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# GROUP 1: SELF- GOVERNANCE



Through Making Relatives



# GREETINGS

We come to gather and bring greetings to and from Ena Makoche, (Mother Earth) and Ade Wakan (Father God), and Minnewanka (Holy Sacred Waters). We look to our relations, of land, water, animals, fish, plants, and trees... mountains and oceans.

We speak the language of land and water. We remember and we sing the songs of our ancestors.

We have relations across the continents and across the great waters. We must be mindful of not just considering humankind but recognizing our relationship to all of Creation.

We remember our relatives and how we made treaties from time immemorial. We have a relationship with the Creator. For this, we give thanks eternally.

Our people have signed and made treaties through the Wampum Belt, the Jay treaty, and most recently, the Buffalo Treaty.

We create relationships guided by the Creator. We relate to all of Creation, we have vision and prophecy, which has foretold that we will provide ways of living with a holistic understanding of our Planet. Our songs and our prayers are our survival. Relationships through our oral tradition enables our cultural vision and calling.

We invite you into becoming relatives, speaking and singing our reality with all of Creation.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A fundamental principle to the Indigenous Peoples of Canada and Aotearoa, and indeed the world over, is to determine how they live on their own terms in this ever-changing world. Bound by similar histories of colonisation - the loss of land, culture, and language - this fundamental principle comes into a more satiable focus.

This INDIGI-X report recommends that the governments of both Canada and New Zealand must enable - not be a barrier to - Indigenous Peoples' reclamation of self-determination and right to govern in their own land.

We propose that the governments of both Canada and New Zealand resource a report that outlines steps to be taken towards supporting self-determination (refer to UNDRIP Article 3) and self-governance (refer to UNDRIP Article 4) in a bilateral treaty.

This report provides three key recommendations to facilitate such a bilateral treaty:

1. Traditional ceremony, or Tikanga, is enacted prior to formal negotiations;
2. Empower traditional forms of Indigenous Nation's Citizenships in Canada; and,
3. Formally and legally recognize traditional leadership structures.

It is envisaged that such a treaty between Canada and New Zealand would provide economic benefits and free-trade agreements, as well as contribute significantly to resourcing actions of self-determination and self-governance for Indigenous Peoples in both countries.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

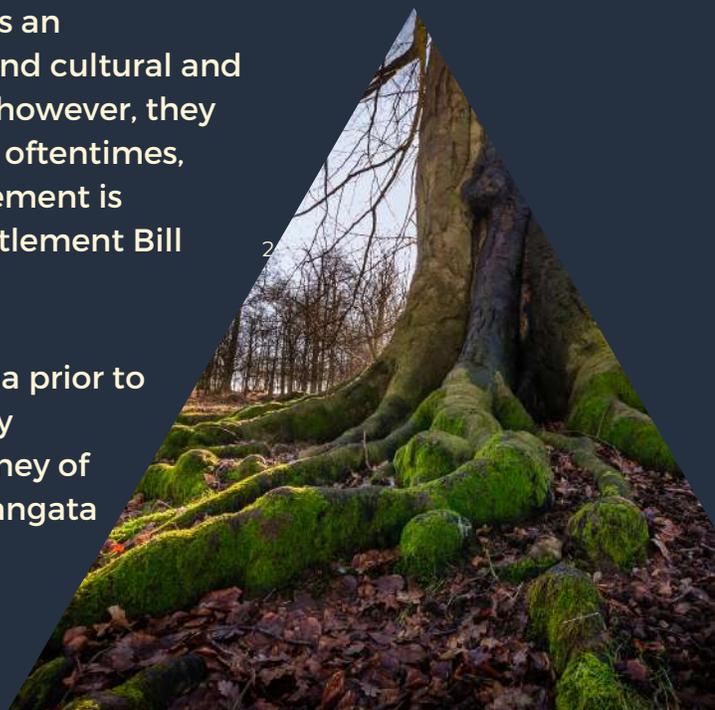
## **Recommendation 1: Ensure traditional ceremony precedes Treaty of Waitangi process negotiations in Aotearoa-New Zealand.**

Presently, there are four stages to the settlement of historical Treaty of Waitangi<sup>1</sup> claims: pre-negotiation, negotiation, legislation, and implementation. However, within these steps there is no formal acknowledgement of traditional ceremony or tikanga. This acknowledgement is essential as a premise to develop a relationship of equity, integrity, and respect between mana whenua (the claimant) and the Crown.

Whilst the Crown accepts its responsibility of redress to Treaty grievances, it is egregious in its lack of commitment to the process of healing prior to formalities. This healing process must focus on creating relationships with all parties involved, including mana whenua and the Crown, governmental, and other required auxiliary bodies.

The Crown's redress to mana whenua provides an acknowledgment of their claim, an apology, and cultural and economic redress. All of these are significant, however, they only occur after a long, generally arduous and oftentimes, acrimonious journey before the Deed of Settlement is accepted by the Crown and a consequent Settlement Bill passed in Parliament.

By embedding traditional ceremony or tikanga prior to formally engaging the Crown process of Treaty Settlement, mana whenua will lead their journey of healing upholding their mana and status as tangata whenua, the Indigenous Peoples of Aotearoa.





## **Recommendation 2: Empower traditional forms of Indigenous Nation Citizenship throughout Canada**

“People within collective kinship is core to the spirit of culture within a First Nation.”

Traditional forms of citizenship refers to how Indigenous Nations historically built kinship and maintained family and community in ethnic and political collectivity. These forms of citizenship will vary depending on the Nation and, in the spirit of self-governance, should be determined by the individual Nations themselves.

