

From: Susan Swift [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, February 2, 2021 5:22 PM
To: Islands2050
Subject: Feedback on Islands 2050

I found this link next to the survey related to the 2050 plan it says to share ideas about the budget (?) but I wanted to share ideas about the 2050 plan - in addition to what included in the survey (see below).

When I sent in my survey response, I completely forgot to mention that I see one very important role of the Trust to track "best practices" and facilitate sharing among the islands. Perhaps this is happening through the committee at the Municipal level on Bowen Island? I wonder if a robust Community website or online bulletin board would be helpful as a de-centralized and dynamic way to share information?

For instance, Bowen Island FoodResilience is writing to individuals we know on Saltspring, Galiano, and Gabriola for ideas and examples of their organic agricultural systems and supports, agri-tourism and ideas for infrastructure and funding. It might be nice if we could connect more generally on a site dedicated to different categories of interest in the Trust area communities. (Reconciliation efforts, for instance, or rainwater catchment programs.)

Here is what I included at the end of my survey where it asked for additional feedback:

Cultural Heritage and reconciliation come up last on the list of identified values or priorities, probably because the process didn't manage to attract many Indigenous people, or because they have their own separate process - in any case, the rest of us didn't prioritize reconciliation - as if it isn't "our issue." Similarly, the diagram of this engagement process puts the land at the bottom, balancing on the smallest tip. Precariously piled on top of the inverted triangle are "manmade" concepts and actions. To me, this triangle speaks volumes of what is "upside down" in our thinking. Land is at the bottom and is insignificant.

Don't these two things seem linked and inherently backwards? The non-inclusion of Indigenous perspectives at the beginning of the planning process (not acknowledged as essential) and putting land in the smallest, unbalanced triangle...

The land (or natural systems) are the basis for everything and they should be firmly planted at the wide base of the triangle and everything grows up from that, like plants and trees. Likewise, while nature is the number one thing that people mention as important, and various aspects of nature from farming to water are listed, the list doesn't reveal that these connections are inherent in an Indigenous viewpoint. And the whole category of being in "right relationship" to the land and the people of this land ("Reconciliation") is placed last under "Preserving & Protecting" in the Policy Statement list of values.

Maybe this inverted view will be "righted" when the consultation with First Nations is integrated with the results from these engagement sessions? To my way of thinking, the answers to our many environmental dilemmas will only come into focus when we truly appreciate an Indigenous way of seeing the world, of interfacing with nature. This kind of knowing is what will guide us to restore

biodiversity and confront climate change. Together scientific and Indigenous knowledge can inform the path forward.

I firmly believe that we will make progress when more of us see that we already live in a world of abundant gifts (aka "clean water, air, plants & animals, etc.) and that we can express our gratitude by reciprocating and not extracting.

If we continue to set First Nations to the side in a separate planning process, it will take much longer to achieve justice for the planet and repair our relationships.

Yours,

Susan Swift

Pronouns: She, her, hers

Residing on Nexwlélexm, in the unceded territory of the
Coast Salish Skwxwú7mesh People