



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

## **Sanikiluaq Trip Report**

**October 2018**  
Megan Sheremata



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

A trip was made to Sanikiluaq in October 2018 to meet with elders and younger hunters to discuss the key outcomes of our 2017 interviews on sea ice and salinity change.

A two-day workshop was held with the following community members: Joe Arragutaina, Lucassie Takatak, Johnny Kavik, Peter Kattuk, Charlie Takatak, Johnny Kudluarok, Johnassie Inuktaluk, and Lucassie Ippak. Additional interviews with Lucassie Arragutaina and Dinah Kavik were conducted to discuss the significance of the project.

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

### **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.

### **Key highlights:**

- Progressive changes in sea ice began following the James Bay Project, and became more pronounced in the 1990s, preventing travel to the mainland
- Sea ice is becoming more and more like “lake ice on the sea”
- In addition to the impacts of the James Bay Project, and of warming temperatures, changes in wind have been a third critical driver of environmental change in the region
- Many indicators of salinity changes have been observed in sea ice in recent years
- Many physical and ecological indicators of decreasing salinity help clarify how hunters understand salinity change
- Seals have been sinking in winter months by some hunters at traditionally salt water hunting sites in recent years
- Changes in bottom dwelling animals, like mussels and sea cucumbers have also been noted
- Changes in seal diet and changes in salinity may both play a role in seals sinking

### **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 Sanikiluaq for warmly welcoming me back and to everyone who participated in the workshops, particularly the elders who shared of their extensive experience on the land. Thank you to the Sanikiluaq Hunters and Trappers Association, and to Lucassie Arragutaina for advice and guidance, and for working with me to coordinate the workshops. Many thanks to the Hamlet of Sanikiluaq, including Davidee Qavvik for interpretation and research support, and Mike Rowan and Johnny Cookie for providing space and resources for conducting the workshops. Thanks to Daniel Qavvik for his work as a research assistant and videographer. Heartfelt thanks to Johnny Kudluarok for always offering help. And thank you for Peter Kattuk for my first taste of seal intestine. Thank you to the Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board for financial support and Air Inuit for their generous sponsorship of AES. Thanks to the Inuit Heritage Trust for Inuktitut place names. And 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 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: Megan Sheremata

