

# FREE, PRIOR, AND INFORMED CONSENT (FPIC) RESEARCH MEETING REPORT

Report prepared by the Indigenous Rights and Resource Governance Research Group at Laurier University

## FPIC Research Meeting October 27-28, 2016

A research meeting, “*Consultation and consent: Intercultural perspectives in resource governance*”, was hosted by Matawa First Nations Management in Thunder Bay, Ontario over several days in late October. This event was a key milestone in the research project led by Dr. Terry Mitchell at Laurier University funded by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) grant. The project is examining the experiences of consultation and processes of free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) in resource development across four regions: northern Ontario, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Chile.

Over 30 people participated in the meeting, including members from several of the Matawa First Nations communities, Matawa First Nations Management, students and researchers. Former Grand Chief Harvey Yesno from Eabametoong First Nation welcomed guests with a traditional opening. Special guest speakers spoke about their experiences of FPIC in their territories, including: Chief Cornelius Wabasse and Roy Spence from Webequie First Nation, David Paul Achneepineskum (CEO Matawa First Nations Management), Chief Sergio Campusano Vilches and Rubén Campusano representing the Diaguita peoples in Chile, Tim Heron (Métis Nation) and Leon Andrew (Sahtu Secretariat) from the Northwest Territories, human rights lawyer José Aylwin from Chile, and Indigenous leader Hugo Arpassi Carpio from Peru (via Skype).



Photo taken by Matawa First Nations Management

We were honoured that the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNSRIP), Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, accepted our invitation to the meeting. The UNSRRIP was welcomed with a dinner and greetings from Chief Peter Collins from Fort William First Nation and Elder Gerry Martin. The Special Rapporteur then gave a public talk at Lakehead University, “*Free, Prior, and Informed Consent: A local and global issue*”, which was attended by nearly 300 people, in which she shared about the challenges and opportunities in implementing free, prior, and informed consent.

To watch the Special Rapporteur’s talk, please visit: <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/ai/news-events/events/details/node/39212>

The following day the Special Rapporteur met privately with the Indigenous community members and leaders who attended the meeting at Matawa First Nations Management to dialogue about their experiences of consultation and consent in resource development on their lands and territories.

The meeting concluded with a workshop on FPIC which promoted reflection on what the terms “free”, “prior”, “informed”, and “consent” mean in each of the participant’s territories, advancing our understanding of how to put the right to FPIC into action.



United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, speaks about challenges and opportunities of FPIC