

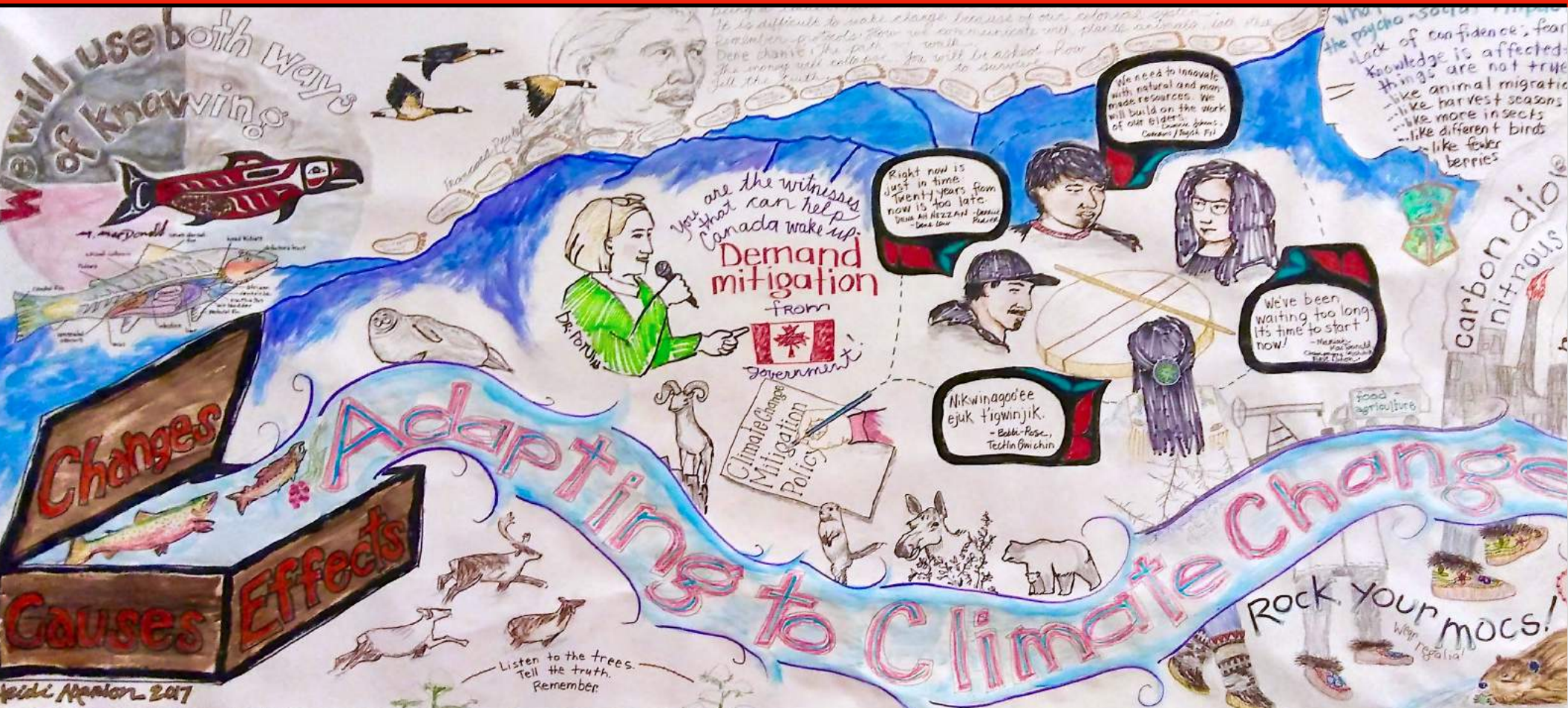


CARCROSS/TAGISH  
FIRST NATION

# OUR LIFE IS IN THE WATER | OUR BREATH IS IN THE WATER

Building Self-Sufficiency and Preserving Our Stories  
for the Next Seven Generations

ASSESSING CLIMATE CHANGE AND ADAPTATION IN CARCROSS, YUKON  
MARCH 2019







[Pictured above]: YIC4 youth participants and community-based monitoring representatives with Keynote Speaker and Dene Elder, Francois Paulette at an evening banquet during the YIC4 training, November 29th, 2017.



This community report describes outcomes from the **Yukon Indigenous Community Climate Change Champions (YIC4) Project: Mobilizing Knowledge for Developing Indigenous Community Champions for Climate Change Adaptation in the Yukon (2017-2019)**.

This project was led by the Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research (AICBR). The AICBR works with communities to develop their own solutions to complex problems that are relevant, community-driven and sustainable. Current priorities include: *climate change adaptation, food security and food sovereignty and youth engagement and leadership*. AICBR works in participatory ways to strengthen capacity and takes a 'whole-of-community' approach, built on the principles of respect, relevance, responsibility, and reciprocity.

[WWW.AICBR.CA](http://WWW.AICBR.CA) | 867-668-3393 | 308 HANSON STREET, WHITEHORSE, YUKON

# INTRODUCTION

**Between November 2017 to March 2019**, three of our youth, Roberta Wally, Jasmine Gatensby and Dominic Johns, took part in the YIC4 training project along with 38 other Indigenous youth (aged 18-30 years) from across the territory and beyond (Northern British Columbia, Northwest Territories and Nunatsiavut).

**During Phase 1**, youth gathered in Whitehorse at the Yukon Inn for four days of training, which built the foundation of knowledge in the area of climate change from a global to local perspective.

