

2022-2024

# STRATEGIC PLAN

Advancing Reconciliation  
Through Research



CANADIAN  
MOUNTAIN  
NETWORK

# CMN OVERVIEW

The Canadian Mountain Network (CMN) was established in 2019 under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act. The organization is hosted by the University of Alberta and is supported by a five-year grant from the Government of Canada's Networks of Centres of Excellence (NCE) Program (2019-2024).

CMN is dedicated to advancing Reconciliation Through Research. We build and support research, training, and knowledge mobilization partnerships based on Indigenous and Western ways of knowing that inform decision-making and action. Our focus is on mountain peoples and places across Canada. Our work has advanced understanding of ecological, social, cultural and economic change in mountain systems. We have also developed methodologies for the ethical braiding of Indigenous and Western knowledges that are applicable far beyond mountains and support a large and diverse group of Canadian researchers, trainees, and knowledge users.

This document provides an overview of the goals and objectives of CMN, as well as its scope, structure and core activities. The Strategic Plan was approved by CMN's Board of Directors on April 4, 2022 and will guide the Network's operations, performance management, and reporting from April 2022 to March 2024.

Visit [canadianmountainnetwork.ca](https://canadianmountainnetwork.ca) or follow us on social media to learn more about our organization and opportunities to collaborate.

Contact: [communications@cmn-rcm.ca](mailto:communications@cmn-rcm.ca)

Website: [canadianmountainnetwork.ca](https://canadianmountainnetwork.ca)

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Instagram: [@CanMountainNet](https://www.instagram.com/CanMountainNet)

This document is available on the Canadian Mountain Network website in English and French:

[canadianmountainnetwork.ca/about/reports](https://canadianmountainnetwork.ca/about/reports)

# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

CMN is proud to be part of a rich history of Indigenous knowledge and culture, including Indigenous ways of knowing, doing and being.

We recognize the historical trauma and the triumphs that many different cultures, lands and Nations have continuously faced within Canada.

We acknowledge that we are on the treaty lands and territories of numerous and diverse Indigenous Nations and pay tribute to their heritage and legacy, as we strengthen ties with the communities we serve while taking concrete actions towards meaningful reconciliation.

We are grateful to have the opportunity to work with Indigenous communities in advancing their vision and aspirations on this land.

We pay respect to all Indigenous people from all nations across Canada, acknowledge the traditional knowledge keepers and honour their leaders.

Photo from CMN project:  
Enhancing the reintroduction  
of Plains Bison through the  
inclusion of cultural monitoring  
and traditional knowledge in Banff  
National Park (William Snow)

# MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

The Canadian Mountain Network (CMN) is a group of diverse people demonstrating strong values, consistent action, solid and novel governance, and excellence in building knowledge and conducting research of mountain systems. CMN's dedication to advancing the understanding and braiding of Indigenous and Western knowledge systems is unmatched in Canada and a model for the international community. Our approach is crucial at a time when reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples is a top national priority. Our work is also urgent at a time when Canada's mountain systems are undergoing rapid and uncertain change due to climate change, land use changes, and biodiversity loss.

Since our launch in 2019, we have mobilized a network of Indigenous leaders, researchers and organizations, all dedicated to improving the resilience of mountain peoples and places. CMN is now on the ground working towards these goals, developing and applying innovative methods to harness both Indigenous and Western ways of knowing to benefit mountain peoples and places. Importantly, these models are relevant and useful not only for mountain regions, but for landscapes from coast to coast to coast. As a result, our work benefits from the sharing of knowledge and practices with an increasingly diverse community across Canada.

Our approach to research, training, and mobilizing knowledge focuses on working for and with communities in order to achieve better environmental, economic, social, and health outcomes for all Canadians. CMN is committed to advancing and accelerating the process of reconciliation by braiding Western and Indigenous environmental science and knowledge to inform policy and decision-making that better reflects the diversity of knowledge systems in Canada.

CMN has a bright future and for that we must acknowledge and thank the many individuals who have supported this initiative through their knowledge, wisdom, and tireless effort. We look forward to continuing to grow these relationships and building new partnerships in the years ahead, as the Network completes its final two years as a Government of Canada-funded Network of Centres of Excellence and during what we know will be an exciting period of growth beyond.

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*Joe Dragon*  
**Dr. Joe Dragon**  
 Chair, Board of Directors



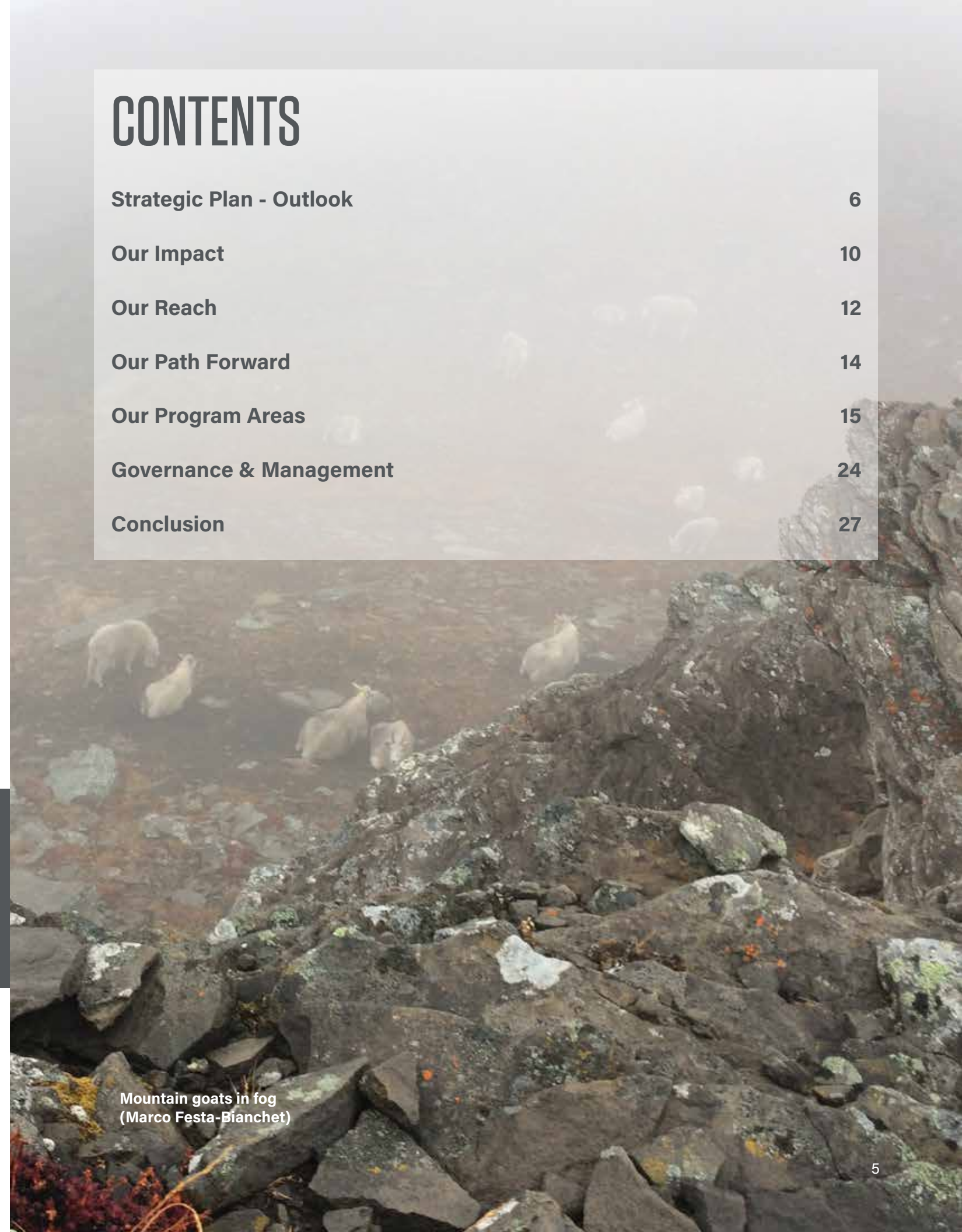
*Monique Dubé*  
**Dr. Monique Dubé**  
 Executive Director



