



Manito Aki Inakonigaawin & The Nibi Declaration

# Pathways Forward

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RECOMMENDATION REPORT 2022



Zhaagimaa Waabo



GRAND COUNCIL  
**TREATY #3**

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ANISHINAABE NATION IN TREATY #3

## GRAND COUNCIL OF TREATY #3

MANITO AKI INAKONIGAAWIN AND THE NIBI DECLARATION: PATHWAYS FORWARD RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

# DRAFT REPORT January 31, 2022

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## On behalf of:

Grand Council of Treaty #3



**GRAND COUNCIL  
TREATY #3**  
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ANISHINAABE NATION IN TREATY #3



# Acknowledgements

True to the traditional ways of the Anishinaabe, we want to acknowledge the Creator and the sacred gifts of life, freedom, and all life on Turtle Island. Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi Declaration encompass all that is life and is sacred to Treaty #3. Our Creator's gifts allow for these laws to have a place in our world.

We want to acknowledge the Anishinaabe Ancestors and Spirits who have left a rich legacy and continue to lead us to mino-bimadiziwin. We give many miigwetches to the Elders and Knowledge Keepers who share their wisdom and knowledge. We also wish to provide many miigwetches to the Spirits who have shared their foresight and teachings. Of course, this document would not exist without them

Lastly, acknowledgement is kindly and passionately extended to the Treaty #3 Nation. Our people who faithfully protect and maintain our customs and traditions, and importantly, our youth who represent our future.



# Table of Contents

3	<b>Acknowledgements</b>
4	<b>Table of contents</b>
5	<b>Glossary</b>
7	<b>Summary</b>
25	<b>Introduction</b> Methods and Limitations Meaning of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration Traditional Anishinaabe of Treaty #3 Decision Making
56	<b>Social</b> Education, Training, and Knowledge Sharing
86	<b>Environmental</b> Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration in governance relationships
120	<b>Cultural</b> Considerations of language, ceremony, and healing
152	<b>Economic</b> Relationships with proponents
174	<b>Further Insight and Wisdom</b>
180	<b>Appendices</b>



# Glossary

**A**  
**Abinoojii Inakonigewin (AI):** Abinoojii Inakonigaawin is the childcare law of Treaty #3 enacted in 2005.

**B**  
**Bell FOTS:** Bell Canada's Fibre Optic Telecommunications line that runs throughout Treaty #3 territory.

**F**  
**Four Hearts Model:** A model referring to the individual heart, the community heart, the Creator's heart, and the mother earth's heart.

**G**  
**Gaagiidoo-ikwewag:** Women's Council within the Anishinaabe Nation of Treaty #3.

**GCT#3:** Grand Council Treaty #3 refers to the government of the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3.

**Great Earth Law:** Simplified English translation representing the concept of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin.

**I**  
**Inakonigaawin:** Provides guidelines, based in teachings and ceremony, on Anishinaabe people's relationships all things and beings. Frequently translated into the English word "law." A more direct translation is "all of us in agreement."

**K**  
**KCA Strecker Road:** Kenora Chief Advisory Strecker Road. Property for healing and land-based activities.

**LGBTQ2S+:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, 2 Spirit, plus.

**M**  
**Mamawichi-Gabowitaa-Ininiwag:** Men's council within the Anishinaabe Nation of Treaty #3.

**Manito Aki Inakonigaawin (MAI):** Sacred Anishinaabe law found in people's connection to the land. It is often simplified in English as 'the Great Earth Law'. Manito translates to "great spirit" or "spirit," Aki can be translated to "all of that which sustains us," and Inakonigaawin translates to "all of us in agreement."



**Mino Bimaadiziwin strategy:** Strategy based on the Anishinaabe guiding principles to how to live a good life.

**MNR:** Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources (1972-1977), currently named the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry.

**Nenabozho:** Important Anishinaabe cultural figure.

**NWMO:** Nuclear Waste Management Organization.

**Nibi Declaration:** Declaration written in 2019 to record and formalize the connection between Anishinaabe people and water, as well as to strengthen water law principles.

**Ogimaakaans:** Anishinaabemowin word used by Chiefs to describe their position within the Indian Act system.

**RRS:** Resource Revenue Sharing refers to the distribution of funds from resource projects

**TPU:** Territory Planning Unit of Grand Council Treaty #3



# Summary

## Introduction and Methods

Together with the Nibi Declaration, which acknowledges the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3's connection to water, Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, known in English as 'the Great Earth Law' guides the Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 in making decisions that respect the lands and waters that are the responsibility of the Anishinaabe in Treaty #3.

To understand how the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 can continue and enhance its work to respect and uphold Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, the Project Team, which was a team of researchers from the Grand Council Treaty #3 (GCT#3) Territorial Planning Unit (Zhaagimaa Waabo) and the Firelight Group, worked with Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 knowledge holders and GCT#3 staff. The research included:

- A review of existing documents,
- Eight interviews with GCT#3 staff,
- A community survey with 154 participants, and
- The participation of 61 knowledge holders in interviews and focus groups.

Interview and focus group participants were asked open-ended questions to identify challenges, concerns, and solutions related to holding up Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration as foundational written laws that guide the Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 in maintaining relationships with lands, waters, and all living beings from the earth to the sky. Survey respondents were asked to prioritize potential actions towards respecting and upholding Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. Those who participated provided hundreds of written comments.

Interview, focus group, and survey responses were sorted by governance area, using the Treaty #3 Anishinaabe Nation Four Directions Governance Model.



The Project Team further separated responses into “Current Implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration;” “Future Visions;” and “Pathways Forward.”

The following pages summarise key observations and themes that were mentioned by knowledge holders, staff, and survey participants. More in-depth information and explanations of concepts and ideas in knowledge holder’s own words are provided within the main body of this report.

## Current Implementations

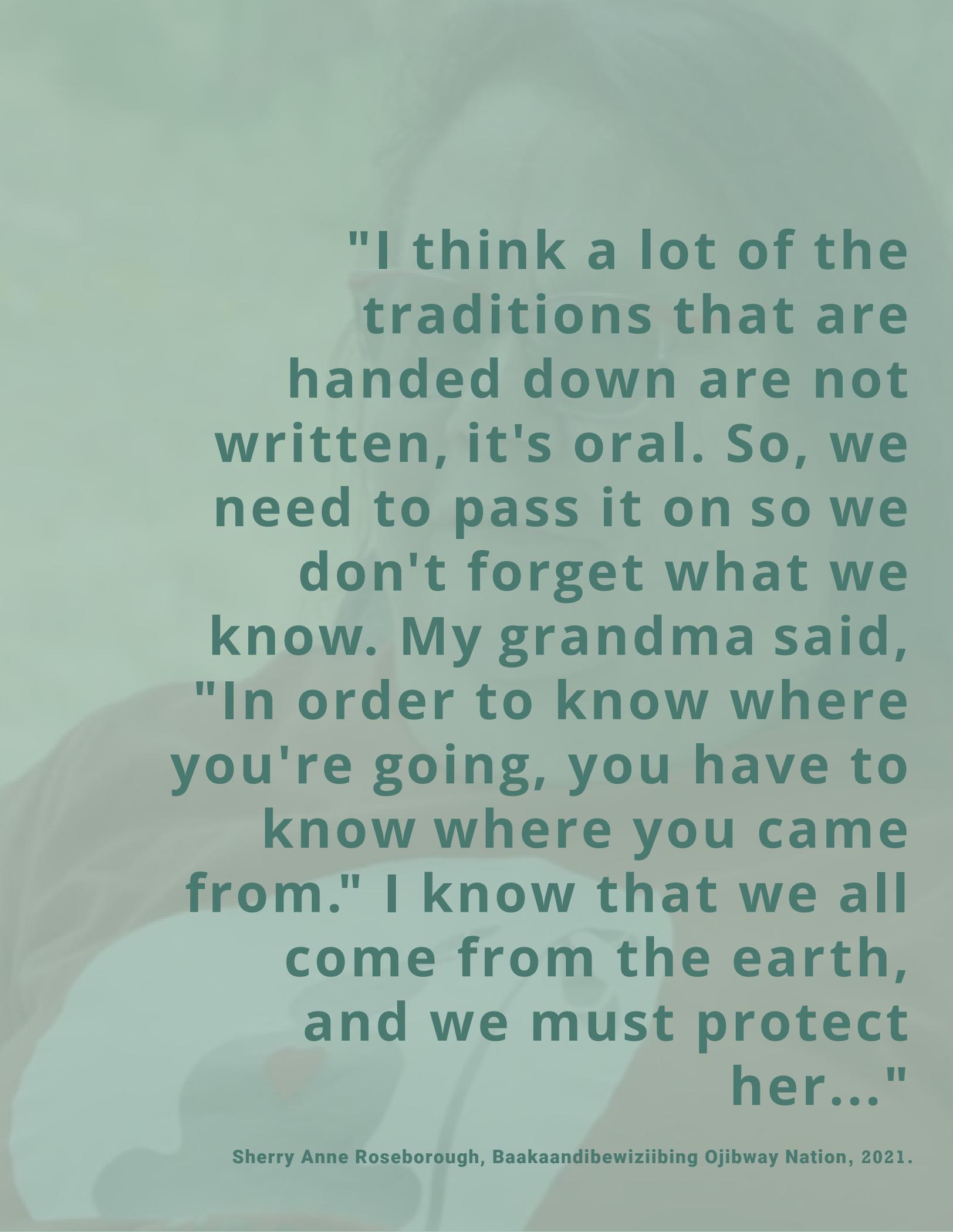
Knowledge holders, staff, and survey participants shared insight and observations on how Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration are currently functioning within Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 decision making. Their observations are summarised below, organized by governance area.

### Social

The social aspect of Treaty #3 governance includes education and knowledge transfer. Knowledge holders and staff spoke of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration moving through the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 in the following ways:

- Ceremony, where knowledge moves between people, and between spirits and people.
- Families, where knowledge passes from elders and children, and sometimes from the spirits and the land through children to their families.
- Oral traditions, which strengthen and change over time.
- The land, which holds Anishinaabe teachings that are passed to people, especially children.
- The school systems, which are increasingly including Anishinaabemowin and Anishinaabe teachings.
- Writing, including documents, pamphlets, and posters that describe Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.



A person wearing a traditional Indigenous hat and holding a drum is visible in the background, overlaid with a semi-transparent teal filter. The text is centered over this image.

**"I think a lot of the traditions that are handed down are not written, it's oral. So, we need to pass it on so we don't forget what we know. My grandma said, "In order to know where you're going, you have to know where you came from." I know that we all come from the earth, and we must protect her..."**

**Sherry Anne Roseborough, Baakaandibewiziibing Ojibway Nation, 2021.**

# Environmental

Knowledge holders and staff shared that Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration are important for the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 to uphold their responsibilities to the land and waters. Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration are currently being respected and upheld within the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 through the Four Directions Governance model and the GCT#3 Elder, Youth, Gaagiidoo-Ikwewag (Women's), Mamawichi-Gabowitaa-Ininiwag (Men's), and 2SLGBTQ+ Councils. Both the governance model and the councils help to ensure that decision making includes different voices and different community priorities.

Externally, Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration are an assertion of the right to make decisions in Treaty #3 territory, and they support the Anishinaabe in Treaty #3's work towards nationhood.

Information collected during the document review, combined with participants insights and comments, also provided the following framework for understanding how Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration fit into Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 Government and decision making, illustrated in Figure 1, on the next page.

- Treaty #3 communities elect the Ogichidaa and Chiefs.
- Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, along with other Anishinaabe laws and the Nibi Declaration, guide the actions of the Ogichidaa and Chiefs in Assembly.
- The Ogichidaa and Chiefs in Assembly serve both political and administrative functions:
  - Politically, the Chiefs each serve on a Social, Environmental, Cultural, or Economic governance committee.
  - Administratively, the Ogichidaa and the Chiefs in Assembly appoint the GCT#3 Board of Directors, which administers and directs GCT#3 activities.
- Both the Board of Directors and the Environmental Committee provide direction to the Territorial Planning Unit.
- The Social, Environmental, Cultural, and Economic Committees and the GCT#3 Board of Directors also provide direction to other GCT#3 departments: Health, Social, Education, Economic, Indian



Residential Schools (Wiisokotatiwin), Treaty & Aboriginal Rights Research, and Kaakewaaseya Justice Services. (These relationships are not shown in Figure 1 for simplicity).

- The Elder, Youth, Gaagiidoo-Ikwewag (Women’s), Mamawichi-Gabowitaa-Ininiwag (Men’s), and 2SLGBTQ+ Councils provides recommendations and guidance to GCT#3 leadership and staff based on Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 values, and the traditional Anishinaabe teachings and governance.
- The Territorial Planning Unit takes a lead role in understanding and implementing Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.

This framework illustrates that Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration are part of a cycle, where they provide guidance and direction to Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 government and decision making, while the Territorial Planning Unit, following direction from the Environment Committee, GCT#3 Councils, and knowledge holders develops knowledge and actions for respecting and upholding Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.

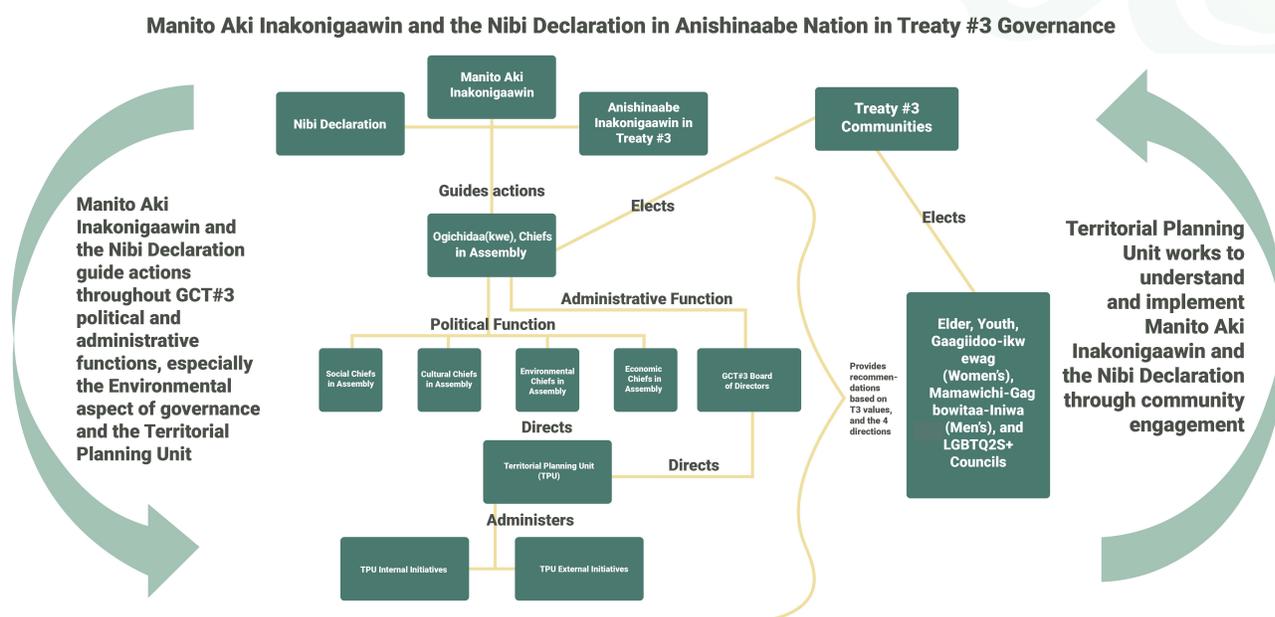


Figure 1. Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration in Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 governance





# Cultural

Knowledge holders and staff spoke of how Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration are given life by the spirits of the land and the laws, who communicate through sacred ceremonies and protocols. Participants also emphasized that individuals' spiritual connections to aki and nibi were important for respecting and upholding Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. Residential schools disrupted people's connections to aki and nibi, and reduced transmission and understanding of teachings and culture. Knowledge holders and staff also spoke of how Anishinaabemowin is a key to the passing of knowledge and culture across generations.

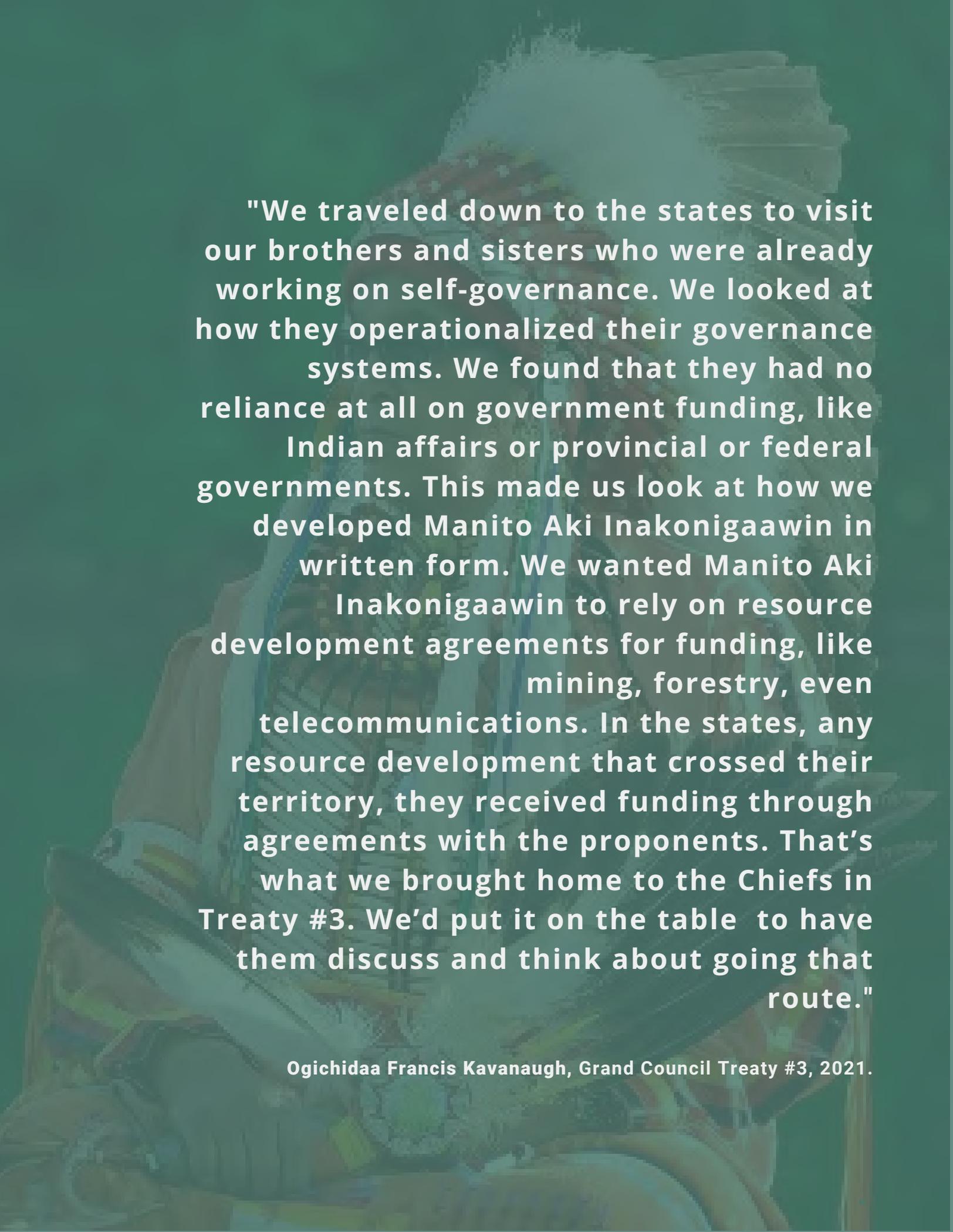
***In international relations, when a treaty or a document is created, there is often an authoritative copy. So even if something is printed in six languages, sometimes the English version will be the authoritative version or sometimes the French version of the treaty is. So, if there is ever a contradiction, the authoritative copy takes precedence. That is the way that I view Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. Even though it's written***

***down and even though it's in hard copy, that's not the authoritative document. The authoritative document lies in ceremony. That's why we have to regularly take it back to that [ceremony] and to the oral tradition rather than relying only on the written copy. But that doesn't mean that we can't write things down or make it relevant to the 21st century because that written copy was still created by that ceremony. (Daniel Morrisseau, Couchiching First Nation, 2021)***

# Economic

Knowledge holders and staff discussed the importance of Resource Revenue Sharing (RRS) agreements, and the role of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin in making these agreements possible. Funds flowing to GCT#3 through RRS agreements can support the implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. Participants also discussed how Manito Aki Inakonigaawin provides guidance to proponents and the Crown on their roles and responsibilities when operating in Treaty #3 territory.



A person wearing a traditional Indigenous hat and a beaded bag is shown from the chest up. The bag is large and filled with various items, including what appears to be a book or a set of papers. The person is holding the bag with both hands. The background is a solid teal color.

**"We traveled down to the states to visit our brothers and sisters who were already working on self-governance. We looked at how they operationalized their governance systems. We found that they had no reliance at all on government funding, like Indian affairs or provincial or federal governments. This made us look at how we developed Manito Aki Inakonigaawin in written form. We wanted Manito Aki Inakonigaawin to rely on resource development agreements for funding, like mining, forestry, even telecommunications. In the states, any resource development that crossed their territory, they received funding through agreements with the proponents. That's what we brought home to the Chiefs in Treaty #3. We'd put it on the table to have them discuss and think about going that route."**

**Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh, Grand Council Treaty #3, 2021.**

# Future Vision

Knowledge holders, staff, and survey participants discussed their aspirations and hopes for a future where Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration are respected and upheld throughout Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 territory. Their statements are summarised below.

## Social

Participants described the following hopes for the future regarding the social aspects of respecting and upholding Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration:

- Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 people increase their knowledge of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration
- Children grow up learning Anishinaabe teachings and laws
- Communities and the people in them are healthy, including psychological, physical, and social aspects of health
- Online platforms, where social media platforms and online tools like the Nibi Portal help communication and distribution of knowledge and teachings.

## Environmental

When asked about their vision for the future where Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration are respected and upheld, participants most often brought up land and water themed hopes and aspirations. These included:

- Nibi (water) is clean, drinkable, and respected as a life-giver
- Land is healthy, thriving and people live in relationship to it.
- Participants also spoke of the following hopes and aspirations regarding Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 decision making about the land and water
- The Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 assert their rights and responsibilities towards aki and nibi
- All communities and community members are involved in decision making
- Anishinaabe people in Treaty #3 have a unified approach to decision making about land and water
- All levels of government acknowledge that Manito Aki Inakonigaawin has always been present.



# Cultural

Participants spoke of the importance of Anishinaabe culture and language for a future where Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration are respected and upheld. Specifically, they described a future where:

- Anishinaabemowin is spoken and passed down through generations
- Traditional Anishinaabe ways are practiced
- The practice of ceremony is continued and increased
- Aki and nibi are respected and protected.

# Economic

Participants outlined the following economic-related hopes and aspirations about a future where Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration are respected and upheld:

- Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration are well funded
- Cooperative partnerships with other governments and businesses are formed
- Resource revenues are shared and benefit all Treaty #3 communities
- Communities have economic resources to support themselves
- The land is respected and healthy, and able to support the Anishinaabe in Treaty #3
- Relationships with proponents include respect and trust because they are built on Manito Aki Inakonigaawin.

# Pathways Forward

## Prioritization

**Table 1** summarises the Pathways Forward suggested by knowledge holders and GCT#3 staff across each of the four areas of governance.

In the community survey, community members were asked to identify which three Pathways Forward were most important to them from groups of five to seven Pathways Forward representing GCT#3, community, and personal scales of implementation. Survey results, which are found in **Appendix C**, are summarised as “Now” for Pathways identified as “top three” by 70% or more of survey participants, “Next” as pathways identified as “top three” by 60 - 69% of survey participants, and “Later” for pathways that identified as top three by less than 59% of respondents. To identify an order of priority through knowledge holder and staff interviews and focus groups, the Project Team reviewed the number pages of quotes and commentary linked to each Pathway Forward in this report.

As each participant brought unique perspectives and insight that were recorded as either quotes or commentary, a page count is a reasonable record of how frequently themes came up in interviews and focus groups. The project team then organized the Pathways Forward as “Very High” for 3 or more pages; “High” as 1.5 to 2.5 pages; “Medium” as 1 page, and “Low” for under a page of knowledge holder and staff comments. Finally, the Project Team reviewed and discussed each Pathway Forward, survey and knowledge holder results, and considered the practicality and feasibility of Pathways, and arrived at a suggested prioritization, shown in the right-hand column.



# Pathways Forward

## Prioritization

Governance Area	Pathways Forward Identified by Knowledge Holders	Community Members' Ordering of Pathways Forward in Online Survey	Knowledge Holders' and Staff Emphasis on Pathways Forward in Interviews	Project Team's Suggested Order
Social	Include Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration in School curriculum and youth programs	Now	Very High	Now
	Facilitate knowledge transfer from Elders	Now	High	Now
	Create a GCT#3- based position specialised in Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration communication	Later	Low	Now
	Develop written introductory material and toolkits	Later	Medium	Now
	Develop technology-based methods for knowledge transfer	Later	High	All phases
	Consider audiences when developing material and communication strategy	Not ranked	Medium	All phases
	Broaden engagement to include diverse voices	Not ranked	Low	All phases
	Foster conversations between different groups: youth, Elders, men, women etc.	Not ranked	Medium	All phases
Environmental	Create a legal framework for the Nibi Declaration	Not ranked	Very High	Now
	Consider traditional governance & incorporate Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration into laws and processes	Next	High	Now
	Strengthen the nation-to-nation relationship between Treaty #3 with the Crown	Later	High	Now
	Consider developing a GCT#3-wide administration structure to support Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration	Later	High	Now
	Develop GCT#3 skills and have dedicated staff position, and focus on hiring local Anishinaabe youth	Not ranked	High	Now
	Develop a strategic plan for each level of governance	Not ranked	Low	Now
	Increase environmental protection and enhancement	Not ranked	Medium	Now
	Support communities' development of resource laws	Next	High	Next
	Engage GCT#3 Councils in the Implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration	Later	High	Next
	Support community-based decision making	Later	High	Next
	Create Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration Task Forces or Advisory Groups	Later	Medium	Next
	Enforce Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration	Not ranked	Low	Next
	Develop governance guidance documents (processes, principles)	Later	Medium	Later
Ensure all voices are heard (focus on engagement, slowing down)	Not ranked	Medium	All phases	



Cultural	Continue and uphold the practice of ceremony and gatherings across GCT#3 territory	Now	Very High	Now
	Facilitate the learning and speaking Anishinaabemowin as Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration can only be fully understood in Anishinaabemowin	Later	Very High	Now
	Healing intergenerational trauma and living in a good way	Not ranked	High	Now
	Reinforce personal connections to Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration through time on the land	Now	High	Next
	Consider the practice of recording sacred laws	Later	High	Next
	Take time and care to ensure translations and interpretations are understood	Not ranked	Medium	Next
	Address past and ongoing trauma to the land	Later	Low	Next
	Continue work on bridging world views	Later	Low	Next
	Recognize racial tension	Not ranked	Low	Next
	Incorporate gender-based councils and ceremonies	Not ranked	Low	Next
	Continue and increase the recognition of sacredness of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration	Later	High	All phases
	Include full acknowledgements in meetings and ceremony	Later	Medium	All phases
	Economic	Improve funding of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration	Now	High
Ensure Proponents acknowledge and respect Manito Aki Inakonigaawin		Later	Medium	Now
Respect Anishinaabe ways of caring for the land		Not ranked	High	Now
Create a policy or regulation to support the sharing of resource revenue through Manito Aki Inakonigaawin		Not ranked	Low	Next
Consider how Resource Revenue Sharing impacts community relationships		Later	High	Next

Table 1. Summary table of feedback on Pathways Forward prioritization.



# Decision Making with Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration

Participants also provided teachings and insights on how Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration fit into Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 decision making and government. For example, the Four-Heart Decision Making Model, shown in **Figure 2**, below, provides a way of making decisions that ensures a holistic consideration of concerns, opportunities, and impacts related to the Individual, the Community, the Creator, and Mother Earth.

## Four-Heart Decision Making Model

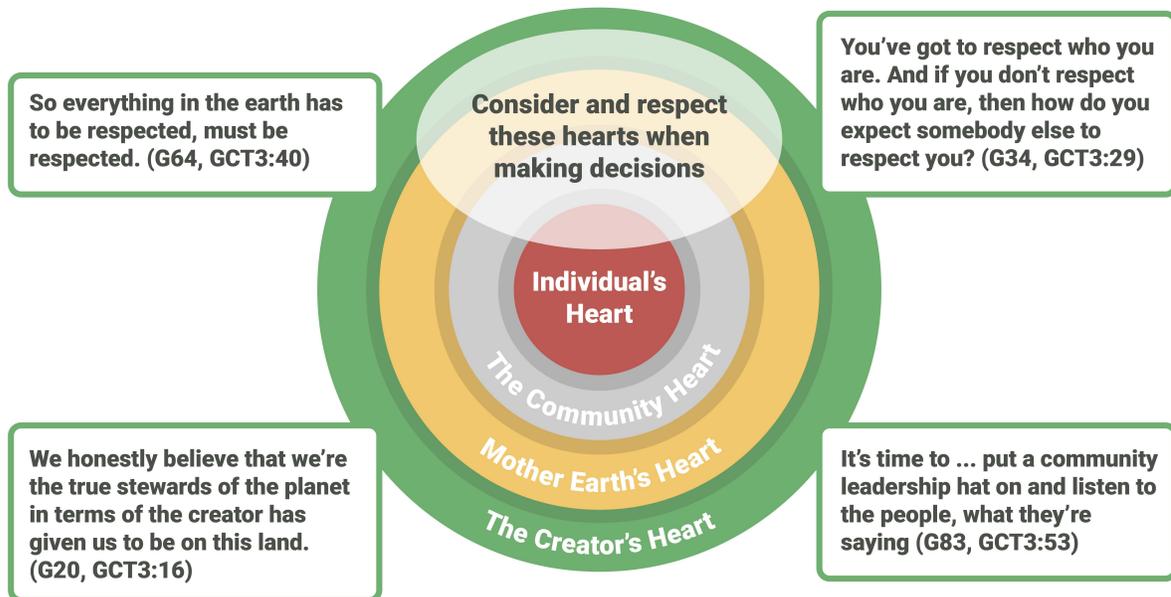


Figure 2. The Four-Heart Decision Making Model is a process described in the teachings of Ron Allen, Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation). This model asks the decision makers to consider and respect the Individual's Heart, the Community Heart, the Creator's Heart, and Mother Earth's Heart when making decisions.

Good decisions require the consideration and balancing of multiple viewpoints and priorities. Manito Aki Inakonigaawin encourages this type of holistic decision making. Through information shared in knowledge holder interviews, combined with the document review, the Project Team developed the following diagram to illustrate how Manito Aki Inakonigaawin influences both Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 decision making, and how the crown and proponents work within Treaty #3 territory.



When Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 make decisions about mining, forestry, and other natural resources, Manito Aki Inakonigaawin encourages:

- **Freedom for communities** to make their own decisions and exercise their sovereignty
- **Respect, responsibility, and reciprocity** with the land, with the land taking precedence over economic benefits
- **Spiritual and ceremonial** guidance for decisions
- **Inclusion of all the Anishinaabe** in Treaty #3 communities.

Similarly, Manito Aki Inakonigaawin guides proponents and the crown to:

- **Include the Anishinaabe Nation** in Treaty #3 in all decision making in regards to Mother Earth
- **Include Anishinaabe** in Treaty #3 communities at the beginning of the process
- **Design and operate projects** with the lowest possible environmental effects
- **Financially support and participate** in review processes that include gatherings, Elders, Traditional Knowledge, and ceremonies
- **Share revenue through Resource Revenue** Sharing and other processes.

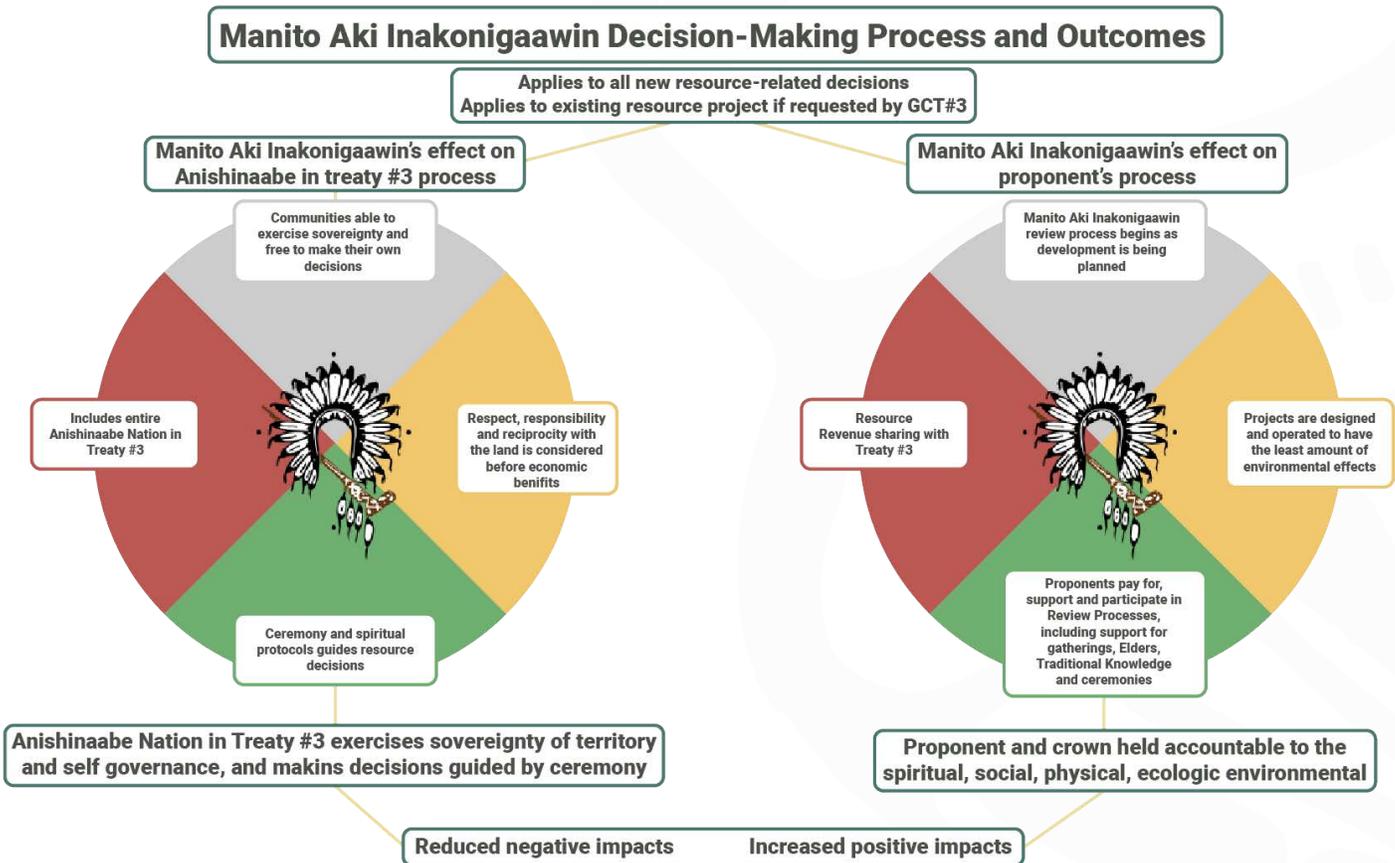


Figure 3. Manito Aki Inakonigaawin Decision-Making Process and Outcomes

# Conclusion

Created from numerous knowledge holder interviews, GCT#3 staff interviews, and a community survey, this research lays out the current conditions, identifies future hopes and aspirations, and identifies key pathways towards respecting and upholding Manito Aki Inakonigaawin at individual, community, and GCT#3 levels, and for the social, environmental, cultural, and economic governance areas. Knowledge holders, staff, and survey participants spoke of the importance of respect for the land and waters, and the foundational place that ceremony and spirituality must take in Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 decision making processes. Respecting and upholding Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration was seen as the route to Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 self-governance, expressing the Anishinaabe in Treaty #3's relationship to the land and waters, based on respect, responsibility, and reciprocity.





# Introduction

This project considers how the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3, proponents and the Crown can continue to respect and uphold Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, also known as “the Great Earth Law,” has existed since time immemorial as an unwritten cultural law but was written and confirmed through ceremony in 1997. The Nibi Declaration shares the significance and relationship with water to the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3. The Nibi Declaration was drafted by Grand Council Treaty #3 (GCT#3), Gaagiidoo-Ikwewag (Women’s Council), and unanimously supported by the Treaty #3 National Assembly in 2019.

## Purpose

This report is intended to strengthen solutions and overcome potential barriers and will help to guide future policy and inform decision making processes in all realms of Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 governance. Through these goals, it will then support the overall implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.

## Engagement

This report summarises GCT#3 staff, knowledge holders, and community member’s input on how the Anishinaabe Nation of Treaty #3 can continue and enhance its work to respect and uphold Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. Research was conducted from December 2020 through to September 2021, and included interviews with GCT#3 staff, a community survey, interviews and focus groups with knowledge holders, and focus groups with GCT#3 councils.

## Organization

The Project Team, which includes staff from the GCT#3 Territorial Planning Unit and researchers from The Firelight Group, identified a wide range of themes within interviews. These themes were organized into Social, Environmental, Cultural and Economic categories, following the Treaty #3 Anishinaabe Nation Four Directions Governance Model, shown in Figure 4. This report is organized according to these governance areas.



**Waabanong (East):** Environmental aspects of governance, includes how Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration inform and guide environment related decision-making within the Nation (GCT#3 and Communities) and externally with both the Crown and proponents.

**Ningabii'onong (West):** Economic aspects of governance, includes how Anishinaabe Inakonigaawin (Anishinaabe laws) informs the distribution of benefits and creation of opportunities from resource projects. This section also includes decision making in relation to economic issues and opportunities.

**Shaawanong (South):** Cultural aspects of governance, includes the importance of ceremony as the source of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin's authority, and the grounding of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration in Anishinaabe law and knowledge systems. This section also discusses cultural aspects of the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3, which represents the responsibility for, and relationship with, the lands and waters.

