



Ministry of  
Environment  
and Parks

# Indigenous Engagement on Non-Residential Packaging Waste

July – September 2024

## What We Heard

*Report authored by Mahihkan Management on behalf of  
B.C.'s Ministry of Environment and Parks.*



*This report is authored by Mahihkan Management on behalf of B.C.'s Ministry of Environment and Parks.*

*In order to respect the feedback from participants, contributions during the discussions have been written as close to verbatim as possible while protecting the speaker's privacy. Due to this, some comments may seem vague, incomplete, or require interpretation by the reader, but this choice ensures that the voice of participants is honoured and truthfully represented.*

## Executive Summary

This report consolidates feedback from three engagement sessions on Non-Residential Packaging Waste Management held with Indigenous peoples in British Columbia between July and September 2024, and two written submissions. These sessions and submissions aimed to gather insights on the challenges faced by Indigenous communities, feedback on the discussion paper, and to explore potential solutions to reduce the amount of non-residential packaging waste entering landfills. To help cultivate a culturally safe engagement process, B.C.'s Ministry of Environment and Parks (the ministry) engaged Mahihkan Management, a firm specializing in Indigenous engagements and events.

Non-residential waste consists of waste generated outside of the household, including schools, businesses, and community centers. The focus of these engagements was driven by the substantial financial and logistical barriers associated with managing this waste, particularly in rural and remote Indigenous communities. These sessions provided the ministry an opportunity to better understand the current inefficiencies in waste management systems and how these could be addressed to support more sustainable practices.

Key themes emerging from the discussions and written submissions included:

1. **Cultural and Environmental Values:** Indigenous participants emphasized the deep cultural connection to the environment and the principle of stewardship. They stressed that waste management strategies must align with these cultural values, promoting environmental sustainability and intergenerational responsibility. Solutions should incorporate traditional teachings while addressing modern waste management challenges.
2. **Resource and Capacity Constraints:** Some communities struggle with limited financial resources and a shortage of skilled personnel to manage waste programs. The lack of consistent funding and training opportunities further exacerbates these challenges. Participants emphasized the need for capacity-building initiatives and long-term financial support to ensure the development of sustainable waste management systems.
3. **Infrastructure Gaps:** Many Indigenous communities, particularly those in remote areas, face significant barriers due to the lack of waste management infrastructure. Participants raised concerns about limited access to collection facilities and depots, waste collection vehicles, and high transportation costs, all of which contribute to the accumulation of waste in landfills.

Addressing these gaps requires targeted infrastructure investments tailored to the specific needs of each community.

4. **Definitions and Classifications:** Current waste classifications fail to reflect First Nations realities, causing misclassification and limited recycling access. Revised definitions, flexible policies, and collaboration are needed to address these issues and to ensure equitable, sustainable waste management that aligns with Truth and Reconciliation principles.

5. **Community Engagement and Education:** The importance of educating community members on proper waste management practices was highlighted throughout the engagements. While some communities have initiated small-scale recycling programs, broader participation is needed to create long-term behavioural change. Targeted educational campaigns, particularly those focused on youth, are essential for promoting waste reduction and recycling.

6. **Partnerships and External Support:** Participants called for stronger partnerships among Indigenous communities, government agencies, and external organizations. Forming these partnerships is critical for accessing the resources, funding, and expertise needed to develop sustainable waste management solutions. Collaboration among neighbouring communities and regional governments was also identified as a potential pathway to sharing resources and best practices.

The engagement sessions highlighted the need for tailored, community-specific approaches that align with Indigenous cultural values and address logistical and financial barriers. Future government policies and programs must prioritize partnerships, capacity-building, and education to support sustainable waste management practices in Indigenous communities.

The report concludes that a one-size-fits-all solution will not suffice for addressing the diverse challenges Indigenous communities face in managing waste, including non-residential packaging. Long-term, flexible support from government and external partners is essential for fostering sustainable outcomes protecting both the environment and Indigenous communities for future generations.

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## 1. Introduction and Objectives

This 'What We Heard Report' consolidates the feedback heard during three engagement sessions and two written submissions. The sessions were hosted by the ministry for Indigenous participants.

The intent of the engagements was to provide an opportunity for Indigenous communities to share ideas and challenges regarding non-residential packaging and general waste management practices. Following the engagements, the ministry aims to develop waste management solutions that are accessible to all communities and businesses across the province. Achieving this requires understanding the current shortcomings.

Non-residential packaging waste is not only waste from industry, or large corporations: it is all waste that does not originate from the home. This includes waste from schools, band offices, daycares, and any local shops that operate in communities. Packaging waste specifically refers to items such as cardboard boxes, plastic containers, metal drums, glass jars, and any material used for packaging products. Currently, a large portion of this waste ends up in landfills, resulting in financial barriers such as tipping fees and transportation costs, especially for those residing in rural and remote communities.

