



Indigenous Centre for
Cumulative Effects

Strategic Plan 2024 - 2027



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Purpose of the Strategic Plan

The purpose of this strategic plan is to set clear direction for the organization in identifying objectives, priorities and activities for the next three years. It aims to fulfill the ICCE vision and mission.

This plan will support the development and implementation of annual work plans, and serve as a guide in decision-making across all levels of the organization.

Strategic planning remains an ongoing process, allowing ICCE to define initiatives and allocate resources to achieve the objectives set out in this plan.

Periodic review and re-assessment of the strategic plan will allow the ICCE team to make adjustments, as needed, during the 2024-2027 period.

ICCE Creation Story

In 2018, the co-development of an Indigenous-led Centre of Expertise on the management of cumulative effects began with an Advisory Group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous cumulative effects practitioners from across Canada.

An allocation of \$15.3 million over five years, from the Government of Canada, supported the initiative to discuss ideas for what an Indigenous-led Centre of Expertise could become. Roundtable discussions took place in Ottawa, Victoria, Halifax, Montréal, and Vancouver in 2018 and 2019. This diverse mix of perspectives within the Advisory Group worked collaboratively to envision an Indigenous-led organization.

As a result of these discussions, the Indigenous Centre for Cumulative Effects (ICCE) was incorporated as a not-for-profit organization in November 2019, with an interim Board of Directors. The ultimate outcome of these two years of work was the delivery of an Indigenous Forum on Cumulative Effects in February 2020. The forum involved approximately 300 participants from 140 Indigenous communities, where the ICCE vision, mission, and guiding principles were confirmed.

Vision

Indigenous Peoples have the capacity and the ability to assess, monitor and manage the cumulative effects occurring in their lands, water and communities.

Mission

ICCE mission is to create networks, develop and share knowledge empowering community-based approaches for culturally relevant cumulative effects assessment, monitoring and management in support of Indigenous well-being and decision-making.

Guiding Principles

- Indigenous-led
- Non-partisan, non-political and not-for-profit
- Independent from government
- Inclusive of elders and youth
- Guided by the principle of Etuaptmumk (Two-Eyed Seeing)

Timeline of Key Achievements and Milestones

Since its creation, ICCE has reached milestones under each of its strategic priorities. The following timeline shares the evolution of ICCE as an organization from 2020 to 2024. It highlights key achievements each year that have contributed to the success of implementing the ICCE vision and mission, in alignment with the guiding principles.

2020 - 2021

Key highlights:

- A virtual conference, attracting approximately 200 participants
- An expansion of the interim Board of Directors to official members
- The creation of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
- Creation of ICCE website
- Community Funding Program pilot projects

The initial ICCE team was assembled throughout the year of 2020, consisting of an Executive Director, two part-time employees, independent contractors, and an association management company. While continuing to develop and implement the various activities and policies to establish ICCE governance, the team also started providing services to First Nation, Inuit and Metis communities.

ICCE supported communities through the funding of community pilot projects, and expanded its informational content for online publishing through the newly developed website. Policies and processes were developed and a shortlist of cumulative effects experts across Canada quickly became a growing database of existing expertise.

The Board of Directors worked with the ICCE team to build on its existing mission, vision and achievements, leading to the inaugural strategic plan for the period of 2021-2024.

To provide ongoing advice to the ICCE Executive Director and to the Board of Directors, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was formed, bringing together expertise relevant to cumulative effects based on both Indigenous knowledge and Western knowledge.