**During Phase 2**, our youth worked with AICBR to complete a community-based assessment of the needs, strengths and opportunities for action related to climate change adaptation in Carcross.

**In January 2019**, another training session was held for new and returning youth to further their knowledge in the area of climate change action and develop leadership, communication and advocacy skills that they can apply to future climate change work in their communities.

The entire training project was grounded in both **Indigenous and western scientific ways of knowing** and involved trainers and speakers from community, academic and policy levels, including Elders, scientists and other youth leaders.

*Our Elders have been telling us about “hard times coming” and that we need to be prepared.*

*This report shares our community’s story of climate change and what we learned from discussions about what it means to adapt.*

*We hope this report acts as a foundation of knowledge that may guide us in future community-based work and planning in the area of climate change.*





*An Except from a letter written by the youth at the YIC4 Training 1, November 27th, 2019:*

...We have learned a lot about climate change over the past few days and we are worried about our future. We are strong and educated and we will do whatever it takes to protect our homelands as well as educate and instil our knowledge and traditional values into the next generation.

Canada is a large country with many pristine natural resources. Our lands are who we are. But we are concerned that many who make decisions for and about our lands, walk solely on concrete. Our voices matter and we want to be heard on the issues that directly impact us and our Mother, the Earth. We will no longer be silent because we have a duty as land stewards and the right to call for action on climate change mitigation and adaptation from our leaders. We have our eyes and ears open. We are the witnesses of climate change for the rest of the world because we are at the forefront of the drastic and detrimental impacts that it causes. We expect our leaders and elected representatives to do more...

Our food, biodiversity and very survival are at risk. We need to look after our lands, animals, waters, air, as well as each other in order to protect our food and water security for longterm health and wellbeing. We need to plan together for our collective futures.

Will you join us?

In respect and sincerity,

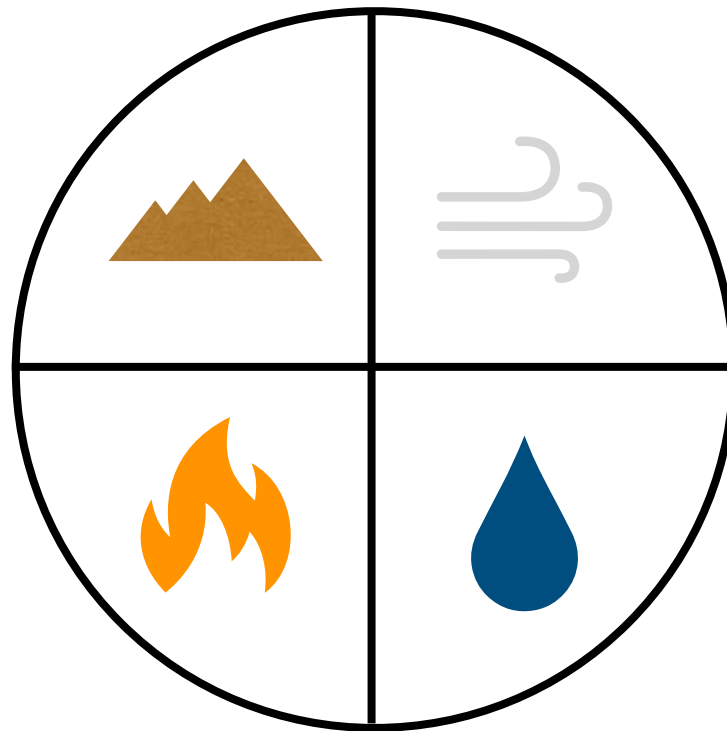
*The Youth*

*Youth are the future caretakers of this land. We must learn how to stand tall in two worlds and make decisions to protect our future. We must do this by remaining grounded in the wisdom of our Elders as well guided by western science.*

# THE FOUR ELEMENTS of CLIMATE CHANGE

## **Earth, Air, Fire, and Water**

These four elements guided us throughout the YIC4 training in understanding climate change and its impacts within our communities.



# What is a Community Assessment?

A community assessment is a process used to identify strengths, needs and challenges of a specified community.

What sorts of changes have we seen with respect to climate change?

What are we doing now to adapt to these challenges?

What more could we do to adapt to and counteract these changes?



[Pictured above]: Roberta Wally conducts an interview during the Carcross community assessment.

A **YOUTH TOOLKIT** was developed from ideas and research questions youth came up with during Training 1; this toolkit guided us in planning *HOW* to assess our communities, *WHO* to talk to, *WHEN* it is best to complete the work, and *WHAT* questions to ask.

The toolkit is also meant to help other communities lead an assessment.

**DOWNLOAD THE TOOLKIT  
HERE:**

[www.aicbr.ca/yic4](http://www.aicbr.ca/yic4)

# *These are some of the questions we asked during our community assessment*

More can be found in the toolkit.

During the Carcross assessment, we talked with **twelve people**, including members of our Executive Council and CTFN government (Infrastructure, Heritage Lands and Resources and Health and Wellness departments), some knowledgeable Elders and community members, our garden and farm managers, and the YIC4 youth.

What's your message for our young people on how they must survive in the long-term future?

How do you think climate change is affecting our people's health?

How are our moose, caribou, sheep and goat populations doing? Have they changed? If so, what do you think is happening to them?

