



Members of A SHARED Future in a Virtual Meeting (Photo courtesy of Heather Castleden)

Hello A SHARED Future affiliates and friends! We hope you are all getting a chance to connect with the land and each other in innovative ways as we continue to face the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you have any big news, a conference or funding announcements you'd like to share, or if are interested in getting involved in A SHARED Future, you can contact Marc Calabretta at marc.calabretta@queensu.ca. We are always looking for extra hands on deck!

Highlights

British Columbia Utilities Commission Report: Indigenous Utilities Regulation Inquiry

On March 11th, 2019 the Lieutenant Governor and Executive Council of British Columbia ordered the British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC) to conduct an inquiry concerning the operationalization of Indigenous utilities in the province. This order came on the heels of a lawsuit against the BCUC from Beecher Bay First Nation in 2016 after their request to run an electrical utility within the reserve was denied. The full report is available [here](#)

The Inquiry Report sought to answer questions about regulatory issues, ownership and operation, service provision, consumer bases, and questions around the role and purpose of the Utilities Commission Act. Ten community input sessions were held in June-July 2019, and a special community input session was held

in September at the BC Assembly of First Nations 16th Annual General Assembly. Following the production of the draft report, a series of workshops were held in November to further refine the document.

On April 30th, 2020 the Final Report was submitted by the Commission Secretary, and it included a summary of the historical context of Indigenous peoples and utilities, land rights, and treaty negotiations. The report refers to UNDRIP principles, as well as BC's own DRIPA (Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People's Act). The BCUC kept economic reconciliation and self-determination a priority while laying out the challenges and opportunities for establishing Indigenous utilities, which are defined as "a public utility for which, as the owner or operator, an Indigenous Nation has *de facto* or *de jure* control". A total of 35 recommendations are made, which include specific conditions for different treaty nations and changes to the Utilities Commission Act itself.

Interview with Dr. Anil (Andy) Hira – Simon Fraser University

Professor Andy Hira, a political scientist at Simon Fraser University, recently published a piece in [The Conversation](#) about the BCUC Report. In it, he discusses the environmental imperative for allowing Indigenous utilities in BC, issues with the initial draft report, and rising demand for energy provision. Professor Hira states, "The conclusion is clear: B.C. and Canada need new clean energy sources and

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Indigenous providers provide the grounds for a win-win situation. By allowing Indigenous utilities to compete, we create both clean energy and Indigenous economic development opportunities.”

A SHARED Future Co-Directors, Heather Castleden and Diana Lewis reached out to him to connect on common interests about Indigenous leadership in renewable energy. Andy also took the time to chat with our program manager, Marc Calabretta, about the BCUC Report, his research group: The Clean Energy Research Group.

Thank you for chatting with me on this beautiful sunny morning, Andy. Tell me a little bit about yourself.

Sure, I will try to give you a very short version of it. My focus as an undergraduate was in Latin American Studies, then I went through and did my Master’s in International Relations. I worked for the United States Government for ten years and during that time I started taking economics courses. Then, I combined my interests and went back to do my PhD in Latin American Economics.

I was hired here at Simon Fraser University as a Latin American political economist and I did that for seven or eight years until I started to see some of my students struggle with finding jobs after they graduated. Those that did find jobs were often in the public sector, so I started to teach public policy. This work went hand in hand with some of the work I had done on government energy regulations in the United States. Coupled with increasing concerns about climate change, I thought a shift toward the renewable energy track would allow me to move away from academic subject matter to something that might actually make a difference.



Dr. Andy Hira, Professor of Political Science, Simon Fraser University

That is quite a career journey. I always enjoy hearing about the career journeys of researchers, and how they often come full circle. Can you tell us a bit more about what the CERG is all about?

A couple of years ago we started to have conversations around the University after the Harper government closed CIDA (The Canadian International Development Agency) and transitioned into Global Affairs. When the Trudeau Government came into power, they wanted more interaction with universities and researchers. So, a number of us came together to work on developing more practical and project-based forms of research. We organized a summit two years ago where we brought together government agencies, private and non-profit sector actors, as well as development practitioners. By the end of the workshop the Clean Energy Work Group was formed. The group is comprised of academics and engineers who have been working in renewable energy but wanted to move toward development projects. Over the past two years, we have slowly begun to develop our mission and methodology, as well as relationships with local First Nations communities.



