



North Yukon Regional Planning Commission: Cultural Heritage Workshop, 2006

Summary Document

Review of the Presence/Use of Traditional Knowledge in Regional Land Use Planning

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1 Summary and Observations

1.1 A Review of Northern Regional Land Use Plans

The north has a long history of regional land use planning. Indigenous people have always been planners when considering how to live in relationship to the land. The early formation and work by the Yukon Native Brotherhood, Dene Nation on the Dene/Metis Mapping Project and by the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada were a coming together of Indigenous people to work toward recognition of their land rights and preservation of their culture. The Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry of the 1970's was an unprecedented community-based public examination of the land use considerations of large scale "frontier" resource development through a homeland. A formal government to government process for northern regional land use planning was set up in 1983 and wound down in 1991. By then, the Yukon Umbrella Final Agreement was completed, the Gwich'in Land Claim Agreement was almost complete and other negotiations on northern land claim agreements were underway. These agreements included a chapter on regional land use planning, which is what guides regional land use planning in Yukon Territory, Northwest Territories (NWT) and Nunavut Territory today. Where land claims have not been settled, government to government agreements direct planning.

This project examines nine regional land use plans in Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Northern British Columbia to consider how traditional knowledge was used and how plans address broader Indigenous concepts about their relationship to land and their way of life rooted in the land.

The nine plans examined are:

Northwest Territories

1. Sahtu Land Use Plan (SLUP);
2. Ndéh Ts'edjichà: Dehcho Ndéh T'áh Ats'et'î K'eh Eghálats'ênda Respect for the Land: The Dehcho Land Use Plan (DCLUP);
3. Nành' Geenjit Gwitr'it T'igwaa'in (Working For the Land). Gwich'in Land Use Plan (GLUP).
4. Tłjcho Wenek'e – Tłjcho Land Use Plan (TLUP);

Nunavut

5. Nunavut Land Use Plan (NLUP);
6. North Baffin Land Use Plan (NBLUP);

Northern British Columbia

7. Wóoshtin wudidaa Atlin Taku Land Use Plan (ATLUP);

Yukon

8. Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan (PWLUP);
9. North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan. Nichih Gwanaf'in – Looking Forward (NYLUP).

The review of each plan examines:

1. the legal requirements and context for traditional knowledge in the plan;
2. the planning body's intention for considering traditional knowledge;
3. sources and techniques for bringing traditional knowledge into planning;
4. traditional knowledge in the planning process and plan;
5. summary highlights and observations about traditional knowledge in the planning.

The review relied on publicly available documents and materials on the plan websites.

The following sections provide summary observations and highlights from the review of the plans.

1.2 Legal Context for Traditional Knowledge and Northern Land Use Plans

The land claim agreements, other agreements, and traditional Indigenous laws all provide direction that relate to traditional knowledge in plans. NWT, Nunavut and Yukon land claims agreements and the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and Government of British Columbia planning agreement clearly require planning bodies to consider First Nation values. All agreements direct planning to consider Indigenous well-being and cultural values. Some of the directives are overall objectives for the land claim agreement as a whole, or objectives for the planning process, and some are directions to the planning body.

- All land claim agreements require planning to address Indigenous values. In Nunavut, plans are to “reflect the priorities and values of residents”. In Northwest Territories an overall land claim agreement objective is “to recognize and encourage the [Indigenous] way of life based on the cultural and economic relationship between them and the land”. In Yukon an objective of planning is “to recognize and promote the cultural values” of Yukon First Nations.
- All land claim agreements require promoting the existing and future well-being of residents and communities of the planning area, taking into account interests of all Canadians. In Nunavut, and Northwest Territories it is the primary purpose of planning. They also require “special attention” to the well-being of Indigenous people. In Yukon promoting well-being is a direction to planning commissions. Added in to the clause is well-being of “Yukon as a whole”.
- Yukon planning commissions shall use First Nation knowledge and experience.
- Nunavut planning commissions shall give weighty consideration to oral communication and apply Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ).
- Traditional Indigenous laws are explicitly referenced as guiding directives in the DCLUP - Dene laws and Dene *Nahodhe* (Dene culture and beliefs); in the ATLUP – the foundational document of “Our Land Is Our Future, *Hà t_átgi hà khustiyxh siti*” and the Tlingit *khustiyxh* (way of life); and in the Nunavut plans - *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* (what Inuit have always known) containing the knowledge and values of Inuit society.

