



INUIT CIRCUMPOLAR COUNCIL PRESS RELEASE

ADVANCING INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE: ICC HOLDS FOCUS GROUP WITH INUIT FROM ACROSS INUIT NUNAAT

4 March 2025— Anchorage, Alaska—Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) successfully convened a three-day Indigenous Knowledge Focus Group, bringing together Indigenous Knowledge holders and ICC staff from Alaska, Canada, and Greenland. The focus group provided a space to reflect on progress and opportunities for meaningful engagement of Inuit in Arctic research and decision-making, and set a clear direction to further advance Indigenous Knowledge in ICC’s work and beyond. Knowledge holders also engaged in critical discussions on related issues, including Indigenous data sovereignty and data management.

Under the theme ***“Advancing Indigenous Knowledge from Theory to Practice,”*** Indigenous Knowledge holders emphasized that research needs to be done in partnership with Inuit – not studies conducted on us. Knowledge holders stressed the need for ICC to establish a strong presence at major international science conferences and symposiums to educate the research community. They also called for researchers to “come to our table” and stressed the need for Inuit to organize and host our own Indigenous Knowledge Symposium.

The focus group strengthened Inuit unity and reaffirmed our commitment to collectively work toward implementing true co-production of knowledge. Knowledge holders emphasized that Indigenous Knowledge must not only be recognized but actively applied throughout all phases of the research process.

Sara Olsvig, ICC Chair, who addressed the focus group virtually, said “Indigenous Knowledge is inseparable from the right of self-determination. Knowledge production has played a big role in mapping resources, lands, and waters. For many centuries, much of this Knowledge flowed south, out of Inuit homelands, and into the hands of others. Indigenous Knowledge is thus also about our sovereignty. A full recognition of Indigenous Knowledge in its own right is critical to the further development of Arctic research and knowledge production. The focus group will bring us necessary steps closer to a tangible application of the Circumpolar Inuit Protocols for Equitable and Ethical Engagement and provide tools to implement our call for full compliance with the rights of Indigenous Peoples in any knowledge production.”

This focus group marks a significant step in ICC's mandate to ensure Indigenous Knowledge is meaningfully engaged in the development and implementation of international policies and agreements that impact Inuit across the Arctic.

"Indigenous Knowledge is gained through the lived experiences of our Indigenous Knowledge holders, and it is critical in shaping the policies that impact our people," said Marie Greene, ICC Vice Chair and ICC Alaska President. "When we listen to and learn from those who have lived in harmony with the Arctic for thousands of years, better decisions about the Arctic will be made."

By bringing together Inuit across the Arctic, ICC strengthens its advocacy, ensuring that ICC's work is Inuit led and driven; and reflects the voices, knowledge, and rights of Inuit.

CONTACT:

Sofia Geisler
ICC (Greenland)
299 34 22 25
sofia@inuit.org

Kelly Eningowuk
ICC (Alaska)
907-274-9058
kelly@iccalaska.org

Cassandra Elliott
ICC (Canada)
613-407-2642
celliott@inuitcircumpolar.com

ICC is an international Indigenous Peoples' Organization, founded in 1977 to strengthen unity among Inuit of Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka. ICC promotes Inuit rights and interests at the international level, develops and encourages long term policies that safeguard the Arctic environment, and seeks full and effective participation and meaningful engagement in the political, economic, and social development of the Arctic region.

ICC holds Consultative Status II at the United Nations Economic and Social Council, is a co-founder and Permanent Participant at the Arctic Council, an Observer at the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and holds Provisional Consultative Status at the International Maritime Organization alongside other advisory and consultative roles across numerous international fora.