



INUIT CIRCUMPOLAR COUNCIL ALASKA

**THE ROLE OF PROVIDING -
INUIT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES:**
YOUTH, ELDERS, ACTIVE HUNTERS AND
GATHERERS WORKSHOP REPORT



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ABOUT THE INUIT CIRCUMPOLAR COUNCIL (ICC)

Founded in 1977 by the late Eben Hopson, Sr. of Utqiagvik, Alaska (formerly Barrow), the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) has flourished and grown into a major international non-governmental organization (NGO) representing approximately 180,000 Inuit of Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka (Russia). The organization holds Economic and Social Council NGO Consultative Status II at the United Nations and is a Permanent Participant at the Arctic Council. To thrive in our circumpolar homeland of Inuit Nunaat, we had the vision to realize that we must speak with a united voice on issues of common concern and combine our energies and talents towards protecting and promoting our way of life. The principal goals of ICC are, therefore, to:

- Strengthen unity among Inuit of the circumpolar region;
- Promote Inuit rights and interests on an international level;
- Develop and encourage long-term policies that safeguard the Arctic environment;
- Seek full and active partnership in the political, economic, and social development of circumpolar region.

ICC represents the interests of Inuit and we have offices in four Arctic regions – Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka. Though each of our communities are unique, we are one people, in a single homeland, across four countries.

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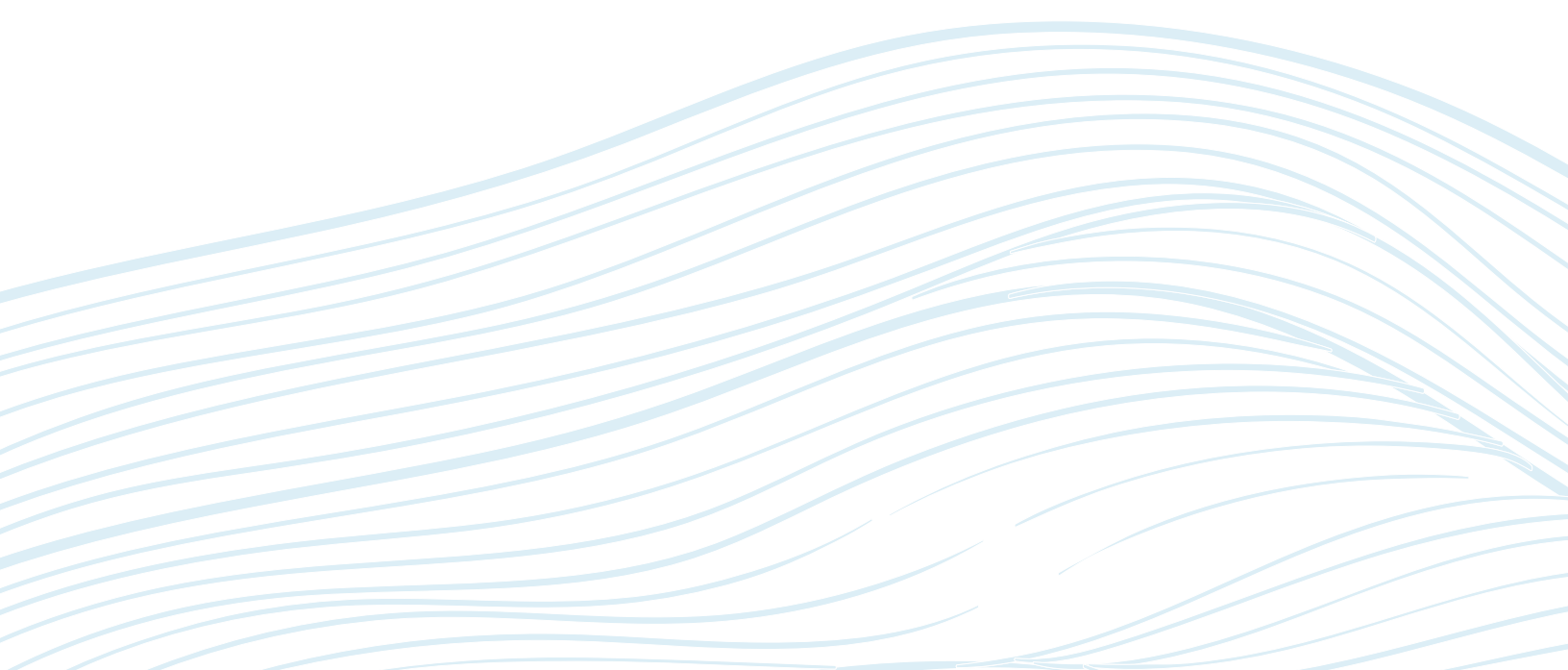
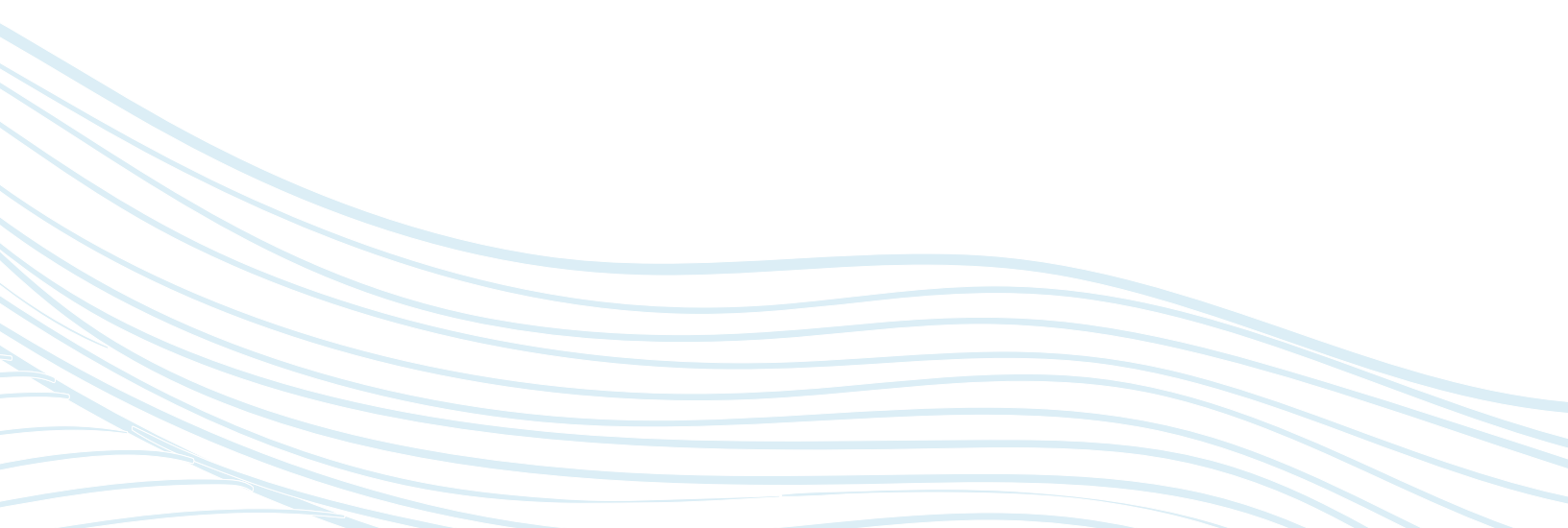


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The meeting was facilitated by Carolina Behe of ICC Alaska and Jonella Larson White of the Foraker Group, with assistance from Shannon Williams and Eilene Adams of ICC Alaska. Additionally, Britt’Nee Brower facilitated a thought-provoking lunchtime discussion about the connections between food sovereignty and Inuit Art. Carolina Behe and Shannon Williams prepared the report.

Quyanainni/Koana/Quyana/Igamsiganaghalek/Quyanaq!

We are grateful to the many people whose help and support made the Youth, Elders, and Active Hunters and Gatherers Meeting possible.

Quyana to the community of Bethel for hosting us, with special thanks to Vivian Korthuis and Jennifer Hooper with the Association of Village Council Presidents and Mary Sattler Peltola with the Kuskokwim River Inter- Tribal Fish Commission for all of your support and assistance in the preparation, organization, and implementation of the meeting and associated events.

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Quyana to Benjamin Charles with the Association of Village Council Presidents Yupiit Piciyarait Museum, for welcoming us into the museum, for sharing your knowledge and time, and for providing a lunch time discussion about Yup’ik mask making.

Quyanaqpuk to the North slope Borough’s support staff, David Maasak Leavitt and Lucia Johnston for providing support, quickly resupplying the pilot bread and for adding to a strong environment.

