

**Vancouver, Halifax and Toronto**

Organized by Outward Bound Canada Training Academy

Facilitated by Bloom + COLAB

# Changing Climate

**Social Innovation Lab**

**MAY 2024**



OUTWARD BOUND  
TRAINING ACADEMY

# What brought us together

In May 2024, three Social Innovation Lab events were hosted across Canada, in Vancouver, Halifax, and Toronto, each focusing on resilience and climate change mitigation within the outdoor sector.

## Overview of activities

The day-long events invited participants from various organizations to explore strategies for building resilience and mitigating the impacts of climate change on their programming and operations.

The first half of each day was focused on building rapport and relations between the participants, and uncovering the current state, narratives, and challenges within the outdoor sector as related to climate change.

The second half was future looking and action focused. Using a process known as Open Space participants self-organized into small breakout groups centred on conversations, actions and ideas related to building a more resilient sector. Ending the day was an opportunity for participants to name commitments they would like to take towards creating a more resilient and disaster prepared future of the outdoor sector.

## Impact snapshot

3

Events  
hosted

79

Participants  
engaged

68

Organisations  
engaged

28

Participant led  
sessions on  
action

40

Committments  
made



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# Main Outcomes

The outcomes from these events highlighted four common themes:

## **Gratitude for Relationship Building Time:**

There was a high level of interest in continuing conversations and staying in relationships, with participants expressing a lot of gratitude for the time spent together.

## **Risk Management and Disaster Preparedness:**

Participants expressed a strong interest in training and support for risk management and disaster preparedness. They emphasized the importance of collaborating across organizations to develop effective solutions in these areas.

## **Climate Change Education and Adaptability:**

There was significant interest in embedding climate change education into sector-specific programming, fostering a deeper relationship with nature, and engaging in innovative learning about climate change, adaptability, and the environment.

## **Unified Action and Ongoing Dialogue:**

The events underscored the importance of unified action and ongoing dialogue to support long-term climate change, risk management, and disaster preparedness solutions, highlighting the need for collaborative efforts across various organizations.







# Vancouver Session

May 9th, 2024

Vancouver Rowing Club, Vancouver, British Columbia

Attendees: 26 people representing 25 organizations from the outdoor sector in British Columbia.

