

WORKSHOP ON INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

Report
prepared by Institut nordique du Québec

April 2-3, 2019
Oujé-bougoumou, Eeyou Istchee

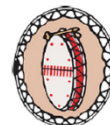
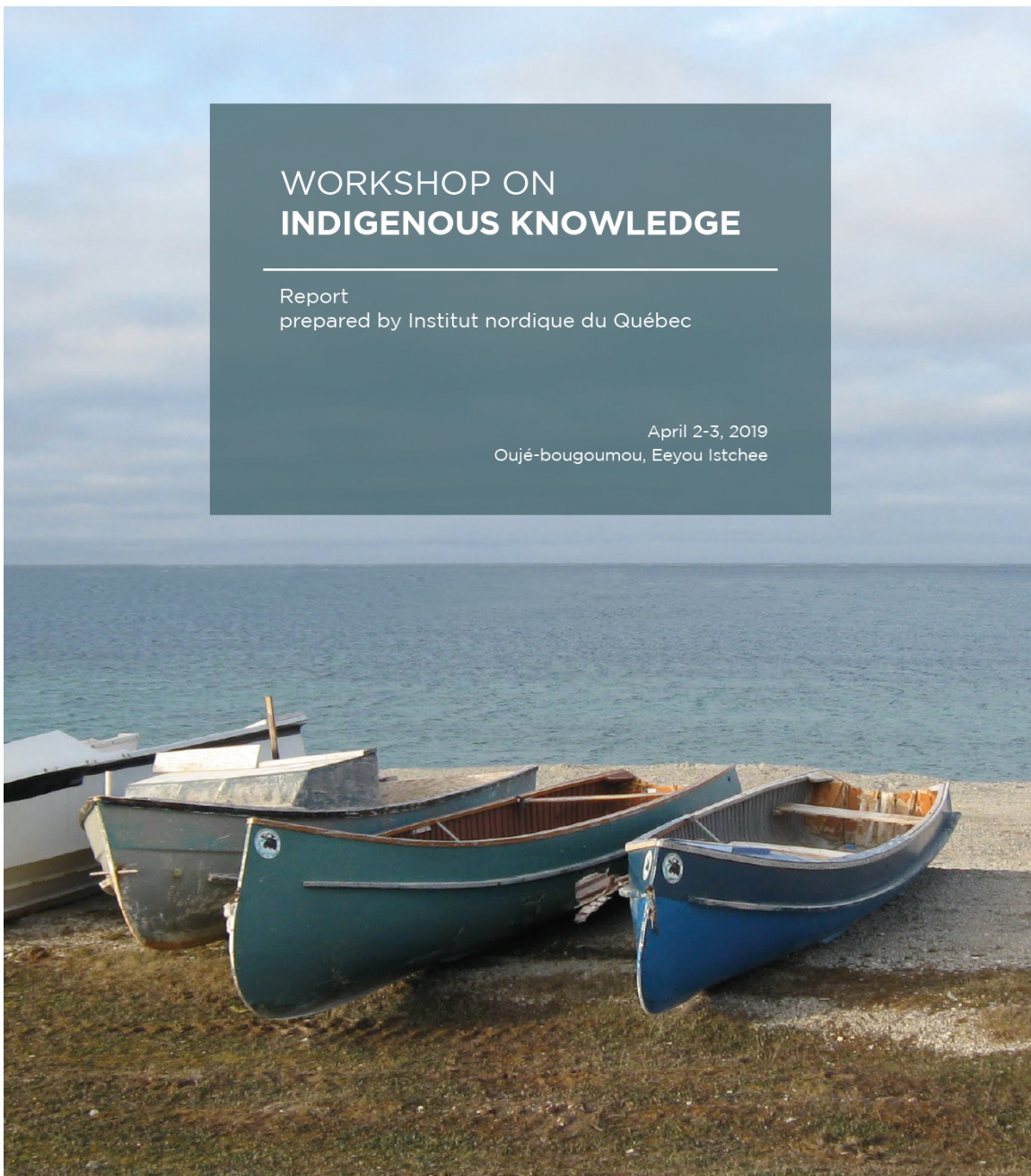


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Introduction

April 2 and 3, 2019, Institut nordique du Québec and the Cree Nation Government held a workshop on Indigenous knowledge. The event took place in the Cree community of Oujé-Bougoumou, where participants were welcomed by the chief of the community. Thanks to funding from Société du Plan Nord, Institut nordique du Québec, and the Cree Nation Government, the workshop brought together some thirty researchers and representatives from the four nations in Northern Québec **to discuss the best ways to respectfully share and transfer Indigenous knowledge**. The workshop featuring presentations by researchers, Indigenous representatives, **and knowledge holders** **provided an opportunity to exchange views on how to boost the participation of Indigenous communities in research**.

The first day was held at Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute. The participants presented what was being done in their communities and talked about best research practices.

The second day took place at Nuuhchimi wiinuu, a Cree cultural camp, and was devoted to discussions about the actions that need to be taken to boost community participation in research and ensure that knowledge is shared in a respectful manner. This report summarizes the discussions from the two-day workshop. It will be followed by a guide for researchers and communities for use in developing research projects.

Session 1 | Inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in Northern Québec

It is important to consider how best to include and use Indigenous knowledge in research in a fair and equitable fashion.

RUPERT RIVER TALLYMEN

The diversion of the Rupert River is a perfect example of how Indigenous knowledge can be incorporated into development projects. Thanks to the participation of knowledge holders, it was possible to limit the project's environmental impact. Paul John Murdoch, the negotiator for the Cree Nation Government, talked about this part of the project's history during the workshop.

The Rupert River diversion stemmed from negotiations with the Cree Government in which tallymen were involved from the very beginning of the process. Three different diversion scenarios were proposed by the engineers at the start of the negotiations. However, the tallymen put forward a fourth scenario in which a tunnel could be built to reduce the total area of flooded Category II land. At the end of the day, their solution won out.

Despite this, the diversion had a significant impact on fishing. The reduced flow of the river considerably diminished the annual fish harvest in Waskaganish. Subsequently, at the suggestion of tallyman Saunders, an artificial dam was built to bring back the fish. After a few years, fish numbers were back up to pre-diversion levels.

The tallymen also played an important role in other development projects. For example, work is currently underway to restore the Chisasibi spawning grounds that were lost when the LG1 dam was built. The biologist hired by Hydro-Québec had concluded that the site was a poor choice for a spawning ground. However, input from a tallyman who was convinced the opposite was true led to the site being reassessed. When the biologist was apprised of the tallyman's opinion, he returned to the site while the sturgeon were spawning. As a result, he was able to observe that it was in fact a good spawning ground for this fish species, and that it was important to protect the site.

Likewise, when the Éléonore Mine project started up, a number of tallymen were involved in assessing the environmental impacts of the project, and were invited to propose potential mitigation measures. It was the tallymen who succeeded in getting the project approved by the local population, by presenting it in a way that the community understood, something the engineers had been unable to achieve.

These examples demonstrate how important it is to take into consideration the knowledge held by tallymen.

Researchers must be open to making changes to their projects after discussions with these knowledge holders. Their valuable contribution must not be underestimated.

SURVEY ON THE GEORGE RIVER MIGRATORY CARIBOU: SHARING KNOWLEDGE THROUGH COLLABORATION

Vincent Brodeur, a biologist with Québec's Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs, presented a study on the George River migratory caribou that used Indigenous knowledge to better survey the herd.

With the George River herd in rapid decline, the combination of Indigenous knowledge and population surveys is helping provide a better understanding of what is happening to the animals. In this instance, telemetry has proven to be an excellent method for understanding the range of the herd. However, hunters and local communities have little faith in this method, and are sceptical about government research. By including hunting and trapping organizations from the outset, it was possible to win over the public's trust. This method also allowed knowledge holders to suggest better flight paths and search areas for monitoring. Indigenous observers were also present on each flight.

RESEARCH IN THE NITASSINAN

To illustrate the research being done in the Nitassinan, Anne-Marie André, an Innu elder from Matimekush, spoke about the importance of protecting Indigenous languages and traditions, which are rapidly disappearing. A teacher at Manitou College for 29 years, Anne-Marie acted as an advocate for Innu traditions and culture while ensuring that students continued their education. She sought to instill in them the respect for themselves, their culture, their community, and for others. She mentioned on several occasions the importance for the Innu People of conserving their culture. The caribou is a central symbol of Innu culture: If the caribou disappears, so, too, will the Innu culture.

