
IPS Update



VOLUME 3, ISSUE 2

June 2004

Research for and by Indigenous Peoples: ICARP II

There is an old joke about three people, one of whom is indigenous and two who are researchers, from different parts of the Arctic standing by a river, bragging about their respective wealth. To demonstrate how rich they are, each proceeds to throw into the river something they have too much of. The American throws away cash, the Norwegian, oil. They turn and look at their indigenous companion. He pauses, turns, grabs a researcher and throws him into the water.

The point is clear: too many outside researchers. For generations Indigenous Peoples everywhere in the Arctic were the subjects of research studies. As objects for analysis, medical researchers took blood samples and measured bodies while anthropologists looked at social formations and customs, often taking with them “artefacts” for exhibitions around the world; biologists came every year to study migrations of birds and terrestrial species while glaciologists drilled and sampled.

All of this work added to the collective human store of knowledge about the Arctic. However, it almost always treated the human occupants of the region as subjects, passive and without interest in the work being carried on around and upon them. It ignored the vast wealth of knowledge that Indigenous Peoples possessed, and it denied their right to have a say in the work being carried out on them and in their lands.

Fortunately, most of the Arctic has moved away from these attitudes. Indigenous Peoples now have a much greater say in the kinds of research being carried out, how the information is to be used, and who owns it. The value of intellectual partnerships with Indigenous Peoples is being expressed in a number of ways in the circumpolar Arctic:

- Most recently in the declaration of the June 2004 Meeting of Ministers of Education and Science of the Arctic Council Member States pointed to the importance of “involving young researchers of

indigenous origin in national and international research and scientific exchange programs.” It also called for ways to improve awareness of “the Arctic region's cultural diversity and the contribution of indigenous knowledge and culture to the sustainable development of the Arctic” and support for education in indigenous languages.

- The founding Declaration of the Arctic Council (1996) recognizes “the traditional knowledge of the indigenous people of the Arctic and their communities and taking note of its importance and that of Arctic science and research to the collective understanding of the circumpolar Arctic.”
- Indigenous knowledge and perspectives infuse the council’s Arctic Climate Impact Assessment and the Arctic Human Development Report.
- Many regions have their own research guidelines – for example, in the Canadian Inuit territory of Nunavut researchers must apply for a license from the Nunavut Research Institute.
- An Indigenous Issues Committee was recently formed to guide curriculum development at the University of the Arctic.

This is an impressive list, but now it’s time for the next steps. In the coming years, there will be two major international research oriented exercises in which voices of the Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic need to be heard: the

continues...

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second International Conference on Arctic Research Planning (ICARP II) and the International Polar Year 2007-08 (IPY). Both represent an opportunity for Indigenous Peoples to directly influence the research agenda in their Arctic homelands for the coming decade.

ICARP II. It's an odd acronym but what it is trying to do is important. In November 2005, Arctic residents, senior and young scholars, policy experts and science and land managers will gather in Copenhagen "to discuss the research needed to address problems, priorities and concerns of those who live in or near the Arctic." According to the ICARP website, "It will also address the linkages between Arctic and global processes. It will formulate physical, biological and social science projects and implementation plans that are necessary to address issues concerning Arctic natural resources and environmental quality and that can guide international cooperation over the next 5-10 years."

Arctic Indigenous Peoples have been invited in from the start. Last year, the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat was asked by conference organizers to help make sure the Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council were both aware and involved in the development of the research agendas that will come out of the conference. Following a discussion between the Indigenous Peoples Organizations, Carl Christian Olsen (Puju) of ICC Greenland was appointed as a representative on the organizing committee. Other PPs contributed research proposals to the various organizing committees.

The major conference themes are:

1. Understanding the coupling between those humans and natural systems that govern the behaviour of the overall Arctic system – sustainable development and Arctic economies; Indigenous Peoples and change; coastal processes.
2. Identifying the governing natural systems in the arctic region that are essential to understanding the behaviour of the overall Arctic system – the deep central basin of the Arctic Ocean; ocean margins, the Arctic shelf; terrestrial processes and systems; future trends and patterns of change in climate, ozone, ecosystems, etc.
3. Understanding the essential social and societal systems across the arctic region that control the overall behaviour of the arctic system -- Vulnerability, resilience, and rapid change in the Arctic.
4. Enhancing the capacity to meet social interests and to enable a robust set of programs of scientific research in the Arctic region.