The entanglement of the Canadian federal government’s policy has imposed systems of generational cut-off, blood quantum, and lineal descent, and has resulted in a genesis based upon imposed Eurocentric ideologies of “race”. This paternalism presides over an Indigenous Nation’s ability to self-determine their own citizenship and has served to significantly erode a Nation's ability to build towards their distinct, fluid, and changing needs as a group. It is also in direct conflict with Articles 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 20, 31 of the United Nations Rights of Indigenous Peoples.<sup>3</sup>

By formally recognising that each Nation has its own distinct cultural epistemology and pedagogy, these unique differences will be recognized and built into their own formalized structures of recognized citizenship. In actively moving beyond the Indian Act<sup>4</sup> and the federal government’s paternalism rooted in genealogy and blood quantum, while moving into self-governance and self-determination, the resulting frameworks will be inclusive of traditional laws and governance, ethnic and cultural understandings of collectivity, and with responsibility to revitalize Nations.

### **Recommendation 3: Formally and legally recognize traditional leadership structures in Canada**

Traditional governance within Indigenous communities are common, yet not recognised through parallel processes. These communities should also be able to determine their own approach to self-government and leadership, as opposed to being burdened with a non-Indigenous governance structure through the imposed Chief and Council system.

Traditional First Nation, Métis, and Inuit governance systems are not hierarchical and the imposed, paternalistic governance systems, such as the Chief and Council system, has led to systemic racism. This has also contributed to significant income disparity within communities, which supports lateral violence as opposed to making relatives, even within some of our own communities. It is impossible for the federal government to create Nation to Nation relations when leadership in many communities changes so frequently, which is out of alignment with our recommendation to make relatives through each community's unique customs. We recommend self-governance as a viable option for Indigenous Nations.

There are also considerations to be made at federal levels when engaging with Indigenous Peoples. We would like to encourage our governments to move away from 'personalities' being the representatives. The popularity of a few Indigenous people who are overburdened with decision-making and sharing perspectives is a practice that requires refinement.



# OUTCOME

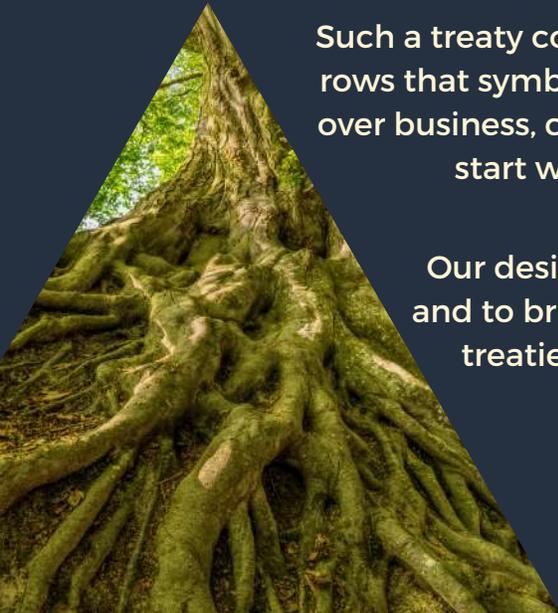
This cohort recommends steps to be taken towards supporting self-determination (refer to UNDRIP Article 3) and self-governance (refer to UNDRIP Article 4) in a bilateral, Indigenous-to-Indigenous treaty.

There is an opportunity to review historical treaties to find inspiration and implement them in new ways. An example of this would be the Jay Treaty, which enables Indigenous individuals in Canada to freely travel, live, work, and study in the United States. The Jay Treaty could be used as a blueprint for global Indigenous collaboration as it creates new opportunities and allows us to return to our traditional practices of visiting and making relatives beyond our country's borders.

There is a recognized need for resourcing around self-determination and self-governance. A treaty between Canada and New Zealand would open up doors for economic opportunities and trade, thereby increasing financial prosperity for Indigenous Nations. Alongside economic and business opportunities, this Treaty document would also encourage an exchange of ideas and culture.

Such a treaty could be inspired by the Wampum Belt, and include two rows that symbolize Indigenous Peoples in both countries connecting over business, culture, and interests. The initiation of this treaty should start with ceremonies and songs between countries.

Our desired outcome is for our people to self-govern themselves and to bring back their traditional practices. We feel that making treaties between our countries is one way to achieve this goal.



# CLOSING

On behalf of our INDIGI-X cohort, we would like to express our acknowledgement to the INDIGI-X Team, supporting Elders/Kaumātua, Minsters, and fellow participants in the program, for their contribution to our ability to form bonds and kinship together.

In recognition of our connectedness to each other and our environment, we offer this karakia (invocation) to harness the immense powers of our earth mother and sky father and their many offspring as we embark on our future journeys together. We acknowledge the toko, the conduit between our material and esoteric worlds, and our journey towards enlightenment – all under the auspices of Rongo, the Great Immortal of peaceful endeavours.

*Na Huirangi Waikerepuru tenei karakia i tito*

*Ko Rangi, Ko Papa, Ka puta ko Rongo,  
Ko Tane Mahuta, Ko Tangaroa  
Ko Tumatauenga, Ko Haumiatikitiki, Ko Tawhirimatea*

*Tokona ra, ko Rangi ki runga, Ko Papa ki raro  
Ka puta te ira tangata - Ki te whai ao, ki te ao marama  
E Rongo, Whakairihia ake ki runga  
Kia Tina (Tina!) ... Hui-e, Taiki-e*



## References:

[1] <https://www.govt.nz/browse/history-culture-and-heritage/treaty-of-waitangi-claims/settling-historical-treaty-of-waitangi-claims/>

[2] <https://www.parliament.nz/mi/get-involved/features/working-to-put-things-right-settling-treaty-of-waitangi-claims/>

[3] [https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS\\_en.pdf](https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf)

[4] <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/i-5/>