Facilitated by: Bloom Consulting

26

Participants engaged

25

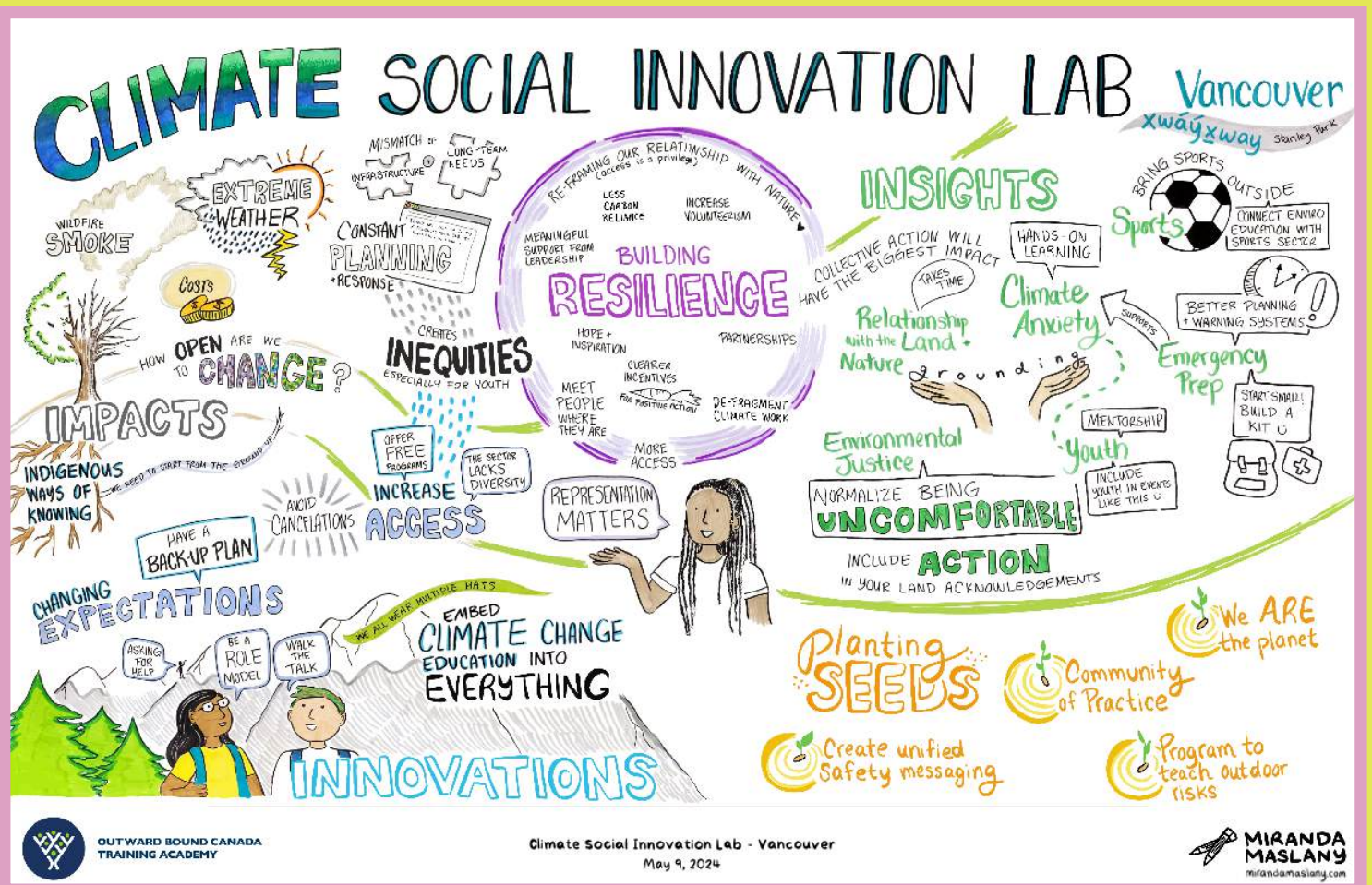
Organizations engaged

12

Participant led sessions for action

15

Commitments made



# World Cafe sessions

## *Round 1 – How is climate change impacting you and your ability to operate in the outdoors?*

- Wildfire smoke, air quality and extreme weather
- Constant Planning – A, B, C, D
- Restricted programming as a result, impacting organizations and communities