Over the next weeks and months a dozen working groups will begin putting together material for the conference. It is worth repeating: The goal of ICARP II is not to present

research results but to look at what research needs to be done in the future.

And it won't be just talk, the first ICARP conference was held in 1995 in the United States. It was attended by over 300 people and most of the plans developed there have been implemented and have contributed significantly to Arctic research and knowledge. In the next edition of Update we will have information on the International Polar Year 2007-08.

Jpc

Trends in Human Development of the Arctic

Numerous reports indicate that people in the north are sicker, poorer and are living under worse conditions than people elsewhere. Northern people, however, do not always recognize themselves in these descriptions. We northerners feel we live rich lives in many ways, in ways that people with a 'southern' perspective may not recognize.

Many living condition surveys use criteria defined for conditions further south than we live, and thus do not take into account what constitutes a good life in the north. Another difficulty is that national surveys for international reports often look at the country as a whole, and look at the inhabitants as a single group of people. Differences in health, education and economy between the north and the south are not reflected.

The Arctic Human Development Report (AHDR) is a regional assessment which Iceland has supported through its program for the Chairmanship of the Arctic Council. The assessment will be based on already existing research and will present the trends of various aspects of life in the circumpolar region. This kind of a regional assessment could make a useful contribution to the United Nations Human Development Report (UNHDR), which looks at human development in the world as a whole.

This first ever AHDR exercise is a starting point. It will not fully cover all aspects of life in the north. Instead it will focus on major trends within various areas chosen by the Report Steering Committee. It is divided into 13 chapters, including health, education, economy, gender, and culture.

It is hoped that the AHDR will become a true baseline study for the future work of the Arctic Council. The findings of the report should also be useful for other institutions working with Arctic issues, such as the University of the Arctic.

The Indigenous Peoples Organisations of the Arctic have been involved throughout the AHDR process with representatives on the Report Steering Committee and the Executive Committee, which identified the lead authors

and co-authors. This process has ensured a good representation of authors and contributors from an indigenous perspective. The AHDR shows how it is possible to integrate traditional knowledge and science, and can be used as an example on how to do so in the future.

The AHDR will probably contribute to break down some myths about the Arctic being only a deliverer of resources to the rest of the world. Another exciting outcome of the AHDR exercise is that it has brought Arctic social scientists together for the first time, just as the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment brought climate scientists together. These international links help to strengthen the Arctic as a region.

It is further hoped that the AHDR will reveal some gaps in the existing knowledge about the development in the Arctic, gaps which Arctic Council, and in particular the Sustainable Development Working Group, should base their future project proposals on. At the very least, this is a beginning of what should become a regular examination of human development in the Arctic.

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IPS UPDATE

The Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat (IPS) was established in 1994. The main task of IPS is to facilitate the involvement of Arctic Indigenous Peoples' organisations - the Permanent Participants - in the Arctic Council, particularly with regard to sustainable development, the environment and traditional knowledge.

The Indigenous Peoples' organisations approved as Permanent Participants in the Arctic Council are:

- Aleut International Association (AIA)
- Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC)
- Gwich'in Council International (GCI)
- Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC)
- Russian Association of the Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON)
- Saami Council (SC)

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The Impact of Climate Change on Traditional Food

by *Cindy Dickson, AAC and Laurie Chan, CINE*

The Canadian North is vast, rich in natural resources and includes the boreal forest, taiga and Arctic ecosystems. Indigenous peoples top the food chain in all three ecosystems. Athabaskan peoples in northern Canada eat large quantities of traditional foods obtained through hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering. Since foods bought from shops are much more expensive in many northern communities than in the south, traditional food provides much of a quality diet at relatively low cost.

