

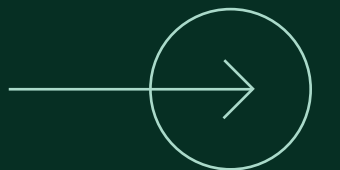
CANADA<sup>\*</sup>



# BUSINESS LEGACY & EVENTS IMPACT STUDY

INSIGHTS REPORT – YEAR TWO

Published May 2025





# TABLE

# OF

1

## Executive Summary

**Pg. 05** Executive Summary

2

## Introduction

**Pg. 06** What is the Legacy & Impact Study?

**Pg. 07** Why is Legacy Important?

**Pg. 08** Events Studied

3

## Latest Findings

**Pg. 09** Latest Findings

4

## Legacy Drivers

**Pg. 11** Legacy Drivers

**Pg. 12** Legacy Drivers—Actionable

5

## Success Factors

**Pg. 15** Pre-Event Activities

**Pg. 16** DMO Involvement

**Pg. 17** Government Participation

**Pg. 18** External Collaboration

6

## Profound Outcomes

**Pg. 20** How do we Measure Outcomes?

**Pg. 21** Social Outcomes

**Pg. 22** Intellectual Outcomes

**Pg. 23** Policy Outcomes

**Pg. 24** Human Outcomes

**Pg. 25** Financial Outcomes

**Pg. 26** Cultural Outcomes

**Pg. 27** Spotlight on Sectoral Transformation

**Pg. 28** Sectoral Transformation Outcomes

**Pg. 29** Sectoral Transformation Outcomes

Cover Image  
Edmonton, Alberta

# CONTENTS



# TABLE

# OF

7

## Intentional Planning

**Pg. 31** The Power of  
Legacy Planning

**Pg. 32** Consequences of  
Failing to Plan

**Pg. 34** Vital Elements that  
Work Together

8

## What's Next?

**Pg. 36** Adapting Our  
Approach

**Pg. 37** Results to Come

9

## Appendix: Updated Case Studies

**Pg. 40** Cities IPCC  
Cities & Climate  
Change Science  
Conference

**Pg. 43** Insects to Feed the  
World Conference

10

## Appendix: New Case Studies

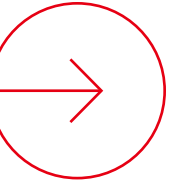
**Pg. 47** International  
Marine Protected  
Areas Congress

**Pg. 49** UN Biodiversity  
Conference

**Pg. 52** International  
Conference on  
Isotopes

# CONTENTS





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Business events can unleash powerful ripple effects long after they end, inspiring transformative collaborations, economic development, talent attraction and innovation.**

At Destination Canada, we see this potential realized every day, which is why I am thrilled to share the latest findings of our Legacy & Impact Study with you.

Building on last year's groundbreaking research, Year Two analyzed five new case studies and followed up on seven from Year One, in collaboration with our research partners #MEET4IMPACT and GainingEdge. This expanded scope has allowed us to confirm and strengthen findings from Year One, while uncovering new insights that were not previously possible.

The results confirm that events designed with purpose can create lasting legacies that extend far beyond financial benefits. These events have driven significant investments, shaped policy changes, fostered strategic partnerships, and inspired far-reaching impacts long after attendees returned home.

Central to these successes is intentional planning.

On the following pages, you'll discover the vital elements every meeting needs to actively drive these lasting legacies, to support growth, resilience and competitive advantage.

These include nine legacy drivers to help you plan with purpose, four success factors to amplify impact, the profound potential legacies of business events and the consequences of neglecting these elements.

By sharing these insights, we hope to offer a roadmap for decision makers and meeting planners—in Canada and around the world—to strategically design events that create waves of positive change that endure for years to come.

**Virginie De Visscher**  
Executive Director, Business Events  
Destination Canada



“ The results confirm that events designed with purpose can create lasting legacies that extend far beyond financial benefits.

”



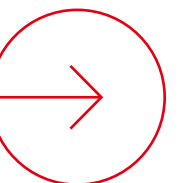
# INTRODUCTION

## WHAT IS THE LEGACY & IMPACT STUDY?

Between 2022 and 2025, Destination Canada's groundbreaking Legacy & Impact Study is tracking the long-term benefits of business events held in Canada.

Building on our industry's wealth of successful events, it aims to uncover concrete proof of the economic, social and environmental impacts resulting from these events.

The study is being conducted by #MEET4IMPACT and GainingEdge, two leading organizations and recognized experts in the field of event impact.





# WHY IS LEGACY IMPORTANT?

**Destination Canada is committed to ensuring meetings hosted in Canada and around the world leave a positive handprint, rather than a negative footprint. We want to lessen the environmental footprint of events, while boosting their sociocultural and economic benefits.**

While international competition to attract business events continues to grow, many associations are also increasingly seeking to build deeper connections and longer, more powerful meeting legacies for the benefit of the association, the communities where they meet and the overall destination.

For destinations, there is growing recognition that the impacts of business events extend beyond their immediate economic effect, providing lasting value to the local population, communities and sectors.



St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

## WHAT IS LEGACY?

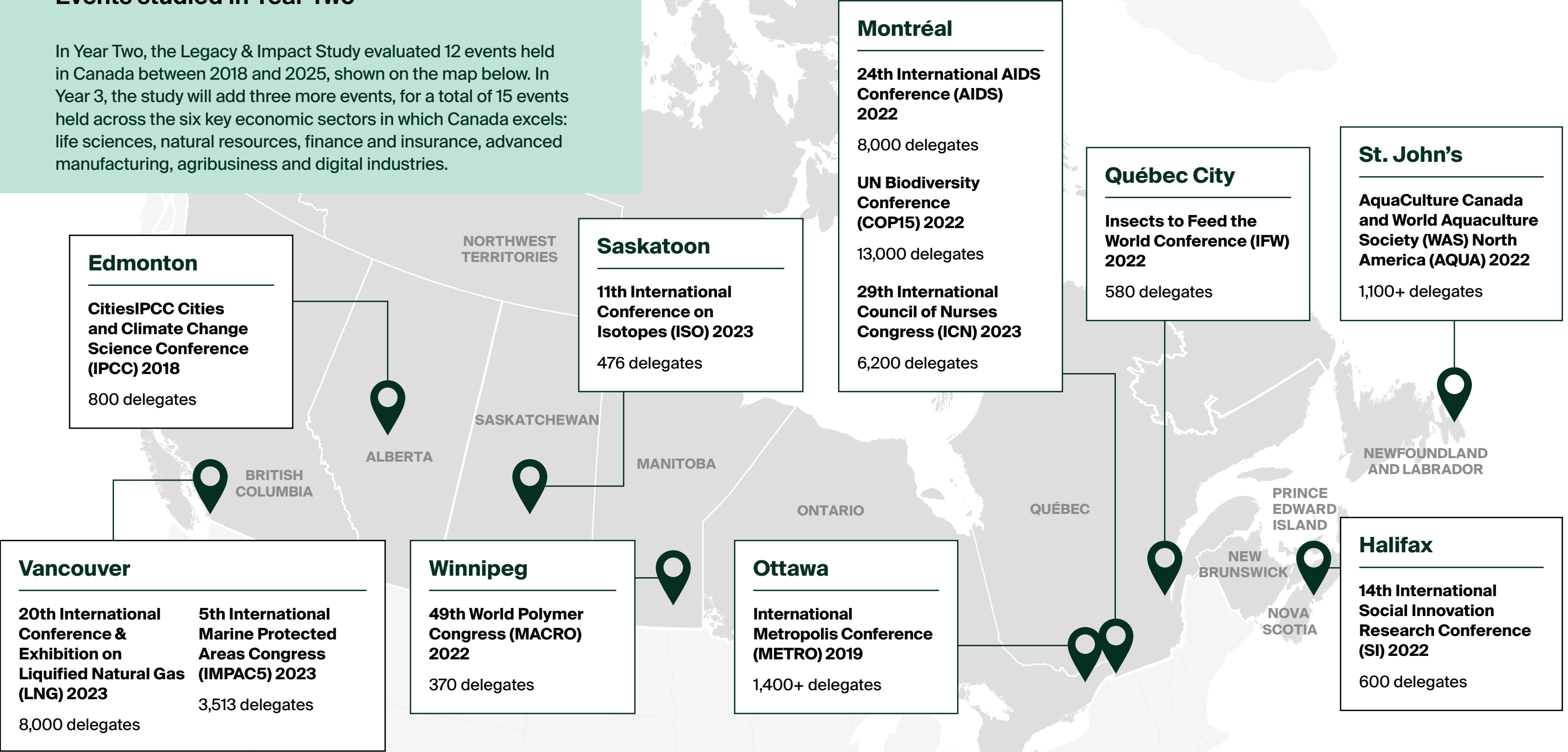
**Academically, legacy is defined as all planned and unplanned, positive and negative, tangible and intangible outcomes created by an event that remain past the conclusion of the event.**

In this study, we will use the term “legacy” to describe the long-term, intentional and positive effects that a meeting aims to create, which will yield impacts for different stakeholders.

