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Toward a Healthy Future for Canada's Oceans and Coasts

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The social, cultural, and economic well-being of all Canadians is inextricably linked to the future of our oceans and coasts (Chapter 1). Yet, as the chapters in this volume emphasize, the future of our oceans and coasts is uncertain, rendering our future uncertain as well. Additionally, this volume highlights how this uncertainty is experienced and governed differently in communities across the Arctic, Atlantic, and Pacific regions of Canada. Each of these ocean and coastal regions is unique in terms of policy contexts, human history, relationships to ocean and coastal resources, and experiences with biophysical and ecological change. Given these differences, and while also recognizing our commonalities, we ask: How can and should we navigate pathways forward to foster viable and desirable ocean and coastal futures?

We have two objectives in this final chapter. First, we summarize the main findings reported in this book and draw attention to some of the core themes that have emerged from our collective efforts and the Ocean-Canada Partnership: reconciliation; changing oceans; access to ocean resources; ocean governance; and the relationship among law, policy, and knowledge mobilization. Second, we suggest practical pathways and recommendations for achieving a healthy ocean and supporting thriving coastal communities in Canada. Our aim is to synthesize insights in ways that resonate with all Canadians concerned about the long-term sustainability of our oceans and coasts and the social, cultural, and economic activities that depend on them (Bennett et al. 2018).

RECONCILIATION AND INDIGENOUS OCEAN MANAGEMENT IN CANADA

Reconciliation and Indigenous governance is a central concern in this volume (Chapters 2, 6, 8, 10, and 14). In particular, Chapters 2 and 14 articulate the history and context for Canada's reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and how doing so is foundational to ensuring the sustainability of our oceans. Chapter 2 highlights the role of Indigenous Peoples as traditional knowledge holders about Canada's ocean and as rights holders with respect to ocean management and governance, and the effects of colonization on undermining Indigenous governance principles. Ongoing work is needed to understand and follow through on Canada's commitments to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, including via the adoption of the 2007 *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP). Drawing on the case studies and analysis of ocean issues in this volume, Chapter 14 highlights and examines best practices and challenges in governance, resource access, and protection of Indigenous culture and values. The analysis was informed by Canada's commitment to recognition of Indigenous rights, including a commitment to secure free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) for development by UNDRIP, and by Ten Principles that Canada identified for reconciliation based on UNDRIP (Department of Justice Canada 2018).

Reconciliation is a long-term and ongoing process that requires political commitment and resources to address three forms of injustices resulting from colonization: