Continued from inside

The Interlinking of the Six Dimensions

While no one of the six dimensions of food security is more important than the other, the decision-making power and management dimension directly influences the strength of all other dimensions. We are experienced in adjusting to changes within the environment. The rapid changes occurring today require our knowledge and expertise to account for short- and long-term disturbances to the Arctic. However, we are lacking in our ability to make daily adaptive decisions due to policies, regulations and other intervening factors that contradict our knowledge and traditional management practices or favor the interest of Outside cultures.

One way to strengthen Inuit decision-making power and management is to concentrate on the tools needed to maintain the integrity of the six food security dimensions. For example, there is a need for co-management practices within Alaska to include IK philosophies and methodologies in obtaining and assessing information and making decisions. This may require moving away from managing single species to paying closer attention to the relationships between given species and the rest of the environment.

Drivers of Food Security

Though there are points of vulnerability in today’s Alaskan Inuit food security; there are many drivers working to maintain it. Most of these are found within the Inuit Culture dimension of food security. For example, there are numerous initiatives that focus on the use and preservation on Inuit languages; sharing systems are evolving to account for new tools need to acquire traditional foods; education programs are being developed to provide an increased focus on IK; practices of obtaining processing, storing and consuming traditional foods and holding feasts, celebrations and dances continue on.

Conclusion

As mentioned above, this project has been ongoing for three-and-a-half years. Since the beginning of the project, impacts of the many changes occurring have escalated. Where before we discussed changes that had never been seen, today these changes are persistent, and abnormal events are becoming the new norm. For example, before, some mentioned having less meat to dry; whereas today, some have no meat to dry. There is no time to waste; we must begin to make changes today, not just for the sake of our culture, but for the sake of the entire Arctic ecosystem.

We hope that the summary and technical report will be of use to a broad spectrum of people. Villages may use the reports to aid in communicating with those from outside our communities. Decision-makers, academics, environmentalist, policy-makers and industry may use the reports as a tool to enhance their understanding of the Arctic.

The food security reports are accessible at www.iccalaska.org.

Who Is ICC-Alaska?

Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) – Alaska is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that exists to be the unified voice and collective spirit of Alaskan Inuit, to promote, protect and advance Inuit culture and society. ICC-Alaska membership includes regional organizations that represent the Inupiat of the North Slope, Northwest and Bering Strait; the Sr. Lawrence Yup’ik; and the Central Yup’ik and Cup’ik of the Yukon-Kuskokwim region.

Member organizations include the North Slope Borough, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope, NANA Regional Corporation, Northwest Arctic Borough, Maniilaq Association, Bering Straits Native Corporation, Kawerak Incorporated, Calista Corporation and Association of Village Council Presidents. Representatives from these membership organizations, along with the President, Vice President, and Youth and Elder representatives, compose the ICC-Alaska 14-member Board of Directors.

ICC-Alaska is a national member of ICC International, an international, non-governmental organization founded by Eben Hopson Sr. from Barrow, Alaska, in 1977. Its creation came out of the realization that Inuit need to speak with a united voice on issues of common concern. Today ICC represents approximately 160,000 Inuit in Russia (Chukotka), the United States (Alaska), Canada and Greenland.

ICC holds Consultative Status II with the United Nations and is a Permanent Participant of the Arctic Council. ICC strives to strengthen unity among Inuit of the Circumpolar North; promote Inuit rights and interests on an international level; develop and encourage long-term policies that safeguard the Arctic environment; and seek full and active partnership in the political, economic and social development of the Circumpolar North. ICC receives its mandate from Alaska, Canada, Greenland and Chukotka delegates gathered in a General Assembly held every four years. The ICC-Alaska Food Security Project began under the Nuuk Declaration (2010-2014) and continues through the Kitigaaryuit Declaration (2014-2018).
The drivers of our food security are all the same and that what make up food we came together through community meetings, one-on-one and group Alaskan Inuit food security. What resulted is something much more. As a conceptual framework and provide an assessment process to determine security, identify what the drivers (or causes) of food (in)security are, create The objectives for the project were clear from the beginning – define food of this project come directly from us, Alaskan Inuit, to share what our food academic and governmental understanding of food security. The outcomes There has been a lot of positive work completed and ongoing to increase From the realization that we need to fully share what our food talking about our culture. We are speaking about the entire Arctic ecosystem and the relationships this is important, but not what we are talking about when we say food security. We are speaking about the entire Arctic ecosystem and the relationships with all components within; we are talking about how our language teaches us when, where and how to obtain, process, store and consume food; we are talking about the importance of dancing and potlucks to share foods and how our economic system is tied to this; we are talking about our rights to govern how we obtain, process, store and consume food; about our IK and how it will aid in illuminating these changes that are occurring. We are talking about what food security means to us, to our people, to our environment and how we see this environment; we are talking about our culture. From the realization that we need to fully share what our food security means within the Alaska Arctic, this project was born. There has been a lot of positive work completed and ongoing to increase academic and governmental understanding of food security. The outcomes of this project come directly from us, Alaskan Inuit, to share what our food security is, how to assess changes occurring and how to move forward in a way that will strengthen our food security. The objectives for the project were clear from the beginning – define food security, identify what the drivers (or causes) of food (in)security are, create a conceptual framework and provide an assessment process to determine Alaskan Inuit food security. What resulted is something much more. As we came together through community meetings, one-on-one and group interviews, regional workshops and numerous conversations, we realized that the drivers of our food security are all the same and that what make up food security within each of our identities, villages and regions is the same.