Quyana/Quyanaqpak to the artists, Britt’Nee Brower (Utkiagvik) and Ryan Romer (Bethel) for your contributions and powerful artwork. And **quyanaqpak** Britt’Nee for facilitating a though provoking discussion on the connections between food sovereignty and Inuit art. **Quyana** Ann Fienup-Riordan for contributing to a strong environment, for providing support, and tirelessly taking notes.

Quyana to all of the participants for your time and valuable contributions to this project!



From left to right – Top row – Ariana Nelson, Jonella Larson White, Billy Adams, Chukita Gruben, Josiah Olemaun, Alecia Jade Lennie, Kendall Archie, Chantel Gruben, Shannon Williams; Second row – Ryan Romer, Ann Fienup-Riordan, Archie Eric Ervin, Jerry Inglangasuk, Roland White, Eben William Hopson, JD Storr, Joe Arey Sr., Dang Dang Gruben, John Orr, Miles Cleveland, Jared Nayakik; Third row – Eilene Adams, Sandra Arey, Dalee Sambo- Dorough, Britt’Nee Brower, Maasak Leavitt, Anna Ashenfelter, Roy Ashenfelter, Dean Arey, Vanessa Cunningham, Jennifer Hooper, Janelle Carl, Mary Peltolta, Vera Metcalf, Orlin Gologergen, Flora Brower, Lucia Johnston, Ben Charles, Denise Kinegak, Carolina Behe; Fourth row - Robert Lekander, James Charles, James Nicori, Arnold Brower, Mark John, Joseph Carpenter, Richard Binder, Tom Gray, Mayor Harry Brower, Vivian Korthuis.
Photo: ICC Staff.

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Alecia Lennie – Inuvik	Eben W. Hopson – Utqiaġvik	Kendall Archie – Aklavik
Anna Ashenfelter – Nome	Flora Brower – Utqiaġvik	Louis Andrew – Bethel
Archie Eric Ervin – Koyuk	Gerald Inglangasuk – Tuktoyaktuk	Mark John – Toksook Bay
Ariana Nelson – Kotzebue	Mayor Harry Brower, Jr. – Utqiaġvik	Mary Sattler Peltola – Bethel
Arnold Brower, Jr. – Utqiaġvik	J.D. Storr – Aklavik	Miles Cleveland – Ambler
Benjamin Charles – Bethel	James Charles – Tuntutuliak	Orlin Gologeren – Nome
Billy Adams – Utqiaġvik	James Nicori – Kwethluk	Richard Binder – Inuvik
Brent Latham – Bethel	Janelle Carl – Bethel	Robert Lekander – Bethel
Chantal Gruben – Tuktoyaktuk	Jared Nayakik – Utqiaġvik	Roland White – Tuntutuliak
Chukita Gruben – Tuktoyaktuk	Jennifer Hooper – Bethel	Roy Ashenfelter – Nome
Dalee Sambo Dorough, ICC Chair – Anchorage	Joe Arey, Sr. – Aklavik	Sandra Arey – Aklavik
Dang-Dang Gruben – Inuvik	Joey Carpenter – Sachs Harbour	Tom Gray – Nome
Dean Arey – Aklavik	John Orr – Bethel	Vera Metcalf – Savoonga
Denise Kinegak – Bethel	John McIntyre – Eek	Vivian Korthuis – Emmonak
	Josiah Olemaun – Utqiaġvik	

ABOUT THE YEAH WORKSHOP

The Indigenous Knowledge, values, concepts, and information shared in this report were brought forward during the Youth, Elders, Active Hunters and Gatherers (YEAH) workshop held in Bethel, Alaska, on February 25 and 26, 2019. The workshop brought together Inuit from across Inuit homelands of Alaska and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region in Canada. We explored Inuit values and approaches surrounding our relationships to the environment, the collection and processing of food, and management practices during the meeting. The workshop¹ was hosted by the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) Alaska in response to input and feedback gathered during the Inuit led project, Food Sovereignty and Self Governance – Inuit Role in Managing Marine Resources (FSSG)² to enhance discussions amongst Elders, youth, and active hunters and gatherers.

The goal of the discussions included the following:

- To consider ways of putting Inuit values at the forefront of discussions and decision-making related to managing the Arctic environment and our relationships with animals.
- To increase youth, Elders, and active hunter and gatherer voices in collective discussions about food sovereignty and self-governance.
- To share and strengthen dialogues across Inuit regions.
- To develop a meeting report with selected Inuit practices or rules related to management, based on the conversations held during the two-day meeting.

The structure of the workshop was designed to be fluid, conversation-based, and to encourage culturally appropriate dialogues and activities. Through this

approach, an agenda was provided with guided questions. However, the Participants determined what direction the discussions needed to take, when we needed to rest, or when we needed to get some fresh air. This resulted in a relaxed atmosphere, with Inuit speaking to each other, becoming more familiar with each other's challenges and solutions, and recognizing common practices.

Discussions occurred with all Participants together and through smaller break-out groups. The smaller group discussions provided an opportunity for everyone to speak. And also provided space for those that are less comfortable speaking in front of larger groups or wished to speak with a particular group first. For example, some female Participants felt more comfortable in a discussion with other females. The fruitful discussion that came from the female small discussion was then summarized and shared with the larger group.

During the workshop, Participants were encouraged to talk and express themselves in any way they felt they needed to. For some, this meant standing and walking around freely. While for others, it meant sitting and taking notes. To further encourage people to express themselves in a way that is culturally appropriate for them, art supplies were provided. Participants were provided with pieces of paper and markers to draw or doodle throughout the day. Additionally, a large canvas and paint pens were placed to the side of the room. Participants drew and wrote on the canvas throughout the workshop. At times, Participants opted to sit around the fabric and paint while they talked and shared. An important Indigenous practice is sharing food. Thus, many brought food harvested and gathered from land and water to share. This, along with humor, kept all grounded and engaged during discussions.

¹ The workshop was made possible through support from the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Pew Environment Trust, Ocean Conservancy, World Wildlife Fund-Canada, ConocoPhillips, the Oak Foundation, and the Ciri Foundation. Additionally, travel support from the National Science Foundation as part of the Food Sovereignty and Self Governance – Inuit Role in Managing Arctic Marine Resources under grant no 1732373 was provided for some participants.

² Inuit Circumpolar Council Alaska. 2020. Food Sovereignty and Self-Governance: Inuit Role in Managing Arctic Marine Resources. Anchorage, AK. Accessed on November 8, 2021, at https://iccalaska.org/wp-icc/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/FSSG-Report_LR.pdf

WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

As part of the workshop methodology and structure, two Inuit artists were commissioned to actively create two respective art pieces. The artists worked to capture the values shared throughout the workshop. One of the artists further hosted a lunchtime discussion about the relationships between art/material, culture, and food sovereignty. The discussion included points about the impact of the ivory and seal trade bans, spiritual respect for animals, and the influence of an imposed view of a dominant culture on Inuit concepts of art.

A 'Storytelling Night' was hosted by two Elders from Bethel, Daniel Bill and John McIntyre, and included a cleansing ceremony. Throughout the evening, stories were shared that included drumming and laughter. On the following day, people continued to share stories. An extra break was taken for drumming, singing, and dancing led by participants from the ISR and Alaska.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants were nominated by ICC Alaska regional organizations, partners of the Food Sovereignty and Self-Governance project (the Eskimo Whaling Commission, the Inuvialuit Game Council, the Fisheries Joint Management Committee, the Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, and the Association of Village Council Presidents). Additionally, participants were nominated through Hunters and Trappers Committees and the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Committee.

The day before the meeting and during the meeting, Alaska was hit by unexpected storms. While it is common to have storms during this time of year, the frequency of the storms in a short time frame was less common. Many people who had hoped to attend the meeting could not join the discussion. As many others were able to arrive safely to Bethel, we decided that we would move forward with the meeting. We greatly appreciated all of the efforts people made to travel to the meeting that was unable to make it. This discussion will continue well beyond this meeting and we look forward to all of those voices we were unable to hear.

Quyanainni / Koana / Quyana / Igamsiqanaghalek / Quyanaq to all of those who were able to attend.



From left to right: Roland White, Orlin Gologeren and Joe Arey, Sr. in a small group discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.



Around the table from left to right: John Orr, Mary Sattler Peltola, Tom Gray and Dalee Sambo Dorrough in a small group discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.



