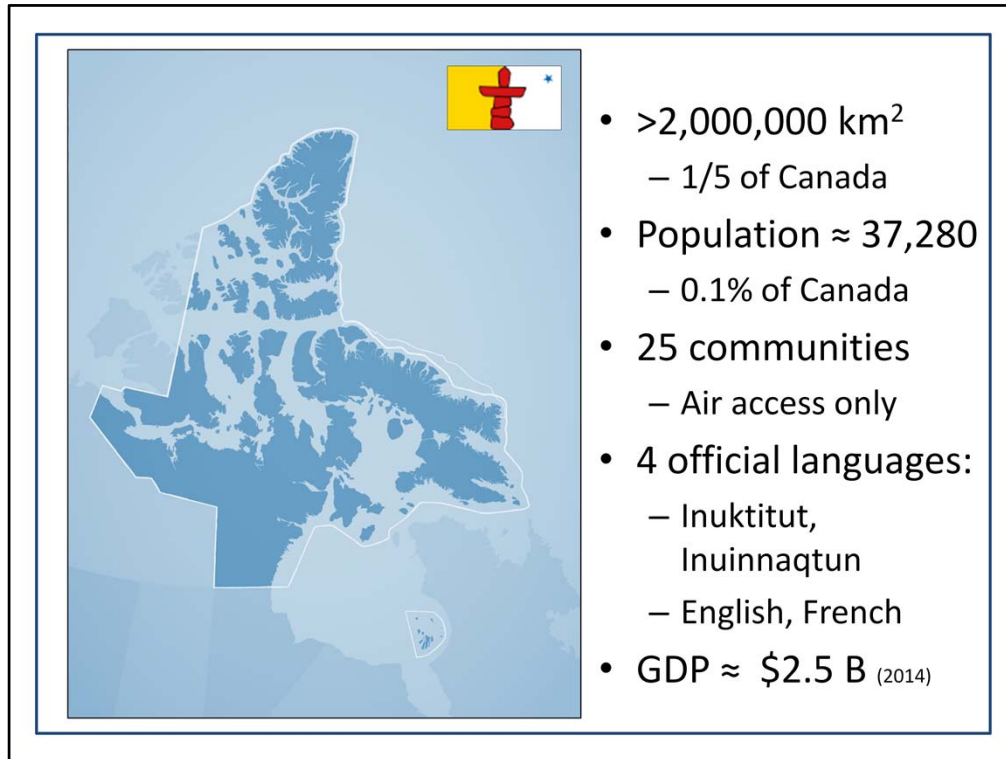




Thank you very much to the organizers of this session for inviting me to join this panel to offer an overview of the impact assessment approaches employed in Nunavut.

This picture was taken in April from the community of Cambridge Bay, Nunavut, where I am very fortunate to live and work. Though Nunavut is a part of Canada, I think this helps to illustrate that we are somewhat far removed from centers like Montreal and enjoy slightly different operating conditions as a result.