**Kiiwetinong (North):** Social aspects of governance, includes the transfer of knowledge, the creation of resources to aid in understanding of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, and the inclusion of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration in school curriculum.

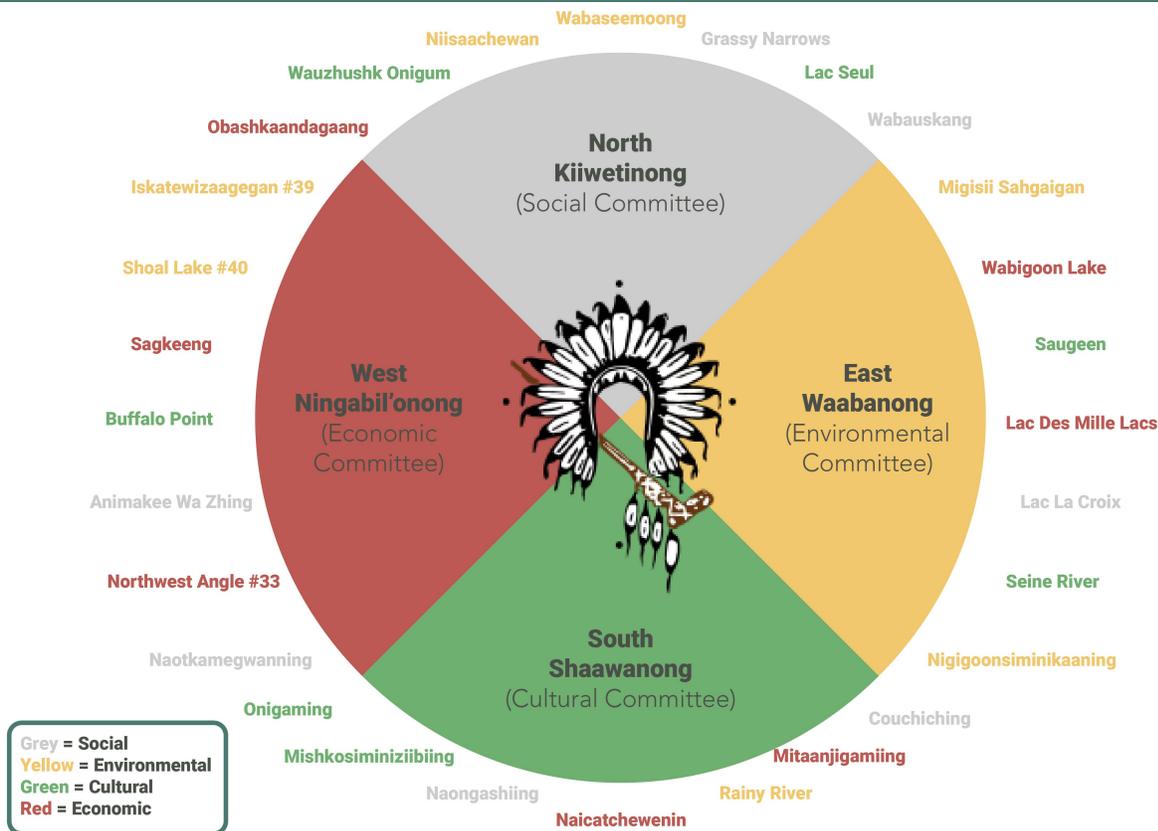


Figure 4: Treaty #3 Anishinaabe Nation Four Directions Governance Model



Knowledge holders also provided guidance in the form of teachings, models, and legends. These include The Seven Grandfather Teachings and The Four-Hearts Decision Making Model, which are highlighted in this report the section on Traditional Anishinaabe of Treaty #3 Decision Making.

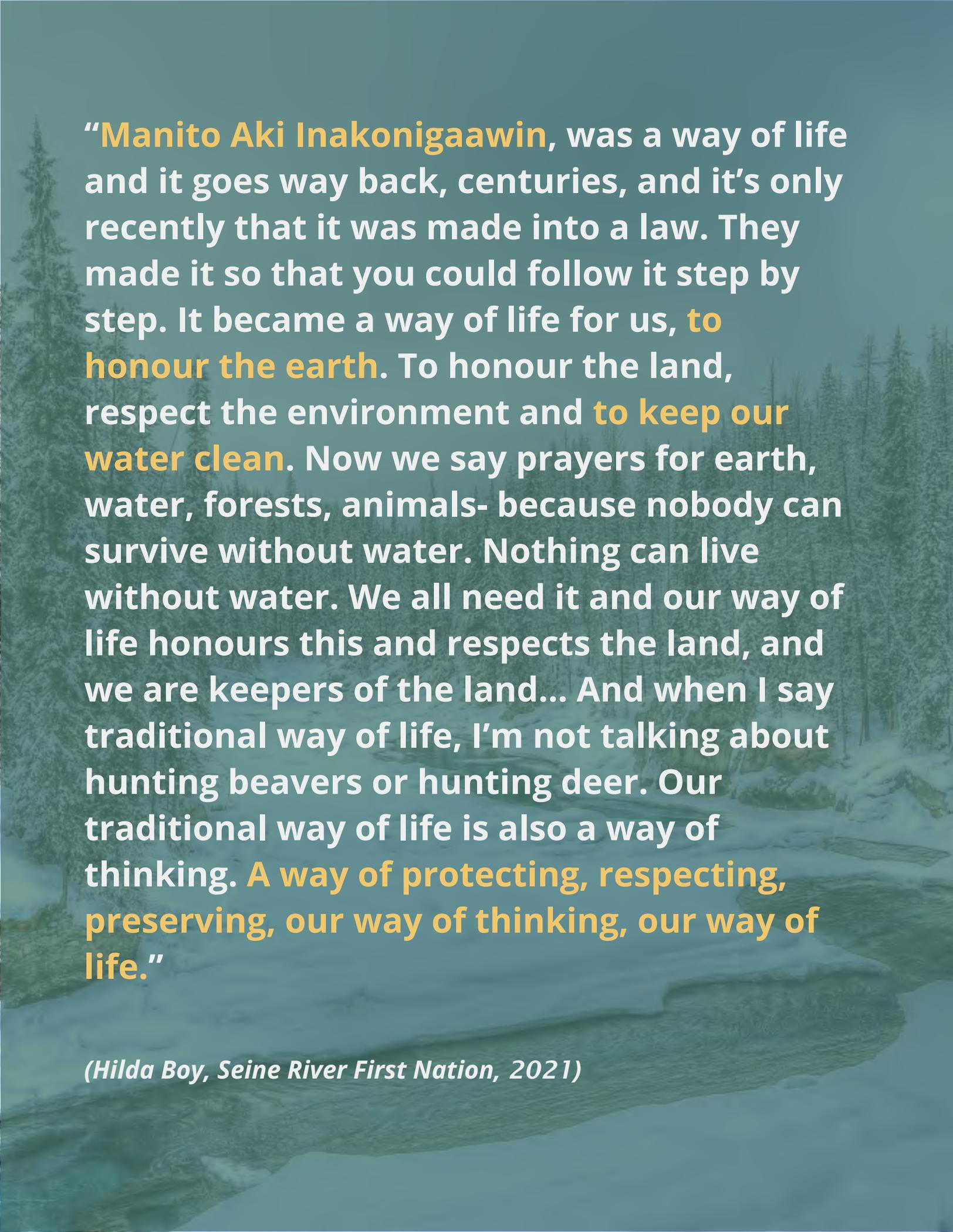
The Project Team focused on incorporating the stories, reflection, history, and wisdom from knowledge holders, staff, and community members' in their own words as much as possible. For example, the following quote provides an introduction, in a knowledge holder's own words, of the important place that Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration hold in the lives and governance of the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3.

## Project Timeline

Guidance and direction received from staff and knowledge holders during each phase of this project informed the direction, questions, and discussions of the subsequent phases. As a living document, next steps in this project will include continuing ongoing discussions with knowledge holders, as well as the development of visualizations and summaries, which will be incorporated as they are finalized.

Results from this research will be presented back to knowledge holders who will bring recommendations to leadership in spring of 2022.





**“Manito Aki Inakonigaawin**, was a way of life and it goes way back, centuries, and it’s only recently that it was made into a law. They made it so that you could follow it step by step. It became a way of life for us, **to honour the earth**. To honour the land, respect the environment and **to keep our water clean**. Now we say prayers for earth, water, forests, animals- because nobody can survive without water. Nothing can live without water. We all need it and our way of life honours this and respects the land, and we are keepers of the land... And when I say traditional way of life, I’m not talking about hunting beavers or hunting deer. Our traditional way of life is also a way of thinking. **A way of protecting, respecting, preserving, our way of thinking, our way of life.**”

*(Hilda Boy, Seine River First Nation, 2021)*

# Methods and Limitations

Grand Council Treaty #3 is made up of 28 First Nation communities, with a combined population of approximately 25,000 people. In total, 223 people engaged in interviews, surveys, or focus groups for this study representing about 1% of the Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 population. The following paragraphs describe the engagement and analysis methods used throughout this study.

## GCT#3 Staff Interviews

Interviews were conducted with 8 GCT#3 staff between December 15, 2020, and February 3, 2021, using Zoom, an online tele meeting platform. Interviews were semi-structured, which is a conversational style of interviewing guided by both the researcher and the participant. During these interviews, the Project Team asked GCT#3 staff to describe how they understand and are guided by Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration in their work and discuss implementation gaps and solutions regarding Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. The staff interview guide is included in **Appendix A**. Following these interviews, the Project Team coded the interview notes and drafted an interim report

that described initial “Pathways Forward,” or actions to ensure that Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration are respected and upheld.

## Community Survey

The Pathways Forward: Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Community Survey was open from Wednesday, March 31st, 2021, to Friday, April 23rd, 2021. 154 community members completed surveys. An additional 15 surveys were removed because the respondents did not answer any of the questions beyond the demographic information. The survey asked respondents to prioritize the “Pathways Forward” identified in the staff interviews, to self-assess their knowledge of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, provide basic demographic information, including age and the respondents’ community, and the positions the respondent held. Survey participants were also provided opportunities to comment on most questions, and collectively provided hundreds of written entries.

Survey participants ranged from community members, council members, and Chiefs, staff members of a Treaty #3 Tribal Council, GCT#3 staff, and GCT#3 Advisory Council members.



To keep the survey short, direct, and reflecting that knowledge holders were interviewed after the survey phase was completed, not all Pathways Forward identified by staff and knowledge holders were included in the survey. The Project Team attempted to keep the options for each level of implementation (personal, community, and GCT#3) at a maximum of five options. Decisions about the inclusion of Pathways Forward in the survey were based on 1) the complexity of the concept, with simpler Pathways Forward being included in the community survey, and 2) the appropriateness of a community survey as a forum for prioritization. The language used in the survey was carefully workshopped by the Project Team to make technical, governance related language more accessible to community members, which resulted in the survey not exactly corresponding to the Pathways Forward identified in the GCT#3 staff interviews.

Survey respondents were made aware of the survey through an email sent to community leadership, lands and resource technicians, and the Elders, Women's, Men's, and Youth Councils, as well as advertising on the GCT#3 Facebook page. Due to COVID-19, the survey was delivered entirely online, and members who are less familiar with or have limited access to technology and internet were likely underrepresented.

## Knowledge Holder Interviews & Focus Groups

Knowledge holder interviews and focus groups were conducted between June and September 2021, in the following sessions:

- Gaagiidoo-Ikwewag (Women's Council) Focus Group, three participants, June 7, 2021
- Youth Council Focus Group, one participant, July 5, 2021
- Mamawichi-Gabowitaa-Ininiwag (Men's Council) Focus Group, 2 participants on July 14, 2021
- Kenora Community Interview Session, 18 participants, June 28-30, 2021
- Couchiching Community Interview Session, 30 participants, August 19, 2021
- 8 individual knowledge holder interviews were conducted between June and September 2021.





During these interviews and focus groups, the meaning and applications of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration were explored using a semi-structured interview format. Participants were asked open-ended questions to identify challenges, concerns, and solutions related to holding up Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration as foundational laws that guide how the Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 maintain relationships with lands, waters, and all living beings from the Earth to the sky. The knowledge holder interview guide is included in **Appendix D**.

GCT#3 focus groups were run online using a “Jamboard” where responses were posted in a format visible to focus group participants. PDF copies of these Jamboards are included in **Appendix E**.

Researchers planned to interview at least two people from each community, and interview sessions were advertised through Facebook posts and by contacting Chiefs, Councils, band managers, and lands and resources technicians. The community interview sessions were run as both group interviews and individual interviews, open to all who chose to come and share their knowledge. Other knowledge holder interviews were scheduled separately from

these engagement sessions. As advertising was largely limited to social media, participation of those less familiar with technology may have been limited. Participation was also limited to those who had the time and resources to travel to one of the community interview sessions. Researchers accommodated those who could not travel by booking individual interviews and meeting at locations best suited for the interviewee. Finally, to reduce engagement fatigue, interviews with this project were held alongside engagements to develop a curriculum based on teachings around energy, which likely had some impact on the themes and priorities expressed by knowledge holders.

## Information Processing, Sorting and Analysis

GCT#3 staff interviews were recorded, and the Project Team took extensive notes during the interviews, which were reviewed following the interviews. Knowledge holder interviews and community focus groups were recorded and transcribed, and the Women’s and Youth’s Council focus groups used Jamboard to record discussion and ideas, in addition to recording the focus groups.



The Project Team then sorted Interview, focus group, and survey responses were sorted by governance area, using the Treaty #3 Anishinaabe Nation Four Directions Governance Model, shown in Figure 4. The Project Team further separated responses into “Current Implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration;” “Future Visions;” and “Pathways Forward.” Responses related to specific teachings, for example, Traditional Anishinaabe Decision Making or the Four Hearts Decision Making Model were separated into their own sections.





# Meaning of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration

Knowledge holders and GCT#3 staff were asked what Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration meant to them. Their responses are summarised below.

## MANITO AKI INAKONIGAAWIN

Staff and knowledge holders shared that Manito Aki Inakonigaawin is a sacred Anishinaabe law. It is part of every Anishinaabe person from birth, and is found in people's connection to the land, the berries, the rocks, the wind, the water, and the animals. 'Aki' means 'everything the creator left for us.' Manito Aki Inakonigaawin has always been there and evolves and changes with the Anishinaabe people in Treaty #3. It describes the Anishinaabe people's responsibility to the land and the resources and can be considered as a constitution to the Anishinaabe in Treaty #3. Knowledge holders also spoke of how Manito Aki Inakonigaawin means that we live by the authority of the land.

*Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi means a lot to me in terms of "connections", in terms of togetherness with the land and with each other as human beings; in how we live on the Earth and how we take care of the Earth and the water.*

*Manito Aki Inakonigaawin is, is our Great Earth Law and we are born into through our families. They teach us, our parents, grandparents, the Elders in the community, they teach the little ones about the Great Earth Law in an indirect way by spending time with them, showing how to take care of items, when preparing foods, prepping tools and mainly how to respect and honour what it is we do. Our mothers, aunties and women in the community teach us about the water in the importance of it and how it relates to women as we are the life givers. (Darlene Curci, 2021)*



*Through community consultations we developed Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. A law we must obey. We must obey one thing and the only thing, that's "miinigoizh", what the creator has left on earth for us. When you say "Aki", what the creator left on earth for us in this land, the land, which means the animals that we eat, the water that we drink, everything that is on the land, Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. (Andrew Johnson, Seine River First Nation, 2021)*

*Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. You must sit with those words because we don't speak our language as often as we should. When we work with Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, when we look at the way the word is set up, what breaks it down, and it's the earth. Aki. That's the key part. We need to know that we can all be warriors to protect our earth. I think Manito Aki Inakonigaawin provides that channel and that process. (Naashki Binezek, Lac Seul First Nation, 2021)*

In 1997, a written version of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin was approved through ceremony. The intention behind the written version of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin was to support the

Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 self governance, removing reliance on federal funding for governance, and ensuring that projects on Treaty #3 territory respected Treaty #3 rights. Knowledge holders shared that the written version of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin holds authority through ceremony and provides a framework for the Anishinaabe Nation of Treaty #3 to practice their responsibilities to the land.

*In international relations, when a treaty or a document is created, there is often an authoritative copy. So even if something is printed in six languages, sometimes the English version will be the authoritative version or sometimes the French version of the treaty is. So, if there is ever a contradiction, the authoritative copy takes precedence. That is the way that I view Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. Even though it's written down and even though it's in hard copy, that's not the authoritative document. The authoritative document lies in ceremony. That's why we have to regularly take it back to that [ceremony] and to the oral tradition rather relying only on the written copy. But that doesn't mean that we can't write things down, make it relevant to the 21st century because that written copy was still created by that ceremony. (Daniel Morrisseau, 2021)*



*"I try to teach my kids and my grandkids, that this is more important. This land is more important than anything else. We, as Anishinaabe people are supposed to be the caretakers of this land and what we do affects seven generations.*

*(Susan Smith, Couchiching First Nation, 2021)*

**The Relationship circle is a visual representation of the Anishinaabe Worldview in regards to relations with Niinkeminaan (Mother Earth)**

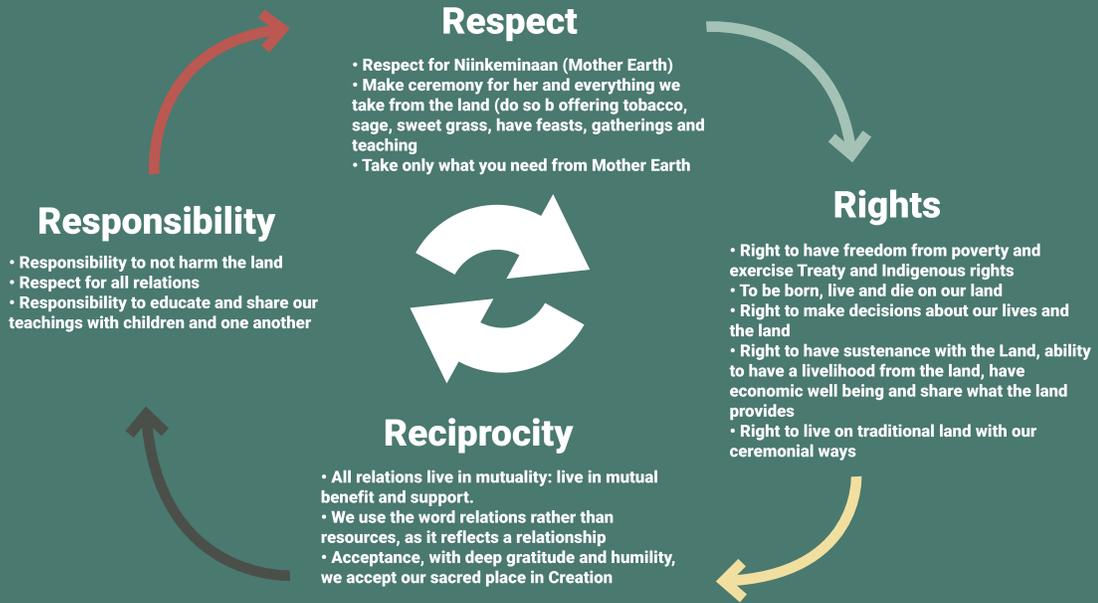


Figure 5. Visual representation of Anishinaabe Worldview, developed by Kaaren Dannenman, Trout Lake

## THE NIBI DECLARATION

Knowledge holders and staff shared the following understanding about nibi:

Nibi is water. Nibi is essential and sacred. Nibi is life. Nibi is a sacred responsibility. It does not know boundaries and flows through borders. Nibi is part of our identity, it connects everything. Water is one of our relatives. Women hold the authority for nibi. Nibi can give life, and also take it away. It must be respected.

The Nibi Declaration (Figure 6) was developed in 2019 as a visual representation of the connection between nibi and the Anishinaabe in Treaty #3i. The Nibi Declaration is an assertion of the importance of water to the Anishinaabe in Treaty #3. The declaration recognizes that nibi is a spirit, that nibi is essential to a good life, that nibi unites people, and that everyone lives in sacred relationship with nibi.

***The [Nibi] Declaration is necessary. From a Nation's perspective we need to be able to come out and say water is important and what is the importance of water? We need to point to a statement about it. The Nibi Declaration does that. It provides a***

***statement. It provides a touch point to go back to that helps us explain the rationale around what we do, and why we do it, and how we do it ... It's really important to have a line in the sand so to speak. To go back and say "on this particular point in time we made a Declaration about Nibi. Here are some of the things that were happening at the time that made it really important, and that we thought that we are going to lose that connection, that very sacred connection to the water." (Anonymous, 2021)***

***Nibi is the relationship between us and the water. Water is essential for all of creation, without Nibi there would be nothing here. Just dry, dry as a desert. Nobody, no people, no plants, no insects, no nothing. That's the significance of water. It's a life giver. The declaration is about protecting, protecting, and rehabilitating our waterways. (Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh, Grand Council Treaty 3, 2021)***



*Nibi is about water in general and how water gets changed ... but it's also about the selling of water. Who gave Nestlé the right to sell bottles of water? What comes back to a community when you sell that water, what is the protection in place? It's about Shoal Lake 40; for years their water went to the city of Winnipeg. There is a great deal of science that supported the delivery of water but there was a lot of repercussions that happened to the community of Shoal Lake 40. I think that people talk about the importance of water, but they don't necessarily understand at the community level what that means. If we don't protect the water, we have situations like in Wabigoon around mercury. It impacted Wabaseemoong and Grassy Narrows. The whole mentality back in the 1970s with the Dryden pulp and paper mill was not based around the understanding of how water moves and how water flows. (Anonymous, 2021)*

**NIBI (WATER) IS ALIVE AND HAS A SPIRIT. IT IS THE LIFEBLOOD OF OUR MOTHER (AKI) AND CONNECTS EVERYTHING. IT CAN GIVE, SUSTAIN AND TAKE LIFE.**

**NIBI CAN TAKE MANY FORMS INCLUDING SNOW, ICE, SPRING WATER, SALT WATER, RAIN, FRESH WATER, SWAMP WATER, AQUIFERS AND BIRTH WATER. EACH TYPE OF WATER HAS A ROLE TO PLAY IN OUR WELLNESS AND HEALING. NIBI IS CONNECTED TO OUR GRANDMOTHER, THE MOON.**

**EVEN THOUGH IT HAS SUFFERED, NIBI CONTINUES TO BRING FORWARD LIFE AND WE MUST WORK TO HEAL THE WATER AND OURSELVES.**

**NIBI HAS A SPIRIT AND SHARES ITS GIFT OF LIFE WITH ALL OF CREATION**  
 Nibi has its own spirit. It cannot be owned or controlled. Nibi is shared across lands and territories, between people, with other nations and all other beings that are part of creation. Spirits and other beings in creation look after nibi and its wellbeing. Nibi and all beings and spirits that look after nibi must be feasted. All creation expresses love and respect for nibi through gestures of gratitude.

**WE ALL HAVE A SACRED RELATIONSHIP WITH NIBI**  
 Anishinaabe have been responsible for the care of the aki (land) and nibi since time immemorial. Women have a sacred relationship with nibi and a special responsibility to look after nibi because they carry birth water and have the ability to bring life into this world. Men have a role to play to protect the land and support the wellness of nibi and ikwewag. Our relationship with nibi is preserved through ceremony, teachings, education and knowledge shared through generations.

**WE NEED NIBI IN ORDER TO LIVE A GOOD LIFE**  
 All beings, including Anishinaabe, are born of nibi. We depend on nibi to live and our bodies are made of it. Nibi is the source of our wellbeing. It nourishes us, spiritually, physically, mentally and emotionally and provides cleansing and healing. Clean nibi for drinking is important to our health. We must respect our sacred relationship with nibi and all beings in creation to help protect nibi for our children and future generations.

**NIBI UNITES US**  
 Through its flow and movement, nibi cleanses itself and connects us all. It brings us together as families, communities and as a nation. Traditional governance and law, including the Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Treaty #3 confirm our collective responsibility to take action, give back and protect nibi and the environment for our children and future generations.

**NIBI**  
 DECLARATION OF TREATY #3

**NIBI HAS A SPIRIT • NIBI IS LIFE • NIBI IS SACRED • WE HONOUR RESPECT AND LOVE NIBI**

Figure 6. Anishinaabe of Treaty #3 Nibi Declaration



# Traditional Anishinaabe of Treaty #3 Decision Making

Along with Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, this section outlines some traditional decision-making governance structures and teachings, highlighting The Seven Grandfather Teachings, the Clan System, and the Four Hearts Model. These teachings are integral to both Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.

## The Seven Grandfather Teachings

Knowledge holders were asked to discuss how the Seven Grandfather Teachings of humility, bravery, honesty, wisdom, truth, respect, and love should be incorporated into decision making and governance. This section organizes their feedback on the Seven Grandfather teachings. Of note, during the discussions, several knowledge holders reminded that there were many Anishinaabe teachings, not just seven teachings. The knowledge holders also stated that the teachings are all interconnected and that each lesson supports the others.

***“Everybody has to be taught the Seven Teachings, in order for that to be Inakonigaawin. Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. Everybody has to understand that.”***

*(Hilda Boy, Seine River First Nation, 2021)*

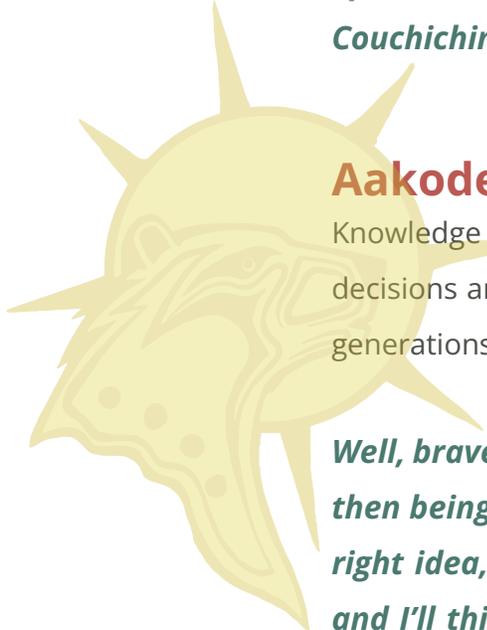




## **Dabaadendiziwin - Humility**

Knowledge holders mentioned the importance of listening and learning from children, from Elders, and from the land, even (or especially) when this is difficult. Laughter, especially towards ourselves, was also mentioned as an important part of Anishinaabe culture.

*Being around over 70 years, I think you know whatever you think is right, you want to pass on to the younger generation. Your wisdom. Well, sometimes they pass things on to us, right? ... I learned that to be humble, you can learn from anybody, anytime, and any place. You have to have an open mind and you have to be willing to share or to accept. (Ernie Jones, Couchiching First Nation. 2021)*

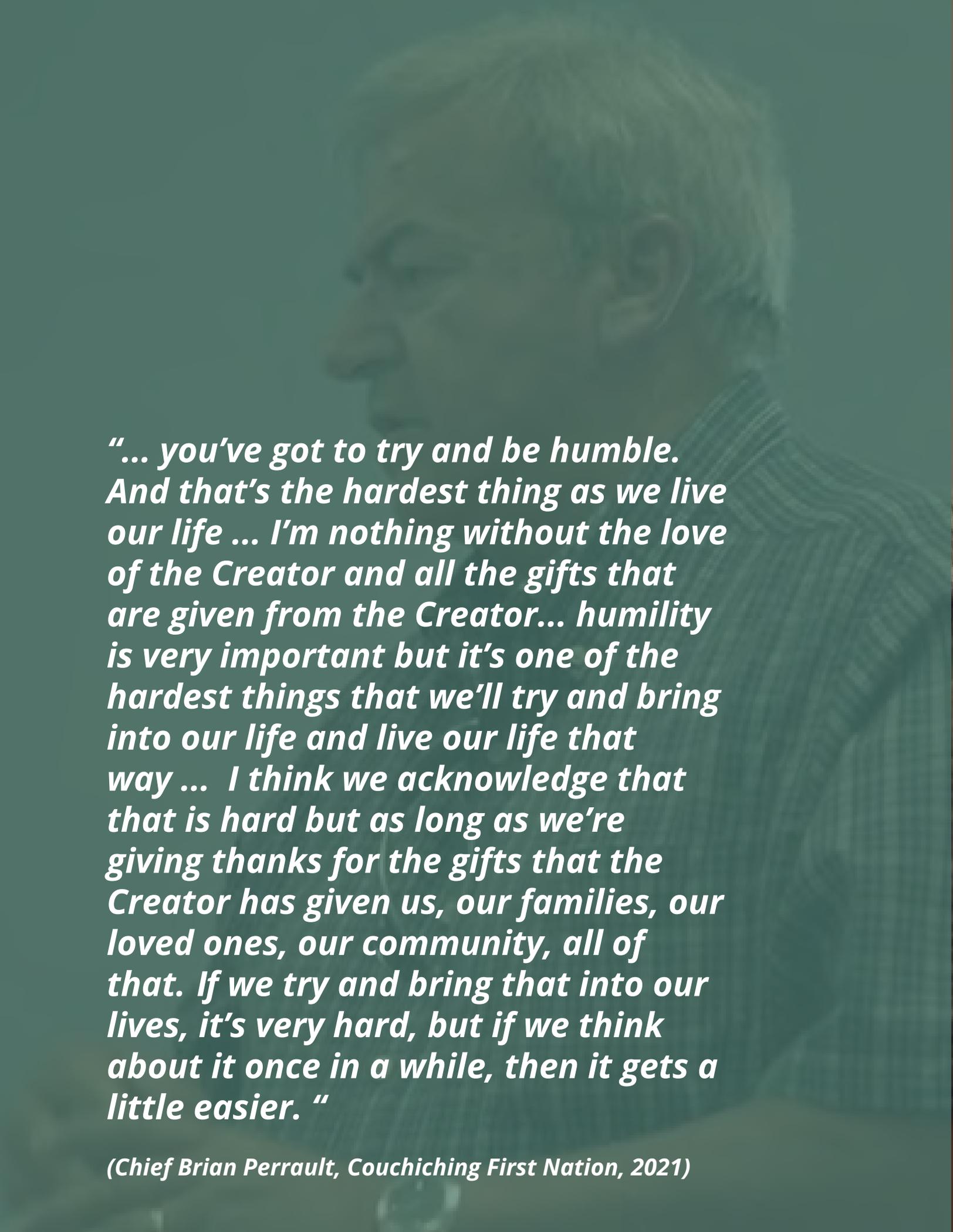


## **Aakode'ewin - Bravery**

Knowledge holders said that bravery is both living with conviction in your own decisions and being willing to listen to others. It also means standing up for future generations and practicing ceremonies even when times are scary and demanding.

*Well, brave is standing up to listening to what somebody else has to say, but then being brave enough to say, I don't agree with you. You might have the right idea, but I don't agree with what you say, but I will take it to listen, and I'll think about it ... But I think bravery is like part of being willing to accept compromise, to be brave enough to say, "Okay, step out your comfort circle." And listen to somebody else because maybe what I believe isn't quite right ... I think that's what bravery is, is being able to stand up for what you believe in, but still be able to cross over if that's what you want to do. If you believe what somebody else is saying to you. (Sherry Anne Roseborough, Baakaandibewiziibing Ojibway Nation, 2021)*





*“... you’ve got to try and be humble. And that’s the hardest thing as we live our life ... I’m nothing without the love of the Creator and all the gifts that are given from the Creator... humility is very important but it’s one of the hardest things that we’ll try and bring into our life and live our life that way ... I think we acknowledge that that is hard but as long as we’re giving thanks for the gifts that the Creator has given us, our families, our loved ones, our community, all of that. If we try and bring that into our lives, it’s very hard, but if we think about it once in a while, then it gets a little easier. ”*

*(Chief Brian Perrault, Couchiching First Nation, 2021)*

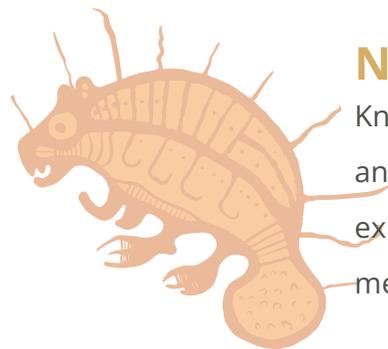
*...the more you follow your way, then you make it stronger, then the more it's easier for you. That's the way I look at bravery. I'm going to stay brave for my people, for my grandkids, my great grandkids. And for other people that are suffering here, I'll pray for them. That's what I say bravery is about (Chief Vernon Copenace, Nay-no-ka-si of Obashkaandagaang First Nation, GCT3)*



## **Gwayakwaadiziwin - Honesty**

Honesty was discussed in the context of both internal and external relations. Internally, knowledge holders mentioned the importance of telling the truth. Externally, they discussed the crown and proponents being dishonest about the Treaty and protection of lands.

*Well honesty, I think it's really hard to come by in the system today because it's all about money, who has the money, who has the power, and Indian affairs – they've never lived up to the treaty. They've never been a protection, they let government take islands. Whatever we owned at one point; it's gone. (Anonymous, 2021.)*



## **Nibwaakaawin - Wisdom**

Knowledge holders talked about how wisdom is earned through life experiences, and emphasized that it can come from ceremony, the land, children and from life experiences. Wisdom is important to survival and to living in a good way and is meant to be passed between people and across generations.

*Teaching of wisdom is important in our lives because that's how we're going to survive. It's always been that way. It's always been passed on. Our knowledge comes from the lodges, our songs come from the lodges and our people, they're gifted ... we have to maintain the teachings for the next generation. (Chief Vernon Copenace, Nay-no-ka-si of Obashkaandagaang First Nation, 2021)*

***“Honesty... I believe that if I tell the truth, then I don't have to worry. And I tried to teach my son that and working with the kids. If you're honest, the chances are that you'll get a better response than if you lie.”***

***(Sherry Anne Roseborough, Baakaandibewiziibing Ojibway Nation, 2021)***





## Debwewin - Truth

Regarding truth, knowledge holders spoke of aki and nibi holding truth, and choosing to live in truth. Traditional ceremonies encourage truth telling, for example, holding a feather during ceremony reminds speakers to only tell the truth. Also, while ideas and messages change as they are passed between people, some truth remains.

*In our culture, you have a feather. You can only tell the truth. You cannot make up a story. You cannot lie. (Earl Klyne, Couchiching First Nation, 2021)*

*Everybody's truth is different. If you listen, sometimes there is some truth in what somebody's saying. As it gets passed to you and to me and everybody, it loses. It picks up a word here or picks up a word there and then it changes the whole sentence or the whole thing, because all they have to do is change one word. But I always believe that there is some truth to some. Somebody will say something and there is a little bit of truth there ... I've always believed honesty is the best policy. (Sherry Anne Roseborough, Baakaandibewiziibing Ojibway Nation, 2021)*



## Minaadendamowin - Respect

Knowledge holders often mentioned respect in relation to relationships with aki, with nibi, between people, and with the creator. One knowledge holder told the following story about how the Anishinaabe have survived as a people because respect is so important to them:

*The original creation law, that's where it [the teaching of respect] comes from. When Anishinaabe people, somewhere thousands and thousands and thousands of year ago, maybe a hundred thousand years ago, there was this turmoil where the Anishinaabe people ... and we came from somewhere, another part of the universe and Anishinaabe people came from that part. But there is somewhere in that universe, there is a life of what we experienced here as human beings, or spirits beings, or human beings ... (con't) (Elder from Naotkamegwanning First Nation, 2021)*



*"I think implementing these traditions is a step in the right direction, but coming together is what's needed, not shooting anybody down because of their education, because there's such thing as knowledge and wisdom. I've gained way more wisdom off the streets than I did off a book ... For instance, the community initiatives that I started, I started a sacred fire last year, not too many elders even came, because of who I was. Because of the life that I led before that ... that needs to change."*

*(Chief Bill Petiquan, Wabauskang First Nation, 2021)*

*Something happened to Anishinaabe people where there were being annihilated by other beings in a war. And because of the Creator, really appreciated Anishinaabe people because they acknowledge creation, very high regard, and they do offerings and whatnot. We still do these things, and we still talk to the spirits in our language. And the Creator said to his support workers, spirit support workers, talk to them as “We can’t lose these people. They can’t die. We need to find a place where we can take them.” And the Creator gave the spirit leaders to find ways and bring them out to journey, and that’s when they journeyed and there was this part of what we know today as earth. There’s a place that we can take them because of the universe power of creation, we landed here on Turtle Island and the Creator wanted us to. But for us, landing here in Turtle Island, is that we have to agree to continue doing the offerings, ceremony, and whatnot. (Elder from Naotkamegwanning First Nation, 2021)*

Knowledge holders also discussed how and when to show respect, including the importance of ceremonies, offerings, and protocols. One knowledge holder emphasized that humans do not create and must show gratitude because they live from the gifts of the land. Another told of how animals used to talk to humans, but no longer do because we are not respecting their homes.

*My ancestors built Ober’s Island ... I remember they had a feast. I was just a little girl. We were allowed to go to the feast, the ceremony. All my relatives were there, and everybody was talking in Ojibwe, Anishinaabemowin. But it was how they lived, and how they treated each other. That’s what I remember. They honoured each other, they respected each other, and they loved each other. And I could feel it. Even as a child I could feel it because that love and that respect was even given to me. I think that’s where I learned how to respect people, respect others, and to show them love and kindness, and to be truthful, and to be honest with how you are, how you live. (Hilda Boy, Seine River First Nation, 2021)*



*“ You look at the trees, look at the water, look at the sky, look at all the stuff around you and then you sit down with a person that you know that tells lies or is dishonest. You can tell the differences right off the bat what Manito is. That sky that water it will never lie to you, none of that won't lie to you. It is what it is. That's no lie ... That's the truth because the creator put it there. He put that nibi – that water there for the Anishinaabe for us to enjoy ... This is Manito aki inakonigaawin, this is how he planned it. That's that is, and the nibi goes with it.”*

*(Sherry Anne Roseborough, Baakaandibewiziibing Ojibway Nation, GCT3)*



*My grandfather used to tell me that the animals can talk to you, but they choose not to talk to you anymore because of what you did to their land, because of what you did to their home or to the air and the water. I get animals around my house, they're like pets, they come right up to me, birds land on my shoulder, my hat. I'm not saying that I'm blessed or anything but it's just that I treat them with respect. (Mike Forav, Couchiching First Nation, 2021)*



### **Zaagi'idiwin - Love**

Knowledge holders spoke of caring for water, life, children, the community, and the nation as important aspects of love. Love and caring makes everything better and is difficult for some due to trauma and disruptions caused by the residential schools. Knowledge holders also spoke about spirits having particular love for children when children made offerings and showed respect.

