

SUBMISSION
Of the
INUIT CIRCUMPOLAR COUNCIL CANADA
To the
SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE ARCTIC
Regarding the
ARCTIC POLICY FRAMEWORK AND INTERNATIONAL PRIORITIES

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Introduction

The implications of climate change are advancing and impacting Arctic communities and the health and wellness of Inuit. International interest in Arctic waters is increasing and requiring dynamic and changing relationships with Arctic neighbors such as Russia and “near Arctic states” such as China. This emerging environmental and geo-political climate creates new political considerations for an emerging Canadian Arctic Policy. With this current climate, the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) Canada welcomes the opportunity to testify before the Senate Special Committee on the Arctic.

The Arctic Policy Framework and the International Dimension chapter that guides these international relations, along with the national priorities of the region, need to be thoughtful, strategic, and comprehensive. It must emphasize the essential role of Inuit as a central player in Canadian Arctic diplomacy and support Inuit. In doing so, it must also recognize the rights, interests, and decision-making role of Inuit, as Arctic residents. It must understand that Inuit use and occupy Inuit Nunaat – their homeland, that Inuit are the stewards of the land, and, given appropriate infrastructure, are the principal players in Canada’s Arctic sovereignty and security.

The current narrative (Validation DRAFT December 14, 2018) is a strategic plan rather than a tight policy document. This makes the additional chapters necessary to form and inform the “policy”. ICC is concerned that the final document will confuse its audience. To understand Canada’s Arctic foreign policy, readers will be required to consume the narrative and numerous chapters. Further, ICC nor any Inuit organizations as we know, have been consulted on the Safety, Security and Defense chapter which addresses emergency preparedness and response and search and rescue (SAR), both critical in need and relevance for the Inuit population, Canadians travelling to the Arctic, and foreign interests in the Arctic.

ICC was grateful for the support from Global Affairs Canada (GAC) and the co-generation of the International Dimension chapter. It was a joint process over a year in the making. Although we did not always agree, the process was respectful and collegial. ICC was disappointed that the international chapter in its final form was revenue neutral. There were important issues that required financial considerations to become a reality such as a commitment to enhancing the Canadian secretariat to the Arctic Council’s Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG).

We recognize that to become a successful policy, this document must be accompanied by a strong investment strategy and a well-defined implementation plan and that Inuit must be part of this process. Forward thinking investment and revenue streams for Arctic engagement would position Canada as a global leader in Arctic environmental policy and its relations with Inuit.

This submission to the Senate Special Committee on the Arctic explains the most important international issues as reported by the ICC Canada, whom represents the international interests of Canadian Inuit and is part of the larger ICC international organization representing Inuit across four countries.

INDIGENOUS RIGHTS, INTERESTS, AND RELATIONSHIPS ACROSS THE CIRCUMPOLAR ARCTIC

Indigenous knowledge (IK) is a complex system dating back thousands of years, with strong inter-generational ties, based on extensive observations with exhaustive peer-review. The most minute environmental changes are noted, and often there are indicators noticed by Inuit hunters and Elders long before scientific research studies take place. Forming a relationship between IK

holders and the research community strengthens the nation's ability to prevent and deal with climate change. In the 1970's, Sanikiluaq-based publication, *Voices from the Bay*, documented indicators and changes that hunters were experiencing during traditional hunting and travel practices. These included changes in ice formation, ice seasonality, habitat degradation, changes in marine mammal diets. Scientists were slow to study these changes and many of the studies happening today, decades later, are collecting data that is evidentiary support to Inuit observations.

As per Article 39, ICC's Utqiagvik Declaration looks to “*enhance ICC's work with Arctic research efforts, such as the Arctic Council's Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP) Working Group, Sustained Arctic Observing Network (SAON), International Arctic Science Committee (IASC), the European Union (EU), and during high-level ministerial processes to ensure our views and concerns are addressed on how research in the Arctic should be conducted and to highlight ethical approaches for research in the Arctic advance Inuit self-determination in research*”. It is important to note that research practices in the Arctic should include Inuit participation in the study development process, fieldwork, and interpretation of the data. Only then can we get a holistic picture of the changes and ensure that the research is ethical and promoting self-determination for the underrepresented Inuit knowledge holders.

