

**Flooding Sustainable Livelihoods of the Lake St Martin First Nation:
The Need to Enhance the Role of Gender and Language in
Anishinaabe Knowledge Systems**

by

Myrle Ballard

**A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
The University of Manitoba
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Natural Resources Institute

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg, Manitoba

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Faculty Of Graduate Studies**

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ABSTRACT

Indigenous peoples have been the sole occupants of the vast lands now known as the continent of North America since time immemorial. The land base provided a full range of climatic zones and an abundance of aquatic, wildlife, and vegetation resources for diverse Indigenous peoples. In Lake St. Martin First Nation, Manitoba where the focus of the research is, the Indigenous peoples are known as Anishinabek. The Anishinabek were able to survive in this vast expanse of land by using their skills and knowledge, which are the Anishinaabe Knowledge Systems (AKS), while preserving ecological integrity. Anishinabek's survival depended on a relationship with the environment through knowledge, which was passed on over thousands of years acquired by direct human contact with the environment. This relationship has been disrupted by colonization and artificial flooding over time and has resulted in the permanent displacement of the community in the summer of 2011. Environmental changes proved to have the most negative impact in terms of changes in all aspects of Anishinabek's lives and livelihoods. In May 2011, the community of Lake St. Martin First Nation was fully evacuated due to the artificial flooding of Lake St. Martin. This research had to come to an end, but the end has not come yet for the evacuees as they are still housed in hotels across the province and in temporary housing in April of 2012.

The land is still held sacred and is seen as the giver of all life and all opportunities for well-being, healthy living, and economic prosperity. Although Anishinabek cultures have changed with modern times, this ancient and sacred relationship to the land still remains close and important to the Anishinabek and continues to be the foundation for their nation building.

In Anishinaabe societies, gender has been important in the transmission of knowledge. Language was also an important component and played an important role in AKS. This research explored the role of language and gender in Anishinaabe Knowledge Systems (AKS). This research had four main objectives: 1) the sustainability of livelihoods in Lake St. Martin over time; 2) the importance of language in IKS and Indigenous research; 3) the role of Anishinabek in sustainability; and 4) the integration of AKS, language and gender in planning the new settlement of Lake St. Martin First Nation after its displacement.

This research explored the livelihoods of Anishinabek by doing a comparison of activities over a time period of 100 years. The research examined gender and language in AKS by exploring the historical changes brought about by policies, technology, and environmental changes. The changes were documented and compared against the policies that were enacted. The results show that policies, technology and environmental changes directly impacted the Anishinabek's livelihoods.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Since time immemorial, Indigenous peoples were the sole occupants of the vast lands now known as the continent of North America (Taiaiake 1999; Bumsted 2003; Atleo 2004). This land base provided a full range of climatic zones and an abundance of aquatic, wildlife, and vegetation resources for diverse Indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples were able to survive in this vast expanse of land by using their skills and knowledge – Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) while preserving ecological integrity (Keoke and Porterfield 2005). Survival depended on a relationship with the environment through knowledge, which was passed on over thousands of years through observation and testing (NWT Culture & Communication 1991). Experience acquired by direct human contact with the environment was and continues to be essential for IKS (Berkes 1993). The importance of IKS is being recognized by various levels of governments, industries, and non-governmental organizations. Only now are some governments beginning to realize incorporating IKS into their environmental management regimes and work plans (Fisheries and Oceans Canada 2011; Environment Canada 2011).

The land is still held sacred in the cultures of Indigenous peoples around the world (Smith 1999). Land is seen as the giver of all life and all opportunities for well-being, healthy living, and economic prosperity (Tebtebba Foundation 2008). Although Indigenous cultures have changed with modern times, this ancient and sacred relationship to the land still remains close and important to the Indigenous people. It continues to be the foundation for Indigenous societies around the world for their nation building (Dickason 2002; Frideres & Gadacz 2004).

It is important to develop alternative strategies or reacquaint with Indigenous Knowledge Systems that have endured since time immemorial that are prerequisite for income, income supplement, and/or sustainable resource development. Anishinabek and First Nations in Manitoba are searching for alternative sustainable solutions for economic development while preserving the environment as much as possible (Thompson, Gulrukh, Fulford, Wong & Zahuriuk 2010). Anishinaabe peoples frequently experience poverty in their communities, but want to participate in economic opportunities while preserving their land and forests that are rich biodiversity and in sustainable ways that will protect and enhance Indigenous stewardship (Wuttunee 1998). Indigenous women carried much of the important traditional knowledge about the land and forests (Anderson 2000; Hogan 2001). They played an important role in the preservation and application of traditional uses of the environments (Shiva 1989; Tebtebba Foundation 2008). Indigenous women's knowledge is important for sustainable environments and Indigenous stewardship of our lands. Both men's and women's knowledge is equally important and complement each other. While both have been under researched, information about women's role in IKS is less researched.

1.2 Purpose and Objectives

Indigenous peoples have lived in close harmony with their land since time immemorial (Mann 2005; Wright 1992; Colorado 1988). But in today's world, almost half of the Indigenous population is moving to urban centres and away from their traditional lifestyles (Statistics Canada 2006). Indigenous people move to urban centres for different reasons, such as educational and economic opportunities, as well as social

and health concerns (Statistics Canada 2006). However, the majority of First Nation peoples in Manitoba continue to live in rural areas near forests or ‘nooping’ (NAFA 2000). Many of these Anishinaabe women have Anishinaabe Knowledge Systems (AKS) that are largely based on their language and historical cultural beliefs, in which a great deal are informal.

A few studies have been done by various Indigenous women scholars such as Priscilla Settee, Marie Battiste, Linda Smith, to name but a few, regarding Indigenous women and their traditional roles. The overall goal of this research was to examine the AKS from the perspective of the local Anishinabek in Lake St. Martin First Nation (Figure 1). This goal was accomplished by researching the following objectives to:

- 1) Explore the sustainability of livelihoods in Lake St. Martin over time and the factors impacting men and women;
- 2) Analyze the importance of language in AKS; and
- 3) Document the role of Anishinabek in sustainability; and
- 4) Integrating language, AKS, and gender in planning the new settlement of Lake St. Martin First Nation.

These objectives were explored considering the impacts of Canadian and provincial policy, colonization, land degradation, modernization, education, and local politics on the role of Anishinabek in Anishinaabe society and culture.

In order to achieve the objectives, this study examined the roles, customs, and traditions of men and women from the local Anishinaabe community of Lake St. Martin in Manitoba regarding our Anishinaabe way of life. The Anishinaabe way of life was reviewed in terms of sustainable livelihoods from a historical perspective to present-day.

Various models were used to document sustainable livelihoods, as well as the importance of language in sustainable livelihoods and AKS.

Anishinaabe Knowledge Systems are the local knowledge systems that exist in a community, which is in this case, Lake St. Martin. AKS is a specific IKS that is impacted by our specific environment, land, language and history. There are no documented definitions of AKS specific to Lake St. Martin women, but I defined AKS as layers of knowledge regarding relationships, roles and responsibilities of people, with respect to nature and the land. This builds on the definition by Leanne Simpson (2001 p. 138) who describes AKS: “Anishinaabe knowledge is part of my internal environment, it is part of who I am and it comes to me through relationships with family, Elders, spiritual leaders, and interactions with the spiritual world” and by incorporating land and nature aspects of the IKS definition of Settee (2007), the IKS of Battiste and Youngblood Henderson (2000), and the TEK definition of LaDuke (2002).

According to Settee (2007 p. 15) “IKS does not encompass a singular body of knowledge but reflect many layers of being, knowing, and methods of expression. IKS include knowledge about economics, politics, music, leadership, transportation, building, astronomy, women’s unique contributions, art, literature/stories, humour, and community values”. Indigenous knowledge is described as a system that shares the following: 1) knowledge of and believing in unseen powers in the ecosystem; 2) knowledge that all things in the ecosystem are dependent on each other; 3) knowledge that reality is structured according to most of the linguistic concepts by which Indigenous peoples describe it; 4) knowledge that personal relationships reinforce the bond between persons, communities, and ecosystems; 5) knowledge that sacred traditions and persons who know

these traditions are responsible for teaching “morals” and “ethics” to practitioners who are then given responsibility for this specialized knowledge and its dissemination; and 6) knowledge that an extended kinship passes on teachings and social practices from generation to generation (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000 p. 42). Battiste and Youngblood Henderson (2000) describe the need for Eurocentric scholars to impose a definition on Indigenous knowledge, which is an attempt to make it apply universally. Indigenous scholars such as Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000, and Simpson 2001 also describes how western science tries to make sense and classify Indigenous knowledge and by doing so it is “scientizing” it (Smith 1999). Battiste and Youngblood (2000) criticize how IKS is separated from the clan, band, community, or even the individual, to be codified into a definition. Similarly, AKS belongs to the Ojibway clan; the AKS in this research is specific to the Lake St. Martin Band and community, and is part of who I am.

Indigenous knowledge also includes the branch of knowledge referred to as traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). “The TEK of Indigenous peoples are scientific, in the sense that it is empirical, experimental, and systematic. It differs in two important respects from Western science, however: TEK is highly localized and it is social. TEK focuses on the web of relationships between humans, animals, plants, natural forces, spirits, and land forms and in particular locality, as opposed to the discovery of universal ‘laws’” (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000 p. 44). LaDuke (2002 p. 78) describes TEK as “the culturally and spiritually based way in which Indigenous peoples relate to their ecosystems.” LaDuke (2002 p.78) states this knowledge is “founded on spiritual-cultural

instructions from ‘time immemorial’ and on generations of careful observation within an ecosystem of continuous residence.”

As I described in the preceding, my definition is specific to the Anishinabek, and is based on a cluster of Indigenous Knowledge definitions by others scholars such as Pam Colorado (1988), Marie Battiste and Youngblood Henderson (2000), Winona LaDuke (2002), Deborah McGregor (2004), and Priscilla Settee (2007) to name but a few. The AKS are based on overlapping as well as distinct knowledge systems based on a theme or subject, and knowledge of the land and ecosystem, which is also the result of continuous residence. The AKS of the Anishinabek who live in the region know subtle changes in the ecosystem, which only they know and are unnoticed by the outsider or western scientists. The Elders in Lake St. Martin were able to discern subtle changes in the land brought on by continuous flooding that were undetected by scientific testing (Traverse 1999). These subtle changes were based on observation through sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch. For example, fish tasted grassy because of the chronic flooding (Traverse 1999). Some examples of AKS of Anishinabek are about preparing hides, the proper way to cut a fish, teaching children how to caregive, knowing what the weather will be by the way the clouds look (Traverse 1999). These are just a few concrete examples that incorporate the definition of AKS of Lake St. Martin. More of these are examined in more detail in Chapter 5. The study also provided an opportunity to explore and examine the significance regarding the changing roles of Anishinaabe men and women over time.

This study was also important in understanding the connection between the roles of men and women and the use of language and traditional activities in AKS. Resource use, language use, culture, and tradition, are measured and documented over time in order

to determine the evolving changes, and what caused these changes. Documenting the role and use of language is important because Indigenous languages are disappearing (Tebtebba Foundation 2008, United Nations 2008). Also, language has significance for Anishinaabe men and women's way of life and their role as knowledge holders and AKS. This case study on Lake St. Martin First Nation was designed to document women's AKS but also to provide direction for policy development on education and resource management. Additionally, Lake St. Martin First Nation was selected because I have observed the changes to the land over time, and I wanted to document how the changes have impacted the livelihoods of the First Nations. Growing up I constantly heard stories of the flood and water and how people lived before and how they lived today, and how the people talked about the decline in their livelihoods. In this way, environmental issues were connected with social and historical factors, which are missing from the academic Anishinaabe and Indigenous knowledge literature.



Figure 1. Location of Lake St. Martin in Manitoba

Source: Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada 2012

1.3 Background of Lake St. Martin First Nation

The Anishinaabe local community of Lake St. Martin is located in the Interlake region of Manitoba. Lake St. Martin First Nation (The Narrows and The Narrows 49A) is located 225 km northwest of Winnipeg, ten miles off Provincial Road 513, on the northeast shore of Lake St. Martin. The community lacks paved road access, but is accessible by a gravel Provincial Road 513 and then a dirt road off 513. Lake St. Martin First Nation is located at the narrows of Lake St. Martin along the Fairford River between Lake Winnipeg and Lake Manitoba, downstream from the Fairford control structure. The community has been repeatedly flooded since the construction of the Fairford water control structure.

The Lake St. Martin Reserve consists of two parcels of land – No. 49 and No. 49A. All the on-reserve members live on the western side of the Narrows No. 49 (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 2006). The registered population is 2172 (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 2008) and occupies a very small land base of 23.98 sq/km (Statistics Canada 2006). Its geomorphology consists of intermittent karst topography and soluble limestone bedrock. Lake St. Martin Reserve is also located in the Lake St. Martin meteor impact crater, which is the site of a meteorite strike that left a 24-kilometre-wide crater, now largely obscured over time. The groundwater in the region is high in fluoride, sulphate, and salinity concentrations, all of which are associated with meteor impacts. This saline water provides poor water quality resources for drinking water and other economic uses.

Lake St. Martin Reserve is situated in the boreal forest (Figure 2). The border of the populated reserve is situated on the shores of Lake St. Martin, which is connected by

Fairford River to Lake Manitoba, and Dauphin River to Lake Winnipeg. Trembling aspen and scattered stands of white spruce and jack pine dominate the region, while a well defined boggy area or swamp supports black spruce and tamarack. The region provides habitat for white-tailed deer, moose, black bears, fox, wolves, waterfowl, grouse, various birds and song birds, beaver, muskrats, as well as numerous other flora and fauna. Lake St. Martin provides fish for commercial fishers, sport fisheries, and for the local First Nations sustenance. The fish caught for consumption and commercial use includes pickerel, whitefish, sauger, jackfish, and perch.

Figure 2. Map of the Forest Regions of Canada



Source: Canadian Forest Services, Natural Resources Canada (2007)

Lake St. Martin was impacted by the Fairford water control structure. The construction of the water control structure at the mouth of the Fairford River in 1960 has

led to the destruction of land, agriculture and sustainable livelihoods of the Anishinaabe in Lake St. Martin (Elders 1999, pers. comm.). The water control structure which is operated by the Province of Manitoba has seriously impacted the Anishinabek at Lake St. Martin First Nation. Flooding destroyed the vast majority of agricultural land on reserve and damaged reserve homes, with no compensation or recognition of the disaster that this has brought to the families in Lake St. Martin. There has been ongoing flooding to the community since 1960. In the spring of 2011 unprecedented water levels forced the entire community of Lake St. Martin First Nation to be evacuated. The community has remained evacuated since then and has no landbase.

1.4 Cultural and Linguistic Background

Lake St. Martin First Nation is an Anishinaabe community, where a majority of the people still speaks Ojibway (also known as Saulteaux) which is referred to as Anishinaabe in this thesis. Speaking the language itself is referred to as *Anishinaabe mowin*. The religion in the community is mostly Christian but the spiritual belief system is Indigenous. Most people in the community, including the women interviewed, belong to Christian churches. Teachings for Anishinaabe women are passed down to certain people and families who live on reserves, other rural communities, and urban centres. These teachings incorporate the traditional way of life meaning that they hunt, fish, trap, and gather as part of their sustenance, as well as the use of traditional medicine for healing certain ailments and health conditions (Anderson 2000). The number of traditional healers still using medicines from the land is few in number. The situation is

similar for trappers, but hunting, fishing, and gathering activities are still very much part of some First Nations livelihoods (Traverse and Baydack 2005).

Lake St. Martin is signatory to Treaty 2, which was signed in 1871. Treaty 2 signatories included the Anishinaabe tribes in central and southwest Manitoba, and part of southeast Saskatchewan. Treaty 2 is part of the Numbered Treaties covering all of Manitoba, which are formal agreements that were created between the Crown and First Nations. The treaties provided for such things as reserve lands and other benefits such as agricultural equipment, livestock, annuities, ammunitions, gratuities, and clothing; and certain rights to hunt and fish, and protection of their traditional economies. The Treaties were also negotiated to protect First Nations cultures, land base and languages. First Nations did not view the Treaty process as a surrender of their land, but as an agreement to share the land and its resources with Canadians (Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba 2008).

1.5 Importance of Research

This research has academic importance to document how AKS impacts Anishinaabe way of life. AKS is a core value of the community I grew up in and myself. I started thinking about the local knowledge systems – the AKS of Anishinaabe women of Lake St. Martin and how much it contributes to the community but how it is overlooked by academia. The Anishinaabe women of Lake St. Martin have vast networks of AKS which have never been documented. However, these AKS are disappearing because the AKS is connected to language, which is also disappearing. There are many reasons why language is disappearing which will be examined more in Chapter 4.

In Canada, traditional land-users and Elders of Indigenous communities have vital information and in-depth knowledge about their local environment. Research and/or literature regarding Indigenous women and sustainable resource use and AKS are scarce. Vandana Shiva (1989), Kim Anderson (2000), Linda Hogan (2001), Bonita Lawrence (2003) are some of the researchers that have documented Indigenous women. The role of Indigenous women are recognized in various international arenas, organizations and conventions, such as the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Framework on the Climate Change Convention (UNFCCC), and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). In 2006, during the CBD Conference of the Parties, the Indigenous Women's Biodiversity Network (IWBN) asserted that 'Indigenous women are the key to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and their role in conserving biodiversity'¹.

Nationally, the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) is recognized as one of the five National Aboriginal Organizations in Canada. This recognition was a crucial step for Indigenous women gaining recognition in Canada. This recognition qualifies NWAC's membership, and the formal recognition of women on the National Aboriginal Council on Species at Risk (NACOSAR), which was formed as a result of the Species at Risk Act. However, despite recognition within various national and international arenas, research on Indigenous women's sustainable management is very limited. Research on traditional knowledge is quite extensive, but much of this research

¹ The Curitiba Declaration of the Indigenous Women's Biodiversity Network, Curitiba, Brazil, March 28 2006.

has been based on trying to compare the knowledge with western knowledge (Colorado 1988, Berkes 1993 & 1999).

This research is also of practical importance for the community decision-making regarding community planning as a result of the full-scale evacuation and the planning process toward permanent relocation. The research is important in considering the different needs of both genders as well as the different age categories such as the elders and youth. This research focused on my own local community of Lake St. Martin First Nation and as a community member which I have a lifelong commitment to rather than a short research interest in. I was granted a larger role in the community during the 2011 flood crisis to land use plan, to develop conceptual community plans, and to document the events of the flood. Knowing the people already, I have their trust which an outside researcher must take time to gain. A limitation may be that I was too close to the women and familiar with the subject matter, which prevents maintaining clear scientific objectivity. Nevertheless, my familiarity and kinship with these women and of their awareness of and unassuming relationship with their land and environment that supports this research. As well, scientific objectivity is not my goal.

Growing up in the community, I also speak the language and dialect, which is pivotal to this research. I was able to do my own translation and conducted all the interviews and visits in my language – which is the Anishinaabe mowin.

First Nation peoples and communities in Canada are diverse, and it is impossible to have a collective voice that will represent all the First Nation women or First Nation peoples of Canada. First Nations are diverse in their culture, geographical locations, traditions, language, social, and political structures.

‘Local community’ limits the scope of the research and can be a limitation in that the reader may think that the ‘local community’ is unimportant and has nothing to contribute to academia. However, the term ‘local community’ is also used in texts in international conventions and agreements. Precisely, it is worded as ‘Indigenous and local communities’ in various decisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Convention on Biological Diversity is an agreement on a comprehensive strategy for sustainable development while meeting our needs and ensuring that we leave a healthy and viable world for future generations. One of the key agreements adopted at Rio was the Convention on Biological Diversity. This agreement among the vast majority of the world's governments sets out commitments for maintaining the world's ecological underpinnings as we go about the business of economic development (CBD 2011).

Researching ‘local community’ allowed my research to remain focused on Anishinaabe women, most of who were known to me, which was an advantage. As previously discussed, AKS is from the local perspective. AKS is the next level of development in the field of research with Anishinaabe cultures and communities. The next section is a short discussion of the limitations.

1.6 Areas of Contributions

So far women’s knowledge has not been included in, traditional ecological studies, in studies of IKS or traditional land-use studies, according to Settee (2007), who problematizes this research gap. Research has been dominated by mostly western males. This has lead to a one-sided and narrow vision of science leaving the views, knowledge and wisdom of women out (Settee 1999, p. 18). Deloria (1997) describes how

methodologies have been dominated by westerners, insofar as suggesting that there is ‘inherent racism in academia and in scientific circles’ (p. 34). Deloria (1997) further states that there is a belief that if a person or community that possesses any knowledge that is not western in origin is unreliable. Deloria (1997) also states that it is still a widespread belief among western academics that an Indian or any other non-western person, cannot be an accurate observer of his or her own traditions because of personal involvement by the individual (p. 34). Indigenous Knowledge Systems challenge the notion that only Western knowledge is legitimate (Deloria 1995). This thesis asserts the opposite. Much of the literature that deals with TEK and IKS is written in the language of colonialism and neo-colonialism (Settee 2007; Odora Hoppers 2002; Smith 1999; Makgoba 1999), where Indigenous peoples are seen as the other.

1.7 Conclusion

To date, there has been little research conducted on Anishinaabe women and AKS. Similarly there has been limited research on AKS including men. The goal of this research is to examine the local AKS from the local perspective of the local Anishinabek in Lake St. Martin First Nation. This goal was accomplished by:

- 1) Exploring the sustainability of livelihoods in Lake St. Martin over time and the factors impacting men and women;
- 2) Analyzing the importance of language in AKS;
- 3) Documenting the role of Anishinabek in sustainability; and
- 4) Integrating AKS, language and gender in planning the new settlement of Lake St. Martin First Nation.

The impacts of Canadian and provincial policy, colonization, land degradation, modernization, education, and local politics on the role of Anishinabek in Anishinaabe society and culture are also an important part of this research.

The Anishinaabe way of life in terms of sustainable livelihoods from a historical perspective to present-day and how AKS have an important role in shaping the how the Anishinabek livelihoods are discussed. Various models were used to document sustainable livelihoods, as well as the importance of language in sustainable livelihoods and AKS.

The terms that are part of this research are carefully defined so that there is no confusion. The knowledge systems of AKS, IKS, and TEK were defined. The overarching knowledge base is IKS and both AKS and TEK fall within the parameters of IKS. Anishinaabe Knowledge Systems are the local knowledge systems that exist in a community, which is in this case, Lake St. Martin. They are layers of knowledge regarding relationships, roles and responsibilities of people, with respect to nature and the land.

Finally, this research is important to adding to the knowledge base regarding AKS and Anishinaabe women, their livelihoods, and the role of language and its relationship with knowledge systems. The integration of gender, language and AKS in community planning is essential.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND WESTERN RESEARCH

This research reviews three areas that are key to this research area of Anishinaabe Knowledge Systems (AKS) and Ubuskuuday'a Kwek (Lake St. Martin First Nation Women). These three areas include: 1) Anishinaabe Knowledge Systems; 2) women; and 3) language.

2.1 Anishinaabe Knowledge Systems

2.1.1 Defining Anishinaabe Knowledge Systems and Indigenous Knowledge Systems

Before delving into definitions, it is important to distinguish between First Nations, Status Indian and Indigenous peoples. First Nations is the term used for Status Indians in Canada. Canada uses 'Status Indian' to distinguish the groups in the definition of 'Aboriginal' which means Indian, Métis and Inuit. The word 'Indigenous' is a powerful word that has international significance. The term 'Indigenous' is a commonly used international term to refer to original inhabitants of a land. The United Nations defines Indigenous peoples as the inheritors and practitioners of unique cultures and ways of relating to other people and to the environment. Indigenous peoples have retained social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live (United Nations 2008). According to the United Nations (2004), the definition of Indigenous people can be summarized as:

Indigenous communities, peoples, and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop, and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their

continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions, and legal system.

This historical continuity may consist of the continuation, for an extended period reaching into the present of one or more of the following factors:

- Occupation of ancestral lands, or at least of part of them;
 - Common ancestry with the original occupants of these lands;
 - Culture in general, or in specific manifestations (such as religion, living under a tribal system, membership of an Indigenous community, dress, means of livelihood, lifestyle, etc.);
 - Language (whether used as the only language, as mother-tongue, as the habitual means of communication at home or in the family, or as the main, preferred, habitual, general or normal language);
 - Residence on certain parts of the country, or in certain regions of the world;
- Other relevant factors:
- On an individual basis, an Indigenous person is one who belongs to these Indigenous populations through self-identification as Indigenous (group consciousness) and is recognized and accepted by these populations as one of its members (acceptance by the group). This preserves for these communities the sovereign right and power to decide who belongs to them, without external interference (p. 2).

Throughout this research ‘Indigenous’ was used, particularly in Chapter 2. ‘First Nations’ and ‘Aboriginal’ was also used to refer to specific Canadian political contexts. The term ‘Anishinaabe’ (singular) and Anishinabek (plural) was used to refer to the local group of people to refer to the local context of the research and to the local knowledge systems. This is part of the new contribution to academic knowledge through this study.

There are numerous Indigenous scholars such as Colorado (1988), Deloria (1997 & 1998), Smith (1999), and Taiaiake (1999) who have been trail blazers in terms of conducting research using Indigenous methodologies and affirming that there are knowledge systems held by Indigenous people. However there are also non-Indigenous scholars such as Fikret Berkes, Julie Cruikshank, Milton Freeman, Charles Mann, and Marc Stevenson who have added to the rise of what is known as Traditional

Environmental Knowledge (TEK) or Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), which is widely used throughout the world, but does not typically use Indigenous methods or Indigenous worldview. Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) is the umbrella terminology for the ways of knowing of the Indigenous peoples of the world (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000).

Historically, Indigenous knowledge or even its existence has been ignored or overshadowed by the orthodox of knowledge called Eurocentrism. Eurocentrism postulates superiority over non-European knowledge. Eurocentrism “is built on a set of assumptions and beliefs that educated and usually unprejudiced Europeans and North Americans habitually accept as true, as supported by ‘the facts’ or as ‘reality.’” (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000 p. 21). Eurocentrism is built on diffusionism which is based on two assumptions: 1) most human communities are uninventive, and 2) a few human communities (or places, or cultures) are inventive and are thus the permanent centers of cultural change or “progress” (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). Eurocentrism has existed since first intrusion of the Europeans and the ‘discovery of America’. From the moment of first contact, everything written about the Indigenous people (Canada First Nations) was from the European perspective (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000; Bumsted 2003). The one-sided approach to history as it evolved in the ‘new world’ was totally remiss of the First Nations cultures and civilizations that already existed in the ‘new world’. Even to this day, non-Indigenous researchers focus on a small segment of knowledge and are not knowledgeable about the greater systems and their linkages (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). History was, and still is today to some degree, being monopolized by those with the tools to

record it (Bumsted 2003). However, as mentioned in the latter chapters, there are emerging Indigenous/Anishinaabe researchers who are setting history records straight.

Each Indigenous community has its own IKS based on language, culture, history, environment, experience, economy, social structure and spirituality (Settee 2007). But at the same time, each Indigenous person in the Indigenous community has different levels of knowledge. Each Indigenous community is tied into a larger cultural context that share general commonalities in terms of language, culture, social order, economy, and spirituality that form the broader boundaries of the overall Indigenous culture while each community within maintains its specific unique role with its own IKS (Settee 2007; and Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). For example, in the case of this study, Lake St. Martin First Nation is an Anishinaabe community in the Manitoba Interlake Region with its own IKS. In the larger cultural context of the Anishinaabe people in Canada and the United States, this knowledge realm is the IKS, but to the local knowledge realm it is community specific knowledge, which is the AKS. Like IKS, AKS is based on the intimate knowledge of the local environment based on the actual hands-on-interactive association with the land through generations. I described AKS in the preceding chapter as the local knowledge systems that exist in a community and how they are impacted by our specific environment, land, language and history. AKS are the layers of knowledge regarding relationships, roles and responsibilities of people, with respect to nature and the land. AKS are part of one's internal environment, shapes identity, and is central in forming relationships with family, Elders, and the spiritual world (Simpson 2001).

AKS and IKS consist of the observations of elders and other traditional users which includes women who by virtue of their closeness with the land have gained

insights and understanding of the natural environment; and are observing ongoing changes within the ecosystems (Northern River Basins Study 1996).

AKS refer to a local scope of knowledge systems that encompasses all understanding of the Anishinabek of their local environment and their integrated use of it, which in this case is the Anishinabek (Simpson 2001). IKS refers to knowledge systems that includes a broader inclusion and is the preferred international term. IKS may include the knowledge systems of many groups of Indigenous people worldwide and refers to the generalized understanding of the IKS (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000).

My view of AKS is that it encompasses all aspects of Anishinaabe cultures and lives. Nothing is compartmentalized and seen as ‘stand-alone’ entities in Indigenous societies. Everything is related to each other and each decision by an individual affects all other members of Indigenous society in one way or another. Everything and everybody is connected and related. In our Anishinaabe culture we say ‘all our relations.’ Around the globe this is referred to as ‘a way of life’ in Indigenous cultures (Tebtebba Foundation 2008). As mentioned before language, culture, history, environment, experience, economy, social structure and spirituality are all part of AKS. This includes for example, family values and traditional healing with plants (Hogan 2001).

Local AKS are based on the intimate knowledge of the local environment based on the actual hands-on-interactive association with the land through generations. Much of Anishinabek traditional activities incorporate sustainable resource use. Sustainable resource use is driven by Anishinaabe language and AKS. Sustainable resource use offers the opportunity to combine traditional cultural values and AKS with modern land-use and resource management systems (Moller et al 2004). These observations and

experiences are steeped in oral tradition and oral history (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000) – which in essence is Anishinaabe language and the ability to converse, understand, and speak it. Much of the teachings are deeply rooted in respect, which ultimately leads to how one should act or treat animate or inanimate objects, mainly flora and fauna (Lyons 2008). This understanding and knowledge is held and deeply rooted in the Anishinaabe language and passed on through the generations via language and traditional land use activities from generation to generation (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). AKS is discussed more in-depth in Chapter 5.

The AKS include languages, knowledge of the land and environment, Anishinaabe knowing and understanding of respect and caring (present day human rights), Anishinaabe histories and cultures, Anishinaabe women’s knowledge, Anishinaabe holistic values, Anishinaabe governance, traditional land-use studies and Anishinaabe knowledge systems. This research within the framework of AKS was focused on the local understandings of the interviewed women of Lake St. Martin specifically in relationship to their understanding and knowledge of the surrounding land and environment.

As previously mentioned, not all Anishinabek have AKS. Similarly, not all Anishinabek live off the land any longer. While statements are true, such as those stated by Settee (2007), Simpson (2001), Battiste and Youngblood Henderson (2000), and Cruikshank (1990) and other scholars, state that Indigenous people have their roots firmly established in their ecological landscape, which is a view of the world, aspirations and an avenue to true living which is very different from those held by the western culture whose knowledge is based mainly on European philosophies, these statements represent a

generation of Indigenous people where this way of life was necessary. The quantity and quality of knowledge systems also varies among community members, depending on gender, age, social status, intellectual capability, and profession (hunter/trapper, spiritual leader, healer, etc.) (Wolfe 1992).

Indigenous peoples perceive their environments in a holistic way where everything has a purpose. These Indigenous worldviews have taught Indigenous people everything from proper kinship order and how to have a nourishing relationship with our ecosystem (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000 p. 10). The same is also true for AKS of the Anishinaabe. Since it was part of everyday life for thousands of years it is deeply engrained in the Indigenous languages. Not so long ago, all food resources and all living supplies were obtained from the land that the Anishinabek as well other Indigenous groups occupied. Through this all environmental factors were understood. Cultural, social, and family values were based on the understanding of life in direct relationship with the land. Anishinaabe knowledge systems (AKS) is the local knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society in contrast with the international knowledge system generated by universities, research institutions and private firms. It is the basis for local-level decision making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, natural-resource management, and a host of other activities in rural communities (Flavier 1995; Warren 1991). AKS attempts much more to address the Anishinaabe land management system or systems of a community instead of just gathering traditional ecological knowledge in terms of some plant lists, some specifics about certain geographic areas that had not been understood, the count of specific animals and the pointing out of some

environmental changes due to landscape alterations or climatic changes. These phenomena are all part of the bigger picture of AKS.

Similarly, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) uses the following definition for Indigenous Knowledge:

Indigenous knowledge represents the accumulated experience, wisdom and know-how unique to cultures, societies, and or communities of people, living in an intimate relationship of balance and harmony with their local environments. These cultures have roots that extend into history beyond the advent of colonialism. They stand apart as distinctive bodies of knowledge, which have evolved over many generations within their particular ecosystem, and define the social and natural relationships with those environments. They are based within their own philosophical and cognitive system. In this way serve as a basis for community-level decision making in areas pertaining to governance, food security, human and animal health, childhood development and education, natural resource management and other vital socio-economic activities. Some see Indigenous Knowledge as a last hope in implementation of a sustainable future (CIDA 2002, p. 3).

Flavier et al (1995) refers to IK as the information base for a society, which facilitates communication and decision-making. In this same way, AKS is the base for the Anishinabek, which is the foundation of their knowledge system. AKS are dynamic, and are continually influenced by internal creativity and experimentation as well as by contact with external systems. Ellen and Harris (1996) further support the characteristics of Indigenous knowledge as local and orally transmitted.

In South Africa, Indigenous scholars have defined IKS as local knowledge that is unique to a culture or society and are located outside the formal educational system (Ellen and Harris 1996). They allow communities to survive and are the basis for decision making in health, agriculture, food preparation, natural resource management, and education. IKS are part of the community. They are embedded in community practices, rituals and relationships and are part of everyday life (Flavier et al 1995).

However, colonialism has negatively affected South African IKS (Snyman 2002, p. 101). The same is also true for Canada where policies such as the Indian Act and Residential Schools were introduced. These policies forced Anishinabek and other native groups to live on reserves and in effect losing their AKS. Living on reserves meant a lifestyle of waiting for government assistance that has done more harm than good (Buckley 1993). However, colonialism, the suppression of language and culture, and epidemics of disease and death have resulted in the permanent loss of some knowledge and the need to rebuild, protect and transmit community Indigenous knowledge throughout Canada (NAHO 2003).

IKS evolved as a result of international recognition of Indigenous Peoples and their knowledge in various international organizations and forums such as United Nations, Convention on Biological Diversity, Food and Agriculture Organization, and World Bank, to name but a few. Indigenous people and researchers have come to understand that Indigenous communities have specific systems of land and natural resource management administered among their members. Based on the non-understanding of Indigenous languages and the shortage of Indigenous researchers who speak the language this is a rather unknown research field. However, both fields are growing and expanding with additional research and new horizons and understandings are reached. The inability for one to understand an Indigenous language regardless of how much research knowledge one has is the greatest limitation in IKS research. This is changing and recognition of Indigenous peoples as knowledge holders has been documented in various international conventions such as the Convention on Biological

Diversity, RAMSAR Convention, and the United Nations Framework on the Convention on Climate Change, to name a few.

2.1.2 Anishinaabe and Indigenous Worldview

“We the Original Peoples of this land know the Creator put us here. The Creator gave us laws that govern all our relationships to live in harmony with nature and mankind.

The Laws of the Creator defined our rights and responsibilities.

The Creator gave us our spiritual beliefs, our languages, our culture, and a place on Mother Earth, which provided us with all our needs.

We have maintained our Freedom, our Languages, and our Traditions from time immemorial.

We continue to exercise the rights and fulfill the responsibilities and obligations given to us by the Creator for the land upon which we were placed. The Creator has given us the right to govern ourselves and the right to self-determination.

The rights and responsibilities given to us by the creator cannot be altered or taken away by any other Nation” (Assembly of First Nations 2002, retrieved 2010).

Fundamentally this is Indigenous people’s understanding and view of the world and how Indigenous peoples function on the earth (Tebtebba Foundation 2008).

Common to all Indigenous peoples around the world was our special relationship to the land (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). However this has changed due to colonization, political strife on reserves, dysfunction, and residential schools, to name a few (Settee 2007). The land with its peoples, animals, and plants was sacred. This was an ancient understanding in Indigenous cultures that has not changed for those still going on the land. It was the very foundation and core of Indigenous peoples’ understanding of their existence, worldview, and role as caretakers of the land that they reside in (Tebtebba Foundation 2008; Deloria 1997; Smith 1999). Indigenous communities carried this responsibility: the land was sacred and if cared for properly it will provide for its people

for all times. In this way, healthy and viable communities were created. The local Indigenous women were responsible for looking after their families and homes as well as catching and growing their food while their husbands were away (Shiva 1989). Every part of a fish or animal hunted for food would be consumed or utilized for other purposes (LaDuke 2005). Today, the Anishinabek still hold the ideal of healthy and prosperous communities, but this is often challenging because of past and present policies, which will be discussed more in Chapter 6.

Since the earth is the only place that people can live on and sustain livelihoods, the earth and everything on it is considered to be living and not to be disrespected, and is viewed as a mother. Everything is provided for the survival, livelihood, and well-being for people. This understanding has been translated into English as ‘Mother Earth.’ Therefore, Anishinabek believes that it is fundamentally important to respect and take care of the all providing source. This understanding is fundamental to the women of Lake St. Martin First Nation.

Quite often Indigenous women are the first to draw attention to environmental crisis. For example, during the Oka Crisis, the Mohawk women were the spokespersons. It is the women who draw attention to the need for water security with the Mother Earth Water Walk (NWAC 2011). The proposal to designate part of the Boreal Forest in eastern Manitoba as a World Heritage was spearheaded by an Indigenous woman. During the protesting of the flood crisis at Lake St. Martin First Nation in 2011 it was the Anishinaabe women who were instrumental in raising awareness and staging the protests against both levels of government. Indigenous women involve themselves in environmental activism. As son (2000) states:

Our relationship with creation involves connection with all that exists around us: plants, animals, land, water, sun, moon, and the sky world. Because the land is our Mother Earth, and the moon is our Grandmother, Native women have a special relationship with these parts of creation. To many native women, reclaiming a relationship to land is as important as recreating Indigenous social and human relations, because the land is something through which we define ourselves, and it is essential in our creation. Aboriginal women do not see the land as wild material resources that need to be developed, possessed, or controlled; rather, the land is a relative with whom we have a special relationship (p. 180).

Traditionally, Indigenous women who depend on the land and live close to the land are viewed as Earth mothers giving more to society than their children (Anderson, 2000). Traditional Indigenous societies understood that women had significant roles, responsibilities and skills as the primary caregivers of children (Anderson and Lawrence, 2003). Indigenous societies upheld the women who held care giving roles and gave them power to make decisions about their families, communities and nations. Their role was to inspire so that people around them would flourish to make a better world for the future (Anderson 2000, p. 68). Being primary caregivers also extended into stewardship and looking after land or looking after ‘mother earth’, a common metaphorical term for the Earth and its biosphere as the giver and sustainer of life (Earth-Mother-Earth 2010).

Many variations in cultural expression exist between the different Indigenous peoples around the world; the sacredness of the earth and the role of stewards are the most common principles that unite Indigenous people in a common worldview (Smith 1999). In Canada it is referred to as Aboriginal worldview, where Indigenous peoples honor and respect the gift of life as given by the Creator, or ‘Manitou’ in Anishinaabe and live accordingly (Mercredi and Turpel 1993, p. 155-156; RCAP 1996a, p. 63; RCAP 1996c, p. 449; Wuttunee 2000, p. 20). Indigenous peoples have a sense of a shared

responsibility to protect the land for future generations and to “honor, maintain and protect the cycle of creation” (Wuttunee 2000, p. 17). Where that sense of responsibility comes from was explored in this research.

Indigenous peoples relationship with the land has led to the development of their own IKS with their distinct worldviews, spirituality, mythology, creation stories, social orders, justice systems, land and resource management systems, and their relationships to other people in the world (Settee 2007; La Duke 2005; Atleo 2004; Battiste and Henderson 2000; and Smith 1999). Indigenous peoples make “sense of their world” (Kulchyski *et al.* 1999, p. xi) through their understandings and experiences in relationship with the land. Wuttunee (2000) explains “the relationship with the land is complex and not easily understood nor experienced for people not born into that tradition” (p. 73).

Indigenous worldviews and IKS are derived directly from the ancient and ongoing relationship with the land (Smith 1999; and Wright 1992). Each Indigenous culture has its own spiritual and cultural understandings that have developed over thousands of years into distinct Indigenous cultures that are rich in tradition and language (Bumsted 2003). Each culture and community is different. However, Indigenous peoples tend to be united by the same struggles such as poverty, being pushed off their land, and colonization (Settee 2007; and Smith 1999). These struggles arise from the core value that the land is sacred and needs to be cared for. Taking care of the land is integral in the thinking processes of Indigenous peoples when they think of natural resources, forests, and economic development projects that are affecting their traditional lands. Indigenous peoples demand that this is the first concern in relationship to development instead of focusing on the economic revenues it might generate. A fundamental understanding of

Indigenous peoples is that the land will always provide for the benefit of its people as long as it is cared for (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). If the Earth is not cared for by its people, it will eventually starve – ‘tuni pukhutay khamika’ (Elder 1999). Indigenous peoples that occupied specific areas saw themselves as guardians of this land, which was given to them by the Creator for their use (Anderson and Lawrence 2003). The role of guardian or steward was and still is essential in the worldview, philosophies, and spirituality of Indigenous peoples worldwide.

Spirituality and spiritual understanding is at the center of Aboriginal worldview. The core of this spiritual understanding is that the land is sacred and Indigenous peoples as part of the sacredness of life are integrated into the cycles of life (Wenzel 1991; RCAP 1996a; Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000; Whitely 2000; Wuttunee 2000; Dudgeon 2003). Indigenous peoples are equal to all other life forms and not above them. Many people in Lake St. Martin are Christian and so people grow up hearing from Genesis 1:26 (KJV): “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth”. Man was bestowed the responsibility to take care of the land and to be stewards of God’s creatures. Furthermore, the roles of stewardship are reiterated in Genesis 2:15 (KJV) “Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it”. Indigenous peoples took the role of stewardship and recognized that the land was not to be exploited, wasted or despoiled, but to be cared for as instructed by God or “Muntoo”, for the benefit of mankind. Mankind is acknowledged by Indigenous people as “all our relations”. They include the land, the animals, and the plants. Spiritual

connections to the land, animals, and plants are fundamental to Indigenous peoples (Brody 1981; Brown and Brightman 1988; Wenzel 1991; Milne 1994; Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000).

2.1.3 Indigenous Stewardship

With the fundamental understanding of the sacredness of the land and the interconnectedness of all living things some Indigenous communities have already achieved alternative land development strategies, as well as large-scale resource projects that benefit Indigenous communities (Wuttunee 1998). At other times alterations to large-scale resource exploitations were achieved that minimize the negative effects on the landscape. This is a fast growing area in natural resources developments especially in areas with Indigenous communities with legislation to address this issue (CEAA 2009). These issues are pressing in Canada with its large amount of Indigenous communities with growing populations spread from coast to coast. Also in lieu of possible resource shortages with ever-growing world populations, rising pollution problems and the possibility of a serious environmental crisis the awareness of better resource and environmental management is more and more on the minds of the decisions makers and resource developers. The demand for sustainable development is growing everywhere. The subject of sustainable development and how it relates to Indigenous worldview is discussed in the next section.

The Teme-Augama Anishnaabe of Ontario (Lake Temagami) developed a specific definition of Aboriginal stewardship and sustainability in regards to their forested lands. They had to deal with forestry and road development issues on traditional lands.

Forest stewardship means: the forest belongs to the life that lives within it and that the future generations of this life are dependent upon the continuity of the forest. Human beings must respect forest life and integrate human uses of the forest in a manner compatible with the continuity of forest life. Forever.

Sustained life means: protecting and maintaining the life of the earth, air, and water that gives life to the forest, which protects and replenishes the earth, air, and water, as well as creating an interdependent home for all biological life forms within it. Designated trees and / or forest areas must be allowed to die, fall to the earth, decay, and return to earth, thus giving life to earth, which can then support the growth of a new forest for future generations, forever.

Sustained development means: (1) a political system that secures effective citizen participation in decision-making; (2) an economic system that is able to generate surpluses and technical knowledge on a self-reliant and sustainable basis; (3) a social system that provides for solutions for the tensions arising from disharmonious development; (4) an education system that respects the obligation to preserve the ecological base for development; (5) a technological system that can search continuously for new solutions; and (6) an administrative system that is flexible and has the capacity for self-correction (Potts 1989, pp. 208-209).

Indigenous stewardship is about wanting the land to continue yielding the same benefits over and over again.

2.1.4 Sustainable Development and AKS

Indigenous peoples' foundations for self-sufficiency prior to the arrival of Europeans was based on a traditional economy which emphasized the sustainable use of a natural and renewable resource base (Wright 1992). The natural environment and the cultures of the people required a nomadic or semi-nomadic existence. To allow for the natural replenishment of areas new resources were sought (Wright 1992; Mann 2005). The concept of land ownership was foreign—as they felt the lands could not be owned but were provided for the collective use and benefit of all living creatures.

In 1987, a call to the world for sustainable development was made by the World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland 1987), which led to the Rio Summit in 1992, and paving the way for the Convention on Biological Diversity that was signed during the Summit. According to Brundtland (1987) :

Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable – to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (p. 8).

The report calls for development that moves away from creating unsatisfactory conditions of life and leads toward a life regarded as spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and materially healthy. Brundtland (1987, ix) proposes “long-term environmental strategies for achieving sustainable development”. Overall, the acceptance and growth of sustainable development has been slow worldwide but may need time to unfold. Indigenous peoples see the importance of this report but made headway and have been instrumental in gaining recognition at the international level.

Specific to forests, Indigenous peoples have participated at various forums such as the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), and the Conference of the Parties on the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Indigenous people have been instrumental in presenting their positions on sustainable forest management relating to their traditional livelihoods and way of life. These positions have been summarized in Indigenous peoples’ statements² such as Kari-Oca (1992), Leticia (1996), Kimberley (2002), Cancun (2003), Durban (2003), Wendake (2003), and Corobicí (2004).

