



## **THE ARTIC WE WANT Report on Activities**

**19 July 2019**

In our collective efforts to achieve the objectives of the Inuit Circumpolar Council, on the occasion of the one-year anniversary of the adoption of the *Utqiagvik Declaration*, we share the following information as a reflection of the actions that we have achieved in the past year in response to our priorities. We thank every Inuk that has assisted us in our collective work since July 19, 2018 to present.

### **International Indigenous Human Rights and International Partnerships**

The ICC leadership has completed its work on the *Utqiagvik Declaration Implementation Plan*. This effort seeks to improve coherence and coordination of inclusive engagement in our international work. Under this plan, we will organize ‘Implementation Teams’ under each of the headings listed below. The implementation teams will set goals that meet the relevant priorities and objectives outlined in the *Utqiagvik Declaration*.

- Operations and Organizational Efficiency
- Indigenous Knowledge
- Wildlife Management, Food Security and Sovereignty
- Sustainable Development
- Biodiversity, Environment, and Climate Change
- Education and Language
- Health and Wellness
- Family and Youth
- Indigenous Human Rights

We expect to have the final *Utqiagvik Declaration Implementation Plan* in final print and distributed before Fall 2019. We have consistently been active in the **Arctic Council** and although disappointed with the lack of a Declaration due to US politics, Inuit priorities on Arctic sovereignty, health and wellness, the suicide crisis and environmental change were heard in the room and outside as ICC continues our leadership within the Council. ICC issued a press release that we expressed disappointment with the lack of a Declaration but highlighted the fact that the Finnish Chair released a separate summary covering elements of the proposed declaration as a positive sign. The press release received extensive attention in the media.

We are monitoring the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals through the efforts of the Major Groups, which includes Indigenous Peoples. ICC leadership attended the 18<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (**PFII**) and was well represented by youth and ICC leadership. ICC provided an intervention on behalf of the Arctic Caucus on the topic of Indigenous Knowledge and read the definition Inuit have developed for Indigenous Knowledge into the official record of the 18<sup>th</sup> **PFII**.

An ICC delegation was present at the UN **Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP)** session, which featured a prominent plenary event focused on Indigenous women and included an Inuk. We have also been engaged with the UN **Intergovernmental Conference that will be negotiating an agreement for**

**Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction** later in July and mid-August respectively. Though we have been invited to participate in **European Union** Arctic specific gatherings, this is one area that requires future attention.

Within Canada, we brought ICC's international perspective to the Inuit Crown Partnership Committee (ICPC), which made progress on several fronts during the year. The ICPC is a bilateral mechanism for Inuit and the federal government to work together on shared priorities. This collaboration produced the Pikialasorsuaq Joint Leaders Statement, which was signed on April 3rd, 2019

## **Food Security**

The Alaskan office continues to lead important work on food security and sovereignty that are of regional and international nature. Building upon the food security project, focus has been placed on food sovereignty through an international research project and an Alaska focused initiative. The **Food Sovereignty and Self-Governance: Inuit Role in Managing Arctic Marine Resources** initiative is a research project addressing co-management structures and practice through four case studies within Alaska and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. The **Alaskan Inuit Food Sovereignty Initiative** unifies and organizes Alaskan Inuit to collectively develop a *Food Sovereignty Management Action Plan* to secure access and management rights over our traditional foods. These two efforts are directly connected to previous ICC work, including the Sustainable Wildlife Management priority and will aid in our international efforts.

Additionally, ICC continues to educate international fora and initiatives about Inuit food security and related concepts through presentations, discussions, and program developments. This work was highlighted at the second **Arctic Science Ministerial** and continues to inform international monitoring efforts under different programs, such as the **Sustainable Arctic Observing Network** and the **Arctic Council's Ecosystem Based Approach** work.

Food security is also a key component in shipping discussions. In the spring of 2019, the ICC Executive Council agreed to pursue "Observer" status within the **International Marine Organization**. Obtaining Observer status provides greater access to the IMO in the context of monitoring Polar Code enforcement and advocacy for the incremental phase out of heavy fuel oil (HFO) in order to protect and minimize impacts on the marine environment – inclusive of our traditional foods, hunting activities, and safety.

## **Families and Youth**

Recognizing that healthy Inuit families are central to the sustainability of our communities, we continue to seek and identify ways to advance this set of priorities and to ensure youth engagement. Both the Canadian and Alaskan offices have been successful at securing grants to make a more concerted effort to respond to this priority. We were fortunate to have Inuit youth representation at the **Women Deliver** conference this past June to address the unique needs and challenges related to youth and gender within Inuit communities.

