OUR FUTURE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HIVUNIKHAVUT

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WHAT ARE SCENARIOS?

Scenarios are plausible stories about the future and how it might unfold. They can help explore and prepare for opportunities and challenges that might arise in the future. With scenarios, we can explore future uncertainty, focus on a few plausible futures, and explore what they mean for ecosystems and societies. We can also better understand what people want for the future.

PROJECT GOAL

This scenario project was designed and facilitated in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut, in 2017 and 2018. It culminated with a participatory scenario workshop on March 13 and 14, 2018 that brought together Inuit community members, managers and scientists to develop scenarios. The project focal questions explored in scenarios were:

(1) How will future changes between now and 2050 affect the marine ecosystem and community well-being in the Kitikmeot Marine Region?

(2) How can the marine region be managed to bring about positive futures and build resilience?
The Kitikmeot Sea and marine wildlife are important to communities of the region because they support health and well-being in many ways. Fishing Arctic char and hunting marine mammals are important sources of healthy marine food. Fishing and hunting also provide employment and revenue, as in the case of the Cambridge Bay commercial fishery, the largest in Nunavut. In the winter, travelling on the sea ice of the Kitikmeot Sea allows access to harvest grounds and to other communities. Local people also enjoy the Kitikmeot Sea for walks along the shore and boat rides. All of these marine-related activities reinforce culture, social life, identities, and heritage. As such, changes in the Kitikmeot Sea and marine wildlife will have important implications for local health and well-being.

The region is undergoing environmental and socio-economic changes that will most likely continue in the future, such as sea ice loss and increasing ship traffic. In the winter of 2017, 95 surveys were conducted to understand community concerns about the changing ocean. Main concerns for the future were, in order of importance:

- Climate change (83% of respondents were concerned about it)
- Ocean pollution (75%)
- Shipping (65%)
- New marine species coming from the South (64%)
- Change in the condition, abundance or distribution of Arctic marine animals (60%)

Ocean changes identified as most concerning by community members - climate change and marine development (which includes shipping, mining, and the pollution they can cause) - were explored in scenarios. Governance by 2050 was also examined in terms of how actions undertaken by individuals, communities, governments, or organizations, can help achieve long-term community goals.

Workshop participants were split into three groups that each explored a set of different trends in climate change, marine development and governance, within which their scenarios would be developed (Figure 2). Groups discussed how future trends may affect the marine ecosystem and communities by 2050, after which they expanded scenario narratives with a series of activities combining art, science and storytelling. They created positive visions for the future by building on existing Arctic initiatives that are already contributing to positive changes. Finally, workshop participants identified paths of actions that could be undertaken between now and 2050 to reach the desirable outcomes.
SCENARIO 1: GROWING OUR FUTURE THROUGH, AND WITH, CORE VALUES

KEY POINTS:
- A network of Hunters and Trappers Organizations is a key governance body in the region.
- Communication and trust between all the actors with a stake in the region.
- Sharing of knowledge between youth and Inuit Elders, and among communities.
- High training and youth involvement in ecosystem monitoring.
- More on-the-land training including Elders-youth camps.
- Core values are strong: local knowledge, Inuit culture and language, values of being out on the land, health, and education.
- Commercial fisheries at the centre of the region’s economy.
- Nunavut Fisheries Regulation: Adaptive co-management of commercial fisheries.
- Year-round, long-term, monitoring of the changing ocean in collaboration with communities.
- High monitoring capacity insured by a fleet of pollution-free vessels with new technologies.

SCENARIO REPRESENTATION

SCENARIO 2: KABLONAK, “IN MEMORY OF MARGARET NAKAHOK”

KEY POINTS:
- Communities have control over the region’s governance, which is insured by the Kitikmeot Inuit Association.
- Priority to subsistence harvesting.
- Protection of the ocean and land for community benefit.
- There is mining and shipping, but these activities are strongly regulated.
- Caribou and muskox are back through research, regulations and farming.
- Inuit education is of foremost importance - there is a university in the Canadian Arctic and the education system is transformed.
- Inuit are highly educated professionals who occupy leadership roles.
- Elder-youth interactions are encouraged.
- Great care for Elders.
- Healthy food, housing for everyone and holistic health approaches.
- Cooperation and knowledge sharing among circumpolar Inuit.
- Inuit are proud of their culture, values, land and history, which they are sharing with the rest of the world.

SCENARIO REPRESENTATION
KEY POINTS:

- Impacts of shipping and mining are mitigated but not eliminated.
- Environmental impacts are mitigated through increased communication, listening, and trust between communities, scientists and managers.
- Regulations about shipping routes are based on traditional ecological knowledge.
- Bridging organizations, like the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS) and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) facilitate communication.
- **Indigenuity**, which means solving problems in unique ways that build on Indigenous knowledge, is encouraged.
- Good communication between the South and the North of Canada.
- Scientists are trained for better integrating local priorities in their research.
- Ecosystem monitoring is community-led. There is a lot of training for community members, including for oil spills and other accident responses.
- Changes to the government structure and more funding to address community needs.

Ocean changes bring a lot of uncertainty, but monitoring efforts are high and inform management. Monitoring is community-driven, involving close and trusting partnerships between communities, scientists and managers. New, socially accepted, technologies are used to study the ocean. Priority is given to research on local concerns. Communities from across the North are sharing best practices for the management of marine resources, which is adaptive to ecosystem variability. The different groups listen to each other’s concerns, and build common understanding of the trade-offs associated with different types of marine development. Commercial fisheries are economically important, bring many benefits to communities, and are thought to cause fewer trade-offs than mining and shipping.

Communities’ ability to take over the Kitikmeot region’s governance is associated with capacity building and education. Improving relevant education opportunities, such as on-the-land training with Inuit Elders and an Arctic university, gives young Inuit the skills and knowledge to take on leadership roles in all spheres of society. In 2050, Inuit lead local and regional institutions and are implementing the regulations wished for by communities. There are fewer inequalities, everyone has access to healthy food and Inuit culture is vibrant. Major efforts are made to strengthen culture and preserve the language.

In 2050, territorial and federal governments are engaged in long-term collaborative work and they have established a system for listening to, understanding and responding rapidly to local concerns. Funding is based on community needs and always flows as promised. Stories about the North are often shared with people from outside the Arctic, and there is more advocacy for northern priorities. As such, public awareness of northern affairs is high, which helps northerners achieve their goals.

CONCLUSION

While scenarios depict environmental trends by 2050 and their impacts, they also highlight how desirable futures could be achieved through governance, actions and collaboration. Using a scenario approach combining plausible trends and positive visioning helped workshop participants focus on actions that could contribute to long-term community goals. All the ideas developed in the scenarios could be used by communities, managers and scientists to improve current planning and for building a desirable Arctic future for generations to come.

Quotes from workshop participants:

“Anything is possible, never give up your goals.”

“I believe we can be a role model throughout the rest of the North […] Others can learn from what we started.”