

The National Indigenous Economic Development Board

2022 Annual Report



The National Indigenous Economic Development Board (NIEDB)

NIEDB Secretariat

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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Message from the Chairperson | 3 |
| About the Board | 5 |
| <i>Vision.....</i> | <i>5</i> |
| <i>Mission.....</i> | <i>5</i> |
| <i>Mandate</i> | <i>5</i> |
| <i>Members.....</i> | <i>5</i> |
| <i>Committees.....</i> | <i>7</i> |
| Executive Committee | 7 |
| Economic Progress Report Committee..... | 7 |
| Procurement Committee | 7 |
| Women’s Economic Policy Committee..... | 7 |
| Infrastructure and Connectivity Committee..... | 7 |
| International Issues Committee | 8 |
| Strategic Planning Committee | 8 |
| Communications Committee | 8 |
| HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR | 9 |
| SPECIAL EVENTS..... | 9 |
| <i>BC AFN Economic Development Forum</i> | <i>9</i> |
| <i>ProChile’s Opening Pathways for Women and Indigenous Peoples: Canada</i> | <i>9</i> |
| <i>Expo Labrador 2022</i> | <i>10</i> |
| <i>OECD’s Investing in Indigenous Communities: Reducing Inequalities and Increasing Opportunities</i> | <i>10</i> |
| <i>Economic Reconciliation and the Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.....</i> | <i>10</i> |
| <i>Strategic Partnerships Initiative Annual Workshop.....</i> | <i>11</i> |
| <i>Circle for Aboriginal Relations Society</i> | <i>11</i> |
| <i>The Circle for Aboriginal Relations Society.....</i> | <i>11</i> |
| <i>Nunavut Mining Symposium</i> | <i>11</i> |
| <i>New Zealand Maori Economic Development Gathering</i> | <i>11</i> |
| APPEARANCES AND PRESENTATIONS..... | 12 |
| <i>Dawn Madahbee Leach – CIRNAC’s Engagement on International Indigenous Issues.....</i> | <i>12</i> |
| <i>Dawn Madahbee Leach – House of Commons Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs.....</i> | <i>12</i> |
| <i>Sandra Sutter – Circle for Aboriginal Relations Society.....</i> | <i>12</i> |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| <i>The Circle for Aboriginal Relations Society (CFAR) hosted it's annual conference on September 29th, 2023 in Enoch First Nation in Alberta. CFAR's members are individuals across Industry, Government and Communities who work as Indigenous Community Industry Relations practitioners. 2022's Conference Theme was focused on Authentic Engagement and Sandra Sutter presented on the NIEDB and the National Indigenous Economic Strategy.....</i> | <i>12</i> |
| <i>Victoria LaBillois – House of Commons Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates.....</i> | <i>12</i> |
| BOARD MEETINGS..... | 13 |
| <i>Virtual Meeting</i> | <i>13</i> |
| <i>Board Meeting in Listuguj.....</i> | <i>13</i> |
| <i>Board Meeting in Whitecap Dakota First Nation.....</i> | <i>14</i> |
| <i>Board Meeting in Ottawa.....</i> | <i>15</i> |
| SPECIAL REPORTS..... | 16 |
| <i>National Indigenous Economic Strategy.....</i> | <i>16</i> |
| Looking Ahead | 17 |
| <i>2019 IEPR Recommendations Revisited.....</i> | <i>17</i> |
| <i>2023 Indigenous Economic Progress Report.....</i> | <i>17</i> |

Message from the Chairperson

On behalf of the National Indigenous Economic Development Board, I am pleased to present our Annual Report for 2022.

Our Board strongly believes that closing the opportunity gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples in the areas of economic participation, community development, education, employment, access to capital, housing, affordable food, and clean water is the way to build a real foundation for reconciliation.

For over 30 years, we have had a vision of a vibrant Indigenous economy, where Indigenous Peoples are economically self-sufficient and have achieved economic parity with the rest of Canada, and we are committed to providing strategic advice to government that will help advance that vision.