The reason for the focus on non-residential packaging waste is due to the significant costs and space limitations related to the 2.5 million tonnes (500 kilograms per person) of waste disposed of each year in B.C. Over half of the municipal solid waste that is disposed of is made up of recyclable or compostable materials that could be redirected away from landfills. One-third of this waste is made up of packaging and packaging-like materials. Recycling of residential packaging, through curbside pick-up, multi-family building programs, and depot services, covers 99% of households in B.C. through an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) plan. This access is not as consistent in Indigenous communities.

Feedback from prior engagements showed that many Indigenous communities do not differentiate between non-residential and residential packaging waste, and there are currently issues managing waste overall. These issues include the classification of residential vs. non-residential waste, co-mingling of residential vs. non-residential recyclable material, lack of access to depots, and financial concerns.

The objective of these engagements was to hear from Indigenous communities and to discuss ways to better manage packaging waste from the non-residential sector and to prevent it from being disposed in landfills. The desired result of the engagements was to understand what is working well in communities, to identify gaps, to establish how to address gaps, and to understand how changes in waste management practices could affect Indigenous peoples. The last objective of these engagements was to discuss the discussion paper published by the ministry

in April 2024, seeking input on guiding principles, proposed outcomes and measures of success. More information on the discussion paper can be referenced [here](#).

## 2. Engagement Structure and Overview

### 2.1 Methodology: Approach

The non-residential packaging waste Indigenous engagement process was led by the ministry and Mahihkan Management. Collation of engagement feedback was conducted by Mahihkan Management and is presented in this report, which will be posted online via the [Engage BC](#) website and shared with engagement session participants. Feedback will be used to inform future government policy development.

Engagement consisted of three virtual engagement sessions and two written submissions ([Appendix V](#)).

An informational backgrounder ([Appendix I](#)) was e-mailed alongside an event invitation ([Appendix II](#)) to all Nations in B.C. a month ahead of the first engagement session. The backgrounder was intended to provide recipients with an overview of the initiative in preparation for the engagement sessions, while the event invitation provided necessary event details, including date and time, and how to register for the virtual sessions. Session reminders were sent to registrants one week, 72 hours, 24 hours and one hour prior to each engagement session, containing the discussion paper, session presentation, a participant agenda and Zoom link to join the meeting.

Session summary notes and thank you emails were also sent out to the participants following each engagement.

### 2.2 Methodology: Analysis

To identify the key themes, Mahihkan Management reviewed the individual session reports from all three engagements as well as two written submissions from Squamish Connect and the Indigenous Zero Waste Technical Advisory Group (IZWTAG) ([Appendix V](#)). The reports were then compared, and similar types of feedback were grouped together to create key themes in terms of what was mentioned most frequently and flagged as the highest priorities for participants. Artificial intelligence was used as a support mechanism to code keywords from participant comments into thematic groups to be consolidated by Mahihkan notetakers. The final key themes provided in this report also include related insights and identified opportunities based on what was heard throughout the sessions. During the analytical process, Mahihkan Management respected the anonymity of the feedback provided by participants by removing all identifying information from the data beforehand.

To ensure the themes were accurate and credible, a cross-checking process was used. Ten unordered quotes per theme were selected, and an independent notetaker, unfamiliar with the project, analyzed and grouped the themes. The results confirmed all original groupings, validating the thematic analysis.

The use of cross-checking contributed to the validity of the research by ensuring that conclusions drawn were based on well-substantiated information, thus enhancing the overall reliability of the thematic outcomes.

## 2.3 Methodology: Limitations

The main limitation for the engagement series was that not every First Nation, Indigenous organization, or individual attended the engagements. As a result, the feedback that was collected does not represent all Indigenous voices in British Columbia.

The timing of the engagements was another limitation as the bulk of sessions took place over July with the third engagement occurring in September. These months correspond to key harvesting times and other seasonal harvesting activities and are therefore a busy time of year. This may have affected both attendance rates and the ability for participants to fully engage on the subject matter.

## 2.4 Engagements

The engagement sessions took place on July 17, July 23 and September 4, 2024. Each engagement session was organized and hosted by Mahihkan Management and experienced Indigenous facilitators. In addition, notetakers and a graphic recorder were present to capture participant feedback in the form of written summaries and images ([Appendix IV](#)).

The facilitator began each session with a welcome, land acknowledgement, and the introduction of an Indigenous Elder who provided a prayer and opening remarks to set the tone for the day. Following presentations from the ministry staff about the non-residential packaging waste discussion paper, participants were invited to share their feedback during a question-and-answer period and breakout discussions. To encourage discussion, facilitators were provided with prompting questions to ask participants during each session.

There was a differentiation in content focus between the first two sessions and the third session. The first two sessions primarily focused on non-residential packaging waste, while the third engagement focused on general waste management practices. This decision was made in recognition that many Indigenous communities in B.C. do not differentiate between residential and non-residential waste management practices. It is important to note that all pre-developed questions may not have been addressed at each session, depending on the input of participants and flow of conversation.



