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WEAVING RESILIENCE AND BUILDING MÉTIS CLIMATE LEADERSHIP

# THE MÉTIS NATION CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

2024



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**Cover art by Teagan Neufeld,  
Winner of the Métis National Council's Youth Cover Page Art Contest**

**Please see full essay submission from the artist at the end of the Strategy**

*"I aspire for my artwork to encapsulate the urgency of strategizing against climate change. We must unite to navigate the flames and emerge on the other side before the fire engulfs us all. I hope future generations will look back on their childhood with the same fondness for nature that I do. There is an abundance we must safeguard and advocate for."*



**Illustrations by Nevada Lynn: Artist Statements**

*"The water in this image is an homage to the Red River and the fertile banks remind us of the homeland of the Métis Nation. The infinity symbol superimposed in the land represents the longevity of the nation. I was thinking about where we come from, the concept of home and future generations when I chose to include seven crows, representing seven generations, flying west in the light of the dawn. The cart wheel in the sky shows how we once moved across the land. And the buffalo symbolizes the spiritual heart of the nation, the buffalo hunt and its traditional significance in the lives of Métis people."*



*"The seven bees in this image reflect the teachings behind seven generations, the importance of pollinators, working together, and interconnectivity. The four trout symbolize our relationship to the finned and the health of our waters. Fireweed speaks to fire and regeneration. The four buffalo in the image represent reciprocity, respect, our relationship to the land, and the repatriation of the buffalo. The solar panels are a transition to green energy, and the beaver, deer, wolf and bear tracks remind us that we share this land with others who are of equal importance to us."*



*"The seven geese represent the importance of leadership, moving together in unison, and the teachings behind seven generations. Cedar is one of the four sacred medicines, which provides protection. The strawberry offers teachings around the heart and the strawberry moon is a transition to new ways of being. The four hands decorated with Métis floral patterns speak to our responsibility to steward the earth with wisdom, care and gratitude. Four speaks to the four stages of life, four directions, four seasons and the four elements. Stars in the night sky remind us that we are a part of the Great Mystery."*

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# OUR MÉTIS NATION'S CLIMATE STORY

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## WHO WE ARE

The Métis Nation emerged during the fur trade in the historic Northwest during the 18th century. Following the mixing of Indigenous women and European fur traders, a distinct process of ethnogenesis occurred establishing separate, distinct communities along the fur-trading routes

that span the Métis Homeland. Métis means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Indigenous Peoples, is of historic Métis Nation ancestry, and who is accepted by the Métis Nation.



## WHERE ARE WE NOW? *Voices from Métis Youth*

*Members of the Métis Youth Council gathered to share their perspectives on what it feels like to be a Métis Youth at this critical moment in time as it relates to the climate crisis.*

***In this pivotal moment, as Métis Youth, we find ourselves at a crossroads of frustration and determination.***

We are at the tipping point, and we know it's on us. We're under significant pressure. They say it's enough to make a diamond. Most people would quit by now. But how can we quit? We can't quit our Nation. We can't quit our culture. It's not fair, but we need to keep going to make it better for the next generation.

***We see our culture and knowledge appropriated and undervalued, while systemic barriers continue to hinder our progress at every turn.***

We are told that our views are "too spiritual" to be scientific, and yet, these Indigenous ways of knowing and being are exactly what is needed right now. While we see a positive shift as people move toward this more holistic understanding, Indigenous Peoples are not receiving the recognition they deserve. We are the source of hope that is needed right now.

***There's a sense of being overlooked and dismissed, as our voices are often silenced or marginalized.***

Don't say you are listening and then put us at the proverbial kiddie table. We are tired of waiting. We are stepping up and fighting our way into these spaces.

***Yet, amidst the barriers and setbacks, our Métis resilience burns within us.***

In this moment, being a Métis Youth is not just a challenge; it's a rallying cry—a call to action. It's about finding our voice, standing tall in the face of adversity, and refusing to be silenced. As we navigate the complexities of the present, we do so with the knowledge that our actions today will shape the future for generations to come.

*Métis Youth who were involved in this process of shaping the opening statement on 'where are we now' and the 'vision, 7 generations from now' were: Gabrielle Moreau (MNO), Autumn Laing-LaRose (MN-S), Rebecca Lavalée (MNA), and Shaughn Davoren (MNBC).*







## WHERE ARE WE GOING? *An Introduction to the Métis Nation Climate Change Strategy*

### *Our Purpose*

The Métis Nation Climate Change Strategy provides an urgent roadmap and call to action. In collaboration with our partners and each other, we are finding Métis-driven solutions to address the changing climate. Through the Strategy, we are writing the next chapter in the ongoing legacy of Métis environmental stewardship and leadership, self-determination, and the bridging of two worldviews.

### *Our Vision*

We are the vibrant, resilient, and self-determined Métis Nation, and we strive to support and empower all Métis citizens. We work diligently to respond and adapt to a changing climate through our dynamic and deeply rooted connection to the land and our culture. We are, and will continue to be, effective leaders in climate action for our communities, our country, and this world for generations to come.

### *Our Values*

The values that underpin the Strategy are about being:

- Rooted to the land and water
- Heart-led
- Resilient & rights-based
- Future-focused

### *Our Priorities*

The Strategy includes five interconnected priority areas for action across the Métis Nation:

1. Nature Stewardship
2. Sustainable Energy and Infrastructure
3. Emergency Management and Climate Resilience
4. Health and Well-being
5. Economic Development and Prosperity

## WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE? *A Vision from a Métis Youth 7 Generations in the Future*

*What if we got this right? What if we addressed the root causes of climate change and mitigated and adapted our way thoughtfully into the future? What would a Métis Youth living seven generations from now, in the year 2174, have to say?*

*The following story is based on conversations with members of the National Métis Youth Council about how they would envision the future, seven generations from now if we achieved our vision.*

Our ancestors tell us about a time when we almost didn't make it. When forest fires, droughts, and floods were common. When people were greedy and disconnected from each other and the land. Where technology was prioritized to the detriment of the living. When our Métis communities, citizens, and Nation were not recognized as valuable contributors. That was then.

Now, green, healthy spaces surround us both outdoors and indoors, with architecture and infrastructure that coexist with nature. Our communities are healed, whole, and flourishing. We live in tune with our environment. We embrace slower living. Consumerism is a thing of the past as we live with minimal waste. Above all, we live in tune with each other. We share knowledge, gifts, resources, and most of all, joy.

We celebrate the past, but we have not gone backward in time. Rather, we embrace the future and technology in an ever-evolving way that serves us and the land going forward.

Our Métis citizens hunt, gather, pass down land-based teachings, promote economic sovereignty,

and contribute meaningfully to the world. Our Michif language is widely used across the Nation. We are nourished: we grow and eat our own food, and we all have access to traditional care.

Our children live free from heavy burdens.

We have a well-respected, age-old practice of listening deeply to all our citizens, especially our Elders, Youth, women, and two-spirit. We ensure they have seats at the table where important discussions and decisions are being made. We have effective Nation-to-Nation relationships with governments who respect and heed our advice and knowledge on the dynamic process of environmental stewardship. We work closely and in solidarity with other Indigenous communities around the world.

We realized that climate change was just the symptom. When we started to live in harmony with nature again, everything started to fall into place.

Rooted in community, we are a happy, healthy, and resilient Nation.



# A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT CARON

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Dear Métis Nation,

I send you this message with a sense of urgency and purpose. From extreme weather events to disruptions in traditional hunting and harvesting patterns, the impacts of climate change continue to be keenly felt by the Métis Nation. Now more than ever, it is vital that we work together to protect and preserve the land, water, and air, and to develop and advance effective strategies to deal with the environmental issues that affect us all. This is why it is imperative that we have come together to facilitate a strategy that is grounded in our Métis values of stewardship, generational equity, and a respect for the land.

We, the Métis Nation, are a foundational part of the solution as we have been and continue to be historically woven into climate-action work. Our environmental stewardship practices, harvesting knowledge, and intricate understanding of ecosystems are a significant part of our Métis culture, and we have a duty to utilize them. The incredible work that is done on a community-level is no small feat and translates into a larger environmental impact. When we work together to protect our lands, waterways, and the ecological health of all species, we are fulfilling our traditional roles as protectors of Mother Earth. We are also paying tribute to those who came before us by preserving the lands that our Métis ancestors fought to protect and govern.

As we work together with environment and health officials at all levels of government, our goal is to implement our sacred traditional knowledge within a broader framework. Practices such as traditional harvesting and our Métis-led fire stewardship are not supplemental to climate-action strategies, but rather foundational. We must have the autonomy to exercise our self-governance by implementing our traditional knowledge in the federal framework, such as through our national climate-action strategy. Notably, a joint strategy also gives us an opportunity to restore relations with our First Nations and Inuit bonds as we work toward our shared goal of collective climate action. The Métis Nation must be an active participant with a seat at the table in shaping policies and initiatives that affect us.

I want to thank all our Métis governments and our staff at the Métis National Council for their continued dedication in the development of a strong climate-action strategy. The delivery of this Strategy requires ongoing collaboration; we recognize that we are strongest when we work as a cohesive unit to fulfill a goal as large as environmental preservation and protection. This is arguably the most important work that we do because environmental stewardship affects all living beings on this planet. By taking ownership of our climate future, we promote the intergenerational well-being and prosperity of our Métis communities.



-President Cassidy Caron



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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We are in a climate crisis because our relationship with the Earth is broken. While the scientific consensus is clear that climate change poses a profound threat to ecosystems, biodiversity, human societies, and economies worldwide, Indigenous Peoples around the world have long been sounding the alarm. Sadly, our collective voices have often been neglected, dismissed, and misrepresented.

There was a very short time in pre-Canada history when Europeans worked together with Indigenous Peoples in relative harmony – there was respect, shared learning, and shared celebrations. This embracing of two cultures is how the Métis Nation emerged.

Historically, we have always walked in two worlds: Indigenous and non-Indigenous. The Métis Nation has become well-versed in the economic, political, legal, and scientific ways of understanding that comprise the modern Western world. Métis also inhabit the world of Turtle Island that includes a deep spiritual connection with the land and water: learning lessons from the land itself, embracing experiences and observations of nature as a form of knowledge, building strong kinship ties with our First Nation relatives, plants, animals, waters, and lands, and acknowledging a duty to protect all these relations. We believe that the weaving of these two knowledge systems is one way to unlock long-lasting, holistic solutions for the climate crisis.

The Métis Nation Climate Change Strategy provides an urgent roadmap and call to action and collaboration with partners to find steadfast solutions to address the changing climate. The Métis Nation Climate Change Strategy is the next chapter in the ongoing history of Métis

environmental stewardship, leadership, self-determination, and bridging of worldviews.

The Métis Nation Climate Change Strategy is based on deeply held values about being rooted in the land and waters, driven by the heart, resilient and rights-based, and future-focused.

Weaving Métis culture, language, storytelling, art, science, and policy together, the strategy provides a clear path forward on meaningful climate action.

The Strategy includes five interconnected priority areas for action:

1. Nature Stewardship
2. Sustainable Energy and Infrastructure
3. Emergency Management and Climate Resilience
4. Health and Well-being
5. Economic Development and Prosperity

We envision a future where...

- We are a vibrant, resilient, and self-determined Métis Nation, and we strive to support and empower all Métis citizens.
- We work diligently to respond and adapt to a changing climate through our dynamic and deeply rooted connection to the land and our culture.
- We are, and will continue to be, effective leaders in climate action for our communities, our country, and this world for generations to come.

