

CLOSING THE ECONOMIC GAP IN NORTHERN MANITOBA: SUSTAINED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR MANITOBA'S FIRST NATION COMMUNITIES

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Abstract / Résumé

This paper argues that the provincial government must relinquish absolute control over natural resources on unoccupied Crown land in Manitoba and share power with First Nations in order to support building a strong, sustainable, equitable and just economy throughout all of Northern Manitoba. Discussion includes barriers to First Nation community resource planning, managing, developing and protecting; alternate development models validating cultural, social, economic and environmental values of First Nation communities; and, opportunities for change benefiting all stakeholders. Concluding recommendations caution that support of First Nations' capacity building and self-determination may be the only way to ensure a sustainable Northern economy.

L'article met de l'avant que le gouvernement provincial doit céder son contrôle complet des ressources naturelles sur les terres publiques libres du Manitoba et partager le pouvoir avec les Premières nations afin de favoriser le développement d'une économie forte, viable, juste et équitable dans l'ensemble du Nord du Manitoba. L'article traite des obstacles à la planification, à la gestion, au développement et à la protection des ressources par les collectivités des Premières nations, des modèles de développement de remplacement qui valident les valeurs culturelles, sociales, économiques et environnementales des Premières nations, et des possibilités de changement en faveur de toutes les parties intéressées. Les recommandations finales soulignent que le soutien au renforcement et à l'autodétermination des collectivités des Premières nations est peut-être le seul moyen de développer une économie viable dans le Nord.

Preface**Universal Declaration of the Indigenous Aboriginal Nations of Canada**

Source: <http://www.cwis.org/fwdp/americas.html>

Our History

We, the Indigenous Nations of Canada, have lived on our traditional lands for thousands of years, since before anybody can remember. Through these thousands of years we lived in keeping with the sacred birthright of the Creator; to live in harmony with our neighbours and the land. We developed our own values and our own understanding of what it means to live in harmony with our neighbours and the land. We practised stewardship, caring and sharing. We developed our own languages and our own laws to foster our harmonious lifestyle. We developed unique forms of government. We lived as nations with territorial boundaries and respecting the territorial rights of our neighbours.

The Dark Shadow

Very recently in our long history as nations, our peoples have undergone difficult and threatening times. Europeans with different values, different languages and different laws have come onto our lands. We extended the hand of friendship and entered into peace and friendship treaties, believing we could live in mutual respect and harmony with these newcomers.

But we have been disappointed and angered. Rather than living with us in peace these Europeans have violated our basic human rights by attempting to force us to feel, think, act and live as they live. Rather than recognizing and respecting our rights as nations they have tried to control us, imposing their own values and institutions and form of government. Rather than respecting and recognizing our right to our land, they have taken our non-renewable resources and seriously damaged our harvesting of renewable resources. The action of these Europeans constitutes genocide – cultural and political genocide as defined by the United Nations.

Strength into the Future

But we have not been destroyed. We are nations. We are determined to be recognized as such; recognized by the people and by the Government of Canada, by the peoples and governments around the world, and by the United Nations.

We are strengthened and encouraged in our struggle by the events

in recent years around the world; colonialism and imperialism is now dead or dying; from the ashes of colonialism old nations are being re-born and new nations are being born. While this emergence is evident in many parts of the world it is not happening in Canada. But we are determined that it will happen. We are determined to be recognized for what we are: the Indigenous founding nations of Canada. We seek Canadian and International recognition of these rights.

1. We are nations. We have always been nations.
2. As nations we have inherent and fundamental rights which we have never given up and which we continue to exercise.
3. We have always had and exercised the right to govern ourselves and we will continue to do so.
4. The right to govern is an expression of our right to be a self-determining nation of people within a revised Canadian Federation.
5. Our right to govern includes our right to determine our own citizens.
6. Our right to govern includes the right to determine the kind of education we want for our children, the kind of economy we need to foster self-reliance, sufficient control of our land and resources to be self-sufficient and the right to control our land - including water, air, minerals, timber and wildlife.

These and other fundamental and ancillary rights of the Indigenous Nations must be entrenched in a Canadian Constitution, which acknowledges that we are the founding and Indigenous Nations of Canada. A first step in acknowledging our rights must be the full and equal participation of our nation at all levels and stages of negotiations leading to a new constitution. What we seek is independence and self-determination within the country of Canada. Our plea to the peoples and governments of Canada and the world and to the United Nations is to help us in our struggle to find a place in the world community where we can exercise our right to self-determination as distinct nations.

Introduction

The Challenge: Validating First Nations' Economic Self-Determination

The Universal Declaration of the Indigenous Aboriginal Nations in Canada sums up succinctly the vision and aspirations of the majority Canadian First Nations. As a country, we have failed woefully in our obligations to accommodate these aspirations. We have not even met the minimal fiduciary obligation to First Nations' rights to hunt, fish and trap

that are enshrined in the Canadian Constitution. Yet, we as a nation seem prepared to accommodate some of the very same demands by francophone Quebec in order to avoid the dismantling of Canada.

The time has come, if we truly care about building First Nations' economic capacity for self-reliance, for all levels of government in Canada to accept and actively support First Nations' self-determination, as they too are one of the founding Nations of Canada. We must adapt and engage institutional and legal mechanisms to facilitate First Nations' planning, managing, developing and protecting of the natural resources in their traditional territories. Canadian First Nations striving for economic sustainability face unique challenges. Yet, some First Nation communities in other provinces are leading the way, creating and benefiting from new economies built from their vision and cultural values. It is worth noting that some of these have become the economic leaders in their region as well, setting examples for surrounding mainstream municipalities. The economic security of Canada depends on the economic security of its communities. The government's inclusion of all marginalized communities as full participants, will lead to a new more just and equitable economy.

This report will provide analysis and insight into government policies and programs related to the natural resource sector of Manitoba's economy that present obstacles to Northern Manitoba First Nation communities working to create sustainable economies that integrate and validate their visions, cultural values and community goals. Particular attention will be given to the Government of Manitoba East Side Planning Initiative as it represents the most significant multi-stakeholder, broad area, land-use-planning exercise currently underway in the province. First Nation communities living in this planning region are demanding that the government of Manitoba give them more control to manage, plan and participate in development activities in their traditional territories.

Barriers to First Nation community resource planning, managing, developing and protecting will be discussed. Community economic development models being implemented in other jurisdictions that validate the cultural, social, economic and environmental values of First Nation communities will be examined. Opportunities for positive change benefiting all stakeholders will be identified. Finally, the report will provide recommendations to support building an economy that sustains the cultural, economic and social fabric of Northern First Nation communities in Manitoba. It is suggested that doing so will support the building of a strong economy throughout all of Northern Manitoba, and cautions that perhaps it is the only way to ensure a sustainable Northern

economy.

Finally, this report fulfills the primary objective of the Manitoba Research Alliance on Community Economic Development in the New Economy to: *“investigate how disadvantaged communities might share in the benefits of the New Economy, and where the transition to a New Economy has erected new barriers, how these might be overcome. ... (A)nd how Community Economic Development (CED) strategies, ... that emphasizes local self-sufficiency, local decision-making and local ownership, ... might assist communities in taking up the opportunities and meeting the challenges created by the transition to a New Economy.”*
– Don Sullivan, Director, Boreal Forest Network

Background

The Modern Northern Economy

For Aboriginal Peoples in Canada access to land and resources has always been at the core of their value system, as it is part of their spiritual, cultural, social and economic fabric. In fact, the very survival of Canada's Indigenous culture is dependent on access to the land and its resources in their traditional territories. Indigenous communities throughout Northern Canada view the impacts by large-scale resource development projects as so significant they largely outweigh the economic benefits.

The modern Northern economy of Canada, which developed after World War II, is dominated by large-scale industrial resource development activities. Conversely, there has been very little attention, or recognition, to studying and collecting data on the existing and important subsistence economy practiced in Northern First Nation communities throughout Canada.

Thus, governments, policy makers and the general public for that matter, see the modern resource sector of Canada's Northern economy as being somehow superior to the subsistence/traditional economy still being practiced by Indigenous communities in the North. However, Canada's modern day Northern economy looks much the same today as it did when Canada was a colony of the British Empire in the late 19th century. The only significant difference is that today the southern industrial heartland of Canada, rather than Britain, controls and profits from development of the resource rich Northern Canada hinterland.

Both levels of governments in Canada, and indeed Canadian society as a whole, have come to recognize the legitimate aspirations of First Nations to seek self-determination and self-government. For First Nations the foundation of this expressed aspiration is the ability of these

communities to manage, plan, control and protect the natural resources in their traditional territories according to their cultural and community values.

Many First Nation communities in Canada, and certainly those throughout Northern Manitoba, continue to be systemically marginalized from direct participation, in any meaningful way, in creating an economy —old or new— that works toward achieving these aspirations.

To be marginalized from direct participation in your own economy, is to be disabled. First Nation communities in Northern Manitoba are denied full access to the requisite tools for building local economies: the management, planning and control of the kinds of economic development activities occurring on their land. In short, First Nations in Northern Manitoba, unlike some First Nations in other provinces, currently have little power to exert influence on creating an economy the sustains their communities and minimizes the impacts of large-scale resource development activities occurring on their traditional territories.

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) recognized this inequity for First Nations across the country and noted that it is critical that Aboriginal communities secure allocations of natural resources from their traditional territories. RCAP called on governments to “rethink their overall allocation policies and licensing systems” (RCAP Final Report 1996:Section 7:2).

Most of Northern Manitoba’s economic wealth is still derived from the old economy, namely natural resource development activities such as: forestry, mining and hydro-electricity. Historically, the Government of Manitoba has viewed the Northern economy as strictly an export economy. In this context, Northern economic development policies by successive Manitoba governments have been designed to stimulate investment into large-scale industrial resource development activities. By virtue of design, the resulting development agreements have undermined First Nation community participation in developing any type of sustainable local economy, much less an economy that is based on cultural values of planning, managing, controlling and protecting the natural resources in their traditional territories (Province of Manitoba Profile).

Yet, in general the natural resource sector of both Manitoba’s and Canada’s economy is creating fewer jobs than 30 years ago. This is primarily due to the introduction of labour-saving technological innovations and efficiencies that allow the natural resource sector of Canada’s economy to compete in the global economy. This approach is at odds with building a Northern economy that works for the North and in turn works to the benefit of Aboriginal Peoples in Northern Manitoba (May 2005:40-46).

In short, “The emphasis throughout the 1980s and 1990s on large-scale developments, such as mines, hydro dams, and forestry, remained central to government economic development plans in the North. These approaches have brought numerous benefits to the Manitoba economy. They have not, however, succeeded in addressing the vulnerability and dependence of Northern economies, nor were Aboriginal people able to exercise any control over these projects or receive a share of the surpluses they generated” (Aboriginal Justice Implementation Commission 2001: Section 4, Chapter 12).