*N. Kassi*  
**Norma Kassi**  
 Co-Research Director



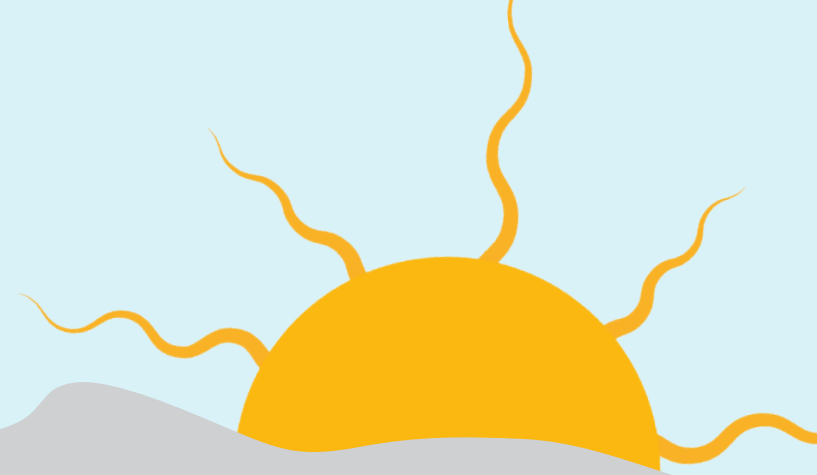
*Murray Humphries*  
**Dr. Murray Humphries**  
 Co-Research Director



Mountain goats in fog  
 (Marco Festa-Bianchet)

# STRATEGIC PLAN - OUTLOOK

CMN is progressing and evolving as an organization through three phases, from start-up to long-term sustainability. Our impact continues to grow and is felt at local, regional, national and international levels.



## PHASE 1 (2019-2022)

Building a Strong Foundation

Over the first three years of its development, CMN established its governance and management structures. Our model incorporates both not-for-profit best practices and innovative approaches to the inclusion of Indigenous ways of knowing and doing. Through the development of our first Strategic Plan (2019-2022), we defined areas of emphasis for our research, training and knowledge mobilization activities and quickly designed, launched, and grew partnership-based programs across Canada.



## PHASE 2 (2022-2024)

Accelerating Impact & Growth

After three years of effort and experience, CMN understands its strengths, successes, areas for growth, and impact. We have become leaders in the braiding of Indigenous and Western knowledges to better understand mountain people and places and the social, environmental, economic and cultural influences on them in a time of rapid and uncertain change. With the encouragement and support of a diverse and growing community of partner organizations, we have also identified strategic value in expanding our work beyond mountains in order to broaden our contributions to advancing the process of reconciliation in Canada.



## PHASE 3 (2024 AND BEYOND)

Honouring our Past, Embracing the Future

As we implement Phase 2 as outlined in this Strategic Plan, we do so with gratitude for the opportunity that the Government of Canada's Networks of Centres of Excellence program and our partners have provided thus far in our journey. Thanks to our solid foundation and confidence in our proven strengths, we see significant opportunities for the future beyond our NCE grant. We know that the work we do to ethically braid knowledges to advance understanding of social, environmental, economic and cultural change is significant, important, and required at local to international levels, and we are committed to continuing that work.

## Our Mission

The Canadian Mountain Network advances Reconciliation Through Research by supporting the resilience and health of Canada's mountain peoples and places through partnerships based on Indigenous and Western ways of knowing that inform decision-making and action within and beyond mountain systems.

## Our Goals

1. Improve through the braiding of Indigenous and Western knowledges the resilience and health of mountain peoples and places through enhanced understanding of rapid and uncertain environmental changes, as well as economic, social, and cultural implications.
2. Improve the skills and employment outcomes of a diverse community of solutions-oriented mountain systems researchers, trainees, and professionals that are capable of working with both Indigenous and Western knowledge systems and research approaches.
3. Inform and influence decision-making and action locally, regionally, nationally and internationally by mobilizing braided knowledges.
4. Enhance the connectivity of impact by drawing out common lessons and knowledge that informs broader research, knowledge mobilization and training outcomes.
5. Grow and enhance local, regional, national and international partnerships and collaborations to support and sustain mountain systems research, training, and knowledge mobilization activities that are informed by both Indigenous and Western knowledges.
6. Build a sustainable organization that is recognized as an essential element of Canada's research ecosystem.

## Our Values

### Mutual Respect and Positive Reciprocity

We recognize that different peoples have different ways of knowing, doing, and being. We acknowledge, promote, protect, and respect this diversity and the sharing of knowledge. We are committed to building trusting, authentic relationships and inclusive, decolonizing practices so that we can learn and grow together on the path toward reconciliation.

We acknowledge that we are connected to, dependent on, and responsible for each other and for the land, water, plants, and animals that sustain us.

We commit to shared governance and will ensure strong representation of Indigenous individuals in our governance and management. We will ensure that decision-making and actions at all levels are informed by both Indigenous and Western ways of knowing.

### Relevance and Impact

We are solutions-oriented and will improve Canada's understanding of urgent challenges and opportunities identified by mountain communities and other knowledge users by advancing and requiring collaborative, respectful research approaches that value local knowledge and wisdom while building community skills and capacity.

