



DRUM

Inupiaq: QILAUN
Siberian Yupik: SAGUYA
Central Yupik: CAUYAQ

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 8-10
Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program Working Group (AMAP) Human Health Expert Group Mtg. • Copenhagen, Denmark
<http://www.amap.no>

May 31-June 4
Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment Working Group (PAME) I-2008 • St. John's, Newfoundland
http://arctic-council.org/working_group/pame

June 1-4
National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Midyear Conference • Reno, NV
<http://www.ncai.org/Home.313.0.html>

July 20-23
Planning for Climate Change: Weathering Uncertainty • Iqaluit, Nunavut
www.planningforclimatechange.ca

August 13-15
Climate, Language and Indigenous Perspectives
Fairbanks, AK
<http://www.uaf.edu/anlc/clip>

August 22-26
6th International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences • Nuuk, Greenland
<http://www.iassa.gl>



Shishmaref erosion. Photo By: Tony Weyioanna

Surviving Climate Change By ICC Alaska staff

A transition in climate change research is occurring. Previously, the focus was on whether climate change existed and why it was happening. Today, most agree that climate change is occurring, and debate over the causes has decreased. The shift in research has begun to focus on adaptation and survival at the community level. Inuit, historically a highly adaptive people, may become the center of these studies, and Arctic indigenous groups, as well as ICC Alaska, are already preparing.

In Nunavik (Northern Quebec), Canada, a community based monitoring program is ongoing in four communities to examine sea ice conditions for safe travel. In these communities, sea ice is monitored on a daily basis by the use of GPS systems, and information on unsafe conditions are mapped for community use. This is one example where communities saw a need to adapt to changing conditions and are adapting in a proactive way through the use of technology.

There are two forums that ICC is currently involved in. The hopeful outcome of the gatherings is the development and communication of tangible strategies that communities can use in response to the effects of the changing climate. The Indigenous People's Global Summit on Climate Change (IPGSCC), an initiative lead by Patricia Cochran, ICC Chairperson, is being planned for early 2009 in Anchorage, Alaska. The purpose of the Summit is to bring together indigenous peoples from around the world to discuss impacts and effects of climate change on culture, subsistence economies, health and the future of indigenous peoples. This is the first meeting of its kind that focuses entirely on indigenous peoples from around the world. The conference intends to allow indigenous peoples to share their experiences with climate change, and strives to enable indigenous peoples to strengthen their voices and bring them to bear in national and international levels of decision-making. They will also focus on effective strategies and solutions in response to climate change from the perspectives of the cultures, world views and traditional knowledge of

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A Message from ICC-AK President Edward S. Itta



Aarigaa, I am very pleased to welcome you to the pages of **DRUM**, our new effort to keep you informed about ICC-Alaska's activities. This newsletter is an indication of the energy and enthusiasm you can expect from our new staff. I want to welcome Jimmy Stotts as ICC-Alaska's Executive Director and Kelly Eningowuk as Director of Administration. Both of these capable people came on board in January, and they have "hit the ground running" with all kinds of good ideas and some very important operational improvements.

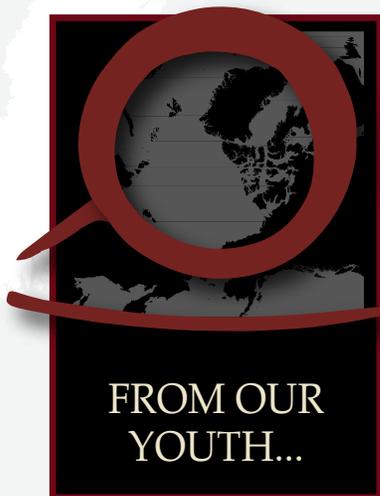
ICC is a small organization with a tall agenda. It grew out of a desire to expand Inuit influence by joining together across our national boundaries. In the course of ICC's 30-year existence, it has accomplished a great deal. ICC's status as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with the United Nations has elevated our profile in the international arena. Each of the national ICC offices have also taken Inuit concerns to the governing bodies in our respective nations.

