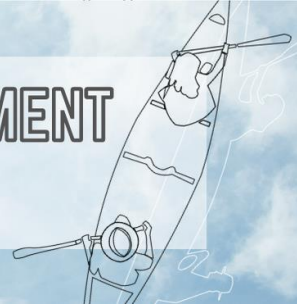


NAVIGATING THE LAW TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

RECONCILIATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL LAW BACKGROUND INFORMATION



April 2021

For reconciliation to work and for a relationship to be renewed there must be awareness, acceptance, apology, atonement, and action.

- The Hon. Murray Sinclair

What is Reconciliation?

- Reconciliation is an ongoing process that means different things to different people.
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and its 94 [Calls to Action](#) play an important role in the reconciliation process which the TRC has described as a process of establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships.
- Reconciliation is an opportunity to work together to strengthen relationships in Canada, not just those between the Canadian government, settlers, and Indigenous peoples, but also with the land itself.
- Reconciliation is about building and restoring trust and respect. It is about healing, while remembering and acknowledging the harms that have occurred in the past.
- The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* provides a framework for reconciliation and must be fully implemented in Canada for meaningful change to occur.

What is my role in the Reconciliation process?

- All Canadians have a role to play in the reconciliation process.
- It is up to each of us to figure out our personal role in the reconciliation process and find the ways in which we can best help create positive change.
- A good starting place is to read the TRC's 94 Calls to Action and see which of the Actions you can best implement in your life.

What does Reconciliation mean for Environmental Law in Canada?

In order to meaningfully move forward with reconciliation efforts in Canada and make the necessary changes to environmental laws and policies, there are a range of different actions that should be taken. This includes:

- Listening to and learning from Indigenous governments and communities in Canada.
- Rethinking our understanding of Canadian history and the origins of environmental law.
- Acknowledging the role of Indigenous peoples in the creation of Canada and development of decision-making systems.
- Recognizing Indigenous laws and the sovereignty of Indigenous governments.
- Acknowledging and addressing systemic environmental racism.
- Reforming and passing new laws and policies at all levels of Canadian government. This includes reform of impact assessment and environmental decision-making processes.
- Full implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.
- Legal recognition of the rights of the lands and waters on which all life depends.

For more information see:

- [Reconciliation and Environmental Law](#) (webinar)
- [Reconciliation and Environmental Law: Additional Resources](#)
- [Reconciliation and Environmental Law: Additional Questions](#)



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