



January 17th, 2020

Backgrounder: Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area

Canada Target 1: In 2010, parties to the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) committed to a set of international targets to conserve biodiversity. These targets are known as the Aichi Targets, after Aichi Prefecture in Japan where the 10th CBD Conference of the Parties (COP 10) was held in 2010. In 2015, Canada developed its own domestic iteration of the Aichi Targets, including [Canada Target 1](#), which states: "By 2020, at least 17% of terrestrial areas and inland waters, and 10% of coastal and marine areas, are conserved through networks of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures."

Indigenous Circle of Experts: The Indigenous Circle of Experts (ICE) was created as part of the Pathway to Canada Target 1 to provide leadership, guidance, and advice to federal, provincial, territorial and Indigenous governments on how to achieve Canada Target 1 in ways that would advance reconciliation and appropriately recognize Indigenous leadership and Indigenous knowledge in the conservation of the land and water. In 2018, ICE released their report [We Rise Together: Achieving Pathway to Canada Target 1 through the Creation of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas in the Spirit and Practice of Reconciliation](#).

IPCA: Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) are "lands and waters where Indigenous governments have the primary role in protecting and conserving ecosystems through Indigenous laws, governance and knowledge systems. Culture and language are the heart and soul of an IPCA." ([ICE 2018, 5](#)). Although IPCAs come in many different forms, they share three essential elements:

- IPCAs are led by Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous Governments.
- IPCAs are committed to long-term conservation.
- IPCAs elevate Indigenous Peoples' rights and responsibilities on the land.

Internationally, IPCAs are often referred to as ICCAs, short for "territories and areas conserved by Indigenous Peoples and local communities" or "Territories of Life." The [ICCA Consortium](#) is a global network of Indigenous Peoples and local communities promoting ICCAs.

Examples of IPCAs: Indigenous Peoples have cared for and stewarded their traditional territories for millennia. In 1984, the Tla-o-qui-aht Nation declared Meares Island Tribal Park (Wah-nah-jus-Hilth-hoo-is) in Clayoquot Sound. Tla-o-qui-aht subsequently established a total of 4 [Tribal Parks](#) spanning their entire territory and guiding land-use and conservation planning. Neither federal nor provincial governments officially recognize the Tribal Parks, though the Pathway to Canada Target 1 and the work of the Indigenous Circle of Experts on IPCAs is changing that. The Tribal Parks model has also been adapted by other First Nations in British Columbia, including the Tsilhqot'in Nation's [Dasiqox Tribal Park](#) (Nexwagwez?an) in central BC and Doig River First Nation's [K'ih Tsaa?dze Tribal Park](#) in northeast BC's Peace River Country. In the Northwest Territories, three IPCAs were jointly declared by Indigenous,

federal, and territorial governments in 2018 and 2019: [Thaidene Nënë](#), [Edézhíe](#), and [Ts'udé Niljé Tuyeta](#).

IPCAs and the Canada Target 1 Challenge Fund: In the 2018 Federal Budget, the Government of Canada [committed \\$1.35 billion for conservation](#). Canada established The Canada Nature Fund to support the protection of Canada's ecosystems, landscapes, and biodiversity. The Fund is available to not-for-profit and Indigenous organizations, provinces and territories, and others. In August 2019, former Minister McKenna (Environment and Climate Change Canada) announced the first of 67 Challenge projects, [including the establishment of up to 27 IPCAs](#). The Ktunaxa Nation's Qat'Muk IPCA proposal has received funding through the Challenge Fund.

Recognition and governance arrangements in IPCAs: By definition, IPCAs are led by Indigenous governments and declared under Indigenous jurisdiction. In some IPCAs, such as the new [Edézhíe](#) and [Thaidene Nënë](#) protected areas in the Northwest Territories, Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments have collaborated to establish, formally recognize, and manage a protected area. (Another example is [protected areas on Haida Gwaii](#), where governance and decision-making are shared between the Haida Nation and agencies of the federal and provincial governments.) Other IPCAs are declared and managed unilaterally by Indigenous governments on Treaty lands, Aboriginal Title lands, or First Nations reserve lands. Several Tribal Parks in British Columbia fall into this category and have not yet been formally recognized by federal or provincial governments.

Useful links:

- Pathway to Canada Target 1: www.conservation2020canada.ca/the-pathway
 - Enabling Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas: www.conservation2020canada.ca/ipcas
- Indigenous Circle of Experts report, *We Rise Together*: http://bit.ly/ICE_Report_2018
- ICE and IPCAs information sheet: http://bit.ly/ICE_IPCAs
- Government of Canada Challenge Fund announcement, August 19, 2019: <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/news/2019/08/canadas-175-million-investment-in-nature-kicks-off-conservation-projects-in-every-province-and-territory.html>
- Conservation through Reconciliation Partnership: <https://conservation-reconciliation.ca/>
 - Press Release: http://bit.ly/CRP_PressRelease

“IPCAs represent . . . an opportunity for true reconciliation to take place between Indigenous and settler societies, and between broader Canadian society and the land and waters, including relationships in pre-existing parks and protected areas” ([ICE 2018, 36-37](#)).