

Frequently Asked? QUESTIONS

Answers to common questions about the
***FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT ON
FIRST NATION LAND MANAGEMENT***



**FIRST NATIONS
LAND MANAGEMENT
RESOURCE CENTRE**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT ON FIRST NATION LAND MANAGEMENT

What is the [Framework Agreement on First Nation Land Management \(FAFNLM\)](#)?

The [Framework Agreement on First Nation Land Management](#) is a government-to- government agreement signed on February 12, 1996 by 13 First Nations and Canada.

The FAFNLM is an initiative driven by First Nations to opt out of the land management sections of the Indian Act and take over responsibility for the governance, management and control of their reserve lands, environment and resources. The FAFNLM sets out the principal components of this land governance process.

In March of 2003 the FAFNLM was amended to allow for additional signatories. More than 150 First Nations have signed on to the FAFNLM.

The FAFNLM provides all its signatory First Nations with the option to govern their reserve lands under their own Land Codes.

Until a First Nation community develops and approves a Land Code to take control of its reserve lands and resources, federal administration of their reserve lands continues under the Indian Act.

The FAFNLM is not a treaty and does not affect treaty rights or other constitutional rights of the First Nations.

How is the [Framework Agreement on First Nation Land Management](#) ratified?

The FAFNLM historically enacted a new approach in government-to- government convention, requiring ratification by each of the First Nations and by Canada.

Canada enacted the *First Nation Land Management Act*, as part of its obligation to ratify the FAFNLM. It was given royal assent on June 17, 1999.

A First Nation ratifies the FAFNLM by enacting a Land Code. Over 80 First Nations from across Canada have developed and ratified their own land codes to date.

What is Land Governance and Land Management?

Land management involves the day-to-day administration of reserve lands environment and resources and land governance is the ability to legislate laws in respect of those lands, environment and resources.

Can the FAFNLM be amended?

Yes. The FAFNLM can only be amended with the approval of 2/3 of its Operational First Nation signatories and Canada.

Is the FAFNLM self-government?

Yes. This is one sectoral component of self-government by First Nations and deals only with their reserve lands, environment and resources. Matters related to other topics, e.g. elections, membership, health and education, would be dealt with in the context of other agreements.

Will there be any impact on other self-government arrangements?

No. There is no direct impact on other self-government arrangements. The provisions of the FAFNLM are sufficiently flexible and progressive that other self-government initiatives are able to fit harmoniously with the First Nation land governance established under the FAFNLM.

The FAFNLM does not define or prejudice inherent rights, or any other rights, of First Nations to control their lands or resources, e.g. rights under s. 35 of the Constitution. The FAFNLM also does not preclude other negotiations or actions in respect of those rights.

ABORIGINAL AND TREATY RIGHTS

Does the FAFNLM affect Treaty rights?

No. The FAFNLM is not a treaty and does not affect any treaty rights.

Does the FAFNLM affect other Aboriginal rights?

No. The FAFNLM does not define or prejudice inherent rights, or any other rights, of First Nations to control their lands or resources or to preclude other negotiations or actions in respect of those rights.

Does the FAFNLM affect other First Nations?

No. It applies only to the First Nation who have signed it. Other First Nations are not affected. The Agreement does not affect any lands, or any rights in lands, that do not belong to the signatory First Nations.

Will the fiduciary relationship between the federal Crown and the First Nations continue?

Yes. The FAFNLM explicitly states that the Parties acknowledge that the federal Crown's "special relationship" with the First Nations will continue.

As First Nations reclaim their decision making under their own land codes, the Minister's responsibility as a fiduciary is less than it would be under the Indian Act.

PROTECTION OF FIRST NATION LAND

Will First Nation lands be protected under the FAFNLM?

Yes. The land base of a First Nation is protected for future generations.

- Reserve lands under a Land Code cannot be sold or surrendered for sale.
- First Nation land is immune from expropriation for any provincial purpose and no provincial government or agency can have First Nation land expropriated by Canada.
- The power of Canada to expropriate First Nation land is restricted to cases where it is “justified and necessary for a federal public purpose that serves the national interest”. If such a case did occur, the First Nation must receive an equivalent amount of land as compensation, in addition to financial compensation for other damages.