What kind of green energy initiatives are here? What are other ways we are adapting economically within our community? How is our infrastructure withstanding the changes?





Are we prepared for disasters? What about fires? Do we have plans/programs in place to manage forest fires? How can we use our Traditional Knowledge to adapt/ manage fires?

How is climate change affecting the land, the animals and the waterways? Which habitat areas are most vulnerable?

Tell me about your gardening and farming initiatives. Do you sell the products? What kind of training is available?

What is the history of our community?

[Pictured below]: Norma Kassi, AICBR's Lead Community-Based Researcher, with the YIC4 youth planning out the Carcross community assessment.

How are our waters - i.e. water level, quality, temperature? How can we protect our drinking water for future generations? How are the fish populations doing?



# CHANGES

The following section tells of some of the changes we have witnessed to our lands, waters, plants, animals, and community over the years. These changes are dramatic. It is hard to talk about them. But these changes are not new and we understand that we need to monitor them in order to be prepared.

In the past, our ancestors looked to Mother Nature for guidance - watching the plants, following the animal cycles, praying to the Creator. They lived in harmony with the land and the land provided for them. Our world now is changing rapidly and we cannot ignore what Mother Nature is telling us. We need to change, we need to adapt.

Over history, with colonial pressures, the Residential School System, industrial

encroachment on our lands, along with many other influences that exist in our lives today, our ways, our Traditional Knowledge and our connection to them has been impacted.

But there is wisdom and strength in our people and in our community. Our language is tied to our land and who we are as a people. By reconnecting with our past, we can rebuild the way forward for the betterment of all people and all things.

## A Message to the Youth:

*“Hopefully, future generations will look at the land as a place of healing; as a place of looking back and say: this is where generations before me lived and grew up and learned the ways, the animals and everything and tried to preserve some of that for their generations and the generations to come after them. Try to preserve it for the good of the First Nation people.”*



# EARTH

*Climate change - “It affects the animals and their way of life. It affects everything.”*

## *Declining species:*

- \* **Our caribou populations are a fraction of what they were** during the pre-Gold Rush era. We live in Caribou Crossing. Our Elders tell stories of the migrating caribou being so abundant that their migration sounded like an earthquake. They were present all over Caribou Mountain and along the lakeshore. Climate change, overhunting, combined with the influx of mining in our area really has impacted their habitats.
- \* **Diminished berry crops, especially soapberries, has an impact on the bears as well as the people.**

## *Changing diets:*

- \* **Our diets used to consist only of wild foods from the land.** Now, we’re reliant on the grocery store shelves, which are full of preservatives, hormones, convenience, and fast food products that are making us sick.

## *Shifting animal behaviours and migration patterns:*

- \* **The migrating caribou used to be like clockwork** - we knew they would come down the mountain and cross at 10-mile in November/December. However, during the last 30-years their patterns have changed. Now, they go up two different mountains and cross further down past 10-mile; you also see very few tracks between November and March.

## *New species:*

- \* **Spruce beetle infestation is killing off our forests.** The winters are not getting cold enough to wipe out the spruce beetle, which consume our spruce trees. When the trees die, they become fodder for future fires.





*“You can hardly hear the birds singing”*

### *Changing weather patterns:*

- \* **The weather fluctuates more than it used to.** We are often getting warm spells multiple times in the winter, even rain in December and January. This causes confusion and also changes the landscape, contributing to more ice and a harder snowpack.
- \* **All these changes mean challenging times ahead,** for the animals and for the people who rely on them.

### *Warming temperatures:*

- \* **The ground is dryer and the forest is a tinder box.** The earth is less moist than it used to be because of changing snow melt patterns; the spruce beetle is eating up our forests, leaving dried, dead wood behind. We have to be careful as this is a dangerous combination for fires.
- \* **Winters are much warmer and the temperatures more inconsistent.** In the past, we used to get down to  $-55^{\circ}\text{C}$  consistently over the winter. Now we are lucky to get down to  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$ .



# FIRE

## *Forest fires:*

- \* **We are seeing more frequent, larger forest fires.** There have always been forest fires; it is part of nature's natural healing cycle. You can see the remains of fires that burned 200-400 years ago. The difference is back then they were smaller and our people were able to control them, using the Indigenous way. Our Elders told us 20-25 years ago that we would start having troubles with fire and water in the future. Today, it seems that if we're not flooding, we're burning.
- \* **The forest fire in Summer 2018 burned up prime caribou and moose habitat.** We haven't seen a fire that big since 1958. Forest fires not only affect the safety of people and our communities, but they put added stress on animals who are already struggling. Scientists say that if you have multiple burns in the same area in a couple decades, it starts to impact the land. The land can't recuperate fast enough to harness the healing effects of fire.
- \* **More fires are started by human interaction than by natural impacts.** Because there are more people in the area now, there is greater risk of improper campfire management, which can easily become the 'lit match' for uncontrollable wildfires.

## *Burning diesel:*

- \* **We are still very dependant on diesel as our main energy source.** In the last census, we had about 500 people relying on diesel to heat and energize their homes. This number easily swells to 600 in the summertime, not including the tourists who now flock to Carcross every summer.
- \* **We also rely on diesel for fuelling our skidoos, trucks and boats, which enable traditional pursuits like hunting, fishing and trapping.** Fewer people travel by foot or dog team for these activities anymore and the rise in use of the combustion engine contributes to the warming we are seeing.





