

**Nipiy Tu responds to the federal Nature Strategy, calling for systems rooted in land, water and community to guide action.**

Fort Chipewyan, Alberta — *Nipiy Tu Research and Knowledge Centre* acknowledges the Government of Canada’s continued investment in the Nature Strategy and the WBNP Action Plan as an important step toward long-term care for waters and lands across the country. The Strategy also reflects a clear recognition of the role of Indigenous peoples, including commitments to Indigenous partnership, stewardship and leadership as essential to achieving its goals. This level of sustained funding signals that Canada is beginning to respond to the scale of the biodiversity crisis and the urgency of protecting ecosystems for future generations and reinforces the importance of how these commitments are carried in place

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Chairperson Lori Cyprien affirmed both the significance of the announcement and the responsibility that comes with it.

*“We recognize the Nature Strategy commitment to protecting the natural environment, particularly and the continued investment in the WBNP Action Plan. This is an important step forward and it reflects what we have been saying for a long time, that there is no path without Indigenous peoples,” said Cyprien. “What matters now is how that commitment is carried in practice.”*

The Peace Athabasca Delta is one of the most significant inland freshwater deltas in the world. It is a living system where ecological change is already being experienced. In its water levels, the ways people can move across it, the health of its living systems, and the conditions that support how people live with the land and water are shifting. The Delta itself is changing and this change matters because everything is in relationship with it. Responding to that level of change requires more than projects or short-term funding. It requires long-term ways of working that can hold knowledge, follow change, support stewardship, and guide decisions over time.

Across the country, Indigenous peoples are already carrying this work through relationships with land, water and community. These systems of knowledge are grounded in generations of responsibility, lived experience and ongoing observations.

As Canada advances its Nature Strategy efforts, Indigenous stewardship, monitoring, restoration and nature finance depend on these systems being recognized, supported and led in place. Nipiy Tu Research and Knowledge Centre also underscores that Indigenous

partnership must move beyond recognition toward shared responsibility and decision-making authority.

*“These investments matter and we support the direction being set,” said Cyprien. “To succeed, they depend on the places and knowledge systems that carry this work every day. That is how commitments become real.”*

*“Indigenous partnership cannot just be a statement,” Cyprien said. “It must be reflected in how decisions are made, how knowledge is respected and how responsibility is carried. Our role is not to be included after the fact. Our role is to shape how this work happens from the beginning.”*

The Nature Strategy sets a clear direction for how Canada is stepping into its responsibility to care for lands and waters over the long term. We recognize the seriousness of that commitment and the intention to respond to the scale of change that is underway. What matters now is how this direction is carried forward in a way that reflects the realities on the land and the relationships that sustain it.

*“We see the potential in this strategy,” said Cyprien. “Now we need to see it carried in a way that reflects how people, land and water are connected. The work must stay grounded in relationships because that is where responsibility lives and where the future of the Delta will be decided.”*

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