

# Getting Ready- Ethical Space:

▶ A framework for  
indigenous relations

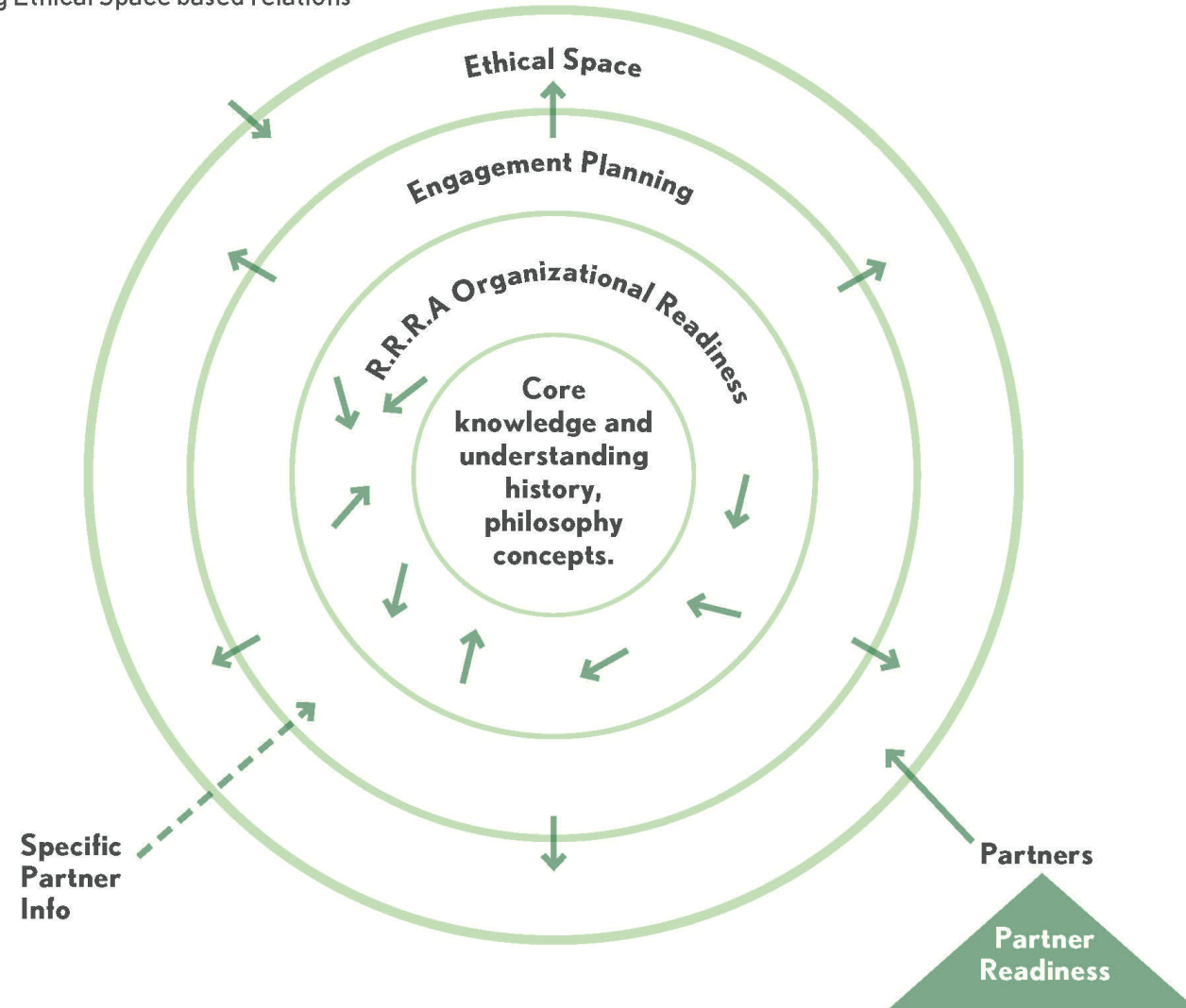
BLab

By: Gwen Bridge  
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GWEN BRIDGE CONSULTING LTD

**TRAJECTORY OF AWESOMENESS™**  
Establishing Ethical Space based relations



How to prepare

by Rob Edward,  
smelqmix

# Agenda Overview - Framework for the future

1. Why do we want to better relationships or collaborations between science and indigenous knowledge practitioners?

- Resolve conflicts that perpetuate inequality,
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People
- Conserve and manage natural resources sustainably, IUCN, COP 26