### Focus, Collaboration and Innovation

We will focus our resources on complementary strategies and activities that are developed collaboratively and informed by both Indigenous and Western ways of knowing and doing. We will question assumptions, make mistakes, learn from experience, and aim for continuous improvement.

Photo from CMN project: The Shútagot'ine Cultural Landscape Project (Glen MacKay)

# OUR IMPACT

To effectively plan for the future, we require a solid understanding of who we are and how we got here; our strengths, risks and opportunities.

Through three years of advancing the priorities of communities, knowledge holders, scientists and other partners, we have learned valuable and significant lessons that can guide our work in the years ahead.

## Resilient and Healthy Mountain Peoples and Places

Our impact begins in diverse mountain regions across the country that provide essential benefits to Canadians from coast to coast to coast. These include fresh water, wildlife habitat, natural resources, energy, shelter and recreation, and spiritual connection. Mountain systems are experiencing rapid and disruptive environmental change that foreshadows serious impacts that will be felt more broadly over time.

In recent years, CMN has successfully coordinated and networked Canada's significant expertise in mountain systems research. That effort includes more consistent and significant collaboration between academic researchers and non-academic experts and their communities in the prioritization, design, implementation, and application of mountain systems research to address urgent public policy challenges.

Examples of our research include:

- Development of an Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area innovation centre in British Columbia;
- Indigenous stewardship of bison restoration in Banff National Park;
- Recovery of mountain caribou populations in the Central Rockies;
- Reassertion of Indigenous place names in the Northwest Territories;
- Enactment of Tlingit traditional law for land and wildlife;
- Reclaiming of scientific research by the Kluane First Nation;
- Inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in transboundary Yukon salmon agreements;
- Combining science and Mi'gmaq knowledge of aquatic ecosystems in the Chic-Chocs mountains of Quebec; and
- Community-based monitoring of climate and health in Nunatsiavut (Labrador).



Photo from Níó Nę P'ęñę (NNP) - Trails of the Mountain Caribou Hub  
Credit: Manisha Singh

Our work over the next two years will build on this momentum and the legacy of CMN by contributing to the sustainability of mountain research in Canada.

## Braiding of Indigenous and Western Knowledges

As our work has progressed in mountain systems, we have realized that the benefits and value of this work flows beyond mountain landscapes into the valleys, lowlands, and coasts to which mountains are meteorologically, hydrologically, biologically, and culturally connected. Through our research, training, and knowledge mobilization activities, as well as our efforts to build strong, trusting relationships, CMN's innovative model of place-based, community-driven research that braids Western and Indigenous knowledges has supported students, research scientists, and decision-makers to work in a way that is helping to decolonize research in Canada. Since our launch three years ago, several organizations and agencies have adopted or endorsed our approach and methods. As a result, our impact has already spread to many regions outside of mountains.

Indeed, the scope and scale of CMN's work to develop methods that harness both Indigenous and Western knowledges to inform and influence public policy is unmatched in Canada. That work is complemented by major investments in Indigenous-led research and training capacities. CMN was the first national research network of its kind to directly fund Indigenous organizations to lead projects, as well as to acknowledge that Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Holders hold the role of Principal Investigator. This support has grown as our organization has matured. Today, the overwhelming majority of CMN's research investments support Indigenous-led or co-led projects and initiatives. These investments and commitments support the restoration, resurgence, and regeneration of Indigenous ways of knowing and doing that have been historically devalued and constrained in an institutional context dominated by Western approaches.

We recognize that this work and these partnerships serve a very important unmet need locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. We will build on this strength moving forward.



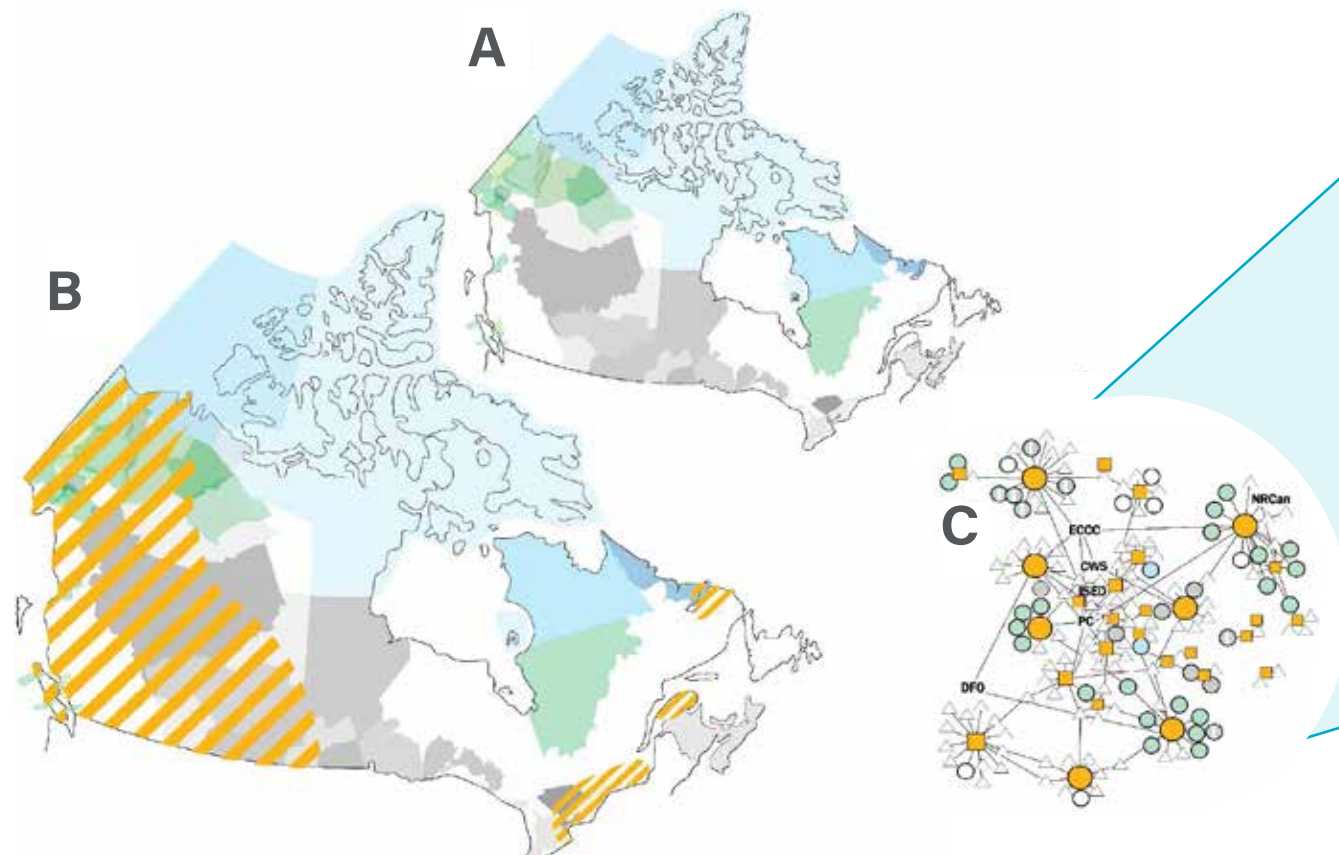
Connecting to the land at Moose Lake  
(Aimee Schmidt)

# OUR REACH

CMN's investments to date have ensured a truly national reach and represent much of the diversity of mountain regions and partnerships across four cultural landscapes in Canada as described in the figure below.

