



August 1st, 2024

Re: Embark's Board of Directors Recognizes and Affirms Emancipation Day

Emancipation Day, falling on August 1st, commemorates the abolishment of slavery across British colonies in 1834 and recognizes Black and Indigenous peoples' continued struggle against racism and discrimination.

When the Abolition of Slavery Act took effect on August 1st 1834, it freed an estimated 900,000 Black and Indigenous peoples across British-controlled territories, including so-called Canada. It is important to recognize that colonialism and capitalism drove the exploitation and violence of slavery for hundreds of years, and these same systems continue to oppress Black and Indigenous communities today through racial inequity, police brutality, over-surveillance, institutional violence, and systemic oppression, all of which are legacies of enslavement. Emancipation Day offers us an opportunity to reflect on the often neglected history of slavery in so-called Canada and its impact on our present, recognizing how slavery and segregation are the roots of racism and many other injustices in our society and world.

With this, we recognize that racial justice is climate justice. White supremacy and environmental exploitation are deeply interwoven, from environmental racism carried out by industries dumping hazardous materials near Black communities formed through historical redlining practices, to state-sanctioned food apartheid that has led to disproportionate rates of food insecurity among Indigenous people and beyond. Just last month Hurricane Beryl tore through the Caribbean, leaving homes destroyed and families displaced, a disaster magnified by industry-fuelled climate change and highly minimized by Western Media as opposed to other catastrophes. Systemically marginalized communities face the worst impacts of this climate crisis, and the history of colonization and capitalism on sovereign Indigenous lands must inform how we work towards liberation across movements.

To say we have arrived at freedom and emancipation is wrong, as we witness the continuation of slavery through deeply embedded anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism. This racism, white supremacy, and domination are still in the spaces we occupy – academic institutions, the nonprofit sector, and the field of sustainability as a whole, even spaces that



emphasize equity, diversity and inclusion. In reflecting on our present, August 1st and everyday serves to challenge systemic oppression while celebrating the existence, power, potential and capability of Black and Indigenous communities, and their long-standing contributions and achievements in every field.

“Supporting Indigenous decision-making is key to fighting racism, the climate emergency and biodiversity loss. Empowering Black voices is key to reflecting our true history. **Just as Indigenous laws are Law, Black history is Canadian history.**” - Annamie Paul

Learn more about emancipation and the history of Black diaspora in so-called canada:

[Emancipation Day in Canada: Past, Present and Future](#)
[The story of Black slavery in Canadian history | CMHR](#)
[BC Black History Awareness Society](#)
[Emancipation Day BIPOC Writing workshop](#)

Support for Hurricane Beryl relief:

[Hurricane Beryl relief](#)

Support Indigenous communities at SFU:

- **SFU First Nations, Métis & Inuit Student Association (FNMISA)**
 - Website: <https://fnmisa.ca/>
 - Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/sfu.fnmisa/>
- **SFU Indigenous Student Centre**
 - Website: <https://www.sfu.ca/students/indigenous.html>
 - Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/sfu_isc/
- **Office for Aboriginal Peoples**
 - Website: <https://www.sfu.ca/aboriginalpeoples.html>

Support Black communities at SFU:

- **SFU Students for Caribbean and African Ancestry (SOCA)**
 - Website: <https://www.sfusoca.ca/>
 - Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/sfusoca/>
- **SFU Black Caucus**
 - Website: <https://www.sfu.ca/black-caucus.html>



- Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/sfu_blackcaucus/
- **SFU African Student Association (ASA)**
 - Info: <https://go.sfss.ca/clubs/298/info>
 - Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/sfu_asa/
- **SFU Nigerian Students Association (NSA)**
 - Info: <https://www.sfusoca.ca/sfu-nigerian-students-association.html>
 - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/nsasfu/>
- **SFU Somali Students Association (SSA)**
 - Info: <https://go.sfss.ca/clubs/810/info>
 - Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/ssa_sfu/