Besides its nutritional values, the traditional diet is also a source of cultural strength and is critical for the social, mental and spiritual well-being of individuals and communities.

Northern food production systems are under stress from a variety of forces. Many northern indigenous communities experience periods of crisis in food supply due to the changes in when natural foods are available. Climate change will increase those changes in the availability of natural foods. Some species harvested for food may decrease, while others will change where they are found, or when they are found in a particular place. Some of the predicted and currently experienced changes in the North may create positive changes in animal numbers and distributions or provide opportunities to hunt new species as migration patterns and distributions shift.

The potential health effects on indigenous peoples due to changes in natural food resources may also be indirect. The transport of contaminants, and how they build up in plants and animals will be affected by climate change. Predicting those changes remains a challenge.

Traditional foods can provide protection against many diseases, which are more common among southern populations. Losing access to traditional foods means we risk losing their health benefits.

The effects of climate changes in the North on the ability of indigenous peoples to get traditional foods are a reality in many communities today. However, the extent of these impacts and what they mean for the nutritional well-being of individuals and communities is not yet well understood.

A project developed in partnership by two members of the Arctic Athabaskan Council, the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN) and Dene Nation, as well as the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (Canada's national Inuit organization) and the Center for Indigenous Peoples Nutrition and Environment (CINE) of McGill University and Laval University in Quebec will investigate the potential health impacts of climate change on three northern Indigenous communities.

Strategies for adaptation to minimize potential impacts will be developed with the communities involved that will integrate local and traditional knowledge, wildlife biology, information on the harm caused by contaminants, food composition and nutrient requirement, food availability and effects of environmental changes, cultural and socioeconomic factors. Education and communication initiatives are also planned to help people to make their own informed decisions on food choice.

Appropriate adaptation strategies will be cooperatively developed in the three communities. These strategies will be of value for environmental and health-planning exercises throughout the Canadian North and potentially the circumpolar world in the face of climate-related changes.

Power over POP's

Arctic Indigenous Peoples can take credit for playing a significant part in an international treaty on toxic chemicals which came into force on May 17th, 2004.

The treaty bans some of the world's worst pollutants, and allows for new pollutants to also be controlled or banned. Some of the most important information about the banned chemicals came from the Arctic.

The Arctic Council's Arctic Monitoring and Assessment program was particularly effective in providing information about chemicals accumulating in the Arctic, and how they are affecting the Arctic's wildlife and indigenous peoples.

Once the indigenous peoples became aware of the contamination in their traditional foods, they started to take action. Representatives from the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, and the Arctic Athabaskan Council all took part in the negotiations leading to the signing of the treaty.

They constantly reminded delegates that lives and cultures in the Arctic were at risk, unless action was taken on stopping the northward flow of toxic chemicals. Traditional singers and dancers from northern Canada reinforced the theme of the cultures at risk from POPs, while delegates made their points forcefully at negotiating sessions, briefed other delegates, and informed the public through the media.

States from around the world listened, and signed, then ratified the treaty. It now applies to almost sixty countries.

Two notable exceptions are the Russian Federation and the United States. Although both Arctic states have signed the treaty, they have not ratified it. This means that the terms of the treaty do not yet apply to either of those countries.

Indigenous peoples are urging both countries to ratify the treaty, closing the ring of Arctic states committed to dealing with chemical threats to Arctic peoples.

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What is the Stockholm Convention?

The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) is an international treaty designed to end the production and use of some of the world's most poisonous chemicals.

Many of these chemicals have been used to kill insects and other pests. Others were used as industrial chemicals, or were produced as a by-product of industrial processes, including burning of wastes. What they have in common is that they harm people and the environment, they last a long time, and they travel over great distances, transported by the air and water.

The Convention picks twelve of these chemicals that it intends to try to get rid of. They include PCBs, Dioxins and DDT.

The Convention allows countries that belong to it to add more chemicals to the list of substances to be banned or restricted in member countries.

The Convention was signed in 2001 after several years of negotiations between representatives of more than 120 countries. After fifty of those countries officially ratified the Convention, it came into force.

