

# OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

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UNION OF B.C. INDIAN CHIEFS  
CHIEFS COUNCIL

JUNE 27<sup>TH</sup> TO 28<sup>TH</sup>, 2018

RICHMOND, B.C., X<sup>w</sup>MƏӨK<sup>w</sup>ƏY<sup>ə</sup>M (MUSQUEAM TERRITORY)

**Resolution no. 2018-35**

## **RE: Climate Impacts and Fossil Fuel Company Accountability**

**WHEREAS** global fossil fuel pollution and other human-caused factors are causing rises in global temperature and acidification of oceans, leading to a wide range of impacts, including rising sea-levels, the loss of indigenous species, shifts in invasive and pest species, an increase in flooding, wildfires and other extreme weather events;

**WHEREAS** Indigenous cultures and communities are closely tied to the land, plants and animals of their territories and are therefore disproportionately impacted by changing climate and seasonal patterns and unpredictable and severe weather;

**WHEREAS** the global fossil fuel industry continues to make massive profits from selling products that they know cause climate change and yet fail to take any responsibility for their share of the costs caused by those products;

**WHEREAS** fossil fuel companies lack any financial incentive to act on the global risks of fossil fuel pollution (which they have known about since the 1950s), and consequently lobbied against global climate action, stood in the way of the development of renewable energy and low emissions technology (including failing to develop their own patents in those areas), and funded and participated in public mis-information campaigns on climate science;

**WHEREAS** the *United Nation Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration), which the government of Canada has adopted without qualification, and has, alongside the government of BC, committed to implement, affirms:

### **Article 20:**

(2) Indigenous peoples deprived of their means of subsistence and development are entitled to just and fair redress;

**Article 28:**

- (1) Indigenous peoples have the right to redress, by means that can include restitution or, when this is not possible, just, fair and equitable compensation, for the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used, and which have been confiscated, taken, occupied, used or damaged without their free prior and informed consent;
- (2) Unless otherwise freely agreed upon by the peoples concerned, compensation shall take the form of lands, territories and resources equal in quality, size and legal status or of monetary compensation or other appropriate redress;

**Article 29:**

- (1) Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination; and

**WHEREAS** West Coast Environmental Law and many other organizations are calling on communities and the BC Government to identify local climate impacts and then seek means of demanding that fossil fuel companies are accountable for those local impacts.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** the UBCIC Chiefs Council fully supports actions to ensure that the global fossil fuel industry takes responsibility for the harm caused by its products to Indigenous Peoples and our territories;

**THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** the UBCIC Chiefs Council directs the UBCIC Executive to sign-on to the attached letter, drafted by West Coast Environmental Law, calling on the BC Government to enact a *Liability for Climate Related-harm Act* to clarify the potential liability of fossil fuel corporations for harm occurring within the province; and

**THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** the UBCIC Chiefs Council directs the UBCIC Executive to work with like-minded organizations to examine ways in which UBCIC and Indigenous communities can ensure that the costs of preparing for climate change and addressing climate impacts where they occur should not fall primarily to Indigenous communities, but be addressed by the fossil fuel industry, other levels of government and others who have benefited from the fossil fuel economy.

**Moved:** Saul Brown, Heiltsuk (Proxy)  
**Seconded:** Chief Don Tom, Tsartlip First Nation  
**Disposition:** Carried  
**Date:** June 27, 2018