We will continue to expand this reach in the next two years of our NCE-funded work.

## Areas of current CMN investment



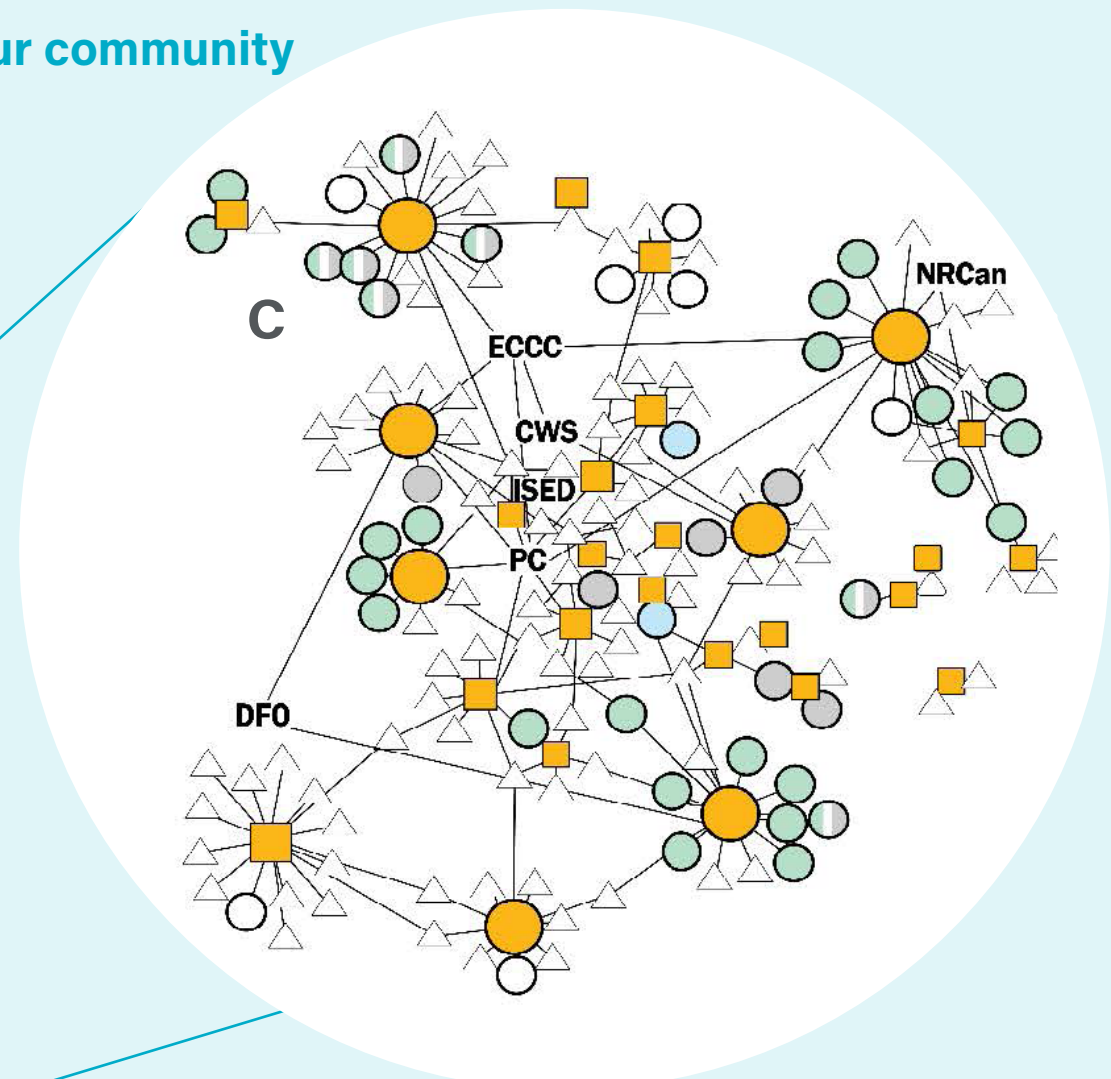
### A) Four cultural landscapes of Canada including:

- modern comprehensive Inuit agreements comprising Inuit Nunangat
- modern comprehensive First Nations & Métis agreements
- historic treaties managed under the Indian Act
- non-treaty territories

### B) Areas of current CMN investment, which include:

- 2 of 4 Inuit settlement regions
- 19 of 21 comprehensive First Nations & Métis agreements
- 10 of 15 historic treaty regions
- multiple non-Treaty territories in Yukon, BC, Quebec, and Labrador.

## Our community



### C) Network of collaborating organizations currently supported by CMN including:

- 7 Indigenous-led or co-led Knowledge Hubs
- 17 research projects & 7 strategic initiatives
- 200+ researchers and trainees (not shown)

Established federal science collaborations include Environment Climate Change Canada (ECCC), Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), Parks Canada (PC), Industry Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED), and Natural Resources Canada (NRCan).

- 157 collaborating organizations including:
- 8 First Nations or Métis organizations from non-treaty territories
- 6 First Nations or Métis organizations from treaty territories
- 22 First Nations or Métis modern comprehensive agreement territories
- 2 Inuit organizations from two Inuit settlement regions
- 7 umbrella Indigenous organizations representing a combination of non-treaty, historical treaty, and modern comprehensive agreement territories
- Other collaborating organizations

# OUR PATH FORWARD



## Honouring our Past, Embracing the Future

Through our wide range of activities, CMN will continue to explore and advance understanding of mountain systems and environmental changes influencing landscapes, peoples and cultures, as well as opportunities to adapt, mitigate, conserve and restore by mobilizing knowledge to decision-making and action.