As Chairperson for the Board, I am proud of the important milestones we achieved in 2022 which have contributed to ensuring that federal policies and programs are working for Indigenous Peoples to support their wealth and well-being, including:

- Releasing of our reports and strategies:
 - The National Indigenous Economic Strategy;
 - Preparation of the 2023 Indigenous Economic Progress Report—to be released in late 2024.
- Hosting and attending special events:
 - In-person Board meetings in Listuguj, Whitecap Dakota First Nation, and Ottawa;
 - Economic Reconciliation and the Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples side event;
 - New Zealand Maori Economic Development Gathering;
 - Appearances at House of Commons Standing Committees and meetings with Government of Canada departments.

I would also like to congratulate two of our Board members on their achievements in 2022. Dr. Marie Delorme received the 2022 Award for Excellence in Aboriginal Relations from the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB). This award recognizes Dr. Delorme's gift for building connections between Indigenous Peoples and Canadian society through her various professional and voluntary commitments and we are proud to have her as a Board member. Chief Terrance Paul was also honored at the Public Policy Forum's 34th Annual Testimonial Dinner and Awards ceremony for his work and accomplishments as Chief and CEO of Membertou First Nation.



We are committed to addressing new and ongoing challenges through our work with communities, governments, industry, and academia. We look forward to continued and positive collaboration with these sectors as we work together to close the gaps. On behalf of the Board, I am profoundly grateful to the organizations and individuals in Canada and abroad for their contributions to our work and for helping shape our advice on Indigenous sustainable and economic development. I would also like to thank my fellow Board members for their leadership and valuable work. We look forward to the opportunities that 2023 will bring.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dawn Madahbee Leach". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dawn" being the most prominent.

Dawn Madahbee Leach
Chairperson
National Indigenous Economic Development Board

About the Board

Established in 1990, the National Indigenous Economic Development Board (NIEDB) is a non-partisan, national organization mandated to advise the Government of Canada on policies and programs related to Indigenous economic development. Comprised of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis community and business leaders from across Canada, the Board plays an important role in helping the federal government develop and implement policies and programs that respond to the unique needs and circumstances of Indigenous Peoples. The Board also provides a vital link between policy makers, federal departments, and Indigenous and non-Indigenous business and community leaders.

Vision

The Board's vision is a vibrant Indigenous economy, where Indigenous Peoples are economically self-sufficient and have achieved economic parity with Canadian society.

Mission

The NIEDB is committed to providing advice and guidance to the federal government on issues related to Indigenous economic opportunities that empower the Indigenous Peoples of Canada to have a voice in government policy.

Mandate

To advise the Minister of Indigenous Services Canada and other federal ministers on policies, programs, and program coordination as they relate to Indigenous economic development.

Members



Dawn Madahbee Leach
Chairperson, Ontario

General Manager,
Waubetek Business
Development Corporation



Victoria LaBillois
Vice-Chairperson, Quebec

Owner of Wejipeg
Excavation
Co-owner of Wejuseg
Construction Inc.



Chief Terrance Paul
Member-at-Large, Nova Scotia

CEO of Membertou Development Corporation



Hilda Broomfield Letemplier
Member, Newfoundland and Labrador

President/Chief Financial Officer, Pressure Pipe Steel Fabrication Ltd.