# INTRODUCTION

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## WHO WE ARE

### History of the Métis Nation

The Métis Nation emerged during the fur trade in the historic Northwest during the 18th century. Following the mixing of Indigenous women and European fur traders, a distinct process of ethnogenesis occurred establishing separate, distinct communities along the fur-trading routes that span the Métis Homeland. Through this process, a new Indigenous People emerged – the Métis people – with their own unique culture, traditions, languages (Michif), way of life, collective consciousness, and nationhood.

The Métis Homeland includes communities throughout the Prairie provinces (Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Manitoba), as well as contiguous parts of Ontario, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories, and the northern United States.

Not every person of mixed Indigenous-European ancestry is Métis. In 2002, the Métis National Council General Assembly adopted the following national definition: "Métis means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry and who is accepted by the Métis Nation." Consistently throughout history, the Métis people have acted collectively to protect and fight for their rights, lands, and ongoing existence as a distinct Indigenous People and nation within the Canadian federation.

### Métis Citizens as Rights-holders

The Métis are a unique and distinct rights-bearing Indigenous People in Canada and are one of three recognized Indigenous Peoples whose rights are recognized and affirmed in Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. In 2003, the Supreme Court of Canada in *R. v Powley* recognized that Métis communities, which emerged prior to effective control and influence of European laws and customs, possess Métis rights that are protected as Aboriginal rights in section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. The *Powley* decision also resulted in "the *Powley* Test," which describes a set of criteria to not only define what might constitute a Métis right, but also who is entitled to those rights. The Supreme Court decision in *R. v Daniels* (2016) recognizes the Métis as "Indians" under Section 91(24) of the Constitution Act, 1982. This decision affirms the Government of Canada's fiduciary relationship with the Métis. The ruling in this case brought broader, significant impacts upon the Nation-to-Nation, Government-to-Government relationship as it pertains to land rights and areas of federal jurisdiction.





## Métis Governance

In 1983, the Métis National Council (MNC) was established to represent the Métis Nation both nationally and internationally to advance issues of collective importance to the Métis Nation, its governments, and its citizens. Specifically, the Métis National Council reflects and moves forward on the desires and aspirations of these Métis governments at the national and international levels.

The Métis National Council receives its mandate and direction from the Métis National Council's Governing Members (GM), who are the democratically elected leadership of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S), the Otipemisiwak Métis Government of the Métis Nation within Alberta (also referred to as MNA), Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC), and the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO).

Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak (LFMO) is the recognized voice of Métis women and plays a significant role in enhancing the social, cultural, economic, and environmental health and well-being of all Métis people with a focus on Métis

women, youth, and those who are two-spirited, and gender-diverse.

Métis citizens mandate their governments through province-wide ballot box elections held at regular intervals for regional and provincial leadership. They participate in these Métis governance structures by way of elected locals or community councils and provincial assemblies.

Under this distinct system of democratic accountability, MNC Governing Members have served the Métis Nation well by providing an effective means of representation at the community, regional, provincial, national, and international level. As well, the Governing Members have a proven record in addressing the socio-economic needs of Métis Nation citizens by delivering government programs and services in a fair, transparent, cost-efficient, and accountable manner. These Métis governments and the MNC are the contemporary expression of the centuries-old struggle of the Métis Nation to be self-determining within the Canadian federation.

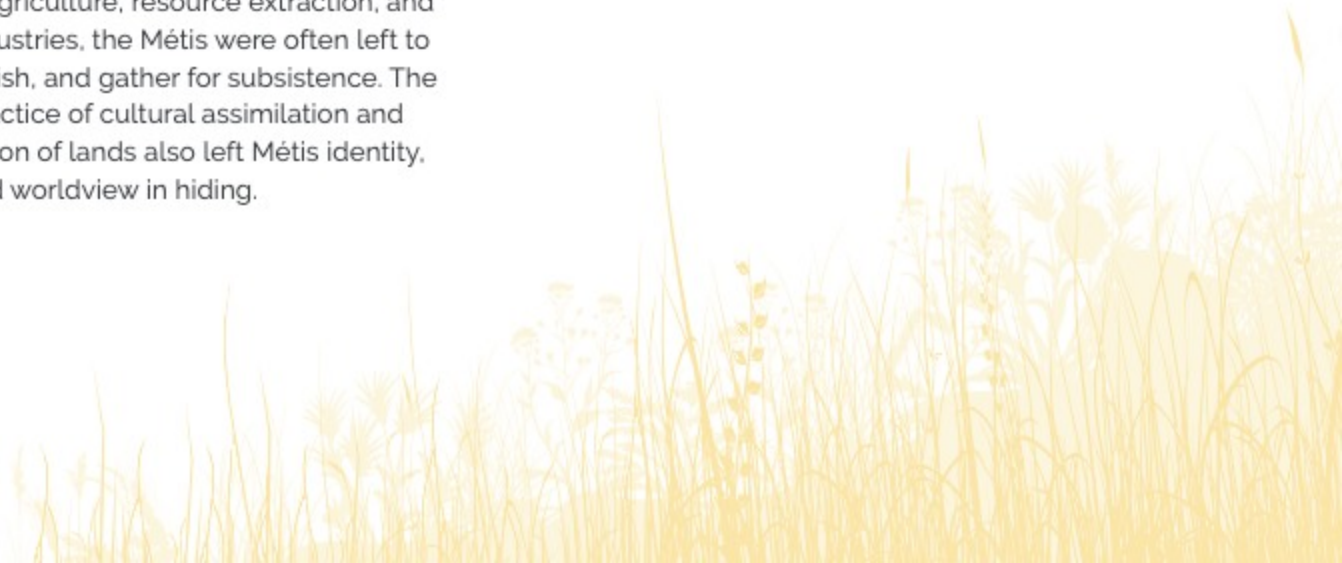
## Métis Culture & Worldview

Living in relation to the land and water means seeing the world differently: an interconnected web of relations between the self, the community, and in the broadest sense, between all things living and non-living. The Métis kinship worldview allows for unique Métis knowledge systems to form. As Métis people, we carry stories and contribute knowledge, such as land and water stewardship practices, cultural burning techniques, plant and medicine teachings, and sky stories. Each of these Métis ways of knowing shows how we can live in harmony with the natural world today and connect us with our First Nations ancestors' understanding of Turtle Island. This Métis worldview offers another perspective on how to address the current climate crisis, one which unfortunately, through colonial systems, has been long suppressed and relegated to the margins of crucial scientific and policy discussions.

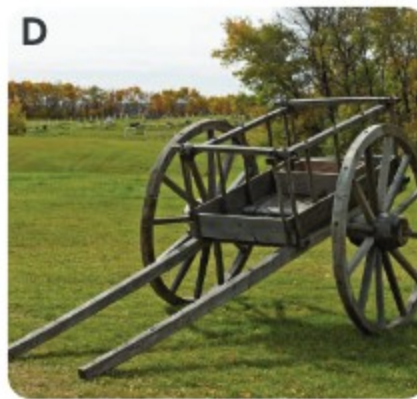
Colonial policies left the Métis without access to the rights afforded to land-owning, tax-paying European Canadians for most of the 20th century. Métis were legally separated from their inherent rights and kinship ties once provided by their Indigenous ancestry. The Métis were left without a landbase, limited economic opportunities, and no formal access to education or health care. While other Canadians thrived in the emerging agriculture, resource extraction, and forestry industries, the Métis were often left to hunt, trap, fish, and gather for subsistence. The colonial practice of cultural assimilation and dispossession of lands also left Métis identity, culture, and worldview in hiding.

In the latter half of the 20th century, our people developed alternative political, cultural, educational, and economic institutions to ensure the continuance of our ways of knowing and our ways of life. This was once accomplished through a network of Métis-led organizations that advocated for Métis rights, addressed inequities facing Métis people, and preserved Métis language and culture. Today, our governments are stronger than ever as they work towards the full implementation of self-government.

Métis people are reconnecting and reinvigorating their language, culture, and history, and through these rediscoveries, they are reconnecting to the land and water. The struggle for Métis rights, as stewards of the land, as harvesters, and as a distinct Indigenous Peoples under the constitution of Canada, remains ongoing to this day.



## Examples of Métis Culture



A) **Métis sash** (a colourful woven belt, symbolizing our cultural pride and identity)

B) **Spiritual tradition** (based on Cree and Ojibwe/ Catholic teachings and traditions)

C) **Buffalo Hunt**

D) **Red River Cart**

E) **Métis fiddle** (mix of French-Canadian, Ojibwe, and Scottish influences)

F) **Artistic craftwork** (rugmaking, fingerweaving, flower beadwork, etc.)

G) **Métis Jigging**



# THE MÉTIS NATION'S ROLE IN ADDRESSING THE CLIMATE CRISIS

## The current state of climate change

The current science of climate change is grounded in a wealth of empirical evidence indicating that human activities, particularly the burning of fossil fuels and deforestation, are significantly contributing to the warming of the Earth's atmosphere. This warming is causing a cascade of impacts, including rising global temperatures, shifting weather patterns, melting polar ice caps and glaciers, rising sea levels, and more frequent and severe weather events. While the scientific consensus is clear that climate change poses a profound threat to ecosystems, biodiversity, human societies, and economies worldwide, Indigenous Peoples around the globe have long been sounding the alarm. Sadly, our collective voices have often been neglected, dismissed, or misrepresented.

Climate change is all-encompassing – it is an existential threat that has never been seen before, touching every aspect of humanity and all aspects of our lives. The critical systems that underpin our current way of life, including our food and health systems, ecosystems, commerce, and governance, are all at a breaking point. Therefore, a holistic approach must be taken. As the world now faces numerous crises at once, we must reconnect to the world in the ways our ancestors once did – through two-eyed seeing and honouring all our relations.

## Impact of climate change on the Métis Nation

While all of humanity is feeling the negative impacts of climate change, Indigenous Peoples have historically been, and continue to be, disproportionately affected. Colonialism and the historical marginalization and dispossession of our people from our lands and waters have led to the exploitation of natural resources and have threatened the transfer of ecological knowledge from one generation to the next.

Within the Métis Nation, we are already seeing:

- Our harvesters losing crucial food sources like deer, elk, moose, and fish to infectious diseases, habitat loss, and the destruction of grazing flora.
- Our trappers losing traditional, generational traplines to forest fires and flooding.
- Our citizens struggling to put food on the table due to increased food prices and limited access to traditional foods.
- Our people facing increased health concerns caused by exposure to wildfire smoke, heat, and vector-borne diseases, such as Lyme disease from ticks.
- Our children and youth, who are and will be at the forefront of these crises, experiencing mental stresses and eco-grief as they come to grips with what all of this might mean for their own futures.
- Restrictions to cultural practices and community gatherings due to climate events such as heat, wildfire smoke, floods, and wildfires.



- Further disadvantaging of Métis people financially as they try to respond and recover to climate events where they don't have the same safety nets as more advantaged Canadians.

***Sipihkisôwin (see-pihk-so-win), the Northern Michif word meaning Resilience. We are resilient and do not fear challenges or setbacks but remain courageous and learn from each step of the journey. We channel the courage of our Métis ancestors who faced adversity and remained resilient.***



However, despite this, the Métis are resilient and innovative people whose culture blends teachings from the two worlds from which we come, to adapt and survive in colonial and capitalistic systems. Throughout history, the Métis have had to navigate changing legal, economic, and political systems that suppressed our culture, languages, rights, and nationality. It is these same systems that have caused and continue to exacerbate the climate crisis.

We are in a climate crisis because our relationship with the Earth is broken. But we have a choice. We can act now, holistically, and steadfastly, to find innovative solutions to address the climate crisis, or we can react and be witnesses to untold tragedies and disasters that we know are heading our way.