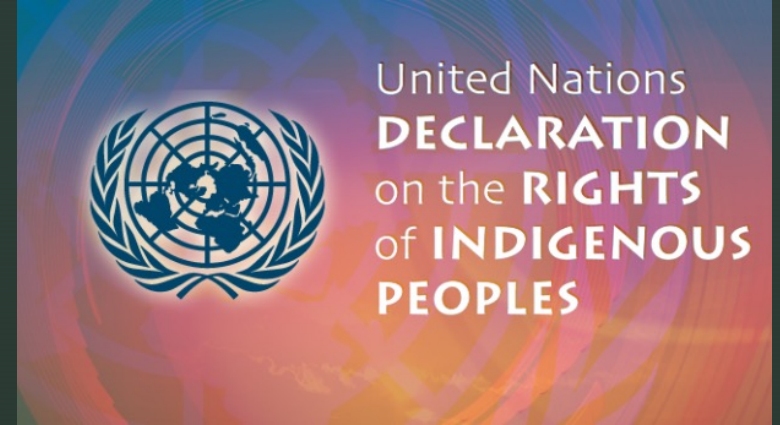
What do we need to know?

- UNDRIP
- Reconciliation: worldviews and ways of knowing?
- Structural characteristics of these worldviews?
- Deep understanding of the challenges to working together as ecologists and indigenous knowledge holders

2. 3. What happens when we know it?

- We practice open-mindedness and creativity to provide guidance towards a more equitable and sustainable future
- We understand our role and our influence in improving ecological management

How long have people been thinking it's important to learn from indigenous knowledge?