- Young people having less exposure to nature, less care for the planet
- More barriers to access outdoor programs, exacerbating inequalities
- Realizing the importance of using more sustainable transport to outdoor activities
- The seasons we operate in the outdoors may need to shift

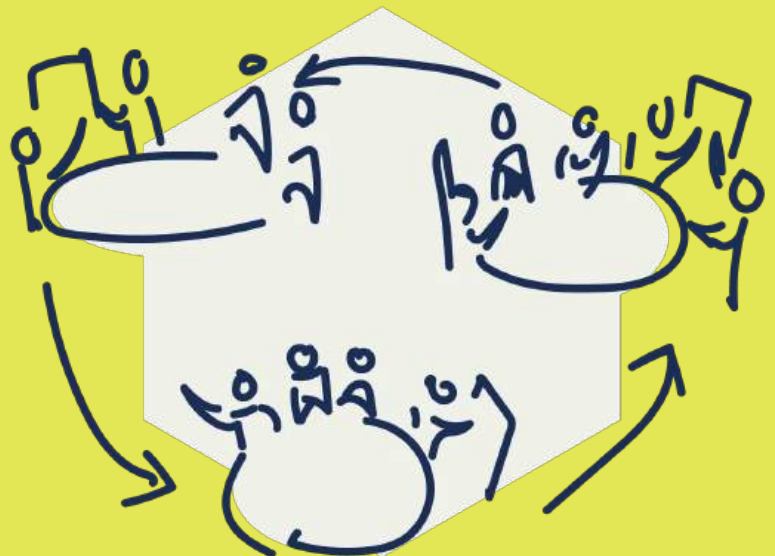
## *Round 2 – How are you navigating these challenges and what innovations are you seeing?*