Métis and other Indigenous Peoples around the world should not be viewed only as victims of climate change, but rather as active agents, holding valuable knowledge and insight into how best to tackle climate crisis.

## **Walking in two worlds: Our approach to climate action**

Centring Métis understandings of the Cree concept of "Wahkotiwin" (all my relations) at the heart of ecological science and policy can create an approach to adaptation and mitigation that includes all Canadians, by serving the wellness of all living things and using a process of kin-making to build partnerships that advance the interests of all.

Like all Indigenous Peoples, the Métis were given a place and purpose by the Creator: to be good stewards of the lands and waters, upon which we gained our identity as distinct

***We are the bridge. We see the best in both worlds, and we are open to new ideas and perspectives for how to move forward to set things right.***



Indigenous Peoples. This is the Métis way of life. The Métis Nation has roots in the land itself. Our systems of governance, our culture, and our ways of understanding the world have developed directly from the Nation's close relationship with the land and waters. The Métis Nation prides itself on being guardians and protectors of nature. The belief in stewardship is a Métis tradition that can be traced back to the time when the buffalo still roamed the Earth.

We are uniquely well equipped, as those who walk in both worlds, to serve as a bridge between diverse ways of understanding the climate crisis. We need to braid the strengths of both worldviews to address the climate crisis in a holistic way.

### *The Buffalo Hunt*

The first Métis government was formed annually for the purpose of regulating the Buffalo Hunt. The Métis would elect hunt captains that would organize the men into hunt brigades. Each brigade in the hunt was subject to the laws of the Buffalo Hunt – a series of eight rules that sought to maintain order amongst the ranks of the hunt, outlining rules for when and how to hunt and punishments for violating these laws.

These laws were put in place to mitigate the effects of greed and make sure that enough buffalo were left to spawn new buffalo to hunt in the future. In this way, the Métis were among the first to codify a set of conservation laws, as they were aware that the bounty of the Canadian prairies was not endless and that measures had to be taken to assure abundant resources would be available in the future.



This important thread of Métis history is an example of how the Métis balanced economic interests in a way that honours nature and preserves its resources for sustainable future use.



## What can Métis Citizens do?

All Métis citizens should see themselves reflected in the Strategy and are encouraged to find ways to actively contribute to find solutions to address the climate crisis. Here are some ways all Métis citizens can get involved:

Learn how to support the implementation of our Métis Nation Climate Change Strategy

Deepen your relationship to nature

Reconnect with our shared history and culture

*What can Métis citizens do to support climate action?*

Consider how you can support the climate movement in your work and community

Build resilient community networks

Get prepared—learn about climate risks in your community and take action



## Finding strength across our diverse Métis Nation

The diversity of the Métis Nation is represented in the multitude of voices spanning across age, sex, gender, geography, socio-economic realities, and more. We acknowledge the diversity of all who make up the Métis Nation and celebrate the differences that make us stronger. By appreciating how our differences open our minds to diverse experiences and perspectives, we are able to learn, adapt, build resilience, and support each other when facing climate change impacts.

We acknowledge those most often under-represented in climate change funding and policies; we aim to amplify their voices and solutions when it comes to climate action. There can be no decisions made without including those most affected in the conversation. Youth, Elders, women, gender-diverse peoples, fellow Indigenous kin, and many other groups will bear the brunt of climate change impacts while having contributed to the problem the least. While amplifying the voices of those often left out of the conversation, we must also acknowledge the overlapping identities and experiences of individuals among and alongside these groups. Our approach in this Strategy, and our advice to other governments and organizations, is to use an intersectional lens when identifying climate change priorities and actions so the unique experiences of all those affected (both humans and nature alike) are represented in the solutions moving forward.

While we all sit at the intersection of multiple identities and systems of power, it is this diversity that enriches our collective endeavour to combat climate change, offering varied perspectives and wisdom, and ensuring a path forward that will leave no one behind.

## Our role as climate leaders

We have always been a people who have had to fight for our rights and livelihoods. And right now, we are seeing the fruits of that hard work as the Métis Nation experiences its vibrant reawakening of Métis culture, led by Métis Youth and guided by our Elders and Métis knowledge keepers.

Métis are natural leaders in the fight against climate change. We are the bridge. We see the best in both worlds, and we are open to new ideas and perspectives for how to move forward to set things right.

Canada, and the world, would do well to listen, learn from, and support the Métis Nation as we work with others to create climate solutions that will benefit all.

***"My people will sleep for 100 years, and when they wake, it will be the artists who give them back their souls."***

***- Louis Riel, 1885***



## HOW DID THE MÉTIS NATION DEVELOP THIS STRATEGY?

The development of the Strategy is the culmination of years of dedicated effort by members of the Métis Nation, reflecting a collective commitment to addressing climate change and its impacts.

Inputs were gathered through:

- Listening sessions and community engagement across the Métis Nation, led by our Governing Members and LFMO
- Ongoing working groups, tables, discussions, and action plans including, but not limited to:
  - The Goose Moon Table (Métis Nation-Canada Joint Table on Clean Growth and Climate Change)
  - The Strawberry Moon Table (Nature and Conservation Table)
  - The National Adaptation Strategy (NAS) engagement
  - The development of the Métis Nation section of the Indigenous Climate Leadership (ICL) program
  - Ongoing work and representation at the international level (e.g., attending and preparing presentations for events at the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties)
- Input from existing strategies, reports and working sessions, such as:
  - The Métis Nation Climate Change and Health Vulnerability Assessment (2020)
  - The Métis National Council's Emergency Management Report (2022)
  - Métis Nation's Vision for Climate Change and Health (developed in a joint Environment and Health workshop (2022))

The Métis Nation Climate Change Strategy writing team included representatives from each Governing Member, LFMO, and MNC. The writing team met in person and online several times throughout 2023 and 2024 to develop the priorities and draft the strategy. Members of the National Métis Youth Council and Métis Youth were also involved in drafting parts of the Strategy and the overall review of the Strategy.

Please refer to the section at the end entitled 'Gratitude' for the names of all members who contributed to the development and design of the Strategy.



## WHO IS THIS STRATEGY FOR?

This Strategy is primarily for the following audiences:

### *Government*

- Federal and provincial governments to play an active role in supporting and funding elements of the Strategy.
- Recognize and support Métis rights and self-determination as we advance climate action.

### *Métis Leadership*

- Recognizing the diversity of our communities and its needs, this Strategy will help the Métis Nation get aligned on our priorities so that we can share knowledge and capacity.

### *Métis Citizens*

- The Strategy is meant to empower all Métis citizens to take a role in addressing the climate crisis.

### *Collaborators*

- We know that we can't do it alone. We are always looking for partners to help support this work.
- This may come from the private sector, foundations, NGOs, other Indigenous governments and groups, international partners, etc.

### *Public*

- Everyone has a role in addressing the climate crisis.
- We hope that this document helps the general public learn more about the Métis way of life and our specific role in helping shape climate solutions.

## HOW WE WANT TO COLLABORATE WITH OUR PARTNERS

### *Government partners (Federal, Provincial, Regional, Municipal)*

We recognize the importance of Nation-to-Nation collaborative efforts and stress the importance of building long-term, sustainable, respectful relationships that focus on positive, solutions-oriented climate change outcomes.

The Métis Nation will always advocate for equitable, distinctions-based funding that

respects our governance structures, and allows us the flexibility to fund the priorities listed in the Strategy. By supporting the Métis Nation's climate priorities, Canada will ultimately advance its own commitments and targets; we cannot do this alone or in silos.

Our plan to help address climate change involves working closely with government partners and ensuring that our partnership is based on our Principles of Co-Development (see box).

### *Co-Development Principles*

To advance the Nation-to-Nation, Government-to-Government relationship based on the respect and recognition of rights, the Métis Nation developed the Principles of Co-Development to begin to redress the legacy of colonialism and racism experienced by Métis, whether present in legislation, policy, or practices.

The Co-Development Principles formalize a co-development process between MNC and Governing Members and Canada for legislative, regulatory, and administrative matters. These Principles provide clarity on the operational elements needed to ensure full and effective Métis Nation participation.

Areas addressed:

- The co-development of legislative or administrative measures that may affect the Métis Nation.
- The importance of Nation-to-Nation, Government-to-Government processes with the MNC and its Governing Members.
- The respect for self-government and Métis governments' decision-making and approval processes and timelines.
- The notion of co-development being included in the substantive and procedural aspects of the traditional legislation and policy development cycle.
- Co-development processes and their accommodation of constitutional imperatives, such as parliamentary privilege and cabinet confidence, in a way that does not generally, disproportionately, or unduly limit Indigenous partnership.
- The importance of distinctions-based approaches to co-development processes.
- The resourcing of co-development processes to ensure the capacity of the MNC and its Governing Members and their ability to appropriately represent their citizens.



We are active participants in existing Nation-to-Nation joint initiatives that address climate change such as:

- The Goose Moon Table (Métis Nation-Canada Joint Table on Clean Growth and Climate Change)
- The Métis Indigenous Climate Leadership process
- Permanent Bilateral Mechanism (PBM with a focus on Emergency Management)

### *Métis Nation Intergovernmental Priorities*

#### **1. Engaging with the Métis Nation through a distinctions-based approach**

The Métis National Council is the national and international voice of the Métis Nation. A Métis-specific approach is critical to ensuring that the unique rights, interests, and priorities of the Métis Nation are acknowledged, affirmed, and implemented.

#### **2. Renewing relationships on a Nation-to-Nation, Government-to-Government basis**

The Canada-Métis Nation Accord and Permanent Bilateral Mechanism re-affirm the relationship.

#### **3. Building the capacity of the Métis Nation**

Canada must invest in the Métis Nation through a renewed fiscal relationship premised on sufficient, predictable, and sustained long-term funding.

### *Other partners*



This Strategy is an invitation to the private sector, foundations, NGOs, other Indigenous governments and organizations, and international partners to work with us as we advance with the implementation of the Strategy. For more information, please contact us at [mnc\\_env@metisnation.ca](mailto:mnc_env@metisnation.ca). We look forward to working with you.



# LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR THIS STRATEGY

## VALUES

To do this work, we need to stay true to the following values and principles:

Value	Story	How the value relates to climate change
<p><b>ROOTED</b></p> 	<p><i>The land is our life</i></p> <p>The Métis are given a place and purpose by the Creator: to be stewards of the traditional lands bestowed upon them. Here we gained our identity as distinct Indigenous Peoples. This is the Métis way of life.</p>	<p>We find strength and ideas in our deep connection and appreciation of the environment and our understanding that everything in this world is connected to Mother Earth. Tapping into our rich history and culture is essential for addressing climate change.</p>
<p><b>HEART-LED</b></p> 	<p><i>Strawberry teachings</i></p> <p>The strawberry – or ‘HeartBerry’ – is the only berry that wears its seeds on the outside, it is the first berry of the spring and represents the reproductive role of bringing new life into the world. Its runners spread across the land which allows the plant to flourish, just like how Métis family systems have grown across the Homeland. It represents a time when people had a chance to look at life and let things go and begin again; this medicine teaches us about connection to mind, body, spirit, and emotion.</p>	<p>We are not going to solve the climate crisis by only using our brains – this is heart work. This work requires us to connect to ourselves, each other, and the land and waters.</p>

## Value

## Story

## How the value relates to climate change

**RESILIENT,  
RIGHTS-BASED  
LEADERSHIP***The buffalo – a symbol of Métis resilience*

The story of Métis resilience is about shining through adversities. From the heartbreaking loss of our lands in Red River, our communities, our trap lines, and the bison, to the dispersal across the West and North, the Métis have ultimately evolved into a vibrant and resilient culture today.