# EVENTS STUDIED

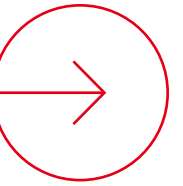
## Events studied in Year Two

In Year Two, the Legacy & Impact Study evaluated 12 events held in Canada between 2018 and 2025, shown on the map below. In Year 3, the study will add three more events, for a total of 15 events held across the six key economic sectors in which Canada excels: life sciences, natural resources, finance and insurance, advanced manufacturing, agribusiness and digital industries.



# LATEST

3



Business events decision makers can actively create powerful legacies by harnessing four vital elements:



**Legacy Drivers**



**Success Factors**



**Profound Outcomes**



**Intentional Planning**

# FINDINGS



# LEGACY

Our research identified nine legacy drivers that enable business events to create meaningful change:



## **Legacy Drivers within the Event Program**

1. Knowledge Transfer
2. Capacity Building
3. Sector Innovation
4. Legacy Frameworks



## **Legacy Drivers as Embedded in Event Design**

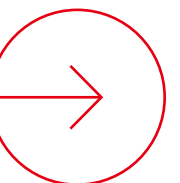
5. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Initiatives
6. Showcasing Local Expertise
7. Sustainable Practices



## **Legacy Drivers Through External Activities**

8. Community Engagement
9. Advocacy Activities

# DRIVERS





# LEGACY DRIVERS

**Legacy drivers are specific activities that can be intentionally designed for a dual purpose: achieving immediate impact during the event, as well as establishing the conditions for long-term benefits that align with the conference's overarching objectives.**

The analysis shows these drivers produce real-world outcomes, from influencing international policies to boosting local business growth. They demonstrate how strategic event planning can accelerate economic development, drive policy reform, spark innovation and strengthen entire industries.

For event organizers, these legacy drivers provide a clear roadmap.

By intentionally incorporating these approaches, planners can move beyond temporary gatherings to create events with enduring influence. The outcome will be events that continue creating value long after they conclude, and they have a higher chance of leaving communities more connected, sectors more competitive, and the global business landscape more resilient.



# LEGACY DRIVERS – ACTIONABLE

Legacy Driver	Action	Potential Impact	Case Study Example
1. Knowledge Transfer	Host public exhibitions, free workshops and field trips that support the transfer of knowledge between different groups within the field, and outside the immediate field.	Raises public awareness and promotes the dissemination of innovative solutions and strategies for local implementation.	The Insects to Feed the World Conference (IFW) in 2022 hosted a public event to educate the general public of the benefits of insects as a sustainable food source and promote local expertise.
2. Capacity Building	Offer training, skill-building and leadership development opportunities.	Fosters a practical environment which enables attendees to translate learning into real-world action, and equips professionals with the tools to accelerate sector growth and drive innovation.	At the 49th World Polymer Congress (MACRO) 2022 in Winnipeg, a dedicated polymer education session highlighted innovative approaches to teaching polymer research to Canadian graduate students, strengthening research capacity and highlighting national expertise to an international audience.
3. Sector Innovations	Highlight local innovations, knowledge and best practices through exhibitions, sessions and technical tours.	Positions host regions as global leaders, attracts talent and boosts international profiles and funding.	At the 11th International Conference on Isotopes (ISO) 2023, the Leaders Summit showcased Saskatoon’s reputation as a world industry leader in isotope research.
4. Legacy Frameworks	Develop collaboratively and adopt global strategies and frameworks.	Provides actionable frameworks for global challenges, integrates local leadership and sets benchmarks for future events in related sectors.	The Edmonton Declaration, created as part of the CitiesIPCC Cities and Climate Change Science Conference (IPCC) 2018, has been endorsed by more than 4,500 municipalities.
5. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Initiatives	Address systemic diversity issues and incorporate the knowledge and leadership of equity-seeking communities.	Promotes inclusivity, enriches discussions and ensures diversity of knowledge informs policy outcomes.	The UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) 2022, the CitiesIPCC Cities and Climate Change Science Conference (IPCC) 2018 and the 5th International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC5) 2023 each actively promoted youth and Indigenous participation in global processes. This successfully amplified underrepresented voices and paved the way for sustained inclusion of youth and Indigenous leadership in shaping international environmental decisions.

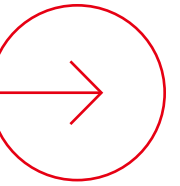


# LEGACY DRIVERS – ACTIONABLE (CONTINUED)

Legacy Driver	Action	Potential Impact	Case Study Example
6. Showcasing Local Expertise	Encourage the use of regional suppliers and local businesses, and highlight local business culture.	Enhances the destination’s appeal, boosts regional economies by creating jobs and strengthening local supply chains.	The local hospitality showcase at the AquaCulture Canada and World Aquaculture Society (WAS) North America (AQUA) 2022 event resulted in more than half of delegates extending their stay.
7. Sustainable Practices	Select vendors with sustainability certifications and implement sustainable practices from the outset.	Establishes models for future events and promotes environmentally conscious practices.	A sustainable event management plan was implemented and certified for the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) 2022, which was subsequently presented as good practice for future events hosted by the federal government.
8. Community Engagement	Promote local success stories and foster partnerships with a wide array of organizations linked to the field.	Increases visibility of local organizations, encourages collaboration and sparks new interactions enabling future joint efforts across sectors.	At the 24th International AIDS Conference (AIDS) 2022, legacy initiatives drove pre-event collaboration between clinicians, researchers, patients, community organizations, government, Pride Montréal and local artists. This strengthened community health initiatives, enhancing support for marginalized groups and fostering more equitable future engagement.
9. Advocacy Activities	Engage with policy makers and carry out strategic representation initiatives.	Elevates voice, visibility and influence of the sector in policy arenas.	Pre-event advocacy activities for the 5th International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC5) 2023 culminated in the Leadership Forum, which facilitated discussions amongst leaders to synergize efforts to protect oceans.

# SUCCESS

5



Year Two findings reinforce the importance of the four key success factors established in Year One. When leveraged effectively, these strategies generate meaningful intellectual, policy and social impacts, ensuring events deliver both immediate and long-term value.



**Pre-Event  
Activities**



**Government  
Participation**



**Destination  
Marketing  
Organization  
(DMO) Involvement**



**External  
Collaboration**

# FACTORS





# PRE-EVENT ACTIVITIES

Activities such as awareness campaigns, cross-sectoral advisory committees, and pre-conference workshops set the stage for powerful events.

Impacts: Strengthened communities of practice, formal network development and increased policy influence.



Saskatoon, Saskatchewan



## Success Story

### UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) 2022

Ahead of COP15, local leaders launched the Tiohtià:ke/Montréal Pledge, calling on cities worldwide to commit to 15 specific actions to continue and accelerate their efforts towards protecting biodiversity and ecosystems. The pledge created a one-stop shop for governments worldwide to share and track their progress towards the commitments and upholding the Global Biodiversity Framework agreed at COP15. Because of this strong action from the city, Tiohtià:ke/Montréal is now part of the committee for Canada's 2030 Nature Strategy.





# DMO INVOLVEMENT

Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) play a pivotal role in connecting event organizers with local ecosystems and governments, as well as optimizing the presence of visitors/attendees in terms of increasing time spent in the destination and the level of engagement with the destination.

Impacts: Enhanced cultural connectivity, increased public engagement and stronger policy influence.