For the most part, the new emerging jobs in the natural resource development sector are in the fields that are related to planning, management, monitoring and protection of the natural resources. On the whole, this has created even fewer full-time employment opportunities for individuals in Northern Manitoba First Nation communities. The reason is simple, federal and provincial provision of strategic community capacity building that enables First Nation communities in Northern Manitoba to undertake and benefit from these types of employment, is limited. Nor, have there been any meaningful efforts, until very recently, by the government of Manitoba to accommodate First Nation communities’ requests for more control to develop, manage, plan, control and protect the natural resources in their traditional territories.

Some attempts to rectify this situation, in both Manitoba and in other jurisdictions, have occurred and are worth examining. There is a small, but growing, number of First Nation communities in Canada that have asserted sovereignty and negotiated government-to-government agreements that secure specific resource management controls over development activities occurring in their traditional territories. However, for the most part, these types of agreements in Manitoba have failed to fully materialize in way that allows First Nation communities to fully maximize the economic, social and environmental benefits from the natural resources within traditional use areas.

The question is: what are the particular impediments faced by First Nation communities in Manitoba and how can these become opportunities for solutions that will benefit all the vested interest groups?

Part 1: Barriers to Planning, Managing, Developing and Protecting

Policy and Legal Impediments

“We are at the starting point of this development. Pikangikum wants to be clear on this. We would never stop any other First Nation from working with the Minister to develop his lands to the North of us. We only want to be in the driver’s seat with respect to resource development on our Traditional Territories. We even have our own initiatives, including the Whitefeather Forest Initiative, which are based on community tenure and partnerships with outsiders. We only want to be in the driver’s seat so that we can ensure the developments on our lands are sustainable and that we benefit. We can use the knowledge of our Elders to ensure that what we do is sustainable.

In conclusion, this is our situation. Those of you who are First Nation people here know it well. Please help us. Investigate our situation. Find out what is being planned for our lands by outsiders. Help us to make our situation known. Support us in our efforts to build partnerships with non-Native Canadians that will benefit all of us.

Our struggle is not about being poor. It is about fairness, working together, respect, cooperation and caring for the land. We will succeed.” (Excerpts from “Our Land, Our Future,” a statement by Pikangikum First Nation to the First Nations Gathering, delivered by Councilor Samson Keeper, Toronto, September 2002. Source: <http://www.vivelecanada.ca/article.php/20050107175451951>)

Introduction

The inability of First Nations to access the natural resources in their traditional territories, an area that extends well beyond the reserves, is seen as the number one problem towards creating sustained economies within First Nation communities.

Federal and provincial government policies, regulations, legislation, taxation and trade agreements, designed to facilitate Canada’s ability to compete in the global economy by developing and using natural resources more efficiently, all fall short because they also, by design, entrench barriers to First Nation sustainable community development. First Nations’ aspirations to manage, protect and develop the resources in their traditional territories are either undermined, or supplanted, by government and industry monopolies on resource development projects and the profits/benefits they generate. In the modern Northern economy, this kind of standard, centralized development thinking takes into ac-

count only short-term objectives. But it comes with a higher price tag in the long term. The “bill” for the combined costs of higher unemployment, more litigation by First Nations’ seeking court rulings on sovereignty over development in their territories, and increased socio-political unrest should motivate any forward-thinking government to decentralize control and create alternatives that will ensure sustainable community economic development into the future.

Therefore, the challenge is to create a solution that will support rather than undermine the legitimate rights and aspirations of Indigenous Peoples in Canada to economic self-determination (Report of the Auditor General of Canada, November 2003: Chapter 9). A solution that designs for self-sustaining First Nation communities as part of the Canadian economic strategy will serve Canada at home, as well as in the global marketplace.

More recently, First Nations communities in Manitoba and throughout Canada have been demanding a role in managing, planning, developing and protecting the natural resources in their traditional territories, and challenging the exploitative relationship of Canada’s modern-day resource economy that generates few benefits for Northern Aboriginal communities (ESPI 2004: Appendix 8.3).

The reason is twofold. First, Northern First Nation communities seeking economic self-sufficiency, must, like other Canadian communities, identify local community economic development opportunities utilizing the natural resources within their prescribed territories. First Nation local development can support community economic self-sufficiency by utilizing former economic leakage to the industrial heartland in the south for local capacity building and culturally appropriate planning. And secondly, these communities have real and genuine concerns about the huge impacts that large-scale industrial resource development projects are having on their traditional territories and traditional land based economic activities.

This component of the report will examine policy and legal impediments to First Nation economic self-reliance, and discuss alternatives beyond colonialism that support First Nation sovereignty and control over resources in their traditional territories. First Nations in Manitoba may wish to consider how to pursue these alternatives to secure control of resource planning in their traditional territories.

Impediments to First Nations Development

“...Our responsibilities as Tahltan Elders require us to inform all those who would come to this land and desecrate it for their own financial gain that you can no longer negotiate agreements in secret. Tahltan Elders

are the true, legitimate governing body. We will apply Tahltan laws to stabilize, build, and strengthen our nation. We will protect our way of life and Mother Earth from further harmful assaults.

We, the Tahltan Elders are the stewards of our homeland, which we have continued to sustain and hold in trust for future generations, make this solemn declaration:

We assert our Aboriginal title and inherent rights to the land and resources within our traditional territory. We declare a complete moratorium on resource development in our territory until:

- a. The leadership dispute has been resolved,
- b. A fair, just, and legitimate process is developed which honours Tahltan custom and law;
- c. All Tahltan members are consulted, informed and give final approval of development.

Prior to any future development in Tahltan Territory, legal agreements must be negotiated with Tahltan Elders that ensure Tahltan People equitable share in revenues generated and are involved in all aspects of decision-making.

All agreements negotiated with industry and government to date, because of the absence of the participation and consent of the Tahltan Elders and Families, are hereby declared void.” (Excerpt from the Tahltan Elders Statement “Dena nenn Sogga neh ‘ine”: Protectors or Keepers of the Land. (Source: http://auto_sol.tao.ca/node/view/1198)

The characteristics of “colonial” economics are very recognizable in Canada’s North. Global demands for primary resources largely determine the fluctuating pattern of this hinterland economy. Multinationals, facilitated by government policies and regulations, are generally the leading forces behind resource development activities in the North. Global demands for primary resources follow cyclical demands, which in turn lead to more pronounced economic booms and busts in the exploited areas. However, even in boom periods created by primary resource development projects in the hinterland, few benefits accrue to the local economies. While First Nation communities are in the majority in the North, the ongoing “colonial” approach to development treats First Nations communities as colonies within the national economic structure (Cornell 2000, Havemann 2000, Hylton 2004). Thus, most of the economic benefits generated from resource projects in the North are assigned or diverted to the industrial heartland in southern Canada and in the United States. Any benefits extended to local Northern economies are usually short-term and only attached to the construction phase of a large-scale resource development project offering temporary employ-

ment for the local work force.

These colonial economic practices, combined with current programs, policies and legislation, also colonial in derivation and application, form a virtually insurmountable impediment to First Nation development for self-reliance. This approach has produced the marginalized communities and crippling poverty-culture presently characteristic of the North. In short, it has denied First Nations communities throughout Canada full use, access and the capacity to develop the natural resources on their traditional lands. Therefore, the ability of First Nations communities to create sustainable economies that work to their collective advantage has been minimal at best, even though much of the wealth derived from Canada's natural resource economy comes from the extraction of natural resources within the traditional territories of Canada's First Nation.

To put this in perspective, the natural resource economy of Canada's Boreal Shield region, where a full 80% of Canada's First Nation communities are located, is ranked fourth among 15 terrestrial eco-zones in Canada for its contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) – approximately \$50 billion dollars. While this is a huge contribution to Canada's wealth, it represents only 9% of Canada's wages and the area as a whole has a relatively low per capita income of \$14,768.00 (Urquizo, Brydges and Shear 2000:8).

In Manitoba for example, in 2002 the forestry sector of Manitoba's economy generated \$550 million in sales and employed directly and or indirectly 3,300 persons (Economic Development and Mines). Also, In addition to forestry, the value of production of Manitoba's Mining and Mineral sector in 2002 was \$982 million and directly employed 4,500 persons (Economic Development and Mines). And finally, Hydro electricity generated \$1.87 billion in sales and employed 4,400 persons in 2002-2003 (Economic Development and Mines). It must be pointed out, that most of these industrial development activities take place in First Nation traditional territories. However, across Northern Manitoba, little, if any, of the wealth that is generated in this way flows back, in any form, into the local economies.

A 1999 Manitoba study concluded that, for First Nation communities living on the east side of Lake Winnipeg, commercial fishing, hunting, trapping and wild rice harvesting activities contributed the most to the local economies. On the other hand, the primary resources sector (forestry, mining hydro and tourism), which contributes and generates the largest amount of wealth for the province in the area, in fact provides little or no direct benefits to the First Nation communities living in the region (Peckett 1999:151).

The level of Aboriginal employment in resource development projects

has been difficult to measure. Generally, the information that has been collected indicates that large-scale resource development projects have historically offered Aboriginals little in the way of long-term employment opportunities (Peckett 1999:64).

For example, for Manitoba Aboriginal males currently living in First Nation communities on the east side of Lake Winnipeg, the highest-ranking occupations in order were in construction, the service sector and in fishing, trapping and the managerial sector (in most cases seasonal or temporary). Given the significant influence of the natural resources sector (forestry, mining and hydro) in this region of Manitoba, it only ranked 7th as an occupation for Aboriginal males in the region. For females the three highest ranked occupations were services, clerical and teaching. Occupations in the natural resource sector for females living in the region was ranked 15th (Peckett 1999:68).

One of the major barriers to shifting from a colonial approach that deconstructs local Northern economies, to a process that supports sustainable communities, is the position of the province that First Nations, other than for the purposes of hunting, fishing and trapping, surrendered or ceded access and utilization of the natural resources on Crown Land upon signing the numbered Treaties (Chandran et. al.)

The province of Manitoba maintains that, in addition to the right to control traditional lands on the basis of the numbered Treaties, it gained full control over natural resources when the federal government negotiated the transfer of control over all natural resources to the province through the signing of the 1930 Natural Resource Transfer Agreement (NRTA) (Chandran et al.).

First Nations in Manitoba and indeed throughout Canada, on the other hand, maintain that they surrendered neither their rights, nor titles, to the natural resources in their territorial lands through the Treaty process. They also maintain that they were never consulted, nor did they give consent to the 1930 transfer of control over natural resources from the federal government to the province of Manitoba, but instead agreed to share the natural resources with the Crown (Adkins and Neville 2002). It would seem that the latter argument is gaining partial recognition in the courts.