Session 1: Indigenous Engagement on Non-Residential Packaging Waste	Session 2: Indigenous Engagement on Non-Residential Packaging Waste	Session 3: Indigenous Engagement on Packaging Waste and Waste Management Practices
July 17, 2024	July 23, 2024	September 4, 2024

*Table 1 - Virtual Engagement Dates*

Over the course of the three engagement sessions there was a total of 30 participants in attendance, representing 26 different Indigenous communities and organizations.

### 3. Key Themes - Overall

The discussions surrounding non-residential packaging waste management in Indigenous communities have revealed several core themes that highlight both the challenges and potential pathways forward. These themes reflect the complex interplay of logistics, resources, cultural values, and external partnerships needed to establish sustainable waste management systems. These key themes are captured in detail below, categorized into key takeaway, insight and identified opportunities.

#### 1. Cultural and Environmental Values

Indigenous communities have a strong cultural connection to the environment, grounded in the principle of stewardship. Many participants emphasized the need to integrate these traditional values into modern waste management practices. While plastic waste and packaging materials are relatively new challenges, they can conflict with the long-standing cultural values of caring for the land. Addressing these issues requires solutions that respect and align with Indigenous beliefs about environmental sustainability and intergenerational responsibility.

**Key Takeaway:** Cultural values offer a powerful foundation for promoting sustainable waste management. By aligning waste management initiatives with Indigenous teachings and stewardship principles, communities can foster greater engagement and responsibility toward the environment.

Traditional teachings emphasize the importance of caring for the land for future generations. However, modern waste management issues, such as plastic waste and packaging materials, pose new challenges that require innovative solutions.

**Insight:** Waste management strategies should align with Indigenous cultural values of environmental stewardship. Integrating traditional teachings with modern waste management practices will foster a greater sense of responsibility toward sustainable solutions.

**Identified Opportunities:** Community-led programs that incorporate Indigenous teachings about environmental stewardship could enhance participation in waste management initiatives. Framing recycling and waste reduction as part of cultural heritage will resonate more deeply with community members, promoting long-term sustainability.

#### 2. Resource and Capacity Constraints

Financial and human resource constraints are common across many Indigenous communities. Limited funding means that waste management often competes with other critical services like housing and Elder care. At the same time, there is a shortage of skilled personnel to run waste

management programs, exacerbating the issue. Even where funding is available, the lack of specialized knowledge and resources hinders the development of sustainable waste solutions.

**Key Takeaway:** Without the necessary financial and human resources, communities struggle to establish waste management systems. Investment in capacity building, including training programs and securing long-term funding, is essential for overcoming these barriers. Support from external organizations and governments is vital to ensure the sustainability of these efforts.

**Insight:** Capacity-building initiatives and consistent, long-term funding are essential to overcome these challenges. Communities need external support, both financially and in terms of training, to develop and maintain sustainable waste management systems.

**Identified Opportunities:** Government agencies and nonprofit organizations should invest in training programs to build local expertise. Additionally, establishing secure funding streams for waste management would help to ensure communities can prioritize waste management without sacrificing other essential services.

### 3. Waste Management Infrastructure and Logistics

One of the most frequently cited challenges is the lack of adequate infrastructure to support effective waste management. Communities, particularly those in remote areas, face significant logistical hurdles, including limited access to recycling facilities and depots, a shortage of waste collection vehicles, and high transportation costs. These limitations make it difficult to separate recyclable materials from general waste and to reduce overall waste in landfills.

**Key Takeaway:** Infrastructure gaps present a major barrier to proper waste disposal and recycling. Remote communities require tailored infrastructure solutions, including transfer stations, garbage trucks, and accessible recycling options to address their unique needs. Building these facilities would require targeted investments and creative logistical strategies.

Communities in remote or isolated areas also struggle with long distances to recycling depots, limited access to garbage trucks, and inadequate sorting and storage facilities. Without proper logistics in place, waste often ends up in landfills, creating environmental and health concerns.

**Insight:** Addressing these logistical issues requires tailored solutions that focus on building and maintaining infrastructure specific to each community's needs. Government support and public-private partnerships are necessary to ensure the provision of garbage trucks, recycling centres, and accessible transfer stations.

**Identified Opportunities:** Developing regional hubs for waste collection and recycling could help reduce transportation costs and ensure a more efficient waste management system. Financial incentives for infrastructure development in remote areas should be prioritized.

#### 4. Definitions and Classifications (Residential and Non-Residential Packaging)

Current regulatory definitions of “residential” and “non-residential” often fail to align with the realities of waste management in First Nations communities. For example, when community members consolidate residential recycling for transport to depots, the materials may be misclassified as “non-residential,” excluding them from residential recycling services covered by an EPR Plan. Similarly, on-reserve “businesses” often differ significantly from their off-reserve counterparts, leading to further challenges in accessing appropriate recycling programs due to misaligned classifications.

**Key Takeaway:** Current regulatory definitions of “residential” and “non-residential” waste often fail to align with the realities of First Nations communities, highlighting the need for revised classifications, flexible systems, and collaborative policies to ensure equitable access to recycling and sustainable waste management solutions.

