Including:

› Arthur J.E. Child Pop-up Policy: New approaches to integrate work and learning
› Arthur J.E. Child Pop-up Policy: Implications of the U.S. Election for Western Canada
› Arthur J.E. Child Pop-up Policy: ESG: What does it mean for Canadian competitiveness?
› Arthur J.E. Child Pop-up Policy: Marine Safety – How safe are our waters?
› Arthur J.E. Child Pop-up Policy: Brexit is Happening – What Next?

Including:

› Nuclear Power: Part of Canada’s Energy Transition Virtual
› ESG: What is it, why is it important and how does it relate to impact assessment? Virtual
› Presentation to Special Committee on Canada-China Relations Ottawa, ON
› Presentation to Standing Committee On International Trade, Bill C-64, NAFTA Ottawa, ON
› Do Bills C-48 and C-69 spell the end of the energy industry? Lake Louise, AB

Including:

• Winnipeg Free Press
• Calgary Herald
• Business in Vancouver
• Western Producer
• CBC
• The Hill Times
• Real Agriculture
• National Post
• Globe and Mail
• Wall Street Journal
• Maclean’s
• Canadian Press
• Financial Post

07 HOSTED AND PARTNER EVENTS

26 SPEECHES/PRESENTATIONS

163 MEDIA INTERVIEWS

51 OP-EDS

1919 MEDIA MENTIONS
(broadcast, print, online)

151K WEBPAGE VIEWS
Natural Resources Centre

POLICY GOAL

Responsible energy for the future

What we promised
In 2020, we promised to continue to help Canadians understand what responsible energy development should look like – and to continue to push for the choices that make sense both locally and globally.

What we delivered

- We published a major report on the approaches to performance management that have been taken by different Canadian resource sectors: forestry, mining, chemicals, electricity, oil and gas and agriculture. The report also discussed how a similar performance management approach could help the oilsands sector.
- We started to look at the way in which environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors are being incorporated into responsible energy production. We published a briefing that mapped out the organizations that are working on ESG metrics, performance standards and credentializing of Canadian oil and gas. We facilitated a webinar on ESG hosted by the International Association for Impact Assessment.
- We also studied how public policy can be used to attract transition finance for future-fit hydrocarbons. We presented at three roundtables for the Energy Futures Policy Collaborative on the topics of policy levers that can be used to drive investment, Alberta’s current energy innovation ecosystem and the definition of future-fit hydrocarbon.
- Finally, we published a What Now briefing on whether the time is right to reconsider nuclear energy; published an op-ed on small modular reactors in the Hill Times; and the centre Director appeared as a panelist in a webinar on nuclear energy hosted by Global Public Affairs.

What it means for Canada’s West
A sustainable, responsible approach to energy development is expected by the public, by investors and by governments. It is also the direction in which almost all energy industry players are moving. Responsible energy development can help position Western Canada as a global leader and supplier of choice. Our work will drive understanding of the crucial role Western Canada plays and identify possibilities for our sustainable energy future.

Still to come
In 2021, we will continue our work in this area, with a particular focus on ESG and policy measures that can offer incentives for responsible energy development.
POLICY GOAL

Carbon and climate policies that support prosperity

What we promised
As home to many energy-intensive, high-emissions industries, Western Canada is particularly sensitive to the effects of carbon and climate policies. This creates both opportunities and risks for existing and prospective businesses, and for society as a whole. While carbon and climate policies already receive a lot of attention in the media and among researchers, there are some important gaps in the conversation. In 2020, we promised to continue to shine a light on what works, and what doesn’t.

What we delivered
In 2020, we produced ground-breaking work that helped paint a clear picture of the rapidly evolving policy environment, and where it is headed.

→ We published a compendium of all greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction legislation and regulations across Canada – at the federal, provincial and territorial levels. Despite the large volume of legislation and regulations that exist, no comprehensive list had ever been collated. This list has enormous value for anyone researching or reporting on how GHG emissions are addressed across Canada.

→ We published a major report: A Citizen’s Guide to the Clean Fuel Standard. We followed this with a webinar attended by 235 people. The guide was well-received, and resulted in both media interviews and mentions, such as the ARC Energy Podcast. We published an update in February 2021 that summarized the changes to the CFS regulations published by the government in late December 2020.

