

“Indigenous Peoples have a deep-rooted connection to the land, shaped by millennia of stewardship, observation, and adaptation to both the natural world as well as settler colonialism. Their experiences in the face of adversity have led to rich knowledge systems that are invaluable in addressing the climate crisis today. While it is important to recognize the resilience Indigenous communities have shown in the face of colonial oppression and environmental change, we can and must honour this resilience as a source of strength and inspiration by centring Indigenous knowledge systems in the fight for climate justice.

Indigenous resilience is not just a story of enduring hardship, but also a testament to their commitment to protecting all life. Despite centuries of systemic harm, Indigenous Peoples have continued to fight for their rights, preserve their traditional practices and languages, and maintain their relationship with the lands and waters. This resilience offers an example for all who are committed to climate justice and the fight against extractive industries and policies. Allies in climate justice can look to these experiences as a source of inspiration and guidance—the determination and leadership of Indigenous Peoples can provide a critical framework for how we can collectively address the climate crisis. By centering Indigenous leadership and knowledge, we not only honour their resilience, but also build a more just and sustainable future for all.

Indigenous resilience, especially in systems of harm, serves as a catalyst for action. It challenges us to take care of our present and future, by dismantling the harmful structures that threaten our very existence. Through this process, we also gain the knowledge to come together in solidarity with Indigenous stewards and begin to decolonize our very paradigm of climate action — building upon resiliency not just beyond survival, but to fostering thriving ecosystems and societies rooted in restorative justice and respect for all forms of life.”


-- Tool kit Reviewer Onagoshi Haymond, Kebaowek First Nation, Indigenous Climate Action.





For all these reasons and more, **redistributing land, power and wealth** needs to be the central strategy at the heart of our collective climate action.






Important Note: Kahsennóktha, one of the Indigenous reviewers of this tool kit told us that in the work she does, they often tell people “Decolonization is not a checklist”. And indeed, it is much more deep and ongoing work than simply checking actions off a list. The ideas for actions provided below are not meant to suggest an endpoint, but to offer some concrete starting points and steps forward.

Concrete Strategies for Decolonizing Your Approach to Climate Action!

Self-Education




- Do your homework. There has been so much already written on this, by Indigenous organizers and scholars. Keep in mind that this essential journey of self-education is a continuous process and not a one-time thing. Engage with a variety of resources, from a diversity of folks. We created a list of resources at the end of this document to get you started!
- Find out: Whose lands are you on? Are you part of a Treaty relationship? Research and follow the Indigenous and Treaty laws and protocols of the territories where you reside. Or as Sakej Ward, an Indigenous reviewer of this tool kit put it: “Understand and acknowledge your status as occupiers on Indigenous lands. [Understand] your obligations to rectify the relationship of being an occupier on these lands. Learn the Indigenous perspective of colonial history and relations.”
- Reflect on what feelings of resistance and defensiveness (and even counter arguments,



prejudices and biases) that come up as you read the list of statements above. What are these based on? Understand that genuine transformation requires discomfort.

- ❑ Start a reading group in your organization. Ensure that all senior staff of your organization are actively participating! Invite your board members!
- ❑ Explore how your organization can enact processes to equally value Indigenous and Western knowledge systems (e.g. learn about the concept “Etuaptmumk” otherwise known as Two-Eyed Seeing, coined by Mi’kmaw Elder Albert Marshall).
- ❑ Find out what Indigenous folks are organizing around in your area and go join them (e.g. Land Back initiatives, Truth and Reconciliation events, MMIWG2S+ vigils) by giving support in ways that still center their voices, but helps lessen the logistical load. Training on protocols and how to properly support such events would be beneficial before the date of the event.
- ❑ Engage with Indigenous media outlets (e.g. television, news, social media) to gain a deeper and broader understanding of current issues and perspectives (e.g. [Aboriginal Peoples Television Network](#), [IndigiNews](#), [CBC News Indigenous](#), etc).
- ❑ Create a resource library in your local community spaces and/or organization that includes literature, articles, multimedia resources, and even artwork by Indigenous authors, scholars and artists.
- ❑ Key concepts and distinctions to learn about:
 - ❑ Traditional governance versus Indian Act systems of governance
 - ❑ Rights-based frameworks versus Responsibility-based frameworks
 - ❑ Indigenous Resistance versus Indigenous Resurgence

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- Learn the problems, barriers and pitfalls in settler-Indigenous alliances. Topics should include concepts of white supremacy (e.g. white saviour complex, “white man’s burden”, “advanced civilization myth”, “Christian supremacy”), typologies of problematic white allies and examples of good allyship.
 - Learn about Indigenous strategies and methods of resistance. For instance: Zapatismo, Warrior Society actions, Idle No More actions, Water Protector actions, Land Back actions, etc.
 - Learn the protocols for being an outsider in the territory where you live or work and abide by them.