*Love is lots of things. So, the love of water, the love of children, the love of life. I think it's important. I think that if you love something, regardless of what it is, that makes it better. And to love somebody other than yourself is selfless. (Sherry Anne Roseborough, Baakaandibewiziibing Ojibway Nation, 2021)*

*I think when we talk about love, we care about each other and want to have the best kind of life for our people. It extends to my children, my community, and to the nation. (Larry Morriseau, 2021)*

*Children are very brave, they're very, very brave. And like I said about that story, about the Black River with the kid [referring to the kid making offering to the little spirit], I didn't quite finish it and the last piece of that is that the children find their own destiny because we gave them the tools for them to do that [teach the kids adequate protocols]. And then returned, the Great Spirit appreciated them doing that, and that great love of the Great Spirit on children. It's like paying them back with that spiritual love. (Elder from Naotkamegwanning First Nation, 2021)*

## The Clan System

Several knowledge holders spoke of the Clan System, and described how traditionally, clans are an integral part of Anishinaabe governance. Each clan has specific duties and responsibilities, all of which are required for good governance, shown in Figure 7. Notably, one knowledge holder mentioned that there was traditionally no defined leader in her community, rather, people led in the specific areas where they had strengths, and they recognized each other's strengths through time spent in circle.

*"I know from what my mom and my aunt talked about in trout lake, their governance system never had a chief. **Everybody knew what everybody else's gifts were.** So, if the community was having problems, they knew who was the one who was knowledgeable to deal with that, whether it was food harvesting, rice, or whatever was needed to be done, they knew who knew how to deal with it. That, that was a **system of leadership.** **Everybody was a leader because everybody knew something that maybe other people didn't know.**"*

*(Kaaren Dannenman, Trout Lake First Nation, 2021)*



# Otootemiwin

## Clan System (The Seven Original Clans)

Giigoo (Fish Clan) Philosophers & Mediators  
 Waawaashkeshi (Deer/Hoof Clan) Reconcilers & pursuers of well-being  
 Waabizheshi (Marten) Warriors, hunters & providers  
 Ochichaak (Crane) and Maang (Loon) Chieftainship  
 Pineshii (Bird Clan) Spiritualists & pursuers of knowledge  
 Makwa (Bear Clan) Guardians & Healers

Now you know the Seven Original Clans. From these clans there are sub-Clans:  
 Fish Clan includes the Turtle, Sturgeon, Bullhead, Sucker, and more.  
 Deer/Hoof Clan includes the Moose, Caribou, Elk, and more.  
 Marten Clan includes the Lynx, Wolf, Weasel, Mink, Otter, Beaver, and more.  
 Loon & Crane clans are part of the Bird Clan and includes pelican, duck, goose, and more.  
 Bird Clan includes the Bald Eagle, Golden Eagle, Hawks, Skydivers, Swimmers and more.  
 Bear Clan includes the Black Bear, Brown Bear, White Bear, Grizzly, and more.

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Figure 7. Anishinaabe of Treaty #3 Otootemiwin (Clan System)



# Four Hearts Decision Making Model

The Four-Heart Decision Making Model, shared by a knowledge holder and shown in Figure 8, below, provides a way of making decisions that ensures a holistic consideration of concerns, opportunities, and impacts related to the Individual, the Community, the Creator, and Mother Earth.

*[Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Four Hearts Model] it's another spiritual model. It's a good way of looking at things. It's a way of making a decision. Those are the*

*things you consider when making a decision. That's the simplest way to look at it. (Anonymous, 2021)*

Considering the first heart is the individual heart, the first step in respect is connecting with respect for oneself:

*You've got to respect who you are. And if you don't respect who you are, then how do you expect somebody else to respect you?*

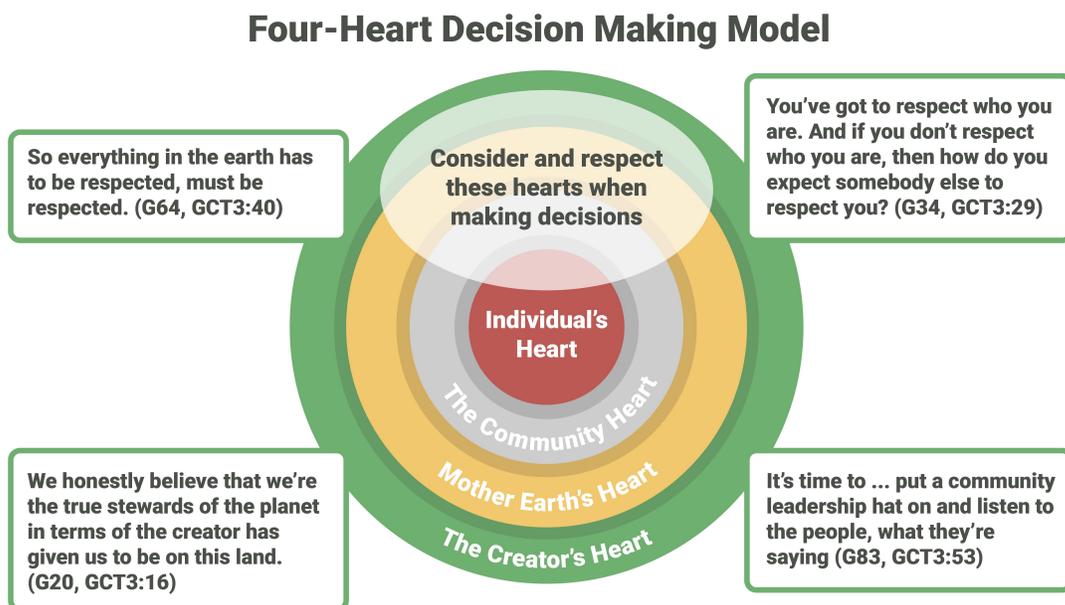


Figure 8. The Four-Heart Decision Making Model is a process described in the teachings Ron Allen, Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nationn. This model asks the decision makers to consider and respect the Individual's Heart, the Community Heart, the Creator's Heart, and Mother Earths Heart when making decisions.

***You have got to respect other people. Everybody has their own idea of what way things should be. I think respect is listening ... You respect my boundaries, I respect yours, you know? (Sherry Anne Rosebourough, Baakaandibewiziibing Ojibway Nation, 2021)***

After respecting oneself, one is in a better place to extend respect for the community heart and the Creator's heart and all life that is interconnected.

***I think what we need to do from here on is ... tell our leadership, "It's time that you quit listening to the Department of Indian Affairs as Indian chiefs. It's time to take that hat off and put a community leadership hat on and listen to the people, what they're saying." (Elder from Naotkamegwanning First Nation, 2021)***

***Manito Aki Inakonigaawin] is a way of life. This is just our way of life, and if you listen to the teachings, all the things that they talk about, they talk about the land. They talk about the water. All these things, if you didn't respect them, then they wouldn't***

***take care of you. (Willie Yerxa, 2021)***

And finally, recognition of the impermanence of all life in our environment, and respect for the circle of life, representing Mother Earth's heart.

***Everything in the earth has to be respected, must be respected. There's animals, and there's trees, there's birds. Everything that's growing or living. That's how I understood Manito Aki Inakonigaawin- respect all the relations and Mother Earth. In our prayers, we thank Mother Earth. When we do ceremonies, offering tobacco and prayers, we're thanking and respecting Mother Earth. (Anonymous, 2021)***

This model encourages decision makers to use a holistic, love-based framework that ensures decisions include human, environmental, and spiritual perspectives. Using this decision-making model helps ensure that decisions are made in a good way, incorporating Anishinaabe values and teachings. It also reflects and compliments the Social, Cultural, Environmental, and Economic aspects of the Four-Directions Governance Model.





# Social: Education, Training, and Knowledge Sharing

## Current Implementation

This section compiles the teachings and information shared by knowledge holders and GCT#3 staff regarding what social changes and considerations are needed to respect and uphold Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. Within the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3, the social aspect of governance includes health, childcare, social services and education and health. As this section includes education, we primarily discuss knowledge transfer about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, a discussion that links closely with Anishinaabemowin, which is included in the Cultural section.

Participants identified seven main methods of current transfer of knowledge about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration:

## Knowledge transfer through ceremony

*In respect to the Manito Aki Inakonigaawin work plan, we feasted it. Any project we do, we feast.*

*We asked that the Creator and the spirit bless our process, and then whenever we reached a milestone, we'd take that to ceremony and asked if we were on a right track with Manito Aki Inakonigaawin or if we have deviated. (Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh, 2021)*

The essential nature of ceremony to all aspects of Anishinaabe law was frequently mentioned by knowledge holders and staff, and is discussed throughout this report, with particular emphasis in the Cultural section. Regarding the transfer of knowledge, knowledge holders and staff discussed how knowledge was transferred to people through ceremony, and that ceremony was an essential conduit between the spirits and the people.



## Family transfer of knowledge

Staff and knowledge holders spoke powerfully of learning the Anishinaabe language, protocols, and teachings through their family. They spoke about their parents practising and engaging them in ceremony from early childhood and sharing teachings with them. Emphasis was placed on ensuring the language, protocol and teachings are especially passed down their children to ensure generational knowledge transfer. Knowledge Holders also described learning from Elders and family members through observation and stated that family members speak to Creator and children together. Learning by doing was extremely important to the Elders and Knowledge Holders.

*I have learned about it [Manito Aki Inakonigaawin], through my family, through our Elders in our community. Where I come from, we are very traditional people. Many of us grew up with teachings, my mom and dad always said to us “what are those things that they teach us about the medicine wheel or those things about love and respect?” My mother shared, “that’s just a way of life, that is how we lived*

*our lives with the Earth. We live as one. So, we know what our role and responsibility is to the Earth because the Earth takes care of us. As we call it Aki. Aki takes care of us.*

*And we take care of her in return. It’s all about relationships and connections”, and that is how I was taught growing up. It was very subtle yet, as today, I realized they had been teaching us all along. Unlike the formal education system where your graded on your understanding of knowledge. (Darlene Curci, 2021)*

*I have a really proud little Anishinaabe boy. He is very proud of who he is and his identity. After he was born, we went into ceremony right away. I was told what to say to him and how to say it. They told me to share that language with him ... As soon as he was born, I sang a song in Ojibwe. (Naashki Binezek, Lac Seul First Nation, 2021)*

*Let the kids get involved... That’s how it was a long time ago. We just got involved with what the people are doing. Then our people never told us, “Come here. I want to*



**“...another element to Manito Aki Inakoniogaawin is when we develop a proposal or documentation that’s in its final draft, we should feast it. We should smudge it and ask the spirits to put their good stuff in it.**

**That’s how [Manito Aki Inakonigaawin] came about. We started the process of writing the law and when we finished it there was an agreement in principle amongst everyone that yes, we had we had our law, it was four years, exactly. Four years to the day when it started to when we had completed writing it.”**

*Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh, 2021)*

*teach you this and that.” We just watched and that’s how I learned how to do things. (Florence Yerxa, 2021)*

Knowledge holders also spoke of the massive barrier to knowledge transfer created by residential schools. Transmission of laws, language, and culture within families and across generations was disrupted and the attempt to take it away from them by the residential schools and in some cases living with non-Anishinaabe families as a result. These impacts are still significantly felt by knowledge holders today.

Several Elders spoke about being cut off from their traditional teachings by the residential schools, with the result that they have less to share with later generations. The impacts of residential schools are discussed further in the Cultural section.

*Remember that in the springtime when our grandfathers used to sit around making paddles or thrashing sticks for wild rice or all those kinds of things, preparing for the summer? Then we would all go into the rice fields, camping. Whether it’s blueberries or rice fields, blueberry fields, picking blueberries, harvesting. Each of these harvestings, our grandfathers used to offer ceremonies,*

*and give thanks for abundance. We learned from that. I said, “We don’t do those things.” We as young parents at that time, we don’t do it, we didn’t do these things with our children because we were too busy doing something else.. and then we forgot about our children. Then our children started to grow, and they didn’t do that traditional, our grandchildren, my grandchildren, didn’t learn that. (Elder from Naotkamegwanning First Nation, 2021)*

*We already have the laws in place, we have been told to keep everything clean and sacred but lots of this was lost due to residential schools (Annoymous, Couchiching First Nation, 2021)*

*I’m just starting to learn a bit of it. I should have been already an Elder, I guess, at my age. But I was taken away from my own teachings when I was seven. I was thrown into Agatha’s Residential School, and my teachers there cut me off from my teachings. (Tommy Keesick, Asubpeeschoseewagong First Nation, 2021)*



# Oral transfer of knowledge

Knowledge holders and staff spoke of oral traditions as being central to Anishinaabe culture, and the traditional way

Anishinaabe knowledge is transmitted. One staff member mentioned that subsequent generations provide peer-review for oral traditions, strengthening interpretations and providing adaptations over time, while retaining the important core knowledge.

*... we've always been an oral people; we didn't have to rely on the pen and paper to demonstrate our lives. We had this true relationship amongst each other that we respected our ways. (Anonymous, 2021)*

*Well, I think a lot of the traditions that are handed down are not written, it's oral. So, we need to pass on, don't forget what we know. Like I was saying earlier, my grandmasaid, "In order to know where you're going, you had to know where you came from." I know that we all come from the earth, and we should protect her... (Sherry Anne Roseborough, Baakaandibewiziibing Ojibway Nation, 2021)*

*One of the great things about having an oral tradition is that things are perhaps by definition peer-reviewed ... in oral tradition when it talks about things that happened 1500 years ago it had to go through all those generations ... What I love about our way of doing things is that the Elders would share this knowledge, but they would usually express it as being what they know or how they perceive it. Then it's up to you to interpret it. Often times it's the young people that say "but this part doesn't make sense. Maybe we should think about it this way." And then the Elders could say "oh that actually makes sense, maybe that is how it's supposed to be interpreted." And that's how knowledge changes over time based upon the interpretation of it. So that is where something like Manito Aki Inakonigaawin is not something that was dusted off and put in a modern context. You know, it wasn't handed to us on tablets at Creation. It was instilled in us as a people, and it changes over time. And that is I think the most beautiful about our way of doing things. Things change over time because something that was 200 years ago isn't necessarily the case now. That is where the*



*actual fine details of things change from generation to generation. But the core of what it is will always remain the same because that core is anchored in who we are in a nation. (Daniel Morrisseau, 2021)*

## Knowledge transfer from the land

A knowledge holder shared the following story to illustrate that while learnings and teachings are passed among people, these teachings originate from the land, and cannot be lost because the land always holds these teachings.

*One of the things they say is that the land is the first teacher...When my grandson, was about three years old, he used to come in the Bush with me and my husband. His job was to carry the tobacco. Every time I needed tobacco; I'd call him over. So, one time he and I went in the Bush to collect Willow trees. He was skipping on the trail ahead of me and I saw this nice clump of Willow trees. I called him back and I said, 'Shayne, I wanna cut these trees. Can you bring that tobacco back here?' So, he comes running back and he stands in front of me, but*

*he's facing the trees and just looking up at them. Then he says, no, no, come come. Those trees aren't ready to die yet. And off he went. So, then he calls me from up the trail, and he says, 'Kookom, hurry.' So, I hurried as fast as I could. And he says, 'Kookom, these trees, say you can cut them down. They want you to put the tobacco down and you to tell them what you're going to use them for'.*

*That was the first time I'd ever heard of that. And, but when I talked to Elders afterwards, they say, well, of course. This was a three-year-old kid that taught me this. He was learning from the land, directly from the land in communication with the land... So ever since experiencing that with my grandson, I have not been afraid that we would lose our knowledge because the knowledge is out there. The land has that knowledge. We just have to learn to be paying attention. (Kaaren Daaneman, Trout Lake First Nation. 2021)*



***“I have not been afraid that we would lose our knowledge because the knowledge is out there. The land has that knowledge. We just have to learn to pay attention.”***

***(Kaaren Daaneman, Trout Lake First Nation. 2021)***

*"I am encouraged by our younger ones. They know a lot about the environment, a lot more at their age than I did. They're getting taught about it in schools now. That's the difference, and they're getting taught about our culture too. Fortunately, I got to sit on the district school board, and we introduced Seven Gens curriculum into the public school system, which is starting to pay dividends. It's going to be a long process, but I'm glad to see it's working. I just hope there's a world left when it's kicking in. They bring me a lot of joy. They come and speak Ojibwe to me, show me how to clean the environment, and there's some really good ideas coming from them."*

*(Earl Klyne, Couchiching First Nation, 2021)*

# Transfer of knowledge through a school system

In contrast to the massive barriers to knowledge transmission caused by residential schools (discussed above and in the Cultural section), knowledge holders and staff described how the current school system includes Anishinaabemowin instruction, and teachings like the Seven Generations teaching. Knowledge holders spoke of joy and hope from seeing youth learn and integrate Anishinaabemowin and teachings.

## Written transfer of knowledge

Regarding the written transfer of knowledge, knowledge holders and staff discussed how knowledge transfer is increasingly happening through writing. For example, staff described how the Nibi Declaration is currently written in an accessible, flowing, and understandable format that helps communicate the relationship between the Nation and water. Staff also felt that the Nibi Toolkit and Manito Aki Inakonigaawin Toolkit (in progress) were important documents which would provide background education for communities, incoming and existing leadership, and GCT#3 staff, giving them the background and explanations to help move forward with

implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. These written documents were also seen as important because they meet the needs of visual and text centred learning styles.

***The Nibi declaration is interesting because anyone can read the document and get a sense of what Nibi means to the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty 3. It helps explain what that relationship with water looks like, then from there hopefully you reflect on your own relationship with water. (Lucas King, 2020)***

***I was adopted into a non-native family, so it wasn't until I started working for Grand Council Treaty #3 that I really started to know who I was as an Anishinaabe person. Working at GCT#3 really helped show me my culture, customs, and protocols, which has been quite a learning journey. Anything that I have learned about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin has been through working with Elders and knowledge keepers and it wasn't until then that I really got to understand the process of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and what this all meant. (Dave Lindsay, 2021)***

## Knowledge Transfer through online platforms

Staff discussed how online platforms like Facebook are used for notifying community members of meetings and events and communicating Anishinaabe governance initiatives and work. Some transfer of knowledge about Anishinaabe teachings is also occurring through platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and on websites like the Nibi Portal.

## Future Vision

Knowledgeholders, staff, and community members frequently mentioned the importance of increasing knowledge of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, and Anishinaabe teachings in general. The importance of increasing the knowledge of Anishinaabe teachings includes among youth, community members, staff and leadership, proponents, and provincial and federal government officials.

*I think it's important to share these teachings with little girls that come to the full moon ceremony. They participate and they get the knowledge and the teachings. It's important to share. We have one, two, maybe three generations of people who have not received those teachings. So, it's about reclaiming our identity, reclaiming our roles and our responsibilities. (Naashki Binezek, Lac Seul First Nation, 2021)*

Participants also emphasized that they wanted their children and grandchildren to grow up learning Anishinaabe teachings and laws, and several participants saw current events, like flooding, the heat wave and forest fires of 2021, as powerful impetus for change and learning and a turning point.

*I tried to teach my grandchildren about listening. Like the wind, I always tell my grandson, "Okay, close your eyes. Listen to the wind." We'll sit there, quiet. "Now, what do you hear?" And then he'll tell me what he hears... And he's always correcting his dad. "Well, that's not what Kookom said. Kookom said this." ... But it's just me teaching my grandson.*



*Hopefully he'll teach his children and then a hundred years from now it'll still be the same. (Sherry Anne Roseboroug, Baakaandibewiziibing Ojibway Nation, 2021)*

*I'll tell you right now after this year, a lot more people are going to listen to it and be interested... Now, things are going to speed up. They're going to be going, "Oh, God. We got to stop this environmental destruction. How can we stop it?" In the first year, we are educating them. This is us. This is the way we want life. It's the way we were taught to have life. There will be a lot that will side with us, see? (Earl Klyne, Couchiching First Nation, 2021)*

Survey participants strongly emphasized the importance of education and land-based learning opportunities in their written comments about their vision for a future when Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration are respected and upheld. These, and other social-themed recommendations, are summarised below.

### Teaching and Learning

- Youth learn about and understand Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration,
- Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration are included in school curriculum,
- Youth receive teachings about aki and nibi.

### Knowledge of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration

- Everyone knows about and practices the laws, and
- Every community knows about the laws.

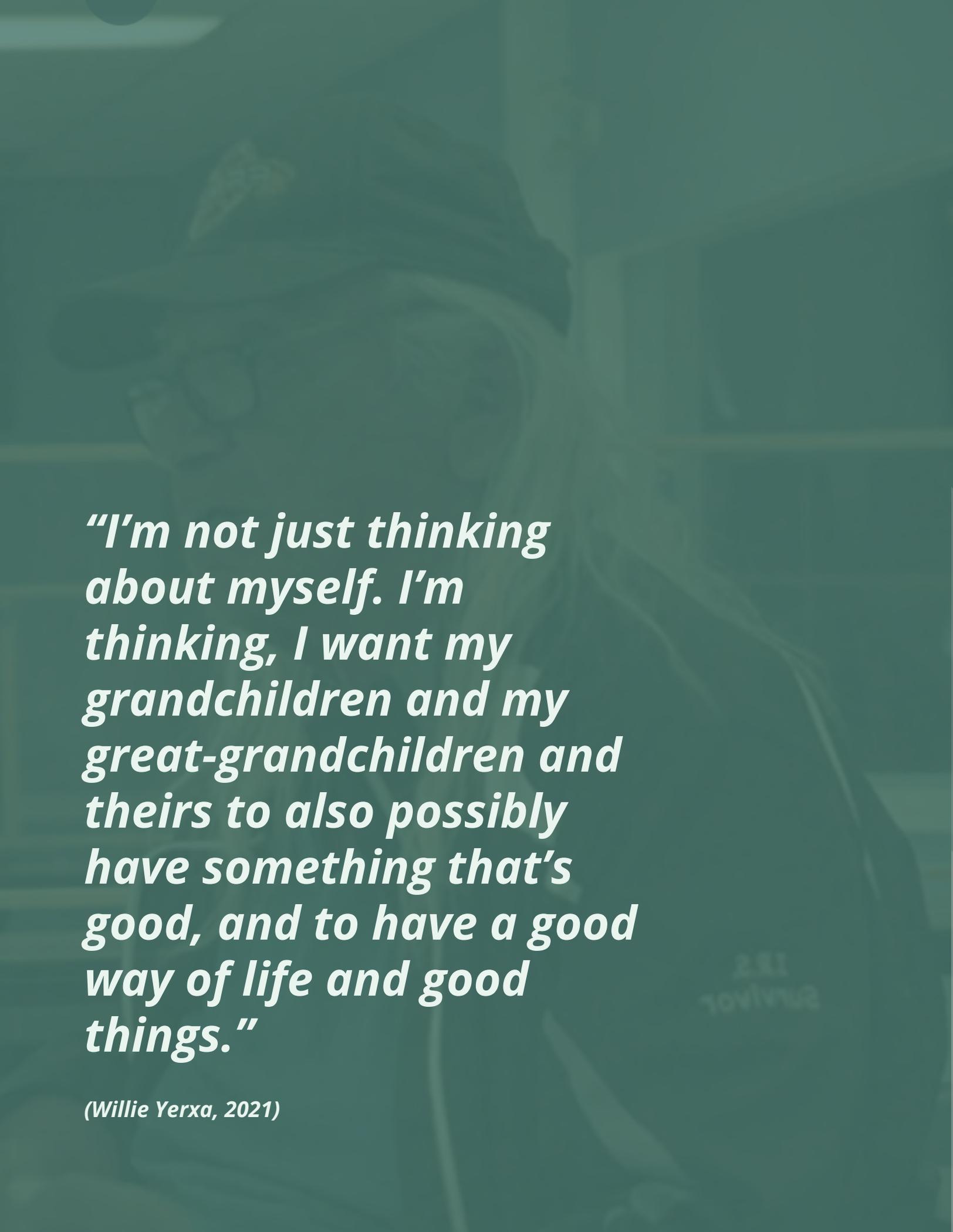
### Health

- People are healthy,
- Communities are clean and healthy,
- Communities and people have healthy relationships, and
- Communities have healthy external relations.

### Other

- Youth are involved in decision making about the future,
- Elders are involved, and play a key role in recognizing the sacredness of resources,
- There is a low crime rate, and
- Traditional knowledge is respected.





***“I’m not just thinking about myself. I’m thinking, I want my grandchildren and my great-grandchildren and theirs to also possibly have something that’s good, and to have a good way of life and good things.”***

*(Willie Yerxa, 2021)*

# Pathways Forward

## Social

While GCT#3 staff recognized that there was currently knowledge transfer about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, this was also identified as something that could be greatly expanded upon. One staff member stated that there was a good general knowledge of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration at GCT#3, but it lacks depth. Leadership were seen as understanding Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi declaration, while staff identified that many community members, youth, proponents, and provincial and federal governments needed to increase their understanding.

### Develop written introductory material and toolkits

Staff identified a need for accessible tools to help implement Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. Specifically, staff mentioned toolkits for Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, which are currently under development. These would help increase knowledge both internally, within GCT#3 communities, and externally, with proponents and provincial and federal governments.

A Youth Council member also mentioned children's books as a potential way to engage children and youth with Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. Notably, the use of written documents in English - while helpful for addressing the knowledge gap - was seen as both a gap and a solution by staff. Several staff were concerned about forcing sacred Anishinaabe laws and world views to fit into western modes of thinking. One staff member referred to written documents in English as "turning the gun against the oppressor," noting that having written laws forced the Crown and proponents to do the work when approaching GCT#3 and Treaty #3 member communities.

*The thing is, in order to convey these senses and these feelings to our non-Indigenous visitors, we have to put them in written form. That's something that we have struggled to do for the past 500 years. To convey the truth that we know in a way that is suitable to having Europeans understand what we are trying to say is very difficult, very, very difficult ... and I often wonder if it's even possible to do. Is it possible to understand a culture without being of the culture?*



*But these documents, these declarations are at least an attempt to try and do that. Whether they are entirely successful or not, I don't know. But I think at least we are trying and it's better than nothing. (Dan Morrisseau, 2021)*

*What we are doing with then Nibi Declaration and Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, is reframing it into written form so that they [external governments/proponents] have to do the work to come to us or they have to do the work around understanding what this is about ... it's important to turn that around and not let them lead ... Instead, we are taking the lead. (Michelle Shephard, GCT#3, 2020)*

In the community survey, 65% of respondents identified “having resources to work with Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration (e.g., staff, learning tools, etc.” as one of the three most important pathways forward for communities.

Survey participants also commented that having written materials, like graphic posters, on display in public places and on Facebook would be

helpful to increase knowledge about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.

## **Create a GCT#3-based position specialised in Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration communication**

Staff suggested creating and maintaining a GCT#3 staff position based in the Territorial Planning Unit (TPU) who would provide on-site Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration knowledge to build the connection between Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration through all departments and government levels. This person could also build a database of who holds knowledge on Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, to assist with education and knowledge transfer. The position could help enforce compliance with Anishinaabe law and be the central focus of implementation on a Nation level.

*I do see gaps [within GCT#3 implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin] and I think the biggest thing is having the Elders at our office or in Grand Council Treaty #3, having the Elders present to be able to teach those teachings to anybody that needs it.*





*We can go to Elders out of the office to do that, but we don't have that close connections with the Elders and our office to be able to comfortably do that ... it would be nice to have somebody designated specifically to have those types of talks, discussion, with staff or whatever, to take time and answer any questions .. We could have a paid position for an Elder to be able to do that. (Dave Lindsay, 2021)*

## Include Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration in school curriculum and youth programs

Including Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration curriculum in schools and youth programs is important to ensure the transmission of knowledge to future generations, and to include children from families where teaching has been disrupted through residential schools.

A Youth Council member emphasized that capacity and knowledge of youth needed to be built up, because youth will be carrying Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration forward, while the Women's Council noted that youth would need to understand Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration to work within both the Traditional and western worlds.

Ideas around youth engagement and school curriculum included:

- involving youth in the Inakonigaawin-ceremony processes, for example, a process to develop a written Nibi Inakonigaawin, as this will increase their lifelong understanding and engagement with the inakonigaawin,
- each school grade including land-based classes and outings with Elders,
- recognizing that many youth do not know how to engage with or participate in Manito Aki Inakonigaawin or the Nibi Declaration;
- connecting with off-reserve youth;
- developing lesson plans for schools;
- teaching Anishinaabemowin, as understanding the language is important to respecting and upholding Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi declaration (discussed further in the culture section);
- spending time on the land;
- learning about medicines, environment, botany, and species names;
- learning about the treaty and its history;
- have Anishinaabe-centred curriculum several days a week, starting in kindergarten;
- having recordings from Elders available to teachers and students;
- providing gender-based teachings; and
- holding ceremonies.



*I know that we all come from the earth, and we should protect her. We should. It's not about money, it's not about being, I think it's about taking care of mother earth because she takes care of us ... I think it should be taught in school. That's a good idea to have Manito Aki Inakonigaawin to be in school. The younger kids, they don't know because the traditions have not been passed ... So, trying to pass on traditions and things like that, it should be mandatory, I think. (Sherry Anne Roseborough, Baakaandibewiziibing Ojibway Nation, 2021)*

*Schools is another way to do it [move forward in a good way]. I think Treaty #3 should encourage the teaching of the treaty in the all the schools and the communities. That should be a course in itself. Like even developed in way that kids can understand it. Even just by drawing maps or telling people this is where we used to live so people can start to understand ... just general information that is starting at every young level. (Lorraine Major, Animakee Wa Zhing 33 First Nation, 2021)*

Knowledge holders also mentioned the importance of youth learning spiritual and

cultural practices, and respecting instruction that comes through from spirits. One knowledge holder mentioned a cultural program where Anishinaabe children spent two weeks on the land, learning knowledge and teachings, and that youth who participated in the program had a lower incidence of suicide. Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration could be included within these kinds of programs.

*You want to see results? This year, you want to see results this year in the community? As long as you promise the little spirit people that you're going back to visit them again next summer and you do that ceremony. We did the ceremony of appreciation then we found out that the love of the little spirit people amongst children, they love to play with them. They said, "We saw them during their offerings when we took them to sacred sites, they were there with them." And there was only one suicide the whole year after that. And the following year there was none. For 10 years there was only one suicide ... And that's the power of a child. (Elder from Naotkamegwanning First Nation, 2021)*

*I think part of what we want the youth to understand too, that we have to pay*



***Many years ago, ... [Elder Buddy Friday] shared that there was this spirit that was going to come through the dam that would make people sick ... You know some of the messages that are received, we have to remember they're not for nothing. We have to pay attention to them. (Chief Brian Perrault, Couchiching First Nation, 2021)***

One knowledge holder also cautioned that language instruction needs to be approached carefully, as schools may require teachers to have post-secondary degrees, resulting in teachers bringing non-Anishinaabe to communities.

In the community survey, 80% of respondents identified “having a curriculum for K-12 students to learn about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration” as part of the three most important pathways forward got GCT#3. Respondents ranked this as their 1st priority for GCT#3.

Reflecting the importance that survey participants place on teaching youth in their visioning statements, participants provided several suggestions regarding education

about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. These include:

- Having a knowledge holder or representative that goes to schools and communities to teach about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration,
- Providing traditional teachings to youth,
- Teaching both on the land and within schools,
- Providing resources to schools,
- Including Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration in school curriculum, and
- Partnership with KCA Strecker Road.

***We'll have a cultural program based on our knowledge of teachings that we receive as young children. That's why we put it on paper, and we made a curriculum in what we want to teach them, and it's all based on sacred sites, teachings and Anishinaabemowin. Once we did that, we had tobacco ties for every child that came to the camp for two weeks. Then we took them out to the sacred sites ... We'd take them out to the cliffs, there's painting, rock painting all over ... One of the things that I find out is that once you find the spirit of the pictographs, you know you're offering and you teach children***



***how to offer food or tobacco (Elder from Naotkamegwanning First Nation, 2021)***

## **Facilitate knowledge transfer from Elders**

Participants recognized that learning from Elders and knowledge holders was of key importance. Elders hold knowledge of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, and knowledge holders and staff noted that it is important to ensure their knowledge is transferred. A Youth Council member shared that knowledge sharing between Elders and youth was particularly important to bridge the intergenerational gaps that have developed, especially as some generations had been particularly traumatized in residential school. Sharing knowledge also heals trauma, as people feel heard and listened to. One knowledge holder emphasized that time and space needed to be set aside to learn from Elders, while several people emphasized that knowledge and teachings needed to be transmitted before Elders passed. Further, this process takes time, and becoming a knowledge holder takes a lifetime of learning.

***When we talked with our Elders, they are going to tell us the stories. But we have to***

***have the ability to listen, to take from their stories all of what they have to share with us. We have to have some way to capture it because if COVID taught us anything is that the age group that we are losing is that valuable Elder group who has our link to our oral history and some of the way and things.***

***Time is of the essence to make sure we have an oral record or a video record ... we had a loss in Education, where we had an Elder from a particular community who talked about the law and naming of the education law, and she passed, and we have never been able to get that back. (Anonymous, 2021)***

One participant stressed the importance of learning from Elders, as this showed people their unique gift and place in the world.

***I remember going to an Elder, he never had an education ... he said, "You know, we all have something. We are all gifted. Each and every one of us, we are gifted. It's just like a puzzle in the circle of life ... we struggle to try and put that piece of puzzle in its place, but it's not turned over the right way. So is true of life". He says, "You have to seek your gift, that each and every one of us has."***



*He said, "Go out and sit with the Elders ... Because they will share things with you, in that circle of life. Then you will start to understand of the gift that you have. And it will slowly. As you go out within that circle and start to share and be with one another, you will start to learn and you will know where that puzzle, that piece that you have, can go. (Anonymous, 2021)*



Knowledge holders also referenced the importance of the Seven Grandfather Teachings in relation to learning from Elders, specifically, that teachings should be requested with respect, and delivered with honesty.

*Honesty... And I believe that if I tell the truth, then I don't have to worry. And I tried to teach my son that and working with the kids, I tried to... If you're honest, the chances are that you'll get a better response than if you lie. (Sherry Anne Roseborough, Baakaandibewiziibing Ojibway Nation, 2021)*

In the community survey, 89% of respondents identified "Talking with and learning from Elders and knowledge holders" as part of the three most important pathways forward for individuals. Respondents ranked this as their 1st priority for individuals. Further, 52% of survey participants also identified "having GCT#3/Elder led Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi workshops" as part of the three most important pathways forward for GCT#3.

Within survey participants' comments about what else was needed to respect and uphold Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, participants also proposed:

- Having education available for all ages,
- Elder-led workshops,

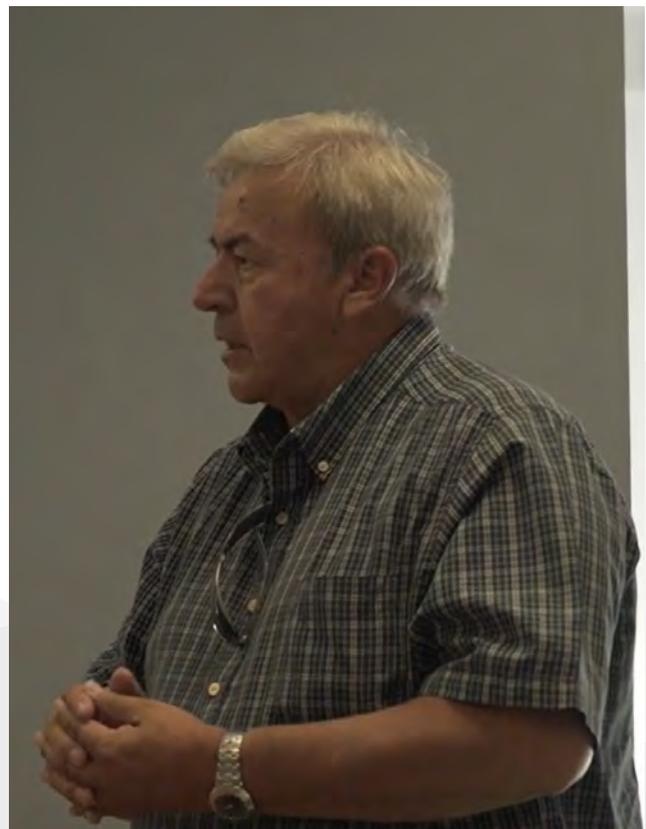


- Community-specific Elders and teachers,
- Knowledge sharing on community histories,
- Listening to Elders and doing what they say,
- Finding knowledge holders with the minds and hearts to teach about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.
- Education about respecting and taking care of aki and nibi, and
- Education about respecting the seasons.

One participant emphasized that, while people word things differently, and sometimes meaning gets altered in translation and transmission, there is still truth in what people say.

***Everybody's truth is different. As it gets passed to you and to me, it loses its truth. It picks up a word here or picks up a word there and then it kind of changes the whole meaning. But I always believe that there is some truth. Somebody will say something and there is a little bit of truth there ... But I've always believed honesty is the best policy. (Sherry Anne Roseborough, Baakaandibewiziibing Ojibway Nation, 2021)***

***I know Shirley had talked about the importance of aadizookaan [story]. A couple of years ago, one of our members wanted us to revive that. We had a number of meetings through that winter to try and bring back aadizookaan. (Chief Brian Perrault, Couchiching First Nation, 2021)***



## Develop Technology-based methods for knowledge transfer

Several staff mentioned that using technology to transfer knowledge would assist the open passing of knowledge and meet peoples' current needs. One interviewee identified that the Seven Grandfather Teachings supported the use of technology in knowledge transfer. Gaagiidoo-Ikwewag (Women's Council) members also discussed using an online network, like the Nibi Portal, to connect water carriers.