Thus, the key impediment to First Nations' development of sustainable communities is the reluctance of the Crown to reframe jurisdictional control over natural resources. It is clear that new arrangements are needed if First Nations in Manitoba are to build local sustainable economies. The question is: What types of policies and legal models can be looked to that can lead to First Nation sustainable planning, developing, managing and protecting of the resources within their tradi-

tional territories?

Review of Alternate Policies and Legal Models

“First Nations in every region highlighted the need for their own economic base in order to strengthen their governments and to get away from federal dependency. An economic base requires a fairer share of resources from traditional territories. Self-sufficiency is a need for all governments and First Nations to feel that the right to govern themselves is already protected in section 35 and the original Treaties signed with the Crown.

At issue is the lack of respect shown to the Treaties by the very government that profited most by their signing. Federal and provincial approaches to lands are resource negotiations that are based on extinguishment and the denial of rights, rather than “recognition and affirmation”. It should come as no surprise that other Crown policies are unreflective of case law regarding Aboriginal title and Treaty rights. The Crown cannot be let off the hook in terms of these breaches in approach and application.” (Assembly of First Nations - Our Nations Our Governments: Choosing Our Own Paths. Report of the Joint Committee of Chiefs and Advisors on the Recognition and Implementation of First Nation Governments, Executive Summary. March, 2005. Source: <http://www.afn.ca/article.asp?id=558>)

It would be only fiscally prudent in the long-term for governments in Canada to begin the process of relinquishing some of their authority over natural resources to First Nations. The early engagement of institutional and legislative mechanisms facilitating full participation and sharing by First Nations in managing, planning and protecting the natural resources within their respective traditional territories will save untold costs in court cases alone. Creating a framework that establishes a context of certainty can provide the foundation for Northern First Nation communities to undertake real community economic development initiatives. In this scenario, not only do the communities share in the economic benefits from the natural resources in their respective areas, but outside or third party investors also gain confidence in new economic development opportunities.

Many other jurisdictions in Canada have undertaken similar arrangements with First Nations. For example, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and the province of Saskatchewan signed the Renewable Resources and Environmental Management Protocol Agreement - to develop a framework for First Nations involvement in co-management of renewable resources in Saskatchewan. Vice-Chief, Dan

Bellegarde, stated “This partnership is a commitment to work in co-operation in managing natural resources which enhances security for our traditional lifestyles and values,” Source: <http://www.collections.ic.gc.ca/Indian/a94jul10.html>

The Agreement signed in 1994 recognizes the valuable contribution First Nations make to environmental protection. It also recognizes the special treaty and constitutional rights, involving fish and wildlife, that make it imperative that First Nations be involved in policy making. Through this agreement, both parties work towards a common understanding on a range of issues, including community, environmental, social and economic sustainability; environmental protection on reserves and traditional lands; and integrated resource management.

This agreement has two objectives. It will jointly develop a framework for First Nations involvement in co-management of renewable resources and specifies the roles of First Nations, Tribal Councils and the Federation. The co-management agreement is founded on the principles of mutual respect, stewardship, sustainability and inclusive process.

The second objective of the agreement is to look at ways of advancing economic and employment projects for business development and revenue generation and agreement on resource revenue sharing. Some of the other key features following from this agreement that could easily be modified and adapted for use in Manitoba are:

- The developing of technical and professional capacities in lands and resource management, providing advisory services to Tribal Councils and First Nations and conducting resource management discussions with First Nations at the request of First Nations.
- Assigning First Nation resource policy analysts to the priority branches within the provincial department of Resource Management including: environmental assessments, resource lands and parks, fish and wildlife and forest ecosystems.
- To continue policy negotiations and issue-management discussions with senior officials and/or the Minister of SERM.
- First Nation policy analysts would be involved with and be aware of all policies and regulations that the Province has developed or is going to develop that will affect First Nations.

Summary

There are many resource management agreements that have been negotiated between the Crown and First Nations in Canada that can be used as templates for creating a framework for the joint sharing of responsibilities for the planning and managing of the natural resources.

It's now incumbent on the government of Manitoba to review these various agreements and begin the process of adapting those agreements that meet the needs of Manitoba First Nations and the government.

Recommendations

1. The government must explore options for enacting new legislation and developing an overarching resource management agreement that especially deals with and accommodates the joint management and planning of Natural Resources—in its broadest sense—within the traditional territories (defined loosely by district trap lines) of Manitoba First Nations. This new legislation, at minimum, should define administrative mechanisms for: implementing the legislation; sharing royalties, rent and fees associated with natural resources development activities; and identifying parameters for both the Crown and third parties to negotiate benefit agreements with effected First Nations where new large scale development activities are contemplated. Finally, it should spell out the terms, mechanisms and fiduciary responsibilities to consult when a natural resource development activity has the potential to infringe on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

This type of legislation/agreement would create the need to undertake resource management agreements jointly between the Crown and individual Manitoba First Nations. Additionally, this type of legislation/agreement would also provide the necessary sources of revenue to implement the legislation and provide much needed capacity to Manitoba First Nations to undertake new resource development initiatives that reflect community values and visions. It would also provide third parties a degree of certainty with respect to investing in Northern Manitoba as they would now know the ground rules. It would have a further effect of reducing various court actions by First Nation regarding infringements on Treaty and Aboriginal Rights.

2. Review and amend legislation in Manitoba that deals specifically with natural resources and Crown land management issues including: The Forestry Act, The Fisheries Act, The Crown Lands Act, The Conservation Districts Act, The Ecological Reserves Act, The Wildlife Act, The Heritage Resource Act, The Mines and Minerals Act, The Provincial Parks Act, The Water Power Act. Many of these Acts currently do not reflect the Crown obligations to First Nations and in fact act to infringe and/or abrogate these Rights. Such legislation needs to be reviewed and amended if necessary to reflect the cur-

rent legal and fiduciary obligations of the Crown with respect to First Nations Treaty and Aboriginal Rights.

3. As a precautionary principal, the Government of Manitoba should at least develop a comprehensive policy or template for a First Nations consultation protocol with respect to any new resource development projects undertaken that may have an adverse impact on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. This consultation protocol would need to meet at least the minimum benchmarks of meaningfulness as defined currently by the courts. Such a broad consultation policy would, in effect, give some degree of certainty to third parties interested in investing in natural resource development projects in Manitoba.
4. More importantly, the Government of Manitoba must seriously consider a comprehensive Northern community economic development strategy modeled on a community-based approach to natural resource management. Manitoba's Northern Development Strategy (NDS), launched in 2000 (see Aboriginal and Northern Affairs: The Northern Development Strategy at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/ana/nds.html>), fails to address and put into place a comprehensive package of policies, programs and community capacity development initiatives to meet the fundamental aspirations of Manitoba First Nations to manage, plan, control and protect the natural resources in their traditional use areas. A community-based natural resource management model would in many ways address the current disparities and reduce the natural resource conflicts that are now playing themselves out right across Northern Canada. Furthermore, this strategy used in association with a "nation-building" model would allow First Nations in Manitoba to develop economic self-sufficiency and fulfill their aspirations to manage, plan, control and protect the natural resources in their traditional territories.

The above recommendations however are not enough. A parallel revision of educational and capacity building policy and programs for First Nations is also required. Relevant training and strategic capacity building initiatives are essential to ensure communities are prepared and fully equipped to plan, manage, develop and protect the resources in their traditional territories.

Part 1: Barriers to Planning, Managing, Developing and Protecting

Education and Training Program Deficiencies

“I learned how important the boreal forest ecosystem is to the whole planet. It is just as important as the rainforests in Brazil. It is important because it is part of a balance that gets affected when an area is clear-cut or when the rivers are dammed.” (Gaa Bi Ombaashid Migizi 2001:3)

Introduction

Many Aboriginal communities in Manitoba face devastating environmental degradation impacting their land, their ways of life, knowledge systems, foods, and cultures. Many of these environmental issues stem from the fact that First Nation communities have virtually no influence over the planning and management of natural resource development within their traditional territories. While larger communities and tribal council organizations are beginning to hire staff to address and manage some of these issues, it is difficult for smaller communities, particularly in the North, to find the monetary resources and personnel to develop and fill such positions. Consequently, few communities in Manitoba are equipped with the necessary resources to effectively deal with the number of environmental issues facing their people and their lands and to influence resource management decisions.

The root cause of most large-scale environmental and resource development issues in Aboriginal territories is colonialism. Aboriginal peoples find it nearly impossible to engage in the management and planning of natural resource development within their territories when they do not have control over those territories. Without the ability to make decisions regarding the types and extent of resource development that may or may not occur in their territories, it is impossible to build healthy and sustainable Aboriginal nations and communities for future generations.

Canadian governments and Aboriginal leaders have often promoted education as the answer to injustices we face in our communities (Castellano, Davis and Lahache, 2000). Currently, there are very few post-secondary educational programs in Canada that root their curriculum in Aboriginal languages, content, processes, perspectives, philosophies, knowledge and Indigenous methods of teaching and learning (RCAP Final Report 1996: Vol. 3).

Further, few programs are designed to include fundamentals such as enabling the students to address the issues of colonization and colonialism in their communities in order to effect healing and decolonization

at the individual, community and national levels. Fewer yet teach resistance strategies in response to current injustice, or promote the building of healthy, sustainable Aboriginal communities and nations based on traditional cultural values and processes. These skills are essential to enable Aboriginal students to return to Aboriginal communities and urban organizations and effect change. Lack of instruction and training in these areas leaves Aboriginal students at a serious deficit in terms of job readiness in their communities.

This component of the report identifies deficiencies in natural resources and environmental education opportunities available in Manitoba at the post-secondary level, and examines some of the ways in which these deficiencies become barriers for First Nation students preparing for a career in local development. Programs are assessed for content that would provide the necessary skill and knowledge to manage, plan and control resource development activities within First Nation traditional territories. Opportunities for provision of relevant and timely education programs are discussed.

Barriers to Environmental & Natural Resource Education for First Nations in Manitoba

“Around our fire we had sharing circles, everybody listened and always had something kind to say. We went fishing in the evenings too. Many fish were caught on the first day of camping; we cut them up and had a bunch of fish for supper. Then in the evenings we all had something different to say! I really understood what they had to say! Because you’ve been there and you’ve seen it.” (Gaa Bi Ombaashid Migizi 2001:23)

The primary focus of most post-secondary educational programs is to prepare students to fully participate in the economic and academic life of the dominant society (RCAP Final Report 1996: Vol. 6). This leaves Aboriginal students in a difficult position. Having been told that education is the key to their future, they are often keen and committed to programs that will better the social, environmental and political conditions in their communities and for their children. Yet the vast majority of these programs are geared towards the learning needs of non-Aboriginal students, leaving Aboriginal students with little knowledge they can apply to the situations they face in their communities and few skills to ensure the cultural survival of their people. This situation is particularly real for Aboriginal students with the desire to become environmental problem solvers within Aboriginal communities, and Aboriginal political or urban organizations.