## Reconciliation Through Research

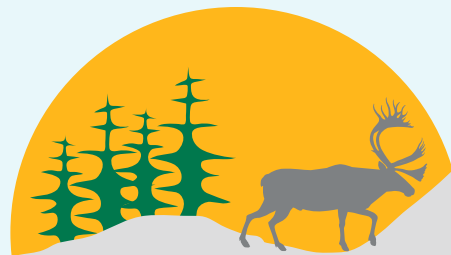
Through our expertise and experience advancing the braiding of Indigenous and Western Knowledges in research, CMN will continue to strengthen its commitment to advancing the process of reconciliation in Canada. Our work will support the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals in Canada.

Braiding knowledge systems through place-based, community-driven environmental research offers a path to more relevant, representative outcomes necessary to advance Reconciliation Through Research, train future generations of leaders, and inform policy and practice in Canada. By the end of CMN's NCE funding in March 2024, this approach will position the organization to honour and expand beyond mountain regions to engage with a larger and more diverse group of researchers, trainees, and knowledge users across Canada and internationally.

Ultimately, CMN aims to ensure that the influence of self-determined, place-based, and co-produced knowledge within Canada's science culture is significantly enhanced such that, over time and on a path towards reconciliation, local knowledge approaches contribute more to public policy and decision-making and become more fully and equitably reciprocal with Western science initiatives.

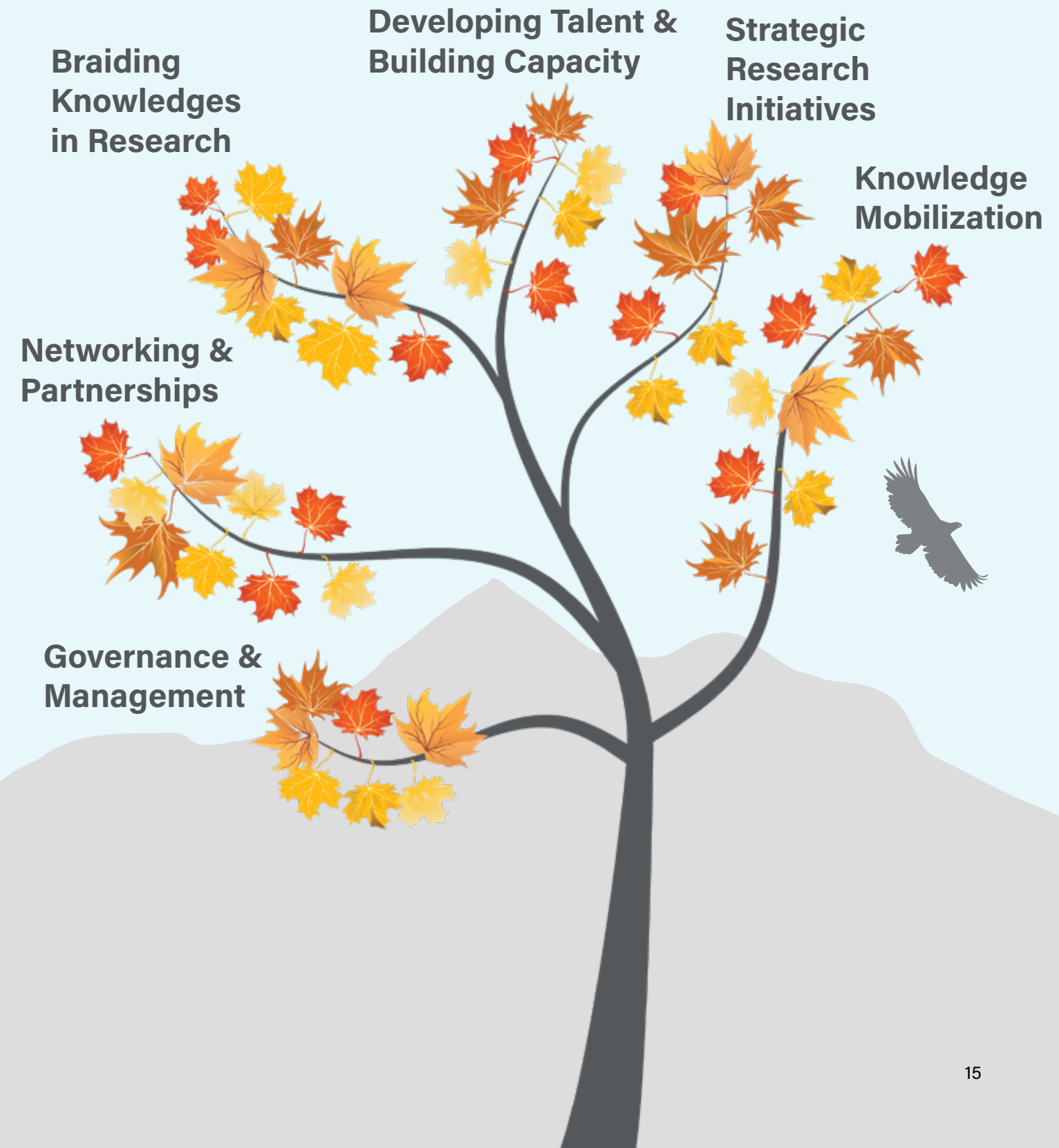
## National and Intersectoral Collaboration

CMN's continued success will require the growth and strengthening of our partnerships across sectors, including Indigenous organizations, post-secondary institutions, industry, governments, philanthropy, and the not-for-profit sector. CMN has established itself as the connective tissue between individuals and organizations across these sectors and across diverse regions that have shared interests and objectives with respect to both mountain research and bringing together Indigenous and Western ways of knowing. Going forward, we will continue to build our reputation as an essential element of Canada's research ecosystem both within and beyond mountain regions. We will also grow our engagement with international initiatives that are re-defining how science is conducted, gaining unique insights through synthesis across disciplines.



