



## **News Release: People are our number one priority, say territorial Premiers in new vision for sustainable development**

**YELLOWKNIFE, NT /WHITEHORSE, YT/IQALUIT, NU (September 22, 2017)** – Northwest Territories Premier Bob McLeod, Yukon Premier Sandy Silver and Nunavut Premier Peter Taptuna today released the *Pan-Territorial Vision for Sustainable Development*. In it, they declare that residents of the territories deserve the opportunity to achieve the same aspirations for themselves and their families as other Canadians – including good health, high-quality education and sustainable middle class jobs.

The three Premiers stand together to foster long-term development of northern economies on a foundation of responsible resource development, job creation, and economic diversification – in addition to investments in transportation, energy and communications infrastructure, and innovation.

A key principle of the *Pan-Territorial Vision* is that northerners must have the tools and authority to manage their own affairs and make decisions on the future of the North, which offers an important opportunity to advance Indigenous reconciliation.

The Premiers will take a leadership role as they work with the federal government, territorial Indigenous governments and organizations, and affected stakeholders to bring about their vision of sustainable economic development for the residents of the three territories – and will participate in the development of Canada’s proposed Arctic Policy Framework.

### **Quotes**

“Having a clear vision and priorities for supporting the social and economic development of Canada’s three territories is the only way to ensure that Northern Canadians will be able to enjoy the same benefits and opportunities that their fellow Canadians already share. Our shared vision has to be the foundation for any Arctic policy that genuinely reflects the needs and priorities of the people who live here.”

**-Bob McLeod**, Premier of the Northwest Territories

“Responsible development is crucial to the people in the North, and the three territories stand together to advance environmental stewardship in building sustainable economic growth. We know that Indigenous knowledge is essential to developing Northern wellness and economy, and we commit to a balanced approach to ensure our citizens attain the same quality of life as their fellow Canadians.”

**-Peter Taptuna**, Premier of Nunavut

“Northern communities face similar economic challenges – it is significantly more difficult in the territories to access equitable opportunities that would improve quality of life for residents and benefit our economies. I am proud to stand with the northern Premiers to advocate for the needs of the residents of Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut – and believe our shared vision will serve as a foundation for a stronger North.”

**-Sandy Silver**, Premier of Yukon

## Quick Facts

- In the Northwest Territories, the resource sector accounts for nearly 40% of our GDP. By comparison, tourism accounts for 3.5% and fishing .01%.
- Approximately half of all NWT residents are Indigenous, representing the majority of people living in 29 of the territory’s 33 communities.
- Yukon’s resource sector accounts for 10.1% of the territory’s GDP. Construction accounts for 8.5%, while tourism is estimated at 3.9% of GDP (in 2014).
- Yukon’s population is presently 38,300, it is estimated that Indigenous people account for 23% of the territory’s population. Whitehorse is the territory’s largest community, at 29,634. Destruction Bay is Yukon’s smallest community, with 54 residents.
- Nunavut’s population has a median age of 22, making it the youngest in Canada. It is also one of the fastest growing; the 2015 population was just over 36,700 compared to 26,000 in 2001. Inuit represent 85 per cent of the population and form the foundation of the territory’s culture. Nunavut is a territory that spans two million<sup>2</sup> km of Canada, extending north and west of Hudson Bay, above the tree line to the North Pole.
- Nunavut’s 25 communities range in size from tiny Grise Fiord (population 163) to Iqaluit (population 7,542), the capital.
- The largest employer in Nunavut is government – federal, territorial and municipal. New jobs are rapidly emerging in the mining and resource development sectors. Important growth is also occurring in the tourism and fisheries sectors, and in the Inuit art sector. The realization of Nunavut’s full economic potential will, in part, be contingent upon the improvement of the territory’s infrastructure.

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