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**VOLUNTEERS**

**SOUTHERN CHIEFS’ ORGANIZATION STAFF**
Heidi Cook—Conference Organizer;
Sharon Bruyere—Conference Coordinator;
Myrna Bushie, Ellen Conois, Sherr Daniel, Eleanor French, Darlene Littlejohn, Pam Marsden, Sandra MacDonald, Preston Routt, Doreen Sanderson, Annette Spence, Tia Whitford

The Water for Life conference and banquet ran smoothly with the help of our master of ceremonies: Chief Morris Shamacappo, Rollin River First Nation

Water for Life sessions were delivered with the kind participation of our skilled presenters and facilitators:

**PRESENTERS**
Michal Anderson (Manitoba Keewatinok Inninew Okimowin), Nicole Armstrong (Manitoba Water Stewardship), Rene Barker (Manitoba Model Forest), William Barlow (Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board), Kathy Bird (Matatoo Lake Medicine Lodge), Marcia Brewer (United Nations Interagency Task Force on Gender and Water), David Brooks (friends of the earth Canada), Heidi Cook (Southern Chiefs’ Organization Inc.), Davide Danyuk (Save Our Seine River Environment Inc.), James Dean (Cree Nation Tribal Health Centre), Thora Martina Herrmann (Université de Montréal), Kim Hickey (North Central Community Futures Development Corporation), Vince Keenan (Tembec Industries Inc.), Brian Kotas (Black River First Nation), Al Kristoferson (Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium Inc.), Allison McPhee ( Fisheries and Oceans Canada), Janet Morin (Peguis First Nation), Ani Naaldeo (Council of Canadians), Merrell Ann Phare (Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources), Roger Schroeder (Manitoba Water Stewardship), Nick Skoke (City of Winnipeg Water and Waste Department), Mitchell Timmerman (Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives), Rachel Van Caeseele (Climate Change Connection), Gaile Whelan Enns (Manitoba Wildlands), Peigi Wilson (Assembly of First Nations)

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**NOTE-TAKERS**
Group reporting of the breakout sessions was done with the assistance of our note-takers: Kimberly Almond, Jim Chibwoyna, Laure Dupont, Seraiti-Adeh Ghebre, Garity Hill, Adam Levin, Sarah Morgen, Megan Peasgood, Karen Press, Yvonnie Ricard, Robyn Rolla, Teri Stevenson, arranged by Judy Bambach at The People Bank

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A special thank you to the women and men of the Three Fires Society, for sharing their gifts of song and prayer with all the participants at the Water for Life conference: Eleanor Olson, Adrienne Atkinson, Alyssa Bird, Kathy Bird, Ramona Birt-Billy, Denise Cook, Gwenn Cook, Mary Crate, Lucy Ducharme, Stan LaPierre, Thelma Morrisseau, Katherine Morrisseau-Stclair, Anna Nelson, Ozhawesha, Harvey Olson, Mary-Lou Olson, Olivia Olson, Shawna Olson, Jason Parenteau

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**
A dynamic and compelling keynote address was given at the Water for Life banquet by: Dr. David Suzuki

**ENTERTAINMENT**
Musical entertainment at the Water for Life banquet was provided by original artists My Whirling Rainbow: Shirli Ewanhen (vocal, percussion), Rhonda Cameron (acoustic guitar), Andrew Muenier (Timbrel, drums), Mike Pawluk (vocal, electric & acoustic guitar)

Prophecy of the Whirling Rainbow: One day all the colors of the world will unite, in the great world of peace (5th world), to form a moving mass of energy known as the whirling rainbow.

**VENUE & LOGISTICS**
Conference logistics were planned with assistance from the exceptional team at the Ramada Marlborough Hotel, in particular Matthew Bear & Susan Joy
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Province of Manitoba, Water Stewardship
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**Pickerel Sponsors**
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Community Futures Partners of Manitoba

**Minnow Sponsors**
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Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation
Inland Audio Visual

Thank you also to the many other individuals and organizations who contributed to our success by registering for the Water for Life conference and purchasing tickets for the evening banquet.

MEEGWETCH! WOPIDA! EKOSI! THANK YOU!
Message from the Grand Chief

Boozhoo! Tansi! Wash-tay! Greetings! On behalf of the staff and member First Nations of the Southern Chiefs’ Organization, I would like to thank all of the elders, volunteers, presenters, facilitators, and delegates who helped to make the Water for Life Conference a success. I am pleased to present the Water for Life Conference Report, which was developed from the very important discussions that took place during the October 2005 conference.

The conference was a landmark event, raising the profile of water issues in our communities and demonstrating the keen interest we all have in protecting our sacred resources for generations to come. The Southern Chiefs’ Organization is honoured to have had the opportunity to coordinate such a meaningful and important gathering.

The Water for Life Conference came on the heels of a summer where Lake Winnipeg, Manitoba’s largest lake and the tenth largest lake in the world, experienced more outbreaks of deadly blue-green algae, and residents of Manitoba and Canada fought a losing battle to keep foreign water from Devils Lake, North Dakota out of the watershed. At the same time we were gathering to raise awareness of our water problems, the residents of Kashechewan First Nation began capturing national attention because of the ongoing problems with unsafe water on their reserve.

Clean water is a precious gift that none of us can live without, yet too often we take our supply for granted. In planning for the Water for Life Conference, we sought and received official recognition from the United Nations to have our event affiliated with the Water for Life International Decade for Action (2005 – 2015). In Canada there is an abundance of fresh water, but those of us who live near the water know that even our water supplies are at risk. The Water for Life Decade and the Water for Life Conference are about promoting and initiating actions which will ensure clean and healthy water for all.

Our friend and relative, Dr. David Suzuki, delivered a powerful message to us all about the urgency and critical importance of taking action now to protect our vital resources. As you read through this report, I hope you are inspired and energized to put the participant recommendations to use, and to incorporate changes in your own life to ensure we all have water for life.

Meegwetch! Ekosi! Wopida! Thank you!

Chris Henderson
Southern Grand Chief
Section One
WATER FOR LIFE: PROTECTING MANITOBA’S FRESHWATER RESOURCES

“Water for Life” describes our basic requirement for water in order to survive. It also captures the long-term goal of providing safe, clean water for many lifetimes. Water cleanses us inside and out; from the water that carries us into the world, to the fresh water that quenches our thirst, water sustains us. We must respect the gift of clean water by protecting it, and ensuring that future generations have “water for life”.

Water is fundamentally important to the health, well-being, economy, traditions and spirituality of First Nations. As traditional stewards of the land and water, we have a responsibility to ensure the sustainability of resources in perpetuity, for all the generations that follow us. As citizens and neighbours, we saw the need to come together to learn, discuss, and take action to protect our rich heritage.

Manitoba’s freshwater resources are at risk, as are water resources throughout the world. By understanding and using water responsibly at home, we share in the global solution.

The years 2005 to 2015 were declared the Water for Life International Decade for Action by the United Nations. The goal of the Water for Life Decade is to promote efforts to fulfill international
Water for Life provided a forum for education, awareness raising, networking, communication of ideas and strategies, and promoting opportunities for sustainable community and economic development.

commitments on water and related issues by 2015. Many of the Decade’s objectives aligned with those of the Southern Chiefs Organization in hosting the Water for Life conference, and the event was officially recognized in affiliation with the United Nations Water for Life International Decade for Action.

1.1. Objectives

Environmental issues are important to First Nations and Aboriginal people for very basic reasons, but often people face economic, social and geographic barriers to participating in public consultations and citizen engagements. The Southern Chiefs’ Organization initiated the Water for Life conference to reach out to the under-represented citizens of Manitoba, to provide a forum to communicate our unique perspectives and values, and connect with the mainstream community. The goals of the Southern Chiefs’ Organization to increase the involvement of First Nations in environmental stewardship activities and to increase community capacity to implement local initiatives led to our organization of the Water for Life conference.

The stated objectives of the Water for Life conference were to:

• Provide education, raise awareness and foster understanding of the many issues related to sustainable water and land management
• Increase awareness of First Nation and Aboriginal roles, rights and responsibilities in environmental management and protection
• Provide a forum for sharing strategies and innovative solutions to address environmental issues and stimulate community and economic development
• Provide an assessment of the current situation and develop a citizen-driven agenda for action

Water for Life indeed provided a forum for education, awareness raising, networking, communication of ideas and strategies, and promoting opportunities for sustainable community and economic development. Participants were engaged and inspired to put ideas into practice. This report on the proceedings will hopefully serve as a resource as well as a benchmark with which to measure our future successes.
1.2. Format

The Water for Life conference drew people together to learn about the multitude of issues that relate to water quality. The environmental, health and social aspects, sectoral and international issues, strategies, and specific actions being undertaken in Manitoba were covered in the context of First Nations and the community as a whole.

Each session of the conference was organized around a particular theme, with one reserved to allow for a repeat of the presentations that had a high level of interest shown by registered participants.

THE THEMES FOR THE SESSIONS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

First Session: Introduction to Issues
The first session provided conference participants with an overview of water issues. The intent was to raise participant awareness of current water conditions and management roles.

Second Session: Sectoral Issues
The second session looked at water issues through the lens of specific sectors. The activities of these sectors in influencing and protecting water resources were covered.

Third Session: International Issues
The third session dealt with local water issues in an international context. International experiences were discussed and related to local events.

TOP LEFT: WATER FOR LIFE PARTICIPANTS ENJOY A LAUGH

TOP RIGHT: MARCIA BREWSTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS PRESENTING AT THE WATER FOR LIFE CONFERENCE

BOTTOM RIGHT: DR. DAVID SUZUKI & GRAND CHIEF CHRIS HENDERSON POSE FOR A PICTURE AT THE WATER FOR LIFE BANQUET

PHOTO CREDIT: SCO COMMUNICATIONS

BOTTOM LEFT PHOTO CREDIT: SHANE CLEMENTS
Fourth Session: Repeat of High Interest Sessions
The fourth session was reserved to repeat high interest breakouts. Conference participants selected breakout preferences when registering, and those with a high level of interest indicated were repeated.

Fifth Session: Strategies
The fifth session focussed on different strategies that have been developed to address water quality challenges. Presenters discussed the components of their community and policy driven plans.

Sixth Session: Community Initiatives
The sixth session highlighted various types of initiatives being undertaken in the community to engage citizens in addressing environmental issues. Sharing success stories, lessons, and opportunities to expand projects and ideas ended the conference on a positive note.

1.3. Conference Overview
Water for Life was held on the 19th and 20th of October 2005, at the Ramada Marlborough Hotel in downtown Winnipeg. Twenty-four breakout sessions were convened over the two days, four of the breakouts were held twice to accommodate high participant interest. In addition, a panel presentation with four distinguished presenters and a presentation on the United Nations decade and water programme were respectively held during the lunch hour of each day. The conference keynote address was delivered by David Suzuki at an evening banquet on October 19th.

The Water for Life conference was attended by approximately 300 people, over 200 registrations were received, with an estimated additional 100 people made up of presenters, volunteers and walk-ins. The evening banquet on October 19th drew a crowd of almost 600 people to hear the keynote address.

The conference evaluations received from participants were overwhelmingly positive. The profile given to the issue of clean and healthy water, the range of speakers, and quality of information presented were the most valuable elements according to the evaluations.
2.1. Introduction to Issues

William Barlow
Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board,
“Our Collective Responsibility: Reducing Nutrient Loading to Lake Winnipeg”

William Barlow, Chair of the Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board, delivered a presentation on the Board’s first interim report to the Minister of Manitoba Water Stewardship, titled “Our Collective Responsibility: Reducing Nutrient Loading to Lake Winnipeg.” The report contains recommendations to guide the Province in achieving its goal of reducing phosphorus and nitrogen inputs to Lake Winnipeg to pre-1970 levels.

Key points made during the breakout session are summarized:

- The summer outbreaks of algae on Lake Winnipeg are caused by excessive nutrient loading. Phosphorus and nitrogen are entering the waterways, mainly from agricultural activities and municipal wastewater. Current drainage practices and lake regulation by Manitoba Hydro are two key contributing factors.
- Public education of the causes and solutions to nutrient loading needs to be increased. An awareness campaign should be initiated by the Province, using flyers, pamphlets, and advertisements to get the message out.
- William Barlow should visit more communities and outlying areas to deliver his presentation and gather information from local people.
- Water stewardship needs to be taught in schools. Environmental and water issues need to be incorporated into school curriculum and training workshops delivered for teachers, as well as having student involvement in water sampling, field work, and outdoor education.
- Community groups should engage in conducting their own research and water monitoring, and share the information with governments and others in their area. Environmental projects can be carried out with the involvement of youth Green Teams.
- Accountability and corporate responsibility needs to be encouraged. Consumers should write to producers of harmful products (i.e. detergents containing phosphates) and request product improvements.
- The impacts of water pollution need to be framed not only as an environmental problem but also an economic one. The commercial fishery is a staple of many local economies and it may be at risk.
- The Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board needs to increase its First Nation representation and inclusion efforts.
- Separate or sub-committees for northern Manitoba and First Nations around Lake Winnipeg should be created to increase awareness and engage communities in finding solutions, and to assist in the sharing of ecological knowledge with the Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board.
- Manitoba and Lake Winnipeg water issues need a higher profile federally. There should be greater representation in Ottawa of inland water issues.
- The scope of effort to protect water quality should not be limited to the Manitoba portion of the Lake Winnipeg watershed. Other jurisdictions within the watershed need to be engaged, and the impacts downstream of Lake Winnipeg in the Hudson Bay basin need to be examined.
- Governments need to increase citizens’ access to information on water quality.
- An inventory of the current drainage system should be created and an environmental assessment of drainage patterns needs to be undertaken. Existing drainage measures should be upgraded to match new standards.
- All new drains and ditches should be regulated and require permits. The public needs to be informed of and consulted on proposed drainage measures.
- Price tools and incentives for farmers are required. The provincial government should...
subsidize measures such as livestock fencing around streams and place higher taxes or levies on intensive livestock operations.

**Kathy Bird**  
MATOOTOO LAKE MEDICINE LODGE,  
“WATER TEACHINGS”

Kathy Bird, a Cree Elder, Registered Nurse, and co-founder of Matootoo Lake Medicine Lodge, delivered two presentations on teachings about water and traditional ways of showing respect. These breakout sessions differed from others in that participants did not form discussion groups, but rather listened to the presenter and posed questions following the talk.

**Key points made during the breakout sessions are summarized:**
- Water is sacred. Traditional teachings of the elders show us how to respect the value of water and the life it sustains. The traditional teachings of many different cultures are similar in this respect.
- Women are the caretakers of the water. Water ceremonies are held to give offerings each year when the ice melts and waters start running again. Water is part of many ceremonies.
- A water ceremony was held when Devils Lake water came through. The water was being abused but was still alive, and it was important to ask for forgiveness. To honour the water through a ceremony was important, especially to keep it pure for our children. There are also water ceremonies and water walks around the Great Lakes.
- If we do not take care of the water, a time will come when it is hard to get. Elders predicted the buying and selling of water when it was still unimaginable.
- Water is a great medicine. Drinking water every day can help to maintain a healthy body and remove toxins. Sicknesses can stem from our attitudes about water and having unhealthy diets.
- We cannot take from the earth without giving something back. Offerings are made to ask permission. Show respect by taking only what is needed and explaining to the spirits what it is needed for. Natural law is about sustainable harvesting, acknowledging that our descendants will require the means for survival in seven generations from now.
- Scientific studies have shown that talking to water can change its molecular structure.
- Ceremonies are a big part of teaching the youth how to respect the earth. It is important to teach the youth about preserving water, appreciating nature and traditional foods.
- Using outdoor toilets in the summer and refilling water bottles are good ways to preserve water and avoid the use of plastics.

**James Dean**  
CREE NATION TRIBAL HEALTH CENTRE,  
“ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH”

James Dean, Environmental Health Officer for the Cree Nation Tribal Health Centre, delivered a presentation on providing safe drinking water in First Nation communities. The presentation focussed on the question “what laws and regulations are needed to ensure safe water in First Nations communities?”

**Key points made during the breakout session are summarized:**
- There is a lack of laws and regulations to ensure safe drinking water in First Nations communities. Jurisdictional issues need clarification in order to ensure safe water is supplied without having overlap or duplication of efforts.
- Adults and children need education in water conservation and source protection. Traditional teachings should be part of the education about water.
- Root causes of contamination of water supplies include run-off from industry including mining, forestry, and agriculture, and improper waste disposal. There needs to be accountability for contamination of water supplies and greater prevention efforts.
- Commitment from First Nations leadership
is required to make safe water regulated and enforced on reserve.

- Water infrastructure must be in place and properly maintained to be effective. The necessary resources must be put towards building and operating water and wastewater treatment plants.
- Water plant operators need to understand laws and regulations and have certified training to do their job well. Liability issues in the case of a water outbreak are a concern.
- The time required to get water tests is considered quick but may be too long in case of an outbreak. Communities sharing laboratory resources have improved local testing capabilities.

Dr. Al Kristofferson

**LAKE WINNIPEG RESEARCH CONSORTIUM, “LAKE WINNIPEG SCIENCE”**

Dr. Al Kristofferson, Coordinator and founding member of the Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium, and a Fishery Management Biologist with Fisheries and Oceans Canada, delivered a presentation on the Consortium’s scientific research, results, and outreach activities around Lake Winnipeg.

Key points made during the breakout session are summarized:

- An overload of phosphorus is contributing to widespread algae outbreaks, which in turn contribute to lower oxygen levels in the water as they decompose. The amount of blue-green algae is increasing, which can produce dangerous toxins in the water.
- People in lake communities have observed the changes in water quality and the ecosystem impacts. The potential impacts on the commercial fishery which can be devastating in the long-term are very important to these communities. The non-economic value of water also needs recognition.
- Public awareness of the causes and effects of nutrient loading on Lake Winnipeg needs to be built in agricultural and lake communities to enable solutions. Dialogue, partnerships, and effective use of media are key.
- The issue of water quality must also be linked to public health and community livelihood. Cost-benefit analysis can be used to demonstrate the consequences of a deteriorating environment.
- Educational units should be developed for use in schools to reach the youth audience.
- Community engagement in stakeholder discussions and governmental decision-making is required for initiatives to be successful. Community partnerships can provide better communication and local employment opportunities.
- Establishing the water rights of First Nations is essential to ensuring a voice in water quality initiatives.
- A long term strategy for adequate funding of research, information exchange and water quality improvement is needed.
- Research should combine scientific knowledge with the local knowledge of fishers and traditional knowledge of Aboriginal communities.
- Strengthening and enforcing provincial regulations regarding intensive hog operations, agricultural and septic waste management is required. Also pursue alternative methods for dealing with hog waste, such as electricity generation and treatment.
- Solutions and partnerships need to be pursued at the watershed level, including jurisdictions outside of Manitoba. All players must acknowledge their own responsibility in creating the problem and commit to working together to solve it.
2.2. Sectoral Issues

Michael Anderson
Manitoba Keewatinook Ininew Okimowin, "Regulation of Water Levels"

Michael Anderson, Research Director for the Natural Resources Secretariat at Manitoba Keewatinook Ininew Okimowin, delivered two presentations outlining the effects that the regulation of water levels using dams has on ecosystems and communities.

Key points made during the breakout sessions are summarized:
- Regulation of water levels and flow by Manitoba Hydro has impacts on First Nations, northern communities and jurisdictions outside of Manitoba.
- Fluctuations in water level and flow affect ecosystems, fisheries, and create safety issues on waterways used for transportation. High operating levels increase debris; low operating levels inhibit navigation and fisheries.
- River bank instability and erosion create environmental and health hazards, and can release contaminants in the land. Some communities draw drinking water directly from the rivers or lake.
- There is a need for the active participation of fishers, hunters, and community members in decision-making. First Nations have a right to be involved in the management of regulated waterways, and the role of women, elders, and customary laws in this process need emphasis.
- Communication and information sharing needs improvement.
- Decision-makers (government, Manitoba Hydro, First Nations) need to make greater efforts to engage communities to alleviate concerns and ensure decisions are not made based solely on economic interests.
- Water flows should be managed to follow more natural seasonal variations and have minimum stream flows.
- Reconciliation and trust-building between Manitoba Hydro and impacted communities is needed. Traditional knowledge and the involvement of elders are necessary to this process.
- Communities require a better understanding of the operating, navigable water, and Fisheries Act licenses for dams and control structures, to understand their rights to challenge terms of the licenses.
- Water levels need to be monitored by an independent party to verify Manitoba Hydro’s compliance with licenses.
- First Nation riparian rights, Treaties, and settlement agreements must be enforced.

Rene Barker & Vince Keenan
Manitoba Model Forest & Tembec Industries Inc., "Forest Management"

Rene Barker, Ojibway Translator, Community Programs Officer for the Manitoba Model Forest and Chair of the Traditional Area Advisory Committees, provided an overview of the goals and activities of a Model Forest. Vince Keenan, Divisional Forester for Tembec Industries and Chair of the Model Forest science based Working Groups, provided information about water quality related forestry projects occurring within the Manitoba Model Forest. Due to time constraints, participants in this breakout session did not form discussion groups, but were able to pose questions and comments to the presenters.

Key points made during the breakout session are summarized:
- The Manitoba Model Forest was developed to bring the private sector, governments, and communities together to improve the planning and management of the forest for sustainability.
- Convening meetings and workshops on a continuous basis to bring people together increases awareness and allows for community participation. Inclusion and respecting the opinions of people from all walks of life is important.
- Many committees are in place to allow
participation in different areas of interest. Traditional Area Advisory Committees are informed by community councils, for example.

• Policy and operational matters are influenced despite a lack of administrative control over forest. Community input contributes to the utilization of sustainable forestry indicators that are reflective of peoples’ values.

• To protect water quality, indicators such as road density within a watershed and the percentage of recently disturbed forest are used. Limits are placed on the amount of roads and recently disturbed forest within a watershed. Targets are developed through consultation.

• More research is needed to understand the impact of fire and harvesting on water quality. A study is being conducted by University of Manitoba researchers.

• Youth in schools are involved in river stewardship and stream monitoring in order to develop baseline data on water quality.

• Forestry curriculum has been developed utilizing the knowledge of elders, trappers, and harvesters.

• The availability of long-term funding for community participation and research is a challenge.

Nick Szoke

City of Winnipeg, “Water Quality Protection—The Four Dimensions of Wastewater Treatment”

Nick Szoke, Branch Head for Wastewater Planning in the City of Winnipeg’s Water and Waste Department, member of the Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board and the Canadian Public Works Association Board of Directors, and an engineer with many professional associations, delivered a presentation on the four dimensions of wastewater treatment and the protection of water quality.

Key points made during the breakout session are summarized:

• The four dimensions of wastewater treatment are collection, conveyance, treatment, and monitoring. Wastewater is treated to protect both public health and the environment. The current challenge is to reduce the amount of phosphorus and nitrogen in treated wastewater, in a fiscally responsible way.

• Communities working together will create large scale change and ensure water quality is protected.
• An informed public is needed to keep pressure on demands for water quality monitoring and better infrastructure. Political will to make water a priority is also required from leadership.
• Allocation of resources from other levels of government is required so that the financial burden for wastewater treatment facilities is not carried by local governments alone.
• Business and industry must be involved in preventing the release of contaminants into waterways and sharing the costs of community infrastructure.
• Community leadership must ensure accountability so that money for water infrastructure gets used appropriately. Communities need designated “minor infrastructure funds” for normal operations and “major infrastructure funds” set up in trust for repairs and upgrades.
• Water quality needs to be legislated to ensure people have access to clean water, and existing legislation needs strengthening to prevent industrial contamination.
• Building codes for new construction should encompass new and alternative technologies that improve water conservation and recycling.
• Education efforts should be directed towards eliminating pollutants at the source, within households and in industry. Target the use of cosmetic fertilizers for reduction.
• Communities need to build capacity to monitor water quality and respond to problems.
• Natural or living system treatment or other “low-tech” alternative technologies are recommended for use in smaller communities.

Mitchell Timmerman
Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, “Agricultural Land Management”

Mitchell Timmerman, Nutrient Management Specialist with the Agri-Environment Branch of Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, delivered a presentation on managing agricultural lands to protect water quality.

Key points made during the breakout session are summarized:
• Agriculture practices have a direct impact on water quality. Irrigation, land fallow, drainage, fertilizer application, intensive livestock operations, buffer zones and livestock access around waterways all need to be considered with water quality protection.
• Money needs to be used as an incentive to encourage environmentally friendly farm practices so that farmers can continue to produce and stay competitive.
• Irrigation should be used on a supplemental, not regular, basis. The cost of water for irrigation can be adjusted to encourage better scheduling.
• Production for ethanol or heating fuel and erosion control measures should be promoted to minimize negative effects fallow lands can have on water quality.
• Expanded compensation for farmers who retain water on their land instead of draining it quickly. There should also be compensation and incentives for retaining and restoring wetlands.
• Better communication of the programs available to assist farmers in developing watershed and environmental farm plans. There should also be help available to farmers to do the necessary proposals and paperwork to access government assistance programs.
• Aboriginal jurisdiction over water management and rights to clean and healthy water must be recognized and respected by governments.
• Public education is necessary to create change. Students need to be taught about responsible water management and Aboriginal rights.
• Governments need to make water quality protection a priority and support it with effective legislation and the necessary funding increases.
2.3. International Issues

Nicole Armstrong

MANITOBA WATER STEWARDSHIP, “MANAGEMENT OF TRANSBOUNDARY WATER”

Nicole Armstrong, Water Quality Modeling Specialist and the acting Manager of the Water Quality Management section of Manitoba Water Stewardship, delivered a presentation on cross-border water management issues relevant to Manitoba.

Key points made during the breakout session are summarized:

- Political boundaries are placed across the ecological boundaries of watersheds. The basis for cross-border water management is to establish rules that will be respected by both parties and have a means for dispute resolution.
- Manitoba has water apportionment agreements with other provinces. There is no apportionment agreement with the United States; the International Joint Commission (IJC) is in place to resolve Canada-U.S. water disputes.
- There is a lack of proper representation of Aboriginal governments on water management boards. Equal representation is needed to ensure rights are respected.
- The Devils Lake issue demonstrated the weakness of the international dispute resolution mechanism. The IJC needs more power to get involved without having a referral from both sides.
- All avenues for resolving disputes in a mutually satisfactory way should be exhausted first, failing that there should be sanctions to protect against agreement violations. Canadians may need to use energy or other leverage to prevent the U.S. from disregarding international agreements when they are not convenient.
- Trust needs to be restored between Canada and the U.S. and should begin at both the political and community levels. Differing values need to be reconciled.
- Manitoba and Canada need to better anticipate potential transboundary issues and deal with them proactively rather than having a reactionary approach to negotiations. We need to take a firm stance against a Devils Lake inlet from the Missouri River.
- Better coordination of scientific standards and cooperation between different jurisdictions is needed.
- Apportionment agreements should include minimum flows of water that are based on ecological requirements.
- The national water legislation needs to be reviewed and updated.
- Manitobans need to lead by example on water management and conservation. We need to learn from history to anticipate and prepare for droughts and floods.

Water management focus needs to shift to conservation, eliminating unnecessary uses of water, and matching water quality to end uses.

Dr. David B. Brooks

FRIENDS OF THE EARTH CANADA, “WATER SOFT PATH”

Dr. David B. Brooks, a natural resources economist and Director of Research for Friends of the Earth Canada, delivered a presentation on water soft paths, which demonstrate how taking an alternative approach to water management can vastly improve local and global sustainability.

Key points made during the breakout session are summarized:

- Current water systems focus on supply; soft paths involve reducing and managing demand to achieve long-term sustainability.
- Water management focus needs to shift to conservation, eliminating unnecessary uses of water and matching water quality to end uses.
- Water usage fees should encourage less use and be reflective of the type of use. Industrial and household users require different fee schedules.
- Human equity needs to be considered. Each person should have 50 litres per day.
- Governments need to take responsibility for leaving as much water as possible in the ecosystem.
- People need to create a grassroots movement.
movement to apply political pressure for the necessary changes in order to implement a water soft path.
• Social and environmental goals should be set and then achieved by using the backcasting technique to suggest the kinds of policies needed to connect a sustainable future to our unsustainable present.
• Efficiency and conservation need to be factored into urban planning and land use decisions.
• Change building codes for new buildings to incorporate water efficient appliances and water conservation technologies such as grey water recycling and rain water collection.
• Non-efficient appliances and water uses should be discouraged with taxes or levies.
• Communities should pursue opportunities to treat wastewater on-site and to use alternative treatment methods such as living systems.
• Low water irrigation systems and xeriscaping techniques need to be promoted and more widely used.
• Local opportunities to reuse or recycle water need greater examination and implementation.

Anil Naidoo
Council of Canadians,
“GLOBAL WATER ISSUES”

Anil Naidoo, Director of the Blue Planet Project for the Council of Canadians, delivered a presentation on global water issues. The Blue Planet Project is focussed on global water justice and securing the human right to water.

Key points made during the breakout session are summarized:
• Water is a human right, and control over water resources must be publicly retained in order to protect that right and ensure human needs are met.
• Greater public awareness is needed to prevent corporate control over water, which is increasing in other parts of the world. Limited public access to water in impoverished areas creates serious health and social justice issues.

• Water distribution systems should not be privately operated for profit.
• People need to hold governments accountable for decisions which limit or deny public access to clean water.
• Governments and corporations must be held accountable for the degradation of water supplies.
• Foreign aid should not be used to support projects involving the privatization of water supply.
• International trade agreements need to reflect the special status of water as a basic human need and right, and prevent the erosion of public supply.
• People must put pressure on governments to make them accountable for their actions and to ensure that water is recognized as a human right.

Rachel Van Caeseele
CLIMATE CHANGE CONNECTION,
“CLIMATE CHANGE”

Rachel Van Caeseele, Manager of the Climate Change Connection, delivered two presentations on climate change, focussing on its causes, future threats, and reduction strategies.

Key points made during the breakout sessions are summarized:
• Human-caused increases in greenhouse gases started with the Industrial Revolution. Global warming creates climate change; the climate will be warmer in some places, colder in others. Climate change is a product of lifestyles and a consumption-based culture.
• A warmer climate in Manitoba will impact on the availability and quality of freshwater, the health of the boreal forest, fish and animal habitats, migration, severe weather occurrences, agricultural productivity and food production.
• First Nations and people who live land and resource-based lifestyles will be disproportionately impacted by climate change. Northern and remote communities will face cost of living increases as the winter road season is shortened.
• Public education needs to be targeted for specific audiences to appeal to people with differing values. Education for youth in schools is especially important.
• Success stories and positive strategies need to be highlighted and promoted to provide models for others to follow.
• First Nations people should take a leadership role in addressing climate change. Utilization of traditional knowledge can contribute to greater understanding of the effects of climate change and should guide strategies for sustainable development.
• Communities need to begin addressing climate change by retrofitting public buildings, improving or introducing transportation alternatives, finding alternative methods of dealing with waste, and incorporating environmental considerations in all planning and decision-making.
• Governments need to increase funding for community capacity building and climate change initiatives.
• Financial incentives and disincentives must be used to support energy efficiency. Incentives should support energy efficient buildings, alternative energy, sustainable transportation, and environmentally responsible companies. Energy intensive industries, urban developments and vehicles should be taxed.
• Individual responsibility, grassroots movement, community action, corporate leadership, and government commitment are needed to create sustainable communities and minimize the effects of climate change.

2.4. Strategies

Heidi Cook
SOUTHERN CHIEFS’ ORGANIZATION, “ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY FOR SOUTHERN FIRST NATIONS”

Heidi Cook, organizer of the Water for Life conference and acting Director of Special Projects for the Southern Chiefs’ Organization, delivered a presentation on the “Environmental Strategy for Southern First Nations” that was developed in response to a SCO Chiefs’ Resolution.

Key points made during the breakout session are summarized:
• The environmental strategy proposes a course of action for southern First Nations that is guided by a focus on providing solutions to water quality problems. Education and communication are key. Many First Nations are already involved in different types of environmental stewardship outlined in the strategy.
• Partnerships with different levels of government, non-government organizations, and educational institutions must be pursued to implement the strategy.
• Diverse funding sources need to be sought
for initiatives. First Nations should develop their own foundations to deliver funding for projects that take a holistic view, instead of relying solely on issue-specific funds. Economic partnerships should be sought with corporations that are involved with the Aboriginal community (for example, Hydro involvement in fish and habitat projects).

- The involvement of youth and elders need emphasis.
- Pockets of activity occurring in First Nations need to be linked, with a network developed to promote efforts, make connections, and cultivate partnerships.
- An inventory of watershed groups and government departments should be compiled and mapped out in order to streamline efforts on water quality.
- First Nations should begin to compile a knowledge database that can be used in projects integrating traditional knowledge with western science.
- The research abilities of First Nations need to be developed and maintained within the communities.
- First Nations should examine different models of resource management and sharing, to develop a model that can be pursued.
- Relationships with other governments need to be strengthened to improve the communication of information and the quality of government action. First Nations need to be at the forefront of government initiatives.
- The environmental strategy should be politicized and pursued at the political level.

Dr. Thora Martina Herrmann
Université de Montréal, “Uprising in the Andes: Hydropower Dams, Indigenous Peoples’ Rights and Local Empowerment — The Ralco Hydroelectric Project in Southern Chile”

Dr. Thora Herrmann, Professor at the University of Montreal and a member of the UN Interagency Task Force on Gender and Water, presented a case study on the experiences of indigenous Mapuche Pewenche people of southern Chile, with whom she previously worked on community-based natural resources management.

Key points made during the breakout session are summarized:

- A grassroots movement was led by Mapuche Pewenche women elders to oppose construction of the Ralco dam in indigenous territory. The power of project proponents to impose development was challenged based on violations of water law, environmental law, indigenous law, and international law.
- The experience of the Mapuche Pewenche people demonstrates how community-based movements can influence powerful corporate and government institutions. Traditional knowledge, indigenous laws and rights were central to the movement.
- Indigenous rights have traditionally focused on hunting and fishing. First Nations must also assert their spiritual rights, and include air and water in their declaration of rights.
- First Nations should, in cooperation with elders and lawyers, define what their rights are. These rights can then be included in federal law and used to develop First Nation laws.
- Greater awareness and understanding of First Nations’ political rights is needed. The education of First Nation and non-Aboriginal children across Canada needs to include the history of First Nations and the Treaties.
- Curriculum on First Nations culture and identity should be developed by First Nations people. UNESCO has a program for educators and can be approached for advice on teaching indigenous knowledge.
Elders can help to educate youth about the land, water, health, medicine, and the universe. First Nations culture and language must be recognized and passed on in schools.

First Nations people need to overcome differences and stand united in order to be heard and create change in Canadian society.

A First Nations political party should be used to provide a voice in Parliament. A goal of the party should be to create a First Nations body that is recognized as sovereign but also included in Canadian politics.

First Nations must be involved in the sharing of resources with other countries that are in need.

Canada needs to publicly acknowledge its wrongdoing in putting First Nations’ resources under the control of the provinces without consultation or approval from First Nations.

When a First Nations’ rights have been neglected, they should make appeals to the highest courts, petition the Human Rights Commission, the Auditor General, or the NAFTA Commission for Environmental Cooperation.

Allison McPhee
Fisheries and Oceans Canada, “Fish Habitat”

Allison McPhee, Habitat Biologist for Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the department’s Stewardship Champion in Manitoba, delivered a presentation on fish habitat programs and initiatives.

Key points made during the breakout session are summarized:

- Fisheries and Oceans Canada exercises federal jurisdiction over fish habitat management. The federal Fisheries Act provides a mandate for the department.
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada needs to improve its communications with First Nations and Aboriginal communities. Traditional knowledge is underutilized in fisheries management and methods for information sharing and cooperative management need to be developed.
- First Nations need to have natural resource positions for community members to direct local management efforts and provide a link with government departments.
- First Nations must begin to collect and document traditional knowledge and use it to create resource management plans.
- First Nation community members must be educated in environmental protection and responsible resource use in relation to Treaty rights.
- Youth in schools should be given applied education in habitat management and encouraged to share the information with others in order to create awareness within communities.
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada should restructure spending so that more money is available for communities to capture ecological knowledge and carry out habitat projects.

Focus should be results-driven as opposed to programs and bureaucracy-driven.
• The Fisheries Act should be updated to incorporate traditional knowledge and community engagement.
• Provincial environmental legislation needs to be better enforced to protect waterways from industrial and agricultural pollution.
• Governments need to work on coordinating conflicting areas of jurisdiction related to fisheries and fish habitat. Confusion exists between the responsibilities of the Province, Fisheries and Oceans, and Environment Canada.
• Consultation with fishers and First Nations should take place prior to and throughout program development. Management of fisheries and habitat protection must be combined using a holistic approach.

Roger Schroeder
MANITOBA WATER STEWARDSHIP, "THE WATER PROTECTION ACT"

Roger Schroeder, Information and Knowledge Manager for Manitoba Water Stewardship, delivered a presentation on the Water Protection Act, a new piece of legislation developed by the provincial government.

Key points made during the breakout session are summarized:
• The Water Protection Act legislation is designed to provide protection of water quality in Manitoba. The difficulty in water legislation is the conflicting policies and jurisdictions between and within governments.
• The goal of protecting water quality must come first.
• More linkages between government bodies are needed. Comprehensive planning for water quality protection must include all governments that make up the watershed, including First Nations, other provinces, and states.
• The Act should include decision-making mechanisms to address jurisdiction issues.
• The Act needs to explicitly recognize the rights and authority of First Nations with regard to water, and define a process for consultation and accommodation with First Nation governments. Planning for water protection needs to incorporate traditional knowledge.
• The Act should clearly state its intent and include dates for compliance, plans, and authorities to be in place.
• Hazards included in the Act should include the pollution and health issues related to flooding and droughts.
• Ecologically based minimum flow requirements are needed in the Act and in intergovernmental agreements on shared water resources.
• Certified environmental planners should be part of the policy process.
• Consequences for violating environmental regulations need to be strengthened. More resources need to be put towards enforcement.
• The Stewardship Board needs to improve its involvement with established entities, such as Wabanong Nakaygum Okimawin (formerly East Side Planning Initiative). The Board also needs greater involvement of northern communities and Aboriginal elders.
• Public education should be targeted at increasing the capacity of communities to become involved in water quality protection.
2.5. Community Initiatives

David Danyluk
SAVE OUR SEINE RIVER ENVIRONMENT INC.,
“RIVER HABITAT STEWARDSHIP”

David Danyluk of Save Our Seine delivered a presentation on community engagement and the river stewardship activities being carried out along the Seine River in Winnipeg.

Key points made during the breakout session are summarized:
• Concerned residents came together to clean up and protect the Seine River environment and the Save Our Seine group came into being. People shared a mutual concern for the river’s health and volunteered their time and effort to address it. The experiences and ideas behind Save Our Seine can be applied to other rivers that people want to preserve.
• River stewardship activities involve the removal of litter, debris, and invasive species such as purple loosestrife. In some areas natural vegetation may need to be restored.
• Educating community members about natural habitat creates more interest in people to become involved in protecting it.
• Access to maps is an important awareness raising tool. Community mapping projects are educational and good motivators.
• Communities can gain widespread support for river habitat stewardship by leading by example.

Conservation districts can be involved as partners.
• Communities should initiate habitat stewardship and attract interest by declaring an area a “litter-free zone”. Before and after photos will provide evidence of success.
• The involvement of youth enhances their education and gives them an appreciation for nature. Youth and schools should be challenged to “adopt” an area which they can take responsibility for keeping clean.
• Rural communities should implement bear and dog-proof garbage cans to minimize litter.
• A deposit-refund system for all bottles and cans should be implemented by the Province.
• Conservation districts should undertake river bank stabilization projects in areas where they are needed.
• Communities can create publicity for their rivers as paddling destinations to increase public awareness and community pride in keeping a pristine ecosystem.
• Dedication and persistence on the part of community members is required to build a strong network and create momentum for change. People have to be willing to volunteer time and effort to support a cause they believe in.

Dr. Brian Kotak
BLACK RIVER FIRST NATION, “ENGAGING FIRST NATIONS IN ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING”

Dr. Brian Kotak, Environment Director for Black River First Nation, delivered two presentations on Black River’s involvement and experiences in engaging the community in environmental monitoring projects.

Key points made during the breakout sessions are summarized:
• Black River First Nation is engaged in numerous environmental projects involving water quality, fish habitat, and climate change. Youth involvement and education are always big components of projects.
• Projects are successful because of the community’s environmental vision, the strong support of Chief and Council, participation of
youth, and the involvement of partners in more than just funding.

