

# Looking Forward: Reserve Land and Environment Management Program (RLEMP)

NALMA National Gathering - September 2023



Indigenous Services  
Canada

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# Presentation Outline

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- Progress made
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**Immediate Improvements for Communities**

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**Quick update on First Nations Land Management (FNLN)**

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# What is the Reserve Land and Environment Management Program (RLEMP)?

- Established in 2005, RLEMP aims to support First Nations to develop capacity to manage their reserve lands, natural resources, and environment under the *Indian Act*.
- The program is structured into 3 progressive levels of responsibility that build capacity as communities assume greater responsibility in managing land activities.
  - Level 1: Training and Development (2 years)
  - Level 2: Operational
  - Level 3: Delegated Authority (closed to new entrants since 2011)
- In building this foundational capacity, RLEMP supports greater service delivery by First Nations.

**130**

RLEMP First Nations

**207**

Land Managers Trained

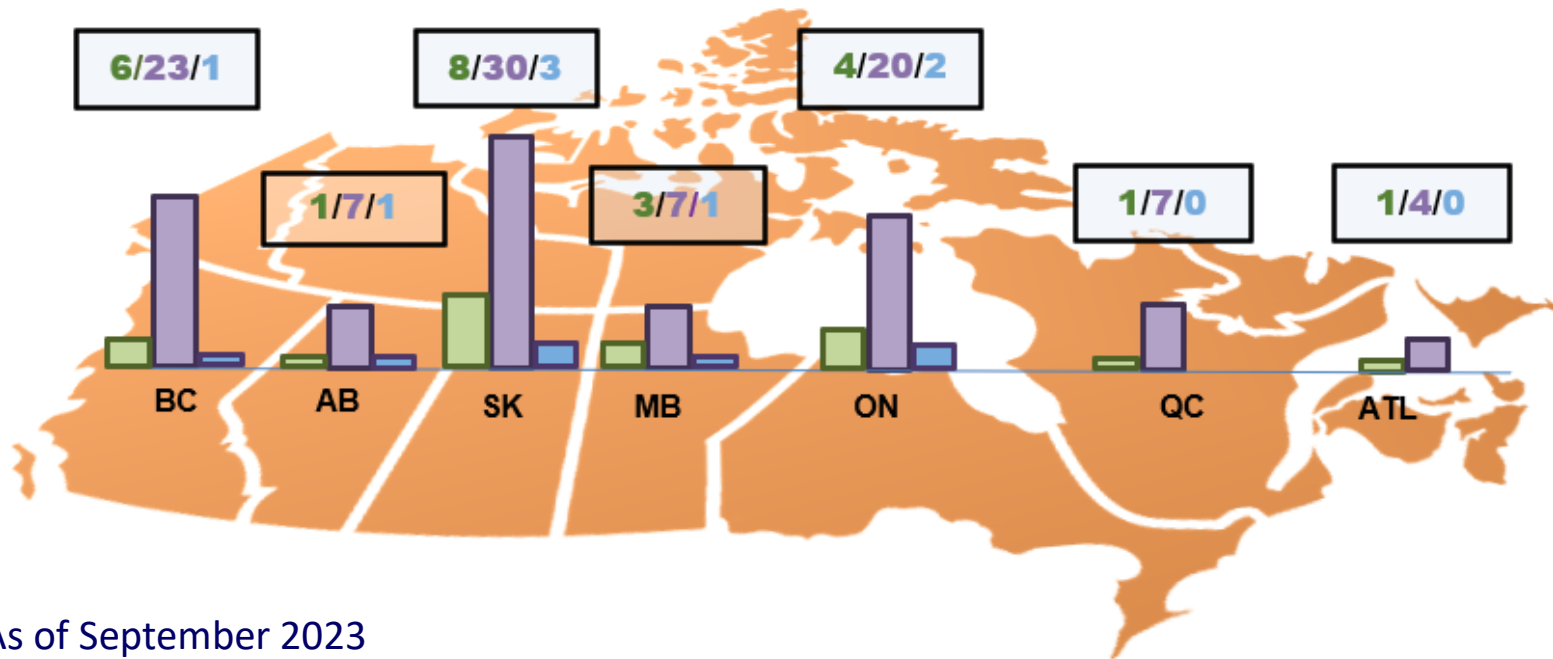
# RLEMP Entry Process



# First Nations Participants

## Distribution of the 130 RLEMP First Nations\*

- Training & Development First Nations (24 in total)
- Operational First Nations (98 in total)
- Delegated Authority First Nations (8 in total)