Once the Convention comes into force, countries that belong to it are bound to take certain steps:

- ✓ End the production and use of some chemicals, and restrict the production and use of others.
- ✓ Clean up stockpiles of unwanted and out of date chemicals. Many of these chemicals are stored in unsafe conditions, and are poisoning the water, animals, and people.
- ✓ Develop a plan within two years that shows how the country will meet its obligations under the convention.
- ✓ Try to stop the production and use of new chemicals which are like the ones already in the Convention.

The Convention recognizes that it will be too costly and difficult for some countries to clean up the chemicals on their own. It commits richer countries to helping out, with money, and with technical help.

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ACIA policy process back on track

It looks as if Arctic indigenous peoples have been successful in helping persuade some of the Arctic states to stick with the original vision for policy recommendations to accompany the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment. The assessment is due for release this November.

The scientific assessment, and the overview or summary that will accompany it answer the question: What is happening with the Arctic climate? Policy recommendations will begin to address the question: What happens next? Permanent Participant representatives working on the assessment wanted to be sure that question was answered, so that action follows from the assessment.

The goal is to have the policy recommendations ready for the meeting of Arctic Council Ministers in November. The Chair of the Arctic Council is now steering the process, which will work from an earlier policy draft. There is agreement on the following steps:

- Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs) and Permanent Participants will provide the Chair with comments on the existing draft by the middle of July.
- On the basis of these comments, the Chair will draft a new policy text and send it back to SAOs and Permanent Participants in early August.
- The Chair will invite both groups to a drafting session, later in August, where it is hoped, the policy text will be finalized.

This plan is a great improvement, and a great relief. Permanent Participant representatives can now be sure that some of the concerns of Arctic indigenous peoples, and their ideas for coping with climate change, will be discussed by the Arctic states.

Arctic Council Permanent Participants: Inuit Circumpolar Conference

- An interview with the ICC Executive Council Member, Carl Christian Olsen, Puju.

The Arctic Council is the only high-level international forum in which Indigenous Peoples' representatives sit at the same table as governments. Called Permanent Participants (PPs), each of these organisations has its own history, concerns, and unique voice. Working together as Permanent Participants at the Arctic Council gives northern Indigenous Peoples the opportunity to speak directly to the governments of the circumpolar states. IPS Update has been profiling each of the six Permanent Participants.



Carl Christian Olsen, ICC

Inuit are a distinct people with common language, culture and traditions closely related to hunting, whaling and fishing, which have been their traditional livelihood for thousands of years. Inuit inhabit great parts of the circumpolar region: from Chukotka in the west to Greenland in the east. It is estimated that there are about 150,000 Inuit today, including urban Inuit living in cities like Seattle, Montreal, Copenhagen, St. Petersburg and Moscow. In Denmark alone, there are approximately 10,000 Inuit. About 70,000-90,000 of Inuit speak versions of Inuktitut, their language.

The establishment of different nation states in the areas the Inuit traditionally use, the impact of colonialism and influence of missionaries created different influences and approaches in education, literacy, religion, ethics, and governance for Inuit and thus created differences among the people. The only Inuit who have not been strongly influenced by missionaries are the Chukotka's. Inuit have inhabited their areas for at least 6,000 years. Today, many Inuit are holding modern life styles, but keeping their Inuit identity through their language and traditional practices is still important to them.

Different Inuit areas have different political structures which provides various degrees of control over their own lives - from hardly any influence in Chukotka to full self-governance as in the Canadian territory of Nunavut.

What is Inuit Circumpolar Conference?

The ICC is an international Inuit organisation, which has its goals and objectives to promote the interests of Inuit among Inuit and also internationally. It was established in 1977 in Barrow, Alaska.

What are ICC's main priority and focuses?

ICC exists beside and independently of the other political structures in place for Inuit. In matters outside the self-government structures, the ICC promotes Inuit interests and we can act on behalf of Inuit independently to promote the Inuit way of living. We do, however, interact very closely with Inuit governments, which is appreciated both by the self-government structures, by the national states and by Inuit themselves. But one of the main and most important messages of the ICC is to keep the integrity of Inuit.