We are distinct Indigenous Peoples under section 35 of the Constitution. Our rights are classified into two categories: 1) Self-Government Rights; and 2) Land and Resource Rights.

We want greater control over our lives within Canada, including how we prepare and respond to climate change.

We have fought on the battlefield, in the courts, and with governments to protect our rights for generations to come, and we will use this same tenacity and spirit to fight, protect, and respond to the climate crisis.

**FUTURE-FOCUSED  
(LONG-TERM AND  
HOLISTIC)***Métis infinity symbol*

The horizontal figure 8 or infinity symbol featured on the Métis flag was originally carried by early Métis people with pride. The symbol represents the immortality of the Nation and the joining of two cultures. The flag emerged as a unifying emblem, sparking the roots of Métis nationalism.

Impacts from climate change are felt far and wide and are intricately connected to every aspect of our lives.

Climate change is broader than just emissions. It directly impacts conservation and biodiversity, which affects our well-being and that of the land, waters, plants, animals, birds, and the entire web of life.

There is no one solution for addressing climate change. We must understand this complexity and make decisions that will serve us for generations to come.



## VISION

We are the vibrant, resilient, and self-determined Métis Nation, and we strive to support and empower all Métis citizens. We work diligently to respond and adapt to a changing climate through our dynamic and deeply rooted connection to the land and our culture. We are, and will continue to be, effective leaders in climate action for our communities, our Nation, our country, and this world for generations to come.

## PURPOSE

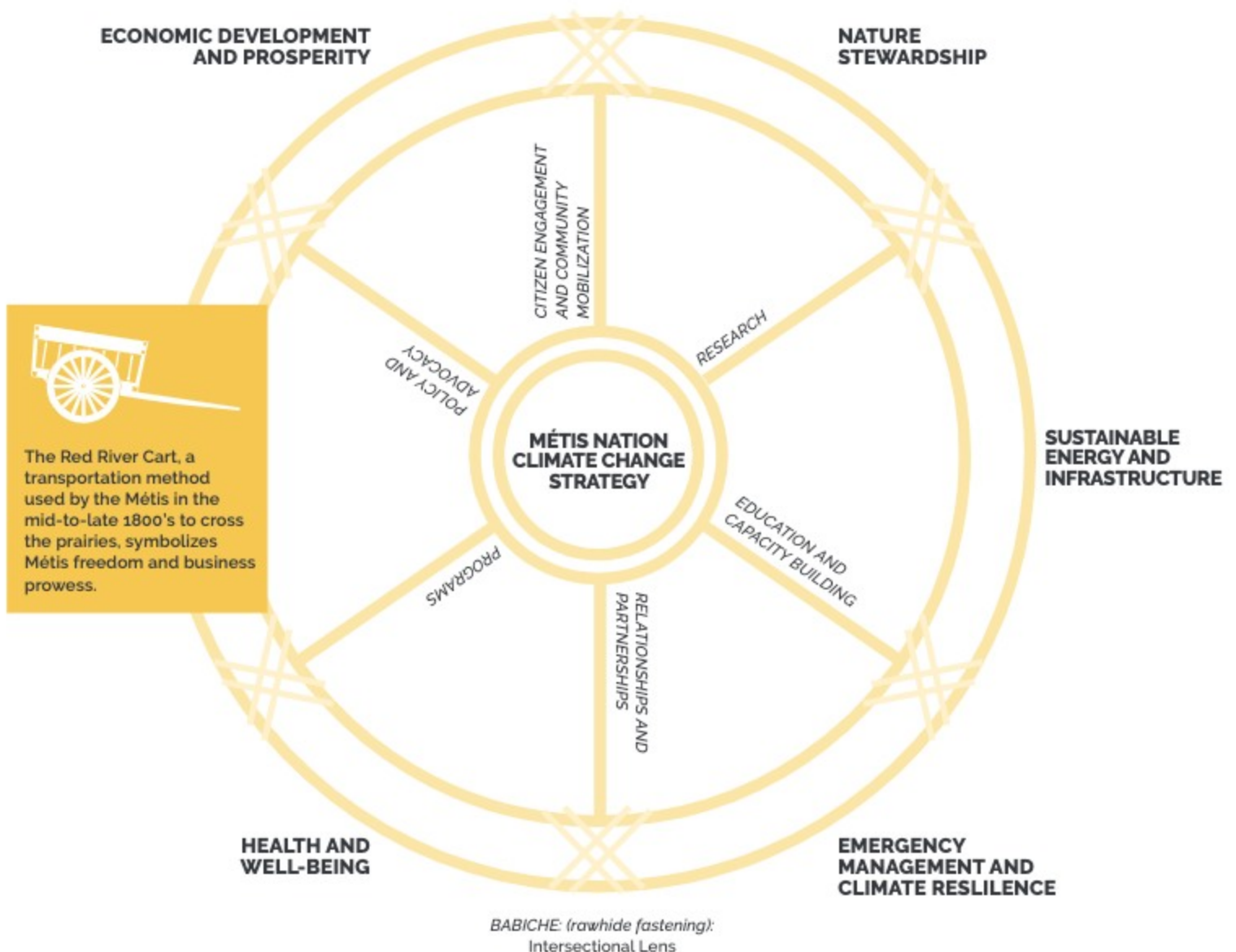
The Métis Nation Climate Change Strategy provides an urgent roadmap and call to action. In collaboration with our partners and each other, we are finding Métis-driven solutions to address the changing climate. Through the Strategy, we are writing the next chapter in the ongoing legacy of Métis environmental stewardship and leadership, self-determination, and the bridging of two worldviews.



# THE MÉTIS NATION CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

## HOW THIS STRATEGY IS STRUCTURED

Any strategy for addressing climate change must be holistic in its approach, recognizing the complex connections between priority areas. Our strategy is based on Métis values and significant cultural teachings; it is unique to us and our ways of life.



The Red River Cart, a transportation method used by the Métis in the mid-to-late 1800's to cross the prairies, symbolizes Métis freedom and business prowess.

## PRIORITY ACTION AREAS

The **outer** wheel of the Red River Cart

These are the **five priority areas** we have identified for action:

- Nature Stewardship
- Sustainable Energy and Infrastructure
- Emergency Management and Climate Resilience
- Health and Well-being
- Economic Development and Prosperity

These priority areas are interlinked, and while numbered, they are not in order of priority as action will often occur simultaneously and differently across Governing Members.

## SUPPORTING ACTIONS

The **inner spokes** of the Red River Cart

The inner spokes are **supporting actions** that help guide our work in the priority action areas to ensure we have a robust and effective strategy:

- Research
- Education and capacity building
- Relationships and partnerships
- Programs
- Policy and advocacy
- Citizen engagement and community mobilization

## CROSS-CUTTING PERSPECTIVES

The **'babiche'** is the leather strap that binds the wheel and holds it all together to make it stronger

Cross-cutting perspectives that are incorporated throughout the entire strategy include:

- 1. Intersectional lens<sup>1</sup>** - We have incorporated an intersectional lens in developing the Strategy to assess how different women, men, and gender-diverse peoples and other considerations (such as age, disability, education, ethnicity, economic status, geography, language, race, religion, and sexual orientation), may experience policies, programs, and initiatives. We will have systems in place to ensure all parties involved in its implementation continue with this approach.
- 2. Regional / Scaled Métis perspectives** - We recognize that this Strategy needs to reflect the diversity across the Métis Nation (e.g., citizen, local/ community, and regional).
- 3. Mitigation / Adaptation** - The Strategy recognizes that mitigation and adaptation actions are often interconnected. While some actions are clearly one or the other, we recognize them as cross-cutting.

<sup>1</sup> UN Women, "Intersectionality resource guide and toolkit," 2021, [www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/01/intersectionality-resource-guide-and-toolkit](http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/01/intersectionality-resource-guide-and-toolkit)

## IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

This is a **national strategy** that aims to advance the needs of MNC and GMs at a national level. Each GM will have their own climate change plan that specifically highlights the needs of their citizens, communities, and governments within their province. The Strategy provides a national overview of the Métis Nation's needs and priorities to address several climate change impacts, to advance climate change adaptation and resiliency, to reduce GHG emissions through Métis-led mitigation, and to advance Métis climate leadership.

We consider this to be an evergreen strategy and will revise it on an ongoing basis to ensure ongoing relevance and responsiveness. We will have a structured process for **periodic review every five years** and updates will be integrated into the Strategy's governance. This adaptive model aims to foster coherence while allowing for local adaptation and mitigation, guaranteeing a unified yet flexible approach to addressing the evolving challenges posed by climate change within Métis communities across the Nation.





## PRIORITY 1: NATURE STEWARDSHIP

### Long-Term Outcome

*We are all stewards of the water and lands. We honour and respect our culture and history when sharing traditional stewardship practices and we demonstrate leadership in protecting nature.*

As Métis, we have the responsibility to steward the lands and waters in which our peoples' ways of life are rooted. Part of this is making sure that our relationship with Mother Earth is respectful and reciprocal. These principles guide our teachings on how to trap, hunt, fish, and gather medicines, as well as other Métis stewardship practices. Nature stewardship cannot be accomplished if the global society continues to place a high value on an extractive relationship with Mother Earth. As Métis, we must look to the teachings from our ancestors on reciprocity and respect to guide us and help us to teach others how to interact with the interconnected world around us. To do this in a good way means that we value nature as kin and not as a commodity. Decisions regarding the protection and restoration of nature must include a holistic understanding of all the relationships that exist by acknowledging the uniqueness of each place and community.

While colonial practices have negatively impacted the ability of Métis to play their traditional role as stewards of nature, the Métis Nation is actively working to correct this. This includes stewardship through grassroots activities, partnerships, and activism as well as through direct land protection by Governing

***"What centres and cradles our culture is our relationship to the land."***

***-Métis Citizen***



Members. Having access to nature in both urban and rural spaces is important for reconciliation, practicing our ways of life, teaching future generations traditions on the land, and meeting our climate and biodiversity goals.

Supporting and restoring all Métis citizens' connection/relationship to the land and water is paramount for healing ourselves and healing Mother Earth.



## What is this priority area about?

### COMMUNITY-BASED STEWARDSHIP



Community-based stewardship incorporates both Métis and Western knowledge systems

### MÉTIS PROTECTION OF LAND AND WATER



Métis protection of ecosystems for stewardship by future generations

### RESTORING CONNECTION TO THE LAND



Restoring Métis citizens' connection to the land and supporting cultural continuity

## Actions:

1. **Increase direct and long-term, sustainable funding, support, and programming that promotes active Métis land stewardship in urban, rural, and remote settings. This includes a variety of existing and upcoming initiatives, such as:**
  - a. Métis-managed, protected, and conserved areas, and Métis-led, nature-smart climate solutions (carbon sequestration, ties to culture and improvements to physical and mental health, teaching opportunities, flood prevention, etc.).
  - b. Environmental monitoring programs (e.g., water quality, air quality, health of flora and fauna, carbon sequestration rates of the lands and waters, carbon footprints).
  - c. Ecological restoration (e.g., tree planting).
  - d. Traditional stewardship practices (e.g., cultural burn practices, traditional harvesting, on-the-land camps, etc.).
  - e. Partnership with the Government of Canada and others to achieve the 30x30 global biodiversity targets and demonstrate where and how the Métis Nation can play an influential role (e.g., through Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs), Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs), ecological corridors, national parks, and urban parks establishment, etc.).
  - f. Co-develop and meaningfully participate in the decision-making with different governing bodies related to land, water, and conservation (bylaws, legislative decisions, environmental planning processes).

