

## DRUM

Inupiaq: QILAUN Siberian Yupik: SAGUYA Central Yupik: CAUYAQ

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

April 6-10 • Western Alaska Interdisciplinary Science Conference \* Nome, Alaska \* www.uaf. edu.waisc

April 20-24 • Indigenous Peoples Global Summit on Climate Change \* Anchorage, Alaska \* www. indigenoussummit.org

April 26-29 • Arctic Council Senior Arctic Officials & Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting \* Tromso, Norway \* www.arctic-council.org

May 14-16 • Youth and Elders Conference \* Kotzebue, Alaska

May 16 • Walk for Life \* Northwest Arctic Borough Villages

May 18-29 • United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues\*New York, NY\* www. un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii

June 10-11 • Arctic Council Sustainable Development Working Group \* Nuuk, Greenland \* www.portal.sdwg.org

June 19-20 • ICC Executive Council Meeting \* Nuuk, Greenland

June 22-26 • International Whaling Commission Annual Meeting \* Madeira, Portugal \* www.iwcoffice.org

July 9-10 • ICC Inuit Health Summit 'Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

July 11-16 • International Congress on Circumpolar Health \* Yellowknife, NW Territories \* www.icch2009.com

# **Arctic Council Ministers to Meet in April**By ICC Alaska Staff

Denmark will assume the Chair of the Arctic Council (AC) at the AC Ministerial Meeting on April 28-29 in Tromso, Norway. As a result, the Greenland government has an opportunity to assume a greater role within the AC, which bodes well for Inuit.



As the chairmanship passes from Norway to Denmark, ministers will consider many Arctic policy matters of importance to Inuit. The ministers will act on work finished over the last two years and set the agenda for the next two-year term. Products and policies to be considered by the AC ministers include work done by the six AC working groups.

The Emergency Prevention Preparedness & Response Working Group (EPPR) is charged with developing policy to respond to environmental emergencies. EPPR expanded its mandate to include natural disasters in 2004. To date EPPR has focused mainly on oil and gas transportation issues and radiological and other hazardous materials issues. A recent proposal from the USA would consider an international Search and Rescue Agreement.

The Arctic Contaminants Action Plan Working Group (ACAP) is charged with reducing the release and the cleanup of contaminants in the Arctic environment. One ACAP proposal of interest is the Indigenous Peoples Community Action Initiative Overview. This project would address issues of safe handling, storage and treatment of local contamination sources in northern Russian indigenous communities.

The Arctic Monitoring & Assessment Program Working Group (AMAP) is charged with assessing Arctic pollutants and developing remedial and preventative actions on pollution. AMAP has published numerous reports on different pollutants including the monumental "Assessment Report: Arctic Pollution Issues." One AMAP report of great interest to Inuit is the "Arctic Oil & Gas Assessment 2007." A current AMAP project with ICC input is Climate Change and the Cryosphere: Snow, Water, Ice and Permafrost in the Arctic (SWIPA).

The Conservation of Arctic Flora & Fauna Working Group (CAFF) works to promote the biodiversity of the Arctic to ensure sustainability of living resources. CAFF is obviously very important to the survival of Inuit culture through the protection of living resources on which Inuit depend. CAFF collaborated with AMAP to produce the "Arctic Climate Impact Assessment." One current CAFF project of importance to Inuit is the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment.



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## A Message from ICC-AK President Edward S. Itta



#### The Ocean's Future is our Future

I recently returned from a United Nations-sponsored meeting on sustainable arctic development in the face of global climate change. Participants were mostly scientists with a smattering of policymakers and representatives of indigenous organizations. I participated in the Working Group on Oceans, Ice and Atmosphere, where we grappled with the impacts of climate change on offshore areas and challenges posed by potential offshore development.