- Add your own ideas!

Concrete Strategies for Decolonizing Your Approach to Climate Action!



Evaluating your organization

- ❑ Conduct an internal audit of your organization's policies and protocols to identify areas where Indigenous voices are marginalized or excluded, or where decolonial frameworks could replace inherently harmful practices. See [here](#) for a testimony on how ENGOs have harmed Indigenous communities and movements. From this point, develop an organizational transformation plan to better support Indigenous movements.
- ❑ Reflect on the possible ways your organization's advocacy and approaches may actually harm Indigenous people, sovereignty movements and uphold settler colonialism. Some questions to consider: how much space does your organization take up in media and climate policy tables? What steps have you taken to 'pass the mic' and open the door to these policy spaces for communities that have been historically excluded? Identify and learn from other groups that are doing this well.
- ❑ **Develop criteria to evaluate your organization's alignment with an Indigenous-led, decolonial just transition.** E.g. Does your advocacy help increase the size and strength of Indigenous decision-making power over their lands and lives? Does your work help defund and transform extractive arms of the colonial government? Do your advocacy goals extend beyond short-term, market-based wins?
- ❑ **Assess what kind of support your organization can offer to Indigenous movements – financial,**

informational/intelligence, administrative, personnel.

Consider how you can best leverage your position and insider channels to disrupt extractivism and support Indigenous sovereignty.

- ❑ Governance and accountability: **Does your organization have a political compass that helps you discern what principles and whose leadership you are accountable to?** If there is significant leadership of settler and class-privileged people in your organization, where are you getting feedback on strategy and direction from Indigenous communities, communities of Colour and working class communities?
- ❑ Who's on your board? Be sure to nominate organization board members who are strong advocates for decolonization. The political orientation and values of your board is often a bottleneck to properly fund and resource staff to do this work.
- ❑ Be critical: What steps do you need to take to make your organization, and affiliated spaces, safe for Indigenous folks to engage and work within?
- ❑ What are the internal barriers in your organization for taking concrete steps like the ones listed in this tool kit? How can you address and overcome these internal barriers?
- ❑ What are the external barriers in your organization for taking concrete steps like the ones listed in this tool kit? How can you address and overcome these external barriers?
- ❑ Implement regular training for staff on decolonization, anti-racism and colonial systems of harm. Dedicate paid time or establish role(s), within your organization that focuses on ensuring that your campaigns and practices are aligned



with decolonial principles. Include mechanisms to keep you accountable to the process.

- All too often, ENGOs form extractive and shallow partnerships with Indigenous nations and organizations – to either further a campaign, appease funders, check diversity boxes or validate their image to settler governments and supporters. What steps has your organization taken to ensure partnerships with Indigenous Nations and organizations aren't extractive?



- Add your own ideas!

How ENGOs have caused real harm:

“ENGOs have hijacked Indigenous struggles, undermined them, pacified them, rendering their struggle ineffective. [They have] tried to create relationships of economic and material dependency on the ENGOs. [They have] sought to politically interfere in the decision making of Indigenous frontline resistance groups, sought to wield undue influence, acted as gatekeepers to important resources, displaced Indigenous people in positions within their own [movements], injected and defended colonial thinking, cherry picked Indigenous people to take direction from or to recruit out of the Indigenous struggle, and used Indigenous struggles as opportunities to gain social capital or appease donors, etc..

These actions present incredible barriers to trust and relationship building. ENGOs have to be conscious of the damage created in past collaborations and to be very careful not to pursue objectives and use tactics that reflect the problems listed above”.

- *“Don’t hijack Indigenous struggles.*
- *Don’t play white saviors, crisis “tourists”, armchair general/ commando, evangelist, or recruiters for European ideologies.*
- *Don’t use Indigenous people or groups as tokens for virtue signaling.*
- *Don’t use Indigenous people as political pawns.*
- *Don’t pay lip service to Indigenous support.*
- *Don’t create economic dependency with Indigenous groups, on your organization, in order to use it to influence the strategic direction of Indigenous struggle.*
- *Don’t use Indigenous struggles as photo opportunities for better donor relations.*
- *Don’t seek power and positions within Indigenous organizations.*
- *Don’t engage in political interference within Indigenous organizations.*
- *Don’t poach Indigenous leaders from Indigenous organizations.*
- *Don’t cherry pick which Indigenous leader you will listen to in an Indigenous-led action”.*

-- Tool kit Reviewer Sakej Ward, Mi’kmaq, Esgenoopetitj First Nation



Concrete Strategies for Decolonizing Your Approach to Climate Action!