How is ICC Organised?

The Inuit are living in four different nation states, which form the four regions that elect 18 delegates each to the ICC General Assembly. Two representatives from each region are elected to the ICC Executive Council, making it a board of nine members together with the international chair, elected by the General Assembly. The International Chair's office moves with the presidency. Every area has its own structure of ICC with, chair and vice-chair and a delegation. The regional constituencies represent all interest groups of each area; like in Greenland there are e.g. the hunters, women, youth and workers, writers union and parliament, that are relevant for the work of the ICC.

Members of the Executive Council receive a political mandate which you do not delegate to the staff. The Chair could mandate some of the staff members to act on her behalf, but in the presentations to, for example, the Arctic Council or Permanent Forum, you would never delegate your political mandate to your staff.

Do Executive Council members have particular jobs?

When the council and the Chair are elected, the roles and responsibilities are divided. ICC Greenland is responsible for the ongoing work with the human rights in Geneva, the Permanent Forum, World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), UNESCO, and we are part of different aspects of the Arctic Council to which I am the SAO member.

The Alaskans are the ones who are knowledgeable about the issues of oil exploration and whaling. The Canadians are also specialists and are responsible on the environmental issues.

What is the working language of ICC?

The working language is English, but at the assembly every Inuk can use his/her own language, and interpretation is provided. However, an Inuk that comes from West Greenland and spends some time in the Bering Strait area will, after some time, be able to communicate without having to study it first.

The Inuit dialects have different ways of writing words today - depending on the ideas of the people who brought writing to the Inuit. The ICC has a project, which I am leading, develop a common base of communication, since we pronounce words the same but write them in different ways.

How is ICC funded?

The funding varies from region to region. ICC Greenland receives its core funding from the Greenland Home Rule, and is free to develop its own budget and set its own priorities. ICC Canada receives its funding from different sources: both from the Canadian government, some external funding, and also some private funding. ICC Alaska has a similar arrangement. For ICC Chukotka, the other three ICC sections provide support, and we pay in turns for their travels, when we have Council meetings.

How would you describe your relationship to the Arctic Council or your role in the Arctic Council?

I think that the Permanent Participants, especially ICC, Saami Council and RAIPON have good relation with the rest of the SAOs and nation states, and also the other PPs are catching up. It is a process to go through, because when you are dealing with your own government, you have to separate your own issues from the international ones, because you have to keep your own integrity as a people. Even though you are citizens of Greenland, you are not necessarily promoting through the ICC the interest of Greenland government alone. I think we have good relations with the alternating chairs of the Arctic Council.

Do you have any formal cooperation with any of the other PP Organisations?

The caucus we have together through IPS could be used to agree on having common stand on different issues, so that we in the Arctic Council can say that one organization would take on a particular issue, and the other one take another issue. Now every organisation is taking care of all the issues. This could save a lot of resources, compared to if every organisation tries to catch the whole thing. If you have common and mutual understanding we could achieve much more.

How do you see your role as a PP in the Arctic Council, do you think you have influence?

Sometimes I think we have more influence than some of the nation states. Because we are up to the issues many times: we have more sensitivity to some of the issues than some of the national states.

What would the Arctic Council have been without the PPs?

If you listen to the scientific approaches to the Arctic Council presentations, the involvement of the people of the Arctic is almost nothing. I think we have given the Arctic Council the human dimension, the human face of the Arctic Council. And we are still insisting on implementing this because a lot of western countries see the Arctic only as nature without peoples. We have all been to international fora like at the United Nations. Working on these issues we meet other Indigenous Peoples. I think what we have achieved in the Arctic is that we are able to organise ourselves as one people, and work together with other than that group of one people, like Inuit and Saami. We are able to act very fast in taking positions compared to other groups of Indigenous Peoples. They are now in a process of learning this, and I think it is a good example that we also exercise our experience in that context: like in Africa, in South East Asia.