One new, modest initiative was establishment of the **Hans-Pavia Rosing Leadership Award** to support Inuit youth in the form of a small scholarship to be used for supporting the growth and development of young Inuit men and women in diverse areas, ranging from pursuit of honing hunting skills with elder experts, to higher education, to leadership training opportunities, to skin sewing skills, or other Inuit customs, practices, and values. Hans-Pavia Rosing's immediate family have been informed of the ICC plan to establish the *Hans-Pavia Rosing Leadership Award* and support it.

This past spring, the Greenland office has initiated cooperation with **Meeqqat Pisinnaatitaaffiit Sullissivik** (MIO) and their Spokesperson for Children. MIO is a National Advocacy Center to address Children's Rights and their current Spokesperson is an Inuk with experience at the international level. As a part of this initiative, she was invited by the Greenland office to conduct a Side Event during the 2019 session of the **PFII**. The event was very

well received and attracted significant, diverse participation. One specific result was an invitation extended to the MIO Spokesperson by Nunavut Tungavik Inc. (NTI) to offer courses and share information on their distinct approach to working with children, youth and families, especially on their methods related to the difficult issues of suicide and abuse of children and youth.

## **Health and Wellness**

The Canadian office is spearheading the effort to host the **Circumpolar Inuit Summit on Health and Wellness** in 2020. We all look forward to this gathering and know that it will take a substantial amount of energy, resources, and work to overcome the issues concerning suicide, addiction, and a host of other health and wellness issues. ICC is currently developing a proposal for the continuation of suicide prevention and mental wellness work into the next four years. The ICC has continued its leadership on suicide prevention and mental wellness initiatives within the Arctic Council's **Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG)**. As a member of the **Arctic Human Health Expert Group**, ICC participated in the face-to-face meeting in August 2018, in Copenhagen, Denmark and another in February 2019 in Oulu, Finland.

Most significantly, ICC was a co-leader of **Project CREATEs** (Circumpolar Resilience, Engagement, and Action Through Story), a project that brought together Indigenous youth to develop digital stories on suicide prevention and mental wellness in three regional digital storytelling workshops and one circumpolar workshop on the implementation of suicide prevention strategies. Since fall 2018, the Greenland office was very active in this project, with their staff member serving as the Coordinator. The story telling workshops and short videos have been very successful and widely distributed in Greenland and elsewhere.

The ICC work on health and wellness was presented at the **International Congress on Circumpolar Health** in Copenhagen, Denmark in August 2018 and will continue to be showcased at international events. In addition, the **Circumpolar Inuit Health Steering Committee** and ICC Chair have become engaged in an **Arctic Health** project associated with the world-renowned **Lancet Commission**, which will emphasize the health and wellness of Inuit within the context of Arctic Indigenous peoples generally. Also, the Greenland office has good and substantive cooperation and collaboration with the Greenland member of the **Circumpolar Inuit Health Steering Committee** and they recently appointed an Inuk as their second member to the Committee.

## **Education and Language**

The ICC Greenland office is leading the follow up to the Education Summit and establishment of the **Inuit Education Committee** with membership from all Inuit regions in order to implement the recommendations developed at the 2018 Education Summit. The Greenland office has identified their two Inuit Education Committee members, one serves as Chairperson of the Greenland Teachers Association and the other member is the Principal for Nuussuup Atuarfia in Nuuk. They await appointment of members by the Alaska, Canada and Chukotka offices, which they hope will be announced this summer in order to hold the first full meeting of the Inuit Education Committee in Nuuk.

In addition, a strong delegation of Inuit representatives were active and instrumental at the North America and Arctic Region meeting of the **International Year of Indigenous Languages (IYIL2019)** being coordinated by **UNESCO**, with the ICC Chair holding the power of the pen in the writing of both the Proclamation and Technical Report of this significant gathering. The Chukotka office has been very active in relation to the **IYIL2019**, including the competitive selection of All-Russian program on the development of an ethnocultural non-profit organization, **“Ethnic”** with a project entitled **“Akuzil`ta yupigystun,”** focused on teaching and learning the Siberian Yupik language through use of modern technologies’ popularizing the language among the Chukotka autonomous region residents; and producing a teaching video featuring professional teaching of their distinct dialect. The video is accompanied by materials of the lessons in hard copy. It is significant that this is one of 30 selected projects within

the Russian Federation. In addition to these events, the Chukotka office has developed a template used in relation to many other **IYIL2019** events directly and intends to schedule numerous other activities before the end of 2019.