Dr. Marie Delorme
Member, Alberta

CEO of The Imagination Group of Companies



Ruth Williams
Member, British Columbia

Business Advisor/Project Manager of the Pathways to Technology Project with All Nations Trust Company



Sandra Sutter
Member, Alberta

Indigenous Manager for PWT and CGT Industrial
President for the Circle for Aboriginal Relations (CFAR) Society



Maxime Vollant
Member, Quebec

Head of Indigenous relations at the Rio Tinto-IOC mining company



Andy Moorhouse
Member, Quebec

Vice President of Economic Development, Makivik Corporation



Michael Bonshor, CPA, CMA
Member, British Columbia

President and CEO of Visions First Nations Financial Services/Ki'mola Indigenous Capital



Danielle Levine
Member, British Columbia

Entrepreneur and
Owner of Danielle Levine
Consulting



Dana Soonias
Member, Saskatchewan

Director of Economic
Development and
Employment Training
Services at the Saskatoon
Tribal Council



Bob Dickson
Member, Ontario

CEO of companies owned
by the Attawapiskat First
Nation

Committees

Executive Committee

Provides ongoing advice and guidance to the NIEDB in carrying out its roles, responsibilities, and mandate. Consists of the Board Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Ex-Officio Member.

Economic Progress Report Committee

Provides ongoing advice and guidance on the Indigenous Economic Progress Reports.

Procurement Committee

Focuses on the federal government's policies and programs, including the Procurement Strategy for Indigenous Business (PSIB) and related initiatives, and actively participates in the federal government's Indigenous Procurement Reference Group.

Women's Economic Policy Committee

Provides ongoing advice and guidance to the NIEDB in relation to Indigenous women in the domestic economy and within feminist foreign policy.

Infrastructure and Connectivity Committee

Provides ongoing advice and guidance to the NIEDB in relation to infrastructure and connectivity in Indigenous communities.

International Issues Committee

Provides ongoing advice and guidance to the NIEDB in relation to policy on international Indigenous economic development.

Strategic Planning Committee

Aids in the development of the NIEDB's Strategic Plan.

Communications Committee

Provides ongoing guidance on the Board's communication strategy including website content and development, social media content, media releases, Board interviews, etc.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

The 2022 year was a successful year for the Board. The Board continued to share its vision on a national and international level by attending various events, presenting to government, and publishing reports and strategies centered on Indigenous economic development.

The Board members work throughout the year to ensure they provide the most up-to-date and comprehensive advice and guidance related to Indigenous economic development. They aim to involve Indigenous communities, leaders, and change makers across the country and bring forward issues that are of direct concern to economic prosperity. They identify forums and networks where these conversations can be brought forward. They see value in partnering with individuals, organizations, and governments to help ensure that new and ongoing challenges are addressed.

With the help of the NIEDB Secretariat, they also identify key timeframes to put these ideas in front of government. Linking community realities into these forums is an important role the Board plays in ensuring First Nations, Métis, and Inuit voices from across Canada are heard in policy development.

The key highlights from the Board's work in 2022 include:

- Attending various events, including the BC Assembly of First Nations Economic Development Forum, the OECD's Investing in Indigenous Communities: Reducing Inequalities and Increasing Opportunities workshop, and the New Zealand Maori Economic Development Gathering;
- Appearing at the House of Commons' Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs to discuss Indigenous economic development;
- Meeting with Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans;
- Hosting in-person meetings again in Listuguj, Whitecap Dakota First Nation, and Ottawa;
- Releasing the National Indigenous Economic Strategy.

SPECIAL EVENTS

BC AFN Economic Development Forum

The BC Assembly of First Nations hosted its annual Economic Development Forum in the winter of 2022. The Forum features speakers from various industries and includes a trade show.

Dawn Madahbee Leach participated in the BC AFN Economic Development Forum on February 9, 2022. Ms. Madahbee Leach gave a presentation on the Board's work and spoke to the importance of promoting Indigenous economic development across Canada.

ProChile's Opening Pathways for Women and Indigenous Peoples: Canada

On behalf of the Board, Dawn Madahbee Leach participated in the ProChile Women's Event/Q&A session, *Opening Pathways for Women and Indigenous Peoples: Canada*, on March 31, 2022. Ms.

Madahbee Leach spoke about the Board and discussed “The Canadian perspective on gender equality, career growth, & development,” and provided recommendations related to:

- Indigenous women and entrepreneurship
- Access to capital and resources
- Engaged research body and data sovereignty
- Increasing representation of Indigenous women

Expo Labrador 2022

Every year, the Labrador North Chamber of Commerce hosts Expo Labrador, an economic development conference and trade show.