I recently visited our Congressional delegation in Washington, D.C. I discussed ICC funding with Senator Ted Stevens, reminding him that other national governments support ICC operations. Senator Lisa Murkowski and I discussed the status of U.S. Arctic policies. She has been pushing the Bush administration to formulate a more coherent approach to the Arctic, to which the administration has replied that it is working through the Arctic Council, a representative group composed of all the nations bordering the Arctic Ocean.

Unfortunately, U.S. participation in the Arctic Council has had the effect of slowing efforts to address arctic management issues. For example, the council hosted a meeting in Norway last January, where it presented "An Assessment of Oil and Gas in the Arctic" for the group's consideration. This report included recommendations based on six years of scientific and policy analysis by the participating nations. Yet the U.S. blocked these recommendations from being discussed and made public.

Along with other indigenous groups, ICC has what is known as "permanent participation status" at the Arctic Council. This allows us to attend meetings and promote our concerns. That's a good thing because our federal government does not appear to be interested in an open and healthy discussion of critical arctic issues. With global climate change causing severe shrinkage of the arctic ice pack, and with accelerating interest in offshore oil and gas development and polar shipping, the world needs comprehensive arctic planning and protection more than ever before. We need a robust multinational policy based on careful science and conservative risk assessment, and we must constantly remind arctic nations that our Inuit way of life hangs in the balance as these decisions are made.

In future issues of this newsletter, we will keep you informed of efforts to intervene in global and national policymaking for the protection of our arctic homelands. I hope you will let us know what you think. 



L to R: Johnathan Epoo, ICYC Canada, Lillian Elias, IIEC Canada, Loddie Jones, teacher from Lower Yukon Kuskokwim School District, Nuno Iboethsen, ICYC Greenland, Lorena Williams of Noatak and Jana Harcharek of Barrow demonstrate their ability to use the Inuit language to communicate. Each person represented different areas of the Circumpolar North. "I think I had to work the hardest! (to understand)" said Loddie Jones, a fluent Yup'ik speaker. Photo By: Greta Schuerch

Inuit Circumpolar Youth Council Update By Greta Schuerch

Since the ICYC General Assembly in July of 2006, the ICYC has been involved in many activities addressing its mandate.

In October of 2006 ICYC Chairwoman, Megan Alvanna-Stimpfle and ICYC-Alaska Co-Chairs Deanna Strunk (now Latham) and Greta Schuerch had the opportunity to address the AFN Elders and Youth convention to raise awareness of ICYC efforts.

In the Fall of 2006, Megan also traveled to Vigo, Spain, to talk about global warming in Arctic communities at the regional government's celebration of 25 years of democracy.

In November of 2006, ICYC wrote a letter of support for UAF's Rural Alaska Honors Institute (RAHI) in expanding its program to indigenous students across the Arctic. For years the RAHI program has enabled high school students from rural communities throughout Alaska to enroll in college level courses in a university setting by creating a supportive network of teachers, tutors, and staff. The RAHI program has been beneficial by helping guide rural students during their important transition from village life to the urban university environment. This expansion would not only benefit international students, but Alaskan students as well. As emerging leaders continue to complete the RAHI program, in our increasingly global world, the expansion would allow them to take on an increasing awareness, understanding, and appreciation of international issues and cultures. Efforts are in progress to seek funding for two international students to attend the program this coming summer.

In May 2007, Megan traveled to San Francisco along with former ICYC Chair, Miali-Elise Coley of Canada to speak on a panel at the International Funders for Indigenous Issues National Conference.

In early 2007, we began planning for the 2nd ICYC Symposium on the Inuit Language, which later took place in Kotzebue, Alaska, on July 6&7, 2007. Approximately eighty people participated representing the North Slope, Northwest Arctic, Bering Straits and Southwest Regions of Alaska. Representatives from Greenland and Canada also attended. The final report on



The ICYC International Executive Council and ICYC Alaska Board address the symposium. Photo By: Lisa Wexler

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indigenous peoples, including local, regional, national, and international rights-based approaches. Particular attention will be also be paid to adaptation and resiliency. Patricia is in the process of securing funding for the event, and will have more information in the near future.

Jimmy Stotts, Executive Director of ICC Alaska has also been involved in a planning committee of Permanent Participants to the Arctic Council (i.e. the Inuit Circumpolar Council, the Aleut International Association, the Arctic Athabaskan Council, the Gwich'in Council International, the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North and the Saami Council). This committee is working on a workshop on "Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation Strategies for Arctic Indigenous Communities." The workshop is scheduled for September, 2008 in Copenhagen, Denmark. One of the main objectives of the workshop is to begin talks between the Permanent Participants on the potential impacts of climate change on Arctic communities and to develop adaptation strategies to mitigate them. The results of this smaller

workshop focused on Arctic indigenous communities will tie into the larger Indigenous People's Global Summit on Climate Change.

In light of a changing climate and the potential negative impacts it may have on our communities, now is the time for our communities to get involved and take control at the local level. Climate change is happening now; adaptation is inevitable. Scientific research proves that we in the Arctic will be severely impacted by climate change. We need to be prepared. We need to be proactive and plan ahead. We are highly adaptive people; we have been for generations. It will be up to us to adapt and face this new challenge. The forums on climate change adaptation strategies are just the first step in the planning process. They will allow for a sharing of information, but it will still be up to our local communities to take charge and implement the strategies as appropriate. O



sought to establish the U.S. Arctic policy largely based on science. Eugene Brower, Mayor of the Norton Slope Borough in 1983, agreed that science was a good basis to begin Arctic policy but "he stressed that the science must seek the knowledge of the Inuit people." He went on to further mention that the cooperation of scientists and skilled Inupiat hunters and observers had produced the best estimates on bowhead whale populations. Today we see more and more cooperation between science and traditional knowledge that leads to successful policy development and implementation. O



Alaskan delegates give applause to a successful Third General Assembly of the ICC, held in Iqaluit, Canada. (Taken from Inuit Today, Inuit Circumpolar Conference Iqaluit '83 "The Arctic: Our Common Responsibility", Special Edition, February 1984)

In the photo are: RoseAnn Timbers, Charlie Johnson, Henry Ivanoff and Caleb Pungowi, delegates to the ICC General Assembly in 1983 from the Bering Straits Region.

At this General Assembly, there was discussion on a comprehensive Arctic policy. U.S. Senator Frank Murkowski had introduced a bill entitled the "Arctic Research and Policy Act of 1983" that

Report from ICC Chair, Patricia Cochran



I recently gave a keynote presentation at the Arctic Frontiers Conference in Tromso, Norway, on the "Social and Cultural Aspects of Oil & Gas Development in the Arctic."

(To see the complete presentation go to www.arcticfrontiers.com.)

In this presentation, I addressed areas of concern, specifically with oil and gas development, but also with development in general. I made two key points that I want to talk further about. First of all, it is of utmost importance that we, as Inuit of the Arctic, be involved in all aspects of development, from start to finish. Secondly, we can also contribute to the process in significant ways by engaging our traditional knowledge with western science. Our traditional knowledge has taught us that everything is connected, a fact that systems science has recently caught up with.

We have seen effects on the animals on which we have traditionally relied for subsistence. Our observations, backed up by scientific studies, have concluded that noise from underwater drilling and seismic work has driven away bowhead whales. This has driven our hunters further offshore, following the whales into increasingly dangerous waters. We do not know if the bowhead may eventually move away altogether. We are intensely afraid that there will be a major oil spill in our traditional areas. We saw what happened as the result of the Exxon Valdez oil spill. If the coastal resources on which we rely are polluted, then the bottom drops out of our culture. We need that link to the land, to our history, and to our traditions.

In 2003, I was involved in the publication of the most comprehensive study yet done on the cumulative effects of oil and gas development on the North Slope of Alaska. This report was commissioned by the National Academy of Sciences. It found that even after more than thirty years of experience, we had not been looking closely enough at the issues to conclude exactly how oil and gas had affected our people and our communities. We should have been monitoring and researching our people and communities as development occurred, so that environmental, social and cultural management decisions could have been made based on solid research.