The Clean Energy Research Group at Kanaka Bar First Nation (Photo courtesy of Dr. Andrew Wright)

CERG recently published a report prepared for the British Columbia Utilities Commission. Could you tell me a bit more about this report and the impetus behind it?

Some of my team alerted me about the BCUC Indigenous regulation, so we hammered down last December and put in

a working paper as a deposition to them. That working paper was actually cited ten times in their final report. I have been writing academic stuff for so many years now, and you know, you’re happy if three people read it, so I finally decided to do something practical and I can see that there is some impact.

We want to get the attention of BC Hydro, which has a monopoly in the Province and has basically brought all renewable energy projects to a standstill because of the Site C dam. But, if we can get them to pay attention to not only the cost of diesel and the fact that it goes against Indigenous values, but also the under-counting of the benefits renewable energy projects can provide communities, we might be able to shift policy at the Provincial level and open things up for Indigenous communities. We are seeing this now with the BCUC report and it is up to the Provincial government now to follow the recommendations in the report. If they do, the space is going to be wide open for Indigenous utilities to come in. This might take seven or eight years before the capacity of Site C plays out and demand picks up, but there is going to be a lot of opportunity for renewable energy in BC.

How did you hear about A SHARED Future?

I came across Heather Castleden and A SHARED Future through online research. It makes a lot of sense for us as researchers to combine forces and work together since there is such little activity in this area. As you know, the main costs associated with doing community engaged work is the travel cost to communities, and so if we can coordinate on a regional level we can really reduce our costs and maybe start to coordinate a research effort so we can build something better.

Your Group’s multidisciplinary approach to renewable energy research is very innovative. Can you tell us a bit more about the pedagogy and ‘flavour’ of the research you do?

Our group has a lot of technical expertise given the engineers we have on board, but we also need the governance side so we can work with communities in an integrated, holistic way. Our idea is we can go to communities and offer integrated solutions or advice at no cost. So many

communities are just besieged by consulting agencies, you know? That is when I recognized that there is a real space here for academic research to play a role in the Indigenous renewable energy space. It is an active field with lots of stake holders across Canada, but you see almost no academic research. We recognized that there is an opportunity for us to fill that research space and be seen too.

Our project and ideas are still 'under construction', but I think it is going to be extremely important for engineers to do technical assessments; that is what a lot of the communities think that they need. These assessments are important, but if we look at the literature, we can see examples of energy projects internationally that, in the long-term, suffer not from technical but governance issues. We think that the technical aspect is important, but in the long run what we are doing that is different is taking a holistic approach that provides advice communities will need to set up these renewable projects.

That sounds very interesting and so useful on the community level, to be able to provide advice on all aspects of the project. It is funny you say that about consulting firms, because we see so much of that siloing of hard sciences and qualitative research. Taking an approach that bridges those knowledges is so important.

Absolutely. This approach made me realize some of the things we take for granted in terms of setting up research and understanding the policy background and the constraints are not as intuitive as you might think. Just understanding the politics of the Province and the interplay between Indigenous groups—for example, UNDRIP. The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was accepted by the Province of BC and no one has even a clue as to what it means, how to put it in practice, or what these principles actually mean for different communities and how does it affect policies. It is just a statement of principle. So, this is a space I think we as academics could start to bridge that gap between academic theory, research design, and the policy sphere that is really lacking in terms of practical advice, and we as academics just don't do enough of that.

How do you see your work aligning with the ASF research program?

It looks to me like your team has a really solid long-term vision, one that is very participatory in nature and I appreciate that. When I first started my career working in Cairo, I wrote this book about development projects and why they fail; the number one reason was that they don't get enough input from the beneficiaries in either the design, evaluation, or implementation phase. So, I'm right on board with what your team has laid out in terms of the vision and governance structure. I think there may be space for our policy experience and background in political economy to engage in some complimentary work with the team.



The Clean Energy Research Group inspecting a solar panel install at Kanaka Bar First Nation (Photo courtesy of Dr. Andrew Wright)

Absolutely, this has been a great conversation and shouldn't end here. Are there any other cool projects, research groups, or actions happening that you would like to give a shout-out to? This is your platform!

