

B.C. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act

The provincial government has introduced legislation to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration), which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission confirms as the framework for reconciliation. The new B.C. *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* aims to create a path forward that respects the human rights of Indigenous peoples while introducing better transparency and predictability in the work we do together.

If passed, the legislation sets out a process to align B.C.'s laws with the UN Declaration.

The Province worked with the First Nations Leadership Council (BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit and Union of BC Indian Chiefs), who have been directed by First Nations Chiefs of B.C., to develop the legislation.

The legislation requires:

- Alignment of B.C.'s laws with the UN Declaration, and
- An action plan that includes consistent public reporting.

B.C.'s relationship with Indigenous peoples has often been rife with conflict. First Nations have pursued litigation as their only recourse to protect their rights. The Constitution of Canada recognizes and protects Indigenous peoples' rights on their territories, and the courts have clearly upheld those rights.

The *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* provides a legislative framework for recognizing the constitutional and human rights of Indigenous peoples and aligning B.C.'s laws with the internationally recognized standards of the UN Declaration, as well as the legal rights of Canadian Indigenous peoples.

With the legislation, the Province, Indigenous peoples, businesses and local governments will have better tools to build effective relationships and a robust and sustainable economy together.

There are many examples in B.C. of how working together creates benefits for First Nations, industry and the province. These include forestry with shíshálh Nation near Sechelt and land-use planning with Tahltan Nation in Northwestern B.C.