In 2018, ITK released the National Inuit Strategy on Research (NISR), a document targeting the government and researchers, calling on them to form partnerships with Inuit that strengthen Inuit Nunangat research and pursue “Inuit-specific research priorities to support advocacy and create social equity”. The Government of Canada needs to develop a national Inuit Nunangat research policy to coordinate research initiatives among the more than ten federal departments and agencies that carry out Inuit Nunangat research. Guidelines must be formalized to advance Inuit governance in research.

Inuit are the stewards of our Arctic region. Their knowledge and observations are inherently valuable to decisions and the policy that needs to be developed around climate change. This value is recognized in numerous international arenas and forums such as in the recent Arctic Science Ministerial and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to name a few. Indeed, the UNFCCC adopted a decision to establish a Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform in December 2015 at COP 21. The Platform aims to create a space in which Indigenous Peoples can exchange experiences, knowledge, and share best practices on climate mitigation and adaptation. Effective mitigation and adaptation to climate change, whether through energy retrofits, shipping infrastructure, SAR training, or mental health programming, requires Indigenous Knowledge. The Canadian government must acknowledge IK as the extensive system of scientific data that it is and ensure that Inuit representatives are contributing members of policy and management plans of the Arctic environment.

Critical Infrastructure and Renewable Energy

If Inuit are to participate in the global economy, Arctic communities require affordable safe and secure energy supplies, access to broadband, and critical infrastructure, both marine and air. Inuit communities also want to be part of the CO2 emission solution to cap and reduce emissions and curb climate change. Inuit communities are completely reliant on fossil fuels, predominantly diesel, with a strategic objective to reduce diesel consumption by 50% by 2030 and replace with renewable energy. With only two communities across Inuit Nunangat connected to the south by roads and no communities attached to the Northern American power grid, it is imperative that Inuit gain ownership and decision-making authority over the renewable

energy projects replacing local power plants. The staggering costs and potential environmental issues of an accident associated with shipping diesel fuel to communities and the operations and maintenance of local power plants dissuade private enterprise development, drastically increase costs of public services, and cause profound economic disparities on households in the Arctic.

Inuit communities have an interest in deploying renewable energy sources, however the costs associated are prohibitive with a multitude of other barriers including the territorial or provincial jurisdiction around energy policy and regulation. To dissolve these barriers, the government must implement effective policy instruments to support Indigenous-owned and operated renewable energy projects. One suggestion from ITK is a Feed-in Tariffs model which has seen success in Canada and internationally (ITK, 2018).

Mental Health and Wellbeing

The drastic climate-driven changes in the Arctic significantly contribute to impacts on health, including mental health. In addition to living with rapid and pronounced climate change, Inuit communities face other social disparities and are working hard to address issues currently plaguing the Arctic at much higher per capita numbers than national averages. Suicide prevention, which has gained notoriety in the Canadian media as of late, has contributing factors ranging from inter-generational trauma from residential schools to a disconnection from ancestral practices and ways of knowing. The changes in nomadic lifestyles to community-based existences, the threats to country food security, language preservation, and knowledge transfer are all affecting the mental health of Inuit youth specifically and are drivers to alarmingly high suicide rates.

Creating self-determination, self-governance, and Inuit-led policy opportunities gives back the power to Inuit leadership to address the mental health and suicide epidemics in a way that honours traditional practices and best serves the youth within the local communities. The Canadian government must provide opportunities for Inuit and Indigenous-led management and prevention practices to be centrally-represented in national strategies in the prevention of suicide and health care broadly.

Inuit-led projects, such as the Arctic Council's Project CREATeS (Circumpolar Resilience, Engagement and Action through Story) on suicide prevention, are proving very successful in mitigating the high rates of incidence and raising the profile of these unacceptable statistics. The Government of Canada needs to support these endeavours, and also provide the infrastructure and training required to address mental health issues locally.

SOVEREIGNTY AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA

Arctic sovereignty and shipping

One important contribution of Inuit to Canada is through the historic and ongoing "use and occupation" of the Arctic. In terms of current disputes with other countries, the Inuit contribution is most significant with regards to the Northwest Passage, where use and occupation of the water and sea-ice is central to Canada's legal position that constitutes the Passage as "internal waters". From time immemorial, Canada's Inuit have used and occupied the ice as they have used and occupied the land. Unfortunately, subsequent Canadian governments have omitted the Inuit contribution from official statements on the legal status of the Northwest Passage.