At the same time, Canadian universities have found it difficult to attract and retain Aboriginal students in science-based educational programs. The highest concentration of Aboriginal students attending Canadian universities remains in the fields of social science, education, general arts and business. These disciplines have put energy and resources into developing programs that are relevant to the educational needs and interests of Aboriginal students, including programs in Aboriginal governance, economic development, law and teacher education. Aboriginal students have been eager to participate in these programs, recognizing their communities have a need for trained individuals in these fields of study and being confident that these programs will be relevant to the realities experienced in contemporary Aboriginal communities.

In contrast, the lowest participation rates for Aboriginal students at universities in Canada occur in agriculture, biological sciences, mathematics and the physical sciences. The reasons for these low participation rates are complex. Much of university science education focuses on theory and is taught in the lecture/lab format, teaching styles and philosophies that run contrary to Aboriginal traditions in education. Aboriginal students are concerned with the relevance of this approach, particularly when their educational decisions are based on the real-world needs of their communities and nations (Simpson 2000). Other Native students become frustrated with the lack of Aboriginal content in science programs.

University programs, with low Aboriginal participation, are further avoided by students from remote communities because they already feel isolated being far away from their communities, their culture and their established support networks (Simpson 2002). For example, at Hollow Water First Nation in eastern Manitoba, only five students are currently enrolled in university, seven have graduated over the last 10 years, and none of these in the sciences (G. Raven, pers. comm.) These factors combined make science programs unattractive to some Aboriginal students and difficult to complete for others.

Environmental and natural resource education programs must, therefore, be multi- and inter-disciplinary in their approach to environmental/natural resources issues and problem solving, because they must strive to offer students the skills to bring about the kind of change that would enable Aboriginal Peoples to control their territories. Because traditional science-based environmental/natural resources programs at colleges and universities in Manitoba and in Canada have failed to do this, they continue to have difficulty attracting students to their programs.

There are a few programs that provide Aboriginal students with the support they need, including cultural resources (Elders, cultural events

and activities) and culturally appropriate counseling, to complete post-secondary training. However, nearly all programs in the field of environment/natural resources require students to relocate to cities. This is a substantial barrier to Aboriginal women, particularly those with young children, who are dependent upon community support networks.

Lack of funding also acts as a barrier at both the beginning and at the end of a program of study. Students often find that upon entry to an environmental/natural resources program they need additional assistance to master the science-based curriculum. Under the current funding structure they often find it difficult and financially impossible to get tutoring and other extra help they may need to complete course work. Also, upon completion of their studies, students find that there are few jobs available in their community, since First Nation communities do not have core funding for the environment and/or management of the natural resources in their traditional territories. Whatever funding a community is able to secure for either environmental or natural resources management work is generally attached to a specific, relatively short-term, project with few positions to offer. The lack of environmental and natural resources management jobs in Aboriginal communities mean few opportunities for students who acquire skills in environmental and natural resources-based programs to work at home for positive change.

The following have been identified as barriers to Aboriginal participation and completion of environmental education programs in Canada: (Based on Simpson 2002, 2000).

1. Lack of Aboriginal content in the curriculum, making the majority of the content difficult for Aboriginal students to relate to and apply in Aboriginal community situations.
2. Absence of Aboriginal teaching and learning methods employed.
3. Marginalization or omission of Elders, Knowledge Holders and Aboriginal Knowledge within education programs.
4. Absence of community-based environmental and natural resource management programs including both western and Aboriginal Knowledge. City based programs require students to leave their communities. This is especially difficult for women with young children.
5. Current programs do not teach specific knowledge and skill sets tailored to communities who are challenging power structures, engaged in nation-building and environmental protection.
6. Despite the recent addition of Aboriginal counselors and cultural activities in some institutions, students still face a lack of support networks in adjusting to city and institutional life.
7. Students often find it difficult and financially impossible to get tutoring and extra help they may need to complete course work.

8. Because First Nations do not have core funding for environmental or natural resource management work, and other available funding is generally project-oriented, there is a lack of environmental and natural resource management-based jobs in Aboriginal communities when students finish.
9. The lack of Aboriginal instructors in environmental and natural resources management programs led to a lack of role models for Aboriginal students.

The question is: are there any viable education programs in environmental and resource-related studies for First Nation students in Manitoba that recognize these obstacles and design for success?

Review of Post-Secondary Environmental Education Programs in Manitoba

“Overall, I know that the training will benefit everyone because I have gained so much knowledge that must be passed on to other people to make them aware of the importance of the environment. I now can use knowledge gained to further my goals to help our children, youth and Elders. I thank the entire staff for what they have taught and shared with us.” (Gaa Bi Ombaashid Migizi 2001:25)

Several environmental and natural resources education opportunities exist for Aboriginal Peoples in Manitoba at the post-secondary, college and university levels. However, what is critical to note is that little of the curriculum has an Aboriginal focus or includes Aboriginal content. Consequently, Aboriginal students wishing to pursue studies in environmental and resource-based fields, for application in their communities, cannot depend on post-secondary programs to provide the relevant Aboriginal content and Indigenous Knowledge curriculum.

Assiniboine Community College

Assiniboine Community College offers two programs of environmental-related studies that contain Aboriginal content and/or Indigenous Knowledge in the curriculum. The two-year Aboriginal Community Development Program, developed in part for, and approved by, CANDO (Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers) is intended specifically to prepare Aboriginal students to design and implement local culturally and environmentally sustainable development initiatives. The Eco-Adventure Tourism Program, while general in scope, includes some instruction on cross-cultural awareness and Aboriginal worldviews. However, the Natural Resources Management Technology Program which covers a variety of environmental and natural resource management is-

sues, does not include Aboriginal content or Indigenous Knowledge.

Red River College

Red River College has two programs in the environmental field, Environmental Protection Technology and Applied Environmental Studies, but neither program offers any courses with Aboriginal content. Their Aboriginal Self Government Administration Program follows a self-administration model and does not address issues around nation-building, environmental protection or resource development.

Brandon University

The Department of Native Studies at Brandon University offers courses that include substantial Aboriginal content, including some Indigenous Knowledge and Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), but no courses specific to environmental or local resource development.

Inter-Universities North

Inter-Universities North (IUN) is mandated by the University College of the North to deliver courses accredited by Manitoba's three universities to residents living north of the 53rd parallel. Instructors are brought into communities to teach courses that have enough student interest and specific degree program enrollment (mostly Arts and Education) to enable delivery, so students do not have to leave home to complete their studies. Although some Native Studies courses are offered, they are generally provided as electives. So very few of these courses get scheduled through IUN. Most of the courses are from other disciplines and do not have significant Aboriginal content. As previously noted, some Brandon University and University of Manitoba courses do contain Aboriginal content and Indigenous Knowledge, however, the overall percentage that is related to the environment and development is very small. Consequently IUN students cannot depend on getting instruction in this curriculum.

University College of the North

The University College of the North offers one program of study related to environmental studies with Aboriginal content. The Eco-Adventure Tourism Program, (not offered every year) while general in scope, includes some instruction on cross-cultural awareness and Aboriginal world views. However, the Natural Resources Management Technology Program while covering a variety of environmental and natural resource management issues, does not focus on Aboriginal content or Indigenous Knowledge.

University of Manitoba

The University of Manitoba has several programs on varying aspects of the environment. The Natural Resources Institute offers graduate degrees in which students can concentrate on a number of different resource development issues. Several Aboriginal students have successfully completed this program, although there is very little Aboriginal content in the courses. The Environmental Science program offers undergraduate degrees, but again offers very little Aboriginal content in the courses. The Department of Native Studies offers substantial Aboriginal content, but very little environmental focus. The Engineering Access Program provides students with support, but there is no Aboriginal content in the program. The Aboriginal Focus program through Continuing Education offers Aboriginal students a community-based approach, but they do not offer any programs with an environmental focus.

University of Winnipeg

The Environmental Studies Program has virtually no Aboriginal content.

Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER)

The Environment and Education Training Program (EETP) at the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER) in Winnipeg is a program that combines Indigenous and western Knowledge to teach Aboriginal students about the environment using Elders, western scientists, Aboriginal academics and community experts. The 18-month program also includes a practicum designed to give students work experience in the environmental field. Although CIER recruits nationally for participants in the EETP, CIER has graduated 28 Aboriginal students from the province of Manitoba since 1998. The program has an extremely high retention rate and provides a supportive learning environment for students. Unfortunately this program is not operating at this time as a result of funding issues. In its place, CIER continues to offer modified versions of the EETP to be delivered in community-based settings to meet specific needs of communities at a variety of education levels (Grade 2-5, 10-12 and post-secondary). The EETP is accredited by the University of Manitoba.

Gaa Bi Ombaashid Migizi (Soaring Eagle School)

Soaring Eagle School is a community-based cultural immersion program providing environmental education opportunities for Aboriginal youth (18-30) in Hollow Water First Nation, concerning different environmental issues from both western and Aboriginal perspectives. Much of

the program takes place on the land and the curriculum is rooted both pedagogically and epistemologically in Anishinaabeg Knowledge. Western science is presented as a useful tool with which Aboriginal communities might address particular issues within this context. This initiative has been very successful but currently lacks accreditation at a university or college.

Northern Forest Diversification Centre (NFDC)

The Northern Forest Diversification Centre began in 2002 as a community development initiative of Keewatin Community College (now University College of the North) with funding from Western Economic Diversification and the Province of Manitoba. The mission of the NFDC is to work with marginalized forest communities to develop sustainable economic opportunities aligned with local values for the benefit of local people in the area of non-timber forest products. The NFDC offers a ten-day community-based training course to prepare individuals and community groups in the creation of micro-economic enterprises. Instruction focuses on building local skills and knowledge. The NFDC works with many First Nation communities in the North and includes traditional knowledge and Aboriginal issues in its training. NFDC staff is largely Aboriginal, and Elders and Aboriginal instructors participate in curriculum delivery and training. While the training is culturally relevant and appropriate, and gives the students practical skills, it is not accredited as a component of a larger post-secondary program of study.

Vocational Schools

There are currently no vocational schools in Manitoba with an Aboriginal environmental focus.