² *Kari-Oca Declaration and the Indigenous Peoples' Earth Charter* (World Conference of Indigenous Peoples on Territory, Environment and Development, Kari-Oca, Brazil 25-30 May 1992); *Leticia Declaration and Proposals for Action with regard to the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests* (Leticia, Colombia 13 December 1993); *The Kimberley Declaration* (World Summit on Sustainable Development, Khoi-San Territory Kimberley, Johannesburg, South Africa, August 2002); *The International Cancun Declaration of Indigenous Peoples*. (5th WTO Ministerial Conference, Cancun, Quintana Roo, Mexico. 12 September 12 2003); *Indigenous Peoples' Declaration*

The purpose of these statements was to gain Indigenous peoples' consensus on the key issues and concerns thereby enabling integration with other sustainable forest management initiatives, particularly those of the UNFF. The statements also recognize the spiritual, social, cultural, economic, and political significance of Indigenous Peoples to their lands and resources for their continued survival.

The worldwide call for sustainable development is growing. People are becoming more aware of the need for sustainable living in order to protect the environment as much as possible while at the same time creating healthy living conditions (Thompson 2008). This requires new ways of understanding and thinking about the world around us and ourselves. Canada is one of the most active countries in sustainable development and in trying to develop ways of finding sustainable and healthy solutions (Industry Canada 2010).

Their stewardship role is guided by customary law or AKS which recognizes a set of responsibilities and obligations governing individuals, families, as well as the communities as a whole, on how they should treat and respect the environment - the land and sea - around them (Lyons 2008). These rules direct behaviour with respect to resource access and use, and they govern, manage, and regulate territorial boundaries and resources (Lyons 2008). Indigenous peoples' land offer them fulfillment that is based on the perception that land and sea related activities correspond directly to Indigenous peoples lifestyles and cultural aspirations (Shiva 1989; Fitznor 2006; Tebtebba Foundation 2008).

(World Parks Congress fifth World Parks Congress (WPC) held in Durban, South Africa, 8-17 September 2003); *Wendake Action Plan* (presented at the World Forestry Congress, Quebec City, September 24 2003)

In modern times this use of the land under stewardship is referred to as a ‘traditional land-use territory’ or ‘land-use planning’ by government (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 2010). Land-use plans are important because ‘First Nations’ culture and spirituality is intrinsically tied to their traditional territory (BC Treaty Commission 2010). First Nations in British Columbia submit a land use-plan outlining their First Nations traditional territory upon entering the BC treaty process. First Nations in Manitoba under Treaty Land Entitlement map their traditional territories to fulfill a long-standing commitment arising from the numbered Treaties signed between Canada and the First Nations between 1871 and 1910 (Treaty Land Entitlement Committee of Manitoba 2010). Mapped traditional territories are utilized whenever development takes place in or near traditional lands.

Any type of development that is in or near Indigenous traditional territory requires the completion of an Environmental Impact Assessment (Canadian Environment Assessment Agency 2009), as well as a Duty to Consult by the government (CEAA 2009).

The common law duty to consult is based on judicial interpretation of the obligations of the Crown (federal, provincial and territorial governments) in relation to potential or established Aboriginal or Treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada, recognized and affirmed in section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. The duty cannot be delegated to third parties. Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 provides that:

- (1) The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed.
- (2) In this Act, “aboriginal peoples of Canada” includes the Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada.
- (3) For greater certainty, in subsection (1) “treaty rights” includes rights that now exist by way of land claims agreements or may be so acquired.
- (4) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the aboriginal and treaty rights referred to in subsection (1) are guaranteed equally to male and female persons.

In the Haida and Taku River decisions in 2004, and the Mikisew Cree decision in 2005, the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) held that the Crown has a duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate when the Crown contemplates conduct that might adversely impact potential or established Aboriginal or Treaty rights. This duty has been applied to an array of Crown actions and in relation to a variety of potential or established Aboriginal or Treaty rights. (AANDC 2012, p. 7).

Most often when Indigenous territories are developed, the traditional economies are undermined or declared as non-existent. Their homelands are dominated, altered, and often ruined and contaminated often resulting in an entire way of life disappearing. In too many cases, Indigenous people have been relocated from their land such as the Dene from Tadoule Lake and the Cree of Labrador and Northern Quebec, and have been placed in unfamiliar land (Mander & Tauli-Corpuz 2005).

In the past, developments on First Nations traditional territories and lands were initiated without prior informed consent from Indigenous people. However, there is now a process in place that at least minimizes damage or destruction of Indigenous peoples lands and territories (CEAA 2009). These processes provide protection, albeit minimal, for Indigenous peoples' sites of cultural and traditional importance. For example, one of the provisions in the Northern Flood Agreement (1977) is the protection of burial sites and objects of traditional and cultural significance. The protection of these sites is crucial because this is where the Indigenous knowledge is embedded. Indigenous knowledge can also be also integrated into land use and land management plans by documenting this knowledge through discussions with elders and community forest users. The areas identified by community members can then be mapped and inventoried as part of the plan and decisions made about how to maintain and ensure continued traditional use. Many

Indigenous communities are now conducting traditional and current land use studies as a basis for land claims or participation in forest land operations (NAFA 2002).

Today, many IKS are at risk of becoming extinct because of rapidly changing natural environments and ecosystems triggered by fast paced economic, political, and cultural changes on a global scale (Warren 1991). Practices vanish, as they become inappropriate for new challenges or because they adapt too slowly. As well, colonization of Indigenous people has also played a major role in the loss of IK (Smith 1999). The tragedy of the impending disappearance of Indigenous knowledge is most obvious to those whose lives depend on IK and make a living through it. However, it affects others as well, when skills, technologies, artifacts, problem solving strategies and expertise are lost (World Bank 2007). Land use studies and consultations with Indigenous peoples, to define and protect traditional land and cultural sites, are now common practice by the government and are part of policy and legislation.

The development planning processes for Indian reserves need to allow for these kinds of traditional land-use activities so that areas of significant importance especially for obtaining medicinal plants are not taken under development and construction. Land-use activities are important because they are a way of life for many Anishinaabe women. Many Anishinaabe and other First Nation communities have land-use studies and planning processes in place. The land-use plans are useful and assist in identifying important sites of traditional and cultural significance. The studies also assist in the utilization and recognition of Indigenous knowledge.

Many First Nation communities in Manitoba have traditional land-use studies in place such as Peguis, Fisher River, Poplar River, Norway House, and Skownan that

incorporate IKS. Lake St. Martin has not been afforded the opportunity to have a land-use study. This is mainly due to unstable leadership in the community and the lack of involvement of community members, especially women in decision-making. Similar to Lake St Martin Indigenous knowledge is not yet fully recognized and utilized in the development process in third world countries (World Bank 2009). Conventional approaches imply that development processes always require more advanced technology. This practice has often led to overlooking the potential in local experiences and practices, which makes up Indigenous knowledge (Flavier 1995). For example in Ethiopia, introduced varieties and commercially marketed seeds are replacing local varieties, and the local knowledge disappears. The international community is striving to establish gene banks to preserve the genetic information of local varieties or indigenous species. However, the seeds and clones do not carry the instructions on how to grow the seeds, which have been nurtured by Indigenous people (World Bank 2009).

The concept of sustainable development is significant to this research because it recognizes a connection with the earth that resonates with Indigenous worldviews and is supported by research that Indigenous peoples have been practicing the concepts of sustainable development since time immemorial (Shiva 1989; Deloria 1997; Smith 1999; Mann 2005; Nelson 2008). In many countries that have high Indigenous peoples populations most of the sustainable development movement revolves around questions of traditional land use activities and how large-scale resource use could be applied in more sustainable ways (LaDuke 2005). This is an area that is growing quickly in Canada in conjunction with all First Nations communities in regards to sustainable development and traditional land use activities.

2.1.5 Traditional land use and land use planning

For resource development to respect Indigenous traditional land use and planning new policies and environmental guidelines and standards must be put in place. An example of this is setting aside and designating part of the Boreal Forest in eastern Manitoba as a World Heritage Site. This would ensure that traditional land and territory is preserved. However not all policies and environmental guidelines serve the general interest of local stakeholders. One example is the 6-kilometer channel that is being constructed from Lake St. Martin to Buffalo Lake. The channel was built without consulting the First Nations and without doing an environmental impact assessment. The Province circumvented required consultations and environmental assessments by implementing the Emergency Measures Act.

Traditional territories meld, blend and overlap with the traditional land-use territories of neighbouring communities. Traditional land-use territories exist in the minds of the people of each Indigenous community (Brody 1981). This is recognized as mental mapping or cognitive maps. Brody (1981) was the first researcher to identify this with Indigenous people in Canada. They are recorded in the oral tradition, songs, and stories and through the repeated and consistent use of them. They shift shape with the movements of people throughout the seasons and throughout time. In the 1970s, mapping of traditional land-use territories started in Canada with Freeman (1976). Mental and cognitive mapping and land-use provide Indigenous people with an invaluable resource management tool that is tied to a way of life and Indigenous language.

Very structured linear work environments are in stark contrast to the cyclical rhythms of nature (Lyons 2008) that are associated with traditional land-use. Their boundaries are not defined by linear as well as clear and visible borders the way it is with the North American township system. Instead no boundaries can be detected on air photos and maps as opposed to land use degradation by western development projects that are clearly visible.

2.1.6 Renewed Interest in Indigenous Knowledge Systems

AKS as a holistic Indigenous knowledge base is on the verge of being lost as the onslaught of Western knowledge and technology converges upon Indigenous peoples. Kawagley (1995) recalls how AKS was carefully constructed around mythology, history, observations of natural processes and animals' and plants' style of survival and obtaining food, and use of material to make their tools and implements, all of which were made understandable through stories and examples. Additionally, this knowledge base of the world has been brought into jeopardy as Indigenous peoples became educated in Western institutions and are forced to speak English only (Smith 1999).

Preservation of AKS is at risk because of its fragile oral tradition. Every time an Elder dies or Indigenous people lose access to traditional land use activities due to the ongoing 'domestication' of 'wild lands in the form of agriculture and industrial resource developments, important parts of AKS vanish as well. Indigenous languages and uses of language that includes specific aspects of AKS disappear when the corresponding land access disappears. With the disappearance of land use, traditions and important knowledge are not passed on to younger generations in the oral tradition. For example,

Indigenous youth are forced to learn the new western technologies and knowledge systems in land and resource management without having the full understanding of their local AKS. Payne and Nepinak (1996) describe how knowledge was lost and cultural extinction took hold, replaced by a new culture – one that was deeply rooted in poverty. However, AKS is being revitalized. Despite the influence of residential schools, survivors are going ‘back to the bush’ and practicing traditional land-use activities to survive in the modern economy which had no benefits or role for First Nation peoples (RCAP 1996).

AKS are now being researched and documented for future generations. AKS are being acknowledged by Anishinaabe leaders as a means of returning to traditional values and culture to provide social stability and cultural identity. With self-government being a major issue, Indigenous peoples are beginning to gain control of land by using different approaches to sustainable resource management vis-à-vis AKS (Mildon 2008). AKS have gained momentum in its importance due to Indigenous resource initiatives and land claims (Mildon 2008). For example, the province is pursuing resource development and co-management arrangements with First Nations communities such as Skownan First Nation and West Region Tribal Council Resource Management to encourage cooperative approaches to resource management and to recognize the importance of sustainable development in land and resource use planning.

In its humble beginnings TEK as understood by non-Aboriginal researchers such as Fikret Berkes, Julie Cruikshank, and Carl Folke, gained prominence because it borrowed from the anthropological model of looking at societies through new eyes. With time Native Studies/Indigenous Departments have started to play a stronger role in

defining and developing TEK. With time IKS replaced TEK to describe a more complex understanding of Indigenous peoples. AKS is the next level of development in this regard. As an Aboriginal researcher in a non-Aboriginal research world, I have to incorporate non-Anishinaabe knowledge systems and technology in order to create new understandings of AKS that will not only inform academia but also benefit my people.

2.1.7 The Importance of Indigenous Knowledge

The importance of Indigenous Knowledge is gaining momentum as is indicated by its acceptance in various international agreements, the need to incorporate IKS into land use studies, and so forth (Colorado 1988; Deloria 1997 & 1998; Smith 1999; Taiaiake 1999; Settee 2007; Young-Ing 2008). The notion that North America was a ‘wilderness’ untouched by humans has persevered and has been reinforced repeatedly in history books. This myth justified appropriation of Aboriginal lands and the genocide that befell Aboriginal peoples (Martinez 1993; Denevan 1992). In contrast to this myth, and prior to the arrival of the Europeans, North America was home to over 100 million Indigenous peoples with advanced irrigation systems, agriculture, government systems and architecture (Mann 2005; Wright 1992).

Indigenous peoples knowledge is now recognized and continues to be the basic component of many country’s knowledge system (World Bank 2007). Significant contributions to global knowledge have originated from Indigenous people. For instance, ‘successions’ – the sequences by which ecosystems fill in open land - were frequently utilized by North American Indigenous peoples prior to the arrival Europeans. Indigenous people managed their ecosystems:

Rather than domesticate animals for meat, Indians retooled ecosystems to encourage elk, deer, and bear. Constant burning of undergrowth increased the numbers of herbivores, the predators that fed on them, and the people who ate them both. Rather than the thick, unbroken, monumental snarl of trees... the great eastern forest was an ecological kaleidoscope of garden plots, blackberry brambles, pine barrens, and spacious groves of chestnut, hickory, and oak. The first white settlers in Ohio found woodlands that resembled English parks – they could drive carriages through the trees” (Mann 2005, p. 250-1).

Another example is the use of fire. In North America, the Indigenous peoples managed land and resources with fire. Fire was used to pursue food – “deer in the northeast, alligators in the Everglades, buffalo in the prairies, grasshoppers in the Great Basin; rabbits in California; moose in Alaska” (Mann 2005, p. 250). The use of fire among North American Indigenous peoples is not unique but is common practice among Indigenous populations in other parts of the world. Aboriginal peoples’ burning practices derive from rich understandings of how fires influence the distribution and relative abundance of plant and animal resources (Mann 2005). Fire use is clearly a form of resource and environmental management based on AKS (Lewis 1989). The Northern River Basins Study (1996) states that intentional use of fire by Aboriginal peoples was to control and encourage plant succession and consequently, wildlife abundance and distribution. Without Aboriginal hunters in Yellowstone National Park, the elk population destroyed the willow and aspen communities that the beaver needed for food and dam building (Chadde and Kay 1991).

Setting aside an area as ‘wilderness’ or a national park will not preserve some remnant of the past, but creates conditions that have not existed in the last 10,000 years. Chadde and Kay (1991) suggest that unless the importance of Aboriginal land management is recognized and modern management practices change accordingly, our

ecosystems will continue to lose the biological diversity and ecological integrity it once had. Clarkson et al. (1992) recognized Indigenous peoples as a precious resource for knowledge about how to live on the land in an ecologically and socially sustainable way due to their knowledge of local resource base, animals, plants, water, rocks, and the soil.

The importance of preserving IKS as a resource management tool lies in the heart of cultural identity and for practical reasons as identified by the Dene Cultural Institute (1993). Firstly, new biological and ecological insights about different aspects of the environment can be derived from perceptive investigations of IKS. IKS is relevant for renewable resource management in areas such as wetlands, tropical rain forests, circumpolar regions, dry land, high-altitude, and coastal areas. The concept of IKS with respect to protected areas and conservation education may be promoted to allow resident communities to continue their traditional harvesting activities, with the benefits of conservation accruing to them. The use of IKS in planning and development may benefit economic development agencies in providing more realistic evaluations of production systems, natural resources, and the environment. Environmental impact assessments depend on the time-tested and in-depth knowledge of indigenous peoples about their local environment and are a valuable resource in assessing the social and environmental impacts of proposed development projects. Environmental ethics span from the traditional belief systems of many Indigenous peoples integrating ideals and values which are increasingly relevant to modern concepts of sustainable development and human behaviour toward nature. Lastly, IKS is essential for the maintenance of a subsistence economy and any economic endeavours which depend on renewable resources (Dene Cultural Institute 1993).

Any type of development project should incorporate Indigenous knowledge in the designing, planning and/or implementing stage. Recognizing the importance of AKS and IKS is crucial, as is the knowledge and relationship Indigenous women have with their land and traditional territories is even more invaluable. The knowledge of women in this regard is also essential and must be taken under consideration.

2.1.8 The importance of women in IKS

Women, as well, have always been part of this life and economy (Tebtebba Foundation 2008; White 2000). Women lived and worked on the land and had an in-depth understanding and knowledge of life and the environment around them (Tebtebba Foundation 2008; Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000; Shiva 1989). They were keen observers of the natural environment since the attainment of food was essential at all times. Women had an innate understanding of this and had their assigned roles in Indigenous society to honour this stewardship (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). The women today are still stewards. However, their roles and interaction with the land is somewhat less than in previous generations because of obvious reasons such as, colonization, technology and industrialization.

So far economic analysis that tries to determine dollar value of Indigenous economies has completely failed to include the labour and worth of women into their analysis. Indigenous women form the backbone of Indigenous communities (Shiva 1989). They bear and raise children. They are the main caregivers of the elderly and the sick. They form a web of social interactions that keep the culture and language alive (Hogan 2001). “Women preserve the social, cultural and natural foundations of their

communities and establish norms that retain traditions and challenge undemocratic practices. Women's economic contributions are seldom counted" (Settee 2008, p. 3). In Lake St. Martin it is the women who bear the burden of supplementing their household income. Due to high poverty rates on the Lake St. Martin First Nation reserve (Statistics Canada, 2006), particularly for single mothers, supplementing income is often needed to meet basic needs. There are different means of supplementing income and may not necessarily have a dollar value. Some of these may include gathering berries, looking after someone else's children and reciprocating, gathering traditional medicines, and hunting and preparing traditional game. While this list is by no means exclusive it is the basis of AKS.

2.1.9 The Circle of Life

In Lake St. Martin First Nation and other First Nation communities, ceremonies, such as the sun dance and pow-wow were banned by colonial government (RCAP 1996). However, people still practice traditional 'activities' such as gathering plants for medicines and food, hunting activities, to name a few. Values of sharing and caring for other fellow humans as well as for the environment are fundamental to AKS. In this way the survival of weaker community members is secured. This means that the needs of community members are placed before individual gain. In the Mohawk culture this is referred to as *Rotinohshonni Kaienerekowas*, or 'the Great Law of Peace.' This philosophy promotes unity, peace, and balance among individuals, families, clans, tribes, and nations while upholding diversity of Indigenous cultures (Settee 2007, p. 13). Respect for the land, respect for nature, respect of Elders, honouring ancestors and

honouring spirituality is fundamental to Indigenous communities. In times of conflict, or when mistakes were made, the emphasis was on reconciliation, healing, and fitting back into the group rather than on punishment and isolation (Settee 2007, p. 14). This response to conflict is a fundamental difference between AKS and western European culture and one of the greatest struggles that Indigenous communities around the world are facing. There are examples around the world where attempts of restorative justice have been made but much work has to be done for the full implementation of ways of justice that are in alignment of AKS.

2.1.10 Layers of Knowledge

Indigenous Knowledge Systems are multi-dimensional and multi-layered (Settee 2007; Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). Each individual learns to her or his capacity. Each person brings special gifts that contribute to the knowledge and wisdom of AKS. All age groups are included in AKS. They include knowledge about “economics, politics, music, leadership, transportation, building, astronomy, women’s contributions, art, literature / stories, humour, and community values” (Settee 2007, p. 15).

There are many forms of expression and ways that AKS is shared and passed on (LaDuke 2005; Hogan 2001; Knudtson and Suzuki 1992). Most important ways of sharing are telling stories, singing songs, ceremonies, dances, humor, and the hands-on every day experience through observation, being in communication and participating in the activities that make out every day Indigenous living. Songs and legends pre-date

recorded history. They include creation stories, moral teachings of living a good life, the possibility of making mistakes, exploring the world as well as dealing with death and dying and the other world (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992).

Many Anishinaabe stories contain teachings on transformation into the spirit world and also from human to animal form and back. Nanabush is an example of this type of storytelling among the Anishinaabe. The importance of balance and respect between animals and humans is often stressed (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992). Two more important subjects are family values and the strength and special gifts of women. Survival and rebirth are essential (Settee 2007, p. 17-18). Stories, legends, and songs are multi-layered and contain teachings for all ages. Every time a person hears a story or a song it triggers a teaching within the person (Hogan 2001). The passing on of knowledge, wisdom and teachings continues to be largely in the oral tradition (Dene Cultural Institute 1993). Efforts to capture this vast knowledge base and practices in writing and documents are present in many Indigenous communities today (Folke 2004; Northern Research Basins Study 1996).

2.1.11 Indigenous Homelands: Community Practices in Land and Resource Management

Indigenous peoples around the world are against empire building and western industrial developments of their ancestral lands (Smith 1999). The establishment of empires and colonization has meant the deconstruction of Indigenous people's homelands, traditional cultures and economic systems (Settee 2008, p. 2). Indigenous peoples around the world are confronted daily with these issues. Part of the legacy of colonization is that Indigenous communities are becoming "globalized market places at

the fringe of ‘development’” (Settee 2008, p. 3). Indigenous communities have hardly any resources in order to effectively deal with these developments and governments that allow this. Land is constantly allocated and sold to multi-national co-operations for large-scale resource extraction for gigantic profits.

The effects of post colonization have been drastic to a point where entire communities are in a state of lingering depression and post-traumatic stress (Smith 1999), and yet governments seem ignorant to the causes. Some Indigenous communities are in a state of major disruption and dysfunction. Actions are rarely taken to help communities to deal with these issues. Instead the entire focus is constantly on how to generate jobs and money in these depressed communities.

A social order of domination and exploitation breaks down healthy and natural human relations (Thompson 2008) especially relating to the land (Settee 2007; Smith 1999). This social order leaves too many people behind who do not have coping mechanisms for high levels of stress that is involved in competition and timely work demands that are not in-line with the rhythms of nature.

2.1.12 How to Move Forward with Indigenous Knowledge Systems

Due to the unhealthy impacts of colonization on Indigenous communities (Smith 1999; Deloria 1988), Indigenous peoples require a healing process (RCAP 1996a). Again, this process is in its beginning phase and has not been well funded and supported by the colonizing governments.

Along with land degradation and the depletion of traditional food resources come extreme health and social problems for Anishinaabe people. Indigenous peoples’ health

is directly linked to the health of the land and the food obtained from the land.

Indigenous people take great pride in the food that they provide for their families that is derived from the land. For Indigenous people, land, food and health is the essential link to healthy human lives. In Cree and Anishinaabe this is called *pimatisiwin*. The word is derived from *pimatisi* which means ‘to be alive’ (Settee 2007, p. 7).

2.2 Language

*I speak my favourite language
because
that's who I am.
We teach our children our favourite language,
because
we want them to know who they are.
(Christine Johnson, Tohono O'odham elder 2002)*

Language transmission is the driving force of how Anishinaabe people interact with their environment (Kirkness 1998). The purpose of this section is to enhance our understanding of how Anishinaabe language influences Indigenous Knowledge systems and how both are directly dependent onto each other.

2.2.1 Importance of Language

The importance of Indigenous language is indicative of the recognition of 2008 as “International Year of Languages” by the United Nations General Assembly. Other international initiatives recognizing the importance of Indigenous languages includes UNESCO’s [United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization] (2008) promoting multilingual approaches in education - an important factor in inclusion – along with mother tongue instruction in the initial years of school, which has a positive impact

on learning and learning outcomes. UNESCO also published ‘Why Languages Matter’ (2008) which provides readers with real life stories about how literacy programs in local languages are helping to achieve Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)³. Furthermore, at the 31st Session of UNESCO General Conference (2001), the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity was unanimously adopted. The Declaration recognizes the relationship between biodiversity, cultural diversity, and linguistic diversity. It makes the following recommendations regarding language to its member states:

- Safeguarding the linguistic heritage of humanity and giving support to expression, creation and dissemination in the greatest possible number of languages.
- Encouraging linguistic diversity – while respecting the mother tongue – at all levels of education, wherever possible, and fostering the learning of several languages from the earliest age.
- Incorporating, where appropriate, traditional pedagogies into the education process with a view to preserving and making full use of culturally appropriate methods of communication and transmission of knowledge. (UNESCO 2001, p. 70)

The International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 169 is also of particular interest to Indigenous people because it addresses languages, in article 28. stating that indigenous children shall “... be taught to read and write in their own indigenous language or in the language most commonly used by the group to which they belong” (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 1989). It further states “adequate measures shall be taken to ensure that these peoples have the opportunity to attain fluency in the national language or in one of the official languages of the country” and that “measures shall be taken to preserve and promote the development and practice of the indigenous languages of the peoples concerned.” ILO Convention 169 has

³ The Millennium Development Goals were officially adopted by 189 United Nations member states in 2000. These goals seek to eradicate extreme poverty, universalize primary education, promote gender equality, improve health and ensure environmental sustainability by 2015.

prompted many countries to adopt constitutional provisions and laws that recognize the multicultural nature of their societies, including languages provisions. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2008) explicitly mentions languages in articles 13 14 and 16:

Article 13

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.
2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that this right is protected and also to ensure that Indigenous peoples can understand and be understood in political, legal and administrative proceedings, where necessary through the provision of interpretation or by other appropriate means.

Article 14

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.
2. Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination.
3. States shall, in conjunction with Indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for Indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.

Article 16

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own media in their own languages and to have access to all forms of non-Indigenous media without discrimination.
2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that State-owned media duly reflect Indigenous cultural diversity. States, without prejudice to ensuring full freedom of expression, should encourage privately owned media to adequately reflect Indigenous cultural diversity. (p. 7-8)

The protection of Indigenous languages is therefore not only a cultural and moral imperative, but an important aspect of global efforts to address biodiversity loss, climate change and other environmental challenges (UNPFII 2008, Tebtebba Foundation 2008). Initiatives are sponsored by international agencies to integrate language into Indigenous

people livelihoods. In Manitoba, Ogoki Learning Systems developed an Ojibway language application for iPhone and iPad use. The application is an innovative method to teach the Ojibway language (Ogoki Learning Systems 2012). In Indonesia, for example, a program in mother-tongue prompted villagers to replant mangroves to stem the destruction of coastal areas. In Togo, a farmer began a chicken breeding business after learning about how to manage finances and resources in an adult literacy class. In Indigenous communities of Mexico, bilingual teachers are noting that students who begin primary school in their mother tongue acquire literacy skills more quickly. In Benin's Waama community, literacy classes in mother tongue are giving people access to basic health information and leading to improved overall health (UNESCO 2007). These examples show the importance of Indigenous language in knowledge transmission.

The UNPFII (2008) states that language rights must be implemented as a collective and an individual right. At an Expert meeting in 2008, the following recommendations were presented regarding Indigenous peoples' language:

- Indigenous peoples and their languages are threatened around the world. The loss of Indigenous languages signifies not only the loss of traditional knowledge but also the loss of cultural diversity and spirituality. Dire as this situation is, there is a lack of awareness by some governments, Indigenous peoples and the inter-governmental system of the urgency for policy measures to reverse this trend.
- Nevertheless, the international community has prepared a solid international legal normative framework that is relevant for the protection of Indigenous languages, of which the most recent one is the newly adopted United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Indigenous languages are treasures of vast traditional knowledge concerning ecological systems and processes and how to protect and use some of the most vulnerable and biologically diverse ecosystems in the world. It is no coincidence that the areas where Indigenous peoples live are the areas that contain the greatest biological diversity. In fact, biological diversity, linguistic diversity and cultural diversity are inseparable and mutually reinforcing, so when an Indigenous language is lost, so too is the traditional knowledge for how to maintain aspects of the world's biological

diversity. The protection of Indigenous languages is therefore not only a cultural and moral imperative, but an important aspect of global efforts to address biodiversity loss, climate change and other environmental challenges.

- Language rights must be implemented as a collective and an individual right. It is crucial to recognize that Indigenous peoples' language rights include, but are not limited to:
 - The right to maintain and to use their own language;
 - The right to have Indigenous languages recognized in constitutions and laws;
 - The right to maintain personal names, place names and the proper names of their languages;
 - The right to be educated in the mother tongue (either in State schools or in their own schools);
 - The right to use Indigenous languages in court and administrative proceedings;
 - The right to non-discrimination on the grounds of language in such domains as work, social security, health, family life, education, cultural life and freedom of speech;
 - The right to take part in public affairs and public service without discrimination on the grounds of language;
 - The right to establish Indigenous media in Indigenous languages as well as to have access to mainstream media in Indigenous languages (p. 5-7).

2.2.2 AKS Undermined by State Education

AKS and Anishinaabe language has been undermined by formal state education systems. Policy makers have long been aware of the formative socializing qualities of education. During the late nineteenth century and throughout the twentieth century, formal education for First Nation children took place in missionary and many boarding and residential schools separated children from families (UNESCO 2009 p. 138), which did not allow First Nation languages to be spoken. These colonial schools, that imposed English on Indigenous peoples and negated Indigenous languages, occurred in Canada, Australia and the United States.

Language endangerment resulted from a multitude of external forces including the military, economic, religious, cultural, or educational subjugation. Such hegemonic organizations create internal forces against Indigenous language, such as a community's negative attitude towards its own language (Tebtebba 2008). Indigenous peoples often believe their disadvantaged social position is associated with their culture and believe their languages are not worth retaining (Tebtebba 2008). Other Indigenous parents did not want to expose their children to Canadian society's punishment for speaking the Indigenous language, as these parents had been physically punished for speaking Indigenous language in school; to spare their children they encouraged English only and that Indigenous language have little use anymore (Kirkness 1998, p. 11).

A major problem in Anishinaabe language preservation is that few teachers speak the language and their schools often lack basic materials to support this language learning. Government educational did not allow Indigenous peoples the possibility of participating in education decision-making, the design of curricula, the selection of teachers and teaching methods and the definition of standards which results in an education gap (UNESCO 2008), but this is now changing.

State education has been in conflict with Indigenous language, as it has not allowed Indigenous peoples to keep their culture and identity Deloria (1988 p. 84), states how Indigenous people are led to believe, and spurred on by the younger generation, that "through education a new generation of leaders will arise to solve the pressing contemporary problems. Tribal leaders have been taught to accept this thesis by the scholarly community...." However, Deloria (1988) refutes this by illustrating how the Apaches of the Southwest have only a few of their young people in college compared

with other tribes. Among the Apache there is little concern regarding lost identity, and they "...could not care less about the anthropological dilemmas that worry other tribes; instead they continue to work on the massive plans for development which they themselves have created" (Deloria p. 84). For the Apache "tribal identity is assumed, not defined, by the reservation people. Freedom to choose from a wide variety of paths progress is a characteristic of the Apaches; they don't worry about what type of Indianism is 'real'" (Deloria 1988, p. 84).

In today's Indigenous society, education is viewed as a means of success, but at the same time, one must learn English or French to get a formal education (or the national language). Education has been a priority of First Nations people as a means of preparing the next generation for assuming its role in ensuring survival of the family and community and has been viewed as a Treaty Right by First Nations peoples since the signing of the Treaties starting in 1871.⁴ In 1999, the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre⁵ was given a mandate by the Chiefs of Manitoba to provide second and third level education services to fifty-five First Nations schools in Manitoba. MFNERC assists in moving First Nations Education forward in the most culturally and linguistically appropriate ways. MFNERC believes that numeracy and literacy can be enhanced by the integration of our perspectives to make our schools the educational learning environments that First Nations children, youth and adults will choose for the search to find out who they are, where they come from, where they are going and how to get there.

Littlebear (2009) acknowledges that bilingual education is important and sees native languages nurturing our spirits and hearts and the English language as sustenance

⁴ Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs website on Treaties (www.manitobachiefs.com)

⁵ Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre website 'about us' (www.mfnerc.org)

for our bodies. Fishman (1996) suggests that efforts to restore languages should be facilitating and enabling rather than compulsory and punitive; and that bilingualism should be viewed as life enriching and as a bridge to other cultures. Maintaining the best of both, albeit facetious, is ultimately the best strategy, for as much as regulations and legislations can only go so far at restoring language.

Efforts at language preservation and restoration are the responsibility of the family. Fishman (1996) and Littlebear (2009) state that the key to language preservation is in the intergenerational transmission of language in the home by families and not by law makers. Fishman (1997) cautions against too much dependency on native-language media, schools, and government efforts in preserving and restoring language. However, this is easier said than done as different modes are being utilized to revitalize Indigenous languages such as education, broadcasting, publishing, and community-based programming (Smith 1999). Avenues as such can provide for a friendly environment for languages, but are by no means a substitute for grass roots based languages spoken in the home. The key is to have the involvement of all concerned parties such as tribal governments and grassroots people.

2.2.3 Large role of women in language transfer

Among the Indigenous women, language plays a crucial role in the passing of culture and tradition to children and extended families. With the transmission of language, Indigenous women are the key to the intergenerational transmission of Indigenous knowledge through indigenous languages. Language diversity is an important part of human heritage. Indeed, a child's first language is referred to as his or her

“mother tongue” which recognizes and acknowledges the significance of the mother’s role in teaching language and passing on knowledge. According to Scollon and Scollon (1981) cultural values are psychological imperatives that help generate and maintain an individual’s level of comfort and self-assurance, and ultimately successes in life. These values are integrated in one’s mother tongue in the first years of life. For this reason, cultural values and mother tongue are closely interrelated in public consciousness are mistakenly viewed as inseparable. The mother tongue is the child’s strongest ally and should, therefore be used systematically (Butzkamm 2003). Using the mother tongue we have learned to think, learned to communicate, and acquired an intuitive understanding of grammar.

It is not the goal of this dissertation to trace our historical profile of the Anishinaabe language throughout the centuries of the people of Lake St. Martin. Instead the focus is on contemporary Anishinaabe language use among women from Lake St. Martin to gain understanding how fundamentally engrained understanding of AKS continues to be with modern Anishinaabe language speakers. Language is fundamentally important for cultural identity and local diversity (Rubenstein 2005, p. 149), and more significantly, the role and importance of women in language transmission.

2.2.4 Indigenous Languages Worldwide

In 1492 an estimated 300 or more native languages were spoken in North America but only 190 of these 300 plus languages are still spoken or remembered by native North Americans. However, of the 155 of these 190 languages in the United States only about 20 are still spoken by people of all ages (Reyhner and Tennant 1995). The vast majority

of the approximately 6,000 Indigenous languages worldwide are on the verge of extinction and are disappearing at an alarming rate like the cultures they represent, the vast majority of these languages, (Djoghla 2010; Tebtebba Foundation 2008; UNPFII 2008; Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). Approximately 97% of the global population speaks about 4% of the languages of the world. Conversely, almost 96% of the languages are spoken only by 3% of the population and most of those languages are Indigenous languages. Ten percent of these (Indigenous) languages have fewer than 100 speakers (Djoghla 2008; Tebtebba Foundation 2008). All of these figures represent and attest the vast linguistic and cultural diversity of Indigenous people.

2.2.5 Anishinaabe Language

Anishinaabe language, which is an ancient North American Indigenous language, has an oral tradition that is thousands of years old. Language is a system of communication through speech that co-exists with livelihoods. Anishinaabe is not a single language but rather a chain of connected dialects with local varieties. Each local variety differs from adjacent ones in details of sounds, words, and grammar. Speakers of one local variety can be generally understood by speakers with different dialects from neighbouring communities. The differences among the different dialects get larger with distance (Nichols 1992, p. vi). For example, the main dialects represented in the Baraga dictionary are those that were spoken 150 years ago on the south shore of Lake Superior. However, nearly all the basic patterns are the same across the whole language and have changed little since Baraga's time (Nichols 1992, p. vi). It is an ancient language derived from interacting and living with the land with a specific worldview and spiritual

understanding that has not changed in its fundamentals. Individual words have been left behind or have changed as ways of life have changed (Nichols 1992, p. vi - vii). Some words have changed or added meanings with changing times. New words have been formed to include the wide range of modern activities and objects from 'cars' to 'computers'. All languages also change slowly in its sound and dialect (Nichols 1992, p. vii).

The above paragraphs provide some understanding in the scope and complexity of the Anishinaabe language. Language is part of culture and contains people's worldviews, philosophies, values, and tangible artifacts. Language changes with changing times over thousands of years. It is easily transferable with the movement of people. People incorporate new words with changed conditions and / or with movement to new locations. The languages of existing people in areas of movement contribute to the language of the newcomers (Rubenstein 2005, p. 149).

Anishinaabe language is related to about twenty-five other languages in the Algonquian language family. Anishinaabe is one of the most widespread North American Indigenous Languages (Nichols 1992, p. v. – vi): in the US it is spoken in Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Wisconsin and in Canada, it is spoken in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec. In the United States and southern Canada, it is spoken mainly by people of middle age and older. In some communities only the Elders are fluent Anishinaabe speakers. However, going further north into Canada, Anishinaabe is often spoken by Anishinaabe people of all ages and still learned by children as a first language (Nichols 1992, p. vi).

Certain languages developed literary traditions with time (Rubenstein 2005, p. 149), including Anishinaabe. A literary tradition was developed with the arrival of European missionaries. There are hundreds of dictionaries and grammars of the North American Indigenous languages that European missionaries created. In 1850, a major linguistic contribution was achieved with Bishop Frederic Baraga's Theoretical and Practical Grammar of the Otchipwe Language and in 1853 with the Dictionary of the Otchipwe Language (Nichols 1992, p. v). The 'Otchipwe' language is also known as Anishinaabe, Algonquin, Chippewa, Ottawa or Odawa and Saulteaux. Its speakers call themselves Anishinaabe which means 'people.

2.2.6 Language as a Governing Tool

Indigenous women have a key and vital role in the conservation and sustainable use of resources and biodiversity which is incorporated into language, and of Indigenous peoples' knowledge, cultures and languages which they pass on from generation to generation (Shiva 1989). Culture and language go hand in hand: "As culture develops, language is both a cause of that development and a consequence" (Rubenstein 2005 p. 149). Indigenous women are concerned that the loss of language contributes to: resource abuse, climate change, over harvesting and other activities that are detrimental to biodiversity (IWBN 2006). The loss of language leads to social, political, economic, cultural, environmental, and health problems for Indigenous peoples, resulting in displacement from their lands (IWBN 2006). The health and well-being of women and their families are ultimately linked to their access to traditional medicines, and traditional practices associated with the sustainable use and health of the ecosystem (IWBN 2006).

Language is the most fundamental way that cultural information is communicated (Settee 2007). In this way all information about land related ecological information and management issues are also exchanged and passed on from generation to generation. The importance of language in the cultural survival of Indigenous peoples around the world and their knowledge and wisdom about the local environment requires the inclusion of Indigenous languages in AKS. As well, Kirkness (1998) explains that language is key to identity and is the principal means whereby culture is accumulated, shared and transmitted from one generation to another. It is language that expresses the uniqueness of a group's world view (Kirkness 1998, p. 4).

The loss of Indigenous languages translates also into a loss of human diversity and the loss of all knowledge contained therein (Tebtebba Foundation 2008; Settee 2007). It is a tremendous amount of detail that is lost in the understanding of the local environment. A language like English does not have enough vocabulary in order to describe the in depth details about the local environment (Settee 2007). It is also virtually impossible to translate Anishinaabe to English especially words that signify more than their face value. Anishinaabe words and thought work together. It is difficult for one to study or understand language and its associated knowledge systems if she/he does not speak the language. Actions relating to and regarding language and knowledge systems depend on one of the thought processes. Therefore it is difficult to understand a word regarding knowledge if one cannot think Anishinaabe or speak Anishinaabe, and is dependent on learning or relearning language.

Early assessments of Indigenous communities characterized them as stable and sustainable in of all their activities (Mann 2005; Deloria 1997). The AKS provided a

good life from the land. However, as Canada's industrial development progressed, Indigenous communities have become increasingly marginalized. Today's modern society with its ever present beckoning of technology that operates at the push of a button reduces AKS transmission.

Indigenous peoples' fundamental link with their land is based intricately with their language and the naming of things and objects (LaDuke 2005). Understanding these teachings is based on learning from existing oral legacy, involving an intimate and endless listening to stories and dialogue with elders and parents (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). It involves "time and patience, and requires learning the languages, the distortions, and the diverse realms and forces contained within and beyond the languages" (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000, p. 77). Within the languages there are associated sounds and gestures that are used. Stories and teachings are lessons which validate experience, as well as renewing, awakening, and honoring spiritual forces. Therefore, stories do not explain, but focus on the processes of knowing (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000).

2.2.7 Language Initiatives

Preserving Indigenous languages is important. In Canada, the appointment of a Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures in 2002 was tasked with developing a national strategy on Aboriginal languages and culture. The report entitled "Towards a New Beginning" provided a list of recommendations on how to preserve Indigenous languages in Canada (Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures 2005). Another

initiative mentioned before is Ogoki Learning Systems (2012) that appeals to the youth of today's modern technology. In New Zealand the Maori recognized their language dilemma very clearly in the 1980s and started a strategy that became known as Te Kohanga Reo (Maori Language Nests). The Te Kohanga Reo has become an effective method of language transmission of the Maori people while at the same time strengthening its traditional cultural base (Te Kohanga Reo 2009). The language program brings together families across the generations and ages. The Maori have demonstrated that 'language is culture, and culture is language.' Maori language is not taught in isolation but in an intergenerational process and is naturally acquired. This is part of a total learning process of a child, a family and a community. The revival of the Maori language is based on the following foundation:

Whanau (family)
Hapu (sub-tribe)
Iwi (tribe)
Maori language and
Tikanga (cultural ways) (Kirkness 1998, p. 103-104).

The first three recognize the social organization of the Maori people set in their language and cultural ways. Children from baby to five years old are in a day care and pre-school system that is run based on a Maori style community-based family setting in the Maori language (Kirkness 1998, p. 104). The recognition of the social organization is integral to maintaining language as it is associated with culture. Te Kohanga Reo are operated in Maori homes, training centers, churches, and specific Maori centers called *marae*. The traditional *marae* is an open courtyard in front of a carved ancestral meeting house. Close by is a Maori dining and general-purpose hall. Each *marae* belongs to a kin group that is responsible for its maintenance and all ceremonial activities. In recent years, many

urban *marae* have evolved in such forms as tribal *marae*, church-based *marae*, multi-tribal *marae* and on campus-*marae* (Kirkness 1998, p. 106).

Important initiatives such as that of the Maori in New Zealand where they have introduced a total language immersion program starting at an early age with toddlers age helps children while they are still in the development stage. The success of the Maori language program has led to a broader based Maori cultural revitalization. The Te Kohanga Reo program used the holistic community principle of inclusivity which is based on the understanding that every community member has a purpose and skills to benefit the community (Te Kohanga Reo 2009).

Another project is Terralingua (2009) which was established in 1996 as an international non-profit organization to preserve the world's linguistic and cultural diversity, and explores the connections among linguistic, cultural, and biological diversities. Part of Terralingua's mission is to support the integrated protection, maintenance and restoration of the biocultural diversity of life. It also recognizes that language, knowledge, and the environment have been intimately related throughout human history and that this relationship is still apparent especially in Indigenous, minority, and local societies that maintain close material and spiritual ties with their environments. Over generations, these peoples have accumulated a wealth of wisdom about their environments and its functions, management, and sustainable use. Indigenous knowledge and practices often make Indigenous peoples, minorities, and local communities highly skilled and respectful stewards of the ecosystems in greatest need of protection. Local, minority, and Indigenous languages are repositories and means of transmission of this knowledge and the related social behaviors, practices, and

innovations. As with biological species, languages and cultures naturally evolve and change over time. But just as with species, the world is now undergoing a massive human-made extinction crisis of languages and cultures (Terralingua 2009).

The Northern Ute Tribe (1985) has also taken an initiative to revitalize language. The Tribe adopted a resolution declaring:

The Ute language is a living and vital language that has the ability to match any other in the world for expressiveness and beauty. Our language is capable of lexical expansion into modern conceptual fields such as the fields of politics, economics, mathematics, and science.

Be it known that the Ute language shall be recognized as our first language, and the English language will be recognized as our second language. We assert that our students are fully capable of developing fluency in our mother tongue and the foreign English language and we further assert that a higher level of Ute mastery results in higher levels of English skills (p. 16).

Another language policy was passed at the tribal level by the Pascua Yaqui Tribal Council in (1984). The policy states that their ancient language is the foundation of their cultural and spiritual heritage. Furthermore the policy declares that "all aspects of the educational process shall reflect the beauty of our Yaqui language, culture and values" (Pascua, 1984 p. 1). Whatever avenue is taken, language is recognized as being the catalyst for cultural transmission and survival.

2.2.8 Language Deprivation

People who lose their linguistic and cultural identity may lose an essential element in a social process that commonly teaches respect for nature and understanding of the natural environment and its processes. Forcing this cultural and linguistic

conversion on indigenous and other traditional peoples not only violates their human rights, but also undermines the world's health (Terralingua 2009).

However, among most Indigenous youth today, culture and language, have indeed been separated. The result is that the youth, and older people as well, have been trying to live in two worlds with just one language (Henze & Vanett 1993). There are varying reasons why Indigenous people do not speak their language. However, there are now attempts by Indigenous people to relearn, seek, and live their Indigenous identities and culture. However, these attempts are futile if one does not speak the language. Based on research it is understood that when children get instructed in their Native languages first they do better with learning a second language. In the Philippines children are first instructed in their Native language. English is introduced later (Kirkness 1998, p. 55).

The majority of the teachers do not know the Native language, consequently, all instruction is in English. What results is two-way frustration. The teacher is frustrated because academic progress is slow and the children are frustrated because they understand very little of what is being said by the teachers during the school day. Children who start off with frustration and failure may never catch up. A low self-image, lack of motivation, and unsatisfactory performance are interrelated handicaps to children whose initial instruction is in a foreign language.

Most teachers lack training in 'teaching English as a second language' and all too often the children are required to read before mastering a sufficient command of the English language. Studies show that children who do not possess adequate language have difficulty learning to read. This process contributes to increasing difficulty in the children's whole learning process. What follows is disinterest, poor attendance and early drop-outs (Kirkness 1998, p. 56).

Giving Indigenous youth an opportunity to keep or learn their language offers them a strong antidote to culture clash many of them experience but are unable to verbalize. Indeed Wong (1991) recognizes that emphasizing English-language in early childhood education separates language minority children from their parents. This

separation leads to family breakdown in terms of parent-child communication problems, as well as identify problems for students approaching their teenage years. If the youth recognize the hidden network of cultural values that permeates the language, they will add to the knowledge and skills required to 'walk in two worlds' (Reyhner & Tennant 1995).

