

NWT Climate Change Council

Terms of Reference

March 2021

1.0 PURPOSE

The NWT Climate Change Council (the Council) is a forum for the sharing of information, for collaboration, and for engagement between non-elected staff in Indigenous governments and organizations (IGOs), representatives of NWT communities and the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), with input from external partners. The Council provides guidance and advice in order to inform and advance GNWT climate change and environment programs in alignment with IGO and community perspectives, interests, and knowledge. Further, the Council will provide an opportunity to build on and strengthen relationships, shared understandings, and trust, which supports the GNWT's commitment to move towards implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

The Council will help inform the development, implementation and review of the following GNWT programs, agreements, strategies, and action plans (as applicable):

- 2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework, 2019-2023 Action Plan, and future action plans
- 2030 NWT Energy Strategy and Action Plan
- NWT Water Stewardship Strategy and action plans
 - Transboundary Water Management Agreements
- NWT Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program
- NWT Sustainable Livelihoods Action Plan

Other GNWT climate and environment initiatives of mutual interest may also be discussed.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- Engage in discussions appropriate to participating governments and organizations that create value for, but do not replace, those discussions which may need to occur at the individual government, organization or community level.
- Inform and advance the development, implementation and review of the programs, agreements, strategies and action plans listed in 1.0 by:
 - Communicating and tracking progress on significant developments.
 - Providing two-way information exchanges between all Council members and the GNWT.
 - Gaining the perspectives and interests of participating organizations.
 - Sharing useful information or guidance in order to successfully inform, advance and

- improve the outcomes and deliverables of the programs.
- Identifying opportunities, concerns, and emerging issues and, where possible, the means to address them.
- Sharing advice on how to effectively engage IGOs and NWT communities and/or how to effectively incorporate Traditional Knowledge.

3.0 COUNCIL STRUCTURE

3.1 *Members*

The Council is co-chaired by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) and by a unanimously selected IGO representative, with secretariat support provided by ENR's division of Environmental Stewardship and Climate Change. The following IGOs, GNWT departments and community association can appoint one regular member to the Council:

- Acho Dene Koe First Nation
- Akaitcho Territory Government
- Dehcho First Nations
- Délı̨ne Got'ı̨ne Government
- Government of the Northwest Territories - Environment and Natural Resources (ENR)
- Government of the Northwest Territories - Infrastructure
- Gwich'in Tribal Council
- Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
- Kátł'odeeche First Nation
- North Slave Métis Alliance
- Northwest Territory Métis Nation
- NWT Association of Communities
- Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated
- Salt River First Nation
- Tłı̨chǫ Government

Each IGO must identify an alternate member, who may participate on behalf of the IGO in situations where the regular member is unable to attend a Council meeting. This is a staff-level council, as such it is preferred that members are not elected representatives.

Depending on the topics discussed at certain meetings, IGOs may request that staff specializing in a specific topic also attend as support. Travel expenses would not be reimbursed for additional staff.

Each IGO shall notify ENR in writing of their appointed Council member and alternate. Similarly, IGOs shall notify ENR in writing of any change in representation (Council members or alternates). Alternates are considered replacements for Council members; therefore, alternates share the same roles and responsibilities as Council members.

New members from other governments or organizations may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