They have also submitted applications to fund cultural events to promote mutual understanding and increased awareness of their way of life, including a project called “**Malaya Rodina: Providensky District**” emphasizing the values of intangible cultural heritage and another entitled “**Near the Bering Sea**” focusing upon the lives of coastal Chukchi culture and Yupik knowledge using audio, photo and video materials. The program intends to be intergenerational, involving youth, elders, and families that support the traditions of the village. At the time of this writing, approval of the applications is unconfirmed.

## **Indigenous Knowledge**

The ICC led an initiative within the **Arctic Council** to unite the views of all Permanent Participants in relation to consistent use of the term Indigenous Knowledge. The effort was successful except for RAIPONs interest in maintaining the use of the term traditional knowledge. Expressing respect for diverse regional use, despite this development, we have managed to consistently advocate for greater intellectual and political space for greater understanding of Indigenous Knowledge and genuine co-production of knowledge, which is central to our work in all arenas [Arctic Council; CBD; UNFCCC; IPCC; etc.] and specific fields and in particular, food security and biodiversity.

Recent examples include our involvement in the **Facilitative Working Group** of the **Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform** of the **UNFCCC**, our contribution to the **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s Special Report on Oceans and Cryosphere**, contributions to the **Coastal Expert Monitoring Plan** (approved by the Arctic Council), organization and facilitation of sessions on the co-production of knowledge and Indigenous Knowledge at the **Arctic Biodiversity Congress**, and further educating and advocating for the utilization of Indigenous Knowledge through the **Arctic Environment Ministerial** and the second **Arctic Science Ministerial**. Further, the Alaskan office has secured funding to develop **Equitable and Ethical Guidelines for the Engagement of Inuit Communities and Indigenous Knowledge** within Alaska. This work will inform a follow-up process to build the Inuit International Equitable and ethical utilization of Indigenous Knowledge throughout Inuit Nunaat.

## **Sustainable Wildlife Management**

The Canadian office is actively working on the follow up to the 2017 ICC Wildlife Management Summit, which they hosted. They are furthering the terms of the **Circumpolar Inuit Wildlife Committee (CIWC)**, which will work to preserve and protect Inuit food sovereignty and develop a wildlife strategy for 2018-2022. The ICC representatives active within the Arctic Council have brought forward sustainable wildlife management issues with the **CAFF** and **PAME** Working Groups. In addition, our Canadian office has actively engaged in the **IUCN** and the **CBD** on these issues. We’re happy to report the formal establishment of **Indigenous Peoples Organization (IPO)** category within the **IUCN**, which we’ll take advantage of in relation to our wildlife management and other relevant work. The ICC has secured funding to support our participation in the upcoming CBD meetings which will be focused on negotiations toward transition of Article 8(j), which focuses on Indigenous Peoples and their knowledge and development of the post 2020 Global Biodiversity framework. We acknowledge the need to do more in the area of the **UN Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)**, especially in relation to how the treaty impacts our distinct rights and use of marine mammal by-products.

ICC continued its involvement with the **2017 International Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean** which ensures engagement of Arctic Indigenous Peoples, integration of Indigenous Knowledge into policies and appropriate management measures supporting the conservation of the Arctic Ocean. Inuit associated with ICC were an integral part of the negotiation process and will be a key partner in the creation of an enhanced knowledge system for the sustainability of future commercial fishing activities. Our

prominent role is to bring forward the interests of Inuit and to ensure **Indigenous Knowledge** is factored into decision making and that Inuit are part of the **Joint Program of Scientific Research and Monitoring**. Conservation efforts to protect our food security and cultural practices is an ICC mandate, as underscored in the *Utqiagvik Declaration*, and will be used to inform further negotiations within the agreement. Inuit youth will be mentored and trained in both science and Indigenous Knowledge (IK) methodologies within the scientific and monitoring programs required to support the Agreement.

The Chukotka office has offered proposals for the draft “Federal Law on Amendments to the Federal Law addressing Territories of Traditional Nature Management of the Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation,” intending to share their concerns about wildlife management in their region.

## **Environment**

ICC’s work concerning research efforts has maintained focus on a holistic approach and contributions have been made to the Arctic Council’s **Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme** (AMAP) Working Group and the **Sustained Arctic Observing Network** (SAON), as well as through the important high-level ministerial meeting that was held in May 2019. ICC is co-authoring, reviewing, and/or leading work on AMAP assessments (e.g. on **Biological Effects of Contaminants on Arctic Wildlife and Fish** (2018), **Chemicals of Emerging Arctic Concern** (2016), **Mercury in the Arctic** (2021), **Human health in the Arctic** (2021-2023)). ICC also actively promotes the utilization of Inuit Knowledge in AMAP’s work. In addition, ICC was heavily engaged in the *Good Practices for Environmental Impact Assessment and Meaningful Engagement in the Arctic* (*Arctic EIA*), a project under the auspices of the Arctic Council’s Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG). Through this project, we contributed to improving the application of environmental impact assessments in the Arctic through engagement in a series of circumpolar workshops and in formulating the project’s recommendations.