2021 - 2022

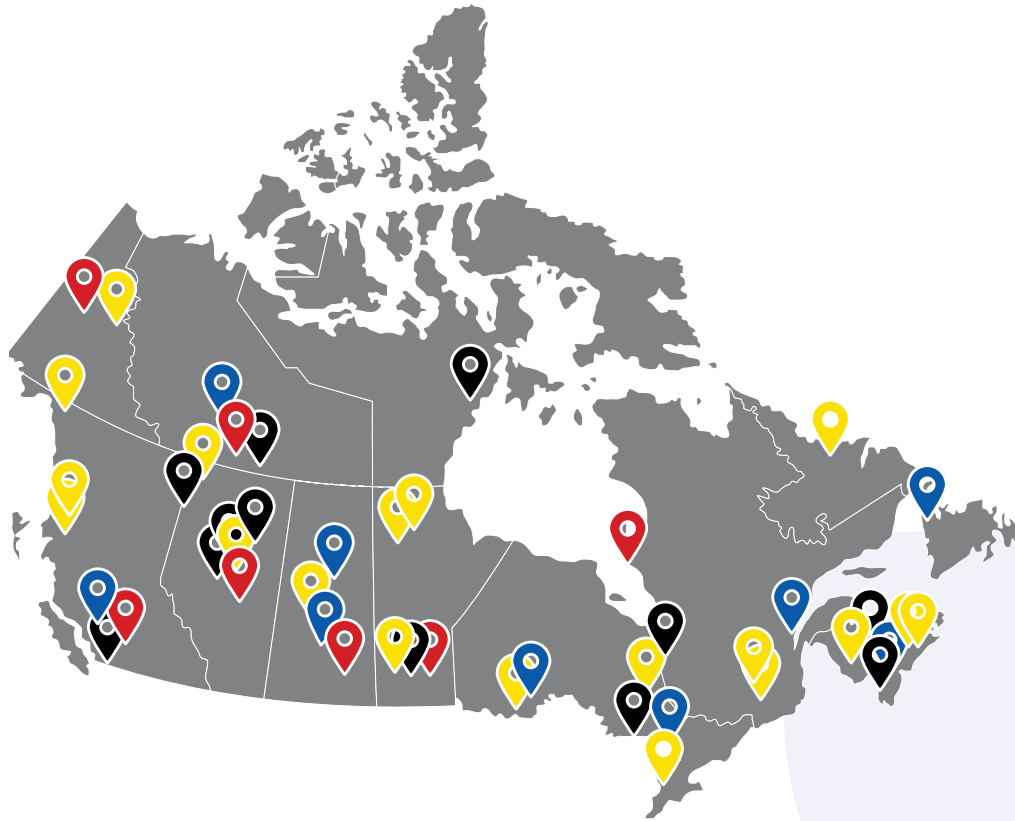
Key highlights:

- 15 communities funded
- Strengthening of online resources
- Inaugural Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- ICCE Governance and Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual

In response to the growing demand for supporting Indigenous communities in cumulative effects projects, the ICCE team expanded in areas of communications and program management. Funding was provided to 15 Indigenous communities under the Community Funding Program (CFP). The CFP was created following community pilot projects the preceding year. Round 1 started in 2021 and ICCE quickly learned that the need for capacity building and the interest of Indigenous communities to undertake projects were greater than anticipated.

The CFP continued over the following years with an increasing number of applicants in each round. Through its life, the CFP has had 275 applications from 198 Indigenous communities, organizations or associations. ICCE distributed over \$11 million to 62 community-led projects between 2020-2021 and 2023-2024.

Map of projects funded by the Community Funding Program (CFP)



Indigenous communities early in their capacity building required additional support in addition to the CFP, resulting in the development of two guidance documents to respond to this need. In addition, the inventory of cumulative effects practitioners led to the development of an interactive map integrated into the ICCE website. This visual tool displays cumulative effects practitioners across Canada, where users can search expertise by territory and type of work.

ICCE held its inaugural Annual General Meeting (AGM) in September 2021.