2.3 Indigenous Research Methods

Since the time of the arrival of Europeans Indigenous people have tried to teach and to make the newcomers understand the foundation of IKS. However the barrier of language and the completely different worldviews, spiritual understandings and philosophies of both worlds have not made it possible to reach non-Indigenous peoples. The teachings have fallen on deaf ears. Only in recent years with academia being more open to IKS from writings of Indigenous scholars such as Marie Battiste, Gregory Cajete, Pam Colorado, Vine Deloria, Winona LaDuke, and Linda Tuhiwai Smith, to name but a few, that some of this understanding and knowledge can reach a larger audience. However, it has not been mainstreamed to impact on daily living in the western industrial world. One of the fundamental differences between IKS and the western industrial knowledge system is the view that humans are on the top of chain of creation which gives humans a special authority over the Earth that is foreign to Indigenous people.

It seems to go back to the idea that human beings, and specifically human beings from the colonizing culture, are elevated above the rest of the natural world and that they have a prior right to use everything around them. It is a fundamental split in ideology that requires aggression. It advocates accumulation as a part of power and is central to the idea that the measurement of a person's worth is their economic and oppressive power. The consequences of that ideology, both internally and externally to all life forms, is very frightening (Armstrong in Jensen 2002, p. 287).

In IKS, science and art are not separated and then subdivided into different subjects. Instead all knowledge is interconnected and works together for the well-being of a community (Settee 2007, p. 15).

2.3.1 Women's research in IKS

Research on TEK and IKS, like other disciplines, have been dominated by mostly western males (Settee 1999, p. 18). This has led to a one-sided and narrow vision of science leaving the views, knowledge and wisdom of women out (Settee 1999, p. 18).

Looked at from the Indigenous peoples' perspective, the term 'research' has been linked with colonialism. The way in which scientific research has been implicated in the excesses of imperialism remains a powerful remembered history for many of the world's Indigenous peoples. Much of the literature that deals with IKS is written in the context of colonialism and neo-colonialism (Settee 2007, p. 25; Odora Hoppers 2002; Smith 1999; Makgoba 1999). Indigenous Knowledge Systems challenge the notion that only western knowledge is legitimate (Deloria 1995).

In Western academia and understanding, research may be defined as an investigation or experiment aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts. Research will include collecting information about a particular subject, revising accepted theories or laws in the light of new facts, and the practical application of such new or revised theories or laws (Porsanger 2009). Western research implies discovery, observation, collection, investigation, description, systematization, analysis, synthesis, theorizing and

codifying by means of the language of theory, comparison, verification, checking hypotheses, etc. (Porsanger 2009; Smith 1999).

Agenda restricts Indigenous research by setting ethical and methodological requirements concerning what has been called “scientific freedom” in Western academic research, because the protection of Indigenous knowledge is one of the most important concerns of Indigenous methodologies (Porsanger 2009). Any research project usually starts with the setting of a research problem or a research question. Too often, research has been used as a tool of the colonization of Indigenous peoples and their territories.

2.3.2 Integrating Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKSs) and Western Science

Indigenous Knowledge Systems are inherently sustainable towards livelihoods and the environment and Indigenous peoples have lived in ways that were sustainable and created minimal negative impacts on the environment (Nelson 2008; Mann 2005; Deloria 1997). Sustainable development and IKS are not the same but they are compatible and can lead to integration processes that will benefit humanity overall. Sustainability is part of Indigenous peoples way of life. Sustainable development is derived from the environmental conscious leaders of the western world (Thompson 2008). It uses modern scientific methodologies and methods. IKS and AKS have their own methodologies and methods that are either not at all understood or only to very limited degrees (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992).

Clarkson et al (1992) recognized traditional Indigenous people as a precious resource for knowledge about how to live on the land in an ecologically and socially sustainable way due to their knowledge of local resource base, animals, plants, water,

rocks, and soil. With a greater demand for sustainable development, AKS perspectives may be able to provide important contributions in search of new solutions. It has been well recognized that the modern industrial/technological society is inherently unsustainable in its economic operating ways; this society is extremely resource intensive, wasteful, uses highly toxic materials, and emits pollutants. AKS continue to be synchronized with the earth despite western economic and technological developments that are self-destructive (Clarkson et al. 1992). Western science bases its 'theories' and 'facts' on a quantitative approach versus a more subtle or qualitative approach held by AKS (Elders 1999).

The Northern Rivers Basins Study (1996) believes that IKS warrant recognition as a distinct body of science, with its own perspective and approach. Therefore, researchers must now define in writing the philosophy, methodologies, methods, and systems that are in the common understanding of Indigenous people but not readily available to the academic community. Much of this kind of information is contained in the Indigenous languages. It is most important that Indigenous researchers who speak their Native language work in this field. The study brings its unique perspective through a researcher who is a Native language speaker and has therefore access to AKS knowledge held by the women of Lake St. Martin First Nation.

AKS is useful for study in that it can provide important 'human' information that if combined with other scientific research will help provide a more complete view of changes and patterns of changes (Northern River Basins Study 1996). Indigenous knowledge offers a holistic view of the environment and is an on-going process that is based on the concept of Seven Generations in which one cannot think of him- or herself

only but is responsible for the survival of the seventh generation (Clarkson, Morrissette and Regallet 1992; Trospen 1995; Hand 2004). Western science offers scientific approaches that are too compartmentalized and fragmented in order to understand the larger picture of the ecology of our environments that includes human activities and interactions on the landscape. Watson and Chambers (1989) argue that as a discipline, the history and philosophy of western science has been guilty of European ethnocentrism, which is both imperialist and scientifically unsound.

In Canada, with the beginning of traditional land-use studies since the 1970s (Freeman 1976), a new research paradigm has started. For the first time, Aboriginal traditional land-use activities have been taken seriously. Since that time a new body of literature has started to develop that is ever increasing. Much more research in this area is needed. This study would be an additional building block in this literature development. Western science acknowledges but attempts to verify and validate AKS. According to Berkes (1993, p. 2) if traditional *ecological knowledge* is used, then it becomes a branch of biology in western knowledge, therefore traditional *ecological knowledge* cannot exist, because most traditional people are not scientists. Perhaps this is an approach that is too conservative in its methodologies and methods in order to better understand AKS. This study presents an approach to research AKS in methodologies and methods that are much more in line with AKS. This study suggests that AKS exists in its own entity with its own philosophical framework, methodologies and methods and has existed prior to western science giving it a 'name'. Indigenous peoples around the world have always had their own researchers who were experts and

leaders in AKS. Oral tradition was the platform of communication and transfer of knowledge from generation to generation.

In today's world with the pressing issues of finding sustainable solutions to the pressing environmental challenges, it is expected that if AKS are used in partnership with Western knowledge, the combination would be a more powerful tool than if each is used alone. This study suggests that resource management's prerequisite should be the understanding of AKS in each given area. Then this understanding can be bridged with western science in order to create a powerful tool that is solution oriented. All too often Indigenous knowledge is downplayed by governments and industries where stronger emphasis is placed on western science which is viewed as more accurate by westerners. This study suggests that it is of great importance to give equal weight to both types of knowledge, but more so on AKS. However, applying AKS as a foundation for land and resource management and giving it the same acknowledgement and respect as western science is easier said than done.

The National Aboriginal Forestry Association (NAFA) (2000) recognize the problem of utilizing Indigenous knowledge is to use and balance it with a professionally prepared forest land management plan and to do this without subordinating Indigenous knowledge to western scientific knowledge. NAFA (2000) agrees that both have strengths and weaknesses, and that integrating the two may be the best approach for forest management. However, the greatest barrier to the full utilization of IKS is the nature of capitalism which involves exploitation (Bear Nicholas 2008). In this way, much Indigenous knowledge is deemed as either unusable or saleable. It would greatly help First Nations communities in Canada with their goal of developing healthy communities

while maintaining their roles as stewards of the land and helping western researchers, governments, and industry in moving forward with sustainable development for the benefit of all.

Indigenous peoples feel powerless towards the gigantic mechanisms of the western industrialized systems. We do not know how to bring our knowledge and wisdom to this world in a larger scale so that it is respected, understood and integrated into the larger society. This dissertation is part of the attempt of doing this. In this way the women of Lake St. Martin are participating in adding to the overall knowledge base on Indigenous cultures and AKS. It is very difficult for non-Indigenous people to learn our languages and our ways of knowing the world. Very few non-Indigenous people learn about AKS. A relatively small number of academic researchers are involved in this line of research. The non-Indigenous researchers have the problem of not knowing the language. However, Indigenous researchers speak seldom more than one or two Indigenous languages and are then also limited in language skills other than their own. My role in life as an Anishinaabe researcher and fluent Anishinaabe language speaker is to bring this knowledge to the world.

However, a majority of Indigenous people do not have the education to participate in these kinds of knowledge generating academic discussions. It is in this state of powerlessness, triggered by imposed policies that many of my people have lost hope and have turned to drugs and alcohol to numb the pain of not being understood and not knowing how to find expression of who they are. Anishinabek have their roles based on principles as Muntoo-given lives as guardians of the land. A role which has never left the

people and will never disappear from the Anishinaabe peoples. This role is fundamental to us as Anishinaabe peoples and forms the base of Anishinaabe Knowledge Systems.

2.4 Western Methodologies

This section briefly explains why my research methodologies for this study did not fit in the commonly applied community-based methodologies when working with Indigenous peoples. Western methodologies include quantitative research, qualitative research, longitudinal research, scientific research, historical research, or the classic ‘experiment’. Collaborative research, participatory research, participatory action research, community-based research, and ethnographic research were developed in the 1970s and 1980s in conjunction with community research work in developing countries and in Indigenous communities. For the first time research focused on community needs developed as a reaction to the failure of ‘top-down’ foreign aid projects in developing countries (Whyte 1991; Reimer 1993; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1993). However, in the early stages of development of these research methodologies they were often rejected as invalid and ineffective by many ‘mainstream’ researchers. With time, they have become widely accepted and are commonly used by non-Indigenous researchers in Indigenous communities. Analysis of community-based methods were also conducted as they present the best approach in methodology for non-Indigenous researchers who are foreigners to Indigenous cultures.

2.4.1 Community-based Research

Community-based Research (CBR) takes place in community settings and involves community members in the design and implementation of research projects. The

researcher and the research activities should demonstrate respect. The University of Washington (2008) states that community partners contribute to the success of the research, as well respecting the principle of "doing no harm" to the communities involved. The school's Community-based research principles include:

- 1) Community partners should be involved at the earliest stages of the project, helping to define research objectives and having input into how the project will be organized. Community partners should have real influence on project direction--that is, enough leverage to ensure that the original goals, mission, and methods of the project are adhered to.
- 2) Research processes and outcomes should benefit the community. Community members should be hired and trained whenever possible and appropriate, and the research should help build and enhance community assets.
- 3) Community members should be part of the analysis and interpretation of data and should have input into how the results are distributed. This does not imply censorship of data or of publication, but rather the opportunity to make clear the community's views about the interpretation prior to final publication.
- 4) Productive partnerships between researchers and community members should be encouraged to last beyond the life of the project. This will make it more likely that research findings will be incorporated into ongoing community programs and therefore provide the greatest possible benefit to the community from research.
- 5) Community members should be empowered to initiate their own research projects which address needs they identify themselves (University of Washington 2008).

Community-based research methodologies have developed into a number of methodologies: action research, participatory research, participatory action research, and collaborative research (Brown and Tandon 1983; Hall 1981; Ryan and Robinson 1990 and 1996; Reimer 1993; Lapadat and Janzen 1994; Castelden 1992; Legat 1994; Ward 1996; Greenwood and Levin 1998).

The University of Victoria (2008) describes CBR as seeking to democratize knowledge creation by validating multiple sources of knowledge and promoting the use of multiple methods of discovery and dissemination. Furthermore, CBR states that the

goal of CBR is social action for the purpose of achieving (directly or indirectly) social change and social justice. Too often, mainstream methodologies main goal is to validate knowledge. The goal here was not to validate but shed light on the fact that Indigenous women have knowledge systems in place.

Very often community-based research with Indigenous communities often entails components of traditional knowledge (such as land-use studies) or TEK in order to create data base lines for modern style land management and economic development opportunities in conjunction with resource developments. This was not the specific intent of this research to enter active land, resources, and economic development but rather to document AKS that can then be used for these kinds of purposes. This research was community-based, but more appropriately from an Anishinaabe perspective - 'based at the community-level'. The workshops and visits with the Anishinaabe were informal and allowed for the Anishinaabe to speak freely and openly.

2.5 Summary

Language is the heart and soul of any culture, and cultural transmission is dependent on its survival. There has been extensive research and studies done on languages particularly in the field of education. However there is limited literature available regarding language and its role in environment and resource management, and even more limited regarding language and Indigenous women. Indigenous knowledge systems are very vast and incorporate and represent thousands of Indigenous languages, with AKS being a small but important part of this whole. At the core of the language are knowledge transmission and the ability to learn from others and to understand other

languages, worldviews, and cultures. The ability to understand language is also associated with the thought process.

Literature on Anishinaabe language and thought is sparse. Language transmission is the essential component of gaining new knowledge. International agencies such as the United Nations, Office of the High Commission for Human Rights, and UNESCO have made great progress in advancing policies on Indigenous languages, albeit 'soft law'. The same international agencies also recognize the important link between language, cultural diversity and biological diversity and how each balances the other. Language transmission allows greater emphasis on the passing on of skills and knowledge. This is an important concern that the Anishinaabe language speakers at Lake St. Martin have. Findings from other countries suggest that only through successful intergenerational language transmission can the broad cultural understanding of AKS at Lake St. Martin with all its complexities and dynamics be maintained. This research will contribute to the limited literature in Canada.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODS

3.1 METHODOLOGIES

This study incorporated both Indigenous and western methodologies. This chapter outlines the Indigenous methodologies that were undertaken and compares and contrasts alongside western methodologies. The Indigenous research methods such as storytelling are used vis-à-vis western methods such as workshops and community-based research. Indigenous peoples around the world, like myself, are telling their own stories based on their own research. This is an exciting, evolving area of research. At times both Indigenous research and scientific research streams come together in order to share and compare the research experience and to compare the data. In this way, many new findings and insights and understandings about the environment are revealed. A great deal can be learned from research with Indigenous peoples about local environments as well as with western scientific methodologies and methods.

The Indigenous research included storytelling, oral tradition, oral history, visiting, self-journey, interacting and Customary Clock.

Western research includes interviews, focus groups, strategic analysis including political/economic/social/cultural/environment (PESCE) analysis, sustainable livelihoods analysis and community planning.

3.2 Description of Methodologies/Methods/Instruments/Tools

The following provides a brief summary of the methods and instruments, which were used in my research journey.

3.2.1 Tools (informal and formal interviews)

I spoke my native language Anishinaabe mowin, when I conducted the interviews with the Anishinaabe women, and did not require translators. I also used questions as a guide when visiting (Appendix 1). I visited with ten women many times over many years. As well, interviews were conducted with ten secondary knowledge holders to compare with primary and tertiary texts. A workshop was held with these same women and other elders including some men to confirm findings.

3.2.2 Community-Level Research and Community Workshop/Forum

My interviews were based at the community level; with some occurring away from the community. I also participated in community, traditional, and cultural activities. The traditional activities included Seneca root digging, berry picking, and preparing fish, moose, deer, and goose. The cultural activities included family outings and gatherings, community feasts, and wake services and burials, to name but a few. A community workshop/forum was also held in Lake St. Martin First Nation. The intention of this workshop was to bring the women together in a gathering type situation where they shared and heard each other's stories. Men also attended these workshops.

3.2.3 Research Tools

The research tools that were used in this research include the following:

- 1) Interview Questions (Appendix 1);
- 2) Interview Protocol (Appendix 2);
- 3) Informed Consent (Appendix 3);

- 4) Voice recorder;
- 5) Video camera; and
- 6) Digital camera.

3.2.4 Ethics Approval Certificate

As this was research based in a western institution, an ethics approval for research was obtained, following correct research protocol. An Ethics Approval Certificate is attached in Appendix 4.

3.2.5 Selection of participants

The study participants were ten local Anishinaabe women. Secondly, men were also included to capture their knowledge and to validate the findings. The criteria in selecting participants for this study were:

- 1) Ability to speak the Anishinaabe language
- 2) Knowledgeable and currently practicing traditional activities;
- 3) Belong to the Local community;
- 4) No age limit to women (but older/elder men included); and
- 5) An elderly focus group (most of elderly were over 70 years of age)

I am a member of the community and had direct knowledge of the women who still practiced traditional activities. The traditional activities were based on their hands-on and knowledge of AKS, gathering (berry picking, Seneca root digging, gathering medicinal plants), food preparation and preservation (preparation and cutting of meat and methods of preservation), fishing, trapping, and hunting activities. The women were identified

and selected based on the above criteria. As well, referrals and/or recommendations from friends, acquaintances and a network resulted in women being contacted in-person or by telephone and being asked to be a part of this study. The women were not subjected to any experiments and were not vulnerable at any time during the visits and interviews, nor did they require extra measures. I personally knew the women from the area (region) who practiced traditional activities, but I also asked for names of other women from the knowledge holders as they had a ‘social network’ for traditional activities. Men were also included in the workshops to validate the research findings.

3.2.6 Anishinaabe towin: Oral Tradition, Oral History, Storytelling, Visiting and Interacting

The Indigenous perspective and methods, and the Indigenous way or in this case the Anishinaabe traditions (Anishinaabe towin) were crucial in understanding and laying the foundation of this research. The Anishinaabe way included visiting (mawa tisi tiiwin), stories (ti bachi mowin), and getting together/interacting (mamawii tada). Additionally, the Anishinaabe tradition included ti bachi mowin aniin kaygo kapi izisayg (telling stories of how things were) and aniin Anishinaabe ka izi pimatiizid mayzu (how Anishinaabe lived before). Elders, women, and the community (including men) who make up the Anishinabek participated in this research. A Customary Clock, which is discussed in detail in Chapter 7, was also developed to add to a better understanding of the Anishinaabe way.

Indigenous methodologies also included: Oral Tradition, Oral History, Visiting, Self-journey and Interacting which are all part of Anishinaabe towin; which are based on the Anishinaabe language. Storytelling is integral to Native peoples’ culture and is vital

to the oral tradition and histories of Indigenous cultures. Storytelling, oral history, and oral tradition are as fundamental to the Indigenous peoples' way of life as writing and reading is to non-Indigenous people. Visiting neechi Anishinabek in their homes and informal settings were very important.

Storytelling and visiting go hand-in-hand and are always together. Methodologies in oral tradition and oral history are invaluable of collecting information in First Nation communities. Oral tradition is the manner in which information is passed from one generation to the next in the absence of writing or a recording medium. Oral tradition is a way to keep the history or culture of the people alive, and since it is a form of storytelling. Oral tradition is as integral to the Indigenous peoples' way of life and is an important component of AKS (Young-Ing 2008). Traditional songs, poetry, ballads, etc. are also part of the oral tradition (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000).

Anishinaabe language is also very important for storytelling, which is an imperative methodology of passing on knowledge and wisdom in alignment with the traditions of Anishinaabe and other Indigenous peoples. Indigenous researchers such as Jo-anne Archibald, E. Richard Atleo, Maggie Kovach, Linda Smith and Shawn Wilson, have used storytelling as a methodology. Indigenous stories contain important information and wisdom for AKS since they are derived from the living experience with the land. In this way, both language and storytelling are methodology for this kind of a study.

Visiting and interacting with the women was part of the methodology which was utilized in this research. Visiting with neechi⁶ Anishinabek, in the methodology context required a knowledge and understanding of the Anishinaabe language and its people. To

⁶ Neechi(s) is used to refer to your Indian *brothers and sisters* (but not necessarily blood relations).

visit someone, you have to know them, have their trust, and be their friend. I visited and interacted with the women in their homes. Some visitations were planned visits or by chance. I also followed the women in pursuit of their traditional activities, and partook and interacted with them as they gathered and prepared their traditional medicines and foods. Visit evokes conversation, laughter, and sharing of stories. Visiting one another on the 'reserve' is part of everyday life. Not a day will go by without someone stopping by for a visit in your home or you visiting with someone. Visiting and interacting is also natural, informal and unpretentious.

According to the Oxford Dictionary (2000), to 'interact' means: 1) to act reciprocally; act on each other; 2) (of people) work together or communicate" (p. 516). Interacting can happen away from visiting, but is still a form of 'getting together whether by chance or planned' (visiting is usually planned in advance but can also happen by chance). Interacting can occur during community gatherings such as treaty day celebrations, community feasts, wedding, or even funerals. Interacting may not necessarily involve conversation, but it will involve observation. Visiting and interacting can, in a sense, is an 'in-situ' methodology as '*in-situ*' is the Latin word to refer to 'in a natural environment 'as opposed to '*ex-situ*' which means 'not in or away from the natural environment'.

3.2.7 Action Research and Participatory Action Research

In the 1940s, action research emerged. Its main goal has been to improve the social structure within organizations through research. In this way action research relates to organizational structures whereas participatory research is aligned with the people of

an organization (Brown and Tandon 1983). Participatory research developed with the social justice movements in developing countries to help oppressed people (Elden 1981; Hall 1981; Whyte 1991). Both methodologies have been instrumental in generating knowledge, solving problems and transforming social structure into better systems for people. From these two methodologies a combined form developed: participatory action research (Brown and Tandon 1983; Maguire 1987; Castleden 1992, Ward 1996).

The emergence of what has become known as the participatory action research (PAR) reflects much wider experimentation in development and participation that has been taking place in various parts of the world since the 1970s. PAR involves the active participation and control of the people that will benefit from the research in such a way that their roles would include defining the questions, controlling the process, and interpreting the findings, ideally as originators, proponents, and executors of the research (Castleden 1992). Ultimately, PAR has primarily involved development practitioners and social researchers in a wide variety of fields, e.g., adult education, sociology, rural development, agriculture and applied research (Castleden 1992). PAR has become a popular methodology in conducting various types of research in Indigenous communities around the world and in Canada.

What is increasingly being called participatory action research began for some with the critical analysis of society and the inequities it generates, leaving the poor voiceless and dominated (Castleden 1992). For others, participatory action research is less ideological or philosophical: it started with the exploration of more responsive techniques and approaches at the grass-roots level, involving the marginalized members of society, project stakeholders and beneficiaries (Ward 1996). For those involved

specifically with community evaluations, there has been a growing dissatisfaction with conventional modes of assessment that claim to be scientifically neutral and unbiased yet have had very little impact on how development activities and research are carried out in marginalized communities (Ward 1996).

While definitions vary with traditions and users, common values of democratizing knowledge production and advancing social justice underlie these traditions (Deshler *et al.* 1998). PAR involves systematic inquiry in which those who are experiencing a problematic situation in an organization or community participate collaboratively. By recognizing the value of knowledge possessed by practitioners, community members, and citizens, PAR bridges local knowledge with scientific knowledge to generate new understanding that can contribute directly to action improving the situation at hand. PAR promotes broad participation in the research process and supports action leading to a more just or satisfying situation for the affected communities (Deshler *et al.* 1998; Greenwood and Levin 1998).

PAR is not a particular theory or set of methodologies or methods. Each PAR project is specifically designed to the needs of a specific community. As Tandon (1988) explained, “Participatory research ... is not a set of tools, techniques and methods. Embodying the values and philosophy of alternative and popular systems of knowledge production, it is based on the belief that ordinary people are capable of understanding and transforming their reality” (p. 13). The methodologies and methods used in PAR can be the same as those used in conventional social science research. The difference lies in how the methodologies and methods are utilized, by whom, and for whom. Thus, PAR is not just a methodology, rather it is an approach to research that aims to democratize society

(Greenwood and Levin 1998) by intentionally challenging power relationships in the construction of knowledge (Deshler and Grudens-Schuck 2000). This research was used to challenge government in the on-going negotiations for a new community after the community was displaced. A powerful example of this intention in the PAR research was conducted with Skownan First Nation. The ‘Appreciative Inquiry Methodology’ and the ‘Vision Seekers Process’ with Skownan First Nation give two excellent examples of how PAR was applied while creating two unique methodologies and processes for community development that directly involved local community members (Stock 2005). Both processes led to some long-term benefits, further education and long-term employment for the participants, and new community developments projects like the creation of an ‘Adult Education Centre’ on the reserve, the ‘Career Trek Initiative’ (preparing youth for entering college and university through visiting such institutions in Winnipeg), and the ‘Wood Bison Curriculum’ for the Skownan Community School (Stock 2008, *pers. comm.*).

Research among Indigenous people and communities has also come under scrutiny in recent years. Indigenous people have stated that they are tired of being ‘researched to death’ (Smith 1999). Participatory Research has been touted as the solution to this ‘over-researching’ of Indigenous people because it engages the research participants at all stages of the research process (Cochran *et al.* 2008). Cochran *et al.* (2008) define participatory research as “collective self-inquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve their own social practices” (p. 8). Despite contributing to basic knowledge in social science and everyday life, Cochran *et al.* (2008) recognize that participatory research “does not prevent the risk that Indigenous ways of

knowing are marginalized by the scientific and academic community. Participatory researchers need to consider the power that Indigenous methods can bring to research design and to the entire research process.” (p. 8). As a community member, participatory research was a life-time commitment to work on behalf of my community using my research skills, networks and life energy. I am a community member and the Anishinabek viewed me as an insider rather than as an outsider. Being a community member has enabled me to live the Anishinaabe way of being which has been obtained from community membership, living in the community, familiarity of the landscape, and understanding and speaking Anishinaabe.

3.2.8 Community-based Participatory Research

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is a collaborative approach to research that combines methods of inquiry with community capacity-building strategies to bridge the gap between knowledge produced through research and what is practiced in communities (Viswanathan 2004). Community-based participatory research is conducted as an equal partnership between traditionally trained ‘experts’ and members of a community. In a typical CBPR project, the research starts with the community and the community participates fully in all aspects of the research process. Community is often self-defined, but general categories of community include geographic community, community of individuals with a common problem or issue, or a community of individuals with a common interest or goal (Ward 1996; Castleden 2002). CBPR encourages collaboration of ‘formally trained research’ partners from any area of expertise, provided that the researcher provide expertise that is seen as useful to the

investigation by the community, and be fully committed to a partnership of equals and producing outcomes usable to the community (Castleden 2002). Equitable partnerships require sharing power, resources, credit, results, and knowledge, as well as, a reciprocal appreciation of each partner's knowledge and skills at each stage of the project, including problem definition/issue selection, research design, conducting research, interpreting the results, and determining how the results should be used for action. Conventional research differs from traditional research in many ways. One of the principal ways in which it is different is that instead of creating knowledge for the advancement of a field or for knowledge's sake, CBPR is an iterative process, incorporating research, reflection, and action in a cyclical process (Castledon 2002).

In CBPR, community members are also involved in getting the word out about the research and promoting the use of the research findings. This involvement can help improve the quality of leadership and decision making processes that improve the well-being and lives of individual community members as well as an overall improved state of well-being of the entire community. The goal of CBPR is to improve the lives of people in the community studied (Viswanathan 2004). For CBPR it is important to make the researchers and community groups partners from the early stages of the research (Agency for Health Care Research 2008). In this way CBPR has become one of the best and most effective ways of conducting research with Indigenous communities.

In CBPR a few selected people of a community get involved, trained and paid in these kinds of research projects (Cochrane *et al.* 2008). With the high unemployment rates in Indigenous communities, employment is needed. Cochrane et al (2008) argue that CBPR is exclusive and that it shuts the door for other methodologies. CPBR allows for

researchers to get inside the community and access the people that are willing to be researched. There was no training taking place with this study. This study could be used as a platform for a larger CBPR project in the future for dealing with land management, forestry and economic development.

3.2.9 Community Planning

Community planning was also one of the methods used. Community planning means the strategies, techniques and capacity building required to encourage and enable community members to take a full and active role in planning processes for their new community (Shandas et al, 2008). Community planning integrated aspects of the built environment with AKS. Community planning includes areas such as economics, design, ecology, sociology, geography, law, political science, and statistics to guide and ensure the orderly development of settlements (Shandas et al, 2008).

3.2.10 Political/Economic/Social/Cultural/ Environment (PESCE) analysis

Political/Economic/Social/Cultural/ Environment (PESCE) analysis is a method to determine priorities for future and current needs in the five categories, namely: 1) Political, 2) Economic, 3) Social, 4) Cultural, and 5) Environment (Wakefield et al, 1985). Under these categories we considered language, women and AKS issues. The analysis was based on the interviews, workshop, literature reviews and numerous community planning meetings. The PESCE analysis was able to draw upon the damages from the past toward a future of hope. PESCE analysis was used to explore what is lacking in the community and what is needed in the new community. It also was used to

illicit an accurate description of a multidimensional reality within the community. The analysis was discussed and reviewed by chief and council and community members and revised until the analysis was considered acceptable to the community.

3.2.11 Sustainability Analysis

A sustainable livelihood is defined as “the assets (natural, physical, human, financial, and social capitals), the activities, and the access to these (mediated by institutions and social relations) that together determine the living gained by an individual or household” (Ellis 2000:10). These five different assets will be judged based on interviews and observation. Social aspects will include tradition and culture, as rather than viewing culture as an obstacle it is seen as an asset for Indigenous peoples with the wealth of AKS. Natural capital, for example, can be transformed into physical and financial capital via economic activity, while financial, social and physical capital can be transformed into human capital by increasing access to education (Ellis, 2009). This analysis will consider that asset use, control and access of resources are influenced by institutional structures (e.g., rules, customs and land tenure), processes (e.g., laws, policies, societal norms and incentives), which operate at multiple levels (individual, household, community, regional, government, multinational corporations) and can create barriers to sustainable livelihoods (Scones, 1998; Ellis, 2000). People choose livelihood strategies to provide the best livelihood outcomes in an external environment (trends of markets, politics and technology, sudden shocks such as disasters, disease outbreaks and shifts in seasons) (DFID, 1999; Ellis, 2000). Thus, the trends and forces will be analyzed.

The sustainable livelihoods model was modified to show what forces (policies and

systems) are at play at Lake St. Martin. The assets that exist in Lake St. Martin were documented and analyzed in relation to the existing policies and systems that impact the people and the community.

3.2.12 Self-Journey

I journalled my thoughts about my youth and childhood to better consider my personal analysis of AKS and women in Lake St. Martin. As I had grown up in this community I had lots of memories and experiences to draw on.

The question arises why self-journey and self-experience is a methodology. In Indigenous cultures self-journey and self-experience is fundamentally important in a person's development (Rice 2005). Only through this process can one reach true understanding of the spiritual significance of one's culture and one's role in it. Through self-journey a person 'comes into being,' understands 'her or his gifts' of life, and the specific role as a leader, guardian and steward of the community and the traditional lands. The person becomes a carrier of spiritual and cultural knowledge and wisdom and has much clarity and insight for helping to guide one's community into the future directions of one's community. All the way along self-experience is fundamentally important.

True survival skills and understanding 'the wisdom of the land' can only be learned through self-experience on the land early on. They are only derived from the land and being in interaction with experienced land-users. Personal experience and knowledge of the land is directly passed on in this way from generation to generation. These skills, knowledge, and wisdom cannot be taught in a classroom environment. In this way both methodologies are fundamentally important for AKS.

3.3 Conclusion

Indigenous Knowledge Systems contain the essential components of social, cultural, historical, spiritual and economic developments for Indigenous communities that have existed since the beginning of Indigenous communities in sustainable, interconnected and symbiotic ways. Indigenous research methods go one step beyond IKS as it applies the knowledge as a methodology. Locally, in my community IKS is AKS to illustrate how local knowledge systems are impacted by language. Drawing on the existing knowledge of AKS will help Indigenous communities with revitalization and development of healthy people and communities. As AKS are recognized and accepted in academic and other mainstream research, associated tools and methods of AKS will also be accepted.

CHAPTER 4: ANISHNAABE EXPERIENTIAL LIFE

4.1 Anishinaabe Experiential Life: Learning from Self Journey, Self experience, Anishinaabe Pimatisiwin (Life), and Mawutizidim (Visiting)

This research involved reflecting back on what I observed and experienced at the local level, and analyzing these observations and experiences. In Indigenous cultures self-journey and self-experience is fundamentally important in a person's development (Rice, 2005; Wilson, 2008). Only through this process can one reach true understanding of the spiritual significance of one's culture and one's role in it.

As I was growing up on the reserve I had first-hand experience and observation about the Anishinaabe knowledge systems (AKS) vis-à-vis 'ecological' cycles in my own backyard. However, I did not know and was unaware that these were knowledge systems. It was only during my graduate studies that I became acutely aware of these knowledge systems that I had grown up with, but had inadvertently or perhaps deliberately obliterated from my memory.

Growing up on the reserve enabled me to experience the customs and traditions associated with living off, from, and with the land; as well as using the land and resources for subsistence, sustenance, and supplementary purposes. Anishinaabe women also played a significant role in my life regarding the transmission of knowledge. Being an only child to a single mother had an important impact on my way of thinking and interacting with my ecological backyard. As an only child I constantly heard oral accounts in Anishinaabe of what life was like before my generation. I was also expected to take part in household and major chores, as well as participating in traditional, economic, and commercial activities from an early age. For example, I went wild-rice

picking and beet-root picking when I was a child and teenager to help the family's income. All the families on the reserve undertook this work as First Nation peoples were poor and farm labour was the only jobs available to First Nation people at that time. I remember picking but not tasting wild-rice due to its high exchange value it became necessary to sell it rather than eat it during my youth, growing up in a single parent family. As I reflect back to these years of childhood and growing up, I appreciate the life experiences that have been bestowed upon me, and it is with these reflections that I am writing this research.

Having spent my childhood on Lake St. Martin Reserve, and hearing my mother's (and other extended family members) *opinions and observations* about different earth cycles, I did not take them seriously and often dismissed them. These included the behaviour patterns of the wild 'critters', various seasonal and weather anomalies such as the colour of the sky or the colour of the sunset, the shape and colour of the clouds, the way the leaves turn upwards, the smell of the air, and other forms of knowledge which my mother and others bestowed upon me. I never really paid attention to the richness of this AKS until my western education and training forced me to take heed and acknowledge its importance, for which I am grateful.

I recognized that many of the women of Lake St. Martin First Nation have gained a level of understanding, knowledge and wisdom that is essential for AKS and felt this story had to be told. Through my own journey and personal growth I have reached a place where I am beginning to understand the high level knowledge and wisdom of the women to appreciate AKS. Without my journey this would not have been possible. I also understood how much self-experience I had gained during my early childhood

growing up in my culture and language. All of this has been a pre-requisite so that it would be possible for me to undertake this kind of a study. Therefore, self-journey and self-experience are Indigenous methodologies. I will proceed with explaining my journey for the reader to understand why it is possible for me to undertake a study on AKS in my community. I realize that analyzing my journey is important in order to understand where this research, my life and my community are going

To get to this point in my research took a long time (nearly seven years). I struggled with my thoughts. I kept changing my topic. But in the end, after a full ‘360°’ I was back at my original objective albeit more focused. What I had struggled with is my western knowledge conflicting with my language and the AKS and information that I possessed but dismissed as unimportant. AKS is knowledge that I was exposed to my whole life from having grown up with and having interacted with neechi Anishinabek. I am fluent in the Anishinaabe language, which is an advantage since this study also focuses on the role of language in the transmission of knowledge. Language with its ways of thinking stalled my progress in this research. Translating words to make sense in academia was difficult. Theories and methods in academia did not seem to provide a good fit.

I was brought up on the Lake St. Martin First Nation reserve. I spent the first 18 years of my life on the reserve. I was not aware that these knowledge systems existed while I was growing up. These were the AKS vis-à-vis reserve upbringing and knowledge, which included growing up with and being able to speak and understand my language (Anishinaabe mowin - Ojibway). They included partaking in traditional activities such as gathering and preparing and preserving food obtained by hunters,

trappers, and fishers; as well as preparing for traditional activities, partaking in family and community gatherings, visiting, being around family and ‘all my cousins’ and extended family. I picked rice from an early age, along with family, extended family, community members, and other neechi community members. During these times, we were taught how to work, how to recognize the different stages of rice, how to recognize wind and water conditions, and weather patterns. We were taught how to maneuver and steer a canoe, and how to recognize the type and texture of branches that were needed for the rice picking sticks. During this time I detested the hard work and waking up early in the morning before dawn, but looking back now I appreciate the knowledge that was shared with me and instilling that work ethic in my life. AKS meant experiencing and enjoying the idyllic years of my youth which included walking to the beach for a swim (or swimming in ditches), catching fish with my bare hands, playing in the woods; and basically having AKS or the ‘Indigenous ecosystem’ (aka ecosystem) at my doorstep and not being aware of it.

Indian Day Schools at Lake St. Martin have left their mark on both my classmates and me. I clearly remember being strapped and humiliated by the teacher when I got caught speaking my language in grade 1 and 2, as speaking Anishinaabe was strictly forbidden. I remember how the grade 5 and 6 teacher would come to class drunk, smelling of urine and alcohol. I felt the wrath of the teacher and was fearful as the teacher would hit the boys over the head or other parts of their bodies with a strap or a long wooden ruler.

Physical and verbal abuse from the grade 5 and 6 teacher toward the students was common. The teacher also kept a pistol in his desk. Rather than feeling safe I was afraid

for my life in a place I should have felt safe to learn and explore ideas. I remember how scared I was of this teacher and how he used to mock us. I was scared to talk in class and it was during this period that I developed a stutter; prior to that time I never stuttered. Many of my former classmates in grades 5-6 at Lake St. Martin Indian Day School have committed suicide or have died tragically.

I always knew that my way of thinking was different and unlike those of my peers and classmates while attending grade school on the reserve. I questioned things regarding nature so that one particular cousin thought that I was strange. From an early age I had a keen interest in the scientific study of nature. I even took university prerequisite science courses in high school to prepare me for this journey, even though reserve schools did not offer science courses or any university prerequisites. The school made special provisions for me and another classmate to take Biology and Chemistry to enable us to get the requirements needed for university. I knew that they did not offer university prerequisites because First Nation students were not expected to go to university.

During this time, I did not know about AKS and neither did my cousins. I grew up in my primary years speaking Anishinaabe only and did not learn English until I entered grade one at Indian Day School. During these years at school on the reserve, I realize I was being indoctrinated into the Eurocentric way of thinking. Moving to the city upon graduating from high school to pursue my post secondary education was not easy. Obtaining my first degree was the most difficult thing since I had no support or mentoring. I did not know how to study properly. Obtaining the second degree was a lot

easier since I had turned my life around by then after being afflicted by a debilitating illness that was potentially life threatening and subsequently being healed from it..

After completing my second degree, I enrolled in the Master's program. In the Master's program, I initially absorbed everything and looked at the world differently. But during this time I started to realize that AKS were important and equal to western knowledge. I realized that I had shunned the knowledge systems that I grew up with prior to the Master's program, because according to my 'post secondary education' and *now being* in the 'master's program', the knowledge holders did not have *western education* like I did, and essentially thinking 'what do they know'. I realized I was the victim of ethnocentrism as a result of having obtained western education and adopted western culture. I admit I enjoy the conveniences of western culture and do not practice the traditional way of life, nor do I practice native religious practice, although I believe in the holistic nature of life and natural law that is native spirituality. I understand and speak my Indigenous language, which is based on culture, tradition, and a way of living and thinking.

During the 'Master's program' years my western knowledge started to collide with my reserve upbringing and knowledge (which was in reality my Anishinaabe knowledge).

I started to question some of the western facts and theories. I realized that numerous theories on Indigenous knowledge were being formed by academics that were not Indigenous and did not speak or understand the Indigenous languages or true nature of the cultures of those they were studying. These academics spoke objectively and did not experience Indigenous culture in a personal way as they had not spent much time with

Indigenous peoples and culture. In this way self-journey and self-experience became important methodologies for this study. This process of personal growth is a methodology since only certain aspects of AKS can be understood once certain levels of personal growth have been achieved.

In this way, I continue to learn and grow within my culture and in the understanding of my own AKS. Now, that I am open to this level of understanding, I learn new words every time I am around my mother, or other family members and neechi Anishinabek especially in relationship to Indigenous women's knowledge about our forests. I always ask what the word means, and once it is explained, I understand its meaning. I am beginning to understand a higher language level of Anishinaabe language that is only understood by the generation of 'neechis'⁷ who were brought up living off the land. In the higher language levels is where much of the AKS information is contained and it is only through self-journey and self-experience that these higher levels of language understanding can be achieved.

For me, understanding the language is important because the knowledge is both 'innate' and 'inherent'. Words in Anishinaabe that describe actions such as unethical treatment of living or non-living organisms or objects cannot be translated into English. The meaning, knowing, sensing, and way of being that is unspoken is well understood among people of the same culture and language. The silences also have meaning. These innate and inherent characteristics of my knowledge base will be important as a 'tool' to utilize both my Anishinaabe and western knowledge in order to achieve the goals and objectives of this research. Speaking Anishinaabe and being an academic gives me the

⁷ 'Neechis' is used to refer to your Indian *brothers and sisters* (but not necessarily blood relations)

best of both worlds where I can utilize and incorporate both traditional and western science knowledge bases.

Having the task of primary researcher in Western academia, I am claiming to be ‘an expert’. I visited and closely worked with neechi Anishinabek. These are my people, with whom I share my traditional territory, culture, language, and way of thinking. I am an Anishinaabe, speak and understand Anishinaabe mowin, and am part of that “network of neechis”. When I meet a ‘neechi’ for the first time, the first thing I ask is where he or she is from. There is a good chance that I will know one or two people that this person knows. This is quite common among Indigenous peoples, which are a reflection of their culture and close kinship ties.

As an Anishinaabe researcher visiting, working and researching with my people, I have the privilege and honour of knowing some of the people who were partaking in the research. Growing up in an Anishinaabe community has enabled me to be familiar with the Anishinaabe customs and way of life. As an Anishinaabe, I have both perspectives – as an Anishinaabe woman who grew up and spent the first 18 years of her life in an Anishinaabe community and as an academic at an urban university. However, one thing I will not claim, even though I am Anishinaabe, is that I fully understand my neechi Anishinabek and Indigenous peoples. I am constantly growing in this way and this research has helped me grow further.

As a researcher, I am becoming expert in ways of understanding research and research methodologies that allow me to extract, organize, analyze, and discuss research data. However, the women of Lake St. Martin are the experts of the local AKS. Based on my Anishinaabe language skills and my up-bringing on the reserve, I have expertise in

AKS as well. As an Anishinaabe researcher, I am seeking more knowledge from my people to fill the voids and unanswered questions left in my western education to better understand myself and my role in my community. In this way I am adding to the scientific literature with new research in this field that considers women and AKS.

Through my journey and experience I have come to understand how fundamentally essential the Indigenous language is when one wants to study AKS. In this way language itself is a methodology by being a method that is used based on the ability to speak, understand and interpret the language and its meaning, as well as its associated cultural and social significance. The spoken language as a methodology involves different tools such as storytelling, oral traditions, oral histories, interpretation, understanding, and translation. Since so much of AKS is contained in the Indigenous languages which reflect a way of thinking about and understanding of the natural environment, language then becomes methodology for a study like this. Chapter 5 will contain an analysis of how language relates to AKS and how one retrieves information of AKS through Anishinaabe language.

As an Indigenous woman who speaks and understands (Anishinaabe mowin) and who was raised on the reserve, I have firsthand experience with language and AKS life. Language has played a crucial role in forming the basis of this research. Not only will language be pivotal in the objective of this research, but will also have a crucial role in forming the groundwork for the theoretical framework of AKS as well as method – speaking and understanding the language as a method and tool of resistance to the dominant culture.

Speaking my language has enabled me to think differently. The different ways of AKS thinking are embedded in my language. Each and every language operates in this way (Abley, 2007; Littlebear, 2009). Learning Indigenous languages is often a lengthy and difficult task. This can often only be accomplished if the researcher would integrate into the culture and live with the language speakers for many years. There are not enough books, audiotapes, films and other ways of learning Indigenous languages in ways that one can learn English. Accessing Indigenous language skills and ways of thinking is therefore very difficult. This is one of the reasons why not much research work has been conducted in this way.

For me, the importance of understanding the Indigenous language when conducting research with Indigenous people is paramount. However, my knowing English was also important as many Indigenous peoples in Canada do not speak their Native languages any longer as the Aboriginal languages are becoming endangered (UNESCO 2008; Statistics Canada 2006). Still, the language speakers are the most important resource people and knowledge holders for research in AKS. For academics including Indigenous researchers who do not speak or understand the Indigenous language I feel that the limitations to research in AKS are too great as to make their work inaccurate and biased. Conversing with my Indigenous peers is difficult because a lot of them do not speak an Indigenous language or Anishinaabe, let alone talk with my western colleagues. Some Anishinaabe words cannot be translated into English. They can only be described to the closest possible meaning, which was done at times. This presents gaps in understanding this kind of research and understanding some aspects of AKS. Some of the meaning and knowledge is lost. Interpretations and understandings are

rather complex and dynamic. For academics who work with interpreters much of the problem arises with the interpreter who does not understand the academic language, terminology and theory that the researcher presents her – or himself with. A great deal of misunderstanding, miscommunication and misinterpretation can occur in this way or important information is not pointed out to the researcher.

I think that an excellent example of the contrast between western conformity and Indigenous individuality are the images at the opening ceremony of the 2010 Winter Olympic Games. The contrast between the Indigenous peoples and the sports teams were very evident. Each Indigenous person was dressed differently to their own style, personality, individuality and spirituality, whether they were from the same nation or not. Each athlete was dressed to the conformity of his or her nation and not to the individuality as a person and the specific sport that the person embodies. The individuality, personal growth, expression of the gifts that each individual brings is far more important in Indigenous cultures than conformity. The uniqueness of each person is celebrated.

The dissertation is also part of the larger healing process for the entire community, for the Anishinabek to better understand ourselves and the forces acting on us. That the community of Lake St. Martin was evacuated in May 8, 2011 has impacted my family and I feel a sense of deep loss. I was in my community when the chartered buses arrived at the health centre to evacuate the first group of people. The people were standing around with their overnight bags thinking that it would only be short term. As I drove through the community I felt an overpowering grief and upon sharing with my

family they had felt the same thing. One of the elders said 'it feels as if someone just died'. There was an overwhelming sense of loneliness in the air.

