

From: Paul Kubik [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 12, 2026 10:39 AM
To: Kristina Evans; Islands2050
Cc: Dag Falck; Tobi Elliott
Subject: Definition of "colonialism" in glossary of terms in draft policy statement

Hi Kristina and Islands2050,

I note from the Trust Council regular meeting minutes of June 2022 that the following resolution was carried.

TC-2022-059

It was Moved by Trustee Rogers and Seconded by Trustee Wolverton,
That staff be requested to develop a Glossary of Terms used in the Trust Policy Statement to be an appendix to that document.

I am reviewing the draft Islands Trust Policy Statement dated July 29, 2025. I note in the Glossary of Terms there is a definition of "colonialism" as follows,

Colonizers are groups of people or countries that come to a new place or country and steal the land and resources from Indigenous peoples, and develop a set of laws and public processes that are designed to violate the human rights of the Indigenous peoples, violently suppress the governance, legal, social, and cultural structures of Indigenous peoples, and force Indigenous peoples to conform to the structures of the colonial state. Historical and ongoing colonialism, including the dispossession of lands, has a deep and devastating impact on Indigenous people and communities. (Source: BC Addressing Racism Working Glossary; BC Office of the Human Rights Commissioner)

The first sentence is a value-laden definition, whereas the second sentence is an explicit judgement.

It defines colonialism *in explicitly moral and political terms*—using phrases like:

- "steal the land and resources"
- "designed to violate human rights"
- "violently suppress"
- "force Indigenous peoples to conform"

This is a **value-laden definition**, not a neutral or purely descriptive one. It reflects a particular ethical and historical framing—one widely used in human rights contexts, but still a framing.

Whereas, Google's English dictionary, which is provided by Oxford Languages, defines colonialism as,

the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, [occupying](#) it with [settlers](#), and [exploiting](#) it economically.

I also note that the BC Office of the Human Rights Commissioner does not seem to endorse such a definition of colonialism that Islands Trust has drafted. It appears to have just the BC Addressing Racism Working Glossary as the source.

I am asking that Islands Trust use a more neutral definition of colonialism. It is more than semantics at stake. Supposing the definition in question is true. That means that in the extreme, Islands Trust itself is illegitimate because its existence is premised on unlawful occupation of the lands it purports to govern. At this juncture, that question has not been settled in the provincial context. The province is grappling with the implications of its recent DRIPA legislation and judgements from the courts.

Furthermore, the definition is problematic in that it formalizes a path to illegitimacy in future. It is disputable that the land is stolen, which is a common refrain from some activists and academics. It is not positive law in Canada, nor is the premise widely accepted. It means that Gulf Islands residents are squatting illegally. Is that then the position of the province, Islands Trust Council and local elected officials?

Thank you for your consideration.

Paul Kubik, Pender Island

cc: South Pender LTC