- Embedding climate change education into everything
- Community capacity building to enhance education, awareness and empowering communities to share
- Re-thinking school systems and curriculum
- The innovation is our relationship with nature & ourselves, shifting our practices while we adapt our society for the better
- Role modelling – walking the talk
- Relationship building, asking for help and collaborating
- Galvanizing institutional/leadership support in organizations
- Accepting and adapting to new normal - changing risk assessments, policy and programming
- Shifting outdoor programming & having a back-up plan
  - Shifting the season
  - Changing location based on needs, going outside
- Changing people's expectations of what outdoor education is
- Partnership between Discover Parks and Adventure Smart Outreach
- Free programs
- Funding programs
- Compensating people for their labour

# World Cafe sessions

## *Round 3 – What might support you and your organization to be more climate resilient?*

- Paradigm shift
- Hope, inspiration, open mind, engagement, inclusion and equity
- Education, engagement and awareness
- Funding for community capacity building
- Shifting outdoor programming – going inside, choosing locations based on needs, having back-up plans
- Rethinking how we fund and/or measure action on climate
- Support and buy-in from leadership – courage to make hard decisions
- Tenacity and community to weather the storm
- Holistic, healthy society – connecting Indigenous, climate & human rights
- Increasing volunteerism
- De-fragmentizing the work of “action on climate change”
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# Open Space

## *List of Open Space topics that emerged from participants*

1. Climate anxiety
2. How do we operate with the reality and effects of climate change?
3. Collaboration between outdoor organizations
4. What will the world be like in 2034?
5. What is outdoor education?
6. Tourism as a way of funding outdoor education
7. Communication on climate resilience - How to share out from today
8. Social justice and environmental justice
9. Youth - how do we include them in conversations about climate change?
10. Relationship with land and nature
11. Environmental education and sport
12. Emergency preparedness



# Seeds / commitments

Seeds / commitments	Who is interested?
We are the planet	Nacho and Henry
Integrate climate change mitigation strategies into evaluations for permitting activities, incentivize good behaviour	Henry, Bryant, Jaylene, Mariana, EJ, Joy
Partner with Discover Parks and create unified safety messaging	Bryant, Nacho, Jaylene, Joy, Kristan
Ask for Funding - Find the funds to create your vision	Henry, Nacho, Joy
Sendai Framework	Nacho & Brendan
Community of practice - share resources, collaboration and partnership both online and in person	Park People, EJ, Herbert, Henry, Kristan, Mariana, Dabney, Erica, N.A, Jeremy, Phoenix
Program to teach about local outdoor risks/dangers, attempt to minimize fear	Phoenix, Joy, Herbert, Mariana, Nacho, Jasmine, N.A
Climate change adaptation, environmental education and sport	Nacho, Herbert, Henry, Joy, N.A, Jaylene
Adding climate change education to outdoor skills training curriculum	Herbet, Erica, Mariana, N.A, Nacho
Climate Action Dialogue and Climate 2050	metrovanancouver.or
Help share Training Academy and sign up for the mentorship program	Bryant Race Nacho, Joy, N.A, Kristan, Jasmine
Classroom 2 Community Annual Conference (Oct 25 - 26)	Joy, Jaylene
Children and youth deserve our compassion, mentorship and respect. They are more capable than most people realize and we are responsible for bringing them into conscientious adulthood	Nacho, N.A, Jaylene, Erica, Henry, Dabney
Partnerships with VIU (Vancouver Island University in Nanaimo) Recreation and Tourism Dept. Flexible on structure - directing students, looking, for work, guest speakers, working in the field, etc	Herbert, Joy, Mariana, Bryant, Nacho, Henry

# Halifax Session

May 13th, 2024

St Mary's Boat Club, Halifax, Nova Scotia

Attendance: 20 people representing 14 organizations from the outdoor sector in Nova Scotia.

