

**Chiefs of Ontario**

**Fall Chiefs Assembly**

November 21-23, 2023 Toronto, Ontario



**BRIEFING NOTE**

**Climate Action Update**

**To: First Nations Leadership and Technicians**

**From: Chiefs of Ontario, Environment Sector**

**Date: November 21-23, 2023**

**Purpose: Update on Climate Action Activities**

**ISSUE**

Chiefs of Ontario (COO) is providing a status update on climate action regarding COO and Assembly of First Nations (AFN) climate initiatives and resolutions.

**BACKGROUND**

Although the federal government has moved on the climate front without First Nations participation from the beginning with its Pan-Canadian Framework in 2016, First Nations have ratified climate resolutions that have impacted their livelihoods, lands and waters. The following resolutions are the key aspirations warranted by First Nations along with the federal government’s progress to include First Nations participation, collaboration and co-development on climate initiatives.

* COO Resolution #04/19 *First Nations Tax Immunity*: With unsuccessful progress with the Federal government on the carbon charge exemption since 2019, legal counsel was hired.
* COO Resolution #21/28 *First Nations Climate Leadership on Energy*: Directive #1 aligns with Resolution #04/19 that is handled by legal counsel. Directive #2 states carbon rights. Directive #3 directs COO to coordinate the development of an energy toolkit.
* AFN Resolution #05/2019 *Declaring a First Nations Climate Emergency*: Directive #5 calls for the development of a First Nations climate strategy.
* AFN Resolution #36/2023 *Urgent and Transformative Climate Action through the AFN National Climate Strategy* was passed in July 2023 and supports Resolution #05/2019.

From the Joint Committee on Climate Action (JCCA) best practices document, the federal government ‘s *Strengthened Climate Plan* and 2030 *Emissions Reduction Plan* including the *National Adaptation Strategy*, the First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda was developed.

**CURRENT STATUS**

* COO Resolution #04/19 *First Nations Tax Immunity*: Legal counsel is preparing for court action.
* COO Resolution #21/28 *First Nations Climate Leadership on Energy*: Directive #2 in stating carbon rights, funding and a contractor was secured to develop a COO First Nations Carbon Rights toolkit to assist First Nations on rights-based energy solutions. With regards to Directive #3, funding was recently secured from the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) to develop an energy toolkit to raise awareness of the various forms of energy to transition to an appropriate energy source as part of global climate action. AFN Resolution #05/2019 *Declaring a First Nations Climate Emergency*: In implementing Directive #5, the AFN released the National Climate Strategy in October 2023, identifying seven priorities areas:   
  + Knowledge systems, jurisdiction & rights, address capacity, self-sufficiency, gap closure, emergencies, and legislation reform.
* AFN Resolution #36/2023 *Urgent and Transformative Climate Action* *through the AFN National Climate Strategy:* Reiterates the climate emergency declaration, ratifies the National Climate Strategy with its seven priorities, and calls on government climate action/impact commitments.

In early spring 2023, the federal government, through CIRNAC & ECCC, announced a First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda with distinction-based funding available to all regions in Canada. The Chiefs of Ontario, through a motion passed by the Leadership Council, leads the process and distributed the funds equally to the PTOs, and Independent First Nations. The purpose of the program over the next two years is for First Nations to identify priorities and develop an approach to climate leadership. All of this work will contribute to recommendations to federal decision makers in fall 2024 - winter 2025, as a memorandum to cabinet moves forward for continued and sustained funding.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. COO Resolution #04/19 *First Nations Tax Immunity* (PDF)
2. COO Resolution #21/28 *First Nations Climate Leadership on Energy* (PDF)
3. AFN Resolution #05/2019 *Declaring a First Nations Climate Emergency* (PDF)
4. AFN Resolution #36/2023 *Urgent and Transformative Climate Action through the AFN National Climate Strategy* (PDF)
5. AFN National Climate Strategy October 2023 document. See link: <https://afn.bynder.com/m/77556e1d9da51db7/original/2023-Climate-Strategy-Report.pdf>