I think the main question is really this convergence of technological change, industrial policy, and how this could start to transform and speed up both the development process and this lack of urgency around climate change. On one hand, I think this technological change is going to solve some problems, but on the other, what we see with COVID-19 and

climate change is a lack of institutionalization at the global level. For instance, billions of dollars have been pledged under the Paris Agreement for mitigation and adaptation projects, but none of that money has appeared for the kind of work that needs to be done. So my hope is that at some point that the money from Paris will start to appear and space will open up for the work that we are doing here to really start, to reach fruition because they are going to need people in this position—people who are policy experts but know the technological side to actually guide these projects and make sure money is well spent.

Fascinating insights, hopefully so. Thank you for chatting with us, Andy!

Project Updates

Here is what Project Leads have to say this month:

Indigenous Women in Renewable Energy (I-WIRE)

Co-Leads: Naatoui'lhkpiakii (Melissa Quesnelle) and Heather Castleden
Advisory Committee: Barbara Dumont-Hill, Tanna Pirie-Wilson, and Spot open
Current Status: Project underway

Update: We are still on pause at this time, while both Co-Leads are pulled in other directions under COVID-19. We will re-start our data analysis and film development soon. We also plan to schedule a second gathering in 2021.

Bras d'Or Lakes CEPI

Co-Leads: Mary Beth Doucette, Lisa Young, and Stan Johnson
Project Assistant: Carolyn Barber
Advisory Committee: Elder Albert Marshall and Cheryl Bartlett
Current Status: Project underway

Update: The Bras d'Or Lakes CEPI Project team is adapting to online meeting logistics, regularly checking in with one another and attending CEPI meetings.

Mary Beth, Carolyn and Shaniya have begun high-level thematic analysis of interviews. Community co-leads Stan Johnson and Lisa Young are also reviewing selected transcripts for 'big bucket' themes.

CEPI members have been brought up to speed on project timeline delays and impacts. The most significant impact is the cancellation of May gatherings in which we would have shared preliminary results and gathered input on next steps in the project.

We Lived This Way Before - Tobique First Nation

Co-Leads: Diana Lewis and Tanna Pirie-Wilson.

Research Assistant: Serena Mendizabal

Project Coordinator: Jennifer Sappier

Advisory Committee: Elder Ramona Nicholas, Laura Turnbull (Sex and Gender Project Co-Champion), Asha Bear (Youth)

Current Status: Project underway

Update: We have had two meetings since COVID-19 thanks to Zoom. Everyone is doing well and all are safe and healthy. Our team has decided that Grandma's should be deemed an essential service since Jennifer and Ramona were missing having contact with their grandkids the most during these challenging times. New Brunswick has since fared really well and is allowing more freedoms, so they are able to reunite at long last. Chad is back from England and will be working with us over the summer. We are happy to welcome him back. Serena is busily working toward implementing an educational program with a newly hired community coordinator (TBD), planning swag, branding, and equipment needs. Ramona is working on the Wolastoqiyik cultural framework that will guide our work. Happy to report that we will meeting every two weeks via Zoom to keep moving things along as best we can.

Gikino'amaagewin Wiigwaam (Teaching Lodge): Supporting M'Wikwedong Indigenous Friendship Centre's Leadership on Land Stewardship and Urban Climate Transition in Owen Sound/Saugeen Ojibway Territory

Co-Leads: Paul Nadjiwan, Karen Houle, and Jeff Masuda

Project Assistants: Diane Giroux, Renee Abram, Diana (Dee) Lewis, Carlos Sánchez, Anna Anbalagan, and Julia Moreau

Advisory Committee: Theresa O'Connor, Susan Staves Schank, Hillary Trudeau, Ron Root, Shane Chegahno, Nick Saunders, Shari Huber, Anne Marie Shaw, Victoria Serda and Helen Doyle

Current Status: Project on hold due to COVID-19

Update: We are happy to announce that M'Wikwedong relocated to a new building in Owen Sound in early May. Kudos to M'Wikwedong for this great achievement! Another great news item is that our project received clearance from the Research Ethics Committee of the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres on March 31st. As successful applicants, we are required to participate in Indigenous Cultural Competency Training, which includes a research-specific component. We are working towards identifying the best way to participate in this training given the COVID-19 context. In the meantime, our research project is on hold while safe conditions for everyone can be guaranteed.