Sandra Sutter participated in the Expo Labrador 2022 conference on June 29, 2022 on behalf of the Board. Ms. Sutter contributed to the Panel Session on Indigenous-Led Economic Development through a presentation on the National Indigenous Economic Development Strategy.

OECD’s Investing in Indigenous Communities: Reducing Inequalities and Increasing Opportunities

Dawn Madahbee Leach participated in the OECD’s Indigenous Communities Workshop, *Investing in Indigenous Communities: Reducing Inequalities and Increasing Opportunities* on April 8, 2022. Ms. Madahbee outlined recommendations contained in the 2019 OECD Report on “Linking Indigenous Communities with Regional Development” and information in the National Indigenous Economic Strategy (NIES).

Economic Reconciliation and the Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

On April 25, 2022, the Government of Canada hosted a Side Event in New York entitled “Economic Reconciliation and the Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples” as part of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. In attendance were the Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, and the Honourable Minister Hajdu, Minister of Indigenous Services. The event was co-chaired by Winona Embuldeniya of Natural Resources Canada, and Jose Enrique Garcilazo, of the OECD.

Dawn Madahbee Leach participated in person at the event. At the Side Event, Ms. Madahbee Leach had the opportunity to engage with both Ministers, both of whom agreed to meet the Board at a face-to-face session planned for December 2022 in Ottawa. The event was an opportunity to share views on the implementation of the UN Declaration in various states, its links to the economic development of Indigenous Peoples, and how the Declaration can be leveraged as a tool for the full realization of the economic potential of Indigenous Peoples.¹

¹ [Read more and watch the full recording here](#)

Strategic Partnerships Initiative Annual Workshop

Victoria LaBillois participated in the Strategic Partnerships Initiative (SPI) annual Workshop from September 13-15, 2022, in Wendake, Quebec. The event was organized in partnership with la Commission de développement économique des Premières Nations du Québec et du Labrador. The theme for the Workshop was “Sharing the Path Towards Economic Reconciliation,” which focused on strengthening partnerships, performance, and outcomes of SPI Initiatives across the country, as well as federal public servants’ Indigenous cultural competencies.

Circle for Aboriginal Relations Society

The Circle for Aboriginal Relations Society (CFAR) hosted its annual conference on September 29th, 2023 in Enoch First Nation in Alberta. CFAR’s members are individuals across Industry, Government and Communities who work as Indigenous Community Industry Relations practitioners. 2022’s Conference Theme was focused on Authentic Engagement and Sandra Sutter presented on the NIEDB and the National Indigenous Economic Strategy.

Nunavut Mining Symposium

The Nunavut Mining Symposium Society hosted its annual Nunavut Mining Symposium from May 9th to 12th, 2022. The Symposium is the largest mining conference in Canada's North. It is focused on conversations about ESG, responsible development, and exploration.

Dawn Madahbee Leach was the keynote speaker and presented on the Board, its activities, and its priorities regarding mining and natural resource extraction.

New Zealand Maori Economic Development Gathering

Dawn Madahbee Leach participated in the New Zealand Maori Economic Development Gathering in August 2022 as a keynote speaker. Ms. Madahbee accompanied Minister of Indigenous Services, Patty Hajdu, as part of Canada’s Indigenous delegation, along with Dr. Brenda Gunn of the National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation, Gerri Sharpe, President of Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, and Sharon Nate, Executive Director (Education) of the Matawa Tribal Council.

The delegation witnessed the signing of the Indigenous Collaboration Arrangement between the Government of Canada and the Government of Aotearoa-New Zealand.² The Arrangement aims to promote and facilitate the socio-economic, political, educational, well-being, cultural, and environmental advancements of Indigenous Peoples in both countries and will be overseen by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), the department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs (CIRNAC), and Te Puni Kōkiri (the Ministry of Māori Development) for the Government of Aotearoa-New Zealand.

