

# EVALUATION OF LAND MANAGEMENT SUB-PROGRAMS\*

*\*In conversation with First Nation partners, the point was recognized that the Framework Agreement on First Nation Land Management (FNLM) is a self-government agreement and should not be referred to as a program. Hereafter the evaluation refers simply to "land management".*

**Community and Culture**

1. Planning for the future use of land is an important intergenerational aspect of First Nations' community-building.

**Self-Determination**

2. Self-determination is an inherent right for First Nations, and there are ways to support communities to exercise that right over their lands and natural resources.

**Relationships**

13. First Nations are developing a complex Land Management ecosystem by building relationships outside of ISC.  
14. ISC has opportunities to improve its relationships with First Nations communities.

**Reporting**

15. There are opportunities to streamline and improve the utility of reports required by ISC for land management funding.

**Service Transfer**

16. 'Service Transfer' speaks to a future where First Nations have the control they desire in managing their lands and natural resources.  
17. As the department moves toward service transfer, ISC has a continued role to play in land management.

Importance of Land

Current Challenges

Ways to Move Forward

**Funding**

3. There are disparities in funding access and distribution across and within RLEMP, FNLM and Land Use Planning that create differences in opportunities for First Nations to benefit from their lands and natural resources.  
4. Funding for FNLM is seen as efficient.  
5. Stable funding arrangements would better support long-term land use planning projects.  
6. Current RLEMP funding is inadequate to meet its objectives.  
7. The RLEMP funding formula does not reflect the land management reality of many First Nations.

**Capacity**

8. An appropriately-compensated and dedicated Land Manager is vital to ensure First Nations' lands and natural resources are sustainably managed.  
9. First Nations and their non-Indigenous partners in the Lands sector could benefit from expanded training.

**Enforcement**

10. Enforcement of First Nations' land codes and laws is a critical challenge.

**Climate Change**

11. First Nations are not currently receiving adequate support to mitigate the serious impacts of climate change.

**COVID-19 Impacts**

12. The COVID-19 pandemic made it challenging for many First Nations to achieve their land management priorities, despite modernization of service delivery.

## Evaluation Scope:

- Covered Fiscal Years 2014-15 to 2020-21, and early impacts of COVID-19.
- Total materiality over the 5-year scope was ~\$240M.
- Implicated three land management areas:
  - Reserve Land and Environment Management Program (RLEMP)
  - ISC support for First Nation Land Management (FNLM)
  - Land Use Planning (LUP)

## Evaluation Assessed the Following Domains:

- Relevance
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Service Transfer
- GBA Plus
- COVID-19 Impacts
- Climate Change Impacts

## Presentation of Findings

The 17 major findings on this page are grouped thematically based on the ideas that were most present in the information shared with the evaluation team.

The findings can be broadly separated into three themes: Importance of Land, Current Challenges, and Ways to Move Forward.

## Indigenous Service Delivery Partners:

The First Nation Land Management Resource Centre (FNLARC) and the National Aboriginal Land Managers Association (NALMA).

# MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN (MRAP)



**Recommendation #1: As First Nations in RLEMP experience disparities within the current model that hinders their capacity to effectively manage their lands and natural resources, ISC re-assess the funding formula for RLEMP.**

Action 1.1: Implement a base-level of funding for existing and new First Nations participants in RLEMP (Q3 2023-24).

Action 1.2: With NALMA, ISC sectors and ISC regional offices, provide progress reports on status of discussions to explore potential options to further improve the RLEMP funding formula to support increased capacity and lessen disparities (Q4 2025-26).

Action 1.3: Report on findings, including recommendations for improvement to the RLEMP funding formula beyond the implementation of a base-level of funding (Q3 2026-27).



**Recommendation #2: Working with First Nations partners and Regions, ISC support a gap analysis for training in lands governance, at the discretion of First Nations partners.**

Action 2.1: Provide progress reports on status of work with the FNL MRC to support the implementation of Budget 2023 funding, including new positions for training curriculum development at the FNL MRC to strengthen their ability to work with First Nations to address training needs. Beginning in fiscal year 2023-24 (Q1 2024-25).

Action 2.2: Provide progress reports on supports provided to NALMA in the development, delivery and promotion of available training (Q3 2023-24 to Q1 2024-2025).

Action 2.3: Support NALMA in undertaking an independent review/evaluation of the redesigned PLMCP (Q1 to Q4 2025-26).



**Recommendation #3: Working with Regions, Human Resources, and the Chief Finances Results Delivery Office (CFRDO), ISC lead an organizational capacity assessment across land management, focusing on training needs, human resource continuity and retention of corporate knowledge for ISC staff.**

Action 3.1: Provide progress reports on status of engagements with internal partners (regions, human resources, CFRDO) to determine a suitable approach to analyze land management organizational capacity needs (Q3 2023-24).

Action 3.2: Undertake the assessment of ISC land management organizational capacity needs determined in Action 3.1 (Q3 2024-25).

Action 3.3: Disseminate and report on the results of the capacity assessment and identify next steps on any recommendations (Q4 2024-2025).



**Recommendation #4: Working with First Nations partners, ISC provide funding and support to carry out studies on existing capacity for land management in First Nations communities.**

Action 4.1: Engage with the FNL MRC to gauge interest and to identify priorities and options for land management capacity studies (Q4 2023-24).

Action 4.2: Provide progress reports on supports provided to the FNL MRC to undertake and lead land management capacity studies as requested (Q1 to Q4 2024-25).

Action 4.3: Report internally on the results of studies undertaken should FNL MRC choose to undertake them (Q3 2025-26).

Action 4.4: Provide progress reports on status of engagements with NALMA and Regional Lands Associations to identify and fund other capacity assessments, as resources allow (Q1 to Q3 2025-2026).

Action 4.5: Support NALMA in the evaluation of the redesigned Professional Land Manager Certification Program, which may include undertaking an assessment on the trained workforce (Q1 to Q4 2025-2026).



**Recommendation #5: Working with First Nations partners and the Chief Data Officer, ISC explore how to ensure First Nations have access to and ownership of their lands-related data, and the necessary data governance and management capacity to support that access and ownership, in support of service transfer and in order to facilitate evidence-based decision-making in land management.**

*LEMB is already undertaking work on: the National Additions to Reserves Tracking System (completed March 2023); the Integrated Environmental Management System (target completion March 2024); the Trust and Lands Information Management System (target completion September 2026); the Indian Land Registry System (target completion September 2026); and supporting the development of a First Nation-led land registry (target completion September 2026).*

Action 5.1: Provide progress reports on status of discussions with the Chief Data Officer and First Nations partners to review whether further steps are required (Q3 2025-26).