The new building of M'Wikwedong at 1045 3rd Ave. West in Owen Sound, ON. Photo credit: M'Wikwedong Indigenous Friendship Centre (Photo courtesy of M'Wikwedong First Nation)

Perspectives Among Indigenous Youth on Energy and Food Sovereignty

Co-Leads: Hannah Tait Neufeld and Chief Gordon Planes

Advisory Committee: TBD

Current Status: Project underway

Update: Hannah and Brianna Poirier are continuing to prepare two manuscripts from Brianna's thesis for publication. Meanwhile, Brianna moved to Australia in February and began working at the Indigenous Oral Health Unit at the

University of Adelaide as a Research Assistant. Brianna has also been offered the opportunity to transition from this role into a PhD program at the University of Adelaide. Brianna would like to extend her gratitude to all members of the ASF team for their support throughout her Master's degree and guidance in developing her research skills.



Brianna Poirier in Australia with a new furry friend! (Photo courtesy of Brianna)

Advancing Culturally Relevant Gender Based Analysis in Indigenous Research on Renewable Energy Futures and Health

Co-Leads: Jeff Masuda and Hollie Sabourin

Project Assistant: Carlos Sánchez, Anna Anbalagan

Advisory Committee: Programmatic Steering Committee

Current Status: Project underway

Update: Jeff, Hollie and Carlos met by videoconference on March 23rd. The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) is proposing that our team hosts a webinar about the practical implementation of CRGBA in A SHARED Future. The webinar could be a great way to reciprocate for NWAC's support to our projects and we are looking into organizing it sometime this fall. The webinar could present a few 'vignettes' that describe how different projects within ASF implemented CRGBA. Regarding the analysis of our gender sharing circle held in

December 2019, our team members are in the process of coding and annotating the transcript. Once the analysis is finished, we will proceed to updating the Gender Report from A SHARED Future's Gender Champions.

Working Towards Energy Security, Self-Determination, and Reconciliation: A Collaborative Analysis of Natural Resources Canada's Off Diesel Initiative

Project Lead: Heather Castleden

Manager: Derek Kornelsen

Advisory Committee: Naatoi'lhkpiakii (Melissa Quesnelle), Ken Paul, Diana Lewis, Siobhan Slade, Vince Robinson

Current Status: Project underway

Update: Despite some slowing related to the current pandemic our critical program analysis of NRCan's Indigenous Off-Diesel Initiative continues to progress well as we continue to work on data analysis, maintaining communications with IODI participants, NRCan, and Pembina and to provide programmatic feedback when possible and to seek iterative feedback on our findings as we progress. Our team has been adapting to working from home and

trying to navigate a work/life balance in these uncertain and unusual times. Currently, we are looking forward to engaging virtually where possible, while maintaining a hope for some in-person meetings sometime in the future if possible. In the meanwhile, we are setting meetings with the ASF team and participants to discuss findings and publication strategies. We expect to hold these meetings within the next month or two and to be working on publications in the summer/fall of 2020).

Towards Energy Security in NunatuKavut

Co-Leads: Debbie Martin and Amy Hudson

Project Assistant: Emily Beacock

Current Status: Project underway

Update: The team is getting used to the new research realities under COVID-19. Nick Mercer (University of Waterloo) is aiming to defend his PhD later this summer and is polishing off a third manuscript from his thesis. Emily has convoked her Master's of Environmental Studies at Dalhousie—albeit remotely. Congratulations Emily! Debbie is continuing to work from home

and spending her evenings fishing with her 7-year old son.

Trainee Project Updates

Exploring Relations, Experience and Ways of Knowing in an Interdisciplinary Cross-Cultural Program of Research

Lead: Sara Rotz, Assistant Professor and A SHARED Future Associate

Project Assistant: Johnathan Rose

Advisory Committee: Simon Brascoupe and Cheryl Bartlett

Current Status: Project underway

Update: Working from the A SHARED Future's Sex- and Gender-Based Analysis Report (2019) alongside interviews, we have produced a draft paper examining how researchers feel about the support (or lack thereof) from CIHR in regards to implementing sex- and gender-based analysis in their projects, and how to improve CIHR's knowledge and training infrastructure to reflect principles of SGBA and CRGBA. We continue the editing process and hope to have a final draft before summer.