A First Nation may decide that it is advantageous to exchange some of its First Nation land for other lands. Provision can be made in its Land Code for a procedure to negotiate and approve such exchanges. However, any exchange of land cannot occur without the consent of the First Nation membership.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

Was federal legislation necessary?

Yes. The First Nations Land Management Act (FNLMA) was required for 2 reasons

- as Canada’s method to ratify the *FAFNLM*, and
- to implement those clauses of the *FAFNLM* that affect third parties and those that affect other federal laws.

Can the federal legislation change the *FAFNLM*?

No. The FNLMA must be consistent with the *FAFNLM*. The Act repeats many of the provisions of the *FAFNLM*.

Was there a previous Bill in Parliament on this subject?

Yes. The Act was previously introduced in Parliament on December 10, 1996, as Bill C_75 and received second reading in April of 1997. However, the federal election prevented that Bill from being enacted in 1997.

The Bill was re-introduced in Parliament as Bill C-49 on June 11, 1998.

Is the FAFNLM or FNLMMA an amendment to the *Indian Act*?

No. There is no amendment of the *Indian Act* as a result of either document.

FEDERAL RESPONSIBILITY

Is there any continuing federal responsibility for First Nations lands?

There is no change to the status of First Nation land as defined in 91(24) of the Constitution, although Canada will have no management authority over the reserve land where a land code has been enacted by a First Nation.

Who is liable for damages related to First Nation land?

The FAFNLM states that Canada will remain liable for and will indemnify a First Nation for losses suffered as a result of any act or omission by Canada, or its agents, that occurred before the Land Code comes into effect.

Once a Land Code takes effect, the First Nation is responsible for its own acts or omissions in the course of its governance and management.

What happens to Canada's fiduciary obligation?

The fiduciary obligation of Canada continues under the FAFNLM. The scope of Canada's obligation is reduced, however, because the First Nation is making the day-to-day decisions regarding its lands, environment and resources. Canada would continue to be involved in any land exchange that might take place and for maintaining the First Nations Land Register.

FIRST NATIONS INVOLVED

What First Nations are involved?

To date over 80 First Nation communities have voted to ratify the FAFNLM through their respective community land code. Equally, more than 50 Developmental First Nations are in the process of creating their own lands codes in preparation for a community vote.

Numerous additional communities have expressed their official intent to become signatory members of the FAFNLM, bringing the total number of First Nations communities involved in the FAFNLM (as signatories or waitlisted potential entrants) to over 200.

The following map identifies the locations of the Operational and Developmental communities of the FAFNLM:

When is the land governance authority of the First Nation considered to be “in force”?

Once the members of the First Nation approve the Land Code and the Individual Agreement, control over First Nation land and resources is transferred from under the *Indian Act* to the First Nation’s land laws and administration or according to their effective date as outlined in the First Nation’s Land Code.

The Individual Agreement must be signed by both the First Nation and Canada before a land code can be fully operational; most First Nations choose to wait until after a land code vote to sign this document.

What is a Land Code?

A Land Code will be the basic land law of the First Nation and will replace the 44 land management provisions of the Indian Act.

The Land Code is drafted by the First Nation and makes provision for the following matters:

- Identifying the reserve lands to be managed by the First Nation (called “First Nation land”),
- The general rules and procedures for the use and occupation of these lands by First Nation members and others,
- Financial accountability for revenues from the lands (except oil and gas revenues, which continue under federal law),
- The making and publishing of First Nation land laws,
- The conflict of interest rules,
- A community process to develop rules and procedures applicable to land on the breakdown of a marriage,
- A dispute resolution process,
- Procedures by which the First Nation can grant interests in land or acquire lands for community purposes,
- The delegation of land management responsibilities, and
- The procedure for amending the Land Code.

Is the Indian Act still relevant to a First Nation that has approved a Land Code?

Yes. Approximately two-thirds of the provisions of the Indian Act, which do not deal with land matters, continue to apply to a First Nation that has a Land Code. For example, the sections dealing with elections and membership continue to apply to the First Nation.

What is an Individual Agreement?