*How we continue to teach our generation, future generations, generations to come the messaging of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin? Our people must understand or realize that we will be part of the process going forward. (George Kakeway, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

*When people pass on, we are going to lose a lot of knowledge that Elders and knowledge keepers have if we don't document their stories ... If we lose that, we are really going to take a step backward and I fear that there is going to be a loss of knowledge. If we lose Elders, a lot of the traditional knowledge that is being passed down orally and is not necessarily*

*recorded. We need to continue to do exactly what we are doing right now. We need to research knowledge and try to document it with knowledge keepers and Elders... we need to be open to pass this knowledge on, whether it's in written form, recordings, video tapes or any other ways we can to help people to learn through the technology that is available today ... Having teachings on a website or a DVD could be very helpful.*

*It would also be important to follow traditional protocol if we were doing this, such as offering tobacco to let the spirits know we have good intentions. There are some Elders that are ok with documenting traditional knowledge and teachings and then there are others that say no this is not the way we do things ... There are some Elders that say, "you know in today's age, with the pen and paper, the computers and everything else, it's okay to share that knowledge and share that knowledge it that way." It depends what Elders and knowledge keepers are most comfortable with. (Dave Lindsay, 2021)*



In the community survey, 57% of respondents identified “having access to online material and discussion forums about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration” as part of the three most important pathways forward for individuals. Knowledge holders and survey participants also suggested the following actions in relation to online knowledge transfer:

- Provide internet access,
- Provide online videos, within protocols, by Elders and Ogichidaa, on Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, smudging, prayers, stories, and teachings.

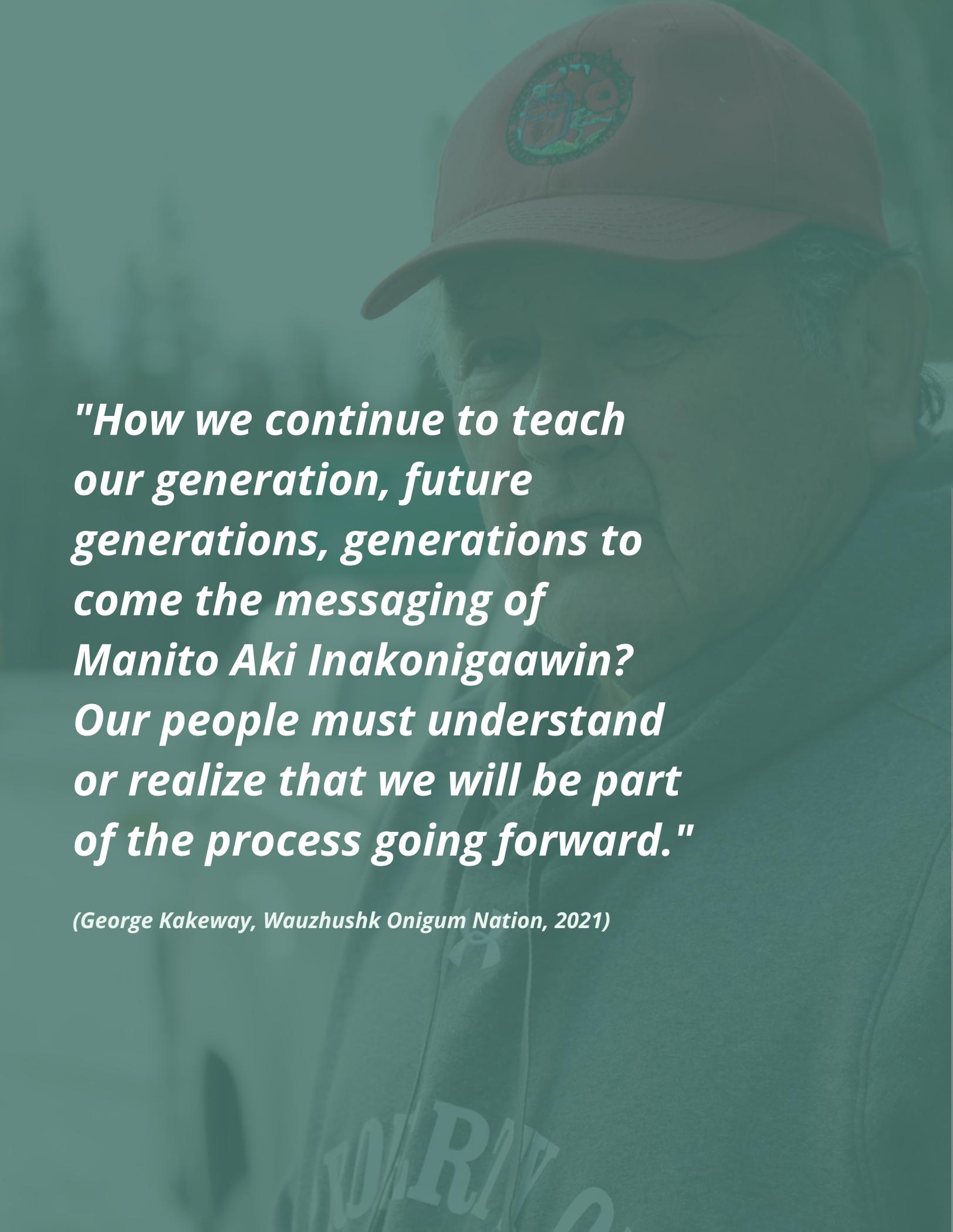
## Consider audiences when developing material and communication strategy

A knowledge holder emphasized that when reaching out to community members, both strategies for communication (the ‘how’ of communication) and materials (the ‘what’ of communication) are needed. Several knowledge holders discussed tailoring communication and knowledge building to different people and groups, specifically mentioning youth, Elders, and community members, with one knowledge holder mentioning that they had designed a matrix for tailoring both the type of material and

amount of material to people’s interests and ability or desire to engage. The participant also noted that a fourth audience to consider was government workers. They also spoke of how the outcomes of meetings and events also need to be assessed, to understand what strategies did and did not work among different groups.

*You said that there’s gaps with the information not continuing throughout, what are some solutions do you think for that? You have to identify the end users – one thing I gave you is our matrix on how to engage our community members. There really is a by sector – economic development or social work in our community, but they try to engage everyone with an issue at the table. That’s hard to do. What we are suggesting is quadrant 1: this is a person not interested with the issue, quadrant 2: there’s some interest but quadrant 4: 3 people who read everything, technical documents, reports, people on committee, they’re totally engaged, and you want to be engaged. There should be some communication system to each one of those quadrants. A person who’s not interested will get a briefing or an overview. Or one in quadrant 4 would be*





***"How we continue to teach  
our generation, future  
generations, generations to  
come the messaging of  
Manito Aki Inakonigaawin?  
Our people must understand  
or realize that we will be part  
of the process going forward."***

*(George Kakeway, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

*given everything – they want them because they’re participating in meetings. You must have a communications system that’s really tailored to the interests of that person. That’s at the very individual level (Anonymous, Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation, 2021)*

Another participant requested Elder-specific communication, like phone calls and in-person visits, noting that advertisements on social media did not reach them, as they were unfamiliar with technology and didn’t use it.

*We don’t know Facebook. The Elders don’t know the technology – we didn’t know this was going on today. I just heard about lunch, so I wandered up. You need to go back in person, let us know, we have phone numbers. Come to our door, knock first, and offer us tobacco. A lot of Elders cannot come, or drive. (Sally Skead, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

## **Broaden engagement to include diverse voices**

A knowledge holder mentioned that in the past, participation at meetings and discussions

run by the Grand Council have been limited to those appointed by Chief and Council. Several knowledge holders appreciated the approach taken in this study, where community researchers were available to anyone who wanted to provide input. Another noted that younger generations also have knowledge to share. Offering engagement opportunities in Anishinaabemowin was also emphasized, as context can be lost in interpretation.

*I think this is a good way [to move forward], to have meetings with random people. Meetings in the past have always been the grand council will ask the Chief and council to send somebody, so it’s always selected. They have to be more random. And maybe in the communities too. Like if you just go and sit and say that you will talk to whoever will come. I think that’s a good way to start things. Because the way it’s been, information has always been between a few people, and it doesn’t really go past those few individuals. (Anonymous, Animakee Wa Zhing 33 First Nation, 2021)*



## Foster conversations between different groups: youth, Elders, men, women, etc.

Several knowledge holders discussed a need for increased conversations and events that would lead to the transfer of knowledge related to Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. This included greater contact between the Ogichidaa and individual communities, more conversations between councils, and other forms of sharing, like information booths and youth conferences.

Three participants noted that interactive meetings between Elders and youth, like those held during this study, were particularly powerful and important, and that one model might be Elders and youth camping together on the land, and Elders holding stations that youth could visit.

*I think there should be more Elder and youth meetings, more interactive meetings, not just the Elders talking and the kids listening. How I learned, was we used to have our grandpa, grandmother, great-aunt, great-uncle. Someone would come in and talk to us and there'd would be*

*maybe four or five of us and they'd tell us stories. It wasn't necessarily legends; it was just stories about life. About how to live, how to take care of the land, how it could be to be an Anishinaabe person. To have that respect, to have that trust for other people, to care for others and to show them a kindness. (Hilda Boy, Seine River First Nation, 2021)*

*But I think as Elders, and I know as Elders, we have to take our part in bringing these out and talking to the younger generation so that they'll know these stories... And I think that would have been good for the Elders and the younger generation to get together like this ... The legends, especially where all are our teachings are and it's good when we can get together like this and start talking. Because I think as Elders too, we sort of remind each other. (Shirley Atwell, 2021)*

*GCT#3 needs to be more in contact with the 28 communities - talk more about it (GCT#3), more information booths - gotta put youth conferences ... Everyone needs understanding.*

*(Sally Skead, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*



## Survey Participants Comments

In addition to comments that fit into the Pathways Forward identified by knowledge holders and GCT#3 staff, survey participants provided the following ideas about ways to respect and uphold Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration from a social perspective. These include:

- Ensuring data sovereignty,
- Creating spaces for discussion about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration,
- Land-based courses are available for people returning to Treaty #3,
- Educating non-Indigenous people working within Treaty #3,
- Providing guidebooks on fish, plants, trees, and medicines, and
- Providing education on resource management.





# Environmental: Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration in Governance Relationships

The Environmental direction of the Four Directions Governance Model includes water and land management, climate change, and relationships with the land, including forestry, mining, trapping, hunting, fishing, and medicine gathering. This project focuses internally, on what is within GCT#3 and Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 communities' political control, including the relationship between Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration with each other, and with traditional governance, protocols, ceremony, and Inakonigaawin internal to GCT#3.

Externally, there are federal, provincial, and municipal levels of government, which include ministries, departments, laws, regulations, and policy, all of which interact with GCT#3 governance systems, including Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. Comments and recommendations regarding these external relationships are included in this

section but were not a focus of interviews or focus groups.

## Current Implementation

Good decision-making with Manito Aki Inakonigaawin require the consideration and balancing of multiple viewpoints and priorities. Manito Aki Inakonigaawin encourages this type of holistic decision making. Through information shared in knowledge holder interviews, combined with the document review, the Project Team developed Figure 9, below, to illustrate how Manito Aki Inakonigaawin influences both Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 decision making, and how the crown and proponents work within Treaty #3 territory.

When Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 make decisions about mining, forestry, and other natural resources, Manito Aki Inakonigaawin encourages:



- Freedom for communities to make their own decisions and exercise their sovereignty
- Respect, responsibility, and reciprocity with the land, with the land taking precedence over economic benefits
- Spiritual and ceremonial guidance for decisions
- Inclusion of all the Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 communities.
- Include Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 communities at the beginning of the process
- Design and operate projects with the lowest possible environmental effects
- Financially support and participate in review processes that include gatherings, Elders, Traditional Knowledge, and ceremonies
- Share revenue through Resource Revenue Sharing and other processes.

Similarly, Manito Aki Inakonigaawin guides proponents and the crown to:

These observations are described in further detail in the following sections on internal and external governance.

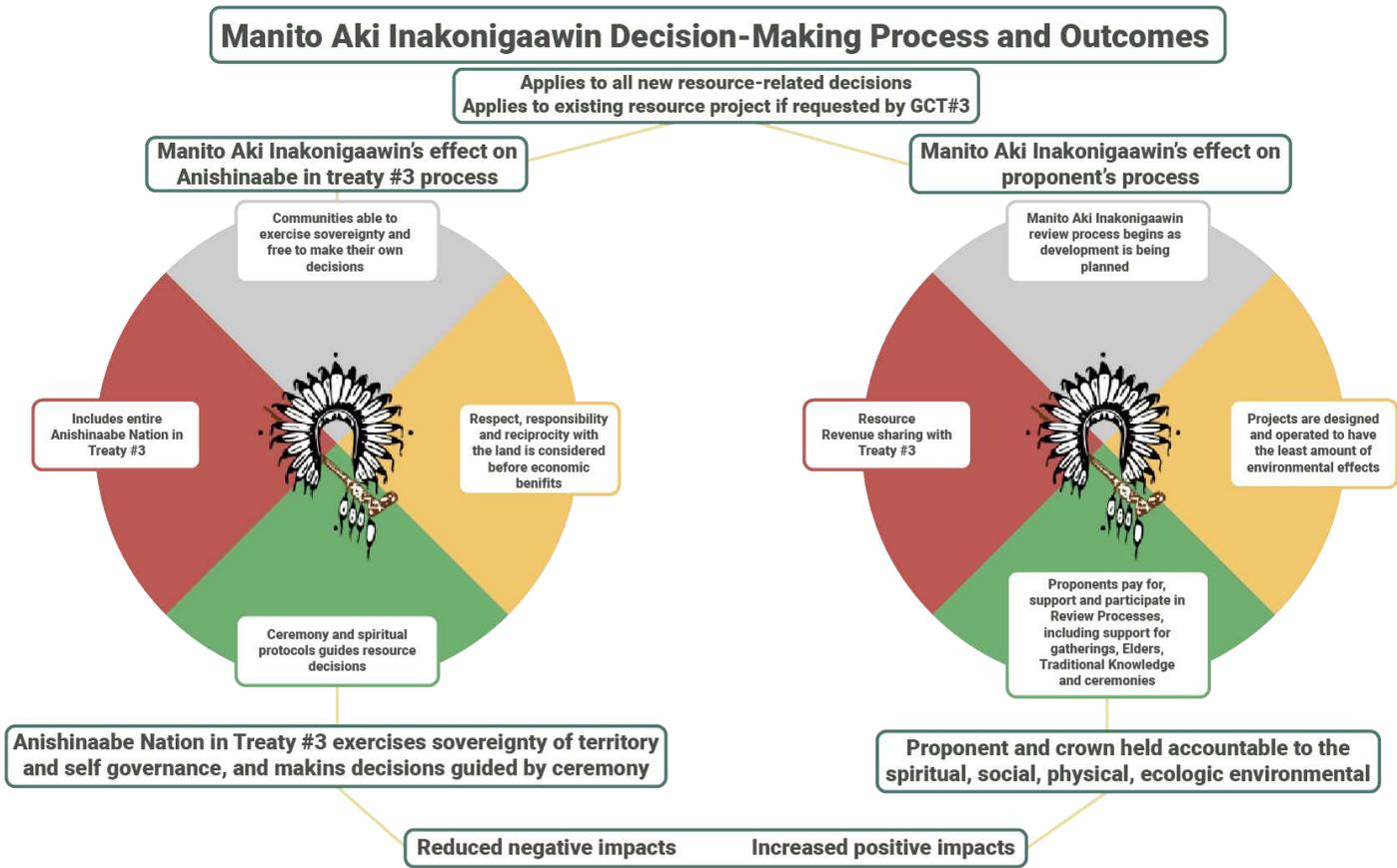


Figure 9. Manito Aki Inakonigaawin Decision-Making Process and Outcomes



## Internal Governance

The current implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration occurs within Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 communities and GCT#3. The Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 through the collective rights of the 28 Treaty #3 communities assert inherent jurisdiction throughout the Treaty #3 Territory. Each Treaty #3 community governs their land and traditional Territory. Through Grand Council Treaty #3 and Chiefs in Assembly, guided by Treaty #3 communities, they govern the shared land of Treaty #3 Territory.

***Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, as a gift from the Creator, has guided the Anishinaabe Nation since time immemorial to fulfil the sacred responsibilities to protect Mother Earth. In order to share the sacred relationship with nibi (water) the Anishinaabe Nation developed the Treaty #3 Nibi Declaration which was ratified in 2019 and shares guiding principles in the protection and responsibilities to Nibi. Knowledge holders and staff shared the following comments and observations about Anishinaabe law-making and implementation steps for Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. We travelled down to the states to visit our brothers and***

***sisters where already I've been there on our self-governance. We looked at how they operationalized their governance systems. And, and then we also found that there was no reliance at all on government funding, you know, like Indian affairs or provincial or federal governments, what Manito Aki Inakonigaawin relied on more as a resource development agreements, you know, in different areas like mining, forestry, even telecommunications, you know, AT&T and railroad systems all of those things that cross state territory, the untreated to resource revenue sharing agreements with these upper points that came through their territories. And then that's what we brought home to the Chiefs here. We'd put it on a table and having them discuss, think about going that route. (Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh, 2021)***

***We already have a law-making process. We already have Chiefs of Assembly and technical people writing and gathering info from Elders and Council in place. We also have a process where we bring it in front of the [National] Assembly. (Anonymous, Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation, 2021)***



In interviews, the challenges of having cohesion in Treaty #3 were identified. One staff member observed that communities tend to naturally follow Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, but there is variability in how Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration are implemented among communities. The strengths of building a cohesive governance system were described as more powerful than being divided in interests.

When asked “how do you go about doing that?” one knowledge holder outlined a future “law of the land” with its foundation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. Another participant pointed to the Four Directions Governance Model as a foundation for building a cohesive governance system that respects the needs and interests of individual communities. Although Manito Aki Inakonigaawin provides an over-arching decision making framework, communities may be focussed more on ceremony, or more on economics, therefore some communities have developed their own community resource management laws. Currently, Treaty #3 communities continue to develop protocols that support and are guided by Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration as they relate to decision making and the protection of Mother Earth. This includes the development of monitoring programs, building relationships,

partnerships, developing specific resource laws, and consultation protocols.

***A lot of ways - if you want to go totally radical - you can start developing things and see what happens. What kind of laws get applied to you all of a sudden. Sometimes you have to throw radical things out there. But a lot of times we need to do a much better job of being cohesive when talking to governments. when we have agreements in place, and we all do this - every band does it - we start saying things like 'we're okay with this mine going up and our band says No we're not okay with this mine going up, then we have the government saying okay this band says that one band says it okay so we're building the mine. And that happens. It is because money a lot of times drives it- money and power. You need a cohesive effort from all of us that this is the law of the land. There's gotta be at least a better way of operating within it. I know there's some bands that will say I want to lead the charge all the time, which is alright. It's okay for a band to lead the charge just as long as they are using the law MAI as the law of the land. I don't think we do that. At least not yet. (Anonymous, 2021)***



A woman with long, wavy brown hair and glasses is smiling warmly. She is wearing a light-colored, textured sweater. The background is a soft-focus natural setting with green foliage and a warm, golden light, suggesting an outdoor environment like a forest or park. The overall tone is positive and hopeful.

***“We have a common interest to act as a collective unit. Treaty #3 common interests in protecting water, forests, a big space with 20 Nations operating as one unit is more powerful.”***

*(Winter Lipscombe, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

***“A big piece of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin is the four-direction governance model that works within the Nation. The north, south, east, and west regions within Treaty #3 are encompassed within a four-direction governance model. There are differences within each of the 28 communities in Treaty #3, but those differences are incorporated into this 4-direction decision-making model. This all ties in with our advisory councils, the Women’s Council, the Youth’s Council, the Men’s Council, the Elder’s Council, and our new 2SLGBTQ’s Council. Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the 4-directions model brings people together from all walks of life, knowledge systems and opinions to help inform decisions.”***  
*(Lucas King, 2020)*

GCT#3 receives guidance from the Elder, Youth, Gaagiidoo-Ikwewag (Women’s), Mamawichi-Gabowitaa-Ininiwag (Men’s), and 2SLGBTQ+ Councils, which help bring diverse representation into GCT#3 governance. For example, nibi is traditionally considered women’s responsibility, and the Gaagiidoo-Ikwewag (Women’s Council) was the driving force behind developing the Nibi Declaration. Staff mentioned that Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration frequently came up in Gaagiidoo-Ikwewag (Women’s Council) and Mamawichi-Gabowitaa-Ininiwag (Men’s Council) meetings, including instances when the discussion was not focussed on Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. This illustrates how fundamental both Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration are to all decisions made within the Nation.

Regarding the current work to respect and uphold Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, staff highlighted in interviews that implementation had broad support from GCT#3, community members, leadership, staff, and Elders. Staff identified the following strengths that aid in implementation:

- many community members speak Anishinaabemowin;
- the Territorial Planning Unit consistently works with Manito Aki Inakonigaawin; and



- having a coordinator working with Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration was a positive step forward.

It was also recognized that the 28 member communities needed more capacity to work with Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.

## External relationships

Regarding external relationships of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, staff mentioned that the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 is advanced in reclaiming Nationhood, and that Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration support the continuity of nationhood. As shown in Figure 10, Manito Aki Inakonigaawin is an expression of the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3's inherent jurisdiction over Treaty #3 lands and waters, and Manito Aki Inakonigaawin exists outside of the Crown's jurisdiction. Staff also noted the difference between government-to-government dialogue and Nation to Nation dialogue.

*In regards to resource revenue sharing, you can say "Well this is not just a money transfer. This is something that we have used Manito Aki Inakonigaawin to operationalize this relationship and our jurisdiction. And that comes back to a lot of what this is. It's*

*jurisdiction, right? And when people hear the word jurisdiction they think of government. But really what jurisdiction is, if you break it down into the Latin terms, it's "law" and "reading." So, it's the right to read the law. So, Manito Aki Inakonigaawin is us practicing jurisdiction because we are expressing that we have the right to read this law because it was given to us by Creation ... they [governments] want to talk government to government, we want to talk Nation to Nation. And Nation and government are not necessarily the same thing. (Daniel Morrissette, 2021)*

*... Bell Canada started talking about putting a fibre optic line, crossing our territory, and they started visiting First Nations, offering them contracts until one Chief told them my community is going to have a ripple effect on all the rest of the Treaty #3, you know, there's 28 communities in Treaty #3 that are going to be impacted by me entering into an agreement with you. Treaty #3 is a territory, they're all involved. We're all treaty people. (Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh (2021)*





Treaty #3, an international Agreement signed on October 3, 1873



Figure 10. Reproduction of a diagram provided by an anonymous participant, explaining how Manito Aki Inakonigaawin exists within the context of the relationship between GCT#3 and the Crown.

# Future Vision

Participants discussed the following environmental aspects of a future when Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration were fully implemented. For example, one knowledge holder provided the following vision for the future they wanted their grandchildren to experience.

Looking forward to a future when Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration are fully implemented within governance structures,

staff expressed the following aspirations:

- Communities have the strength and capacity to develop positive relationships with the Crown and proponents;
- The relationship between the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 and the Crown is built on a Nation-to-Nation structure;
- Traditional governance is practiced;
- Governance processes are proactive, rather than reactive, meaning that the Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 are building their own **future**.





***“Through individual interviews and focus groups, communication and building trust were identified as key precedent actions towards a unified community-based approach. Truth and humility are two of the Seven Grandfather Teachings and key principles in rebuilding relationships to overcome the erosion of trust.***

***I didn’t even realize how much mistrust those barriers that we talked about, there’s one, there’s mistrust from our communities to each other, to our own communities within each other, to our communities and our institutions like Grand Council Treaty #3 incorporated, it’s a corporation. Right? So, like there’s a lot of mistrust and a lot of relationship building that has to be done.”***

***(Janine Seymour, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)***

***People should understand that they are not necessarily in the province of Ontario, but they are in the territory of the Anishinaabe nations of Treaty #3, which came before the province of Ontario and the province of Manitoba. You really have a marker in history that says where you are, who we are. (Anonymous, 2021)***

***[Manito Aki Inakonigaawin] is not a constitution and it's not a written document. It's more about the foundations of who we are as a Nation ... It's something that all the citizens of the Nation have some concept of, and I am not necessarily sure why that is. In my discussion with Ogichidaa, he mentioned that it is sort of linked back to the original instructions. It's linked right to your soul. That is where we all get that foundational understanding of what sacred law is. (Daniel Morriseau, 2021)***

One staff member noted that discussions about implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin were often framed as 'bringing something back,' a continuation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, and this work is about acknowledging that the law has always been present. The concept of continuing the work of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin was emphasized

by knowledge holders as well. One knowledge holder spoke of how traditional Anishinaabe laws and teachings were unenforceable, and that a group was planning on fasting to ask Nenabozho to come back to remedy this.

***It's [Manito Aki Inakonigaawin] already implemented. For thousands of years. We've always lived that way. It's already implemented for 1000's of years. (Chief Bill Petiquan, Wabauskang First Nation, 2021)***

***We had those laws [teachings about respect] but they were unenforceable. They were meant to be followed by the individual themselves. (Anonymous, 2021)***





When asked ***“What does Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi declaration mean to you?”*** members of the Gaagiidoo-Ikwewag (Women’s Council) responded with various interpretations: “Respect for waters,” “laws speak for animals, birds, species, universe, ozone, climate,” and that it is “our sacred responsibility, has been shelved for too long. Our inherent responsibility, our right.” In a separate focus group with youth, a Youth Council member made the distinction between Manito Aki Inakonigaawin as a governance system and the Nibi Declaration operationalized through clean water.

***[Manito Aki Inakonigaawin means a] “first step in governance system, getting back to traditional ways of life. Knowledge sharing, culture, and taking care of the land.” (Winter Lipscombe, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)***

***“[Nibi Declaration means an Environmental crisis and water pollution, having clean water.” (Winter Lipscombe, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)***

Interviewers posed a slightly different question when a knowledge holder stated they did not know about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin; instead



they asked ***“What does the Anishinaabe way of life mean to you?”***

***We live for the moment as much as possible with respect to everything that’s around us. I think it’s just intrinsic in our blood. You know, I wasn’t raised Anishinaabe anyways because my dad moved off the reserve when I was a baby. So, I was a “townie.” I was raised in town and I guess I’m like a lot of Anishinaabe. I was raised that way without, without the language, the skill of the language, the beauty of the language and the flavour, if you will, of the language. Cause it’s bigger than any one institution could ever be. I couldn’t escape it and in as many ways as it always seemed to come and caught up with me and politics back in the latter part of the seventies, where I became involved with native politics and certain institutional ways, so, there’s no way that it could ever escape. (Anonymous, Couchiching First Nation, 2021)***

Digging deeper into governance, interviewers asked ***“What would the Nation look like if Manito Aki Inakonigaawin was fully implemented, and the Nibi Declaration was***

***working together?”***

***[If Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration were fully implemented and working together] Well, I guess we’d have a perfect society. (Anonymous, 2021)***

In deeper discussions about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin several knowledge holders did not agree with the modern title of ‘Law’ but rather, viewed it as a way of life.

When asked ***“What is your vision of the Nation in 20 years if all decisions about land and resources within Treaty #3 territory were based on Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration?”*** most survey participants referenced the Environmental aspect of governance. These visioning comments are organized in the next column, by category.

### **Nibi (water) is clean and plentiful**

- All communities have clean drinking water,
- Rivers and lakes have clean water,
- Polluted rivers are cleaned up, and
- Nibi is respected and protected as a sacred gift.

### **Aki (land) is healthy and thriving**

- Less pollution and waste,



- Protected and healthy animals, medicines, and land,
- Operators clean up polluted sites,
- Land is free of pollution, and
- People are becoming more land-based and self-sufficient.

### Sovereignty and governance

- Anishinaabe governance, guided by spiritual laws, is asserted,
- Traditional laws are practiced,
- Inherent responsibility is practiced,
- Inherent rights, laws and jurisdiction are implemented,
- Treaty #3 has the authority to monitor and regulate the lands (licenses, boundaries),
- We have our own order of government that makes its own money, banks, investments, and
- Other governance systems do not take precedence.

### Self-Determination

- Independence for communities,
- All people (community members) involved in decisions,
- All parties are involved in decisions,
- Communities are more resourceful,
- Communities are strong and self-sustainable,
- All Treaty 3 communities share in management and benefit from gifts of the

land, and

- We use the land to help us learn and thrive together.

### Sustainability

- There is a structure to support the laws,
- We honour laws about land and water,
- Resources are managed sustainably,
- Resources are shared with settlers,
- We have a viable and ecologically balanced economy,
- Treaty #3 controls development,
- We break free of reliance on extractive industries,
- More on-the-land relationships are practices, like hunting, fishing, and farming, and
- Resources are protected for future generations.

### Role of Women

- Women are at the forefront of leadership,
- Women are ceremonial leaders,
- Women are medicine knowledge holders, and
- Women are life givers.

### Role of Treaty #3 Nations

- Treaty #3 is unified and has a nationwide approach to land and resources,
- We have our own laws in place,
- We maintain our treaty rights,
- We gather as a whole,



*“Manito Aki Inakonigaawin is not really a law. It’s called the Great Earth Law, because the Elders, they had to correspond with the white society. White society lives by law. So just for them to understand it’s our way of life. It’s the way we do things, it’s how we act on the earth.”*

*(Earl Klyne, Couchiching First Nation, 2021)*

# Pathways Forward Environmental

## Support community-based decision-making

Most staff emphasized that the implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration should be community-led, and that communities needed to retain decision-making power. One staff member specifically noted that an attempt to develop a GCT#3-based regulation in 2011 had not been successful. There were, however, several issues noted about community-based decision making that need to be considered:

- member communities are diverse, with different views, interests, and orientations;
- each proponent or government approaches community consultation at a different level; and,
- leadership is pushing for a Nation-led approach to Manito Aki Inakonigaawin policies and protocols to ensure a unified community approach to consultation with proponents.

*There are individual community negotiations around Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. These will always be there because the 28 communities in Treaty #3 are the rights-holders within*

*the Nation. There is also on-the-ground MAI implementation that is happening within the 28 communities too. Ensuring that Nation based decision-making processes and community processes are working in harmony is very important because there are individual needs that need be taken into account on a community level that possibly wouldn't be on a Treaty #3 National level. In regards to proponents and Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, our leadership always advocates that Treaty #3 processes and protocols must be guiding principles as each proponent will come to the Territory very differently. Some proponents will be very understanding and respectful of a Treaty #3 processes and protocols, and some will come in to just check a box around Indigenous engagement. This is a large gap we are working with. Manito Aki Inakonigaawin being the law of the nation tells us there is a Nation process to follow, but also considers and is respectful of individual community processes. Currently, that is*



*what we are figuring it out. What does that Nation process look like? And how does that harmoniously coincide with the community processes. (Lucas King, TPU Director, 2020)*

## Support communities' development of resource laws

One staff member noted that some Treaty #3 communities had developed resource laws and suggested that the implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration would be supported by more Treaty #3 communities developing similar laws.

*A few communities of 28 have resource laws. That says some of our communities are now developing their own resource laws. The positive thing that will come out of this is that industry will have to increase consultation. If we can all support Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, it will keep us more unified. Manito Aki Inakonigaawin will make us stronger. If we are all unified, we are going to have a much stronger voice and will be able to push back to protect the land and the water. (Michelle Shephard, GCT#3, 2020)*

In the community survey, 62% of respondents identified "Community laws and policies in relation to Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration" as one of the three most important pathways forward for communities. Respondents ranked this as their 2nd priority for communities. In addition, 42% of respondents identified "Support for the Nation in development of law making and policies in relation to Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration" as one of the three most important pathways forward for GCT#3. Survey participants also made the following comments about Pathways Forward in relation to communities' development of laws and policy:

- Communities need to agree to Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.
- Communities need to develop their own resource law.

Knowledge holders emphasized that they would like to see the National Assembly act and provide overall guidance regarding Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration to follow through with implementation.

*[Manito Aki Inakonigaawin] It's got to come back from the National Assembly. If you're going to present it that's where you present it. It's the national assembly - the national portion of the assembly. That's where it*



*belongs, where it should stay. It should never be dealt with at the Chiefs Assembly. Not until the nation gives direction, then you can follow through. (Andrew Johnson, Seine River First Nation, 2021)*

*And this Assembly [referring to the National Assembly], this is the place where you set your course. The Chiefs just guide after it's put together by the people ... I can't go on based off my assumptions of what the people want ... That's the important thing - It's what their people want and need. We need to take a good look at ourselves. (Chief Bill Petiquan, Wabauskang First Nation, 2021)*

## **Create a legal framework for the Nibi Declaration**

An issue identified by a staff member that needs to be addressed is that GCT#3 needs an understanding of whether the Nibi Declaration needs to be written as a law, or if Manito Aki Inakonigaawin would work as a legal framework.

*I believe that both the Manito Aki Inakonigaawn and the AI [Abinooji Inakonigaawin] have been structured to be non-prescriptive and more of an overarching*

*law and I have seen there could be challenges to then supporting communities into how you transition somethings that maybe ins't super descriptive for their local context. (Jordan Bergattoli, GCT#3 Staff, 2021)*

Knowledge holders were asked if they thought there should be a Nibi Inakonigaawin. There was not a total consensus among those interviewed, however, this is something that needs to be discussed in greater depth with the Nation in the future.

*That's what my Elders told us. When I was a little girl, they said, "You see all this water?" They said, "Someday, white man is going to come and say, 'That's our water.' They're going to come and take it away, and they're going to fight for it." That's why we have to have some kind of a law, a law that we can enforce, in order for us to save it, to respect it, to honour it, and keep it safe for future generations. That's why I think there should be a law, not a statement. It has to be a law, a law that can be enforced. (Anonymous, 2021)*





Reasons for having a Nibi Inakonigaawin were the following:

- A law can be enforced, while a declaration is more of a guideline.
- A law will increase the respect for Nibi.

Notably, there were various interpretations of the term 'Declaration'. One knowledge holder expressed that a Declaration was much like the law.

*When we were working on it [Manito Aki Inakonigaawin], and doing our consultation at the time, we were told not to use resolutions. The language is different. When you Declare something - it's like the law. That's what it is - you declare it. Doesn't question what it is. It comes with the marching orders of leadership. (Andrew Johnson, Seine River First Nation, 2021)*

Another knowledge holder emphasized having a balance between written declaration and the oral tradition with ceremony.

*When I say written and ceremony, that needs to happen, written and ceremony.*

*The way I see the Anishinaabe way is ceremonies, this is all oral. We don't write stuff when we pray and when we do ceremonies, it doesn't come from the book. It comes from the tobacco; this one is the one that guides us ... So, to me there has to be a balance. And that's how we can bring them together ... But also get direction from ceremony or a prayer, sweat lodge, or shake tent, then get direction from there and then get direction. (Anonymous, 2021)*

Knowledge holders also spoke of the importance of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration being considered together and emphasized that laws had to be understood and respected on an individual level. It was further noted that Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration had not, in the past, been enforced among the Anishinaabe - rather they were respected and lived by.



***It's a concept of how we live. I don't see it as a statute or a law. I don't see it like that because it's not how it was. We didn't have formal ways, it was just that we had to respect the lands, nature, and each other. It's not, to me, a governing thing like how you tell or regulate - it's not the same concept to me. (Anonymous, Animakee Wa Zhing 33 First Nation, 2021)***

***[Manito Aki Inakonigaawin] It was a way of life of what they taught. This is just our way of life, and if you listen to the teachings. The teachings, all the things that they talk about, they talk about the land. They talk about the water. All these things, if you didn't respect them, then they wouldn't take care of you. (Willie Yerxa, 2021)***

## **Develop guidance and process support for Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.**

Several staff mentioned the importance of having guidance documents, policies, frameworks, and processes to support the implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. These included:

- Providing communities with processes to assist in negotiations with proponents;
- Defining a set of principles regarding Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration that all communities agree on and that respects the differences between communities; and,
- Developing strategies for engagement that would involve everyone in consultation processes about developments, while allowing space for the process to be customised by each individual community.

In the community survey, 42% of respondents identified “Review the Nation’s policies, procedures, and practices in relation to Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration” as one of the three most important pathways forward for GCT#3.

Further descriptions by interviewees emphasized respect, which is one of the Seven Grandfather Teachings. Respect for oneself, respect for the community, the Creator and mother earth; all are key principles for guidance and respectful processes to support Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.

Survey participants also provided the following input around declarations and endorsements



related to Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration:

- There should be an “all the Chiefs Council” to endorse Manito Aki Inakonigaawin.
- The National Assembly of Nations should hold a ceremonial signing.
- A declaration that Britain and Canada are leaseholders should be made.
- A statement that any company making changes to water resources must first obtain consent should be made.

## Engage GCT#3 Councils in the Implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration

Knowledge holders and staff mentioned the importance of including all GCT#3 Councils (the Women’s, Men’s, Youth, LGBTQ2S+, and Elder’s Councils) in the implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.

*In Treaty 3 we have Councils to guide us - the Women’s Council, the Men’s Council, the Youth Council, the Elder’s Council, and the LGBTQ2S+ Council. I think those Councils, very much contribute to this work and that*

*it’s really critical that we include them. I think [the GCT#3 staff member] already does but those are very valuable pieces to really help bring us forward, because those people are in the communities, and they talk to their own people. If you follow the philosophy of planting a seed, or how a drop of water ripples out, you can see that when those Council members talk to people in their own communities, the discussion ripples out, helping our understanding of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi to become stronger in communities ... and that contributes to implementation. (Michelle Shephard, GCT#3, 2020)*

One Youth Council member noted that the concept of Anishinaabe laws are sometimes novel to young people. Additional support from Treaty #3 would be beneficial in providing youth with guidance, including youth in ceremony, sharing guidance and direction from spirit helpers, and receiving blessings to work together (Council-to-Council).

*The message I think we’re getting is that we need to bring all of these councils, Elder’s council, men’s council, women’s council, youth council, and the two-spirit council*



***together with Elders and youth to talk about some of these things, and then just keep sharing as we go along. (Chief Brian Perrault, Couchiching First Nation, 2021)***

In the community survey, 50% of respondents identified “having advisory councils or groups that provide guidance on Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration” as part of the three most important pathways forward for communities. This pathway was also emphasized in interviews with members of the Youth Council, Gaagiidoo-Ikwewag (Women’s Council) and Mamawichi-Gabowitaa-Ininiwag (Men’s Council). Interviews were not held with 2SLGBTQ+ Council as the Council was not yet formed.