# OUR PROGRAM AREAS

The Canadian Mountain Network will achieve its goals through activities under the following program areas:





## Research (R)

***Improve, through the braiding of Indigenous and Western knowledges, the resilience and health of mountain peoples and places through enhanced understanding of rapid and uncertain environmental changes, as well as their economic, social, and cultural implications.***

**R1. We will conduct and enable research that informs conservation, restoration, health & wellness, and adaptation and mitigation strategies for mountain communities and Indigenous Peoples responding to rapid and uncertain environmental, social, and economic change.**

**This will be accomplished by:**

- Supporting and enabling existing CMN-funded Research Projects and Knowledge Hubs

**We will measure our success by:**

- The number of peer-reviewed publications arising from CMN Research Projects and Knowledge Hubs
- The number of research products on braiding knowledges
- The extent to which community knowledge holders and Elders share the importance of the work undertaken in their communities

**R2. Improve understanding through the creation of functional, diverse, multisectoral and multi-regional research teams that include Indigenous and non-Indigenous trainees, academics, knowledge holders, other experts, and knowledge users that embrace Indigenous and Western ways of knowing and doing in their research.**

**This will be accomplished by:**

- Partner assessment and outreach exercises

**We will measure success by:**

- The number of investigators and collaborators in CMN-funded research initiatives across Canada
- The percentage of researchers that identify as Indigenous across CMN-funded research initiatives
- The number of partnerships/agreements with government departments in CMN-funded research initiatives
- The number of partnerships with the private sector across CMN-funded research initiatives
- The number of partnerships with other agencies (including Indigenous organizations) across CMN-funded research initiatives

**R3. Develop and enable research protocols and approaches to support the braiding of Indigenous and Western knowledges.**

**We will accomplish this by:**

- Encouraging, adhering to, communicating, developing and adapting ethical principles for knowledge co-production and braiding of knowledges in CMN research initiatives
- Developing best practices based on lessons learned from place-based research that braids knowledges

**We will measure success by:**

- The percentage of research teams that support models of knowledge co-production between Indigenous knowledge and Western knowledge
- The percentage of research funds allocated to Indigenous-led Research Projects
- The extent to which Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Holders communicate that the standards of research reflect community needs and values
- The extent to which researchers speak to changes in their ways of working



**Photo from CMN project: Long-term monitoring of harvested mountain ungulates to improve their conservation and sustainable use (Marco Festa-Bianchet)**

## Training (T)

*Improve the skills and employment outcomes of a diverse community of solutions-oriented mountain systems researchers, trainees, and professionals that are capable of working with both Indigenous and Western knowledge systems and research approaches.*

**T1. Attract, develop, and retain outstanding trainees, researchers and students in novel research that braids knowledges to improve our understanding of environmental, social, and economic change in mountain systems.**

**We will accomplish this by:**

- Trainee participation in CMN initiatives

**We will measure success by:**

- The number of trainees in CMN-funded projects
- The percentage of Indigenous trainees in CMN-funded projects
- The extent to which trainees attribute the contribution of participation in CMN-funded research to their development

**T2. Improve cultural awareness and understanding of Indigenous and non-Indigenous academic and non-academic trainees through land-based learning.**

**We will accomplish this by:**

- On-the-land learning camps

**We will measure success by:**

- The number of trainees participating in on-the-land learning
- The extent to which trainees attribute the contribution of CMN-funded land-based learning to their development

**T3. Advance the competencies and skills of outstanding trainees and researchers**

**We will accomplish this by:**

- Opportunities for skills certification and access to stipends and subsidies for trainees in CMN research initiatives

**We will measure success by:**

- The number of trainees completing certificate or certification courses
- Funding allocated to trainees through stipends and subsidies for employers of CMN trainees

**T4. Improve intercultural competencies for trainees, researchers, professionals, knowledge users through training in ethical braiding of Knowledges**

**We will accomplish this by:**

- Developing Ethical Space training activities

**We will measure success by:**

- The number of researchers involved in CMN-funded activities that complete Ethical Space training annually



Discussing Tlingit Language around the fire at Arrowhead Lake (Aimee Schmidt)

## Knowledge Mobilization (KM)

**Inform and influence decision-making and action locally, regionally, nationally and internationally by mobilizing braided knowledges.**

**KM1. Establish CMN as the premier source for trusted, credible data, information, knowledge, and approaches for braiding Indigenous and Western knowledges within mountain systems researchers and knowledge users.**

**We will accomplish this by:**

- Developing a diverse array of CMN communications activities (e.g., website, social media, newsletter, podcasts)
- Promoting participation in CMN events (e.g., International Mountain Day, Annual Knowledge Sharing Summit)



**We will measure our success by:**

- The number of CMN e-newsletter subscribers
- The number of unique website visits per year
- The number of social media followers
- The number of citations in news articles
- The number of participants in CMN events annually
- Validation of the relevance of knowledge mobilization products by Indigenous communities and organizations



**KM2. Improve public and policymaker understanding and appreciation of the importance of braiding Indigenous and Western knowledges to understand mountain systems and influence policies and practices.**

**We will accomplish this by:**

- Targeting outreach to decision-makers in coordination with Knowledge Hub and Research Project leaders

**We will measure success by:**

- Assessing the uptake of CMN research results by knowledge users as reflected in policies or decision-making
- Assessing the extent to which Indigenous communities and organizations see their ways of knowing reflected in the use of information by knowledge users

**KM3. CMN is recognized by key partners and stakeholders as an authoritative voice and valued source of guidance on the opportunity for braiding knowledges in research to support Canada in meeting its national and international commitments.**

**We will accomplish this by:**

- Communicating and mobilizing knowledge developed by CMN-funded initiatives that support and align with national and international priorities and commitments

**We will measure success by:**

- The percentage of CMN research initiatives contributing to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the United Nations (UN) Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- The percentage of CMN research initiatives contributing to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals in Canada

## Strategic Initiatives (SI)

**Enhance the connectivity of impact by drawing out common lessons and knowledge that informs broader research, knowledge mobilization and training outcomes.**