NASKAPI TEACHERS: BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

Loretta Robinson, educational project coordinator at the First Nations Education Council and a former teacher in Kawawachikamach, realized the impact of colonization on the education system when she returned to the community after a prolonged absence to complete her master's degree in education. In Kawawachikamach, most of the teachers are not Indigenous. Loretta wanted to teach in her mother tongue, but she came up against prejudices from her colleagues, who consider the years children are taught in the Naskapi language as «wasted» years. In their opinion, children do not acquire any real education during the years where Naskapi is the language of instruction. Today, English is the language of instruction starting in grade 4, at the expense of the Naskapi language and culture. Loretta Robinson surveyed teachers to find out what they thought about the role of the Naskapi language in school. The Naskapi teachers viewed the language as a tool that allows children to acquire cultural knowledge related to the land. The non-Naskapi teachers did not share their vision.

She concluded that more measures must be taken to preserve and teach the Naskapi language. Through dialogue, collaboration, and a better understanding of Naskapi values, it could be possible to reconstruct the relationship between Naskapi and Western knowledge so as to strike a balance that is beneficial for the community's children.

INUIT KNOWLEDGE IN NUNAVIK

Tommy Pallisser, executive director of the Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board, described the way his organization works with Indigenous and Western knowledge.

The Fisheries Management Plan developed by Fisheries and Oceans Canada a few years ago was viewed in a negative light by Inuit hunters, who had always fished only what they needed rather than adhering to a quota system. Since the signing of the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement, it is now the responsibility of the Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board to manage the beluga population.

The Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board decided to set up a new management system by implementing a project that takes Indigenous knowledge into consideration in beluga management.

One of the main challenges is to effectively manage two beluga sub-populations whose territories overlap: one is in very good health, while the other has only a very small number of individuals. With the quota formula put in place by Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Inuit hunters ended up competing against each other to fill their quotas. They were inadvertently hunting and depleting the wrong beluga sub-population. To avoid a repeat of this situation, consultations were held with hunters to gain a better understanding of the belugas' migratory paths, and with Fisheries and Oceans Canada to enhance knowledge about the genetics of the animals to better identify the two sub-populations.

Although scientific research is well funded, there is limited financial investment in Indigenous and Inuit knowledge, and the valuable knowledge held by elders is often overlooked. Young people are often more interested in Western knowledge than in the knowledge of their elders. Which is why the Unaaq Men's Association of Inukjuak has developed intensive, traditional knowledge training programs that bring together young people, elders, and experienced hunters.

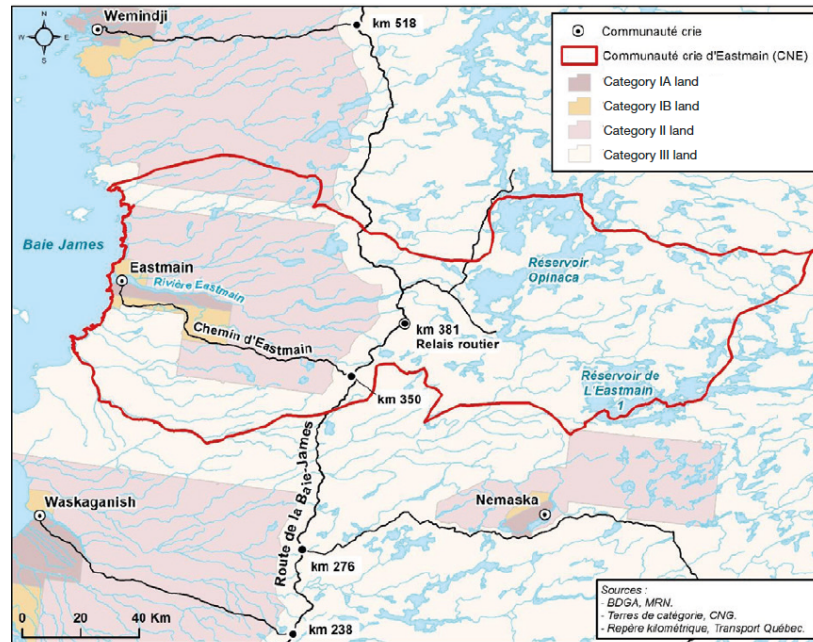
MAPPING GROUNDWATER IN EASTMAIN

Éric Rosa, a researcher at Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue (UQAT), shared the findings of the research he conducted with Dylan Mayappo, a project manager for the Cree Nation of Eastmain.