## **Strengthen the Nation-to-Nation relationship between Treaty #3 and the Crown**

Implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration was seen among knowledge holders and staff as an assertion of self-governance. Specific examples of this observation included:

- *Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration-based laws, regulations, and decisions should be proactive, and nation based, rather than reactive to Crown legislation.*

- *GCT#3 should develop tools that will teach proponents and other governments how to interact with GCT#3 laws, building nation-to-nation relationships.*

Knowledge holders also emphasized that internal and external relationships must begin with the Creator, and honouring those relationships involve ceremony.

***In ceremony, we were told to follow up with the roadmap set by our ancestors. That’s how they did it. So, any future law-making processes, that’s how we do it. So that’s why, I say our treaty is not between two parties. Our treaty is between three parties, Creator. So, our lives Creator sanctioned our treaties (Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh, 2021)***

***We’re not second class to any other nation. We’re our own nation, our own people. Our own systems. It’s quite unique but it’s honourable. (George Kakeway, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)***

Having Anishinaabe members who understood and participated in decision-making within mainstream Canadian culture was also seen as important to respecting and upholding Manito Aki Inako-



-nigaawin. Essentially, people that are proficient in both languages from a legal and cultural sense would be able to facilitate working relationships between Anishinaabe and Canada (Nation-to-Nation).

*We have seven or eight lawyers here already. They're mixed, male and female. And I think there's four of them that has jobs already and the other four are still looking for jobs. This is what we hope to become part of recognizing the ability that what is needed now. And in order for do that, we need to become part of the ongoing decision-making and the authority making policies that... I guess it's a protocol I guess, what we're dealing with, because we feel now, we can better understand the different cultural that's in front of us. We now know your language. Now it's up to you to know our language so you can know what we're trying to do here. It's for the good, it's not for the worse. We need to work together. Find a way to work together and help out each other. (Tommy Keesick, Asubpeeschoseewagong First Nation, 2021)*

From a Youth Council member's perspective, once fully implemented, Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration would be authoritative laws that are respected by Treaty #3 Nations as well as

other governments, binding for both Anishinaabe and non-Anishinaabe people. Another knowledge holder noted that "the law of the lands" would include recognition and acknowledgement from provincial and federal governments.

***"What is our call to action? It needs the acknowledgement that all of us are Treaty #3 and I think you gotta work from a base like that. A call to action – you want to actualize Manito Aki Inakonigaawin – the buy in from all the members, the buy in from all of the Chiefs, need the buy in from staff and also that MNR or government of Canada acknowledges that this is the law. The law of the lands – that was here before us. Right now, they don't acknowledge that. They know it's there, but they don't put us on an equal table."***

***(Anonymous, Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation, 2021)***





Some staff identified that implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration opened questions about what type of governance Treaty #3 communities used, and that full implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration may require changing governance models from those based on the Indian Act to traditional governance practices.

***We need to go back to our clan system. Our grandmothers were the ones who were the key decision-makers. They usually chose a spokesperson to be the one who spoke to the chi-mookimons, and usually a man, to speak on behalf of all people. Though it's important to note, that person would get guidance from the grandmothers first and foremost ... Today, we need healthy women in spirit, emotion and mentally... we can't have women that are angry and***

***because that wasn't our way. None of this oppressive kind of behaviours. Like being honest with each other, it is imperative to be total honesty. And so, I see that in order to move forward with Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, our women need to be healthy. We could also have a grandmothers' council— the women are the head clan mothers of their respective families. At this point they speak only for their families, not for everybody else. (Darlene Curci, 2021)***

***You hear that in our assembly when our own Chiefs refer themselves as Ogimaakaans, which when you add "kaan" to the end of something that means "fake" or "made-up" or "manufactured". So, they are referring to themselves as the fake Chiefs because they are Indian Act Chiefs, and their positions are created but the Indian Act ... but that***



*subtle distinction in there is them saying that the national government didn't cease to exist. The national interest is still there ... we still have it [the sense of nationhood] and that is where we are able to pull things off that I didn't think we were capable of. I didn't think that anyone was capable of resource revenue sharing, but here we are. Treaty #3 is the one that did it. (Anonymous, 2021)*

In the community survey, 61% of respondents identified "Traditional Anishinaabe governance customs within communities (e.g., clan systems, traditional elections, etc.)" as one of the three most important pathways forward for communities. Likewise, the reintroduction of the Anishinaabe clan system of governance was emphasized by knowledge holders.

Several knowledge holders emphasized the requirement for ceremony as part of any discussions about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. Not only at the outset of a research project, but also at the start of every discussion, as a way to continue practicing traditional governance, way of life, and how to act on the earth. The importance of ceremony is discussed further in the culture section of this report.

*Each community has certain people that do the water ceremonies. You should have a list from Treaty #3 by now. Many ceremonies who you're going to have to do if you want to bring us to a table, understand and get us to talk. (Anonymous, 2021)*

## Develop GCT#3 skills and staff positions, and focus on hiring local Anishinaabe youth

Most staff members commented on GCT#3 staff capacity. Issues identified with capacity included leadership and staff turnover disrupting continuity; staff being over-allocated; and staff needing skill development. One staff member also expressed the importance of GCT#3 having its own scientists and conservation staff to support the implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. Pathways forward identified by staff included creating specific positions within GCT#3, including:

- Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration support person that builds connections with communities;
- Conservation Officer;
- scientists; and,



- Stewardship Program Staff.
- Areas of skill development mentioned included:
- Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration orientation for new staff;
- Water testing; and,
- Impact assessment.

In the community survey, 23% of respondents identified “having Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi Declaration dedicated staff within Treaty #3” as one of the three most important pathways forward for GCT#3. Additionally, knowledge holders in interviews and focus groups shared insights about youth. Some have witnessed the younger generations, after finishing training and education, take their talents to high-paying companies. For example, industries such as forestry and mining hire Treaty #3 graduates. Examples were also shared of neighbouring First Nations with their own conservation officers able to make decisions about their fisheries while protecting lands and waters.

***Treaty #3 hired a bunch of youth 15 years ago. All went to school, all graduated at their degrees, everything. Not one of them is working for Treaty #3 now. Not a single one, working for white companies because Treaty #3 wouldn't pay enough. They can go work for a white company for 180***

***grand a year. They get 25 from Treaty #3. Something's wrong. (Anonymous, 2021)***

Knowledge holders also acknowledged excitement about work completed the current GCT#3 technical staff.

***I'm excited for that [Nibi Declaration]. I've been following that one and the development with the technicians. And so again, I'm speaking from that side. So, I'm, grounding it with that, with what I share. So just take the pieces that, that work. And like I said, I'm excited. I'm hopeful. I see more of that maternal stuff that we talked about. That's where I'm like, "oh, this is going to be good." (Janine Seymour, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)***

## Create Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration Task Forces or Advisory Groups

One knowledge holder mentioned that a Task Force would be helpful for implementing Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. They also noted that Task Forces have taken different forms over time.



*Working with a task force at the Treaty #3 level might support the implementation. I believe there was a resolution that speaks to a task force that was formed around the education of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. (Michelle Shephard, GCT#3, 2020)*

This pathway forward was also identified by knowledge holders as a way to build relationships in communities as well as fill in gaps with technical expertise which could support GCT#3 in responding to urgent matters. It was noted that work needs to proceed slowly and at the speed of trust.

*I think building a relationship with a group of people, maybe form committees in each community, maybe that's the best way to do it and build a relationship with those communities. Get to know them. I know it's a long process, but they sit, when they always say to the, we say to them do it slowly, to make it to work, don't rush. Do it step by step. Don't rush, that's another teaching Anishinaabe teaching. Don't rush. So that's another way with Manito Aki Inakonigaawin is don't rush. (Anonymous, 2021)*

*I think we need an active technicians' team - all these people at Grand Council. We need an advisory group when developing things to look at certain issues. If you need an authorization done, you want a good personality, a hydrologist, leading doing economic assessments, like geologists you need to have all those people at the table. (Anonymous, Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation, 2021)*

## **Consider developing a GCT#3-wide administration structure to support Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration**

One staff member suggested that the Territory Planning Unit and Chiefs needed to work together to develop a process and structure to administer Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, in order to proactively ensure a stable administration structure, rather than allowing governing bodies to reactively assert control over the administration of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. This administration structure could be supported with resource revenues collected through Manito Aki Inakonigaawin.

A knowledge holder suggested an oversight board like the one in place for Abinoojii Inakonigewin (the Childcare Law).



***I think one of the questions that you might want to ask is: What is the governance structure of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin? Once it is implemented, who is going to be left in charge with it? Is it going to be TPU? Or will we create an entity that oversees the Manito Aki Inakonigaawin? So how does that work? It's a very important element... if you don't do that, somebody will assume that chair. Somebody comes along with their own idea about it and then they will say "Well, we are the Tribal Council. We have this many people in our tribe. We are going to run it." And that is what is happening in other laws I see, in terms of Child Welfare. There is conflict there, and then Health. There is conflict but what is good about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin is that there is no conflict because nobody stepped up and said, "You know what, we will take over."***  
***(Anonymous, 2021)***

***I think that there should be an approach there between the Chiefs and the TPU unit on MAI regulations. What does that mean? So, I know that a number of years ago we talked about the 90-10 rule, 90-10. 90% of the revenues would go to First Nations and then 10% to Grand Council to administrate the law. So, what does that mean 'administrating the law'? I think that means creating an entity at some point. I think TPU would probably be the best ones to do that. (Anonymous, 2021)***

In the survey, 28% of respondents identified "Anishinaabe Nation of Treaty #3-wide entity that administers Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration" as one of the three most important pathways forward for GCT#3. This pathway was likewise emphasized in interviews. Knowledge holders described the existing governance structures and the administrative structure of Treaty #3 as mechanisms to support Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.

***I believe this is the solution that has to happen and be pushed by the leadership. Is taking control over all government programs related to Aboriginal people, whether it's health, education,***



*all that. Having our own solutions and priorities addressed. When you think about water and stuff, and you see things like Grassy Narrows and Wabaseemoong not being addressed. (Larry Morriseau, 2021)*

## **Develop a strategic plan for each level of governance**

A strategic plan that lays out a process for implementation at community level, as well as a process that guides implementation at a provincial and national level, was identified as an important pathway forward by a knowledge holder. This plan needs to be adaptable and not a “one size fits all” approach.

*[What does that first step look like working together as a nation?] I guess we have to have a strategic plan in place. We look at the community level and put a plan in place, provincial and national level. Work our way up, figure out How do we see it, and the timelines. Things like that. And figure out who will be our contact person, so we have to have an outcome. (Rose Sky, Migisi Sagaigan First Nation, 2021)*

## **Enforce Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration**

Survey participants and Knowledge Holders provided the following direction regarding the enforcement of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration:

- The laws need to be followed and enforced
- GCT#3 should have an Environmental Protection agency or department to enforce the laws
- Each community should have their own process for enforcement.

*How are we going to enforce those laws? Who's going to administer those laws? And then, when one law comes up against another law, which supersedes that. There should be no question ever, that our laws should always be respected. (Anonymous, 2021)*

One knowledge holder spoke of enforcement as being an original intention of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and discussed how an GCT#3 was meant to have police to enforce Manito Aki Inakonigaawin.

*The enforcement part of it needs to be done. And that's why they worked so hard on getting their own police force in*



***place was because Treaty Three police were supposed to be the ones that were doing the enforcing of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. Anybody that was caught abusing the resources, like say, New Gold for instance, anything that they do with the mine, all those agreements that they have, there should be somebody at Treaty Three, that's monitoring them to make sure that they're doing exactly what they said they were supposed to be doing. (Anonymous, 2021)***

## **Ensure all voices are heard**

Several participants mentioned that they feel disconnected or not listened to by leadership and wanted engagement that meets people where they are. This would be much more inclusive and encompassing.

Specific strategies mentioned by knowledge holders were:

- Ensure grassroots members are heard
- Allow all Treaty #3 members to speak at GCT#3 assemblies
- Provide non-judgmental places for people to share

- Provide accommodations for youth participation
- Reach spatially separated communities by bridging on-reserve and off-reserve connections (Winter Lipscombe, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)
- Reach intergenerational communities, noting that often youth get left out of the conversation (Winter Lipscombe, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021), and
- Elders need direct notification of engagement opportunities and events (Sally Skead, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)

***“People who should be part of conversations are sometimes not in a place where they can share that knowledge. Elders are important, and we need momentum from youth. That’s where sharing comes in” (Winter Lipscombe, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)***

Interviewees further emphasized moving at the speed of trust (slow down, take time to build relationships and cohesive/common understanding).



*The treaty - that didn't happen right away, it took time, it didn't even take months, not even years. They didn't rush. It was talking and ceremonies – always asking the spirit. Always asking how its gonna affect the kids, not for us, how do we go about doing things, language and spirituality and parenting, etc. (Sally Skead, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

## Increase environmental protection and enhancement

*Knowledge holders and survey participants brought up the following environmental concerns and solutions:*

- Spawning areas should be enhanced;
- Water should be respected and not polluted;
- Communities need clean drinking water;
- Treaty #3 itself is protecting the land and water, in the interests of future generations and not in the interests of proponents;
- Do not allow NWMO, as it is contrary to Manito Aki Inakonigaawin; and
- Do not exploit the land.

*“They're starting to restore the sturgeon population. We have our rice beds. We have Dr. Brittany Luby looking at our rice beds, working with the water, another young woman working with the water. And that to me is so empowering, as a woman of a certain age. I'm not quite an Elder. I'm a mom. I'm a mom. I'm a life giver. So, I could appreciate what that's happening. And all that is part of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, whether we know it or not.” (Naashki Binezek, Lac Seul First Nation, 2021)*

## Other

- Gain a fuller understanding of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, and then redo the written version of the law.
- Respect land-use plans
- Define the Anishinaabe ways to protect lands and waters
- Regularly examine the goals and objectives of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration
- Community liaison, careers based on upholding the laws,
- Agencies, staff, and leadership model the practicing of sacred laws



When asked how they see Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration working together, one interviewee's statement identified that future actions towards bridging worldviews, harmonizing Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and western worldviews, communicating laws and implementation would achieve this.

***Harmoniously. I see beautiful. I see it as being really beautiful. When I say harmonious too, like I said, we're getting to points where we are mixing. We are mixing a lot and we're not going to unmix. There's no way we filter it out. Right? We're going to be mixed. And our ancestors also planned for that. (Janine Seymour, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)***



***“Land, air, water, animals, and all the gifts that were provided to the Anishinaabe to care for, can be used and must be used in a sustainable way for seven generations.”***

*(Survey respondent, 2021)*

# Cultural: Considerations of Language, Ceremony, and Healing

This section discusses how Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration can be supported through the Shaawanong (South) direction of governance, which includes cultural matters such as Anishinaabemowin, history, citizenship, justice, arts, and Treaty and Aboriginal Rights Research (TARR). Knowledge Holders and GCT#3 Staff spoke at length on how language, culture, ceremony, protocols, and tradition influence the implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.

## Current Implementation Ceremony and Protocol

Sacred ceremonies and protocols (protocols were described by one interviewee as “unwritten ceremonial processes”) were recognized as the source of authority for Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. Ceremony reawakens the spirits associated with land and laws, and authority ultimately comes from the spirits / the Creator. The process of law-making is unique

to each law, as the law-making process must respect the spirit of that law. One knowledge holder spoke of the Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 constitution as being unwritten, and accessible through ceremonies.

***Each of these laws [Childcare Law, Health Law, Education Law, and Justice Law] has its own spirit. They are invoked usually through ceremony. So, we won't be talking about the same spirit ... how we do Manito Aki Inakonigaawin is not how we are going to do the Education law ... because it really represents the diversity and the thinking that we have ... we have different processes for each law. (Anonymous, 2021)***

***We don't have a written constitution. Our constitution is unwritten, but it's there. Through our teachings. It's there through ceremony. Our constitution is based on the drums, the songs, the pipe ceremonies.***



*All these ceremonies, that's part of our constitution. That's where everything comes from. (George Kakeway, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

*The Elders of Treaty #3 were the ones who revitalized Anishinaabe culture in Turtle Island." The Elders from here used to go all across Turtle Island, go to community, do healing ceremonies for them the first year. Next year, they were invited back. Then they started progressing. Bring the drums back. Bring the ceremonies back. Then, finally, bring the dancing back. (Earl Klyne, Couchiching First Nation, 2021)*

The use of ceremony was discussed as a current strength by many of the knowledge holders, as well as GCT#3 leadership and staff interviewed. Guidance is provided through ceremony when decisions need to be made, and when difficulties are encountered. Ceremonies have also been a key part of revitalization of Anishinaabe culture.

*A lot of the work that we do is brought back to ceremony ... that is not something that I know a lot of facts about. But what I do know is that when we struggle with something, it helps immensely to bring it to ceremony. Because through ceremony, you*

*get a certain level of guidance ... [because] it does provide the nation with invaluable guidance, and it creates opportunities where they would not exist otherwise. I think that the more that happens, the that we go back to the traditional ways of doing things, the more success that we see. (Daniel Morrisseau, 2021)*

## Spiritual Connection to Aki and Nibi

Knowledge holders and GCT#3 staff described spiritual connections to Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi. This spiritual connection to aki (land) and nibi (water) was seen as part of the identity as being Anishinaabe. Among GCT#3 staff, this connection was recognized as part of the current staff capacity to implement Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.



A photograph of two people sitting at a table outdoors. On the left, a person wearing a wide-brimmed hat and glasses is seen in profile, gesturing with their hand. On the right, a woman is smiling and looking towards the other person. The table has a water bottle and some containers on it. The background shows lush green trees and a wooden railing. The entire image has a semi-transparent dark overlay.

***“A lot of our songs are the powers of the direct relationship to the land. Our water, our trees, the animals, the clan songs. The pipe ceremonies and the smudging. ”***

*(George Kakeway, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

*My father and my mother taught me that we are star people. For us to understand that story about the Creation and how it ties into Manito Aki Inakonigaawin gives us that basic foundation to go through life with all those Seven Grandfather Teachings that we have been taught right from the day that we were born. Like the respect, the love, the honour, the courage, the wisdom, those seven teachings. And as women, we are taught a little bit more because we are life givers. So, when we understand that Nibi Declaration and how it relates to us as being life givers. (Darlene Curci, 2021)*

*Every full moon, I do a water ceremony. I put out some water to get charged with the moon energy, and I use that for ceremonies. I do water offerings several times a year. And when I do programming, when I was employed, I would do a water ceremony at the beginning of each workshop because we need to acknowledge the sacredness of life. And water is just a basic component that we can relate to, that tells us what life is and how good life can be. (Naashki Binezek, Lac Seul First Nation, 2021)*

## Impacts From Residential School

Knowledge holders described how residential school had torn them from their culture and disrupted their ability to learn from their family and knowledge holders, reducing their understanding of their culture. They stated that trauma from residential school led people into unhealthy behaviours, including drugs, alcohol, and crime. Those who did not directly go to residential school identified residential school and colonization in general as disrupting the transmission of language, culture, and learnings about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin.

*The Catholic church came into the reserve where I grew up. I didn't grow up here, but I am a member. It took all the traditional languages, everything gone. Although my parents could speak it and communicate with my grandparents, they didn't pass it on to their kids. So, anything that I've learned about Anishinaabe law has been through books and my own self research, I guess, over the years ... I missed a residential school, but not much, but I was schooled on the reserve by nuns, priests, Catholic, basically ... I can't speak Ojibwe; I don't know enough of the history to really give a two-hour lecture on it or anything of like that. (Ernie Jones, 2021)*





*...because of residential school issues [I] became an alcoholic, drug addict, but I sobered up. 29 years of sobriety, which I asked the creator to help me. And that's the way I look at things now because I went back to some of my traditional teachings that I should have learned way back when I was a kid growing up. The law of nature, nature's law, how to treat animals, how to treat other people, how to treat your brother and sister. (Terry Greene, Niisaachewan Anishinaabe Nation, 2021)*

*But just know that what's happened to us is done with intent. It wasn't an accident. The residential school... I call them concentration camps for children today because that's what they... I even struggle with saying 'were' because I'm in courts [interviewee works in the justice system]. I'm like, it's what they 'are'. (Janine Seymour, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

*So many people that went through the residential school have a criminal record. Even when you're driving now, when*

*you got to go across the border or something. It opens up another issues or barriers...*

*(Nay-no-ka-si of Obashkaandagaang First Nation)*

*I think it's not just what you see, it's what you feel and experience. And right now, what we collectively feel and experience is a lot of pain, a lot of suffering and a lot of harm. That's not how things should be. (Janine Seymour, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

*When they were doing the apartheid in South Africa and stuff, and I thought, do you know where they got that idea? They got that idea from Canada. Instead of calling them reservations, they called them townships. And it was the same rule, you had to have a note to get out and stuff like that and things ... But now the world's eyes are open, and they see the genocide and the loss here, and now just discovering all those children that never made it home. (Sherry Anne Roseborough, Baakaandibewiziibing Ojibway Nation, 2021)*



Language was recognized as fundamental to the understanding of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, and to decision making in general, with many participants concerned that loss of fluency in the Anishinaabemowin would reduce the transmission of knowledge and culture and disrupt people's spiritual relationships with aki and nibi.

*That's a really big question. So, I need that time and space, but you need to understand that language is important. So, if you're taking Manito Aki Inakonigaawin from a spiritual side I think what I can contribute is probably that message, not necessarily the content. (Janine Seymour, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

*It just makes me sad. When I came to this meeting, there was only three people in this room that could speak Ojibwe. Everybody else doesn't understand and that just makes me wonder, have we lost our language? Have we lost our culture? Like my Elders are gone, who's going to keep the land? Who's going to honour the water? And who was going to carry on after these Elders are gone? (Hilda Boy, 2021)*

*I learned that a lot about the power of the language [Anishinaabemowin], because the government would come in and make demands on us. And then, our Elders would talk in the language about the situation that we were being presented with. And they would talk in the language, they would deliberate in the language. And only in that process, was there a beautiful consensus reached. (Naashki Binezek, Lac Seul First Nation, 2021)*

## Harm to the Land

Knowledge holders also spoke of issues and trauma related to the land, with examples like the St. Catharines milling case, Grassy Narrows mercury poisoning, denied access to rice harvesting areas, and hydro dams being built without Anishinaabe of Treaty #3 permission, input, or ceremony.

*There's other things like St, Catharines milling case. They gave that right to that province and to this day I think we should fight. I always ask is there any way we can go back. Back in those days, we had no representation. When St. Catharines mill took place, we had no representation. And we should've because it affected our rights.*



*I bring that up once in a while at Chiefs meetings. It affected everything. Every little thing, the trees, the minerals, the water were all affected. (Anonymous, Animakee Wa Zhing 33 First Nation, 2021)*

## Future Vision

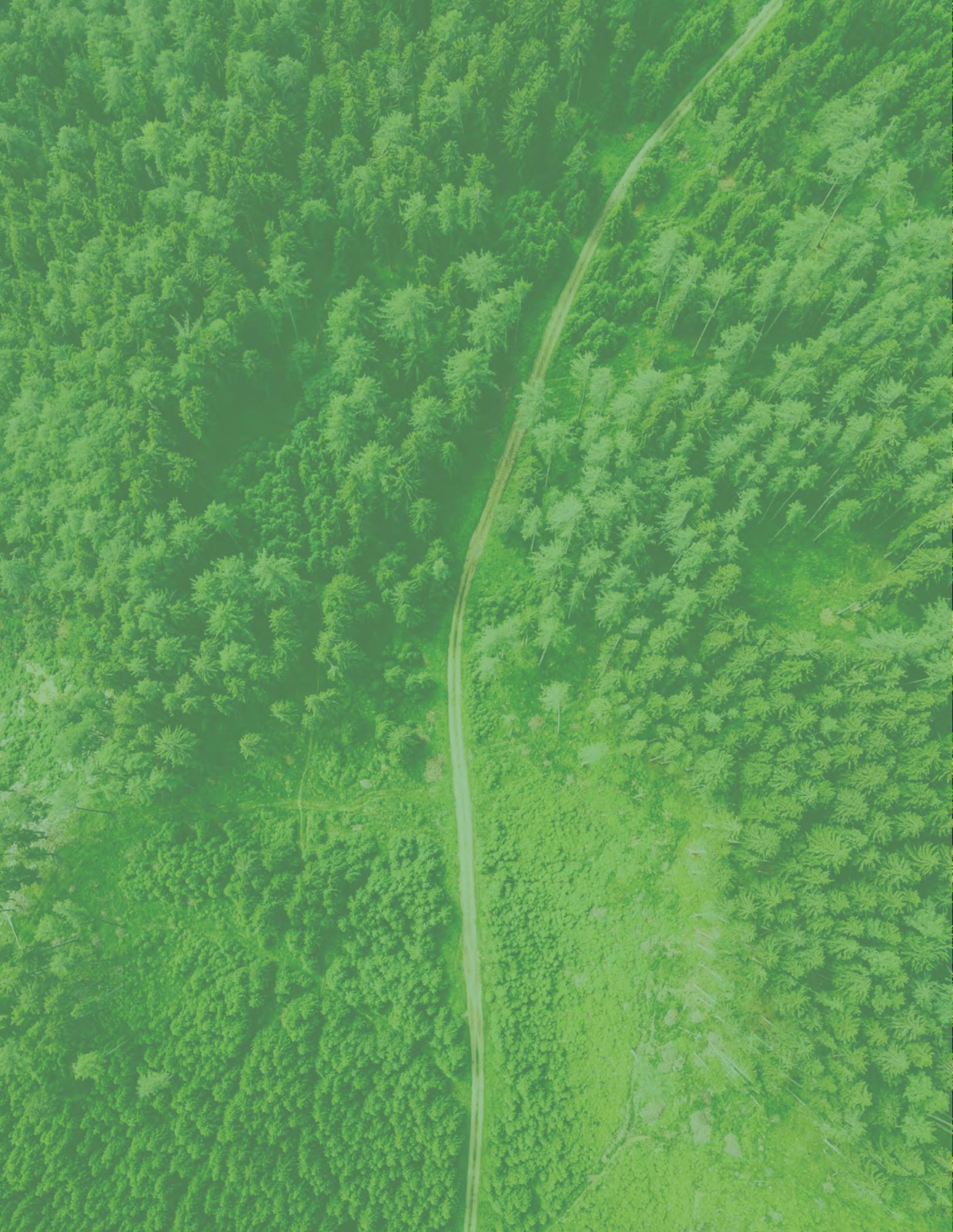
When Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration are fully implemented, staff said this would change the Anishinaabe people in Treaty #3 and the rest of the world. Anishinaabe people in Treaty #3 would make decisions differently and reinforce their relationships with the land and food. People, including youth and children, would practice ceremonies and prayer and respect animals and the water. People would see each other as equal without labels or titles.

*Picture a spider web right after rain and sunshine. There is nothing in my eyes more beautiful than that spider web. Because the drops of the water are sparkling, but every line is connected. That is beautiful, and that it is strong. I think about Nibi, and I think about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, and I think about the beauty of that day ... it's sparkling and every piece of it is connected. I think about our territory, I think about our communities, I think about our people, and I think about everyone on different part of that spider web, we are all connected. We are all strong as that spider web. We are as beautiful as every droplet on that web that is attached to each of these little strands. That's to me ... if we have Nibi, we have Manito Aki Inakonigaawin it's fully implemented that vision that I would have of like being home...*

*(Anonymous, 2021)*

Regarding culture, knowledge holders and survey participants provided a range of future vision ideas, organized by topic on the following page.





## Fluency in Anishinaabemowin

Participants spoke of a future where Anishinaabemowin is spoken fluently and passed down through generations, which will help to ensure that the Anishinaabe knowledge and laws are understood.

*It fills me with hope and joy that maybe our language will be coming back. And maybe I can help in some way, that they might be listening to me someday, long after I'm gone. (Hilda Boy, 2021)*

*"... the most important thing is to revive Anishinaabemowin, once we have achieved that, I believe that the inherent knowledge that our ancestors had entrusted us with will emerge, hence a deeper and true understanding of our laws" (Survey Participant)*

*But with the language pursue, slight urgency, our language keepers are like the time is now. So, in terms of the language, I know we would love to have, everybody would, I would love everybody here to speak Anishinaabe. Right? Wouldn't that be beautiful? (Janine Seymour, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

## Practicing Anishinaabe ways

Participants also discussed a future where Anishinaabe ways of living are actively practiced, where communities are immersed in culture and hunting, ricing, and fishing are practiced with traditional ceremonies. People would return to the lakes and heal the broken places in themselves and the land.

*Now to get back to what we need. It's almost impossible to get back. I'm not saying I want to go back to the 1300s, 1400s, but that way of life was sacred, that way of life was the good life that my grandfather taught my uncles and my brothers. (Mike Forav, 2021)*

*"I believe that we were all lake people and that being away from our water and Islands we are forgetting who we are and the responsibilities we have" (Survey Participant),*

*I believe we need to go back to our traditions, and back to our roots, where it all began, and heal exactly where the destruction took place. (Craig Lavand, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*



## Practicing Ceremony

The continuing and increased practice of ceremony was frequently emphasized as an important part of a good future. Knowledge holders and survey participants provided the following comments regarding their future visions for the role of ceremony in respecting and upholding Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration:

- Lighting an eternal flame in the centre of Turtle Island, where people from everywhere can come to connect, pray, and heal, and spread this practice throughout Turtle Island.
- Each Treaty #3 community hosts their own Nibi gathering annually,
- Communities all have strong ceremony practices for land and water
- Land and water are honoured, and
- Mother Earth is protected and respected.

*In Winnipeg, I created unity there with multiple organizations, multicultural organizations, and I would like to ignite an eternal flame there, an eternal fire, so that everyone can come together around the medicine wheel. Every colour, every nation, religion, creed, sex, everybody can come there to heal and to come there to pay*

*respects to their ancestors ... Where they have the centre, that's supposed to be the centre of Canada. So, that was one of the gathering places of all our people. So, I think by bringing unity in the centre of Turtle Island, that will spread like wildfire, like a ripple effect. And then each city, town can take pride and have their own eternal fires where everybody can gather, to pray, and come together in peace, and eat, and laugh, have concerts, have gatherings, and just learn to live together and coexist by using our talents instead of using each other for our talent. (Wabiski ma'inagan, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

## Practicing Respect

*Knowledge holders and survey participants spoke of respect, one of the Seven Grandfather Teachings.*

- *Respect for and connection to aki and nibi, across entire community,*
- *Respect and gratitude for the gifts of aki and nibi,*
- *All generations show respect for the land, and*
- *Protection for sacred sites.*



*“To me it sounds like the law of the universe – nature. Respecting mother earth, and promoting it, following it, and teaching younger generations to do the same so it’s carried on. Respect mother earth. We try to follow that here, teach it and follow it.”*

*(David Kelly, Migisi Sahgaigan First Nation, 2021)*

# Pathways Forward

## Cultural

Knowledge holders, staff and survey participants had the following comments about how language, culture, and ceremony should influence the implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration:

Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration can only be fully understood in Anishinaabemowin

Knowledge holders strongly felt that respecting and upholding Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration required fluency in Anishinaabemowin. They emphasized that English translations of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin were inadequate: while Manito does translate to 'great spirit' or 'spirit,' 'Aki' is often translated directly to 'Land,' when Aki more correctly indicates 'all of that which sustains us,' and 'Inakonigaawin' means 'all of us in agreement.' This illustrates that the use and understanding of Anishinaabemowin is of pivotal importance in respecting and upholding inakonigaawin, and in the ceremonies around the inakonigaawin.

*We attended a meeting too and that was a big discussion, the word law. That's not a traditional word, so it should be changed to something that's more traditional. (Chief Brian Perrault, Couchiching, 2021)*

*Inakonigaawin. Let's say, I'm the head of the household, and I set down rules. Okay, you've got to be in at 9:00. You've got to do dishes after supper. That's me, denaakonige. That means I'm setting down guidelines for you to follow. Inakonigaawin, is all of us are in agreement. We're all in agreement to the guiding. It's a guiding principle. It's a law. A law is an English term, and what I think instead of Manito Inakonigaawin, a law, is it should have been Inakonigaawin. Manito Inakonigaawin, guidelines, instead of law. But law is what white people understand. So maybe we should just leave the law in there. And a declaration is just simply stating a fact, and a law is something that you can enforce, like a white man do. So, a law, the way the white people understand, I say white people*



*because it's how they understand law, it can be enforced. But if it's a guideline, let's say we say it's a guideline, then they're just going to laugh at us, because it's not enforceable. It's also important that these messaging or these words of wisdom the Elders might say, has to be passed on to the next generation. There's other laws that have been implemented. Child welfare. Education laws. These are mixed with the contemporary and our spiritual values and the teachings. It's important that our younger generation truly understands what that is. One of the keys to understanding of moving forward is that language becomes important. The Anishinaabe, when language has to be front and centre and how we take to the future. The well-being of the Anishinaabe, language is a fundamental principle in how we achieve these goals. (Anonymous, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

Knowledge holders and GCT3 staff discussed the importance of using Anishinaabemowin when talking about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. Using Anishinaabemowin will help ensure that the detail, meanings, and sacredness of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi

Declaration are upheld and is fundamental to respecting and upholding the Inakonigaawin. Several knowledge holders held some urgency and concern around ensuring that Anishinaabemowin is learned and passed to future generations.

***[Manito Aki Inakonigaawin] is an expression of a sacred law ... often times when we talk about things like sacred or traditional law, it's always very abstract. It's very difficult to describe in English because I don't think that the proper terms necessarily exist in English to comprehend how Anishinaabe people view the world.***

*(Daniel Morriseau, 2021)*

*I know the Men's Council discussed quite a bit and they want to see a shift in the language, not necessarily the content ... some of the titles for the processes, often you have an English word for it but it's not really capturing the intent or the full spectrum of what you are trying to say or achieve through that. (Jordan Bergatolli, 2021)*



*It's also important that these messagings or these words of wisdom the Elders might say, has to be passed on to the next generation. There's other laws that have been implemented. Child welfare. Education laws. These are mixed with the contemporary and our spiritual values and the teachings. It's important that our younger generation truly understands what that is. One of the keys to understanding of moving forward is that language becomes important. The Anishinaabe, when language has to be front and centre and how we take to the future. The well-being of the Anishinaabe, language is a fundamental principle in how we achieve these goals. (George Kakeway, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

One knowledge holder mentioned that Manito Aki Inakonigaawin would provide the jurisdiction for Treaty #3 to adopt Anishinaabemowin as the official language in Treaty #3 territory.

*We should have signage everywhere in "Anishinaabe". That should be our official language, and we do have the power to do that. Under Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, we can do that. We can get our own language... Our own official language of this territory. (Naashki Binezek, Lac Seul First Nation, 2021)*

In the community survey, 58% of respondents identified "having more opportunities to learn and/or speak Anishinaabemowin" one of the three most important pathways forward for individuals. Survey participants also provided the following comments about the importance of Anishinaabemowin:

- Speak about and write about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration in Anishinaabemowin.
- Incentivize learning Anishinaabemowin, as well as traditional songs and teachings.

Regarding Anishinaabemowin revitalization, one knowledge holder commented that they appreciated that Anishinaabemowin words were being adopted by non-Indigenous people.

*...even the white people, even here in Kenora. You go to a store, or the clerk will tell you, saying thank you saying Miigwetch, very, it's not seldom, it's frequent. Where they got that, I don't know, but it feels good being Anishinaabe hearing white people saying that. (Elder from Naotkamegwanning First Nation, 2021)*



# Take time and care to ensure translations and interpretations are understood

As discussed above, when moving between Anishinaabemowin and English, important meaning and context is lost. With governance work, planning, and research currently being carried out in English, knowledge holders emphasized that time and care is needed to ensure that the meanings of Anishinaabemowin words are communicated, to the extent that they can be, in English.

***Because even though the law has been in paper form since I think like [1997] and I've been very familiar and comfortable and we can use it as a tool in these environments, but are we, where you're going... Where you've told me that you want to go, I think you got to put time into that. So, it's not necessarily like, well, I understand it to be this. What does that person understand it to be? How are you communicating that? (Janine Seymour, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)***

***Well, there's two words. Listen. Take your time. Think about it... Think and translate that to your heart. You begin to think clearly about who you are as an Anishinaabe person. (George Kakeway, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)***

***We need to have somebody there, interpreting it in Ojibwa, and we need to be painstakingly about it (Naashki Binezek, Lac Seul First Nation, 2021)***

***I think that's where all the emphasis should be, on this kind of work, because in the language is the interpretations for the laws. (Janine Seymour, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)***

Continue and uphold the practice of ceremony Knowledge holders, including the Gaagiidoo-Ikwewag (Women's Council) and GCT#3 staff spoke of the importance of ceremony in developing the written version of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, and the importance of ceremony in implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. The Gaagiidoo-Ikwewag highlighted that ceremony would be needed to move the Nibi Declaration to a Nibi Inakonigaawin. Knowledge holders also spoke of the power of ceremony and highlighted the importance of incorporating more ceremonies.





One staff member brought up the four hearts model of decision making: my heart, my family, my community, and the creator's heart.

They stated that ceremony was needed to include the creator's heart, and that this is necessary for implementing Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.

Ceremony is an important act to show respect (one of the Seven Grandfather Teachings) for Anishinaabe relations, including Mother Earth, nibi, a brother. Specific suggestions around the incorporation of ceremonies included:

- Always deferring to spirit first in decision making;
- Including more Elders and youth in ceremony;
- Trusting in the process of ceremony;
- Trusting in the spirit helpers;
- Honouring all four kinds of water with ceremony;
- Holding ceremonies outside;
- Bringing offerings to ceremony;
- Honouring the four seasons with ceremony;
- Holding ceremonies in Anishinaabemowin, so that the spirits will come;
- Helping people not used to attending ceremonies; and
- Holding ceremonies with the Crown and proponents.