The separation of residential and non-residential packaging and paper products (PPP) is particularly difficult in smaller or remote First Nations communities. Although some tolerance exists for co-mingling (e.g., small percentages of non-residential PPP mixed with residential), these allowances are insufficient to meet the practical needs of many communities, especially when volumes are hard to quantify or manage.

**Insight:** Definitions and understanding waste are needed to reflect First Nations’ realities, ensuring equitable access to recycling and EPR programs. Policies should address hybrid on-reserve services, co-mingled materials, and collaboration with First Nations for sustainable waste management solutions.

**Identified Opportunities:** To address misaligned classifications, “residential” and “non-residential” categories should be redefined to reflect First Nations’ waste management realities. Flexible systems and clear policies for co-mingled materials are needed, alongside collaboration with First Nations to ensure alignment with Truth and Reconciliation principles and UNDRIP, enabling equitable access to sustainable waste management.

#### 5. Community Engagement and Education

Education and community engagement are seen as crucial drivers of change in waste management practices. Many community members lack awareness about proper recycling methods, and there is a need for ongoing education campaigns. While some communities have developed small-scale programs led by local champions, broader participation is required to make a lasting impact. Educational initiatives must target all community members, with a particular focus on youth, who can lead future waste reduction efforts.

**Key Takeaway:** Raising awareness and providing education on waste management is essential for long-term behavioural change. Community-driven education campaigns, especially those that involve local champions and youth, can help foster a culture of recycling and environmental responsibility.

**Insight:** Community-wide education, especially targeting youth, is critical to fostering sustainable waste practices. Educational programs should emphasize the importance of waste reduction and provide practical guidance on recycling and composting.

**Identified Opportunities:** Expanding educational campaigns through schools, local workshops, and community events will raise awareness and encourage greater participation in recycling initiatives. Local champions and role models could help drive these efforts by modeling sustainable behaviours.

## 6. Partnerships and External Support

Forming partnerships with external organizations, governments, and other communities is critical for addressing waste management challenges. However, remote and isolated Indigenous communities often face delays and difficulties in building these partnerships. External support can provide the necessary resources, funding, and expertise that are otherwise unavailable to many communities. Collaboration between neighbouring communities or regional governments can also help in sharing resources and best practices.

**Key Takeaway:** Strong partnerships are essential for success in waste management. Indigenous communities need support from government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and neighbouring regions to build capacity, to share resources, and to develop sustainable solutions. Streamlining the process of forming partnerships and fostering regional collaboration will be key to overcoming resource constraints.

Partnerships with external organizations and government entities are vital for Indigenous communities to overcome logistical and financial barriers in waste management. However, forming these partnerships has been slow.

**Insight:** Accelerating the formation of partnerships and streamlining access to external support will be key to building effective waste management systems. Regional collaboration can help smaller communities overcome resource limitations by sharing infrastructure, expertise, and funding.

**Identified Opportunities:** Governments and organizations should work to simplify the process of building partnerships with Indigenous communities. Regional collaboration should be incentivized to enable shared resources and knowledge, reducing the burden on individual communities.

## 4. Conclusion

The Indigenous engagement sessions on non-residential packaging waste have provided critical insights into the challenges and opportunities for developing sustainable waste management systems. The feedback received highlights several key barriers, including insufficient infrastructure, financial and capacity constraints, and misaligned classifications and definitions, and the need for enhanced regulatory approaches, community education and engagement. However, the discussions also identified significant opportunities to advance waste management solutions through community-specific approaches, partnerships, and culturally aligned strategies.

The sessions underscored the need for solutions that address the specific circumstances of Indigenous communities, particularly those in rural and remote areas. Key themes emerging from the discussions, such as gaps in infrastructure, resource limitations, and the integration of Indigenous cultural and environmental stewardship values, emphasize the importance of localized approaches and coordinated efforts across multiple sectors.

Identified opportunities include fostering stronger partnerships between Indigenous communities and external organizations, increasing long-term funding commitments, and investing in capacity-building initiatives. Educational programs, particularly those targeting youth, were identified as essential for promoting community-wide participation in waste reduction efforts. Additionally, integrating Indigenous cultural values and environmental stewardship principles into waste management strategies will be vital to ensuring the success and sustainability of these initiatives.

Moving forward, it is clear that a one-size-fits-all approach will not adequately address the diverse challenges faced by Indigenous communities in managing waste, including from non-residential packaging. Future policies and programs must be flexible, community-specific, and inclusive, ensuring that the voices and values of Indigenous peoples are central to the development and implementation of waste management solutions. By supporting Indigenous communities through meaningful partnerships, capacity-building, and financial assistance from both government funding programs and producer paying the cost requirements for EPR programs, governments and interested parties can work collaboratively to create long-term, sustainable outcomes that benefit both the environment and future generations.



## Appendix I: Background



### Everyone plays a key role in identifying opportunities for packaging waste.

**Did you know?** A third of the over 2.5 million tonnes of solid waste we dispose of in B.C. each year is plastics, paper, and other packaging-like materials.