An Individual Agreement between each community and Canada will be finalized and identify with such matters as:

- The reserve lands to be governed and their boundaries
- Findings of the Phase I ESA study on the reserve lands to be transferred
- Details of an interim environmental assessment process
- The amount of Capital and Revenue dollars to be transferred to the First Nation
- Amount of Operational funding to be provided by Canada to the First Nation

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND APPROVALS

Are First Nation members involved in developing a Land Code?

Yes.

- The contents of the Land Code are developed by the membership of the First Nation.
- Typically, a lands committee is formed to be responsible for developing the draft Land Code for the First Nation. The committee often has officers of the First Nation knowledgeable about lands and includes other members of the community.
- The lands committee holds community meetings with the members to develop the specific wording and policy upon which the Land Code is based.
- Once the draft Land Code begins to take shape, drafts are circulated in the community for comment. Door to door meetings with members are also arranged to allow the lands committee and members an opportunity for more in-depth discussion of the draft Land Code.

As a fundamental principle, the development of a Land Code is an exercise in community self-government at a “grass-roots” level.

Does the Land Code need community approval?

Yes. In order for the First Nation to re-assume control over its lands, the Land Code and the Individual Agreement must be ratified by the members of the First Nation.

The procedure for the community ratification process is developed by the community in accordance with the FAFNLM. This process will be set out in a document that will contain all the details of the process. The ratification procedure involves a thorough process to locate all eligible voting members and provide them with the opportunity to vote in person, electronically or by mail.

Are off-reserve members involved?

Yes. All members of the First Nation who are at least 18 years of age, whether living off-reserve or on-reserve, have the right to vote and have input on the Land Code and the Individual Agreement.

Is there a verification process?

Yes. An independent person selected jointly by the First Nation and Canada, called a Verifier, will monitor and confirm that the community ratification process and Land Code are consistent with the FAFNLM. Once that is confirmed, the process of monitoring the ratification is conducted by the Verifier in accordance with the community ratification process.

LANDS

What lands are involved?

A First Nation will be able to take responsibility for all of its reserve lands.

- Each reserve to be subject to the Land Code will be described in the Land Code. These lands are called “First Nation lands”. Only reserve lands and certain north of 60 settlement lands are to be included.
- South of 60, Lands received under treaty land entitlement, specific claims settlement, etc. could be governed by a land code but only if they are first made reserve lands.

Will land governance powers extend beyond the reserve boundaries to traditional First Nation territories?

No. The land governance powers only apply to reserves of the First Nation. The FAFNLM does not affect any lands, or any rights in lands, that are not subject to the Agreement.

Is First Nation land considered to be fee simple land?

No. First Nation land continues to be reserve lands.

- There is no change to the status or title of reserve lands
- Title to land will continue to be held by Her Majesty in right of Canada and the land remains set apart for the use and benefit of a First Nation. First Nation lands remain a federal responsibility under section 91(24) of the Constitution Act, 1867. However, jurisdiction over the land and decision making in relation to the land will be in the hands of the First Nation.
- Operational First Nations will, for all practical purposes, act as if it were the owner of the land, except for control over title or the power to sell the land.

What resources are covered by the FAFNLM?

The FAFNLM covers reserve lands, environment and resources. Included are all the interests, rights and resources that belong to that land, to the extent that these are under the jurisdiction of Canada and are part of that land.

Forestry resources are included within the scope of the agreement. Crops, livestock and other matters related to agriculture are included.

What resources are not included?

Fishing, migratory birds and endangered species are not included. The FAFNLM does not affect or extend existing rights and powers, or create additional rights and powers, related to fisheries and is not intended to affect rights and powers relating to migratory birds or endangered species. These matters may or may not be dealt with in the context of other negotiations.

Oil and gas resources are not included. The Indian Oil and Gas Act will continue to apply to any First Nation lands, or interests in First Nation land, that are "Indian lands" within the meaning of that Act.

Uranium and radioactive minerals are also not included. The Atomic Energy Control Act, or any successor legislation will continue to apply to First Nation land.

FIRST NATION POWERS

What is the legal status of a First Nation?

First Nation with a Land Code will have all the legal status and powers needed to manage and govern their lands, environment and resources. The First Nation will have the same legal status as a natural person for purposes related to land.

Can a First Nation make laws?

Yes. A First Nation council, governing its lands under a Land Code, will have the power to make laws in respect of the development, conservation, protection, management, use and possession of First Nation land. This includes laws on zoning, environment, services and dispute resolution.