2022 - 2023

Key highlights:

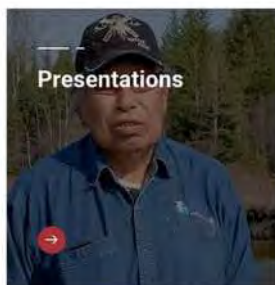
- Deployment of the National Needs Assessment
- First Annual Report
- ICCE Online Knowledge Centre

A national needs assessment was conducted with the intent of better understanding the needs of First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities with respect to cumulative effects across Canada. This assessment not only collected substantive data on community needs, but also how communities would be better served by ICCE in the future. Networking and information-sharing initiatives included another virtual conference.

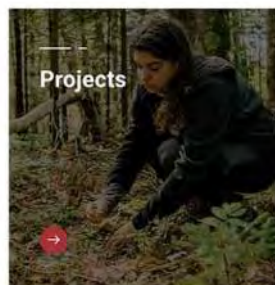
Resources such as expert practitioners, project learnings, and knowledge-based assets were consolidated into the creation of an online Knowledge Center. Living on the ICCE website, the Knowledge Centre presents a repository of cumulative effects resources specific to Indigenous communities.



Best Practices



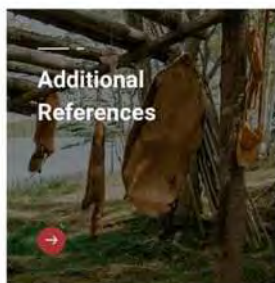
Presentations



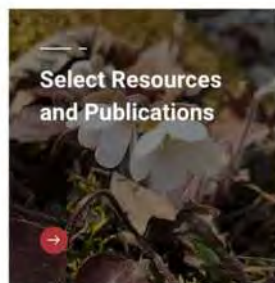
Projects



Research



Additional
References



Select Resources
and Publications

External communications efforts were strengthened by increasing the ICCE presence across social media channels, and the development of an Annual Report.

2023 - 2024

Key highlights:

- Development of administration and governance policies
- Strengthening of ICCE governance through the expansion of the Board of Directors
- Confirmation of longer term funding for ICCE
- Initiated 12 community projects for CFP Round 4
- Detailed analysis of the CFP and Needs Assessment

In May 2023, ICCE's first in-person conference hosted over 200 participants from across Canada, reaching international attendees with interest in Cumulative Effects. The conference theme was Sharing Knowledge to Take Action, and resulted in a massive success based on the feedback received from participants.

The results of the national needs assessment were analyzed in order to identify key needs from coast to coast to coast. This exercise was intended to improve the services that ICCE provides to First Nation, Inuit and Metis communities and also to help develop a new strategic plan for the 2024-2027 period. Data and information from project applications received through the CFP were also analyzed to gather intelligence and inform future planning.

Building governance structures allowed for the expansion of the Board of Directors with the addition of six new Directors who began their term in April 2023. As of the last quarter of 2023-2024, the ICCE Board consists of nine Indigenous leaders with representation from across Canada. The Board includes an Elder Director and a Youth Director.

ICCE administrative and HR policies continued to be refined to meet the needs of ICCE operations. As a young organization, ICCE continues to evolve and grow. Many new positions have recently been created and efforts continue to identify and recruit strong Indigenous candidates for the National Office.

ICCE's early successes have contributed to its recognition as a leading-edge Indigenous organization, a key player in the field of cumulative effects, and an employer of choice. While it has been a challenge to recruit new employees, the confirmation of longer-term funding for ICCE should help make the organization more attractive for potential candidates.

ICCE's most recent achievements are detailed further in the next section of this strategic plan, with the latest accomplishments in each area of ICCE's strategic pillars.



A Recent Snapshot on Strategic Priorities

The conclusion of implementations carried out in ICCEs inaugural strategic plan are reflected in each of the 3 strategic pillars: (1) capacity building and training, (2) networking, provision of expert advice and information-sharing, and (3) strengthening ICCE governance to ensure long-term sustainability.

[P1] Capacity Building and Training

Since the envisioning of ICCE, the priority has remained consistent in helping Indigenous communities with building capacity to manage, monitor and assess Cumulative Effects within their territories.