→ COVID-19 and the global lockdowns have had an enormous effect on energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. We kept a close eye on implications for the future, and published a What Now policy brief, produced op-eds that appeared in the Globe and Mail and CBC’s The Road Ahead, granted media interviews and spoke in webinars including sessions hosted by Energi Media, Earnsclefe/New West Public Affairs, Alberta Carbon & Energy group and the Rotary Club about this topic.

What it means for Canada’s West
Western Canada is home to many energy-intensive, high-emissions industries, and is particularly sensitive to the effects of carbon and climate policies. Our work helps ensure that carbon and climate policies – at both the national and provincial levels – consider both environmental sustainability and economic prosperity.

Still to come
In 2021, we will continue to keep a close eye on developments at the federal and provincial level. We will also work to ensure that the interests of Western Canada are at the fore as new policies are introduced in the United States by the Biden administration.

POLICY GOAL

Getting to go – getting energy innovation adopted

What we promised
Innovation is key to Canada’s transition to a cleaner energy sector. But the adoption of innovations that could reduce GHG emissions and lower costs faces hurdles. These hurdles include regulatory processes that aren’t optimized to handle innovation; adopters that are reluctant to take on risk; and difficulties in proving technology at a commercial scale. For 2020, we promised to work with a broad range of partners – energy innovators, regulators, technology adopters, accelerators and others – to identify barriers and supports, and recommend changes that increase flexibility and adaptability without sacrificing the environment or well-being.
What we delivered

→ In February 2020 we started publishing the *Energy Innovation Brief*, a monthly round-up of energy innovations that are changing the way we think about and use energy. Ten issues were published in 2020 to a very positive response, with over 300 subscribers, engagement from readers writing in with exciting innovations and a wide social media audience.

→ In collaboration with the Energy Futures Lab, we started a project called Leveraging our Energy Assets for Diversification (or L.E.A.D.). The project focuses on amending legislation and regulations in Alberta that hinder the repurposing of inactive facilities, such as orphan wells, for new energy uses. We also published op-eds in the *Calgary Herald* and the *London Free Press*, and briefings about the topic.

What it means for Canada’s West

Western Canadians are energy innovators. But success relies not just on those efforts alone, but on the functioning of the ecosystem in which they operate. Our work examines that ecosystem, to increase the likelihood that innovation will thrive.

Still to come

In 2021, we will continue to publish the *Energy Innovation Brief* to share stories about the path to an innovative and sustainable energy future. We will also continue working towards policy recommendations that allow for energy repurposing. Finally, we will participate in a project alongside ACTIA and the Foresight Cleantech Accelerator that helps map Alberta’s cleantech sector competencies.

POLICY GOAL

Getting things built in Canada

What we promised

For 2020, we promised to focus on the issue of how to get energy infrastructure built in a way that is both responsible and keeps Canada globally competitive.

What we delivered

→ We monitored and responded to global and national trends, including the influence of COVID-19, and the U.S. election. We published six op-eds discussing what these trends are likely to mean for the natural resources sector, spoke in four webinars and were quoted in 77 media interviews on this topic.

→ We evaluated new developments on the intersection between infrastructure development and Indigenous reconciliation and published an op-ed in the *Globe and Mail* on this topic.

→ We continued to present to interested audiences on relevant federal legislation, including the *Impact Assessment Act* and the tanker ban.

What it means for Canada’s West

Across Canada, the prosperity of the natural resources sector relies on both responsible project development and the building of infrastructure to move products to market. We work to ensure the smooth functioning of both.

Still to come

In 2021, we plan to renew our focus on an integrated Western electricity grid – a critical support as the economy moves towards increasing electrification.
Trade & Investment Centre

POLICY GOAL

The West’s relations with its largest trade partners

What we promised

The United States
The new NAFTA agreement will not resolve all trade tensions with the U.S. Country of origin labelling, grain grading and the omnipresent threat of new unilateral tariffs all require proactive engagement to defend Western Canadian interests. For western provinces far from Ottawa, these interests require direct engagement with U.S. state counterparts.

In 2020, the Trade & Investment Centre continued to build on groundwork laid during the previous year:

> Work with a consortium of Canadian academics on a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council grant to map state-provincial engagement to enable government and businesses to make better choices on where and how to engage.

> Research and recommendations for new pacts between states and provinces to improve the economic competitiveness of western North America.

> Research for provincial engagement activities including continued active membership in groups like the North American competitiveness initiative by the G.W. Bush Presidential Institute.

China
China is the second-largest trade partner for each western province and the largest importer of key agricultural commodities – trade that is increasing every year. Relevant information for businesses and policymakers on China as a trade destination is critical for the West. Over the past five years, the Trade & Investment Centre has made a concerted effort to build knowledge, competence and capacity to work on issues in the relationship with Canada’s second-largest trade partner.

In 2020, the centre will apply that capacity to:

> Translate experience from Australia and Brazil into policy recommendations for the Canadian government to engage China on non-tariff barrier issues in agricultural trade.

> Publish the China Brief news summary of major issues in Western Canada’s relations with China. In its second year, the widely read brief has become an important tool to increase knowledge on China in Western Canada, reach new engaged audiences and highlight western issues in the relationship in Ottawa and abroad.

What we delivered

The United States
Work with the consortium of academics stalled on the academic end. CWF changed focus and conducted a unique analysis of MOUs between western provinces and states in the U.S. This research was used to begin laying the basis for reinstituting governor-premier meetings between Canadian Prairies and U.S. mountain western states.
CWF research and advocacy for the Cascadia Innovation Corridor to consider Calgary as a member included research, outreach to members of the corridor, briefing Alberta-based organizations — including the Government of Alberta — and published op-eds.

On the first day of House of Commons testimony on the new NAFTA, CWF was called to open testimony, following just after Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland and Government of Canada witnesses.

CWF continued participation with the Bush Institute and took part in several other similar working groups and conference calls, often as the only Western Canadian participant.

China

CWF published the most in-depth analysis of U.S.-China agricultural trade, including the only analysis of the impact of the U.S.-China Phase One agreement. The paper incorporates several years of research on how to resolve non-tariff barriers with China and proposes a new strategy for protecting the interest of Western Canada and the country as a whole in engaging China. Our paper was called “insightful, inspiring and practical,” and was widely disseminated across both Canada and China, including on the ground with retailers, consumers and in the Embassy of Canada.

As part of an extensive engagement plan with agriculture producers, CWF has a year-long series of talks on the paper designed through 2021, and delivered the first keynote in 2020.

What it means for Canada’s West

The United States

In NAFTA testimony at the House of Commons, CWF highlighted western provincial government work to build support and advance Canadian interests in the U.S. and urged the federal government to financially support these efforts. This testimony is an example of how CWF ensures that western interests are front and centre in critical national trade policy debates.

China

China is the second-largest trading partner for the West, and all of Canada. Work by CWF provided evidence that more attention needs to be paid to this relationship and also provided new, practical solutions to engagement critical to the West. CWF is one of the few organizations in Canada to provide the depth of research to support this type of approach.

The China Brief is the only publication to focus on Western Canadian issues with Canada’s second-largest trading partner. The brief not only digests information for Western Canada to help inform businesses and policymakers but also helps to inform other parts of Canada and foreign audiences as to what issues are important for the West in the relationship.

Still to come

The United States

We have begun to focus on developing an agenda to restart Premier-Governor engagement between the Canadian Prairies and U.S. mountain west.

China

Public speaking, agricultural stakeholder engagement (including agricultural producers, provincial and federal ministers, deputy ministers and civil servants, and consumers) on When Interests Converge: Agriculture as a basis of re-engagement will be a major undertaking for 2021. We will also research impacts and opportunities for Western Canada in China’s upcoming five-year plan.
**POLICY GOAL**

**Rediscovering other markets**

**What we promised**
For Canada, the easiest way to lessen its overdependence on its two largest markets is by getting more out of its existing trade relationships before striking new agreements. From Mexico to Japan to Europe, Canada has privileged – but underused – access to secure, large and open global middle-class markets. In 2020, the Trade & Investment Centre will:

→ Conduct modelling under the World Customs Organization’s Harmonized System, using the most detailed (HS 6-digit level) code, to identify new trade opportunities and total potential new market share in Japan. Modelling will produce specific information for each of the western provinces.