- Communities need to be educated to develop the desire for environmental projects and capacity building. Travelling awareness and education groups should be used to increase community aspirations.

- Greater linkages between elders and youth in communities and schools are needed to facilitate the passing on of traditional knowledge and practices. A network of elders and experts should be used to share knowledge with students in schools.

- The information shared at the Water for Life conference should be shared with everyone who attended so they can use this knowledge and pursue the recommendations.

- An environmental awareness committee of community-appointed representatives including youth, women and elders should be formed to lead awareness-raising and implementation of community recommendations.

- Communities need to increase their knowledge of surrounding areas by doing traditional land use studies, biological studies, and other research projects.

- First Nations statistics need to be valued. Water monitoring should include community input.

- Bio-monitoring projects should always include an education component for youth to build community capacity and reconnect people with the natural environment. Computer applications should be a part of environmental training.

- Communities can benefit greatly by having a database or network for sharing information on the types of research and monitoring being done and the data that is collected. More conferences and workshops in rotating locations are necessary to facilitate information exchanges.

- There is a need to build better connections between projects of the SCO and MKIO.

- Customary laws need to be translated (i.e. oral to written) and conveyed (i.e. person to person, between communities) and put to use in more communities.

- First Nations should develop their own policy with regards to environmental laws. Federal and provincial laws need to be ratified via BCR to assert Aboriginal rights.

- Communities must make it clear that they are dedicating their own financial resources to projects and lobby other governments more aggressively for contributions.

- The mistrust in community relations with corporations that have fiscal resources to help needs to be repaired. Manitoba Hydro needs to take responsibility for damaging water quality and the health risks created by their operations. Hydro should be a key funder of community projects.

- First Nations data should be collaborated with Manitoba Hydro monitoring data. Alternatively, Manitoba Hydro can give power to First Nations to conduct the monitoring.

**Janet Morin & Kim Hickes**

**Peguis First Nation & North Central Community Futures Development Corporation, “Climate Change Community Challenge (C4)”**

Janet Morin, Community Coordinator for the One Tonne Challenge in Peguis First Nation, and Kim Hickes, Community Development Officer with North Central Development, delivered a joint presentation on communities undertaking a climate change challenge.

Key points made during the breakout session are summarized:

- Peguis First Nation undertook a public awareness campaign for residents and
schools as part of their involvement in the One Tonne Challenge. Five local winners of a "radio idol" contest produced radio commercials promoting the One Tonne Challenge.

- Energy efficient buildings in Peguis are being developed. Local carpenters participated in EnerGuide for Houses train the trainer workshops. The community plan includes the construction of homes and an RCMP station to R2000 standards, retrofitting an old school with a ground source heat pump, and developing an energy efficient office showroom.

- A recycling depot is being built, and Peguis has plans to expand the recycling program to surrounding communities. The community is also looking to turn their existing landfill into a transfer station and partner with surrounding communities in a new landfill.

- North Central Development coordinates a regional approach to environment issues. Sustainable communities, resource conservation and economic benefits are promoted through public education, outreach, and community capacity building. Four communities are part of the climate change challenge. Education and promotion is ongoing to keep initiatives going. Use of local language and understanding the culture is important for success.

- Scrap metal recovery and recycling are the principal components of an integrated waste management system for northern communities, although more communities are beginning to compost fish offal. Transportation of scrap metal and recyclables to depots remains a big issue, though communities have developed creative solutions and businesses have helped out.

- Waste heat from diesel generators is being used in greenhouses. The production of food locally reduces the communities' dependence on foods which have to be shipped long distances and are expensive to buy.

- Communities can experience social, economic and environmental benefits from addressing climate change. There is a need to increase awareness and circulate information.

- A regional advisory body for culturally appropriate climate change information should be established to aid in developing materials, also providing a source for the distribution of information on community projects and best practices. The provision of culturally appropriate information will improve community awareness and commitment.

- An inventory of existing community initiatives and their successes should be compiled to help demonstrate the collective results of taking positive action.

- Greater use of media tools and more conferences for networking are needed to improve communication and public awareness.

Gaile Whelan Enns

Manitoba Wildlands, “Environmental NGOs and Initiatives”

Gaile Whelan Enns, Director of Manitoba Wildlands, a local non-governmental organization, delivered a presentation outlining the activities of environmental NGOs and exploring ways they can support communities concerned with environmental issues and work together on common concerns regarding water.

Key points made during the breakout session are summarized:

- As an environmental NGO, Manitoba Wildlands participates in the public policy process by monitoring, auditing, and reviewing proposals and decisions for the use of Manitoba’s lands and waters. The organization is involved in public consultations, environmental assessments, and advocacy and lobbying of governments. Community outreach actions include public awareness campaigns and information dissemination using the internet.

- Respect, understanding, and the establishment of common ground on water issues can be the basis for NGOs and communities to work together, share knowledge, and achieve common objectives. Shared initiatives between First Nations and non-Aboriginal peoples (like the Water for Life conference) are one way to build relationships and strengthen capacity to address the problems that affect everyone.

- Environmental NGOs, First Nations, and Aboriginal peoples hold similar values regarding water, sharing a holistic view of ecological systems and acknowledging the overall connection between the health of the water, the land, and Mother Earth.
First Nation rights and title to water were not extinguished by treaties; First Nation peoples’ rights to water remain intact. First Nation water rights have not been sufficiently tested by the courts.

- Governments must recognize the multiple uses of water, rather than dealing with one use or decision at a time.
- The precautionary principle needs to be applied by governments to prevent environmental harm from taking place.
- Provincial and federal governments must make polluters pay for environmental damages and take responsibility for restoring damages. Reporting requirements and funding for enforcement of environmental laws need to be increased.
- Governments need to improve communication and access to information. Crown corporations should not be less accountable or exempt from the responsibilities of the government that owns them.
- Canada must respect the treaties it is signatory to, including the treaties with First Nations, the Kyoto Protocol, Convention on Biodiversity, and others.
- The provincial and federal governments need to recognize and respect First Nation sovereign rights and territorial boundaries and work on a government-to-government basis regarding water rights and use.
- First Nations have an advantage when engaging with other governments and industry on water issues, as traditional knowledge can be integrated and strengthen environmental management.
- Research and information provided by First Nations in this process must be protected against misuse.
- Development proposals and environmental licensing processes inevitably involve impacts on water use, water quality, or water management.
- Development proponents are required to provide opportunities for public involvement in review of environmental impact statements. First Nations can require a standard of engagement from proponents that takes the approach of a genuine intention to incorporate and accommodate First Nations’ rights, and not simply a formality for obtaining licences. The crown’s obligation to consult First Nations is a separate process and responsibility, and needs to be equally genuine.
- The development licensing system could be improved through greater transparency and more checks and balances. A fully independent environmental licensing body is needed that includes citizen and First Nation participation.
- All information on environmental licences/permits and their conditions, and all information on water quality, use and management should be made public. Public registries need more resources.
- A cumulative assessment of the hydroelectric system in Manitoba needs to be undertaken, as well as a review of the licences issued (as recommended by Manitoba’s Clean Environment Commission). There should be a moratorium on new hydro developments until there is definitive action taken on water quality across Manitoba.
- Large corporations need to be educated on the effects of their actions and make commitments to resolve outstanding water issues.
- First Nations need to assert their authority over water and resources. Fisheries and trap lines need to be restored under local control.
- A First Nations organization with grassroots and leadership direction should be established to manage water and resources.
- Community-based resource planning processes are opportunities for First Nations people and especially youth, women and elders, to become more active in developing plans and counter-proposals for environmental management and utilization of resources. Objections to development proposals need to be documented.
- First Nation youth councils can be established to address ecology issues and empower young people to take leadership in restoration efforts.
- Aboriginal people could work towards positions where policies are made in order to influence them from within.
- Large media blitz to raise awareness of water quality issues and First Nations rights would be useful to bring the issue to the forefront. The SCO should organize a national campaign to protest abuse of the environment.
- A similar conference should take place in the north. Communities that have clean water can share their experience on maintaining water quality.
Section Three

PANEL PRESENTATION: INDIGENOUS WATER RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

On day one of the Water for Life conference, panel presentations on indigenous water rights and international law were delivered during the lunch hour. A summary of main points made by the presenters is provided.

Merrell-Ann Phare

Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources

- Indigenous water rights flow from the connection to traditional territories and include the right to govern and make decisions based upon indigenous laws.
- Indigenous peoples worldwide unified to assert and declare their water rights in the Indigenous Peoples Declaration at the Kyoto World Water Forum in 2003. A similar declaration could be made by the First Nations of Canada or Manitoba.
- Water supplies are threatened globally. Polluted water severely impacts traditional cultures.
- Governments in Canada haven’t made water protection a priority and do not consider the cumulative effects of actions. Decisions have not taken indigenous rights into consideration.
- There has never been a case in the Supreme Court of Canada that specifically affirms or denies indigenous water rights. First Nations are in a good position to assert these rights.
- The 1997 Delgamuukw case affirmed that Aboriginal title exists and includes all waters part of a territory, including wetlands, permafrost, groundwater, etc.
- The 1996 Van der Peet case gave a description of how Aboriginal rights can be infringed upon by governments (test). Aboriginal rights are given first priority and governments have a duty to infringe as little as possible, accommodate rights, and have consultation and compensation.
- Consultation must be carried out in any decision that may impact on water rights, regardless of who the decision is being made by. First Nations have a right to be involved in negotiations such as with NAFTA and the North Dakota agreement, as these will impact on rights.
• The Winter’s Doctrine in the US has been integrated in Canada in some cases in that water is necessary for upholding treaty rights to fish and meet other needs.
• Manitoba treaties are not clear on water rights. The treaties show that there was no clear intention to extinguish water rights.
• A settlement was made between the Piikani First Nation and Alberta regarding water claims on the Oldman River. The settlement that was reached was supported by a strong treaty argument.

