

January 18, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to affirm the IISAAK OLAM Foundation's (IOF) support for the continued designation of the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region, established in 2000. IOF is one of Canada's leading Indigenous Non-Governmental Organizations. We share knowledge and build capacity for Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs). Our programs and collaborations support Indigenous leadership in the conservation of biological and cultural diversity, the development of sustainable and resilient communities, reconciliation between Indigenous and newcomer societies, and innovative solutions for (re)connecting people with their environment. We are located on Vancouver Island and host programs and workshops within the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region.

Like IPCAs and unlike traditional parks and protected areas, UNESCO biosphere reserves believe in a model of community-led conservation and sustainable development that sees humans as part of their environment. As such, we lead our organizations with shared values. The Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region has been a leader in Canada, taking on the role of Chairing the Canadian Biosphere Reserves Association and demonstrating that there is a way for biosphere reserves to support shared and equal governance with Indigenous Nations. IOF President Eli Enns is a past member of the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region's board of directors and a citizen of Tla-o-qui-aht Nation, one of the host Nations of the biosphere reserve. He is a strong supporter of the biosphere reserve's role in serving the region's local economy and in building social capital between sectors and cultures.

Over the past decade, Eli and IOF have worked with the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region to advance the objectives of UNESCO's Biosphere Reserve program. We are working together to achieve the objectives of sustainable development, biodiversity conservation and reconciliation, through education, research and collaboration such as:

- Supporting Indigenous- and community-led visions for the region;
- Developing programs and events that support cross-cultural understanding and advance reconciliation;
- Establishing alliances and partnerships to strengthen the development of citizens, communities, and ecosystems as well as stewardship of ecosystem services;
- Participating in networks to enhance communication and coordination among organizations with shared values;
- Contributing to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

We are proud to support the continued Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere designation, and look forward to participating in the next ten years of activities in our region.

Sincerely,



Monica Shore, Executive Director  
IISAAK OLAM Foundation  
monica@iisaakolam.ca  
250-802-7193