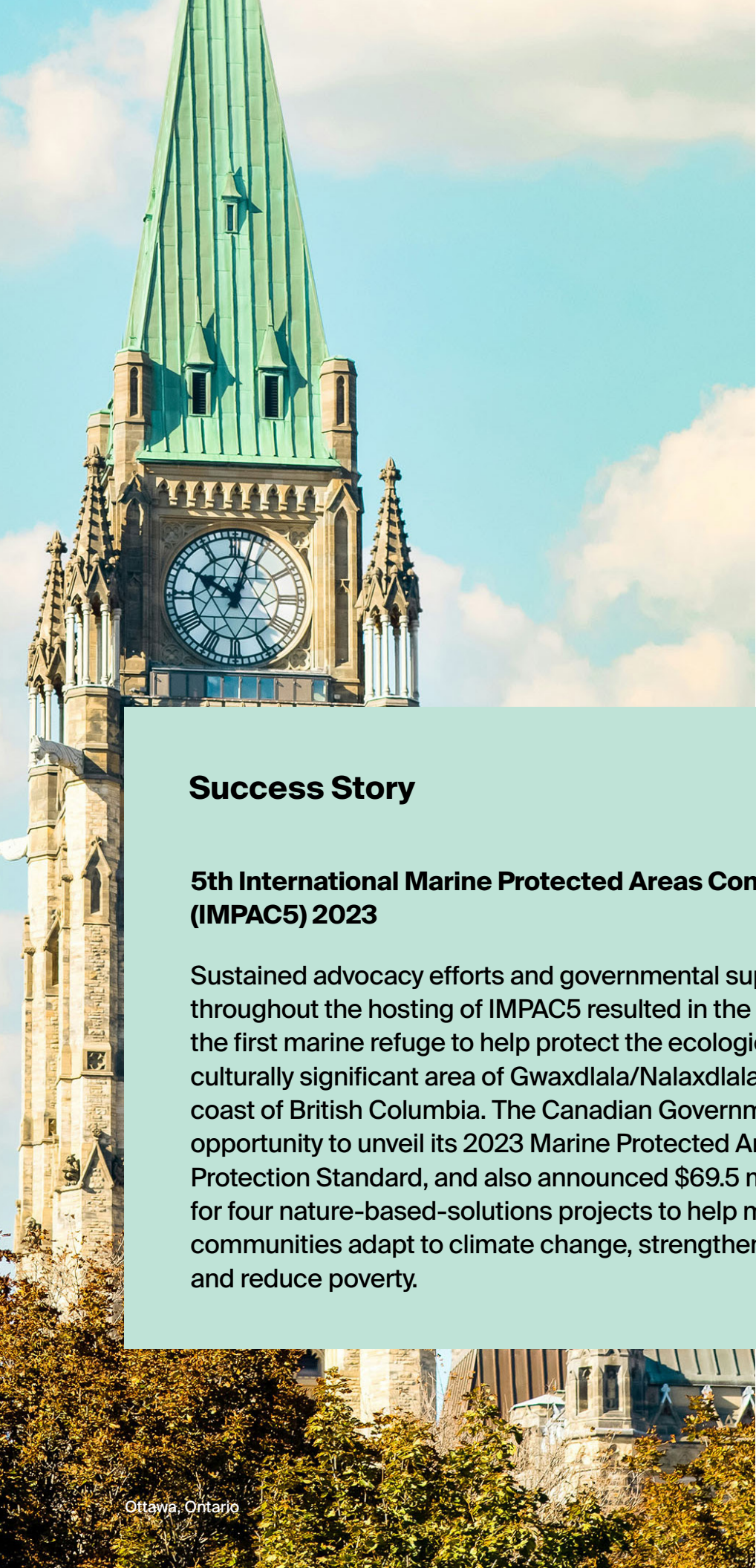


## Success Story

### 24th International AIDS Conference (AIDS) 2022

Tourisme Montréal and the Palais des Congrès de Montréal supported the International AIDS Society (IAS) and the local organizing committee in the organization of AIDS 2022. They piloted a local social impact strategy to increase the potential for positive event outcomes. They were key in convening a local impact taskforce to support the pre-event collaborations that facilitated a wide array of community-led awareness efforts surrounding the official event.





## Success Story

### 5th International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC5) 2023

Sustained advocacy efforts and governmental support throughout the hosting of IMPAC5 resulted in the creation of the first marine refuge to help protect the ecologically and culturally significant area of Gwaxdlala/Nalaxdlala on the coast of British Columbia. The Canadian Government took the opportunity to unveil its 2023 Marine Protected Area (MPA) Protection Standard, and also announced \$69.5 million in funding for four nature-based-solutions projects to help marginalized communities adapt to climate change, strengthen biodiversity and reduce poverty.



# GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION

**Events with active government involvement yield higher social and policy impacts, such as sector recognition and policy influence.**

Impacts: Formal network development, strengthened communities of practice and incorporation of diverse perspectives.



## Success Story

### CitiesIPCC Cities and Climate Change Science Conference (IPCC) 2018

The City of Edmonton demonstrated strong cross-sector collaboration in delivering the CitiesIPCC Cities and Climate Change Science Conference, working with a diverse range of partners to amplify the event's impact. It partnered with Alberta Ecotrust to establish the CitiesIPCC Legacy Research Grant, providing \$500,000 to climate adaptation and mitigation research.

Edmonton also mobilized global networks through the Change for Climate Global Mayors Summit, engaging mayors, city networks and the scientific community in pre-conference dialogue. Co-development of the Edmonton Declaration further illustrated collaborative leadership, uniting more than 4,500 municipalities in a shared policy agenda. Local universities contributed through youth-driven initiatives, such as the Global Students' White Paper, and Indigenous-led panels, while cultural and public-facing activities—including art exhibitions and public zones—engaged residents and visitors alike.

These efforts, supported by the DMO, city departments and civil society groups, reflect Edmonton's coordinated, multi-actor approach to achieving lasting climate and policy outcomes.



# EXTERNAL COLLABORATION

**Partnerships with local organizations and stakeholders amplify the event's reach and impact, and help ensure inclusion of local voices, showcasing local expertise and Indigenous representation.**

Impacts: New ideas and theories are shared, increased business for local vendors, and strengthened, more diverse and representative networks.



# PROFOUND

Each business event is unique, but common themes emerge, offering valuable insights for decision makers aiming to maximize impact. In the events studied so far, the most prominent outcomes fell into six categories:



**Social  
Outcomes**



**Intellectual  
Outcomes**



**Policy  
Outcomes**



**Human  
Outcomes**

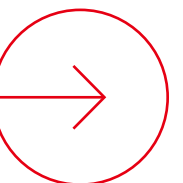


**Financial  
Outcomes**



**Cultural  
Outcomes**

# OUTCOMES



# HOW DO WE MEASURE OUTCOMES?

To standardize and categorize event outcomes, the Legacy & Impact Study uses the Impact Measurement Framework, developed by #MEET4IMPACT.

This framework is at the core of the study's analysis and processing of data. It is there to provide a structured, repeatable way to collect, categorize and communicate outcomes—turning isolated anecdotal information and success stories into meaningful insights at the macro level. It standardizes impact vocabulary across events and with it, events of different sizes, sectors and scopes can be compared, aggregated and understood through this common lens.

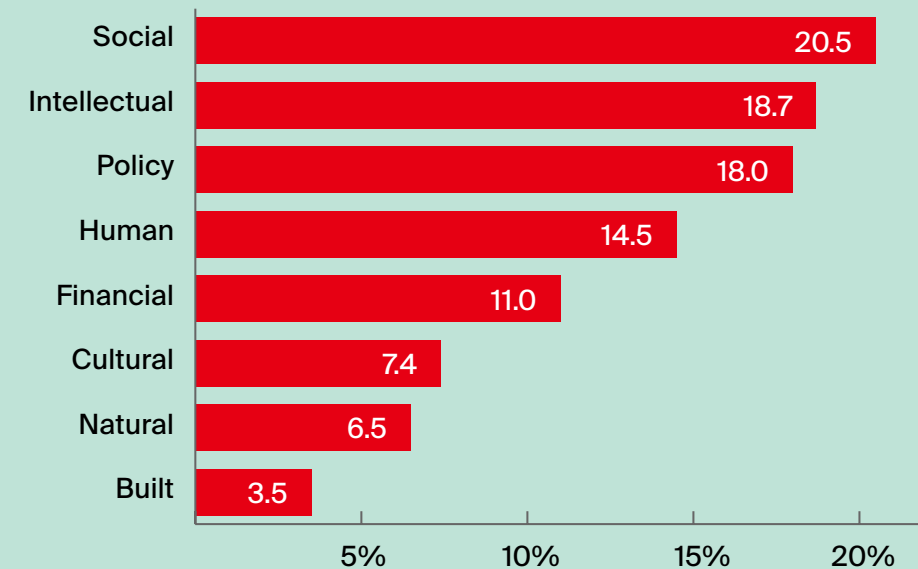
This framework organizes results into eight categories, providing a consistent language for reporting and analyzing the diverse impacts of business events.