Five points regarding international law:
• The ILO Convention is the only convention addressing indigenous rights. Canada is not a signatory to this convention.
• Canada does not support the UN Draft Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It includes the rights to own, develop, control, and use lands and territories, including air, water, coastal seas, sea-ice, etc.
• The UN Convention on Biological Diversity includes the protection of traditional knowledge. It implies land and water rights because it is hard to protect traditional knowledge without land and water.
• There is a NAFTA provision that Canada wanted so that Aboriginal rights would not be affected. Under the NAFTA Environmental Side Agreement, any North American citizen can ask the Commission for Environmental Cooperation to investigate whether environmental laws are being enforced.
• The question of whether water laws are being enforced can also be asked of the Auditor General of Canada.
• First Nations need to start implementing their inherent rights by identifying traditional laws, figuring out how to apply them to water and development, and developing a community position on outside development. First Nations need to create independent water institutions or networks involving youth. Information on water must be collected and tracked. This will show implementation of rights instead of fighting over them.
• First Nations implementing their water rights can insist other governments recognize their rights are “first in line” and oppose the lack of consultation in decisions like licensing, the IJC, and the Devils Lake conflict.
• First Nations must insist on the revision of federal and provincial government policies regarding water. The RCAP report recommended changes to water policies to accommodate Aboriginal participation but this still has not happened.
• First Nations must be involved in setting a long term vision for sustainability and defining joint stewardship in partnership with the federal and provincial governments.

Peigi Wilson
Assembly of First Nations
• A clear message that water around the world is being degraded was issued in the 1997 UN Freshwater Assessment.
• First Nations rely on water directly for drinking and sanitation and indirectly for fish habitat and supporting plants, animals and birds.
• Water resources are finite and demand is increasing, making it very important to protect and manage resources properly.

International water law deals with two issues:
• Allocation of water between two or more states sharing a body of water.
• Rights and responsibilities of states sharing water resources.
• International law recognizes that states have sovereign rights to their natural resources; there is a corresponding obligation of states to be responsible for the transboundary impacts of their actions.
• References to states and governments in this presentation are not only to countries like Canada and the US, but also to Canada and First Nations.
• In 1920 the Permanent Court of International Justice declared that states sharing water bodies share a “natural community of interest” and “common legal right” in the use of waters.
• In the 1960s customary international law on watercourses was codified to include environmental protection concerns, beginning
with the Helsinki Rules on the Uses of Water of International Rivers.

- The Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses says that states shall utilize international watercourses in an equitable and reasonable manner. This includes the right to use and the duty to cooperate.
- The 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty between Canada and the US sets out conditions for use including navigation, construction of dams or diversions, and pollution control. It established the International Joint Commission as the dispute resolution mechanism, and IJC responsibilities for research and investigating pollution, as well as dams, rules for sharing, emergency water levels, and water quality.
- The 1978 Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement was established under the Boundary Waters Treaty to restore and maintain the waters of the Great Lakes ecosystem.
- The Great Lakes Charter purposes are to protect and conserve the levels and flows of the connecting waters and the balance of the Great Lakes ecosystem. It also provides for cooperative programs and management and establishing a secure foundation for developments.
- The Great Lakes Charter Annex 2001 gave rise to concerns about water diversions and the replenishment of water removed from the watershed. The provinces renegotiated to include a ban on diversions.
- The Devils Lake diversion into the Red River basin in North Dakota was opposed by US tribes and Manitoba Chiefs because of pollution concerns. Canada and the US have reached a deal allowing the diversion to proceed.
- The Great Lakes Annex negotiations did not include the participation of First Nations. The AFN passed a Resolution calling for the assertion of Aboriginal title to the Great Lakes basin and opposing the Great Lakes Annex 2001.
- First Nations concerns with respect to international waters include pollution, sufficiency of supply, commoditization and trade of water, bulk water removals and diversions, health of fisheries, invasive species, source protection, and drinking water supply.
- First Nations are also concerned about the lack of inclusion in decision making, lack of respect for title and treaties, non-recognition of the inherent right to self-govern, failure to fulfill fiduciary duty, and failure to consult and accommodate First Nation interests.
- First Nations must address the fact that they are not recognized as governments by Canada or the United Nations. Movement has been made at the UN in negotiations under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The AFN hosted an environmental stewardship policy forum in April 2005 to shape a strategy for moving forward:

- Need to lobby for recognition of First Nations’ authority, including the inherent right to self-govern, establishing government-to-government relationships, fully informed consultation and accommodation, and inclusion of traditional knowledge in decisions.
- Need to build capacity for govern, including a stable financial base, education and training, information and research, and essential tools and infrastructure.
- The AFN is currently working on implementing Resolutions, a pre-budget submission for capacity and infrastructure, increasing awareness of the Auditor General’s findings on water issues, and establishing a joint policy table with Health Canada, Environment Canada and INAC.

Indigenous people play a very important role in teaching others how to interact with water and to understand its spiritual aspects.
Dr. Thora Martina Herrmann

*Université de Montréal*

- A good project was started in South America called Water Law and Indigenous Rights (WALIR). The objective is to contribute to the understanding of indigenous water rights, to sensibilise the decision-making regarding legal and policy changes and to concretise the recognition of indigenous water management rules in national legislation.
- Indigenous knowledge is often not valued in political, scientific and legal systems.
- Indigenous groups in Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Chile, together with the UN Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean and the Wageningen University of the Netherlands established the program in 2001.

**Objectives are to:**
- document indigenous knowledge and provide an analysis of indigenous mechanisms of water management,
- provide an analysis of national laws and regulations, in order to identify the gaps and opportunities with respect to recognition of indigenous water rules,
- develop proposals to bring them together. Indigenous knowledge would then become part of national legislation.
- In the three years the program has been running, four legal analyses have been completed.
- The program meets a concrete need to recognize and respect indigenous knowledge and water management mechanisms, and to translate the recognition and respect into national laws.

Anil Naidoo

*Council of Canadians*

- The international human right to water exists; it is not a right that governments have to grant. If rights are not asserted they will not be respected.
- Water is not mentioned in the UN Declaration of Human Rights. The Declaration was made during different times, when there was no commoditization, scarcity, or population pressures like there are presently. If the Declaration was written today it would include an article on water.

A movement called Friends of the Right to Water is premised on the idea that the human right to water exists:
- The right is explicit in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and (November 2000) General Comment 15 of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
- Indigenous groups around the world are leaders in fighting for the right to water. In two cases in Bolivia, indigenous people were instrumental in stopping the commoditization of water and ensuring public access to water. Large corporations were assuming ownership of water resources but were eventually stopped because citizens organized grassroots action to oppose them.
- Governments are responsible to respect, protect, and fulfil the right to water. The realization will be progressive, but governments must show how they are moving towards ensuring that right. Water has to be safe, affordable and accessible.
- A rights-based approach is necessary for communities to gain the control to democratically decide how water is distributed.
- In the past, Canada has been at the forefront of the human rights movement. Today, Canada is the only country that is standing up internationally against the human right to water.
- As informed citizens, we must hold governments to account and create the political will for the recognition of human rights.
- Recognition of the right to water will confer a duty on governments to ensure public access to clean water. In Canada, the majority of boil water advisories are in First Nations communities.
- Focus is on bridging different social movements, working on it not as a legal issue but as a movement building issue. When people hold rights in their hearts it is much more powerful than a contractual right.
- Indigenous people play a very important role in teaching others how to interact with water and to understand its spiritual aspects.
Section 4

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: DR. DAVID SUZUKI

On day one of the Water for Life conference, an evening banquet featured a keynote address by renowned author, scientist, and broadcaster, Dr. David Suzuki. Amongst his many awards and recognitions, Dr. Suzuki is also an honorary member of the Dehcho First Nations, was adopted into the Heiltsuk and Haida Nations, and was named an honorary Cree Chief in Alberta.

A summary of his remarks are provided.

- Our relationship with water defines us as human beings.
- The telescopes aimed at other galaxies, the machines on the moon and Mars, and the satellites probing other planets are all searching for water. Without water, there is no possibility for life.
- Life on earth began in water. Even today, sperm need water to swim, a baby grows in water, we are still water creatures. Our cells are inflated with water. If we could envision water vapour we’d see our bodies enveloped. In Canada we know this because we can see the water vapour in our breath freezing in the winter.
Canada has 20% of the world’s freshwater, which is more per capita than any other country in the world. Yet, we pay more for water than for gasoline and think nothing of it.

- Looking at the globe, the name shouldn’t be earth but water. Water covers 71% of the surface of the planet, and it is wrapped in an atmosphere of water vapour. Most of the water isn’t drinkable. We have water available because of the hydrologic cycle, which circulates water around the planet.
- What is water? Why is it so important? Water is a simple molecule, one atom of oxygen and two atoms of hydrogen, yet when put together they create something with mystical properties.
- The charges of an H2O molecule makes them attract other H2O. The bonds are very strong and because of this stability water can absorb a lot of heat. The heat absorbed by the oceans makes certain climates liveable.
- No scientist can explain what causes each snowflake to form and be unique. When water freezes, the ice floats—every other liquid forms crystals that are heavy and sink. This property of water insulates our lakes and rivers and prevents them from freezing to the bottom.
- The polarity of water allows many chemical reactions to take place which makes it is easy for living organisms to metabolize. Science today barely understands what it is about water that makes it such a precious substance and makes life possible.
- We face a crisis because we have lost our sense of reverence for water, and our gratefulness for this gift from the Creator. The water ceremony this morning was moving. Traditional cultures around the world do this to celebrate the important place water plays in our lives.
- Unfortunately the dominant society has lost this sense of importance and increasingly views water as an economic opportunity or commodity. The tensions in the Middle East are due to water, the next wars will be fought over it.
- Canada has 20% of the world’s freshwater, which is more per capita than any other country in the world. Yet, we pay more for water than for gasoline and think nothing of it. We need to ask ourselves what we are doing to squander this gift so badly if we have to pay to drink water from France.
- Human beings have lost their sense of place in the world; our challenge is to rediscover where we belong.
- Scientists say humans evolved 100,000 to 150,000 years ago in Africa. We were not any bigger, faster, stronger, or more numerous than other animals but were differentiated because of the human brain’s capacity for memory, curiosity and inventiveness.
- Human beings invented the idea of the future and realized that we could shape it. Foresight was a key attribute of our species.
- Today humans are more numerous than any other animal and have become the dominant species on our planet, but we are no longer using our foresight. Scientists are telling us that the forests are disappearing, species are disappearing at a catastrophic rate, our climate is changing, but we ignore the warnings.
- In 1992 a document called the World Scientists’ Warning to Humanity was issued, with more than 1,500 leading scientists including over half of all Nobel Prize winners signing their name to it. The warning says that human beings and the natural world are on a collision course that if left unchecked will make our planet unable to support life in the manner we know, and fundamental changes are urgent to avoid this. It says that we have no more than one or a few decades remaining to avert disaster.
- The document is frightening, but more frightening was the response of media that it was not newsworthy.
- The UN Millennium Ecosystem Assessment was to be the largest assessment of the state of the planet. After four years the document that was released showed a terrifying picture of our assault on the planet. The ultimate authority said we are in real trouble, and the news story was dropped because the Pope was ill.
- Why are we turning our backs on the strategies that allowed us to survive for 100,000 years? Why do we no longer use our brains to look ahead and act to shape the future?
In the time that we live, with the explosion of information around us, we have got to decide what matters and be critical. The news is shattered by media into unrelated stories, containing facts but no sense of why things are happening, what we can do about it, or why it’s news.

