

**13** CLIMATE  
ACTION



**Toward  
Climate Action  
in Nogojiwanong |  
Peterborough**

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Land Acknowledgement

We respectfully acknowledge that the Kawartha World Issues  
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Saagiig territory and in the traditional territory of the Michi  
Saagiig and Chippewa First Nations, collectively known as  
the Williams Treaties First Nations, which include Curve Lake,  
Hiawatha, Alderville, Scugog Island, Rama, Beausoleil, and  
Georgina Island First Nations.

KWIC and GreenUP respectfully acknowledge that the Williams  
Treaties First Nations are the stewards and caretakers of these  
lands and waters in perpetuity, and that they continue to  
maintain this responsibility to ensure their health and integrity  
for generations to come.

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What are the UN Sustainable Development Goals?

The 2030 Agenda was adopted by the United Nations general assembly in 2015. It is a framework of seventeen interconnected goals, referred to as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs focus on economic, social and environmental themes including sustainable development, poverty, and climate change. At the heart of the 2030 Agenda is the idea of equity, or ‘Leaving No One Behind.’ For more information about leaving no one behind and the Sustainable Development Goals Framework, please visit the [UN SDGs website](#).

About this project

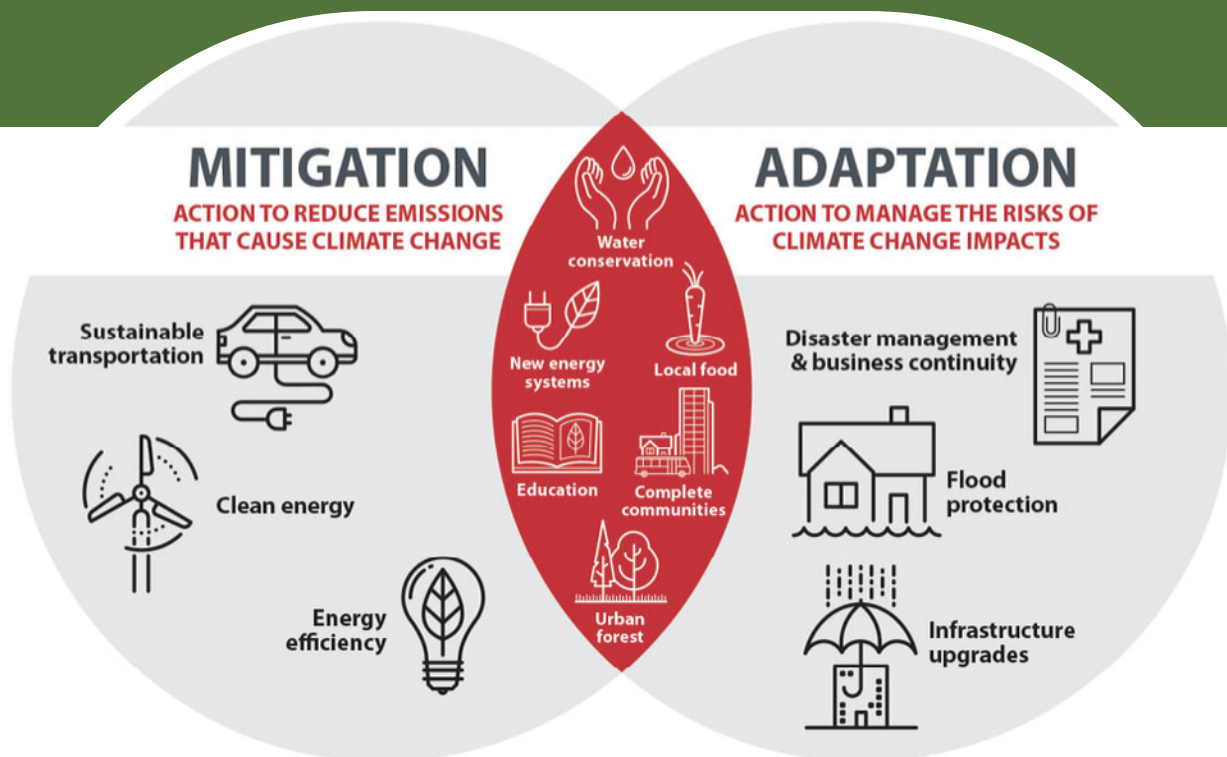
In March 2019, Kawartha World Issues Centre (KWIC), GreenUP, Fleming College, and Trent University hosted a Community Forum called Understanding the UN Sustainable Development Goals: Canada’s Commitment and the Local Connections. Later that year, KWIC applied for Sustainable Development Goals Program Funding, in partnership with GreenUP, in order to build upon the foundation established at this forum. The grant was awarded in March 2020, which coincided with the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. These circumstances created unique challenges, constraints and opportunities for the project, which was reorganized to become fully virtual.