## THE MOST COMMON OUTCOMES

**Social outcomes** are the most frequently cited category of outcome of the business events analyzed, followed by **intellectual** and **policy outcomes**.

This highlights the importance of building community connections, relationships and networks as a core value of business events, and enriches the more traditional discourse that direct economic impact is the most important benefit of business events for destinations.

While events operate within broader economic ecosystems and should be seen as contributing pieces in a much larger puzzle, these findings underscore the potential of single business events to create meaningful societal and sectoral outcomes.







# SOCIAL OUTCOMES

## Outcomes observed:

- Formal network development
- Strengthened community of practice
- International collaborations
- Diverse perspectives
- Awareness of social issues



Halifax, Nova Scotia



## Examples

1

### 20th International Conference & Exhibition on Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) 2023

The establishment of the Coalition for LNG Emission Abatement toward Net-zero (CLEAN) initiative was a key outcome of the LNG conference, focusing on collaborative efforts to achieve net-zero emissions in the LNG industry.

2

### UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) 2022

The creation of the Québec Civil Society Collectif at COP15 brought the voice of civil society forward, resulting in a far wider dissemination of information and learning about biodiversity loss.





# INTELLECTUAL OUTCOMES

## Outcomes observed:

- New ideas or theories shared
- Training opportunities for local talent
- Research opportunities created



Edmonton, Alberta



## Examples

1

### Insects to Feed the World Conference (IFW) 2022

The IFW conference hosts saw the creation of a three-year Research Chair at Université Laval through an official academic-industry partnership. This has resulted in the development of graduate courses and multiple research projects in the emerging field of insect production for food.

2

### 11th International Conference on Isotopes (ISO) 2023

Dedicated conference sessions during ISO showcased the contributions of women in nuclear science and technology, and helped to strengthen the profile of female scientists.





# POLICY OUTCOMES

## Outcomes observed:

- Sector recognition by government
- Influence on political leadership
- Global media exposure



Ottawa, Ontario



## Examples

1

### Insects to Feed the World Conference (IFW) 2022

Following the IFW conference, the Québec government officially recognized insects as livestock in the same manner as poultry and beef, which resulted in a formal sectoral strategy.

2

### UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) 2022

During COP15, Canada committed to its 2030 Nature Strategy and substantial public funding to advance and report on conservation progress.





# HUMAN OUTCOMES

## Outcomes observed:

- Skills development
- Enhanced profile of researchers and speakers
- Reduced barriers
- Greater sense of inclusion

## Examples

1

### UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) 2022

The COP15 Youth Summit held prior to the main conference provided an important opportunity for youth to showcase their efforts in the conservation field, demonstrate the power of youth-led solutions, and champion youth inclusion in policy making.

2

### 24th International AIDS Conference (AIDS) 2022

Diverse activities within and around the AIDS conference provided critical exposure for artists and activists who were key in disseminating positive messages, successfully raising public and media awareness and decreasing stigma about people living with HIV.







# FINANCIAL OUTCOMES

## Outcomes observed:

- Direct financial stream into local businesses
- Recognition of the sector leading to investment
- Talent attraction and job creation

## Examples

1

### 11th International Conference on Isotopes (ISO) 2023

The ISO conference helped position Saskatchewan to attract top talent, including new professors and students, to the province. It also catalyzed a funding contribution from Prairies Economic Development Canada to the Fedoruk Centre to accelerate development of new radioisotope products.

2

### Insects to Feed the World Conference (IFW) 2022

The public Insect Market during IFW provided an opportunity for promotion of local businesses in the industry, growing future demand and supporting the local economy.



Victoria, British Columbia



Montréal, Québec





# CULTURAL OUTCOMES

## Outcomes observed:

- Enhanced connectivity between visitors and local cultural offerings
- Amplifying local narratives
- Preserving local cultural assets



## Examples

1

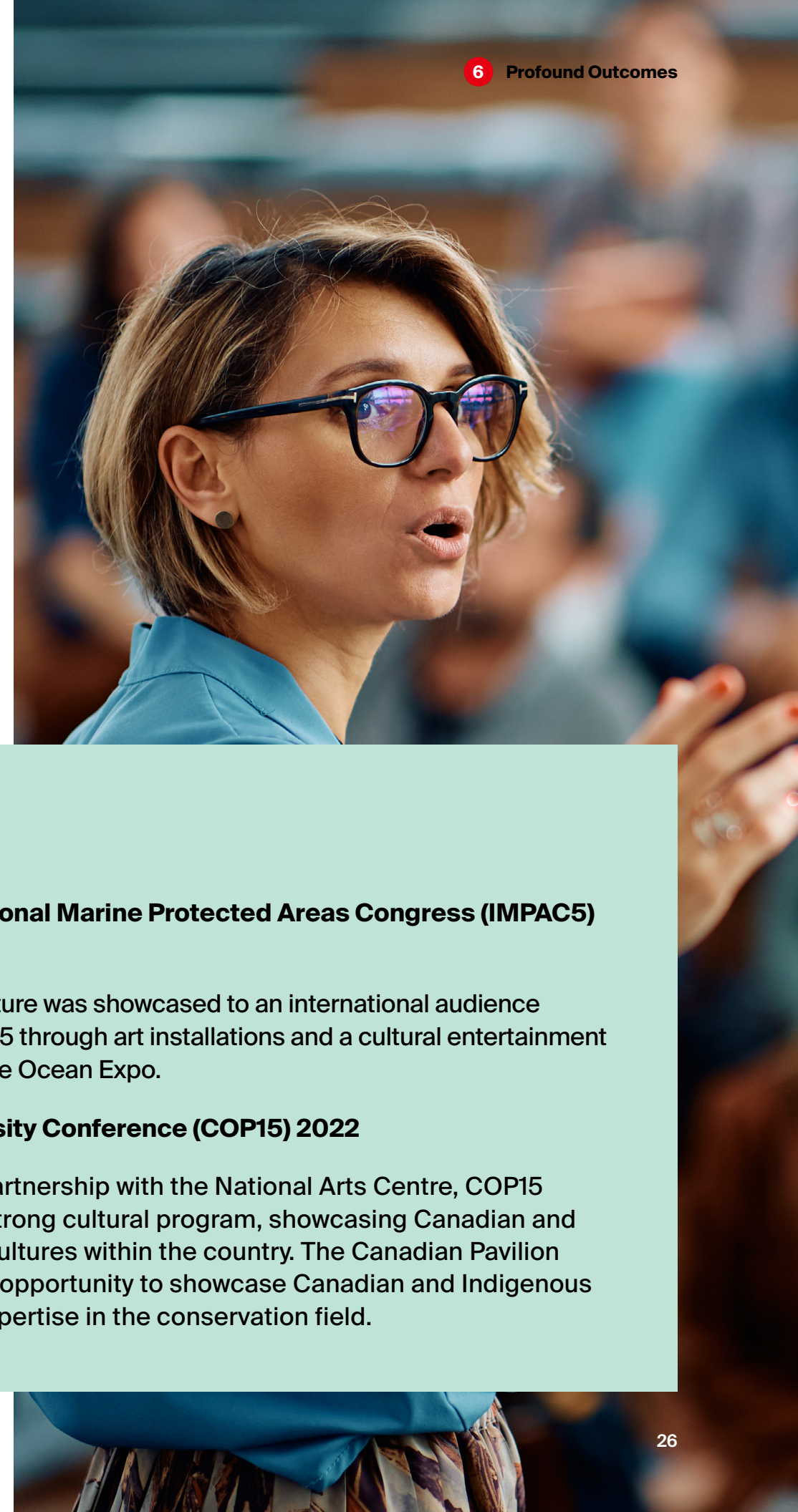
### 5th International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC5) 2023

Canadian culture was showcased to an international audience during IMPAC5 through art installations and a cultural entertainment program at the Ocean Expo.