# WATER

*Changing ice and melt/freeze-up patterns:*

- \* **As the weather fluctuates more, there are multiple melt and freeze-ups** in the winter, leaving water on top of the lakes and ice between layers of snow. This makes it hard on the animals migrating through who rely on the snowpack. Some have noticed more sheep carcasses up in the mountains and are concerned that this has to do with the animals having difficulty getting through the ice while traveling and searching for food.
- \* **Lakes are no longer freezing in the winter completely.**
- \* **Snow used to melt consistently over a couple weeks.** When this would happen all the moisture would trickle back into the earth. Now, the snow melts over a longer period and much of the moisture evaporates, leaving drier earth in the spring.
- \* **The lake ice is thinner than in the past and thus the stability unpredictable.** This impacts our ability to travel safely while we are trapping and winter fishing.

*“Now, an Elder in Alaska by the name of David Katzik — who has worked on the place names and water projects we’ve been working on here recently — says in Tlingit — and I can’t quite translate it yet. It translates to:*

**Our life is in the water. Our breath is in the water.**

*That’s directly related to the temperature of water.”*

*Water is changing:*

- \* **Water level in our lakes is declining.** Lakes are becoming shallower.
- \* **Water temperature is getting warmer.** This is a big concern for our people as fish are being affected. Fish are moving into deeper areas in search of cooler temperatures. Some fish need the deep water to spawn. Our people worry as well, that if the snow keeps melting like it is, our lake water levels will only get lower.



# WATER

*“Everything is connected.  
Climate change affects all things.”*

## *Less snow:*

- \* **There used to be snow on Montana Mountain all year-round.** In the late 1960's up until 1983, the Canadian ski team would train on the mountain because there was snow there in the summer. Now, throughout the summer most of the mountains are bare.



## *Water contamination:*

- \* **All of the mining** around our community over the years has led people to become increasingly concerned about possible water contamination in the lakes and streams.
- \* **More combustion engines on the lakes** as well causes leaking oil and other contaminants into the water.

## *Changes in the fish:*

- \* **There are fewer salmon.** We used to see them at M'Clintock but now they are no longer there.
- \* **Other fish are not where they used to be and seem to be moving around more,** making it harder to fish them.
- \* **Whitefish is not as firm as it used to be;** in the early spring, the meat is firm and good, but as the summer goes on, it gets mushy because of the warmer temperatures in the lake.

Despite these many changes, there is strength in our community, in our culture,  
our traditions, and our language.  
We have the knowledge of the land.

**Any action we do today to deal with climate change must be long-lasting.  
We must think seven generations behind us and seven generations in front of us.**

The next section of this report talks about action. It is a reflection on the areas where we are strong in counteracting and adapting to climate change already and it also provides hope and ideas for future work that could be done to preserve our future.

*“I guess the easiest way to put it is that it can be done and that it’s very rewarding to be able to help look after yourself. I think that’s the most important thing — that it can be done and that — yeah, it’s just as simple as that.”*

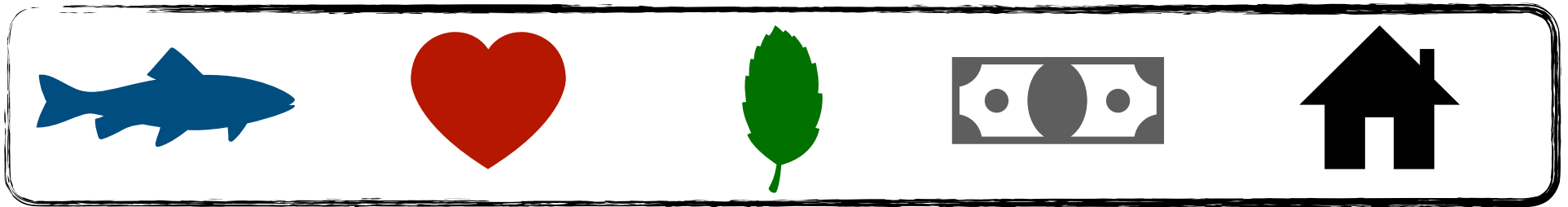
**We can do it. Together we can do it.”**



Once we started exploring what changes were happening in our communities related to **earth, air, fire,** and **water,** it became clear how interconnected and complex the issues are.

The key areas of our community which are affected most by climate change are also the key areas where efforts can be made to adapt to and counteract further climate change damage.

*These five key areas are:*



**Food & Water  
Security**

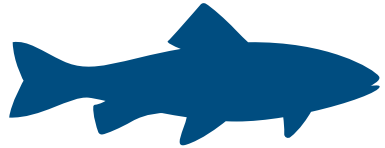
**Health, Social  
& Culture**

**Species &  
Habitat Areas**

**Economy**

**Infrastructure &  
Transportation**

Assessing what the needs and priorities are in these five areas will help us to define where future opportunities for action are.