Facilitated by: COLAB Consulting

20

Participants engaged

14

Organizations engaged

8

Participant led sessions for action

6

Commitments made



# World Cafe sessions

## *Round 1 – How is climate change impacting you and your ability to operate in the outdoors?*

- Hurricanes, hotter weather, and floods
- Anxiety and hopelessness
- We feel responsible for holding the burden of change
- Air quality and water quality
- More in-depth risk management planning is now necessary for all programs
- Roads washed out, participants are at greater risk
- Loss of employment
- Loss of experience for participants
- Burn bans and wildfires
- Increase in bugs, ticks
- Responsibility to the participants and the risks has become limiting for what we can do

## *Round 2 – How are you navigating these challenges and what innovations are you seeing?*

- Fostering hope and connection
- Embracing technology
- Effective communication with all program staff
- Building education and awareness between programs
- We need to think and act locally, hyper local
- Have to stay adaptable and have contingency plans
- Proactive planning and risk management
- Have to still focus on the joy of it all
- Participants need to be part of contributing to Plan B

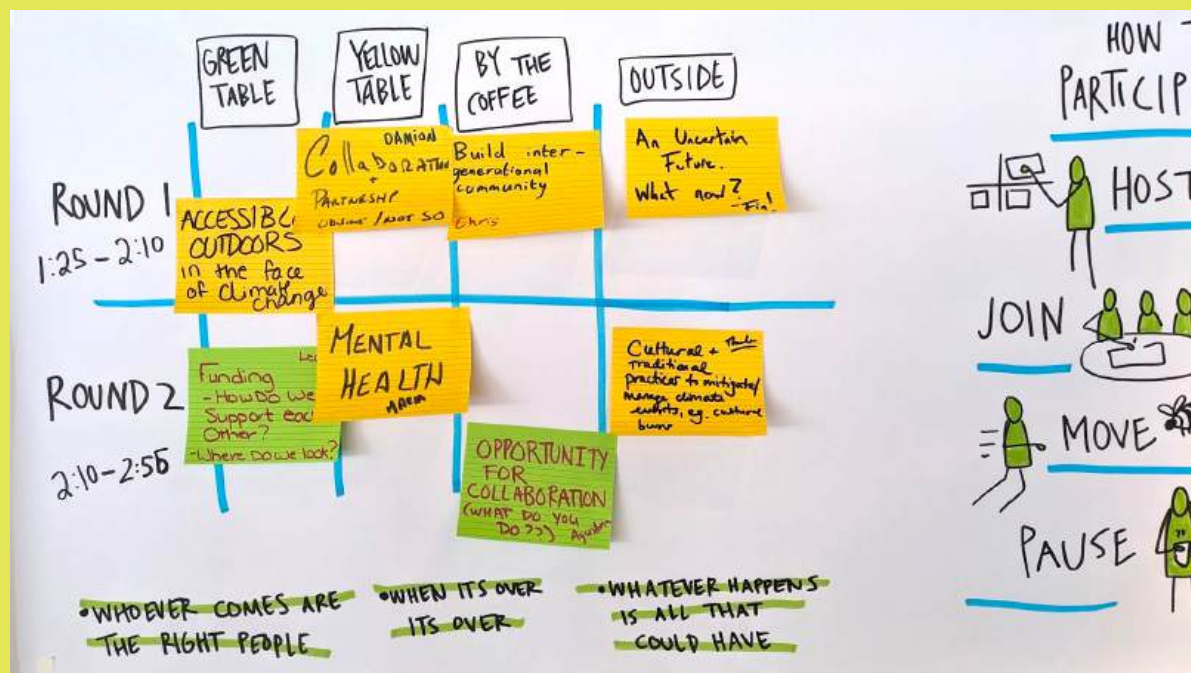
## *Round 3 – What might support you and your organization to be more climate resilient?*