## PRIORITY 2: SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### Long-Term Outcome

*We have transitioned our infrastructure and energy systems to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 while continuing to power a thriving and resilient Métis Nation. The Métis Nation has realized self-sustainability and economic opportunities through clean, resilient, and long-lasting energy and infrastructure systems.*

***"Métis people have coexisted with the land for hundreds of years and the shift in energy generation to a sustainable source is part of humanity co-existing with nature. That's where I see Métis knowledge and Indigenous knowledge coming into renewables. We're creating a sustainable energy source that can co-exist with the new way that we're moving in our economy."***

**-MNA Citizen**



A thriving, resilient Métis Nation requires non-emitting, reliable, and affordable energy sources able to power its communities and economies while mitigating the impacts of climate change. The burning of fossil fuels exacerbates the

climate crisis and has direct and indirect impacts on our environment, health and well-being, and the Métis way of life. For the Métis Nation to continue to flourish it is necessary to shift toward renewable, non-emitting sources of energy.

### What is this priority area about?

#### ELECTRICITY



Renewable, non-emitting sources of electricity

#### TRANSPORTATION



Emissions from transportation

#### BUILT ENVIRONMENT



Emissions and environmental impact of housing, buildings, agriculture, and waste systems

### *Salay Prayzaan at Métis Crossing*

*The official name for the Métis Crossing Solar Project, Salay Prayzaan, is a Michif translation for "gift from the sun." The name was chosen from among ninety MNA citizen recommendations submitted through a social media contest.*

Salay Prayzaan at Métis Crossing is a distributed community-generation solar project located in Smoky Lake County at Métis Crossing, a signature cultural site of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government of the Métis Nation within Alberta (MNA). The project was conceptualized as a key initiative of the MNA Climate Change Action Plan. It is a collaboration between the MNA, the Town of Smoky Lake, and Smoky Lake County. The 4.86-megawatt AC community generation solar project will reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and generate economic and community benefits for the community partners.

Salay Prayzaan Solar is the largest 100% Métis-owned solar power project in Alberta and will serve as a model for grid-scale community-generation and partnership with Indigenous communities. The solar farm will provide economic and community benefits to all community partners. The profits will allow the MNA to fund social and economic development initiatives and programs to benefit Alberta Métis. The solar farm will provide significant tax revenue to Smoky Lake County, and a local Community Development Fund will support further sustainability projects in the local community.

To take meaningful action on climate change and work towards a sustainable Métis Nation, it is important to understand the significance of reductions in greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) accomplished by the Métis Nation. The monitoring and tracking of GHG emissions will provide accountability and clear understanding of progress toward the sustainability goals of the Métis Nation.

#### **Electricity**

As of 2023, electricity production accounts for 8% of emissions from Canada (*National Inventory Report - 1990-2023: Greenhouse Gas Sources and Sinks in Canada*). To meet the energy needs of our communities while reducing the impacts of climate change, the Métis Nation will have

to embrace non-emitting sources of electricity, such as solar, wind, geothermal, and hydro. Electrification of transportation systems and building heating systems will be required to meet the 2050 net-zero carbon target. It is estimated that Canada will have to double or triple its electricity generation to meet future electricity needs. Therefore, supporting technologies such as storage and smart grids will also be required to ensure the energy is made available when and where our communities need it. The Métis Nation must embrace these sources of energy, and the economic benefits they represent, such as jobs and revenue opportunities.



The energy produced by Salay Prayzaan is expected to produce 8.6 million kilowatt-hours of renewable electricity per year – enough to offset all MNA and MNA affiliate's electricity use. This is the equivalent of the electricity use of approximately 1,200 Alberta homes, removing 1,500 cars from the road, or planting 82,650 trees. Salay Prazaan is an important piece of the MNA Climate Change Action Plan and moves Canada closer to a net-zero energy future by reducing reliance on existing grid generation sources.


### Transportation

Emissions from transportation systems account for 22% of Canada's emissions (*National Inventory Report - 1990-2023: Greenhouse Gas Sources and Sinks in Canada*). To transition to a carbon-neutral Métis Nation, we will need to increase availability of and access to cleaner modes of transit through land, water, and air, implement more active modes of transportation, and make zero-emissions vehicles (ZEVs) more accessible. As the world transitions to ZEVs, the Métis Nation will embrace the opportunity this transition represents, including smart engagement and investments in the sectors to also capture economic opportunities such as jobs and cost-savings.

### Built Environment

Buildings account for 13% of Canada's emissions as of 2023. The main source of emissions from buildings come from space heating. Agriculture accounts for 10% of Canada's emissions, and waste accounts for 7% of Canada's emissions (*National Inventory Report - 1990-2023: Greenhouse Gas Sources and Sinks in Canada*). To decrease emissions from the built environment, the Métis Nation will need to explore opportunities to increase energy efficiency in housing and buildings, transition away from GHG-emitting sources for heating, and increase sustainable practices in agricultural and waste systems.

## Actions:

- 1. Develop a system across the Métis Nation to track greenhouse gas emissions and measure progress towards the 2050 emissions-reduction target.**
    - a. Establish a baseline of greenhouse gas emissions across the Métis Nation.
    - b. Set short- and medium-term greenhouse gas emissions-reductions goals, in alignment with the 2050 emissions-reduction target.
    - c. Develop and implement a framework of ongoing reporting of greenhouse gas emissions across the Métis Nation.
  - 2. Secure access to affordable and reliable carbon-free electricity for the Métis Nation.**
    - a. Understand enablers and barriers for increasing uptake of clean and resilient energy and infrastructure throughout the Métis Nation.
    - b. Design and implement programs, resources, and training for Métis citizens, businesses, and institutions to transition to carbon-free electricity.
    - c. Engage with the government, regulators, industry, and institutions to increase the participation of the Métis Nation, Métis businesses, and citizens in the energy transition to capture economic opportunities and provide self-sustainability.
  - 3. Ensure Métis access to low- and zero-emissions modes of transportation.**
    - a. Develop and implement policies and processes to significantly decrease the use of emitting sources of transportation, including tracking, decreasing, and/or offsetting travel emissions for Métis Nation governments.
    - b. Design and implement programs and resources to increase Métis access to cleaner modes of transit, active modes of transportation, and make Zero Emissions Vehicles (ZEVs) more affordable and accessible.
    - c. Transition Métis Nation operations towards ZEV fleets and infrastructure.
- 

**4. Increase the energy efficiency of new and existing Métis Nation infrastructure, homes, and buildings.**

- a. Track and increase the energy use and energy efficiency of Métis Nation governments, institutions, homes, offices, and other buildings.
- b. Design and implement programs and resources to increase the energy efficiency of homes and buildings, including grant and finance solutions for Métis homes and businesses.
- c. Design and implement programs and resources to transition away from GHG-emitting sources of space heating, such as natural gas and heating oil, to low- or non-emitting alternatives, such as electricity (powered by non-emitting sources of energy).

**5. Explore opportunities to reduce emissions from food, agriculture, and waste systems.**

- a. Assess opportunities for the Métis Nation to engage in greenhouse gas emissions reduction efforts from food, agriculture and waste systems.
- b. Design and implement Métis Nation-led programs, resources and initiatives aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions from food, agriculture and waste systems.



## PRIORITY 3: EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE

### Long-Term Outcome

*Our Métis citizens and communities are prepared and resilient to the short- and long-term effects of climate change.*

Climate-related disasters are increasing in frequency and severity across the globe. Wildfires, droughts, floods, infectious diseases, heat waves, and other extreme weather events have made it clear that a vital part of climate change adaptation is how we, as the Métis Nation, respond to emergencies.

Past disasters have tested and highlighted the Métis Nation's ability to adapt and overcome through community cooperation and resiliency. Métis, across the Homeland, have worked hard to develop emergency management systems that address climate risks, and create co-benefits that mobilize the Métis community spirit, promote resiliency, and help to rebuild the Nation across the Homeland despite having no resources to do so.

These initiatives are carried out with a "side-of-the-desk" approach as capacity is currently limited for the Métis Nation. This is insufficient to adequately prepare and respond to increasing climate-related emergencies. Governing Members have an inherent right of self-government in responding to and recovering from emergencies and, therefore, should have control over how they support their citizens and their communities in the face of climate-related emergencies and disasters.

***"When thinking of Emergency Management for Métis Nation citizens, it is useful to shift away from a fully territory-based lens, to consider the needs and possibilities for a population that is distinct, and simultaneously dispersed and connected."***

***-Métis National Council Emergency Management Report, p.63***



### A Homeland in peril

Recent climate-related emergencies have highlighted the need for Métis-led emergency management. For example, the 2023 fire season far surpassed any previous year on record for hectares burned (see Figure 1). Official numbers of Métis citizens affected by the 2023 fire season and the evacuations it caused are currently being compiled. As climate events increase and intensify, such as wildfires, floods and atmospheric rivers, cultural safety is a vital aspect to emergency management. Previous reports<sup>2,3</sup> on cultural safety during evacuations have indicated the adverse and inequitable risks that Métis citizens face during emergent situations. The lack of Métis-specific funding and current statistics only serves to further expose how Métis citizens are being adversely, disproportionately, and inequitably impacted by these extreme climate events.

<sup>2</sup> Timothy David Clark, "Rebuilding Resilient Indigenous Communities in the RMWB: Final Report," October 2018. [static1.squarespace.com/static/615cce89f72da40d46b95fc6/t/6192c14208d95a1ec5b53bba/1637007685737/Rebuilding-Resilient-Indigenous-Communities-Final-Report-Final-1.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/615cce89f72da40d46b95fc6/t/6192c14208d95a1ec5b53bba/1637007685737/Rebuilding-Resilient-Indigenous-Communities-Final-Report-Final-1.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Ombudsperson British Columbia, "Fairness in a Changing Climate: Ensuring disaster supports are accessible, equitable and adaptable," October 2023. [bcombudsperson.ca/assets/media/OMB-FireFlood\\_report\\_web.pdf](https://bcombudsperson.ca/assets/media/OMB-FireFlood_report_web.pdf)



