

The Aashukan Declaration

We, the participants of *Aashukan*, have gathered over four days in Waskaganish, Eeyou Istchee, the traditional territory of the James Bay (Qc) Crees, in March 2017. Our experiences and the guidance passed on from our respected elders, past and present, have taught us to be responsible for our ecosystems of origin; our peoples have flourished based on these principles for hundreds of generations. The geographic specificity of Indigenous Knowledge is the fundamental way of knowing our ecosystems of origin. We wish to continue to engage in all efforts to live more harmoniously with the Earth for the benefit of all of humanity.

In Waskaganish, we have shared story with regards to our origins and identities, and our experiences in protecting and enhancing our land and culture, which are intimately intertwined. Development has affected and altered all our lives in profound and lasting ways. As such, we address the following message to the Impact Assessment community. Impact Assessment must meet the following principles regarding Indigenous Peoples' rights, relationships, processes, and outcomes.

1. **Indigenous Peoples' Rights** are the foundation upon which all discussions must be initiated. Following international best practices, this includes territorial Rights, the Right to self-determination and the Indigenous Right to say YES or NO.
2. **Relationships** must have integrity and be based on humility, respect, reciprocity, community empowerment, sharing, mutual learning, and sustained and long-term engagement. Our timelines are based on our values, processes and social organization, and should be respected.
3. **Processes** must achieve clear communication, transparent decision making, be inclusive and be founded on the worldview of the Indigenous Peoples that are impacted.
4. **Outcomes** must be multi-faceted and oriented towards mutual benefits, a commitment towards the prevention of harm, and the enhancement of the well-being of Indigenous Peoples based on their own definitions and criteria.

We believe that Impact Assessment is a pedagogical process that involves mutual learning and can be tremendously rewarding for all parties involved.

We invite the Impact Assessment community to apply these principles in their work with Indigenous communities to achieve the unrealised potential of fully participatory processes.

We may support development, but not at any price!

We welcome Impact Assessment, but not of any kind!

We represent the Eeyou, Anishinaabe, Sauteaux, Secwepemc (North America), Aymara (North Chile), Ainu (Hokkaido), Karipuna and Tiryó Kaxuyana (Amazonia, Brasil), Masahua (Sierra Norte de Puebla, Mexico), Saami (Swedish part of Sápmi), Nuudelch Malchid (Mongolia), Tangata Whenua (Aotearoa New Zealand), Kalinago Carib (Trinidad Tobago and Dominica), Nganguruku (First Peoples of the River Murray Mallee) and Ikwerre (Niger Delta) Nations.

Signed at the IAIA Annual Conference in Montreal, Canada on April 2, 2017.

A collection of approximately 15 handwritten signatures in various colors (black, blue, red, green) and styles, representing the diverse Indigenous peoples mentioned in the declaration. The signatures are arranged in several rows, with some overlapping. Some legible names include 'Angeles Mendez', 'Dan Soudquet', 'Chey Pato', and 'Jovana Gules'.

Handwritten signature

We the signatories of this document understand the Ashukan Declaration. We commit to continuing this important discussion for the good of Impact Assessment.

Signed at the IAIA Annual Conference in Montreal, Canada on April 2, 2017.

Reinal Boucelles

Pennwood

Langhills

Handwritten signature

John Blin
Aurora

Frank Vanclay

John
Gibson

Steve M. Harnett

Handwritten signature

Steve D. B.

Michelle
M. H.

John
Gibson

Cathy Gordon
O. H.

Lang Range

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John
Gibson

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Carol Brown

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Stefanie Blum

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John
Gibson

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Michelle
M. H.

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