The First Nation council can continue to make by-laws under sections 81 and 85.1 of the *Indian Act*. For the most part, these by-laws relate to matters other than land.

How will First Nation laws be enforced?

A First Nation will have full power to enforce its land and environmental laws. A First Nation may incorporate the summary conviction procedures of the Criminal Code for offences under First Nation laws. Those procedures are the ones used for minor criminal offences. They are also used in some provinces for offences under provincial laws, e.g. offences under provincial environmental legislation.

A First Nation can appoint its own justice of the peace to try offences created under First Nation laws and can appoint its own prosecutor. First Nation laws may make provision for search and seizure, fines, imprisonment, restitution, community service or alternate means for achieving compliance.

What other powers will a First Nation have?

The FAFNLM provides the First Nation with all the powers of an owner in relation to its First Nation Land, except for control over title or the power to sell it. The First Nation's council can govern land, environment and resources, as well as revenues from the land, environment and resources, in accordance with its Land Code.

While First Nations will not be able to sell their land, they will be able to lease or develop their lands and resources, subject to any limits imposed by their own laws and Land Codes.

THIRD PARTY INTERESTS

What happens to existing third-party interests under a Land Code?

Under a land code, the interests in First Nation land lawfully held by third parties will continue in effect according to their terms and conditions. For example, a lease that expires in the year 2025 would continue in effect with the same rights and obligations as before. If the landlord in an existing lease made under the *Indian Act* were the federal government, the First Nation would assume the rights and obligations of the federal government under the lease, so that the tenant would pay the rent directly to the First Nation.

No new interests or licenses may be acquired or granted except in accordance with the Land Code.

How will interests in First Nation land be recorded?

The FAFNLM and the federal legislation authorize Canada to setup a separate register to record interests granted by First Nations under their Land Codes. Modern regulations were developed by the Lands Advisory Board in consultation with signatory First Nations and Canada to govern the First Nations Lands Register in 2007.

A First Nation may also establish its own duplicate registry system to record interests in its First Nation lands.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Is a First Nation Council less accountable under a land code?

No. Accountability is increased. Besides being politically accountable, a First Nation council under the Land Code is legally responsible for governing its lands and resources for the benefit of the members of the First Nation.

Council is also responsible for the accurate implementation of the rules established under the land code including mandatory community approvals.

How will accountability to the members be ensured?

A Land Code will make provision for a First Nation to report annually to its members on its land governance activities. The Land Code will also set out rules on financial accountability for its management of lands, resources and revenues. The First Nation council is politically accountable for laws that it enacts.

Land Codes may provide that certain laws or policies must be ratified by the community before they take effect. Examples of what might require community approval before taking effect could include:

- a land use plan,
- a grant of any interest in First Nation land for a term exceeding 25 years,
- any grant or disposition of any natural resources for a term exceeding 5 years, or - a charge or mortgage of a leasehold interest.

REVENUES

Can a First Nation generate its own revenues?

Yes. Revenues can be generated by leasing and granting rights and licenses in First Nation land. A First Nation can also develop its own land directly and generate profit.

Taxation powers are not included in the FAFNLM.

What happens to revenues previously collected by Canada?

The FAFNLM provides that revenue and capital monies of the First Nation previously collected and held by Canada will be transferred to the First Nation when its Land Code comes into effect.

Revenue moneys may include, but are not limited to proceeds from:

- *the sale of renewable resources*
- *reserve land activities such as leases, permits and rights-of-way*
- *finances and interest earned on capital*

Capital moneys include:

- *oil and gas royalties*
- *sale of a First Nation's reserve lands*
- *other proceeds from the sale of timber, oil and gas or gravel¹*

TAXATION

Will First Nation land be subject to taxation?

No. The current exemption of reserve lands and property situated on-reserve, will continue under the relevant provisions of the *Indian Act*, s. 29 & s. 89(1) & (2).

The Land Code does not authorize laws relating to the taxation of real or personal property. Such laws may be made separately pursuant to section 83 of the *Indian Act*.

Can a First Nation tax land under the FAFNLM?

No. The Land Code does not authorize laws relating to the taxation of real or personal property. Such laws must continue to be made separately pursuant to section 83 of the *Indian Act*.