Figure 1. Map of Inuit Nunaat

INTRODUCTION

The Arctic has been our home for thousands of years. Our culture has grown and developed as a part of this environment. Our knowledge, innovations, and sustainable practices have successfully cared for Inuit Nunaat (our homelands). Our values continue to guide our relationships with all of life around us. Our hunting, fishing, and gathering practices have proven that our practice and decision-making approaches are vital to maintaining the health of the Arctic. These practices include: how we prepare the foods we collect; our sustainable practices; our sharing of what is gathered; our respect for the land, water, and all of life; our belief in collaboratively working together; our practices that follow the weather and the animals; our holistic and adaptive approaches, have proven that our practices and decision-making approaches are vital to maintaining the health of the Arctic.

Core to this discussion is our Food Sovereignty. Our management practices and Indigenous Knowledge are not stagnant, stuck in the past, or old information. Our ways and knowledge are alive and reflective in daily activities and decision-making. We have been actively

ABOUT INUIT FOOD SOVEREIGNTY - THE FREEDOM TO MANAGE OURSELVES.

For the purposes of this report, Inuit Food Sovereignty is defined as the right of Alaskan Inuit to define their own hunting, gathering, fishing, land and water policies: the right to define what is sustainable, socially, economically and culturally appropriate for the distribution of food and to maintain ecological health; the right to obtain and maintain practices that ensure access to tools needed to obtain, process, store and consume traditional foods. Within the Alaskan Inuit Food Security Conceptual Framework, food sovereignty is a necessity to supporting and maintaining the six dimensions of food security.³

³ Inuit Circumpolar Council-Alaska. 2015. Alaskan Inuit Food Security Conceptual Framework: How to Assess the Arctic From an Inuit Perspective. Technical Report. Anchorage, AK.



From around the table clock wise: Josiah Olemaun, John Orr, Robert Lekander, James Charles, Dean Arey, Roy Ashenfelter and Dang-Dang Gruben in a small group discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

managing our resources for thousands of years. We will continue to as we move into the future.

For everyone involved or interested in management, it is important to understand how different values and ways of knowing guide management. For centuries, we have managed our relationships and guide management through our way of life. As a Participant shared, “Our unwritten laws have been passed down by our ancestors, generation to generation. Have never changed. No matter if it is out in the ocean or the sea or on land. They have passed them down to us. They are still living at our time.”

The approaches for gathering information, regulations, and decision-making continue to be dominated by Federal/State/Territorial governments and international bodies. These approaches are often top-down, driven by one knowledge system and cultural perspective. The result can leave a threat to our food security, sovereignty, way of life, and the overall health of the Arctic.

The world is gaining a stronger appreciation for the need for ecosystem-based, holistic approaches and quick adaptive decision-making. In response, it is even more crucial that our knowledge and approaches be at the

forefront of all management and policy discussions at both national and international tables.

As a Participant shared, “Understanding that our information is not only from the past or old information. It is important for the future. For example, western science does not have indexes to judge the strength of the salmon run. We are using indexes/forecasting methods that our people have always used here and are more accurate than western science. Going forward with climate change, we need more of the experts that have always lived on the land.”

Over the two-day workshop, participants discussed core values and how these values relate to management. Participants shared their thoughts and raised many topics. Some of the frequent themes raised relate to relationships, climate change, shared concerns about balancing life, development, changes in animal movements, conflicting approaches to management, values, and imposed regulations from Federal/State/Territorial governments and international bodies. Additionally, discussions focused on Inuit management and co-management structures (such as the Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, Hunters and Trappers Committees, Fisheries Joint Management



Moving clockwise at the table in the forefront: Chukita Gruben, Gerald Inglangasuk, and Mark John in a small group discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

Committee, the St. Lawrence Island Ordinance on managing walrus, the Eskimo Walrus Commission, the Inuvialuit-Inupiat Polar Bear and Beluga Co-management bodies, and the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission).

A common sentiment and topic of discussion was the fact that our values can't be changed. Additionally, participants specified that while many differences do exist and it is important to respect that different communities and families have their own rules, many of these rules are common and our values are shared across all of Inuit Nunaat. As one Participant shared, "Our values, it doesn't matter if we're from Bethel, Barrow, Canada, we all have the same kind of values when it comes to our land, and our food and so on and so forth."

Through this workshop report, we share a summary of the rules and aspects related to management that Participants shared through summaries, bullet-point lists, and direct quotes grouped under the following 8 headings stressed during the discussions. The bullet point lists provide only a snapshot of the many practices related to each heading. For each bullet point, there is much more involved than the words shared here. For example, under the heading Respect is the bullet point "never take more than you need."

Some Participants have shared that "never take more than you need" requires that you follow the weather to ensure that you are processing food during a time that it will not

be wasted. It also requires adaptive decision-making. If it is raining and going to cause the drying fish to mold, you will need to change when you get the fish or how you are preparing it. Others shared that this means your freezer should be empty in the spring.

The below 8 headings are all interrelated and should be viewed collectively with an understanding that you could not have one piece without all of the others.

- ✦ We Follow the Weather - We Follow the Animals– Holistic Management
- ✦ Know the Animals, the Land, the Weather – Being on the Land
- ✦ Respect – In Our Thoughts and Actions
- ✦ Harvesting and Gathering – Following the Seasons
- ✦ The Importance of Sharing
- ✦ Passing on Knowledge
- ✦ Our Language
- ✦ Mental and Physical Wellness

The information shared is not exhaustive. It offers a summary of key points shared during the fruitful discussions in the Participants' own voice and bullet points listed under each heading. Following the listing of sustainable management practices and discussions is a section with recommendations from the workshop. These are recommendations that arose during the discussions.



Vivian Korthuis, CEO of the Association of Village Council Presidents, contributing to the group discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.



From left to right: Daniel Bill, John McIntyre, and John's grandson, Teil McIntyre, lead us in a night of storytelling with drumming. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

PARTICIPANTS' VOICES

"Our time's changing. Our hunting is disrupted by climate change. But the values of those unwritten laws are still the same. No matter how much our climate changes. Our values are still in front of us and are passed down to us."

"We have our own way of life. We have our own laws. Our ancestors have made them. Those are the values. You can't change them. You can't change those rules. You can't bend those rules."

"And wherever you go, they say respect the land, it is yours, and it will give back to you what you need or what you would like to get. But respect the land."

"You don't go try and take twenty animals just because you can. You only take what you can handle for the time being that you're out there to provide for your family. Even though there's other animals, you let those other

animals go. Somebody else may need them. You take three or four to take back home for yourself and to share with others that are in need in the community."

"Being on the land - It clears and declutters our mind in so many ways, and it's just so beautiful to be out there. It's an empowering feeling and to have that connection with the land."

"We are people of the land and ocean."

"Knowledge of our language, our traditions, humor, love, and respect for our elders and others. These are things we identify with - compassion for one another; these are the ones identified through our Inupiat values, avoidance to the fullest extent. To show respect to the resources that you're looking to pursue to turn into food and to share with others."



From left to right: Britt'Nee Brower, Alecia Jade Lennie, Dean Arey, Chantel Gruben, Dang-Dang Gruben and Billy Adams drumming, singing and dancing added inspiration and joy to our meeting. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

WHAT IS INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

For the purpose of this workshop report, ICC offers the following definition: Indigenous Knowledge (referred to as IK in the remainder of the report) is a systematic way of thinking applied to phenomena across biological, physical, cultural, and spiritual systems. It includes insights based on evidence acquired through direct and long-term experiences and extensive and multigenerational observations, lessons, and skills. It has developed over millennia and is still developing in a living process, including knowledge acquired today and in the future, and it is passed on from generation to generation.

Under this definition, IK goes beyond observations and ecological knowledge, offering a unique “way of knowing.” This knowledge can identify research needs and be applied to them, which will ultimately inform decision-makers. There is a need to utilize both Indigenous Knowledge and science. Both ways of knowing will benefit the people, land, water, air, and animals within the Arctic.

*Note: Inuit at times may refer to their knowledge as Indigenous Knowledge, Inuit Knowledge or Traditional Knowledge. The definition provided above is understood by ICC to apply to all these terms.

INUIT SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

WE FOLLOW THE WEATHER – WE FOLLOW THE ANIMALS: HOLISTIC MANAGEMENT

In discussions about core components to maintaining a healthy environment and management, Participants stressed the need for applying a holistic understanding. Understanding that everything is interconnected - culture, animals, plants, water, land, air, governance, sovereignty, food security, spirituality, and much more. Participants further stressed that we could not control the animals and weather. We can only be responsive to them and the need for strong flexibility, communications, adaptability, understanding cumulative impacts, and multi-species management. As one Participant shared, “Building in flexibility is very important...this flexibility in times of weather conditions, global climate change effects that we’re dealing with is needed. Sometimes we’re not able to take, even though the resources are plentiful and they’re moving out there, the access to them is not permissible [by federal/state regulations]. We don’t control that. The flip side to that is to be patient and take another animal when it becomes available that we identify and use for food. That’s the kind of flexibility and interpretation, collaboration and communications that need to be had with the regulators, state, or federal.”