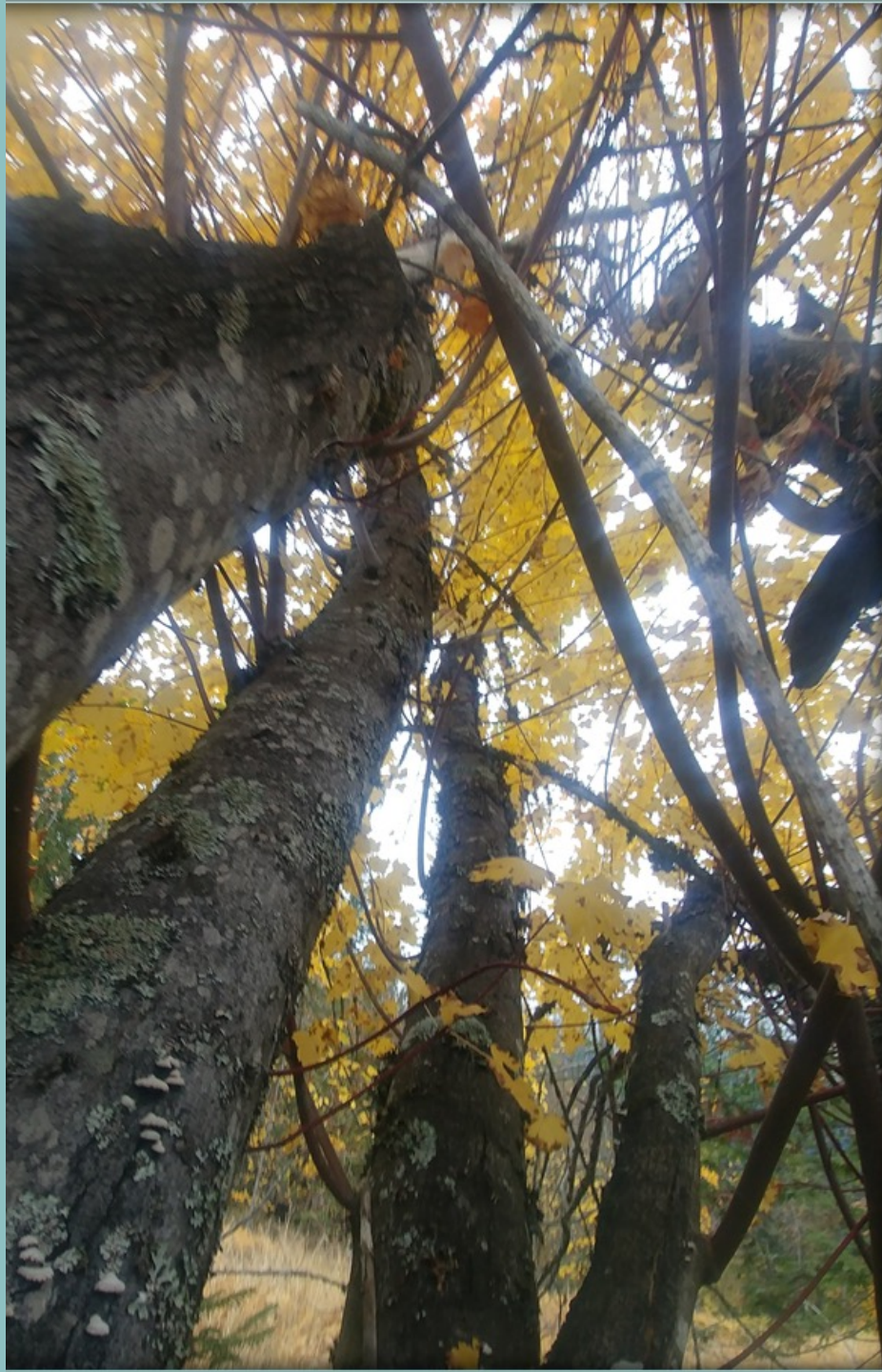


## UNDRIP - 2007

- Highest level of international guidance endorsed by indigenous peoples – not legally binding
  - Canada endorsed in 2016 C-15 2021
  - US endorsed with caveats in 2010, TEK white house press release
  - BC passed the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) in 2019
  - Underlies press for indigenous rights,
  - Global conservation goals, 80 % biodiversity on indigenous lands

# UNDRIP

- States to:
  - 1. acknowledge and recognize rights
  - 2. protect those rights
  - 3. pay to protect, redress, mitigate impacts to, those rights



- Article 25 The right to maintain and strengthen unique spiritual relationships with, and **responsibilities to, traditional lands, waters, and other resources** for current and future generations
- Article 27 To establish and implement, with indigenous peoples, a system whereby **indigenous people's laws, traditions, customs and land tenure systems are recognized**, and indigenous rights can be adjudicated.





Article 31 1. Indigenous peoples have the right to **maintain**, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the **manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures**, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, **knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora**, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.

# Reconciliation

- Canada, Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2015
  - 94 calls to action
    - 47. We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and lands, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullius*, and to reform those laws, government policies, and litigation strategies that continue to rely on such concepts.
  - To reconcile, the first relationship that must **heal is the relationship of indigenous people to their land**



# How to reconcile?

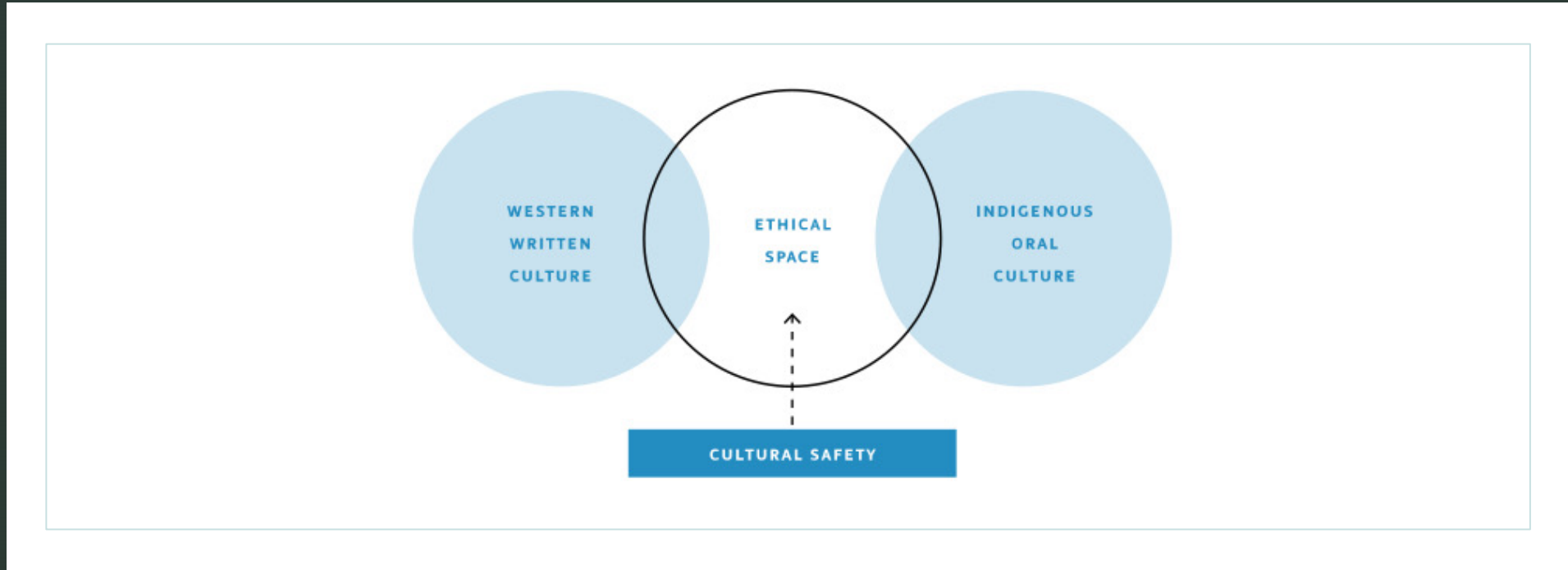
- What does reconciliation mean?
- It means sharing a vision, one that is in focus for both entities?
- We are seeing out of only one eye if we attempt to create a vision without indigenous people (the second eye)