I went back to my community on May 23, 2011. When I drove around the community, it really struck me at how much destruction the flooding has caused. I remembered how much cattle we used to have and how much I hated feeding and watering the cattle. I looked at the last remaining cattle that were confined to a small piece of land surrounded by water. I watched a little poodle with a pink collar in need of human contact running through the water chasing after the security truck. The community members are being housed in various hotels in Winnipeg and surrounding areas. Lake St. Martin was once a beautiful community. It is uncertain when or if the community members will ever return to their homes. The Anishinabek have stated that the government may relocate them and compensate them, but there is no price tag on memories. I am quite concerned about my neechi Anishinabek's well-being and I feel their displacement. I also worry about my mother's well-being because she is very active and likes to work, and is now being housed in a hotel room and her daily routine and livelihood taken away. I can only hope and pray that they will return home soon, even if it means returning to a relocated community.

4.2 Conclusion

I realize that the next few chapters give a glimpse into a world that is very different and very foreign to non-Indigenous peoples. There are so many things that can never be understood by non-Indigenous peoples unless they go on a mission to learn the language, to immerse in the culture and to live a life with the land. Although non-

Indigenous peoples may never be able to understand Indigenous peoples to the full extent they can gain far more respect for these very different cultures. I hope this dissertation will inspire other Indigenous researchers to be brave and go deeper in their research sensitizing others to understand that there is a lot more going on in Indigenous cultures than what meets the eye. Reading works like this thesis, non-Indigenous peoples can become more sensitive to Indigenous peoples. Often non-Indigenous people override conversations with their very limited point of view and judge Indigenous peoples as incapable of doing things, and pushing them into silence. This is why I wrote this thesis.

CHAPTER 5: ANISHINAABE LANGUAGE AND ANISHINAABE KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

5.1 Anishinaabe Language and Anishinaabe Knowledge Systems: An Overview

Anishinaabe Knowledge Systems (AKS) are built upon an elaborate network of language that are comprised of thoughts, words and actions (Highway 2003). Indigenous peoples often know a great deal about the natural world, and part of the knowledge lies embedded in their languages (Abley 2007, p. 198). Various international conventions and agreements recognize and advocate Indigenous Peoples' right to language. The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples recognizes the importance of adequate education for Indigenous people, where they establish and control their own educational systems and where they have a right to manifest, practice, develop and teach spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies (UNESCO 2009, p. 132). UNESCO's Constitution stipulates language diversity as a basic principle. Based on this principle UNESCO has developed programs aimed at promoting languages as instruments of education and culture, and as a significant means through which to participate in one's way of life. The United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNPFII 2008) affirmed that Indigenous languages are storehouses of vast Indigenous knowledge concerning ecological systems and processes and how to protect and use some of the most vulnerable and biologically diverse ecosystems in the world. UNPFII (2008) further stated that it is no coincidence that the areas where Indigenous peoples live are the areas that contain the greatest biological diversity. Biological, linguistic and cultural diversity are inseparable and mutually reinforcing, so when an Indigenous language is lost, so too is the Indigenous knowledge to maintain aspects of the world's biological diversity.

Indigenous peoples recognize the vital link between their language and their customs, traditions and ecological integrity.

The need to recognize the importance of language transmission has emerged out of a critique of the traditional ways in which research has been conducted in Indigenous communities within academic settings (Kirkness 1998). Mainstream knowledge translation discourse has focused on examining ways in which the gap between research and policy can be addressed. Language transmission has demonstrated that Western scientific theory alone is not enough, but AKS, via language transmission is the driving force of how Anishinaabe people interact with their environment.

The purpose of this chapter is to enhance our understanding of how Anishinaabe language influences AKS and how they are both directly dependent upon each other. I defined AKS earlier as layers of knowledge regarding relationships, roles and responsibilities of people, with respect to nature and the land. However, the Anishinaabe language or ‘Anishinaabe mowin’ is inherently integrated into the AKS and I will examine whether language and other aspects should be not only in the name but be part of the definition of AKS.

This chapter is organized into three sections: 1) the importance of Indigenous language; 2) the systematic disruption of Anishinaabe language by government and its impact; and 3) the policy and program shifts needed to revitalize language.

5.2 The Importance of Anishinaabe Mowin to Land Based Activities

Language is recognized as an important part of one’s identity (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). Anishinaabe language or Anishinaabe mowin is the

principal instrument by which Anishinaabe kwek transmit their knowledge from one generation to another. Because language defines the world and experience in cultural terms, Anishinaabe literally shapes our way of perceiving - our worldview. The Anishinaabe worldview has long been and still is shaped by life close to the land and a deep appreciation of the spiritual dimension of being.

Anishinaabe language is an important thread of AKS and land based activities (Simpson 2004). Much of Anishinaabe land-based activities are centered around language. “Indigenous languages are not only vital links to Indigenous knowledge, they are also descriptive of Indigenous peoples’ relationship with their ecosystems” (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). The land provides Anishinabek with a sense of identity which is further strengthened by Anishinaabe mowin. Identification with the land and nature gives one a sense of security and continuity with the past and shaped by culture (RCAP 1996).

Simpson (2004) discusses the need to maintain Indigenous Knowledge by recognizing that nature lore is encoded in the language but that environmental destruction is causing issues:

Indigenous Knowledge comes from the land through the relationships Indigenous Peoples develop and foster with the essential forces of nature. These relationships are encoded in the structure of Indigenous languages and in Indigenous political and spiritual systems. They are practiced in traditional forms of governance, and they are lived in the hearts and minds of Indigenous Peoples. Without intact ecosystems, Indigenous Peoples cannot nurture these relationships (Simpson 2004, p. 378).

The destruction of Indigenous or Anishinaabe peoples’ land base and traditional territories and placement on reserves on marginal land (such as the crater impacted basin, in saline, where the Lake St. Martin community has resided for 120 years) has had

negative impacts on them in terms of physical well-being, health, loss of traditional foods, loss of traditions and language (Wheatley 1997). There are well-documented cases such as Grassy Narrows and WhiteDog (Wheatley 1997), and the current situation of Lake St. Martin where the entire community has been evacuated because of artificial flooding. The Anishinabek cannot make a sustainable livelihood from trapping; the fur industry is not profitable anymore due to reduction in the demand for fur, which has been brought on by organizations such as People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals⁸ (PETA). PETA used celebrities to influence the public and decision-makers. As well, there are no government supports for hunting (Thompson 2009). The Anishinabek commonly ate muskrat, but rarely do so presently. Hunting is more viable since deer or moose or other large game provide substantial amounts of food (Traverse 2009a, *pers. comm.*). The disinterest in the land further weakens the ability to transmit the knowledge and its associated AKS via Anishinaabe mowin.

5.2.1 Language as a Proxy

Language is commonly used to determine whether Indigenous culture is thriving (Tebtebba Foundation 2008). Language is not being measured but is used as a proxy for health, culture and sustainability because language is the heart and soul of Indigenous culture. Language and culture simply go hand in hand and one cannot exist without the other (Abley 2007). Determining the level of language spoken and its transmission among Indigenous speakers has become the overarching indicator of determining the health of a culture.

⁸ People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is an organization that advocates for ethical treatment of animals.

The loss of language is always related to loss of culture (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000; Nicholas 2008). Indeed many of the customary activities of the Anishinabek are being lost due to the loss of language according to Anishinaabe kwek. For example, women talked about a homemade swing cradle that was built from two pieces of rope tied to opposite sides of a wall inside a house. Cloth or blankets were used to make the cradle. This was called “maymay-ii”. The baby was put in the cradle to be “maymay-ii”. The word refers to the humming and singing sound the mothers’ used to soothe the baby and to make the baby fall asleep. It was also the activity of gently swinging the baby. The rocking motion soothed the baby and made it fall asleep. As well, the wrapping of the baby was also soothing because it was similar to the baby’s fetal position inside the mother’s womb. Another example of a word that is no longer used refers to an activity that does not exist anymore: ‘kii mbee kay wug’. ‘Kii mbee kay wug’ was a word referring to the activity of building homes through community engagement. ‘Bee’ was more than a word. The word is similar to that of a working bee, and perhaps this word was adopted from Anishinaabe to English to explain getting together on any issue such as organizing a community event or protest. In Anishinaabe towin (way of life or how things are done by the Anishinabek), ‘bee’ means the activity of getting together to help one another. Helping one another was an opportunity to get together, eat together, share stories, and work together. The word ‘bee’ represents the Anishinaabe culture and a cultural activity and a way of life. Joshua Fishman (1996), a noted linguist, states that most of culture is contained in its language. Furthermore, Fishman (1996, p. 42) states:

Language is best able to express most easily, most accurately and most richly, the values, customs and overall interests of the culture. If you take

language away from the culture (a people's way of life), you take away its greetings, its praises, its curses, its laws, its literature (legends), its songs, its riddles, its proverbs, its cures, its wisdom, its prayers... You are losing those things that essentially are the way of life, the way of thought, the way of valuing, and a particular human reality.

Sumner (2007, *pers. comm.*) remembers her youth and that speaking the language was a way of life and a source of pride. Speaking Anishinaabe was as natural as breathing, as parents only spoke Anishinaabe at home. At home there were no outside influences, unlike those of today's generation such as television, computers, cell phones, among other things. Anishinaabe women use language as a tool for teaching and passing on traditions and customs. The women of Lake St. Martin call themselves Anishinaabe, or Anishinaabe 'quay' – meaning Anishinaabe 'woman' and pass language and knowledge down through the generations.

The loss of Indigenous languages signifies not only the loss of traditional knowledge but also the loss of cultural diversity and spirituality, as well as the intricacies involved in the knowledge systems, such as those embedded in Anishinaabe plant names, with these names often providing information about its medicinal purpose. Many traditions and customs are dependent on the language and if the language is lost some of the customs and traditions will disappear as well.

5.2.2 Oral History, Oral Tradition, and Story Telling

Anishinabek and Indigenous peoples around the world have practiced oral tradition (Battiste and Henderson 2000; Smith 1999). Their speeches, stories, prayers, songs, laws of governing, history, philosophy, and spirituality have been mainly passed on through oral tradition, oral history, and storytelling.

One cannot leave someone's home without storytelling. Storytelling is part of life for Anishinaabe people, especially Anishinaabe women. Growing up on the reserve, I heard my share of stories from various sources such as elders, women, traditional land users, and everyday folk. Story telling was necessary when the interviews and workshops were conducted. The Elders shared a greater part of their knowledge in the form of stories.

Storytelling is an integral component of the oral tradition of Indigenous cultures (Highway 2003). Oral history is also part of the oral tradition. Oral history is referred to information that is active and vivid in the memory of Indigenous peoples and continuously passed on from generation to generation (Mildon 2008). For the Anishinabek, this was associated with 'mami-kow' or remembering; where they recalled how they lived in the past and the way it was, as well as how life is today and how it will be in the future. Creation stories or specific historic events are part of oral history and the overall oral tradition. Stories define oral tradition that with time they also become oral history and get transmitted from generation to generation.

Oral history is an individual addressing first-hand experience and feelings in narrative form. The Elders gave vivid accounts of their way of life, so that I could visualize being there with them. Oral history is an 'eye witness account' as opposed to one 'handed down by word of mouth to later generations' (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000; Augustine 2008). With time the first-hand experience becomes lost but the story continues across many generations. The way the story might be told changes with time, however, the core issue remains the same. With time there could be several versions of stories about a specific event in the past of an Indigenous community. Giving

an account of more than one perspective and to look for links between stories becomes important (Cameron 1996). Indigenous peoples, rich with information in the oral tradition have strong cultural connections to their histories, which are transmitted orally and are essential for cultural identity and survival (Cruikshank 1990; Mihesuah 1996).

Subtleties are part of oral histories in that they describe events in minute detail which western knowledge is unable to capture. Subtleties can detect the change in fish taste over time by the Anishinaabe elders and can track the changes in time regarding the taste in fish. Subtleties involve mental tracking. Traverse and Baydack (2005) refer to subtleties which describe how elders rely on mentally keeping track of events and observing subtle changes as opposed to keeping a written account of events. Subtleties are part of AKS. Mental tracking or being aware of the subtle differences or variations in nature, objects or things, provide Indigenous people with “a full scale” of events and occurrences. The elders noticed the difference in the taste of fish after there was a flood. These are subtleties that a non-Indigenous person would not recognize nor be aware of. This is in contrast to written observations that are recorded when events occur or have already happened. Colorado (1996) states that Indigenous science stresses cognitive abilities and powers of reasoning lead the way toward holistic knowledge.

Anishinaabe people base their observations and knowledge on subtle changes in the environment, changes that Western science is unable to capture (Traverse and Baydack 2005). Indigenous knowledge systems consist of the observations of nature by Elders and other Anishinabek, through an awareness of the subtleties: the subtle and obvious changes in nature (Traverse and Baydack 2005). This study incorporated oral

tradition, oral history, and storytelling, which are generated from visiting and interacting, in order to gain insights into the AKS of Lake St. Martin First Nation.

People spent hours and hours perfecting the art of public communication and learning methods for memorizing what had to be said, recorded and passed on from generation to generation (Einhorn 2000, p. 1).

Einhorn (2000) explains the importance of the spoken word of Native peoples:

When people breathe, they exchange spirits, and their breath transforms sounds into words. Uttered sound vibrations possess physical and spiritual energies that find their expression in the voices and visions of all sentient beings. Words vibrate in every vein and crystallize in every capillary. Words carry one's physical totality or state of being and become part of one's being (p. 3).

Just making certain sounds carries a specific message to another person that has meaning.

Anishinaabe kwek are the primary transmitters of AKS. The reason for this is because Anishinaabe kwek tend to be the ones looking after children and raising them, but this is not to dispute or dispel the fact that the men do assist in and raise their children as well, in fact there are many single parent fathers raising children. The systems based on methods of how the knowledge is transmitted are determined by the situation. The AKS transmission is in many forms: verbal, non-verbal, gestures, body language, or facial expressions. The responsibility is bestowed on the women to teach and pass on knowledge. The knowledge befits the situation: for example, if a child starts getting rough with someone else's pet, the mother or caregiver will give the child a certain facial expression that serves as warning. Another example is in terms of respect. Respect is an honored tradition among the Anishinabek. If a child or even an adult says something to an elder or another adult that is out of line, another person will make a facial expression as a warning to stop.

Words – whether they are spoken or unspoken - are seen as a vehicle for action and change. Based on the words change can become positive or negative as living vibrations affect the actions and reactions of all people. For Anishinabek change includes ‘all relations’ meaning all living beings as well as spirit beings. Spoken words can unite or divide; they can lead to cooperation and solution or to separation and war. The spoken word is always an act of Creation (Einhorn 2000, p. 3). Anishinaabe kwek instruct their children or kin “naguchitooon akiduwun”, “kaygo maamiikindithikain”, or “kaygo ayi u anoochigu iinakain” – meaning “watch what you say”, “don’t tease”, or “don’t say anything bad to someone”. The latter two translations are only approximate, but the meaning behind them represent the repercussions of saying or doing something bad or intentional to someone or something. These are similar to “njinay” which discussed previously. Anishinaabe believe that you will suffer the consequences if you do intentional harm to someone. Anishinaabe words or phrases lose their meaning when they get translated. This is why it is so important to speak, understand and think Anishinaabe (Highway 2003).

For Anishinaabe kwek, talking about their youth and how life was back in their day is a way of sharing oral history. This oral history is also a means of instilling values into their children and the present generation. Sharing stories comes from the breathing life into words. The breathing of words to become life is also significant when a mother gives birth and the first breath a baby takes is life. Anishinaabe kwek teachings bring life. Einhorn (2000, p. 4) also states that breathing words of truth and communicating in right relationship of self and everyone and everything is the sacred flow of the oral tradition. When stories, wisdom, and teachings are shared, the Anishinaabe will tell the

listener ‘utapinun unu kiikiduwunun’ which means ‘take these words’. Taking the words is accepting what is being taught.

Anishinabek consider the spoken word and the act of speaking as sacred as well as listening and responding (Highway 2003). Listening is a privilege since this is how teachings and wisdom is passed on. The listeners learn valuable lessons from the people who have training, experience and learning. However, language is being lost due to lack of use. There are also different levels of Anishinaabe mowin: kana at Anishinaabe moot, Anishinaabe moo, and nithidutum. There are different levels of proficiency in Anishinaabe mowin. Nuta Anishinaabe mow is a recognition and distinction among Anishinabek that someone can speak the language fluently. The highest level of Anishinaabe mowin has words that the ordinary Anishinaabe speaker cannot understand. Mamanzii Anishinabemuud (does not speak Anishinaabe well) refers to someone who can speak but does not understand the higher level Anishinaabe mowin. The levels also indicate a person’s knowledge of the Anishinaabe language. There are higher-level words that are not understood by the average Anishinaabe speaker. Elders or someone who is very fluent in Anishinaabe mowin only understands these words. The different levels of speech also reflect the teaching. The Anishinaabe language is just as complex and highly developed as any other language and is just as important as any other language.

However, due to the western school system and television much of the understanding of value and sacredness of the choice of every word has been very much lost with younger generations. Once Anishinabek and their Indigenous relations are on the path of healing and are relearning their language, these teachings become important

and choice of words becomes critical again. The older generations still have this understanding. Kitchi Anishinabek – very loosely translated meaning one of great stature or wisdom – recognize that language is very important for their survival (Elders 2009 *pers. comm.*). “*Kitchi Anishinabek ukikaydanawa Mantoo n ay kiimiinuguwad ugiikudonuwa*” – ‘know that God gave us this language [Anishinaabe mowin] to speak’. Kitchi Anishinabek have repeated time and time again that the young people are losing their language, which is why they are not respecting life.

Among the older generation, speaking Anishinaabe language is still a source of pride to some and represents a symbol of unity. When Anishinaabe people meet each other for the first time, they usually ask each other - “kit u nishi naabaym?” – which means “do you speak Anishinaabe?” When Anishinaabek can converse with one another it is a source of pride that our culture is strong. There are still many people who speak Anishinaabe.

Much of the traditional and cultural activities are based in the forest (NAFA 2007). For the Anishinaabe people, a wooded or forested area is called 'noopiming'. There is also distinction between the type of cover, along with specific words for the type of activity that takes place in the 'noopiming'. When Anishinaabe people talk about someone going into the woods they say 'kupi'. Kupi is usually associated with an activity of some sort; it can either be going for fire wood, checking out wildlife or plants, or just observing what condition or shape the forest is in. 'Noopiming' offers aesthetic, recreational, cultural, spiritual, social, and economic values for Indigenous people. Much of these activities incorporate sustainable resource use. Sustainable resource use is driven by Anishinaabe language and AKS. Sustainable resource use offers the opportunity to

combine traditional cultural values and AKS with modern land-use and resource management systems (Moller et al 2004). Anishinabek's AKS are based on observation and experience of land and nature. These observations and experiences are steeped in oral tradition and oral history (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000), which in essence is Anishinaabe language and the ability to converse, understand, and speak it. Much of the teachings, which are passed, are deeply rooted in respect, which ultimately leads to how one should act or treat animate or inanimate objects, mainly flora and fauna (Lyons 2008).

Oral history and oral tradition are an integral component of Indigenous peoples culture. But just as important are the actions of Anishinaabe that are not oral or written. The actions are the motions and activities of the Anishinabek that are not based on storytelling, oral history or oral tradition. Action tends to be overlooked by academia and historians because they are based on actions that may be deemed unimportant or uneventful. The Anishinabek believe that everything is alive and that it can be talked to. For example, Traverse (b 2009, *pers. comm.*) shared a story where one of the Elders yelled out to the 'thunderbirds' during a thunderstorm to "quiet down and go away. You're scaring the children." This behavior is not uncommon as the Anishinabek still speak to both animate and inanimate objects like they would to another human being. Another example is when Traverse's (a 2009, *pers. comm.*) brother saw a skunk with a can stuck on its head. Her brother saw the skunk was in distress and wanted to help it but at the same time was scared the skunk was going to spray him. Her brother went up to the skunk and talked to it; and told it that he was going to help it and not to spray on him. The can was removed from the skunk's head and it walked away without spraying.

Traverse (2007, *pers. comm.*) recalls when her nephew Gordon partnered up with their late dad to go Seneca root digging. “They came across a beehive and bees. Gordon chased the bees and got stung on his eye. When they arrived back in the evening, Gordon’s eye was swollen shut. One side of Gordon’s face was so swollen and blue. It looked so bad because he was disrespectful of the bees” (Traverse 2007, *pers. comm.*). ‘*Ukii taybaynimawan Gordoninun*’. ‘*Ukiitaybaynimawan*’ is a word that is used when someone deserves something for doing something wrong to another person, animal or thing. The closest translation into English is when making reference to someone who has done wrong or harmed someone or something. The word is used in the context of “he deserved what he got” and it goes further to refer it in the context of “deserving what you get for doing something to someone or something”. In non-Anishinaabe society karma may have similar connotations, however, for the Anishinabek, it is more than this word but also how the community or others will view the person.

5.2.3 Indigenethics: Njinay (Ways of Knowing)

Life forms that cannot speak for themselves are fully integrated into AKS (Knutson and Suzuki 1992; Lyons 2008). Certain Anishinaabe words are very powerful in providing instruction and guidance in how to treat and respect life that cannot speak for themselves. As transmitters of knowledge, Indigenous women use language to convey these instructions regarding ethics. This type of instruction is also used in western academia and research institutions in what is referred to as ethics. But unlike university and academia where they are enforced as an agreement/waiver-like documents for researchers to sign, the instructions or teachings are part of the upbringing of a child as

they grow up and continue until death. These are what Indigenous people would call Indigenous ethics or ‘Indigenethics’.

Indigenethics are unwritten teachings or instructions of how to respect and care for life, animate or inanimate. Indigenethics are also a reminder to the Anishinaabe - ‘*ki gu njinay*’ which refers to doing something that is wrong or not acceptable to something or someone and that something will happen to you if you do something to someone or make fun of someone on purpose. Smith (1999) has provided an excellent account of how western research does not work and how ‘Indigenizing methodologies or research’ should be left to Indigenous peoples. These set of instructions or Indigenous methodologies provide guidance for Indigenous peoples in their roles as keepers or guardians of the land that they live on and includes the extended family and community including all human and nonhuman relationships and acknowledges the interdependence of all life forms (Settee 2007).

At the flux of ‘*njinay*’ are the teachings and transmission of proper etiquette toward other living species regardless of whether it is crawling, swimming, flying, or walking – animate or inanimate. The etiquette is based on language and behaviour actions, which is also a guide for governing behaviour, which ultimately serves as a governing mechanism of how Indigenous women manage their resources and sustainable use. Anishinaabe *mowin* (language) directs how one should handle or respect their environment. Anishinaabe *mowin* can have other stipulations that are unwritten but intricately enforced.

Behaviour and actions are also guided by sounds that may not necessarily be speech and are neither audible nor understood. However, the language speakers only

recognize such sounds. One example is the ‘clucking’ sound made by Anishinaabe women when a person does something that is out of line with what is the norm. Another word is “*haawoo*” which cannot be translated but is a word associated with scolding or correcting behaviour. If someone says “*haawoo*” to you, that means that you have done something that is not acceptable. Other means of teaching include understanding Anishinaabe words associated with taboo. For example, while visiting my aunt in Lake St. Martin one winter night, I noticed a fly in her dining room. I immediately volunteered to shoo the fly out into the cold winter night. My aunt immediately scolded me saying “*kaygonishupapunitawakaan – kigu-njinay*” – meaning do not make fun of something or do not do intentional harm to something. My aunt was correcting my behavior and telling me what the repercussions would be for my behaviour. She said that the flies will torment you later on in life. Whether this is true is irrelevant, but the emphasis was on the teaching. *Kigu-njinay – and – kaygonishupapunundungan* – are words that are very powerful in directing how one should act. *Kigu njinay* is the harshest form of correction.

Language is a unique form of expression of human experience (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). Language intricately guides behaviour. In the case of the Anishinaabe women of Lake St. Martin, language plays a pivotal role in information dissemination, instruction, guidance, governance, cultural transmission, and knowledge sharing, which are all part of AKS. In addition to speech, language carries with it an unspoken network of cultural values that generally operate on a subliminal level. These values are a major force in the shaping of each person’s self-awareness, identity, and interpersonal relationships (Highway 2003).

In western philosophy and theology, nature is relegated to the environment with the animals (Deloria 1997; Smith 1999; LaDuke 2005; Lyons 2008) and separate from humanity. Human nature is set apart with its intelligence, intellect and morals above other types of nature, which needed to be tamed and cultivated (Deloria 1999). That is not the case in Indigenous philosophy: “Creation, the physical world is considered a manifestation or reflection (as in a shadow or image) of its spiritual creator” (Atleo 2004: xvi). With the Anishinabek, everything is viewed on the same level and is respected. In Indigenous cultures humans are always part of nature (LaDuke 2005). Humans exist in a kinship relation with all of nature; life is ordered and regulated through the interactions of humans with all of nature (Deloria 1999; Atleo 2004). For the Anishinabek, the use of Anishinaabe names for places, which is discussed in the latter chapter. Nepinak (2007b, *pers. comm.*) affirms that Anishinabek are part of nature and all of their livelihoods and existence revolved around the land. Everything we do is ordered by nature.

[My] dad and grandpa taught me how to hunt, how much to take, even the little ducks. [I] stayed at my grandpas for a long time and picked up a lot of teachings from him. [I] asked [my] grandpa ‘come with me and we’ll go shoot’. He told me ‘this is not the time to hunt ducks because they are breeding now’. This was July. He said ‘they are now brooding and they don’t really fly because they have lost some of their feathers due to their breeding. You can’t shoot them and they’re not good to eat at this time.’ The best time to eat is in the fall when they have already finished breeding. This is an example of leaving ducks for the next generation. That’s one of the examples I learned from my grandpa is never to shoot duck[s] in July because they have that cycle too to get ready for the fall. They fly home to come to raise their young. Don’t ever shoot ducks at this time (Nepinak 2008, *pers. comm.*).

Anishinabek honour and respect the cycles and systems within their land and nature. This is why all of nature has meaning to Anishinabek and is spiritual in essence (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). This realization was and is expressed in feeling, action, language, culture, song, story, dance, philosophy and science of the

Indigenous peoples (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). The Anishinabek understand that the land was given by Muntoo for their use and that the land has to be taken care of; and everything that grows on and is part of the land is there for a purpose and is to be respected, and if it is not respected and taken care, “*tunimunduyiimugun akhii*” – “the Earth will eventually starve” (Traverse 1999). In this way nature is observed and perceived by each person and is the responsibility of each person.

5.2.4 The Meaning of Naming

Anishinaabe mowin names have deep, abiding meanings. For the Anishinaabe, there are different forms of communicating according to the task at hand. This is similar to the Maori belief that language is the life principle of Maori *mana* (philosophy) (Kirkness 1998: 105). With the preparation of traditional foods, the Anishinaabe language plays a significant role in the naming of the tools that are used in cutting and preparing the foods. Traditionally cooking tools are handmade and made specifically for the task, and as such are named after the task.

Naming different ways of preparing food is closely linked with the Anishinaabe language. The Anishinabek used to make ‘achidamoonan’ which is a term that refers to a processing of white fish. The term ‘achidamoonan’ refers to the way it is prepared and hung upside down with the head down and tail up with a hole for a stick to run through the tail. About two or three months before freeze-up the Anishinabek fished for white fish. After the fish was caught, it was prepared and hung to dry. Within three days all the blood would drain and they would have dried white fish (Elders 2009 *pers. comm.*).

When there was a kill, every part of the animal (deer, moose, fish, rabbit, etc.) was used. Even the bones were used as a food staple. “The women would prepare the pathiganack, which was a process of ‘breaking of the bones’ – ‘pathigan’ and cooking them. ‘Pathiganack’ was the most delicious thing to eat with bannock. The bone marrow was also good when it was cooked. They would cook the bones, and eat the marrow” (Sumner 2009, *pers. comm.*). The bones were not discarded but were used in preparing the hide. The men would carve the bones according to the task that was needed for the preparation of the hide. They made a ‘mada-yigan’, which was used as a scraper for scraping the hide. The bone scraper looked like it had little teeth. The naming of the tool ‘mada-yigan’, refers the order which it is used, and in this case, it was the first tool used in the preparation of the hide. ‘Mada’ or ‘maachi’ mean start of something. They also carved the bone to make a ‘minkogon’ that was used on the hair and fat. ‘Minkogon’ refers to action of hitting to find something.

The Anishinabek also have different words for different activities associated with hunting. It was the men who hunted and killed game. ‘Inini wuk kikiwithay wug’ but it did not necessarily mean that they killed something. What this means is that ‘the men went hunting’. They asked ‘kaygo nu u nitoo?’ or ‘did they get anything’. And if there was a kill, they say ‘u key nithaan muunsthun’ – ‘they killed a moose’. However there is a difference if one merely shoots but does not kill.

The Anishinaabe have words describing the various customary activities of hunters, fishers, trappers, gatherers, Seneca root diggers, and medicine makers:

Hunting – kiiwithay
Fishing – pugiiituwa
Trapping – wunii gay
Gatherer – muwiithoo

Seneca root digging – moonuyigay
Medicine maker – muskikikay

The words also describe the various level of skill and if someone is good at doing a customary activity then the honor bestowed upon it brings up the Anishinaabe's stature in the community. For example, attaching 'nata' before the customary activity is acknowledging that a person is good at the customary activities and that person is recognized with that skill. Describing someone as 'nata kiiwithay' is telling someone that person is a skilled hunter. But making reference to some as ka nata kiiwithayd is the highest honor. Ka nata refers to something that is sacred. The words describing the skills become:

Ka nata – kii withayd
Ka nata – pugiiuwad
Ka nata – wunii gayd
Ka nata – muwiithood
Ka nata – moonuyigayd
Ka nata – muskikikayd

Women who are considered skilled trappers are rare but highly celebrated as it is men who normally trap, and the women who prepare the meat for food. To be described by your neechi Anishinabek as being skilled at a customary activity is not only an honor but is also associated with your own well-being, and with being healthy and fit. It is usually the Anishinaabe kwek that will talk about the "ka natakiwithayd" or "ka nata pugiiuwaud" meaning the skilled hunter or the skilled fisher. Anishinaabe kwek hold their neechi kwek in high esteem if they're good bannock makers and good cooks, especially knowing how to prepare and cook traditional foods. Women and men recognize each other if they possess certain skills, which they refer to as 'iinu-gu-chi-

toon'. As well, for women to be described or referred to as 'nata wu nookii' is a great honor because it recognizes the woman as a hard worker.

A name in Anishinaabe signifies so much, with much contextual meaning. Anishinaabe words and expressions show the relationships among family members and with the surrounding environment. The Anishinabek of Lake St. Martin have names for everything important to our culture, health, governance, natural resource management, etc. Relationships define AKS. The Anishinaabe word 'ndinawaymaganuuk' means my 'relatives', but in the Anishinaabe context it expresses your identity as an Anishinaabe tribe or kinship. For example, according to Mi'kmaw teaching, "everyone and everything are part of a whole in which parts are interdependent on each other" (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000: 55). Wilson (2008) discusses 'relationality', where he describes the relationship systems among Indigenous people and the acknowledgement of each other as relations or as the Anishinabek say 'ndinawaymaganuuk'. Wilson (2008: 80) states that:

Identity for Indigenous peoples is grounded in their relationships with the land, with their ancestors who have returned to the land and with the future generations who will come into being on the land. Rather than viewing ourselves as being in relationship with other people or things, we are the relationships that we hold and are part of.

Being 'Anishinaabe' also goes further in identifying which clan someone is from. In Anishinaabe societies, language defines us, as well belonging to a clan gives someone identity. The Anishinaabe language defines AKS by words, non-verbal gestures, and thought. Highway (2003) describes language as more than the semantics of words, but encompassing the thought process, identity, and an internal processing that involves more than thought. Language is also the foundation of one's identity (Highway 2003). For

example, in the Anishinaabe language, the word for ‘aunt’ and ‘uncle’ are directly related to close kinship between the mother and her sister, and shows differences between an aunt on the mother and father’s side, which is different than in other languages.

Ownership is also represented with the prefix ‘ni’. The following Anishinaabe words represent the linkage in kinship and extended families:

Mother - ‘*nimama*’
Aunt – ‘*nimamaainth*’
Father – ‘*nikuths*’
Uncle – ‘*nimisumay*’
Grandmother – ‘*nookoo*’
Grandfather – ‘*nimishoomiths*’
Brother and sister – ‘*ni chi zhanug*’
Older sister – ‘*nimithay*’
Older brother – ‘*nithuyay*’
Younger brother or sister – ‘*nishi may*’
Family and/or Relatives - ‘*ndinawaymagun*’

When Anishinabek refer to someone else’s relative “*ki*” – which means “your” is used in front of the word. For example “*kimama*” means “your mother”. I realize that ‘nimama’ is an anglicized word but no dictionary or Elder was able to provide the original word for mother. This indicates the deep impact of colonization over many generations that there is no living memory of the original word. Anishinabek call each other ‘*ndinawaymagun*’, even though there is no blood relation. This is a sign that the Anishinabek are acknowledging that they come from the same tribe or as Indigenous people as a collective. Thus, tribal identity is accented. There is no distinction between first, second, or third cousins. The distinction made is how close one is related. For instance, “*paysu ndinawayma*” or “closely related” signifies that a close-relative.

5.3 Naming of places

The Anishinaabe name specific places according to its landscape features and characteristics. Every feature of the land and landscape and space signifies a unique feature and characteristic only the Anishinaabe can readily see and identify. This identification of landscapes and spaces also signifies Anishinabek close and intimate relationship with the land. Also because of the significance of waterways, there are many Cree words as well, signifying waterways (e.g. where the waters are narrow, or begin to narrow, or curve around land, etc.) (Kirkness 1998: 47). This also holds true for the Anishinaabe language. Many of the First Nation communities (reserves) in Manitoba and in other parts of Canada are located next to waterways. Many of the reserves have Anishinaabe wiinziwinun in that they are either named after the land or an animal. The legal name for Lake St. Martin First Nation is ‘The Narrows’ or ‘Ubuskoodayyang’, which means where the water narrows. The nearby town of Gypsumville is called ‘wajjiwing’ which means on the ridge. Names of places are associated with the land feature that best describes it. A lot of other names in Manitoba and other parts of Canada have Indigenous names that represent land. The following are a few commonly known names of places:

‘Winnipeg’ refers to ‘wiinibeeg’ meaning ‘dirty water’;
‘Manitoba’ means ‘manitouabhi’ meaning ‘where God sits’; and
‘Canada’ means ‘kanadha’ which means ‘something that is sacred’.

It would be important for non-Native teachers teaching in Anishinaabe communities to learn about the specific Indigenous language, as well as their children’s culture and environment. Understanding the Anishinaabe meaning of commonly known places would also instill a sense of pride among the children.

5.3.1 Land and Nature

The Anishinabek have names for and a relationship with all the flora and fauna around them (Wilson 2008). There are many Anishinaabe words referring to the land. Anishinaabe winzwin form specific connections to nature, and through them the values and identity as a people are maintained. Anishinaabe people associate their neechi Anishinabek with where they live and refer to directions whether it is keewatinowng (north), sawanowng (south), ngaabiiwanowng (west), or wabanowng (east), (Traverse 2009a, *pers. comm.*).

Intact ecosystems are fundamental in Anishinabek and other Indigenous peoples' relations with the land but are disappearing. The Anishinabek of Lake St. Martin recognize that the people do not go out to the land as much anymore and go so far as saying that the Anishinabek are too complacent and simply not interested – 'kaween kaygo iipiskayndaziinawa' (Elders 2009 *pers. comm.*). The disinterest in the land negates the relationship the Anishinabek have with their land, further weakening the relationship as the spoken language becomes diminished.

When people make mistakes in their land activities humor is used to both teach and lessen the criticism. Joking and teasing is normal and a very big part of traditional knowledge (Gallagher 2003). There is far less criticism, harsh words, scolding or even punishment for mistakes that people make. It is far more important that people learn from their mistakes, are acknowledged that they are learning, and that they are emotionally up-lifted.

5.3.2 Anishinaabe Kiigidowin (Words)

While the origin of newly emerged words is often more or less transparent, it tends to become obscured through time due to sound change or semantic change. There are some words as well that do not exist in Anishinaabe. One of these words is ‘I’. Anishinaabe mowin is about sharing and working together, therefore to have a word like ‘I’ is to refer to something that is personal or a personal possession. ‘I’ also refers to individuality, whereas in Anishinaabe culture, it is about the family and extended families.

Semantic changes occur with words. For example, the English word ‘bead’ originally meant ‘prayer’, and acquired its modern sense through the practice of counting prayers with beads. In Anishinaabe mowin, beads are called ‘manitoominaythug’. The prefix ‘manitoo’ means God. Beads were used as part of the trading business between the conquerors and the Indigenous people (Bumsted 2003).

Where in Western languages the word ‘but’ is used to show the opposite and the contrast, in Indigenous languages the word ‘and’ is used to show the continuum and connection of the issue discussed in its greater context (Einhorn, 2000, p. 24).

Anishinaabe mowin has similar words. ‘Edus’ is like ‘but’ however a negative word is also used with ‘edus’. ‘And’ has a similar word in Anishinaabe ‘tugo’ which is used to expand on something. The Anishinaabe word for ‘car’, ‘truck’ and ‘train’ is ‘uudaban’. The language does not differentiate between the type of vehicle but is described according to their purpose which is transportation. Similarly, “‘car’, ‘truck’, ‘train’, and ‘wagon’ are all the same in Mohawk, not because the language has failed to catch up with the industrial world, but because those items perform the same task: transporting people

from one place to another. In Mohawk grammar, objects matter less than actions” (Abley 2003, p. 175). The same goes for Anishinaabe language where actions are more important.

5.4 Systemic Disruption of Language by Government

The disruption of a way of life for the Anishinabek was through the systematic introduction of the English language through the school system. Bear Nicholas (2008) describes this disruption as an assault on language. Government has been so successful that one Indigenous language in Canada, the Maliseet, “virtually has no child speakers of Maliseet, despite nearly three decades of in-school language classes” (Bear Nicholas 2008, p. 26).

5.4.1 Anishinaabe Language and Treaty

In Canada, Indigenous languages are regarded by Indigenous peoples as rights: inherent right, treaty right, Aboriginal right and a constitutional right. UNESCO’s Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Languages (1997) reaffirms and recognized Indigenous people’s language rights. Excerpts of the Declaration (1997) state:

Article II

2. Indigenous peoples have the collective rights that are indispensable to the enjoyment of the individual human rights of their members. Accordingly the states recognize inter alia the right of the Indigenous peoples to collective action, to their cultures, to profess and practice their spiritual beliefs, and to use their *languages*.

Article VII

3. The states shall recognize and respect Indigenous ways of life, customs, traditions, forms of social, economic and political organization, institutions, practices, beliefs and values, use of dress, and *languages*.

Article VIII

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to Indigenous *languages*, philosophy and outlook as a component of national and universal culture, and as such, shall respect them and facilitate their dissemination.

2. The states shall take measures and ensure that broadcast radio and television programs are broadcast in the Indigenous *languages* in the regions where there is a strong Indigenous presence, and to support the creation of Indigenous radio stations and other media.

3. The states shall take effective measures to enable Indigenous peoples to understand administrative, legal and political rules and procedures, and to be understood in relation to these matters. In areas where Indigenous languages are predominant, states shall endeavor to establish the pertinent languages as official languages and to give them the same status that is given to non-Indigenous official *languages*.

Article IX

2. When Indigenous peoples so decide, educational systems shall be conducted in the Indigenous *languages* and incorporate Indigenous content, and they shall also be provided with the necessary training and means for complete mastery of the official *language* or *languages*.

Article XVI

3. In the jurisdiction of any state, procedures concerning Indigenous peoples or their interests shall be conducted in such a way as to ensure the right of Indigenous peoples to full representation with dignity and equality before the law. This shall include observance of Indigenous law and custom and, where necessary, use of their *language*.

Although these are rights under International law and agreements, in Canada, few community people empower themselves in the use of these rights and to demand their right to education, health care and housing as their right (UNPFII 2010). They do not often use the language of rights in discussion. The Anishinaabe Elders (2009, *pers. comm.*) talk about ‘Muntoo kaki iizi miininung’ which means ‘the gift God has given us’, which refers to the gift of Anishinaabe mowin (language), the way of life, and everything that God or Muntoo created for the Anishinabek to use and to be part of Anishinaabe pimatziiwin. There is no Anishinaabe word for ‘rights’, however there is a word that refers to our land, and that for the Anishinaabe speaker to refer to ‘du kiinan’ carries significant weight. ‘Du kiinan’ means our land. Anishinaabe words are direct

descriptions of their relationship with the land and with their everyday life – feelings and emotions. Anishinaabe people speak of ‘du kiinan’ in conversation with an outsider to refer to the Anishinaabe collective ownership of the land. ‘Ki du kiinan’ is used when talking with other Anishinabek or neechi Anishinabek. ‘Ka tusii pi madiizhiyang’ also signifies that the land is our base, the basis of our sustenance, health and culture, and this is where we live. However this translation has not resulted in sufficient legal rights and services.

The administration of treaty annuities falls under Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (previously Indian and Northern Affairs Canada), which is responsible for the discharge of the Crown's treaty obligations (AANDC 2010). Treaty annuities are normally paid in cash at Treaty Day events held annually on or off reserve to registered Indians who are entitled to treaty annuities through membership to bands that have signed historic treaties with the Crown. First Nation members’ right to treaty payments depends on the precise terms and conditions of their First Nation's treaty. Depending on the terms of the specific treaty, these obligations can include the payment of individual treaty annuities, the provision of ammunition and twine for nets, and the provision of a suit of clothing every three years for Chiefs and Councilors (INAC 2010).

The Elders (2009, *pers. comm.*); remember how treaty days used to be a time for celebration. Everyone would wear something new for the occasion. The people set up tents and sold food and crafts around the area where the treaty payments were made. The celebrations would go on up to a week. At that time five dollars went a long way and would be worth several hundred dollars – enough to buy a month’s groceries and other goods. In 1914 the purchasing power of one dollar was \$17.75 in 2005 dollars (Powel

2005). Between 1914 and 2005 the Canadian dollar has lost more than 94% its value. The treaty payments have remained the same at five dollars per head since the numbered treaties were signed. Since then inflation has not been taken into account. Indian policy has never made amendments to its policies regarding adjusting treaty payments. Indigenous political leaders have voiced their concerns regarding the lack of price indexing to inflation on the treaty payments. The Anishinaabe Elders (2009, *pers. comm.*) also voiced their concern that the \$5.00 is worthless in today's economy and that nothing is being done to accommodate inflation. The Anishinabek still view 'agooniding' as the day they receive their 'treaty money' - their five dollars. On treaty days, the 'Indian Agent' or a representative from Indian and Northern Affairs still go to the reserves and give the \$5.00 per person treaty payments, and the Anishinabek still line up on treaty day to receive their \$5.00. The poverty is so great in the community that this money may provide a few bites when there is not enough food in the house.

5.4.2 Impact of Indian Act and Treaties on Language

The Indian Act was a harbinger to Indigenous languages in Canada. Speaking an Indigenous language in the early 1900s and as recent as the 1970s was illegal. The Indian Act through its various forms criminalized Indigenous knowledge systems by rendering traditional governance systems as illegal and virtually eliminated by imposed colonial administration (Simpson 2004). Language, knowledge systems and traditional teachings were also illegal. The Anishinabek of Lake St. Martin were not forced to attend residential schools (Elders 2009 *pers. com*) but there were some parents that sent their children to residential schools. However, the Indian Day School that existed on the

reserve at Lake St. Martin was no different from the residential schools in that they did not allow Anishinaabe to be spoken. Having attended Indian Day School in Lake St. Martin in my primary school years, I remember clearly being strapped and humiliated by the teacher when I got caught speaking my language.

Anishinaabe words exist for anything that affects Anishinaabe well being. For example, the Indian Agent was called ‘Ka thugandibayn iwaid’ which means ‘the one who pulls hair’. ‘Ka thugandibayn iwaid’ represents a negative word and refers to pain that is inflicted on another. The true translation of the English word ‘Indian Agent’ to Anishinaabe is meaningless. The Anishinaabe word used for Indian Agent – ‘Ka thugandibayn iwaid’ represented the frustrations the Anishinabek were faced with when dealing with bureaucracy and the new policies that were being imposed upon them. The Anishinaabe language also has a word for treaty – ‘agoowa’.

There were over 70 historical treaties negotiated with First Nations and the Crown between 1701 and 1923 (INAC 2010). Prior to Confederation, the Dominion of Canada signed treaties with First Nations. Treaties were made with the First Nations because of land. Treaties were a regular feature of the colonization of the British of what is now Canada. The First Nations assisted the new comers in their battle against the French. The First Nations also assisted the new comers in settling and in trapping, trading, clearing farms and building towns. France and Britain were at war against each other over ‘the new land’ and continued their battle against each until 1758 after they waged war for 7 years. In what was New France, fell in 1758, and the French lost any hope for control of the new world (INAC 2010)

After the war King George III of England issued an important directive on Indian rights – called the Royal Proclamation of 1763 (INAC 2010). This document played such a pivotal role in the defining of Indian rights. The vast area in the interior of North American was Indian country and would be preserved as hunting grounds for the Indians. The Eastern boundary was formed by the Appalachian Mountains. But the Western boundary was left undefined. King George ordered that no one could use these lands without the public permission of the Indians themselves. And only the Crown or its authorized representatives could actually acquire the land if indeed the Indians were willing to part with it. The British monarch had laid out the basic formula for treaty negotiation in Canada. From this time forward, the British Crown would be the central agent in the transfer of Indian lands to colonial settlers. And land was something that settlers would be looking for plenty of (INAC 2010).

The American Revolutionary War defined the American settlers that remained loyal to the British Crown (INAC 2010). When Britain finally surrendered the American colonies to local forces in 1781, the loyalists who were now deemed traitors fled north. They came North looking for land. However, under the provisions of the Royal Proclamation, no land could be given to anyone before Indian title was cleared. So the government machinery for treaty making quickly got underway (INAC 2010).