Reintroducing the Inuit contribution will only benefit Canada and ensure appropriate SAR and emergency preparedness is in place (training and infrastructure) as it will be Canada's responsibility.

Maintaining the Northwest Passage as internal waters allows for higher safety standards and restrictions than are available under the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (specifically Article 234) and the 2014 Polar Code, adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Article 41 of the Utqiaġvik Declaration requires ICC to *support national and global programs that safeguard our marine ecosystems and wildlife from marine litter and micro-plastic*, and Article 41 asks ICC to *recognize the importance of short-lived climate forcers such as black carbon and support work through programs such as the European Union Action on Black Carbon*. It is generally assumed by the Canadian government and others that increases in foreign shipping in the Canadian Arctic cannot be impeded. However, if the Northwest Passage is truly internal waters, Canada is entitled to restrict foreign shipping to designated shipping corridors and to ban certain kinds of shipping outright. A rigorous discussion of whether and when to restrict foreign shipping must take place with Inuit centrally involved because of the risks to their environment and food security, and because of their invaluable Indigenous Knowledge. Inuit are always the first to respond to an emergency, and in doing so with limited training and resources they risk their own safety and security.

Canada is also entitled, within internal waters, to place limits on ship noise, prohibit the release of ballast water, and ban the use of heavy fuel oil. Ship noise can disturb the feeding, mating, and nursing of marine mammals, which are an important food source for Inuit; ballast water can contain destructive invasive species; and heavy fuel oil is a major contributor to black carbon, which accelerates the melting of snow and ice and thus contributes to climate change. The Canadian government should embrace efforts within the IMO to ban the use of heavy fuel oil in the Arctic, there is no need to wait for other countries to follow suit. In addition, the risk of oil spills from cruise ships and other large vessels requires effective preventative and clean-up measures that do not increase the already substantial cost of living in, often socio-economically vulnerable, Inuit communities.

The issue of foreign owned-or-operated cruise ships and small vessels must be part of the Northwest Passage discussion. Should foreign owned-or-operated cruise ships and small vessels be allowed to go anywhere they wish, for instance into poorly charted waters, and to visit any communities, or should they be required to stay within approved corridors? Should landing fees be charged to assist communities with their costs and to reduce the social impacts of mass tourism? The Canadian government must closely and collaborate with Inuit to answer these questions and implement solutions that work for Inuit communities and for Canada as a nation.

China's growing interest in using the Northwest Passage for commercial shipping also needs to be addressed proactively and through diplomatic dialogue that includes Inuit. If new infrastructure is to be built, where and by whom should it be built and operated? If new or improved services are to be provided, such as search-and-rescue equipment and personnel based in the Arctic, where will they be based and who will be employed? These are opportunities for Inuit to improve safety, diversify their economy, and build equity through social enterprises that keep benefits in the Arctic.

Hans Island and the Beaufort Sea

The same inclusive approach should be taken to the Hans Island dispute with Denmark and the Beaufort Sea boundary dispute with the United States. Inuit are important stakeholders in both disputes, and could play a central role in solutions. For instance, Hans Island could be jointly managed by Inuit from Canada and Greenland and include the Pikiyasorsuaq, while the disputed sector of the Beaufort Sea could be designated a transboundary Indigenous marine protected area jointly managed by Inuvialuit from Canada and Inupiat from Alaska.

CASE STUDY

Central Arctic Fisheries Agreement

Inuit have not been meaningfully involved in decision-making concerning the setting and allocation of fishing quotas and licenses in Baffin Bay, where the presence of transboundary stocks requires coordination with Greenland. The close connections between Inuit in Canada and Greenland, including the Inuit-led Greenlandic Government, should be a major asset for Canada as it seeks to manage these stocks sustainably.

The 2017 Central Arctic Ocean Fisheries Agreement, which concerns the high seas in the middle of the central Arctic Ocean, was a positive step towards the sustainable management of that area. It also recognized the value of IK in, among other things, determining ecological baselines. Inuit now need to be meaningfully involved in the ongoing scientific evaluation and decision-making concerning whether and when fishing can take place.

A Zone of Peace

In 1983, the ICC adopted a resolution that calls for “no nuclear testing or nuclear devices in the arctic or sub-arctic”. It recently made a similar call in the Utqiagvik Declaration of 2018. Article 7 “Mandates ICC to initiate diplomatic talks for the purpose of laying the groundwork for negotiations to declare the Arctic as a Peaceful Zone.”