As we look to the future of oil and gas exploration on Inuit lands, even though the Alaskan North Slope may be declining as a source of oil and gas, the Arctic as a whole will become ever more important. A study by the U.S. Geological Survey says that one quarter of all untapped reserves in areas known to contain oil are found north of the Arctic Circle. That is only

the known reserves. Experts can only guess at the size of unknown reserves in the largely unexplored Arctic. Some of those guesses would place the Arctic at the forefront of oil and gas exploration over the coming decades. This means that those pockets of the circumpolar world that have so far mostly escaped the inroads of industrial development will shrink, and may ultimately disappear. From the shores of Chukotka, ever deeper into the Beaufort Sea, through Canada's Arctic islands to Greenland, the rigs are coming. The global thirst for oil and gas is such that it is not a question of if exploration will come, but when.

We need to be ready, more ready than we were with the North Slope. One important way in which we can be ready is to be politically ready. The Arctic Council is still considering its response to its "Arctic Oil and Gas Assessment." Michael Baffrey from the United States is the lead author on the chapter on economic and social effects. He told us that, "When local organizations and institutions lack power, local interests are likely to be neglected, so that costs are borne disproportionately by local residents while benefits accrue primarily at the regional and national levels."

The important point to be made, wherever development occurs in the Inuit world, is that it cannot be a process that goes on above the heads of local people. Decisions made by remote control in southern centers, no matter how well intentioned, cannot adequately reflect the reality of the lives of Inuit living in small Arctic communities. We must be involved, not just on a consultative level, but on a decision-making level. It is we who will live with the environmental, social, cultural and economic effects of oil and gas development. The drillers, the managers, and the support staff from elsewhere in the world will move away, as they have always done, moving on to the next project. We remain. We may not always make perfect decisions for ourselves. With the best will in the world, and the best grasp of local realities, we may still make mistakes.

Balancing the need for economic development and the needs for environmental and cultural protection is not a simple task, and must be approached afresh in each place. There is no off-the-shelf solution to finding that balance. But if we make mistakes, when we make mistakes, those mistakes will surely be easier to live with if they are our mistakes. Our mistakes, we can live with, and learn from. Other peoples' mistakes, imposed on our people, breed resentment and dysfunction.

It is our responsibility to ensure that we are involved in all processes of development. We need to take a stand. Eben Hopson once said, "The politics of the Arctic are no longer the politics of the people, but they are the politics of oil." As new parts of the Arctic are opened up to oil and gas development and other types of development, the politics of the Arctic must be of the people of the Arctic, and not the politics of development. This is our responsibility to the generations to come. 

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the symposium is in the final drafting stages, and will be ready for circulation by April.

In late July, Stina Berthelsen, ICYC-Greenland President, and Greta Schuerch, ICYC Alaska Co-Chair, participated in the Language Planning for Eskimo, Aleut and Saami Languages at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, which was co-sponsored by St. Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Shelly Tulloch, Assistant Professor at St. Mary's and long time supporter of ICYC, invited the two to participate and discuss ICYC Inuit language revitalization efforts.

In October of 2007, the ICYC Chairwoman, Megan Alvanna-Stimpfle of Nome joined the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs working for Vice-Chairman Lisa Murkowski as Republican Professional Staff. In her new position she was unable to continue the duties



Bernadette Alvanna-Stimpfle of Nome, left, and Jana Harcharek of Barrow, right, discuss an idea during the symposium. Photo By: Stina Berthelsen

host a program of approximately one hundred people, including four generations of Inuit representing the four ICC member regions.

The ICYC Bylaws and Mission are currently being revised and will be ratified at our next board meeting in Spring or Summer 2008. Soon the ICYC will be focusing largely on increasing membership within its organization. Ultimately, we would like to create regional and/or local ICYC councils in member regions and communities.