>> *Community Funding Program*

ICCE had little time to show success at building Indigenous capacity in cumulative effects, having onboarded an Executive Director in June 2020 during a pandemic. To accelerate capacity building in Indigenous communities under such circumstances, the Board of Directors approved the creation of the Community Funding Program (CFP) as a pilot. The pilots demonstrated community interest in cumulative effects projects, which led to the first round of funding in February 2021, and ICCE quickly learned that the need for capacity in Indigenous communities was greater than anyone anticipated.

Within a year of its inception, ICCE demonstrated that there was a need among Indigenous communities for support to do cumulative effects work and that ICCE has a role in providing this support. After the first two rounds of the Community Funding Program, ICCE was getting recognition for the work it was doing, and was approached by outside organizations including several federal departments to help them reach First Nation, Inuit and Metis to develop capacity in the area of cumulative effects. By way of example, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) approached ICCE to assist with their Indigenous Capacity Support program and provided \$1.5 million to reach more communities through the CFP.

The development of the CFP has resulted in ICCE:

- Learning there was a widespread need for support in First Nation, Inuit and Metis communities to conduct cumulative effects work.
- Learning more about the work Indigenous communities are doing in the area of cumulative effects.
- Receiving an increasing number of community applications.
- Learning more about how ICCE can be more strategic with its limited budget to support the needs and Ways of Being of Indigenous communities from coast to coast to coast.

Through its life, the CFP has received 275 applications from 198 unique Indigenous communities, organizations, or associations, requesting \$51,506,740. The CFP has distributed a total of \$11,468,443 in funds for 62 community-led projects across Canada.

With each round of funding, ICCE has:

- Improved accessibility and ease of use within the application process for communities wanting to apply.
- Increased flexibility to match the realities of their projects, and centered on helping communities ensure the project met their needs.
- Created a more inclusive and equitable program, ensuring funds are distributed across Canada.

The Technical Advisory Committee has been critical in evaluating these applications objectively with a Two-Eyed Seeing approach and providing recommendations to the Board.

ICCE has completed 4 rounds of the CFP; through each round the CFP evolved and created greater visibility into the types of capacity Indigenous communities are seeking to build.

>> National Needs Assessment

Another major accomplishment under the Capacity Building and Training, and Governance strategic pillars was the successful completion of the National Needs Assessment, which aimed to better understand the needs of Indigenous communities across Canada and how they want to work with ICCE.

This initiative was conducted in two phases. Phase One took place in the spring of 2022 and consisted of five virtual “focused dialogue” sessions. Phase Two was a series of five in-person regional dialogues which were completed in October and November 2022.

The results of the Needs Assessment will not only influence the services that ICCE provides but also the ICCE Strategic Plan.

[P2] Networking, provision of expert advice and information-sharing

From the Indigenous Forum on Cumulative Effects to the in-person and virtual conferences, ICCE has delivered substantial opportunities for Indigenous communities to network, collaborate, and build inter-community connections. Communities in early stages of development have since interacted, learned, and drawn learnings from communities enhancing their capacity in Cumulative Effects work.

The consolidation of resources into the online Knowledge Center has seen significant improvements and will continue to be prioritized to create an accessible experience for Indigenous communities across Canada.

ICCE’s first in-person conference in May 2023 was a great success, attracting over 200 participants from across Canada and abroad with interest in cumulative effects.

ICCE is exploring the idea of a pilot project on the potential contribution of Indigenous Knowledge to the Government of Canada’s Open Science and Data Platform (OSDP). Initial discussions with the federal government and with a few Indigenous communities have been conducted in 2023-2024.

[P3] Strengthening ICCE governance to ensure long-term sustainability

Solid foundations of the organization's governance structure allowed ICCE to expand its Board of Directors with the addition of six new Directors who began their term in April 2023. The ICCE Board currently consists of nine Indigenous leaders with diverse territorial representation across Canada. ICCE Board of Directors includes new specialized roles for an Elder Director and a Youth Director.

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has also dedicated much of its time towards redefining its role and how it can better contribute to the activities of ICCE. Renewed Terms of References for the TAC are currently being drafted. In the meantime, many of the existing TAC members have renewed their tenure and a few new members were appointed. The TAC currently has 11 members, with one additional seat to be filled.

ICCE administrative and HR policies continue to be refined to meet the needs of ICCE operations. With the onboarding of new Directors and the recent confirmation of funding for ICCE beyond March 31, 2023, the Directors and the National Office initiated a strategic planning exercise in 2023-2024.

The results of the Needs Assessment and the interactions with Indigenous communities through the CFP over the past few years provide background information to inform the renewed 2024-2027 strategic plan.

A Focus on Corporate Management and Leadership

As a new organization, ICCE continues to evolve and grow. Many new positions have recently been created and efforts continue to identify and recruit strong Indigenous candidates for the National Office. ICCE’s early successes have contributed to its recognition as a leading-edge Indigenous organization, a key player in the field of cumulative effects, and an employer of choice.

While it has been a challenge to recruit new employees, the confirmation of longer-term funding for ICCE should help make the organization more attractive for potential candidates.



Community Funding Program Success Stories

Monitoring Effects of Hydroelectric Development and Climate Change

A Cree Nation in Northern Quebec has been impacted by accumulated impacts of hydroelectric development and climate change. The cumulative effects of these developments have adversely affected their traditional practices, and inherent rights to the ecosystems on and around territorial lands. The rights and practices held by the community have observed cumulative effects, which have been largely understudied.

Thanks to the Community Funding Program, the collection of baseline data will allow the community to make decisions based on scientific analysis and comparative changes to local ecosystems as time proceeds. The ecosystem identification method will be based on community-led facilitation of the study, will braid both western science-based theories, and research methods with Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). By specifically focusing on two ecosystems vital to this community's way of life, which are waterfowl and fish habitats, the project involves gathering sufficient baseline data to investigate anthropogenic and natural environmental change.

Right Holders such as trapline leaders and community elders are consulting the project research throughout its development to ensure accurate historical data on traditional fishing sites, and raise questions to the cumulative effects technical team when appropriate.

Community-Based Aquatic Monitoring

An Anishinaabe community from Northern Ontario has sought out to understand cumulative impacts of climate change, forestry and mining activities, dam operations, agricultural practices, and the presence of residential and cottage lots.

Implementing a community-based Aquatic Monitoring Program (AMP) includes surface water quality, sediment quality, and fish habitat data from up to 25 monitoring sites in and around territorial waters.

With the community's long-term vision to build capacity for collecting Indigenous Knowledge and environmental monitoring, the project will also facilitate connections between Elders and youth. The AMP will provide mechanisms for leadership to make well informed land use decisions that are grounded in Indigenous Knowledge and fostering stewardship at a community level.

In addition to the acquisition of aquatic data that will be essential for future monitoring initiatives, the program will also build community capacity through collaboration in monitoring program development and implementation, including theoretical and technical training, and applied sampling experience. Overall, this project is set to strengthen the community's relationship with the land and their understanding of the cumulative impacts.

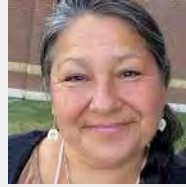
ICCE Leadership

Board of Directors



Angie Gillis (Chair)

The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq
Eskasoni First Nation, NS



Melanie Daniels (Vice-Chair)

Chickadee Indigenous Relations
Westerose, AB



Leona Irons (Treasurer)

National Aboriginal Lands Managers
Association
Curve Lake First Nation, ON



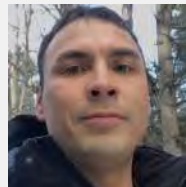
Florence Catholique (Elder)

Lutsel K'e Dene First Nations
Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation, NT