Prior to 2008, there was very little data on the use, quantity, and quality of Québec's groundwater. To address this shortcoming, the Government of Québec decided to set up a major funding program to acquire more knowledge about this topic south of the 49th parallel. However, no funds were earmarked for research north of this limit. In 2016, UQAT and the Cree Nation Government decided to work together to fill the knowledge gaps. A number of sub-projects were created in different regions of the territory. Research on the Eastmain River is focused primarily on the Opinaca and Eastmain reservoirs. The project will have repercussions on Hydro-Québec's operations.

From the outset, the project took into consideration Cree knowledge holders. On one hand, the researchers brought their theoretical knowledge to the table, while on the other, Cree elders contributed their wealth of knowledge about the land. Tallymen were consulted to determine the territory's areas of interest, and maps were subsequently drawn up.

The research project enabled UQAT to set up a microprogram in applied hydrology. The program is offered online and in the classroom. Its goal is to help Cree students boost their communities' capacity and to create and maintain a database on the quality and quantity of groundwater in the region. The training will also provide an opportunity for more jobs in Cree communities.



Session 2 | Stepping up the role of communities in research

The aim of the presentations and examples given by the speakers in this second session was to describe the methods and tools available to reinforce the role of communities in research and to provide them with more control over research activities.

RESEARCH ETHICS IN MASHTEUIATSH

Some communities have adopted processes that allow them to better monitor and control research in their territories. This is the case, for example, with the Innu community of Mashteuiatsh. Hélène Boivin, coordinator of the community's research project coordination committee, was on hand to talk about a community research committee that was set up in 2017 with the goal of supervising a large part of the research being conducted in the territory and ensuring compliance with the OCAP® principles (Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession).

A protocol was created to revise, accept, and monitor the more than 20 research project applications that are submitted to the committee each year. Most deal primarily with culture, territory, and language, while others focus on education and health. The committee also provides guidance to researchers to help them tailor their research to the needs of the community, involve community members, and better integrate Indigenous knowledge. Once a project has been submitted and evaluated, researchers must sign a research agreement with the community, and a monitoring committee is set up.

The study's findings must be presented to the community and to the band council.

However, it is difficult for the committee to keep up with demand, as there are too many research projects for the community to handle. Furthermore, some researchers bypass the committee, which doesn't have the means to force researchers to abide by the process it has put in place.

Another important issue for the community is accessibility of the results of research conducted on their territory. It is important that communities have access to the data and a place for it to be archived. Mashteuiatsh signed an agreement to this effect with *Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de Mashteuiatsh* to archive its research data. Intellectual property is also a key issue. Knowledge holders must be recognized, on an equal footing with university researchers and their partners.

Another important element to take into consideration is cultural appropriation. The community does not want to lose «ownership» of its knowledge. It is therefore important that the community be involved in every phase of research projects. H  l  ne Boivin suggested that a portion of research budgets be earmarked directly for the community's participation. This funding would help in coordinating research, managing the community's involvement, and integrating knowledge. It is interesting to note that the Indigenous nations living in the North are involved in various research networks, including INQ, as a means of building their capacity and collaborations with researchers and universities.

CREE-INNU CO-MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT WITH MASHTEUIATSH

Carl Cleary, secretary of government relations for the Innu Nation Council of Mashteuiatsh, and John Paul Murdoch, negotiator for the Cree Nation Government, presented the Cree-Innu co-management agreement. The agreement—the first of its kind between two Indigenous nations—allows them work together on shared issues.

Since the territories of the Cree Nation and the Innu Nation of Mashteuiatsh overlap, the two nations drew up a co-management agreement for the land they share. After two years of discussions, an agreement was finally signed in June 2018 recognizing both nations and establishing communication and co-management mechanisms regarding economic and forest management, hunting, and traditional activities.

The objectives of the agreement are two-fold:

- 1) Establish channels of communication between the nations; and
- 2) Permit development on the land.

Discussions are underway to include other nations.