Redistributing Power

- ❑ **Ask yourself: How much of your (and your organization's) time and resources are being spent engaging with colonial governments on dead-end reforms and false solutions¹⁰? How can you spend more of your time and resources working to actually transform the colonial capitalist system that is driving the climate crisis and blocking the real solutions?**

- ❑ **To what extent are you working in direct service to Indigenous sovereignty movements and frontline struggles that challenge colonial capitalism and the other root causes of climate change?** Are you showing up to direct actions? Are you providing material support for Indigenous communities facing the brunt of environmental degradation? Are you using your platforms to amplify Indigenous voices?

- ❑ If you are funded and tasked with working on a specific policy or project, the first step is to consider how to centre Indigenous leadership and sovereignty. Find out which Indigenous communities, Nations and organizations are working on this (whether visibly or behind the scenes). Learn about the local context and governance so that you know whether you should be collaborating with the Chief and Council or Hereditary Chiefs and traditional governance bodies – or both. Build relations with these folks and take direction from them before starting your own work on a policy or project.

¹⁰To learn more about dead end reforms and false solutions to climate change, see Hoodwinked in the HotHouse. <https://climatefalsesolutions.org/>

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- ❑ In conversation with impacted communities, consider where your organization could share the labour that frontline Indigenous movements have been carrying. Can you provide labour, time, and funding to help shoulder the heavy lifts that drain frontline energy? Can you actively hold your settler government accountable for violating Indigenous rights? For criminalizing Indigenous land defenders?
 - ❑ **How do you or your organization “spend” the social/ political capital it has built with those in power within the settler government? If you occupy a policy advisory role to the government, how can you leverage this position and insider channels to disrupt extractivism and support Indigenous sovereignty?**
 - ❑ Use your power in ENGO coalition spaces to change the organizational structure in a way that centers Indigenous-led efforts and other grassroots organizing that address the roots of colonial capitalism.
 - ❑ Begin to build relationships with Indigenous people and communities - not by trying to get them involved in your campaign and initiative - but by actively supporting their work. A critical first step in building relationships is to first build an understanding of the historical context of settler colonialism and its impacts on the specific communities you’re working with.
 - ❑ Making public statements of solidarity and support for Indigenous led-movements. These commitments serve as powerful declarations of intent and accountability. Transparency fosters trust and demonstrates our unwavering dedication to advancing decolonial climate action.
 - ❑ Cultivate connections within your community and with like-minded NGOs committed to similar objectives. By breaking down silos and fostering collaboration, we harness collective strength and expertise. Recognize that division and competition are legacies of colonialism, and solidarity is our most potent weapon against systemic injustices. Maintain a dynamic network through a living document that



facilitates ongoing communication and resource-sharing among collaborating organizations.

- Create decision-making structures within your organization that include meaningful representation from Indigenous communities, and advocate for Indigenous representation on local boards and advisory councils.
- Support Indigenous leadership development programs that aim to build capacity within Indigenous communities to lead climate action initiatives.
- Use your platform to amplify Indigenous voices in social media, public forums, and in day-to-day life.

- Add your own ideas!

Concrete Strategies for Decolonizing Your Approach to Climate Action!

Redistributing Wealth



- ❑ Tell your funders that they need to directly fund Indigenous-led land protection efforts and actively work to remove the structural barriers to these efforts.
- ❑ Identify Indigenous-led projects and find ways to redirect funding to them. Engage in due diligence to make sure the projects are not fraudulent and not led by Pretendians.
- ❑ Work alongside other ENGOs and foundations to develop a funding pool that can be accessed by Indigenous land defenders, for both rapid response projects and ongoing basic needs. This may include salaried positions and/or specific service needs, psychological and material support to offset the burden of leading resistance efforts on the ground. This funding pool needs to be governed by a Council of Indigenous folks.
- ❑ Dedicate significant funding and prioritize staff time to respond to frontline needs. Offer your expertise and resources to serve the needs of Indigenous front line needs, such as research labour, access to your printer, your skilled graphic designer, your proCanva account, your media contact list, amplify their events and fundraising campaigns, and donate to their legal defense funds.