**The Province is seeking ideas on how to prevent non-residential plastic and packaging waste.**

We want to hear from Indigenous organizations and First Nations on the needs and concerns specific to Indigenous people and how to keep packaging out of our landfills and environment.

Currently, there are some programs underway to manage these materials for the residential sector (e.g. blue box / depots), however it is not as consistent for the non-residential sector.

#### Why should you participate?

- ✓ Share what's working for your community now, and what you'd like to see more of in the future.
- ✓ Provide feedback on how certain policies and regulations might impact your community.
- ✓ Ensure government understands and considers the challenges and opportunities Indigenous communities across B.C. face on this issue.

## Get involved



#### Attend a roundtable discussion

Attend either roundtable discussion:

**Wednesday, July 17th,  
1:30pm - 4:00 pm PST**

**Register Here!** 

**Tuesday, July 23rd,  
1:00pm - 3:30pm PST**

**Register Here!** 



#### Provide feedback on the discussion paper

Read our discussion paper and respond to the questions presented.

Please note that feedback closes on Tuesday, July 23rd.



#### Share our survey with your community

We also have a survey designed for the general public. Share it with your community!

Please note that feedback closes on Tuesday, July 23rd.

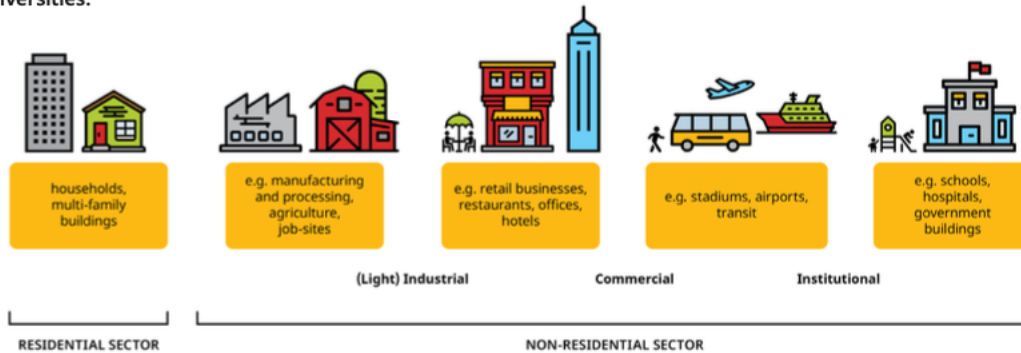


[engage.gov.bc.ca/preventingwasteoutsidethehome](https://engage.gov.bc.ca/preventingwasteoutsidethehome)

| [gov.bc.ca/reuse](https://gov.bc.ca/reuse)

## What is the non-residential sector?

The non-residential sector, also referred to as the industrial, commercial and institutional (ICI) sector, is comprised of diverse sources of waste, including light industrial sources such as agriculture, manufacturing and jobsites, businesses such as retail stores, tourism, and restaurants, as well institutions including hospitals, schools, and universities.



## What are the desired outcomes?

This discussion paper, and future work on policy approaches, are guided by the principles of:

- o A clean environment and climate resilient communities, free of waste and pollution;
- o A circular economy, supporting, B.C. businesses and jobs, where products and materials for as long as possible and materials can easily be repaired, reused, or recycled, and,
- o A true, lasting, and meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

Building on the guiding principles, the proposed desired outcomes, are intended to support policy approaches that consider the entire lifecycle of non-residential packaging.



## Learn More



[Read the discussion paper](#)



[Watch a recorded information session](#)



[Review the slide deck from the information sessions](#)

## About Mahihkan Management

The Ministry is working with Mahihkan Management to facilitate these 2.5 hour sessions that will be documented by a graphic recorder. Mahihkan Management is an Indigenous owned business that specializes in designing and delivering Indigenous engagements and events. Culturally and ethnically diverse, Mahihkan works with contractors representing many cultures, including Indigenous Peoples, and has worked in collaboration with the government and Indigenous led organizations to deliver engagements within B.C. and across Canada. For more information, visit [mahihkan.ca](http://mahihkan.ca).

[engage.gov.bc.ca/preventingwasteoutsidethehome](http://engage.gov.bc.ca/preventingwasteoutsidethehome) | [gov.bc.ca/reuse](http://gov.bc.ca/reuse)



## Appendix II: E-mail Invitations

### **Initial Invitation and Reminder Email**

**Subject Line: Engagements on Non-Residential Packaging Waste Quickly Approaching –  
Reminder to Register**

Attachments: Engagement Backgrounder



Ministry of  
Environment and  
Climate Change Strategy

Hello,

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (the Ministry) invites you to participate in a series of upcoming Indigenous engagements on Non-Residential Packaging Waste. The virtual engagements will be held on **July 17** and **July 23, 2024** and led by Mahihkan Management, an Indigenous facilitation and engagement company.

