



Sustainable Development Working Group



ARCTIC COUNCIL




IPS Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples Secretariat


TRADITIONAL AND LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Presentation to Senior Arctic Officials
Yellowknife, NWT


March 26, 2014



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RATIONALE

- Since the inception of the Arctic Council, efforts have been made to incorporate traditional & local knowledge into its work
- For example, in the Iqaluit Declaration (1998), Ministers:
 - *"Encourage the Sustainable Development Working Group to take special note of proposals which reflect the importance of **traditional and indigenous knowledge** and the perspectives of indigenous communities in developing a sustainable future for the Arctic..."*


2



RATIONALE (continued)

- Different methods are employed by the six WGs with varying degree of consistency
- In the *Kiruna Declaration* (2013), Ministers:
 - “**Recognize** that the use of traditional and local knowledge is essential to a sustainable future in the Arctic, and decide to **develop** recommendations to integrate traditional as well as local knowledge in the work of the Arctic Council”


3



BACKGROUND

- Responding to the Kiruna Declaration, new initiative is being led by the SDWG, in close collaboration with all six PP organizations and the IPS
- Objective is to develop a set of guiding principles and a common approach for integrating traditional and local knowledge
- All working groups will be involved in the successful development of the approach, and its implementation


4



PROGRESS SINCE KIRUNA

- At October 2013 Whitehorse meeting, SDWG HoDs agreed on the need for a PPs workshop
- Led by IPS, and with funding and in-kind support from Iceland and Canada, workshop was held February 17-19 in Reykjavik, Iceland
- The aim was to bring experts together to establish common understanding, agreement, and vision


5



TK WORKSHOP

- With representation from all six PP organizations and four Arctic Council working groups (SDWG, AMAP, CAFF, and EPPR), the workshop provided a valuable opportunity to advance this initiative
- Participants produced draft "Guiding Principles," including recommended options to translate the proposed principles into practical action
- Participants agreed on the importance of the overall initiative and recognized the need for continued consultation and progress


6



TK WORKSHOP (continued)

- Principles discussed included:
 - the appropriate use of traditional knowledge in the AC
 - consistency of approaches
 - ethical considerations
 - knowledge exchange and benefits
 - efforts to enhance capacity
- Proposed recommendations included:
 - conduct outreach to enhance understanding of traditional knowledge
 - incorporate TLK lens into AC decision-making processes
 - “lessons learned” reviews upon completion of a project,
 - greater efforts to translate project materials into local languages



7



NEXT STEPS

- Reykjavik workshop focused on traditional knowledge. To ensure that local knowledge is reflected in all deliverables:
 - the SDWG HoDs have been invited to provide advice
 - additional outreach is planned to engage local knowledge experts
- Revised drafts will be circulated to all Arctic Council working groups and to SAOs for comment and approval
- SDWG is exploring the cross-cutting implications of this initiative with other ongoing AC projects including:
 - Promoting Traditional Ways of Life for Northern Communities and
 - Enhancing PP Capacity
 - Arctic Adaptation Exchange: Facilitating Adaptation to Climate Change
 - Task Forces

8



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DELIVERABLES

- Ministerial Declaration reaffirming the importance of TLK in the work of the Arctic Council
- Guiding principles for the use of Traditional and Local Knowledge in the Arctic Council and implementation actions
- Outreach event(s) on TLK

9



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ANNEX DRAFT PRINCIPLES

- “Recognize the value of Traditional Knowledge (TK) as a systematic way of thinking that will enhance and illuminate our understanding of the Arctic environment and promote a more complete knowledge base.
- Build mutual trust and respect, enhancing dialogue between disciplines and across approaches through the promotion of TK in the Arctic Council.
- Recognize the integral role of Permanent Participants (PPs) with respect to the appropriate use of TK within the Arctic Council (AC).
- Encourage meaningful engagement through systematic and consistent approaches to the use of TK in the work of the AC, including that TK is acquired and applied in accordance with appropriate ethical principles, where applicable, and is included in all stages of AC projects from conception to outputs.”

10

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ANNEX

DRAFT PRINCIPLES (continued)

- “Recognize the need to bridge knowledge systems, including through leveraging existing networks and exploring new opportunities for knowledge exchange; as well as developing education and communication strategies to broaden mutual understanding.
- Recognize the important role of Arctic Indigenous communities and peoples as TK holders, and that they should enjoy the advantages of new knowledge derived through their contribution of TK; and foster effective communication with, and among, communities by using appropriate, innovative and effective communication tools.
- Support the improved use of TK in AC activities through on-going efforts to enhance capacity and address resource needs.”

11




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THANK YOU

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