# FOOD & WATER SECURITY

## *Food security is a priority:*

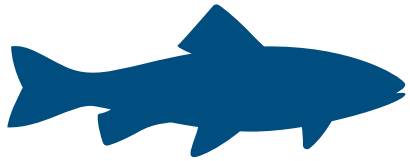
- \* **Food security became a main priority for our community after the 2012 Alaska Highway washout.** When this happened trucks coming up the highway with our market foods were stuck and within days, the grocery store shelves became empty. This was a wake up call that our food system is vulnerable and thus, our people are vulnerable, because although we have a strong culture of hunting and sharing, most in our community rely on market foods to feed their families.
- \* **We started a community farm.** After the washout, we started gardening, this project eventually grew into a full fledged farm. We still grow a variety of vegetables in the garden and greenhouse; everything is organic and high quality. There is a community space for Elders and those on Temporary Financial Assistance to grow their own vegetables. At the farm in 2018, we had 500 roasting chickens, 40 turkeys, 25 rabbits, eight butcher pigs, as well as chickens producing 10 dozen eggs/day. We also have 10 beehives, berry bushes, crabapple trees, and haskaps. A lot of the vegetables and eggs are given away to single parents, elders, the daycare, or are used in community dinners.

## *Food sovereignty:*

- \* **“True food sovereignty is about a relationship with your food that Indigenous peoples have had since time immemorial.”** Our community has prioritized self-sufficiency and food sovereignty, which for us is also about respect, reciprocity and relationship with the land.
- \* **The Carcross Farm** is a growing and promising project; it gives us hope for the future and makes our youth feel more prepared. It is more than just an agriculture project and is a means to revitalize connection to the land, embrace culture and language and build community.

## *Reducing waste:*

- \* **Globally, we have an issue with waste.** When it comes to food waste, Canadians are among the number one culprits. Each year, we waste about 40% of our food. Water conservation is also key as we are starting to see communities across the world running out of water. It is possible that we too could run out of water. We need to protect our resources and make them long lasting into the future. We cannot take these things for granted anymore.



# FOOD & WATER SECURITY

## *Learning from each other:*

- \* **We need to rely on each other and learn from other communities in the territory.** There is a supportive community of farmers in the Yukon and there is a lot we can learn from each others' experience. Online forums are a good resource for northern communities to learn from each other.
- \* **Teaching and passing down knowledge** will ensure projects such as the Carcross Farm is sustainable into the future. We need to train our young people especially to take up the torch. The gardening project started as a student project and we have kept up the tradition of training students through the farm and garden.

## *Water security:*

- \* **We need to work with our governments (First Nations, territorial and federal) on cleaning up contamination from mining.** This unfortunately lands on the young generation and we need to help them so that they can have clean water for their future.
- \* **We need to look into getting year-round water access for the animals on the farm;** during the winter, we have no way to pump it from the creek as we do throughout the rest of the year.

## Food Sovereignty

"As Indigenous peoples we understand that food is a gift and we have the responsibility to nurture healthy, interdependent relationships with the land, water, plants and animals that provide us with our food. This also means having the ability to respond to our own needs for safe, healthy, culturally relevant indigenous foods with the ability to make decisions over the amount and quality of food we hunt, fish, gather, grow and eat. These rights are asserted on a daily basis for the benefit of present and future generations."

*(First Nations Health Council, 2009)*



# HEALTH, SOCIAL & CULTURE

## *Reconnect to traditions:*

- \* **Bring youth to the land and build connections.** Being out on the land is healing in more ways than one. We are working hard to bring our people back to the land through the farm and through our stewardship program.
- \* **There is power in our traditions.** We need to bring back our traditional values of harmony with the land. We can encourage this through community harvest camps, where we can reconnect with each other and also with Mother Nature; we do this by picking our medicines, giving thanks to the Creator and learning from our Elders about traditional teachings.
- \* **Language and place names hold wisdom.** Place names tell a story about a place and what food is there. For example, in Tlingit, Judas Creek means "Big Fish Tail", so we know that fish are there. We need to go back to our stories; the language itself holds the key to our survival.
- \* **Be proud of who you are.** We are seeing this more and more with downtown becoming a stage for our art and culture, it makes people proud to say "this is who I am and where I come from."

## *Traditional gathering places:*

- \* **We built the Learning Centre as a place for feasts, gatherings and ceremony - it is a potlatch house, a place to build community.** This is where our strength lies. Having these beautiful places to gather in our village is part of Reconciliation. There used to be a residential school here and for some previous students of that school, Carcross is still a difficult place to be. With the new Learning Centre here, feelings about Carcross are starting to change. The gathering space helps to breathe life, culture and beauty back into our buildings and our community, and through this transformation, people start to see things differently; they start to see that good things are possible.

*"We got to reconnect with our own culture and in that way, we're going to be stronger in our minds and our hearts to share with those seven billion people out there the importance of drinking that water and eating the food right off the land and keeping it that way. I think we're smart enough to do it between all of us."*



# HEALTH, SOCIAL & CULTURE

## Research:

### \* **We are researching plants and medicines.**

Our stewards pick medicines and plants up on Montana Mountain and bring them down to our Learning Centre to plant them in the garden. We do studies on them and see how they grow in a different environment. While growing traditional medicines in a garden is not our traditional way, we want to preserve these plants and teach our young people about them. This is one way we can pass down knowledge and adapt to climate change.

### \* **We need to explore the connection**

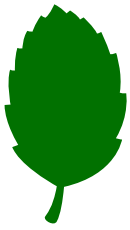
**between mining and health.** We have seen a rise in cancer rates in our community and we want to understand why. Many feel that mining has caused contamination in our water and traditional food species, which contributes to the disease.

### \* **There is an urgent need for mine clean-up**

**and land reclamation.** Two large mines are still in need of clean-up and so we are currently doing tests to figure out how best to solve the problem.