***Engagements are approaching quickly, and we encourage you to register to register as soon as possible so we can plan accordingly for the size of group.***

#### **Background**

British Columbia has been taking action to prevent plastic waste, as outlined in the [CleanBC Plastics Action Plan](#). This includes actions under the [2021-2026 Extended Producer Responsibility 5-year Action Plan](#) and the commitment to identify a policy approach for non-residential packaging and paper products in 2025.

Working towards identifying policy approaches for non-residential packaging, the Ministry is seeking your input on a series of desired outcomes and potential policy approaches, as outlined in the discussion paper. Given the complexity of Non-Residential Packaging Waste, it is anticipated that a combination of actions delivered through a phased approach will be required. If regulatory approaches are identified as a desired approach, further engagement would take place, following the process of consultation regarding an intentions paper.

Further information on solid waste in British Columbia can be found in the attached backgrounder or in the following [discussion paper](#).

#### **Engagement Opportunities and How to Register**

The virtual engagements have been scheduled for the following dates and times. Each engagement will cover the same agenda and subject matter.

<b>Wednesday, July 17, 2024</b>	<a href="#">REGISTER HERE</a>
---------------------------------	-------------------------------

1:30pm-4:00pm PST	
Tuesday, July 23, 2024	<a href="#">REGISTER HERE</a>
1:00pm-3:30pm PST	

To register click on the register here links included in the table above and follow the prompts as provided.

Once registered, you will receive an automated confirmation with the Zoom meeting details to add to your calendar. Registered participants will receive further information for review in the lead up to engagements.

The engagements are scheduled for 2.5 hours (150 minutes). This time will include a presentation by the Ministry and a series of facilitated breakout room discussions and activities.

### Why Participate?

Those that attend will have the opportunity to help advance waste management practices in B.C. by sharing:

- what's working for your community now, and what you'd like to see more of in the future
- feedback on how certain policies and regulations might impact your community

Your input will also help ensure an understanding of the challenges and opportunities Indigenous communities across B.C. face on this issue.

### Participant Funding

Individual participant funding will not be provided for these sessions; however, Nations are welcome to apply for capacity funding through the Declaration Act Engagement Fund (DAEF) which supports the implementation of the Declaration Act Action Plan. More information on the DAEF can be found [here](#).

### Questions

Please contact Mahihkan Management at [events2@mahihkan.ca](mailto:events2@mahihkan.ca).

Sincerely,

Mahihkan Management

On behalf of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy



*Mahihkan Management acknowledge and express gratitude to the keepers of the lands of the ancestral and unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, specifically scəwəθən (Tsawwassen), xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) where our main office is located. We also recognize the Métis Chartered Communities, Inuit and urban Indigenous peoples living across various traditional territories.*

**Reminder Email to Participants**

***The same email reminders were sent out one week prior, 72 hours prior, 24 hours prior, and 1 hour prior to each engagement containing all the session information and the respective Zoom link. Session 2 reminder email included below noting that all followed the same layout.***

Attachments: Engagement Backgrounder and Agenda

Hello,

Thank you for registering for the **Indigenous Engagements on Non-Residential Packaging Waste** engagement taking place on **Zoom**.

As a reminder, you have registered for:

**Indigenous Engagements on Non-Residential Packaging Waste - Session 2**

When:	July 23, 2024 (1:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. PST)
Where:	Virtual (via Zoom) Zoom: Zoom: <a href="https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86555793868?pwd=ptalDA3Hmkp6aJsSZ5A7sIRpE4k0Kv.1">https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86555793868?pwd=ptalDA3Hmkp6aJsSZ5A7sIRpE4k0Kv.1</a>

The **engagement backgrounder** and **participant agenda** have been attached for your reference. We recommend reviewing both resources in advance of the engagement.

You are encouraged to arrive 10 minutes early so the event can commence on time. The Zoom call in coordinates are included below for your reference.

**Zoom**

To minimize chances of technical difficulty, make sure you have the most up to date version of Zoom on your computer via the following link: <https://zoom.us/download>.

**Questions?**

Contact Mahihkan Management at [events2@mahihkan.ca](mailto:events2@mahihkan.ca).

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Thank you,  
Mahihkan Management



Ministry of  
Environment  
and Parks

## Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy



**Email:** [events2@mahihkan.ca](mailto:events2@mahihkan.ca)

**Website** [www.mahihkan.ca](http://www.mahihkan.ca)

1466 Enderby Ave, Delta, BC V4L 1S5

*Mahihkan Management acknowledge and express gratitude to the keepers of the lands of the ancestral and unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, specifically scəwəθən (Tsawwassen), xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) where our main office is located. We also recognize the Métis Chartered Communities, Inuit and urban Indigenous peoples living across on various traditional territories.*

### **Post Engagement Thank You Email**

**From:** Mahihkan Management (on behalf of Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy)

**Subject:** July 17 Engagement on Non-Residential Packaging Waste - Thank You for Attending



Ministry of  
Environment and  
Climate Change Strategy

Hello,

On behalf of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (the Ministry), we'd like to thank you for attending yesterday's engagement on Non-Residential Packaging Waste. Your time and input are highly regarded, and we appreciate you providing insight on such important subject matter.