3.2 Roles and Responsibilities of Members

GNWT Co-Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the finalization of all meeting agendas and materials, and the preparation of meeting logistics • Chair meetings (in collaboration with the IGO Co-Chair) • Regularly communicate with GNWT’s Director-level Climate Change Working Group about the Council • Ensure the proper functioning of the Council, which involves appropriate reviews of the Council’s Terms of Reference
IGO Co-Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Co-Chair to confirm the agenda • Chair meetings (alternate with the GNWT Co-Chair) • Serve for a 1 year term (with possible 1 year extension if consensus by the Indigenous Caucus) • Mentor the Co-Chair successor
Members and Alternate Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm attendance • Inform agenda items • Prepare for and actively participate in Council meetings • Review and provide input on materials such as plans, strategies and proposals • Share the perspectives and interests of their respective governments or organizations • Communicate respectfully on a foundation of integrity, trust and honesty • Report back to appointing government or organization, by providing periodic or routine updates to elected leaders • Verify the summaries/action items of Council meetings and act on these, as required, within identified timelines
Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide overall professional, technical, administrative, clerical and other assistance to the Council • Solicit agenda items • Develop draft agendas • Coordinate and/or facilitate Council meetings, workshops and activities • Capture, track and circulate meeting summary notes and action items • Incorporate identified errors and omissions into meeting summaries • Brief Council members who are new to the role • Maintain contact lists, distribute documentation, and communicate with Council members • Update the relevant GNWT websites to reflect the current Council membership • Obtain and circulate updates on strategy, action plan or program implementation in plain language formats that can be sent directly to Council members’ communities and to their leadership • Maintain a reference resource of all relevant documentation • Draft an annual briefing that members can share with their leadership • Report on Council progress in the publicly-available 2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework 2019-2023 Action Plan Annual Report

3.3 Advisors

The Council will seek advice from a range of advisors, some with specific expertise, as needed. Examples of input and expertise from different knowledge holders that can help inform and guide the Council include, but are not limited to:

- Elders
- Youth
- Stakeholders (for example: industry groups, non-government organizations, co-management boards)
- Researchers or other knowledge holders

The Council will decide how best to engage these advisors. For example:

- Panels could be formed that report back on tasks or questions given to them by the Council (e.g., NWT Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program panel, water stewardship panel, sustainable livelihoods panel, climate change-panels, etc.)
- Advisors could be invited to meetings or to workshops/events to give their input on a wide range of topics as needed (e.g., a Climate Change Advisory Group that includes Council members and stakeholders, an Elders advisory group, a youth advisory group).

4.0 COUNCIL MEETINGS

4.1 Meeting Frequency

There will be at least four regular meetings per year, approximately 2 hours long. Additional meetings may be scheduled to address issues or developments between regular meetings, as needed.

4.2 Meeting Type and Location

Regular Council meetings will take place through telephone/video conferences. In some circumstances, the Council may hold in-person meetings.

4.3 Attendance of Guests and/or Observers

Invited guests, observers or advisors may participate in the Council meetings to provide information or expertise on a topic. Council members may request in-camera time for Council members only during meetings. Meetings are not open to any person or organization, except when invited by the Council.

4.4 Decisions

The Council is a guiding body, rather than a decision-making body; however, if a decision is required, it will be made by consensus. If consensus cannot be obtained, it is important that opinions both for and against a particular decision be expressed and documented.

4.5 Indigenous Government and Organization Members Caucus

IGO members of the Council may choose to caucus to discuss and provide input and advice regarding matters specific to IGO representation or concerns. Time and space will be set aside at Council meetings to accommodate the caucus as needed as identified by the co-chair.

4.6 Reimbursement of Meeting Costs

Costs incurred by IGOs to send one representative (regular member or alternate) to a face-to-face Council meeting will be reimbursed in accordance with the following rules (as per the Financial Administration Manual Directive 1818):

- Reasonable travel and accommodation expenses for face-to-face meetings will only be paid for one Council member per IGO to attend Council meetings or events (where attendance was requested).
- Council members will arrange their own travel and will be reimbursed by ENR.
- Only meals that are not provided at Council meetings or events will be paid for at the standard per diem rate.
- Honoraria will only be provided to unsalaried members.
- GST taxes will not be paid.
- Up to 15 percent administration fee per invoice will be paid to recognize the effort to arrange travel, compile receipts, and generate invoices.

4.6.1 Advisory panels

As per 4.6, costs incurred by IGOs to send one representative to face-to-face advisory panel meetings will be reimbursed.

5.0 PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed as required by the Council to determine if amendments are needed. Proposed changes will be reviewed by all members, endorsed at the subsequent meeting(s).