



Indigen**ERA**

Indigenous perspectives of
health in
Canadian impact assessments

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Introduction



Introduction

- The Canadian *Impact Assessment Act (IAA 2019)*
 - Impacts on Indigenous people's, their rights, use of land, and culture
- For the purposes of the IAA, Indigenous Knowledge (IK) is defined as “Indigenous knowledge is understood as a body of knowledge built up by a group of Indigenous people through generations of living in close contact with the land. Indigenous knowledge is cumulative and dynamic” (Canada, 2020).



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Introduction

- IK was involved in past EIAs, but was generally limited to GIS mapping (Mackenzie et al., 2017).
- Indigenous understandings of health and place can create comprehensive environmental assessments because they give a framework for how health is measured for Indigenous people (Lewis et al., 2021)

Research Questions

- 1) How far does Canada go to protect the rights of Indigenous peoples to have access to and protect their Indigenous knowledges and to live healthy lives as they struggle to protect their traditional lands when development occurs?
- 2) Does the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge (IK) in environmental impact assessment (EIA) processes in Canada translate to how Indigenous health is understood in an Indigenous context, and do we see those conceptions reflected in the documents that are informing environmental impact assessment decisions?



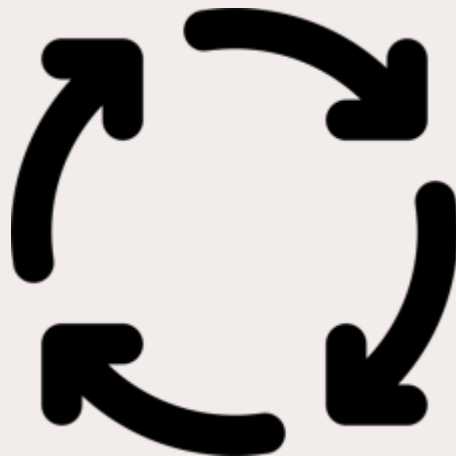
Methods

- Literature review of Indigenous health and knowledge
 - Academic literature, grey literature, Canadian federal EIA decision reports
- Thematic analysis
 - Qualitative analysis on the key themes in the literature and how each type of lit. compares
 - Assess the gaps in the literature and look at the inconsistencies between them

Academic Literature

Indigenous Health

- Place-based
- Based on social, emotional, physical, mental, and environmental factors (Bethune, 2019)