¹ <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1428673130728/1428673159469>

FUNDING

Is developmental funding available to a First Nation?

Yes. Canada will provide funding to a First Nation to develop its Land Code, its community ratification process and the individual Agreement. This funding is provided through the First Nation Land Management Resource Centre to the First Nation.

Is funding available to a First Nation to operate under a Land Code?

Yes. Canada provides operational funding to First Nations - to manage its First Nation land, to make, administer and enforce its laws under a land code.

The amount of the operational funding is agreed upon between the LAB and Canada. The amount is out in the Individual Agreement with Canada and is subject to the approval of the members of the First Nation as part of the ratification process.

GENDER EQUITY

Do men and women have equal rights in relation to First Nation land?

Yes. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms applies to First Nation lands and First Nation laws.

The FAFNLM ensures that all male and female members of the First Nation who are at least 18 years of age, whether living off-reserve or on-reserve, have the right to vote on whether to approve the Land Code and the Individual Agreement with Canada.

What are the rules on possession of land if a marriage breaks down?

All First Nations in Canada adhere to either the federal *Family Homes on-reserves and Matrimonial Interests or Rights Act* (FHRMIRA) or their own laws enacted under their own land codes.

Under a Land Code, a First Nation can pass a law to deal with the rights of spouses to interests in First Nation land in the event of marriage breakdown or they can decide to remain under the authority of FHRMIRA.

LAND DEVELOPMENT

Will First Nations be able to develop their land?

Yes. First Nations will be able to create land development policies and laws to promote economic development on their own terms.

Can First Nation land be mortgaged?

No. Title to First Nation land remains with the federal Crown and cannot be mortgaged. Title to First Nation land cannot be lost through legal process.

Can interests in First Nation land be mortgaged?

Yes. Leasehold interests are capable of being mortgaged. In its Land Code, a First Nation may allow leasehold interests to be subject to mortgages and seizure by third parties.

A First Nation may also allow any certificates of possession held by members to be mortgaged to the First Nation itself or to other members.

Will personal property be subject to seizure under legal process?

No. The current exemption of personal property situated on-reserve will continue under the relevant provisions of the Indian Act, s. 89(1).

Can First Nation land be sold?

No. Surrender for sale is prohibited in order to protect the communal nature of reserve land and land base of the First Nation for future generations.

Can First Nation land be exchanged?

Yes. A First Nation may decide that it is advantageous to exchange some of its First Nation land for other lands. Provision can be made in its Land Code for a procedure to negotiate and approve such exchanges. An exchange of land cannot occur without the consent of the First Nation community.

ENVIRONMENT

How will the environment be protected?

A First Nation will have the power to make environmental laws. These laws will deal with environmental assessment and protection.

First Nations have agreed to harmonize their laws with provincial and federal environmental laws.

What happens to existing environmental problems under the Indian Act?

If there is an existing environmental problem on a reserve before the Land Code takes effect, the federal government continues to be responsible for the problem and liable for any of its actions or inaction that may have caused the problem.

Before bringing a reserve under its Land Code, a First Nation is entitled to full disclosure on any environmental problem from Canada. The First Nation and Canada may decide to exclude the land from its Land Code until the problem is fixed by Canada.

EXPROPRIATION

Can First Nation land be expropriated by Canada?

Yes, but to a limited extent. Canada's power to expropriate First Nation land is constrained. That power can only be exercised when the expropriation is justified and necessary for a federal public purpose that serves the national interest. Compensation must include provision for equivalent lands so that the land base of the First Nation is not diminished.

Can First Nation land be expropriated by a Province?

No. Under the *FAFNLM* there can be no expropriation of First Nation land by a provincial or municipal government or agency.

Can a First Nation expropriate interests in First Nation lands?

Yes. A First Nation will have the power to acquire interests in lands for community works or other community purposes. It must pay fair compensation to members or non-members whose interests are affected according to rules approved by the community in the land code.

Some First Nations have voluntarily waived or restricted their expropriation power in their Land Code in accordance with the wishes of their members.

Can a Province or Municipality be exempt from First Nation expropriation?

Yes. The First Nation's expropriation powers apply only to its own reserve lands.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

How will community land disputes be resolved?

