

5-YEAR

Strategic Plan

2024-2029



Canadian
Water
Network
Igniting interest.
Inspiring action.



Grand River, Cambridge, Ontario

Land Acknowledgement

Canadian Water Network (CWN) respectfully recognizes and acknowledges the deep connection that First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples across Canada have with the land that all Canadians call home. We also honour and recognize the significance of the treaties that established the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and settlers on this land.

Our office is located in Waterloo, Ontario, on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee Peoples. More specifically, our office is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land granted to the Six Nations that extends six miles on each side of the Grand River.

We are grateful for the privilege to work and live on this land.

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About CWN



What we do

Canadian Water Network (CWN) is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that fosters cross-sector collaboration to address water challenges and opportunities that affect our communities, health and climate. We do this by bringing together leaders from different fields and sectors to learn from each other, share knowledge and work together to make a difference.



Our vision

We envision a Canada where our vital water resources are respected and protected, ensuring healthy, equitable and resilient water management for all.



Our mission

CWN inspires and empowers Canadians to lead the way in finding water solutions to protect our health, create vibrant and resilient communities, and respect our natural environment.



Our values

CWN is committed to:

- Creating a safe and respectful space for sharing and learning.
- Fostering collaboration.
- Embracing equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Supporting reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

The CWN approach

Solving complex water issues takes a collective effort from diverse sectors and disciplines. Here's how we do it:



Understand the (eco)system

We start by getting to know the key players – the leaders, decision-makers, experts and end-users.



Identify needs

We listen and learn to pinpoint what's needed.



Build and support networks

With insights from key players, we connect the right people and organizations.



Share knowledge

We host forums for learning and discussion. These forums bring in a range of expertise, including scientific, community and Indigenous perspectives.



Build consensus and facilitate collaboration

We work with leaders and partners to arrive at a shared understanding of what it will take to address water challenges. We also collaborate on sustainable solutions.



Accelerate action

Our ultimate goal is to empower decision-makers to act swiftly and effectively on water-related issues.

Our six corporate objectives for 2024-2029

Over the next five years, we have ambitious plans to expand the scope of CWN's work, deepen collaboration with our members and program participants, and stand up projects in three program areas. We also have plans to diversify our revenue sources, as well as clearly articulate and implement our first Indigenous Reconciliation Plan.



Scarborough, Ontario

Six corporate goals are to:

1 Establish and support national networks for strategic decision-making in the following areas: delivery of safe, integrated drinking water, wastewater and stormwater services; public health; and climate adaptation and mitigation.

2 Share knowledge and build capacity in the following areas: delivery of safe, integrated drinking water, wastewater and stormwater services; climate adaptation and mitigation; protection of human health from water-related risks.

3 Promote consensus and collaboration in addressing complex water challenges.

4 Develop and implement an Indigenous Reconciliation Plan in consultation with Indigenous-led organizations, strategic partners and program participants.

5 Support the creation of the Canadian Water Network Foundation, a registered charity, and serve as its administrative support and project delivery arm.

6 Grow programs, projects and staff in all program areas based on a diversified, sustainable funding model.

PROGRAM AREAS

CWN operates in three intersecting program areas:

1. Water and communities.
2. Water and climate.
3. Water and health.

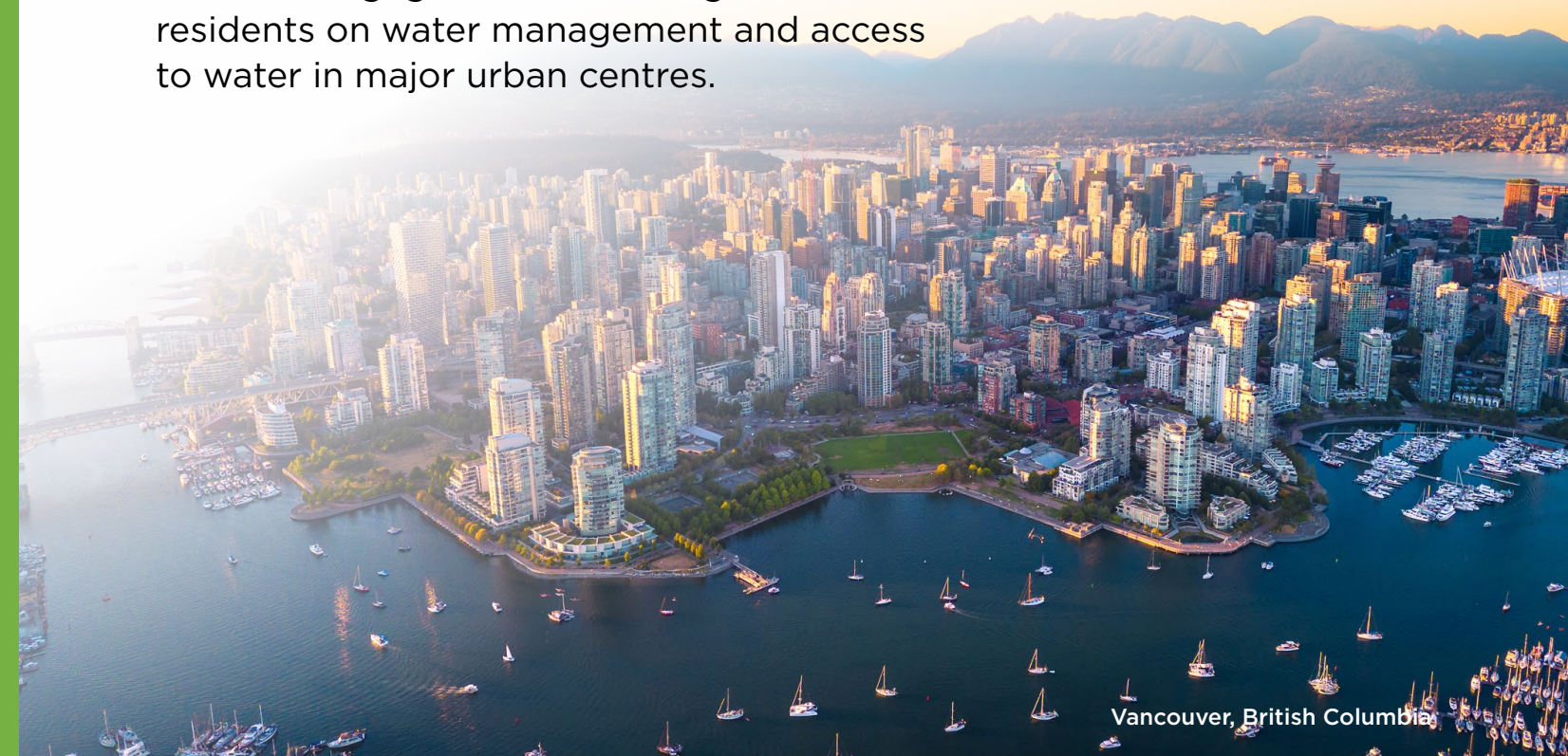
Engagement with Indigenous-led organizations and representatives will be considered in activities across all three program areas. Additionally, strategic projects and programs will complement these program areas.