Below are some of the points shared during the discussions –

- Need for flexibility.
- Understanding the interconnecting relationships of all that make up the Arctic.
- Understanding of cumulative impacts.
- Multi-species management.
- Be responsive to the weather.
- Be responsive to animals as they make themselves available.
- Work with the weather to prepare food for future use.
- Honesty - being honest with each other and in your actions.
- Collective decision-making – being inclusive.
- Animals do not know imposed geo-political boundaries – humans do not control their movements.
- Avoid conflict.



From left to right: Robert Lekander, Jared Nayakik, Anna Ashenfelter and Mayor Harry Brower, Jr. in a small group discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.



Miles Cleveland participating in a small group discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

PARTICIPANTS' VOICES ON WE FOLLOW THE WEATHER – WE FOLLOW THE ANIMALS: HOLISTIC MANAGEMENT

“That is important in our management and subsistence that you don’t just manage one species. Recognize the patterns we see.”

“You have to look back in terms of our practices – adaptability, flexibility, unregulated, in a sense. That was our way of life. When one resource wasn’t so available because of circumstances that we were enduring at the time of their migration, we’d be adaptable to take another resource. Which gave itself more easily to take home for food. Those were the adaptable and flexible kind of conditions with our practices, our way of life.... used to bring mammals, whales, and other resources: walrus, seals, beluga, all the marine mammals, polar bears. We used them all for food. Not all at one sitting. As they became available, the opportunity was given to take the animal without being regulated in season or time. We live today, in comparison, to how much regulations we have to put up within the US as native people. To take a migratory bird; to take a marine mammal; to take a caribou; or a moose; or muskox. We’re all regulated in that sense and within seasons as well. Wait to take it when you cannot take these resources. That’s the federal government or the state governments imposed on our way of life. We didn’t have any of that in the past. We have to share these kinds of comparisons to the more current situations as we’re growing into this new era of time, global climate effects.”

“We respond to animals and weather, not the other way around.”

“Inuit have to adapt by observing the environment and their surroundings, which is the land, water, weather, and animals. This will help us continue our practice of traveling on the land safely, harvesting the animals, understanding the movement and the migration patterns. And then, the plants and weather conditions which impact the animal movement and also navigating traveling on the land.”

“When it is good weather, we make dry fish, herring.”

“We have learned and have to change, as soon as the weather starts to get warm, we need to get out there to have a chance to get what we want [food]... We’re learning and adapting [to animal movements and changes in weather].”

“Regulatory agencies... need to start being more adaptive. A lot of times, the regulations are based on dates. But dates don’t matter anymore, now the way the weather’s changing. It’s based on how the temperatures is.”

“Global warming is a big thing that we have to adapt to, and that’s what we’re adapting to - animals are coming, and animals are going quicker, so we’re adapting to it.”

“Putting up fish is about timing. They put up before the flies come out. The flies are coming out sooner because of the warmer weather, it’s rainier, and you know they’re laying larva on the fish. Every day we have to clean.”

“Because the weather is wetter, one thing that has worked for us was cutting our fish differently. We’re cutting the fatter pieces off so it dries better and keeping the bellies for soup in the winter. But then you don’t get that nice oil in your fish, and so your fish is not as oily, but then you have good fish, so it’s kind of figuring it out.”

“...I know we are people of adaptation; we can adapt to anything. We’ve done that for thousands and thousands of years. We adapted to climate change, we’ve adapted to starvation, we adapted to the rules that were imposed on us. These adaptations that we are going through seem like more and more regulations are trying to be imposed on us through the way we live. That shouldn’t be.”

“Ducks and geese, the swans, and all the waterfowls that we try and hunt in the spring, but we try to get them in the springtime cuz they’re nice and fat, and we have to adapt for where the springs are coming earlier, and the birds are coming in earlier, and we have to cuz our ice is not as thick anymore, we have to be really careful when we travel now. We have to watch the ice, and it is really thin.”

“...if anyone in this world is able to adapt to the changes we’re dealing with, it’s Indigenous Peoples.”

“Weather is important to learn. Important to our survival.”

“...the marine mammals don’t know boundaries, and yet we all share that same resource. Seals, ice seals, beluga whales, all of them. They don’t know any boundaries, and they bound us together because we utilize them for food, and our way of life and the preparation of food.”

KNOW THE ANIMALS, THE LAND, THE WEATHER – BEING ON THE LAND

Discussions often emphasized the importance of being observant and the wealth of information gathered through observations, watching, listening, patience, and being on the land. Within these discussions, many Participants emphasized the need for connection to the land and the importance of relationships. As one Participant shared,

“Really, what we are talking about is our relationship with the land, our relationship with the mammals and what you harvest. What are the values that you put forth when establishing and sustaining those relationships?”

Additionally, discussions focused on the importance of trusting our knowledge and the importance of knowing the land, water, animals, plants, and yourself. Participants also emphasized that our knowledge continues to support our survival and sustainable management practices with many changes occurring.

Below are some of the points shared during the discussions –

- Be observant, listen, watch, have patience.
- Rely on your knowledge – on your Indigenous Knowledge.
- Focus/Concentration.
- Pay attention to the changes and shifts happening.
- Understand the relationships between everything (i.e., families, animals, weather, etc.).
- Spend time on the land.
- Compassion - always have compassion for others and yourself.

PARTICIPANTS’ VOICES ON KNOW THE ANIMALS, THE LAND, THE WEATHER - BEING ON THE LAND

“View things/surroundings no matter how small.”

“It is something that we have to continue sharing, our observations, our changes that we’re enduring. Bigger things are coming that we haven’t even begun to discuss.”

“The polar bears have been very healthy. We see the world always focused on things – they think they’re going to get extinct right, so they focus so much on lobbying. They try to change people’s minds that this will happen to this animal. And they don’t know much about the people living in those communities that depend on food like we do, and preparing the fish, the game, and how we store our foods.”

“Talking to young people about methods for concentrating - when you’re hunting, things to look out for; how to pay attention when you’re hunting for moose versus caribou, versus walrus, versus seal; understand the methods for the opportunity. And trying to teach them how to relax, how to concentrate, how to look at different parts. How to use the wind, how to call, how often to call, you know, where to be when you call, those kinds of things. As you are hunting and want something to come to you, you use different methods.”

“My parents raised me to have a connection with the land, with the animals, to observe and to be proud of who you are.”

“For our future generations, they need to know the movement and migrations of the animals. They need to know the land. We’re observers.”

“When you’re processing foods is to stay present. My grandma would always redirect me if I was getting a little off track, and she would redirect back to being present to what my job was at that time. You start off with maybe like cleaning the fish and then work your way to cutting the heads. So it’s about being present too in your activities. And teaching your kids that too early on.”

“My grandmother used to express thought, to think about what we’re going to do before we leave... The way the hunters that I respected a lot, that’s what they practice.”

“...we have to continue to make our observations... indicating what our Elders have taught us. The winds blowing one direction, the ocean current going another direction, don’t try going out there on the ice. There will be another time.”

RESPECT – IN OUR THOUGHTS AND ACTIONS

A large part of the discussions related to respect focused on the relationships people have with animals, land, and water and how we express this respect. Participants connected the discussions back to respect for all of life, yourself, community, humility, taking care of the environment, and ways of being. Practices of harvesting, hunting, obtaining, and preparing food are done by following the weather, the seasons, and the movements and changes in the animals. These discussions also emphasized the importance of giving back and practicing reciprocity.

