



Inuit Knowledge of the Cumulative Impacts of Environmental Change in Eastern Hudson Bay

Umiujaq Trip Report

April 2018 & January 2019

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Purpose of the trip:

Two trips were made to Umiujaq (April 2018 and January 2019) to meet with elders and younger hunters to verify the key outcomes of 2017 interviews on sea ice and salinity changes since the 1970s.

Two interviews were conducted in spring 2018 with Markoosie Sala and Joshua Sala, however a return trip had to be made since many others were out of town. In January 2019 two workshops were conducted with the following community members: Joshua Sala, Noah Inukpuk, Annie Inukpuk, and Willie Kumarluk. An additional interview was held with Lucassie Tooktoo.

Similar workshops and interviews were also conducted in Inukjuak, Sanikiluaq, and Kuujuaaraapik throughout 2018. Currently, all of the interview recordings and notes are being reviewed and compiled.

Purpose of this report:

To update everyone who participated in interviews and workshops, and any community members interested in learning about the project's progress.

Some Key highlights:

- Many indicators of changes in the salinity of sea ice – texture, hardness, smell, appearance - were discussed to clarify how significant salinity changes have been
- Seals have been observed sinking at saltwater hunting sites in winter, or in late fall, but not by everyone
- Delayed freeze-up and earlier breakup has had a profound impact on hunting seasons
- Sea ice has changed remarkably since the 1990s
- In recent years, ideal sea ice thickness and stability (“tuva” in Inuktitut) is not seen anymore
- It is critical for youth to learn from elders about knowledge of survival to respond to changing sea ice conditions

Next steps:

- Fall 2019 – Return to community with final project reports for community feedback. This will also allow us to talk with key community members who were not available in 2018 workshops.
- December 2019 to April 2020 – finalize publications for public sharing of project results.

I would like to thank the community of Umiujaq for warmly welcoming me back and to everyone who contributed to the workshops and interviews, particularly the elders who shared of their extensive experience on the land. Thank you to Annie Novalinga and Perty Tookalook for interpretation, translation, advice, and coordination with the workshop contributors. Thank you to the Northern Village of Umiujaq and to Tursujuq Park for generously providing space and resources for conducting these interviews, and thank you to Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board for financial support and to Air Inuit for their generous sponsorship of the Arctic Eider Society. Thanks to Avataq's Nunatop program for providing Inuktitut place names for maps. Thank you to the Arctic Eider Society, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Ontario Ministry of Research Innovation and Science, and the Northern Scientific Training Program for their financial support.

Do you have questions or suggestions about this project? Please contact me:

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