# Ethical Space

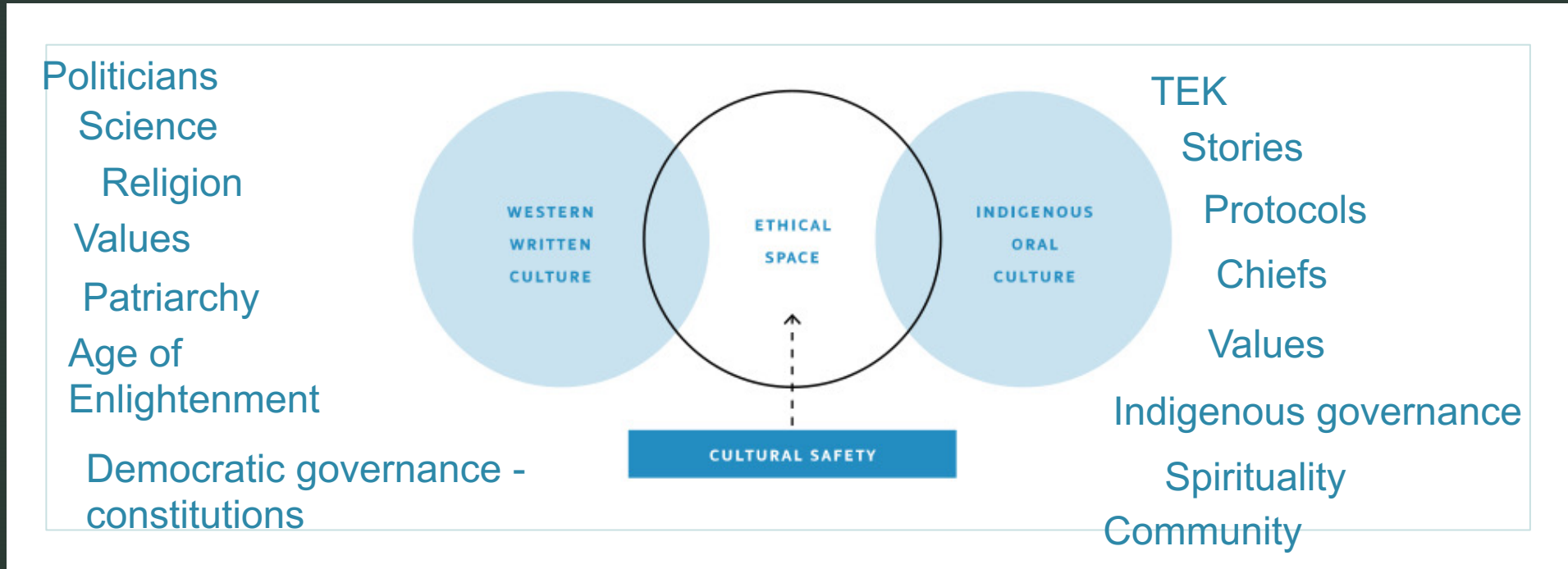
- Before we can reconcile, we need to understand what that other eye is seeing. We will miss our target if we don't have that **depth perception** provided by **binocular vision**
- “it means having a **visual field** which is put together by the brain with input from both eyes.”





