CHRISTINE SMITH-MARTIN
CEO of Coastal First Nations-Great Bear Initiative

My name is Christine Smith-Martin. My Haida name is Xaad Xyella. I come from the Lax Kw'alaams clan of Haida Gwaii. I am the CEO of Coastal First Nations.

TRENT MORAES
Board Member of Coastal First Nations-Great Bear Initiative and Deputy Chief of Skidegate Band Council

My name is Trent Moraes. My Haida name is Nangkilslas.

I serve as the Deputy Chief Counselor for the Skidegate band Council here on Haida Gwaii.

I'm also honored to be able to be working with Coastal First Nation Great Bear Initiative, as a board member.

CHRISTINE

We have three different regions that represent Coastal First Nations. In the North Coast We have Metlakatla, Gitga'at and Gitxaała. And in Haida we have Old Massett and Skidegate, in the Haida Nation.

In the Central Coast we have Heiltsuk, Wuikinuxv, Nuxalk and Kitasoo Xai'xais that represent our communities.

And within each of those communities are the rights and title holders. And each of our communities have different ways that they have set themselves up in terms of governance. Some communities have traditional governance, hereditary leaders alongside with the elected leaders. Some have them all together, but they are all rights and title holders.

And with that comes responsibility. And we talk a bit about stewardship. Stewardship is a really important piece. And it didn't just start when Coastal First Nations started. Stewardship and stewarding our territories is a traditional part of our responsibility in our territories.

Stewardship roles traditionally meant that my tribe or my house or my community has certain traditional, territories that we are responsible for caring for. So stewardship is not something that's new to our communities. It is something that's inherent to our communities.

TRENT

The Coastal First Nations communities have always done key initiatives that have worked on climate action. They do different initiatives that they see live in community and community response has always been one of the biggest measures for what is needed.

There's been a large focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, reduction of diesel in in community, as well as other energy efficiency
initiatives.

We work on different initiatives that involve climate adaptation. One of those initiatives is the Indigenous Climate Action Network (ICAN) which brings together regionally selected coordinators that work on climate adaptation in their communities.

Indigenous people have always been stewards of the land and the sea. And through this program, we are building new representation through mentorship and through climate adaptation strategies.

CHRISTINE

Each of our communities have different needs. And so when we developed this, we were very specific. We wanted each community to identify those needs.

We would provide the training, we'd provide the network, we would help with some of the hiring in each of the communities. We'd provide that support so that they can be successful.

TRENT

The ICAN Network helps create a stronger network of practitioners in community, and we use a lot of what has been taught to us, because Indigenous people have learned strategies through traditional knowledge and traditional knowledge, has met Western science
in practical use today.

Climate Action Networks create champions in each community and help build the capacity towards dealing with these emerging risks.

CHRISTINE

Each of our communities at Coastal First Nations have a climate action coordinator
that's housed in their community.

As we all know, we don't have a cookie cutter for each of our communities. It is up to that community to decide what their priorities are. And since we've been so successful at this and really producing each of the communities producing these amazing initiatives, the province of British Columbia asks us if we can expand this and be able to bring on other communities that want to learn from the initiatives that we've done in our communities.

And this is why you're here today at the training.

TRENT

This course was developed with guidance and collaboration from a steering committee, select ICAN Climate Action Coordinators and other First Nations climate leaders.

This course was developed because First Nations communities are feeling the impacts of climate change. There's a real need for building capacity in community to address the impacts and protect communities health, wellbeing, culture and their territories.

CHRISTINE

So I'd like to welcome everybody to this training. It's been a very well thought out training. We have taken all of the pieces that we learned along the way in our journey, and we have incorporated into this training.

TRENT

This course is about learning together, sharing experiences, and strengthening the capacity of our communities to adapt and thrive in a changing climate.

Whether you are a climate coordinator, planner, community leader, or somebody involved in supporting climate work in your Nation, we are very grateful that you are here.