Summary

“We went to Sandy River and did some quadrants on both sides of the highway and we also looked at the impacts clear-cutting has on the land. I think this is the most important part of the training-learning about the environment and finding ways we as a group can do something to stop or slow down the destruction of our Mother Earth.” (Gaa Bi Ombaashid Migizi 2001:26)

While post secondary educational opportunities for Aboriginal students in Manitoba have certainly increased in their relevancy to Aboriginal issues and in their inclusion of Aboriginal peoples in curriculum, few programs have successfully attracted and retained Aboriginal students in environmental and natural resource fields for all the reasons discussed.

Overall, there is a critical deficiency of educational opportunities in Manitoba that have substantial Aboriginal content in their curriculum; that use Aboriginal pedagogy and Aboriginal methods of teaching and learning; and that are designed to give Aboriginal students the skills and expertise they will need to work on environmental and natural resource development activities in their home territories.

Both CIER and Gaa Bi Ombaashid Migizi have recognized the importance of community-based environmental education for Aboriginal students, yet the two struggle to find consistent and adequate funding. Gaa Bi Ombaashid Migizi also needs to be accredited by a university or college so that students can continue their education and receive credit for their past work.

NFDC provides community-based training with relevant Aboriginal content and methods of instruction combined with science and business-based curriculum. However, the training is community specific, very brief and focuses on the development of single micro-enterprises.

Recommendations

1. Environmental and natural resource management education programs must be multi- and inter-disciplinary in their approach to environmental issues and environmental problem solving, because they must strive to offer students the skills to bring about the kind of change that would enable Aboriginal Peoples to control their territories.
2. Most post-secondary and secondary environmental/natural resources management programs already operating at colleges and universities in Manitoba could be improved with the addition of Aboriginal instructors, Aboriginal curriculum and by including Aboriginal approaches to teaching and learning.
3. Distance education opportunities via the web and through Inter-Universities North could be modified to offer relevant and timely environmental-based programs. Successful curriculum and programming is available and could be used by the province to address most of the barriers facing Aboriginal students with a desire to complete environmental education programs.
4. More funding is needed to support, strengthen and expand Aboriginal community-based training initiatives such as those offered by CIER and Gaa Bi Ombaashid Migizi.
5. Aboriginal students who participate in the training sessions offered by the Northern Forest Diversification Centre in their home communities could be given credit by their school program to recognize the value of their learning and encourage further interest and involve-

ment in environmentally sustainable development. The University College of the North should also consider how it can credit students who are taking related courses at UCN during the time they take the NFDC training.

The implementation of the above recommendations, either in full or part, is itself not enough to support First Nations' capacity building for local environmental and resource management. These training initiatives need to be specifically developed and aligned to support the business of First Nations communities in a new economy of First Nation local control of resources. Training programs designed as part of an overall capacity building development strategy will create relevant community employment and assist in building sustainable community infrastructures.

Part 1: Barriers to Planning, Managing, Developing and Protecting

Development Capacity Limitations

"The Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development began with a simple question that has turned out to have some intriguingly complex answers: Why, we wondered, did some Indian nations appear to be 'better,' so to speak, at economic development than others? By 'better' I mean that they were more successful at generating sustainable, productive economic activity on their lands, activity that reflected their priorities and met their own criteria of success" (Cornell 2000:1-2).

Introduction

The current economic development process will not support Manitoba First Nation communities in their efforts to manage, plan, control and protect their traditional territories from various large-scale resource development projects. The funding programs presently available to build community capacity all fall short of supporting these community objectives. However, the problem of funding limitations is not primarily the result of lack of scope and diversity of program support for projects. If this were the case much needed programs could be implemented by government in its aim to support First Nation sovereignty and self-governance. The problem is much more critical and complex. It is a problem of both colonial and historical dimensions. The expansion of development support in the middle of the last century was a cause for hope.

However, as then, today the colonization agenda that informs program structures essentially ensures that actual, sustained, long-term community development, as envisioned by First Nations, does not take place.

Both government and non-government development aid programs are characterized by this fundamental flaw. Alternative funding through environmental and philanthropic organizations that includes support for First Nations, does so only insofar as it meets or enhances the larger mainstream objectives set by their boards. While recently it has become considered “politically correct” to frame development funding agreements with First Nations as “Partnerships,” to differentiate them from the standard colonial model, these agreements continue to situate control with the funder and have not produced tangibly different results. The problem in all instances is one of paradigm – a faulty model not only of First Nation development, but national development in general, that continues to fail First Nations striving for local control and sustainability.

Time is pressing for the First Nation communities alarmed at the inevitable negative impacts of large-scale resource development projects. Certainly other First Nations and even many corporations and non-government organizations are pressing for a change from the environmentally disastrous “business-as-usual” approach to an environmentally sustainable politic (Benyus 2002, Hawken 1994, Warry 2000). Until then, it is necessary for First Nations to seek alternatives. The question is: what alternatives are available at this time to the First Nation communities in Manitoba to control long-term resource management objectives in order to protect their traditional territories?

This component of the report will examine economic development strategy gaps, and discuss initiatives in Manitoba and other jurisdictions that effectively support the economic, cultural, political and environmental goals of First Nation communities. First Nations involved in the East Side Planning Initiative (ESPI) may wish to consider how to adopt or modify these initiatives to secure control of resource development in their traditional territories.

Limitations of Current Development Strategy

“Far from demanding the moon, Aboriginal people want an honest accounting of the cost of services delivered to their communities. They wish to decolonize the number crunching. By seeking control over resources—whether direct or hidden—that are currently a part of the federal government’s contribution to Indian Affairs, they are asking for a redistribution of existing monies – from old services to new programs, from mainstream institutions to Aboriginally controlled institutions (Warry 2000:254).

The two key reasons that the current strategy contrives to fail sustainable development for First Nation communities in Manitoba are, one: a critical historic gap in the funding framework; and two, restrictions on community control of development planning. In terms of the first, the existing framework for First Nation community development support in Manitoba may appear, at a glance, comprehensive to community needs. Close examination however, shows an inordinate duplication of services, as a review of programs currently operating in the provincial and federal sectors, as well as in non-government organizations and financial institutions reveals (see selected list of sources consulted at the end of this paper, see also Wien, 1999). The result is smaller dollars for projects, while neglecting to fund essential community capacity building projects that would advance a development plan to completion.

The gap created by government and non-government program funding failure includes two essentials of any viable development plan: staff capacity building as determined by a goal-based staffing needs assessment and provision of technical and administrative infrastructure (Storm and Murphy, 2003). In short, there is no funding provision for building institutional capacity necessary to actually “do” the development. Without this funding, as any business knows, implementation of the proposed plan becomes impossible. Since this systemic flaw is “hidden,” yet endemic to First Nation operated projects, the finger is erroneously pointed at First Nations themselves as inept project managers. This engenders subsequent reluctance to invest on the part of other funders making it difficult for First Nations to secure often-needed “partner” funding on community projects. Meanwhile staffing and infrastructure capacity requirements go unaddressed.

The second reason the current strategy is failing is lack of First Nation control. Funding remains implicitly attached to a colonial mentality and political reality that controls First Nation development and management of resources. Until communities assert control over the planning and management of their resources, First Nations working to establish sustainable economies will continue to be limited to the point of critical failure by the existing paradigm. (Cornell, 2000).

The problems of lack of funding and control, if taken in principle, would be serious impediments to any mainstream economic venture. For First Nation management and planning of natural resources in their traditional territories, the combination of the two makes long-term, sustainable community development impossible. All First Nation communities in Manitoba targeted for large-scale development projects are struggling with this problem. The proposed projects will impact on their main source of potential revenue – forestry, including non-timber forest prod-

ucts and by association cultural and eco-tourism, as well as fishery and mining revenue potential.

Like most First Nation communities in Canada, those in Northern Manitoba are well below the poverty level with band funds often being necessarily expended before the next budget allocation. While they are culturally and economically forest-dependent, they lack funding to build human resource and infrastructure capacity (RCAP 1996 and Simpson 2002). First Nation communities have few band members with the training and credentials needed for these positions. These positions are key to implementing local decision-making with respect to community resources. When funds are available outside, usually non-Aboriginal, consultants are hired. This can be a source of conflict in the community, and also results in the income loss of the attached salary that might otherwise be reinvested within the community. Additionally, being disenfranchised of control over their resources they benefit little, if at all, from the revenues extracted from these resources. The same factors disable the communities in their efforts to negotiate terms of development with government and industry to minimize negative impacts on their traditional territories and secure rightful revenues, employment and related benefits (Storm and Murphy 2001).

What is needed is a fundamental shift that places the locus of community development control in the hands of the First Nation, as recommended in the 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal People. As Wien (1999:245-6) states:

The Royal Commission took the position that it was important for Aboriginal governments to have strong economic bases. It argued, however, that the reverse was also true; it was important for Aboriginal people to regain control over the policy and program levers that governed their economies if those economies were to be strengthened. In the commission's formulation, it is Aboriginal people themselves who are best placed and most motivated, and who have the best understanding of local conditions. It is Aboriginal people who should be in charge of each Aboriginal nation's economic development.

In response to government and industry planning on the East Side of Lake Winnipeg, a study of the East Side Planning Initiative (ESPI) and its implications for the First Nations involved was undertaken by The Boreal Forest Network (BFN) for the Anishinaabe Turtle Island Protectors. The report, *First Nations Participation in Large Area Land Use Planning on the East Side of Lake Winnipeg: Recommendations for a Meaningful Process* (Simpson 2002) identified a set of explicit structural

changes required to the LALUP process to bring it in line with current legislation, and further, to support the economic, political, cultural and environmental values and objectives of the communities. Fundamental to all points put forward were the issues of community capacity for effective involvement, and community control to ensure a successful process for First Nations. Three specific areas of concern cited by the report include: consultation, representation and use of local knowledge.

Significant weight in First Nation decision-making for development planning is purported to rest with the communities through the consultation process. Were it in fact so, First Nation communities might have some modicum of control. However, the policy for consultation has consistently failed to be effective for First Nations, not only in Manitoba, but also across Canada, for two reasons. One, because the policy has been inadequate in providing First Nations with any degree of meaningful input. And two, notwithstanding its ineffectuality, it has not been upheld to any degree. The BFN/Anishinaabe Turtle Island Protectors report argues that the east side of Lake Winnipeg First Nations communities must be consulted and included in the design of the LALUP process according to the terms of “*meaningful consultation*” as legally defined in recent case law, in order to be legitimate. Without an honest consultation process, sustained protection of cultural sites and fragile eco-systems, as well as sustained future economic benefit related to the development, is out of reach of First Nations. Finally, any remaining hope for establishing First Nation economic sustainability, under the proposed LALUP, is effectively eliminated by virtue of the fact that additionally, it has no provisions “for the sharing of resources and revenues generated from resource development with First Nations as recommended in the COSDI report” (Simpson 2002). While each First Nation community strives to deal with this problem, capacity to be effective is limited by lack of internal resources.