These directives clearly require planning bodies to bring traditional knowledge into planning and to promote and give special attention to Indigenous well-being and values. Some planning bodies used the directives as is for their own plan guiding principles and objectives. Some developed more specific principles to guide their planning. For example the Gwich'in Interim Land Use Planning Board expanded on the meaning of “protect and promote well-being” of residents of the Gwich'in Settlement Area.

The plans do not always make explicit how they applied the directives about well-being and cultural values. For example, the PWLUP states “sustainable development” is the core principle of the plan, and other land claim agreement directives are not addressed as explicitly.

1.3 Planning Body's Intention for Approaching Traditional Knowledge

One of the main differences between the plans is whether or not the planning body developed a set of policies regarding traditional knowledge before planning began that clearly state their approach to traditional knowledge guide their planning process. The Sahtu Land Use Planning Board (SLUPB), the Dehcho Planning Committee (DCPC), interim Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board (GLUPB), and the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC) each prepared policies, principles or other guiding documents

about traditional knowledge. These documents define traditional knowledge, explain the significance of traditional knowledge in planning, and some provide guidance on how it will be collected and other considerations such as confidentiality. They also make explicit that traditional knowledge is to be used alongside scientific knowledge.

A working group of Elders drove the TLUP, which ensured traditional knowledge was fundamental to the process. The ATLUP was guided by the previously completed “Our Land is Our Future” vision document, which ensured the approach was “grounded in culture and knowing who we are and where we come from”.

The Peel Watershed Planning Commission (PWPC) and North Yukon Planning Commission (NYPC) did not prepare any such guiding policy or document, although the NYPC explains in the NYLUP that the teachings of the Vuntut Gwitchin ancestors guided the plan.

Some planning bodies further defined their approach to addressing Indigenous values in their guiding principles or in a mission statement or logo. The SLUPB, GLUPB, and NPC explicitly elaborate on the Final Agreement direction of promoting Indigenous well-being. The NYPC captured core guiding beliefs in its logo.

The PWPC repeated the guiding directives from the Final Agreement, then chose “promote sustainable development” as its guiding principle because most of the directives are “aspects of sustainable development”. In comparison, the DCPC guiding principle for the plan is “guided by the principles of sustainable development and respect for the land as understood and explained by the Dehcho elders”. The PWPC statement of intent developed early in the process does not specifically mention First Nations, traditional knowledge or broader Indigenous values.

The ATLUP, the TLUP, and the DCLUP explain the significance of traditional knowledge as information and knowledge of the past that is necessary to plan for and manage land for the future. They note its contribution to informed decision-making. The DCPC stated that Dene laws, culture, beliefs and experience were the “foundational guide” for planning.

The SLUPB used a collaborative decision-making process for planning, which they saw as integrating different values into one plan to guide land use. With this collaborative spirit, they saw the SLUP as a “unique opportunity to reconcile the different world views and systems of laws and beliefs of the Sahtu Dene and Metis, government and other stakeholders”.

1.4 Sources and Techniques for Considering Traditional Knowledge

All of the planning bodies worked with the First Nation communities to gather traditional knowledge for consideration in planning. However, the extent to which their sources and techniques focused on ‘understanding the past before planning the future’ varied. Some carried out an extensive traditional knowledge documentation process with interviews and mapping. Others gathered traditional knowledge in broader community workshops. Others included consideration of traditional knowledge as part of consulting with First Nations on their planning documents.

With some plans, traditional knowledge had already been gathered previously as part of another process. The planning body was then able to draw from an existing and extensive body of knowledge. The SLUP, DCLUP, GLUP, TLUP, NLUP, ATLUP all drew on extensive previous work such as

documentation of Indigenous values and way of life, maps of traditional knowledge, and documentation of place names and their significance.

The DCLUP and NLUP drew on and expanded extensive traditional land use and occupancy mapping that had been started as part of previous land use planning initiatives and land claim negotiations.