According to John Taylor (INAC 2010), historian, the Royal Proclamation said that the Indians had rights in the land and that individuals could not come up and make deals with Indians for the land. The land could only be alienated to the Crown at the general meeting for that purpose. What followed was a series of land surrenders or land

surrender treaties which were the means whereby Indians gave up their land for settlement purposes or whatever else the Crown wanted to do with the land (INAC 2010).

There were a total of 31 Indian treaties signed before Confederation in an attempt to secure rights to what was then called Upper Canada. The colonials recorded their understanding of treaty provisions in writing. The Indians recorded their understanding in stories; memories of promises made in a sacred time. Some tribes, particularly those in the East, embedded their vision of the treaty in wampum, precious beads, which themselves took on the sacred character. No matter how they were remembered, most of these treaties were drawn up and signed in a hurry, sometimes only days, and there were often tremendous weaknesses in them. A famous example of sloppy staff work was the gun shot clause of a treaty prepared in September 1787. The Crown was attempting in one maneuver to acquire all the lands North of lake Ontario between present day Kingston and Toronto. The Indians were prepared to share their lands but they wanted to know exactly which lands were involved. The area in question was described to them in this way, "from the lakeshore as far inland as a gunshot could be heard on a clear day." But whose gun, whose ears, and what season, winter or summer? The terms were too vague and the Indians declined to deal further. The gunshot treaty fell apart. But most treaties didn't... In the 1840's, surveyors and excavators found rich deposits of iron, nickel and copper on the shores of Lake Superior. Access to these minerals meant wealth and local mining companies appealed to the Crown for support. So the government sent in William J. Robinson and instructed him to extinguish all the Indian titles to the land (INAC 2010).

First Nations still expect the treaties to be honoured rather than the actual outcome of being put in parcels of land or set aside to be untouched by settlers, which the government called 'reserves'. In essence the land was of little or no value. Anishinabek called reserves - 'skoonigans' which means 'leftovers' (Elders 2009 *pers. comm.*). These areas are typically swampy lands.

5.4.3 Impacts of Education on Anishinaabe Mowin

According to Traverse (2007), children today are deprived of their culture because they are unable to speak Anishinaabe. Tebtebba Foundation (2008) states that every language embodies the unique cultural wisdom of a people. The loss of any language is thus a loss for all humanity (Tebtebba Foundation 2008, p. 359).

Integrating Indigenous language into literacy programs is a step to combating the threat to Indigenous languages around the world (Tebtebba Foundation 2008; UNPFII 2008; Smith 1999; Reyhner and Tennant 1995). But many Indigenous peoples remain indifferent as to whether the children actually learn their language or not. The same is true for the Anishinabek. This attitude stems from the residential school experience where several generations were not allowed to speak their Indigenous language (Kirkness 1998: 4).

English has always been the language of instruction in the formal education system at Lake St. Martin since the early 1900s, when formal schools started with the Indian Day Schools on the reserves. Even today, Anishinaabe is taught as a second language in First Nations' schools, including Lake St. Martin First Nation but for various reasons children choose not to speak it. According to Beardy (2009, *pers. comm.*), children are taught Anishinaabe in the primary grades from kindergarten to six but only for half an hour per day. This is not enough time to learn another language. According to Beardy (2009, *pers. comm.*), the problem is that Anishinaabe is not taught as immersion and that speakers are very isolated and do not practice it. It is not the 'official' school language with all business conducted in English at school. Public announcements on the school intercom are made in English and not in Anishinaabe and notes to parents are in English, as well as the regular business within the school and all other subjects

(maths, science, history, etc.) are spoken and taught in English. Beardy (2009, *pers. comm.*) recalls how she used to speak to her children in Anishinaabe and how they used to speak it at home. However, when the children entered school they stopped speaking Anishinaabe.

There are many barriers preventing children from speaking Anishinaabe. Often, parents cannot teach their children because they do not always speak Anishinaabe. Parents are typically younger – between 18 to 35 years of age and they themselves do not speak Anishinaabe. Also, parents feel that learning English is preferable to Anishinaabe based on past bad experiences or utility. Asked why she did not push her children to speak Anishinaabe, Beardy (2009, *pers. comm.*) remembers her childhood:

I've often wondered recently why I didn't push speaking Anishinaabe on my children and without realizing [it] I was doing it emotionally. When I went to school I spoke Anishinaabe and my generation before that so when I entered school (grade 1) they [the non-Indigenous teachers] were still trying to completely take everything away from us. We used to get strapped if we spoke Anishinaabe and therefore never spoke it. The teachers would walk around in the school yard during recess carrying straps and children getting caught speaking Anishinaabe would get strapped on the spot. I think subconsciously that was always on my mind and [I] didn't want my kids to go through what I did. I think that it's still the effects of colonialism. I think it was the unconscious effect. Technology has little effect on your ability to speak Anishinaabe and if you're a strong speaker it shouldn't matter.

The refusal or inability of the parents to teach or speak Anishinaabe moves to the children perpetuates the tactics of the government to destroy the language. The Indian Act and residential schools curtailed the use of Anishinaabe. It took years of brainwashing by the residential schools to achieve this ingrained attitude in some Aboriginal peoples (Wilson 2008). Similarly, parents' acknowledgments that their child does not speak or understand the language appear to be an admission that they are turning

away from their 'Anishinaabe' identity. Traverse (b 2009, *pers. comm.*) recalls listening to an elderly woman talking about one of her grandchildren and seemingly taking delight in the fact that her granddaughter did not speak or understand Anishinaabe. This relatively minute observation has a large significance, as documented by Tebtebba Foundation (2008). Speakers of Indigenous languages often consider their own language as backward and impractical, which cause Indigenous language speakers to abandon the language (Tebtebba Foundation 2008). Also communities lack supports, resources and funding to make language studies vibrant.

These parents, many of whom have lost their language, do not see the Aboriginal language as being a viable means of communication. They see English as the only important language. If learning Anishinaabe does not seem to provide employment opportunities or communication channels, the instruction seems futile and children do not take learning the Anishinaabe language seriously.

Many Indigenous parents in Lake St. Martin and Canada have felt that the introduction of Aboriginal languages in schools is not necessary (Sumner 2007, *pers. comm.*). Sumner (2007, *pers. comm.*) states that the onus is on the parents to teach Anishinaabe to their children. In addition, the dominant society typically does not support the teaching of Aboriginal languages in schools, due to what is called 'lingua-centric' attitudes. In Canada, English, and less often French, is the only language Canadians value. Such people treat other languages and other varieties of English/French as inferior (Kirkness 1998: 63). However there is a small but growing minority that sees that addressing the loss of language is important because language is the key to

worldviews and values, much of which cannot be translated into English. Indigenous people's culture and life is contingent upon Indigenous language (Wilson 2008).

5.5 The impact of the rupture of language transmission

The Elders (2009) recognized that without their language, the future generation will be lost. This is also shared by other Indigenous groups whereby members of a culture communicate meaning and make sense of their shared experience (Tebtebba 2008; Abley 2007; Fishman 2007; and Settee 2007). The Elders (2009) expressed concern in interviews and focus groups that their languages could disappear, and along with it, their distinctive worldview, the wisdom of their ancestors and their unique way of being human could be lost as well. The Elders (2009) at Lake St. Martin discussed the loss of Anishinaabe mowin and grappled with how to revitalize intergenerational communication of AKS. The Elders warned that 'ki gi mii ni go min oo akhi pi gu ti ku nu waynt u mungk' – 'we were given this Earth we have to look after it'. All food, all water, all health, and all abundance and all well-being is derived from this earth. There is nothing else and nowhere else to go. If one raids, pollutes and poisons the earth, the waters, the animals, and the plants, one will only create destruction, disharmony and illness for oneself. The grievance of how western society treats the earth and all living beings with such disrespect, slander and disgrace runs deep in the minds of Anishinabek. The Elders (2009) feel that they have failed in their assigned roles as stewards and guardians. The Elders (2009) say 'kaween pi znthundii thiwuk ka iskadiziwad! – pii gut u ku gway pi znthu muwad!' – 'the young people don't listen!' – 'they have to try and listen!' They were powerless in their teachings with non-Anishinabek peoples who do not speak

Anishinaabe and do not understand anything about Anishinaabe values, worldviews, philosophies, cultures and how one interacts with and treats the land.

Although Elders in Lake St. Martin felt language was an essential part of being Anishinabek, the youth did not always feel the same. However, in some Indigenous communities where the language has been lost they still consider themselves as Indigenous peoples in other ways but lament the loss of language (RCAP 1996). Elders in Lake St. Martin too have sadness at the loss of culturally significant aspects of the language including the spiritual significance of language, the role of language keeper, storyteller, and the passing on of very special sacred knowledge has been lost. Indigenous peoples around the world are struggling with this dilemma.

The decline in Aboriginal languages and the rupture in language transmission from older to younger generations are a result of policies devised by government and enforced by churches and the education system (RCAP 1996).

5.5.1 Aboriginal Language Decline and Policy

As First Nation languages are a right, the Canadian government has an obligation to support Aboriginal initiatives to conserve and revitalize languages. Language revitalization means taking the steps necessary to ensure the survival of a language community for which the Aboriginal language is both the mother tongue and the primary vehicle of verbal exchange within the family and social networks (RCAP 1996). The Elders (2009) want the youth at Lake St. Martin to learn their language. They also want the parents to get involved by speaking Anishinaabe to their children in their homes. The Elders (2009) complain about parents: “kaween tu wii kaki nuu amu wawad idu pii noo ji mi wa” – “they don’t want to teach their children”.

Another difficulty in teaching Indigenous languages has been that people fluent in the languages have had little or no training in teaching language in a school setting. These people selected as Indigenous language teachers were not trained in curriculum planning or in teaching methods conducive to language learning from nursery to grade twelve and those who are very knowledgeable of their language are too old to teach in school (Kirkness 1998, p. 4-6). The situation is no different in Lake St. Martin. Elders who can speak the language often do not meet all the criteria for a teacher required by the education system and thus are not accepted (Kirkness 1998).

Neither daycare nor the school in Lake St. Martin has immersion programs in Anishinaabe. In the last decade some progress has been made with bringing Aboriginal language programs into the reserve schools at the elementary school level. However, these efforts are insufficient for language revitalization. Anishinaabe language programs need full immersion in order to be successful (Beardy 2009, *pers. comm.*). A great need for curriculum development exists for the higher class levels, training for teachers and university programming for Indigenous languages in Canada. More effort has to be placed on traditional activities on the land. In communities where this has taken place and more youth are involved with traditional land-users and Elders, there is also an increase in the Indigenous language skills among youth (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000).

The community planning exercise prioritized at Lake St. Martin identified activities and structures for the entire community. The First Nations have a sense of loss for their homes and ancestors' homes but acknowledge this reserve was badly placed and ruined completely by the water control structure causing flooding. They are now at a

crossroads where they can demand services that were unavailable in their community. I, as chief negotiator, am part of this. The once thriving and vibrant community that was pushed to despair and a “write-off” has a sense of optimism again that their voice can be heard and they can lead a culturally fulfilling life. The people want a planned community with homes that are built according to CSA standards. They want services for the youth and elderly. They want business opportunities. People identified specific buildings, activities, infrastructure, cultural and social activities as priorities, many of these were related to language, traditional activities, and cultural integrity. These are itemized in table 7.2 as a way of judging sites and prioritizing these aspects. We are trying to rebuild our nation to be strong and healthy and connected to the land but recognize the devastation colonialism has brought to environment, AKS and language. We are also planning for an eco-reserve that has energy efficiency and renewable energies to minimize environmental impacts, provide economic opportunities for local people and reduce welfare dependency. The community planning exercise has given the people a chance to take part in planning their future.

5.5.2 Indigenous Language Immersion Education Program

In recent years, the Anishinaabe have organized Elders gatherings where the Elders from the four communities of Lake St. Martin, Pinaymootang, Little Saskatchewan, and Dauphin River meet. The Elders gather together and share oral histories and oral traditions. The Elders shared stories of their past giving them a chance to visit with one another (Sumner 2009, *pers. comm.*). Even though total immersion programs do not exist, Elders recognize that their AKS need to be transmitted to the

younger generation and that their AKS has to be recorded. The Elders (2009) recognize that if the youth do not learn the language and about their history, they will be lost. The Elders (2009) recognize that language plays a huge role in the transmission of knowledge. Other Indigenous people, other than Anishinabek have also recognized the importance of language in culture.

The Te Kohanga Reo model can be easily transferred to other Indigenous peoples around the world and is a successful model for small language groups that are at risk of losing their language. Without large sums of money language programs can be easily started on a family level (Kirkness 1998, p. 115). Despite the fact that Native delegations from Canada have travelled to New Zealand to gain firsthand experience of the Te Kohanga Reo project, something like that has not been adopted in Canada on a provincial or federal scale (Kirkness 1998, p. 118-119). Success stories in Canada include the Mohawks of Kahnawake who have had a Mohawk-immersion school for more than two decades for its young children and a Survival School for adolescents operating in Mohawk (Abley 2003). Church services are conducted in the Mohawk language, as well as local radio stations switching effortlessly between English and Mohawk and websites in both languages. Mohawk language is used in singing societies and longhouse rituals. Despite all the efforts, not everyone speaks Mohawk frequently. “Parents whose children attend the Mohawk immersion school are given a calendar with a set of goals on it. Second on the list – right after understanding oneself through Mohawk language and culture – is ‘to develop respect and appreciation for the gifts of the Creator Ohenton karihwatehkwen’” (Abley 2003, p. 180). However, Abley (2003) states that the Mohawk language continues to be a presence and will not vanish without a struggle. There is also

hope in Manitoba, as Manitoba First Nations schools have started the process of conducting bilingual pilot projects in the following Manitoba First Nation schools: Cross Lake (Cree); St. Theresa Point (Oji-Cree); Wassagamach (Oji-Cree); Nelson house (Cree); Pelican Rapids (Anishinaabe); and Berens River (Anishinaabe) (Kirkness 1998, p. 61). As mentioned in the preceding section, Lake St. Martin teaches Anishinaabe language as one of many school subjects, but more time and concerted efforts from the families (children and parents) and the school is required if the language to be spoken and understood by youth.

5.5.3 Conclusion

This analysis of language has shed light on the importance, impacts of government policy and the way forward for Lake St. Martin. Language is important for the survival and transmission of Anishinaabe Knowledge Systems. The implementation of the right to language of Indigenous peoples' and the right to education in that language are essential means of achieving empowerment and self-determination, as well as key to organizing principle for transmitting AKS, all of which have been included in various international instruments and agreements such as the International Labour Organization-169 (1989), UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001), and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2008). However, the right to education must also include the Anishinaabe language as well as the Anishinaabe curriculum. Education is viewed as an important avenue for the enjoyment, maintenance and respect of Indigenous culture, languages, traditions and Indigenous knowledge (UNESCO 2008). The loss of language is detrimental to the culture and well-being of

Indigenous people, as the Western education system continues to fail to teach the values, beliefs and principles which underlie Anishinaabe Knowledge Systems. For Lake St. Martin language is considered very important. Elders (2009) take pride in the young people who speak their language (ki tin aywi ni nan – ‘our language’ or ‘the sound that was given to us’ or ki ki gu ti inan – ‘our way of talking’ – ‘our words’).

Government policy has undermined language transmission and has contributed to the eradication of Indigenous language, culture, and a way of life (Bear Nicholas 2008). Destruction of cultures occurred when children were taken away from their parents to attend Residential schools leading to children missing out on social, cultural, traditional, and language skills and knowledge (Thompson 2008). Additionally time spent at residential and day schools has limited the opportunity for AKS to be passed on to the younger generation (RCAP 1996). For Lake St. Martin, there is new hope as the community prepares to get relocated. People are taking an interest in the community once again and feeling like there are opportunities for AKS, language and a healthy community. Taking interest in the community will lead to renewed interest in language and their traditional way of life. Language and AKS have an important role to play in planning the new community as all components of community rebuilding is dependent upon people. Rebuilding the community also means language and cultural revival.

The efforts of international bodies deserve accolades for pushing forward instruments, rights and agreements. Albeit non-binding, these should, but have not yet, boosted programming at the community level of Lake St. Martin. Recognizing the relationship between biodiversity, cultural diversity, and linguistic diversity are important in finding sustainable solutions (UNESCO 2001). Anishinabek must take initiatives for

total immersion of the Anishinaabe language in their schools. For Lake St. Martin, which has neither daycare nor school in Anishinaabe, community planning has resulted in prioritizing the needs of the youth and elderly. Leadership is taking a strong position that the new community needs to look after the needs of the future generation which are the youth. Language is also an important aspect of the rebuilding process as Elders clearly stated that activities are disappearing because the language is being lost. Language is closely related to activities as well as kinship and extended families. The Elders' needs are also respected and fulfilled. Leadership is once again taking control by taking the important initiative in acknowledging the youth and elders, and in doing so, have come to full circle in honouring and accommodating its people.

CHAPTER 6: ANISHINAABE KWEK AND ANISHINAABE KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

6.1 Anishinaabe Women's Research

In traditional land-use studies, traditional ecological knowledge studies and in studies of IKS women's knowledge is largely absent. Settee (2007) raises awareness about the oversight of women's large role in the transmission of knowledge and this focus on hunting, trapping, and fishing activities, which are conducted almost exclusively by men in today's world of the Anishinabek. The lack of studies has resulted in a gap regarding women's knowledge. Men's activities with wildlife have significant meaning to the larger society and funding agencies for generating revenues, conservation purposes, joint and co-management programs. Men's hunting and fishing activities are seen by the non-Native population in direct competition to their interests in hunting, trapping and fishing as well as jeopardizing forestry and conservation issues. Anishinaabe kwek activities today are comprised mostly of berry picking and medicinal plant gathering and are not considered as a priority for academic investigation. Most of the women's berry picking and medicinal plant gathering takes place mostly on reserve or close to the reserve and not in areas that are of interest for industrial or conservation purposes.

The accumulated knowledge and understanding, including that of ecological and spiritual, are crucial for Anishinaabe kwek. The women of Lake St. Martin have definitions, values, and systems of classification in place, although they are not formalized on paper. The Anishinaabe kwek are the primary knowledge holders. These definitions often do not concur or agree with the existing definitions of TEK written by the dominant society.

This chapter discusses the foundations of AKS with its interrelationship with native spirituality versus religion as a context to consider the role of women in AKS over time from 1930s to more recent times from the viewpoint of the Elders that were interviewed.

6.2 Foundation of Anishinaabe Knowledge Systems

All of life is sacred. The Earth is sacred. There is only one Earth in the entire universe that we know of. All of our human life is totally dependent on the Earth for our survival and well-being. This is fundamental knowledge to Anishinabek. This relationship and dependency on the land is deeply engrained in the consciousness of Indigenous peoples that Indigenous people most often call themselves “*people of the earth or people of the land*” (Settee 2007, p. 7). This is the first level of understanding of AKS. The women of Lake St. Martin understand this very clearly. In their words they describe this basic but most fundamental understanding of life in the following ways: pimatiswiin – which means life.

Anishinabek lived in sustainable communities centered within natural settings which gave them life (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). Overall, nature provided a good life within these natural settings (Settee 2007, Mann 2005). This is not to make the assumption that the lives of Anishinabek were perfect and life was easy at all times. Anishinabek had challenges and problems to be worked out and overcome. Embedded in AKS were/are mechanisms and tools for the restoration of balance, peace and harmony (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992). If something was out of balance special ceremonies, teachings, sharing, and storytelling were used to restore balance and health of an

individual, a group or something in the environment (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000; Knudtson and Suzuki 1992).

The second fundamental foundation of AKS is that all forms of life are interconnected (Tebtebba Foundation 2008; Settee 2007; Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000; Smith 1995). All life forms are in relationship with each other (Sumner 2009, *pers. comm.*). If you impact one life form it then impacts all life forms in some ways. The Anishinaabe kwek of Lake St. Martin refer to this ‘awush iimay tuu izii zay’. The word has no word that can be translated into English, however, it refers to the fact that if you keep pushing something then you make it worse and it affects other things. However, the notion is based on a similar concept in western science this is referred to as cumulative effective (Folke 2004; Chadde and Kay 1991). Natural ecosystems have ways to balance things out so that the natural balance is always restored and life and survival for all species guaranteed. Anishinabek refer to this as “aniin kaygo ayzi anokiimaguk” – or “how things work”.

The third fundamental understanding of AKS is that humans are nature and interconnected with all form of life through the web of life (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000; Smith 1999; Knudtson and Suzuki 1992). A symbiotic relationship exists with all of nature (Settee 1999, p. 1). As Settee (1999, p.2-3) explains:

People know that each plant and animal has a use as well as a purpose in the natural order of existence. This knowledge of natural surroundings and biodiversity has been developed over millennia and through a careful process of observation, listening, experimentation, and adaptation. A common North American Aboriginal belief is that both animate and inanimate objects have a spirit and a life, and that this life must be honoured and protected. ... The Indigenous world view sees all of nature as equal, to be respected and given a place of honor.

People are interconnected at all times to the natural rhythms and elements of nature. Nature provides for everything that is needed for human survival and well-being. Anything artificial and toxic added to nature has direct impact on the health and well-being of the natural processes and the natural functions of the human body (Thompson 2008; Traverse 1999). Anishinabek have a very clear understanding of this and are very concerned about toxins that are constantly released into the web of life on Earth to degrade the well-being of nature and the health of humans. Every toxin that is released into the atmosphere, water and/or soils ends up in the food chain and in the bodies of people (Thompson 2008). Anishinabek know that as marginalized people, a majority of Anishinabek Peoples do not have the western education, tools, and technologies to prove or counter this, but Anishinabek do have the Indigenous and traditional knowledge as proof. Anishinabek know toxins create sickness, disease and unhealthy mental states in people. But Anishinabek do know how to counteract this daily release of toxins on Earth and how Anishinabek can be part of using natural ingredients in all inventions so that everything is biodegradable and in this way sustainable to life on Earth.

The Anishinabek know that everything on Earth is given by God or “*Muntoo*” in a natural way for the use of people so that healthy lives can be lived that are holistic and based on well-being and not on suffering (Elders 1999, *pers. comm.*). “As societies deteriorate, so does the special status of women as keepers of knowledge of life and sustenance. If medicines are disappearing so does the role of the keepers of that medicine knowledge – the women” (Settee 1999, p. 9). This is another commonality among Anishinabek and other Indigenous peoples around the world that they use plants in traditional ways for healing (Settee 1999, p. 14). The women of Lake St. Martin express

their understanding and concerns about this issue when they refer to “Anishinaabe muskiki” or “medicinal plants used for healing”.

According to the Elders (2009, *pers. comm.*), the women sat on the ground, ate on the ground, and slept on the ground. They did not have chairs or tables in the bush, unlike today, where Anishinaabe go camping and they take tables, chairs, and air mattresses with them. In today’s world, the Anishinabek take their modern conveniences with them when they go camping or even hunting. On the land Anishinabek find a level of understanding and an all-pervading Spirit that shapes them profoundly in their human development. Being on the land gives strength, health, and vitality that they cannot achieve with reserve living conditions and in cities. However, today, the deeper connection to the land is always missing. The deep connection is also intricately connected with respect, which is lacking as well (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). When one does a lot of activities with direct contact of the ground, a very special relationship starts to happen with the earth. Feelings of a strong grounding, safety, security, strength and well-being start to emerge (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). One feels rejuvenated, refreshed and balanced from longer contacts with the ground. One gains a different kind of respect towards the earth from spending longer times on the ground. Generally speaking, this is something that is missing in peoples lives today. The expression of people ‘being grounded’ is commonly used to refer to well-being.

Anishinabek normally do not separate their knowledge into numerical subdivisions but for the betterment of understanding of IKS in an academic environment, this approach will be used (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). However, this is not to say that Indigenous societies do not use numerical subdivisions. The

mesoamerican societies used mathematics and calendars long before the so-called Columbus discovery of America (Mann 2005). Anishinabek normally represent all their teachings in a circle since the rhythm of life is cyclical (Mann 2005). This third fundamental principle is expressed in our languages as ‘all our relations.’ In Cree the word is “*miyo-wichihtowin*, which means ‘having good relations’”(Settee 2007, p. 11). In Anishinaabe, ‘*ndinawemaaganag*’ means ‘all my relations’, which is how the women of Lake St. Martin also express themselves.

Indigenous people have been taught individually and collectively to strive and conduct themselves in ways that create positive relationships with their extended families (Mann 2005; Settee 2007). The concept of collectively striving for the well-being of Indigenous communities is fundamental in Indigenous communities. The concept of extended family and community is part of this principle of ‘having good relations.’ Aunts, uncles, and grandparents are automatically ‘surrogate’ parents and are all responsible in raising the children within their own and extended families (Tebtebba Foundation 2008). This relationship is also extended to animals, plants, rocks, trees, the moon, the sun, and every aspect of nature. Often nature is humanized through naming: the bison people, the plant people, grandmother moon and father sun (Smith 1999; Agger 2003; Fitznor 2006).

The three teachings – all of life is sacred, all of life is interconnected, and humans are part of the web of life – form the foundation of AKS (Smith 1999). These are fundamental life principles that cannot be changed. This is natural law the way it is understood by Indigenous Peoples around the world (Lyons 2008). Natural law is the Anishinaabe common heritage and understanding of Anishinabek. Natural law is the

foundation of Anishinaabe spirituality, worldview and philosophy. Natural law is where one has to start in order to gain understanding of AKS. This knowledge is normal to the women of Lake St. Martin and is expressed in Anishinaabe language in the following way: “*niibhokhawiin*” – intelligence or ‘smart’. These three understandings show there is no superior authority of power over people and the Earth (Mohawk 2008). Instead the fourth fundamental principle is understood. All life is equal since it is completely interdependent. Nobody has any higher authority over anything or anybody. Each person has her or his unique place in life and brings her or his gifts to the community of people, and the responsibility that comes with it (Bear Nelson 2008). People learn from each other and share their knowledge and resources to create healthy communities.

Much of Anishinaabe belief systems or AKS are not understood or are poorly understood by the non-Indigenous persons. The foundational beliefs of AKS are all inter-related and disrespect of natural law has consequences. Fear of the unknown or what cannot be seen, and fear of spirits is quite common among the Anishinabek. “*Anind Anishinabek kutachiiskii*” means ‘some Anishinabek get scared’ or ‘fear the unknown’. What Anishinabek are ‘scared’ of may not be understood by the non-Indigenous person. The “*kutachiiwun*” is part of the AKS and is only understood by the Anishinabek. Sometimes the Anishinaabe will take someone with them “*tu api kutachiid*” – or someone to be with them to ease or calm their fear. It is important to note that it is the women who get scared since the Anishinaabe man is not expected to “*kutachiid*” or get scared. *Kutachiiwin* is also based on native spirituality, which is interspersed and rooted with native culture

Western civilization has its roots largely in the civilization of ancient Greece which developed in cities. This is also where Christianity was developed by Greek theologians in the walls of monasteries and early universities who were in fierce debate with Greek philosophers over the creation of the world, humankind, nature and the meaning of it all (Conzalez 1984; Hauer, 1989). In this way, western knowledge, understanding, worldview and spirituality developed very differently from people who lived in forest environments where an abundance of life was freely experienced (Conzalez 1984).

Some of the fundamentally Indigenous world views are based on this research and my own understanding as an Anishinaabe person:

- the universe is circular
- everything is in circular motion
- everything moves and changes
- everything is alive and vibrating
- everything is interrelated
- everything has meaning to each other
- everything is in relation to each other
- people are completely dependent on the earth, the plants and the animals for their physical survival and well being

These fundamental Anishinaabe views of the world are reflected in all spoken forms of their oral tradition with all their differences in language and culture.

According to most Native People, creation takes the form of a circle with one solid vibrational core in the center. Spirals emanating from the center of circles reveal the depth and mystery of the cultures of Native Americans. Concentric circles spiral outward, rippling, in perpetual patterns. Since circles symbolize unity, harmony, infinity, eternity, wholeness, and oneness, the different oral discourses of Native Americans frequently concern these qualities – features that follow from seeing the world as a circle (Einhorn 2000, p. 15-16).

In this circular view, all is holistic and all is one in its essence. In a circle, everyone and everything is equal in power and spiritual strength. The Elders (2009, pers.

comm.) talk about the circle becoming complete when one becomes an elder, with the final phase where the elder is unable to take care of itself. The Elders (2009, pers. comm.) stated this is the period where an Elder and an infant are alike but at different stages, but nearing the completion of the life cycle. People's lives are cyclical in alignment with the cyclical movements of the sun, the moon, the stars and the seasons. People travel around the circle from birth to death and with each circle gain more understanding, teachings and wisdom. The stories are told in this 'circular way' and have meaning and contain teachings for all ages. Many stories do not have linear story lines with black and white or good and bad conclusions but rather reflect the circular events of lives that are open-ended and might have different meaning for each person present. This way emotional transformation becomes spiritual growth and strength. Anishinaabe stories have the theme of transformation at its core. These are the stories that are the least understood by non-Indigenous people leaving them puzzled and bewildered with the comment 'that story makes no sense at all.' The Anishinaabe are spiritual people. This is normal knowledge and understanding for Indigenous people especially for Indigenous people who are still familiar with their traditions or are relearning them.

In Indigenous cultures, where people see time as circular the deceased from generations ago are still part of the circle. Burials and human remains are to be treated as living spiritual entities. They are not to be touched and disturbed. Excavations of ancient grave sites are unsettling for Indigenous peoples. Many Indigenous people are afraid that if the spirits of the deceased are treated in some kind form of disrespect that this can have consequences for the living. Wrong behavior can have negative effects for the entire community (Piquemal 2003).

The circle stands for one and wholeness. All living beings stand in a circle each in their own sacred place and space and are all looking into the center from a different location. In this way, all views are valid. In a circle everyone can see everyone else. In this way, all are acknowledged and are participating in creation of the event the circular meeting is for. People sitting in circles seem to listen better to the perspectives of others than when sitting in rows (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). The circle has been adopted in group counseling sessions all over North America and its healing powers have been proven time and time again.

‘Mamowoobiwug’ is the word for ‘they are having a meeting’. The word ‘mamowii’ is ‘getting together’ or ‘all together’ but for the Anishinabek it has further meaning because ‘mamowii’ can also be expressed in a circular motion for everyone to come together.

In the circle each living being possesses a special purpose in life for the benefit of all of life. The earth, the moon, and the stars are round. Birds build nests in circles. Animals mark their territories in circular form. Rocks are circular. Flowers and trees are circular and grow in circular patterns. Campfires and most forms of Indigenous housing is circular. The teepee, the wigwam, the sweat lodge and the igloo are all circular. In the pueblo cultures the pueblos always have round structures for meetings and spiritual ceremonies. They are called kivas in the southwestern United States. All openings of the body are round and people come into this world through the womb which is round. Hoops, rattles, drums, mandelas, dream-catchers are all round (Einhorn 2000, p. 18). Even in Anishinaabe legends, there is always reference to circles in the stories. For example, the legends and stories shared by Traverse (1999, *pers. comm.*) about Nanabush make

reference to dancing or walking in circles. However, the Indigenous cultures also celebrate the linear as well as the circular. In this way, the female and male energies are always acknowledged. Tipis have long poles, rattles have linear handles, and the round pipe bowl is always joined with the linear pipe stem. The pipe symbolizes the union of female and male energies. The joining of the two in a pipe circle always acknowledges and allows change, and transformation to occur. Out of transformation comes the new. Everybody who is participating in a pipe ceremony or any other Indigenous ceremony will always be in some way transformed and renewed after the ceremony. Many times the deeper insights of the ceremony come with time. With every ceremony the participating people leave a bit of their past and of their old ways of being behind. Natural order is always maintained by the circles and rhythms of nature with the rising and setting of the sun and the reoccurring seasons. The universe and the earth are vast. There is no need to set up boundaries (Einhorn 2000, p. 18-19).

6.2.1 Native Spirituality in Religion

Most Anishinabek of Lake St. Martin identify Christianity as their religion although some may not be practicing Christians. Among the Anishinabek God, Jesus, Lord, Father God, or Muntoo is very much a part of life. Even though God is invisible, God is very real to the practicing Christians. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, God is separated from the people and all-powerful and all-controlling (Charleston 1995).

Prayer is important in the daily lives of the Anishinabek whether they are Christian or traditional. Prayer was and is still part of the Anishinaabe kwek. The roots of Christianity go back into ancient tribal times of the Hebrew people in an arid to semi

arid desert environment. Life was harsh in these desert environments. The world was hostile and needed to be conquered and improved in order to survive (Tagore 2004, p. 3). The different people and nations of the near and middle east were constantly involved in some kind of a fight for water, grazing grounds, resources and territories (Hauer and Young 1998; Beck 2006). This is a very different perspective of life than of people who live in forest environments that are rich in abundance of water, animal and plant life. Food, water and shelter were easily obtainable. One can somehow see that this would influence how people saw the world around themselves. Only in the last few decades that this kind of rich forest abundance for everyday survival has been diminishing for the Anishinabek. Something that was there for thousands of years that provided sustained lives and that has just vanished within a few decades – I think – is still unfathomable to many Indigenous North American peoples.

Western society is focused on text whereas Indigenous societies are concerned with the context in which all things exist. Anishinabek do not separate people from nature. They also do not separate the spiritual from nature and from humans. Most Indigenous languages contain no word for religion, however there is a word for ‘prayer’ – ‘anumiya’. The AKS include words such ‘Muntoo’ or ‘Manidoo’: Muntoo is God in the Anishinaabe language. In other Anishinaabe dialects, ‘Manidoo’ or ‘Manitou’ also means God and is interchanged with Creator. However, Anishinaabe mowin has a word ‘anumiya’ which means prayer. Spirituality does not exist apart from people. Body, mind, and spirit are one at all times. In this view the physical body is a sacred vessel and rituals mark passages in the circles of life for each person. Anishinabek believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which are all one. Spirituality is life itself. The Anishinabek

believe that their bodies are temples and house the holy spirit. The Anishinabek identify their souls as 'achak'. In the purest form, it is referred to as 'kanadizhi achak'. This is the sacred form, considered holy, and not to be disrespected and kaygo tunishibapuuniduwind. The mystical and the ordinary are always together. In this way, everything is mystical and sacred. Nature lives. Nature is spirit and the Creator and creation is in everything. The earth belongs to all living things and to all people (Einhorn 2000, p. 21).

Beading is a custom among Anishinaabe kwek. The tradition has been handed down and transmitted through generations. 'Bead' originally meant 'prayer' and was used in reference to counting with beads. The word "manidoo minainth" means 'bead' which almost translates to 'little idol'. The translation is significant because of its reference to the Christian traditions, which the Anishinabek practice and how certain weight or value was placed on certain things. Among the Anishinaabe kwek, "*aynabidoowawad manidoominaythug*" [threading beads] was a way to bond with others. It was usually the mother who taught the daughter to do bead work. Beardy (2007, *pers. comm.*) recalls how she spent many hours with her mother learning and doing beadwork with her. Beardy (2007, *pers. comm.*) remembers that it took a lot of patience learning to do beadwork: "beading takes a lot of patience, real tiny beads you have to work with...I was 9 years old when I learned to bead on leather. My mom taught me how to do the beading, and to this day I have a lot of patience working with those little beads ingrained in me like bead by bead". The knowledge that was passed down by her mother was more than the physical aspect of beading. It was much more than that, teaching the patience required to have children and raise a family. Beardy (2007, *pers. comm.*) describes it in

terms of lessons and assignments where things may look impossible but it starts with one step on a long journey, and you eventually finish. She gave up beading when her children were young but after her children were raised she went back to beadwork. Although, it took her over a year to relearn the physical skill that her mother taught her, the mental and emotional aspect of learning was kept and never lost.

I started going back to the beadwork. I can't remember how I go into it, but I had to relearn everything...the stitches that I knew, the peyote stitch, the brick stitch, the daisy chain, some of them are easier, but it took a year before I could get back into it. I even started beading on leather again. I used to wonder why they called them manidominaythag. They called them seed beads and that's what we used all the time. I used to wonder why 'manidominaythag'. Why do they call them that. There was something about when I went back into beading. There was something that I couldn't explain why I had to go back to it. I started with one and then I read in one of those Aboriginal newspapers from the west coast, there they make willow baskets. And this man went back to making baskets, because he said 'there's something there while I'm making the baskets'. It seems like I'm communicating. When I'm beading I used to do it with my mom, my granny I mean like your keeping that link alive. When I started again, it would bring back a lot of memories. Stuff that my mom taught me besides beading (Beardy 2007, *pers. comm.*).

The sacredness attached to beading is transmitted to the decorative role of beads. Anishinabek decorated themselves from the land with its supplies in the form of quills, needles, birch bark, sinew, bone, the seed and whatever could be found. Even moose tuft was used for decoration. According to Beardy (2007, *pers. comm.*) the sacredness of the beads was why they were used for decoration. Throughout the years, manidominaythag have been used in making clothing, crafts, and jewelry.

Native spirituality is different than religion. Indigenous peoples acknowledge that the Creator is present everywhere. This leads to a deep adoration and respect of all of nature and a thankfulness that is expressed in the form of prayer and offerings. A

fundamental Native North American teaching is to greet the new day with thankfulness. The Indigenous people are aware that they are always in the hands of Creator and that they are an important part of creation. In this way feelings are of uttermost importance. Through feeling a healthy person is fully connected to the Creator and all relations. Through feeling all information can be obtained that is necessary for healthy living in healthy interactions with others and the surround environment.

The Anishinabek serve Muntoo who is an omnipotent God. The Anishinabek praise and give thanks to Muntoo as soon as they wake up. *Miigwetch kidinin Muntoo – I give you thanks Muntoo. Kinunakumum nuugom kakizhizaypawuguk – I give you praise this morning.* Their existence is acknowledging that they are here for a purpose. Giving thanks for the food that was given to them was also part of their daily regime. Gagen (2007, *pers. comm.*) remembers the abundance of food as they were growing up: “There was lots of food we were never short. There was food growing everywhere. Even Big Rock. Why is Big Rock there. God put it there for a reason so we could pick and eat the blueberries.” In fact, there was a deep connection between Muntoo and the abundance of food. The Anishinabek relied on the basics for survival: fire, water, and the foods from the land. ‘Aynana kumind Muntoo’ was to “bow to God over and over again who is in fire and in water, who permeates the whole world, who is in the annual crops as well as in the perennial trees” (Tagore 2004, p. 13).

Indigenous spirituality is not the same as Indigenous culture and should not be confused with it nor should they be used interchangeably. Each Indigenous culture has developed its own unique spirituality with its specific spiritual practices and rituals. Through colonization Christianity has replaced much of Indigenous spirituality. In recent

years, Indigenous spirituality has surged again and is practiced a lot more in Indigenous communities. These forms of spirituality often present new ways of practicing Indigenous spirituality unlike that practiced before. Now, Indigenous spiritual practices are often not conducted in the Indigenous languages since either the spiritual leader does not speak her or his own Indigenous language or most of the people attending do not speak their native language. Many times spiritual traditions of the different Indigenous cultures are now mixed together.

The Indigenous Scholar Brian Rice explains that it is important for Indigenous people to fast, cleanse, talk to Elders and take part in a ceremony before one undertakes a specific journey of work, in life and / or for research (Rice 2005). These were the traditional ways but are not necessarily followed anymore by all Indigenous people. In Lake St. Martin, the Anishinabek do not follow the traditional way, but a lot of the practicing and even non-practicing Christians pray and fast before undertaking new paths (Elders 2009).

6.2.2 Wisdom, Spirituality, and AKS

Wisdom and balance is gained from living in harmony with the land. From the western worldview people leading meditative lives in the forest life of deprivation and hardship. However, the opposite is true according to the people who engage in such fulfilling lives, whether in India or here. The Anishinabek spent months living in the forest. They did not go there to meditate or just to get away to relax. It was a way of life that was necessary. The forest was a home away from home. They prayed and did their daily routines in the forest. It was a life requiring food preparation for the winter to

come. But the Anishinabek also visited each other while they were in the forest because it was not just one or two families, but entire communities. It was a life of richness, abundance, relaxation, health, wisdom, and deep spirituality. Indigenous peoples around the world talk about their lives before European contact in this way and they wish to obtain this state of living again (Nelson 2008). Indigenous peoples who spend a lot of time on the land talk about the peacefulness of the land and a profound connection with the Creator. The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) project at Skownan First Nation commented that life on the reserve is too crazy and stressful and that the deeper connection and peacefulness of the land was missing too much. People felt that they did not have enough opportunity to spend time on the land in such peacefulness based on the demands of modern life (Stock 2008, *pers. comm.*). Many Native North American paintings show this perfect union with the Creator and the world in which humans have their rightful place in relationship to all, artists such as Jacqueline Traverse, and S. Bignell.

In Lake St. Martin, the women balanced their lives between living in the bush with their families for weeks at a time in the summer and their homes on the reserve at other times. Bush living was a necessity for food on the trap line and not a retreat for peace and harmony, although it did provide that. However, the women recall that this life was not harsh but rewarding and the only life they knew. People learn by working on the land. A process to constantly grow, learn and reflect, whereby work becomes meaningful. As the researcher Gallagher (2003) experienced and wrote that “traditional knowledge is a lifestyle” (p. 184). He writes that it is very difficult to put the experiences

of traditional knowledge into writing. The written word can never fully reflect or capture the feelings, relationships and events (Gallagher 2003, p. 184):

Much of the context of an experience is lost when paper is the medium to communicate those experiences. ... Traditional knowledge is very personal to each individual because everybody has different teachers, experiences and spiritual relationships.

Also, when people are working on the land, they are in a state of being present in the moment. They are physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually engaged in their activities. This is the time when traditional knowledge is passed on in a natural and all-encompassing way. This is when the words, which go along with the activities, make the most sense. There is a certain mental strength that is required to live a traditional lifestyle with bush activities on a regular base. Experienced Elders and traditional land users pass on this strength to the younger inexperienced people so that they can become strong people of the land in order to look after their families (Gallagher 2003, p. 185). The experienced people make quietly suggestions of how somebody can improve their skills. With time the younger inexperienced people gain experience, confidence and respect. They become more and more part of the team. With every step earning their knowledge and respect more information then is passed on. The Elders know when somebody is ready to receive the next level of knowledge (Gallagher 2003, p. 188).

6.2.3 Religion

Christianity entered into the way of life of Lake St. Martin slowly. The Elders (2009, *pers. comm.*) reported that the Catholics came first to Lake St. Martin but were rejected by the people and Chief. The Anglican came in the 1930s and were accepted.

Interestingly enough it was the First Nations from Fisher River who first brought the Anglican gospel to Lake St. Martin. The role of indigenous new converts in indoctrinating new people in Christianity and other new developments is worthy of further exploration. Later, the Baptists came and they too got rejected because the Anglican Church was already there.

Since the missionaries assumed that Indigenous people merely lacked knowledge of the ways of a “higher civilization”, it followed that they would flock to the missionaries for instruction (in Peikoff 2003, p. 117-118). When the first Anglican missionaries arrived at Red River, they assumed that, in order to Christianize and "civilize" Indigenous peoples, they would only have to point out the inferiority of their traditional practices and beliefs as compared to those of nineteenth century British civilization. According to Peikoff (2003) the missionaries tried to persuade the individuals to adopt the new cultural and spiritual order. However, Indigenous people did not immediately flock to the missionaries. On the contrary, for many years the Aboriginal peoples highly resisted the missionaries (Peikoff 2003). While some Aboriginal people did convert, and others incorporated selective aspects of Christianity into their traditional spiritual framework, many resisted the missionaries' efforts. Contrary to the missionaries' expectations, they thought their traditional culture to be at least equal to that of the missionaries. As one missionary observed, “They think they are much wiser than us already, and they think they pay us the highest compliment when they tell us that we are almost as good as an Indian” (Cockran to Woodroffe, Red River Aug.3, 1831, A77 IN Anuik 2006). Once the fur trade declined and animal populations declined overall a life on hunting and trapping was no longer guaranteed, Indigenous people came

more and more to the missionary establishments for food and to learn agricultural practices while attending services (Piekoff 2003).

In Manitoba, certain Indigenous religious practices are now being endorsed by various levels of governments. For example, various levels of governments as well as academic, medical, correctional and industrial institutions have cultural training for their employees – both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. The cultural training is mixed in with native religious practices but without a deep examination of the spiritual beliefs and understandings. For example, the practice of smudging before a meeting is now a common occurrence at meetings and conferences as well as the lighting and smoking of a pipe.

Endorsing ‘Native spirituality’ under the guise of ‘Native culture’ is erroneous and is being confused with Native culture (Tinker 1996). Non-Aboriginal people and institutions are under the impression that through a simple ceremony the ‘Aboriginal’ component has been successfully integrated and satisfied and carry on with their agendas without understanding what the sacred relationship to the land and the role of care taker means. This is obvious in how the meetings are carried out with much disrespect towards the Aboriginal participants. Many First Nation people disagree with this approach or feel that these practices conflict with their particular religion. This great frustration to Indigenous peoples around the world that the essential message of the ancient and sacred relationship to the earth and the land and the role as caretakers of Indigenous cultures is generally not understood at all by people of western society (Tinker 1996).

6.3 The Role of Anishinaabe Kwek

The role of Anishinaabe kwek in AKS is based largely on the women's role as caregivers but also considers their individual abilities. Women were considered the source of human life. Their role as life bearers and mothers was respected and acknowledged. Today, in traditional ceremonies, men and women always reference women being the source of life. According to the Haida Gwaii (1989), the significance of women is premised on natural law:

The Natural Law gives women the responsibility of bringing new life into the world. Everyone must be born from the womb. Mothers must protect the lives they have helped to bring into this world.

The Traditional Circle of Elders and Youth wishes to affirm women in their sacred responsibilities, and to express its gratitude and encouragement to women everywhere who struggle to nurture and protect life in the face of many obstacles.

In our traditional ways, the woman is the foundation of the family. It is the mother who provides spiritual direction and inspiration to the husband and children. The opportunities for women to help their families rise to higher levels of spiritual consciousness are unlimited. A man can become a powerful force for good in the world when he is spiritually supported by a discreet and loving mate.

In order for women to carry out their responsibilities, a home atmosphere of respect, security, and harmony is essential. A mother who is secure in the center of the family circle will be a source of strength to all. Abuse and repression have no place in a traditional family (American Indian Institute 1989, p. 1).