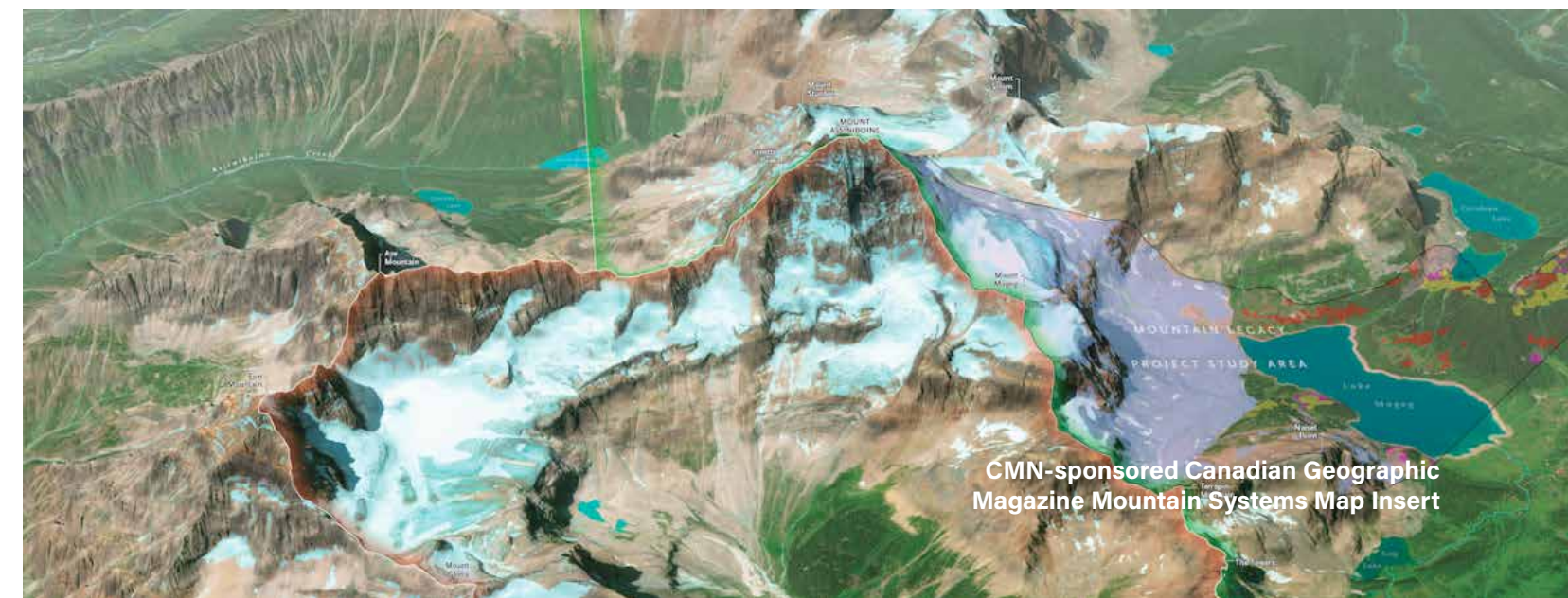
**SI1. Support strategic “connector” initiatives that are interdisciplinary and cross-cutting across Knowledge Hubs, Research Projects, research theme areas, and geography to accelerate, integrate, and leverage CMN’s impacts, including through sharing lessons learned and identifying common threads from place-based research efforts that can be assembled into regional and national best practices.**

**We will accomplish this by:**

- Supporting cross-cutting, strategic initiatives in research, knowledge mobilization and training

**We will measure our success by:**

- The percentage of Knowledge Hubs and research projects “connected” to strategic initiatives
- The number of CMN-generated products co-authored or co-produced by more than one Knowledge Hub or research project working collaboratively



CMN-sponsored Canadian Geographic Magazine Mountain Systems Map Insert

## Networking and Partnerships (NP)

*Grow and enhance local, regional, national and international partnerships and collaborations to support and sustain mountain systems research, training, and knowledge mobilization activities that are informed by both Indigenous and Western knowledges.*

**NP1. Develop the cross-sectoral partnerships necessary to support mountain systems research, training, and knowledge mobilization activities at the local, regional, national, and international levels.**

**We will accomplish this by:**

- Identifying and developing key partners who can enable and support place-based activities through a regional and national strategic lens
- Participation in international events and activities

**We will measure our success by:**

- The number of strategic, organizational partnerships
- The number of international events supported, sponsored, and participated in

**NP2. Optimize and diversify the financial resources available for CMN activities**

**We will accomplish this by:**

- Maintaining and expanding CMN's sustaining partnerships
- Enabling and supporting research initiatives to maximize cash and in-kind leverage from existing and new partnerships

**We will measure success by:**

- The number of committed sustaining partners of CMN
- The ratio of leveraged partner cash and in-kind contributions to CMN's funding for Research.

## Governance & Management (GM)

*Build a sustainable organization that is recognized as an essential element of Canada's research ecosystem.*

**GM1. Support the continuous improvement of governance structures to ensure accountability, transparency, and performance.**

**We will accomplish this by:**

- Accurate and timely reporting to our funders, partners, program participants, and wider community.
- Conducting open and transparent evaluations of operational and financial performance.

**We will measure success by:**

- The results of annual evaluations by the NCE program.
- The results of annual internal governance and management evaluations.

**GM2. Maintain a focus on results and impact**

**We will accomplish this by:**

- Regular evaluation of performance against metrics/targets
- Annual evaluation of CMN-funded activities against their objectives and outcomes.

**We will measure success by:**

- Ensuring annual performance meets or exceeds established targets
- The percentage of CMN-funded activities that met annual deliverables and, where relevant, had funding approved for subsequent years.

**GM3. Ensure that CMN is diverse and inclusive, with decision-making and actions at multiple levels informed by both Indigenous and Western ways of knowing.**

**We will accomplish this by:**

- Evaluating and updating as needed CMN's Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Justice statements, strategies and policies
- Increasing Indigenous participation in CMN governance and management

**We will measure success by:**

- The percentage of CMN governance volunteers and staff that express satisfaction with performance of the organization and their role within it
- The percentage of the CMN Board, its committees, and staff that identify as Indigenous.
- Public reporting on EDIJ performance statistics

**GM4. Plan for the post-2024 future of CMN**

**We will accomplish this by:**

- Seeking post 2024 funding opportunities
- Developing operational scenarios and transition plans reflecting possible outcomes post 2024

**We will measure success by:**

- The amount of partner contributions secured beyond 2024
- Completing Board-approved plans for different transitional scenarios and critical paths for implementation

# GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

## CMN's Organization

CMN is a federally-incorporated not-for-profit organization that has been structured to comply with the rules of the Government of Canada Networks of Centres of Excellence program. The organization is hosted by the University of Alberta, which provides an annual funding contribution and a variety of in-kind administrative services.

CMN's Board of Directors oversees the organization's strategy and is responsible for the overall governance of the Network. Committees of the Board include the Governance Committee; Finance, Audit and Risk Committee; Research Management Committee; and, Indigenous Circle of Advisors. CMN staff include seconded University of Alberta employees and contractors reporting to an Executive Director, who in turn reports to the Board and is responsible for managing the day-to-day business of the organization.

CMN has made significant investments in the development of governance and management structures, policies, procedures, and guidelines during its initial three years of operation. This work has benefited from the active oversight and leadership of our Board of Directors and its committees. These groups include significant intersectional diversity, such as knowledge system diversity, linguistic diversity, geographic diversity, career-stage diversity, and user-sector diversity (e.g. academia, government, industry, Indigenous organizations).

CMN's management team, which includes the Executive Director and two co-Research Directors, has a demonstrated record of delivering on the organization's objectives. Strong evaluations, clean audits, and the rapid growth of the scope and scale of CMN's programs attest to the competence of our leadership and their complementary administrative, scientific and Indigenous knowledge expertise and experience.

## Governance Excellence

The Governance Committee oversees the overall health of the Board and its committees. It leads the recruitment and evaluation of senior staff and governance volunteers, as well as ensures non-financial corporate compliance. The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee provides oversight of internal controls, budgeting, financial reporting, information systems, and risk management.