***"We honestly believe that we're the true stewards of the planet. The Creator has given us to be on this sacred land and the sacred duty of stewardship. This is important because anytime there's a resource development, a proposed development, or a discussion on process, it's always our spirituality and traditions that are front and center. For instance, when we have our ceremonies, we had a MOU and four winds, and a celebration. There's people who question "how come the Chief doesn't make the opening comments? How come the minister doesn't speak first?" That's not our way. Our way is the spirituality first, the Creator. It's not a political process. It's about our spiritual relationship with the Creator. Ceremonies and Creator always come first. There's a contemporary process to accommodate special guests, dignitaries or government officials. Even with these ceremonies, just because there's no agenda on paper, it doesn't mean there's no due process of respecting what people have to say. It's what we learn from our ancestors and traditional forums. That's very consistent." (George Kakeway, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)***



***Teaching Anishinaabemowin is so vital and very important for the survival of generations to come for our children. Because if they don't have the language and they want to do a ceremony, nobody's going to show, the spirits will not show up. You have to have that language for the spirits to come and join you and join the ceremony, and that's where the good happens. And so, if majority of our children don't speak the language, then I'm sorry to say that there'll be no longer Anishinaabe people around to do what the Creation wanted us to do. (Elder from Naotkamegwaning First Nation, 2021)***

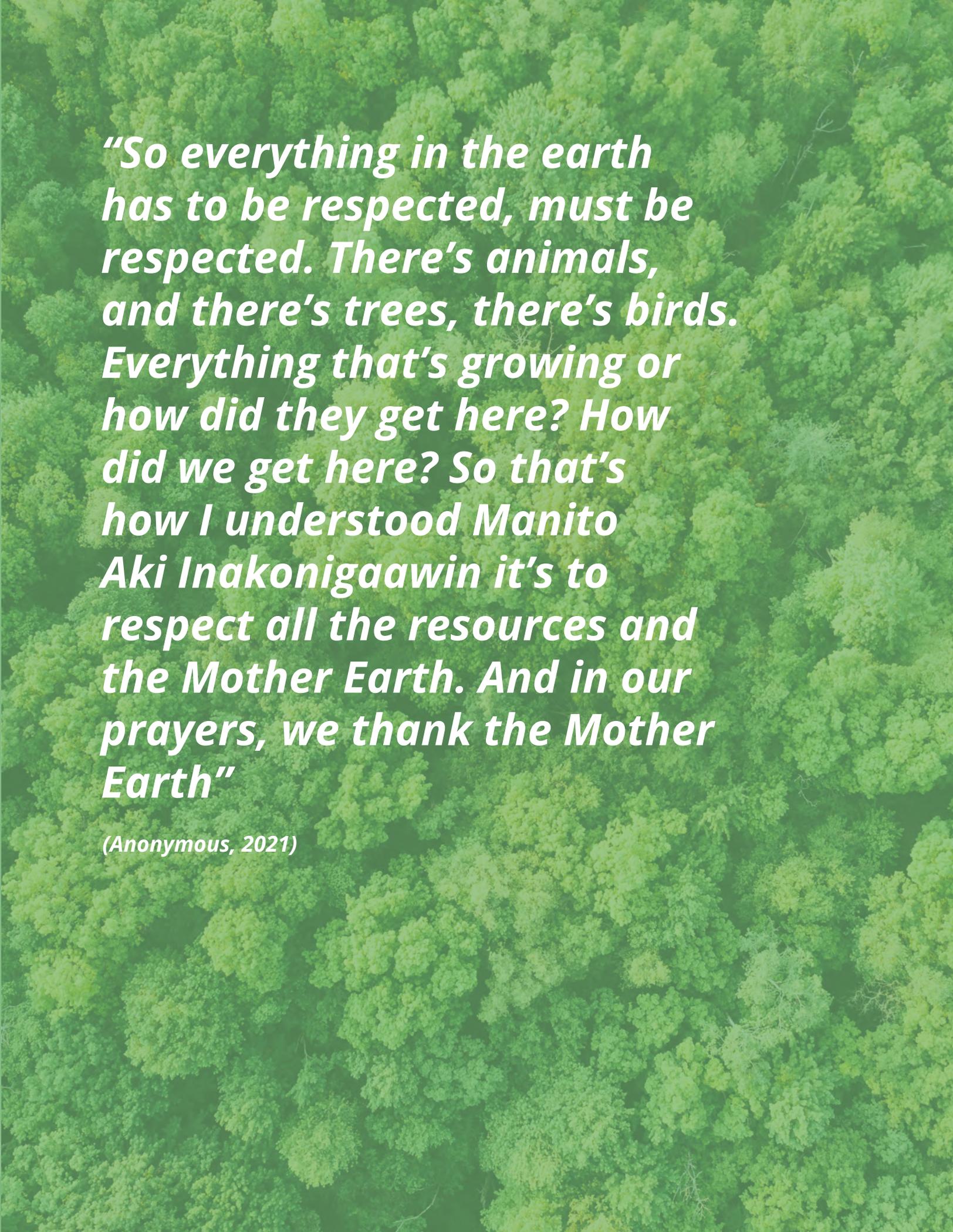
In the community survey, 76% of respondents identified “having Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi gatherings and ceremonies” as one of the three most important pathways forward for communities. Respondents ranked this as their 1st priority for communities. As well, 59% of respondents identified “having resources (like staff, funding, or supplies) for Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi Declaration ceremonies and gatherings across Treaty #3 territory” as part of the three most important pathways forward for GCT#3, making it their second priority for GCT#3.

Survey participants also provided comments regarding Pathways Forward for ceremonies and gatherings. These include

- needing more ceremonies and gatherings, including with other communities,
- having ceremonies accessible to those not able to travel,
- teaching children and youth the significance of ceremonies,
- holding ongoing programs in addition to singular events.

***Whether we admit it or not, we're still struggling with that concept of a way of life, because it has something to do with four seasons. Because every different season, there is a prayer, a ceremonial prayer, like in the spring, summer, in the fall, in the winter, there's a ceremonial prayer that goes into it and you do the ceremony, you do your offerings. But we don't do those things anymore (Elder from Naotkamegwaning First Nation, 2021)***



An aerial photograph of a dense, lush green forest, showing a vast expanse of trees from a high-angle perspective. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

*“So everything in the earth has to be respected, must be respected. There’s animals, and there’s trees, there’s birds. Everything that’s growing or how did they get here? How did we get here? So that’s how I understood Manito Aki Inakonigaawin it’s to respect all the resources and the Mother Earth. And in our prayers, we thank the Mother Earth”*

*(Anonymous, 2021)*

One knowledge holder noted that Manito Aki Inakonigaawin should be feasted four times a year, and that a copy of the written law should be put in the water as an offering, but these ceremonies may not be being held consistently anymore.

*There was four different sweat lodges that it went through and it also had to go through a shaking tent. It was supposed to be feasted every year. There was actually a copy of it that was put out into the water. We were told through a shaking tent that we were supposed to put an offering of the law written law itself into the water, which we did. (Anonymous, 2021)*

## Continue and increase the recognition of sacredness of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration

Knowledge holders and staff members emphasized that the Implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration must be done carefully and treated with reverence.

*Implementation of a sacred law is difficult because it's important to treat it with reverence. I am not saying, it's a bad thing. It's a good thing, but you have to be so careful with it, to not make a mistake that will diminish Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. In developing an implementation plan, we have got to be careful not to get pulled in the colonized way of thinking and doing. (Michelle Shephard, GCT#3, 2020)*

Knowledge holders and staff had several suggestions for ensuring that the sacredness of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration were respected. These include:

- *Refraining from the acronymization of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin (i.e., referring to it as 'MAI').*





- *Not using the word “resources,” but rather framing fish, trees, minerals, etc. as relations, especially when in discussions with other governments and proponents.*
- *Choosing words to describe Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration and supporting documents that respect the sacredness of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, for example, reconsidering the use of the words ‘tool’ and ‘toolkit.’*
- *Reconsidering the use of the word “law” to describe Anishinaabe Inakonigaawin.*
- *Protecting the documents and laws from western legal challenges.*

*Our language has spirit in itself, so we have to be able to feel it and when we start short forming these, the language, the spirit of it or the essence of it isn't there. So, we need to continue to say it because when — the more people say it like Manito Aki Inakonigaawin the spirit hear ... So, when we talk about other traditional laws, Manito Aki Inakonigaawin encompasses everything about our way of life. The Mino Bimaadiziwin Strategy needs to be part of that process because they are the guiding principles to how we live a good life ... And the teaching that goes with the water also need to — are paramount to Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. You can't have one without the other because water is life, so is Earth. Earth is life too. They give us, human beings a life that we need to continue on ... I found it disrespectful when you short-form things. And these, the language itself has the spirit so we have to honour that spirit of that*



*name ... and "law" sounds like it's a colonized way of being and thinking. So, we are just incorporating a colonial way of doing things still. And we have to move away from that. So, Manito Aki Inakonigaawin is, it speaks for itself. The original speakers understand what that means. (Darlene Curci, 2021)*

*A big barrier is the language we use. For example, when I [teach], I won't let people use words like natural resources, because that commodifies our relations. A tree is not a resource, that's a relation, a moose, isn't a resource, that's our relation muskrats and beaver, not natural resources, our relations. When you call them relations, then you have to develop that relationship with them. It's about a reciprocal relationship. Whereas when you think of them as natural resources, it's all about taking and not giving back. So, I don't like to use the natural resources. If we don't use those words in our day-to-day life, then it would change the way we look at them. (Kaaren Daaneman, Trout Lake First Nation, 2021)*

## **Include full acknowledgements in meetings and ceremony**

Several staff members commented about the importance of proper acknowledgements. Depending on the circumstances, these could include all the aspects of water, all the kinds of animals, all the types of laws and how each interacts. Such acknowledgements are not consistently practiced. Staff members mentioned that events needed to go slowly to make sure all these sacred things are acknowledged.

*In my understanding, there is seven levels of the water. Each is based on the amount of oxygen at each level. We talked to the old turtle and that old turtle talks to the fish and then to the other water animals ... everything is equal and just like the Creation story, all animal life is important ... the Elders said: You can't just disturb the water and disturb the shoreline without asking for permission. So, you better go and ask about it. This issue was brought into the lodge and (the spirits) talk to us. Nobody notices the work that is being done in the water. And it's just keep going about its own business. So, I think this is why we pray. Our Elders have to speak more to*





*acknowledge all the things that impacts our life. Every single animal. And I think that this is one component that we are forgetting. We need to speak to each one and in our context using Anishinaabemowin to properly acknowledge them ... we tend to keep a lot of our prayer short for the sake of convenience because we want to go on with our meetings. But when an Elder really sits down, they could be talking for about two hours to properly speak to every single animal that is in creation. We have been skipping this step and have to learn to slow down and acknowledge all those things. (Anonymous, 2021)*

## Consider the practice of recording sacred laws

Knowledge holders and staff expressed concerns about the approach of recording sacred laws in writing. One staff member reported that Elders in gatherings say the sacred laws should not be written. Another stated that ceremony should always come before writing, and that this approach would help decrease the hesitation about writing laws. Notably, before the version of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin was written, the working group that was developing Manito Aki Inakonigaawin sought guidance through ceremony, and were told that in this case, it was good to have a written

Aki Inakonigaawin, and that this invited the tree spirit to meetings and negotiations.

*I was told our as Anishinaabe people we do not write down our laws and its not traditional. As we were wanting to develop the law, it was okay for us to just start writing. I know paper came from trees and trees have a spirit. I took that to ceremony, and the spirits came back and told us that paper has a spirit because it comes from a tree. When we're writing the law on paper, what I'm doing is I'm inviting the tree spirit to come and sit with me. And whenever you go to Ottawa or Toronto or wherever to negotiate some kind of proposal, you have the tree spirit, particularly sitting with you right there. And he's gonna make sure that that things go accordingly. So, we were told that it's okay to use paper. (Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh, 2021)*

While staff expressed concerns about having written laws in a western model, they also noted that it was important for working with the Crown, as writing translated sacred laws into a form that the Crown and proponents could begin to



understand. This was referred to as “using the tools of the oppressor”. This metaphor of weapons and hunting was also shared to demonstrate that leadership employs proposals as modern-day weapons.

*I know that teachings don't always exactly fit in the modern context. So, I'll take that to ceremony. How can I adapt this teaching to fit modern reality and not disrespect or offend the source of that gift that teaching? Can I adapt it? Can I modernize it? I've been told yes. You know, even computers or electronics today might change next week. That's evolution. Things have changed-growing up a livelihood was hunting, trapping, gathering, wild rice, either guiding pro camp or a commercial fishing and selling your catch. And that was a livelihood growing up. And I'm happy to say that the hard work of the parents, we were never short of anything at all. Today, its a different kind of hunt. Our leaders need to go to Ottawa. Their weapons are proposals, you know, that's what they do in Ottawa or Toronto. And how do they sharpen their tools? We have policy analysts put together those*

*documents or proposals, but to me it's still a hunt, we still that prepare for that hunt. (Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh, 2021)*

## Address past (and ongoing) trauma to the land

Some staff members discussed trauma to the land as an issue that needs to be addressed to fully implement Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.

The following forms of trauma to the land were mentioned by staff members:

- mercury poisoning at Grassy Narrows;
- damming rivers for hydropower;
- Shoal Lake water being directed to Winnipeg; and
- cumulative effects.

*My understanding is growing up, people took care of everything. They took care of the land. Everything we see on our land; they took care of it ... I think maybe that's why our people a long time ago were well taken care of, because they cared for things then (Chief Brian Perrault, Couchiching, 2021)*





## Emphasize time on the land and connection to aki and nibi

Some staff members identified personal trauma experiences from residential school and colonization as related to the implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. Forms of personal trauma include loss of language and addictions, which disconnect people from the land. The implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, especially as it relates to Anishinaabe peoples' connection to the land, was seen as one of the ways that this trauma could be addressed.

One knowledge holder shared that the land holds knowledge, and to learn from the land, people must spend time on the land. Children are particularly connected and can learn and teach knowledge from the land.

*I have not been afraid that we would lose our knowledge because the knowledge is out there. The land has that knowledge. We just have to learn to be paying attention. (Kaaren Daaneman, Trout Lake First Nation, 2021)*

*When we talk about mental health and addiction, mainly mental health, we talk about the spirit of the individual. So, knowing the Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration gives us a foundation as to who we are as Anishinaabe people. And if we don't have that foundation, we end up having all these addictions because of not knowing who we are and how we are connected to each other and how we are not connected to the land ... something was disconnected from us early on in life, like when we were babies as we grew up with our parents, when we attended residential schools that is when the dis-*



*-connect started happening ... we always have to remember, as I was taught, we need to know who we are as Anishinaabe people ...When we talk about where we are going in life, we all have roles and responsibilities as individuals. We were all gifted with something when we came to this earth from, from the stars. (Darlene Curci, 2021)*

*We are also caretakers, all of us, both men and women. We are stewards of the land, so we need to come back to that kind of practice or way of living, or way of life. (Darlene Curci, 2021)*

*You look at the trees, look at the water, look at the sky, look at all the stuff around you and you sit down with a person that you know that tells lies or is dishonest, you can tell the differences right off the bat. That sky that water it will never lie to you, none of that will lie to you. It is what it is. That's no lie ... That's the truth because the creator put it there. He put that Nibi – that water there for the Anishinaabe for us to enjoy ... This is Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, this is how he planned it.*

*(Chief Bill Petiquan, Wabauskang First Nation, 2021)*

Knowledge holders and survey participants also provided the following guidance on establishing reinforcing personal connections to the land and to aki and nibi:

- facilitating time on the land,
- individuals offering tobacco each day, and
- planting wild rice.

In the community survey, 69% of respondents identified “having more opportunities to be on the land learning” as one of the three most important Pathways Forward for themselves.

## Continue work on bridging world views

Several staff members mentioned that there is a gap between Western and Anishinaabe world views. For example, Western society takes a disconnected, siloed approach to issues, whereas Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration encourage more fluid processes. One knowledge holder commented that there were aspects of Western thought that were working towards closing this gap when it came to environmental laws, citing work to develop an



“Environmental Bill of Rights” by the David Suzuki Foundation.

*Everything is interconnected from our understanding, from the protocols to understanding the law ... western society tends to take a sectorial approach to everything ... but health and the environment are symbiotic, so we have to understand these things. (Anonymous, 2021)*

*I think in terms of laws, we're different. They got their laws; we got our laws. At the same time, we need to harmonize. How we begin to administer or manage either conventional law or federal law. They got to respect each other. We respect their laws. But opposition is not the way we want to go. I think we did an adequate job of conveying that message. (George Kakeway, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

## **Incorporate gender-based councils and ceremonies**

The Gaagiidoo-Ikwewag (Women's Council) spoke of a water council, which could be a Women's Protectorate, or a Circle of Grandmothers, or waterkeepers. They would

hold the responsibility for protecting water, and hold nibi ceremonies, songs, protocols, and teachings. They also spoke of the importance of balancing men's and women's presence in each of the four directions of governance.

*We've used the water as one of our relations and for the most part, we call them water or brother. But it's up to the woman to look after the water, to take care of the water and make sure the water isn't being abused. And we haven't done a very good job because for example, red lake water is very polluted by the gold mines. A lot of the fish, for example, the trout, we're losing a big population in the lake. (Kaaren Daaneman, Trout Lake First Nation, 2021)*

Survey participants provided the following guidance regarding gender and ceremony:

- Forming women's groups in each community,
- Respecting the role of women in relation to nibi, and
- Integrating the new Two-Spirit Council.



# Healing intergenerational trauma and living in a good way

Knowledge holders emphasized that respecting and upholding Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration requires Anishinaabe people who have healed from both their own trauma, and from intergenerational trauma, and who know the teachings and are following a straight path. This includes things like practicing:

- Listening,
- Honesty,
- Respect, specifically for others, aki and nibi, and the teachings of life,
- Success on Anishinaabe terms, rather than colonial terms.

*We have a Mino Bimaadiziwin strategy. We have the Youth Suicide strategy. We also have the Drug Taskforce strategy. So, those three strategies in itself speak to the level [of implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi declaration] of mental health. And as I said earlier, mental health is about our spirit, how do we take care of our spirit. And so, Mino Bimaadiziwin is — what it means is living a good life. And*

*there are guiding principles in there that teach us what we need to do as technicians, how do we help the communities move toward that healing and that wellness as opposed to staying stuck in an oppressive state of being, or way of operating in the communities. (Darlene Curci, 2021)*

*I think everyone's born into their child bodies and you grow through it and it's like we've just been damaged obviously, through stuff that happens to us. But it even goes further to our physical little bodies being birthed from two parents with two very different trauma lines because that trauma, that invasion has been so... I can't underscore how horrible and horrific and violent that invasion has been for us as a people. So, you have to heal those two lines in your physical body. Because you actually have that. You have inherited, now they call it intergenerational survivors. That's a concept, but now there's epigenetics where my brains are now different developed because of that trauma. (Janine Seymour, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

*This Elder had never knew how to read and write or anything, then he just*



*explained something to me about life and the gifts that we all had. He says, "Even from the beginning you start to have things." He said, "He gives you all the items that you must need to put in that circle, and how we come to understand things of smudging, of tobacco, the pipe, the drum," he says, "which is the heartbeat of life, and what you hear right from the beginning of when you're in darkness within your mom, you hear that."*

*You hear that, so when you go walk, he says, "You know what that item is there, that drum, and you share it. That's who you are. You are that Anishinaabe person." That's right. When you start to hear the drum, the drum it pulls you. It's your mom. You're in that circle of life, see? That's the respect and the teachings of life that we have to share with one another, right from the beginning, with our kids and our grandkids and so it'll continue, it'll be watered down, and it'll continue to grow. (Willie Yerxa, 2021)*

*You don't want to say to a child, we'll spank you. No, you teach them about the importance of communicating*

*with tobacco. Little spirit people see a child coming up and offers tobacco and they take that, that's when the good spirit takes over. (Elder from Naotkamegwanning First Nation, 2021)*

## Recognize racial tension

Several knowledge holders spoke of racial tension in the Treaty #3 area, which they identified as concerning because some non-Indigenous people may not approach, or lack a worldview that allows them to approach, Manito Aki Inakonigaawin or the Nibi Declaration with respect or understanding.

*The white society goes against everything our law says. Because under their laws, you have to own things, you have to control things, you have to take things. Those words aren't in our laws. If we wanted water, we asked the Creator for water, and he would direct us where to get water. If we wanted food, we knew how to go get food and you thanked him. (Earl Klyne, Couchiching First Nation, 2021)*



*“... When they say, “Oh, I’m nothing.” We will continue to walk as nothing if we don’t come back to the circle and to the items that Creator has given us to grow as an Anishinaabe person. That’s what we are, we’re Anishinaabe, we can’t be anything else. We’re Anishinaabe, and we have teachings and ways of life that we have to start to understand and respect once again. Then the circle will start to turn in its right way. We ought to balance. We don’t start pushing one another. It has to turn the right way, with the centre of what we have, the drum, the pipe, tobacco, the smudging, all these sacred items that we use, that was given to us, to grow. That has to come back, and it has to come back to our younger generation so they will grow right. They will grow. ”*

*(Willie Yerxa, 2021)*

# Economic Relationships with Proponents

This section considers economic matters related to the implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. This includes how funding flows from projects and is divided by communities, and how work to implement Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration is funded. This section also includes commentary and discussion regarding tension that is often felt between economic development and protection of aki and nibi.

*Sometimes communities also struggle ... Do we do economic development at the cost of the life-givers, or do we protect the life-givers at the cost of being dependent on the colonizers? There are two different approaches, but we have got to find a way to walk that middle ground and develop sustainably, because otherwise we are going to continue to be in that relationship with the government, where we have our hands out ... as opposed to generating our own revenues. (Michelle Shephard, GCT#3, 2020)*

*To get an economy going, we must rely on the land as a base. Without access to the land, we are more restricted in what we can do. That is why the government is trying so hard to maintain control over the land and give communities so little access. That is where that struggle is .... In land-based conflicts. Those conflicts are there for a reason. The wealth comes from the land. In the Anishinaabe way, the understanding of 'wealth' has so much more meaning. The wealth is not just about the economy. It is about the wealth of people health's, the wealth of relationships, the wealth of being able to practice our own traditional activities. The wealth of our land is so, so generous and giving, and we find it is mistreated when thought of in such a limiting way. (Michelle Shephard, 2020)*

*I was talking to another elder that was a part of writing the law or work. [00:23:00] I don't know if he wrote the law, but he was part of the ceremonial process. And he was saying another part, another reason for writing this law was that it was supposed to create money,*



*lots of money and generate income to get rid of this reliance on the government. (Anonymous, 2021)*

## Current Implementation Resource Revenue Sharing

The written version of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin provides a framework for the distribution of benefits from resource projects through a clause in the law that states that the authorizations for activities will be subject to conditions. Such conditions can include things like economic benefits that flow to individual Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 communities, and/or GCT#3. For example a Resource Revenue Sharing (RRS) agreement for forestry and mining was signed between GCT#3 and Ontario in 2018. This agreement codifies the sharing of royalties and taxes between Ontario, Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 communities, and GCT#3.

The formula for sharing revenues between communities is adjusted on a project-by-project basis, and effort is made to ensure that benefits are distributed equitably, with the nearest or most affected communities receiving a greater portion of localized projects, for example, local

forestry projects. In contrast, projects that affect a large portion of Treaty #3 territory, for example, a mine that is located upstream of many communities, would result in a wider distribution of resource revenues. There is currently some disagreement within Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 communities regarding how revenues should be distributed, with some leaders advocating for equal nation-wide sharing of revenue, while others prefer the current case-by-case approach.

*The whole reason that Manito Aki Inakonigaawin was put on paper was because of the Bell Fots agreement- they wanted to come through to bring their fibre optic lines to the Western part of the country and the Chief at the time said that they would have to not only pay Couchiching money to bring the line through our community, but any other community that it went through on its way out west, and that they would also have to pay money to treaty three as a whole to, to bring their line through. And that's how the writing of the law on paper come about was because bell Canada wanted proof that we had a resource law that said*



*that we had rights, tthe right to, force resource users to pay a fee for using our land. (Anonymous, 2021)*

In general, decisions on the distribution of resource revenues are made in a community-led conversation between the Ojichidaa and the leadership of Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 communities. GCT#3 also developed a regulation to support revenue sharing, however, this regulation has not yet been passed.

RRS supports co-management and encourages a nation-based approach to projects. At the GCT#3 level, RRS, supported by the written version of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, can be used as a source of funding for implementing Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.

*The reason why Manito Aki Inakonigaawin is so powerful, is because it allows us to do things like [co-management of resources and resource revenue sharing] ... there are 634 First Nations in Canada and some would say that they are all sovereign, whereas some would say they all belongs to Nations and those Nations are sovereign.*

*But according to the Canadian Law and the Indian Act, they are the rights holders ... so they have to fight for what is theirs. What that does is that it creates a situation where you have 634 communities that are all fighting for the same pot of resources. Now what Manito Aki Inakonigaawin does, is it takes that concept of nationhood, and it throws it in that cycle. Now, we just finished up doing our first year of resource revenue sharing here. And how is that possible? How can 28 communities that consist of the poorest most downtrodden, oppressed demographic of Canada come together and often times sacrifice for the greater good of the collective. How can you convince them to do that? Well, you anchor it in that traditional law, that sacred law. If you run it through Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, they have a concept of that, and that is where these communities all came together and they said "look we have this opportunity" and you know the conversation always gets bogged down in distribution formulas but they just did equal share and they said "this came to the Nation so it should be*



*distributed out as a Nation” and they used Manito Aki Inakonigaawin to do it. Manito Aki Inakonigaawin is the, I guess the authority behind the whole thing. The great advantage of this is that it carries forward that idea of nationhood, that national government never ceased to exist. (Daniel Morrisseau, 2021)*

Consideration of the tension between economic development on one hand, and environmental protection on the other, formed a thread that was heard through interviews and focus groups. For example, one participant cautioned that the current implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin was facilitating mining and energy projects that did not respect Mother Earth. In discussion with Gaagiidoo-Ikwewag (Women’s Council), Manito Aki Inakonigaawin was described as an opportunity to create conversations regarding benefits and risks of projects that change the lands and waters.

*What’s going on is, they’re making deals with mining companies to dig up the earth. Dig up mother earth, dig down into mother earth, underground mining and to use water ... See, what Inakonigaawin does,*

*is it allows companies that you see in, such as mining companies, the oil companies. They’ll make an agreement with Treaty 3 to come through our lands. We don’t want them, they don’t come. Pretty simple. Reality is, Treaty 3 need dollars to survive. That’s reality and some of those type of agreements will come in effect. (Earl Klyne, Couchiching First Nation, 2021)*

In response to this tension between development and environmental protection, knowledge holders described the process of ceremony as a way to ‘scan’ the important decisions being made to ensure that decisions respect both communities’ economic needs and the environment. Knowledge holders also noted that the ceremonial process for each decision is unique and must be developed separately for each law and decision.

*[For Manito Aki Inakonigaawin] so they would help us develop a work plan and a budget. What’s the work plan and budget was in place. We took it to ceremony again, you know, because they had to be scanned in ceremony and then to be vetted. To move forward in that way. And then that’s what and that’s where these facilitators came in.*



*They went to all these communities with the work plan we developed. We decided how we should continue to align and then after the draft was approved in principle, when they all agreed that yes, we had a law- That's what we called the traditional validation process. That's when we went to the lodges for four days. And then after the fourth day, the evening of, we did the shake tent and then went back to our leadership for final ratification, that's the whole law-making process like we did. (Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh, 2021)*

## Crown and Proponent Relationships

Manito Aki Inakonigaawin currently structures the Anishinaabe of Treaty #3's expectations regarding consultation with proponents and the Crown, ensuring that proponents and the Crown have clear guidance on expectations and responsibilities when working in Treaty #3 territory.

*ight now, we are going in the right direction. Proponents, governments, and Nations entering into Treaty #3 for the most part know that they need to come*

*and do things the Treaty #3 way. When we are doing things right, there will be that continued feeling of a collective and National presence working together in unity that the Anishinaabe Nation of Treaty #3 is so well known for. (Lucas King, 2020)*

Regarding current relationships with proponents, one interviewee noted that proponents consider First Nations a risk factor because they can impede the project, while others referred to proponents attempting to play communities against each other in divide-and-conquer strategies illustrating the importance of an Anishinaabe Nation of Treaty#3-wide approach.



*"So, it's not always the same. Some of the processes are going to differ each time we do a law making, you know, but the thing is, we, what we did, we established a guideline. This is how you're gonna do it. The process, it's just a guideline tells you what we should do, but you're going to be involving different [knowledge keepers]. At the end of the day, it might be a different process when you're going to traditionally validate that law. So that's why we're, I was not permitted to document that whole process, but I will. But I am going to document it just, just for Manito Aki Inakonigaawin."*

*(Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh, 2021)*

# Future Vision

Knowledge holders, staff, and community members shared the following vision regarding economic aspects of respecting and upholding Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, which are expanded upon below:

- Implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration is funded
- We have cooperative partnerships with other governments and businesses,
- Resource revenues are shared and benefit all Treaty #3 communities,
- Each community has the economic resources to support themselves and each other,
- Anishinaabe use the land to support themselves,
- Relationships with proponents are guided by Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, resulting in:
  - Respect for Treaty #3 authority;
  - Proponents earn trust by acting and communicating respectfully; and
  - People and communities stand up for themselves, supported by Inakonigaawin.

While the community survey identified one of the top economic priorities was to 'improve funding of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration' most staff did not define specific

visions related to economic aspects of the implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. This may indicate that economic aspects of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin are not front of mind when people consider the impacts of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin or the Nibi Declaration, or perhaps that the economic processes in the written version of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin are already functioning well. Several of the suggested 'pathways forward' in the Social, Environmental, Cultural, and Economic sections require sustainable, long-term funding to implement, indicating that there are important economic aspects of the implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration that still need work.

One staff member stated that feedback from community members on a project emphasized that Manito Aki Inakonigaawin should be the foundation of relationships with proponents.

***We identify Manito Aki Inakonigaawin as a critical piece as to how we are making decisions. What happened with one of the projects I am working on .... the Hydro One Waasigan Transmission Line, where they are upgrading it to a more commercial, heavy***



*duty hydro line for industrial development in north-western Ontario, and in a community engagement session, the feedback that we got is that Manito Aki Inakonigaawin has to be front and centre. It has to be the absolute guiding principle that shapes the discussions, that shapes the protocols and decisions that get made .... that shapes all of our inputs and how we engaged on all of our consultations. (Michelle Shephard, GCT#3, 2020)*

Only one survey participant commented on a future vision that related exclusively to the economic governance area:

*“That a new relationship with Canada is developed as the leaseholder instead of Britain. One which a fiduciary obligation is unnecessary, and we manage our own money earned by the use of our lands and resources.” (Survey participant, 2021)*

In smaller focus groups and individual interviews, knowledge holders shared their insights, aspirations, and desires for the future implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. Following the thread of the Seven Grandfather Teachings, many participants emphasized the need for trust in the relationship with proponents.

*Principles we use with the Province of Ontario when implementing Manito Aki Inakonigaawin are based on trust and obligations. We used moccasins as a symbol through sacred ceremony to represent the beginning of our relationship with the Province in moving forward. That was the key, which didn't come by accident. We are going to walk together in economic partnerships. Maybe in the future we will have a stronger relationship with the province, but in the meantime there needs to be trust, integrity and respect. You shouldn't lie. Once you lie, you walk backwards in your moccasins. Now we're going to take your moccasins away, because you haven't earned them. These are some of the key messages that have been used in various negotiations with the Province. These principles are key in all resource development in Treaty #3. This case scenario could be used as an oversight in implementing Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. (George Kakeway, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

In addition to trust, another of the Seven Grandfather Teachings is based on the principle of bravery; a knowledge holder shared that being brave means confronting conflict and disagreement with respectful communications.



In this series of responses, a knowledge holder shared a specific example of being brave. In the face of bullying, community members applied Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and declared that Ontario Hydro employees were trespassing on community lands. This short story exemplifies how Hydroelectricity (energy that is generated from the waters that flow through Treaty #3 territory) remains out of reach for some Treaty #3 members. Through Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, members find the courage and strength to stand up for themselves in the face of conflict.

***Hydro One attempted to shut someone in our communities power off. I said, well maybe let them come up with a payment plan. See how simple as things can be worked out. When you immediately try to intimidate and bully people, things don't go over well. So the Hydro worker agreed and said she can pay whatever she can afford to per month. So the next few times that Hydro comes back to the community, they come looking for me. I said, I'm not even a council member or anything but they wanted authorization to come into the community. This may be a good example as to how we begin authorization processes. (Anonymous, 2021)***

***I said, you have no right. He goes, I have every right, and he starts shoving a piece of paper, which was the hydro bill. So I said, well, you know what? I'll tell you what, I guess you may not realize this, but you're trespassing in our community. I said, do you know what I said? That's a thousand dollars fine. I was lying. It's only 25 bucks. I said, there's two of us here. I said when you're trespassing, I can take your company truck. But I said, I'm nice enough. I'll drive you to the highway. So he dashes back into his vehicle and makes a phone call that he gives to me. It's the top man from hydro in Toronto, and he said what's the problem? I said, well, one of your staff members are in my community and are intimidating, threatening and harassing one of my clients here. (Anonymous, 2021)***

***There's another resource right there. Hydro. How many hydro lines run through this community? There's no reason why we have to pay extremely high hydro rates when we have the lines running right through here. (Anonymous, 2021)***



When asked “What does the Nation look like if MAI and Nibi declaration were fully implemented?” the responses from knowledge holders describe Treaty #3 authority to make decisions and those decisions respected by the proponents and the neighbouring municipalities that rely on water that is Treaty #3’s responsibility.

*If we took control of the water. Okay. Um, you have, like I said, you have Dryden, Kenora, Fort Frances, and all the little places in between that take water out of the lakes for tap water. So, and everybody within the towns paid the municipalities for using that water. It, they shouldn’t be paying the municipalities. They should be paying Treaty #3 that’s Treaty #3’s water that they’re using. So, the, the, the municipalities themselves either should be paying directly to Treaty #3 or the, the users of it should be paying directly to Treaty #3. But somewhere in there, there should be, it should be written and enforced that there’s money that goes to, um, to the Nation of Treaty #3 for, for using it. And the same with, um, with, um, boating the recreation use of water. Like I said, those that every fishing license that’s sold within on, within the Treaty #3 territory, we should be getting that money, not, not the province and not*

*the municipalities that are selling it. That money should be a share of that money should be coming to Treaty #3. And those are all things that the water law should be doing. It’s not only, it’s not only protecting the water, but it’s, um, getting the proper benefits from the water that we’re not receiving right now. (Joanne Bruyere, 2021)*

*That we would actually control a lot of the activities in the territory. The things that control the development of the projects, the rules that are being enforced. We have the authorizations going through, it needs the backing of “This is why we are saying the authorization is approved, it meets all the standards that we have” If you have everything actualized under MAI and Nibi, you have control. We are more than participants; we are active people in our own lands. (Anonymous, Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation)*

Additionally, wisdom and humility are two of the Seven Grandfather Teachings which knowledge holders emphasized as important for decision-making. Having humility when sharing teachings, in particular with inter-generational teachings, are important skills to share. Training the next generation of wise decision-makers



was recognised as important for the continued understanding of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.

*Being around over 70 years, I think you know whatever you think is right, you want to pass on to the younger generation. Your wisdom. Well, sometimes they pass things on to us, right? ... I learned that to be humble, you can learn from anybody, anytime, and any place. You have to have an open mind and you have to be willing to share or to accept. (Ernie Jones, 2021)*

*Wisdom? Because I know something that you don't know or that you don't know, and if I tell you, then you tell somebody else, and then it's passed on and then it's continual. It's a continual thing. And wisdom is part of making the right decision that you think is right. Doesn't necessarily mean that somebody else might think it's right, but you got to stand for what you believe in ... Even children have wisdom. They have an insight that as a big person, you lose that. They have that innocence and it's always like, "From the mouth of babes." But if they learn from us and continual that future generations ... If you don't tell somebody something that they should know, then it*

*stops and it ends, so wisdom is passed down to everybody and it's continual. (Sherry Anne Roseborough, Baakaandibewiziibing Ojibway Nation, 2021)*



*"I think we need to also go to industry to say, "you are coming into the territory, and you are going to follow Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. In Red Lake they poured their first gold bar this past weekend ... there is no mention about the resource law and the fact that part of their ability to pour that bar of gold rests on them getting some permission from the community. That is the resource law. I think that if we had news stories about economic development that happens within the 55,000 square miles of the territory, we need to acknowledge that. We don't necessarily always get industry to pay any respect or any credence to Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, which needs to happen."*

*(Anonymous, 2021)*

# Pathways Forward

## Economic

### Ensure proponents acknowledge and respect Manito Aki Inakonigaawin

Staff stated that proponents beginning projects on Treaty #3 Territory needed to understand and acknowledge Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. The written Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, along with the Manito Aki Inakonigaawin toolkit, provides a clear set of consultation regulations to follow on GCT#3 territory.

During interviews and focus groups, knowledge holders emphasized dual responsibilities towards acknowledgement and respect of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. Participants acknowledged that ceremony, workplace training and learning about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin are the responsibilities of the proponent; yet at the same time, knowledge holders recognize that Treaty #3 has a responsibility to teach respectful acknowledgement of, and how to follow, sacred laws.

***[G66] Well, we had a meeting with Ontario Hydro couple of days ago. They came into the community and of course they made their offer of tobacco, but I asked him, "Do you***

***guys do any cultural sensitivity training?" Well of course, they don't. So, I advise him that there are some of the things you should be doing because when our youth want to apply for work with Ontario Hydro or get into administration, they have a chance of surviving in that industry. (Dave Bruyere, 2021)***

***And even the big companies would have to have some kind of Indigenous cultural learning for their workers to come onto our land, and to our communities, they have to have some kind of sensitivity training, in order for them to understand us. (Hilda Boy, 2021)***

### Create a policy or regulation to support the sharing of resource revenue through Manito Aki Inakonigaawin

Knowledge holders mentioned that a regulation was drafted that would support how revenue was shared between



Treaty #3 communities and GCT#3, which is a key purpose of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, but that this regulation had not been passed.

One knowledge holder provided supporting comments towards developing such a regulation, outlining rationale for sharing resource revenue among all Anishinaabe in Treaty #3 communities. They said this should be based on asserting claim to all the territory of Treaty #3, rather than having individual communities outline specific traditional territories. Such a system, they suggested, would help ensure that decisions respected all the territory, as well as future generations.