The ICC Chair has been appointed to the **Facilitative Working Group** and assisted in development of its first two-year Work Plan within the **Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform** within the UNFCCC. ICC continues to consistently send a delegation to the UNFCCC intersessional and Conference of Parties meetings that includes active participation and advocacy from leadership, youth, and staff. Additional climate resilience and research work has been done within the Arctic Council CAFF Working Group and elsewhere. Our advocacy efforts related to the UN **Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants** (POPs), the **UN Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee** (POPRoC) and the **UN Minamata Convention on Mercury** continues as well.

We contributed a short piece to the **IPCC** Special Report on Oceans and Cryosphere that focuses on the importance of Inuit knowledge in global climate assessments. We hope to continue to work within the IPCC towards meaningful engagement with IK. We also provide extensive comments on the IPCC reports as they are available.

Our work on the implementation of conclusions and recommendation of the *People of the Ice Bridge: The Future of the Pikialasorsuaq* report has continued. The government of Greenland has chosen to pursue this work directly and fortunately, Canada did meet with Greenland officials in May, making some progress towards establishing a mandate for future bilateral negotiations on Pikialasorsuaq.

The Greenland office has become a partner in a local and national initiative by the Inatsisartut (Parliament of Greenland), which approved an initiative to reduce the use of plastics. Plastics have created numerous problems throughout Greenland, resulting in pollution on land, sea, etc. thereby contributing to the microplastic problem now being highlighted by the Arctic Council and others. In this regard, the Greenland office has partnered with the **“Plastic Not So Fantastic”** activist group to specifically develop an Action Plan to be delivered to the Greenland Government.

## **Sustainable Development**

Progress has been made on ICC involvement in the **Arctic Economic Council**, with an active Alaskan Inuit representative present on the AEC. Her participation has been inclusive of a wide range of concerns, ranging from input on high-capacity broadband internet, best practices, responsible mining policies, and tourism. In follow up to the 2017 Inuit Economic Summit, substantial progress has been made on the finalization of Terms of Reference by the Task Force on an International Inuit Business Association, which will result in the formation of an **International Association for Inuit Businesses**.

Prior to the *Utqiagvik Declaration* adoption, the Chukotka office successfully passed a competitive selection to receive state financial support within their region to focus upon "Stimulation of economic activity of the population of the Chukotka Autonomous Region for the period 2014–2020". We will gain more information about the status of this work at our next ICC Executive Council meeting. In addition, they participated in the Canada Eurasia Russia Business Association in Vancouver and expressed their appreciation for the ongoing collaboration of environmental users of the region with the Indigenous peoples by addressing social issues and examples of cooperation.

## **Communication and Capacity Building**

Regarding organizational efficiency, the Chukotka office has worked to resolve issues related to their Charter and the composition of their Coordinating Council as well as work on their website – both of which are important matters for their presence in Chukotka.

Finally, in the context of the *Utqiagvik Declaration* Implementation Plan, the area of internal and external communications received significant attention. The Operations and Organizational Efficiency team will look at this closely. The goal is to bring about cohesive and coordinated communications, from Press Releases, to use of social media, to messages from leadership, to membership. It is important to note that the Canadian and Alaskan offices both have national communication strategies that provide a great starting point.

In addition, fledgling initiatives in terms of professional exchange across borders, dialogue concerning an **Inuit Aviation Association** as well as a **Circumpolar Inuit Law Association** have been initiated. The Chair and several Inuit from Alaska, Canada and Greenland have also been working to ensure formal Inuit engagement in the forthcoming **Arctic Circle** event in October in Reykjavik, Iceland. Events will include a plenary panel, breakout session panels and an INUIT Night reception, where we hope to feature “tidbits” of Inuit foods as well as Inuit performers to showcase Inuit cultural and creative expression. Our fundraising to ensure success of this activity is ongoing.

This concludes our report for the time period of 19 July 2018 to 19 July 2019. In future reports, we hope to include the names of all Inuit that have assisted us in our work at the local, regional, national and international level – the ICC is every Inuk and every Inuk is ICC.