



Establishing Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas on Land and Water

Investing in Indigenous-led economic development and land/ocean-use planning, environmental stewardship programs such as Indigenous Guardians, and establishment of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) is a tested approach that will have economic, social and cultural benefits now that grow over time and help Canada meet its commitments to reduce GHG emissions, protect biodiversity, and advance reconciliation.

Tourism is just one economic driver of IPCAs. Prior to COVID-19, Indigenous tourism in Canada contributed \$1.9 billion to Canada's GDP annually, with a 20% annual growth rate, 40,000 employees and 1900 businesses.⁵⁴ Investing in IPCAs now will provide immediate support for communities, and also put in place the planning, infrastructure, and governance structures necessary to capitalize on economic opportunities from IPCAs, such as tourism, as our economy recovers.

For example, the recent Thaidene Nënë Indigenous Protected Area⁵⁵ was established in 2019 with a \$30 million endowment that will generate \$1-4 million annually and support 18 new full time jobs critical to such a remote community. Prior to COVID-19, tourism development associated with Thaidene Nënë was anticipated to create at least 20 new year-round jobs and 30 seasonal jobs.⁵⁶



Photo: Pat Kane

54 <https://indigenoustourism.ca/corporate/itac-strategic-recovery-plan/>

55 <http://www.landoftheancestors.ca/>

56 <http://www.landoftheancestors.ca/uploads/1/3/0/0/130087934/lkdfn-overview.pdf>



The Canada Nature Fund confirmed the demand for IPCAs across Canada. The Green Budget Coalition recommends that future funding support both IPCA establishment and the upfront economic development and land/ocean-use planning that creates the overarching framework for IPCAs and the stewardship and Guardians program that ensure their management. Such investments would accelerate IPCA development and associated economic, cultural, climate and environmental benefits.

RECOMMENDED INVESTMENT [ECCC, Parks Canada, DFO]:

Indigenous-led efforts such as the Indigenous Leadership Initiative⁵⁷ and Land Needs Guardians⁵⁸ are calling for significant new investments in Indigenous-led conservation. In the spirit of reconciliation, the Green Budget Coalition affirms its support for these efforts and their budget requests and thus recommends:

- 1) Committing to Indigenous-led conservation, including Indigenous-led land use planning, the creation of IPCAs, and stewardship programs such as Indigenous Guardians, as a vital component of Canada’s domestic plan to protect 25% of its lands and waters by 2025.
- 2) Investing **at least \$1.5 billion over five years** to support the completion of Indigenous-led land use plans and the establishment of IPCAs and their associated stewardship programs.⁵⁹

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⁵⁷ <https://www.ilinationhood.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Backgrounder-Indigenous-Guardians.pdf>

⁵⁸ <https://landneedsguardians.ca/national-network>

⁵⁹ The Green Budget Coalition has not received a specific recommendation for IPCA investment in years 2025 onward from the Indigenous Leadership Initiative or other Indigenous-led effort; however, we anticipate that an investment on par with years 2020-2025 will be required.