



# Inuit Knowledge of the Cumulative Impacts of Environmental Change in eastern Hudson Bay

## ***Inukjuak Trip Report***

**October 18-27, 2018**

Megan Sheremata



### **Purpose of the trip:**

A trip was made to Inukjuak in October 2018 to meet again with elders and younger hunters to discuss the key outcomes of 2017 interviews on sea ice and salinity change, and to clarify further questions.

### **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.

### **Overview of the interviews:**

With Annie Weetaluktuk-Rousseau (wildlife officer NMRWB, project research associate and translator), two workshops were held with the following community members: Abraham Kusudluak, Simionie Ohaituk, Charlie Eliasiapik, Eliassie Weetaluktuk, and Josie Nastapoka. Additional interviews were held with Pauloosie Kasudluak to discuss the significance of the project.

Similar workshops and interviews were also conducted in Umiujaq, Sanikiluaq, and Kuujjuaraapik throughout 2018 and early 2019. Currently, all of the interview recordings and notes are being reviewed and compiled.

### **Key highlights:**

- Changes in salinity in winter have been observed since the 1990s
- Delayed freeze-up and earlier breakup has had a profound impact on seasonal hunting
- Reduced sea ice thickness and extent has impacted travel across the region
- Many indicators of changes in the salinity of sea ice – texture, hardness, smell, appearance - were reviewed to clarify how significant salinity changes has been
- These indicators include the freezing over of some all-year polynya and the wildlife who use them
- Concerns over information-sharing of wildlife information polynyas led to a decision not to publish such information, but to share it directly with NMRWB
- Seals sinking in winter at traditionally salt-water hunting sites in sea ice have not been widely observed outside of

### **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 to participate in 2018 workshops.
- December 2019 to April 2020 – finalize publications for public sharing of project results.

*I would like to thank the community of Inukjuak for warmly welcoming me back and to everyone who participated in the workshops. Thank you to Annie Weetaluktuk Rousseau for the late nights of work, interpretation, translation, advice, and coordination with the workshop contributors. Thank you to the Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board for financial support, and for generously providing space and resources for conducting these interviews, and thank you to Air Inuit for your generous sponsorship of the Arctic Eider Society. Thank you to Nally Weetaluktuk and Avataq's Nunatop program for providing Inuktitut place names. Additional thanks to the Ohaituk family for replenishing my supply of mitsiraq. 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:**

Email: [megan.sheremata@utoronto.ca](mailto:megan.sheremata@utoronto.ca)

Phone: 416-702-2491

Facebook: MB Sheremata