The threat of nuclear weapons, whether accidentally or intentionally detonated, has returned to the top of the international agenda due to the developments in North Korea, Iran, India, Pakistan, Russia, and the United States. The threat extends to the Arctic, because of its geographic location between Russia and the United States, and the US plans to strengthen military infrastructure in Greenland. In 1968, an American B-52 bomber crashed near Thule, Greenland, resulting in the loss of one unexploded nuclear bomb under the sea-ice.

Canada chose not to take part in the UN negotiations on the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and has not signed or ratified that instrument. The ICC urges the Canadian government to reconsider this decision, which is detrimental to their efforts to maintain and promote peace in the Arctic. Ideally, the government would also publicly and unequivocally state that it opposes the presence of nuclear weapons in the Arctic.

Co-development and consultation

The ICC supports economic development in the Arctic provided it is sustainable, provides long-term employment and other benefits to Inuit, and centrally involves them in decision-making. Within this context, consultation with Inuit on natural resource and infrastructure projects has to

be meaningful in a way that assumes a real possibility of the projects being stopped as a result of consultations. The Clyde River and Trans Mountain Pipeline cases demonstrate the recent federal government failures in this regard.

The requirement of meaningful consultation is outlined in both Canadian Constitutional Law and International Law. The 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) reflects customary international binding on all countries. Meaningful consultation with Inuit benefits the nation and the Canadian government, enhancing Canada's reputation among circumpolar countries and the world stage.

Search and Rescue, community infrastructure and spill response

Canada's sovereignty is best served by resilient communities. Safety and security is best administered by people with the infrastructure that supports their efforts. For safety or sovereignty, operational requirements are changing with the climate and an increase in foreign and domestic activity is occurring.

Search and Rescue (SAR) in the Arctic needs to expand to include increased Indigenous participation, for Inuit Knowledge reasons and geographical proximity reasons. Currently, communities are not equipped in anyway to deal with SAR operations. With little funding and equipment support, inadequate training, and limited resources the questions of a serious incident is not if, but when. The grounding of the tourist/research vessel, the *Akademik Ioffe*, in the summer of 2018 off the coast of Kugaaruk, Nunavut cost the Department of National Defence over \$ 513K. This incident also showed weaknesses in Canada's SAR capabilities.

Similarly, spill response efforts are largely stunted due to the financial stress on already economically vulnerable communities and a lack of infrastructure including appropriate clean-up equipment and training. The Arctic landscape provides arguably the most difficult environment to address marine spills with the changing ice landscapes and extremely cold conditions. Both of these factors make spill response extremely difficult and dangerous. Without the right support system, it makes spill response impossible.

INTERNATIONAL ARCTIC COOPERATION TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES AFFECTING ECONOMY AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN CANADA'S NORTH

Climate change is arguably the single greatest challenge facing the Arctic and Inuit. Traditional food sources are disappearing; ice conditions are becoming unpredictable and dangerous for travel by hunters; melting ice and rising sea levels are causing destructive coastal erosion. The Canadian government should acknowledge that greenhouse emissions in the South are an enormous threat to the North. The government must take strong and immediate action to reduce national emissions well below the existing targets which are currently insufficient to actually protect either the Arctic or Inuit.

Inuit support the strong findings of the 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C. Among its findings, the report identified the Arctic and its Indigenous People as "unique and threatened systems". The report also described large scale singular events caused by global warming, notably the disintegration of the Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets. Triggering events are already happening, including the chronic loss of Arctic sea ice and the release of carbon dioxide and methane from thawing permafrost.

These findings do not come as a surprise to Inuit. For more than three decades, Inuit have brought warnings about global warming to the international community, including at the first Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. More than ever, it is essential that federal, provincial, and territorial government - across all party lines - take peer-reviewed science and Indigenous Knowledge seriously, implementing urgent and drastic measures to limit global warming to 1.5°C. UNFCCC's COP 24 decision "*Invites Parties, local communities and indigenous peoples to take into consideration the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform and its functions at the local, national and regional level in order to enhance the engagement and inclusion of indigenous peoples and local communities to facilitate the exchange of experience and the sharing of best practices and lessons learned on mitigation and adaptation in a holistic and integrated manner*". Similarly, Article 38 of the Utqiagvik Declaration "*Mandates ICC to participate actively in the operationalization of the United Nations "Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform" to create a space to share best practices, relevant climate change programs and policies, and build capacity for Indigenous Peoples to engage in the United Nations Framework Convention Climate Change process*".