- Need education and training on best practices for risk management
- Need disaster preparedness training and support
- Funding and support to take on new risk management practices
- Collaboration between organizations
- Volunteers to support citizen science and monitoring
- We need top-down buy in from funders, from government, leadership
- Need to develop succession plans
- Climate mental health first aid (anxiety)
- Sharing knowledge between organizations
- Focus on the good work that is happening

# Open Space

## List of Open Space topics that emerged from participants

1. Accessible outdoors in the face of climate change
2. Collaboration and partnerships needed to thrive
3. Building intergenerational community
4. An uncertain future - what now?
5. Funding - how do we support one another?
6. Mental health - climate anxiety
7. Finding opportunities for collaboration
8. Cultural and traditional practices to mitigate / manage climate events



## Seeds/ Community Commitments

- Create resource list to share
- Keep learning from each other
- Create intergenerational outdoor program
- Google form to stay connected and learn more about each other's work
- Host conversations in outdoor spaces - continuing these important conversations
- Strengthening connections with Indigenous communities



# Toronto Session

May 15th, 2024

## Evergreen Brickworks, Toronto, Ontario

Attendance: 30 people representing 29 organizations from the outdoor sector in Ontario.

Facilitated by: Bloom Consulting

30

## Participants engaged

29

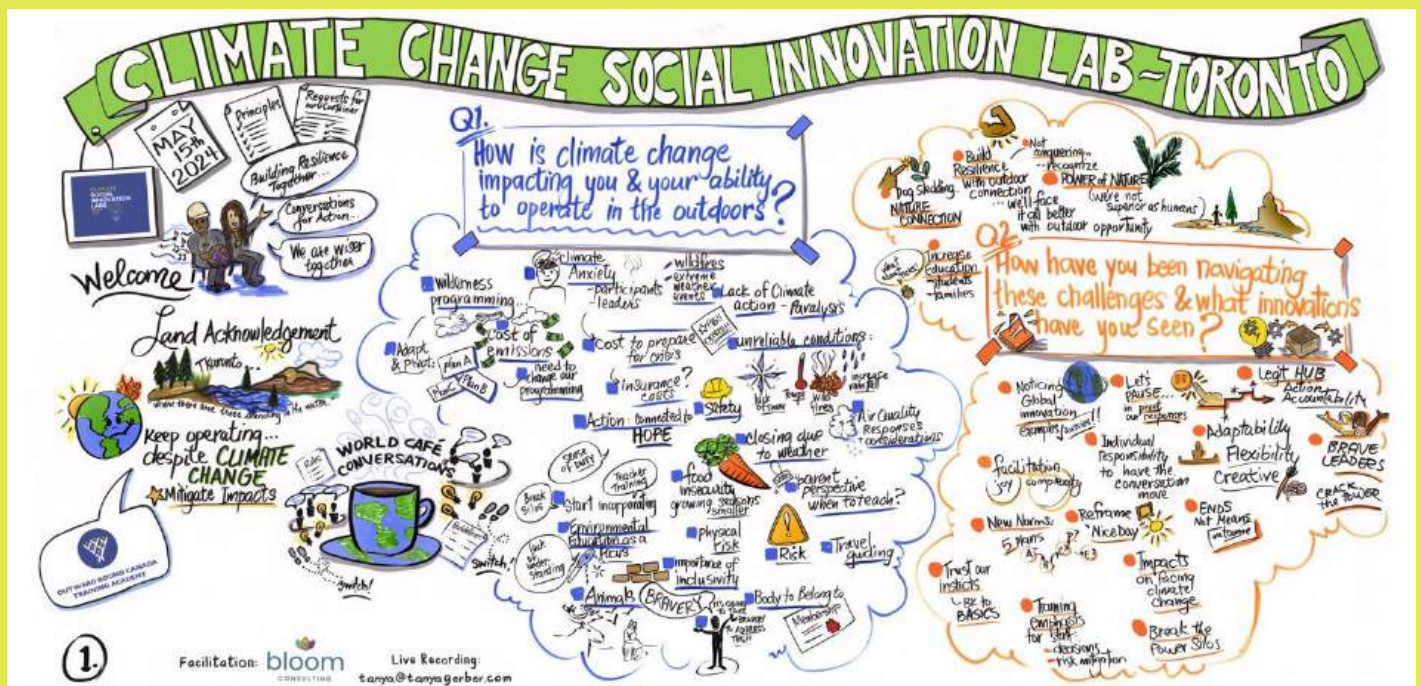
## Organizations engaged

6

## Participant led sessions for action

19

## Commitments made



# World Cafe sessions

## *Round 1 – How is climate change impacting you and your ability to operate in the outdoors?*

- Extreme weather
  - Wildfires –affects air quality, affects all elements
  - Lack of winter, no snow, and the need to adapt to changes
  - Heat, wind
  - Unreliable environment conditions
  - Rainfall, flooding
  - Destruction
- Inconsistent weather affects programming
- The cost of preparedness and insurance liability
- Risk – accept – overt – defer
- Need for connected solutions (hope – action – duty, understanding)
- Lack of direction and climate action planning
- Education
  - Parenting
  - Guiding
  - Teaching and teacher training
  - Breaking silos in education
- Anxiety for participants and instructors
- Spaces for belonging
- Cost of emissions to travel to program site to balance with program outcomes

## *Round 2 – How are you navigating these challenges and what innovations are you seeing?*

- Reframing what is a nice day
- Continuing to run programs, changing location, activity, etc
  - Attached to the ends, not the means
  - Creativity
  - Community
  - Connection to nature
- Nature is resilient and can overcome
  - Recognizing humans and their technology can't always conquer
- Innovative training for flexibility/creativity and adaptability
  - National training program
  - The art of facilitation in regards to educating about climate change
  - Knowledge of environment
  - Survivor skills
  - Education of youth and families
  - Weaving into the fabric of society