***They shouldn't the resources or their royalties or whatever governments get for using those lands, whether it's shares negotiated for those communities or whatever. But yeah, I don't... The current definition of traditional territory, I don't really agree with. I believe that it has to be Treaty #3, that outside of the first nation territory, the 55,000 square miles has to be governed by Treaty #3. And for that Manito Aki Inakonigaawin to happen, and I think that's the only way that this happens. Otherwise, we're going to have negotiations amongst ourselves of how that community***

***is going to be dealt with or whatever or in some cases they say, " you go deal with industry there" So that's just my belief, but communities with industry happening next to them, they're not going to agree with that. But then they don't have a long-term focus either, how long? 20, 25 years that mill is going to last. What about the next 500 years? You know? So, I think that they have to look at it that way. (Larry Morriseau, 2021)***

## **Improve funding of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration**

Most of the pathways forward discussed in earlier sections require funding to move forward. Lack of funding for the implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration was identified as a gap at both the GCT#3 and community levels by GCT#3 staff. Currently, the TPU depends on grants to fund work with Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, but one staff member noted that funding for sacred laws should not come from grants that may be politically motivated. Staff also mentioned a need to fund Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the



Nibi Declaration implementation at both the GCT#3 and the community levels.

*I would absolutely like to see stronger financial support for this work [Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi] because without it, it tends to get brought in as an afterthought.*

*We often get told, “we can’t fund that - with the resources we have, this is all we can do”. Financial resources are an important factor to manifest this work, but not the only thing. An important element of the work is ceremony. Ceremony is something you cannot rush – it takes time to manifest the outcome you need. (Michelle Shephard, GTC#3,2020)*

Knowledge holders also stressed the importance of Treaty #3 retaining the authority to implement Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, independent of outside funders’ influences.

*We need to revisit these arrangements, where we were never involved the pipeline and to the area title lines. And then we have hydro dams, and we were never involved in, or never consulted when they flooded our lands. They flooded our cemeteries and this and that. And that’s the significance of*

*Manito Aki Inakonigaawin proponents or industry went to Indian Affairs, not just in our territory across Canada. Treaty #3 was the first area where this happened, where industry came to for permission to cross. (Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh, 2021)*

*I just would like to see more, not we’re doing something because we have funding to do it. More we’re doing the work because it needs to be done. So, I would like to see that because I feel that right now that the money is a lot of strings and we’re doing it. And then we’re like, now we’re at a time where something’s off. What’s missing? Let’s look, let’s search. Right? And it’s like, well maybe we strayed. (Janine Seymour, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

Knowledge holders also spoke about striking a balance and walking the middle road while also earning revenues from resource economies in a way that is sustainable into the future.

*And when I think about the interpretation with our land right now, we’re trading too much of it for money. We’re giving too much of it away for money and I’m looking at it now, look outside,*



*to earth. I mean, the money is not helping anybody right now. We're burning. We're burning out. And it's all because of what we did and how we treated Mother Earth. I'm afraid that the more we talk about money, the more we talk about dollars and how much money we could make, if we do this with our land, our land, and that's what sustains us. (Laura Bruyere, 2021)*

*We have, we all have our role, I guess. And I just believe that finding a way to take control of our own lives has to do a lot with taking care of the money. And I know money isn't everything, but it is in a relationship with non-native people. And amongst ourselves, we can use it to help our families feed themselves ... But I think today it's very important to have money and being able to do that. But I believe that there's still that spiritual component that people live by, but money is important, and that's all there is to it. I don't believe today that anybody can survive unless they're dependent on that. (Larry Morriseau, 2021)*

In focus groups with the Youth Council and Gaagiidoo-Ikwewag (Women's Council) knowledge holders imagined what future funding could support:

- continued funding for the Nibi Portal;
- important initiatives for youth with land-based environmental programs; and
- high-speed internet as investment in the economic future for Treaty #3.

Another knowledge holder emphasized the need to invest money into the greater whole of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin as a way of teaching younger generations how to have healthier relationships with money.

*And a lot of people looking at the money-wise [linked to resources development]. You can't take money with you. No, I'd rather have my grandchildren and my great-grandchildren have fresh water and see the deer and the birds and enjoy life the way that it's supposed to be. (Sherry Anne Roseborough, Baakaandibewiziibing Ojibway Nation, 2021)*

## Consider how Resource Revenue Sharing impacts community relationships

The division of revenue from resource projects was raised by some staff as a potential gap, as money seeded divisions between communities.



One interviewee suggested that revenue should be shared equally among all GCT#3 communities.

***It's important to understand how Manito Aki Inakonigaawin works. It is important [for projects we are working on] because the practice of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin is about ensuring that the communities most impacted by a proponent or an industry are the ones that should benefit the most ... but we also recognize that all of the communities should benefit in some form or another. So, any work that I do, I bring that perspective forward [Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the governance practices]. Each one of these communities is having discussions in their own community about how it works. They may ask themselves, "how much do we let the other communities benefit?" (Michelle Shephard, GCT#3, 2020)***

Further to this pathway forward regarding resource revenues, one interviewee noted that resource sharing may soon become normalised in Treaty #3.

***I think that we're finally getting to the point where we can stand up and start to demand our rights [reference to the***

***Treaty rights and revenue sharing] and that all the projects in the area would be shared with the first nation. (Earl Klyne, 2021)***

In focus groups and interviews, "Resource Revenue Sharing" was described as participating in resource development, as well as taking responsibility in mitigating the impacts of such development, including shared responsibility with the proponent and other regulatory approval bodies, . One such example was flood mitigation from damming.

***It is a lot of money that has been taken out. In our community, we're not saying we want a free ride or a piece of the action or anything like that - we just want to be active participants in our own developments. That's what you really want. Not looking for a corporate well-fare state or anything like that. (Anonymous, Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation, 2021)***

***That's one area [South of Northwest Angle] because that affects water. I think dams, it's all about money. In some of the areas of the negotiations it's like we talk about the impact, how a dam somewhere impacts us, but the government says unless its right here it won't recognize the***



*impacts. All the water systems are connected. They'll say oh it didn't affect this part, or this wasn't caused by the dams etc., so there's not that recognition or admission to what they do to us because it's all about money ... They won't recognize that we have land with shoal lake, and that was flooded. (Anonymous, Animakee Wa Zhing 33 First Nation, 2021)*

A survey participant also noted that the revenue sharing process needed to be clear and transparent.

## Respect Anishinaabe ways of caring for the land

Survey participants and knowledge holders provided the following direction on ensuring that Anishinaabe ways of caring for the land are respected:

- Include in all natural resource and land use agreements a description of how Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration work;
- Base decisions and communications in Manito Aki Inakonigaawin; and
- Incorporate ceremony in decision making.

*When you talk about industry or different forms of development, such as mining or other proponent resource development, it's not so much as we are opposing resource extractions from our ancestral lands, but we need to be very careful how it proceeds. Particularly in the natural environment. The Anishinaabe people, we know how to do that, to give ceremony. We have one God, the Creator. That's our belief. That's part of our spirituality. We are not a religion, we are a spiritual people. Anything that is done on this land has to be in reference to Manito Aki Inakonigaawin as the resource law. I think it's important you give back what you take from the Creator through spiritual and traditional ceremonies. It's different for many other scenarios in which I think the general public is starting to understand general processes and how they evolve. (George Kakeway, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

*I myself have had experience working with MAI as a business owner. We wrote a proposal to relocate bears ... And we could base a business on that because I grew up trapping, hunting, fishing, gathering ...So under the MAI we applied, we used the MAI as a reference tool, as a support for our business, and in saying that we wanted to manage this resource.*



***And that one summer that we had this business, we relocated some 32 bears. And people paid for it ... We did our own education, but we all did it in the spirit, my husband and I, we did it in the spirit of MAI. We're Anishinaabe, and we're taking care of the land. (Naashki Binezek, Lac Seul First Nation, 2021)***

Knowledge holders also discussed how Anishinaabe ways of caring for the land may include natural resource managers such as biologists upholding the Nibi Declaration in everyday professional life.

***So we do things in a good way. And I think the more advanced we get, the more education that our youth pursue, nothing wrong with becoming a biologist. You know what a biologist is? Somebody that does water ceremony to the power of one million. That's basically it. You're studying life. So, all our water carriers out there, they should be aware that there's things we can do to further this. So, I think that's so important that MAI provides those opportunities. And I think it's important that we promote those careers. (Naashki Binezek, Lac Seul First Nation, 2021)***

## Other

Survey participants, staff, and knowledge holders also brought up the following points and suggestions regarding economic pathways forward for Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration:

- Respecting Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration by not commodifying them.
- Funding for implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration could come from Treaty #3 governments,
- Provide incentives learning Anishinaabemowin and traditional ways of living.
- Funding could be provided to communities to host workshops and webinars.

***Well, somehow, we got to get industry online to minimize their impact they're having on nature, and it can be done in a good way, but, to them, it'll mean the loss of profits ... and loss of control. They have to give half the control back to the First Nations people so that we set the boundaries on what can be [done]. (Earl Klyne, Couchiching First Nation, 2021)***



*"Environmental assessments and impact assessments - they both have, they both have different acts that the proponent has to satisfy before they can move forward. And that's where we come in. Again, we have our own mitigation processes that we need to do, and that still ceremony shake tent, sweat lodges, and meeting. We consult with the spirits that reside in that given area. Do we take part, or do we consent and provide permission to these people to do that? Or can you, can you move to a different site so that we don't disturb you? So, we don't harm you in any way or asking them, you know what I mean? And that sorrow, that's our environmental assessment process. We have our own ways."*

*(Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh, 2021)*

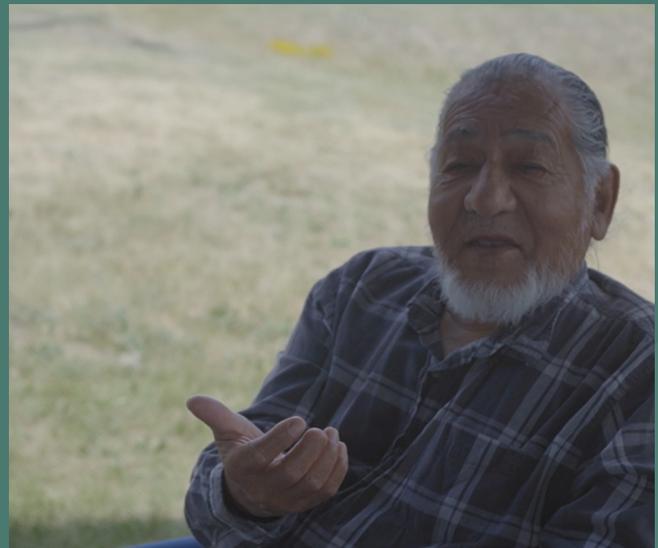
# Further Insight and Wisdom

This section includes quotes from knowledge holders that the Project Team struggled to fit into the structure they had created for this report. However, these statements carried wisdom, teachings, and insight that the Project Team felt important to retain. The following quotes are not organized in any particular order.



*I know that when we danced that how hard you hit the ground with your feet and how our moccasins touched the ground ... And when I danced, the elder asked me, said "How many moccasins have you gone through?" ... Shouldn't have been a month and a half, about 20 moccasins I've gone through. I'm a good dancer!" ... She goes*

*"That's how kind of a person I am. You have to learn to be proud of your culture" I hadn't realized that. And that was a simple lesson by moccasins. (Albert Jamieson, Niisaachewan Anishinaabe Nation, 2021)*



*here are four directions what they call, I guess you heard about that. That's the wind, north, south, east, west. And within those four areas, a great animal is sitting there because this is part of the life. East, is the white wolf, the great white wolf. And what we say in the sweat lodge is that we talk to this great white wolf that comes from the east, where the sun rises.*

*white wolf that comes from the east, where the sun rises. We're asking that you were put there to see where you can help us. If we listen to you and we listen to what's being said to us, because you've got ears and you can hear what's going on. You hear, and you listen, and that's how you hunt what you're after. Is it possible that you can give your hearing to our children, ourselves? The hearing that God gave you or Manito gave you, then Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. And that's what we talk about when children come in the sweat. And the south is the great white eagle. He flies around and his eyes are really good. He can see what's good and he can see what's bad. And that's what we say in there too. Can you give those good things you see with your good eyesight to our children? West, it's a white buffalo, is what we call it. We ask him to give what God gave him to give to our children too. So, to be strong with your legs, because look at the vast land that he was given to patrol and run, and he became strong out of that. And that's what we were asking for the great spirits to give to our children and give to us that are turning weak. To have the strength to understand these things. Up north, they call the great white bear. And everybody thinks it's a polar bear, but there's a lot of bears out there. We got Kodiaks, they got grizzlies, they got black bears, we got the Chinese bears and stuff like that. But all these bears hold some incredible strength. And that's what we ask the spirits. Is it possible that you can give the strength to our children, so they can take care of whatever is befalling them or something like that? (Tommy Keesick, Asubpeeschoseewagong First Nation, 2021)*



*There's a story about this person who was given to the authority to find out why the grass was made. So, he changed himself and he had the ability to change himself into grass, just to find out why it was placed there. Land, water, stone, the trees, and stuff like that. He was able to change himself into a human being to find out why things weren't working so good for humans. And he found a lot of things. (Tommy Keesick, Asubpeeschoseewagong First Nation, 2021)*

*We need to have our own lawyers, I mentioned that on what I thought was best. We need to have our own doctors board or health board. We need to have our school board. We need to have our also manpower board, or whatever you can call it where we can... We know what kind of education that our children need. (Tommy Keesick, Asubpeeschoseewagong First Nation, 2021)*

*We have our own children, who're selling themselves ... My mom, when she was alive, she says ... "when I was in school, the man in black, she says just a priest ... he did something to me that I will never forget. I was so ashamed of myself, I wanted to kill myself, she said.*

*ut I didn't know this would happen, when I'm an old person, I'd get paid for what I did in school. It's like, I offered my sex to the priest. Now later, here's your payment to do that ... I live in Winnipeg. I see young girls selling themselves." She said the residential school reminded me of that. (Tommy Keesick, Asubpeeschoseewagong First Nation, 2021)*



*Our children, as much as 14 years old, doing that [referring to girls selling themselves]. There's needles being [inaudible] on all the streets, places where they talk, and visit each other ... The things that they had to do in order to meet with everyday life. They had to do things that're not really worth doing, but they needed money. They weren't getting jobs because they don't have the education. (Tommy Keesick, Asubpeeschoseewagong First Nation, 2021)*



*In my environment of being in court, we've gotten to a habit of calling people numbers. So, if you're coming to court and I see a lot of young people, a lot of young people, a lot of youth, it's very, very heavy. You know, you might be number five to seven on the docket. They just literally call you like that. Like just... [...] I've been doing that for seven*

*years, seven years of not feeling right. So, I've gone through some stuff I had to go through to get to this point of knowing how I need to operate. And you know, you might be lines 150 to 178 and follow it, like just so degrading. And so yesterday I knew what I had now that I have this awareness. I knew what I had to do in the environments I was in and change that. And that narrative, so started with just saying miigwetch after the person. And then there's like, yes, miigwetch. (Janine Seymour, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

*But not just the two laws. I mean actually more bigger work in those processes. Cause like I said, I think we're mixing a lot. In our bloodlines is mixed and our lang... We're not going to; it'd be just pure bred Anishinaabe. It's going to look different. And frankly, I don't know how willing people are to start separating out your family. Yeah, that's not what the elders, I don't think had in mind, but you guys can go find that out and you could tell me. Okay, you'll help me on my journey. Tell me what it's supposed to look like. But we're mixing right now. (Janine Seymour, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

*Say someone is complaining, and for the most part people in communities they don't go to the police or any authorities because*

*of their past history. The police were there, and we would call them \*Ojibwe word\* - it means 'the people that come and grab.' So, there's the long history of authority and the police. So, there's not that trust. There really isn't that trust or that comfort that they're there to protect you. We don't have that same thoughts about police because they weren't really there to protect Anishinaabe people. That was not our history. So, we carry that even to treat 3 police because they are enforcing provincial laws. (Anonymous, Animakee Wa Zhing 33 First Nation, 2021)*

*I first suffered [from the fasting] was the food. I was getting hungry, and my stomach was just getting sore. And water, I felt like jumping into that lake, I said, but I had to do it, fear. But I was told to sleep. So that's what I tried doing, sleep. But I did it, those four years, but I won't get into details, what I did get from that. But that's what I say when you got to be strong. (Nay-no-ka-si of Obashkaandagaang First Nation)*

*I think it [both truth and reconciliation] could be done at the same time. Because when people are exposed to a problem, they automatically have two reactions, right? Like, if they're threatened, say your livelihood is threatened, or if you feel your family is threatened or anything, that's*

*either fight or flight. You'll be defensive or you'll shy away. So, I think that by having that double component, it'll actually make you scared, but it will actually bring you back to be like, "Okay, well, we can actually deal with this then. Okay." So, there's: here's a problem, but here's a solution. (Craig Lavand, Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, 2021)*

*Yeah, because our children, they're in two worlds and it's hard how devastating it is. You're either white, you're either brown. What should I be? There was a time, too, that I didn't want to be anything. I hated to be a Native. I see my people on the street today, they're all drunk and making fools of themselves. (Irwin Loon, Asubpeeschoseewagong First Nation, 2021)*

*My grandma used to tell me she could turn herself into a raven. So, she told me to, she was always watching me. And after I did my first sweat that had a big raven come land on my yard and come right up to me. And so, I knew it was my grandma. (Sherry Anne Roseborough, Baakaandibewiziibing Ojibway Nation, 2021)*





# Appendix A: Staff Interview Guide



# Appendix A: Staff Interview Guide

## Interview Guide for the Grand Council Treaty #3 Nation Rebuilding: Implementation of MAI & Nibi Declaration

### PRE-INTERVIEW

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Before formally beginning the interview, ensure the following steps have been completed:

#### 1. Introductions

- Introduce yourself and the research team, who you work for, who you were hired by and who you report to.

#### 2. Give the participant an overview of the project, Explain the interview process and goals of the research.

- Provide the participant with the project summary and/or describe it verbally.
  - Pathways forward for implementation of MAI and Nibi declaration, what are the gaps and opportunities
  - Interviewing GCT3 staff, a survey for communities, then up to 45 knowledge holders
  - Not coming with predetermined outcomes, very much directed by what people say is important.
- Acknowledge we are working with MAI and Nibi, and these are sacred laws. Would you feel more comfortable if we began with a prayer?

#### 3. Provide an opportunity for the participant to ask questions

- Providing accurate answers to participants' questions is an important aspect of free, prior and informed consent.
- Questions that you cannot answer should be directed to the community coordinator or project manager as appropriate.

#### 4. Consent

- Can stop at any time.
- We make responses anonymous when we write up the results. If we have a specific quote of your we want to use, we will check with you first, to make sure we have it right.
- We would like to record the interview, is that OK?
- Recordings will be held by GCT3, but any use of recordings will also require your permission again.
- Once the participant's questions have been answered, ask them if they give their consent

#### 5. Provide participant with honorarium or tobacco where appropriate

1



## INTRODUCTION \_\_\_\_\_

*[Complete the interview checklist and pre-interview section, above, then read the text below with AUDIO & VIDEO RECORDERS ON at the start of each interview.]*

**Note that not all the questions below should be asked in each interview – rather, the interviewer should use these as suggestions help the interviewee delve deeper.**

Today is [date]. We are interviewing [participant name] for the Grand Council Treaty #3 Nation Rebuilding: Implementation of MAI and Nibi. Thank you for coming.

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. Personal Information

- How long have you been working for the Grand Council?
  
- What is your current role with the Grand Council?

### 2. Understanding and use MAI and Nibi

- What does MAI mean to you?
  
- What does Nibi mean to you?
  
- What does the Nibi Declaration mean to you?
  - What do you feel is the cultural importance or significance of MAI and Nibi?
  
  - How is MAI and Nibi important within your role at the Grand Council?
  
- How did you learn about MAI and Nibi?
  
- How would you describe your knowledge of MAI and Nibi?

### 3. Implementation of MAI and Nibi

*i.e., what practices (clan systems, ancestral and sacred laws, teachings, and protocols), tools, and mechanisms have been used by GCT3 and communities to uphold and respect these laws*

- What practices, protocols, or tools are in place to implement MAI and the

2



#### Nibi Declaration?

- What are the traditional ways to implement MAI and Nibi (i.e. ancestral clan systems, teachings, sacred laws)?
    - Outside of traditional ways of implementation, how are they being implemented in the day-to-day work of GCT3?
    - What do you like / dislike about the implementation of MAI and Nibi at GCT3?
  - What could be done to improve implementation of MAI and Nibi? *i.e. at the community level, in policies, in decision-making process.*
  - What has worked well to make sure MAI and the Nibi Declaration are respected?
- 4. Identifying gaps** - (Probes: gaps in relationships with proponents, within community governance and land use decisions (i.e., community decisions about own lands), within negotiations, within GCT3)
- **What challenges exist when trying to uphold MAI and the Nibi Declaration?**
    - **What are the key factors contributing to these challenges?**
  - What challenges do you see when creating policies related to MAI and Nibi?
  - **What decision-making processes could support MAI and Nibi?**
  - What gaps in implementation of MAI and Nibi do you see at the community level?
  - What gaps in implementation of MAI and Nibi do you see at the GCT3 level?
  - Are there projects, protocols, tools, or mechanisms that GCT3 has tried to develop that haven't been successful? Why did these fail?
- 5. Describing current capacity**
- **How would you describe the current capacity at Grand Council to implement NiBi and MAI?**



- **What do communities need to be successful when implementing MAI? What are they missing?**
    - **What do you think are the key factors contributing to these successes?**
  - How does financial capacity influence GCT3 and community work on MAI and the Nibi Declaration?
  - Beyond staffing and finance, what resources are available for GCT3 to implement MAI and the NiBi declaration?
- 6. Skills and knowledge needed for better MAI and Nibi implementation**
- **What are the key skills and knowledge needed to work with MAI and the Nibi declaration?**
  - Overall, how would you describe the Grand Council staff skills and knowledge of MAI and the Nibi declaration?
    - is there a common understanding across staff and different departments on how to implement MAI and the Nibi?
    - Is there enough staff devoted to implementation?
  - Are these available within GCT3?
- 7. Improving MAI and Nibi implementation and measuring success**
- What are some changes you would like to see with the future implementation of MAI and Nibi?
  - If MAI and NiBi were successfully implemented, what would that look like? What would you need to see to say "we're doing this right?"
- 8. Optional Questions** *(ask these if there is time & energy to keep going)*
- How did the Interim Regulation MAI 2010-01 influence the implementation of MAI? (i.e. timelines, delegating consultation, etc.)
  - How were MAI and laws and teachings related to Nibi implemented prior to MAI revitalization (1997)? (i.e., *practices, protocols, tools, and mechanisms used to uphold and respect these laws*)
  - Did reaffirming MAI into a written law (1997) change the way MAI is implemented?



- Have you developed partnerships outside of the organization to support your work with MAI and the Nibi Declaration?
- What did you learn from these partnerships or collaboration?

**9. Other topics**

- Is there anything else we should know?



# Appendix B: Community Survey



# Appendix B: Community Survey



## Pathways Forward: Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi Community Survey Description of the survey

Boozhoo!

Welcome to our survey about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin (MAI) and the Nibi (Water) Declaration. The Territorial Planning Unit of Grand Council Treaty #3 (GCT#3) would like to learn how the Anishinaabe Nation of Treaty #3 and GCT#3 can support Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration as they guide us with our decisions, as well as our responsibilities with land and water.

As part of this project, we will be interviewing knowledge holders about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration, then we will share the information back to the Nation. When working with Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and nibi, it's important to follow protocol. In order to ensure we are going ahead with this work in the right way, we have offered tobacco, smudged, said a prayer, taken the project to ceremony, and sang a song to honor MAI and Nibi. Miigwetch for sharing your input.

This survey is open to all Treaty #3 members and will take 5-10 minutes. All responses shared in the survey will remain anonymous and will be held in confidence by the Territorial Planning Unit of GCT#3. All survey respondents can enter into a raffle, with three winners each receiving one of the the following prizes:

- Apple Watch series 6 (GPS) 44mm
- JBL Charge 4 Waterproof Bluetooth wireless speaker
- Master chef 5 burner propane BBQ plus BBQ gear/tools

\* 1. Do you agree to participate in this survey?

Yes

No

Suggested question: ☑ ☒

1





## Pathways Forward: Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi Community Survey Background Information Questions

2. Please select all the roles that currently apply to you.

- I am a member of a Treaty #3 community
- I am a chief or councillor of a Treaty #3 community
- I am a staff member in a Treaty #3 community
- I am a staff member of a Tribal Council in Treaty #3
- I am a GCT#3 staff member
- I participate on a GCT #3 Advisory Council

3. What Treaty #3 community are you a member of?

4. What is your age?

- Under 20
- 21-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- 61-70
- 71-80
- Over 80



5. Please indicate how much you have heard or learned about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin.

0 4

6. Please indicate how much you have heard or learned about the Nibi Declaration.

0 4

Suggested question:  





## Pathways Forward: Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi Community Survey Respecting and Upholding Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration

Please read the following information about MAI and the Nibi Declaration before answering the next survey questions.

### **What is Manito Aki Inakonigaawin?**

Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, The Great Earth law is a gift from Creator to Anishinaabe Nation of Treaty #3. Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, since time immemorial has been the law of the Nation and provided guidance in decision making in relation to the environment. The written form of the law was shared by our Elders in Treaty#3 in 1997.

Manito Aki Inakonigaawin is written within and throughout nature- its spirit is within all living things on earth- from you, to the trees, to the animals to the air that we breathe. It is the natural law that governs the natural cycles of life. Manito Aki Inakonigaawin has its own spirit, as it itself is also living.

### **What is the Nibi Declaration of Treaty #3**

The Nibi Declaration is about respect, love, and our sacred relationship with nibi and the life that it brings. It is based on Gitizii m-inaanik teachings about nibi, aki/lands, other elements (including air and wind) and all of creation. This knowledge will be preserved and shared through the declaration with our youth and future generations. Anishinaabe-Ikwewag (women) have a sacred responsibility to nibi and should be included in all decision-making around nibi. This declaration will guide us in our relationship with nibi so we can take action individually, in our communities and as a nation to help ensure healthy, living nibi for all of creation.

Suggested question: ☺ ☹



## Pathways Forward: Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi Community Survey Pathways Forward for Individual

The next three sections ask you to consider how GCT#3 can support you, your community and the Nation to respect and uphold Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. When we say “respect and uphold” we mean that Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration guide our decisions in Anishinaabe governance and serve to the protection of our lands and water.

7. From the following list, please pick the three most important things you think would help **you** respect and uphold Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration in your life.

- Talking with and learning from Elders and knowledge holders
- Having more opportunities to learn and/or speak Anishinaabemowin
- Having more opportunities to be on the land learning
- Having access to written material, like documents and pamphlets, to help me learn about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration
- Having access to online material and discussion forums about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration

8. Is there anything else **you** need to respect and uphold Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration in your life? Please tell us!

Suggested question: ☺ ☹

## Pathways Forward: Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi Community Survey Pathway Forward for your Community

9. From the following list, please pick the three most important things that would support **your community** to respect and uphold Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.

- Traditional Anishinaabe governance customs within communities (e.g., clan systems, traditional elections, etc.)
- Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi gatherings and ceremonies
- Resources to work with Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration (eg. staff, learning tools, etc)
- Community laws and policies in relation to Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration
- Advisory councils or groups that provide guidance on Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration

10. Is there anything else **your community** government needs to respect and uphold Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration? Please tell us!

Suggested question: ☑ ☒

## Pathways Forward: Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi Community Survey Pathways Forward for the Nation

11. From the following list, pick the three most important ways that **GCT#3** can support the Anishinaabe Nation of Treaty #3 to respect and uphold Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.

- Review the Nation's policies, procedures, and practices in relation to Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration
- Anishinaabe Nation of Treaty #3-wide entity that administers Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration
- Curriculum for K-12 students to learn about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration
- Support for the Nation in development of law making and policies in relation to Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration
- Resources (like staff, funding or supplies) for Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi Declaration ceremonies and gatherings across Treaty #3 territory
- Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi Declaration dedicated staff within Treaty # 3
- GCT#3/Elder led MAI and Nibi workshops

12. Is there anything else **GCT#3** should provide to support the Nation respect and uphold Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration? Please tell us!

Suggested question: ☺ ⊗



## Pathways Forward: Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi Community Survey Vision and Next Steps

13. What is your vision of the Nation in 20 years if all decisions about land and resources within Treaty #3 territory were based on Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration?

14. More to share? Please write it here.

15. May we use your written comments in GCT3 reports and documents supporting Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration? All responses will remain anonymous.

Yes

No

Suggested question: ☺ ☹

8





**Pathways Forward:  
Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi Community Survey  
Miigwetch/Thank you for your participation!**

[Please click here](#) to enter the **raffle for participation prizes** or if you are **interested in participating in interviews or focus groups** about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration. All survey respondents can enter into a raffle, with three winners each receiving one of the the following prizes:

- Apple Watch series 6 (GPS) 44mm
- JBL Charge 4 Waterproof Bluetooth wireless speaker
- Master chef 5 burner propane BBQ plus bbq gear/tools

If you have any question about this survey or Manito Inakonigaawin and Nibi Declaration work ongoing at GCT#3, please contact:

Hailey Krolyk,  
Outreach Coordinator  
Territorial Planning Unit  
Grand Council Treaty #3  
hailey.krolyk@treaty3.ca  
807-464-0713



# Appendix C: Community Survey Results



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## PARTICIPANT OVERVIEW

A total of 154 participants completed the survey. Most survey respondents (139) identified themselves as members of a Treaty 3 community, shown in Figure 1. Fifteen non-community members participated in the survey and identified their roles as staff members in a Treaty #3 community or staff members of GCT#3. Participants were able to select multiple roles to reflect their roles in GCT#3 and the community.

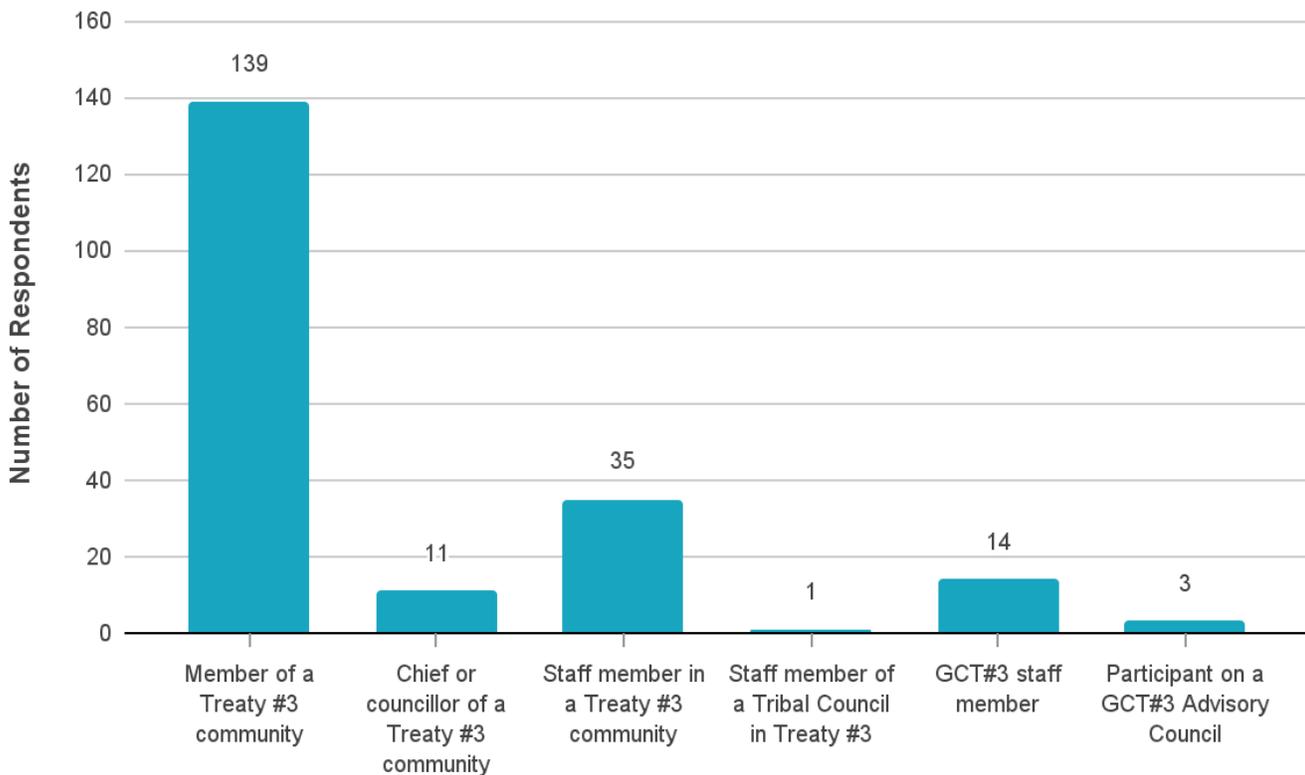


Figure 1. Community and GCT#3 roles of survey participants. Participants were able to select multiple roles to reflect their work and participation in GCT#3 and their community.



Participation in the survey was spread among Treaty #3 communities, as shown in Figure 2. Couchiching First Nation and Niisaachewan Anishinaabe Nation had the most participants, with 18 and 15 participants respectively. Only two nations

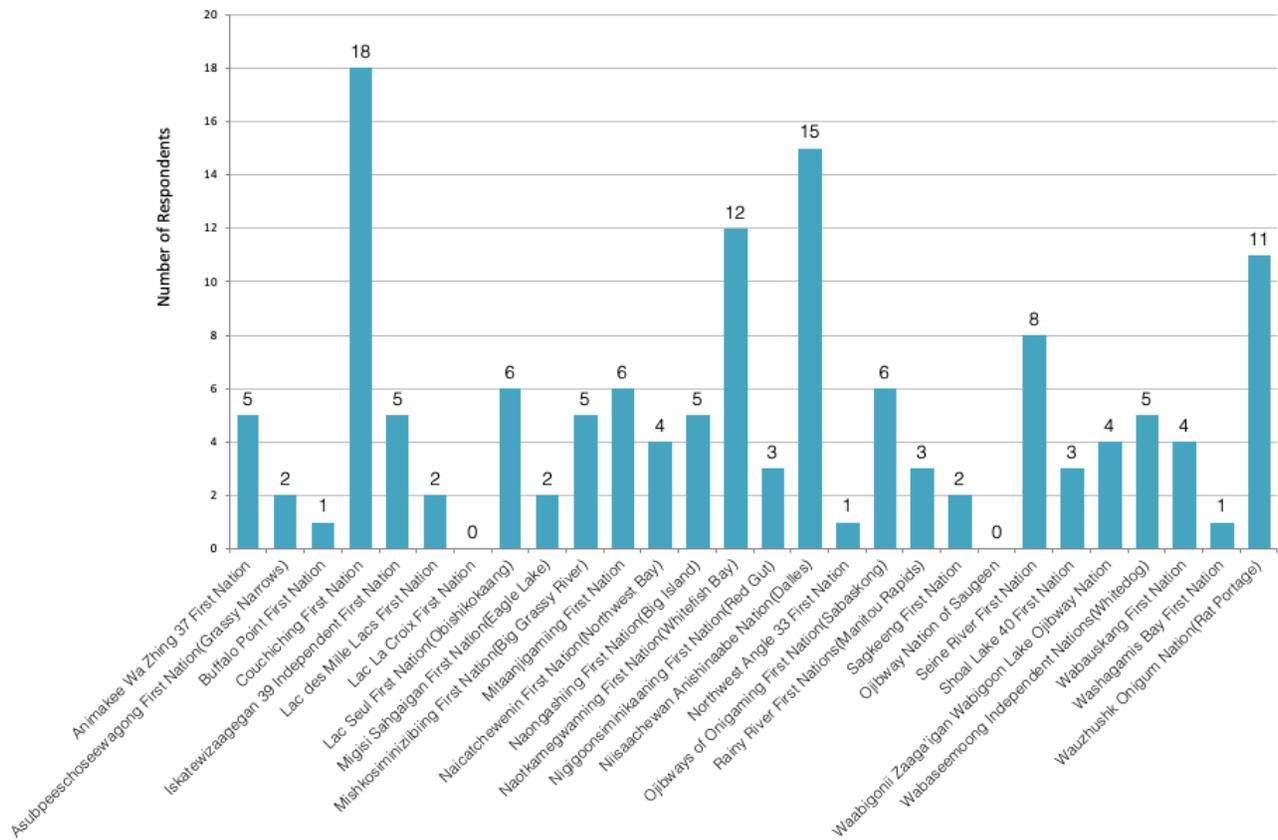


Figure 2. Community membership of survey participants. 15 participants did not identify a community.



Figure 3, below, shows the age range of survey participants. Most survey participants were between the ages of 21 and 70. There was one participant over 71 years old, and 9 participants under the age of 20.