Below are some of the points shared during the discussions –

- ✦ Animals give themselves to you. Let the animals come to you.
- ✦ Take only what you need. Don't waste any part of the animal.
- ✦ Know how to prepare food in a way that doesn't waste the animal.
- ✦ You don't always go for the biggest animals.
- ✦ When one animal is low, focus on another for food.
- ✦ Do not be the cause of stress for animals. Respect when they should be left alone. Do not harass, chase, or play with the animals.
- ✦ Don't talk about the animals negatively or assume that they will give themselves to you.
- ✦ Think about what you are going to do before doing it. Have intention in what you do.
- ✦ Know the proper times to take the animals.
- ✦ Take care of your hunting tools.
- ✦ Make sure you are spiritually ready for hunting.
- ✦ Don't sharpen your knife before you take an animal. This can be viewed as being presumptuous that the animal is going to give itself to you.
- ✦ Know the behavior of animals. Watch, listen, be observant, and patient.
- ✦ There are different practices to not cause suffering to animals. For example, some break the necks of some animals that are taken.
- ✦ Respect the spirit of the animal. There are different practices for respecting the spirit of animals. Some Participants shared taking the eyes of the animals. Another Participant shared other practices for when a seal gives itself to them. Such as putting the seal's head back in the water, putting Labrador tea in its mouth, or spit in its mouth to let the spirit know everything is okay. Other Participants shared similar practices.
- ✦ Respect Elders /Listen to Elders.
- ✦ Respect everyone, regardless of social standing; understand that every person has value.
- ✦ Take care of one another by helping others meet their needs.
- ✦ Don't be sneaky or secretive.
- ✦ Know your body.
- ✦ Giving back (i.e., Feeding the animals that feed the animal, put back; Returning bones to the sea to feed the krill that feed the whale; Putting the bones that are not used to the river).
- ✦ Never take more than you need (i.e., preserve your catch throughout the year; empty freezer in the spring).
- ✦ Never waste any part of the animal.
- ✦ Work on your catch with care.
- ✦ Always bring your catch to a clean environment when you take care of it.

PARTICIPANTS' VOICES ON RESPECT – IN OUR THOUGHTS AND ACTIONS

“Animals have ears, and we were taught to be polite and wait for an animal because that animal is going to come to you. You don’t have to work hard when you’re you know when you do good for your community.”

“If you don’t respect nature, nature won’t respect you. These are some of the values that have been passed down to us.”

“For relationships with animals and people, you need compassion, relationships between people and animals.”

“We are big on respect. Respect for nature, you protect the environment, we’re told to be mindful.”

“Respect... that’s the way I was brought up was respect, the listening and to the animals and our Elders. And I traveled around a lot, and I sit on a few boards and always listen and respect our Elders and all that they say.”

“Respect everyone in your life you have no matter the title they have valuable knowledge that you can learn from.”

“You also have to respect yourself. Be able to know your body, and you have to love yourself. When you go out there in the right mind, and the Lord is watching, we’re able to recognize who is not having a good day and those kinds of things put together, and somehow it happens. Sometimes, you can’t describe words, you know it just comes out, and we all feel that emotion, the love, and the respect.”

“When we say respect the animals: don’t talk bad about them – don’t talk about them smelling bad or call them gross. Be thankful for the way that they smell.”

“There are things that my grandparents taught me about harvesting is never take too much from the land. So, if you go out berry picking, get enough, so you leave some on the tundra.”

“Usually, we will pick in a sport for a little bit; then we’ll go somewhere else and go pick somewhere if we want to get more. We don’t take everything from that one certain area.”

“Many times, particularly when we catch whales, we put the bones back in the water. [This] Feed the krill that feeds the whale. One strong point on respecting nature is that. I love to try to do - to return those bones and flesh on them back into the sea. So, the krill can replenish the whales.”

“When we have seals, we take the bones and we through them in the river, or even the fish that are no longer useful to us, we put them back in the river out of respect.”

“Whenever you go, they say respect the land, it is yours, and it will give back to you what you need or what you would like to get.”

“When we get our seal, and we put the head back into the water, we spit in its mouth, to let the spirit down there know. The freshwater part of it is to give it back, and we believe that by doing that, the seal spit tells the other ones that everything’s okay. We give them an opportunity in the future.”

“We look for a certain age in the moose. We don’t like those big bulky ones.”

“Don’t talk bad about the animals. They’ll hear you through the ground.”

“You don’t go try and take twenty animals just because you can. You only take what you can handle for the time being that you’re out there to provide for your family. Even though there are other animals, you let those other animals go. Somebody else may need them. You take three or four to take back home for yourself and to share with others that are in need in the community.”



1 - From left to right: Joe Arey, Sr. and Arnold Brower, Jr. adding to the collective discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

2 - Dalee Sambo Dorough, ICC Chair, sharing during the collective discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

3 - From left to right: Billy Adams, Archie Eric Ervin, Kendall Archie, J.D. Storr, and Mayor Harry Brower, Jr. in the back contributing to the collective discussion: Photo: ICC AK Staff.

4 - Moving around the table clockwise: Roy Ashenfelter and Sandra Arey and Vanessa Cunningham in a small group discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

“My auntie has a really nice way of fileting pikes, without the bones. And she dries ‘em. She said you cut ‘em by the sound. You got to listen to the sound of the bones on the bladed. Then you can filet ‘em real nice and dry ‘em [without waste].”

“The gut of the caribou...that is something we value as elderly people. We crave it. But if they come home without the liver, without the heart, things like that, then we lose out. I mean, we could eat the limbs and other stuff, but that’s a part of our life, and if you don’t have that once in a while, then it goes away from you.”

“Caribou braiding – you pull the back. When you’re cutting the caribou, you cut the back, right here. And then it’s like this. And then you cut it out, and then you get a spoon, and you squeak it, take all of the meat off, and you soak it for that night. And then you get a cardboard and a spoon, and you need to make you take all of the meat off. So, if you leave meat hung there it

becomes like beef jerky and smoking. So, you have to make sure you take all the meat off, and then you dry it. And the coat is seasoned. And then the front ones - they take it off from the back because they’re longer. One Elder, before she died, told me and my husband that the front leg’s tendons are to make it stronger for when you braid it. It makes it more durable.”

“We use it to sew the mukluks together, and then we put it on the frame. and then they use that to go spring hunt.”

“...if you use the caribou tendons, it just stays, and it’s more safe.”

“Don’t try to be a trophy hunter. If there’s too many animals, they’re going to sink our boat. Let’s go find one or two animals that aren’t quite [so big]. You’re not going to eat the tusk, are you? We’re going to find a smaller walrus. This boat can only handle [so much].”

WINDS OF CHANGE, 2019. BRITT'NEE KIVLIQTARUQ BROWER

Acrylic, Feathers, Beaver, White Fox, Wolf, Seal Skin,
Antler and Glitter on Canvas

There is a story of a moon mask with a crescent moon shown alongside the dark side of the moon, or the unknown. In the unknown there are 4 feather spokes that represent the direction of the winds, and each feather represents a wish you would like to see happen. Surrounding the moon is a qupak design representing a drum, the heartbeat of the Inuit culture. The sun shines around the moon to represent the climate change affecting our subsistence calendars. I would like to make 4 wishes to help us adapt to all of the changes and unknowns occurring in the migration routes, hunting & gathering seasons, and weather. Each feather is a wish for helping us predict the weather, adapt to migration and route changes of the animals in the sky, the waters and the land'. – Britt'Nee Kivliqtaruq Brower



HARVESTING AND GATHERING – FOLLOWING THE SEASONS

Our sustainable management practices go well beyond the moment we get animals or plants. There are many activities that occur throughout the year that relate to each other. For example, the sinew from caribou is often used as thread to sew mukluks and the seal skin together for boats used for whaling and walrus hunting.

Participants shared that many of the activities before and after animals and plants are obtained for food relate to weather conditions, safety, respect, humility, teamwork, sharing, teaching, guiding youth, and much more. Many of these actions are interconnected with other points, such as respect. For example, to be respectful of the animal that has given itself, it is important to work on your catch with care, and always work in a clean environment.

Many discussions emphasized the value of working together within our families, hunting parties, and communities. Working together, knowing our roles, and understanding that everyone has a job to do is part of what makes ourselves, our families, and our communities strong. Participants described the strength of supportive families and working together, with each person fulfilling a role.

Hunting is an extremely dynamic activity. A hunter needs to consider many facets, such as ensuring safety, including the movement of ice, wind conditions, use of sometimes-dangerous vehicles, very cold temperatures, fast-moving and changing weather systems, being out on the water, currents in the water, difficult navigation, and being near large and aggressive animals. In describing some of the dangers associated with hunting, one participant commented, “It’s a very unforgiving country when you’re out in the ocean. And you have to take safety precautions. If you’re not careful, if you’re not cognizant of your surroundings, danger comes so quickly. It’s very eminent in our practices and our way of life: respect the elements surrounding you, just not the ocean. It’s also the weather, wind patterns, wind

conditions. The winds blowing one direction, the ocean current going another direction, don’t try going out there on the ice. There will be another time, it will just be with less wind, with less ocean current, and the availability of that resource will still be there. You’ll be able to harvest your resources.”

