

What is collaborative water governance for Mistawasis Nêhiyawak?

M. Mora^a, M. Watson^b, A. B. Johnston^c, L. Bharadwaj^d

^a Ph.D candidate, University of Saskatchewan, mariafer.mora@usask.ca; ^b Climate Change Leader, Mistawasis Nêhiyawak, mwats83@live.com; ^c Special Projects Coordinator, Mistawasis Nêhiyawak, anthony.b.johnston@gmail.com; ^d Supervising Professor, University of Saskatchewan, lalita.bharadwaj@usask.ca

RESEARCH CONTEXT

- Safe water on First Nations represents a challenge from a decision-making perspective.



First Nations' well-being is not guaranteed under the current approach to water governance in Canada.

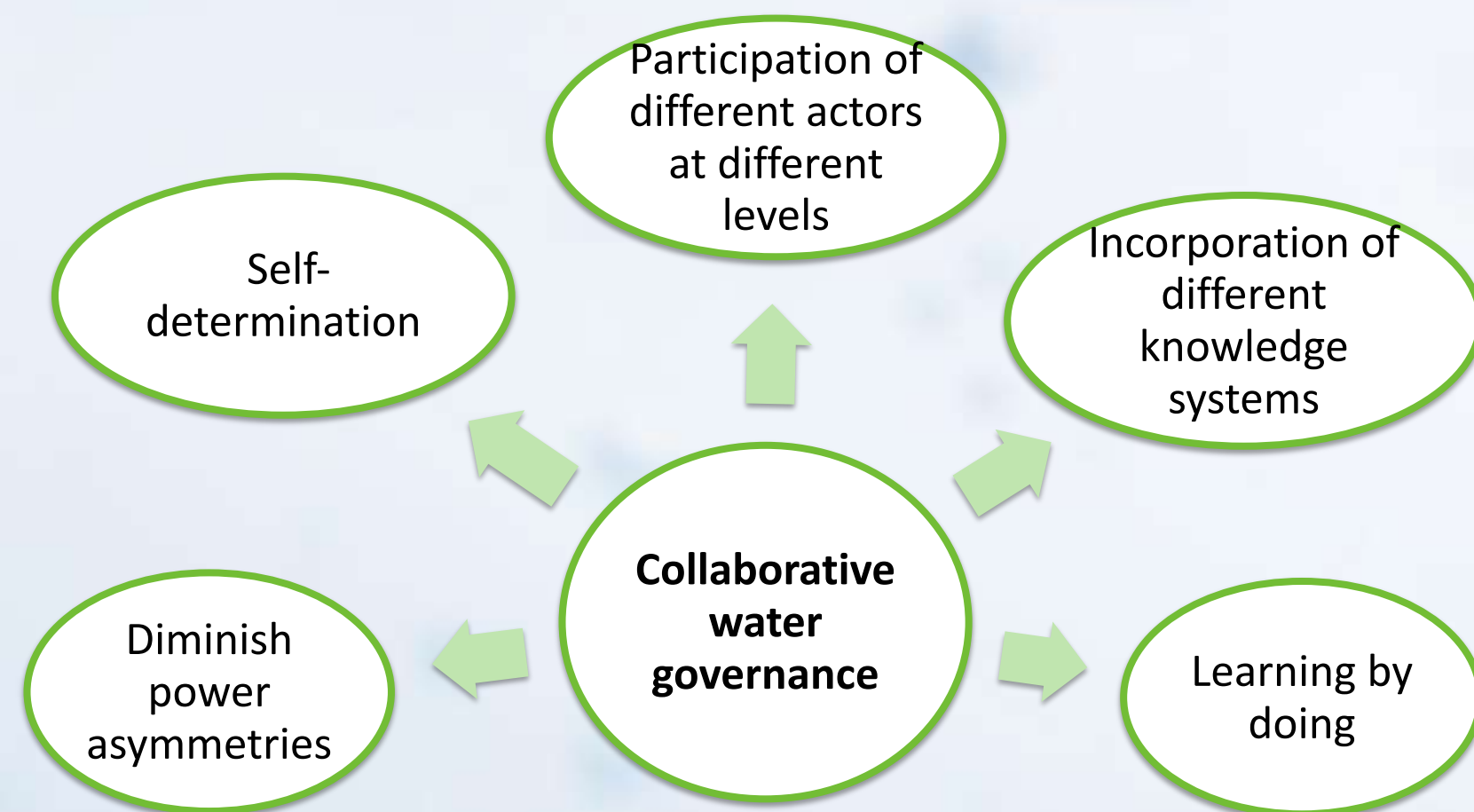
Better understanding of water governance from the First Nations perspective is needed.

OBJECTIVES

- Gain better understanding of what water governance means for Mistawasis Nêhiyawak.
- Co-create a water governance framework with Mistawasis Nêhiyawak utilizing a collaborative approach.



GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY



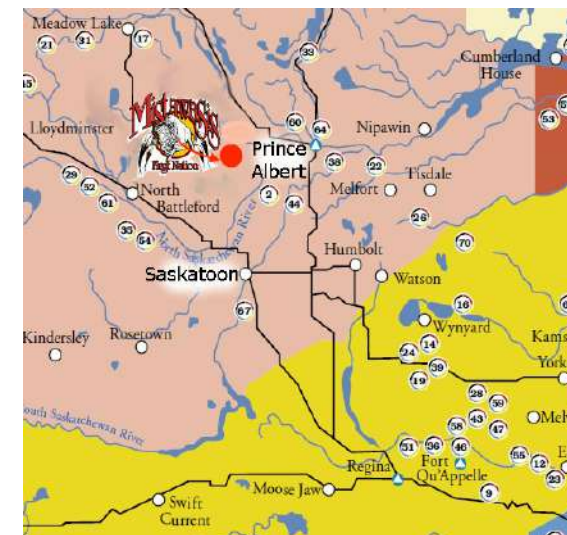
Community-based participatory research (CBPR).



Local Protocols!!



MISTAWASIS NÊHIYAWAK



Located 120 kilometers north of Saskatoon.

2,832 registered band members
Approximately 15,370 hectares.



Mistawasis Nêhiyawak experienced heavy snowfalls, early rapid snow melt and heavy rains (2005, 2006, 2010-2015).



Water problems:

- Flooding of houses and roads
- Water sources affected impacting access to secure drinking water.
- Lakes' shorelines and spiritual camp development affected.

RESEARCH RELEVANCE

- A tool to facilitate involvement of elders, youth, women, and leaders in water-related decisions.
- Improved understanding of water governance from an Indigenous perspective.
- A decolonized research incorporating interculturality and reconciliation.



PRELIMINARY RESULTS



CHALLENGES

- Mistawasis Nêhiyawak has no decision-making power at federal or provincial levels.
- Lack of formal processes to deal with water issues.
- Limited long-term financial resources.
- More community involvement in water decisions is needed.



OPPORTUNITIES

- Strong leaders in the community.
- Partnerships developed at various levels.
- Open to dialogue and inclusion of different knowledge systems.
- Projects fostering collaborative water governance. (Honour the Water)

LINKAGE TO GLOBAL WATER FUTURES GOALS

Goal 3: Adapting and managing risk

- The co-creation of a decision-making tool that will facilitate improved responses and adaptation to water issues and more integrated and accountable water governance and management mechanisms



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Mistawasis Nêhiyawak: Chief, Council Members, Band Office, and the community.

Human Dimensions of Water Security Lab Team: Dr. Graham Strickert, Ashleigh Duffy, Anuja Thapa.