The Anishinaabe kwek acknowledge that women are very strong because they are the child bearers. They are the ones that have to endure the labour of childbirth. The Anishinaabe kwek have respect for their purpose in life as child bearers. When they talk about women's 'monthlies' they refer to it as 'kaygo ka izi ayad ikwe'. The 'monthlies' are sacred and considered powerful. The women also take precautions during 'that time' of the month not to get cold and for women to take care of themselves. These teachings

continue to be shared among the Anishinaabe kwek in Lake St. Martin. The Anishinaabe kwek teach women of child bearing years to take care of themselves – ‘tu na gijiduthud ikwe kayga tu dtu kujid’ – ‘women to look after themselves and not to catch [a chill]’. The meaning cannot be fully translated but it is a very powerful teaching that is passed on.

Women took extra precautions up to, during, and after childbirth. A woman was not allowed to do any heavy lifting before the due date because of fear that the umbilical cord would be wrapped around the baby’s neck. The women also share stories of how women have died in the past because of ‘aytukujchid ikwe’ - meaning “the women caught a ‘bug’ or ‘flu’”. Being able to bear children is considered a gift (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*) and a privilege. After the baby was born, the umbilical cord was kept because it was believed that it protected the baby. As well, after the birth of a child, a woman was not allowed to do any heavy lifting. It was also important for the woman to protect herself against the elements – ‘kayga tu du kuchid’ (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

Ross (2009, *pers. com*) remembers how his mother kept her children (his siblings) in a cradle - ‘abitoogibipithon’ - with a board with the front a little bent, to prevent the baby from falling: “The children were tied into place. They had a bundle, not a frame. They also had different features for newborns, which were softer. The cradle for the bigger babies was called ‘tikanagan’” (Ross 2009, *pers. comm.*). The mothers also made swings for their babies and toddlers to be kept in it while the mother worked around the house. The swings were like hammocks with two pieces of rope and tied to nails on the walls. The swings were great and there was no way for a child to get hurt (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). “The thing a child loves the most is to be warm when they sleep and that is

why they kept them in the swing. The baby did not get tired because they get tired when they move around too much. Babies also wake themselves when they move suddenly and yet when they wrapped them in the swings they just slept” (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). Keeping small children wrapped right reminds them of being in the womb. It actually generates feelings of security, comfort and peace. These babies are more quiet and peaceful as children than children who did not get wrapped (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

The Elders (2009, *pers. comm.*) stated that the mother-child bond and home was always the foundation of the Anishinabek’s life but no longer. The Anishinaabe kwek kept their connection with their newborn child by keeping the umbilical cord or ‘uudith’. Residential school and/or child and family services have disrupted this bond by taking the child away from the mother at a young age and typically leaving an unrelated stranger in charge of the raising of these children. This bond is further disrupted by children apprehensions, where Lake St. Martin has the highest rate of children being apprehended with Anishinaabe Child and Family Services that look after the Interlake First Nation communities. The Elders (2009 *pers. comm.*) stated that children were well behaved and families raised their families well without any chief or council or other external organizations interfering. Family bonds between mother and child were very strong with every mother breastfeeding and then when milk ran out feeding their children healthy food, like oatmeal. Eating fish during breastfeeding ensured a good flow of milk to make the child healthy and to nourish the mother. Sumner (2011, *pers. comm.*) shared that the women would rock their child and sang the child to sleep. This activity was called ‘maymay-ya’ – ‘maymay-ya-wathud’ and

it was easy for the child to fall asleep. Their care of the children was painstaking and loving. Only recently due to colonial impacts and adoption of the western child care practices have children been apprehended.

Long ago the child was never taken away. The immediate and extended family looked after the child. They never went to a strange family. Today Child and Family Services take away the children. Long ago when a child was born the Anishinabek celebrated. All the relatives came together to show who the child was related to so that the child will never forget whom their relatives were. When the water broke from the mother when she was ready to give birth, the water was collected and sprinkled outside to show what the child had to do and teach them what they were expected to do. When women gave birth they would breastfeed their baby. If something was wrong with the mother they helped each other with the child rearing. If the mother did not have her own milk they would use oatmeal broth to feed the infant. The women ate fish during breast feeding. The women made and sewed their own diapers. They took care of their babies (Sumner 2011, *pers. comm.*)

6.3.1 Nagajiitooon (Take Care of)

Nagajiitooon is a term meaning ‘take care of’. The Anishinabek provided excellent care of their animals. Everything that had life was respected and taken care of. Taking care of, and respecting those that cannot help themselves is part of reciprocation.

Animals ‘worked’ for the Anishinabek and in turn the animals were well taken care of.

For example, when traveling in the bush, there were always a swarm of “bull dogs”

(horse flies) around the horses. The Anishinabek made a potion for their horses to protect them from being bitten and agitated by bull dog flies. ‘They made a potion like a smudge and they would lather the horses with salve, like a tar. It stunk. They would put the stuff on the horses' nose and rear end to protect them from the bull dogs. After it was put on, the bull dogs didn't bother the horses as much’ (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

Horses were used for trapping to pull sleighs, as well as providing transportation for the Anishinabek. Dogs were also an efficient mode of transportation during the winter for the trappers. The animals were taken care of and respected. The horses were equipped with horseshoes to protect them from the sheer elements of the ice during the winter and from the gravel and soil irritants during the summer. They were fed oats during the winter so that they would preserve their body temperatures. Dogs were also treated with respect. They were properly taken care of and did not go hungry.

Nowadays they don't respect the meat they take from animals. You see bones lying all over the place and being thrown to the dogs. Long ago everything was used from the moose and everything was distributed accordingly. Dogs were kept and used for transportation and fed because of their work. Today you see dogs roaming and starving all over the place (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

The Anishinabek respected the animals they ate and were given to them by Muntoo.

6.3.2 Women and the Land

Anishinaabe Knowledge Systems and the land with all its resources are seen as a gift from Muntoo (Elders 1999, *pers. comm.*). The land is for the use and benefit of all the people. Entire communities are dependent on ancestral territories for the survival and well-being of each individual within the group. The focus here is on the entire group. The land provides everything. For the Anishinabek 'uundatiisii' is significant because it means 'living off'. For Anishinaabe land is called 'du kii naan' meaning 'our land'. According to the women of Lake St. Martin the Anishinaabe word 'mino ayaa' refers to someone that is healthy or comfortable in their life. Mino ayaawin' refers to something that is separate from one's body or life and refers to a collective sense of well-being.

Indigenous peoples take great pride in the food that they provide for their families that is derived from the land. For Indigenous peoples, land, food and health is the essential link to healthy human lives.

Roles were also defined among the Anishinabek with women given special roles on the land. The Elders (2009) talked about how they were assigned roles, as they were growing-up. These roles were also the tasks and chores that they had to do on a daily basis. In voyages into the bush in the summer the women packed and the men got the horses ready. These roles complemented each other. When they arrived at their destinations, the women were responsible for preparing and cooking food. The men hunted for food while the women stayed in the camps looking after the children while digging for Seneca root at the same time. Items were also made and designed that were based on gender.

Anishinaabe kwek have an unspoken understanding of the need for the land to rejuvenate if overused (Traverse 1999). This unites Indigenous peoples around the world in their struggle for self-determination in order to create healthy Indigenous communities that live in harmony with the land and to re-establish their role as stewards and caretakers of the earth in their traditional home lands. Indigenous peoples from forest environments around the world have fundamentally different worldviews, understandings, knowledge, wisdom and spirituality than non-Indigenous people. Through this a very different understanding and knowledge of nature develops.

The Anishinaabe kwek practice traditional activities and know traditional ecological knowledge. If I ask them to share their traditional knowledge with me, they will not understand what ‘traditional knowledge’ means or what I am talking about. In

this sense, the women are ‘primary knowledge holders’ meaning that they have not been indoctrinated to act and think a certain way because of outside ‘peer pressure’.

Anishinaabe women are aware of the changes around and the changes that are taking place within the land they know as ‘du key nan’. The Indigenous women are rich in knowledge and have names for everything that is around them.

Anishinabek talk about the living earth, the living water, the living wind and the living fire (Einhorn 2000, p. 22). When the Anishinabek arrived at their destination they would scout the area for water. “They would look in the tall grass or even in the muskeg and that is how they found the water. The water was good. There was no pollution at that time. The water was in the grass, even a little water” (Gagen 2007, *pers. comm.*).

Drinking water was obtained by digging a hole in the ground that would cause the natural water to come up. Gagen (2007, *pers. comm.*) remembers the water – muskegowabow – or water from the ground, as being brown in color but very cold and good. ‘We never even boiled the water; we just drank it straight from the ground; (Gagen 2007, *pers. comm.*). The Anishinabek never boiled their water and were never under any boil water advisories unlike today where the water is contaminated on their land. Tagore (2004) states that water does not merely cleanse the limbs; it purifies the heart, for it touches the soul. The earth does not merely hold its body; it gladdens its mind, for its contact is more than a physical contact – it is a living presence (p. 5). Indeed Gagen (2007, *pers. comm.*) remembers that nobody ever got sick when they spent weeks at a time living in the bush.

There were no pills or doctors. No one was ever sick. Mosquitoes didn’t even bother us. We had no spray to spray them off. When we went to sleep, we slept. Now people have a hard time to sleep. Back then, when we went to sleep we slept. Today people say they can’t sleep. When we bundled up, we would be warm. We didn’t use mattresses in the bush, not even sponge. As long as we had one blanket. We had canvas on the

ground where we slept on. It was so dirty at that time. We must have been dirty but no one ever got sick. And no one had sores anywhere. Nobody had diabetes. People were so healthy long time ago. When we laid down to go to sleep, no one complained that the ground was too hard. You would not hear anyone saying they were unable to sleep. Even little kids too they would be crawling about on the ground (Gagen 2007, *pers. comm.*).

Anishinabek lived with nature, were part of nature, and lived in harmony with their land. This harmonious relationship was conducive to their well-being and did not make them sick. The relationship was reciprocal and close. Anishinabek only took what was needed and they did not pollute it. Gagen (2007) remembers how they used to make their beds on the ground with just a canvas or in earlier times a hide separating them: the closeness to the earth was in part the physical closeness. Einhorn (2000, p. 22) mentions the reciprocity by stating that “each part of creation tries to form a physically and spiritually harmonious relationship with all other parts. Harmony and balance equal survival and happiness. Lack of harmony and balance causes sickness and death or, in short, dis-ease”.

Anishinaabe kwek practiced sustainable management and were recycling long before the words ‘sustainable’ and ‘recycle’ were coined. When Anishinabek lived in the bush for weeks at a time they did not destroy or damage the land. Anishinabek did not have any disposable or plastic material with them, so they did not leave garbage when they left. “The little garbage we had was burned and no one left anything behind. We had a few cans but they were thrown into the fire. We never used any plastic” (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). Even during food preparation, all parts of the food were used. When moose was prepared, everything was used up, even the bones. When the Anishinabek started receiving flour as part of the food supplements, they used the flour bags for everything. They recycled these bags for everything, from pillowcases, sheets, blankets,

and clothing such as underwear and slippers. Men's shirts were also made from the flour bags. The flour came in white canvas bags marked 'Harvest Queen'. "We laugh today when we remembered how the men, as they went courting, had 'harvest queen' written on their shirts" (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

The Anishinaabe men and women of Lake St. Martin did not take more than what they need. For example if there is too much meat or fish, they will give to those who are in need. This is referred to as 'wii chi tiwin' or helping one another. Tampering, tainting, contaminating, and / or polluting are not part of the way the people of the earth are supposed to live. The Elders (1999 *pers. comm.*) stated that God assigned us to be stewards of this land.

The Anishinabek were very capable stewards of their land. The traditional land-use study of Skownan First Nation and their on-going work to increase fish and wildlife populations and to preserve the land for future generations is the work of stewardship. It comes from the deep Anishinaabe understanding of knowing that as long as we take care of the land it will take care of us (Stock 2005). The people of every single Indigenous community around the world have this understanding. This understanding is what makes us Indigenous peoples. However, the loss of land, culture, language and the constant battle with government and industries to stop or reduce the impact of large-scale industries has destroyed many of our ways of understanding of how we should live our lives sustainably. Every Indigenous person knows this and struggles with this dilemma. All activities of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada in order to reclaim our creator-given role as stewards are the foundation of all traditional land-use studies, co-management, land claims, and land protection efforts.

The Elders (2009) state that “Anishinabek kii nu ta anowkiiwug mayzhu” – “Anishinabek were hard-working people”. The Anishinabek took care of themselves to survive not only in the present but for generations to come. Despite the fundamental importance of stewardship to Indigenous Peoples very little has been written about it. One of the earliest references by Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples about stewardship was perhaps by Chief Gary Potts of the Teme-Augama Anishnabai in 1989. He addressed forest stewardship:

Forest Stewardship means: the forest belongs to the life that lives within it and that the future generations of this life are dependent upon the continuity of the forest. Human beings depend upon the continuity of the forest. Human beings must respect forest life and integrate human uses of the forest in a manner compatible with the continuity of forest life. Forever (Potts 1989, p. 208).

The knowledge of the land, enabled the Anishinabek ‘tunuguchiituud tu pi majii yuuwaud’ – ‘they knew how to look after themselves well.’ ‘Anishinabek kii pi majii yuu’ meant that the Anishinabek as a community was able to survive by fending for themselves and each other. This meant that Anishinabek were able to live off the land sustainably and what it had to offer. The term is rarely used in Anishinaabe mowin because it refers to how the Anishinabek lived long ago and how they survived.

‘Uundadisii’ is a concept or word that is held with high regard by the Anishinabek. This also refers to ‘uundadisii’ which means ‘being able to live off’ or ‘being sustained by something’. Anishinabek talk about being able to live off and providing a living for themselves. Today, Anishinaabe mowin refers to ‘pi majii yidothoo’ to refer to someone who is working to survive. The Anishinabek had skills and knowledge that was obtained from ay pi majii yuuwaud. Each Anishinaabe added to the knowledge, understanding and wisdom of the larger community. Each person understood

his or her special role in community. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Anishinabek hold ka nata kii withay wad (good hunters), ka nata wuniigait (good trappers), ka nata pugidowad (good fishers), ka nata moonuyigait (good diggers), tu gu akii nu pakan (and everything else). These gifts of skill were shared with their ‘ndinaway maganak’ – my relatives / my relations. A gift of skill does not lead to power and control but rather to interaction, sharing and working together in harmony. Where Anishinabek way of life or ‘pimatisiwin’ was once based on foundation of sharing, today it intermixed with the former and ‘to each his own’ way of life. Humans find spiritual vision in natural phenomena. In this way, Indigenous peoples around the world understand their relationship with nature.

6.4 Teaching – Transmission of knowledge

Anishinaabe kwek are the primary transmitters of AKS. The reason for this is because Anishinaabe kwek tend to be the ones looking after children and raising them, and men assist in raising their children. Just making certain sounds carries a specific message to another person that has meaning.

The AKS are in many forms including verbal, non-verbal, gestures, body language, or facial expressions. The responsibility is bestowed on the women to teach and pass on knowledge. The knowledge will befit the situation: for example, if a child starts getting rough with someone else’s pet, the mother or caregiver will give the child a certain facial expression that serves as warning. This is very different from non-Native people who use the spoken word right away. Anishinaabe kwek instruct their children or kin “*naguchitooon aki duwun*” – ‘watch what you say’, “*kaygo maamiikindithikain*” –

‘don’t tease’, “*kayma kaygo ayi u anoochigu iinakain*” – or ‘don’t say anything [bad] to someone’. Anishinaabe kwek enjoy talking about their youth and how life was back in their day. Anishinaabe kwek sharing of oral history is also a means of instilling values into their children and the present generation. “Breathing words of truth, communicating in right relationship of self and everyone and everything, and speaking to manifest wholeness – this is the sacred flow of the oral tradition” (Einhorn 2000, p. 4).

Once Indigenous peoples are on the path of healing and are relearning their language, these teaching become important. Choice of words becomes critical again. The older generations still have this understanding. “*Kitchi Anishinabek ukitaydanawa Mantoo ‘n ay kii miinu guwad ugiikudonuwa*” – ‘are really honoured that God gave them a language and works to speak’. *Kitchi Anishinabek* have repeated time and time again that the young people are losing their language, which is why they are not respecting life.

The Anishinabek also state that the subsistence livelihoods are changing and what was used for subsistence is now being made commercial (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). “*Gi kupiimin aku noopiming*” – ‘we used to go into the forest’. “*Kinaysh aku ge undaydimin*” – we used to be gone for a long time. “*Gi mu nu yi gaymin, paykish kii kowithaywug*” – ‘we dug for Seneca root and hunting at the same time’ (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). Seneca root digging was a means of income to purchase some food staples. The Anishinabek would pack up and live in the woods until they dug enough root to buy what they needed for the winter. While in the bush they also hunted, again, in preparation for food to be used during the winter. The women would look after the children while the men were hunting. The women would be the ones who were the primary Seneca root diggers. However the men also dug for Seneca root if they were not

hunting. The Seneca root was purchased by the local store owner at 5 cents per pound (1940s), who in turn sold it to another buyer. The Anishinaabe did not have formal teachings in place, and all the teachings and transmission of knowledge was inherent and as a normal daily routine for the Anishinabek. AKS was a way of life in balance with nature and others.

6.4.1 Story-telling: *Atisookanan*

Anishinaabe mowin are also rich in other forms of storytelling such as the “*atisookanan*”. *Atisookanan* are also stories about Nanabush or Nanoboza who was a prankster. *Atisookanan* are told in Anishinaabe mowin. A person that is telling the *atisookanan* is referred to as the verb, ‘*atisookay*’, as he tells an *atisookanan*. Much of Anishinaabe *atisookanan* are also not understood by the non-Indigenous speaker because after they are translated they lose their meaning and humour.

A little child was born once, but nobody knew whose child it was. The animals gathered and sat around in a circle. They said whoever the child peed on the hand of the person would be the parent to the child. So they passed the baby around. And there was one called Chidaya. And then it was Chidaya’s turn to hand the baby. When it was almost Chidaya’s turn, Chidaya started spitting on her hands. When Chidaya received the baby, she said to the baby ‘hello my baby’ and pretended to be the mother of that child. “*Neen sziginig ekedow enthan’ umbay enthan onincheesan ookey thithikodanan uninjeen*”. Chidaya said ‘the baby peed on me’, yet she spat on her hands and it was not from the baby’s pee (Gagen 2006, *pers. comm.*).

Another *atisookan* told the story of:

“*Abidingk eethun animooshugk kii mamawoobiiwug*” (One time dogs were at a meeting). When they got to their meeting they took their tails off and hung them on the wall. Suddenly, there was a fire and the dogs scrambled to find their tails to flee the fire. But some of them could not find their tails, and grabbed someone else’s tail. That is why to this day, dogs sniff each others behind when they first meet each other because they are still looking for their own tails (Gagen 2006, *pers. comm.*).

The latter *atisookan* is about being prepared and organized. This *atisookan* is also about peoples' behavior and mannerisms when they first meet each other and how they check each other out. Many of the *atisookanan* are about life and how Anishinabek view life. *Atisookanan* tell stories of all things – both animate and inanimate, including man – to be living. Everything is life and in the form of life, and is on the same level as Anishinaabe where it can think and talk. Logic and reason are also part of the *atisookanan*.

6.4.1.1 Women's Role in House: *Ndad Umbumitoon*

Anishinaabe *kwek* were very diligent in their roles to maintain a healthy home environment. All the chores were done and the children that were able helped in all the chores. There were no washing machines and all laundry was washed by hand. Traverse (2007, *pers. comm.*) remembers how they used to make a day trip going to the shore to do their laundry. They would stand in the water and wash their clothes and hang them on the trees to dry along the shore. They made their own soap from moose fat, which was mixed with ash from the fire. Later, Sunlight soap was used and had other purposes as well. For other cleaning purposes, white ashes from wood were used to wash the wood floors in their homes (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

All tasks in the home to improve life were made by women. Mattresses were made by stuffing straw into canvas material (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). The mattresses would be changed at least once a year by replacing the straw. Pillows were made from the scraped moose fur and stuffing it into canvas (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). The Anishinaabe *kwek* were also strong and provided much leadership as well as raising children. Life is easier today compared to the days when women would look after big

families and everything would be washed by hand including diapers. Today, Anishinaabe kwek would not be able to cope if they had to use diapers and wash them every day (Traverse 2007, *pers. comm.*).

6.4.2 Pimaachiiwin

The worth of a person was defined by their participation in the overall community (Deloria 2003). One of the Elders (2009, *pers. comm.*) remembers how her mother did not allow her to sleep in when there were chores to be done. She recalls “one time my sister and I got home 5:00 in the morning and we were not allowed to sleep in. We covered potatoes in the garden all day long, and yet we were so tired.” The Elders (2009 *pers. comm.*) state that they had to work to survive and they worked hard.

6.4.2.1 Plants and Medicines

After the August harvest moon, the Anishinaabe kwek got ready to prepare for the fall gathering time of roots and medicines. These roots and medicines were important to keep the people healthy during the long winter months. The Anishinabek knew what the weather and conditions would be like in the coming seasons and prepared themselves in anticipation. Weekay was and is still a popular medicinal plant that has many purposes. Weekay was gathered at a certain time and prepared for storage to be used during the winter months. Traverse (2009 *pers. comm.*) remembers her parents only harvested enough weekay to last them all winter, which was about two inches of root. There were also numerous other medicinal plants that were harvested and stored for use during the

winter months. However, I am not at liberty to name each of these plants and what they were used for due to intellectual property rights.

The Anishinabek knew when to harvest plants. Western science recognizes the chemical changes that occur within the roots of the plants as the seasons change but for the Anishinabek, it is more than recognizing the physical changes in the plant. The Anishinabek associate changes in how the winds blow, how the birds fly, the colour of the sunset, the colour of the sky, the color of the halo around the winter sun, how the air smells, how the birds and animals behave, how early or how late the plants blossomed, and the list goes on (Elders 2009). All of these are part of the AKS in which Anishinabek – whether man or woman – has knowledge of their winter survival. In the summer certain plants are gathered at solstice time. This is when the sun energy is the longest and the highest. This induces the productions of certain healing qualities in the plants that make them more powerful for healing certain ailments. They have to be gathered at solstice time and dried out in the open to receive even more sunlight.

The Anishinaabe kwek used various medicines, which were made from plants. They had medicines for everything. ‘Ujigigthag’ was used on babies with diaper rash (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). When a child had diaper rash the bark from a certain tree was used. It was chopped real fine until it looked and felt like powder. “It looked like the baby powder that is used today; that’s how good it was and the rash healed right away no matter how bad the rash was. Back then we had no pampers just diapers” (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). They also used moss on babies too (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). When babies had rashes around their necks they used ‘piwaskinag’ which are the little plants that hang in bunches. They would gather the piwaskinag and when they turned into

powder they used those on kids for neck rash and diaper rash (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). Rabbit skin was used as well for covering babies. “We got all of our medicines and food from nature and we never got sick” (Elders 2009 *pers. comm.*)

6.4.2.2 Healthy Babies and AKS

The women always took extra precautions during the winter against nature’s elements. They knew the force of nature and respected its force. When they took infants and children outside in the winter they made sure that they were properly sheltered and covered from the cold wind and cold air. They wanted to prevent the child from ‘keewatinownin uku pootanigoon’ – ‘the north wind will blow on him’. Also during spring as the snow and ice thawed, the Anishinaabe kwek took extra precautions to prevent the child from ‘miicomiin uku pootanigoon’ – ‘the ice will blow in his face’. The translation or meaning has no relevance in English, however, in Anishinaabe, it is a powerful warning for the mothers to take extra precautions for her baby during that time of the year. The infants were also shielded from the cold elements to prevent ‘katuka tipaywujchid abinoonjii’ – ‘his teeth will get cold’. Another warning was ‘kaygo tudokujchid.’ – ‘not to catch a chill’.

The traditional healer was consulted about the health of children. Even today, the Anishinaabe kwek who speak the language know the ‘katuka tipaywujchid abinoonjii’ – ‘the child that get affected with getting sick from cold teeth’. Gabriel (2009, *pers. comm.*) recalls taking her grandchild to a traditional healer. The traditional healer made something from plants and put it into a little bag (cheese cloth). The little bag was filled with plants and was rubbed inside her grandchild’s mouth. The traditional healer showed her what to do so that she could treat her grandchild at home and administer the muskiki

(medicine) herself, providing her with muskiki wabo for the baby. When drinking the muskiki wabo (liquid medicine), the mother was advised that the baby should not drink any type of milk while on the muskiki wabo. A sweetener was also used to take away the bitter taste such as sugar or syrup. The women from Lake St. Martin also talked about the muskiki and how it was made. The plants were picked from an open field. The plants were shaped like little balls with plant fluff inside them. The plant was prepared and used specifically for “*katuka tipaywujchid abinoonjii*” – ‘the child who gets infected from cold teeth’ (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

“*Katuka tipaywujchid abinoonjii*” is a condition in infants that does not have a medical term in the English language, the closest would be ‘teething’ but the translations get lost and does not mean the same thing. “*Katuka tipaywujchid abinoonjii*”, cannot be treated by western medicine and Anishinaabe mothers still seek traditional medicine for their children. Western medicine treatment is in the form of antibiotics and does not work and only makes the infant weaker. However, the Anishinaabe kwek always know when their child is “*tuka tipaywujchid*”. The treatment that is commonly sought is from traditional medicine, which is specifically made for ‘*katuka tipaywujchid abinoonjii*’.

6.4.2.3 Gathering and Preparation

The Anishinaabe kwek were the primary gatherers. Men were also gatherers however it was the women who took the lead in initiating the gathering outings. The elders talk about how they spent days picking berries and getting ready for the winter. The berries were picked according to when they were ready for picking. It was usually the women who kept track of the season patterns regarding when the gathering would be

ready. The weather patterns were particularly important when they were preparing for the winter. For example, during the late spring and the season leading into early summer, the women knew if there were going to be certain berries that will grow abundantly or sparsely. The Anishinabek knew when to go out. Sadly though, during the past decade, the Elders (2009 *pers. comm.*) have noticed that the berries are not as abundant as they used to be.

There used to be a lot of – miinun - blueberries by big rock every summer and yet today there are none around. Oothigokoominag were also picked and were in abundance, as well as uudayminum – strawberries. We would go blueberry picking at big rock and go there by horse and wagon and be gone for 2 or 3 days. We would bring back 4 to 6 tubs. We used fish wooden tubs that were about 2 ½ feet wide. Lots of people used to go blueberry picking. They were not small either but big – today there's not that many around and they're small. We also used to gather 'muskigiminan' in the fall and made jam from them. We had long hot summer in those days, not like the summers today (Traverse 2009a, *pers. comm.*).

Anishinabek travelled to the gathering sites and made day trips or even spending two to three nights camping. Much of the activities leading up to and associated with gathering involved preparation. The women would prepare their lunch and food requirements, their gathering equipment and gear, and camping and overnight supplies. The whole family would go on these trips. Everyone had to pick including the children.

We all used to go picking berries – low bush cranberries – muskiigiminim - with our parents. It used to look like the berries were just spilled over - that's how abundant they were and they all used to be so delicious We would prepare them, make jam and put them in 'sealaring' (jars). We had jam all winter long (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

Different types of berries were picked. Most of these berries also have Anishinaabe names indicating that they have been a diet staple, namely: oothigokuminug (Saskatoon

berries), aniiibimum (cranberries), mithkuminug (raspberries), miinun (blueberries), and oodayminun (strawberries). The berries were also prepared and preserved in different methods depending on their use. Saskatoons were made into jam for use in the winter or dried [like raisins] (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). The Anishinabek used to keep everything they picked – mawinzowin – and would keep them all winter (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

Produce from gardens was also preserved. The women were the ones who tended the gardens, but it was the men who prepared the gardens by tilling them. They did the same with corn and onion (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). One of the elders remembers how her mother used to dry corn and how she used it. “Our mother used to boil the dried corn for up to three hours with moose meat and it used to be so delicious (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).” Potatoes were a main diet staple. They were grown in gardens and kept well during the winter months in storage facilities, which were made by the Anishinabek.

Our father dug a hole in the ground that was about six feet deep which he then lined with straw. We stored our potatoes in there for the winter where they kept well. He put some kind of tube so that the potatoes would breathe. Our potatoes lasted all winter and we used what was left over for spring planting (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

When families went hunting they would be gone for about a week or until they had enough meat (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). They stayed until they killed a moose. They prepared and dried the meat while they were at camp (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). When a moose was killed, they made lard - thathkiganang - from the fat (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). “Thathiganag from moose fat was also used to make soup. Our mother used to make soup from thathigan. They also used the fat to make bannock and pastry such as pies. Even better was bear fat, which tasted better than the moose fat. The women also made pies from the bear fat” (Elders 2009, *pers.com.*). Most of the time

women would prepare the meat, and they (women) always helped each other (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). “Ay-ya ke wich ii tiwug - they helped each other.

Thathkiganang had other uses. Coal oil was used to light homes at night. But many times people could not afford coal oil and the Anishinabek made their own lamps using thathkiganang. These were referred to as skunk lamps.

They used to just make these lamps. They used to take a piece of rag and twist and wrap it around and they would grease it with lard from moose or bear fat. They would grease it really good. They put the lard in a saucer and light it. That is where light came from. Just a little light, not a bright light and that is what they called a skunk lamp. After that there were gas lamps and these were even brighter (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

Every part of the meat was used and none was wasted. The moose used was not only for consumption but served many purposes. The Anishinaabe kwek never used thread. They used “sinew” as a thread which is the muscle found along the back of moose and along the loins and is used when it dries up. They also used ‘udith’ as thread, which is from the moose bellybutton. These were very strong and did not break and did not rip even when you tried ripping it. When they made moose hide shoes and moccasins that is what they used. They also used them for violin strings. They would use different thickness for each string.

Fish was also a staple in the Anishinaabe diet. The men fished commercially to make a living as well as providing food for their families. However the women fished as well when the men were not home, as a means of sustenance. The women also prepared the fish for consumption and storing. Traverse (a 2008 *pers. comm.*) remembers how she used to go fishing with her mother during the summer when her father was away working.

My mother and I would go out on the boat and she would throw a net into the water to catch fish for us to eat. We caught enough fish to last us for a few days. When we got home my mother prepared the fish. She used all parts of the fish and did not waste anything. I remember her frying the fish guts with onion and I can still remember that smell. It smelled good and tasted so good (Traverse 2008, *pers. comm.*).

Fish heads were also boiled and used as soup. Fish was prepared similar to meat where it was crushed after it was dry. This was used in the winter and spring and never spoiled (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). The fish was hung to dry and are referred to as nookiganag which is a fish that is hung. The fish was also smoked which added a delicious flavour. Both the men and the women smoked the fish, however, it was the men who made the racks and prepared the wood for smoking; and the women who tended the fire.

Seneca root digging was part of the Anishinaabe livelihood. Seneca root or ‘wiinithikainth’ was a major source of income up to the 1970s. People still dig for seneca root to supplement their income, however, depending on its retail value and fluctuates throughout the years. Usually the women who dig seneca root. Families would spend weeks travelling throughout the bush/forest during the summer digging for seneca root:

We would just come home for a little while and go back out again. We drove horse and wagon all over the place from Peonan Point. That is where we moved to sometimes 2 or 3 weeks. That is how long people camped out until all their food supplies were gone (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

‘Muunuyigaing’ or digging for root is a skill that is learned: the majority of the time, it is the women who teach the children and youth how to dig for root. The women will show what the root looks like and what the color should be, when is the best time to dig, and how to dig properly. When the Anishinabe kwek dug for root they did very fast moving from place to place. They also know what type of vegetation it grows best in and

where to find it. In recent years, digging for Seneca root is done to supplement income, and for some it is also a chance to go back into the bush and spend the day there.

6.4.2.4 Sewing and Preparing Hides

All clothes and blankets were originally made from animal skins. Anishinabek never threw away the hide. “They used to make it - any kind of hide. They used to make moccasins and mukluks and some jackets. They used beads to make designs on the hide” (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

Preparing hides was a form of art and required skill. The Elders (2009, *pers. comm.*) recall the preparation that went into preparing hides.

They made a frame to accommodate the hide. They used a little rope and it had little holes around the leather. It was raw before they dried it and they laced it all around the square frame. The frame was the size of one hide. They hung the hide on the frame right after they killed a moose and laced it all around and before the hide dried. The women used to climb on the hide and they used to just move around on the hide. A tree used to sit across the frame until they got off the hide but first they scraped the fur and they used a mingkigonand (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

The women used to prepare and finish the hide while they were out in the bush (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). Women spread the brain over the hide to prepare the hide (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). In the fall before it got cold they would wet the hide, soak it in water and it would soften up and change color (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). When they wrung out the hide they rolled it up a certain way and they would hang it up on a tree and they would ‘athaykem’ – which was a process to make the hide soft. Women beat the hide. The children would be the ones responsible for doing this task.

They made their own clothes. They received yarn from the school to knit their own socks and mitts. The men and women helped each other during the fall. They tanned the hide for leather. They pulled the hide

and scraped it. They prepared for winter. The women made guntlets and wraparound moccasins to wear with their rubbers. They called the wraparounds - 'bisiweengwain' or 'bisiweengay-ithinun'. These were wraparound moccasins that came up to the knees. They wore them in the winter and kept their feet warm. They also made their winter jackets from the moose hide (Sumner 2011, *pers. comm.*).

The Elders (2009, *pers. comm.*) recall how they used to detest the task of 'athaykem', which was done over a fire and was hard and monotonous. One of the Elders (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*) recalls that "she used to fight with her sister, or one would let go and one would fall down. It was awful and hard work to do the 'athaykem' and yet it was part of our life. You had to stand there to pull the finished hide back and forth over the fire". Sticks were used to tie the hide in place and a fire was kept burning under it to smoke the hide. After the curing process the hide was nice and brown and it was light like paper. When the hide was good and dry, they used it for sewing and making different items. The hide was used for slippers and wrap-arounds for children (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

Sewing and beading were important skills that were transmitted. Not everyone could bead. The women that did bead were very good at what they did. "They used to wear these things on their fingers – that were as long as their fingers. They used to call it 'athigothowin' – they used tay-ya thimbles. When they sewed clothes it was referred to as 'kaskogothiwin' – using thread and beads. In early times all clothes were made out of hides and then later cloth. In the winter time the women made jackets and pants for the men.

They used to wear a winter jacket like today how they are dressed. But they made those jackets themselves they were white. It is just recently they started buying those parkas, back then they used to just make them. They made parkas with white canvas cloth. That is how men used to dress

and some wore leather pants made from moose skin. ‘Ki nu ta wi gothiwug mindomoowayug.’ Everything was sewn by hand. All by hand there were no machines at that time they did all by hand. The women were good at sewing and that was really nice when they used that thread and it would just go flat that thread on the shoes. They were good to sew they made leather [from] moose hide. Ay-ya. (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

Beading the seeds from silver willows were particularly popular for use in jewelry. The women would pick the seeds, peel them, scrub and then boil them. The seeds were strung with beads to make colorful necklaces. These were also sold. However this custom is hardly being practiced anymore as the silver willows are harder to find now and not abundant as they used to be.

Women also made little baskets from trees – wegoth – birch trees (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). “They used to peel the bark and used it for sewing as a thread. They used the baskets for berry picking and they put them in the cellars and they kept them there all winter and nothing was wrong with them” (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

6.4.2.5 Agriculture

Ubuskoodaya Anishinabek were horticulturalists and agriculturalists. First Nation people engaged in agriculture long before settlers. There are archeological digs with the three sisters including corn, beans and squash (LaDuke 2002). Agriculture was an important food source along with fish and meat traditionally. Women were the chief gardeners at the trap line.

The importance of agricultural activities during the 1930s has been reported for other Aboriginal peoples in Manitoba and Saskatchewan as well (Buckley 1993, Tough 1996). For example, the Swampy Cree of The Pas (Manitoba) and Red Earth (Saskatchewan) had developed important agricultural practices of cattle raising and

potato gardening alongside to their traditional subsistence based hunting and fishing activities, and the debt-based trapping economy (Meyer 1985). The Anishinabek were involved in similar activities since the beginning of the century and earlier on. Indeed the Anishinabek had cattle from as early as 1900s. When the Traverse family migrated to Ubuskoodayang from Jackhead, they migrated with all their belongings that included tools and cattle. Traverse (2009 b) recalls their father sharing stories that they were young men when they moved:

They were young men already they came from Jackhead. I guess they first stopped in Muntag for the winter. They were there for the winter. I saw that dwelling. Roger and Andrew McKay they hunted by the river and you could see the remains of the house all around. And when they left from there they moved here. There were only a small group of people living here (Lake St. Martin). It was small. It took them two years to get here. They even had cows with them when they left Jackhead. They had everything with them, all their clothes and their equipment.

Feeding livestock and making hay interfered to a certain extent with the highly mobile hunting and trapping activities. Some people that became specialized in cattle and horses became more sedentary.

I remember this man, called 'Kookookowoonth. He farmed by Kenneth's over there. He had a big garden and he was a rich man. He had lots of cattle; when you looked to the field you could see what looked like a black island. Those were his cattle. He had so much cattle that they looked like a big island in the field (Traverse 2009b, *pers. comm.*).

However, potato gardening and haying filled out periods that were of low activity seasons for traditional undertakings. Making hay became an additional seasonal activity of great economic and social importance. From late July on, entire families would come together and camp on the edges of the hay fields. This time of summer camping was highly

enjoyable but also hard work to make hay (Meyer 1985, p. 119-120). These kinds of haymaking camps lasted into the 1960s. “They used to walk across the river to go to other side. The other side had lots of hay and that’s where they spent their summer and the hay was done” (Sumner 2011, *pers. comm.*). Elders still talk about these haymaking times with great joy. Potatoes were mostly harvested at the beginning of October after the fall moose hunt.

Until recently, Anishinabek still practiced their ‘subsistence’ livelihoods but the focus is not the same. The Anishinabek went rice picking up until the 1980s, however modern conveniences were intermixed and also it was part of the commercial process. It shifted from subsistence to commercial.

When we went rice picking we went portaging in between the rivers and land to get to the next site. We would usually make camp wherever we happened to be at dusk. We slept outside on a big rock in the open air, with no tents, with only a blanket underneath. We made camp in an area that was open so that we would see what was around us. This type of camping and portaging was not done out of the need to experience the great outdoors, but out of necessity. We really had no choice because we had to be ready and be in our canoes again at the break of dawn. We also needed the income that it provided (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

6.4.2.6 Salt

Salt was also made for consumption. “There’s a lot of natural salt around this area and they used to make it for table use. They also used it for animals to eat – the deer especially like the salt – tamajiiskiiway” (Traverse 2009b, *pers. comm.*). They looked for the raw salt by looking for white mounds, which was boiled dry to purify it (Traverse 2009b, *pers. comm.*).

6.4.3 Helping one another: Wiichiitwin

The Anishinabek looked after one another and those in need. This activity was called ‘bee’. The term does not imply any form of building or construction but refers to the community coming together and helping one another. This was a community fundraising – without money, where the people got together to help out someone in need. Interestingly enough, the term is no longer used today.

All the families who had horses gathered fire wood for those families who did not have horses and were unable to fell wood for themselves. The activity ‘bee’ was a time of helping or ‘wiichiitwin’. “The families cooked together, ate together, and then when they were all done had a dance party without alcohol. In those days there was no alcohol. They had big dances in those days and they danced all night. No one got drunk and no one fought. It wasn’t until the white men made homebrew and sold it to the Anishinabek, that Anishinabek started drinking” (Elders 2009).

‘Kee mbee kay wug’ or building a house involved the whole community.

The first house my father built was a log house. He used horse and wagon to haul the trees from the woods. He chopped and cut the trees into boards. He used to have cows which he sold so he could buy supplies such as nails (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

The men typically did most of the heavy labour, but the women also had a role in the home building. The women prepared the food and gathered the wood for the fire. Unlike today where all the building material is precut into lumber of various sizes and uses, the men would go into the bush and look for trees to be used of a specific type, height, age, and appearance. The men brought back the trees and prepared them into logs by

manually cutting off the branches and cutting the trees into logs for building houses using axe and hand saw. The logs had to be cut so that the corners met and overlapped each other. The men also made the mud to fill the spaces between the logs. There was a lot of work involved in building the log houses. “The men would shove the mud in between the logs and then they [the houses] were painted white” (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). This paint was not store-bought paint, but the colour came from heating limestone. The men rotated with each other to keep the fires going all night to heat the stone. “All night long there was a man watching and all day long they worked hard” (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). They heated stones by digging big holes in the ground where they would cook the stone there until it was white. Upon heating the limestone would break up into little pieces, and then was further crushed to look like powder. After the limestone was crushed they mixed it with water to get a paint-like mixture, which was then used to paint or plaster the houses. “It was hard work transporting those stones. They got the limestone from all over. It was just laying around. They just went around collecting them” (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). But the stone was not just any limestone. It had to be a particular colour and it had to be a specific texture. “The stones were white and they were soft and they knew which stones to pick” (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). The limestone used to be hauled by the Anishinabek by horse and wagon. “Mayzhu Anishinaabe iki ki kay dan aniin kay izi pi mach iyud. The houses were warm in the winter and much warmer than they are today. There was no electricity. “Ki michi pooda waim ka bay pipoon” – They used firewood all winter” (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*).

6.4.4 Anishinaabe kwek and Leadership

Anishinaabe kwek's role is important in the community. Despite this, there continues to be gender discrimination in the lack of recognition in any form of women's contributions in the political arena. Anishinaabe kwek have been elected as councilors but there has never been a female chief elected yet, yet women have been nominated to run for chief but have never been elected (Lake St. Martin 1975), despite proof indicating that female leadership is directly related to better government and cleaner business.

With the present leadership, the Chief recognizes and acknowledges the important contribution women on his staff are making. Lake St. Martin leadership recognizes the importance of women in their role of supporting the work of leadership. The influence of Western thinking and the division of labour (Anderson 2000) results in this sexism. "As societies deteriorate, so does the special status of women as keepers of knowledge of life and sustenance. If medicines are disappearing so does the role of the keepers of that medicine knowledge – the women" (Settee 1999, p. 9).

6.5 AKS changed with technology

The modern civilization of the West, by all its organized efforts, is trying to turn out men [humans] perfect in physical, intellectual, and moral efficiency. ... They are ever disciplining themselves to fight nature and other races (Tagore 2004, p. 9-10).

Technology has been used to perfect rather than experience the world. Technology has proven to be a detriment to Anishinaabe way of life. While technology can be effective, it has been ineffective and unhealthy for Anishinaabe peoples. Technology has placed them in a position of despair, powerlessness, hopelessness and poverty. The Elders (2009, *pers. comm.*) affirm that the Anishinabek long ago were healthy and strong. They were able to walk long distances, able to survive the harsh elements, and able to lift and haul

heavy objects. Another Elder (2007, *pers. comm.*) remembers her late mother as a very good seamstress, and how she would work with canvas and make tents to sell. Other activities such as rice picking, sugar beeting, and potato picking were part of activities of the Anishinabek which spanned for about two decades during the late 1950s to the 1970s. Children worked hard from an early age on and continued up until the early 1980s. Children doing their chores after that were not the same. Back then chores were intensive and hard and equal to adult chores. But that was part of life for everyone including children. Traditionally Indigenous peoples work together in groups including the children and “each group has a duty to the generations to come to make certain that they have a culture, way of life, and a set of beliefs that correctly reflect the generations that have gone before (Deloria 1991, p. 460).

6.6 Conclusion

There is a huge gap in literature on AKS regarding Anishinaabe women. In order to understand the dynamics of sustainable livelihoods and Anishinaabe women, more research should be conducted, and with the lack of Anishinaabe speaking researchers has been a huge limitation in this field of research.

Anishinaabe kwek have played an important role in the transmission of AKS. Women have shared this role with men, although both women and men have different roles at the community level. The Anishinaabe kwek are the transmitters of AKS in terms of child rearing, food preparation, looking after their households and families. All of these roles played a significant part in Anishinaabe kwek role as stewards of the land. For example, women were usually the ones digging for Seneca root, which required great

skill and knowledge of the land, how, when and where to dig. The women also made preparations when their family went out to the land, and preserved foods and medicines when they returned from the land.

AKS guides spiritual, cultural, and social dynamics of the Anishinabek. The AKS are rich in painting a vivid picture of the subsistence economies of the Anishinabek, which were further supplemented by income, based on their knowledge of the land. The Anishinaabe kwek had an important role in the transmission of AKS, but this did not preclude the men from the responsibility of knowledge transmission. Each had a role to play, as individuals and as a community. Much of the Anishinabek dependence upon the land both traditional and economic was based on the land and their AKS. With time and the gradual phase-in of technology, and the implementation of government policy upon their lives, AKS have eroded. Women's roles have not diminished with time, but child welfare services continue to disrupt mother's role by taking children away from the extended family, disconnecting this sacred bond. Child and family services has disrupted and destroyed families in Lake St. Martin, which is further exacerbated by the entire community of Lake St. Martin being decimated by repeated flooding. The destruction of families and the land affects the Anishinabek's well-being. What is more challenging today is how to pass on the AKS. How can Anishinaabe mothers pass on AKS if their children are in care?

Anishinaabe women's traditional knowledge systems are still part of their world and co-exist with their modern conveniences and lifestyles. Some are still practicing their IKS while participating in modern economic activities (Thompson 2008). Language which was once the base of a culture steeped in tradition is now on the verge of being lost

as modern lifestyles and conveniences compete with the ‘simplistic’, yet physically demanding, traditional way of life (Buckley 1993).

This research found Indigenous women are still the backbone today (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). Indigenous women, in particular, are considered to be the stewards of the land (NWAC 2010). However, Indigenous women’s role in resource stewardship is typically ignored in academic literature.

In conclusion, traditionally, Indigenous women’s role is to care for their families, to provide safe water, shelter and a continuous food supply depended on their knowledge of the land (Anderson 2000). However, their capacities and desire to fulfill this role has been diminished by colonization, residential schools, Christianity, which has led to a loss in AKS or simply disinterest (Bumsted 2003). This research found that despite traditional roles, the Anishinaabe women work alongside men (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*; Elders 2011, *pers. comm.*).