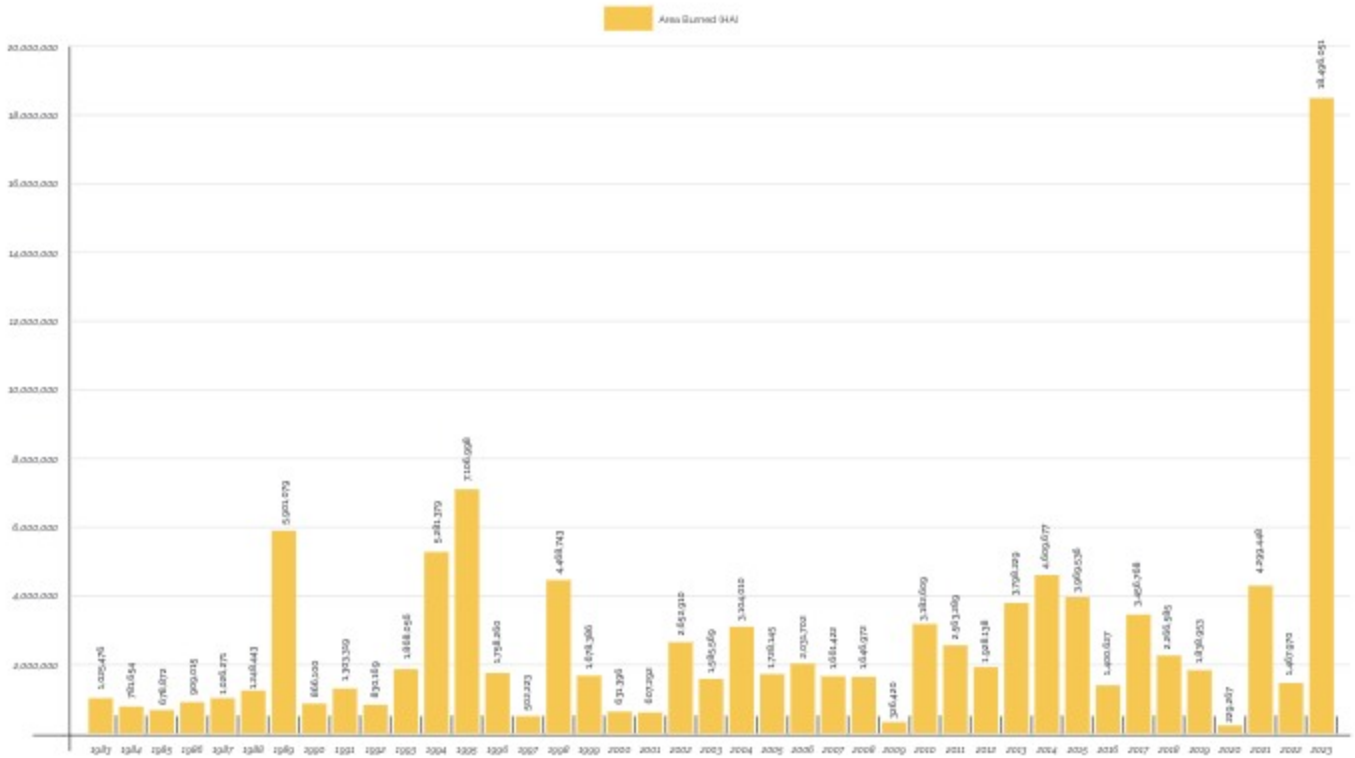


Figure 1: Chart of the area burned in Canada (hectares per year) Source: ciffc.net

**Our work so far**

Our work has included (but is not limited to) the development of the MNC’s Métis Nation Emergency Management Review<sup>4</sup>, the MNC’s Métis Wildfire Research Project, representation on various tables and councils (including the National Adaptation Strategy – Disaster Mitigation and Resilience Table, National Indigenous Fire Safety Council, and Climate Proof Canada), and the development of the Permanent Bilateral Mechanism (PBM) Working Group on Emergency Management among others.

The MNC Ignite Project develops Métis emergency management capacity across the Homeland while building a case for disaster resiliency through Indigenous Science, Knowledges, and Climate Leadership. Governing Members have been creative in finding funding to distribute emergency preparedness kits to citizens (see Photo 1), however, demand has repeatedly surpassed capacity and supply.

These pathways demonstrate the continued commitment of the MNC and Governing Members as they advocate for the health, safety, and well-being of Métis citizens through emerging events and across the Homeland.



Photo 1: Métis Nation BC staff distributing emergency kits to citizens.

<sup>4</sup> Métis National Council, "Métis Nation Emergency Management Review", [www.metisnation.ca/uploads/documents/MNC%20Emergency%20Management%20Report%20-%20FINAL.pdf](http://www.metisnation.ca/uploads/documents/MNC%20Emergency%20Management%20Report%20-%20FINAL.pdf)

## What is this priority area about?

The principles and recommendations in this section follow the United Nations' Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015), to which Canada is a signatory. The Sendai Framework recognizes that all Indigenous Peoples through their experiences and traditional knowledge systems, provide an

important contribution to the development and implementation of plans and mechanisms in responding to disasters and emergencies. The Sendai Framework follows the international best practice of the four principles of emergency management:

### MITIGATION



Identify and remove/  
reduce hazards

### PREPAREDNESS



Establish capacity to  
anticipate, respond  
to, and recover from  
emergencies

### RESPONSE



Measures taken to  
prevent and reduce  
adverse effects of  
emergencies

### RECOVERY



Measures taken  
to recover from an  
emergency

## Actions:

1. **The increase Métis Nation's capacity to mitigate, prepare, respond, and recover from climate-related emergencies through direct, sustainable, and long-term federal funding while putting continued pressure on all levels of government to act on existing emergency management-related commitments and recommendations.**
  - a. Review the governments' progress to date on existing commitments and press on the government to address gaps, including updating and modernizing emergency management legislation to align with Canada's international commitments (e.g., to the Sendai Framework and UNDRIP) that will ensure Métis' inherent right of self-government
  - b. Advocate for 'Loss and Damage' (see text box on page 39) funding mechanisms as a national response to climate events affecting Métis communities, property, and livelihoods.
  - c. Ensure long-term, sustainable emergency management funding and capacity development, which protects culture, identity, and community for future generations of Métis citizens.
  - d. Through the PBM Working Group on Emergency Management, establish a Métis Nation Emergency Management Preparedness and Response Sub Accord.



Photo 2: MNC and GMs presenting Métis climate perspectives at UNFCCC COP28 in Dubai (Names left to right: Dane de Souza (MNC), Leona Shaw (MNBC), Jennifer Pylypiw (MNA), Cole Chretien (MN-S), Jordyn Playne (MNO) and Kate Gillis (MNC)).



Photo 3: Dane de Souza (MNC) presenting on a panel on Loss and Damage at the UNFCCC COP 28 in Dubai.

## Loss and Damage

While Canada advocates for inclusive Loss and Damage funding mechanisms for the Global South, it has not done the same on the domestic front. Indigenous communities across Canada, while often cited as the ones hardest hit by climate change, cannot access those funds for Loss and Damage. More specifically, no funding has been provided for Métis-specific Emergency Management despite its fiduciary duty to the Métis Nation under Section 35 of the constitution.

### 2. Increase coordination and capacity across the Métis Nation to prepare and respond to climate emergencies.

- a. Integration of Métis within government emergency management systems, recognizing a geographically dispersed Nation with centralized and modern governance structures, has a vital role to play in serving vulnerable citizens and providing cultural safety.
- b. Build long-term, reciprocal, and effective emergency management capacity for all Métis Nation governments, including
  - c. hiring dedicated emergency management staff for each GM and building capacity at the local level.
  - d. Ensure that the Métis Nation can properly resource emergency management and policy staff to continue engagement in government and public dialogue on this topic.
  - e. Ensure that post-disaster funding includes guarantees to 'Build Back Better' as per the Sendai Framework and, thus, increase future climate resiliency and recovery funding for communities.

- e. Explore creating a repository of information, resources, and modalities geared toward cooperative Métis emergency preparedness and emergency management.

**3. Mitigate climate hazards by building relationships with regional partners to ensure Métis' right of self-government is respected and Métis voices are included at emergency management planning tables.**

- a. Develop coordination agreements, improve regular communication channels, and integrate Métis knowledge and resources into relevant municipal, provincial, federal, and private emergency management institutions and agencies.
- b. Ensure that hazards identification and risk assessments (HIRA) integrate Métis experiences, science, and knowledge recognizing that Métis communities hold inherent knowledge of their lands and a deep understanding of their citizens.
- c. Develop international relationships with emergency management agencies and Indigenous kin to improve resiliency and resource sharing on global emergency management aid.

**4. Increase support for emergency mitigation and preparedness planning for the Métis Nation, GMs, communities, and citizens.**

- a. Review, prioritize and act on recommendations from the Métis Nation Climate Change and Health Vulnerability Assessment and the MNC Emergency Management Review.

- b. Support GMs, communities, and citizens to create and/or improve their own emergency management plans; incorporate community perspectives and local realities into these plans while also increasing cooperative capacity and community mobilization.

**5. Increase Métis capacity to mitigate, prepare, respond, and recover from climate emergencies through education and training for Métis governments, organizations, and citizens.**

- a. Provide education in emergency management and risk identification, plus develop learning goals for MNC and GM staff.
- b. Use Emergency Management training to speed up mobilization and coordination across the Nation during an event.
- c. Adequately fund GMs as public safety providers with the capacity to secure culturally safe Métis volunteers who are trained, qualified, and prepared to respond to climate-related emergencies and evacuations.
- d. Develop and implement integrated systems and resources to improve cultural safety for Métis across all levels of Emergency Support Services (ESS) and healthcare service systems.
- e. Adequately fund GMs to support their citizens' health and well-being during the emergency response and recovery phases.



## PRIORITY 4: HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

### Long-Term Outcome

*Rooted in community, we are a happy, healthy, and resilient Métis Nation.*

Climate change is increasing the compounding health risks faced by Métis people and all our relations. Health impacts due to climate change affect Métis people uniquely due to their close relationship with the land/water and the diversity of where Métis people live and spend time with nature. The intersection of climate change and health must be recognized and understood when identifying improvements to health systems such as adjustments to legislation, policies, funding, and programs.

The Métis Nation Climate Change Strategy aligns with the Métis Nation Health Strategy, which summarizes the Métis vision for distinctions-based Indigenous health legislation: Métis Vision for Health, and includes the priority area of Climate Change Impact on Health.

The Métis Nation Climate Change & Health Vulnerability Assessment demonstrates that threats posed by climate change are interconnected and far-reaching. The pull-out box below includes examples of how climate change impacts our health and well-being.

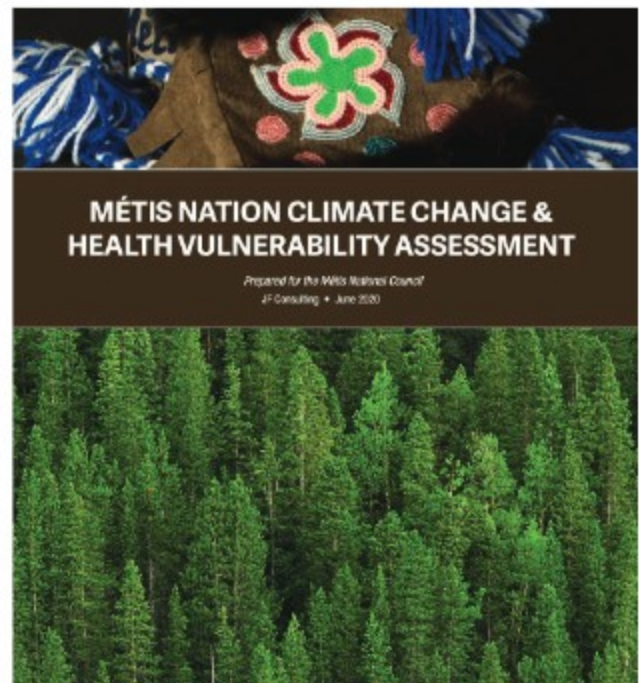
The Métis Nation is currently left out of climate change and health-related federally funded programs. Governing Members are left to seek other funding sources, such as through negotiations with provincial governments, which are often unsuccessful and lead to large gaps in funding and capacity to address climate change and health-related challenges. Funding is urgently needed to better prepare for these increasing health risks related to a changing

***“When we are sick, the land is sick.”  
“The health of a person is at the root. We need to fix the roots.”***

***Quotes from Métis participants at the MNC  
Climate and Health workshop in 2022***



climate. It is necessary to listen to and amplify Métis communities and the diverse voices within, such as Métis Youth, the gender-diverse community, and Elders, especially in relation to climate and health.