I reminded the participants that their scientific research is needlessly incomplete if they fail to incorporate the traditional environmental knowledge of Inuit populations across the Arctic. Our knowledge base – accumulated through centuries of observation – can add a unique historical dimension to their attempts at quantifying changes to sea ice habitat and marine mammal behaviors along the arctic coast. Arctic peoples can help to establish a baseline understanding against which future changes will be measured, and we can also help to fill in gaps as scientists try to interpret their observations without the confidence or context that our ancient arctic connection can provide.

I suggested that the impacts of development are likely to be magnified by climate change, which makes development projects even riskier. That's why we need sufficient baseline studies before development occurs – so we'll have a starting point to measure changes affecting our treasured animal species and habitat. We also need to know what sorts of environmental protections are required by other nations, because we want to make sure that if the federal government is going to allow industrial activity offshore, then it better be done to the world's highest standards. In this respect, we have plenty to learn from other arctic nations.

My final recommendation for safeguarding the Arctic environment in the event of offshore industrial disturbance was that all nations should commit to including Inuit representation at the table when decisions are made. Nobody has a greater stake in the outcome than we do. The Arctic is our home, and it will remain our home long after the oil companies have moved on to some more lucrative venture. If we are at the table, then subsistence will not be overlooked as a primary value in the Arctic, and the decision-making process will be informed by the lessons of our traditional knowledge about the place we know so well and love so much.

I have grave reservations about the safety of offshore development, so I want to make sure that those who are responsible for it – developers and government agencies – feel plenty of pressure to take every available precaution. That's what it will take to protect our home.

Check Out Our Website!

www.iccalaska.org

"DRUM" is now online!

# **Executive Council Meets in Copenhagen By ICC Alaska Staff**

The Executive Council (EC) met on January 23-24 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The timing of this meeting also allowed ICC representatives from Canada and Greenland to meet with officials from the European Union (EU) in Brussels, Belgium, on the EU's anti-sealing referendum just prior to the ECM. The EC also met with Danish officials to hear Denmark's plans for their chairmanship of the Arctic Council (AC). Unfortunately, EC members from Chukotka were unable to attend due to problems with travel.

On January 23, the EC met at Representation Office (Bryggen). representatives from the (IPS). Friday morning was spent on report, including a discussion on US Government and the European with updates on activities from

The afternoon featured reports on activities. UN and human rights of the UN Permanent Forum on Human Rights Council – Expert Organization of American States Declaration on the Rights of activities of the ICC UN Advisory



ICC Executive Council 2006-2010. Photo By ICC Greenland

the Greenland Government Attending the meeting were Indigenous People's Secretariat reports starting with the Chair's the recent Arctic Policies of the Union. Country reports followed the different ICC nations.

United Nations (UN) and AC topics included: recent activities Indigenous Issues; actions of the Body on Indigenous Issues; the (OAS) efforts to develop a Draft Indigenous Peoples; and recent Group.

AC topics included: activity report on the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG); activity report on the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment Working Group (PAME) with an emphasis on the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA); update on the results of the Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium; and reports from the Indigenous People's Secretariat.

Friday afternoon concluded with a meeting with senior Danish government officials on Denmark's plans for its upcoming two-year stint as AC Chair. Denmark's areas of focus will include: a holistic approach to concerns and developments affecting Arctic peoples to balance environmental protection, sustainable use of resources, and ongoing economic development; climate change and the need to address high energy costs through renewable energy sources, as well as threats to Arctic species important to Arctic societies; the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment, which will be completed in 2013; the concept of integrated management of resources between the Arctic nations; and the continued consolidation of the structure of the AC. Greenland will have a more active and meaningful role under the Danish chairmanship.

On January 24, the ECM was held at the Greenland House in Copenhagen's city center. Again representatives from IPS were in attendance.

The meeting opened with climate change issues including: a progress report on the upcoming Indigenous Peoples Global Summit on Climate Change; a report on the IPS-sponsored Climate Change Adaptations Strategies Workshop held in Copenhagen last September; and a report on the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The Council then reviewed the ICC Statement on Arctic Sovereignty, which is in the final drafting stage, followed by an update on the Circumpolar Inuit Health Summit conference to be held in July in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories.