Water and communities

Our water and communities program helps leaders make more informed decisions about providing safe drinking water, wastewater and stormwater services. We do this through the lens of good governance, innovation and continuous improvement.

Over the next five years, we plan to:

- Promote engagement and excellence in water servicing through the Canadian Municipal Water Consortium.
- Support collaborative community water management initiatives.
- Work with relevant players, including municipal water utilities and urban planners, to reduce barriers and costs related to water infrastructure for new housing.
- Promote engagement with Indigenous residents on water management and access to water in major urban centres.



Water and climate

Our water and climate program helps communities and water-reliant economic sectors find solutions that effectively increase climate resilience and minimize greenhouse gas emissions.

Here's what we plan to do over the next five years:

- Work with municipal utilities and other relevant players so communities can take faster action to address the water-related effects of climate change.
- Help people understand how climate change affects water and promote ways to adapt to climate change in water-dependent economic sectors, beginning with agriculture.
- Work with municipal utilities, technology companies and others to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions from water services, including in Indigenous communities.



Water and health

Our water and health program aims to protect our health from water-related risks and promote health through proactive solutions.

Over the next five years, we plan to:

- Increase understanding of wastewater surveillance for tracking infectious diseases and other harmful agents.
- Enhance knowledge of new and evolving methods for tracking and reporting pathogens and chemicals in water.
- With advances in the detection of contaminants in water, improve our understanding of the implications for our health and how to mitigate our exposure.





A woman performing a Fancy Shawl Dance along the river in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Engagement and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples

Engagement and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and organizations will be considered in each of our program areas. They will also be reflected in CWN's governance structure, communications and external engagement.

Here's what we plan to do over the next five years:

- Consult with Indigenous-led organizations, strategic partners and program participants on ways and approaches to integrate Indigenous content, knowledge and perspectives into CWN's activities.
- Develop and publicly post an Indigenous Reconciliation Plan.
- Use the Indigenous Reconciliation Plan to guide how CWN integrates Indigenous perspectives into its governance and program areas.

Strategic initiatives

CWN will manage or contribute to strategic initiatives that include:

Hosting the Blue Cities conference for the water sector and allies from other sectors.

Collaborating with international networks and organizations, like the Global Water Research Coalition.

Supporting young professionals in the water sector.

Undertaking fee-for-service projects.

Upon the creation of the Canadian Water Network Foundation, serving as its administrative support and project delivery arm under contract.

Blue Cities

Blue Cities is a focal point for dialogue and collaboration amongst decision-makers in local government, the private sector, researchers, students, knowledge/technology providers, and various government agencies.



2024-2029 Strategic plan at-a-glance



Vision

A Canada where our vital water resources are respected and protected, ensuring healthy, equitable and resilient water management for all.



Mission

Inspire and empower Canadians to lead the way in finding water solutions to protect our health, create vibrant and resilient communities, and respect our natural environment.



Values

1. Create a safe and respectful space for sharing and learning.
2. Foster collaboration.
3. Embrace equity, diversity and inclusion.
4. Support reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.



Approach

1. Understand the (eco)system.
2. Identify needs.
3. Build and support networks.
4. Share knowledge.
5. Build consensus and facilitate collaboration.
6. Accelerate action.

Three program areas



WATER AND COMMUNITIES

- Promote engagement and excellence in water servicing.
- Support collaborative community water management initiatives.
- Reduce barriers associated with building water infrastructure for housing.



WATER AND CLIMATE

- Help communities take faster action to address water-related challenges posed by climate change.
- Help people understand how climate change affects us. Promote ways to adapt in water-dependent economic sectors, beginning with agriculture.
- Work with partners to achieve zero greenhouse gas emissions from water services.



WATER AND HEALTH

- Increase understanding of wastewater surveillance for tracking infectious diseases and other harmful agents.
- Enhance knowledge of new and evolving methods for tracking and reporting pathogens and chemicals in water.
- With advances in the detection of contaminants in water, improve our understanding of the implications for our health and how to mitigate our exposure.

ENGAGEMENT AND RECONCILIATION WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Engagement and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and organizations will be considered in each of our program areas. They will also be reflected in CWN's governance structure, communications and external engagement.





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Inspiring action.

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