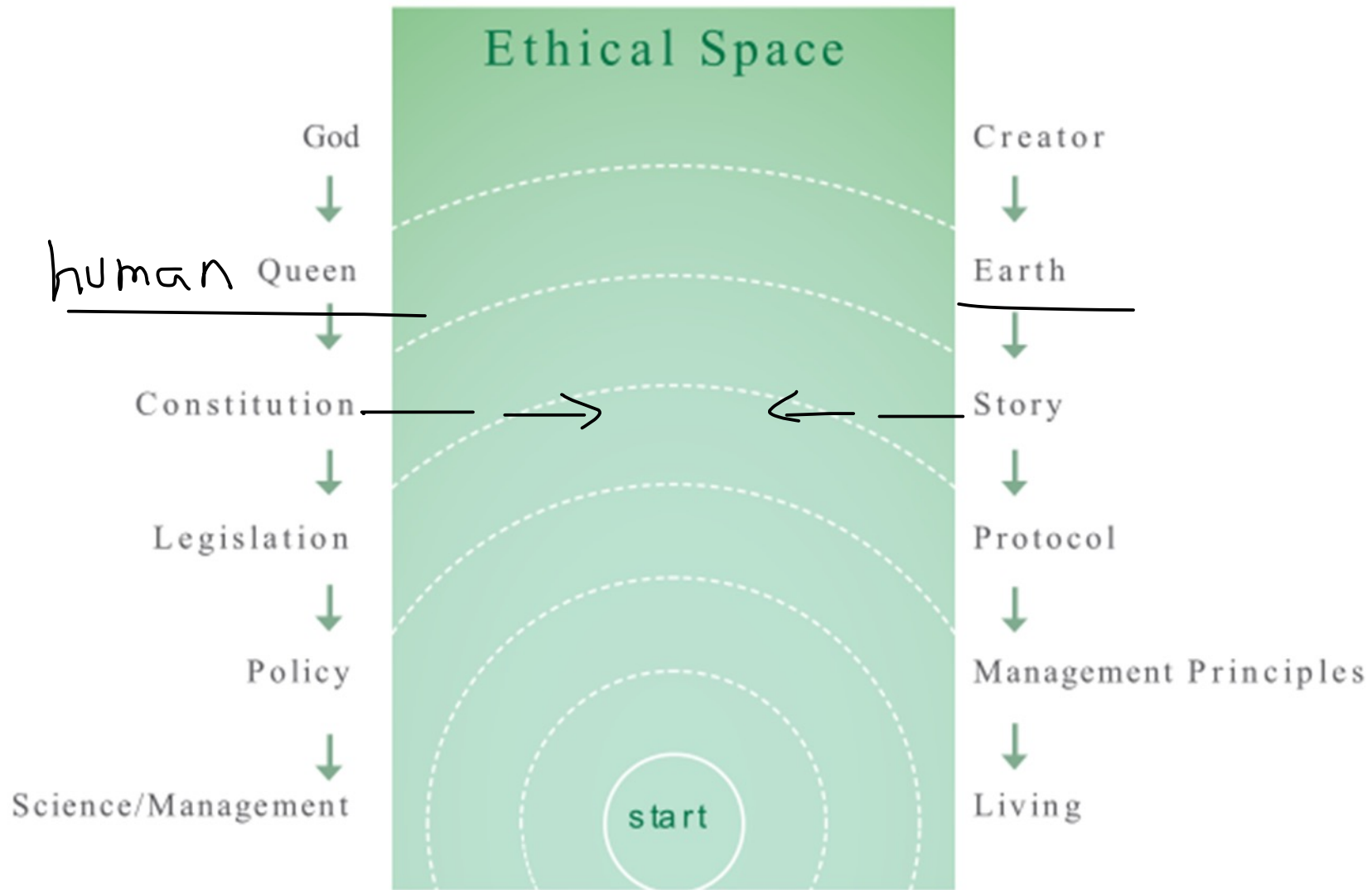
Reg Crowshoe, Voices of Understanding, Alberta Energy Regulator