The SLUP, DCLUP, GLUP, TLUP, NBLUP, ATLUP carried out multiple community meetings for the purposes of visioning and documenting and mapping traditional knowledge. Some of the planning bodies conducted personal interviews with traditional knowledge holders and prepared individual map biographies. The GLUP, NBLUP, PWLUP and NYLUP planning bodies held community mapping workshops to prepare traditional knowledge maps.

In some cases, the planning body started with the communities to document traditional knowledge early in their process, which would have contributed to their understanding the past before planning the future. The SLUP, DCLUP, GLUP, NLUP, NBLUP, ATLUP planning bodies all started working with the communities first to document traditional knowledge.

The TLUP fully engaged Elders because they made up the land use working group that was involved at every stage of the planning process and brought their traditional knowledge in throughout the process. They also participated in field trips to share their knowledge out on the land. The SLUP used community fieldworkers and the NBLUP used a local working group to assist with gathering traditional knowledge.

The SLUP Board spent a lot of time working with the communities on the vision at a suitable pace, then reporting back so that open communication and trust built up with the communities. The SLUP Board also has a very thorough and accessible website that provides a lot of transparency on their planning process. Some communities engaged in the PWLUP and the NLUP expressed concerns about the engagement process and how traditional knowledge was being gathered and applied.

The DCLUP planning body held a workshop to talk about Dene beliefs, values and traditional laws for input to planning. The NYLUP planning body held an Elders workshop. The DCLUP and NYLUP planning bodies held workshops that brought together traditional knowledge holders and scientists to exchange traditional and scientific knowledge.

The detailed documentation of traditional knowledge for the DCLUP was used to develop a GIS data base on traditional land use and occupancy, which was used at other stages of the planning process, for example, to identify traditional land use density. The SLUP was able to draw on traditional knowledge documented in the Sahtu Atlas.

1.5 Traditional Knowledge in the Planning Process

All planning bodies gathered traditional knowledge and applied it during the stages of the planning process. Traditional knowledge was considered along with scientific knowledge to identify important ecological and cultural areas, land use zones and management directions. In some plans, it is evident how traditional knowledge was considered, in others, it is not as evident.

The SLUP, ATLUP, and DCLUP vision statements reflect a lot of input about Indigenous values and way of life.

Traditional knowledge was documented in the supporting background documents for the SLUP, DCLUP, NLUP, PWLUP, and NYLUP. The TLUP used traditional knowledge documented in a data base. These documents and GIS data bases provided reference material to the planning bodies as they identified issues, options, zones, and plan directives.

Traditional knowledge was used at the zoning stage to identify areas of community interest, priority areas for protection or conservation because of community values, and areas of significant cultural values.

Some planning bodies developed methods explicitly to incorporate traditional knowledge in the identification of land use options and management directions. The TLUP was developed through the “Tłjcho storytelling process”. The ATLUP developed a Tlingit Land Use Model and Decision Support Tool. The DCLUP analysed traditional land use density from their traditional knowledge data base. The PWLUP used a habitat suitability model using traditional knowledge from community workshops.

1.6 Traditional Knowledge in The Plan

The extent to which and way in which traditional knowledge is portrayed in the plans varies. In the SLUP, DCLUP, TLUP, ATLUP traditional knowledge is very much present and front and centre in the plans, whereas in the PWLUP and NYLUP it is not as evident.

Some plans reflect traditional knowledge by expressing the Indigenous way of life and their relationship with the land, as essential to Indigenous identity, values, and beliefs. The SLUP, DCLUP, ATLUP and TLUP integrate these values of the relationship with the land throughout the plan.

The GLUP, PWLUP, and NYLUP portray a narrower expression of traditional knowledge by focusing on traditional land uses, sites and cultural resources.

Some plans apply the land claim directive about promoting the well-being of Indigenous people as a key principle in the plan. The SLUP, DCLUP, GLUP, NLUP include it in their guiding principles, goals, or vision statement.