**What we delivered**

→ Modelled and identified detailed HS 6-digit product level export opportunities based on Japan’s tariff reduction under the CPTPP. This project was done with extensive consultations with provincial export promotion agencies. Modelling data was turned over to these agencies.

→ Four separate, province-specific briefs were prepared on the modelling results.

**What it means for Canada’s West**

→ Improved data and access to data are useful, practical tools to improve efficiency and effectiveness of export promotion activities and increase western exports.

→ Being able to use empirical evidence to identify specific opportunities in existing agreements will better inform the decision-making of Western Canadian businesses to grow exports strategically.

**Still to come**
CWF, in partnership with the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, will launch a visualization of the modelling results to enable public access to this CPTPP-Japan tracker by business associations, chambers of commerce and individual businesses.

**POLICY GOAL**

**Getting to market**

**IMPROVING CANADA’S TRADE INFRASTRUCTURE**

**What we promised**
In 2019, despite significant investments by the private sector, global perception of the quality and reliability of Canada’s trade infrastructure dropped to 31st from a perceived 15th in the World Economic Forum’s rankings. New action at home and more vigorous communication abroad are needed. In 2020, the Trade and Investment Centre will:

→ Model the impact of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) agreement on Canada’s trade infrastructure to enable western provinces and stakeholders to effectively engage the federal government and demonstrate to foreign markets that work is being done in Canada.

→ Finish a strategic framework to guide trade infrastructure planning and prioritization in Canada including translating elements of Infrastructure Australia and other global best practices.

→ Wage an aggressive public education campaign to raise awareness around the importance of improving trade infrastructure and turn policy recommendations from the research into action.

**What we delivered**

→ Work on the strategic infrastructure framework continues. A planned release at a second New West Partnership premiers’ summit on trade infrastructure was postponed due to the pandemic. CWF continues to update the research.
CWF assembled a national coalition of like-minded organizations including the Business Council of Canada, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Western Roadbuilders and Heavy Construction and Canadian Construction Association to support the dissemination of the upcoming trade infrastructure report. That coalition is on stand-by for post-COVID release of the report.

CPTPP infrastructure modelling was completed but is being updated with new CPTPP trade modelling data to provide a post-COVID onset comparison.

**What it means for Canada’s West**
Western Canada depends on exports even more than the rest of the country. Improving our ability to get goods to market is critical for the West. This is one area that requires greater federal government attention and funding. CWF advocacy in partnership with other organizations is critical to ensure that this issue is not lost from the national agenda.

**Still to come**
CWF will produce new, updated trade and infrastructure impact modelling of CPTPP agreement post-COVID onset. We will also launch a public advocacy campaign for improving trade infrastructure and a potential second New West Partnership Trade Infrastructure Summit.

**Other work**

**What we promised**
A principal strength of the Trade & Investment Centre is its ability to anticipate challenges and opportunities that emerge unexpectedly for Western Canada. In 2020, this included:

- Support for development of plant protein and ingredient industry in Western Canada, primarily through service on the board of the Plant Protein Alliance of Alberta and collaboration with Protein Industries Canada.

- Identifying opportunities for investment attraction and economic diversification, primarily through initiatives such as expansion of the Cascadia Innovation Corridor to include Calgary and removing regulatory barriers to expand the food processing industry in Alberta.

**What we delivered**
- Continued drive for profile, public engagement and stakeholder reach via serving on the board of directors of the Plant Protein Alliance of Alberta.
- Advocacy and briefing on the Cascadia Initiative for provincial government, officials, MLAs and investment attraction organizations.
- Work on removing regulatory barriers to growing the food processing industry has stalled due to difficulties gathering data and may be cancelled.

**What it means for Canada’s West**
Diversification means expansion of markets and product portfolios. Whether it is plant protein, greenhouses or sub-national competitiveness for investment attraction, evidence-based research and analysis will identify new opportunities for Western Canadian trade and investment. Work done on engaging sub-nationally between Western Canada and Western-states is important in addressing key trade issues. These efforts will facilitate economic growth of the West.
Skills and competencies

LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION

What we promised
The world of work is changing, and the most in-demand skills and competencies are often transferable between jobs. Many of the thousands of people who were laid off from Canada’s oil patch are now working in different sectors. Many more could be if they and their potential employers better understood how well their skills transfer.