*Photo 4: Cover page of the Métis Nation Climate Change & Health Vulnerability Assessment Report.  
Source: [www.metisnation.ca/what-we-do/health](http://www.metisnation.ca/what-we-do/health)*

## *Examples of how climate change impacts our health*

*Examples drawn, in part, from the Métis Nation's Environment and Health workshop (2022)*

### **Physical**

- Physical health impacts from wildfire smoke, heat waves, mould from homes being flooded, and concerns about accessing clean drinking water after a drought, flood or extreme weather event
- Heightened risks to personal safety on the land due to erosion, poor air quality, and unpredictable weather
- Increased climate and health vulnerabilities related to lack of access to traditional foods, medicines, and harvesting areas
- Increased exposure to respiratory, cardiovascular, infectious and vector-borne diseases, and water-borne illnesses.

### **Emotional**

- Emotional distress from losses and damages, evacuations related to increased weather events, and poorly managed emergency responses

### **Mental**

- Eco-anxiety, ecological grief, eco-paralysis, overwhelm, and despair for the future (especially among Métis Youth)
- Trauma from climate-induced disasters
- Exacerbation of intergenerational trauma due to loss and displacement
- Stress caused by changes to economic stability due to climate change impacts

### **Spiritual**

- Spiritual discord created by colonialism and harmful resource extraction
- Forcing changes to integral aspects of Métis culture, including access to traditional foods, medicines, and important cultural places, all of which are interlinked with the health and well-being of the Métis Nation
- There is a deep sense that the land is suffering due to human causes of neglect and abuse
- Loss or degradation of spaces to connect with and/or honour our ancestors

## What is this priority area about?

### FOOD SECURITY



The ability to control and sustainably manage our traditional food systems, ensuring cultural integrity, self-determination, and food security

### INTERCONNECTED WELLNESS



Establishing the interconnected relationship between an individual's physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health, and how it is directly connected to our culture, history, and the well-being of the land and waters

### ACCESS TO MEDICINE



The ability to access both modern and traditional medicines (i.e., plant medicines or ceremony) to enhance physical, mental, emotional, cultural, and/or spiritual health

## Actions:

1. **Advocate for sustainable, predictable, flexible, and distinctions-based funding for Métis Governments to advance priorities related to climate change and health.**
  - a. Work closely with the federal government to both develop the Indigenous Health Legislation and implement the Métis Nation Health Accord as paths toward increasing Métis-specific climate and health programming.
  - b. MNC and GM environment leadership support the advancement of the priorities laid out in the Métis Vision for Health through collaboration on topics related to health, well-being, and climate change impacts.
  - c. Identify key knowledge gaps to support targeted new research and development funds, such as establishing dedicated research grants to advance the state of knowledge surrounding climate change and human health impacts on the Métis.
2. **Conduct research to understand, inform, and determine action on climate impacts on Métis health and well-being.**
  - a. Governing Members to engage with Métis citizens to assess gaps, improve data collection, and increase the Métis Nation's understanding of the diverse health impacts of the changing climate.
  - b. Identify and highlight the local risks for Métis citizens through the merging of health and scientific data so that Métis perceptions of risk are included in the decision-making process.

- c. Collect additional information on Métis health status and outcomes (in collaboration with regional health authorities).
  - d. Co-develop indicators with federal, provincial, and regional agencies to track climate change impacts on Métis health and well-being, ensuring Métis-specific data is included and monitored within adaptation and/or mitigation planning.
- 3. Assess and address, where possible, climate change impacts on relevant food systems and food security facing the Métis Nation.**
- a. Develop a baseline understanding of how climate change is impacting our food security and accessibility to traditional Métis foods, agriculture, food systems, and medicines.
  - b. Develop programming to minimize the impacts of climate change on and further build resilient traditional Métis foods systems.
- 4. Build the knowledge and capacity of Métis governments and citizens to better understand the relationship between climate change and wellness.**
- a. Support awareness, outreach, and capacity building at the community level to help Métis communities understand and address climate change and its associated health risks and impacts.
  - b. Develop training programs and hire specialists to work across all Métis Nation governments to better integrate climate change and health-related information and develop our knowledge.
- c. Explore ways to better understand the degree to which climate change is impacting the health of the Nation across all regions through a diverse and intersectional lens. Develop knowledge and capacity to address eco-anxiety, ecological grief, and trauma caused by climate-induced emergencies.
- 5. Support Métis governments to plan, manage, and monitor programming that reduces climate change health impacts by promoting Métis citizens' wellness through the reconnection with nature and culture.**
- a. Develop specific climate and health plans that address food security, and access to medicines, and ensure they are integrated within climate change action plans.
  - b. Encourage and support programs that foster cultural and community connections to the land and water, to each other, and to Métis way of life as a means of promoting holistic health and well-being to build climate resilience.





## PRIORITY 5: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPERITY

### Long-Term Outcome

*Our bold entrepreneurial spirit has led us to prosper and be active contributors to the clean economy in a way that aligns with our values, culture, and deep connection to Mother Earth.*

We must empower the Métis Nation with Métis-specific economic opportunities for long-term prosperity in a climate-conscious future. This transition will include access to affordable capital, energy-transition job readiness, and partnerships.

Currently, the Métis Capital Corporations are oversubscribed and can lend only up to \$1.5 million in financing per Métis business or group of related businesses, leaving major projects out of reach. Additionally, pan-Indigenous financial institutions are not compatible with Canada's commitment to a bilateral relationship with the Métis Nation, and their lack of non-repayable portions of lending leaves the Métis Nation behind.

***Economic self-determination for the Métis Nation is pursued with an understanding that the land and resources belong to generations of the past, present, and future. The Métis Nation strives to pursue economic development in a manner of reciprocity with the land and its inhabitants, at present and for the next 7 generations.***



Métis governments are lacking in capacity to engage in natural resource projects and regulation development, particularly in the areas of duty to consult, lands and resources, economic development, and environment. Lack of support from provincial governments, industry, and regulatory bodies means engagement is low or non-existent.

We will shift away from colonial economic practices, which have led us to the current climate crisis, and instead dig deeper into our roots of Métis stewardship and entrepreneurship. This includes addressing challenges in single-resource economy communities and emphasizing Métis ownership.

We aspire to be bold, fostering a self-sustaining, circular economy rooted in our legacy of land stewardship. Acknowledging the importance of Youth involvement, we recognize their role in shaping our sustainable future and encourage their active participation in building this path forward.



### *Just Transition*

The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines the concept of "just transition" as: "Greening the economy in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned, creating decent work opportunities and leaving no one behind."

Based on the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change Final Advocacy Paper on "Just Transition" for UNFCCC COP 28, the only way to ensure the achievement of the Paris Agreement Goal of 1.5°C global temperature rise, thereby limiting the adverse impacts on the ways of life, food, and ecosystems of Indigenous Peoples around the world, is for all states to commit to an equitable and rights-based phase-out of fossil fuels at COP 28, coupled with a commitment to a fair and just transition to sustainable, non-carbon-based energy sources.

Current discussions of "Just Transition" are solution-based and can make a substantive contribution to the reduction of greenhouse gasses, prevention of loss and damage, protection of the planet's ecosystems, biodiversity, and Indigenous Peoples' ways of life.

## What is this priority area about?

### MARKET READINESS AND ACCESS



Market readiness and access to capital

### BUSINESS & INVESTMENTS



Capital investments, partnerships

### WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT



Métis job creation and support, self-sufficiency

### NURTURING TALENT



Professional development, training, and capacity building

## Actions:

- 1. Conduct research to assess the current state, opportunities, and barriers to being active contributors to the clean economy in a way that aligns with our values and culture.**
  - a. Assess the current state of Métis employment, entrepreneurship, businesses, and economy.
  - b. Understand economic opportunities and barriers for supporting Métis workers and businesses to shift to a clean economy (e.g., market readiness, market access, etc.).
  - c. Ensure all research and data collected utilize an intersectional lens.
  - d. Engage and inspire Métis citizens and businesses on how we can be active contributors to the clean economy in a way that aligns with our values and culture.
- 2. Support and advocate for Métis entrepreneurs and businesses to participate in the low-carbon economy.**
  - a. Ensure Métis entrepreneurs and businesses have low-cost, low-risk, and Canada-backed access to capital to increase Métis participation in the low-carbon economy.
  - b. Develop sources of capital through Métis financial corporations that promote and support Métis low-carbon initiatives and circular economy opportunities.
  - c. Incentivize and promote the hiring and training of Métis businesses and workers on major low-carbon projects and initiatives.
- 3. Develop and expand partnerships to stimulate clean economic development and prosperity.**
  - a. Partner with industry and governments to support the hiring of Métis individuals and/or businesses related to the clean economy.
  - b. Partner with tech and educational institutions to provide education, training, and support for Métis citizens to better access and take part in the low-carbon economy in a way that aligns with our values and culture.
- 4. Invest in Métis-led business practices.**
  - a. Support the development and management of Métis business directories that advance the low-carbon economy and the Nation's climate priorities.
  - b. Support Métis involvement in trade policy that advances the Nation's climate goals, particularly in natural resource development and the protection of intellectual property.
- 5. Provide training and economic support.**
  - a. Offer scholarships and bursaries for Métis citizens who want to advance or start their career in the green economy and/or shift away from the fossil fuel industry.
  - b. Offer Métis-specific training and development for Métis citizens and businesses to accelerate their involvement in the low-carbon economy.



## MOVING FORWARD

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This Strategy is the culmination of Métis voices, ideas, hopes and ambitions and is representative of individuals and communities from across the Métis Homeland. Although this Strategy is a technical and aspirational document, its intent is to act as a roadmap for the continuation of the Métis path of stewarding all of our relations in a respectful way. The spirit of this Strategy honours the legacy of those who have come before us in building a better future for those who come next. Métis culture and identity is resilient; sustainable; adaptive; innovative; inclusive; cooperative; collaborative; and rooted in the lands, skies, waters, and relations we belong to as much as they belong to us.

This Strategy belongs to you (the reader), regardless of your background, identity, career path, or heritage. The authors of this Strategy and the voices they represent urge you to see yourself in the solutions and ambitions within this Strategy. We invite you to join us in forwarding the knowledge, science, tradition and culture passed to us by our ancestors and kin as we come

together to heal Mother Earth, and cross borders and boundaries to lead in the climate action needed. We invite you to join us in overcoming barriers, learning, understanding, partnering and reconciling the truth of the Métis connection to our lands, waters, skies and relations.

The Métis Nation has always walked in two worlds. As our world and our place in it continues to evolve, we will continue to walk this path as a Nation that unites and communicates between worlds. This Strategy will be realized through enhanced global, national, and local inclusion of Métis voices in providing strong climate leadership and solutions that elevate our voices as climate leaders. As the challenges we face continue to change, this Strategy will grow and adapt to meet them. The destination of the road in which this Strategy maps out is a brighter, healthier, and sustainable future for all.

## ELDER'S CLOSING WORDS

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### *Our Path Forward*

The Métis National Council, Governing Members from Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Ontario and their staff have worked diligently in developing a Métis Nation Climate Change Strategy.

A Strategy that respects the invaluable contributions, wisdom and knowledge of our ancestors and their determination, strength and resilience that continues to guide our people forward in a way that inspires and influences our Métis ways of living and being.

A Strategy that continues to work towards implementing our traditional knowledge in the federal framework of national and international climate change policy.

A Strategy that addresses our commitment to be good stewards of our world and to use our values, culture, and deep connection and relationship to each other and this world left in our keeping.

Our national, provincial governments and Métis Youth clearly understand the key barriers we face - that Métis culture and knowledge is undervalued and our voices are often being overlooked and dismissed.

Métis people are grateful that governments are moving forward in braiding our traditional science with western science. More needs to be done to address the difficulty of scientists to go beyond

measuring effects. They need to get a better understanding of the relationships our people have to water, lands, air, flora, fauna and how to incorporate it in their research and reports.