Traditional knowledge appears in the vision statements, description of the planning region, rationale for zoned areas, conformity requirements, management directives. Some examples:

- NYLUP notes Indigenous values in the cover letter “Message from the Chair” but has no vision statement;
- SLUP, DCLUP, ATLUP vision statements express Indigenous values about connection with the land and a way of life;
- PWLUP vision statement mentions cultural resources, traditional use, subsistence harvesting;
- SLUP addresses cultural integrity alongside ecological integrity;
- TLUP zones cultural landscapes such as trail networks;
- DCLUP has a section of conformity requirements that address Dene culture and traditional uses.

1.7 Summary Observations

This review of plans has shown the depth of northern experience in bringing traditional knowledge into planning. What can be learned from this depth of experience? The following sections summarize lessons that can be taken from this experience as we move forward with planning in the north.

1.7.1 Indigenous Values and Plans

The main differences regarding traditional knowledge between the plans is whether they address Indigenous values primarily as land uses, cultural resources, and sites of importance (PWLUP, GLUP) or considered the broader relationship of Indigenous people to the land and its critical foundation to their identity and way of life (DCLUP, TLUP, NLUP, ATLUP). These plans address broader concepts such as cultural landscapes, responsibilities, stewardship, and land as story, history, education, and refuge.

All plans recognize the importance of the land to Indigenous peoples. The discussion of these values is often in a section on 'heritage or cultural resources' or in discussions of 'traditional land use' and 'subsistence harvest'. The more common land management approach in the plans is that protection of the land, of wilderness, of ecologically significant areas also protects all the associated cultural values. For example, the PWLUP has a strong focus on the "wilderness character" of the region and how sustainable development encompasses other regional priorities.

A more explicit approach to protecting the broader cultural relationship to the land is in some plans. The SLUP is the only plan with "cultural integrity" as a separate goal, alongside "ecological integrity". Most plans address only ecological integrity. The GLUP and TLUP address protecting cultural landscapes. The DCLUP provides management direction specifically to preserve Dene culture and traditional use. The ATLUP recommendations make connections back to the *khustiyyh* (way of life).

All plans address the concept of sustainable development, and in most it is broken into its separate parts of 'environment, people, economy'. But a more wholistic description based on Indigenous concepts is provided in the North Baffin Land Use Plan (NBLUP). It presents *Ikupik* as the Inuit approach to sustainable development, which is ancient knowledge about how to live in relation to the world. The NYLUP Message from the Chair describes the teachings of the ancestors that ensures "a sustainable future for generations to come".

1.7.2 Language and Expression of Traditional Knowledge in Plans

In some plans it is obvious to see how traditional knowledge has been considered and then reflected in the plan. In other plans, you have to search to find expressions of traditional knowledge.

Language in a plan is important. To develop a sense of ownership for a plan, people need to see themselves reflected in a plan. They need to trust that their knowledge and values were respected and listened to and considered. Indigenous people should see themselves in the vision, goals, and description of the region in a plan for their traditional territories. The more holistic vision and goals sets the context for the more compartmentalized approach in the rest of the plan. If the plan vision reflects traditional knowledge, it provides confidence that the rest of the plan is intended to achieve this vision, with all sections of the plan are working toward the overall vision.

The ATLUP is very strong in reflecting Indigenous experience and values throughout the plan. The DCLUP and the TLUP also reflect Indigenous values and traditional knowledge shared during the process. The SLUP vision and goals reflect Indigenous experience and values. The NYLUP lacks a vision statement and the plan does not portray the depth of community work, knowledge, experience and values shared at community workshops. The PWLUP is similar to the NYLUP, although it does have a

vision statement, but the plan doesn't portray the depth of First Nations connection with the region using traditional knowledge.

1.7.3 Traditional Knowledge: A Body of Knowledge and Worldview that Informs Planning

Traditional knowledge is a body of knowledge that communicates a world view, and the values and experiences of Indigenous peoples. It conveys different information in different ways than scientific knowledge, and the two knowledge systems are essential to fully informed planning.

The planning body needs information about values (what is important) and interests (what is wanted) so they can make fully informed choices about options and recommended actions (what to do about what is wanted). First Nations and all other participants in a planning process will bring values, interests and positions to the process. Traditional knowledge explains what is valued in the region in a very different way from science. The planning body's responsibility is to make the distinctions between values, interests and actions and to ensure they are fully informed with both traditional and scientific knowledge for their decision-making.

Traditional knowledge is an important element of northern land use planning. Some plans provided a definition of traditional knowledge. Some plans were clear in how scientific and traditional knowledge were considered.

The TLUP clearly portrays science and traditional knowledge as two knowledge systems that can support planning. For example, using the scientific methods of ecosystem-based management and using traditional knowledge to identify cultural landscape zones.

The DCPC policy on traditional knowledge makes clear that traditional knowledge is seen as a body of knowledge that can explain ecological and cultural significance of the land. Their GIS includes both types of knowledge.

In some plans traditional knowledge was portrayed as filling gaps in scientific knowledge, whereas in others it served a much more integral function of communicating the intertwined relationship with the land and Indigenous identity.

1.7.4 Look to the Past Before Planning the Future

The need to understand the past before planning the future is a key tenet of northern planning where the Indigenous relationship to the land has a continuity that extends to the past for millennia. Current and future land use is not in isolation from but is a continuity of that history of land use.

The ATLUP, DCLUP and TLUP all affirmed the approach to "gather information and knowledge from the past in order to plan for and manage land for the future".

Some planning bodies spent a lot of time early in the planning process with communities to fully document traditional knowledge of the region (SLUP, DCLUP, GLUP, TLUP, NBLUP, and ATLUP).

1.7.5 Traditional Knowledge is Closely Tied to First Nation Engagement

Engaging First Nations does not necessarily mean that traditional knowledge is effectively gathered and documented, but the way in which First Nations are engaged is important for the effective use of traditional knowledge. The plans that reflect a lot of traditional knowledge engaged First Nations

early in the process, worked closely with the First Nations throughout the process, reported back on how the traditional knowledge was considered, and built trust with the First Nations in the plan. The methods for collecting traditional knowledge were usually some combination of interviews, workshops and mapping. The TCLUP refers to the “Tłı̨cho storytelling process”. Some concerns were raised during the PWLUP process about how well traditional knowledge was understood.

One risk of documenting traditional knowledge is that methods may inappropriately remove the traditional knowledge from the traditional knowledge holders, where traditional knowledge can potentially be misused and misinterpreted.

1.7.6 A Values-centred Approach to Planning

The SLUP Board took a “collaborative decision-making” approach, through which they integrated different values into the plan. The Board saw the plan as “an opportunity to reconcile the different world views”. In many places, the plan takes a value-centred approach, in which the plan clearly links the recommended action to the value it is to maintain. For example, the SLUP conformity requirements and zoning are linked back to the values of culture, water, and wildlife.

In contrast, during the PWLUP process, competing positions developed about the appropriate percentage of the region’s land base to allocate to conservation or development. The controversy built up during the process until court challenges to the PWLUP were undertaken. They addressed fundamental matters of First Nation rights and proper implementation of the planning process according to the Final Agreements. But the level of controversy that built up during the process often was focused on how to divide up the planning region.

If the end purpose of planning is seen as dividing the land base among competing positions then conflict is difficult to resolve. But as with the SLUP, if the purpose of planning is to consider values and to collaborate, then conflict resolution may find different and more creative solutions. If planning is seen as an ‘opportunity to reconcile different world views’ then the purpose of planning is more about relationship building and finding common ground than about dividing up a land base.

The definition of sustainable development in the Yukon land claim agreements “beneficial socio-economic change that does not undermine the ecological and social systems upon which communities and societies are dependent” lends itself to a value-centred discussion”: what social and ecological systems do we depend on? How? What could undermines them? A focus on values and the purpose of having different land use designations may help find common ground and move the conversation forward. Traditional knowledge would contribute to such a value-centred conversation.

1.7.7 Transparent Process

The way in which a planning body comes to their decisions in the plan should be transparent, including how they have considered scientific and traditional knowledge. This transparency builds trust in the plan as participants can see how their knowledge has been considered. Generally in the plans, the application of traditional knowledge is evident in the vision, the description of planning region, and the rationale for choice of zoning. It is less evident in how the management direction incorporated traditional knowledge. The results based management system in the Yukon plans is in part in response to community concerns over cumulative effects but the application of traditional

knowledge in choosing cumulative effects indicators and criteria and cautionary and critical levels of impact is not explained.