In 2020 we will examine the need for labour market information, including national occupation classifications, to better reflect the transferability of skills in occupational profiles.

What we delivered
While we were in the research phase of this work, the Labour Market Information Council received $3 million to pilot the creation of an open cloud-based database to collect, store, organize and retrieve accurate and timely labour market information. This matches our recommendations to the federal government in 2018, when we recommended a methodology to update the Career Handbook; we will provide input to this project as appropriate.

What it means for Canada’s West
This tool will help ease career transitions by aiding unemployed workers to identify opportunities that closely align with their knowledge, skills and personal preferences.

PAN-CANADIAN COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS

What we promised
Our work on pan-Canadian competency frameworks continues, including efforts to build competency profiles of specific jobs in specific sectors and amalgamate them into more comprehensive frameworks over time. In 2020, we will document what we have learned since we published Matchup: A case for pan-Canadian competency frameworks in 2017.

What we delivered
Governments and organizations across the country have used the ideas in Matchup to build their own frameworks, and expressed interest in the next phase of this work. COVID-19 delayed some of the required employer input, but the update to Matchup is planned for release in 2021. We also co-authored an op-ed in the Calgary Herald that highlighted the need for a competency framework for Calgary as a starting point for becoming a learning city.

What it means for Canada’s West
Competency frameworks are a vital tool for matching people with jobs and jobs with people. They are being developed by a variety of organizations including industry associations and post-secondary institutions. An architecture for these frameworks is the next step. Once built and linked, these frameworks will make matching people and jobs easier, in the West and across Canada.

Still to come
Our architecture for competency frameworks developed through experience in a variety of industry sectors will be published and widely disseminated in 2021.
**MODULAR, STACKABLE CREDENTIALS**

**What we promised**
In 2020, the Human Capital Centre will revisit the issue of modular, stackable credentials for Canada’s trades, to better ensure apprentices have the skills they need to succeed in their workplaces – and to be recognized for what they know. We will look at the progress of Ontario, B.C. and other jurisdictions move to modular, stackable competency-based training and assessment for their apprentices.

**What we delivered**
In the U.S., many states are expanding their apprenticeship models to effectively develop skills, while England recently recommended more value be placed on the apprenticeship system. The Government of Alberta’s Skills for Jobs Taskforce has submitted a report that recommends the system be expanded to go beyond the skilled trades. Our report is being revised to include these developments and will be released in 2021. We published op-eds on workforce renewal and expanding apprenticeships, and held an Arthur J.E. Child Pop Up Policy on New approaches to integrate work and learning.

**What it means for Canada’s West**
Employers in skilled construction, mechanical, automotive and personal service trades understand apprenticeship, and have embraced it as a way to develop their workforce. Broadening the industry sectors in which apprenticeship is a recognised workforce development tool requires more involvement from employers not used to such a high level of responsibility for employee training.

**Still to come**
Recognizing that apprenticeship was the original form of work integrated learning (WIL), later in the year we will look more closely at ways to develop WIL opportunities for more learners.

**DIGITAL SKILLS**

**What we promised**
Digital skills are critical for success in every sector but for people living in rural and remote areas, building these skills and the creation of digital opportunities presents a unique challenge. What are the problems that need to be addressed and what are the lessons from economic development strategies in other countries that can inform decisions on policy and programming here?

**What we delivered**
Our report, Upgrade: Towards a Rural Digital Economic Strategy, was released in July 2020. Timely due to the pandemic, this report highlighted the importance of not just the connection to high-speed Internet, but also preparation for its arrival in rural and remote communities. We highlighted rural, digital and economic strategies from around the world and right next door to provide insight into the way a digital strategy could be developed for rural areas to ensure the equipment, skills and leadership are in place to integrate the technology to locally needed services.

**What it means for Canada’s West**
When information dissemination, learning, work, health care and shopping went online due to COVID-19, people in rural and remote areas felt the lack of broadband connectivity most keenly. This report helps government leaders understand the types of policies needed to reduce the digital divide that exists.