# Ethical Space frameworks

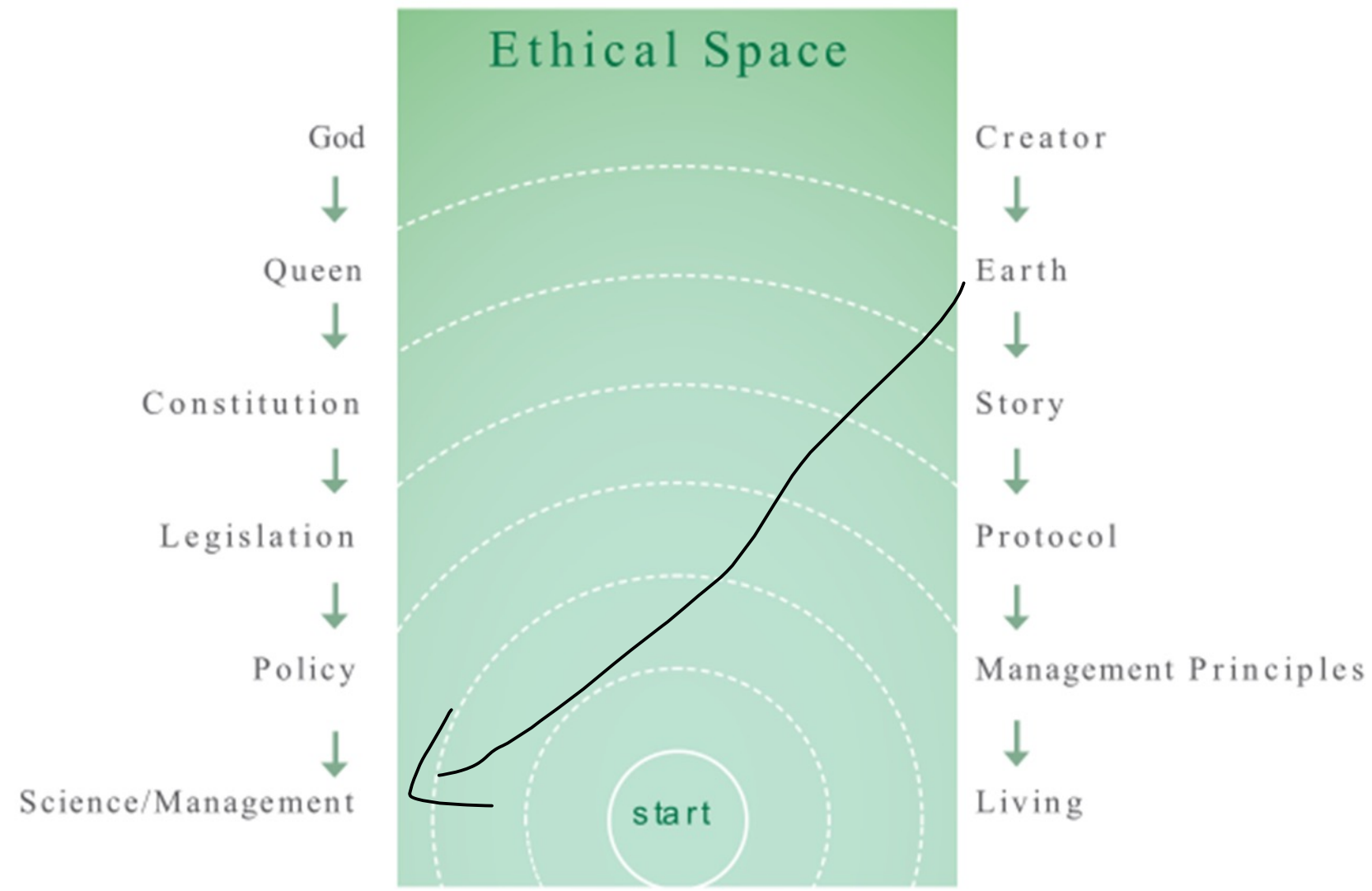


What is in those cultures?

