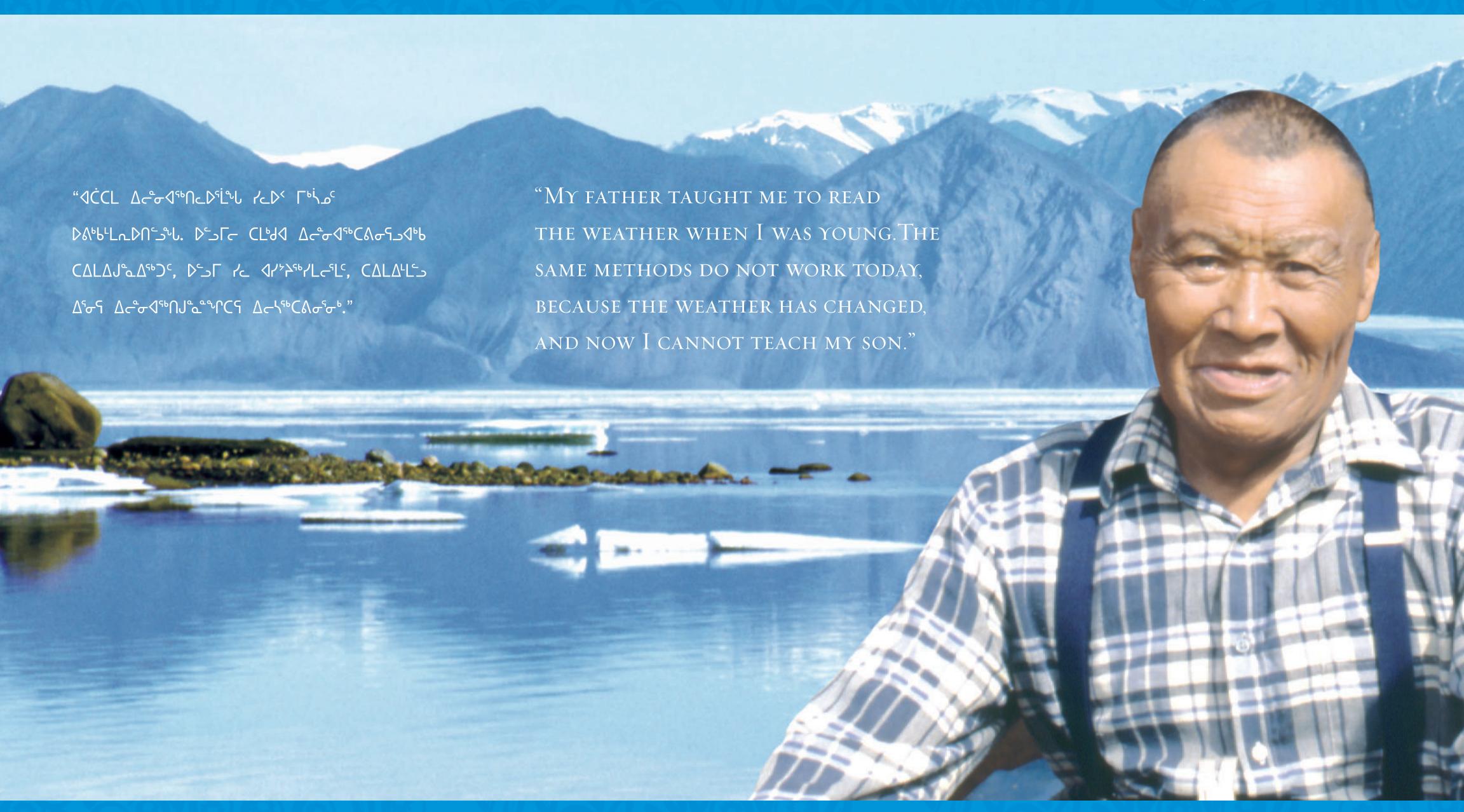
# UNIKKAAQATIGIT

PUTTING THE HUMAN FACE ON CLIMATE CHANGE CON CLIMATE CHANGE

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Unikkaaqatigiit - Putting the human face on climate change is a joint publication of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Nasivvik Centre for Inuit Health and Changing Environments at Université Laval, the Ajunnginiq Centre at the National Aboriginal Health Organization, and the Inuit regional land claim organizations. It documents Inuit observations on environmental change in Canada.

In recent years, Inuit communities and organizations in Canada have expressed concerns about environmental change taking place in the North. In response to these concerns, community workshops where community members could share their knowledge and experience of environmental change were held in all four Inuit regions of the Canadian North.

### The project had four objectives:

- 1) To document Inuit perspectives of observations of environmental change
- 2) To explore impacts of changes on Inuit communities, individuals and the Arctic environment
- 3) To record adaptation and coping strategies already in place or that could be used
- 4) To build community capacity to conduct further research and monitoring on environmental change.