#### **July 23 Engagement**

We have one more engagement on Tuesday, July 23, 2024 from 1:00pm-3:30pm. If you have any colleagues interested in attending, please have them email [events2@mahihkan.ca](mailto:events2@mahihkan.ca) to register.

#### **What We Heard Report**

As mentioned on the engagement, a What We Heard Report will be made available to participants following the overall engagement series. We are expecting to distribute the report this coming fall.

#### **Resources and Further Feedback**

To review the Non-Residential Waste Discussion Paper, [click here](#). If you have further feedback and/or commentary following Wednesday's session, we encourage you to send your thoughts

through in writing to [events2@mahihkan.ca](mailto:events2@mahihkan.ca). If you would like to set up a meeting or speak directly with the Ministry, please reach out to Avery at [avery.gottfried@gov.bc.ca](mailto:avery.gottfried@gov.bc.ca).

Sincerely,

Mahihkan Management

On behalf of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy



*Mahihkan Management acknowledge and express gratitude to the keepers of the lands of the ancestral and unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, specifically scəwʔəəθn (Tsawwassen), xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) where our main office is located. We also recognize the Métis Chartered Communities, Inuit and urban Indigenous peoples living across various traditional territories.*

## Appendix III: Participating Nations & Organizations

The names listed below are not representative of all who attended and gave feedback, but rather show the communities and organizations that consented to being identified in the report.

### Attendance List – Engagement Sessions

#### July 17, 2024:

Union of BC Indian Chiefs  
Tla'amin Nation  
Tłat̓asikwāla First Nation  
Tsay Keh Dene Nation  
Lheidli T'enneh Nation  
First Nations Summit  
Malahat Nation  
Simpco First Nation  
Skatin Nation  
Saulteau First Nations

#### July 23, 2024:

Tsay Keh Dene Nation  
HFN Government  
Prophet River First Nation  
Lil'wat Nation/Lil'wat Business Group  
Simpco First Nation  
Nisga'a Lisims Government  
Kitsumkalum Nation  
Skwah First Nation  
Homalco First Nation  
Namgis First Nation  
IZWTAG (Indigenous Zero Waste Technical Advisory Group)  
Tla-qui-a-aht First Nation

#### September 4, 2024:

Ts'il Kaz Koh Nation  
T'Sou-ke Nation  
Lil'wat Nation  
Tsay Keh Dene Nation  
Tseshaht First Nation  
Binche Whu'ten Nation  
Namgis First Nation  
Tla-qui-a-aht Nation

#### Mahihkan Management Staff Members Present:

Cara Lenoir – Facilitator  
Dana Moraes – Facilitator  
Erica Bota – Graphic Recorder  
Ibrahim Parkar - Notetaker  
Jarod Macdonald – Tech Support  
Kagiso Pupp – Notetaker  
Niki Etherington – General Support & Project Lead  
Ricky Grewal – Tech Support  
Vanessa Ong – Tech Support

#### Government Representatives & Knowledge Experts Present:

Avery Gottfried – Senior Policy Specialist  
Erin Prescott - Senior Policy Analyst  
Taylor Daniel - Senior Policy Analyst  
Elder Darlene McIntosh - Lheidli T'enneh



**Thine Link**  
Erica Bota:





Session 2 - July 23, 2024



## Appendix V: Written Submissions

### Squamish Submission:

Wednesday, October 16, 2024 at 22:37:17 Pacific Daylight Time

**Subject:** [Squamish Connect] 1 Update

**Date:** Thursday, August 8, 2024 at 1:36:47 AM Pacific Daylight Saving Time

**From:** Squamish Connect

**To:** Circular Communities ENV:EX

You don't often get email from [do-not-reply@squamishconnect.com](mailto:do-not-reply@squamishconnect.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

**[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.**

## 1 comment on things you're watching

### New Comment

 posted a comment

Hello Taylor,

We concur that disposal includes both landfilling and incineration (definition page 5) but raise the concern that while correctly outlining the concerns about landfills (page 7), without also noting the even greater harms caused by waste to energy that some may conclude that system is preferable. Ideally the province would adopt the Zero Waste Hierarchy (instead of the pollution prevention hierarchy shown on page 11) and ban the use of waste to energy for mixed municipal solid waste and EPR programs to ensure that the highest and best use of materials is pursued, rather than providing a loophole for waste. A significant amount of time and resources continue to be spent on seeking to destroy materials instead of prevention of waste. Inclusion of the Rethink/Redesign step in the hierarchy at the top will ensure systems start to look at the areas that can have maximum impact.

The Circular Economy inset on page 7 is a good outline but should include the fundamental first step which is to reduce the throughout and use of material and reduce the use and creation of toxic materials.

The guiding principles (page 16) are sound but need to include the words "are used" in the second bullet.