Advancing the 2030 Agenda Peterborough / Nogojiwanong has four main objectives:

- 1. Raise awareness of and support for the 2030 Agenda;
- 2. Enhance multi-stakeholder efforts toward the Agenda by building partnerships and bridging efforts across sectors;
- 3. Ensure that progress on the 2030 Agenda leaves no one behind, including vulnerable and marginalized groups;
- 4. Foster and integrate Indigenous knowledge into approaches and efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

Five Action Teams were established to further these objectives in relation to priorities identified at the 2019 forum. Four of the teams focused on specific SDGs: No Poverty (SDG 1), Quality Education (SDG 4), Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6), and Climate Action (SDG 13). The fifth group, called the Indigenous Leadership Action Team (ILAT), guided and supported the work of the other four teams. The Action Teams each met remotely as a group three times, and worked toward the results shared at the 2021 Forum and in this report. Each Action Team made remarkable contributions, particularly given the constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic, and we are extremely grateful for their expertise, experience, and generosity.

The Climate Action (SDG 13) Action Team emerged from a strong interest amongst participants at the 2019 Community Forum in mitigating and building resilience to climate change. Together, the Action Team has imagined ways to build momentum toward SDG 13 while centering Indigenous knowledge and leadership and leaving no one behind. This report introduces Climate Action (SDG 13) to the wider community and summarizes the Action Team’s insights and recommendations.



**Mitigation** means to slow the rate of (or ‘mitigate’) climate change by reducing emissions and sequestering excess carbon from the atmosphere back into the earth.

**Adaptation** means to improve our ability to survive and respond to the impacts caused by climate change. Both mitigation and adaptation are important for achieving SDG 13.

Source:  
<https://www.calgary.ca/UEP/ESM/Pages/Energy-Savings/Climate-Change.aspx?redirect=/climateprogram>

Canada committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) by 30% below 2005 levels by the year 2030, and 80% by 2050, in its Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change (2). In 2020, the federal government released its updated plan, A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy, which commits to net-zero emissions by the year 2050” (3).

Although climate change is a global problem that impacts all of humanity, persistent inequalities between and within nations remain. Those who have historically contributed the least to the problem are more vulnerable to its effects. In Canada, climate change threatens to exacerbate the challenges that Indigenous peoples already face in maintaining their cultures and land-based livelihoods, due to generations of colonialism at the hands of settler states. Indigenous knowledge systems are rooted within the land and should be integral to conversations related to the localization of sustainability and climate change mitigation and adaptation.



Since March 2020, COVID-19 has focused significant capacity and funding toward a national response to the public health crisis. This has shifted government and public support away from priorities such as the ongoing climate crisis. COVID-19 has also contributed to new environmental challenges, such as increased plastic pollution from single-use personal protective equipment (4). However, climate change remains an emergency, and the Climate Action Team emphasizes the need to act now.



