

What Is Self-government?

Self-government is what it sounds like: it is the ability for nations to govern themselves in the way they want and to make laws they need. To become self-governing often means to have a treaty or to have taken advantage of Land Management Act, Election Act and/or Membership Acts that apply to Status Indians on reserve lands only.

Self-government allows for



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Lake Babine Nation: Self- government

the nation's culture and traditional ways to be incorporated. This will of course include how the newly formed government will handle its resources, traditional lands and traditional customs or practices. Unlike in the Indian Act, self-government allows nations to decide whether they want to include traditional ways in their official governance, i.e. hereditary chiefs, heads of families, Elders and how they play a part in law-making.

What Does a Governance Model Look Like?

The models listed above can be adopted post-treaty. In all cases

the nation maintains the right to legislative functions such as:

- they are able to create laws and policy;
- they can review decisions in an administrative function;
- and they can handle all their finances through economic development and investments.

The main one, however, is the ability to create a body of laws. This includes making a Constitution for the nation to follow as the highest law of the land. Through the Constitution, the nation gains governance authority. It also establishes accountability and fairness, no matter which ever type of governance model the nation decides on. It, too, will describe the fundamental values of the nation that the government, the members and all who live and operate on a nations lands, will respect. The model for good governance is closely tied to the Constitution and how whichever model the nation decides to adopt.