Enhancing Inuit roles in diplomacy

The ICC represents Inuit in Greenland (Denmark), Canada, Alaska (US), and Russia, and plays a central role in Arctic cooperation and decision-making. Part of that role involves the Arctic Council, where the ICC maintains the status of "Permanent Participant", entitling participation in deliberations equal with the eight member-states.

The Government of Canada needs to continue to support Permanent Participants and enhance this support financially and through working partnerships with government departments. Support for Permanent Participants is support for the Arctic Council and its working groups as they deliver pertinent Indigenous and research-driven documents addressing the most consequential issues facing the Arctic. These issues range from social initiatives to improve the safety, security, health and wellbeing of Inuit communities and address the mental health and suicide epidemic to the environment and economy of the Arctic.

The ICC is particularly well-placed to facilitate positive international circumpolar relations: with Greenland, whom has a semi-autonomous government with jurisdiction over offshore resources; diplomacy with Russia with ICC's close ties to the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North; assisting the United States with the current international chair of ICC residing in Alaska, and; playing a role in Arctic-related diplomacy with China and other non-Arctic states, many of which are observers to the Arctic Council, some of whom invite the ICC to participate in conferences and other meetings on Arctic issues.

It is in Canada's interest to support an enhanced Inuit role in Arctic diplomacy. Inuit representatives have, to date, contributed to the negotiation of the:

- 2004 Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
- 2011 Arctic Search and Rescue Agreement
- 2013 Minamata Convention on Mercury
- 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change
- 2017 Agreement on Arctic Scientific Cooperation
- 2018 Agreement on Central Arctic Ocean Fisheries

As stated in the Utqiaġvik Declaration of 2018, the ICC is encouraged to “*enhance Inuit participation and capacity in international fora*” and additionally “*mandated to strengthen its role in international, multination and bilateral fora*” to guide the timely implementation of the declaration’s requirements as presented in *Inuit - The Arctic We Want*.

Additional, stable, long-term financial support for ICC Canada is needed from the Canadian Government to ensure that the full benefits of Inuit participation in diplomacy are achieved. This should include enhanced support for Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council. Funding should also support ICC and its delegations, including regional Inuit organizations, to play an active and mutually beneficial role in international fora like the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Arctic Circle, and Arctic Frontiers. We cannot be heard if we are not present.

The Utqiaġvik Declaration, Arctic 43 “*directs ICC to advocate for Inuit-led environmental monitoring and management of Inuit Nunaat (marine and terrestrial) and adopt in principle, the report, People of the Ice Bridge: The Future of the Pikialasorsuaq, and establish a committee to advance the implementation of the recommendations. These include creation of an Inuit Management Authority, an Inuit-led monitoring regime, and increased mobility for Inuit between Canada and Greenland, with the goal of supporting similar authorities across Inuit Nunaat. These initiatives should be undertaken with an objective of improving the self-sufficiency of Inuit over time with the overall objective of aligning economic development and cultural way of life*”.

This article is being met, as seen in the case study below:

CASE STUDY

Inuit Led Conservation - Pikialasorsuaq (North Water Polynya)

The Pikialasorsuaq (North Water Polynya) is the most biologically-rich location in the entire circumpolar Arctic and is of great economic and cultural importance for Inuit in both Canada and Greenland. Hunters travel hundreds of kilometres to access the wealth of wildlife at the floe-edge. The polynya and surrounding marine region is acutely threatened by climate change, increased shipping activity, tourism and potential commercial fisheries.

In 2016, the ICC formed the Pikialasorsuaq Commission with high-level representation from both Canada and Greenland. In 2017, the Commission recommended the creation of an Inuit-led transnational management regime, including Inuit-led monitoring. It also recommended the Canadian and Danish governments ensure freedom of travel for local Inuit across the international boundary preserving the visitation of extended families, the common language and the culture. The good news is that discussions with Greenland and Denmark on Pikialasorsuaq are now underway, led by Fisheries and Oceans Canada. The ICC supports this diplomacy, while underlining the necessary and ongoing role of Inuit in all decision-making.