1 Outcomes

We make the following recommendations:

1. Prevention-first - "Actions are prioritized using the Zero Waste hierarchy, resulting in

*a focus on reduced consumption, lower toxicity, waste reduction and materials reuse over recycling, and recycling over energy recovery or disposal. Materials are kept out of landfills, incinerators and the environment and are used at their highest value to support a circular economy.*

*2. Consistency -we are pleased to see the mention of paper so that a focus on phasing out some uses of plastics does not just result in the substitution of single use items made of paper.*

*3. Accountability and transparency – while producers may be considered covered under the term “businesses”, adding the term “producers” may make it clearer that they have a particular role to play.*

*4. Access -we fully support the focus in First Nation communities. We also think that small communities also need equitable access to services.*

*5. Maximize material recovery -the inclusion of recovery of products for reuse should be included here as well where collection systems may also be used to support broad reuse systems (like beer bottle, but expand to reuseable cup programs, wine bottles and others).*

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PROJECT NAME

**Preventing Waste in B.C.: Non-residential packaging and paper products discussion paper**

ISSUING AGENCY FILE NUMBER(S)  
**411040**

REFERRAL ID  
**2778**

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[View this Submission](#)

## Indigenous Zero Waste Technical Advisory Group (IZWTAG) Submission:

**IZWTAG**  
INDIGENOUS ZERO WASTE  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP

Gwendolyn Lohbrunner  
Senior Director, Circular  
Communities  
cc. Avery Gottfried, Senior  
Policy Specialist, Circular  
Communities BC Ministry  
of Environment and  
Climate Change Strategy

Dear Senior Director Lohbrunner

November 14, 2024

**Subject: Preventing Waste Outside the Home, Non-residential Packaging & Paper Products Discussion Paper**

The Indigenous Zero Waste Technical Advisory Group (IZWTAG) would like to offer some high-level comments on the above document and provide information about the impacts being caused by the existing classification of packaging as residential and non-residential.

IZWTAG's mission is to assist all 202 First Nations within the province of B.C. to implement waste management systems based on the zero-waste philosophy, working in partnership with government, product stewards and other service providers (see [izwtag.com](http://izwtag.com)). First Nations have lived and thrived on the lands and waters sustainably. Today, however, it is necessary to participate in circular economy systems if First Nations are to continue the culture and tradition of taking care of the land and water. In that context, it is essential that each of the 202 First Nations have access to province-wide recycling and zero waste systems in actuality, without barriers, extra requirements or delays.

IZWTAG has identified several challenges with existing waste management and zero waste systems for packaging and paper products in First Nations Communities. These challenges often relate both to non-residential/ICI as well as residential packaging and paper products (PPP) and can be grouped into three themes: access to depots; classification of residential packaging and co-mingled residential and non-residential PPP.

Access to depots or collection facilities: Many First Nation residents are in remote communities. Given the size and remote nature of many First Nations communities, access to (free) depots to recycle PPP can be challenging. These challenges can be compounded by several additional unique circumstances including storage capacity for recyclables within community; community members with driver's licenses and ability to drive to depots; and difficult road conditions to depots, when available.

Classification of residential packaging as ICI: Given the challenges with access to collection facilities, at times community members will collect and transport residential recycling from residences in their

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communities to depots. Because this material is consolidated prior to the depot, and collected by private community members, the materials are at times considered non-residential PPP, excluding them from the ability to deposit the material at the free depots for residential PPP.

In addition, on-reserve “businesses” may not be businesses, comparable to off-reserve entities, given constraints of the reserve system, or the remote locations.

Co-mingled residential and non-residential PPP: Given the size and remoteness of some First Nations communities it can be challenging to recycle non-residential PPP, even though the community may have access to residential PPP recycling. On-reserve “businesses” may not be businesses, comparable to off-reserve entities, given constraints of the reserve system, or the remote locations. This can create challenges in access to recycling for PPP. In some instances, small amounts of non-residential PPP (2-3%) are allowed to be included with the residential PPP however the volumes are difficult to quantify and may not be sufficient for the community’s requirements.

We ask that the Province consider and take action on these challenges as it moves forward with a provincial policy approach for non-residential/ICI PPP. The outcome of Access, as identified in the discussion paper, is of importance to IZWTAG and the First Nations communities that we work with, as is the outcome of Prevention-First approaches, supporting zero waste activities. IZWTAG would like to see all indigenous communities with access to the EPR recycling programs.

On behalf of the Board of IZWTAG Directors, I would like to extend an invitation to meet in person and begin a dialogue in the spirit of relationship and reconciliation. We note and acknowledge here the Truth and Reconciliation efforts and commitment demonstrated by our Provincial government through legislative declaration to recognize/affirm UNDRIP. For First Nations, this commitment to a ‘New Beginning’ signals a systemic shift away from marginalization of our communities and requires positive and accountable performance to support our First Nations communities.

Lucinda Phillips, the IZWTAG Executive Director, can be reached at 604-902- 9440 for arrangements.

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**IZWTAG**  
INDIGENOUS ZERO WASTE  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP

Thank you for your attention to this letter.  
Yours Truly,



Calvin Jameson  
President

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