Our path forward can be challenging, and continues to be an upward battle, but I have every confidence that we will one day have capacity to establish and validate our scientific traditional knowledge on a world stage.

We are truly blessed with our Métis traditional science, our leadership, and the determination and resilience of our Métis people that will continue on this path until we are at the decision-making table at UN Global Summits on Climate Change and the world recognizes that our invaluable contribution creates greater balance in the way we look after our planet.

For those who are working in the climate change space, I encourage you to find strength and resilience through teachings passed down to us from our ancestors, our leaders, our Elders, and knowledge holders. Our Métis traditions, heritage, language, culture and distinct identity give us a sense of purpose and belonging. Always remember the perseverance and determination of those who brought us to today - for we are no longer a forgotten people and our voices, our knowledge, and wisdom are so needed to create positive change to matters that impact our environment.

*- Elder Norma Spicer*

## GLOSSARY

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### *Climate Change*

Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. Since the 1800s, human activities have been the main driver of climate change, primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels, resulting in consequences that now include, among others, intense droughts, water scarcity, severe fires, rising sea levels, flooding, melting polar ice, catastrophic storms, and declining biodiversity.

(Source: Based on the definition from the United Nations; for more information, visit: [www.un.org/en/climatechange/what-is-climate-change](http://www.un.org/en/climatechange/what-is-climate-change))

### *Métis*

Métis means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Indigenous peoples, is of historic Métis Nation ancestry, and is accepted by the Métis Nation.

### *Métis Nation*

Métis Nation emerged during the fur trade in the historic Northwest during the 18th century. Following the mixing of Indigenous women and European fur traders, a distinct process of ethnogenesis occurred establishing separate, distinct communities along the fur-trading routes that span the Métis Homeland.

### *Governing Members (GM)*

Governing Members (GM) of the Métis National Council are the democratically elected leadership of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government of the Métis Nation within Alberta (also referred to as MNA), the Métis Nation British Columbia, and the Métis Nation of Ontario.

### *Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak (LFMO)*

Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak/Women of the Métis Nation (LFMO) speaks as the national and international voice for Métis women. LFMO aims to consult, promote, and represent the personal, spiritual, social, cultural, political, and economic interests and aspirations of women, two-spirit, and gender-diverse people of the Métis Nation across the Homeland.

### *Nature Stewardship*

Nature stewardship entails connecting with and maintaining reciprocal relationships with entire ecosystems for the well-being of nature and people – both current and future generations – in a manner that preserves cultural continuity and biodiversity.

### *Self-determination*

Refers to the inherent right of the Métis people to govern their own affairs, including the ability to determine their cultural, social, economic, and political development priorities and strategies, in accordance with their distinct identity, history, processes, and institutions as affirmed by the United Nations Declaration on Indigenous Peoples.

## STRATEGY AT A GLANCE

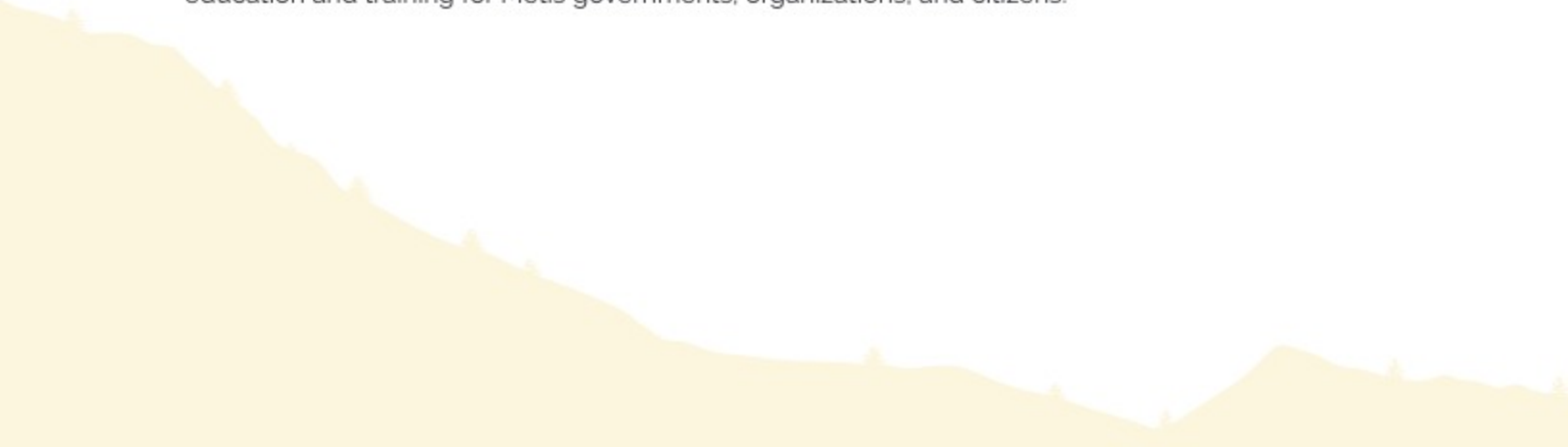
### Priority 1: Nature Stewardship

1. Increase direct and long-term, sustainable funding, support, and programming that promotes active Métis land stewardship in urban, rural, and remote settings.

### Priority 2: Sustainable Energy and Infrastructure

1. Develop a system across the Métis Nation to track greenhouse gas emissions and measure progress towards the 2050 emissions-reduction target.
2. Secure access to affordable and reliable carbon-free electricity for the Métis Nation.
3. Ensure Métis access to low- and zero-emissions modes of transportation.
4. Increase the energy efficiency of new and existing Métis Nation infrastructure, homes, and buildings.
5. Explore opportunities to reduce emissions from food, agriculture, and waste systems.

### Priority 3: Emergency Management and Climate Resilience

1. Increase the Métis Nation's capacity to mitigate, prepare, respond, and recover from climate-related emergencies through direct, sustainable, and long-term federal funding while putting continued pressure on all levels of government to act on existing emergency management-related commitments and recommendations.
  2. Increase coordination and capacity across the Métis Nation to prepare and respond to climate emergencies.
  3. Mitigate climate hazards by building relationships with regional partners to ensure Métis' right of self-government is respected and Métis voices are included at emergency management planning tables.
  4. Increase support for emergency mitigation and preparedness planning for the Métis Nation, GMs, communities, and citizens.
  5. Increase Métis capacity to mitigate, prepare, respond, and recover from climate emergencies through education and training for Métis governments, organizations, and citizens.
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## Priority 4: Health and Well-Being

1. Advocate for sustainable, predictable, flexible, and distinctions-based funding for Métis Governments to advance priorities related to climate change and health.
2. Conduct research to understand, inform, and determine action on climate impacts on Métis health and wellbeing.
3. Assess and address, where possible, climate change impacts on relevant food systems and food security facing the Métis Nation.
4. Build the knowledge and capacity of Métis governments and citizens to better understand the relationship between climate change and wellness.
5. Support Métis governments to plan, manage and monitor programming that reduces climate change health impacts by promoting Métis citizens' wellness through the reconnection with nature and culture.

## Priority 5: Economic Development and Prosperity

1. Conduct research to assess the current state, opportunities, and barriers to being active contributors to the clean economy in a way that aligns with our values and culture.
  2. Support and advocate for Métis entrepreneurs and businesses to participate in the low-carbon economy.
  3. Develop and expand partnerships to stimulate clean economic development and prosperity.
  4. Invest in Métis-led business practices.
  5. Provide training and economic support.
- 

## GRATITUDE

*There are several people to thank for helping us develop and share this Strategy.*

### MNCCS Writing Team

The writing team included Environment and Climate Change Directors and technical staff from each of the Governing Members (MNBC, MNA, MN-S, MNO), MNC, and LFMO. The writing team met several times over the course of one and a half years (in-person and virtually) to develop and draft the Strategy.

Members of the writing team include Erin Myers (MNC), Dane de Souza (MNC), Sydney Castro (MNC), Leona Shaw (MNBC), Drew Stewart (MNBC), Andres Filella (MNA), Jennifer Pylypiw (MNA), Mary Pupo (MNA), Ron Henderson (MNA), Cole Chretien (MN-S), Shalyn Fladager (MN-S), Jesse Fieldwebster (MNO), Krista Clement (MNO), Sharon Morin (LFMO), Mariana Liberman (LFMO). Jane Porter and Vanessa Monteiro of Bridge Building Group supported the writing team through the facilitation and development of the Strategy.



*Photo 5: Photo of the writing team at the first Métis Nation Climate Change Strategy writing workshop in 2023*

### Métis Youth

Métis Youth, including members of the National Métis Youth Council, were involved in shaping the vision and opening statement and reviewed the Strategy. Many thanks to Gabrielle Moreau (MNO), Autumn Laing-LaRose (MN-S), Rebecca Lavallee (MNA), and Shaughn Davoren (MNBC). And many thanks to all the youth who submitted incredibly inspiring artwork for the cover of this Strategy.

### President Caron

Great thanks and appreciation to President Caron for recognizing the importance of developing a National Climate Strategy and for continued support to advance Métis climate leadership.

### Métis Elder

Special thanks to Elder Norma Spicer from MNA who reviewed the Strategy and offered a beautiful closing statement.

### Graphic Design

Special thanks to Darcy Senger (graphic designer) (MNBC) who beautifully designed the Strategy, and to Nevada Lynn (artist and illustrator) (MNBC) who developed three powerful art pieces to reflect the vision of the Strategy.

### Government of Canada

Thank you to the Indigenous Climate Leadership Team at CIRNAC and ECCC for supporting this vital work. The Métis Nation Climate Change Strategy not only advances reconciliation but self-determination.



### **About the Front Cover:**

### **Winner of the Métis National Council 's Youth Cover Page Art Contest**

January 31st, 2024

Dear Métis National Council,

*Reflecting on the issue of climate change, I think of cherished memories from my childhood growing up in Northwestern Ontario. I recall the summers filled with adventures in the woods, gathering mushrooms and berries with my grandparents by my side. The vivid image of wildflowers decorating our yard. Winter brought its own delights, with days spent on the ice, patiently waiting for walleye or trout to bite. Those recollections are peppered with antics of the fox family that stole our shoes from the porch and my unsuccessful attempts to capture hummingbirds with a fishing net. My bond with nature has shaped the person I am today in profound ways.*

*However, as I struggle with the realities of climate change, I am troubled by its critical implications for our collective future. I worry about the legacy we leave for generations to come. Will they inherit the same experiences that shaped my upbringing? Will they have the opportunity to create their own memories amidst the wonders of nature, surrounded by the richness of flora and fauna that defined my own childhood? As I contemplate the uncertain path ahead, these questions weigh heavily on my mind.*

*I wanted my climate strategy artwork to showcase the essence of Northwestern Ontario while emphasizing the profound impact of climate change on Earth. Drawing inspiration from Métis beadwork, I shaped my piece with symmetry, symbolizing balance, and harmony. Throughout the artwork, symmetry reigns supreme, except for two elements: the Earth and the fire. The fire symbolizes the assault of climate change, engulfing our planet in its destructive embrace. Amidst the flames, Earth cannot have balance and harmony. Climate change disrupts our water, weather patterns, and the entirety of nature's offerings—not just within my own stories but within the collective experiences of us all.*

*I aspire for my artwork to encapsulate the urgency of strategizing against climate change. We must unite to navigate the flames and emerge on the other side before the fire engulfs us all. I hope future generations will look back on their childhood with the same fondness for nature that I do. There is an abundance we must safeguard and advocate for.*

Sincerely,

Teagan Neufeld