The Pikialasorsuaq Commission also expressed concern about the Russian practice of discarding rocket stages with highly toxic residual fuel in the area. Canada responded by issuing diplomatic protests, which may have contributed to a recent suspension of this practice. However, close attention is still required.

In December of 2018, the Executive Council dissolved the Pikialasorsuaq Commission acknowledging the completion of its mandate. Replacing the Commission in work moving

forward is the Pikialasorsuaq Implementation Committee (PIC). The purpose of the PIC is to implement the former Commission's recommendations, assist in the development of Inuit-led management regime of this region and to support negotiations between regional and national governments.

Reconciliation and self-determination are key to this government's commitment. Supporting the Pikialasorsuaq initiative presents the opportunity to come together and recognize Indigenous Knowledge and participation as a crucial component to strengthen ocean conservation and build a strong, sustainable Arctic region.

THE ROLE OF SCIENCE AND ARTS/CULTURE IN ARCTIC DIPLOMACY

Science, arts, and culture are inextricably linked, one feeding into another, with the Inuktitut language weaving its way through. Environmental science supports successful subsistence hunting practices that provide materials for the clothes and supplies artfully created from skins, bones, and fur, which are foundational to the Inuit culture that exists in the survival of Arctic conditions. Promoting one means promoting all. And to strengthen science, arts, and culture is to equip the youth population with the tools required to preserve the language and customs of their ancestors, and to observe, record, and communicate the environmental changes that are happening as the climate warms. President of the National Inuit Youth Council, Ruth Kaviok, has appeared in international and national fora to promote IK, science, art, and culture and has been well received, garnering much attention at COP 24 from Canadian ministers and diplomats whose attention was grabbed by her message. The government needs to support youth leaders, such as Ruth, to be the voice of their Inuit communities in international capacities, and also support Inuit science, arts, and culture events nationally.

Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada

The Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) is an Indigenous Peoples' Organization (IPO), founded in 1977 to promote and celebrate the unity of 160,000 Inuit from Alaska (USA), Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka (Russia). ICC works to promote Inuit rights, safeguard the Arctic environment, and protect and promote the Inuit way of life. In regard to climate change, we believe that it is crucial for world leaders and governments to recognize, respect, and fully implement the human rights of Inuit and all other Indigenous Peoples across the globe.

Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) Canada has worked alongside Global Affairs Canada on the International Chapter of the Arctic Policy Framework, negotiating on various issues and agreeing where possible, and understanding the complexities of the process with a vast number of rights-holders and stakeholders involved. ICC Canada has expressed the vision of Inuit and international Arctic priorities, attempting to align these within the narrative of the framework, now termed Aurora 2030. ICC Canada has been engaged with Inuit Tapariit Kanatami (ITK) and the four regions to develop the Inuit Nunangat chapter with the intention of aligning all documents with the best interests of Inuit. ICC Canada intends to engage with the Government of Canada in developing the Governance and Investment Strategy accompanying the new Arctic Policy Framework.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Canadian Government must:

Recognize Indigenous Knowledge as an extensive system of scientific data that must be integrated as a central component to policy and decision making around Arctic environmental efforts, as well as the health and community prosperity of Inuit Nunaat.

Provide opportunities for Inuit and Indigenous-led management and prevention practices to be centrally-represented in national strategies in the prevention of suicide and the care of mental health. Provide the infrastructure and training (build Inuit capacity) to address mental wellness locally.

Support youth leaders to be the voice of their Inuit communities in international capacities, and also support Inuit knowledge, arts, and culture events nationally. Equip Inuit youth with the tools required to preserve the language and customs of their ancestors, and to observe, record, and communicate the environmental changes that their communities are experiencing as the climate warms.

Enhance SAR and emergency protection infrastructure and training in Inuit communities as Inuit are the first responders to an emergency.

Increase community infrastructure (energy, air and marine) to ensure safe reliable platforms for National Defence operations (both training and actual).

Conduct a rigorous discussion on the future use of the Northwest Passage with Inuit as central participants as their food security and way of life and the health of the Arctic marine environment are all at risk with increased vessel traffic.

Implement strong and immediate action to reduce national CO2 emissions well below the existing targets which are currently insufficient to actually protect either the Arctic or Inuit.

Provide additional, stable, long-term financial support for ICC Canada to ensure that the full benefits of Inuit participation in diplomacy are achieved.

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