



February 9, 2020

Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty

Solidarity Statement – Hereditary Chiefs of the Wet’suwet’en

The Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty stands in solidarity with the Hereditary Chiefs of the Wet’suwet’en who are asserting their inherent jurisdiction and right to “say no” to Coastal Gas Links and the provincial and federal governments who are asserting “control with no soul” over their traditional territories. As the oldest living memory of what it means to live with dignity in right relationship in their lands and waters, we are deeply grateful for the leadership being shown by the Hereditary Chiefs and Matriarchs who are upholding the sacred responsibilities encoded within their original instructions, to ensure the health and integrity of their land, water, cultures/languages and present and future generations.

We are deeply saddened and outraged by the actions of the governments of BC and Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and Coastal GasLink Pipeline who are unlawfully and unjustly invading and excluding the Wet’suwet’en Hereditary Chiefs from their ancestral lands and waterways. The exclusion and forceful removal of their Hereditary Chiefs who have unanimously opposed all proponents of pipeline proposals in their traditional territory, is a highly unjust and unlawful violation of the Wet’suwet’en who have never ceded their jurisdiction to the lands they have cared for and governed for multi-millennia.

Indigenous Peoples have lived the reality of food sovereignty in subsistence economies and cultures for multi-millenia and are keystone to finding solutions to the existential crises that pose some of the biggest systemic challenges of humanity. We carry this voice and vision into a global movement of an estimated 200 million small scale farmers, fishers and Indigenous peoples mobilizing to resist the corporate control of the food system. As a grassroots movement we are committed to upholding our sacred responsibilities to work with the rapidly expanding networks of Indigenous hunters, fishers, farmers and gatherers mobilizing to address the underlying issues and injustices encoded in colonial policies, planning and governance impacting our ability to respond to our own needs for adequate amounts of healthy culturally appropriate foods in the forests, fields and waterways.

We are part of a cultural resurgence in land and food system networks where millions are waking up to realize themselves more fully in the bad karmic patterns that are being perpetuated by

governments and corporations who are invading Indigenous Peoples worldwide and excluding us from our ancestral lands and waterways that runs through the blood in our veins.

The provincial and federal governments have proclaimed truth and reconciliation. Actions speaks louder than empty promises that continue to erode the sacred trusts of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the trust of a growing network of Black, Brown, and working class white people who are showing up in solidarity to bring justice and clear the memory of trauma and violence from humanity. If the elected politicians of BC and Canada are truly committed to *meaningful* truth and reconciliation, then immediate action is necessary. Elected leaders must act now by adhering to the wishes of the respected Hereditary leaders of the Wet'suwet'en, who hold the inherent right to say no to harmful developments such as the Coastal Gas Links liquid and natural gas pipeline, to defend their sacred trusts of land, water, language/culture and present and future generations.

All members of the Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty stand in solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en, and demand that the government of BC and Canada uphold their responsibilities laid out in the Supreme Court Delgamuukw-Gisday'wa decision of 1997. We stand as witnesses at this historic moment when the colonial governments and corporations are being called to make a choice to uphold this court decision and bring justice to the ongoing legacy of colonization and genocide in Canada.

Signed,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dawn Morrison". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dawn Morrison, Founder/Curator
Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty