

**Presentation to the Enbridge Northern Gateway Joint Review Panel
Victoria, British Columbia, 10 January 2013
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Good morning. I'd like to begin by acknowledging that we are meeting today on the traditional lands of the Lekwungen nation. For over 4000 years, Coast Salish People have lived on and cared for these lands with the knowledge and appreciation that right relationship with the earth is critical to human survival. This particular piece of land is called the "place of the cradle," for it was along this shoreline that Lekwungen parents would place their newborns in cradles, with the hope and belief that these precious babies would be blessed with long lives.

I, on the other hand, have only lived in Victoria for 20 years. That makes me a newcomer, a settler in these parts. Nonetheless, I appreciate Victoria's beauty and the determination of its people, most of whom as you have surely discovered by this point in these presentations, are keenly interested in protecting the gifts they have been given by virtue of living in this province.

I am speaking today as a "settler," but also as a member of a national faith-based social justice umbrella organization known as KAIROS. There are 11 national churches and religious organizations that make up the Board of KAIROS. Here in Victoria, we have broadened the circle to include people from all faiths who are working to create a world that is more equitable for everyone and who appreciate that the entire earth is our home and must be cherished and protected as such. KAIROS is a Greek word that means "a moment in time when change is possible." Because we are a network that examines the critical issues of the day; that looks at the big picture and tries to connect the dots, we are always seeking the KAIROS moment -- a point in time when we can say "Uh, ha! Something new can come out of this situation: transformation is possible now." And then we work to make it so.

There is an active network of KAIROS communities and supporters in BC, and through a process of consultation, we determined that Northern Gateway and the issues this proposal raises is a KAIROS moment for British Columbia, if not Canada; hence my presence before you today.

I believe, as does the KAIROS network in BC, that this project can only be considered a good one in the sense that it is providing us with an opportunity to have a critical conversation about the current path we are walking, as well as to raise questions that do not get asked

often enough about the way we pursue development. Fundamentally ethical in their nature, these are questions that look at the relationship we have with one another as well as humanity's relationship with the earth itself. And, after considering the ethical issues that the Northern Gateway proposal presents, we have concluded that it will have no long-term benefits and is decidedly not in the public interest.

First, you should know that the national organization of KAIROS has produced an ethical reflection paper on Northern Gateway which I will now briefly reference and which supports my own personal opinion about the Northern Gateway proposal.

The proposed Northern Gateway pipeline from Alberta to Kitimat, British Columbia presents intersecting challenges for economy, ecology and Canada's relations with Indigenous peoples. A strong focus on anticipated wealth creation threatens to obscure the magnitude of profound challenges for ecological justice and Indigenous rights—key priorities of KAIROS. Commitments to human dignity and covenantal right relations inspire KAIROS to work with First Nations communities to pursue Indigenous land and treaty rights, including the right to free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) before major development projects proceed. These rights are at stake in development of the Northern Gateway pipeline.

The integrity of God's Creation motivates KAIROS to seek respect for Earth's natural limits and recognition of ecosystems as inherently valuable, as well as complex and essential parts of our shared existence. The Gateway project poses threats of contamination, and contributions to increased carbon emissions and in turn climate change, that would disrupt eco---systems critical to shared survival.

Ultimately, there are concerns that the Northern Gateway project stands counter to two much needed priorities for Canada: the affirmation of the right of Indigenous peoples to be self--- determining, distinct peoples with an adequate land base, and the much needed development of a just, clean and sustainable energy strategy.

If we were to proceed with this project, there is an abundance of evidence that suggests the environmental risks would be too devastating, the financial gains too small, and the damage to a unique way of life too great, to even consider any terms and conditions that might be applied in order to consider approval.

So much of the wild has already been lost in BC, but the KAIROS network maintains there is a value to wilderness that goes beyond human economic exploitation. We need some new words in this conversation...for words shape meaning and ultimately, reflect relationship.

As a child, I recall learning about the resources of Canada. In social studies classes, we were required to create colourful maps that located Canada's timber supplies, wheat fields, minerals, fishing stocks, and waterways. This was the wealth of Canada, we were told, and weren't we a fortunate country to have so many "natural" resources just there for the harvesting, mining, picking, scooping, gathering, damming, and then of course, selling on the global market, at the best price possible. In my child-like mind, it did seem amazing. We had been given so much and there didn't seem to be any end in sight... The environmental degradation that was caused by extractive industries, or the displacement of First Nations caused by mining or hydro-electric projects was just the cost of doing business and of generating wealth for our country. These were side issues that were rarely mentioned, if at all.

Decades later, I now have a very different appreciation for those maps and that viewpoint. Fifty years ago, many of us were ignorant about the impact of "resource exploitation", but now we know better. Who knew what "ecosystems" were back then? Now most of us do, and so there really is nowhere to hide... However, in the name of progress, it too often appears that our leaders are still content to "exploit" these natural resources as quickly as they can, rather than manage them for all time and future generations.

Here in Victoria, and throughout this province, we are exploring our connections to the earth and to each other in ways that fill me with hope for the future. Instead of exploiting our natural resources, more and more of us are coming to view these resources as the gifts and treasures they really are. "Nature" may be viewed as a resource for people, but that hasn't prevented us from understanding that nature has a practical, cultural, emotional, and even spiritual value, all of which are equally necessary for our well-being. Moreover, we appreciate that the treasures nature provides are not just for those who walk on two legs and call themselves the smartest, but are assets for all life on this planet. Science is at long last catching up with ancient spiritual teachings that call for more humility and respect for the natural world because everything is connected.

The lands and waters that the Enbridge pipeline would traverse are one of the last areas in this province where there are intact ecosystems, where the wild that we imagine in our heads and our hearts is real and not just a memory. Surely this is worthy of protection!

Human beings cannot continue to act as the pirates and plunderers of the natural world. We are part of that natural world whether we choose to recognize it or not. Global warming will force a re-balancing which most believe is already happening, as we watch the effects of enormous hurricanes and raging wildfires night after night on our television screens. We

may be able to control where we mine or how we construct pipelines, but we will not be able to control the natural forces we have now set into motion by our pursuit of material wealth, in the name of the good life.

So what about our standard of living? How can we pay for health care, schools, and all those other services that we depend on and take for granted in 2013? This is the main argument that is lifted up whenever anyone suggests that we need a moratorium on tar sands development or a re-imagining of our current economic paradigm. Call me naïve, but I believe, as do the people in the KAIROS network that I am part of, that a majority of Canadians would be very willing to walk back on their lifestyles, if it meant saving wilderness, investing in alternative energy sources, and keeping carbon in the ground in order to prevent runaway global warming,

What was our province's slogan, not so very long ago? "Super, Natural, BC." That's our core narrative, if you will...what most citizens from this province expect their government to always be about defending, preserving and enhancing... How does this pipeline project fit within this core narrative? Obviously, it doesn't.

I can live in a world without a car, but I don't want my grandchildren to grow up and live in a world where the only "wild" animals they will be able to see will exist in zoos or in photos from long ago.

For that is really what is at stake here -- if we continue with the status quo, the wilderness as we understand it today, will be lost. And along with that, the biological diversity which has provided us with our true standard of living for hundreds of thousands of years.

To conclude, may this "place of the cradle" be for this review panel, as it was for the indigenous people who lived here for centuries, a place of fresh beginnings and great expectations for our common future. To start down a new path begins with a single step taken in a different direction. Take that step and recommend against this pipeline.

Thank you. All my relations.