² [Read more here](#)

APPEARANCES AND PRESENTATIONS

Dawn Madahbee Leach – CIRNAC's Engagement on International Indigenous Issues

NIEDB Chairperson Dawn Madahbee Leach participated in CIRNAC's Engagement on International Indigenous Issues on February 16, 2022.

Dawn Madahbee Leach – House of Commons Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs

Dawn Madahbee Leach participated at the House of Commons Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs on February 11, 2022.

Ms. Madahbee Leach provided short-term recommendations on the topic of Barriers to Indigenous Economic Development. The recommendations included:

- co-develop the United Nations Declaration implementation process with Indigenous Peoples;
- better recognize Indigenous jurisdiction and legal frameworks;
- support the development of Indigenous-led institutions in areas, such as community infrastructure and procurement;
- better support the network of Indigenous Financial Institutions;
- increase funding for Indigenous economic and business development to ten percent of total federal spending on Indigenous Peoples; and
- implement the forthcoming National Indigenous Economic Strategy.

Sandra Sutter – Circle for Aboriginal Relations Society

The Circle for Aboriginal Relations Society (CFAR) hosted its annual conference on September 29th, 2023 in Enoch First Nation in Alberta. CFAR's members are individuals across Industry, Government and Communities who work as Indigenous Community Industry Relations practitioners. 2022's Conference Theme was focused on Authentic Engagement and Sandra Sutter presented on the NIEDB and the National Indigenous Economic Strategy.

Victoria LaBillois – House of Commons Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates

On December 5, 2022, NIEDB Vice-Chair Victoria LaBillois appeared at the House of Commons Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates.

Ms. LaBillois provided recommendations on the topic of Indigenous procurement. The recommendations included:

- immediately increase the low thresholds for non-competitive processes and sole-source contracting;

- increase the target for the total value of federal contracts awarded to Indigenous businesses so that it is proportionate to the Indigenous population in areas where it exceeds 5%;
- implement mandatory Indigenous cultural awareness training for procurement officials;
- monitor and report on an annual basis whether each federal department is meeting its mandated 5% Indigenous procurement target.

BOARD MEETINGS

Virtual Meeting

In February 2022, the Board met virtually to provide reports from the committees on their recent activities and next steps. The meeting featured a presentation from Chris Rainer from ISC on transferring program and service responsibilities to Indigenous control.

Board Meeting in Listuguj

In June 2022, a return to face-to-face meetings of the Board took place in Listuguj, Quebec, and featured reports from Board committees on their recent activities and next steps. The meeting also included presentations from the Listuguj Mi'gma'wei Mawio'mi Business Corporation, the Listuguj Natural Resources Department, Canada Economic Development for Quebec Region and Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Clearwater Seafoods, and Indigenous Services Canada. The Board also visited the Mesgi'g Ugju's'n Wind Farm and the local communities of Listuguj and Ugpi'Ganjig (Eel River Bar) First Nations.



From left to right: Fern Keeshig, Khaleel Khan, Dr. Marie Delorme, Dan Hughes, Danielle Levine, Chief Terrance Paul, Sandra Sutter, Dawn Madahbee Leach, Andy Moorhouse, Hilda Broomfield Letemplier, Victoria LaBillois, Maxime Vollant, Michael Bonshor, Bob Dickson

Board Meeting in Whitecap Dakota First Nation

In September 2022, the Board met in Whitecap Dakota First Nation, Saskatchewan. Along with committee updates, the meeting included presentations from First Nations Infrastructure Institute, Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan), George Gordon Developments Ltd., and Francois Gauvreau, Managers of the Strategic Partnerships Initiative Directorate, on the ISC Navigator Position.