The DCLUP process at the Nahodhe workshop explicitly addressed the challenge of incorporating Dene beliefs and values into management of land uses like resource development. The DCLUP addresses the challenge in part by including a section of CR and recommendation on Dene culture and traditional use.

The SLUP Board also a very good website that clearly documents their planning process. The NPC maintains a public registry with all documents related to planning catalogued and readily accessible.

The extent of documentation of traditional knowledge in the plan itself varied in part depending on the role of the plan and whether traditional knowledge had been documented elsewhere. Under the NWT legislative system, the DCLUP and SLUP primarily have the role of being 'conformity documents'. They provide direction to the main intended audience of land use regulators on how land use is to conform to the plan. The plan itself provides an expression of traditional knowledge in the vision and overview of values, but most traditional knowledge is documented in extensive GIS data bases, an atlas, and in the plan Background Reports, which are identified as supporting documents to the plan. In other words, the plans itself focuses on providing direction to regulators and land users, not as an expression of the values of the region, which are well documented elsewhere by the First Nations.

The TLUP conveys the First Nation values and presents conformity requirements in the plan, but traditional knowledge was documented in a GIS data base maintained by the First Nation. There is no Background Report because the information was available from the data base.

1.7.8 Who Gathers and Documents the Traditional Knowledge?

In some planning processes the gathering and documenting of traditional knowledge was carried out by the planning body for the purpose of preparing the plan (GLUP, NBLUP, NYLUP). In other regions traditional knowledge documentation was a much broader initiative by the First Nation, some or all of which had been done before planning began (SLUP, DCLUP, TLUP, NLUP, ATLUP). The First Nations had already developed or were developing a traditional knowledge data base to use in other initiatives as well as the land use plan. The PWLUP was a combination of commission work as well as First Nations (e.g., Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in) bringing in their own documentation.

In the ATLUP, for example, the Taku River Tlingit First Nation (TRTFN) had already completed a visioning document as well as a conservation assessment before entering into the agreement for planning with the Government of BC. Not only did this mean the TRTFN already had their own documentation of their knowledge and values to bring into the planning process, it also meant that all the traditional knowledge did not have to be gathered and documented as part of the planning process. For the PWLUP, the NYLUP, the SLUP, and the DCLUP a lengthy report accompanying the land use plan documents values of the region. With this approach, it was the commission's responsibility to gather and document traditional knowledge for the plan.

Both the SLUP and ATLUP advocate that planning is successful when residents have considered in advance of planning what they want in the region - their values, interests and vision, which they can then bring to the discussion with other planning parties.

1.7.9 Considering Traditional Knowledge in the Right Way – Policies, Protocol

The plans describe First Nation values and use of the land using a lot of different terminology: values, uses, resources, traditional, subsistence, local, culture, heritage, social. In many cases the terms were not defined, which makes a plan confusing and harder to understand.

For some plans, policies were developed to further guide planning on the matter of traditional knowledge and Indigenous values. They define traditional knowledge and provide direction on how it is to be used in planning, including dealing with oral testimony, ownership, and confidentiality.

- The NPC in conjunction with the other planning authorities developed broad policies, objectives and goals that relate to traditional knowledge.
- SLUPB developed rules of procedure.
- DCPC developed a traditional knowledge policy.

The SLUP defined traditional knowledge and explains “cultural integrity”. The ATLUP explains *khustiyxh* (way of life). The TLUP describes their core values. The NLUP describes IQ. The DCLUP defines traditional knowledge and traditional land use and occupancy. The NBLUP defines traditional knowledge and IQ.

1.7.10 Square Peg in a Round Hole: Traditional Knowledge in a Western Science Planning Paradigm

The plans generally take a western scientific approach to planning, which shows up in the scientific language and concepts throughout the plans, for example, dividing the plan into environment, people, economy, zoning according to scientifically defined ecoregions, and the results-based management framework. Within a western scientific planning paradigm, the task has been how to ‘insert’ traditional knowledge into the structure and questions of the planning process, much like trying to insert a square peg in a round hole.