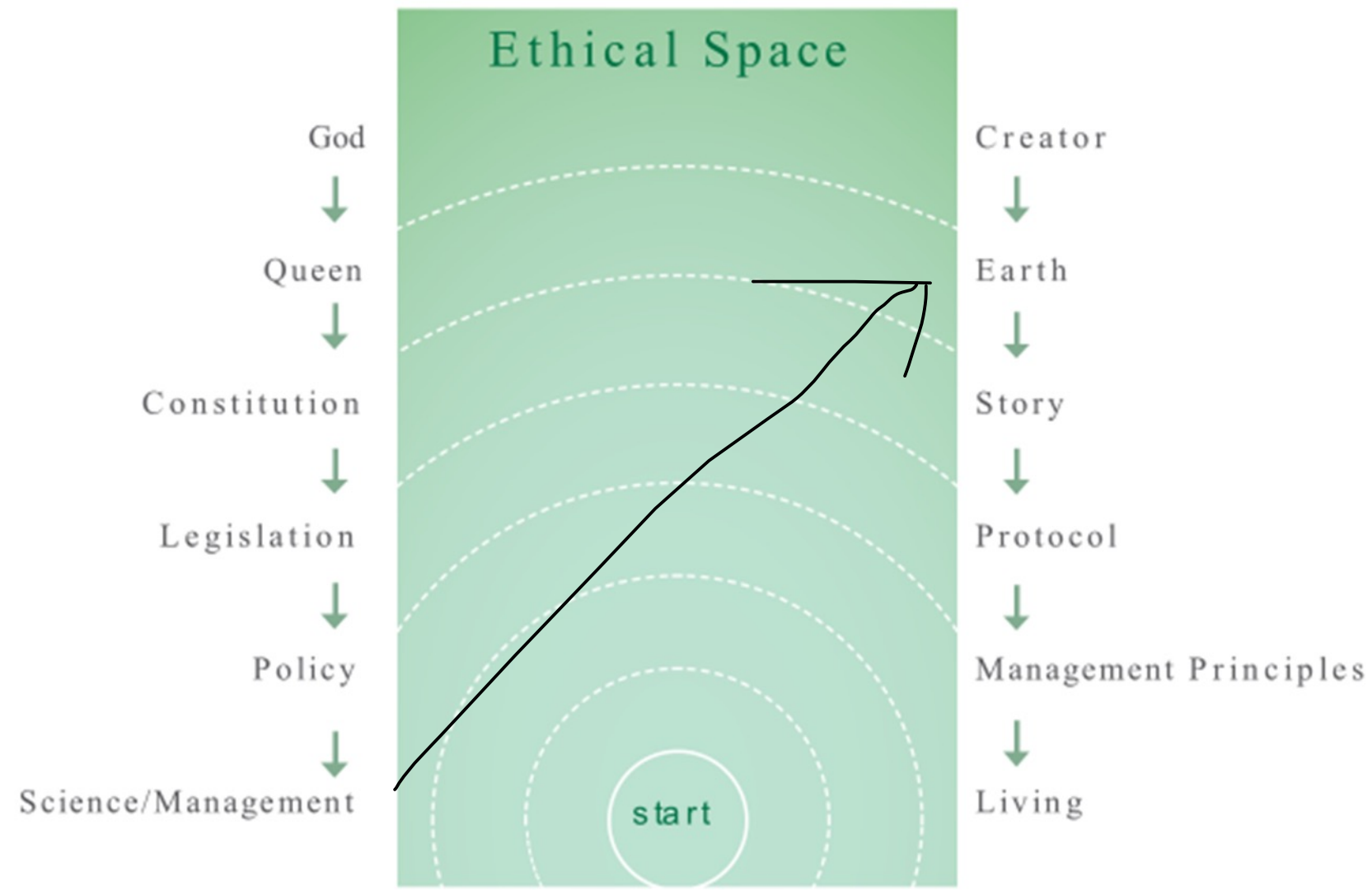
ETHICAL SPACE AND RECONCILIATION



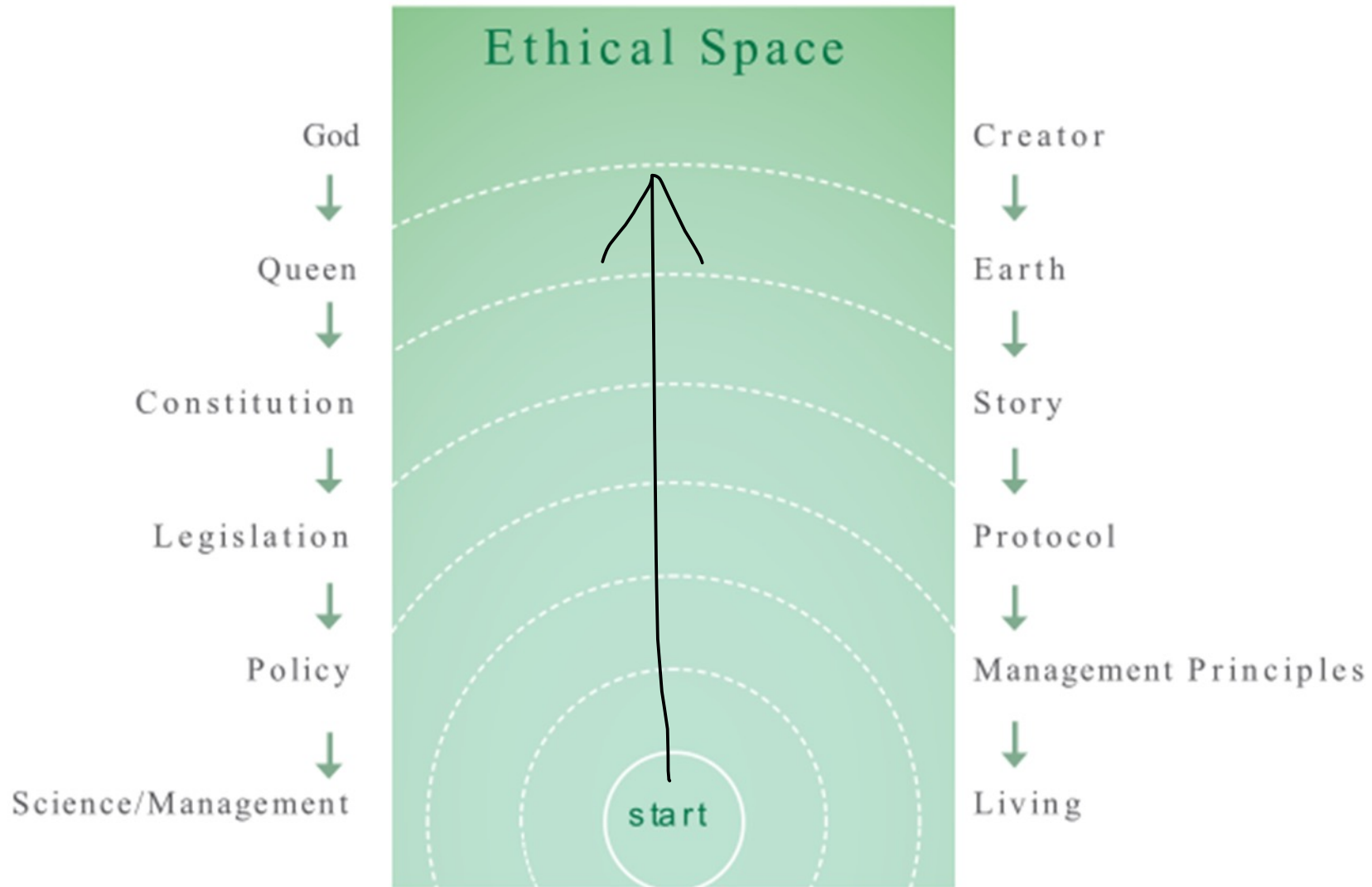
ETHICAL SPACE AND RECONCILIATION



# ETHICAL SPACE AND RECONCILIATION



## ETHICAL SPACE AND RECONCILIATION





# Regional and Organizational Strategy

- Typical Planning - Theory of Change
- Ethical Space
- Creation stories and protocol

decisions

influence  
systems

Common  
goals

exploration  
of assumptions

challenges

systems  
taught us

⇒ decision  
making  
takes systems  
guidance into  
account  
....

# Pragmatic approach

- What level are we working at? I understand the system
- Principle based approach, I understand the significance of the knowledge
- Transparency
- Capacity, challenges and supports?
- Trust and time.

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*Action has meaning only in relationship and without understanding relationship, action on any level will only breed conflict. The understanding of relationship is infinitely more important than the search for any plan of action.*

— J. KRISHNAMURTI



# Engagement planning

by Rob Edward,  
smelqmix



People + Place + Principles = Partnership

# Indigenous Law and Policy – decision making

Sir Wilfred Laurier Memorial 1910

(<http://www.sfu.ca/~palys/OpenLetterToWilfredLaurier-1910.pdf>)

***“These people wish to be partners with us in our country. We must, therefore, be the same as brothers to them, and live as one family. We will share equally in everything half and half in land, water and timber, etc. What is ours will be theirs, and what is theirs will be ours. We will help each other to be great and good.”;***

i? s'caǰ w'tət (MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING)

**Responsibility** We are responsible for the content and character of our relationships and we honor and meet our commitments

**Relevance** We continuously work on building collective relevance. Our work will be considered in relation to Indigenous priorities as well as our own.

**Reciprocity** We ensure that we are always bringing value to Indigenous peoples

**Relationality** We commit long term to the development of mutually beneficial relationships.

**Resources** We recognize and support that funding may be required to engage with Indigenous peoples from Tribes and First Nations.

## 2. What are you trying to achieve? (Responsibility)

- a. Define what you are hoping to achieve, consider Y2Y vision, and Reconciliation Vision