CHAPTER 7: REFLECTING ON CHANGES OVER TIME

7.1 Lake St. Martin in its present circumstances

The current situation at Lake St. Martin can only be understood by knowing the forces that have acted upon it. Currently Lake St. Martin is one of the poorest communities in Canada, even amongst First Nations (Statistics Canada 2006). In Canada, First Nation peoples are among the poorest in Canada and chronic unemployment is rampant in many First Nations communities. The Public Service Alliance of Canada (2008) issued a Fact Sheet on June 21, 2008, National Aboriginal Peoples' Day entitled: Make Aboriginal Poverty History. The Fact Sheet outlined below is a true list if not worse for my community of Lake St. Martin:

- One in four First Nations children live in poverty.
- Diabetes among First Nations people is at least three times the national average.
- Recent Census data shows that 23 per cent of Aboriginal people live in houses in need of major repairs, compared to just 7 per cent of the non-Aboriginal population.
- Overcrowding among First Nations families is double the rate of that for all Canadian families. A recent government study found that more than half of Inuit families live in overcrowded conditions. Some three-bedroom homes are known to house as many as 20 people.
- More than 100 First Nations communities are under boil water advisories right now, meaning they have little or no access to clean water for drinking and sanitation.
- First Nations people suffer from Third World diseases such as tuberculosis at eight to 10 times the rate of Canadians in general.
- More than half of First Nations people are not employed.
- One Aboriginal child in eight is disabled, double the rate of all children in Canada.
- Among First Nations children, 43 per cent lack basic dental care.
- Aboriginal children are drastically over-represented in the child welfare system.
- High school graduation rates for First Nations youth are half the Canadian rate.

- First Nations youth commit suicide at five to eight times the Canadian rate. The suicide rate for Inuit youth is six times as high as in the rest of the country.
- The majority of Inuit people in Canada live in remote arctic communities that make it difficult for them to access medical services and consumer goods. A 2005 Statistics Canada report found that 56 per cent of Nunavut respondents stated that their household lacked the money over the past year to buy enough quality food to eat. In the North, junk food is often much cheaper than nutritious food, because it is so much easier to ship.
- More than half of First Nations and Inuit people are under 25 years of age. This is the fastest growing population in Canada. If poverty is not addressed today, it will continue to negatively impact First Nations families for generations to come (Public Service of Alliance of Canada, 2008).

These facts are true for Lake St. Martin. Policies such as the Indian Act have hindered the Anishinabek's ability to take care of themselves. The Anishinabek talk about how they built their houses and no one got sick and they did not get moldy. Anishinabek built their own houses on the reserves but in the late 1950's, Indian Affairs houses had to be built. These Indian Affairs houses were not the best quality. Policies have taken away Anishinabek way of life. Policies have caused the Anishinabek to be sick and to be dependent on the government (Buckley 2003).

Lake St. Martin has its very own history, events, challenges and achievements, while sharing many common historical and political dimensions and dynamics with all First Nation communities. Both the local and the shared history bring understanding to the marginal poverty in the reserve system which is brought on by policies such as the Indian Act, Residential Schools, the Sixties Scoop, child welfare services, band elections, and environmental governance and degradation. The Anishinabek have remained resilient to the hardships they have faced and have continued to survive as Anishinaabe peoples with distinct societies and nations with their language and education. Much of the

hardships have been brought on by environmental impacts from the water control structure (damming) and settlement, which have also been compounded by policies.

7.1.1 Customary Clock

A timeline documenting changes in the community is discussed in this chapter. The Customary Clock Model (Figure 3) depicts the major events and activities over a time period. I developed the Customary Clock from an Indigenist framework to understand the Anishinaabe traditions and livelihoods. I found this form useful to analyze how events and livelihoods changed over time with technology, policies, and other systems. The Clock was developed as a tool because it is simplistic and easy to understand visually. The concept of time have been applied around the world with oral history and traditions of Indigenous communities. A customary clock model approach presents a valid and workable method of presenting oral interview data without having to research every single event in the correct historic context. It is also circular and the circle is important to *Anishinaabe towin*. It is also easy to understand because it refers to decades. It enables one to visualize with a quick glance all the policies and systems that have impacted the Anishinabek. The concept of time is also important to Anishinabek and Indigenous peoples. Anishinabek and Indigenous people refer to the seven generations when they talk about the future, which is based on time. The Anishinaabe tradition is also based on cycles, which are continuous. The same is for the Customary Clock. The Clock is about the cycles and the roles they have in shaping our lives. Anishinabek have the land close to their hearts and the Clock represents the seasonal cycles the land represents.

The most important symbol in AKS is the circle. Even life is cyclical. Traditional housing is often constructed in round shapes like the tipi and the wigwam of North American Indigenous people. In other Indigenous societies, the sweat lodge and the kivas of the pueblo people of the American Southwest are round structures, and the round mud huts of African tribes (Mann 2005). The ancient Mayan and Aztec cultures incorporated their knowledge based on the universe's features: the sun, the moon, and the earth - which are all round (Wright 1992). In the Anishinaabe language: 'mamowii' refers to circular concept referring to the activity of getting together. In other traditions such as dance, people gather in circles for ceremonies, sharing, and healing. Ceremonies and symbols were and still are important ways to pass on knowledge from generation to generation about IKS. The Customary Clock will also represent something that has significance for the Anishinaabe people.

The Clock can be easily modified for use in other subject areas to show changes or structures and systems. The time span can also be shortened or lengthened. More importantly the Clock represents the lives of the Anishinabek and all the factors that have impacted all that is represented within it.

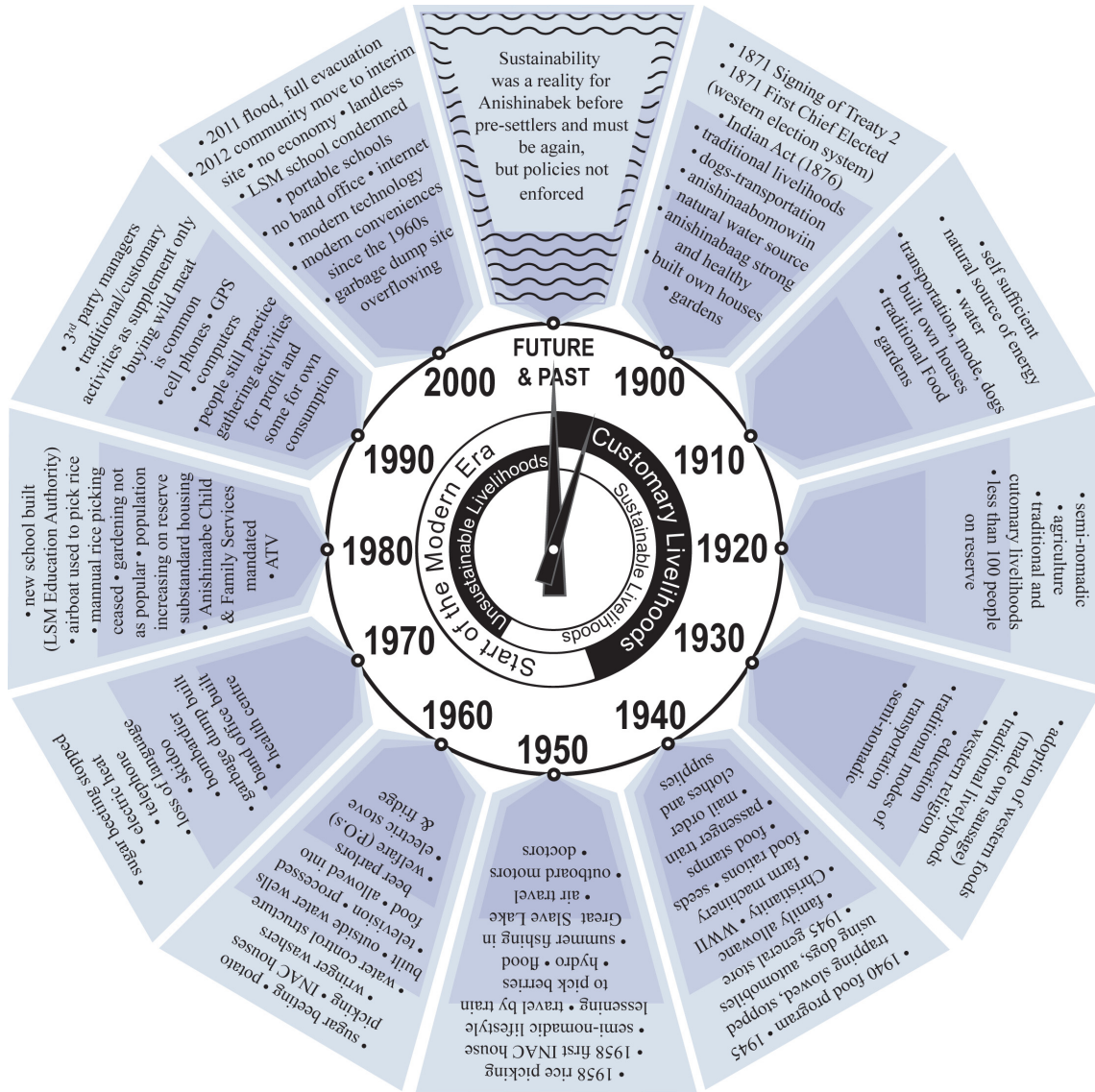
A customary clock also traces and documents historic changes over time. The major dynamics, activities, and changes for each decade are illustrated in a customary clock model. This clock portrays the fundamental challenges and changes over relative short time frames, but at the same time contributes to the overarching changes in the Anishinabek and their community. For example, the introduction of technology is in many forms, from the automobile to the electronic age. Technological changes have an impact on the Anishinabek. For one, it enables them to have modern conveniences and

ease of living. The introduction of plumbing and indoor toilets meant that water did not have to be hauled in from external sources but was available with the turn of the faucet. Indoor toilets meant that outdoor toilets and indoor slop pails for waste were no longer necessary. The focus of this chapter is on what the Anishinaabe Kwek remembered and how they see events and themselves in their space and time, and in relationship with their community and environment. Analysis of events and their impact from policies are discussed.

This chapter is a summary of what the Anishinaabe kwek of Lake St. Martin, had to say through this interview and oral history recording process. This is only the beginning of recording some of the historical dynamics and events of Lake St. Martin to preserve these histories. It is the first recording of oral history in an academic format for Lake St. Martin. This is an important step for my community's history, development and growth and to understand how a way of life once was and to recount a community's activities, assets, and access to the preceding. The ability for the Anishinabek to sustain themselves prior to contact and up to as late as the 1950s and 1960s is significant. This identifying what events prompted these changes and what was the resulting change in activities, assets and access.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the Anishinabek used horse and buggy for their traditional activities such as hunting and gathering. The introduction of the automobile meant that they could go longer distances. However not all Anishinabek could afford automobiles and the same is true today. With the introduction of technology, Anishinabek who are poor are unable to access technology.

Figure 3. Customary Clock Model

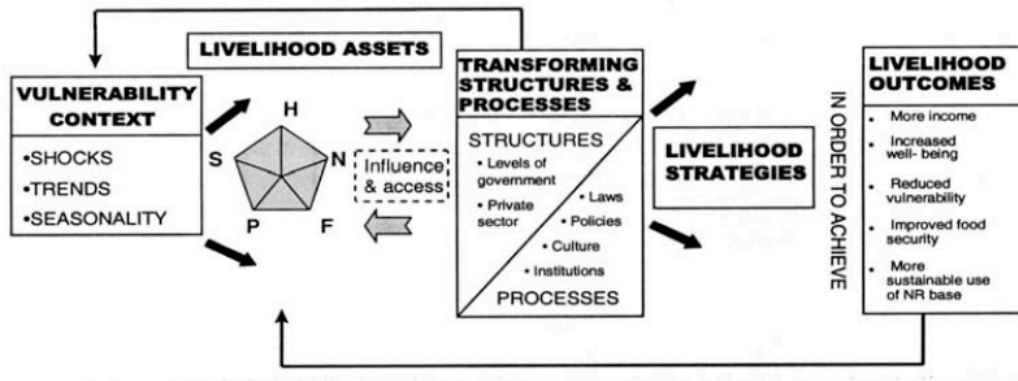


Source: M. Ballard 2012

Sustainable livelihood is defined as the assets (natural, physical, human, financial and social capitals), the activities, and the access to these (mediated by institutions and social relations) that together determine the living gained by an individual or household (Ellis 2000). The five capital assets (Figure 4) include: 1) Human capital (the skills, health and education of individuals that contribute to the productivity of labor and capacity to manage land); 2) Social capital (the close social bonds that facilitate cooperative action, social bridging and linking to share and access ideas and resources); 3) Natural capital (the productivity of land, and actions to sustain productivity, as well as the water and biological resources from which rural livelihoods are derived); 4) Physical capital (items produced by economic activity including equipment and infrastructure); 5) Financial capital (the level, variability and diversity of income sources, and access to other financial resources (credit and savings) that together contribute to wealth) (Ellis 2000). Natural capital, for example, can be transformed into physical and financial capital via economic activity, while financial, social and physical capital can be transformed into human capital by increasing access to education (Ellis 2000). Asset use, control and access of resources are influenced by institutional structures, processes, policy and programs. People chose livelihood strategies to provide the best livelihood outcomes in an external environment over which they often have little control. Structures (e.g., rules, customs and land tenure) and processes (e.g., laws, policies, societal norms and incentives) operate at multiple levels (individual, household, community, regional, government, powerful, private enterprise) (Scones 1998; Ellis 2000). A sixth category, tradition or culture, is typically viewed as an asset rather than an obstacle as it is the

wisdom of knowledge systems generated over time. For this research, tradition is considered an asset because women played a major role in AKS and it provides them increased independence.

Figure 4. DFID’s Sustainable Livelihoods Framework



Source: Carney, 1999b

These six assets or capitals represent the potential capacity to be in total equilibrium and holistic. Anishinabek once possessed and controlled assets, however this is no longer the case as government and institutions have created marginalization. As shown in the Customary Clock (Figure 3) and Activity Changes (Table 1), the imposition of policies, technology, and the modern era has contributed to the imbalance between these five capitals which leads to inequity. According to Ellis (2000) capitals often complement each other in the process of generating livelihoods. For example, minimum levels of human and social capital are necessary to effectively make use of natural, physical and financial capital. Viewing adaptive capacity as a balance between the capital assets is also useful for capturing the transformative nature of the capital assets (Ellis 2000). The

sustainable livelihood model is also useful in identifying important interactions between diverse variables (LaFlamme 2007). This model will be considered and adapted to show the impacts of outside forces on Lake St. Martin First Nation.

7.2 Findings

These findings chart and describe the last century of Lake St. Martin FN. The stories of the Elders (2009 *pers. comm.*) provide a historic and living record of the way it was and the way it is now.

7.3 The people's history of Lake St. Martin

The Indian Act of 1876 forced the Anishinabek to settle into reserves or skoonigan (Anishinaabe word for 'reserve' which means leftover to signify that marginal lands were provided as reserve). Prior to this time and for an approximate time period up to the 1940s to 1960s the Anishinabek were self-sufficient and leading sustainable livelihoods (Figure 3). They had gardens and preserved their foods in underground storage facilities. The Anishinabek grew their own food and had cattle and other livestock (Elders 2009 *pers. comm.* and Buckley 1993). They made their own clothing and household items. They built their own houses and helped one another. There was a lot of community support and reciprocity. The reciprocal obligation was a given and served to knit Anishinabek together by mutual obligations of aid in time of need (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2000). This was the period of *minopimatisiwin* or living a good life. The land provided for all the Anishinabek's needs. The Anishinabek did not have to go too far to hunt moose. "The men used to go to Pete Kozak's at the edge of the

reserve to go hunt for moose. They were gone for a day and they got their moose. The moose were in abundance in those days. They used horse and toboggan for all their needs. They used the same for fishing. The Anishinabek dried meat on a rack for the winter. They ate dried meat all winter and was used for soup and heated in the oven” (Sumner 2011, *pers. comm.*).

Medicines for well-being and food for good eating were obtained from the land. All their equipment and shelter needs were provided by the land. The Anishinabek made canoes and boats to travel by water, and built sleds and wagons to travel by land which were drawn by either horses or dogs. Their mattresses were made from straw and their homes built from the trees felled from the land. Environmental governance was a way of life to manage for continuous rebirth (LaDuke 2000). The land provided enough for all living people and future generations if it was properly cared for.

The Anishinabek lived in abundance because there were no vehicles. There were lots of rabbits. There was lots of food. We picked duck eggs and seagull eggs. We caught a lot of fish in the little streams from the fish migration. There was a lot of fish. All winter they caught fish and now that doesn’t happen. My father used to bury his fish in a snow mound so that they would not freeze. They were good for a couple of days and then he would go sell them. In those days they didn’t have skidoos. They filled the racks with hay. The first year the bombardier was used to haul fish from Dauphin River for sale. That was around 1948. The fishers had small camps in Dauphin River where they stayed to fish commercially (Sumner 2011, *pers. comm.*).

The Anishinabek were truly self sufficient and engaged in various activities to sustain themselves before settler society impacted almost every aspect of their life. The distinct gender roles complemented each other in the sustainable livelihoods of the Anishinabek. However, activities changed over time. Table 1 shows the various activities, including house building, fishing, hunting, trapping, medicine, etc., the Anishinabek were

engaged in and how these activities changed over the course of time. As the land was environmentally impacted by development to provide less sustenance, western knowledge and way of life was embraced. Hand sewn clothes and other items were replaced by mail order items and by items obtained from the general store. The economy was starting to change from being self-sufficient to a market-based economy. Prior to this period the Fur Trade was thriving and a good source of income materialized. The 1940's marked the end of the fur-trade society and marked the beginning of the modern era (Ray 1998) due to the introduction of the automobile. Anishinabek were adapting and finding some limited means to participate in the economy. However this was curtailed by the Canadian Government large role in Anishinabek to look after their 'best interests'. At that time the Canadian government began to assume direct responsibility for First Nations health, education and welfare needs (Ray 1998).

The 1940s (Figure 3) marked a change in the sustainable livelihoods of the Anishinabek. The first bits of technology were embraced by the Anishinabek, such as riding the train, followed by the automobile in the 1950s. During this period, the Anishinabek could travel further than ever before to gather berries. The Elders (2009 *pers. comm.*) share stories of how families travelled by train to Bel Air, Manitoba and northern Ontario to pick berries and sell them for profit. Prior to this, the Anishinabek were limited in the distance they could travel.

This period marked a change in the purpose of gathering activities for the Anishinabek. Anishinabek went from being nomadic; to being semi-nomadic spending weeks at a time in the bush during the summer. The transition to semi-nomadic from using dogs, and horse and buggy to automobiles meant that they could travel greater

distances now to seek an income. By the 1960's the Anishinabek were travelling to southern Manitoba to hoe sugar beets during the summer. They would take their families, board up their homes and spend two to three months in southern Manitoba. They would make enough money to make major purchases such as automobiles and furniture and still have money to last them during the winter months. Families also started to pick rice in the Whiteshell area around this period albeit for a shorter duration, but again, the families made enough money to buy bigger items and to last them all winter. However this signifies the transition from a customary traditional lifestyle to an era of modern technology. Along with modern technology, was a desire to earn an income. Trading was replaced with buying and selling. The Canadian government was pushing people from sustainable livelihoods and independent towards being self-sufficient and dependency as they moved into the wage economy that has few options for First Nation people.

In early times, the consumption pattern of fish resources in the prairies was oriented towards local consumption to satisfy subsistence needs, however, a commercial fishing industry in the 1880's rapidly developed as a result of production for the American market (Tough 1997). Tough (1997) argues that the legacy of commercial fishing has its origin in the demise of Native fisheries. Through this development process First Nation peoples lost control over the resource through the consolidation of capital, foreign ownership, spatial expansion, depletion, the demise of the local market, low incomes to fishermen, loss of an economic surplus and a subservience to an external market (Tough 1997). In 1969 the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation (FFMC) was established to create new markets and increasing returns to fishermen (FFMC 2011)

FFMC managed fish resources through the use of quotas, mesh size of gill nets, seasons and regulating the number of fishermen licenses (FFMC 2011). The intent of these government management tools is to allow fish populations and the industry to remain viable while sharing resources with treaty First Nation fishing and sport fishing but has effectively taken away local control and ownership of the resource for local, sustainable use. The quota policy and pricing structure of FFMC results in wastage of huge amount of by-catch in Island lake communities, northern Manitoba.

As in fisheries, technology proved to be too much as modern machinery replaced Anishinabek income livelihoods, which had no finances for technology to compete in an industrial market. Machinery replaced the manual labour of hoeing sugar beets, and airboats replaced the manual aspects of picking rice. Welfare was introduced in the 1960s and became an easy alternative for the Anishinabek. Since then welfare has become a way of life and the former way of life was replaced by poverty and dependency.

Lake St. Martin has been negatively impacted by the Fairford Dam. The construction of the Fairford Dam in 1960, a water control structure at the mouth of the Fairford River changed the landscape and severely flooded the community. The Fairford Dam was constructed without consulting the affected downstream population, which are the Anishinabek of Lake St. Martin. They did not change this approach over the years, as they never have consulted when they change the water levels to appease the farmers or cottagers, to this day, according to community members. The devastation brought on the land as a result of repeated artificial fluctuations in water levels by the control structure has also contributed to the Anishinabek's loss of livelihood and onslaught of poverty. The

artificial flooding is an intentional flooding done at the expense of the Anishinabek for the benefit of the upstream land users, who are farmers, cottagers and recreational users.

Repeated flooding with saline water has left the land saturated and unusable. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Anishinabek were excellent cattle ranchers but all this came to an end in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Table 1) when repeated artificial flooding by the control structure destroyed the land resulting in the destruction and severely diminishing hayfields which were a food source for cattle and were a source of income (Elders 1999, *pers. comm.*). Anishinabek lived well utilizing and maximizing organic, biodegradable and sustainable ways prior to the arrival of the Europeans. They lived healthy sustainable lives without the side effects of pollution, toxin accumulation in the food chain, poisoning of their water supplies, and the slaughtering and eradication of thousands of animal species (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*). Government policy has had a direct impact on the lives of Lake St. Martin Anishinabek.

Infrastructure is lacking at Lake St. Martin which affects the Anishinabek well being. Infrastructure that is lacking include an arena, fire hall, paved roads, sewer lines, grocery store, convenience store, post office, bank, parks, and beaches. There is no school building at Lake St. Martin because of government policy. Instead a series of portable classrooms have been used for the last ten years with no plan for a new school in place. Clearly, this is unacceptable.

The story behind the lack of school indicates the lack of meaningful consultation that government gives First Nations. When a school was constructed in Lake St. Martin in the 1980s, Elders warned the European Architects /builders commissioned by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) not to construct the school on the

proposed site because of snake pits in the area. The builder did not heed the Elders warning, and once the permits were approved and signed off by AANDC, the school was constructed at this high-risk location. The Elders were right and thousands of snakes converged at this location and travelled through the air vents and mould set in due to swampy conditions in this area. As a result the school was deemed unsafe and unsanitary since the early 2000s due to mold and snakes emerging inside the school during the winter and spring. This lack of consultation about the school building by the Canadian government and the lack of power of community members and Elders in AANDC politics to design their community infrastructure has resulted in an unlivable community and undermined human rights.

Education is a fundamental human right for all Canadians and for all children around the world. Every child is entitled to education and is critical to our development as individuals and as societies, and it helps pave the way to a successful and productive future. When we ensure that children have access to a rights-based, quality education that is rooted in gender equality, we create a ripple effect of opportunity that impacts generations to come. Education not only enhances lives, but it ends also generational cycles of poverty and disease and provides a foundation for sustainable development. A quality basic education better equips girls and boys with the knowledge and skills necessary to adopt healthy lifestyles, protect themselves from HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, and take an active role in social, economic and political decision-making as they transition to adolescence and adulthood (UNICEF 2010).

In the Anishinaabe understanding, each person has specific gifts and a specific role to play on earth which is sacred and given from spirit. If people cannot participate in

life with their gifts and cannot fulfill their assigned roles in life, they lose their vision, their purpose, and their understanding of why they are here. They start to live in a chronic state of depression, hopelessness, powerlessness, despair and grievance that leads to dysfunctional and self-destructive behaviour. This is clearly indicated when the Anishinabek were displaced from their community in May 2011. The Elders (2011) stated that because they are unable to move around and confined to the small space of a hotel room that they are starting to feel depressed and find it difficult to walk and move around. The nurse for Lake St. Martin confirmed that one of the signs of depression is the inability to move (Helm 2011, *pers. comm.*).

The Anishinabek were given the land with everything on it by the Creator to create healthy lives and communities for ourselves. The Anishinaabe know that they were given the responsibility to protect and care for the land in ways that it will always provide for future generations. Anishinabek never agreed to live in such disempowered and impoverished ways. The Anishinabek have lived in hopelessness for over half a century. For a better understanding of the reader I will repeat this paragraph from chapter 5. This understanding is so central to Indigenous peoples around the world but not to the rest of society. This is a fundamental core sacred value to Anishinaabe peoples as expressed in the Anishinaabe ways. The Anishinaabe Elders (2009) talk about:

‘Muntoo kaki iizi miininung’ to refer to language, the way of life, and everything that God or Muntoo created for the Anishinabek to use and to be part of Anishinaabe pimatziwin. It is important to note that there are no Anishinaabe words for ‘rights.’ However there is a word that refers to our land, and that for the Anishinaabe speaker to refer to ‘du kiinan’ carries a lot of weight. ‘Du kiinan’ means our land. Anishinaabe words are direct descriptions of their relationship with the land and with their everyday life – feelings and emotions. When Anishinaabe people speak of ‘du kiinan’ it is used in conversation with an outsider and refers to the Anishinaabe collective ownership of the land. ‘Ki du kiinan’ is used

when talking with other Anishinabek or neechi Anishinabek. ‘Ka tusii pi madiizhiyang’ also signifies that the land is our base; the basis of our sustenance, health and culture, and this is where we live. However the translation is not enough, as the English language cannot accurately describe the full extent of these Anishinaabe words.

Table 1. Policies that have contributed to Anishinaabe Activity Changes over Time

	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	Future
Policies												
Indian Act (1876)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Education		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Welfare							●	●	●	●	●	●
Housing						●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Family Allowance					●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Food Rations/Stamps					●	●						
Subsistence												
Hunting	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Fishing	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Trapping	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Gathering	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Gardening	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Medicines	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Income Activities												
Seneca root digging	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Berry picking						●	●					
Wild rice harvesting						●	●	●				
Sugar beeting							●	●				
Fishing						●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Cattle	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Hunting											●	●
Potato picking							●	●				
Western Knowledge												
Passenger train				●	●	●						
Automobiles					●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Doctors					●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Electricity						●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Electric heat								●	●	●	●	●
Diversions and flooding							●	●	●	●	●	●
Waste dump								●	●	●	●	●
Mail order					●	●	●	●				
[General] Store					●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Customary Activities												
Ku piim	●	●	●	●	●	●						
Transport	●	●	●	●	●	●						
Walking												

	Dogs	●	●	●									
	Horses	●	●	●	●	●	●						
Anishinabek Healthy		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Built own homes		●	●	●	●	●	●						
Sew own clothes/items		●	●	●	●	●							
Language													
Anishinaabe mowin		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
English					●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Source: Ballard 2012

7.4 Discussion:

7.4.1 Community capital

From sustainability a century ago, Lake St. Martin is now displaced and impoverished due to the vulnerability context created by colonization. The position of Anishinabek within society has been reduced to the underclass. Access to resources or social capital is moderated by formal and informal institutions such as laws and local systems of resource governance (Tough 1997) that were built to support the settler society and take away land and resources from FN. The Anishinabek are particularly vulnerable as a result of the existing structures and processes. Sustainable livelihoods once enjoyed by the Anishinabek have been reduced and removed by policies, government and institutions.

The structure imposed by AANDC on the reserve systems is one that is archaic and comparable to the communist state systems where the state owns and controls everything. First Nations people, or even the community as a whole, do not have title to their homes or the land on which they reside. The crown owns it and governs it with chief and council as “middle men”. Starting up a business venture on the reserve requires endless red tape so that the average would be First Nations entrepreneur gives up. Since

First Nation people do not have title to their homes or property on reserve, it is difficult to secure loans from banks. Poverty, single parent households, poor health, and low education have marginalized the Anishinaabe kwek. Where the Anishinaabe kwek were once integral to the transmission of AKS, policies have severed that role.

The Anishinabek had free access to the land and its abundance before the Europeans came (LaDuke 2002). For the Anishinabek, time and technology has played a significant role in determining their access to assets. The Anishinabek built their own houses from the trees they cut from the forest. Today policy dictates Anishinabek's use of forest and Anishinabek can no longer go into the forest to fell trees for the construction of homes (Province of Manitoba 2010). Housing is now also provided for the Anishinabek by AANDC, but is typically of low quality and the housing provided is insufficient in numbers to accommodate the fast growing Anishinaabe populations on the reserves (Statistics Canada 2009).

7.4.2 Analysis of Community assets of Lake St. Martin

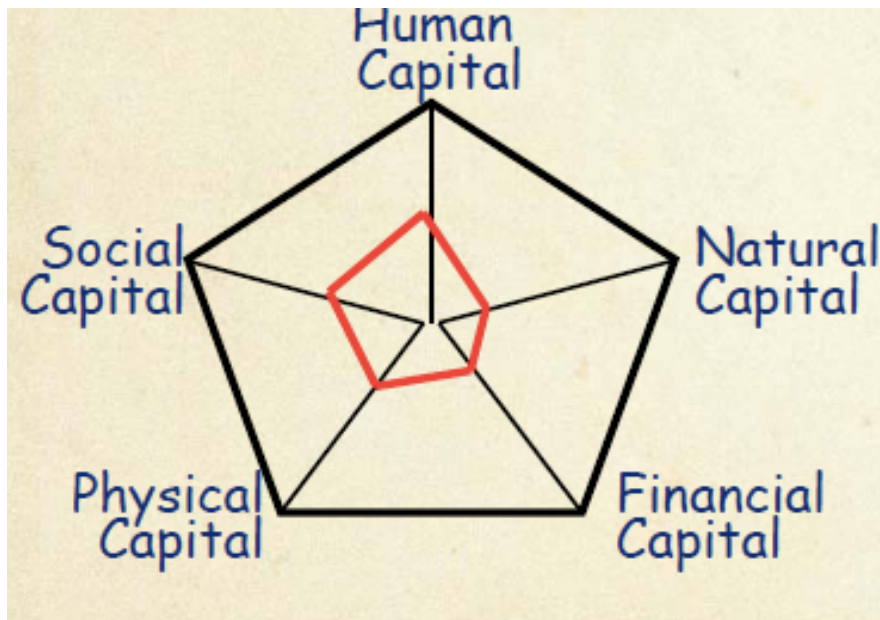
Figure 5 provides an analysis of the community assets for Lake St. Martin considering the constraints of policies. Human capital is strong in AKS but AKS and human capital generally are limited by policies and education programming. Human capital is limited with low education levels of most community members, limited technological skills, high AKS of elders but impediments prevent it being transferred to youth and young families. Social capital has many positives in the bonding category with strong links with family and friends and traditions of reciprocal exchange. However, they have few bridging aspects to influence Canadian society, as Canadian society views

Aboriginals to have low social status with negative depictions in media and with little influence in public and political life. In particular, Canadian society but also the Lake St. Martin community and Aboriginal governance discriminates against women. Canadian society discounts Aboriginal women's lives without an inquiry although hundreds of Aboriginal women and girls are murdered and missing. Within Aboriginal politics, few women hold council office at Lake St. Martin FN or any other level of Aboriginal government. In terms of financial assets many women (and men) in Lake St. Martin FN are on welfare which does not meet their basic needs to supply adequate food, heat and other expenses. Most have no access to credit and limited financial opportunities, with few jobs in the community. In terms of physical capital the people lack basic infrastructure in their community. The community lacks any store and people must travel great distances to buy groceries, which entails additional expenses. This impacts women as they are responsible to feed the family in most households.

The physical capital or infrastructure in Lake St. Martin before displacement was abysmal. The community has no proper school building having only temporary portable buildings for the last decade. The roads are not paved but remain dirt roads. Not even a community centre exists with only the band office and church as public buildings. The poor quality housing is made worse by constant flooding due to the diversion resulting in high water levels. The community floods almost every year but does not have a community dike to prevent houses from flooding, with temporary sandbags offered as a solution. However the sandbags rip and tear and become unsightly. In 2011 the community was displaced and is presently without any land or infrastructure.

Natural capital is low as community members do not own the reserve land (or any land) or its resources as reserve land is owned by the Canadian government, which controls activities that occur upon it. All activities by Lake St. Martin FN are subject to approval by AANDC, although FN have to be consulted within their territory. As well, environmental change like water levels are controlled and governed by other levels of government with Aboriginals having no voice in decisions or representation on decision-making boards. Figure 7 shows how the asset mix is out of balance and how this creates vulnerability and prevents resilience. Particularly with the current young demographics community members and in particular women are vulnerable to the impacts of colonialism which has resulted in poor livelihood outcomes and poor health. The institutions, policies and programs show that ‘the rules of the game’ are counter the best interests of women in Lake St. Martin.

Figure 5. Community Assets for Lake St. Martin FN women



The Anishinabek shared what they wanted in their new community. Table 2 describes the strategic analysis of needs based on a PESCE analysis. PESCE stands for political, economic, social, cultural and environmental needs. Each of these categories were defined by community members for Lake St. Martin First Nation and the different sites were rated based on the PESCE values identified, which considered language, gendered needs and AKS as priorities. Although originally five sites were judged three of these sites scored very poorly and were removed. The PESCE analysis for the two remaining sites are present in Table 2.

Table 2. PESCE Analysis of Two Sites for consideration as the permanent site for Lake St. Martin First Nation

Site Number	Site 1	Site 2
Political		
➤ Interim site	Y (Yes)	Y
➤ Permanent community	Y	Y
➤ Band office facilities	Y	Y
➤ Supports Good Governance	Y	Y
➤ Impact on Remediating 3rd vs. 1st party management	Y	Y
Environment		
➤ Hunting	Y	Y
➤ Fishing	N (No)	N
➤ Forest	Y	Y
➤ Cleared land	P (Partial)	P/N
➤ Good drinking water	WELL	WELL
➤ Access to surface water	Y	N
➤ Wildlife co-management	Y	Y
Social		
➤ Recreational spaces and facilities	Y	Y
➤ Gendered needs met (e.g.. birthing centre, daycare facilities, women's places and men's places – such as a grandmother house like in Nelson house.	TBP (To Be Planned)	TBP
➤ Relief from Social distress from flooding and relocation/ displacement	Y	Y
➤ Church/spiritual/place of worship	TBP	TBP
➤ Adequate cooking facilities – shared	TBP	TBP

cooking/restaurant		
➤ Healthy housing	TBP	TBP
➤ Daycare facilities	TBP	TBP
➤ Language rights respected	TBP	TBP
➤ School with gym and food service facilities (K-12)	TBP	TBP
➤ Health facilities	TBP	TBP
➤ Youth facilities	TBP	TBP
➤ Elder facilities	TBP	TBP
➤ Recreational facilities	TBP	TBP
➤ Youth facilities for recreation	TBP	TBP
➤ Library	TBP	TBP
Health issues		
➤ Wellness versus Diabetes	TBP	TBP
➤ Disability	TBP	TBP
➤ Addresses Social determinants of health (poverty)	TBP	TBP
➤ Addresses Chronic disease prevention	TBP	TBP
➤ Assisted living facilities for elders	TBP	TBP
➤ Personal care home	TBP	TBP
Cultural		
➤ Traditional medicines	Y	Y
➤ Gardens	Y	Y
➤ Language facility	TBP	TBP
➤ Language classes	TBP	TBP
➤ Elders meeting space	TBP	TBP
➤ Traditional Land use	Y	Y
➤ Cultural gathering space/grounds	Y	Y
➤ Cultural facility	Y	Y
➤ Ecotourism		
Economic		
➤ Hunting	Y	Y
➤ Ecotourism		
➤ Commercial Fishing	N/Y	N/Y
➤ Seneca root digging	Y	Y
➤ Close to highway	Y	Y
➤ Paved road	TBP	TBP
➤ Paved driveways	TBP	TBP
➤ Alternative Energy	TBP	TBP
➤ Biomass/geothermal		
➤ Lagoon	TBP	TBP
➤ Waste disposal site	TBP	TBP
➤ Sewer system (in ground)	TBP	TBP
➤ Healthy food access	Y	Y
➤ Ability to develop supermarket	Y	Y
➤ Market activities	Y	Y

➤ Casino Resort Potential	Y	Y
➤ Gas bar	Y	Y
➤ Restaurant	Y	Y
➤ Ranching	Y	Y
➤ Cattle farming	Y	Y
➤ Dairy farming	Y	Y
➤ Other Economic potential	Y	Y
➤ Other livestock	Y	Y
➤ Farming	Y	Y
➤ Subsistence	Y	Y
➤ Recreation	Y	Y
➤ Infrastructure	Y	Y
➤ Central office complex/mall	TBP	TBP
➤ Conference facility	TBP	TBP
➤ Arena	TBP	TBP

The PESCE tool is important in identifying the immediate and future needs of the Anishinabek. This matrix served as a good planning tool and is easier to visualize what the community wants and see how this relates to the broader good life.

Table 3 envisions some of the potential assets of the Anishinaabe kwek. The assets are built on a set of general categories as discussed by LaFlamme (2007 p. 291). The categories can then be tailored for any Anishinaabe tribe. Table 3 considers not only the present situation of assets but also what is possible based on concepts or assets that are important to the Anishinaabe kwek. They would promote self-determination, power, and equality for the Anishinaabe kwek. The model simulates the livelihoods of the Anishinabek before the introduction of policies. Ideally, this table represents the way life should be for the Anishinaabe kwek today. Anishinaabe kwek's at Lake St. Martin autonomy and empowerment has been taken away and replaced by welfare dependency and a corrupt political system. A respected Anishinaabe kwe with a strong voice is needed to revive the collective voice and community's thinking process towards holism and renewal. A few women have tried to change the political system and to bring

attention to problem. But these women are ‘majay nimawug’ – ‘not being good enough’, and are viewed as troublemakers or ‘maji i’kwek’.

Table 3. The present situation of Anishinaabe kwek assets in Lake St. Martin and the possible benefits of empowerment

Assets	Present situation	Possible assets with women’s empowerment and supports for AKS and language					
	I’kwek capitals at present	I’kwek	AKS	Land	Language	Customs	Kinship
Human	- Labour capacity but few paying jobs in community - low education levels - Elders rich in AKS but not young families - Limited technological skills	Nurturing and family and community governance and family life and development	Anishinabek knowledge utility	Knowledge of your land	Amount of knowledge shared	Right people for land	Family members cared for
Social	Aboriginals have low social status -discrimination against women - strong links with family and friends - traditions of reciprocal exchange	Empowerment of women	AKS transmitted	Responsible families stewarding land	Youth learning language.	Youth become responsible adults	Strong family connections
Financial	- majority low income - no access to credit for majority	Autonomous independent	AKS rewarded and acknowledged	Sustainable economic development	Anishinabek paid for AKS.	Payment for cultural services	Income to care for family
Physical	- poor water supply - poor quality housing - poor communications	Healthy	Tools to responsibility	Sustainable livelihood activities	Stories and photos recorded	Trans-port for country visits	Housing for family
Natural	- landless - access to common property resources on reserve - little control over traditional territory	Traditional activities passed on to the next generation	Knowledge of your land and conservation measures	Conservation of land	Proper names of plants, animals	Increase usage of traditional plants, animals	Traditional family country visits

Clearly, one can only fathom the despair, powerlessness and hopelessness some Anishinabek are dealing with in their daily lives since they are maligned by Canadian society (Settee 2008). This research clarifies how detrimental the residential school system was. This impact was not just on the generation of parents who suffered from their children being taken away and children suffering abuses in residential school and CFS agencies. Children taken away from their families, extended families, communities and land base discontinues language transmission.

Before displacement at Lake St. Martin children were forced to endure school days in one-room trailers for ten years. These portables are highly susceptible to mould and are not ideal learning environments, particularly in extreme weather. With such poor facilities, parents do not force their children to go to school. The poor learning environment resulted in low attendance, high dropout rates, low-level of reading and comprehension skills, and in some cases illiteracy.

Indian Day Schools at Lake St. Martin have left their mark on its former students. These day schools did not tolerate speaking Anishinaabe and were abusive if students spoke any. Many teachers were hostile towards First Nation culture and many were degenerates with alcohol addictions and physically and psychologically abuse. I mentioned the teacher kept a pistol in his desk making students fearful of losing their lives in a place they should have felt safe to learn and explore ideas. The high suicide rates and the alcoholism, particularly among males, sheds light on the atrocities they had to endure with this teacher without outside intervention.

The Elders (2009) stated that they wanted their histories and voices documented so that their knowledge would not be lost. The Elders (2009) also wanted to get together

with the youth and to share and teach them of how life was before. The Elders are worried that the youth will become a generation that does not speak their language and not know their Anishinaabe history. The Anishinabek need to return to their former AKS. Women once knitted the community together by looking after their families, passing on the tools of AKS, and gathering and preparing food. Colonization included the involuntary acceptance of new doctrines that would become a way of life. The road to recovery now includes re-balancing gender role and reclaiming traditions and language, and strengthening families and communities (Assembly of First Nations 2009). Anishinaabe kwek will need to need to re-visit their role in their community and restore their former roles.

7.5 The importance of language and caring in research

This dissertation shows that western scientific theory alone is not enough in researching and understanding Indigenous peoples and cultures; language skills, caring and openness to a different worldview is also required. Indigenous scholars have made long strides to expose the intellectual imperialism and are due accolades for their success in search for rational justifications in defending their cherished worldviews (Wilson 2008). This research makes the importance of AKS clear and that this knowledge is transferred via Anishinaabe mowin.

The Anishinaabe language is the driving force of how Anishinaabe kwek interact with their land and environment and with one another. In Lake St. Martin Anishinaabe kwek used and still use language as a tool for teaching and passing on traditions and customs. Many of the traditions and customs are dependent on the Anishinaabe mowin

and if the language is lost many of the customs and traditions that are specific to Lake St. Martin will disappear as well. The Anishinaabe kwek often associate the spiritual with their way of being and hold their actions accountable to something that they cannot see but are guided from it. For example, behavior towards the treatment of other beings is guided by 'njinay' or repercussions or 'karma'. For Anishinabek, the threat that their Anishinaabe mowin could disappear is that their distinctive worldview, the wisdom of their ancestors and their ways of being human could be lost as well. The deep understanding of what it means to be 'Anishinaabe' is highly esteemed by many Anishinaabe Elders. But sadly enough, 'minopimatisiwin' no longer describes the once proud Anishinaabe community of Lake St. Martin. They are highly concerned that too much has been lost already, and with too many young people that it might be lost altogether if the issue is not addressed in culturally appropriate ways of passing on these teachings once again. The preservation and revival of Anishinaabe mowin is of key importance in this process. It is only through the process of learning what it truly means to be Anishinaabe that Lake St. Martin can become healthy and function again. In this way balance and harmony can be restored and disease and dysfunction eliminated.

More First Nations history needs to be taught in the communities but also in the public schools system. The history has to be taught from a First Nations perspective. Some progress has occurred in terms of communication since Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) – an Aboriginal television network - was launched in September 1999. The network is the first and only national Aboriginal broadcaster in the world, with programming by, for and about Aboriginal Peoples, to share with all Canadians as well as viewers around the world. Its launching represented a significant

milestone for Aboriginal Peoples across Canada; for the first time in broadcast history, First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples have the opportunity to share their stories with the rest of the world on a national television network dedicated to Aboriginal programming (APTN 2010). First proclaimed by the Governor General of Canada on June 13, 1996, June 21st of every year has become National Aboriginal Day. This date in the Canadian calendar presents Aboriginal peoples with an opportunity to express pride for their rich diverse cultures with their families, neighbours, friends and visitors (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 2010) but should be extended to ensure Indigenous history and science are celebrated and taught in schools. The creation of APTN and Aboriginal Day are positive steps toward creating awareness and showcasing Indigenous peoples to the rest of society. However, African- Americans have Black History month – and much more time is needed than one day to celebrate Aboriginal culture. As a start an Indigenous History and Science month should be proposed to provide incentive to celebrate First Nation culture and for settlers to learn about the treaties and another view of history.

Settler societies lack any comprehension of Anishinaabe values of the land. If the land and ecosystems are not left intact then the land-based activities and its associated knowledge systems of Anishinabek are impacted as well. An Elder from Lake St. Martin - Elder Marsden talked about the need to care for the land. If the land is not cared for it will starve (Traverse 1999). The Elders (2009 *pers. comm.*) also discussed the importance of a holistic approach to taking care of the land. In western terms this is known as resource and/or environmental management. But for the Elders (2009 *pers. comm.*) it is looking after the land – *nagu chitooon ki du kii nan*. The Elders (2009) also talked about how things were – ‘*aniin kaygo kapiizi pi mo saymaguk*’. ‘*Aniin kaygo*

kapiizi pi mo saymaguk’ – ‘how things were done’ is demonstrated in Figure 3 where the Elders (2009 *pers. comm.*) recount their lives from as far back as they can remember. As demonstrated in Figure 3, the Anishinabek oral traditions are captured. Prior to the 1900s, the Anishinabek of Lake St. Martin lived off the land. Anishinabek were nomadic and stayed in their camps only long enough so that they did not exploit and overharvest the land (Elders 2009). Anishinabek moved on to allow the land time to replenish itself (LaDuke 2005; Mann 2005; Smith 1999; Deloria 1997 et al.).

This is why the role of Indigenous stewardship and the role of keeper of the land are so important. Any activity on the land has to be conducted with deep understanding and responsibility. This stewardship role has been violated with policies that have hindered Anishinabek from practicing their traditional livelihoods. Government has forced restrictions through legislation saying when a person can hunt. These are contrary to AKS where all their knowledge of when to hunt or fish is based on migration patterns. Hunting was based on the need for food and every part of the animal was used.