### What is SDG 13 and Where Do We Stand?

In the 2030 Agenda, SDG 13 aims to “take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts” (1). The United Nations recognize the unprecedented challenge that climate change presents for humanity and all life on earth. As a result, SDG 13 sub-targets focus on education, setting national and sub-national policies, and improving capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- In 2018, **ICLEI** (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives) created **Future Climate Projections** for the City of Peterborough.
- All municipal partners and First Nations within the region have set community and corporate emission reduction targets for 2031, through Sustainable Peterborough’s **Climate Change Action Plan**.
- **The Youth Leadership in Sustainability** program, led by the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board and based out of Trent University, educates high school students to develop skills and knowledge to join this critical conversation and take action.
- **Depave Paradise**, a project of **Green Communities Canada** and local partners such as GreenUP, have worked to depave Peterborough. Volunteers and neighbourhoods remove unwanted pavement and plant gardens in its place. This is a great example of local mitigation and adaptation to flooding!

LOCALLY ADAPTED TARGETS

SDG 13 has five global targets adopted by the United Nations for Climate Action by 2030. The Climate Action Team adapted these targets to our local context. The team also identified opportunities and challenges to advancing these targets that are summarized below:

↕ OPPORTUNITIES      ! CHALLENGES

13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters.

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|---|--|
| ↕ Ample climate data, climate-resilient infrastructure, innovative technology | ! Funding, varying capacities and resources, inequitable impacts |
|---|--|

13.2 Integrate climate change measures into local policies, strategies and planning and align them with UPDRIP and national policies, strategies and planning.

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|--|---|
| ↕ Reducing GHGs, political advocacy, communal interest | ! Limited government resources and capacity to advance implementation, climate change impacts from beyond our borders |
|--|---|

13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

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| ↕ Educational opportunities and organizations doing this work locally | ! Limited capacity to implement and sustain climate action initiatives |
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13.a Implement the commitment undertaken by local communities and secure resources to address the needs of urban and rural communities in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation.

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|--|--|
| ↕ Strong multi-sectoral partnerships to address the needs of diverse communities and to engage local populations | ! Funding, shifts in government priorities and funding programs based on our electoral cycle, varying capacity to support implementation |
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13.b Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management locally, in both rural and urban communities equitably, in a way that prioritizes vulnerable groups in our community, including focusing on women, youth and marginalized peoples and communities.

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|---|--|
| ↕ Strong multi-sectoral partnerships to address the complex needs and opportunities for diverse communities and regions | ! Understanding and developing meaningful strategies to address the needs of diverse populations and communities (e.g. urban and rural) within a single region |
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LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

The principle of leaving no one behind (LNOB) is central to the Sustainable Development Goals. Climate action is connected to issues of discrimination, racism, rising inequalities, etc. that have left Indigenous communities dispossessed in their homelands and their waters and lands degraded. In Canada, “LNOB” means acknowledging and redressing the historic and ongoing harms of colonialism. We cannot repair our relationships with the land without repairing them with each other. This is why Indigenous knowledge and leadership are essential in taking climate action.

The burden of climate change falls disproportionately on those that have historically contributed the least to the problem and have the least resources. Those who are typically left behind in addressing and finding solutions to climate change include:

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|---|--|---|
| • The land itself, non-human beings, and all our relations; | • Folks with land-based livelihoods, including the agricultural community; | • Health-compromised and disabled people; |
| • Indigenous Peoples and Nations                            | • People living in poverty and/or experiencing housing insecurity;         | • The elderly and youth;                  |
| • Newcomers to Canada;                                      |  | • Future generations.                     |

The reasons they are left behind include but are not limited to:

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|--|---|
| • The hierarchy of knowledges - Western science and philosophies often oppress Indigenous knowledge systems; | • Lack of collaboration with jurisdictional neighbors;              |
| • Discrimination, racism and other forms of systemic marginalization;  | • Lack of inclusion and representation in political agenda-setting. |
| • Capacity and funding disparities experienced by rural and First Nation communities;                        |   |

## INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP IN CLIMATE ACTION

The understanding of climate action provided to us by the Indigenous Leadership Action Team (ILAT) was kept within our hearts and minds during this work. Here is a summary of what Climate Action looks like to the ILAT:

Traditionally, when we take life (eg. hunting, trapping, gathering), we put our semaa (tobacco) down for that spirit. If we take a tree, we plant another tree in its place. Everything is interconnected. What we do to the earth we do to ourselves. There are consequences to behaviour for 7 generations. Don't take more than you need. Our "resources" are not seen as our capital but are our relatives that we must treat with respect and care. We need to teach the youth and all peoples to have good reciprocal relationships with all our relations.

The ILAT identified people in their communities who get left behind in climate action:

- Hunters, trappers, gatherers - people living on the land;
- Local Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, Seed Keepers, etc;
- The elderly have knowledge, experiences and observations to share;
- The environment and all life in nature. They can show us what we need to do to make the environment more healthy. Indigenous knowledge is rooted in listening to nature.



## LOCAL CLIMATE ACTION EXAMPLES

The Climate Action Team identified work that is happening locally towards climate action. We created a list of initiatives that help us to understand the many layers of work happening within the climate action movement. We decided to focus on the work that exemplifies leaving no one behind and/or centering Indigenous leadership. The following are the local examples we chose to highlight:

### Community-led initiatives

- Trent Aboriginal Culture, Knowledge and Science (TRACKS) Youth Program
- The Indigenous Environmental Institute at Trent University
- Youth Leadership in Sustainability Education
- Camp Kawartha
- 4RG (For Our Grandchildren)
- GreenUP and GreenUP's Ecology Park
- PYE (Peterborough Youth Empowerment)
- Future Majority
- Food Not Bombs (food waste reduction & redistribution)
- Nourish Peterborough
- Manoomin (wild rice) revitalization efforts
- Farms at Work
- Depave Paradise & Vibrancy Project
- Sustainable Urban Neighbourhoods
- Builders for Climate Action
- Green Economy Peterborough Hub

### Government-led initiatives

- The City's Climate Change Reserve Fund
- County & GreenUP Community Climate Action Initiatives
- Home Energy Retrofit Incentive Programs
- Curve Lake First Nation Catch Basin & Stormwater Improvements
- Peterborough's Source Separated Organics GROW program
- City of Peterborough Rain Garden Subsidy Program
- The Link Rural Bus Service
- Peterborough Moves
- [City of Peterborough Community Climate Change Resiliency Strategy \(February 2020\)](#)
- Greater Peterborough Area's Climate Change Action Plans



## WHAT'S NEXT?

There is excellent work happening in our communities related to climate action. However, we have a long way to go if we're to reach SDG 13 by 2030. It is critical that no one is left behind, which means that matters of equity, including a central role for Indigenous knowledge and leadership, should be at the core of community-wide partnerships and initiatives to advance climate action.

At the Climate Action Team workshops and the 2021 Community Forum, many suggestions and ideas were raised about how to continue this work. While it is not the purpose of this report to outline a robust action plan, next steps could include:

- Develop or build upon existing collaboratives, partnerships, and networks (including this Action Team), especially with local Indigenous knowledge holders, to ensure there is space for diverse stakeholders to advocate for climate action;
- Implement climate change policies and plans and, where necessary, create complementary indicators for locally adapted SDG 13 targets;
- Continue identifying areas of overlap and interconnection between multiple SDGs, and especially No Poverty (SDG 1), Quality Education (SDG 4), and Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6).

For more information about this project and how to continue the conversation about Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6), please visit the [Kawartha World Issues Centre](#) and [GreenUP](#) websites.

## REFERENCES

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4. International Institute for Sustainable Development, COVID-19 Has Canada Using More Plastic. What impact will this have on our fresh water? <<https://www.iisd.org/articles/covid-19-has-canada-using-more-plastic-what-impact-will-have-our-fresh-water>>





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