\*As of September 2023

# 2017 Engagement – What we heard

Training is effective but could be further improved

Funding is needed to train land managers outside of the Program

There is a need to provide an adequate base amount of funding to participants

The entry criteria should be reviewed because it is seen as too narrow

Better integration with other Lands programs or regimes

The funding formula should be examined and updated

Re-opening Level 3 (Delegated Authority 53/60)

# 2017 Engagement – Progress Made

## Training

- NALMA established partnerships with 3 additional universities, including a French-language one, for the PLMCP Level 1
- NALMA redesigned the PLMCP Level 2 to make it more practical and responsive to First Nation needs, which will also be offered for the first time in French in 2024-2025
- ISC supported the training of land managers outside of RLEMP and the training of a second land manager for succession planning when funding allowed

## Integration

- ISC increased **institutional capacity** through:
  - Supporting core capacity "hubs" for Regional Lands Associations (RLAs)
  - Increased investments through Budget 2022 (Economic Recovery)
  - Increased investments for Land Use Planning, which is now implemented by NALMA and the First Nations Land Management Resource Centre (FNLMRC).

# 2017 Engagement – Challenges remaining



**RLEMP still operates on a one-out, one-in basis**



**No base amount of funding for participants**

Many First Nations do not receive enough funding to meaningfully undertake land management activities



**Funding Formula still needs to be examined and revised**



**There are still important gaps in the Program**

Delegated Authority (Level 3) is still closed to new participants

Environmental Management is not specifically funded



# Budget 2023 Opportunities

## Advancing Economic Reconciliation by Unlocking the Potential of First Nations Lands

*"The federal government is committed to supporting initiatives that return control and decision-making over the use of First Nations lands back to First Nations communities. This supports economic growth and self-determination for First Nations and moves us further along the path of reconciliation."*

*Budget 2023, Chapter 4.1*

Budget 2023 provided **\$30 million over five years** to “enhance RLEMP, ensuring First Nations can develop capacity to exercise increased responsibility over their lands, resources, and environment”.

Investments will complement progress made in training and institutional supports to target community-level improvements and expansion.


New funding will provide an opportunity to address some pressing community needs, while providing building space for further development of the Program vision.

# Immediate Improvements for Communities


In recognition of urgent opportunity presented by Budget 2023 funding, ISC will deliver on two major outstanding priorities identified in the 2017 Engagement:

Open the program to new First Nations participants (25-45)

Seek approvals to implement a base level of funding (to be announced)



ISC, in collaboration with NALMA and the RLAs, revised the Expression of Interest Form, focusing on prioritization vs eligibility criteria.



ISC is also developing with NALMA some communication tools to bring awareness to the Program and to new applicants (letter to Chiefs-in Council, process chart, updated website, etc.)

## Further Improvements to the Program (3-5 years)

In partnership with NALMA, RLAs and ISC Regional Offices, the Program will continue to explore improvements that support service transfer and self-determination. This will put RLEMP in a better position to address the two outstanding items from the 2017 Engagement:



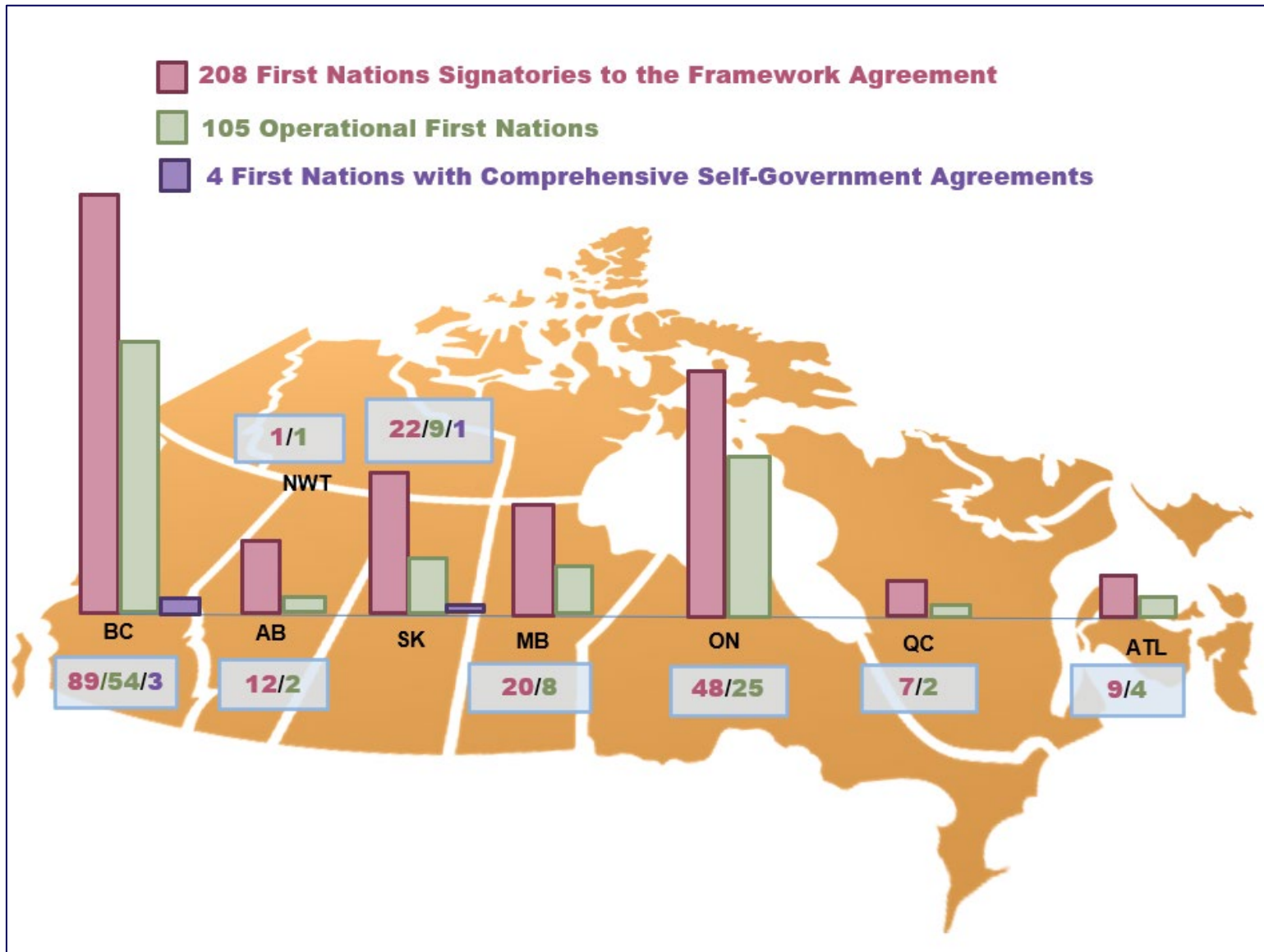
Exploring possible enhancements to the Funding Formula



Addressing the remaining gaps in the Program:

- Reopening Level 3 (Delegated Authority 53/60)
- Better supporting Environmental Management

# First Nations Land Management (FNLM) – A National Picture



# Budget 2023 Updates - FNLM

Budget 2023 provided funding:

- For a new Operational Funding Formula for FNLM. An Agreement-in-Principle has been reached with the Lands Advisory Board (LAB).
- To add 50 new First Nation signatories to the Framework Agreement over the next five years.

The Budget also announced funding over three years to support the creation of a new independent First Nations-led National Land Registry. The LAB is leading this initiative in partnership with Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC), and Natural Resources Canada (NRCan)

This initiative will be tailored to Land Code First Nations or Self-Governing Nations who choose to use it.

For more information, contact the LAB or the FNLMRC.

**Miigwetch!**

**Thank you!**

**Merci!**



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