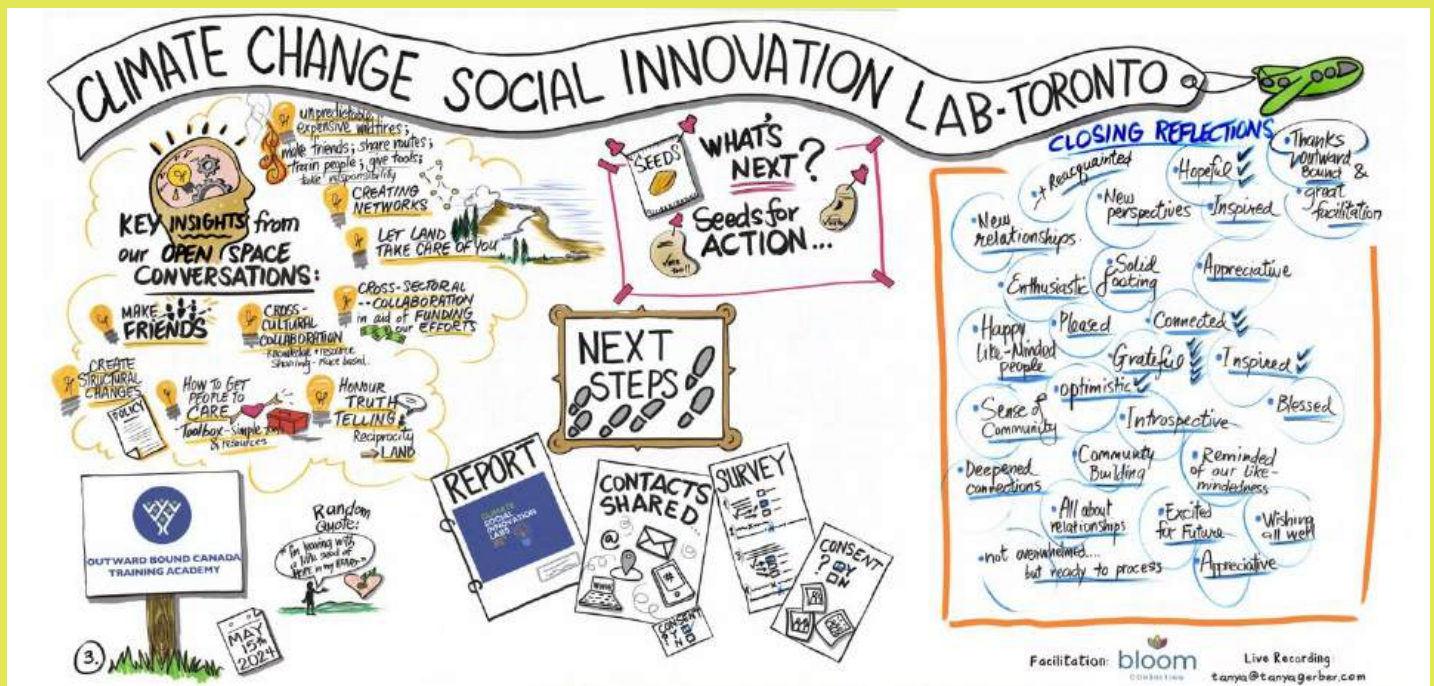




# Open Space

## List of Open Space topics that emerged from participants

1. Indigeneity, land stewardship and ancestral knowledge
2. Antidote to apathy
3. How to create successful cultural shifts
4. Small quick wins
5. Forest fires
6. Centering the landscape as our primary teacher of resilience





# Seeds / commitments

- Deepen my understanding of how youth can be involved in political action - Sam
- Continuing walking alongside thought leaders to develop an intentional school board/education policy that merges teaching and learning and operations as it related to outdoor education and environmental
- Creating opportunities for building relationships with land to foster community-based and youth-led climate solutions - Codrina
- Make friends widely
- Find small ways to grow our programs and offer connections to the outdoors for youth - Sascha - Project Canoe
- Adapting outdoor education programs to climate change & empower and show participants ways to take climate action
- Follow up with emergency preparedness collaborative event - Michelle
- Read UN Best practices to see applications - Lisa Wright
- Plant plants and build ecosystems....next meeting a fall garden party - Owain
- Continue meeting to further learning and sharing - webinars in person - Jacqueline
- Organize community conversations to mobilize folks to work together and form relationships - Raise
- To express myself a bit more than outdoor sector - Randy
- Learn something new - outdoor skill that connects me to environment in a different way - foraging, planting, composting
- I'm ready to listen, learn and continue to invest in helping our industry navigate and be united in this - Matt
- I would like the youth that I work with to learn from anyone who has advice to share with the next generation - Ashley
- Incorporate conversations, themes, practices with kids/campus, programming. Reciprocity, love of the land, stewardship, climate strategies - Lindsay
- Big or tiny acts, conversations, projects are not sacrifices but nourishing and positive steps towards the climate crisis. Solutions we want - Marietta
- Continue to explore/share connections between being outside, human health, and climate change mitigation
- To continue these rich connections and conversations with new friends - Abi
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**Thanks to all the  
people and  
organizations that  
contributed to this  
meaningful dialogue**



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