- The human brain is hardwired for order; we have an instinctive need to create order to understand the world around us. Early on humans noticed patterns in nature, the days, seasons, moon and stars, migrations. This knowledge shaped the worldviews of people around the globe.
- The important thing about worldviews is that everything is connected to everything else - nothing exists outside of them. The dominant society has a shattered worldview; we no longer see how things connect. If the world is disconnected bits and pieces, we no longer feel a part of it and no longer have a sense of responsibility to protect it.
- The challenge of our time is to connect the bits and pieces and rediscover our place. The Suzuki family is privileged to know and spend time with First Nations people, to learn and celebrate our part in nature. They are grateful that the knowledge and practices have been retained so that they can be taught today.
- Over the last 100 years the worldview of humans has been shattered. One of the biggest changes has been in our population. The majority of people are born after 1950, we are living in an unprecedented and unsustainable period of growth and change but because it’s all we’ve ever known we think it’s normal, and that it needs to continue.
- Science has shattered the world by looking at it in tiny parts, loosing focus on the larger picture. Technology is used to force the parts into submission.
- The change in how we live is striking. In 1900 most people lived in rural areas; there were 16 cities of a million or more people, the largest was 6.5 million. Today most people live in cities; there are over 400 cities of a million or more, the top ten are all over 11 million and the largest is 26 million.
- In cities it is easy to think we are different from other animals and that we don’t need nature. Children don’t know where food comes from, where water in the tap or energy for lights comes from, or where toilet flushes or garbage on the curb goes. If we don’t recognize that our life is supported by the earth, it is easy to believe politicians and businesses that say it is the economy that provides these things, and a strong economy will make environmental protection affordable.
- The economy is the biggest disconnector from the natural world. Economics is a set of values...
We are using up the rightful inheritance of our children and grandchildren right now and calling it progress. posing as science, using equations and graphs to make it impressive. The whole economy is based on human creativity and productivity, and assumes that it can and must grow forever. All the systems that support life are externalized; the economy might as well be on Mars.

- Even the richest province in the richest country, Alberta says it can’t reduce greenhouse gases because it will hurt the economy. When is environmental protection going to be affordable?
- Politicians do somersaults to keep the economy growing without ever asking where it is leading us. Nobody is asking about the social and ecological consequences of steady growth—it is suicidal.
- Anything growing steadily is called exponential growth and has a predictable doubling time, for example anything growing 1% a year doubles in 70 years, 2% doubles in 35 years, 3% in 23.5 years, 4% in 18 years, and so on.
- An example of exponential growth is a test tube filled with food for bacteria, one bacteria is put in and will divide every minute. At zero minutes there is one bacteria, at two minutes there are two, at three minutes there are four bacteria. At 60 minutes the tube is full of bacteria and there is no food left. At 59 minutes the tube was only half full, 25% full at 58 minutes, 12.5% full at 57 minutes, and 3% full at 55 minutes. If one bacteria said there was a population problem at 55 minutes the rest would have said it was crazy. At 59 minutes they see the problem and give a bunch of money to scientists who create 3 more test tubes full of food. At 61 minutes two test tubes are full and at 62 minutes they are all full.

- How are we supposed to add more air, water, soil, or species to the earth? No scientific mega project can grow another biosphere. Human beings are past our 59th minute.
- We are using up the rightful inheritance of our children and grandchildren right now and calling it progress. First Nations have not forgotten the teachings of their ancestors and acknowledge their responsibility to ensure survival far into the future, that you must pass something on even seven generations after you.
- The sad reality is that children, plants and animals don’t vote so the dominant society doesn’t value them. We must learn from our ancestors and remember that we are biological creatures as dependent on the earth and its gifts as any other animal.
- Learned a great lesson while doing a film on the Haida Gwaii logging battles in the late 1970s. The Haida opposed the clearcutting even though logging had many economic benefits for their communities. Was told that yes, we can cut down all the trees and we’ll still be here. But once the trees are gone we won’t be Haida anymore, we’ll just be like everyone else. After time the realization came that this is a fundamentally different worldview. Haida don’t end at their skin. Being Haida, knowing where their home is and being in that place, with the air, water, plants, animals, and oceans - all of that is what makes a Haida special and different. This is how it was for every group of human beings on earth.
- Leaving Winnipeg tomorrow, but it will now be a part of me. The whitefish, the vegetables from the soil, the air and sunlight absorbed, and the memory becomes a part of me. We are all children of mother earth, created by the four sacred elements of earth, air, fire and water. Water is one of the most precious and important.
- Thank you very much for having this conference to remind people of our place, not only First Nations people but all those around you as well. We must rediscover our place on this earth.
The years 2005 to 2015 were declared the International Decade for Action ‘Water for Life’ by a resolution of the UN General Assembly. The goals are to increase the focus on water issues and ensure the participation and involvement of women in water-related developments.

The Commission on Sustainable Development sessions in 2004-2005 had water and sanitation as main themes, and recognized the importance of indigenous knowledge and integrated water resources management.

All the resolutions request a coordinated response through UN-Water and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples. Overall coordination is provided by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Launch of the Decade took place on World Water Day, March 22, 2005, and included a traditional water ceremony by Six Nations, Hopi, Lakota, and Apache elders. Blessing of the waters was also done by representatives of the Buddhist, Jewish, Hindu, Islamic, and Christian religions.

2005 to 2015 is also the second International Decade of the World’s Indigenous People, promoting action in areas of culture, education, health, human rights, economic and social development, and environment.

UN-Water is the interagency mechanism for coordinating UN activities relating to water. Priorities include coping with water scarcity, access to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, disaster risk reduction, transboundary issues, and water, sanitation and gender, all within a framework of integrated water resources management and with a regional priority in Africa.

The Interagency Task Force on Gender and Water is a sub-program of UN-Water. Goals are to integrate gender perspectives into strategies and plans for fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals, activities and decisions of the Commission on Sustainable Development, World Water Forum, and others, the World Water Assessment Programme and World Water Development Report, and plans and activities of the Water for Life Decade.

Members of the Gender and Water Task Force are from 18 UN bodies and five non-UN organizations concerned with gender and water issues. The Freshwater Caucus, Commission on Sustainable Development, and Plan International have Observer status.

Issues of concern include equitable access to water supply, land rights and water for productive use, sanitation, capacity development, participation and equity in decision-making, protection of resources and including indigenous perspectives, resource mobilization, privatization, pricing, and the right to water.

The Task Force publishes outreach materials, leads public awareness and education campaigns, provides consultation and support for women in decision-making processes, prepares research and policy guidelines, and supports the training and advocacy initiatives of individual members.

Additional information on the activities of UN-Water and the Water for Life and Indigenous Peoples Decades is available online.

The goals of this decade are to increase the focus on water issues and ensure the participation and involvement of women in water-related developments.
The key message coming from participants was clear, we need to take action. Many ideas were put forward on how we can achieve our goal of clean, healthy water for generations to come. The responsibility for achieving this goal is shared; First Nation, Métis and non-Aboriginal community members, our political leaders, governments, and corporations all have a role to play.

**6.1. Guiding Principles**

First and foremost, we must respect the gift of clean water and the life that it sustains. In the traditional culture of First Nations, the protocol of respect in our interactions stems from the belief that everything is sacred and alive, whether it is another person, an animal, plant, wind, rock, or river. This message of respect, which was demonstrated at the beginning of the conference through a water ceremony, is essential in our approach to restoring the health of our water.

The idea of openness and the free sharing of information between parties is also a key to success. When people know the truth about the situation we are facing, and are given good examples of other accomplishments that can be emulated, a momentum for change is built. The solution becomes a part of our daily lives.

The plan for restoring and protecting our water must be comprehensive and encompassing of the holistic wisdom of First Nations traditional knowledge. This knowledge tells us that everything is connected, and indeed we are facing the result of many seemingly unrelated actions. Success will require connecting them all and including them in the plan.

The governments and corporations that hold some of the responsibility for creating the present situation need to acknowledge their roles. Moving forward with a policy of honesty and accountability will build a greater trust between the individuals and institutions that are working to improve water quality.

The lives and well-being of First Nations peoples are intimately tied to the well-being of the land and water of which we are a part. Further, exploitation of the lands and waters of First Nation traditional territories are violations of inherent and legal rights. Restoration of traditional governance and a greater awareness of First Nation rights will foster a spirit of cooperation and neighbourly love that is required for everyone to work together towards a common goal.

The communities and individuals that depend on water for various purposes have the best understanding of how positive changes will work, and the policy and planning processes must be open and inclusive. Decision-makers require a measure of humility to share authority and enable people to put forth solutions.

Ultimately, achieving the goal of clean and healthy water for generations to come will require strength and bravery on the part of the individuals that make up our communities, governments, and corporations, to take the steps that will get us there.

**6.2. Principal Actions**

**Communicate and Educate**

The demand for information on water quality and communication of programs and initiatives to address local issues is huge. The message that communities need information on water issues in order to become engaged was stressed...
repeatedly at the Water for Life conference. Greater communication, education and awareness are vital first steps to ensuring clean and healthy water.

Good communication goes two ways. Not only do communities require better communication from governments and institutions, there also must be an avenue for communities to relay their concerns, values and ideas. Greater efforts are needed to build a public dialogue which is open and directed towards finding workable solutions to water quality issues.

As well, education needs to take place at all levels. An awareness of water issues must be developed in our leaders, citizens, elders, youth, and school children. Particular importance is placed upon the education of youth and children, as they need to understand the issues impacting their future well-being, and historically youth have been very effective at convincing adults to modify their behaviour (such as in recycling). Building awareness amongst the elderly is also important, as they have the wisdom of experience and can provide good advice when the issues are clear.

Many suggestions for improving communication and education were put forth during discussions at Water for Life; those repeated most often and reoccurring in different contexts are summarized here.

- Local insight and traditional knowledge shared and incorporated into recovery strategies and management plans.
- Greater inclusiveness and transparency in governmental planning.
- Clear communication of roles and responsibilities in management and legislation enforcement.
- Effective use of media, advertising and promotion.
- More networking forums such as workshops or conferences for sharing ideas and establishing partnerships.
- Curriculum development and hands-on learning with school children involved in water quality research and monitoring.
- Tools and training provided to communities for people to develop and enforce local solutions.

Engage
A lack of community engagement does not stem from lack of interest, rather a lack of information. The Water for Life conference was attended by people from many diverse communities, and a shared commonality was the desire to take action to ensure clean and healthy water for generations to come. The demand for information is directly related to the desire of community members to put forth ideas and come up with solutions tailored to work at the local level. A message that was repeated many times was that the best solutions will come from the communities with a direct interest in water quality protection.

Engagement at the local level is conducive to enabling the participation of women, youth and elders, which needs emphasis. Community values and local ecological knowledge will inevitably be reflected in the strategies put forth. Acknowledgment of the immense value of local contributions will inspire people to be proactive and develop unique forward-looking plans for sustainable communities.

Many suggestions for improving community engagement were put forth during discussions at Water for Life; those repeated most often and reoccurring in different contexts are summarized here.

- More significant representation and inclusion of First Nations on management boards and governmental advisory committees.
- Meaningful consultation and accommodation of First Nations and community interests in governmental initiatives.
- Strong leadership displayed by First Nation, municipal, provincial and federal representatives, to inspire and teach by example.
- Citizen involvement in community planning, including land use, community design, and innovative housing strategies.
- Social responsibility demonstrated by the corporations, industries, and municipalities that impact on water quality.
- Political engagement, from citizens bringing forth local strategies to elected leaders prioritizing the issue of clean and healthy water.
Respond
For those people who live in proximity to water or to one of the point sources for water pollution, the urgency of responding to the situation could not be clearer. Many of the concerns, questions, and recommendations of Water for Life participants dealt with responses from different levels of government.

Protection of our waters in the long term will require a great deal of coordinated action that crosses political boundaries and encompasses numerous jurisdictions. While the ecological boundaries of the Lake Winnipeg watershed must be the basis for long term planning, other jurisdictions will look to Manitoba to demonstrate leadership and implementation of local solutions must begin immediately.

Governments responding to the issue of water quality need to commit to actions that are set in common with the principles and recommendations previously outlined in this report. The need for water is shared by everyone, and people, governments and corporations all have a role in ensuring we have clean and healthy water for generations to come.

Many suggestions for governmental responses were put forth during discussions at Water for Life; those repeated most often and reoccurring in different contexts are summarized here.

• Priority placed on water quality by politicians of all types, and demonstrated commitment to proactive solutions.
• Clarity in legislation and jurisdictional responsibilities.
• Assertion of First Nations rights, including air, water, and spiritual rights.
• Inclusion and equitable representation for community members in policy, planning, and law-making.
• Implementation of First Nations customary laws and regulations based upon traditional values within First Nation jurisdictions.
• Establish and enforce regulations and operating procedures for water infrastructure within First Nation communities.
• Wider reporting of water quality data and hazards.
• Better enforcement of existing legislation, policies, and licences issued by the provincial government.
• Better methods for holding governments, industries, and corporations accountable for harming water quality.
• Use of financial incentives and disincentives to encourage efficiency, including licence and user fees that are more reflective of the value of water.
• Change regulations to improve efficiency in appliances, especially toilets, and allow household grey water recycling.
• Development of school curriculum that teaches water values and methods for research, monitoring, and sustainability.
• Dedication of sufficient funds to enable development and implementation of local, long term solutions.
Appendix I: List of Acronyms

AFN  Assembly of First Nations
BCR  Band Council Resolution
C4  Climate Change Community Challenge
IC  International Joint Commission
ILD  International Labour Organization
INAC  Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
MIND  Manitoba Keewatin Okimowin Ininiwak
NAFTA  North American Free Trade Agreement
NGO  Non-Governmental Organization
RCAP  Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
RCC  Royal Canadian Mounted Police
SCO  Southern Chiefs’ Organization
UN  United Nations
UNESCO  United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US  United States
WACL  Water Law and Indigenous Rights program

Appendix II: Participant Feedback

The following questions made up the conference evaluation which was provided to participants in the registration package. Many positive affirmations and some constructive comments were received. A sample of evaluation responses are included below.

Please rate the following using a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is poor and 10 is excellent (Average):

Conference Registration Process ........................................... 9.5
Conference Staff and Volunteers ............................................ 9.2
Conference Venue ............................................................... 7.6
Breakout Speakers .............................................................. 8.7
Breakout Structure ............................................................... 8.0
Lunch Hour Speakers ........................................................... 8.2
Conference Fixture ............................................................... 7.6
Conference Banquet ............................................................. 9.3
Overall Quality of Workshops ............................................... 8.4
Overall Impression of Conference ......................................... 8.8

Was the purpose of the conference clear to you?
Yes. Opened my eyes even more.
Crystal clear. Clean water is essential to ALL of us; take action now to protect, correct and preserve.
Yes! Emphatically YES! A call to action and empowerment.
Yes, very clear. I hope this doesn’t stop here.

What were you looking for from the conference? (Percentage)
New Information ................................................................. 89%
Networking ................................................................. 67%
Other ................................................................. 22%

“Other” responses:
To hear David Suzuki in person.
Gathering views to influence the development of education resources.
Making new friends and meeting old ones!

Did you get what you were looking for out of the conference?
I got a good idea which I will follow up on to help the cause.
I just scratched the surface but it is a start.
Yes, did a lot of networking. Suffering from information overload but that’s a good thing in regards to the very important topic.
Yes, very much appreciated.
Yes, lots of excellent information to take back to the community.

What did you enjoy the most about the conference?
Networking and facilitated sessions.
Water ceremony and David Suzuki as keynote speaker.
Networking and facilitated sessions.

What do you think could have been improved?
More handouts of speakers’ presentations.
More presentations on indigenous issues and how to develop substantial partnerships.
Longer lunch period to accommodate the lunch, presentations and questions.
More time to network. Informal gathering between conference and dinner.
Involvement of Manitoba Conservation, especially enforcement.
More compact venues. Breakouts in more central area.

Was there anything else you would like us to know about the conference?
Needed more time for participants to have input.
More conferences on the other three elements, fire, earth, and air.

Appendix III: Conference Program

October 19, 2005 - DAY ONE
8:30 Water Ceremony
9:15 Welcoming Remarks
12:00 Lunch
2:00 Breakout Sessions — Introduction to Issues
10:15 President David Chartrand, Manitoba Metis Federation
10:30 Grand Chief Sydney Garrison, Manitoba Keewatin Okimowin
10:45 Honourable Steve Ashton, Minister of Water Stewardship
Health Break

October 20, 2005 - DAY TWO
6:30 Banquet Dinner featuring a Keynote Address by David Suzuki
8:30 Breakout Sessions — High Interest
10:05 Brian Kotak, Black River First Nation, “Engaging First Nations in Environmental Monitoring”
10:30 Rachel Van Caeseele, Climate Change Connection, “Climate Change”

Applications

Appendices

October 20, 2005 - DAY TWO
8:30 Breakout Sessions — High Interest
10:05 Brian Kotak, Black River First Nation, “Engaging First Nations in Environmental Monitoring”
10:30 Rachel Van Caeseele, Climate Change Connection, “Climate Change”

Breakout Sessions — Sectoral Issues
Michael Anderson, Manitoba Keewatin Okimowin Ininiwak
Rene Barker & Vince Keenan, Manitoba Model Forest, “Forest Management”
Nick Szoke, City of Winnipeg, “Water Quality Protection - The Four Dimensions of Wastewater Treatment”
Mitchell Timmerman, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, “Agricultural Land Management”
Health Break

Breakout Sessions — International Issues
Nicole Armstrong, Manitoba Water Stewardship, “Management of Transboundary Water”
David Brooks, Friends of the Earth Canada, “Water Soft Path”
Ant Naidoo, Council of Canadians, “Global Water Issues”
Rachel Van Caeseele, Climate Change Connection, “Climate Change”

Banquet Dinner featuring a Keynote Address by David Suzuki
Appendix IV: Reporting Template for Discussion Groups

Date (if a repeated session):  
Session Title:  
Facilitator:  
Recorder:  
This feedback form should be filled out in consultation with the group facilitator following each discussion group.

Please insert a concise description of the key messages of the discussion group. Please limit responses to a few words or one sentence.

In each section, points should be made separately. i.e., 1. general education, 2. financial resources, etc.

Issue:

Goals:

Concerns or barriers:

Appendix V: Presenter Information

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Appendix VI: Additional Resources

The Nature Challenge  
“Ten simple things you can do to protect nature”  
www.davidsuzuki.org/naturechallenge

The David Suzuki Foundation researched the ten most effective ways individuals can help conserve nature and improve our quality of life. Make a difference by signing up and committing to at least three of these actions.

The Seven Sacred Teachings  
www.theturtlelodge.com/teachings.htm

The seven sacred teachings were received through prayer and ceremony through Turtle Lodge. The Anishinaabe seven sacred teachings were given to guide us in our daily lives, to help us live in a good way. The teachings are part of the guiding principles of this report.

Water for Life, 2005-2015  
International Decade for Action  
www.un.org/waterforlife

The years 2005 to 2015 have been declared the Water for Life International Decade for Action. Learn about the Water for Life goals, access resource materials, and get your community involved.

Water Law and Indigenous Rights (WALIR)  
www.eclac.org/DRNI/proyectos/walir

Indigenous peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean teamed up with international, national, and local institutions to strengthen their indigenous rights to access and manage water resources, read about the project on the WALIR website.