[Pictured right, top to bottom]: YIC4 youth Jasmine explores some of the dried traditional medicines at the Learning Centre; YIC4 youth Dominic interviews a member of his community during the Carcross assessment.





# SPECIES & HABITAT AREAS

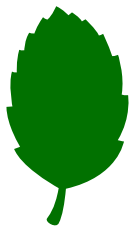
*Youth are the future leaders:*

- \* **Our youth are strong and committed.** Youth today are the future leaders who will be dealing with the worst impacts of climate change. We need to act now to slow and limit its devastating effects to our world. Because of this, we have prioritized training our youth. They are learning about what is going on and are committed to keeping the fight going to preserve our land, water, animal species, and the air we breathe; we must hold them up and support them in their endeavours because we know that if we lose the precious gifts in Mother Nature that Creator gave us, they will be gone forever.

*“So, we need you [the youth]. We need your minds, your hearts and [for] you to dig into your history to help preserve that caribou, that fish, the very air we breathe. So... Thank you for your hearts and minds and your interests in it because it's really important now. Gunalchîsh.”*

*Bring back Indigenous values and Traditional Knowledge:*

- \* **Traditional Knowledge holds a lot of wisdom for conservation, preservation and stewardship.** In order to harness this knowledge, we must first rebuild connection. Connection to the land and to each other. This is critical.
- \* **We need to work with our governments,** territorial, municipal and Indigenous. The world can learn from us. As First Nations, we were the ones that originally protected the land, that knew how to live in harmony with the animals, and so we have a lot to offer in terms of guiding land stewardship.
- \* **Holistic land use planning** is one of our priorities as a self-governing nation. This means to outline use, management and conservation of our traditional lands. Species protection is an important part of this as well; the land has to be healthy enough to support them. Within our Indigenous Land Use Plan, which takes a more holistic perspective, we value Indigenous customs and practice, Traditional Knowledge and ecological knowledge first and foremost and then apply it to a more contemporary, western scientific space.



# SPECIES & HABITAT AREAS

*“I think the Indigenous populations around the entire planet have a lot to teach. Globalism and capitalism have taken over the planet in the last couple of centuries. I think that a slow transition back to — not all of the Indigenous sort of belief systems — but the ones that protect the land, especially that protect the water — moving away from — creating and taking everything that you need and moving back to a more sustainable lifestyle for the growing population of the planet. I think that would be a nice vision that could be fulfilled if the rest of the world would start to pay attention.”*



*Conservation, management and monitoring:*

- \* **Wildlife management** - In 2008, we, along with other First Nations governments in the Southern Lakes region, signed on to the Southern Lakes Wildlife Coordinating Committee. This document outlines our responsibilities and authority for land/habitat and wildlife management. The key species in need of protection are caribou, moose, sheep, and goat.
- \* **Protecting our Caribou** - We have opted not to hunt our caribou for 30+ years. This has meant that our young people today have never tasted, tanned or worked with our caribou, which is an integral part of our tradition as Carcross/Tagish First Nations people. We have given up a lot but we do this to protect these key species for the future.
- \* **We need to continuously monitor our species.** We have been monitoring the caribou herd for quite some time and are looking to do a moose survey. It's also important to monitor goat and sheep populations. If we know how the animals are doing, we can better conserve them. We can ensure protections are in place (like hunting bans or species safeguards along key migratory corridors and roadsides) and we can monitor changes that are going on.



# INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION

## *Movement towards greener energy systems:*

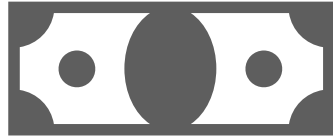
- \* **Our government and our Elders Council are pushing for more alternative, green energy systems** in order to move away from an over-reliance on diesel. There are a number of renewable resource projects going on. We have solar panels on our government buildings and install panels on all new builds. The solar project has offset our consumption of diesel within our buildings dramatically. Additionally, we have a windmill in town and are doing a pilot wind and micro-hydro project on Montana Mountain. We've also looked into geothermal, however the costs are currently too prohibitive to make it work. We are looking to biomass options and see it as a useful more local, carbon neutral way to burn energy. Even at our on-the-land camps, we are integrating renewable energy systems so that people are more comfortable out on the land; in this way we're merging traditional ways of life with some new technology.
- \* **Smarter transportation practices** - We're looking into getting a larger truck for the government to use for making trips to Whitehorse in order to get supplies; a larger vehicle would allow fewer trips and would reduce our transportation needs down to once or twice a week.

## *Self-sufficiency:*

- \* **Self-sufficiency is not just about food security and our food systems.** We rely on the highway for access to goods, services and jobs, etc. When we want to get out on the land, we need fuel to run our skidoos, quads and vehicles. These transportation means allow us to practice our traditional culture and access our traditional foods. Thus, we need to transition to new technology and renewable fuel alternatives quickly to reduce our dependency on diesel.
- \* **Year-round growing and cold storage** is needed to extend our food security and make us more self sufficient throughout the winter.







# ECONOMY

## *Building new industries:*

- \* **As part of this movement towards prioritizing self-sufficiency in our community, we've put a lot of emphasis on establishing new industries** and offering training to our people to boost local employment of those industries.