Participants also discussed the importance of having a sense of humor and staying present, mindful, joyful, grateful, and in good spirits when hunting, harvesting, and preparing food. They emphasized that emotions and frame of mind are important factors in our lives and can positively effect success in harvesting and success in preparing food. Additionally, having a positive attitude shows respect to others, including the animals being harvested, hunting partners, and the people who receive shared food.

Below are some of the points shared during the discussions –

- Be physically, mentally, and spiritually ready.
- Always be humble and patient.
- Taking care – be present in your actions.
- Prepare for hunting. Within Whaling, a Whaler is always ready for his crew.
- A Whaling Captian always values the knowledge of his crew.
- Always thinking about safety to sustain safety.
- It is important to be dependable - to always plan for the family’s well-being.
- A Whaling Captian has strong values for his crew.
- Cooperation/Teamwork - Understand the strength of unity and working together.
- Follow the seasons and live life on a seasonal rhythm. In going with the seasons, you follow the animals.

PARTICIPANTS’ VOICES ON HARVESTING AND GATHERING – FOLLOWING THE SEASONS

“Our way of being, Yuyaraq, and the preparation for the whole is not only to prepare our tools for hunting and fishing. And we were advised when we are preparing our tools for hunting and fishing to do them with care, with a lot of thought, and to do the best we can in the preparation of our tools. And then, once all of this is done, we used to go out. Our ancestors went through a ceremony - which is lighting our wood and putting all of the tools through the smoke first, purifying the equipment and then kayaks also, or a sled if you’re going to use a sled. And then, ourselves after that. Purifying ourselves so that the animals can present themselves to us”.

“Umalik (whaling captain) will tell the whaling crew in March to come over and eat in preparation with a whale that we’re expecting. That next day, we’ll do the ice cellar – remove all the left-over particles of whale meat from the ice cellar, take it completely away. No remnants left, not a single bloody remnant left. Eat it all up. Then Umalik will inspect that, and he approves of it and tell them to find the whitest, cleanest snow and put it in the ice cellar and pack it down for the fresh meat for the next whale.” “During our preparation after...in respect of the whale. The harpoons are cleaned, shined, and clean, those are elements of preparation, and we talk about them... had we done all of these things

when spring comes for whaling season. We know that we make acceptable progress for the whale. Acceptable maybe, perhaps by now, an acceptable crew for the whale to come.”

“It’s about community. We think about others before we think about ourselves.”

“Working together as a team, appreciating each other for what we’re doing and what we’re working towards and striving for is irreplaceable. And that time is just so rich.”

“...you have to be able to gather all your caribou tendons during the fall, and then you clean ‘em out and hang ‘em out in Nov., Dec., January towards the coldest to dry them. And there’s some you know you do your steps. You try to be....I try to be ahead of my husband cause he’s like, okay, I’m ready cause he said I’m ready. I said, you’re ready. You aren’t going to do anything until our daughter is done with your thread.”

“in our food security, we have to plan ahead...you do it long time way, traditional way, with the knowledge we have today we could plan ahead and not miss out on before whales migrate, before the ice flow away or melt away .”



1 - From left to right: Lucia Johnston and Britt’Nee Brower preparing bowhead whale muktuk for lunch. Photo: ICC AK Staff.
2 - Bowhead whale muktuk. Photo: ICC AK Staff.
3 - Bowhead whale muktuk for lunch. Photo: ICC AK Staff.



THE IMPORTANCE OF SHARING

Throughout the discussions, Participants continually stressed the importance of sharing. Sharing is vital to our traditions and one of our most prevalent core values. Sharing is an act of compassion, humility, and love rather than a law. Participants noted that we share because there is an opportunity to do so, not because we feel forced.

Sharing practices support sustainable management practices, survival, and overall health of the entire ecosystem. The importance of sharing also extends beyond the sharing of food. One participant, a mask maker, commented on the sharing of masks to honor the spirit of the masks and the animals they represent:

“I carve masks, Yup’ik masks. And when I originally started, it was to supplement the inventory for my business. But as time went on, I stopped selling the masks. And did a lot of research as to why they were made. And how to invoke the spirits of the animal. And now I just give away my masks to different dance groups so they can honor those different spirits. Seals, owls, wolves. Each animal has its own specific purpose to ... how we interact with our world. And all the animals that come to us from the spiritual realm. Present themselves to us for our catch.”

Below are some of the points shared during the discussions –

- We should give freely and humbly without accepting anything in return.
- A young hunter should give away his first catch.
- Hunters provide for the whole community, not just for themselves.
- Share far and wide.
- Don’t sell food; share it.
- Don’t be greedy.
- Don’t fight over food.
- Especially share with those who can’t hunt for themselves: the elderly, the widowed, the families who don’t have a father or a hunter.
- If you share your resources, more will come to you.
- Use feasts as an opportunity to celebrate sharing.
- Not claiming ownership of the animals you harvested but instead dividing equally amongst a group.
- Give your first catch to an Elder.
- Share food, knowledge, materials, stories, etc.



Alecia Jade Lennie contributing to the small group discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.



Chief Louis Andrew adding to the collective discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.



Dean Arey sharing during the collective discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

PARTICIPANTS' VOICES ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SHARING

"We like the clams in walrus stomachs. It is a prized food. If another boat comes to you, you give to the boat your prized food."

"The importance of sharing... It's really part of us. Before the government came here, the Elders made the rules. Two guys go out hunting seals out on the ice for dog food. They need to eat too. Say they get seven. They have to split it evenly even though one guy shoots six. The other guy shoots one."

"The time before that, we were blessed with a whale last fall. We'd been given a whale to share with the whole community. We don't bring it home just for ourselves. We're hunting for the whole community. In a sense, we were just the family to identify it and were successful in holding well, bringing that home, sharing it with the community, holding a feast, and bringing Elders to the home to feed the following day. These are the kind of experiences we have been sharing with our children. It's family unity. It's not just an individual. It's family involved in teaching them. What food items do we bring home from the whales and the animals that we catch? It's constant."

"When you share your resources, more will come to you."

"Giving your first catch is not a regulation or anything. It's just a traditional thing so that they [the youth] have more compassion for those that are not as agile as those that are able to go hunting."

"When we have whales, we have to treat it with that respect in the springtime. And then you represent that animal when you're going to take it out of the cellar and put it out for food for many different people. And, we share that animal. Cause we're really respecting that animal to feed many people as possible, and that respect sustains us."

"I grew up in a whaling family. I grew up with people in need surrounded by these families - everyone sharing and caring for each other. This is the type of respect, honoring their Elders, honoring your parents, taking care of your siblings. This kind of upbringing sets the stage for you in the community you live in - the sharing with Elders, sharing with the people in need, the widowers, the families that cannot provide for themselves. They're faced with problems in their daily lives, trying to provide means to ease their way of life daily. And, as whaling captains, these are part of our responsibilities. Sharing resources, our recourses with a community that's in need."



1. From left to right: Flora Brower, Mayor Harry Brower, Jr., and Dang-Dang Gruben in the background taking in a short break before the collective discussions continued. Photo: ICC AK Staff.
2. Chukita Gruben sharing during the collective discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.
3. From left to right: Richard Binder, Josiah Olemaun and Mayor Harry Brower, Jr. in a small group discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.
4. Arnold Brower, Jr. holding the microphone and James Charles next to him in the collective discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

PASSING ON KNOWLEDGE

Throughout the two-day meeting, the importance of teaching others, especially our youth, and passing on and sharing traditions was repeatedly brought up by Participants. These discussions, Participants shared those values are learned from being on the land and the importance that knowledge is shared with everyone to maintain our way of life and survival.

Participants also emphasized the importance of listening. This included listening to Elders, to stories shared, and being observant so that you can pick up the wealth of knowledge that others may have. Participants shared that often decisions are made by coming together and listening, and sharing stories.

Below are some of the points shared during the discussions –

- Give knowledge freely and not to benefit yourself.
- Teach even when you think no one is listening.
- Encourage your children and grandchildren to be involved (i.e., take your children and grandchildren with you when you hunt, harvest, and prepare foods).
- Share and how to be in your environment.
- Teaching those who have lost their parents or do not have someone to teach them.
- Help youth understand who they are as Inuit.
- Teach practices, even those that have become uncommon.
- Pass on knowledge of the tools we have used for thousands of years. They are part of survival.
- Respect that our youth today will soon be our providers.
- Teach how to navigate without the use of technology.
- It is okay to make mistakes.
- Be kind and encouraging as children learn.
- Teach and learn in our traditional ways; remember how we learned. Teaching our ways is how we make sure that we are here to stay.
- Have the youth sit down with Elders and learn.
- Teach children their relationship with animals and how to have respect, respect for Elders and, sharing.
- We often learn through stories. Listen to the stories from Elders and those from animals and the land.
- Teach youth our core values.