These items were followed by a discussion on wildlife issues, particularly on the EU ban on seal products and US government plans for commercial fishing in the Arctic Ocean.

The afternoon session concluded with a number of ICC organizational issues which included: an update on ICC's restructure plan; update on ICC's Arctic Policy revisions; and planning for the upcoming 2010 ICC General Assembly.

The next ECM will be held in Nuuk, Greenland, during the month of June coinciding with Greenland government celebrations over their recent national referendum on self-rule.



## Village Journey Continues By ICC Alaska Staff

In 1983, ICC commissioned Thomas Berger, as head of the Alaska Native Review Commission, to document Alaska Native thoughts and feelings about the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971. Berger's popular book, "Village Journey: The report of the Alaska Native Review Commission," resulted from the study. The Commission's work also contributed to the 1991 amendments to ANCSA. However, the issue of Native sovereignty was never addressed in ANCSA, nor in the 1991 Amendments, even though the issue was brought up many times during the Commission's village hearings. A whole chapter in the book was devoted to the subject of Native sovereignty in Alaska. Here are samples of what Inuit had to say at the village hearings:

"I also feel that [the Alaska Department of] Fish and Game shouldn't put regulations for the people. I feel our people could do a better job than some college graduate that comes here to put regulations on us. I also feel that all the regulations could be made by the Native people that live on the land, and could be much better off than that which is written from Washington, D.C., or Juneau. Those laws we don't get along with. I am sure if we were to write our own laws, we would be much happier." (Louis Commack, Ambler) Village Journey, page 165.

"[The Indians] were told that Columbus discovered America and here is how you are going to live. If a single Native can speak English at that time, he would reply, 'No, no, no! We are the first Americans. Therefore, here's how you'll live in our country.' Our people have one perpetual goal—self-determination, freedom, and peace." (Roger Silook, Gambell) Village Journey, page 138.

"The Yup'iks had their own government for many years before the IRA was introduced. Yu'piks had their own institutions from way back, you know. That was government. The IRA has that and that's its jobs. And that whole idea is powerful and can be defined by one word by the White man: sovereignty." (Mike Albert, Tununak) Village Journey, page 140.



In this photo, taken from the Inuit Arctic Policy Review, 2/1984, are Oscar Kawagley, ICC-Alaska Executive Council member, Thomas Berger, and Hans-Pavia Rosing, ICC President. This photo was taken when the formation of the Alaska Native Review Commission was announced.



"We are the only ones who can save ourselves. We keep looking to the outside world for someone to come and do it, and it is not going to happen. We are expecting someone out there to save us and, in fact, there is nothing in the outside world that is really that important... I think our people ought to understand that it is possible to maintain their identity and their spirit and their language and their traditions and their history and their values and still function in the twenty-first century. We know what we need to know, how to make decisions, how to analyze situations, how to speak many languages and understand technology," (Edgar Ningeulook, Shishmaref) Village Journey, page 155.

In November 2008, Inuit leaders met in Kuujjuaq, Northern Quebec, to discuss the topic of sovereignty and agreed to develop an "Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic." Following this meeting, the ICC Executive Council met in Copenhagen in January 2009 and further discussed the declaration. Steps are being taken to finalize the declaration. The declaration will be presented to the Arctic Council's ministerial meeting in April 2009.

## Report from ICC Chair, Patricia Cochran



ICC is proud to host the first Indigenous Peoples' Global Summit on Climate Change to be held in Anchorage on April 20-24, 2009 (www.indigenoussummit.com). Hundreds of Indigenous People and observers from more than 70 nations will convene in Alaska for a UN-affiliated summit to discuss ways in which traditional knowledge can be used to both

mitigate and adapt to climate change. The Summit is also designed to help strengthen the communities' participation in and articulation of recommendations to the December UN conference in Copenhagen, at which a successor agreement to the Kyoto protocol will be negotiated.

