

Identity-based Approaches to PSIA

Exploring a case of Sagkeeng First Nation



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Context

- Proposed project: *in situ* decommissioning of Whiteshell Nuclear Reactor by Canadian Nuclear Laboratory (CNL)
- Sagkeeng First Nation had strong reservations
- Contrasting worldviews and understandings of impacts
- Sagkeeng proposed their own PSIA to analyze community perspectives

Approach Used

1. Storywork
2. Trauma-Informed Methods
3. Discourse Analysis & Identity Mapping



Storywork

The study centred community stories and lived-experience to understand their **collective identity**.

Knowledge was documented through:

01 | Semi-structured Interviews

02 | Psychological Assessments





Trauma-Informed Approach

Trauma awareness shapes:

- How we engage with community members
- How we create cultural and psychological safety
- How we operate as practitioners and look after ourselves / our teams



Discourse Analysis

Explored identity as it relates to:

01

The Environment

02

Perceived/Actual Exposure

03

Cultural Continuity

04

Relationships

05

The Decommissioning Project

06

Other Emerging Values

07

Interconnectedness of Values



Assessing Impacts

Explored impacts at 3 scales:

01

Historical Impacts

02

Industry Impacts

03

Project Impacts

- Family
- Community
- Sustenance
- Territorial Sovereignty
- Spirituality
- Flora & Fauna
- Mental Illness
- Racial Tensions
- Intergenerational Trauma
- Mental Stress
- Food Security
- Agency



Mitigation

1. Building a Trauma-Informed Decision-Making Model
2. Building a Trauma-Informed Engagement Plan
3. Building a Long-term Monitoring Program
4. Providing capacity and access to independent expertise
5. Actively investing in improving the psychological wellbeing of Sagkeeng members





Conclusions & Impact

01

Built understanding with the proponent and regulator.

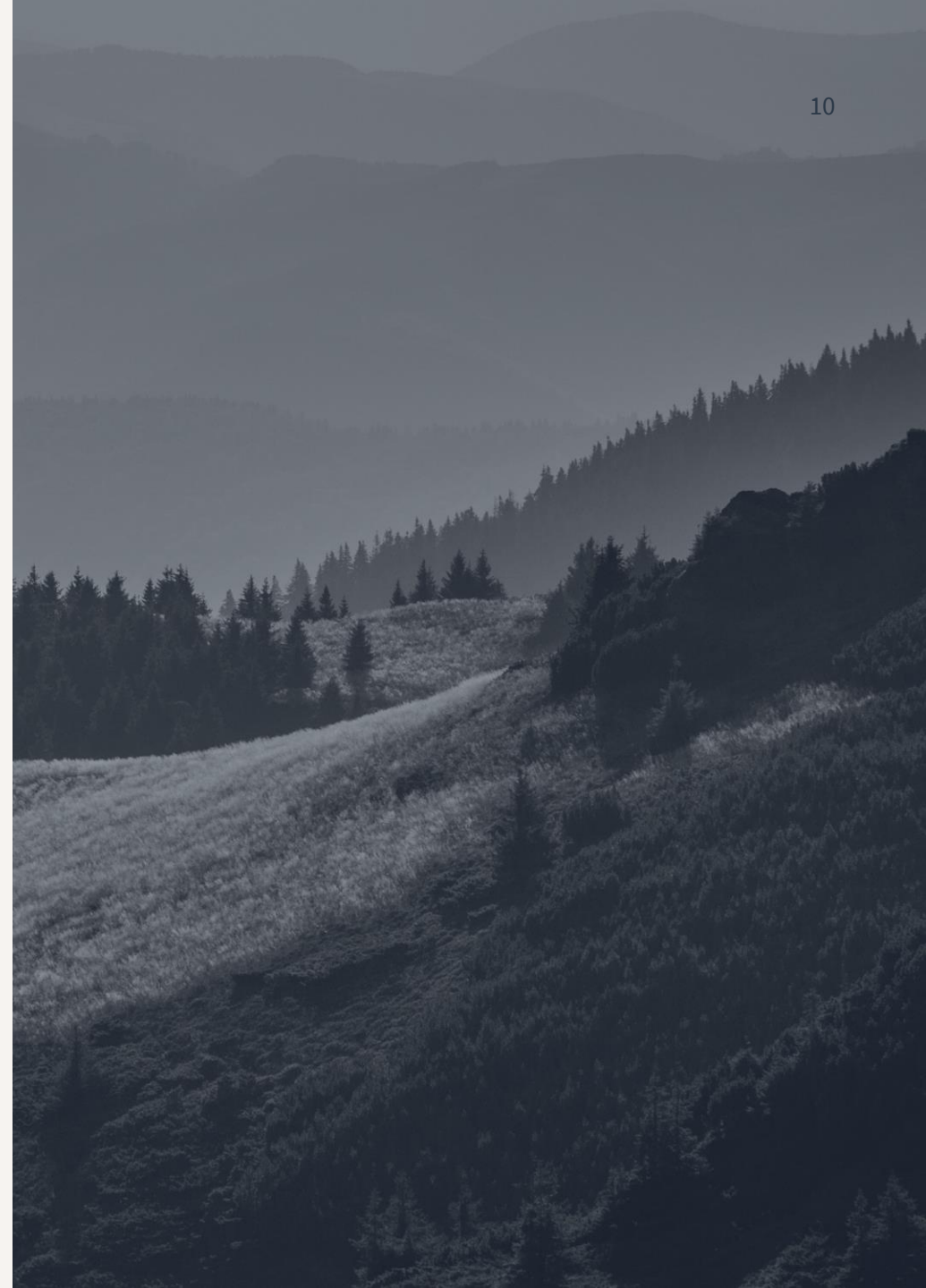
- Perceived impacts *are* real impacts.
- Historical trauma matters.

02

Transformed the relationship

03

Set legal precedence for leveraging PSIA to build case on historical harms.





Path Forward for Psychosocial IA

01

Psychosocial IA allows for deeper, more holistic analysis, with greater community voice.

02

Identity-based approaches can create space for reclaiming agency and identity.

03

Psychosocial IA requires a trauma-lens to help IA practitioners do no harm and build transformative relationships.

Let's continue the conversation!

Post questions and comments in the IAIA24 app.



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