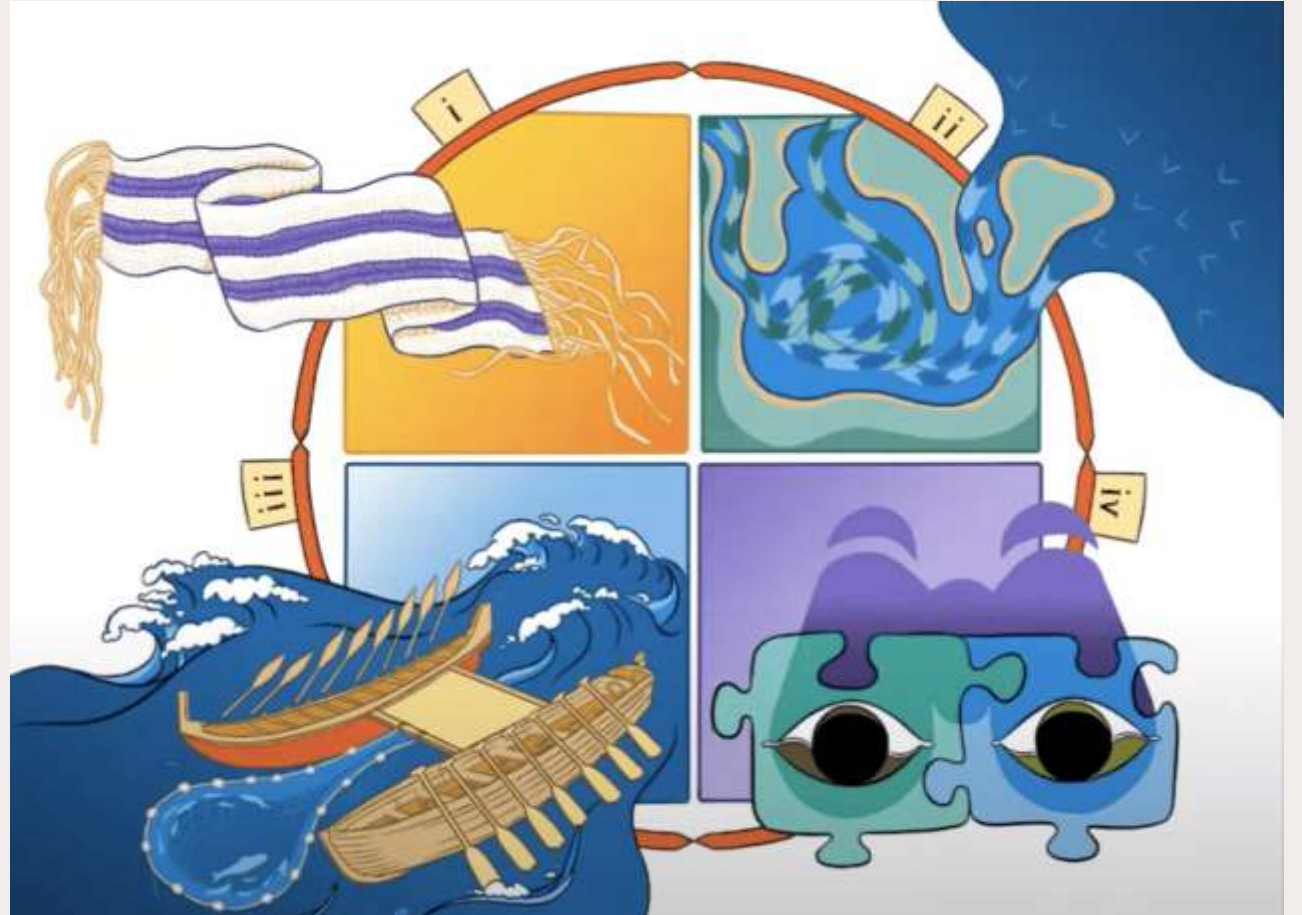


Decontextualization of Indigenous Health

- IK being fragmented to fit in Western science
- IK and Western science have very different attributes that cause engagement difficulties (O'Faircheallaigh, 2007)

