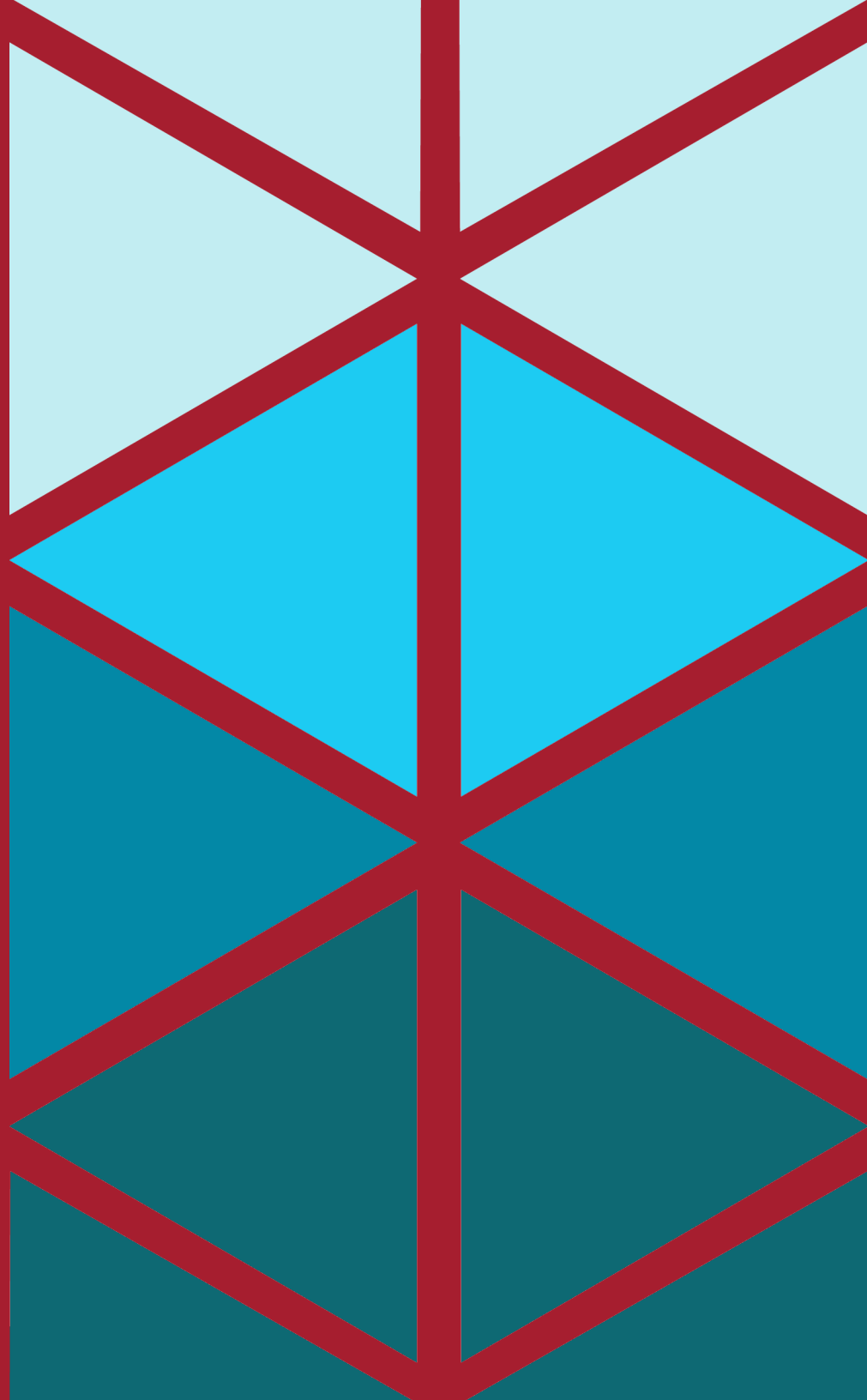
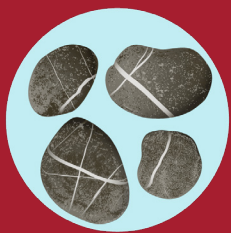




Step into the River:

Section Seven

► Where to, next?



Where to, next?

Because this is a living document, and because Economic Reconciliation is an ongoing journey, this is more of a jumping off point than a conclusion.

We invite you to take a look at the global social economic reality and ask yourselves what has happened under the current economic regime? The way that we see it, on a global scale, we have widespread economic exclusion and negative impacts on society and our planet. We have a meteoric rise in wealth accumulation for the wealthiest parts of society and its result is a growing gap between rich and poor, which has only gotten worse with the increasing catastrophic effects of climate change, some of which is irreversible at this stage. Ignoring this reality only perpetuates the decline of our lives and that of mother earth.