Sophie Collins (Youth)

Qwelminté Secwépemc
Esk'etemc (Alkali Lake BC) & Woodland
Métis



Dustin Ray Thacker

Beaver First Nation, Consultation Lands
and Resources
Beaver First Nation, AB



Lisa Tsessaze

Dene Lands and Resource Management
Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, AB



Earl Belcourt IPC, CMS

IAMC Policy Advisor
British Columbia Métis Federation



Hélène Boivin

First Nations Consultant
Pekuakamulmuatsh Nation, QC



Executive Director

Leea Litzgus

Leea is the founding Executive Director at ICCE. She has over 30 years of experience working with Indigenous communities and environmental management from a public and private sector perspective.

Before leading the team at ICCE, she held the role of Associate Regional Director General at Indigenous Services Canada in Ontario from 2011-2020.

Leea also held senior level positions within ISC in the Manitoba and Atlantic regions. Prior to her federal service, she worked as an environmental consultant.

Leea is dedicated to help build and enhance Indigenous communities' capacity for self-driven cumulative effects assessment, monitoring, and management.

Leea is Algonquin on her mother's side and eastern European on her father's side.



Key Factors and Considerations influencing ICCE Strategic Direction

For a thorough understanding on the operational context of ICCE, the following five considerations are highly influencing the future direction the organization will embark on. The current external landscape has a tremendous impact on ICCE, as well as internal factors informing strategic priorities, decisions, and ongoing projects.

1. Confirmation of Funding until 2028
2. Strengthened Commitment by Newly Appointed Board of Directors
3. Emerging Needs for Indigenous Communities identified by the National Needs Assessment
4. Insights from the CFP Data Analysis
5. Substantive Demands for ICCE Knowledge Sharing

[1] Confirmation of Funding until 2028

Corporate management and strengthened leadership will be made possible with secured longer-term funding for ICCE. This support from funders allows the organization to evolve and continue its path to growth, with three new employees hired in 2023 and many positions being advertised with the goal of hiring additional staff in 2024-2025.

[2] Strengthened Commitment by Newly Appointed Board of Directors

With a priority of strengthening ICCE governance to ensure long-term sustainability, the newly appointed directors give the organization a robust leadership structure to support its continued growth.

ICCE administrative and governance policies continue to be created and refined as appropriate, to meet the evolving needs of ICCE operations. In 2023, a Honoraria Policy and a Tendering Policy were created and many adjustments were made to a number of existing policies.

[3] Emerging Needs for Indigenous Communities identified by the National Needs Assessment

A considerable amount of data and information was collected during the national needs assessment. Further analysis of the data and information was undertaken by a subset of ICCE Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to synthesize and prioritize the recommendations arising from the needs assessment. The main purpose of this work was to support ICCE strategic and work planning.

From the regional dialogues in Fort McMurray, Ohsweken, Saskatoon, Yellowknife, Dartmouth, and interviews with Métis and Inuit groups, **overlapping themes** emerge, which ICCE should consider:

A) Regionally Specific Approaches

- Foster regional networks to work on shared goals
- Regional training
- Events to network and collaborate
- Facilitate region specific Indigenous methodologies and terminology

B) Developing Toolkits

- Highlight best practices
- Support mapping tools
- Support database development, how to collect data and baseline information
- Navigate legislation on Impact Assessment
- Establish clear Indigenous cumulative effects terminology

C) Intergenerational Two-Eyed Seeing

- Promote Indigenous-led methodologies to facilitate workshops
- Events for knowledge sharing between knowledge holders, Elders, and youth.

[4] Insights from the CFP Data Analysis

To complement the analysis of the National Needs Assessment, an analysis of the Community Funding Program (CFP) was also undertaken.