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- ❑ Do you have office space, event space, equipment that you can make available to Indigenous individuals, communities and groups?
 - ❑ Evaluate your own role and access to wealthy settler networks - how can you activate these networks to redistribute land and resources? (eg. [Treaty Land Sharing Network](#), [Resource Movement](#))
 - ❑ Indigenous people have historically been exploited and undervalued for their knowledge and time. Don't ask for an Indigenous person's time without compensating them well financially for their time, expertise and energy. By fairly compensating, you're setting the precedent for other organizations to do the same.
 - ❑ When you hire Indigenous people, on contract or honoraria, ensure that you have the accounting systems in place to pay them as rapidly as possible.
 - ❑ Prioritize hiring Indigenous people for paid positions in your organization, including setting up paid fellowships and training programs. Ensure that there are tailored supports to prevent burnout and help Indigenous employees to thrive, on a daily basis and long-term.
 - ❑ Build partnerships with Indigenous businesses to support Indigenous economic development and sustainability. Identify partners in your organization that could be substituted by an Indigenous entrepreneur or business, such as product distributors, apparel suppliers, or catering!





Add your own ideas!

A large, empty white rectangular area intended for drawing or writing, corresponding to the prompt above.

Concrete Strategies for Decolonizing Your Approach to Climate Action!




Redistributing Land

- ❑ Push for laws that recognize collective Indigenous land ownership.
- ❑ Openly oppose (and put real resources behind this opposition) the ongoing violation of Indigenous rights and theft of Indigenous lands as industry and government force unwanted mines, pipelines, and other developments.
- ❑ Advocate for crown lands to be returned to Indigenous jurisdiction and oppose any privatization of crown lands.
- ❑ Work with other ENGOs to raise funds, activate your lists, and dedicate staff hours to support for legal cases and community organizing that affirm Indigenous sovereignty, particularly in the face of corporate/state resource extraction and encroachment.
- ❑ Push for those who are leaving estates to give land back in their will; explore other forms of private land ownership transfers. This could also look like facilitating workshops on land transfer or creating educational materials for settlers on land transfer and stewardship.
- ❑ For nature and conversation-based organizations, ensure that conservation efforts are led by Indigenous communities.



- Commit to returning Indigenous lands after you or your organization no longer needs to occupy the land.
- Offer use of lands for hunting, gathering and land-based education initiatives.
- Offer the use of space for meetings, events, gatherings, trainings, support areas, staging areas, storage areas, etc.
- Pay territory taxes to Indigenous Nations, communities or resistance groups in your area. This could be in the form of money, donated equipment, equipment purchase, or donated labour.

- Add your own ideas!



Important Note: As mentioned at the beginning of the tool kit, Kahsennóktha, one of the Indigenous reviewers of this tool kit told us that in the work she does, they often tell people “Decolonization is not a checklist”.

Keep that in mind as you use this tool kit with your organization. Decolonization is always ongoing. If you and your organization get through all these steps, begin again and keep going. This is iterative, cyclical, ever deepening work.



Suggested Reading for Self-Education and Reading Groups (including sources cited in this tool kit)



- » Amnesty International, 2022, **10 Ways to be a Genuine Ally to First Nations Communities.**
<https://www.amnesty.org.au/10-ways-to-be-an-ally-to-first-nations-communities/>
- » Angele Alook, Emily Eaton, David Gray-Donald, Joël Laforest, Crystal Lameman and Bronwen Tucker, 2023, **The End of This World: Climate Justice in So-Called Canada.**
<https://btlbooks.com/book/the-end-of-this-world>
- » Atleo, C., 2020, **Between a rock and a hard place: Canada's carbon economy and Indigenous ambivalence.** In Regime of Obstruction: How corporate power blocks energy democracy.
- » Marie Battiste, ed. 2016, **Living Treaties: Narrating Mi'kmaw Treaty Relations.**
- » Harold Cardinal and Walter Hildebrandt, 2000, **Treaty Elders of Saskatchewan: Our Dream is that our Peoples Will One Day be Clearly Recognized as Nations.**
- » Chiro, G. D., 2020, **Mobilizing 'intersectionality' in environmental justice research and action in a time of crisis.** In Environmental Justice. Routledge.
- » Jessica Clogg, Hannah Askew, Eugene Kung, and Gavin Smith, 2016, **Indigenous Legal Traditions and the Future of Environmental Governance in Canada.**
<https://www.wcel.org/publication/indigenous-legal-traditions-and-future-environmental-governance-canada>
- » Collective Liberation, 2018, **Anti-Racist Organizational Assessment.**
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