A joint committee on traditional activities and wildlife, with equal numbers of Cree and Innu representatives, was struck to conduct the negotiations. Its mandate was to decide how the land should be co-managed. To avoid any interference from the provincial and federal governments, the Cree did not have recourse to the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement in their negotiations. Instead, the two parties agreed that the Innu territory management system would be adopted, which kept the governments removed from the process. A two-nation committee was also set up to bolster economic development.

NUNAVIK RESEARCH CENTRE: 40 YEARS OF RESEARCH BY THE INUIT

Ellen Avarð, director of the Nunavik Research Centre, and wildlife technician Claude Makiuk were on hand to present the history of the centre (which opened in 1978) and explain how it operates. Most of the centre's employees are Inuit. Its primary mandate is to conduct research that addresses the needs and concerns of the Nunavik Inuit. The research must incorporate Inuit values and include Nunavik researchers. The centre also offers training opportunities. Most of its research focuses on local flora and fauna.

One of its research projects deals with Arctic char in Deception Bay. It was submitted by the communities of Salluit and Kangiqsujuaq, which were concerned by the low weights of the local fish population. A working group composed of various stakeholders set up the research project and carried out field work. Samples were collected, and the group incorporated Inuit knowledge on the topic by interviewing elders. The preliminary findings were recently reported to the two communities.

NASKAPI MIYUPIMAATISIUN

Glenda Sandy, a nurse in Kawawachikamach and master's student at Université Laval, spoke to the participants about her community's healthcare system. In her experience, it is essential to tailor healthcare to the community's needs, so its members can take ownership. In the community, the CLSC (local community health service centre), which reports directly to Québec's Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, is the organization responsible for providing healthcare to the population. Like in many other regions of the North, the doctors and nurses are mainly from the southern part of the province. What's more, very little data exists about the health of the Naskapi. It is believed that the health of the population would improve if the community were more involved, since health encompasses not only physical, but also emotional, mental, cultural, and spiritual aspects.

APPLYING AND INTEGRATING INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE IN THE MINING INDUSTRY

Youcef Larbi, chief geologist for the Cree Mineral Exploration Board, explained how the Board incorporates Indigenous knowledge.

With the signing of the Peace of the Braves agreement in 2002, the Cree can control mining development in their territory. The Cree Mineral Exploration Board, a not-for-profit organization, was created at that time to foster mining development, facilitate access to the territory, and gain a better understanding of the territory's geology.

The committee also oversees a vital training component. In addition, it brings elementary and high school students out onto the land to talk to them about geology, and offers workshops to train prospectors.

A program for entrepreneurs was also created to provide financial aid to Cree exploration companies. Under the Cree Nation Mining Policy, development projects must be endorsed by the tallymen, the chief, and the band councils. The process is clearly set out, and companies are encouraged to use the services of tallymen and Cree companies.

NUNAVIK NUTRITION AND HEALTH COMMITTEE

Kitty Gordon of the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services gave a talk on the Nunavik Nutrition and Health Committee and its involvement in research.

The committee was struck in 1989 in response to the release of a study showing high levels of contaminants in the breast milk of Inuit women. The report led to the creation of the National Contaminants Program, later renamed the Nunavik Nutrition and Health Committee. Since its creation, the committee's mandate has been to advise the director of public health, oversee regional coordination, and communicate with the Inuit all relevant information about health, nutrition, and contaminants. The committee also collaborates with researchers and gathers information on the concerns of the public that have not been taken into consideration or that have not been examined by researchers. Lastly, it serves as the regional ethics committee for health projects. The committee's recent concerns deal with beluga whales, the presence of lead, and its introduction into foods.

Session 3 | Discussion: How to improve collaborative research and the integration of Indigenous knowledge?

The final day of the event was devoted to discussions. Melissa Saganash of the Cree Nation Government acted as facilitator for a question and answer session on the topics raised by the invited speakers. The following points were addressed :

- 1) how research can meet the needs of the communities more effectively; and
- 2) how INQ can facilitate the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge and collaborative research.

COLLABORATION AND DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN NATIONS

One of the points raised by several of the stakeholders was the need to create more discussion forums and partnerships among the Indigenous nations of Northern Québec. Being able to discuss best practices and the various research projects underway helps the communities to manage research better. This information-sharing and coordination maximizes available resources, encourages the implementation of best practices, and can even facilitate shared management of research. Among other things, nations could help each other to define their research priorities.