Traditional knowledge contributes to understanding climate change – observations and interpretations by Indigenous Peoples of changing Arctic sea ice, for example, has proven important across a wide range of economic, cultural and scientific interests. Traditional knowledge of fire is helping to create more effective strategies for year round forest management and reducing the risk of wild fires.

Over millennia, Indigenous Peoples have developed a large arsenal of practices of potential benefit in the climate change context, including:

- Traditional methods of shoreline reinforcement, land stabilization and reclamation;
- Protecting watersheds with Indigenous farming techniques; and
- Fostering biodiversity and the growth of useful species through planting, transplantation, and weeding techniques.

Traditional drought-related practices used to hedge against normal climate variation include:

- Sophisticated small dam systems to capture and store rainfall;
- Temporary migration;
- Planting and using diverse varieties of crops simultaneously; and

• Using alternative agricultural lands, food preservation techniques, hunting and gathering periods and wild food sources as necessary.

At least 5000 distinct groups of Indigenous Peoples have been identified in more than 70 countries, with a combined global population estimated at 300-350 million, representing about 6% of humanity. Those at greatest risk from expected extreme climate change-induced events such as sea level rise and crop-damaging droughts reside in:

- The Arctic
- The Caribbean
- The Mediterranean
- The Amazon
- Southern Chile and Argentina
- Southern Africa
- Pacific islands and other island states
- Along the Asian coastline
- Across Australia

Beyond rising temperatures, climate change is expected to alter the timing, frequency and intensity of precipitation, the direction and intensity of winds, waves, ocean currents and storm circulations, the volume of rivers, and the ranges of plants and animals.

There is no question that the impact of climate change on Indigenous Peoples will be particularly severe because most of us practice subsistence lifestyles and share a deep spiritual connection with the natural world.

The voice of Indigenous Peoples needs to be heard by rest of the world and their knowledge gained from centuries of experience utilized in worldwide climate change discussions. At this critical time, when it comes to implementing mitigation and adaptation strategies, the world would gain greatly from proven ancient traditions built on a profound respect for Mother Earth.  $\bigcirc$ 



April 20 - 24, 2009 Anchorage, Alaska



## ICC Chukotka Elects New President By ICC Alaska Staff

Citing the need to spend more time with family and job, Natalia Rodiovina recently resigned from the ICC Executive Council (EC) and from her position as President, ICC Chukotka. Natalia was replaced by Tatiana Achirgina on the EC and as President of ICC Chukotka in January. Tatiana is no newcomer to ICC, having served on the EC previously, and we look forward to working with her.

Tatiana Achirgina was born December 16, 1944, in Markovo, Chukotka. She graduated from secondary school in 1961 and completed her postsecondary degree at Urals State University in 1966. She has been working as a professional journalist for the past 43 years.



Tatiana Achirgina

Tatiana has been active in promoting the rights of Indigenous Peoples in Russia. She was a founder of the National Intelligentsia Council of Anadyr and the Association of Indigenous and Numbered Peoples of the Magadan Region. Tatiana also participated in the first Congress of the Russian Association of the Indigenous Peoples of the North and the Far East.

She participated at the meetings of the first ICC delegation to Russia in 1988. Tatiana was an observer at the 1989 ICC General Assembly in Sisimiut, Greenland. From 1990 to 1992 she worked as Project Coordinator with the newly established NGO, "Yupik". She was elected to the ICC EC after "Yupik" joined ICC in 1995.

Tatiana continued working as a free-lance journalist throughout the 1990s. From 2002 through 2008 she served as a member of the ICC Chukotka Executive Council. At present she is an editor of the State Chukchi-Inuit Performance Group "Ergyron".

## Kivgiq 2009 By Colleen Akpik Lemen

Kivgiq, the Messenger Runner Feast was held in Barrow on February 11-14, 2009 at the Barrow High School. Kivgiq is held only during years when hunting has been successful.

This year's theme was "Qaummatilli Uqautchiqput" (Let our language shine through). The North Slope Borough (NSB) in cooperation with the NSB School District provided presentations from school children from across the North Slope showing progress made promoting our culture and language. How powerful those presentations were!