- \* Some examples include:

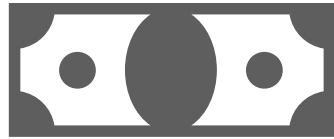
- \* **Farming** - We offer training and employment to students at the farm. We host a **Farmers' Market** to sell high-quality produce at affordable prices. We welcome everyone, even non-community members to come to the market because this helps us grow the economic arm of the farm. Currently, the farm makes about \$100/day which helps us buy new tools. The farm is also looking into **tourism opportunities**, like offering farm tours and letting tourists work with the horses and other animals.

- \* **The Stewardship Program** offers our people on-the-land training, carpentry, landscaping, cultural, and land reclamation work as well as other skill-building opportunities.

- \* **Building the mountain biking trails** has helped boost the tourism industry in Carcross as well. It is a growing industry and our trails have gotten worldwide attention; it has also opened doors for the development of guiding initiatives, which will offer more employment training options for our young people. All of this has led to a boom in development of the downtown core, which includes a café, more shops and a museum which features local artists. The cultural revolution of Carcross/Tagish First Nations is visible in our community. We stand tall and proud of who we are and enjoy sharing this with visitors.



[Pictured above]: Shane Wally, local trail builder, talks with Norma about how the mountain biking trails have contributed in many positive ways to the community's wellbeing and economy.



# ECONOMY

## *Building new industries (continued...)*

- \* **Tiny Homes Building Program** - The Tiny Homes Building Program began for three different reasons: **1)** to train our local people in carpentry, **2)** to meet the need for smaller/apartment-sized homes to house Elders and others who are living alone, and **3)** to develop a new local building industry and make it more cost affordable for people to enter the housing market and keep up with the living costs (since tiny homes are more energy efficient, they are most affordable to live in).
- \* **Renewable energy systems** - Biomass projects show promise for local job development and encourage self-sufficiency. The local biomass industry can be linked with fire smarting activities around our community, as we can build up these two industries to work together and feed each other. This is an example of how we can balance climate change mitigation and adaptation.

## *Shifting thinking:*

- \* **There is a lot of interest amongst our community members for building 'green' homes.** However, the capital cost is still too high for everyone to access this initiative. We need to shift our thinking on a mass, global scale to move away from cheap oil and build momentum in the renewable energy field. This will take political pressure from citizens all over the world, as we live in a globalized economic system. We can do this by paying attention to what is happening around the world as well as doing our part on a local scale to offer up a model and way forward. More and more Indigenous communities are leading the way in the renewable energy sector. We can be an example for others to follow.

## Mitigation vs. Adaptation

**Mitigation** - refers to the actions taken to reduce the severity of climate change (i.e. dealing with the root causes - reducing greenhouse gas emissions)

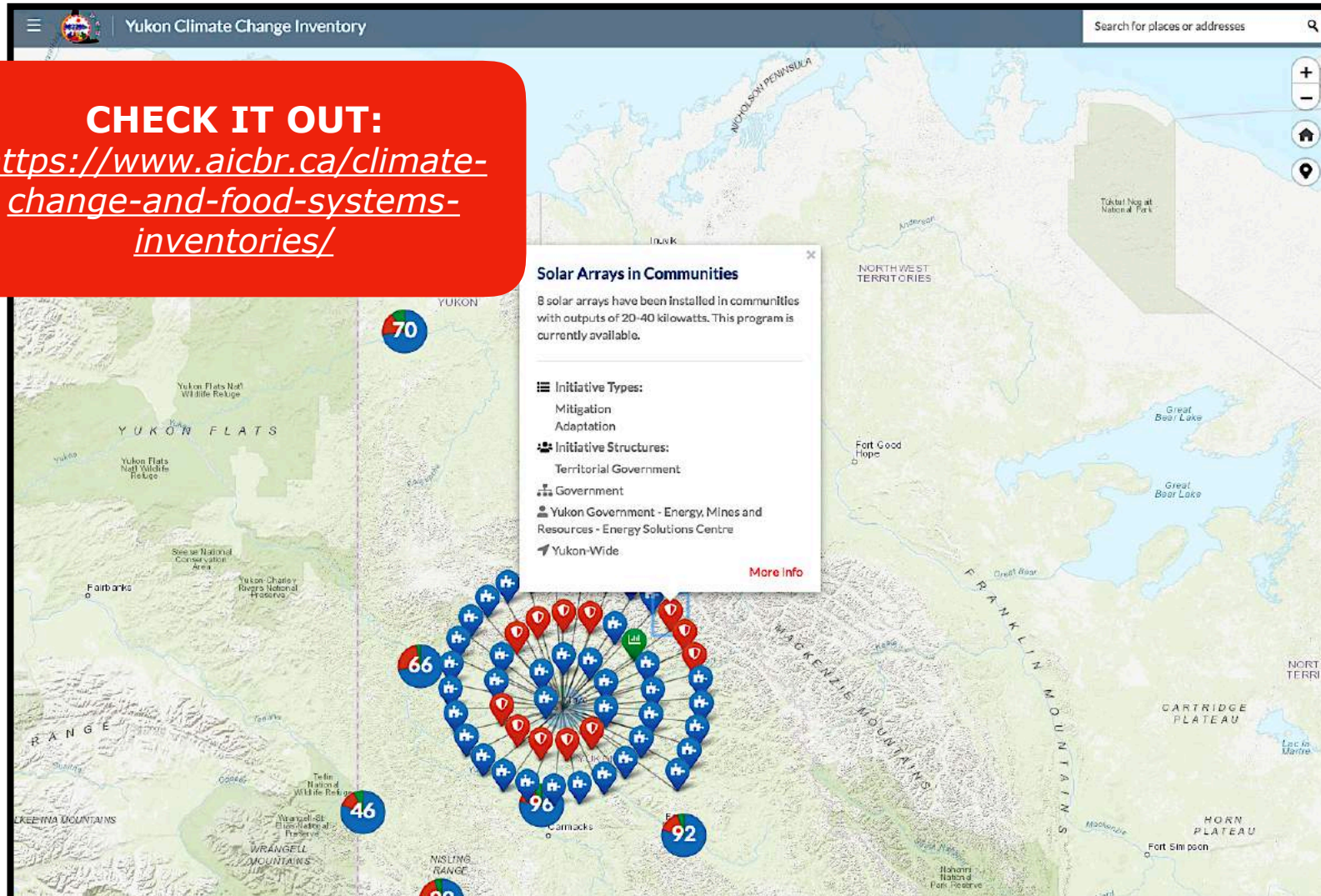
**Adaptation** - refers to the actions taken to limit our vulnerability or adjust to the impacts of climate change (not necessarily dealing with root causes of those impacts)

# Mapping Climate Change & Food Systems

Also part of the YIC4 project is the development of two mapping tools which show the number of climate change and food systems initiatives across Yukon communities (and beyond). The map contains detailed information about each initiative and allows the user to filter and search by community and project type. These maps help us to get a better picture of our current strengths and allow us to learn from and be inspired by other communities.

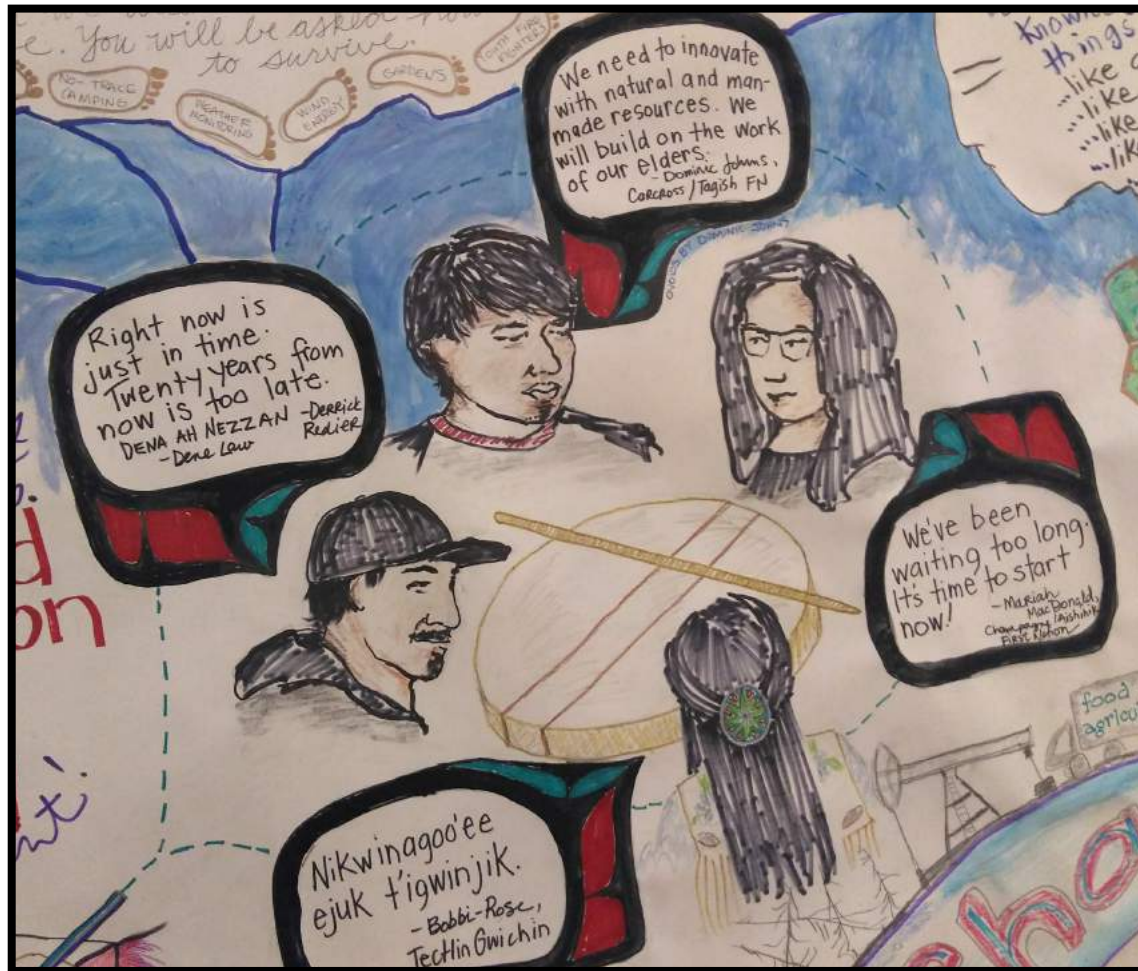
**CHECK IT OUT:**

<https://www.aicbr.ca/climate-change-and-food-systems-inventories/>



# A MESSAGE

From the Youth



Artist credit: Heidi Marion, with the help of YIC4 youth, Dominic Johns.

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*Photo credits: Tookie Mercredi, Molly Pratt and Kelly Pickerill*

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