Turning to Indigenous wisdom and epistemologies can lead to myriad possibilities for transforming our economic system and how we want to live. Placing the children and Mother Earth back at the centre of the equation is integral

to engaging in economic practices and building a resilient society rooted in care.

Central to the current conversation going on in BC, Canada and beyond, is moving away from just words to the implementation of actions. A sustainable, inclusive, and equitable BC economy cannot be left to only governments or corporations; each of us has to be involved in taking action towards equitable, decolonized and place-based strategies for Economic Reconciliation. It's going to take courage, to step outside of your comfort zone, to be brave and look at one's privilege, be with truth, and intertwine new worldviews. It will also take a willingness to imagine possible futures outside of the current system..

We hope that the stories, truths and insights shared here provoke you, in many senses of the word. The origin of the word provoke comes from pro- 'forth' + vocare- 'to call'. In this sense, we hope that you feel called forward. Another meaning of provoke is to stimulate or incite (someone) to do or feel something, especially by arousing anger in them.

In that sense, we hope that this work has stirred something in you. We hope that you are feeling uncomfortable. The beginning of this journey of transformation is going to be challenging. We do not want to reiterate the status quo, have the same dialogue, and share what is already out there in the forms of guides, research, toolkits, etc. We hope that this document has provided some space for strong reaction, whether negative or positive, and to fuel the need for transformation. Lastly, we hope that you want to be more engaged in transforming our economic system through Economic Reconciliation at an individual, community, institutional and societal level. This will come in the form of being curious, deep dives into learning more, using your voice to call out injustice, to speak up in the face of inequality, committing to creating space for Indigenous knowledge and ways of being in the work you do.

Hopefully what we are sharing can support moving many away from the belief that Indigenous Peoples are a 'problem that needs fixing' or a drastic 'burden' that has to be

constantly dealt with. Canada's current situation is fully and completely a result of endemic racism and colonialism that is deeply seeded in the mindsets of Canadians. First Nations never chose to be here, they were forced into it over and over again. Indigenous communities and Peoples have battled every step of the way, from having a seat with the King of England to leading environmental, social and political movements, to every court case in the past, present and future. The choice is yours about how you want to sit at the table with them, because they aren't going away and one day, you will more than likely be working for them.

For First Nations and Indigenous Peoples: you're already doing this work and have been for many generations as you and all of the previous generations have fought for everything you have in your communities. It is our time to reshape and begin the journey of transformation for what we want around sustainability, environmental protection, land-use, and demand how we want to be in relationship with others in a new way.



Closing Remarks on this Journey: by Sxwpilemaát Siyám

At the beginning of this document I began in ceremony, inviting you the reader to be a witness of sorts through this journey. And as a witness, you are responsible to take this new knowledge and do something with it.

If circumstances were different at the time of writing this, I personally would have held a feast to demonstrate all that we have shared throughout this document. It would be for each reader to bear witness to the true beauty and nature of who we are as First Nations people of this land. Not as a spectacle but to be in ceremony together to educate, share, listen, be humbled and feel the connection of our culture to all things, with the intent to transcend your knowing of who we are, to witness the complexity, depth and richness of our culture, ways of being and knowledge sharing. It would possibly be foreign to you but you would leave with an understanding of the basis of the cultural framework of my people and potentially grasp how that impacts the relationships required for meaningful reconciliation and relationships.

The fabric which makes me is my identity, purpose, responsibility, and the vision of my collective well-being (myself, my family-immediate and extended) and my people. I am here to be in service to that collective well-being, not for my own personal material wealth. I am rich because of my culture (even though I do not have my languages), my families, my communities and Nations. This knowing grounds and guides my work everyday.

The journey of this work has been fun, hopeful, painful at times, arduous and stressful, but hopefully worth it as my desire is to create a space of curiosity within settler communities to engage in intentional and purposeful work of economic reconciliation. The journey ahead of us all can be what we make it and I'm asking you the reader to choose a path of learning, listening, heart-opening, healing, embracing discomfort, moving towards a future state of our collective economy that is inclusive, equitable, but most importantly gifted with the richness of each First Nation's knowledge of a good life.





Land is a fundamental asset for sustainable economic development. This is no different for Indigenous communities in Canada and it is a reason why land rights are critical for self-determination. However, land is much beyond just an economic asset for Indigenous Peoples. Land provides sustenance for current and future generations; it is connected to spiritual beliefs, traditional knowledge and teachings; it is fundamental to cultural reproduction; moreover, commonly held land rights reinforce nationhood.

OECD,
Linking Indigenous Communities with
Regional Development in Canada