

Atuliqtuq: Action & Adaptation

The Nunavut Climate Change Partnership

Climate Change in Nunavut

Local observations and scientific studies suggest that climate change is affecting and could affect Nunavut in a number of ways. Environmental changes ranging from sea-level rise to melting permafrost could result in direct and lasting impacts on the sustainability, health and well-being of Nunavut communities. To manage these predicted changes, the Government of Nunavut has identified advancing climate change knowledge and increasing adaptive capacity as priorities for Nunavut.

Climate change is highly complex and dynamic. The timing, nature and severity of the impacts on Nunavut communities are difficult to predict and will vary locally and regionally. This necessitates a locally-based community-driven approach to climate change adaptation. By bringing together the best available scientific, community and Inuit knowledge and developing clear and proactive plans for action at the community level, Nunavummiut will be well prepared in the face of uncertainty and change.

Partnership for Action and Adaptation

In response to the complexity of climate change issues in Nunavut and need for a multi-faceted approach, an innovative partnership was formed to support climate change adaptation in Nunavut communities. Four organizations; namely, the Government of Nunavut (GN), the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP), Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), are collaborating on increasing adaptive capacity and climate change knowledge in Nunavut. With the Government of Nunavut (Departments of Environment and Community & Government Services) providing the overall vision, leadership and on-the-ground knowledge, each of the organizations bring its own unique and essential element to the partnership. CIP contributes a wealth of experience in community planning and a group of skilled planners to work with communities in developing climate change adaptation plans. NRCan provides leading edge scientific information and experience in integrating Inuit, scientific and community knowledge to further climate change understanding. INAC provides invaluable support in the form of resources and insight that make the partnership and the Atuliqtuq project possible.

The Atuliqtuq Project

“Atuliqtuq” means “coming into force”. This project title underscores the importance of building community capacity to take action in order to minimize the negative implications of climate change for Nunavummiut and in order to benefit from the positive opportunities that it may provide. Community-driven planning and application of multiple forms of in-depth knowledge can be seen as critical to this outcome. Moving forward with experience and knowledge from previous community adaptation planning and science projects in Hall Beach and Clyde River, over the next two years, the partners team will work to advance climate change adaptation planning capacity within all three Nunavut regions (Kitikmeot, Kivalliq and Qikiqtaaluk).

By 2011, the project aims to prepare community adaptation plans in five pilot communities, develop model planning tools for use in other Nunavut communities, and to collect and disseminate local and regional scale climate change science and knowledge.

The Atuliqtuq Project, cont'd.

An overview of the overall project theme areas is given below, along with a summary of key deliverables within each theme area.

Theme I: Building community capacity for adaptation planning

- Climate change adaptation plans developed for five pilot communities: Iqaluit, Arviat, Cambridge Bay, Whale Cove and Kugluktuk.
- Climate change adaptation planning tool kit for future use in remaining Nunavut communities.
- Climate change module for the Nunavut Municipal Training Organization
- Training and employment opportunities for Nunavut youth in climate change projects

Theme II: Gathering regional and local scientific and Inuit knowledge

- Watershed and drinking water supply analysis
- Establishing a Nunavut Permafrost Monitoring Network
- Arctic sea level rise assessment
- Developing a landscape hazard mapping methodology to protect investments in infrastructure
- Working with Elders and local knowledge holders to prioritize climate change issues

Theme III: Disseminating knowledge and best practice across Nunavut

- Creating a Nunavut-based climate change website housing accessible information for Nunavummiut
- Communication and outreach to Nunavummiut on locally relevant climate change science and planning; including a newsletter.

Government of Nunavut

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