PARTICIPANTS' VOICES ON PASSING ON KNOWLEDGE

“I think that we all know the history and the way our people talked. We learned from hearing the storytelling. And it wasn't always something that you could say in a couple of sentences or even a couple of words. There was always a story and a value in the story to help emphasize your point and what you were trying to teach. Your kids or your nieces and nephews or whoever learned. Things were very intentional, and I just keep being reminded that it's nice to be able to sit here and talk and take however long you need to get your point across.”

“I lost my parents due to medical reasons, and I didn't have much support. My uncle stepped in, and he said, “you're gonna learn. You're gonna go with me.” So, he took me out hunting every chance he got, and that's where I learned my values as a young person, and that's how I learned to survive; to be an independent person.”

“We include our children, grandchildren, right from the small age that they are, and then they start asking questions. Why are we cutting this up? What are we doing with it? Where is it going when we are done with it? These kinds of communications are very important.”

“Every community is unique to share their knowledge to their children. Families teach how to do it in their own special way.”

“When the gov first came and set up the Hunters and Trappers committees, it was mostly Elders – guys that trap and hunt all their life, they're sitting on the board... I used to really like listening to them, even though it is nothing like today. Cause today, there is the agenda, got to follow this agenda, make a motion, talk about that [what is on the agenda]. Everything is formal, but when

they first set it up, all the men Elders, 95% of the time they're telling stories; hunting sorties. And then after the meeting, they know what to do."

"I've got nine children. They're all grown up on their own, everything. When they were young, I used to take them out hunting, berry picking all the time. And teach them our values right at that time - to take care of their environment, their surroundings. And they still do. They go out by themselves. They come back with a bag of trash. And the food that we eat."

"We have a subsistence way of life, and if you use that and continue to live by that way, you have your values that you spent on the resources that bring your values to you. Exchange, water, trade, whatever resources, whatever you harvest, you can trade and barter with relatives that have the cash value. The western values. For the fuel, ammunition, food, canned food, that kind of stuff that they could readily buy from the store. But their families mix in both, western values and the values of our traditional practice, utilizing the resources harvested in trade and barter."

"I'm thankful that my parents pushed me to go out on the land at times where I didn't want to, but now I'm thanking them because I didn't know any better. I just wanted to go and have fun. Now I'm an adult; it sure helps me."

"We have been teaching, working on emphasizing how to do things, even those that are not common. Sewing is not common. It's not a common practice that you would find caribou sinew and weave them so that they can be thread and they are waterproof, and they don't rot."

"There was no store. They had to depend on themselves. And, there are a lot of teachings that go with that. And rules for roles of different members of the family. Roles would come from the time you were able to help out to be an Elder. Roles for the women; roles for the men. The people had to be prepared mentally, and physically, and spiritually."

"Winter travel is a little bit different. Traveling overland, I tell the kids to bring these gadgets, the global positioning systems, GPS. They get these gadgets, and I tell them if I take all your GPSs away, will you make it to the cabin? No. Well, it's time for you to learn without the GPS. Learn to observe on the ground - the snowdrifts. What angle are you cutting the snowdrift when you start? And you maintain that all the way till, you get to your destination, and they go, how do you find the cabin? When you get closer to your destination, you know the river. Get in the river and follow the river. Go along the riverbank. You can be in the river or on the side of the river, and you follow it until you recognize the features of your surroundings and that kind of communicator."

"It is good to sit with the Elders and listen – they tell good stories. All of us got good stories, and you listen. You learn from them."

"A value would be to always have true teachings and not just ways to benefit yourself because you taught someone whatever. You're teaching them because the blood runs through all of us."



Moving around the table clockwise: Ann Fienup-Riordan, Chantal Gruben, Jennifer Hooper, Denise Kinegak, Dalee Sambo Dorough, Anna Ashenfelter, Kendall Archie, Mary Sattler Peltola, Chukita Gruben and Brit'Nee Brower share stories, laughter and listen during a small group discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.



Jennifer Hooper and Anna Ashenfelter listening intently during a small group discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.



1 - Robert Lekander, holding the microphone, shares during the collective discussion. Around the room, everyone listens intently as part of the discussion. At the far back table, from left to right, is Ryan Romer and Britt'Nee Brower. At the table in front of them, from left to right, is Arnold Brower, Jr., Roland White and John McIntyre. At the table to the right of John is Archie Eric Evin. Sitting at the table with Robert Lekander, moving left to right, is Chantel Gruben, Benjamin Charles, and Chief Louis Andrew. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

2 - Jonella Larson White and Arnold Brower, Jr. visit during a break. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

3 - Mary Sattler Peltola shares with us during a collective discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

OUR LANGUAGE

Throughout the meeting, participants discussed the importance of speaking, learning, and teaching our languages. They emphasized that there are often no direct translations from our languages into English. Often, information and nuance become lost when speaking in English. This plays a significant role in discussions related to management and decision-making occurring within co-management structures. And could be a barrier to bringing all the information forward needed to inform decisions if discussions occur only in English. Within discussions about language, Participants also highlighted the many different aspects of language, such as body language, humor, and overall, how we communicate with each other. Participants stressed the importance of passing our languages down to the next generation. Participants recommended using

our languages when speaking to the young people in our lives to impart that knowledge to them. It was also highlighted that language learning comes more easily when out are out on the land, and that language and hunting go hand in hand.

Below are some of the points shared during the discussions –

- The importance of knowing our language.
- The importance of having strong communications, including humor, listening, and humility.
- Body language is a language and communicates a lot during discussions.
- Speak to our children at home in their language.

PARTICIPANTS' VOICES ON OUR LANGUAGES

“When we talk about animals, it really affects our language. Our native language. It goes along with hunting.”

“When we speak in our Inupiaq language, to me, it’s presented more clearly in terms of the verbiage that we express in our Inupiaq language. Trying to identify ways the English language, speaking English, there’s so much variability in the definitions, in the words that you use.”

“Keeping our language. Some of our words don’t have the proper translation into English. Our words have our values in them, what we learned through our language.”

“Our Native language, it goes along with hunting. Our

young people that don’t really go out are losing it faster than the ones that go out.”

“My boys, they spoke Yup’ik all the time. But when we moved here, they started speaking English. So, what I told them, I said, “if you talk to me in English, I’m going to either ignore you or tell you that I don’t understand you. You talk to me in Yup’ik.” Even today, they’re grown up; they have their own kids; they talk to people around them in English. When they look at me, it’s automatic, they talk to me in Yup’ik.”

“There is a story in every catch you do. And if you put it in your own language, you’ll even understand more. Because you live so close to the spirit of the animals.”



Gerald Inglangasuk, holding the microphone, shares during a collective discussion. Moving clockwise around the room from Gerald is: Vanessa Cunningham, John Orr, Richard Binder, Eben, W. Hopson, Mark John, Dalee Sambo Dorough, and Ann Fineup-Riordan. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

MENTAL AND PHYSICAL WELLNESS

Participants emphasized the connection between traditional foods, sustainable management, and holistic health and wellness. All aspects of hunting, harvesting, processing, sharing, and eating traditional foods make us healthier and more spiritually, emotionally, and mentally content.

Participants shared that hunting is part of our identity and discussed how being on the land makes us well. They described the feeling of being on the land as calming, strengthening, and mind-clearing. And when those traditional foods that we collect from the land are consumed, they positively affect our physical health. Participants shared many stories while discussing the physical health benefits of traditional foods. One participant shared a story about an Elder who failed to thrive in a hospital setting but fully recovered after returning home and eating traditional foods. Other Participants noted our Indigenous Knowledge guides us on how to prepare our food in a way that is good for our bodies.

By understanding the healing power of harvesting, processing, and eating traditional foods, we can also understand how to better help community members struggling with their own wellness. One participant described how many of the most successful programs that help community members recovering from substance abuse, domestic violence, and other unhealthy situations revolve around harvesting or processing traditional foods.

Participants also stressed the connections between our physical and mental health and the health of the entire Arctic. For example, the health of the whaler depends on the health of the whale. But the health of the whale also depends on the health of the whaler: our proven sustainable management practices aid in maintaining this health.

Below are some of the points shared during discussions –

- Don't lay blame.
- Have compassion.
- Keep connections with one another, even when family and friends move far away.
- Practice forgiveness.
- Uplift each other.
- Understand the strength in unity and in working together.
- Practice humility. "My Apa was telling me if you want to be a good whaler, you have to be good to your fellow people. Have the same kind of respect and love and positiveness; you're going to be humble. And humble people get praised. You don't have to work hard when you do good for your community."
- Be proud of who you are.