We invited 20 dance groups from southwest to northeast Alaska representing Inupiat, Yupik, and Siberian Yupik communities. Unfortunately the "Sunny Bunnies" from Russia could not attend due to bad weather. A special treat was the first ever participation of traditional dancers from Greenland. Thanks to ICC Greenland for help in making this possible.

There were a total of 352 performers and another 250 attendees that came to be a part of the celebration. Singing and dancing are not the only traditional activities during Kivgiq. Other traditional activities include: Maglaqtuutiniq (gift giving); Simmiqsuutiniq (bartering and trading); Tivisaaq (humor); and Mitaaq (funny story telling). A great time was had by all. Q



David Maumina from Qaanaq and Anna Kuitse Thastum from Kulusuk, East Greenland perform at Kivgiq. Photo by Colleen Akpik Leman

## **Elders Meet in Kotzebue** By ICC Alaska Staff



Photo by ICC-Alaska staff.

The ICC Alaska Elders Council met on March 3-4, 2009, in Kotzebue, Alaska. Willie Goodwin, Jr., and Mildred Foster (Northwest), David Stone (North Slope), Bob Aloysius and Nick Andrew, Sr., (Southwest) attended. Unfortunately, the Bering Straits members were unable to be there due to bad weather. The group was joined by members of the NANA Region Elders Committee and by two ICC Alaska youth representatives, Greta Schuerch and Elizabeth Hensley.

After Willie Goodwin, Jr., ICC Alaska Elders Council Chair, welcomed everyone to the

meeting, Jim Stotts gave reports on current and future ICC activities. The youth representatives also gave reports on ICC youth activities. One purpose for the meeting was to get advice and input from the elders on ICC's plans and activities.

The main topic of discussion was ICC's plans to restructure the organization. Jim briefed the elders on the current proposal being considered by the ICC Executive Council (EC). Due to high costs of ICC General Assemblies, the EC was tasked at the 2006 General Assembly to restructure ICC.

The restructuring proposal would eliminate separate Elders and Youth Conferences currently held in conjunction with General Assemblies. Elder and youth participants from each country would be included as delegates to the General Assembly. There is also discussion on including elder and youth representation on the ICC EC. The ICC EC plans to make a final decision on restructuring at its next meeting scheduled for June in Nuuk, Greenland.

Willie Goodwin, Jr., said, "This is the first time that ICC Alaska Elders have ever met and we are excited to get organized within Alaska. We hope that the momentum from this meeting continues."

The next ICC Alaska Elders Council meeting will continue the discussion on the ICC restructuring and the process for selecting ICC elder and youth delegates to the 2010 General Assembly. The next meeting is scheduled to be held during July in Bethel, Alaska. 🔎

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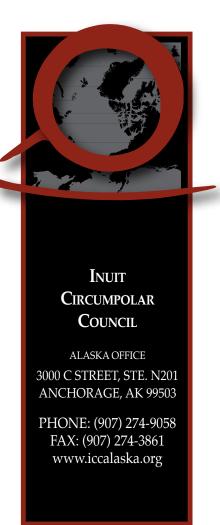
The Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) is engaged in several projects of direct concern to Inuit, including: Arctic energy needs focusing on the Arctic as an energy consumer including investigations on renewable / alternative energy sources, efficiency and savings, and energy supply to remote communities; another SDWG project of interest is Vulnerability and Adaptation of Climate Change in the Arctic (VACCA).

The Protection of Arctic Marine Environment Working Group (PAME) works on topics related to the Arctic Ocean environment. PAME is presenting two products for adoption by the ministers of great importance to Inuit at the Tromso meeting: the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment and the Arctic Offshore Oil & Gas Guidelines Update.

Other topics that ICC will be addressing at the ministerial meeting include the effectiveness and efficiency of the Arctic Council structure and procedures, funding of the permanent participants, and the Inuit Declaration on Arctic Sovereignty.

For more information on these projects and many other Arctic Council initiatives, please visit www.arctic-council.org. Q







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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