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The Day After Tomorrow

Another 'America Saves the World movie'. That is what I was expecting when I arrived at the theatre to see 'The Day After Tomorrow'. I was shocked to learn they did not save the world or at least America. Like most other extreme disaster movies I have seen, they always avert continental or world disasters with only America to thank. I have come to expect this from a Hollywood movie.

This movie was dealing with climate change in a very exaggerated way. There were definitely some comical moments; well at least I found them comical. The Vice-President of America denied climate change and refused to acknowledge that anything could happen. When the Americans are forced to flee to Mexico, the Mexicans close the borders until all foreign debt is cleared.

Although this movie did bring climate change to the minds of people in an exaggerated way, it is a movie. This being said climate change is a very real serious problem and should be dealt with seriously. Maybe from this movie people will start to look at the real issues around climate change. Or on the other hand take this movie as real life.

All in all I did enjoy the movie, but it was a movie, not a documentary on climate change. It is something Hollywood thought up to entertain people. I was entertained for the 2 plus hours.

For facts about climate change please visit the following:

www.acia.uaf.edu

www.ipcc.ch

www.iisd.org

<http://www.sierraclub.ca/national/postings/index.html>

pa

My Internship

For the past 5 months I have had the pleasure of being a part of the team at the Arctic Council, Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat. On Jan. 26, I started my first experience working abroad for an international organization. I had been waiting for an experience like this for a long time.

When getting ready to move to Copenhagen I did not have enough time to come up with many expectations. The move here was extremely fast. For some reason I thought it would be a lot like Canada. Well it is not, there are definitely some major differences that took me by surprise. The one thing that worried me was the language barrier. This is the first country I have been where I did not know any of the language. It was a bit intimidating, although there is no problem being understood in English. I found it very weird at first talking to people, knowing that they could understand my English but I could not understand their language.

While working at IPS I have been involved in two major projects. They were to develop a 'guidebook' for Traditional Knowledge and compile a comprehensive list of possible funding sources for us by PP's. As these projects round to completion I look back at all I have learned and am glad I took the opportunity put forward to me and came to the Arctic Council, IPS.

I have learned so much about the Circumpolar North and myself during this invaluable experience. The North covers such a vast and diverse area but it still can seem so small at times. When you meet people on the other side of the world who share common acquaintances as you do in Canada you are reminded at how small the world can be.

This opportunity has allowed me to gain new experiences that will help me wherever my path shall lead.

I would like to thank the staff at IPS, John, Alona, Gunn-Britt and Laila for making me feel at home and always being willing to answer my questions and help in any way they could. They made this experience what it was.

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Schedule of Events 2004	
September	
3 - 6	6th Arctic Parliamentarians Conference , Nuuk, Greenland
13 - 16	SDWG and SDAP Workshop , Whitehorse, Canada Web-site: http://www.sdwg.org
13 - 16	CAFF X , Anchorage, Alaska, USA Web-site: http://www.caff.is
29/9 - 1/10	American Association for the Advancement of Science's 55th Arctic Conference , Anchorage Alaska
27 - 29	Indigenous Rights and Gendered Representations , Tromso, Norway Web-site: http://www.sami.uit.no/forum/
29/9 - 2/10	Knowledge in the Next Generation , Tromso, Norway Web-site: http://www.unesco.no
October	
6 - 9	Saami 18th Conference and the Saami Council 50 years Anniversary Honningsvåg, Norway Web-site: http://www.saamicouncil.net/?deptid=2197
November	
9 - 12	ACIA International Scientific Symposium On Climate Change In The Arctic , Reykjavik, Iceland Web-site: http://www.acia.uaf.edu/pages/symposium.html
22 - 23	SAO Meeting, Reykjavik, Iceland Web-site: http://www.arctic-council.org
24	Arctic Council Ministerial, Reykjavik, Iceland Web-site: http://www.arctic-council.org
December	
6 - 17	COP 10 , Buenos Aires, Argentina Web-site: http://unfccc.int/cop10/index.html