PARTICIPANTS’ VOICES AND MENTAL AND PHYSICAL WELLNESS

“It’s a lot of hard work as well. Our lifestyle is compared to the new lifestyle. Working on an animal takes a lot of work, from hunting to skinning to preparing it in your freezer. It is not an easy lifestyle to live but what we get goes beyond it. The family relationships we build from it [working together]. Also, it clears and declutters our minds in so many ways. It’s just so beautiful to be out there [on the land and water]. It’s an empowering feeling and to have that connection with the land.”

“You have to do things when you’re happy because your emotions go into what we’re providing for ourselves and other people. You need to be in a better place when you’re doing this. My parents have never outright told me that, but that’s always been what they’ve shown me. And so, I think that’s important too when I’m picking

berries. I have to be in a place where I’m happy. I’m grateful. I’m picking these. They’re here. I’m going to share them.”

“When you are on the land, it’s like feeling small. When you stay in town, you get frustrated with everything, but when you’re out on the land. It’s just me and my problems, and then the land. I don’t get to unwind like I want to [when not on the land]. And I’m only 25. It’s like I feel like an Elder talking like that. But that’s just how quick the change [when on the land].”

“My parents raised me to have a connection with the land, with the animals, to observe and to be proud of who you are.”

A large piece of material and paints were laid out during the meeting. The result was a large collective art piece with contributions made by many of the Participants.



Photo of drawings done by Participants during the meeting. Including a painting of a person in blue by Ryan Romer. Photo: ICC AK Staff.



This photograph shares some of the drawings done by Participants. Photo: ICC AK Staff.



Billy Adams drawing a bowhead whale while participating in a group discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.



Vanessa Cunningham, Gerald Inlangasuk, Alecia Jade Lennie and Chantal Gruben adding drawings to the collective art piece while participating in a small group discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.



THEN IS NOW. 2019. RYAN ROMER

“The self-awareness of Indigenous Peoples and their cultural power is returning from afar. The younger generation is being met with proven reliability of how things from the past can direct the way of the future using cultural blue prints that have effectively shaped the survival of Inuit from all northern corners. Stories and methods given to proper placement, align the realm of spirituality to progress in an otherwise desolate landscape” - Ryan Romer

RECOMMENDATIONS

Related to Current Management Practices and Co-management

Participants discussed how current management practices and co-management bodies can reflect Inuit ways and approaches. Participants shared several paths to increased Inuit food sovereignty and inclusion of Inuit values in management, including the following:

- Respect our proven sustainable management practices.
- Meeting with Arctic Indigenous Peoples to learn from the sustainable harvesting and wildlife management that has taken place for thousands of years and continues to this day.
- Increase communications and consultation.
- Learn, understand, and support what our food security and sovereignty mean – as we define these concepts - remember that this is about more than nutrients and calories. It is about all of life.
- Look to our communities for solutions to the many challenges that we face today - this includes supporting the health and wellbeing of the animals, plants, and people.
- Understand that there are different conservation concepts and seek to understand Arctic Indigenous conservation activities, such as conservation through use.
- Work to strengthen existing legal frameworks that countries have already pronounced support - including the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (recognizing the connection between these agreements and Inuit food sovereignty).
- Respect hunting schedules and areas during hunting season.
- In meetings, managers should be listening to Inuit more than Inuit listen to them.
- Hold meetings and management discussions in Inuit dialects.
- Hold management meetings in Inuit communities.
- Equity needs to exist in co-management (i.e., funding, information sharing, decision-making).
- Indigenous Knowledge needs to be valued as strongly as science.
- Hunters and community members should be working alongside researchers.
- Continue implementing community-driven monitoring and community drive research programs.
- The use of clear, understandable language should be a priority in co-management.
- Indigenous Knowledge should be respected and used as the basis for decision-making.



Ariana Nelson shares with all of us during the collective discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.



Dean Arey, holding the microphone, shares during the collective discussion. J.D. Storr and Kendall Archie listening and contributing to the discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.



Roland White, holding the microphone, and John McIntyre contribute to the collective discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.



James Nicori shares with us during the group discussion. Photo: ICC AK Staff.



Robert Lekander, Mark John, Ann Fienup-Riordan and Dalee Sambo Dorrough taking a break and preparing for more discussions. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

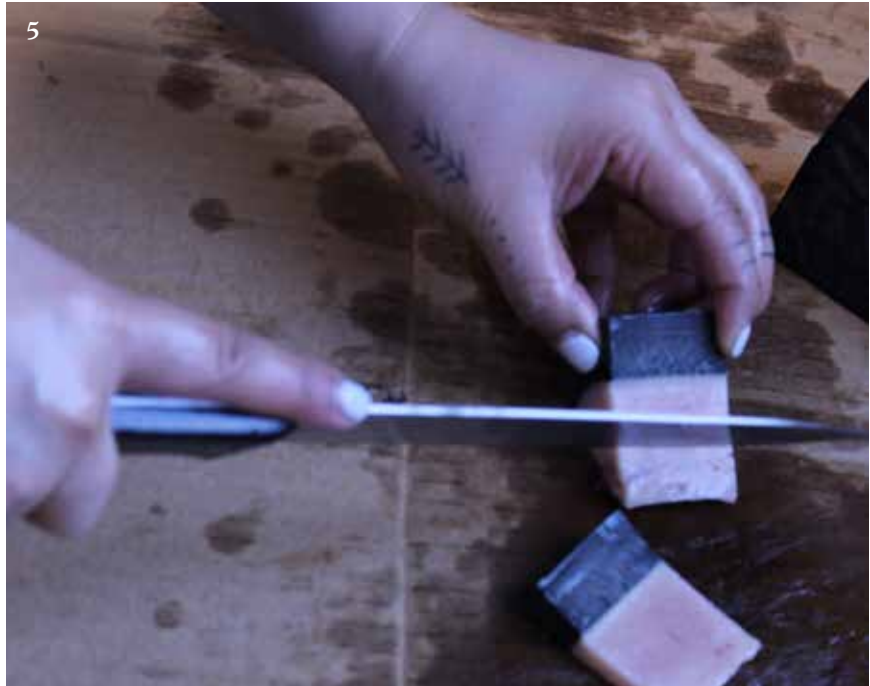
Overall Recommendations

Throughout the two-day meeting, Participants provided several recommendations beyond management practices. Most of these recommendations listed ultimately revolve around the same theme: how can we move towards Inuit food sovereignty. The recommendations are:

- ✦ Education and healthcare systems should recognize and incorporate our values.
- ✦ Show the world how we take care of our environment using social media and other platforms.
- ✦ Use social media and other media platforms to help instill pride in our people.
- ✦ Share success stories across Inuit Nunaat.
- ✦ Foster good communication across Inuit Nunaat.
- ✦ Reintroduce traditional ordinances.
- ✦ Build a legal case; we have the authority to manage our resources. We just need to assert that authority.
- ✦ Build in more flexibility to our co-management structures.
- ✦ Create more programs that help youth get out on the land.
- ✦ Create opportunities for Elders to help steer wayward youth.
- ✦ Encourage more Elders to speak at schools or engage with youth more often.
- ✦ Continue to teach and learn food preparation.
- ✦ Collect baseline information to help document the rapid changes occurring in our communities.
- ✦ Document more of our sustainable management practices and ways of preparing foods.
- ✦ Hold more meetings like the YEAH meeting - utilizing Inuit-led methodologies.

CONCLUSION

This workshop report provides a glimpse of the many proven sustainable management practices that continue to be utilized today in guiding our relationships as part of the Arctic. As the world holds an increasing interest in the Arctic, it is necessary to bring our knowledge, an understanding of our way of life, and our long-standing sustainable management approaches to the forefront to aid in guiding research, decision-making, and policy. Our way of life holds a holistic understanding, where everything making up the Arctic is connected and dependent on each other. The approaches and knowledge will aid the world in applying holistic, ecosystem-based, and adaptive decisions to human actions with an understanding of the need to follow the animals and the weather as opposed to trying to control them.



1 - Robert Lekander shares during the collective meeting. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

2 - Billy Adams dancing and raising our spirits during the meeting. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

3 - John McIntyre sharing during the meeting. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

4 - Vera Metcalf shares during the collective meeting. Photo: ICC AK Staff.

5 - Cutting up bowhead whale muktuk for lunch. Photo: ICC AK Staff.



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