2

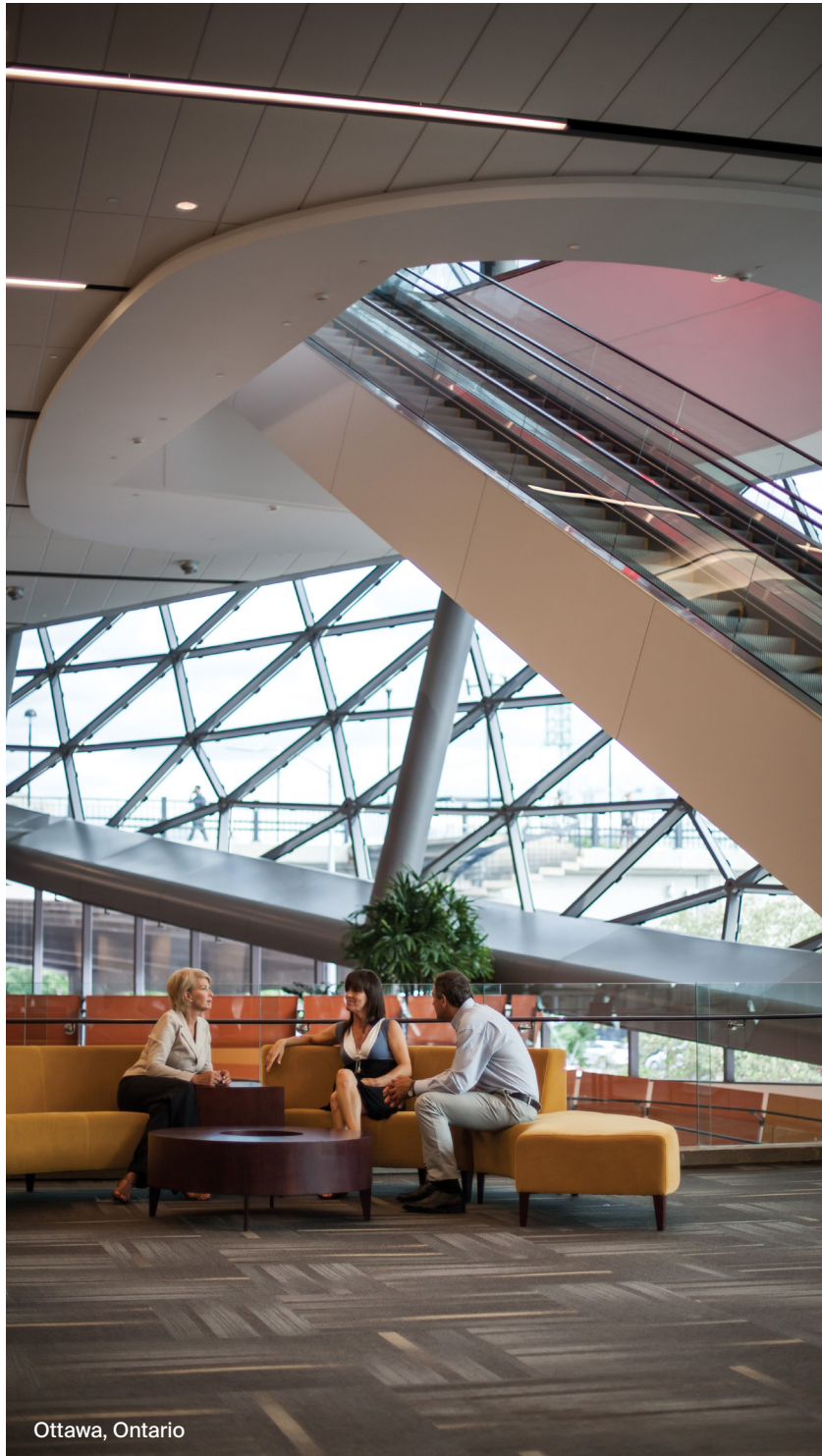
### UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) 2022

Working in partnership with the National Arts Centre, COP15 delivered a strong cultural program, showcasing Canadian and Indigenous cultures within the country. The Canadian Pavilion provided the opportunity to showcase Canadian and Indigenous talent and expertise in the conservation field.





# SPOTLIGHT ON SECTORAL TRANSFORMATION



Ottawa, Ontario

## **Business events can accelerate entire industries forward by combining big-picture vision with on-the-ground action to drive meaningful progress.**

At the strategic level, events act as collaboration hubs where stakeholders align around shared priorities. They transform diverse perspectives into a collective momentum, shaping policy agendas, strengthening professional networks, and elevating sector visibility to attract both talent and innovation.

The real power emerges when this vision meets execution. Events provide the platforms where policy discussions become regulatory changes, where handshakes evolve into lasting partnerships, and where skills training translates into workforce readiness. Local businesses see immediate benefits, while entire sectors gain long-term competitiveness.

Four categories of impact consistently emerge as engines of sectoral transformation: the social bonds that outlast the event itself, the intellectual sparks that ignite innovation, the policy influence that legitimizes sectors, and the financial benefits that sustain growth.

This dual ability, to inspire strategic vision while enabling tactical progress, represents an unrivalled opportunity.

## **Event impacts that drive sectoral transformation**

- Social: Strengthened networks and collaboration
- Intellectual: Innovation through new ideas and best practices
- Policy: Increased influence and sector legitimacy
- Financial: Economic growth and sustainability





# SECTORAL TRANSFORMATION OUTCOMES

## Funding Commitments

More than **\$2 billion** in public funding commitments and investments were directly attributed to the 12 events studied, supporting initiatives such as:

- Domestic conservation, endangered species protection and Indigenous-led conservation initiatives (COP15)
- HIV self-testing kits and community-based testing initiatives in Northern, remote and isolated communities
- Nature-based solutions for climate adaptation and poverty reduction (IMPAC5)

## Policy Frameworks

Global and national policies influenced by the events include:

- Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, a global policy commitment to protect 30 per cent of land and water by 2030 and address biodiversity loss (COP15)
- Canada's 2030 Nature Strategy, committing to halt and reverse biodiversity loss with mandatory reporting (COP15)
- The Edmonton Declaration, calling for science-based climate policies and greenhouse gas targets for municipalities globally, and other related climate strategies (IPCC)







# SECTORAL TRANSFORMATION OUTCOMES (CONTINUED)

## Partnerships and Programs

Notable collaborations and initiatives launched:

- **Coalition for Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Emission Abatement**, focusing on collaborative efforts to achieve net-zero emissions in the LNG industry (LNG 2023)
- **IPCC Legacy Research Grant**, a partnership between City of Edmonton, University of Alberta, and other Canadian institutions to fund local climate research (IPCC)
- **Insects as Livestock Policy**, which enabled the allocation of resources to support the developing insect industry and advance agricultural science (IFW)

## Indigenous Community Engagement

Events amplified Indigenous leadership and participation. Outcomes included:

- **First Nations National Guardians Network**, which provides resources and training for First Nations-led stewardship of land and water (COP15)
- **High-profile Indigenous partnerships in the LNG industry**, with a focus on energy security and environmental performance (LNG 2023)
- **Youth and Indigenous integration in biodiversity and climate programs** during and after events (COP15 Youth Summit, IMPAC5)



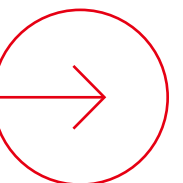
# INTENTIONAL

Intentionality is a proven approach to maximizing impact. When supported by the four key success factors mentioned previously, events not only achieve immediate results, but also create enduring legacies that drive economic growth, policy change and societal transformation.



Pemberton, British Columbia

# PLANNING







# THE POWER OF LEGACY PLANNING

**Events designed with intentionality—clear objectives to create tangible outcomes—consistently deliver broader and more meaningful results.**

By defining legacy goals, such as advancing public health agendas, attracting investment, or fostering global collaborations, organizers can strategically align activities, stakeholders and messaging to ensure every aspect of the event contributes to its purpose.