As well as the obvious political problems this raises between the First Nations and government, it also results in political strife between communities. Any large-area development planning directly impacts on the socio-political relationships of all the communities involved, often pitting one against another. As the First Nations on the north and central coast of British Columbia learned (Storm and Murphy 2001), full community representation resulting in inter-community protocol agreements is essential in order to create a secure and fruitful planning framework for all the groups involved in large-area planning of their conjoined traditional territories. However, according to the BFN/Anishinaabe Turtle Island Protectors report (Simpson 2002), the restrictions on First Nation participation that are currently written into the ESPI will make it impos-

sible for the required range of representatives from each community to participate. Lack of appropriate representation leads to destabilization of local governments and diminished capacity to plan effectively.

Full First Nation representation (this includes Métis communities in the area) at all levels: local First Nation governments, Elders and traditional knowledge holders, and community representatives is also required to ensure that the planning is not only economically and politically viable, but culturally and environmentally sustainable. Related to provision of this is the problem of funding, since, by virtue of the funding gap discussed earlier, there are no funding allocations under the present system to support full and effective participation. Unless other funding sources can be secured by Manitoba First Nations, such as were secured by the B.C. coastal First Nations under the Turning Point Initiative (Storm and Murphy 2001), full representation and the necessary inter-community protocol agreements will not happen. Without these agreements, First Nations in Manitoba will not have the combined strength of a regional protocol critical to successfully negotiating the terms of the proposed large-area development.

It is well known by all First Nation communities across Canada involved in development planning that the most powerful tool to inform local impact assessments are Traditional Land Use Mapping reports. As Simpson (2002) indicates, the role of Traditional Knowledge and relevant data from these projects, has not been clearly defined in the LALUP (ESPI), but appears to be minimal, and falls short of the Manitoba government's COSDI Report and recommendations. And again, even if it were, provision of a full funding package to complete or initiate these projects must be established. Lack of direct formal involvement of these groups restricts self-determination and subsequent sustainable planning.

Legal and fiscal provision for meaningful consultation, full representation and traditional knowledge as the blueprint for planning are essential and rightful requirements for the process. Without these, it can be concluded that, were development to proceed under the terms of the proposed LALUP (East Side Planning Initiative ESPI), it would be "business-as-usual," with the First Nations suffering the negative impacts on their traditional territories, while watching their resources and rightful revenues accrue to non-First Nation governments and corporations. It is clearly not reflective of a model designed to promote First Nation economic growth.

As stated previously, in order to take control of this problem it is essential to address, in tacit terms, the fact that community development projects and initiatives, while diverse in nature and scope, all re-

quire the establishment of appropriate institutions and training of personnel in order to be effective. However, as Wien (1999:267-8) observes, even the subsequent specific commitments to capacity building intended to fill the funding gap, put forward in RCAP's Final Report, Volume 3. *Gathering Strength*, fall short of what is required to carry out a long-term, sustainable community development plan. This again is symptomatic of organizational thinking within the accepted paradigm. In short, the system that has created the problem has neither the vision, nor the tools, to resolve it.

According to the Harvard Project, the standard model of development—the paradigm controlling First Nation initiatives for the last half-century in Canada—shares all the characteristics of its counterpart in the United States. Both systems: are short-term and non-strategic; view development as primarily an economic problem; have outsiders set the development agenda; and view Indigenous culture as an obstacle to development (Native Nations Institute 2000:9). Typical results of the standard model are: failed enterprises; a politics of spoil; and outside perceptions of incompetence and chaos that undermine the defense of sovereignty (Native Nations Institute 2000:15). In both countries the legacy of this approach can be seen in the abject poverty of most Indian and First Nation communities.

The question is: are there alternative development strategies for First Nations that meet First Nation criteria for success?

Review of Alternate Models for Sustainable Development

“To create an enduring society, we will need a system of commerce and production where each and every act is inherently sustainable and restorative. Business will need to integrate economic, biologic and human systems to create a sustainable method of commerce. As hard as we may try to become sustainable on a company-by-company level, we cannot fully succeed until the institutions surrounding commerce are redesigned” (Hawken 1994:xiv).

Two notable models relevant to the First Nation communities in Manitoba are currently being implemented in North America. Both are First-Nation centered and support the economic, cultural and environmental objectives of their communities. First Nations of the north and central coast of British Columbia, faced with impending loss of all key traditional resources and forms of livelihood, have formed a regional government that is engaged in negotiating interim measures for Land Use Planning throughout their combined territories. In the United States, an increasing number of tribes have reversed their economic status from

below poverty level to become economic powerhouses through a process of self-determination known as “nation-building.” The development strategies employed in both approaches emerged as First Nation responses to particular failures of the standard government development model to support their interests.

Turning Point: A Regional Model for Sustainable Development

The combined territories of the First Nations of the north and mid coast of British Columbia, including Haida Gwaii, extend six hundred miles north to south and encompass the last remaining one quarter of the original Pacific old growth rain forest. In 2000, faced with looming economic and environmental collapse, and unemployment rates averaging 90%, First Nations of the north and central coast of B.C. embarked on a series of meetings. Seminal issues included the damaging impacts of industrial clear-cut logging, commercial over-fishing of the salmon stocks, contamination and destruction of the marine environment from fish farming and corporate oil and gas development. Most critically, individual community governments, all operating with limited staff, capacity and funds, were unable to effectively combat problematic legislation and policy, so had little or no control of their desired sustainable planning objectives. In absence of a legislated “meaningful consultation” process, corporate exploitation was fast depleting remaining resources, and in a way that also excluded the communities from real employment opportunities and economic benefit. In the face of this devastation, a transformational vision emerged within the First Nations to establish a coast-wide process for culturally and environmentally responsible land-use planning based on traditional Indigenous cultural protocols and ecosystem-based principles. In early 2000, at a conference hosted by the David Suzuki Foundation to support these First Nations, representative leadership of the coastal territories drafted a *Declaration of the First Nations of B.C.’s Coast* outlining their mandate and commitment to protecting and managing their territories. Through this initiative, called Turning Point, they launched a unified action to secure an agreement on land-use planning and interim measures with the B.C. provincial government.

With the treaty process stalled, and the coast under threat, these First Nations saw a critical need to protect what resources still remained if they were to have anything left to sustain their culture and their communities. Through extensive discussions over the following year with all the stakeholder groups, the Turning Point leadership succeeded where the government had failed, bringing all interest groups to the negotiation table. On April 4, 2001, in an unprecedented and historic move, the

B.C. government publicly signed onto the General Protocol Agreement on Interim Measures and Land Use Planning drafted by Turning Point. The agreement recognizes the Government-to-Government status between the Turning Point First Nations and the Provincial Government and sets out a framework for negotiations of resource activity in traditional territory (Turning Point Interim Measures Initiative 2001). Since the signing of the April 4th agreement, discussions on Interim Measures Agreements for Forestry, Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and for Tourism on the coast have been underway with the First Nations at the centre of the planning process.

Also, from mid 2000 to mid 2002 in association with the David Suzuki Foundation's Pacific Salmon Forests Coastal Economic Development Project, the communities embarked on an intensive development strategy to provide technical training and certification of a community-based staff of forestry and fisheries field workers – a capacity building strategy on the ground that was designed to support the specific policy aims of the Turning Point initiative. Four closely-linked development components included: local projects (such as traditional land use mapping, resource inventories, eco-tourism development and community sustainable-planning ventures); strategic regional resource development projects (such as coastal fish stock research and forestry protection initiatives); regional training, certification and capacity building projects on the ground in each of the communities to empower forestry, fisheries and cultural heritage workers to assess and control local resource management, land-use and development planning; and last, conferencing on exploration of the relationship between self-governance and economic development as a process for culturally sustainable planning.

Possibly the single greatest challenge faced by the B.C. Coastal First Nations, when joining forces, was to set aside contemporary political differences and competing interests. One mechanism they employed to facilitate this process was the renewal of their own traditional protocol agreements that, prior to colonization, had governed their own nation-to-nation relationships in matters of shared resources and territorial sovereignty. This necessitated “full participation” of the traditional Chiefs and Elders from each community in the ongoing Turning Point Initiative discussions. Consequently, Turning Point's approach to building a regional capacity for negotiation was informed first and foremost by the traditions of their culture. This has remained a strong feature of the organization, which continues to combine cultural values with political expertise.

The Turning Point Initiative has loosened the colonial stranglehold on these coastal First Nations. The Turning Point model is easily trans-

ferable to other First Nations, treaty or non-treaty. The approach to community development that was used—implementing strategic training and capacity building to support upper level policy-making by leadership—has much potential to inform and serve as a valuable resource to other communities who are working for self-governance and economic sustainability.

Economic Development as Nation Building: Implications from U.S. Cases

Certainly the situation for First Nations in Canada differs in significant ways from that of their U.S. counterparts. However, there are also lessons to be learned from tribes who have, as Stephen Cornell stated in his address to the Standing Committee of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development in June of 2000, “made major progress in escaping the relentless poverty that has long characterized most of what is known in the U.S. as ‘Indian country’” (Cornell 2000:2).

Cornell, co-founder of The Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development, cited the success of a number of tribes including: the White Mountain Apache Tribe in Arizona who moved from below poverty level status to become a “major economic player in the economy of east central Arizona” (2000:2). And the remarkable revitalization of the “Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians [who] had an unemployment rate of nearly 30 percent in the 1960s, and a 70 percent illiteracy rate [and have] become the largest employer in east central Mississippi, a region of few opportunities and a long history of Black, White and Indian poverty” (Cornell 2000:2).

However, as the Harvard Project determined, not all communities succeed to the extent of the aforementioned tribes. And many, in spite of repeated attempts at development planning, remain unable to break out of the downward spiral of planning, funding gap, lack of control and collapse. What makes the difference? According to Cornell, project research “indicates that the factors that do the best job of accounting for the variance in reservation development outcomes are political factors. Economic development is first and foremost a political problem. This is true even of financial capital...[and this] has directed our attention in our work with Indian nations to what we call ‘nation-building’ or ‘nation-rebuilding.’ The task is to increase the capacity of Indian nations to effectively assert self-governing powers on behalf of their own economic, social and cultural objectives” 2000:7).

The Native Nations Institute (NNI), a joint enterprise of The Harvard Project and the Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy, utilizes this research to offer executive leadership training in “nation building as eco-

conomic development.” The training sessions identify two models of reservation economic development in the United States, “the standard model which has dominated Indian country since the Meriam Report of 1928, and the nation-building model which is emerging in practice in Indian country today” (NNI 2000:8).