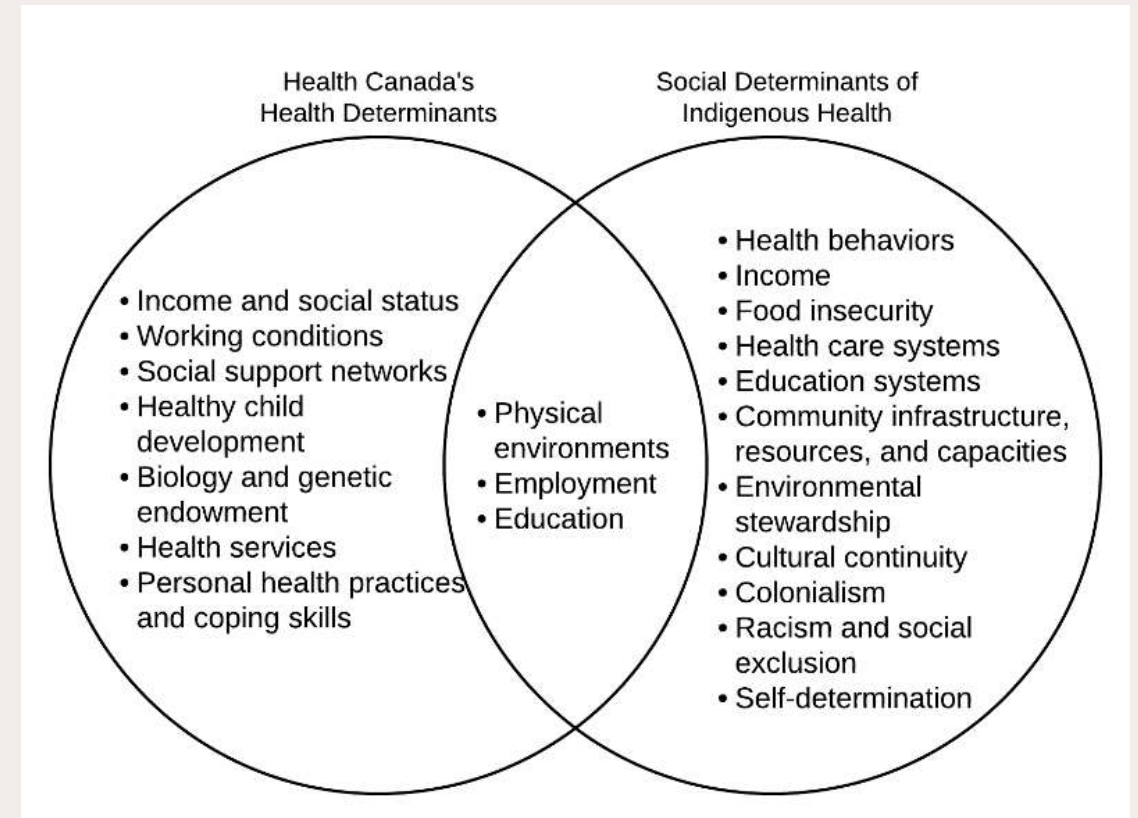
Academic Literature

- Etuaptmumk (Two-eyed seeing) as a way to equity in decision making
- Resists decontextualization



Grey Literature

- Agrees that the IAA 2019 is a step forward, but still needs improvement
- Criticisms around meaningful engagement and respect
- Health in the IAA 2019 is not as comprehensive as the social determinants of Indigenous health



from St. Pierre, 2021

EIA Decision Reports

- 13 reports
 - Newfoundland and Labrador (3)
 - British Columbia (3)
 - Ontario (5)
 - Alberta (1)
 - Quebec (1)

Drilling - 2

West Flemish Pass Exploration Drilling Project
BHP Canada Exploration Drilling Project

Mine - 9

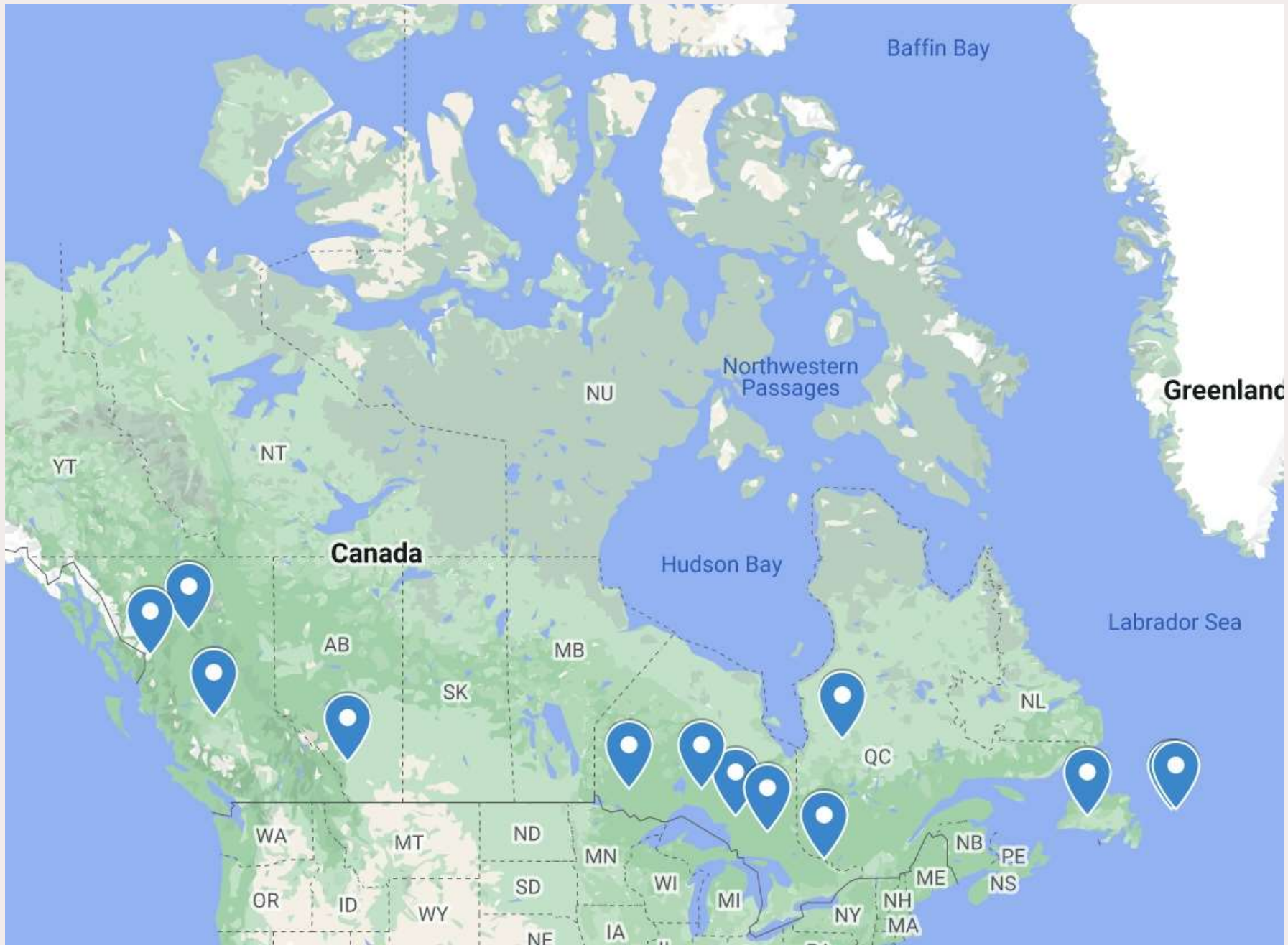
Valentine Gold Project
Blackwater Gold Project
Kemess Underground Project
Red Mountain Underground Gold Project
Magino Gold Project
Hardrock Gold Mine Project
Cote Gold mine project
Goliath Gold project
Rose Lithium – Tantalum Mining Project