The CFP Analysis used a thematic approach, and significant overlap was found with the conclusions of the Needs Assessment. In short, the CFP Analysis overlapped with the Needs Assessment in these areas:

Needs Assessment Analysis	Community Funding Program (CFP) Analysis
Regional specific approaches	Support Indigenous communities to develop meaningful relationships with provincial and federal agencies. ICCE should consider strengthening Indigenous understanding of CE technical terminology, regulatory policies and agreement types to do so.
Toolkit Development • Develop a mapping tool • Database development	Develop tools for education and training on cumulative effects to keep Indigenous communities updated on regulatory changes
Intergenerational Two-Eyed Seeing learnings and teachings	Continue to nurture a holistic Indigenous approach to cumulative effects Support collecting baseline information based on Indigenous Knowledge

[5] Substantive Demands for ICCE Knowledge Sharing

Since the creation of ICCE, the need for Indigenous perspectives in all connected areas affecting Indigenous cumulative effects has increased dramatically. ICCE has seen an increasing number of requests to participate, collaborate, and present its learnings in a variety of events and conferences across Canada.

Between the rise of global issues relating to cumulative effects, and the movement toward reconciling rights and relationships between Canada and Indigenous peoples, there is an accelerated demand for both human and capital resources within ICCE.

The importance of Indigenous perspectives, knowledge sharing and careful resource management will remain a top priority leading into the strategic priorities and objectives for 2024-2027.

2024 - 2027

Strategic Priorities and Objectives

In setting clear direction for the organizational objectives, priorities and activities for the next three years, the strategic pillars will guide the development and implementation of annual work plans, based on the objectives set out under each pillar.

Capacity Building and Training

Goals

- Increase awareness of cumulative effects
- Support the development of tools, protocols, and frameworks for cumulative effects assessment, monitoring and management
- Follow up on the National Needs Assessment

Objectives

2024 - 2025

- Facilitate intergenerational knowledge transfer by involving more Elders and Knowledge Holders and youth
- Identify and develop Capacity Building initiatives across the country

2025 - 2026

- Increase regional training opportunities and support
- Broaden the scope of services to include environmental capacity and challenges faced by First Nations, Métis, and Inuit

2026 - 2027

- Develop in-person and on-line training programs
- Develop partnerships with post-secondary institutions for training and potentially a certification program

Networking, Provision of Expert Advice and Information Sharing

Goals

- Increase awareness among Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, regulators, and industry about ICCE's role in supporting their work
- Assist communities to navigate the Impact Assessment Act
- Act as a resource for Indigenous communities to access information, resources, and best practices around cumulative effects assessment, monitoring, and management
- Fill existing gaps and build bridges between existing initiatives surrounding cumulative effects

Objectives

2024 - 2025

- Develop collaborative relationships with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities and organizations
- Establish a presence, through regional events, to communicate ICCE's work to communities across the country

2025 - 2026

- Organize conferences for knowledge sharing and networking
- Provide technical support to facilitate the sharing of knowledge between Indigenous communities

2026 - 2027

- Build a database to facilitate understanding and access to cumulative effects data and information for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit



Strengthening of ICCE Governance to Ensure Long-Term Sustainability

Goals

- Secure stable financing and increase awareness of ICCE's activities
- Solidify the status of ICCE as a credible source of information and knowledge to government
- Enhance and support board decision-making