These workshops helped bring a "human face" to the issue of climate and environmental change in the Arctic.

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"We were told that
one day we would not be
eating fish anymore from
the rivers by our Elders.
This is happening now."

	OBSERVATIONS	IMPACTS	ADAPTATIONS
SIMILARITIES	Unpredictable weather.	<ul> <li>Elders have lost confidence in abilities to predict weather.</li> <li>More people are getting stranded on the land.</li> <li>Travel and hunting is more dangerous.</li> <li>Difficult to get to some species (hunters are staying home more which means less traditional food).</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Increased communication about travel plans and dangerous routes.</li> <li>Use of community freezers.</li> <li>Increased number of cabins out on the land.</li> <li>Community exchange of country food.</li> </ul>
	Some marine and land animals are thinner. More animals have abnormalities.	Fewer animals are available as food sources.	<ul> <li>Have to be selective of which animals to consume and which to discard.</li> <li>Food exchanges between communities.</li> </ul>
	Decreased level of snowfall and ground cover.	<ul> <li>Makes travel by snowmobile difficult.</li> <li>Finding snow for iglus has become difficult.</li> <li>Harder to travel to certain areas.</li> <li>Impacting lakes and rivers.</li> </ul>	Have to find new, often longer, travel routes.
	Lower water levels (in all regions except Nunavut).	<ul> <li>Increased algae in water.</li> <li>Increased sedimentation.</li> <li>There is concern about the safety of natural sourced drinking water.</li> <li>Impacts travel.</li> <li>Difficult for some animals (i.e. char).</li> <li>Some ponds and lakes are drying up.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Use melted snow rather than lake water for drinking.</li> <li>Better water treatment systems are needed.</li> <li>Dredging and diverting rivers (in Nunavik) for char.</li> </ul>
	Warmer temperatures in winter.	<ul> <li>Thought to cause thinner and melting permafrost.</li> <li>More "southern" bird and animal species found further north.</li> <li>Food spoils faster.</li> <li>Less snow, thinner ice, earlier thaws, later freeze up of ice.</li> <li>Animal fur doesn't prime.</li> </ul>	Means traveling further (less snow, ice and permafrost melt faster).     Food must be protected quickly underground or in freezers when at home.

### **Observations, Impacts, and Adaptations Shared Across Regions**

	OBSERVATIONS	IMPACTS	ADAPTATIONS
DIFFERENCES	Rainfall varied across the regions. •Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR): Rainfall varies between communities. • Nunavut: More rain. • Nunavik: Less rain. • Labrador: Level of rainfall varies over time.	<ul> <li>Where rainfall is low it is impacting water levels that are also low and is negatively impacting vegetation growth.</li> <li>Low water levels impacts (see above).</li> <li>High level of rain and heavier rainfall can cause mudslides, landslides, and is negatively impacting vegetation growth in areas.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Adaptations for lower rainfall and lower water levels: water testing to ensure safety of drinking water; longer travel routes (around dried up lakes and rivers); dredging and diverting rivers for fish.</li> <li>There were no adaptations mentioned for higher rainfall.</li> </ul>
	Erosion  ISR: Deep erosion is occurring and threatening much of this region.  Nunavut: No erosion mentioned.  Nunavik: Surface erosion is occurring (hillsides mainly).  Labrador: Both surface erosion and deeper erosion is occurring.	<ul> <li>ISR: Aklavik will soon become an island, Tuktoyaktuk site is threatened, Tuktoyaktuk graveyard threatened, lost buildings, forced to move buildings, concerned about infrastructure.</li> <li>Nunavik: less vegetation, land is dry, soil and vegetation rolling off hills.</li> <li>Labrador: threatens homes and buildings.</li> </ul>	ISR: Relocation and documentation of sites and buildings; rocks along shore to control erosion (costly); some monitoring in Paulatuk; more fill around houses.     Labrador: Have tried to put down wood and boards to slow erosion but it doesn't last long.
	Landslides and mudslides  ISR: landslides and mudslides have been seen in Tuktoyaktuk and Aklavik (caused by permafrost melting and increased rain).  Nunavut: More rain has caused landslides for the first time.  Nunavik and Labrador: none reported.	<ul> <li>Can't walk on beach in Aklavik because there are mudslides on beach.</li> <li>Historical sites have been/are being washed away.</li> <li>Concern for cabins and houses.</li> </ul>	Documenting historical sites.

Observations, Impacts, and Adaptations Shared Across Regions











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This report, a synopsis of observations, findings, and perspectives from a series of workshops, provides an overview of the changes taking place and the perspective of community residents. The workshop findings represent an important first step in the development of national, regional, and local understanding of environmental change. As Inuit have been saying for many years, and as climate assessments and global models predict, polar regions will be first and most affected by climate change. It is important to learn with communities about the nature and extent of local impacts and adaptation to a changing Arctic.

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