- b. Demonstrate that you have done your work, what you understand, acknowledge what history you know,
- c. Share transparently where your limitations are, what directives/policies/laws etc that you are abiding by which may place limitations on options.
- d. Understand ethical space, be clear about what you are bringing into the space, ask for how to gain understanding of indigenous perspectives and priorities
- e. Think through how Y2Y is able to support those agendas.
- f. Understand your own mandate and policies so as to be responsive if indigenous groups point out needed changes, you have suggestions about where and how those changes could be implemented.

## 3. Understand what your potential partners are trying to achieve (Relevance)

- a. Search for how you support indigenous agendas and needs, for example, data, infrastructure buildouts, capacity and mentorship,
- b. Review their strategic plans, position statements, letters they have sent to other governments (if you can find that out), what are their priorities, ask your contacts directly what they are working towards.
- c. Determine what synergies could exist between your work and their work
- d. Write that down, develop a presentation, etc. and be willing to share where you think you can support



## Indigenous processes – Free, prior, informed consent

“decision making systems require a community-based decision-making process which is embedded in skətraʻ (inherent right), the captik<sup>w</sup>† (doctrine for transference of all knowledge) and sm iʻm ày (the stories of transition between animal people to human domain) and includes use of naqscn (speaking with one voice), knʻxtwix (helping each other), kəʻʧačxəntm (considering multi-generational impacts) and nʧawqntəm (coming together for on-going discussions to reach consensus) principles guided by miʻscut (traditional knowledge) and ceremony.”

*MOU with Canada and Lower Similkameen Indian Band*

## Join us for a 2.5 day workshop on the Similkameen River.

July 25-27, 2023

This workshop will teach industry leaders new conceptual frameworks and strategies for building relationships with Indigenous Peoples that lead to mutually beneficial outcomes and advance our collective progress towards realized reconciliation.

[Details](#)

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