By embedding intentionality into every stage of event planning and execution, organizers can ensure their events leave a lasting impact on communities, sectors and societies.



## **Key principles:**

- Events like COP15 and LNG demonstrate how strategic alignment with government priorities, through intentional planning, addresses sectoral gaps, advances government agendas, and drives policy reform for long-term value creation.
- Early collaboration and engagement of diverse stakeholders, as was the case for IPCC, including government, industry, civil society, and researchers, strengthens cross-sectoral partnerships that extend beyond the event itself.
- Pre-event advocacy activities, witnessed for example for IMPAC5, amplify the event's relevance, aligning it with public and civil society agendas and strengthening its impact on policy and societal outcomes.



# CONSEQUENCES OF FAILING TO PLAN



**While business events hold significant potential to create lasting positive impacts, fully capturing and maximizing these benefits requires overcoming several challenges.**

Stakeholder engagement efforts sometimes fall short, limiting the availability of comprehensive data on long-term outcomes. Economic impact figures are often reported anecdotally rather than through rigorous analysis, making it difficult to quantify true benefits. Many organizations face constraints in funding, time and expertise when attempting to measure legacy effects.

There remains untapped potential as some stakeholders are not fully aware of how to intentionally design events for lasting impact. The industry would benefit from more consistent planning and measurement approaches to better evaluate success, as we encounter the following systemic barriers:

## **Lack of Intentional Legacy Planning**

Without proactive planning for legacy outcomes, events risk delivering only temporary activities with limited societal value. Too often, legacy is treated as a post-event consideration, rather than an embedded component of event conception and design. This reactive approach limits the depth and duration of event outcomes, weakening their potential to foster systemic change.

## **Over-reliance on Traditional Economic Metrics**

Business events continue to be evaluated primarily on short-term economic indicators such as attendance figures and tourism spend. While these are important, they do not capture broader societal benefits, such as policy influence, community development, or knowledge transfer. The absence of widespread adoption of legacy-based impact metrics undermines efforts to articulate the full value of events.



# CONSEQUENCES OF FAILING TO PLAN (CONTINUED)



Québec City, Québec



Vancouver, British Columbia

## Fragmentation of Stakeholder Collaboration

Events with limited or late-stage engagement from governments, community organizations and local institutions fail to generate broader buy-in or lasting partnerships. Successful case studies demonstrate that early and intentional cross-sectoral collaboration—particularly involving academia, industry, civil society and Indigenous communities—is essential, yet inconsistently applied across events.

## Challenges in Measuring Long-Term Impact

Attributing long-term change, such as sustained economic growth or sectoral reform, directly to events remains complex. This is compounded by a lack of robust tracking systems post-event, making it difficult to follow up on commitments, monitor legacy progress and assess ongoing value creation.

In Year Three of this study, we will work to mitigate these challenges by strengthening stakeholder collaboration, refining our measurement methodologies, and developing practical resources to help organizers create more meaningful and enduring legacies for their communities.



# VITAL ELEMENTS THAT WORK TOGETHER



Edmonton, Alberta

**As the second year of this Legacy & Impact Study concludes, the research continues to underscore a powerful insight: when business events are designed with clear purpose and foresight, they transcend being simple gatherings—they become catalysts for lasting change.**

This year's expanded research offers even stronger evidence that strategically planned events can spark policy innovation, drive economic growth, promote social equity and influence national agendas.

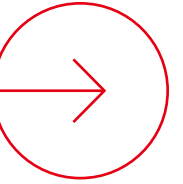
A key takeaway from this year's findings is the growing recognition of legacy planning as a core strategy, rather than a post-event consideration. Events that incorporate legacy objectives from the outset, especially those aligned with tangible social, intellectual and political outcomes, consistently deliver greater long-term value than those focused solely on immediate logistics or economic return. It's a clear signal that the events industry must broaden its definition of success. While attendance and delegate spend still matter, they must be considered alongside deeper metrics that reflect enduring sectoral progress and societal impact.

The 12 events featured in this year's study offer compelling evidence of what intentional event design can achieve. The outcomes are both substantial and strategic. These aren't incidental wins—they're the product of purposeful planning, inclusive engagement and a commitment to lasting legacy.

Central to these successes are the nine legacy drivers and four key success factors. Together, they form a practical blueprint for planners, policymakers and host communities to build events that deliver both immediate value and enduring impact. Whether it's highlighting local strengths, nurturing international partnerships, embedding sustainability, or advancing diversity, equity and inclusion, each element plays a role in cultivating a thriving ecosystem where events serve as engines for societal progress.

# WHAT'S

8



In 2025, we will conduct additional research on the 12 events studied to date and **three additional** events being assessed.

# NEXT?



# ADAPTING OUR APPROACH

We will build on the insights gained so far, further refining strategies to maximize the benefits of hosting powerful events in Canada.

## Additional Events

We will analyze three more events:

- IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition 2024 in Toronto
- One Young World Summit 2024 in Montréal
- GLOBExCHANGE 2025 in Toronto

## Enhanced Interviews

We will expand interviews with strategic partners, conduct participant surveys, and explore youth and Indigenous engagement to enhance data collection and deepen our understanding of event impacts.

## Indigenous Perspective

We will strengthen relationships with Indigenous communities to ensure their voices and experiences are meaningfully reflected in event planning and legacy outcomes.

## ICAF Analysis

We will evaluate the International Convention Attraction Fund's (ICAF) role in fostering legacy planning, aligning with societal goals like sustainability and inclusivity, and advancing Canada's position in the global events market.

## Best Practices

We will propose avenues to maximize legacy outcomes through the four key success factors—pre-event activities, DMO involvement, government participation and external collaboration.

## What is the ICAF?

The International Convention Attraction Fund (ICAF) supports bids by Canadian cities to host major international conventions in Canada. The ICAF is funded by the Government of Canada and administered by Destination Canada.

### The ICAF:

- aims to bolster Canada's global competitiveness in attracting major international conventions, conferences, and events to Canada
- offers support of up to \$1 million per event for eligible Canadian destinations bidding to host major international business events
- is part of an overall \$50 million investment by the Government of Canada for this purpose

# RESULTS TO COME

A final report with collated evidence and case studies is expected in 2026.

## MORE INFORMATION

For more details, please refer to the Appendix and visit [businesseventscanada.ca](https://businesseventscanada.ca).





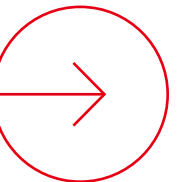
# THANK YOU



Our sincere appreciation to all partners, stakeholders and communities who are contributing to the Legacy & Impact Study. Your collaboration has been instrumental in demonstrating how business events drive meaningful, lasting change—far beyond economic benefits. Together, we are reshaping the future of the industry.

**Thank you for helping us turn insights into impact.**

# APPENDIX: NEW CASE STUDIES





# CITIESIPCC CITIES & CLIMATE CHANGE SCIENCE CONFERENCE

Edmonton, Alberta  
March 5 - 7, 2018

## Mission

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was founded with a mission to assess climate change science, socioeconomic impacts and response strategies for international conventions. The intentions of the event align with the IPCC's mission and extend to inspiring the next frontier of research focused on the science of cities and climate change. The primary goals included assessing the state of academic and practice-based knowledge related to cities and climate change, and establishing a global research agenda through collaborative identification of key gaps by the academic, practitioner and urban policy making communities.

## Research Update

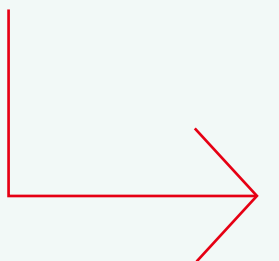
Expanded research into the CitiesIPCC Cities & Climate Change Science Conference included an additional five interviews with members of the local advisory committee, sponsors and one session leader.







This additional research confirmed the findings from Year One. It also showed how the city provided an example for other municipalities, creating a ripple effect that has extended beyond Edmonton and resonated across Canada.