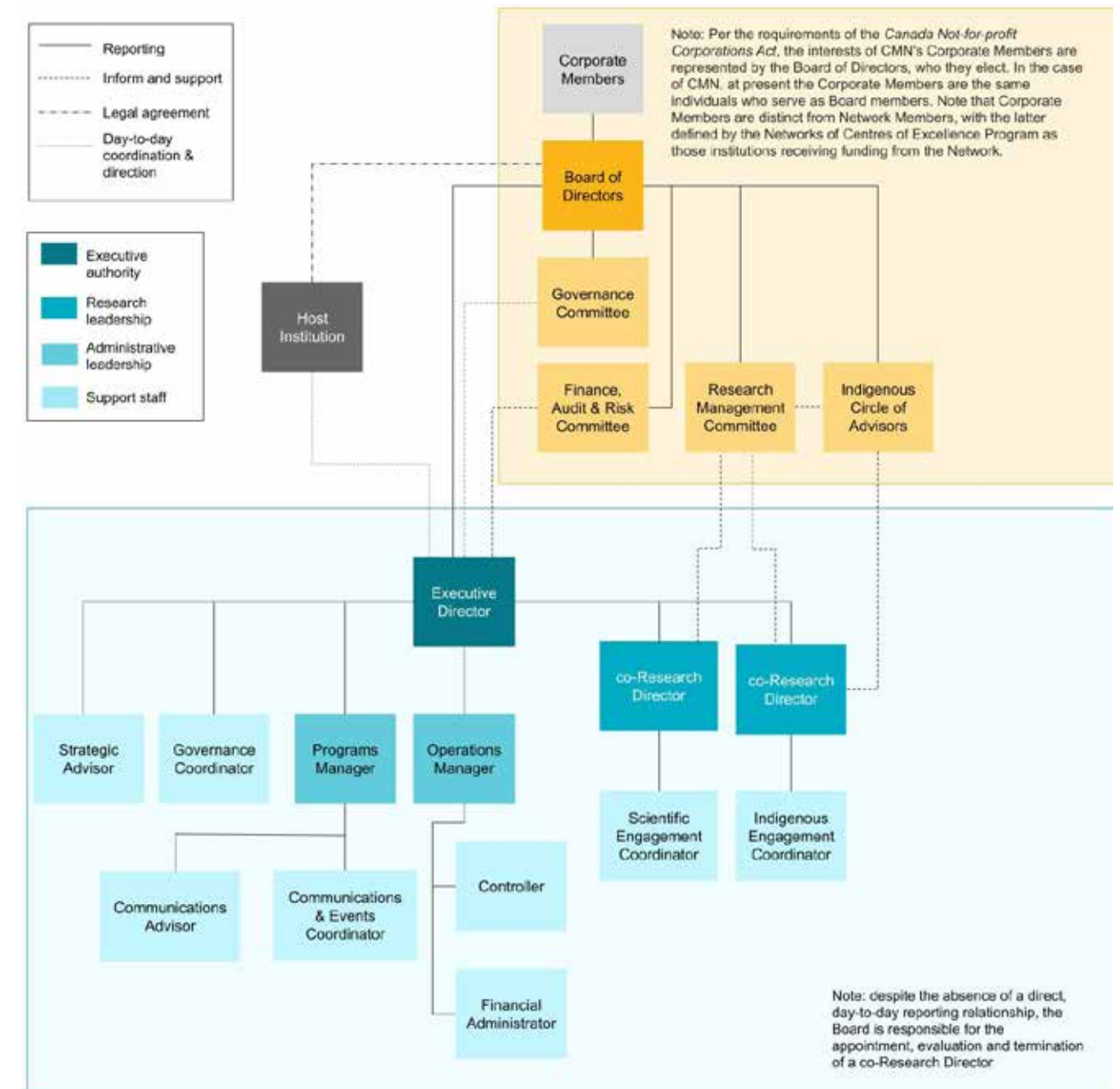
## Research Excellence

The Research Management Committee (RMC) is an interdisciplinary group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous, academic and non-academic, and Canadian and international experts who reflect the full diversity of our community. The RMC is an independent governance body that oversees the Network's research policies and the performance of its research investments. The RMC reports to the Board and advises on research priorities, provides peer-review of proposals, and evaluates the progress of funded Research Projects and Knowledge Hubs, including their EDIJ commitments.

## Indigenous Circle of Advisors

The Indigenous Circle of Advisors (ICA) brings Indigenous perspectives and lived experience to inform CMN's decision-making in order to ensure credible and durable partnerships with Indigenous communities and leadership. The ICA advises on issues such as ethics, protocols, and practices, including emerging best practices with respect to the braiding of Indigenous and Western ways of knowing and doing.

## CMN's Organization





# CONCLUSION

This document outlines CMN's strategy to build on its strong foundation, continue to accelerate its impact, and prepare for an exciting future beyond its NCE funding. As a forward-looking document, it is designed to complement CMN's public annual reports, which review the progress of our program areas over the previous year. It also provides high-level direction for annual operational planning.

On November 23, 2021, the Governor General of Canada, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon, delivered the Speech from the Throne to outline the government's agenda at the opening of the 44th Parliament of Canada. As Canada's first Indigenous Governor General, she reflects a country and a governance system that is, at once, young and old. "This is the moment to move faster on the path to reconciliation" and "Our Earth is in danger. We must move talk into action and adapt where we must. We cannot afford to wait."

Changes to our environment, our climate, lands, waters, and wildlife are occurring before our eyes, and before the fading eyes of our Elders and the wide-open eyes of our youth. Understanding our collective and diversified circumstances of vulnerability and resilience to environmental and societal change – and our ability to adapt and transform to a more sustainable and just future – is the grand challenge of our time.

The decisions and the actions we take will have a profound impact on the collective health and well-being of generations to come. Recent events in Canada suggest that rarely in our history has the urgency been greater or the burden of responsibility heavier. The devastation of recent fires and floods have brought home the reality of our climate crisis and hundreds of communities across Canada have declared climate emergencies. Six years after the release of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, the reality of unmarked graves of children who died in the residential school system served as a painful reminder of the devastation inflicted on Indigenous Peoples by governments and institutions, as well as the continued impacts of those actions.

We hold a collective responsibility to move forward together in a better way. This requires organizations and partners to work together with a shared commitment to a vision for a better future.

CMN has an important role to play in this national, multi-generational effort. We are grateful to those who have contributed on our journey thus far, and we are excited by the opportunities in front of us as we enter a new phase of our work.

Photo from CMN project:  
Enhancing the reintroduction  
of Plains Bison through the  
inclusion of cultural monitoring  
and traditional knowledge in  
Banff National Park (Bill Snow)

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