As The Harvard Project research shows, and NNI explains in its First Nation executive leadership presentations, these two models are producing very different results. NNI’s summary comparison of the main characteristics, processes and outcomes of the two models (2000:9-49), on its own, is very instructive.

The *standard model* of reservation economic development can be characterized as follows: short-term, non-strategic; views development as primarily an economic problem; lets others set the development agenda; and, views Indigenous culture as an obstacle to development.

Development planning and process under the *standard model* goes as follows: one, ask the economic development planner to identify business ideas and funding sources; two, apply for outside grants/respond to outside initiatives; three, start whatever can be funded; four, appoint people to run projects; five, micromanage; six, pray.

Typical results of the *standard model* include: failed enterprises; a politics of spoil; outside perceptions of incompetence and chaos that undermine the defense of sovereignty; and, continuing poverty.

Characteristics of the *nation-building model* of economic development include: de facto sovereignty; effective governing institutions; cultural match; strategic orientation; and, leadership.

Development planning and process under the *nation-building model* include: asserting sovereignty; building institutions; setting strategic direction; and, taking action.

In its analysis, NNI (2000:48) states, “Note that not one of the characteristics of the nation-building model is something we usually describe as ‘economic.’ They are all political. In the nation-building model, economic development is first and foremost a *political* problem.” In short, the key finding of The Harvard Project research is: “Successful Indian nations *assert* the right to govern themselves; *exercise* that right effectively by *building* capable governing institutions that *match* their cultures. The task is *nation-building*. Nation-Building is the most effective development strategy we’ve seen” (NNI 2000:52-53).

According to Cornell, in the U.S. the primary implications of this research for federal and state governments are twofold: support tribal sovereignty, as it is one of the most potent development assets Indian nations have; and invest in building the institutional capacity of Indian nations – not mere job training, but assisting Indian nations in putting in

place the institutional foundations for successful societies (2000:8). Given that the main factors limiting First Nation sustainable community development in Canada are lack of First Nation control and lack of capacity building support, the same implications can easily apply for the federal and provincial governments.

The Harvard Project seems to be the only database of its kind at this time. In answer to the question of transferability of this research to Canadian First Nations, Cornell (2000:9-10) acknowledged that the Harvard Project research results are based almost entirely on US data, with no known comparable data for Canada. However, NNI is receiving increasing requests from Canadian First Nation communities and organizations for their expertise. He also pointed to significant legal and political, as well as demographic and geographic differences in the two situations. Of these, he identified two as key: the fact that in the US the right of tribes to govern themselves, though frequently challenged, is well established, whereas First Nations in Canada do not have the same degree of self-governing powers. Second, in terms of land base and population, while both Canada and the US have a large number of small tribes with small land bases, in the US there are a sizable number of tribes with populations between 1,000 and 10,000 with very substantial land bases. However, according to Cornell, “tribes both small and large have significant effects on their development prospects by paying attention to the kinds of things that have emerged from this research. Surely the same principles—self-governance, good governance, cultural match, and strategic thinking—apply here in Canada as they demonstrably do, not only among Indian nations in the US, but more generally among the nations of the world” (2000:10).

Cornell’s concluding statement bears repeating here. It is particularly interesting, when reading his final recommendation to the House of Commons, to reflect on the successes to date of the Turning Point Initiative in B.C. In effect, the Coastal First Nations’ vision directed them to drop out of the old paradigm of standard, “business-as-usual” development and construct an alternative process for themselves. Their strategy, in essence, was to create their own nation-building model that would meet their mutual objectives for sustainable planning for their communities and combined territories.

Cornell: As for support for self-government, I think the U.S. case is instructive. The United States government spent most of the 20th century searching for a policy that would deal effectively with the poverty and related problems of Indian reservations. They tried shutting reservations down; they tried cultural suppression; they tried urban relocation; and

so on. In the mid-1970s, partly in response to aggressive Indian demands, they turned to a policy of self-determination—self-rule. They gave it only half-hearted support, but Indian nations seized the opportunity and began to wrestle with the challenges of practical sovereignty—of genuine decision-making power. Some have done better than others at meeting those challenges. But one thing is clear: to date, self-rule is the *only* federal policy that has led to significant, lasting economic progress in Indian country. In a century of flailing around, it is the *only* policy that has worked. I believe that constitutes a powerful recommendation (2000:10).

In absence of the kinds of federal and provincial policy and funding support needed to build capacity for First Nation sovereignty in Canada, communities must consider other strategies. A number of Canadian First Nation communities and organizations have consulted The Native Nations Institute including: Gitga'at, Kitasoo Xai' xais, Metlakatla, Nisga'a, Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Tribal Council, Awkwesasne Mohawk, Treaty 8, Osooyos, Sto':lo First Nation, Council of Yukon First Nations, Hatchet Lake Band, Nicola Valley Band and the Atlantic Policy Congress (Mi'kmaq and Maliseet). This short-list gives some sense of the range and diversity of First Nations actively looking beyond the standard model for alternatives.

For most Canadian First Nations, assertion of sovereignty and self-government in and of itself can be a complex and often controversial issue. However, as Cornell and Kalt 1992:5) point out in *Reloading the Dice*, a position paper for tribes seeking to “improve their chances for sustainable self-determined development”:

Sovereignty alone is hardly sufficient for overcoming the immense problems tribes today face. Our research clearly indicates that, in the development arena, the single factor that most clearly differentiates “successful” tribes from “unsuccessful” ones is their ability to *effectively exercise* their sovereignty, to turn it from a legal condition or rhetorical claim into a practical tool for nation-building (1992:45).

Most often, the question then becomes: Where do we start?

Summary

“Canadians can continue to adopt a philosophy that views Aboriginal initiatives as an additional cost and burden on an already strained system. Or they can begin to see the resolution of Aboriginal issues as a major investment in Canada’s future.... In the end, therefore, an investment in self-government turns on a vision where Aboriginal people are

central rather than peripheral to the renovation of a new Canadian society" (Warry 2000:255).

The standard model of development can, and must be changed, to make the transition to a new and sustainable national economy (Hawken 1994, Kuhn 1996). Many mainstream municipalities that are resource-dependent have been forced to seek alternative approaches to economic development in order to survive. Some are adopting a strategy known as "community-based natural resource management (CBNRM)" (Gunter and Jodway 1999) to frame new partnership agreements for local resource management and revenue sharing. CBNRM would appear, in many points of theory and process, to offer to municipalities, what the "nation-building" model offers to Aboriginal communities in Canada and the U.S. Economic development program design and funding can be adapted to support First Nation initiatives for sustainable development in their territories – development that meets the First Nations criteria for success (Cornell 2000). The question remains: Will the provincial and federal governments make the changes needed in the program and funding infrastructure to support strategies that emphasize local self-sufficiency, local decision-making and local ownership, and assist communities in taking up the opportunities and meeting the challenges created by the transition to a "*New Economy*"? If not, what alternative steps can be undertaken by Manitoba First Nations towards creating an economy that sustains the cultural, economic and social fabric of First Nation communities in Manitoba?

In terms of the national approach to development in general, some analysts suggest there may be a small movement towards sustainable development planning by certain mainstream contributors to the national economy. Hawken (1994:xiii) observes, "Many companies today no longer accept the maxim that the business of business is business. Their new premise is simple: Corporations, because they are the dominant institution on the planet, must squarely address the social and environmental problems that afflict humankind. [They] are drawing up new codes of conduct for corporate life that integrate social, ethical, and environmental principles." However, as the Coastal First Nations in B.C. realized, at present First Nations desperate to protect their traditional territories from outside corporate exploitation and further to secure a sustainable development planning process, must create their own alternatives and assert their own strategy.

Two alternatives have been cited in this report: the regional approach of the Turning Point Initiative to gain control over large area land-use planning in their combined territories, and the nation-building approach

taken by individual tribes in the U.S. In both models the assertion of sovereignty by First Nations themselves, is a fundamental requirement. And it is a step that only the First Nation can make. (See also RCAP 1996, vol. 2, chap 3, for the commission's recommendations for realizing self-governance in Canada). However, as this paper has pointed out, and Cornell and Kalt caution: "Sovereignty alone is hardly sufficient for overcoming the immense problems tribes today face. Our research clearly indicates that, in the development arena, the single factor that most clearly differentiates 'successful' tribes from 'unsuccessful' ones is their ability to *effectively exercise* their sovereignty, to turn it from a legal condition or rhetorical claim into a practical tool for nation-building" (1992:45).

In order to "effectively exercise" sovereignty, First Nations must build the governing institutions that match their culture (NNI 2000). The problem for First Nations in Canada, including those on the East Side of Lake Winnipeg, is the lack of program and funding support for institutional capacity building. This is certainly one of the most significant limitations of the current infrastructure in terms of facilitating First Nations sustainable economic development success. A consolidation of existing programs, with adjustments designed specifically to fill this gap needs to be undertaken by the federal and provincial governments. Partial reference to this was made in RCAP's chapter on economic development (Royal Commission 1996, vol. 2, chap. 5), as Wien recaps:

...funding provided to Aboriginal governments for economic development or other purposes should move away from project-by project support. It should be replaced by multi-year block funding arrangements that would give Aboriginal governments more opportunities to allocate funds according to their own priorities—to invest, for example, more in long-term economic development and less in passive welfare payments. It also recommended the consolidation of funding from different federal departments and from the provinces into multi-year government-to-government fiscal transfers in order to give maximum flexibility to Aboriginal governments to pursue their own agendas (1999:246).

Research and community experience have shown that in the current structure of programming for First Nation development funding, the left hand doesn't appear to know what the right is doing (Warry 2000, Storm and Murphy 2001). To expedite program consolidation and provision of funding to assist First Nation institutional capacity building, it would be useful to create a "map" of existing funding that identifies all overlaps, and reveals all gaps. Such a "gap map," would allow for analysis

and development of program infrastructure that gets the most out of taxpayer money and provides most support to capacity building critical for First Nations.

Lessons learned in the B.C. experience (Storm and Murphy 2001) demonstrate that government and industry could have saved unnecessary expenditure of time and money and stimulated economic growth while doing so, had they, and other stakeholders involved in the large-area Land Use Planning, set aside their differences and respected First Nation sovereignty. Also, the approach to community development taken by the Turning Point Initiative—implementing strategic training and capacity building of their resource offices and field workers to support upper level policy-making by leadership—has much potential to inform and serve as a valuable model to other communities who are working for self-governance and economic sustainability.