Objectives

2024 - 2025

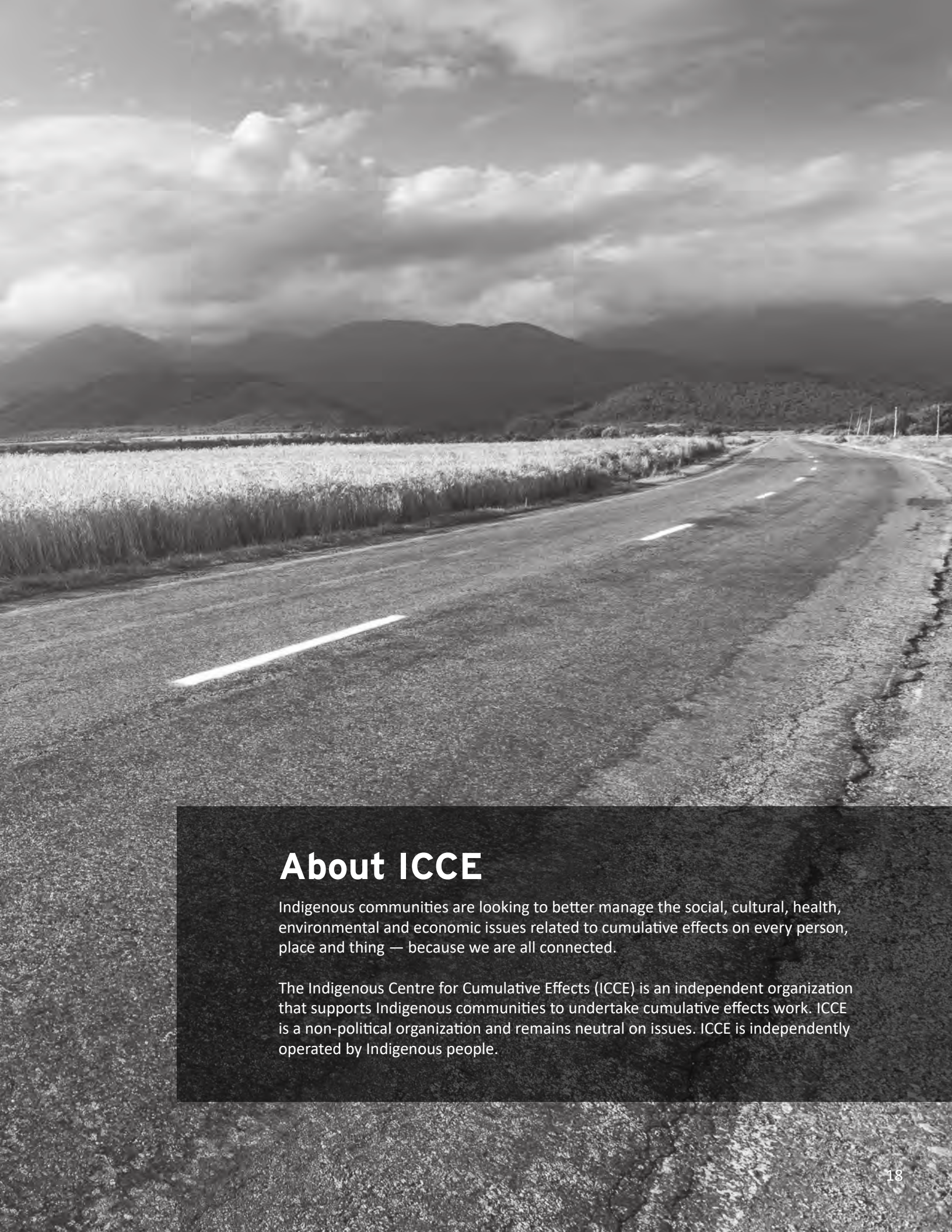
- Establish an organization structure aligned with strategic direction and goals
- Create an effective approach to board communications with Indigenous communities
- Create a board communications strategy

2025 - 2026

- Seek alternative funding opportunities including potential funding from industry
- Engage Elders and Knowledge Holders and Youth to enhance board governance

2026 - 2027

- Assess the organization's achievements and recognition nationally



About ICCE

Indigenous communities are looking to better manage the social, cultural, health, environmental and economic issues related to cumulative effects on every person, place and thing — because we are all connected.

The Indigenous Centre for Cumulative Effects (ICCE) is an independent organization that supports Indigenous communities to undertake cumulative effects work. ICCE is a non-political organization and remains neutral on issues. ICCE is independently operated by Indigenous people.



Indigenous Centre for Cumulative Effects

Strategic Plan 2024 - 2027

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Report by:

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