

Gitxsan Chiefs Office Proposal

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Written by:

Cameron Stevens

Gitxsan Forester

GITXSAN CLIMATE EXCHANGE

Introduction.

The global climate is a huge societal concern; as it has an enormous effect on the surroundings in which we live. The factors that have contributed to the climate change are the rapid release of greenhouse gases. These greenhouse gases are released through the burning of fossil fuels and deforestation, where CO₂ is predominantly released into the atmosphere; therefore, contributing to warming of the earth.

One idea of mitigating the climate change phenomenon is to establish a method of carbon trading; where carbon producers would buy the carbon credits from governments or organization such as the Gitxsan that have accumulated carbon credits through what is known as carbon sequestration. The carbon producers would limit their production based on the amount of carbon credit they have purchased; therefore, the carbon producers would be capped on what they would be able to emit. As a result, the producers would seek new innovative technologies that would ultimately reduce carbon emissions which in turn is beneficial to the environment.

This is not a new idea it was first brought forward in 1995, the United Nation prepared a paper on reducing greenhouse gases that are emitted into the atmosphere, which contributes to the warming of the climate. The paper was agreed to by Canada to reduce the greenhouse emission by 2008 with methods such as reforestation, afforestation and forest management. The respective methods are under Article 3.3 and 3.4 of the Kyoto Protocol.

Article 3.3 of the Kyoto Protocol specifies that “The net changes in greenhouse gas emissions by sources and removals by sinks resulting from direct human-induced land-use change and forestry activities, limited to afforestation, reforestation and deforestation since 1990, measured as verifiable changes in carbon stocks in each commitment period, shall be used to meet the commitments under this Article of each Party included in Annex B. The greenhouse gas emissions by sources and removals by sinks associated with those activities shall be reported in a transparent and verifiable manner and reviewed in accordance with Articles 7 and 8.”

Article 3.4 of Kyoto Protocol specifies that “Forest Management is a system of practices for stewardship and use of forest land aimed at fulfilling relevant ecological (including biological diversity), economic and social functions of the forest in a sustainable manner.”

The public debate on managing the risk of climate change is heating up and it is important for the Gitxsan to be involved with the mitigation process. The debate between environment and development is often much more immediate and urgent to the Gitxsan. The Carbon Offset module is an exciting opportunity to start a Gitxsan Climate Exchange Project.

Mitigating climate change is about reducing carbon dioxide emissions globally by being well informed of the issue and using modern technology to lessen the release of green house gases. With most carbon trading systems today, the offer of offsets and sequestration projects there is no real strength to the audit and feed back process. This exchange will address these two concerns by ensuring that projects funded are operating as planned and the Exchange will inform our clients on their effectiveness.

The Gitxsan Climate Exchange is a “made in Canada” system but the results will be positive, globally. The Gitxsan are interested in developing biomass and other renewable energy projects. This “green” renewable energy will be used to generate electricity and the waste heat used to grow food for our peoples or to attract other industries, such as wood processing.

Based on the success of this Carbon Exchange model other First Nations in the area will be offered the opportunity to be included with Carbon Exchange. The other First Nations such as the Gitanyow and Wet’suwet’en have been awarded Non-replaceable Forest Licenses (NRFL) in their territories. There are two options, harvest or maintain these old growth forests as carbon sequestration areas. We believe that we can do both, conserve the biodiversity through our forest management policies, traditional knowledge and science and also harvest decadent areas for wood processing and providing feedstock to our power generators.

Goals:

1. To assist in informing the public debate on managing the risk of global climate change from a hereditary system perspective utilizing traditional knowledge and sciences.
2. To develop carbon offset project opportunities with First Nations communities.
3. To provide the option of a First Nation institution that will facilitate the transaction of carbon credits with ethical business and transparency practices.
4. To build skills and capacity within First Nations to be effective and efficient in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions.

Process

- Create an institution that encompasses the Wet'suw't'en, Gitksan, Gitanyow and Tsimshian nations.
- Create emission reduction targets and baselines.
- Develop a Carbon Financial Instrument Contract.
- Sell membership to public and non public companies.
- Develop auditors and exchange personnel's capacities.
- Develop institution.
- Approach both governments for their share of carbon credit.
- Develop a process where revenues are available for carbon offset projects within the Northwest.
- Ensure the success the cap and trade emission trading system from an environmental and economic point of view.