We are seeking people who might be interested in hosting quarterly meetings of Inuit youth in their home communities, and in establishing local councils. Any Inuit age 35 and younger interested in becoming involved with ICYC or presenting their ideas should contact Greta Schuerch via e-mail at greta.schuerch@gmail.com 



Amber Latham of Anchorage, left and Dora Hughes of Teller, right, participate in a language strategy workshop. Photo By: Stina Berthelsen

as ICYC Chair. We have missed her involvement, but continue to keep in close touch with her. Greta Schuerch of Kiana has since taken the Chair position, vacating her seat as Alaska Co-Chair. Lee Ryan of Unalakleet has accepted the position as ICYC Alaska Co-Chair, and will serve with Co-Chair Deanna Latham of Quinhagak to lead ICYC Alaska. Greta remains involved with ICYC Alaska efforts, and will spend more of her time leading the ICYC International efforts as a whole.

In January of 2008, the ICYC-Alaska Board met in Anchorage to engage in organizational strategic planning. We are now in the planning stages for an Inuit Culture Camp to take place near Unalakleet, Alaska, in July or August 2008. We would like to work with the Covenant Bible Camp to use their facility located on the North River, eight miles from Unalakleet. Funding requests have been submitted and pending approval, we plan to



L to R: Elizabeth Hensley ICYC Alaska, Minnie Gray of Ambler, Edith Pungalik of Noorvik, and Raymond Hawley of Kivalina sit together, listening to presenters. Photo By: Stina Berthelsen

Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium

By Carole Simon

The challenge of language preservation, promotion, and revitalization has been at the core of ICC's work for decades. This work has included the establishment of an ICC Language and Communications Commission, and participation in numerous international venues dealing with indigenous language issues. In 2006, delegates from all four countries attending the ICC General Assembly in Barrow, Alaska, held an in-depth session on language and culture, and adopted the following article in the Utqiagvik Declaration:

- Mandate the ICC Language and Communications Commission to participate in international bodies and promote technological initiatives that will promote linguistic diversity, fight the tendencies of linguistic diversity in Inuit language speaking areas and to promote youth initiatives, such as the Inuit Circumpolar Youth Council's project on hipification of Inuit culture and language.

Shortly after the Assembly, at the September, 2006, meeting of the Arctic Council Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG), the Government of Canada put forward a proposal for an Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium (AILS). ICC and the other five Permanent Participants to the Arctic Council enthusiastically welcomed the proposal, and were extremely pleased when the proposal received endorsement and approval from both the SDWG and the eight Arctic Council Ministers.

The Department of Canadian Heritage, with the assistance of other government departments, offered to take a lead role in supporting the Symposium, and initiated discussions with the ICC office in Canada regarding how best to organize and plan the event. Given the cultural content of the symposium, Canadian Heritage invited ICC Canada to act as the coordinating agency, and has made a generous contribution to launch the project, although additional travel funds for participants will be required. ICC Canada will be responsible for planning, managing and implementing the Symposium in collaboration with the Canadian Government, other member states of the Arctic Council and Permanent Participants.

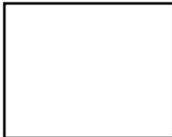


Gunn-Britt Retter, Saami Council -Member of the AILS Steering Committee

The underlying objective of the Symposium is to provide an opportunity for the participants to engage policymakers and linguistic experts in discussion on the state of indigenous languages in the Arctic, and on strategies to help in their revitalization. It is expected that the Symposium will help to build stronger relationships between state governments and indigenous peoples, foster a partnership approach toward the revitalization of language, facilitate sharing of best practices in this area, and create networks of common interest, with a view to strengthening policies related to indigenous culture.

The Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium will be held October 21-22, 2008, in Tromsø, Norway, prior to the fall meeting of the SDWG. As Tromsø is part of the Saami homeland, we will be working in close partnership with the Saami Council in planning and hosting the Symposium. Approximately forty

indigenous experts will be invited to take part in the Symposium, as well as government representatives and keynote speakers from various sectors. An initial meeting with the Saami Council and site visit to Tromsø took place in March, and we will now be moving forward with contacting language experts and establishing an advisory body to guide us in the development of the substantive program for the Symposium. ○



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The Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) representing the Inuit of Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka. ICC Alaska, along with other members, strives to strengthen, protect, and develop Inuit rights in the circumpolar region.

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