**Still to come**
In 2021, if funding permits, we will look at the importance of leadership and organizational culture in digital transformation, especially in the nonprofit sector.
**ESSENTIAL SKILLS**

**What we promised**
We will continue our advisory role with Employment and Social Development Canada’s (ESDC) committee working to renew the essential skills framework with the inclusion of some soft skills.

**What we delivered**
New skills have become critical as the economy has shifted to become more knowledge-based and the use of technology has increased. CWF was part of an ESDC advisory committee that made the recommendation to incorporate creativity and innovation, collaboration and adaptability into the new *Skills for Success* framework. We are also on the team that is researching the best approaches to measurement of these new skills. The federal government will announce this new framework and tools to assist adult educators in 2021. We published op-eds on literacy and learning; we also released *Competency Frameworks and Canada’s Essential Skills*.

**What it means for Canada’s West**
When the federal government launches this framework, employers will have a method to determine the most common cognitive, behavioural and social skills they need their employees to have – and to what level. With these tools, employers will be able to assess current and potential employees and make better training, hiring and promotion decisions.

**Still to come**
We will continue to offer expertise on this advisory committee and will be ambassadors for the framework.

**POLICY GOAL**

**Reshaping the post-secondary education system in Western Canada**

**COMPETENCY-BASED ASSESSMENT AND MICRO CREDENTIALING**

**What we promised**
Post-secondary institutions across the country are developing modular courses that meet the needs of employers and offer competency-based assessment and micro credentialing to students. We will highlight best practices.

**What we delivered**
As a partner in the *Bridging the Gap* project led by the Pivot-Ed team at Bow Valley College and funded by the Future Skills Centre, we’ve promised to contribute expertise and report on its innovative approaches. Through the project, colleges across Canada will: 1) work with employers to determine the exact competencies needed for jobs in which they experience shortages; 2) use AI to assess competencies in people interested in filling these roles; 3) award micro credentials for competencies gained prior to the initial assessment, regardless of how learned; 4) identify learning content to develop the specific competencies required; and 5) award micro credentials to potential workers who have successfully completed competency-based learning requirements. As with many field projects, COVID-19 restrictions have slowed progress. We continue work on this project.

**What it means for Canada’s West**
This project puts employer needs at the heart of learning for specific jobs, provides learning curated to meet competency requirements rapidly and has the potential to help overcome skills shortages quickly.
**CHANGE IN POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION**

**What we promised**
Post-secondary institutions in Western Canada face an increased focus on performance-based funding, and an overall reduction in government funding. The number of domestic undergraduate students is decreasing, the number of international students may soon peak and there is a huge need to offer solutions for mid-career professionals. We will examine designs for a sustainable and effective college and polytechnic sector that meets the changing needs of students, builds the competencies required by employers and respects taxpayer resources.

**What we delivered**
COVID-19 has changed the way higher education is delivered. Some recommendations for a redesign of the college sector that made sense early in 2020 would now be redundant. Our research paused when the Government of Alberta contracted a McKinsey review of post-secondary education in Alberta with a very similar goal.

**What it means for Canada’s West**
The results of the McKinsey study are due for release. A new Post-Secondary Learning Act will be tabled soon.

**STEM GRADUATES**

**What we promised**
Statistics Canada reported in 2016 that only 47 per cent of Canada’s STEM bachelor’s degree graduates and only 66 per cent of engineering graduates worked in STEM fields. In 2020, we will investigate potential reasons for the underemployment of some of our most expensively trained people, including what appears to be a gap between what is taught and the competencies required in the workforce.

**What we delivered**
New statistics show a steady increase in STEM enrolments since the early 2000s, while growth in the number of STEM jobs has slowed. In 2020, we began our investigation of possible reasons. That work continues.

**What it means for Canada’s West**
While the number of STEM graduates has increased, employers consistently call for a blend of competencies that includes skills such as collaboration and critical thinking associated with liberal arts programs. There is also a need for graduates with interdisciplinary capacity such as engineering and computer science or biological science and business.

**Still to come**
A paper will examine the issue of the mismatch between STEM graduates and available jobs and will make recommendations on how to get more STEM grads into the jobs for which they are training.

**Other work**
In September 2020 we published our inaugural edition of The Future of Work and Learning Brief. This monthly brief highlights how education and training are changing today to build the skills and competencies needed for the work of the future. We published four editions in 2020.
We thank our supporters

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