It is the position of this report that the communities who wish to move quickly to direct development in their territories must consider the links between lack of funding for capacity building and the need for sovereignty. Until there is a change in the current national paradigm on development that truly supports First Nation sustainable planning, First Nations communities, like mainstream communities, will not have access to the needed framework of support. However, it is quite possible that, with the assertion of First Nation sovereignty and creation of First Nation institutions that support sustainable resource development, First Nations in Canada, will like those tribes in the United States that have implemented this agenda, move ahead of government and lead the way to a “New Economy.”

Recommendations

1. Document the overlaps and funding gaps in the current economic development program framework at provincial and federal levels. Utilize this “gap map” to inform the redesign of programming to support First Nation institutional capacity building.
2. Conduct a full staffing-needs assessment for each First Nation community in Manitoba, beginning with those on the east side of Lake Winnipeg that identifies all areas of institutional capacity building required for each community to effectively manage and plan its economic development.
3. Study the strategies used by First Nation communities in Canada and the United States, who have created new economies, for alternatives that can be modified or adapted with success by First Nation communities in Manitoba, such as:
 - The Coastal First Nations Turning Point Initiative of the nations

of the north and mid-coast of British Columbia: These communities formed a regional First Nations government and in 2001 successfully negotiated a regional Protocol Agreement on Interim Measures and Land Use Planning with the provincial government. Located in downtown Vancouver, the central office of the Coastal First Nations Turning Point Initiative provides development training, planning and negotiation expertise to its member communities. For more information on the Protocol Agreement go to <http://www.dauidsuzuki.org/files/finalprotocol.pdf>.

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- Other First Nation communities and organizations in Canada who have worked with the Native Nations Institute to explore possible applications of the Nation-Building model for economic development including: Gitga'at, Kitasoo Xai' xais, Metlakatla, Nisga'a, Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Tribal Council, Awkwesasne Mohawk, Treaty 8, Osooyos, Sto':lo First Nation, Council of Yukon First Nations, Hatchet Lake Band, Nicola Valley Band and the Atlantic Policy Congress (Mi'kmaq and Maliseet). More in-

formation on specific communities and their unique problems and solutions, as well as the Native Nations Institute, is available at Native Nations Institute for Leadership, Management and Policy, on-line at the website for the Udall Centre for Studies in Public Policy at the University of Arizona.

4. Planning capacity building strategies to support First Nations' aspirations to become self-sustaining communities in the Canadian economy first requires a vision of the desired outcome. That vision defines how success will be measured. Measuring success in local development initiatives is a culturally-based process. This is particularly true for First Nation communities whose cultural precepts, beliefs and values are inseparable from the lands of their traditional territories. Measurements for success in the standard model of development ignore the local and cultural. Alternate models for measuring success that are consistent with, and reflective of, Aboriginal community ethics and beliefs, should be studied and integrated to ensure development accounts for cultural sustainability as well. Both the Turning Point Initiative and the Nation-Building model discussed previously, have rigorous criteria for planning and measuring development success. Another approach is the Elements of Development model developed by the First Nations Development Institute (FNDI), which promotes economic independence as a means for community self-determination. More information is available on the FNDI website. Or refer to Dr. Wanda Wuttunee's discussion and analysis in her book, "Living Rhythms: Lessons in Aboriginal Economic Resilience and Vision."

Aboriginal communities who are meeting their aspirations for economic self-reliance and sustainable planning in their traditional territories in other parts of Canada, and elsewhere, all have to engage with, and overcome barriers of, policy, legislation, educational programming and development capacity. Effective capacity building strategies help overcome these obstacles by providing tacit support for an integrated plan of community needs assessments, strategic training initiatives, relevant community employment and effective community infrastructures. This approach takes into account realistic planning to achieve a sustainable economy. It is essential if we are to ensure communities are prepared and fully equipped to plan, manage, develop and protect the resources in their traditional territories.

Part 2: Opportunities for Creating Economic Certainty

Summary

As stated in the introduction of this report, both levels of government in Canada, and indeed Canadian society as a whole, have come to recognize the legitimate aspirations of First Nations to seek self-determination and self-government. For First Nations, the foundation of this expressed aspiration is the ability of First Nations communities to manage, plan, control and protect the natural resources in their traditional territories according to their cultural and community values.

However, First Nation communities in Canada, and throughout Northern Manitoba, continue to be systemically marginalized from direct and meaningful participation in creating an economy—old or new—that works toward achieving these aspirations. This report clearly outlines a path and a series of recommendations that the government and First Nations in Manitoba could use to shift the economic disparities so often found in the Northern First Nation communities across Canada and in Manitoba.

The intent of this report is to focus attention on the underlying causes of this marginalization that serve as barriers to First Nations trying to create an economy that fulfills their aspirations to self-determination and self-government.

It is important, both from an economic standpoint and from a social perspective, that the provincial government considers seriously the recommendations contained in this report. In sum, they point the way to building for economic and social stability within Northern Manitoba. This would not only have the potential to provide a degree of certainty, and therefore enhanced interest, for new capital investment in Northern development projects, but would also lead to a stronger and more stable provincial economy.

While some of the issues addressed in this report now have the attention of the government of Manitoba with respect to the East Side Planning Initiative and other initiatives, the response has been reactive, incremental and piecemeal at best. What is needed is a more proactive and comprehensive approach that integrates legislative, legal, institutional, educational and capacity building program reforms to meet the stated challenge of creating a Northern economy that works and sustains the North for future generations to come.

First Nations in Manitoba also need to consider alternate and effective ways of asserting their rights of, and aspirations for, self-determination and self-government if they hope to achieve some degree of social and economic equity with the rest of Canada. At the heart of these aspirations is the need for First Nation communities to have the authority

and economic power to ensure appropriate, sustainable planning, development and protection of the natural resources within their traditional territories. To do this will take a tremendous amount of work at the First Nation community level and will require a nation-building paradigm within the community itself.

It is obvious that these reforms are needed and are being demanded by First Nations across Canada and in Manitoba. The real question is how long do these communities have to wait for the political will to make this happen. If we as a Canadian society are truly concerned about effectively addressing the plight of the most marginalized communities in Canada then the time is now.

Part 2: Opportunities for Creating Economic Certainty

Recommendations

**** This list of recommendations is compiled from all those put forward in previous sections of this report.***

1. The government must explore options for enacting new legislation and developing an overarching resource management agreement that especially deals with and accommodates the joint management and planning of Natural Resources—in its broadest sense—within the traditional territories (defined loosely by district trap lines) of Manitoba First Nations. This new legislation, at minimum, should define administrative mechanisms for: implementing the legislation; sharing royalties, rent and fees associated with natural resources development activities; and identifying parameters for both the Crown and third parties to negotiate benefit agreements with effected First Nations where new large scale development activities are contemplated. Finally, it should spell out the terms, mechanisms and fiduciary responsibilities to consult when a natural resource development activity has the potential to infringe on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

This type of legislation/agreement would create the need to undertake resource management agreements jointly between the Crown and individual Manitoba First Nations. Additionally, this type of legislation/agreement would also provide the necessary sources of revenue to implement the legislation and provide much needed capacity to Manitoba First Nations to undertake new resource development initiatives that reflect community values and visions. It would also provide third parties a degree of certainty with respect to investing in Northern Manitoba as they would now know the ground rules. It would have a further effect of reducing various court actions by First Nation regarding infringements on Treaty and Aboriginal

Rights.

2. Review and amend legislation in Manitoba that deals specifically with natural resources and Crown land management issues including: The Forestry Act, The Fisheries Act, The Crown Lands Act, The Conservation Districts Act, The Ecological Reserves Act, The Wildlife Act, The Heritage Resource Act, The Mines and Minerals Act, The Provincial Parks Act, The Water Power Act. Many of these Acts currently do not reflect the Crown obligations to First Nations and in fact act to infringe and/or abrogate these Rights. Such legislation needs to be reviewed and amended if necessary to reflect the current legal and fiduciary obligations of the Crown with respect to First Nations Treaty and Aboriginal Rights.
3. As a precautionary principal, the Government of Manitoba should at least develop a comprehensive policy or template for a First Nations consultation protocol with respect to any new resource development projects undertaken that may have an adverse impact on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. This consultation protocol would need to meet at least the minimum benchmarks of meaningfulness as defined currently by the courts. Such a broad consultation policy would, in effect, give some degree of certainty to third parties interested in investing in natural resource development projects in Manitoba.
4. More importantly, the Government of Manitoba must seriously consider a comprehensive Northern community economic development strategy modeled on a community-based approach to natural resource management. Manitoba's Northern Development Strategy (NDS), launched in 2000 (see Aboriginal and Northern Affairs: The Northern Development Strategy at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/ana/nds.html>), fails to address and put into place a comprehensive package of policies, programs and community capacity development initiatives to meet the fundamental aspirations of Manitoba First Nations to manage, plan, control and protect the natural resources in their traditional use areas. A community-based natural resource management model would in many ways address the current disparities and reduce the natural resource conflicts that are now playing themselves out right across northern Canada. Furthermore, this strategy used in association with a "nation building" model would allow First Nations in Manitoba to develop economic self-sufficiency and fulfill their aspirations to manage, plan, control and protect the natural resources in their traditional territories.
5. Environmental and natural resource management education programs must be multi- and inter-disciplinary in their approach to environmental issues and environmental problem solving, because they

must strive to offer students the skills to bring about the kind of change that would enable Aboriginal Peoples to control their territories.

6. Most post-secondary and secondary environmental/natural resources management programs already operating at colleges and universities in Manitoba could be improved with the addition of Aboriginal instructors, Aboriginal curriculum and by including Aboriginal approaches to teaching and learning.
7. Distance education opportunities via the web and through Inter-Universities North could be modified to offer relevant and timely environmental-based programs. Successful curriculum and programming is available and could be used by the province to address most of the barriers facing Aboriginal students with a desire to complete environmental education programs.
8. More funding is needed to support, strengthen and expand Aboriginal community-based training initiatives such as those offered by CIER and Gaa Bi Ombaashid Migizi.
9. Aboriginal students who participate in the training sessions offered by the Northern Forest Diversification Centre in their home communities could be given credit by their school program to recognize the value of their learning and encourage further interest and involvement in environmentally sustainable development. The University College of the North should also consider how it can credit students who are taking related courses at UCN during the time they take the NFDC training.
10. Document the overlaps and funding gaps in the current economic development program framework at provincial and federal levels. Utilize this “gap map” to inform the redesign of programming to support First Nation institutional capacity building.
11. Conduct a full staffing-needs assessment for each First Nation community in Manitoba, beginning with those on the East Side of Lake Winnipeg, that identifies all areas of institutional capacity building required for each community to effectively manage and plan its economic development.
12. Study the strategies used by First Nation communities in Canada and the United States, who have created new economies, for alternatives that can be modified or adapted with success by First Nation communities in Manitoba, such as:
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