

In Canada, success in governing the oil sands region depends on building trust among stakeholders and rights holders — and this must be established at federal, provincial and municipal levels of government. The history of the Treaty Eight region is not one that has built trust with Aboriginal people. Aboriginal communities should be welcomed into decision-making, governance and profit sharing from existing oil sands developments. Moreover, it should be expected that, under such circumstances, Aboriginal people will often choose environmental protection over economic development, therefore slowing down development. The principles of Treaty Eight would be a suitable guideline for these processes. With Aboriginal participation, Canada and Alberta should empower a treaty commissioner and a Métis rights commissioner with considerable authority to address disputes over lands, livelihood and governance.

Monitoring of sociocultural and ecological impacts alike is critical, as these processes are interrelated. Agencies must become more responsive to local communities; this would include training programmes helping Aboriginal communities to become more directly involved in monitoring and assessment activities. Furthermore, baseline studies and monitoring of social impacts on Aboriginal communities are required. Aboriginal communities should consider attempting to enter self-government negotiations to take new powers over environmental assessment and management in their traditional territories.

Sustainability includes the traditional practices and knowledge of indigenous people, and requires rethinking alternatives to the dominant capitalist paradigm based on non-renewable resource dependency as a source of infinite growth. Such a paradigm remains at odds with what constitutes true sustainability and stewardship. Rather than relying on rapid expansion of the oil sands in Alberta, one option would be to use current oil production to support new manufacturing within smaller communities, supporting Aboriginal people and moving beyond total reliance on resource extraction industries. This will aid the transition towards 'true' sustainability and stewardship that encapsulates indigenous rights and cultures.

Finally, in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples' principle of free, prior and informed consent, policymakers must respect the right of indigenous peoples to say no to development on their traditional territories. □

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Correction

In the Commentary 'Development incentives for fossil fuel subsidy reform' (*Nature Clim. Change* **5**, 709–712; 2015), in the Acknowledgements, J. Steckel's surname was incorrectly spelled. This has been corrected in the HTML and PDF versions after print 6 August 2015.