From left to right: Andy Moorhouse, Michael Bonshor, Ruth Williams, Chief Terrance Paul, Dawn Madahbee Leach, Victoria LaBillois, Dana Soonias, Hilda Broomfield Letemplier, Bob Dickson, Sandra Sutter

Board Meeting in Ottawa

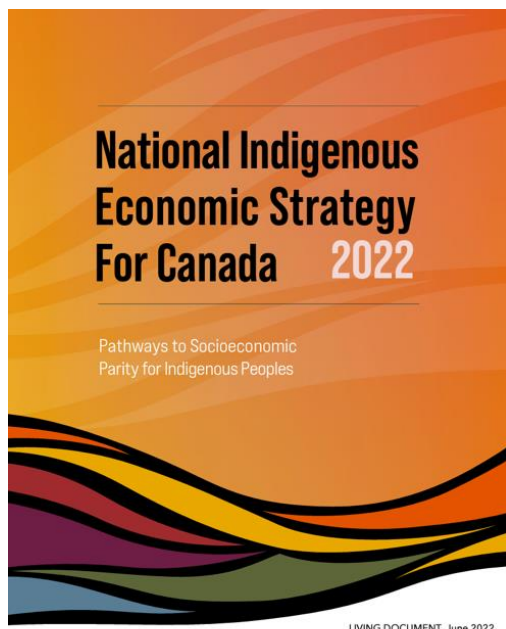
In December 2022, the Board met in Ottawa, Ontario. Minister Miller, Minister Hajdu and Minister Vandal were invited to join the Board in person for an extended conversation, including in relation to the National Indigenous Economic Strategy. The meeting featured presentations from Matt Garrow and Samuel Coxwell on the government's response to the NIES and the OECD's research agenda, Todd Evans on Export Development Canada's Indigenous Business Strategy, Valerie Gideon on the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario (FedNor), Eric Guimond from ISC on ISC's transformational approach to data, and Darryl Neufeld, Hugues Landriault, and Andrew Beynon on additions to reserves in the 2021 budget and policy redesign.



From left to right: Ruth Williams, Hilda Broomfield Letemplier, Sandra Sutter, Minister Dan Vandal, Victoria LaBillois, Minister Patty Hajdu, Dawn Madahbee Leach, Minister Marc Miller, Bob Dickson, Chief Terrance Paul, Michael Bonshor

SPECIAL REPORTS

National Indigenous Economic Strategy



The Board worked with the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB), the National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association (NACCA), Indigenous Works, and the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers (Cando) to develop the National Indigenous Economic Strategy (NIES).³ This Core Working Group collaborated with over two dozen Indigenous organizations in developing the Strategy. The NIES was launched on June 6, 2022.

The Strategy, as a living document, is a work in progress and is intended to guide all levels of government, Indigenous entities and communities, enterprises, and non-Indigenous organizations and institutions. It is designed to drive positive change, address longstanding inequities, and achieve inclusive growth for and with Indigenous communities.

This Strategy presents pathways for Canada to be the global leader in upholding Indigenous rights and includes 107 “Calls to Economic Prosperity” with a vision for economic reconciliation.⁴ These Calls fall within four pillars: finance, people, lands, and infrastructure. The Board presented the Strategy to various government departments throughout the year and will continue to do so in 2023.

³ [Read the full strategy here](#)

⁴ [Read more here](#)

Looking Ahead

2019 IEPR Recommendations Revisited



The 2019 IEPR Recommendations Revisited is expected to be released in early 2024. The report will detail the Government of Canada's actions related to the recommendations provided in the 2019 Indigenous Economic Progress Report. The report links the 2019 IEPR Recommendations to the National Indigenous Economic Strategy's Calls to Economic Prosperity. For each recommendation, the report identifies if progress has been made by the federal government or if more needs to be done.

2023 Indigenous Economic Progress Report

The 2023 Indigenous Economic Progress Report is expected to be released in 2024. The report will provide an updated, in-depth look at employment, income, community well-being, education, entrepreneurship and business development, governance, lands and resources, infrastructure. It will also include a gender-based analysis, as well as an examination of age and regional differences.