Waste Disposal - 1

Radioactive Waste Disposal in the Ottawa Valley

Reservoir - 1

Springbank Off-Stream Reservoir Project



EIA Decision Reports

Newfoundland and Labrador

- Limited mention of Indigenous health
- 'Health and socio-economic conditions of Indigenous peoples' and 'Current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes' sections

British Columbia

- Indigenous knowledge and health mentioned
- Proponent as the main authority

EIA Decision Reports

Ontario

- Indigenous health sections
- Current use of lands and traditional resources sections
- Radioactive Waste Disposal in the Ottawa Valley



from CBC, 2018

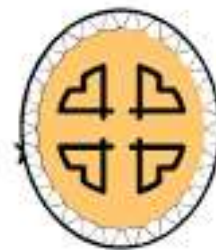
EIA Decision Reports

Alberta

- No specific mention of Indigenous health
- Current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes section

Quebec

- Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (CBHSSJ)
- Cree Health section



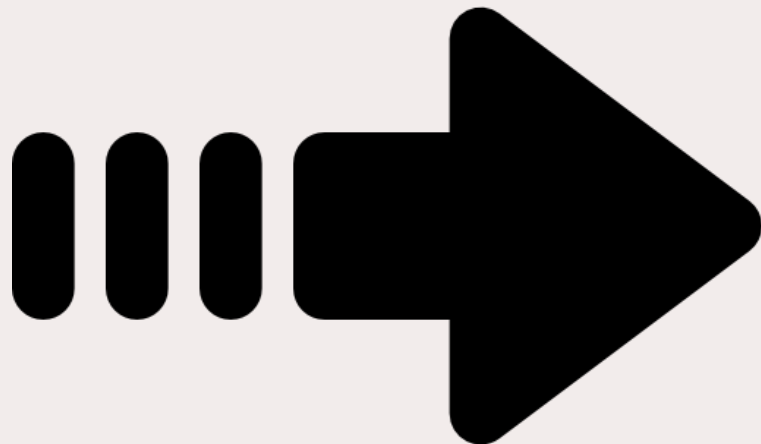
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CONSEIL CRI DE LA SANTÉ ET DES SERVICES SOCIAUX DE LA BAIE JAMES
CREE BOARD OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES OF JAMES BAY

Discussion

- Environmental impact assessments do not meaningfully engage Indigenous knowledge so that Indigenous health can be understood in the right context
- Takes Indigenous Knowledge out of context
- No balance
- EIAs in Canada do not protect Indigenous health

Steps Forward

- Change in views of Indigenous knowledge and health by proponents and the IA agency
- Expand scope of Indigenous jurisdiction
- Involvement in the planning phase



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