

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Report Shares Ancestral Knowledge on Importance of Biodiversity**

(Vancouver, Canada, January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010) Today, Assembly of First Nations' National Chief Shawn Atleo, Chief Councillor Marilyn Slett of the Heiltsuk Nation, Chief Bill Cranmer of the 'Namgis Nation and Frank "Athalis" Brown were present for the release of *Staying the Course, Staying Alive, Coastal First Nations Fundamental Truths: Biodiversity, Stewardship and Sustainability*, a report that gives voice to ancestral knowledge of B.C. Coastal First Nations and serves as a formal contribution to the United Nation's proclamation of 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity.

"I believe this invaluable report will contribute to the critical dialogue on biodiversity conservation, stewardship and sustainability here in British Columbia and throughout Canada," said Frank "Athalis" Brown, report co-author. "The seven truths can serve as a moral compass as we all move forward in these uncertain times of climate change and unprecedented loss of biodiversity."

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's message stated: "To raise awareness of the impending crisis and to spur the world to act, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity... In this International Year, we must counter the perception that people are disconnected from our natural environment."

Coastal First Nations of B.C. are responding to this call to action through sharing the following ancestral teaching that has sustained our people for over 10,000 years:

**Fundamental Truth 1: Creation**

We the coastal first peoples have been in our respective territories (homelands) since the beginning of time.

**Fundamental Truth 2: Connection to Nature**

We are all one and our lives are interconnected.

**Fundamental Truth 3: Respect**

All life has equal value. We acknowledge and respect that all plants and animals have a life force.

**Fundamental Truth 4: Knowledge**

Our traditional knowledge of sustainable resource use and management is reflected in our intimate relationship with nature and its predictable seasonal cycles and indicators of renewal of life and subsistence.

**Fundamental Truth 5: Stewardship**

We are stewards of the land and sea from which we live, knowing that our health as a people and our society is intricately tied to the health of the land and waters.

**Fundamental Truth 6: Sharing**

We have a responsibility to share and support to provide strength and make others stronger in order for our world to survive.

**Fundamental Truth 7: Adapting to Change**

Environmental, demographic, socio-political and cultural changes have occurred since the creator placed us in our homelands and we have continuously adapted to and survived these changes.

In the foreword of the report, AFN National Chief Atleo wrote, "I encourage serious reflection on the seven truths and trust they will stimulate constructive dialogue that supports both greater inter-cultural understanding and actions promoting conservation of biodiversity and other natural values."

Report available at: [www.biodiversitybc.org](http://www.biodiversitybc.org)

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