In some plans traditional knowledge was used to ‘fill gaps’ in western science, for example, providing additional information about wildlife species or locations that have not been scientifically researched (e.g., DCLUP).

In other plans, traditional knowledge is used to describe individual features or land uses in the region such as subsistence harvest, trapping, cultural resources such as archeological sites and cabin sites (e.g., GLUP, NYLUP, PWLUP).

Some plans apply traditional knowledge much more holistically to express the intertwined relationship between Indigenous peoples and the land and how the land is fundamental to their identity and way of life. Such plans don’t separate the land into sites, resources, and uses, but explain concepts such as cultural landscapes, cultural integrity, and the significance of land to all aspects of their well-being from past to present to future (SLUP, DCLUP, TLUP, ATLUP).

Western science based planning generally has shifted over time toward addressing the interconnections between people, economy, and environment. Northern planning in particular has moved in this direction guided in part by northern processes such as the Berger Inquiry, and especially by the land claim agreements where planning is to promote the well-being and cultural values of Indigenous people, to take an integrated approach, and to promote sustainable development, the definition of which recognizes the dependency of communities on ecological and

social systems. The land claim agreements and earlier northern planning experience have also clearly indicated that the knowledge and experience of Indigenous people is essential to achieving effective land use planning.

Moreover, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), respects traditional knowledge as it “contributes to sustainable and equitable development and proper management of the environment”. UNDRIP states the right of Indigenous peoples to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions (Article 31).

Northern planning is having to address more complex land use issues as land-based interests increase and diversify, significant ecological values decline, and as climate change shifts the entire context for northern land use planning. Traditional knowledge that has guided Indigenous people for millennia points to how to live sustainably in relationship to the land. It is more critical now than ever that planning for the future be informed by this knowledge. But the challenge is not to modify traditional knowledge so it fits with a western science planning paradigm, but to re-examine the paradigm itself so that decisions about future land use are informed by traditional knowledge.

1.7.11 Time to Consider – Is Planning Asking the Right Questions?

Indigenous experience points to the central questions of how to live sustainably in relationship to the land: what is our relationship to the land, how do we share what the land provides, how do we use the land in balance, what are our responsibilities to the land for future generations?

A planning process that addresses these questions would broaden the conversation and take a value-centred approach to planning. The definition of sustainable development in the land claim agreements lends itself to such an examination:

“beneficial socio-economic change that does not undermine the ecological and social systems upon which communities and societies are dependent”. This definition generates questions such as, what are the ecological and social systems we depend on? In what way do we depend on them? How can they be undermined? What socio-economic change is beneficial and does not undermine the systems? Planning that respects and learns from Indigenous knowledge would help answer such questions.

Following the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report, the planning profession is starting to address its own colonizing history in contributing to land use decisions that have impacted Indigenous people. Ensuring a planning practices planning is a practice of reconciliation rather than colonization requires rethinking whose values, knowledge, and concerns are considered, what questions are asked, how boundary lines are drawn, and land uses are recommended.

1.7.12 Lessons to be Learned from these Plans

1. Traditional knowledge is a body of knowledge that is essential to fully informed planning;
2. Look to the past before planning the future;
3. Engage First Nation traditional knowledge holders early and throughout to share traditional knowledge;
4. The main challenge with having traditional knowledge in planning is not with traditional knowledge itself, but with the planning process in how it respects and learns from traditional knowledge;

5. Indigenous experience points to central planning questions of how to live sustainably in relationship to the land, what is our relationship to the land, how do we share what the land provides, how do we use the land in balance, what are our responsibilities to the land for future generations?
6. Planning can be a collaborative values-centred process;
7. Traditional knowledge informs all stages of planning from definitions of concepts such as sustainable development to vision, to zoning, to management direction;
8. Develop proper protocols and guidelines for the gathering and use of traditional knowledge, including who gathers it and the way it is shared with and used by planning bodies;
9. Indigenous documentation of way of life, values, vision takes time and community-based work. If it is not done before planning or early in planning, then planning will not fully address what is important in a region. As a multi-year planning process proceeds, this early work provides reference points and reminders so values don't get overlooked.