Operational First Nations will establish their own processes for dealing with disputes in relation to their lands and resources. These are alternative dispute resolution processes.

How will disputes between a First Nation and Canada be resolved?

If the First Nations and Canada disagree on the meaning or implementation of the FAFNLM, there are provisions in the FAFNLM to resolve the dispute outside the courts. These include mediation, neutral evaluation and arbitration.

Is the court system still available to resolve disputes?

Yes. Judicial review of certain decisions under the dispute resolution process between the First Nations and Canada is available on limited grounds

Members of the First Nations and third parties may use the courts to appeal any decision of a Justice of the Peace made under the First Nation's laws.

A First Nation in its Land Code will specify how decisions made under its dispute resolution process are to be appealed.

LANDS ADVISORY BOARD and RESOURCE CENTRE

What is the Lands Advisory Board?

Under the FAFNLM, the First Nations have established a Lands Advisory Board (LAB) to assist them in implementing their own land codes. The LAB is the political body composed of Chiefs regionally elected from among the Operational First Nations.

The LAB established the Resource Centre as the technical body intended to support First Nations in the developmental and operational phases implementing the FAFNLM.

What does the Lands Advisory Board and Resource Centre do?

The Land Advisory Board's functions include;

- Policy and planning at the political level;
- Intergovernmental relations/meetings with Canada, Parliament, provincial, regional and municipal governments, financial institutions, etc., to implement the spirit, intent and meaning of the FAFNLM;
- When requested, attendance at conferences and other public gatherings directly relevant to the promotion and awareness of the FAFNLM
- When requested by a First Nation, attending community meetings and/or providing high level political and strategic advice to Chiefs and Councils in the developmental phase and those operating under a ratified land code
- When requested, providing advice to First Nations seeking entry into the *Framework Agreement*; and
- Political advocacy with signatory First Nations related to the fulfillment of FA responsibilities such as the negotiation of operational funding and FAFNLM/FNLMA amendments.

The Resource Centre's functions are;

- Policy, planning and administration at the technical level;
- Intergovernmental relations with federal, provincial, regional and municipal government organizations to implement the technical aspects of the FAFNLM
- Support to operational First Nations implementing their Community Land Code, including the transitional period that ranges from several months to several years after opting out of the *Indian Act*. Areas of advice and support can include capacity building, legal, environmental, enforcement, land use planning, communications, law creation as well as best practices
- Funding and Field Support to First Nations in achieving Implementation Document (ID) milestones, including, among other activities, developing the Land Code, assisting with communications, completing ESA Phase I, Boundary Description Reports, Individual Agreement finalization and the ratification vote
- Technical advice to First Nations seeking to become new signatories to the FAFNLM.

PROVINCIAL RELATIONS

Do Provincial Governments support this initiative?

In the late 1990s, the government of each province in which the original 13 First Nations were located provided written support for the FAFNLM.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS TO FIRST NATIONS

What are the major benefits of the FAFNLM to First Nations?

- First real recognition of First Nation inherent right to govern its reserve lands and resources,
- Removal of reserve lands from the *Indian Act*,
- Community control over First Nation land governance, management and development,
- Inclusion of both off-reserve and on-reserve members in important decisions,
- Increased accountability to members of the First Nation,
- More efficient and appropriate control of First Nation land,
- Recognition of First Nation legal capacity to acquire and hold property, to borrow, to contract, to expend and invest money, to be a party to legal proceedings, to exercise its powers and to perform its duties,
- Transfer by Canada of previous land revenues to First Nation,
- Recognition of the right to directly receive revenue from interests in First Nation land,
- Protection against arbitrary expropriation of First Nation land,
- Protection against loss of First Nation land through surrender for sale,
- Ability of First Nation to better protect the environment,
- Ability of First Nation to address rules related to land during marriage breakdown,
- Recognition of significant law-making powers respecting First Nation land,
- Removal of the need to obtain Ministerial approval for First Nation laws,
- Recognition in Canadian courts of First Nation laws,
- Recognition of right to create modern offences for breach of First Nation laws,
- Ability to appoint Justices of the Peace,
- Ability to create a local dispute resolution process,
- Establishment of an improved land registry system,
- Establishment of a First Nation controlled Lands Board and Resource Centre to provide political and technical assistance to First Nations