Upcoming Opportunities

Conference Updates

Canadian Water Resources Association 2020 National Conference: Unfortunately, this year's conference has been cancelled. Another conference and additional workshops are being planned for 2021. More information [here](#).

9th Biennial International Indigenous Research Conference 2020 Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga New Zealand's Māori Centre of Research Excellence (NPM) is the founding host of the biennial International Indigenous Research Conference, and will be hosting this year's conference, titled "Indigenous Futures" from November 16th to 20th virtually from the University of Auckland. Online options for engagement will be offered, with information forthcoming. You can find more information on refunds and abstract submission on their [website](#).

Renewables in Remote Communities Conference: RiRC2020 is a four-day event at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre in Whitehorse, Yukon that has been rescheduled to April 13-16, 2021. The conference was rescheduled in order to adapt to COVID-19. The two-day main conference, supplemented by activities on the pre-conference and post-conference days, focuses on the collaboration and financial solutions necessary to further accelerate the transition of clean energy in remote communities across Canada while prioritizing Indigenous-owned and led projects. Register [here](#)!

The **World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education 2020** has been postponed to November 1st-5th, 2021. Click [here](#) for more info.

The **Reconciling Ways of Knowing: Indigenous Knowledge and Science Forum**, which was supposed to take place in Winnipeg from May 25-27, 2020, has been postponed to May 25-27, 2021. In the meantime, online programming is being released. The conference is being hosted by the Reconciling Ways of Knowing Conference Society in partnership with the David Suzuki Foundation, Turtle Lodge International Centre for Indigenous Education and Wellness, and the Indigenous Leadership Initiative. The purpose of the conference is to bring together Indigenous and western ways of knowing to produce comprehensive and

effective responses to the challenges of climate change, the protection of biodiversity, improved health and wellness outcomes, the development of thriving and sustainable economies, and fulfilling commitments to reconciliation and Nation-to-Nation relationships. If you have any questions please contact Allison Bishop at abish007@uoguelph.ca.

New Initiatives

The **Indigenous Innovation Initiative** is now accepting expressions of interest for projects that advance gender equality in Indigenous communities. The initiative offers up to \$250,000 in funding per project. The call for applications is open to non-profits, Indigenous governments, and others. You can learn more about the initiative [here](#)!

Other Opportunities

As many gatherings and conferences are being cancelled or rescheduled, we are discovering more ways to come together, and to learn from one another!

Check out this [webinar recording](#), titled “Reimagining our relationships and communities: A conversation with David Suzuki and Melina Laboucan-Massimo”. You can join the David Suzuki Foundation’s Charged Up [community](#) to hear about more events like this, as well as stories and opportunities to take action!



Photo by Thunder Currier, 2019.

The **Idle No More** movement has a collection of webinars and livestreams on land rights, self-determination and more! Check them out [here](#).

The **Climate Action Network** has a series of webinars on a multitude of climate related topics, including the Teck Mine, climate and health, and the role of social media! Check it out! The image on the right is from a webinar on the Teck Mine and barriers to climate action from the oil and gas lobby in Canada.



The **Canadian Coalition for Global Health Research** recently did a webinar regarding the impacts of climate change on health, and the importance of partnering with Indigenous people. You can watch the webinar [here](#).



Just in from the CAG are some new articles & publications relevant to the vision and purpose of ASF!

Sākihitowin Awāsis. [Gwaabaw: Applying Anishinaabe harvesting protocols to energy governance.](#)

Warren Bernauer. [Producing consent: How environmental assessment enabled oil and gas extraction in the Oikiqtani region of Nunavut.](#)

Carelle Mang-Benza, Carol Hunsberger. [Wandering identities in energy transition discourses: Political leaders' use of the "we" pronoun in Ontario, 2009–2019.](#)



Thank you to those who shared news articles with us. If you read an article or see a multimedia piece that you think fits the A SHARED Future research program, we would love to see it!

Please send all content to marc.calabretta@queensu.com