## Impact Intentions

Impact intentions were co-crafted by the City of Edmonton, the local advisory committee and the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO), Explore Edmonton:

- To promote Edmonton's leadership in the global effort to address climate challenges
- To enhance Edmonton's international reputation as a host city
- To showcase the clean technology solutions and innovations of Edmonton, Alberta and Canada
- To engage Edmontonians in the science of climate change by partnering on a minimum of five community events
- To raise external funds to offset the costs of the conference to the City of Edmonton, up to \$1,253,000 plus in-kind support



Key Outcomes	Activities	Legacy & Impact Categories
<b>The Change for Climate Global Mayors Summit</b> brought together global city networks, mayors and the science community to discuss their unique needs prior to the main conference.	Pre-conference activity to initiate interest, spark enthusiasm and drive momentum.	<div><div> Policy</div><div> Natural</div></div>
<b>The City of Edmonton's Change for Climate Campaign</b> , a series of pre-conference events to inspire residents and visitors to engage in dialogue and take action on climate change challenges.	Pre-conference activity to assemble global city networks, mayors and the science community to discuss their unique needs prior to the main conference.	<div><div> Social</div><div> Natural</div></div>
<b>The Edmonton Declaration</b> was created to help cities collaborate with governments to stimulate research, innovation and new funding sources for cities to combat climate change.	General conference program to inspire global and regional research on climate impacts and solutions for cities, that will lead to peer-reviewed publication and scientific reports that will inform the IPCC's next Assessment Report.	<div><div> Policy</div></div>
<b>The CitiesIPCC Legacy Research Grant</b> , funded by the City of Edmonton, with support from Alberta Ecotrust, from 2019 to 2021 delivered research grants to help advance knowledge about how Edmonton can become an energy sustainable and climate resilient city.	Announcement of a research grant allocating \$500,000 to research supporting Edmonton's ambition to becoming a sustainable, climate resistant city.	<div><div> Financial</div></div>







Edmonton, Alberta

## Outcomes Update

The conference was a significant catalyst in terms of Edmonton's future approach to climate change and resulted in the approval of a far more ambitious strategy than would have happened otherwise. This included the introduction of a carbon budget, total integration of finance and climate change, and the creation of a Carbon Budget Manager role.

The city created a Climate Resilient Edmonton Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan to complement their Community Energy Transition Strategy and Action Plan. This is Edmonton's first ever climate adaptation strategy and one which puts the focus on science and evidence-based decisions.

The implementation of the Change for Climate program resulted in the creation of eight spin-off programs e.g. Change Homes for Climate.

The Global Research and Action Agenda (GRAA) on Cities and Climate Change Science, a key outcome of the conference, led to a city-focused initiative, Innovate4Cities, to take on board the learnings from the GRAA. I4C has held three conferences since inception, most recently in Montréal.



# INSECTS TO FEED THE WORLD CONFERENCE

Québec City, Québec  
June 12 - 18, 2022

## Mission

First hosted in 2014 by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations and a senior entomologist from Wageningen, the Netherlands, the Insects to Feed the World Conference aims to foster dialogue and exchange research on edible insects, advancing legislation, communal knowledge and sector innovation. Gathering academics, industrialists, and experts worldwide, the event showcased the latest advancements in edible insects and ento-technologies.

## Research Update

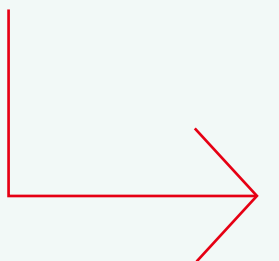
Expanded research into the Insects to Feed the World Conference included follow-up interviews with key local actors and conference hosts, as well as reviewing strategic documents produced.

These interviews confirmed the sector-building role of the event identified in Year One. They further illustrated how Québec City became an industrial showcase for insect-based innovation—both through public engagement activities and commercialization strategies. The event not only helped normalize entomophagy (the practice of eating insects) locally, but also supported business development and sustainable food practices that now influence other regions in Canada.

## Impact Intentions

The impact intentions were provided by the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO), Québec City Business Destination:

- Deliver economic impact created by the event
- Showcase the City of Québec's expertise in hosting conferences
- Create case studies to encourage future ambassadors to bid for international events
- Provide greater visibility of insect processing companies
- Showcase the socioeconomic impact of insect feeding in future
- Make the sector visible to the Government of Québec and investors





Key Outcomes	Activities	Legacy & Impact Categories
<b>The creation of a Chair of Leadership in Education in Primary Production and Processing of Edible Insects (CLEIC) at Université Laval</b> , funded mainly by industry with a key focus on supporting sector development.	General conference program including 8 keynote speeches, 156 oral presentations and 58 posters.	 Intellectual
<b>Official recognition by the Government of Québec</b> of insects as a livestock and as an agricultural science.	Lunch and Learn Sessions including academia and industry discussing challenges in the field.	 Natural
<b>Demystification of the sector and introduction of the public to local suppliers</b> through tastings and cooking demos by local and celebrity chefs.	Le Marché des Insectes Comestibles, a public showcase, attracted 12,000 visitors, democratizing insect consumption and garnering interest through tastings and cooking demonstrations conducted by both local and celebrity chefs.	 Social
<b>Training of aspiring chefs</b> to introduce insects in menus in establishments across the city.	Well-known local chefs promoted the Marché and acceptance of edible insects. Québec City Convention Centre’s catering team trained chefs and incorporated insects into the menu.	 Intellectual



Québec City, Québec





## Outcomes Update

### Strengthening sector capacity through education and training

The CLEIC at Université Laval, established in 2020 and recently renewed through 2031, has been instrumental in the growth of the sector. Funded primarily by industry partners, the Chair has focused on building educational pathways, developing talent and strengthening institutional collaboration. The Chair created an accredited undergraduate course on edible insect production for agronomy students and produced a suite of training programs and materials spanning primary to post-secondary levels.

### Growth and maturation of the edible insect sector in Québec

Québec's edible insect sector has shown substantial growth and is maturing since the conference took place, with the Table Filière Insectes Comestibles (Edible Insects Sector Working Group - TFIC) seeing a 35 per cent membership increase since 2022. This growth is supported by several factors, including active working groups focused on regulation, quality standards, resource management, and market development. Additionally, a sector-wide strategic plan for 2023–2026 has been launched, outlining clear priorities for research and development, regulatory frameworks, commercialization, and supply chain development.

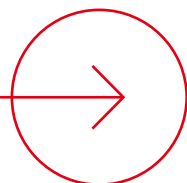
### Regulatory progress and sector consolidation

Now that Québec's Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAPAQ) recognizes insect production as a specialty agricultural activity, producers have access to more resources and support. TFIC has also advocated for the inclusion of insect production in Québec's forthcoming 2025-2035 bio-food policy, ensuring long-term government support.

Regulatory progress is evident at both provincial and intergovernmental levels. The sector is also consolidating, with fewer but more resilient firms that have realistic business models and better-aligned investor expectations. This shift toward professionalization positions the sector for long-term viability within the Canadian agri-food economy.



# APPENDIX: UPDATED CASE STUDIES



# INTERNATIONAL MARINE PROTECTED AREAS CONGRESS

Vancouver, British Columbia  
February 3 – 9, 2023

## Mission

The International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC), founded by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 2005, meets every four years to advance Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) for sustainable ocean management. IMPAC5, co-hosted by Canada and the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations in Vancouver, was organized by the Government of Canada and led by teams from Fisheries and Oceans, Parks Canada, and Environment and Climate Change Canada. It brought together global MPA practitioners to work toward conserving 30 per cent of the ocean by 2030, emphasizing MPA networks, the blue economy, biodiversity, climate action, and the connection between ocean culture and wellbeing. Indigenous leadership, youth and innovation were central to fostering collaborative marine conservation solutions.



Vancouver, British Columbia

## Impact Intentions

- To define the structure of the planning committees in the project charter, to ensure all voices with responsibility and/or knowledge of marine protected areas would be fully represented in the congress
- To provide significant resources and space to the voices of Indigenous Peoples and young professionals
- To raise awareness around ocean conservation
- To get a majority of ocean countries to agree to try to protect, or agree to protect, 30 per cent of their sovereign ocean space by 2030



Key Outcomes

**Recognition of the need for close collaboration with provincial and territorial governments, Indigenous communities and industry.** IMPAC5 highlighted the need for progress on Indigenous participation in marine conservation and facilitated the engagement of Indigenous communities with government at all levels.

Announcement of a new marine refuge, protecting the ecologically and culturally significant area of Gwaxdlala/Nalaxdlala in Knight Inlet on the coast of British Columbia.

Delivery of a post congress Leadership Forum further emphasized the need for a whole-of-planet and society approach to achieve new biodiversity targets and the role of Indigenous Peoples in marine conservation.

**Social inclusion.** Representation and input from young professionals and Indigenous communities amplified their voices in a very authentic way, resulting in a highly inclusive congress. This sets a precedent for future congresses and leads to more diverse and qualified current and future sectoral leaders.

**New relationships were cemented at the Ocean Expo,** which successfully combined a trade show with learning, networking, entertainment and a cultural showcase. Future collaborations and international knowledge sharing will galvanize efforts to tackle the health of oceans worldwide.

Activities

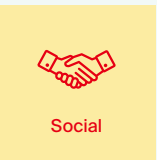
The IMPAC5 program featured 937 presentations from 78 countries over five days, tailored for MPA practitioners, policymakers, Indigenous leaders, and industry innovators. One third of the program was dedicated to young professionals.

Mentoring of young professionals through tools, advice and a pre-congress networking event. This created a shared experience and vision for young professionals, creating new relationships and colleagues for life.

The Ocean Expo featured 41 exhibitors plus four anchor pavilions.

Consciously programmed public engagement activities included a two-day Ocean Festival, plus the incorporation of visual and sculptural arts showcasing Canadian and Indigenous cultures.

Legacy & Impact Categories



# UN BIODIVERSITY CONFERENCE

Montréal, Québec  
December 7 - 19, 2022

## Mission

The Convention of Biological Diversity, under which COP15 was held, focuses specifically on conserving biodiversity, sustainable use of natural resources, and equitable sharing of the benefits from genetic resources. Although not an international association as such, its Secretariat is responsible for organizing meetings, including COP15, and supporting countries in implementing the convention's goals. This meeting brought together 188 governments with the specific aim of getting agreement to the Kunming-Tiohtià:ke/Montréal Global Biodiversity Framework.



## Impact Intentions

- To ensure the event was carbon neutral and to classify it as eco-responsible
- To deliver a safe and fiscally responsible event with due consideration to public health
- To highlight Canadian local culture, traditions and talent
- To engage with civil society
- To showcase the conservation work of Indigenous communities locally and globally
- To engage youth
- To position Canada as a global leader in recognizing the Indigenous Peoples
- To establish a coalition to support a new Global Biodiversity Framework



## Key Outcomes

**Adoption of the Kunming-Tiohtià:ke/Montréal Global Biodiversity Framework**, calling for the strengthening of biodiversity policies at all levels in the public and private sector, aiming to protect future generations. The framework means policy action can be better measured and reported on, enabling implementation globally.

Both Canada's 2030 Nature Strategy and Québec's 2030 Nature Plan position Canada as a world leader and influencer, enhancing its influence in global climate and biodiversity governance and benefiting Canadian citizens and societies worldwide.

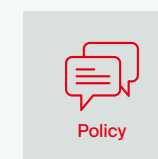
## Activities

Negotiation of the framework formed the main agenda of the 13-day conference program. The adopted framework contains global targets to conserve 30 per cent of land and water by 2030, also known as the 30x30 target.

Québec's government reaffirmed its commitment to the target of protecting 30 per cent of its territory by 2030 through its Québec 2030 Nature Plan.

Canada's 2030 Nature Strategy charts a path for how Canada will implement the framework domestically and report on conservation progress.

## Legacy & Impact Categories

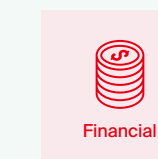


**Increased commitment and funding from the Canadian government for conservation.** Federal and Québec investments will directly support:

- The expansion of protected areas (land and marine), critical to achieving the 30x30 target
- On-the-ground conservation work by Indigenous Guardians and civil society groups, enabling localized and culturally relevant stewardship
- Endangered species protection through research, habitat restoration, and policy enforcement
- Support for biodiversity in developing countries, helping prevent global biodiversity loss at its source

Funding announcements included:

- \$350m for the First Nations National Guardians Network
- \$185m in funding for domestic conservation initiatives and significant measures for the protection of endangered species
- Up to \$800 million over seven years to support up to four Indigenous-led conservation initiatives



## Key Outcomes

**The Tiohtià:ke/Montréal Pledge** is now part of the committee for Canada’s 2030 Nature Strategy. The Pledge encourages cities to accelerate and be bolder in their actions towards protecting biodiversity and ecosystems, and subscribe to a voluntary system measuring progress towards the 2030 biodiversity targets.

**Heightened awareness** and greater understanding of biodiversity challenges by civil society mobilize the community towards research and conservation aims. A more informed civil society will seek government commitments to fund biodiversity protection.

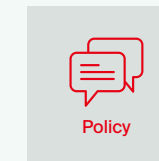
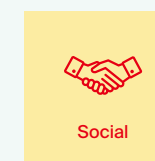
## Activities

As a pre-conference activity, local leaders launched the Tiohtià:ke/Montréal Pledge, calling on cities worldwide to commit to 15 concrete actions towards protecting biodiversity and ecosystems.

The Public Action Zone (Green Zone) featured various activities and conferences accessible to the general public.

Ahead of COP15, more than 80 Québec civil society organizations formed the Québec Civil Society Collectif COP15 alliance to seize the opportunity to raise awareness and obtain commitments from governments.

## Legacy & Impact Categories





# INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ISOTOPES

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  
July 23 - 27, 2023






## Mission

The overall mission of the World Council on Isotopes (WCI) is to promote safe and environmentally sound isotope technologies for global wellbeing and to promote the sharing of the peaceful uses of isotope technologies among members. It also aims to provide a strong voice, as an internationally recognized non-governmental organization, at important regional and international forums. The WCI acted in an advisory capacity and supported the promotion of the conference through its member network. It was not involved in any specific legacy development activities.



## Impact Intentions

- To increase Canada's position as a key player in the global isotopes industry
- To attract new government and/or industry funding for university chairs
- To develop local business, products and use of the Fedoruk Centre's facilities
- To attract talent to the University of Saskatchewan
- To promote and support nuclear energy initiatives
- To improve public perception of radiation
- To boost provincial economic benefits
- To facilitate collaboration among stakeholders
- To promote women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)
- To inspire and inform youth about opportunities in the nuclear sector

Key Outcomes	Activities	Legacy & Impact Categories
<p><b>Skills development and talent recruitment,</b> educating and inspiring future generations to choose a career in nuclear science and technologies.</p>	<p>Mentoring of students and young professionals through a hands-on summer school, which took place ahead of the congress and included lectures and practical experiments conducted by experts in the field.</p>	<div><div><div>Intellectual</div></div><div><div>Social</div></div></div>
<p><b>Recognition of Canadian expertise through knowledge transfer.</b> Presentations by Canadian experts showcased capabilities and developments within Canada. This supports Canada’s positioning as a world leader in this field and leads to talent attraction and development of the sector.</p> <p>Recognition of the contribution of women in the nuclear industry helps attract women into STEM careers and establishes a diverse and inclusive workforce which is of benefit to all.</p>	<p>The conference program included 150 speakers over five days and five tracks.</p> <p>Technical tours showcased local expertise and facilities, enhancing visibility and understanding of Saskatchewan's capabilities.</p> <p>The “Women in Nuclear” session transferred knowledge to student participants and acknowledged the prominent roles of women nuclear scientists internationally and locally.</p>	<div><div><div>Intellectual</div></div><div><div>Social</div></div></div>
<p><b>New investment into the sector helps meet market needs,</b> enabling enhanced research and development, clinical trials, and applications for cancer diagnosis and treatment within Saskatchewan and beyond.</p>	<p>The conference served as a catalyst to publicly showcase and strengthen the Fedoruk Centre's partnerships and initiatives.</p> <p>New contracts, funding and investment included a contract between Canadian Nuclear Laboratories and the Fedoruk Centre for the production of Actinium-225, valued at \$400,000 per year for five years.</p> <p>The Fedoruk Centre also received funding from Prairie Economic Development Canada, to accelerate the development of new radioisotope products required for developing nuclear imaging or therapeutic radiopharmaceuticals for health care.</p> <p>Also, smaller contracts were secured, valued at approximately \$60-70,000 each, with potential expansion to around \$300,000 per year.</p>	<div><div><div>Financial</div></div></div>