The point was raised that, in such cases, INQ could play a role in facilitating collaboration. One of the conclusions among participants was that workshops such as the one documented here are essential, as the opportunities for discussion between Indigenous nations are few and far between.

The themes of future workshops should vary, to promote partnerships and discussions, not only between researchers and communities, but also among Indigenous nations.

An information centre would also be helpful to facilitate discussions between nations and communities.

DEFINING RESEARCH PRIORITIES

To effectively coordinate research on their territories, communities must have the capacity and necessary resources to define their own research priorities.

However, while defining priorities is a major challenge, it is also important that communities have the necessary resources and authority to ensure their priorities are respected and subsequently coordinate research conducted in their territories. It is therefore important, according to the stakeholders, to identify the necessary resources so that the communities can not only undertake the exercise to prioritize research, but also ensure that the priorities are subsequently respected.

There must also be more training provided in the North to enable communities to conduct research themselves.

The stakeholders agreed that it is important to set up research frameworks tailored to each nation to facilitate the coordination of research projects, as is the case in the community of Mashteuiatsh. INQ could provide support for establishing such structures.

In addition, it was suggested that part of the funding for research in Québec be earmarked directly for the communities and for local research.

The participants mentioned the possibility of creating a structure that would be tasked with ensuring that projects are ethical and that they meet the communities' priorities. This organization could provide communities with assistance to access data.

The participants also suggested that research be coordinated via calls for projects from national and regional organizations. It was further proposed that INQ promote this approach with federal and provincial organizations.

ACCESS TO DATA

Collaborative research and research coordination cannot be carried out if the communities do not have access to the data collected by researchers. The participants stressed the importance of having access to a physical space to consult the data. In some cases, the community could be the owners of such data, as is the case for the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services for the Inuit Health Survey. The data collected cannot be disseminated or shared without its permission. Lastly, it was noted that it is important to repatriate the data, Indigenous knowledge, and cultural objects currently kept in research centres outside communities.

It was suggested that data management committees be set up in every region, as is the case in Nunavik.

RECOGNIZING INDIGENOUS EXPERTISE AND KNOWLEDGE

Participants mentioned that it is important to recognize the expertise of Indigenous researchers over and above the diplomas they hold. Local expertise and knowledge holders must be recognized, and their knowledge transferred.

Some participants suggested that regional and local organizations should be supported so they are better equipped to transfer and promote Indigenous knowledge. Another point that was raised was the need to promote networks for dialogue on Indigenous knowledge and to provide support for those networks.

LONG-TERM COLLABORATION

One of the points mentioned by participants was the importance of relationships with researchers. They stressed the need for researchers to engage with communities for the long term, to forge a relationship of trust. Researchers must also be open to collaborating and lending an ear to the communities.

From the point of view of the participants, it is important to recreate a climate of trust and to rebuild bridges between researchers and communities, for example, by emphasizing long-term engagement by researchers within the communities. It was therefore proposed that INQ promote collaborative and ethical research, and that it educates both students and experienced researchers in this regard.

Beyond the communities, researchers must demonstrate openness and collaboration amongst themselves in order to improve knowledge sharing and avoid redundant research.

Recommendations

The stakeholders raised a number of points and made several recommendations during the workshop. The following is a summary of the key recommendations:

INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

In order to foster collaboration among Indigenous nations and help define research priorities, the participants proposed that:

- Indigenous nations set up more research partnerships among themselves;
- Indigenous nations create and set up more spaces for dialogue; and
- data management committees be created in the communities and nations that so desire.

RESEARCHERS AND RESEARCH INSTITUTES

Researchers and research institutes, particularly INQ, were singled out for a number of recommendations. For example, it was proposed that:

- INQ facilitate collaboration between Indigenous nations, notably by organizing more activities to bring the various Indigenous nations together;
- INQ support the creation of Indigenous research frameworks aimed at coordinating research projects in the territory;
- INQ support the creation of data management committees in Indigenous communities and nations;
- INQ promote ethical and collaborative research among researchers, and that it educates them to this effect;
- part of the researchers' funding be given directly to the communities to help coordinate research within their territory; and that
- calls for research projects by the various organizations and agencies take into consideration the research priorities of Indigenous communities when allocating funding.