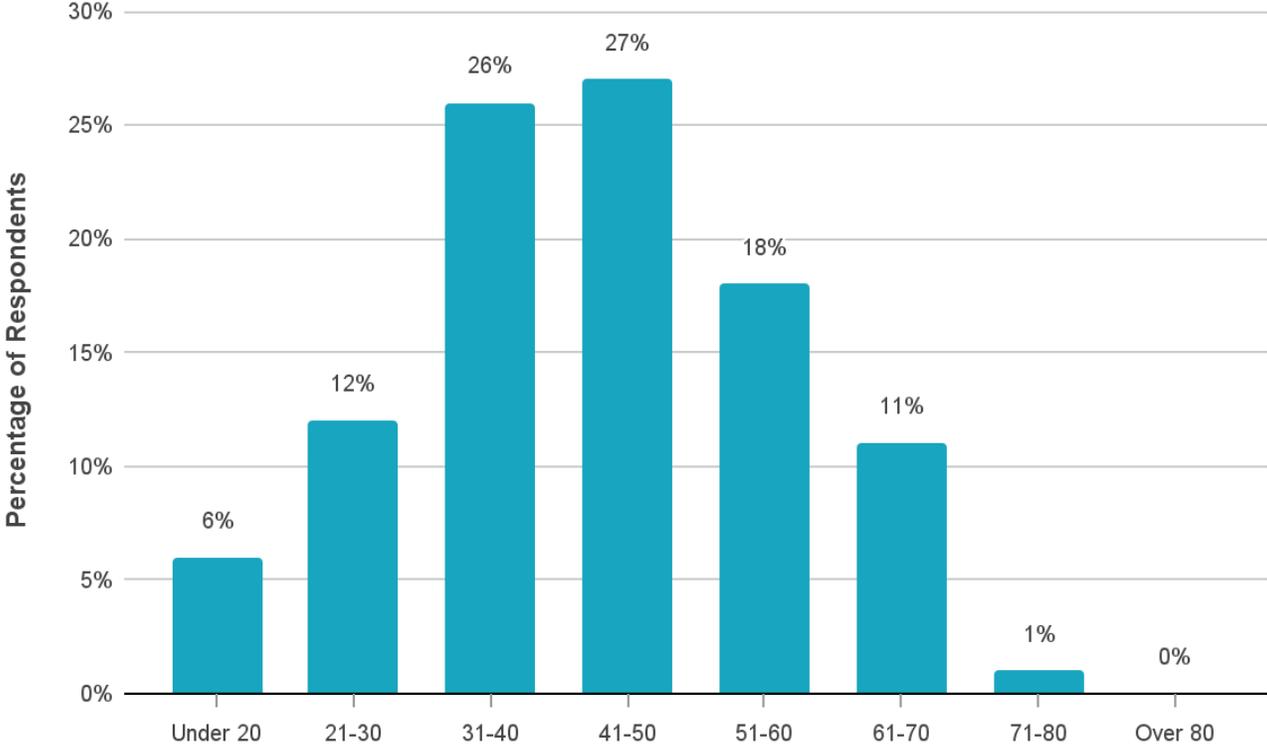


Figure 3. Age range of survey participants



## KNOWLEDGE OF MANITO AKI INAKONIGAAWIN AND THE NIBI DECLARATION

Survey participants were asked to identify how much they had heard or learned about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin on a scale of 0-4. As shown in Figure 4, participants were fairly evenly divided in their self-assessment with the exception that only 11% of participants reporting that they had heard “0” about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin.

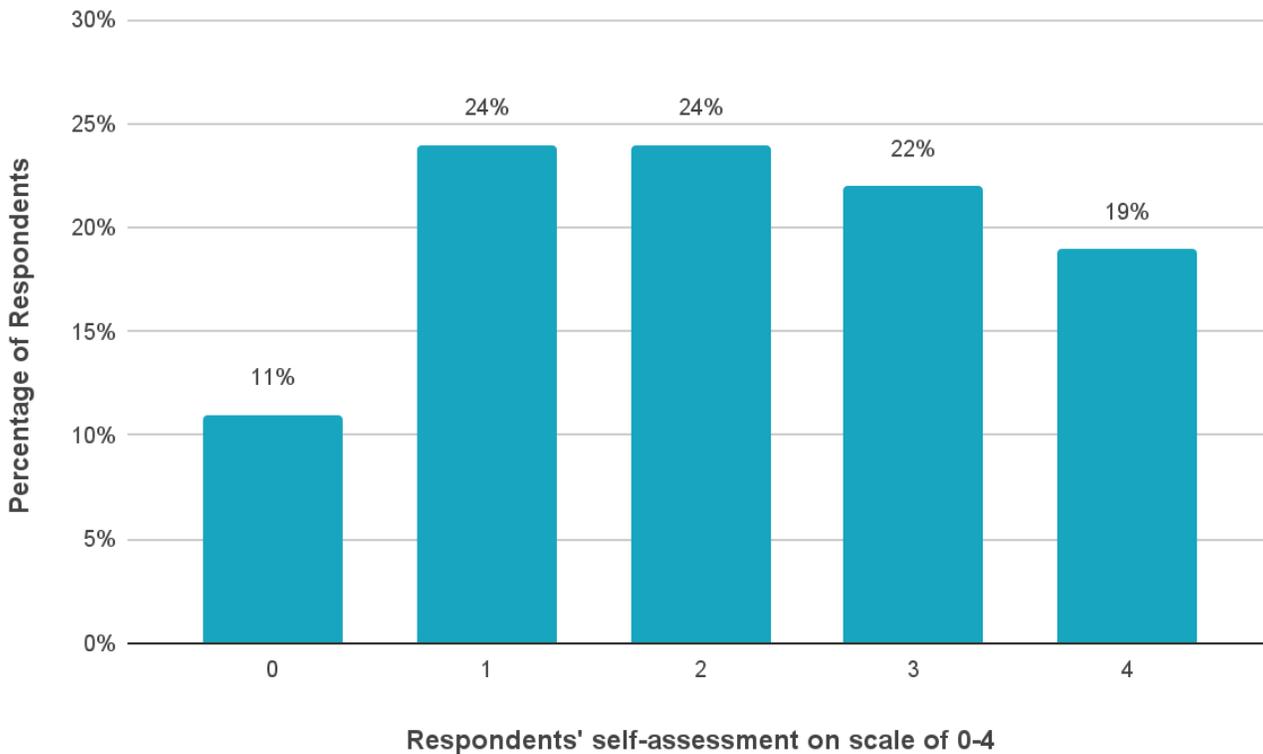


Figure 4. Participants self-assessment of how much they have heard or learned about Manito Aki Inakonigaawin.



Interestingly, slightly more participants reported learning, or having heard, about the Nibi Declaration than Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, however, slightly few participants rated their knowledge of the Nibi Declaration at a 3 or 4.

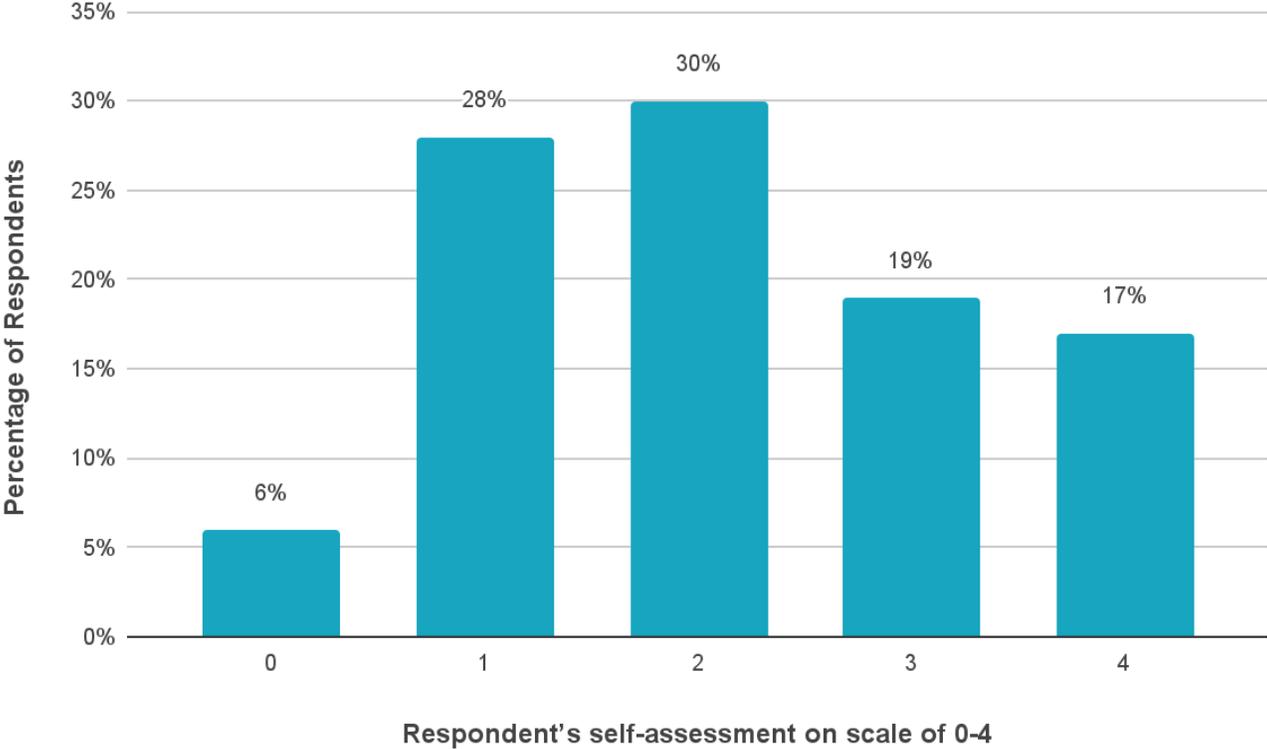


Figure 5. Participants self-assessment of how much they have heard or learned about the Nibi Declaration



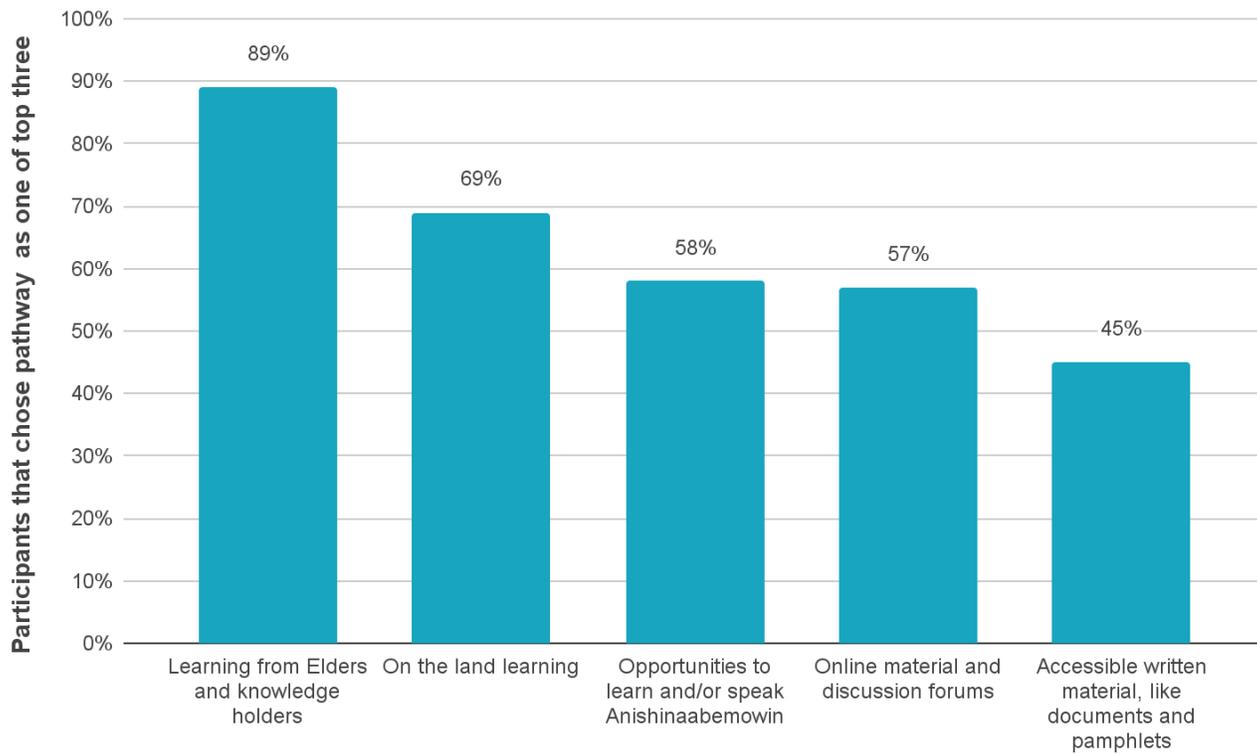


Figure 6. Survey Participants' ranking of Pathways Forward that would help them respect and uphold Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration in their life.



Survey participants' ranking of Pathways Forward that can be implemented at the community level was similarly widespread, with half or more of participants identifying each pathway as important. Gatherings and ceremonies, however, were seen as particularly important, with 76% of survey including this pathway in their top three, as shown in Figure 7.

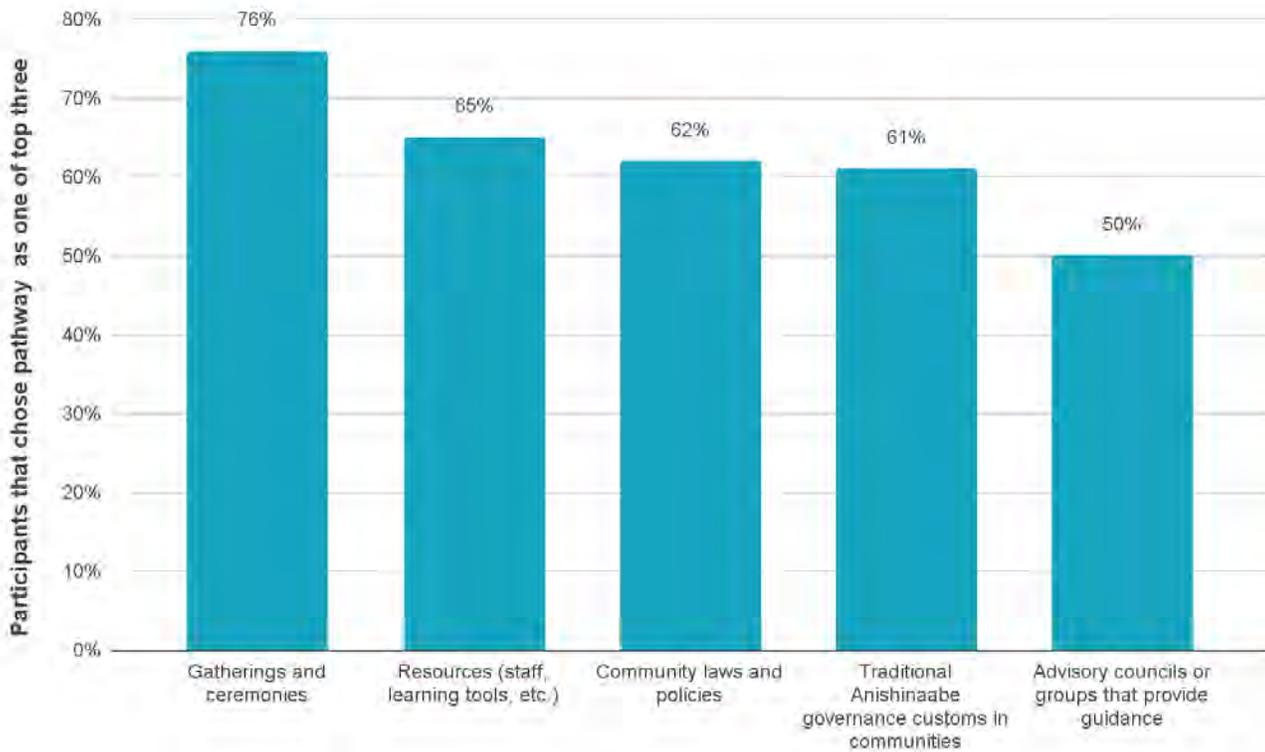


Figure 7. Survey Participants' ranking of Pathways Forward that would support their community to respect and uphold Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.



Finally, survey participants identified priorities for how GCT#3 can support the Anishinaabe Nation of Treaty #3 to respect and uphold Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. Curriculum for K-12 students was identified by 80% of respondents as one of their top-three priorities. Resources for ceremonies and gatherings were also identified as particularly important, along with GCT#3 or Elder led workshops. Policy and law-making work were also seen as highly important by just under half of all survey participants.

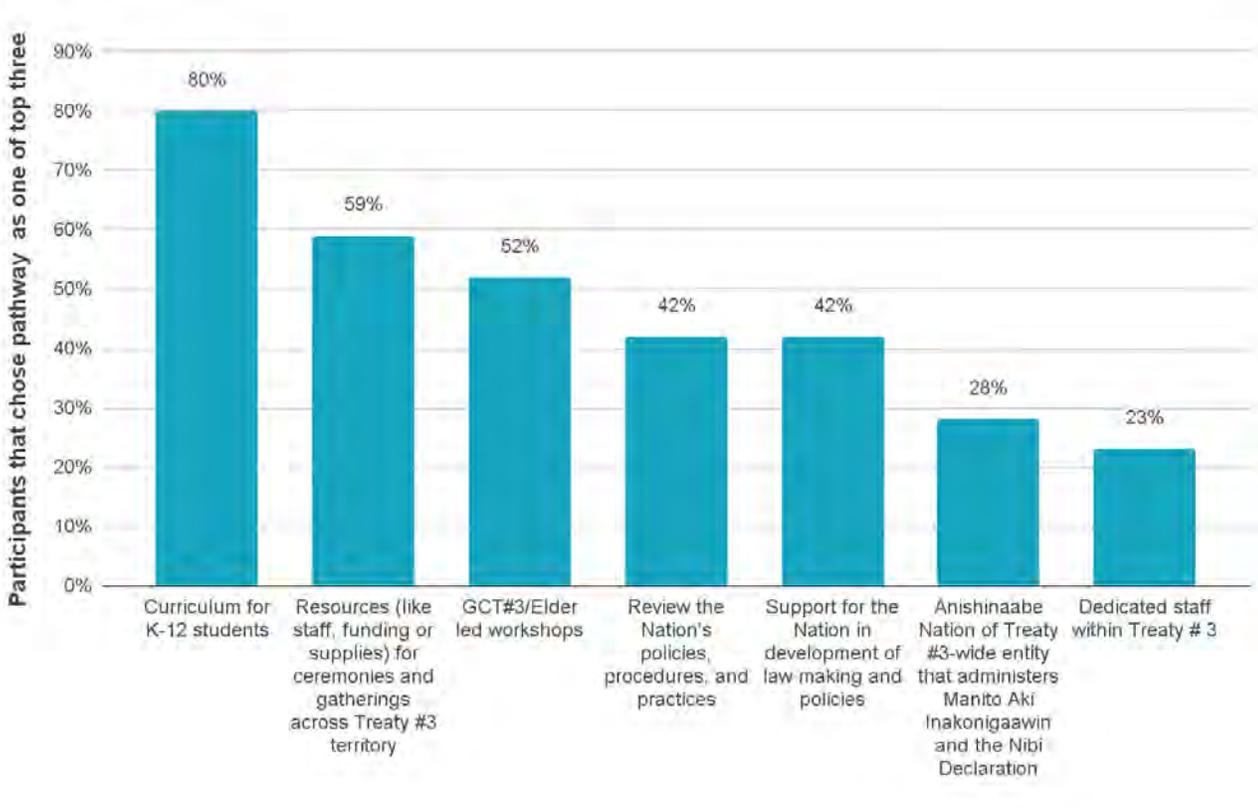


Figure 8. Survey Participants' ranking of Pathways Forward that GCT#3 can support Anishinaabe Nation of Treaty #3 to respect and uphold Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.

In summary, among all three levels of implementation, survey respondents showed a preference for the following kinds of actions:

- more ceremonies and gatherings, and resources for ceremonies and gatherings;
- learning from Elders, both personally and in workshops;
- spending time on the land; and
- curriculum for K-12 students.



# Appendix D: Knowledge Holder Interview Guide



# Appendix D: Knowledge Holder Interview Guide

## GCT#3 Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi Declaration

### Knowledge Holders Interview Guide

Conducted by: GCT#3 and The Firelight Group

Date:

Participant:

Interviewer(s):

1. Offer participant tobacco
2. Ask the participant if they would like to start with an opening prayer.
3. Introduce yourself and the team, who you work for, who hired you, who you report to.
4. Give the participant a verbal overview of the project.

#### **PROJECT OVERVIEW**

The Territorial Planning Unit is working with the Firelight Group to understand the strengths, priorities, and gaps relating to the implementation of Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi declaration. This work is designed to identify and prioritize pathways forward for Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration.

A ceremony signified the beginning of this important project as per traditional Anishinaabe protocol. We began by reviewing documents and interviewing Grand Council Treaty #3 staff. From there, we developed a list of potential next steps for the Nibi Declaration and Manito Aki Inakonigaawin. Next, a survey was created to gather feedback and to prioritize these next steps. Now we are reaching out to knowledge keepers and elders to develop further a knowledge base and a deeper understanding of how Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and the Nibi Declaration can work within Grand Council and Treaty #3 communities inward and outward-facing perspective. Following these interviews, Firelight and GCT#3 will integrate the findings into a recommendations report presented to leadership.

5. Review the consent form with the participant and have them sign it. If using verbal consent, **make an oral recording of you reading the consent form, including the date, their name, and names of the interviewers, and the participant agrees.** If the participant does not wish to be recorded, we can record consent, turn off the recording, and take notes for the rest of the interview.



**INFORMED CONSENT**

I (name) \_\_\_\_\_, on this day (complete date) \_\_\_\_\_, give permission for Grand Council Treaty #3 to interview me, with the support of The Firelight Group for the Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi Declaration project.

By signing below, I indicate my understanding that:

- a) I consent to have my words and responses recorded in notes and using audio and video recording equipment.
- b) I am free to not respond to questions that may be asked, and I am free to leave the interview whenever I wish.
- c) GCT#3 will maintain intellectual property rights over information and recordings collected through my participation and use the information and recordings, including audio, video, or pictures, in future projects on Anishinaabe laws and land and governance planning.
- d) GCT#3 will ask my descendants or my permission before using my information for purposes not indicated above.

For more information, please contact Hailey Krolyk at [hailey.krolyk@treaty3.ca](mailto:hailey.krolyk@treaty3.ca) 807-464-0713 contact information.

How would you like to be recognized in reports?

I would like my quotes included in reports:	<b>yes</b>	<b>no</b>
I would like my name included beside my direct quotes:	<b>yes,</b>	<b>no</b>
I would like "anonymous" included beside my direct quotes	<b>yes</b>	<b>no</b>
I would like to be acknowledged by name at the end of the report as a contributor:	<b>yes</b>	<b>no</b>

Signature of participant:

\_\_\_\_\_



6. Ask the participant if they have any questions. Providing accurate answers to participants' questions is an essential aspect of free, prior, and informed consent. Questions that you cannot answer should be directed to the community coordinator or project manager as appropriate.

7. Remind the participant that they can pause or stop the interview at any time.

8. Turn on audio recorders if not already on. Readout:

The date,

Who you are interviewing, and

The names of the interviewers.

9. Begin the interview.

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

*Keeping in mind social, cultural, economic and environmental factors:*

1. What does the Nation look like if Manito Aki Inakonigaawin was fully implemented?
2. What do communities look like if Manito Aki Inakonigaawin were fully implemented?
3. What does the Nation look like if the Nibi Declaration were fully implemented?
4. What do communities look like if the Nibi Declaration were fully implemented?
  - How do you see MAI and the Nibi declaration working together?  
What does this look like if MAI and Nibi declaration are working together?
  - Prompts:
    - *SOCIAL: schools? Knowledge transfer?*
    - *ENVIRONMENTAL: governance of lands and waters? Relationship between Treaty #3 and the crown?*
    - *CULTURAL: use of ceremony? Use of language? Trauma to the land?*
    - *ECONOMIC: relationships with proponents? Funding? Resource Revenue Sharing?*
5. With everything we discussed in mind, on a nation, community and individual level what needs to be done now to get us to that vision?
  - *Again, ask for individual, community, and nation suggestions*
  - Prompts:
    - How do you see the Nibi declaration working in a nation level?
    - How do you see the Nibi declaration working in a community level?
    - How do you see the Manito Aki Inakonigaawin working in a community level?
    - In what ways do you see Manito Aki Inakonigaawin working on a nation level?



6. What does the decision making process look like to you?
  - Between communities as a nation
  - What happens when one community says yes to a proponent but the nation says no? Or vice versa, when a nation says yes but a community says no?
    - Consensus models
7. What do communities want to see when someone (a proponent) comes knocking at the door?
8. What pieces of MAI and Nibi cross over? What does that look like?
  - Do you think Nibi Declaration should be law?
  - What does that law-making process look like to you?
9. How do we move forward in that process in a good way?
  - What is needed to further this vision?
  - Do you see any gaps?
  - Prompts:
    - PERSONAL – gaps, individual actions, practices?
    - COMMUNITY – community governance, actions, gaps?
    - GCT3 – governance, support, efforts, gaps?
10. Ask if team members have any follow-up questions
11. Ask if the participant has anything else to add.

## CLOSING

### *Interview Closing*

1. Check in to see how they are doing.
2. Thank the participant for their time. Ask them if they would like to close with a prayer.
3. When finished, state the date, names of participants, and interviewees for the audio recording.
4. Turn off the recorders and thank the participant for their time.
5. Make sure you leave your contact information.



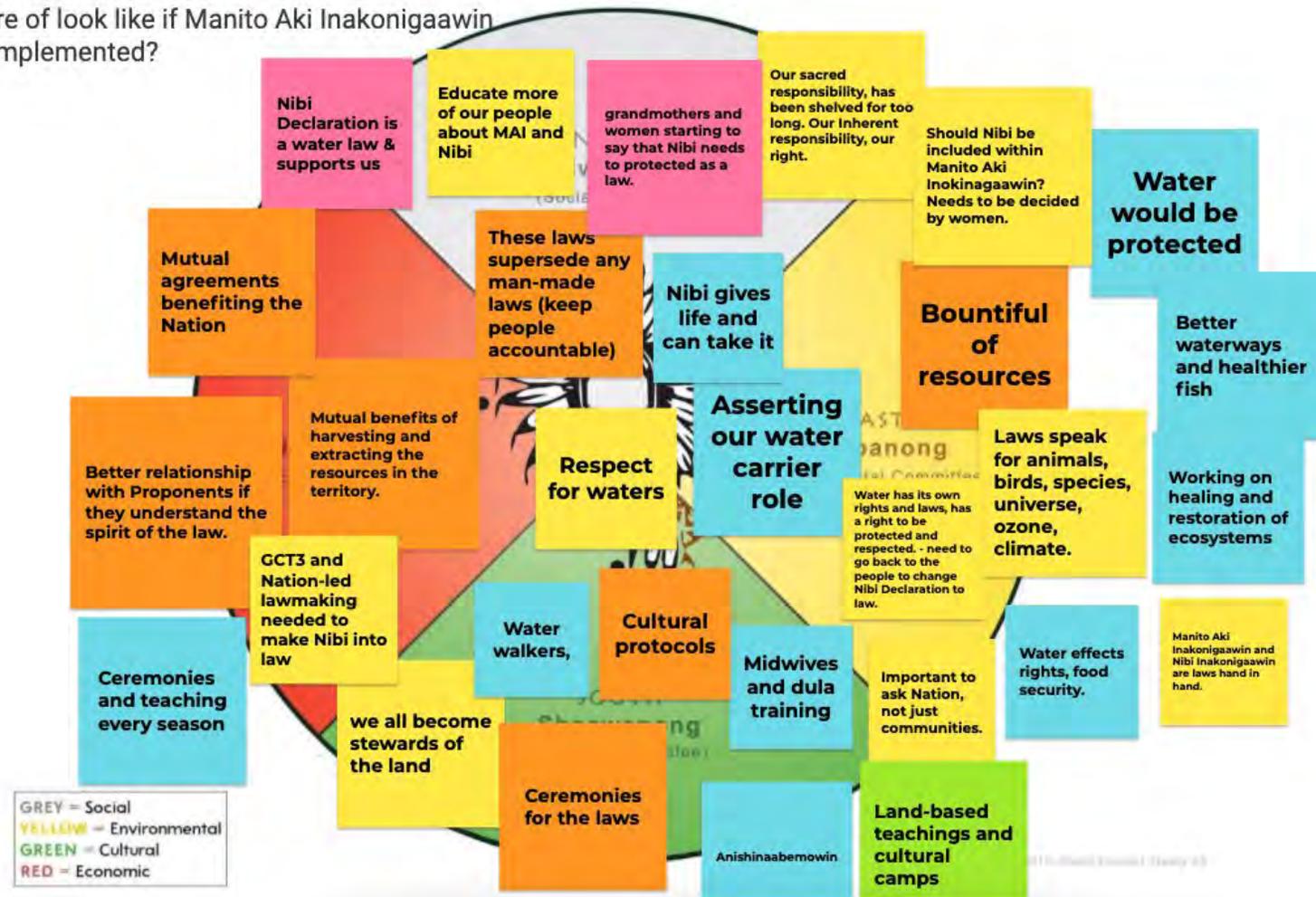
# Appendix E: Women's Council Focus Group Jamboards



# Appendix E: Women's Council Focus group Jamboards

## Visioning

What would the future look like if Manito Aki Inakonigaawin and Nibi were fully implemented?



# Pathways Forward

What needs to be done now or in the near future to get us to the vision you outlined?

## Nation Level



## Community Level



Orange- social  
 Pink- economic  
 Yellow- environmental  
 Green- cultural



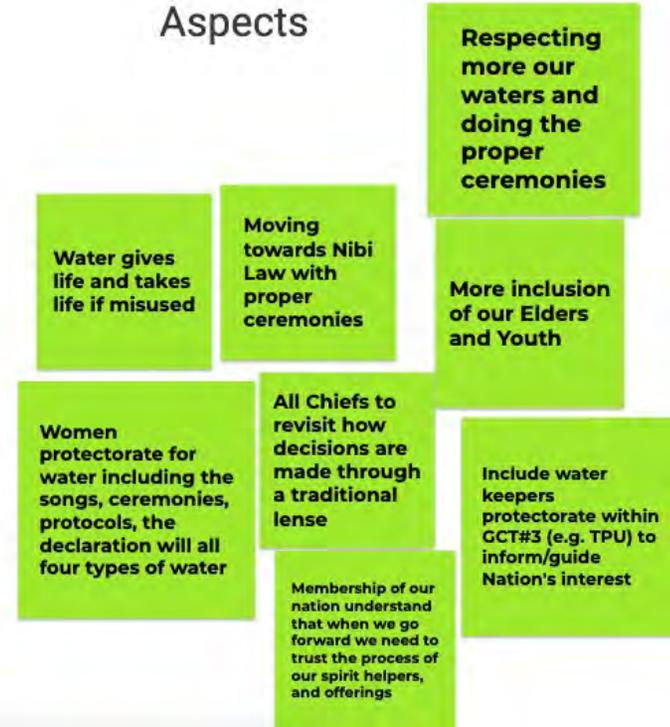
# Prioritization

What are the biggest take-aways from our discussion? (round robin)

## Social Aspects



## Cultural Aspects

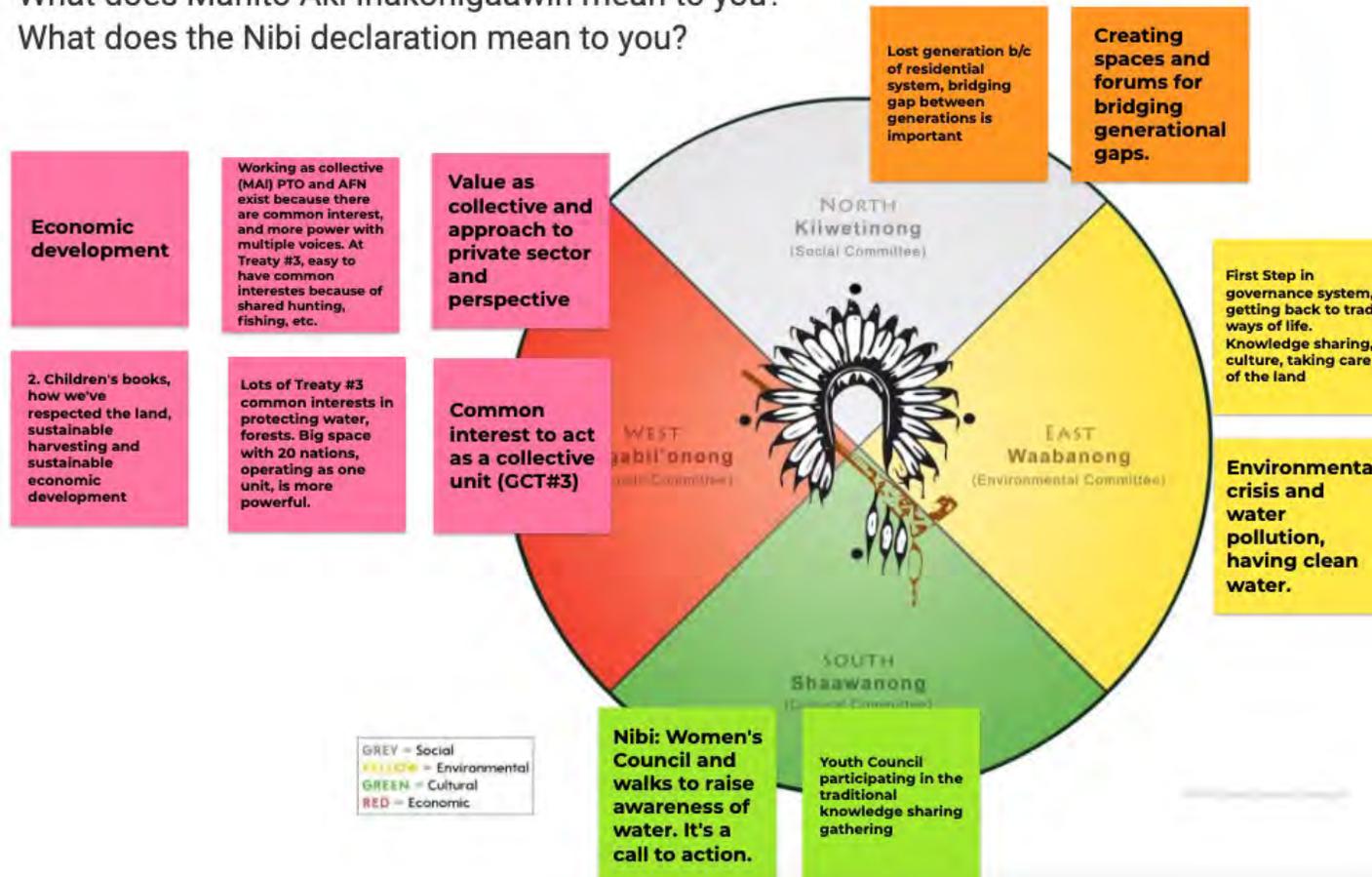


# Appendix E: Youth Council Focus group Jamboards

## What is your insight?

What does Manito Aki Inakonigaawin mean to you?

What does the Nibi declaration mean to you?



# Pathways Forward

Keeping in mind what we've just discussed, what can we do right now to move forward in a good way?

Orange- social  
 Pink- economic  
 Yellow- environmental  
 Green- cultural

Manito Aki Inakonigaawin, as councils, Treaty #3, if they assent to the laws, then it is important that we follow and apply the laws in all that we do. One of the most important is that we don't do anything

## Personal Level

## Community Level

## Nation Level

<p>Generally need people to feel that they have ownership with Manito Aki Inakonigaawin</p>	<p>People more likely to want to see something succeed if they've contributed. Functions at community, personal, and nation level.</p>	<p>Issues include: lack of data on cell phone, no calendars, transportation, extra little steps that help youth participate, that might not be modeled</p>	<p>We still struggle with "how" of implementation.</p>		<p>Could be work or partnership at 7 or seven gens, supporting sustainable development and policy work.</p>	<p>We struggle with policy staff. Finding people that have the policy experience and the language and culture is hard.</p>	<p>How do we present the law in a way that connects to everybody. It is an immediate need but not an emergency.</p>	<p>Women's council came together to make sure they came together in ceremony to work with laws in a good way.</p>
<p>People's values and interests are reflected in Inakonigaawin</p>			<p>Two different groups of indigenous youth - those have gone to university etc, and they have skills and capacity to participate. Other group is struggling and are getting left behind. Harder to meet some of the</p>	<p>Men's and Women's council went forward with Manito Aki Inakonigaawin with ceremony.</p>	<p>Children's books and community pick-ups are targeted participation.</p>	<p>Education dept. conference presented on how to be a science teacher, he framed questions in a way that made people interested in what he was teaching.</p>	<p>Need to address youth barriers to do MAI in a good way.</p>	<p>Youth council has not met as a collective since October, members struggle with having meetings with all of us.</p>
<p>Immediate needs - you don't care if something more urgent or pressing is happening.</p>	<p>People often default to working with Winter because it's easier to not wonder if someone will show up and participate. Reality is that youth struggle and need accommodations to participate.</p>			<p>Youth council should feel heard and acknowledged. And supported by women's council.</p>	<p>The hands on teaching is important, showed family, gets children and youth engaged in a different way.</p>	<p>Find adequate ways to spark interest for MAI and Nibi</p>	<p>Youth get left out of the conversation.</p>	<p>Struggled to go to ceremony or sit with elders. It is a priority, want to meet and include elders but doesn't always happen.</p>
<p>Engagement to meet youth where they are not and be more inclusive in the approach.</p>	<p>Accommodations for youth participation - meeting youth in different ways. Need frequent reminders and follow up to attend meetings.</p>			<p>Youth council in ceremony, to ask for role, guidance, direction for Manito Aki Inakonigaawin spirit helpers, receive blessing and direction to work together. Spirit helpers will provide help, and it</p>	<p>Youth council could have youth council ceremony with Tommy, sometimes need to go into ceremony to ask for guidance.</p>	<p>Supporting and guiding Youth Council through ceremonies</p>	<p>When women's council was not coming together as a collective, came together in a shake tent ceremony.</p>	<p>In events, try to incorporate different elements, drumming, elders.</p>



# Barriers

What do you see as barriers to this vision? Consider the past, present and future.

## Past

Barriers from Fed and UNDRIP. UNDRIP is really good, and FPIC is really big thing. What that actually looks like in practice when companies are working on projects in territory.

What consultation and engagement looks like when being approached by companies.

## Present

Capacity and education. Biggest barrier across any progress we make.

Need to bridge off and on-reserve social ties. Off-reserve tends to be disconnected, not always ties to community = not always ties to elders.

Capacity at Youth level needs to be built up because youth is carrying this forward.

There are a lot of racial tensions in our area. Need to be mindful with MAI, we may respect and follow it, but others may not have respect and understanding.

Elders are important, and we need momentum from youth. That's where sharing comes in.

Full implementation requires a lot of resources

People who should be part of conversations are sometimes not in a place where they can share that knowledge.

Even at youth council, people who have knowledge to share but not in a place to share.

## Future

What do we have left to protect? What will we have left to protect in a few years?

A lot of resources have to go into writing, consulting, and engaging. We get the people to self-select into engagement sessions.

Lands are getting encroached around. Cabins on traplines - operators upset because they can't say they have the only cabin on the lake anymore.

Orange- social  
 Pink- economic  
 Yellow- environmental  
 Green- cultural





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**GRAND COUNCIL  
TREATY #3**  
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ANISHINAABE NATION IN TREATY #3