

**THE HONOURABLE ROBERT C. MCLEOD
MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND
NATURAL RESOURCES**

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Sustainable Livelihoods Action Plan

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories made a mandate commitment to finalize a strategic plan to enhance existing programming and build new partnership initiatives to support healthy and sustainable traditional lifestyles, and to develop country food programming to promote the consumption of wild foods.

This month, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources released its Sustainable Livelihoods Action Plan, a strategic document that will meet those mandate commitments by helping to provide better support to Northwest Territories communities in the overall development and implementation of on-the-land programming.

Mr. Speaker, this government understands the importance of sustainable country foods systems, traditional economies and being on the land, as well as the challenges communities face and the changes they see socially, culturally, economically and environmentally.

This government supports the continuation of a prosperous, diverse and sustainable traditional economy that helps communities invest in their renewable resources and traditional harvesting practices, and that increases cultural programming and education alongside food security.

The Sustainable Livelihoods Action Plan outlines a number of actions that will help us achieve a vision where all NWT residents have opportunities to connect with the land in ways that are meaningful to them.

These actions focus on removing barriers to going out on the land, building land-based skills and knowledge, supporting community harvesting programs, promoting intergenerational learning between youth and Elders, and improving the promotion of existing programs and opportunities.

The Action Plan was developed through extensive public engagement, including gatherings in 18 NWT communities, regional meetings, online surveys, a youth photo and writing contest, an advisory committee meeting, and direct outreach to individuals and organizations.

The plan reflects the needs identified by Northerners and helps to guide our way forward as a government in establishing priorities for programs, services, capacity and funding.

Mr. Speaker, Environment and Natural Resources is committed to supporting the continuation of culture and traditions in the NWT. The Sustainable Livelihoods Action Plan helps us to promote and support the sustainable use and development of natural resources in the NWT, and to protect, conserve and enhance our environment for the social and economic benefits of all residents.

The Department looks forward to working closely with our many partners to ensure successful implementation of this Action Plan.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.