GOVERNMENTS

Lastly, other recommendations were directed specifically at governments. The participants recommended that:

- resources be made available to help Indigenous communities and nations define their research priorities and coordinate research within their territories;
- more financial support be allocated to regional and local organizations seeking to transfer and promote Indigenous knowledge; and that
- governments fund travel for Indigenous representatives when they are invited to take part in government initiatives outside their territories.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Map of the Territory and its Communities

FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT OF QUÉBEC



- Les 17 régions administratives du Québec
- 01 Bas-Saint-Laurent
 - 02 Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean
 - 03 Capitale-Nationale
 - 04 Mauricie
 - 05 Estrie
 - 06 Montréal
 - 07 Outaouais
 - 08 Abitibi-Témiscamingue
 - 09 Côte-Nord
 - 10 Nord-du-Québec
 - 11 Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine
 - 12 Chaudière-Appalaches
 - 13 Laval
 - 14 Lanaudière
 - 15 Laurentides
 - 16 Montérégie
 - 17 Centre-du-Québec

Québec

Appendix 2 – Glossary

– **James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement:** A legal agreement signed in 1975 to allow hydroelectric development in Northern Québec and the construction of the James Bay dam. Often referred to as the «first modern treaty,» the agreement redefines relations between Québec and the Indigenous nations that signed it, namely the Cree and the Nunavik Inuit. In exchange for their Aboriginal rights to certain territories, the Indigenous nations obtained exclusive rights on certain lands as well as financial compensation for the protection of the Cree and Inuit way of life and traditional cultures.

– **Peace of the Braves:** Signed in 2002, this new agreement between the Government of Québec and the Cree nation followed up on the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. It enabled the resolution of court battles surrounding hydroelectric and forestry development in the territory, as well as the application of certain aspects of the Agreement. Among other things, the new agreement calls for the Cree to play a role in resource development and, especially, in a share of the revenues. It also calls for negotiations for a self-government agreement.

– **Tallyman:** As defined in the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement, tallyman refers to a Cree person recognized by a Cree community as responsible for the supervision of harvesting activity on a Cree trapline.

– **Telemetry:** The automatic measurement and transmission of data by wire, radio, or other means from remote sources.

– **OCAP®:** Refers to the principles of ownership, control, access, and possession that are the de facto standard for how to conduct research with First Nations. They are the basis for the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Research Protocol and are enshrined in the Tri-council Policy Statement issued by Canada's three major granting councils on the ethical aspects of research involving human participants

Appendix 3 – List of participants at the Workshop on Indigenous Knowledge

Anne-Marie André
Former teacher and Innu elder from Matimekush-Lac John

Serge Ashini-Goupil
Representative of the Innu nation for INQ

Ellen Avarð
Director, Nunavik Research Centre

Hélène Boivin
Coordinator, Research Project
Coordination Committee, Mashteuiatsh

Vincent Brodeur
Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs du Québec

Carl Cleary
Secretary for Government Relations,
Innu Nation Council of Mashteuiatsh

Kitty Gordon
Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services

Lucy Grey
Kativik Regional Government

Julie-Simone Hébert
Société du Plan Nord

Murray Humphries
INQ/McGill Chair in Northern Research – Wildlife Conservation and Traditional Food Security

Youcef Larbi
Chief Geologist, Cree Mineral
Exploration Board

Claude Makiuk
Nunavik Research Centre

Mackenzie Anne Clifford Martyniuk
PhD student, INRS

Alexandre Mathieu
Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones

Réal McKenzie
Political Advisor to Ekuanitshit Chief Jean-Charles Pietach

Paul John Murdoch
Secretary, Grand Council of the Crees,
Cree Nation Government

Tommy Palliser
Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board

Loretta Robinson
First Nations Education Council

Thierry Rodon
Chairholder, Research Chair on Northern Sustainable Development

Éric Rosa
Professor, Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue

Melissa Saganash
Director of Québec-Cree Relations, Cree Nation Government

Glenda Sandy
Nurse in Kawawachikamach and master's student at Université Laval

INQ

Andréanne Bernatchez
Communications Officer, Institut nordique du Québec

Brigitte Bigué
Director, Administration and Development, Institut nordique du Québec

Debra Christiansen-Stowe
Operations Coordinator, Institut nordique du Québec

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Jean-Éric Tremblay
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