

Introduction

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This section highlights lessons gained from research on the practice of economic development within Aboriginal communities. Beaudoin, Bouthillier, Bulkan, Nelson, and Wyatt examine a model of sustainable economic development using Aboriginal forest enterprises in the Essipit First Nation in Quebec. The lessons indicate that sustainable economic development is more likely to be successful if it provides benefit to communities beyond profits and jobs, is built into the cultural fabric of the community, and acts consistently with local cultures.

The next two articles examine the limitations of theoretical understandings developed outside Indigenous communities when used as the foundation for Aboriginal development. Kamal, Martens, and the *Ithinto Mechisowin* Committee of the *O-Pipon-Na-Piwin* Cree Nation find that the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework can be adapted for use within Aboriginal communities provided that Aboriginal perspectives on sustainable livelihoods are used to define what is meant by “capital”. Atleo brings to the table a debate about the concept of “Aboriginal capitalism” as interpreted by three Indigenous scholars (Miller, Champagne, and Newhouse) and concludes that a full engagement with capitalism requires a radical change in core values and principles of Aboriginal peoples. However, he argues, we must make best efforts to develop alternatives that are consistent with Aboriginal understandings of the nature of the social and natural world.