7.6 AKS Discussion

The knowledge and understanding of the Anishinabek is the heart of AKS and Anishinaabe mowin. Anishinaabe researchers must find ways to present this understanding more and better to the rest of the world so that better dialogues between Anishinaabe peoples, governments, funding agencies and industries can be created. In this understanding lies a key core value of sustainable development that is of great significance to all people in order to find sustainable, healthy and harmonious solutions to the world’s problems. Without this deeper understanding the raiding, pollution and

destruction of the world's resources will continue. I would like to point out again the important fact that I presented in Chapter 5 that there is a wealth of Anishinaabe words for anything that affects Anishinaabe well-being. A great deal of work is required to build bridges of understanding between such fundamentally different worldviews and experiences. Since expressions for well-being in the Anishinaabe language are so dominant one can see how important health, well-being, healthy living, harmony and balance are for the Anishinaabe people. Further research on just this subject is needed to gain much better understanding of what all of this really means to the Anishinaabe peoples and Indigenous peoples sustainability around the world.

Anishinaabe *minopimatisiwin* has been lost at Lake St. Martin. Sustainability at Lake St. Martin has been compromised and shattered by government policies. The current flooding situation has disrupted the sustainable livelihoods of the community. The land, which was once a natural asset because of its beauty and proximity to the lake, is now a wasteland. The environmental catastrophe is reflected in social imbalance that includes internal conflict, the violence, and the forever increasing addiction and self-destructive behaviour problems. Anishinaabe peoples understand this but do not have the resources to participate in the solution-finding processes. Anishinabek need an opportunity and funding to shape their world to be “in correct, healthy and balanced relationship to all”. Much will have to change to allow this to happen – environmental balance, safe drinking water, healthy housing, education and governance systems of our own making. The means and possibilities to their own health, balance, harmony and well-being are very limited in their chronic state of poverty and through colonial political

economic forces. This will require the entire Canadian political economy to shift to remove their stranglehold on First Nation communities.

Traditional foods are the key to Anishinabek cultural identity both historically and current (Thompson et al 2010; Power 2008). By limiting food supplies the war against First Nations were won and it holds true today. Policy makers and health professionals have recognized the importance and benefits of traditional foods for Anishinabek's well-being and yet at the same policy and regulations are making it difficult to access traditional foods. Public health professionals do not openly allow traditional food (mostly wild game) in a public setting and requires that only foods obtained from approved and inspected sources be used for public consumption (Health Canada 2010). Roadblocks were encountered when a traditional feast for the Elders was planned in Winnipeg. The wild meat, which is used for traditional feasts, had to pass government inspection before it could be used for public consumption. Yet the wild meat could have been a welcome change from the rich-sauced meals the Elders are being fed at hotels during their stay as evacuees. Maintaining cultural traditions, including food choices and preparation methods necessitates an examination of food safety risks and new recommendations for food preparation and storage using a blend of cultural tradition and modern science, with recommendations based upon available evidence, not theories.

The fundamental healthy and well balanced understanding is that we are all interrelated and learn from each other. In the past entire family clans lived, worked, and traveled together at all times but that has changed. Today policies such as the Sixties Scoop and Residential Schools has separated, estranged and destroyed families. The Elders were always present with the younger generations and consistently transmitted

their knowledge and wisdom through their presence, actions and words. In a lot of ways, presence is more important than words. As we have seen in chapter 5 the success of the Maori language program is based on bringing Elders back together with small children in the home environment. There is something very sacred about the relationship between Elders and children. Generally speaking, Elders have lived and seen a great deal in their lives. They have gained a lot of experience and have peacefulness about them. Children thrive on this peacefulness. Children who grew up in dysfunctional homes grew up in much more stressful, fearful and emotionally unstable environments. These experiences will be carried with them into their adult lives and pass on the stress, the insecurities and the dysfunctions to their children again, and so the cycles go. Once the cycle of dysfunction has started it is very difficult to stop it again. Teachers in school teach facts and some knowledge but very seldom wisdom. Elders teach wisdom. Together with their presence, actions and words wisdom is passed on to younger generations. The faster youth can learn wisdom the healthier, more stable, balanced, and peaceful they will become.

In the field of quantum research, the following has been discovered:

All of life is an exchange of energy. Everything is always in some kind of motion and interaction with each other. This is called *phase entanglement*. Particles converge and separate. When they come together their energies interact and exchange information. When they separate they each take a portion of each other's energies with them. Humans have this experience as well especially on the emotional level. We always take away some of the vibration of another person and either feel uplifted or pulled down (Tayler 2006, p. 54).

This is the scientific explanation for the spiritual explanation of Anishinabek core believe that everything is in relationship with each other. Correct, harmonious and balanced

interaction is absolutely necessary for healthy, balanced and harmonious human development.

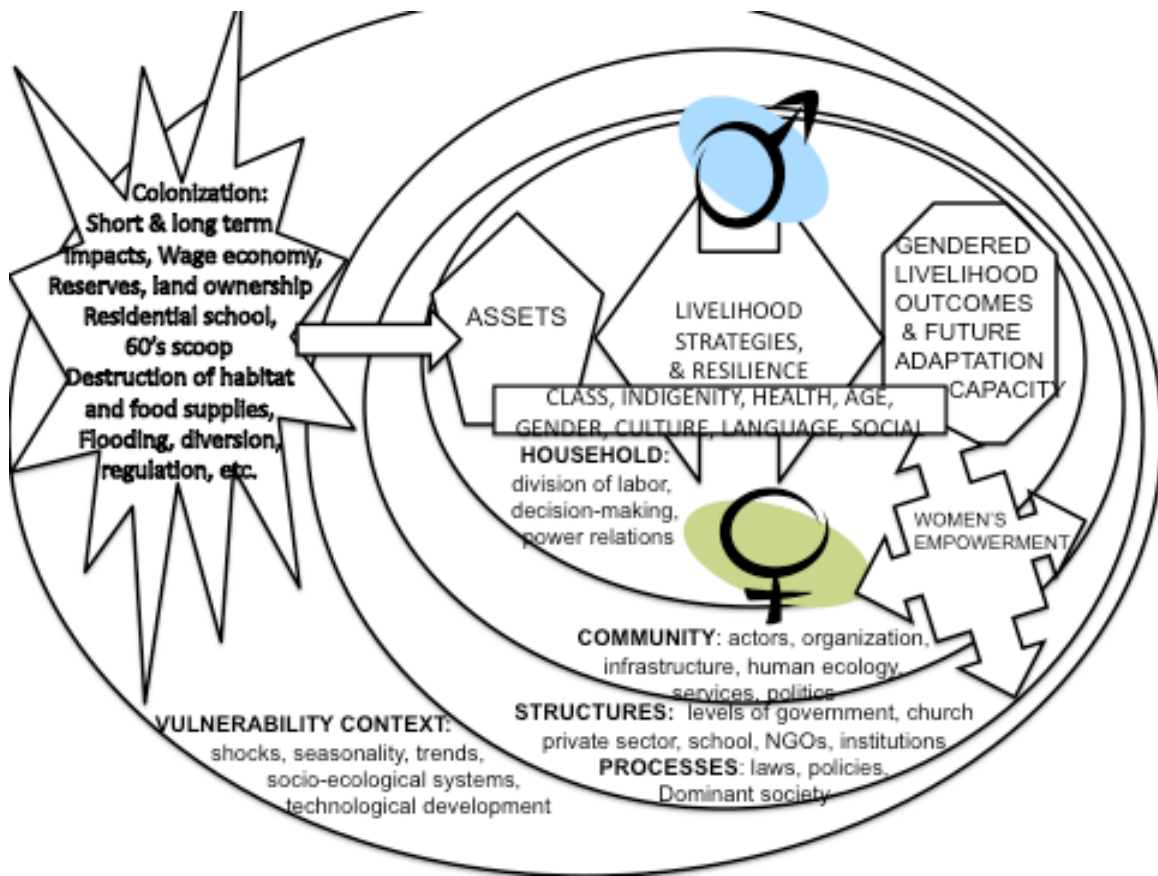
Scientific evidence exists regarding how and why people under suppressed, dysfunctional and abusive circumstances then become emotionally, mentally and physically sick. The Anishinabek Livelihoods Integrated Model (Figure 6) shows how Anishinabek livelihoods are impeded by Canadian government policies, structures and institutions. These colonial government powers make Anishinabek's life very complicated without power over local resources or the ability to own homes on reserves. These colonial powers and policies have restricted First Nation power so much that they are very vulnerable. These boundaries are invisible to others. Accessing health services in Manitoba is available for all Manitobans who have a Manitoba Health card but not First Nation people living on reserves. The case of a boy named Jordan, who was disabled needing chronic care, typifies this. He could not receive this chronic care on reserve resulting in his family not being able to see him. Policy changes were recently initiated into what has become known as Jordan's Principle to make people aware how First Nation people are deprived of services for chronic care on reserve and that this is unjust. Below is the story of Jordan and how a lack of services have First Nation people falling through the cracks:

Jordan was a young First Nations child who was born with complex medical needs. As his family did not have access to the supports needed to care for him at their home on reserve they made the difficult decision to place Jordan in child welfare care shortly after birth. Jordan remained in hospital for the first two years of his life as his medical condition stabilized. During this time the First Nations child and family service agency, First Nations community and family worked together to locate a medically trained foster home and to raise money to refit a van for Jordan's safe transportation. Shortly after Jordan's second birthday, doctors said he could go to a family home. This decision should have been a time of

celebration but for federal and provincial governments it was a time to begin arguing over which department would pay for Jordan's at home care. The jurisdictional dispute would last over two years during which time Jordan remained unnecessarily in hospital. The costs they argued over ranged from some higher cost items such as renovations to the home for a wheelchair ramp to low cost items such as showerheads. The community initially tried to mediate a solution between the governments but when this failed they turned to legal action. Shortly after Jordan's fourth birthday in hospital, the jurisdictional dispute was settled but not in time for Jordan who sadly passed away at the age of 5. (First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada 2010, p.1)

Legislation has penalized First Nations. Jurisdictional wrangling has often left First Nations to suffer and be treated like second class citizens. Jordan's Principle has not been fully passed in Manitoba. More children should not have to die before it becomes legislation. The separation of families does not allow the transmission of AKS. Anishinaabe kwek nurtured their children and they knew how to look after them. That was their responsibility. This was the time where AKS were transmitted (Elders 2009 *pers.comm.*).

Figure 6. Anishinaabe Kwek Livelihoods Integrated Model



Source: Modified from Thompson, 2010

The Anishinabek Livelihoods Integrated Model (Figure 6) represents the end of the free and rich life for Anishinabek peoples, the adjustment to life with all the restrictions on reserves and reservations, the poverty, the systematic efforts to take culture and language away to force Anishinabek peoples into lives and lifestyles that were foreign to them. The residential schools, the Indian Act and the current conditions are all major contributing factors in the chronic post-traumatic stress situations and dysfunctional lives of Anishinabek. Anishinabek still remember that their lives were very different at one time and remember a better life they call ‘minopimatisiwin’. This was

frequently reiterated and stressed by the Elders (2009 *pers. comm.*). The Model represents how changes have negatively impacted the lives and livelihoods of the Anishinabek. The Anishinaabe kwek who once had respected roles in the community have been relegated into the background due to foreign systems. Women's empowerment among the Anishinabek kwek is long overdue. The role of women is also represented in Lake St. Martin's political system where there has never been a female chief elected yet to this day. The Anishinabek have a word "majay nima ikwe" in which the approximate translation is 'not good enough'. Colonialism included inadvertently adapting to sexist roles and division of labour (Bumsted 2003).

Elders understand that recovery from colonialism has to take place within their own cultures, languages, worldviews and philosophies. The Elders (2009 *pers. comm.*) stated "pii gu kay go tu iizhi chi kaynk" meaning that "something needs to be done". Anishinabek cannot live a healthy life without at least a certain amount of Anishinaabe teachings, understandings and wisdom. The elders believe that you can never turn an Anishinaabe person into a European person. That is biologically, spiritually, and culturally impossible. Yet this has been the European colonization and assimilation strategy with all sorts of policies and programs to adjust and assimilate us into settler society. This is unwanted and does not reflect the notion of multiculturalism that the government preaches towards immigrants but does not apply to First Nations.

Anishinaabe Elders view the land as 'Muntoo gkigii mii niguunan Akhi tu abu chi toowung' – 'God gave us this land to use'. Anishinaabe kwek have repeatedly stated that being outside and spending months in the forest was a good way of life. The Elders (2009, *pers. comm.*) have repeatedly stated that hard work and living off the land is what

kept us healthy and strong. The Laika have a similar belief and call this *ayni*, or right relationship to nature. When we are in *ayni*, we do not have to fear nature. When we are out of balance we might get killed by something from nature. Laika people see being out of balance as the same as being killed by a jaguar or by bacteria (Villoldo 2006).

Anishinabek perceive what nature provides as ‘*ki mino toodagk umin*’ or ‘*ki mino skag umin*’ – which means it does us good or it’s good for us. Anishinabek explain that humans need to realign themselves back with nature and what Muntoo gave them for their health and well-being. In this way our natural health will return as well as that of the earth. In *ayni*, our physical, mental, and emotional health is complete. For the Anishinabek, ‘*mino aya*’ is a person’s health and well-being. In the western view, our body is an independent machine that eventually breaks down and needs to get fixed with operations and pills (Villoldo 2006, p. 67). For the Anishinabek, living off and being dependent on what Muntoo gave us health. This holistic eco-health approach is now becoming accepted in academic circles (Parkes 2010).

The Elders are highly venerated in Anishinaabe society and considered wise. Adrian Sinclair (*pers. comm.* 2011), the current Chief of Lake St. Martin First Nation uses the Elders’ feedback to shape the community and in making important decisions such as which types of homes to purchase for the entire community. Elders are important in governance and decision-making but Third Party managers have muted their voice.

Indebtedness to cover expenses justifies to the federal government an even worse corruption – that of third party managers. When a band is indebted it falls under third party management or co-management with AANDC appointing an outside accountant to manage a band's money and improve financial management. This transfer of money

effectively strips the band council of signing authority and control. This is the most extreme level of intervention but is common practice by AANDC (2011). Third Party managers have taken over the affairs of Lake St. Martin First Nation, as is the case in most other First Nation reserves in Canada. Due to shortages in funding debt is a common situation on reserves, due to colonial punitive structures and “bare-bones” funding to reserve. Similar to third world countries these countries have become indebted. The Elders (2009) indicate their disapproval that the decisions of the third party managers supersede chief and council and give them limited or no voice. Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC 2011) give third party managers (majority of which are located in Winnipeg) power to control the affairs and business of First Nation communities, one of which is Lake St. Martin.

Third party managers somehow make it legal for third party managers to take as much as 50% of the cash flow from communities, many of which have insufficient housing, lack safe drinking water piping to many houses, and very limited infrastructure. With limited budgets the First Nation cannot pay for basic needs to be met and makes them vulnerable to indebtedness, which results in third party management. Co-management is when AANDC forces the band to hire an outside accountant or consultant to help keep the books in co-operation with the chief and council. Band councils still have signing authority but financial decisions are constrained as the outside co-manager, who is paid from band funds, has to agree (AANDC 2011). Third Party managers are modern day Indian Agents who still manage and control the daily lives of ‘Indians’. Third party managers not only decrease community and household assets further – and represent corruption when an outside body skims most of the money off the top that

should be going to provide community services. The assignment of third party managers must give way to a practice that enables the communities and builds capacity rather than taking away capacity and financial assets.

The government powers were not the only colonial forces acting on Anishinabek. Christianity tried to usurp the spiritual aspects of holism of the Anishinabek. Religion is based on belief, whereas spirituality on personal experience. Experiencing the divine firsthand is very different from being preached about it (Villoldo 2006, p. 69).

Anishinabek used storytelling to explain spirituality and metaphor (Elders 2009, *pers. comm.*; Villoldo 2006). Anishinabek were focused on developing wisdom through experience and each person must do this on their own. The Anishinabek of Lake St. Martin have similar views and understandings that are contained in the Anishinaabe mowin. One feels nature, one experiences nature, one is in tune with nature, one listens to nature and through all of this, one learns from nature how to be in correct interaction with nature and with other humans. This is why it is so incredibly important for Indigenous people to spend time on the land. The more time spent on the land the more these experiences and teachings take place. There is a peacefulness with being on the land that just does not exist in close human environments. The Anishinaabe kwek in Lake St. Martin still go out on the land to dig Seneca root [and gathering activities] for both economic activity and rejuvenation of memories of how good life was. All their senses are renewed. ‘Aki nu kay go pu kan ipugud’ – ‘everything tastes different’. – ‘Maymi dunghay apichi kaygo ai weengi pughud – everything seems to taste so much better’ (Traverse a 2007, *pers. comm.*). The case is similar in Skownan where the

Anishinabek go out to the land and explained that after a while they feel that their heads clear and they can think clearly again (Stock 2006).

This continuing connection to the land despite all the colonial forces clearly supports the claim that Anishinabek are peoples of the land. This relationship with the land is ancient, sacred and deeply rooted. Anishinabek need access to the land in order to become truly healthy once again. Anishinabek have moved freely over the land for thousands of years. They were nomadic and great travelers. They must be active in this way once again in order to become healthy. Anishinabek will never live the nomadic lifestyle that afforded them health, but a similar lifestyle can be adapted easily in terms of camping, culture camps, nature walks and trails, canoeing and boating expeditions. Even though Lake St. Martin is lacking in terms of its infrastructure, our plan for the community considers infrastructure to meet the basic needs, environmental health and recreational needs of babies, youth, families and Elders. Today, most of the people of the world live in a collective conformity of materialism that gives us a sense of security but not necessarily happiness or self-efficacy (Villoldo 2008, p. 25). In western society, there is a large emphasis on productivity and achievement instead of focusing on emotional and spiritual growth and acknowledging the process of learning, discovering, and maturing which are much more important human qualities in Indigenous societies. Living the materialistic American dream worldwide is not sustainable and friendly to the environment. The Anishinabek who can afford to have adapted to the western lifestyle but at a price. The majority of Anishinabek cannot afford the consumerist western lifestyle and must live in unhealthy housing with unmet needs for healthy food and opportunities (Thomas-Muller 2008). The majority that live on the reserve, off the

reserve, and in urban centres had succumbed to diseases and lack the ability to cope from past legacies resulting from policies.

Lake St. Martin has been a 'sexist' community in terms of recognizing women political leadership. The Chief and Council have been male-dominated. Despite Anishinaabe women's important role in the community, there continues to be gender discrimination in the lack of recognition in any form of women's contributions. There have been a few Anishinaabe women elected as councilors but there has never been a female chief elected yet: even when there has been a female nominated to run for chief, they have never been elected (Lake St. Martin 1975), despite proof indicating that female leadership is directly related to better government and cleaner business (Kaufmann 1998). However Lake St. Martin recognizes the importance of women in its role of supporting the work of leadership. The influence of Western thinking and the division of labour (Anderson 2000) results in this sexism. "As societies deteriorate, so does the special status of women as keepers of knowledge of life and sustenance. If medicines are disappearing so does the role of the keepers of that medicine knowledge – the women" (Settee 1999, p. 9).

A foreign system of governance has resulted in elected leadership that is modeled after the western system. This type of governance has brought dysfunction to the community and has resulted in a community that has lost its social fabric, its pride, its honour, and its independence.

7.7 Conclusion

Anishinaabe peoples have very different worldviews, philosophies, culture, languages and understandings about life than settlers. Anishinaabe language, understandings, teachings, and then relations are relational versus individual. Once core to the culture of Anishinabek was the relationship to the earth and the land with all its gifts for people to make use of for survival and well-being. The same applies to the Anishinaabe kwek of Lake St. Martin. Despite European colonization little has changed in their views about the earth, the land, human to human, and human to nature relationships.

What has caused changes are the impacts of western knowledge and its associated restrictive policies in the name of ‘assuming responsibility’. In order to decolonize there needs to be a bridge between state powers and institutions for men and women. However, colonization and the Indian Act have been around for almost 140 years, and will take more time to undo. The core values of their Indigenous worldview, philosophies and knowledge systems have stayed the same. This research shows that the Anishinaabe kwek of Lake St. Martin are Indigenous people at their core. Lifestyles have changed with the adaptation to new technology and changing times but nothing has changed of who they are as Anishinaabe peoples. Food, water, shelter, and all interactions with other humans and with all other beings and things have played and continue to play a central and sacred role in the lives of the Anishinabek of Lake St. Martin. I repeat from chapter 2: “Indigenous peoples’ health is directly linked to the health of the land and the food obtained from the land.” Anishinaabe peoples take great pride in the food that they provide for their families that is derived from the land. But

sustainability was threatened in the decade of 1960s and early 1970s as shown by the clock impacted by technology.

For Anishinaabe peoples, land, food and health are the essential links to healthy human lives. This is sacred to Indigenous peoples around the world as well as it is to the Anishinabek of Lake St. Martin. This is why the land has to be taken care of forever. This is the role of the stewardship and guardianship of Anishinabek. This unites Indigenous peoples around the world in their struggle for self-determination in order to create healthy Indigenous communities that live in harmony with the land and to re-establish their role as stewards and care-takers of the earth in their traditional home lands. Non-Indigenous peoples generally do not listen and do not understand of what this really means, which has resulted in policies that prevent traditional food gathering and sharing. Non-Indigenous peoples are typically disconnected from the earth – from this deep sacred relationship. They are out of balance and out of harmony with nature. This is why it is possible that they as humans are involved in activities that are unhealthy, toxic, and destructive to the earth, nature, all living beings and themselves. Unfortunately, Indigenous peoples are not immune to these activities. They could not have anticipated what the newcomers were really all about.

CHAPTER 8: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND REFLECTIONS

8.1 Research Summary

This chapter provides an opportunity to review and discuss the findings, particularly: 1) the sustainability of livelihoods in Lake St. Martin over time; 2) the importance of language in IKS and Indigenous research; 3) the role of Anishinabek in sustainability; and 4) the integration of AKS, language and gender in planning the new settlement of Lake St. Martin First Nation.

8.2 Research Conclusion

8.2.1 Sustainability of Livelihoods in Lake St. Martin

In Lake St. Martin, the Anishinabek have adopted a western lifestyle which has resulted in impoverishment, as First Nation people cannot own land or houses on reserve, which limits credit and other financial capitals (LaDuke 2002). Prior to European contact, Anishinabek had sustainable livelihoods: they were strong, healthy, self-reliant, and lived in a total subsistence economy (Mann 2005). This provided a good life and well-being, better than today by all accounts.

The sustainable livelihood framework considers assets, vulnerability, context, structures, processes and livelihoods. It has been very helpful to consider the impact of government policies and structures on impacting community well-being as they curtail assets. However, for the Anishinaabe kwek and Anishinabek of Lake St. Martin, sustainable livelihoods are no longer possible as the environmental change and institutional forces against them are too great and all pervasive. Government largely controls activities and access to assets.

This research allowed for the determination of a sustainable livelihoods framework for Lake St. Martin. Households in Lake St. Martin had limited assets in most categories. Human capital is poor as most community members have low education levels, limited technological abilities, higher rates of chronic diseases, while at the same time having rich traditional teachings held by Elders. Social capital has many positives in the bonding category with strong links with family and friends and traditions of reciprocal exchange but residential school, reserve settlements and non-Aboriginal education and political systems have eroded these. As well, few bridging aspects exist to influence Canadian society. Financial capital is very low, as the majority of community members do not have jobs. The rate of unemployment is extremely high. On First Nation reserves, community members do not own the land, which is the property of the crown, or own the government housing they reside in. Without this collateral, First Nation's people have limited credit ratings. Physical capital is very low with the community having gravel roads, no hospitals, no physical school structures, no band administration building, no grocery store, no gas station, no playground, no arena, no post office, no bank, no sewer system, and no food production facilities. However, infrastructure in the non-First Nation neighboring town 10 miles away is slightly better as they have paved roads, grocery store, and a physical school structure. Although natural assets are high with Lake St. Martin having abundant fisheries, forests and non-timber products, the community has no markets and has no regulatory role to govern the resources in its territory.

This research found an overwhelming impact of Provincial and Federal government policy on the community of Lake St. Martin. The sustainable livelihoods

model in Figure 4 shows the large impact of government on food security and sustainable livelihoods on Lake St. Martin. The government's colonial social and environmental policies have created a large vulnerability context that is made larger by environmental degradation which has been caused by the water control structure. Today's structures (government, business, church, educational system, etc) and processes (policies, laws, practices, etc) act counter to Lake St. Martin's progress. These structures and processes have contributed to Lake St. Martin's demise and destruction and have only reinforced colonialism and vulnerability. For example, the barriers to sustainable livelihoods in Lake St. Martin are numerous. Some of these include: the regulation of the water control structure by the province and the exclusion of Anishinabek from regulating the water levels (Lake Manitoba Regulation Review Advisory Committee 2003); the inability to cut wood for building houses (Forest Act 2012); the sale of wild foods for local consumption (Wildlife Act 2012); lack of infrastructure for the processing of wild foods for local and non-local markets (Thompson 2011) ; lack of local management control programs to support the preservation of fish spawning grounds and other wildlife habitat; and, the lack of training in public education programs on hunting, fishing, berry picking and medicines or even Anishinaabe culture and history.

Government policy has led to the decline in the quality of life for the Anishinaabe kwek. The Anishinaabe kwek were once self sufficient and self-sustaining but colonization, land degradation, modernization, westernization, education, and Indian Affairs dictated level of local politics have curtailed this self-sufficiency (LaDuke, 2002). All these have hindered and changed Anishinaabe kwek's role in Anishinaabe society and culture. The adaptation to changes has caused the Anishinabek kwek to be dis-

empowered which is particularly dominant in the local political system. Policy and mindsets resulting from colonization have changed the men's perception of Anishinaabe kwek's roles.

These adaptations are affected by the environmental impacts of the construction of the water control structure at the mouth of the Fairford River in 1960, which destroyed land, agriculture and sustainable livelihoods of the Anishinaabe in Lake St. Martin (Traverse 1999). Stories of seeing cattle as far as the eye can see, have been replaced by the reality over the last fifty years of every expanding bulrushes and land that is water saturated and useless for any type of agriculture. Houses were flooded every year before the community was displaced. This is an environmental impact of the water diversion, that has not been acknowledged or compensated for caused by other levels of government (Manitoba and Canada). Only recently in the spring of 2011 has there been an admission that Lake St Martin land is permanently sacrificed to human settlement by flooding to ensure settlers on Lake Winnipeg and agricultural land is preserved. The Government of Manitoba finally acknowledged that the downstream impact of the Fairford Dam has done permanent environmental damage and harmed the Lake St. Martin community. In a Free Press article, the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs affirmed that "it's a unique situation we're dealing with and the important point is we're taking the first step in correcting a half century of wrongs at Lake St. Martin" (Winnipeg Free Press 2011).

The community of Lake St. Martin First Nation was evacuated on May 8, 2011; the Anishinabek left with overnight bags thinking they would only be gone for a short period of time. The flooding this time around has ravaged the land in the community for a long time; insurmountable devastation has replaced the little glimmer of hope the

community once had so that the move is regretful but people feel there is no other way, as the land is destroyed.

A channel was constructed from Lake St. Martin to Big Buffalo Lake to ease the water levels on Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin. The channel was constructed under the guise of the Emergency Measures Act which circumvents consultations and environmental assessments. This channel has a direct impact on many First Nations communities including their traditional territory, fishing economy, and access to traditional food and medicines.

Lake St. Martin people have been recently promised to have their community relocated to a nearby area. This relocation is the result of the bias of government policy to sacrifice First Nation land to preserve agricultural land for settlers. This bias should be the other way – towards First Nation land, as the land represents basically money to agricultural people who make their income from it. However, to First Nation peoples including the Lake St. Martin community, the significance of the land is far deeper -- embedded in culture, history, stories, language, community, livelihoods and income. While settlers have moved recently to this agricultural land for income and could relocate easily a First Nation community is not so easily shifted.

The connection between Anishinabek and the land is not simply a matter of subsistence production, but extends to form the basis of guiding laws and is deeply embedded in the spiritual life of the people. This integral connection is essential for the continued survival of Indigenous Peoples and their cultures (National Aboriginal Forestry Association 2007). The AKS of neechi Anishinaabe kwek offer important insights of the world for the past, present, and future.

The destruction of land that was once used for gardens and agriculture from the construction of the water control structure has left its ugly footprint in a once thriving and beautiful community. A way of life has been adapted from a life of independence to a life of dependency. Oral recounts of how Anishinaabe kwek left their campsites garbage-free are a stark contrast to the garbage disposal site in the community that is left unattended. The community worked together to build their houses, now the Anishinabek wait for Indian Affairs housing. Anishinabek gathered their own medicines to heal themselves now they rely on prescription drugs. Adaptation of some western methods has failed miserably because of the lack of infrastructure and the dependency on funding from the 'state'. It is now more convenient to access prescription drugs than access the traditional medicines that were once the core of the Anishinabek. The convenience of processed food over traditional food has also led to the decline of Anishinabek health.

The Customary Clock Model depicts a stark reality of how changes in Anishinabek lives have created poverty and a life governed by policy that is foreign to them. Sustainable livelihoods recognize that the ability to generate livelihoods is predisposed by social and institutional factors that are largely beyond individual or community control. The great force of the outside influences on communities through institutions, processes and policies have predetermined the Anishinaabe kwek destinies, including the once fundamental aspects of their very existence – their access to their resources. The SLFM depicts how access to resources or social capital has restricted Anishinabek's success; and decision-making over Anishinabek's very existence has been moderated by formal and informal institutions such as laws and local systems of resource governance. The SLFM shows how assets can be beneficial if fully recognized and

utilized. However, for the Anishinabek, such a feat is not easily achievable as the community struggles from division and poor leadership, which in turn affect the very essence of AKS, the Anishinaabe kwek, and Anishinaabe mowin.

The Anishinabek Livelihoods Integrated Model represents the end of the free and rich life for Anishinabek peoples. The Model represents the Anishinabek's adjustment to life with all the restrictions on reserves, the poverty, the systematic efforts to take culture and language away to force Anishinabek peoples into lives and lifestyles that were foreign to them which has led them to become vulnerable. While many Anishinabek have opted to move away from reserves into urban centres or different communities, it has often been by choice for seeking a better life. While many Anishinabek have succeeded, there are many who live impoverished lives. Anishinabek have adapted to modernization. For some, the changes have been positive and for some negative. In terms of health and social well-being, Anishinabek and Indigenous people have the highest rate of chronic health and health related problems which are the direct result of colonization (LaDuke 2005)

This dissertation provides a glimpse into the larger meaning of the changes that have transpired that have led to a shift in the way of life for the Anishinabek by providing a timepiece depicting these changes and tracing Anishinaabe sustainable livelihoods through a Customary Clock Model (Figure 3). The livelihoods model generated from this thesis shows the large extent Colonization has increased the vulnerability context by imposing a foreign government system for housing, education, etc. How different institutions and government act against sustainable livelihoods and undermine community development in First Nations must be explored and reshaped to allow women

and men to rebuild their communities based on cultural values and with respect to AKS. Governments and funding agencies need to gain more understanding and appreciation for Indigenous languages and AKS as well as to develop more respect for Indigenous women around the world. An appreciation will surely lead to changes for Anishinaabe kwek and Anishinaabe people in terms of policy, infrastructure, education, and their well-being.

8.2.2 Role of Anishinaabe Women

Anishinaabe women had an important role in the community, however, their role has been severely curtailed through gender discrimination which has been brought on by the adoption of the western governance system. Women have held positions as councilors but have never been a majority nor have they been successful in getting a seat in all of the election terms. The division of labour has contributed to the sexism (Anderson 2000).

A foreign governance system has resulted in elected leadership that is modeled after the western system. This governance system has resulted in dysfunction in the community. The Anishinaabe kwek want to reconnect and work with the youth and teach them Anishinaabe mowin and their history. Anishinaabe and Cree neighbors have taken steps to revitalize their communities. Some of these include the Greenhouse Initiative in Grand Rapids, the Language Program in Wassagamack, and the Country Foods Program in Nelson House. Initiatives such as these go a long way in bringing the community together and instilling a sense of pride into the community.

Anishinaabe kwek need to be more involved in the community and be heard. Anishinaabe kwek have been excluded from the political arena too long and need to unite and be heard. By coming together and taking a stand can go a long way toward change

that will benefit everyone. Expression of individuality, expression of personal gifts and responsibilities, expression of spirit, personal growth, and the becoming of a wise Elder to pass on the Anishinaabe ways to future generations are the main goals and values of Anishinabek. The striving for harmony and balance is most important for Anishinabek in their development as peoples. However this has been severely curtailed for the Anishinabek. Gender played an important role in Anishinabek livelihoods. In the traditional ways, the Anishinaabe kwek had a lot of responsibility. The Anishinaabe kwek fulfilled these responsibilities with AKS. They had the gift of child bearing and child rearing which also meant that they would be their children's mentors, teachers, and guardians. Anishinaabe kwek had different skills and gifts and each played a role toward the community. Each role and responsibility was based on AKS. They worked together alongside men, and each of their roles complemented one another. In Anishinaabe society, everyone worked together.

8.2.3 Importance of Language

The Anishinaabe kwek had very specific roles in the transmission of AKS, especially through Anishinaabe mowin. But Anishinaabe mowin has been impacted by change in Anishinaabe kwek pimatisiwin. Language plays a critical role in the transmission of AKS: it is a way of knowing and living and provides direction for a person on how to interact with its environment. Anishinaabe mowin provides identity and is intricately connected to guiding behaviour. Anishinaabe mowin is used to bridge the generations by reconnecting the younger generation reconnected to the older generations and learning language, tradition, and knowledge from them. In recent years, certain

Anishinaabe communities have experienced an increase in traditional land-use activities and an increased interest in learning the Native language.

Lake St. Martin is losing its Anishinaabe mowin. The younger generation does not speak the language and only a handful of youth speak Anishinaabe. The loss of language affects the identity of the person and the community. Cultural activities are intimately connected to language. The loss of language is the result of residential schools and Indian day schools where students had to endure severe punishment from teachers if they spoke their language. The loss of language is also the result of western influences such as television, radio and internet. The schools also teach in English. Lake St. Martin has an Anishinaabe language program, but this is inadequate as more needs to be done in terms of full language immersion, and encouraging parents to speak the language at home as well.

This research also makes it clear that Anishinabek need programming and funding to support language building and retention programs to rebuild a strong community in Lake St. Martin. Regaining Anishinaabe mowin would regain cultural pride and balance for Anishinabek and turn their lives around to once again create healthy communities. Anishinabek must free themselves from this disempowered and suppressed state by resurrecting their tools of Anishinaabe mowin, which was once outlawed and punished. This research will generate transformative learning and change within academia and policy makers, in Manitoba, Canada and throughout the world.

Anishinaabe mowin is precious in providing valuable information about Anishinaabe peoples identity. All the wisdom, knowledge and teachings of each Anishinabek and Indigenous groups are contained in its language. This research

combined with literature review illustrates that Anishinaabe mowin and Indigenous languages are tremendously important to Anishinabek and Indigenous Nations and communities by showing how language is directly related to all aspects of Anishinabek and Indigenous livelihoods. It is my hope that through this research, researchers that are not speakers of a specific Indigenous language will consider the importance of language and how much knowledge is contained in AKS, as well as inspiring other Indigenous researchers to further their understandings of their communities and people and take their language seriously and learn it.

In conclusion, AKS is a way of life that is at the core of Anishinabek. AKS is a way of life that has shaped the Anishinabek. It is a way of life that is based on respect, sustainability, expertise, knowledge, and hard work. The Anishinabek had different roles in the transmission of AKS. As well, language was and is the key in the transmission of AKS. The Anishinaabe kwek of Lake St. Martin have a wealth of knowledge systems that span generations but have never been documented. It is important to document these AKS of the Anishinabek, and by way of this research, the AKS has begun to be documented.

8.2.4 Integrating language, AKS, and gender in planning the new settlement of Lake St. Martin First Nation

The dissertation is also participatory research in that it has helped to shape the negotiations for the Lake St. Martin new community. The community of Lake St. Martin was evacuated on May 8, 2011. The PESCE analysis has led us to work on an eco-reserve and has turned the tables from us reacting to the provincial negotiators to having a clear vision and comprehensive plan strengthened by AKS and supported by Elders. Lake

St. Martin First Nation's permanent displacement requires a new site and we have chosen site 7 and site 9, and Lowry and Kiesman sites in the RM of Grahamdale. Lake St. Martin is community of 1394 people on reserve and 895 people off reserve (Statistics Canada 2006) that is now looking at a permanent site and wanting to have an eco-community design. Currently, 230 households are confirmed for homes in the new settlement and there are also 50-100 households that are willing to wait for the permanent reserve.

Based on model communities in the north and Indigenous communities we are trying to design an energy-efficient community that allows everyone a 10 minute walk to the central buildings (e.g., school, band office, community centre, health centre), which would reduce the piping, heat loss and thus increase energy efficiency for heating. This design is environmentally friendly but also considers political economy. It recognizes both that our people are poor and many do not have cars and that ongoing operational funds from AANDC for roads are negligible and so roads must be minimized. I am in discussions with community, province and federal government regarding modelling the community off two ecodesigns. The preferred models for their northern community are: 1) Leaf Rapids (not First Nation but northern Manitoba) and 2) Ouje-Bougoumou, a Cree First Nation in Northern Quebec, with a community heating system that is the UN-Habitat award winner. Also the other aspect is considering housing: in choosing modular housing energy efficiency and insulation levels were maximized. Lake St Martin Chief and Council are seeking and exploring options for Eco-energy for renewable and energy-efficiency regarding geothermal for their new community and possibly other central district heating and electrical possibilities (possibly combined heat and power biomass or heat only biomass). They badly want their electrical bills (heat and energy) down which

are in the range of \$500 to \$700 for the summer, and even more during the winter. These high costs show the issues with energy on reserve, with most First Nation people feeling that Manitoba Hydro has higher rate charges for First Nations.

Operation of a biomass facility would offer significant savings in terms of very large energy bills and job creation opportunities for Lake St. Martin First Nation. Also regarding biomass operations, there is potential for involvement of the community in the biomass harvesting operations. From an economic perspective, harvesting biomass feedstock near Lake St. Martin would make energy production cheaper and more energy efficient. Such information is necessary to evaluate the potential for forest or agricultural stubble, switchgrass or other harvesting. Heat and energy from biomass can make a significant contribution to local economies compared to fossil fuels and even other renewable energy technologies. Biomass resources are generally low in energy content and bulk density, meaning more material must be used in comparison to fossil fuels (Gautam et al. 2010). These requirements are offset by the abundance of inexpensive fuel resources. Biomass typically uses locally available resources, mostly wood fibre in Canada, which usually employs local firms to harvest and process biomass material (CANMET 1999). Regarding off-grid and remote communities, the long-term nature of biomass facilities provide relatively stable job opportunities in our community (Prest and Simpson 2009). This brings us back to nopoming and how our economy has always been linked to the forest.

8.3 Personal Reflection

Finally, my life story has added to my understanding of my community – Lake St. Martin. I had to look at my community from the outside to understand and appreciate all the dynamics that exist in Lake St. Martin. I had to recount my journey from my childhood up to the present in order to appreciate the AKS and the Anishinaabe kwek’s rich history. Much insight was gained about AKS from my ability to speak and understand the Anishinaabe language that is still spoken in Lake St. Martin. AKS involves a certain way of thinking, which is embedded in the language. Speaking and understanding Anishinaabe mowin and being Anishinaabe combined with my many academic degrees, allowed me to bridge the gap between AKS and western academia. Both neechi Anishinabek and western academia have knowledge bases. For the Anishinabek it is the AKS, which has been acquired from living off the land and has been passed on through oral traditions, and for western academia is their knowledge which is acquired in a formal learned environment.

This research clearly demonstrates that there are some very different understandings about the earth, nature, and human interactions in AKS than from ‘correct’ scientific western understanding. Anishinaabe peoples are distinct societies and Nations with their very own worldviews, philosophies, understandings, languages, cultures, histories and human / environment and human to human interactions. Since this is the first comprehensive study that has ever been conducted with Lake St. Martin First Nation on AKS, this dissertation presents a significant contribution to my community and the literature. It provides historical and contemporary context that Lake St. Martin First Nation can draw on for its community development planning processes. More research

would have to be done in order to portray a complete historical account of each decade. The oral history can then be compared with archival material and other historical research that exists on Lake St. Martin. By documenting this rich holistic view, this research provides a significant contribution to the academic literature, policy makers, and to the larger global society.

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APPENDIX 1 – Interview Questions

1. How has time changed on your reliance on traditional foods and activities?
2. What type of traditional food gathering activities are you involved in?
3. How has the role of women changed throughout the decades regarding their traditional food gathering and land activities?
4. What do you think are the reasons for the lack of interest in living off the land and the changing use of land?
5. How do you define “living off the land”?
6. How has your “living off the land” changed over the years?
7. What do you think are the reasons for the changes in the use of land?
8. How would you define “sustainable management”?
9. How would you define knowledge?
10. Have knowledge systems have changed? Why?
11. What do you think Traditional Knowledge is?
12. What role does Anishinaabe language have in your day to day activities and how you interact with your environment?

APPENDIX 2 – Interview Protocol

Myrle Traverse, M.Sc.
Graduate Studies, University of Manitoba

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The number of subjects to be interviewed is 15-20. All of the interviews will be performed between the months of December 2008 and August 2009. The exact schedule of the interviews is unavailable at this time due to unfinished recruitment process. The place of the interview will be set with study subjects and include such options as: subjects' traditional activity locations, First Nation community, nearby town, or any other place that the subjects will feel comfortable with (within 500 Km radius from the city of Winnipeg) and that will allow privacy to the subject and to the researcher. Interview recording devices will include two tape recorders (one as a form of a back up instrument), field notebook for a quick researcher's thoughts and self-comments, a camera, and a video recorder.

--START--: "Hello – Aniin/Boozhoo - My name is Myrle Traverse and I am a graduate student from the University of Manitoba conducting doctoral level research "Indigenous Women and the Role of Tradition and Language in Sustainable Resource Management". I would like to talk to you during this half hour to hour interview about Indigenous women's role in sustainable resource use. There will be no risk to the subjects or to third parties when doing research. The study does not involve any physical or emotional stress to the subjects. The study aims to increase the knowledge base that currently exists in the field. The study will also provide an opportunity to explore and examine the significance in research on the changing role of Indigenous women over time and why these roles may or may not have changed.

The purpose of the interview is to help to understand the connection, if any, between the role of women and the use of language and traditional activities in sustainable resource management. The study will investigate the use of language, culture, and tradition, which will be measured and tracked against time in order to determine the evolving changes, and what caused these changes.

You will not receive any direct benefit from taking part in this study but I hope that this study will benefit our society. This study will increase the knowledge base that currently exists as well as help to understand the connection, if any, regarding the role of women in traditional societies and how knowledge is transmitted.

You will be presented with open-ended questions regarding Indigenous women and the role of language and tradition in sustainable resource management. Please do not feel obliged that you have to answer all of the questions you will be asked. You can stop the interview any time you like or feel uncomfortable or uneasy.-- Meegwetch. "-- FINISH --

APPENDIX 3 - INFORMED CONSENT

CONSENT FORM (will be on University of Manitoba letterhead)

Informed Consent Form

Research Project Title: Indigenous Women and the Role of Tradition and Language in Sustainable Resource Management

Researcher(s): Myrle Traverse, M.Sc., Graduate Studies University of Manitoba

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of Anishinaabe women from the perspective of local Anishinaabe women. There are limited studies that have been done regarding Indigenous women and their traditional roles in environmental management. This study will attempt to understand the roles, customs, traditions, positions, views, values, visions and ideas of women from local First Nation communities in Manitoba in regards to land and forest issues in their traditional land-use territories, based on their language which is the key to Indigenous Knowledge Systems, and is the catalyst for informal sustainable forest management.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in a .5-1 hour face-to-face interview that will involve only you and the researcher. The place of the interview will be arranged according to your preferences, either at your premises, or according to your suggestions. The interview will consist of open-ended questions and the main topic being asked will include the role of Indigenous women and the role of tradition and language in sustainable resource management. I will also ask permission to accompany you, and participate with you on your traditional activities.

Audio-tape recorders, cameras, and/or video recorders will also be used to record participation. In order to validate analysis of data and avoid the misinterpretation of interview conversation you will receive a copy of your own transcript summary report and will be asked to verify the interpretation of your thoughts.

There are no possible risks related to your participation in this study. There will be no sensitive questions asked that could cause any embarrassment or psychological discomfort.

You will not receive any direct benefit from taking part in this study but I hope that this study will benefit our society. This study will increase the knowledge base that currently exists as well as will help to understand the connection, if any, regarding the role of women in traditional societies and how knowledge is transmitted.

Records or notes identifying participants will be kept confidential. Access to information collected and to the identity of the subjects will be available to the researcher, her advisors, and committee members. If the results are published, your identity will remain confidential. All of the information will be retained for the period of three years after finishing this study and kept in a locked filing cabinet at the University of Manitoba premises. After the period of three years the data will be destroyed.

Final report will be available to all of the subjects. It will be mailed directly to you as a hard copy or e-mailed in the form of file – whatever is preferable.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and / or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Myrle Traverse, M.Sc., phone: 204-632-6792 or email mtraverse@shaw.ca
Dr. Shirley Thompson, phone: 204-474-7170 or email s_thompson@umanitoba.ca

This research has been approved by the University of Manitoba Research Ethics Board. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122, or e-mail margaret_bowman@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Participant's Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

APPENDIX 4 – APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

05 December 2008

TO: Myrle Traverse (Advisor S. Thompson)
Principal Investigator

FROM: Wayne Taylor, Chair
Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB)

Re: Protocol #J2008:149
“Indigenous Women and the Role of Tradition and Language in Sustainable Resource Management”

Please be advised that your above-referenced protocol has received human ethics approval by the **Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board**, which is organized and operates according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement. This approval is valid for one year only.

Any significant changes of the protocol and/or informed consent form should be reported to the Human Ethics Secretariat in advance of implementation of such changes.

Please note:

- if you have funds pending human ethics approval, the auditor requires that you submit a copy of this Approval Certificate to Kathryn Bartmanovich, Research Grants & Contract Services (fax 261-0325), including the Sponsor name, before your account can be opened.
- if you have received multi-year funding for this research, responsibility lies with you to apply for and obtain Renewal Approval at the expiry of the initial one-year approval; otherwise the account will be locked.

The Research Ethics Board requests a final report for your study (available at:http://umanitoba.ca/research/ors/ethics/ors_ethics_human_REB_forms_guidelines.html) in order to be in compliance with Tri-Council Guidelines.