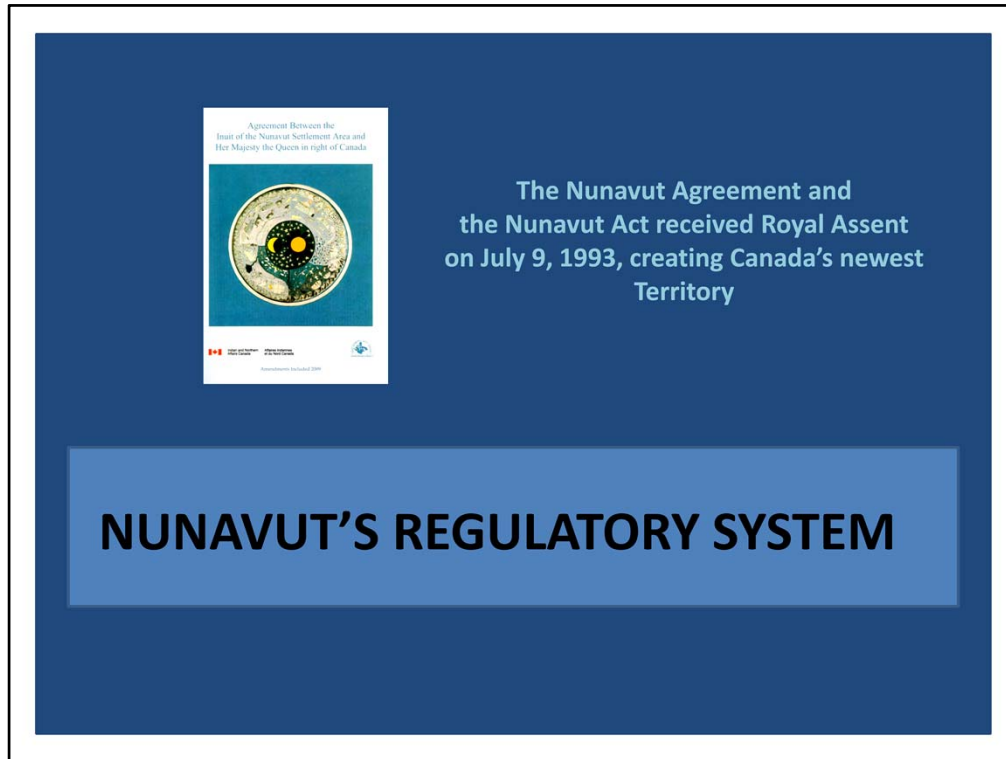


Nunavut is unique within the landscape of Canada, and this has direct effects on our regulatory system. It's a vast geography, over 2 million square kilometers of total area, spanning 3 time zones and consisting of arctic and sub-arctic environments. We have less than 0.1% of the Canadian population spread out over 25 communities occupying approximately one-fifth of Canada's land mass.

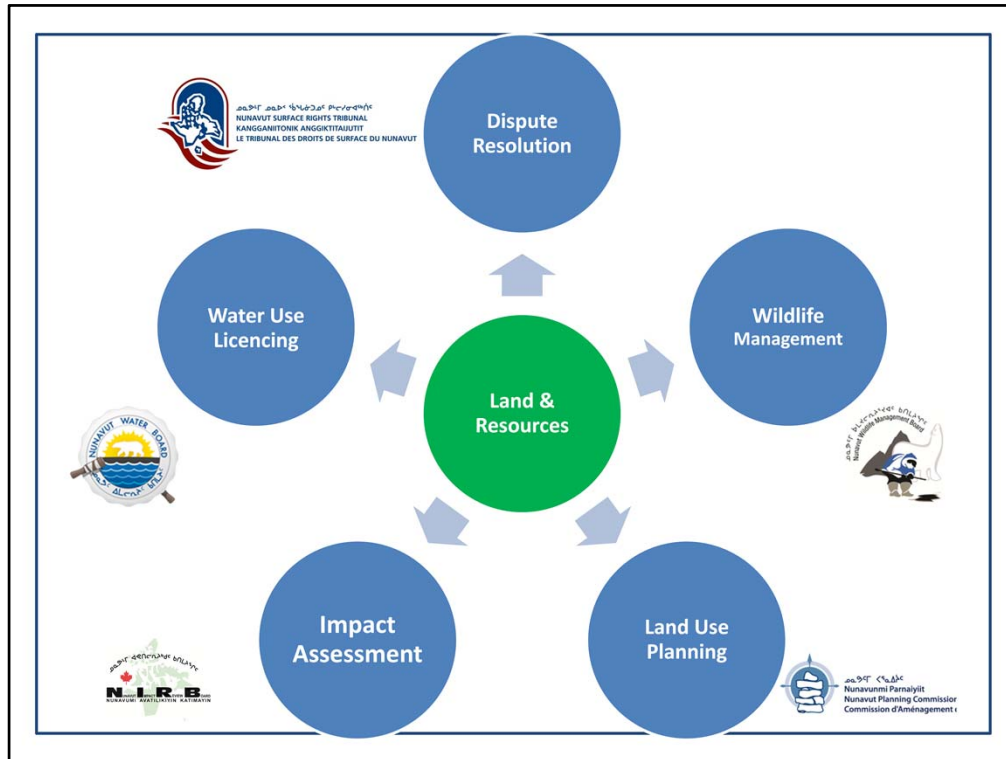
There are no roads connecting any of Nunavut's communities to one another or to the rest of Canada; the cost of living is extremely high



Nunavut's population is predominately of Inuit descent, persons who enjoy a strong, vibrant culture that is still very closely linked with seasonal cycles of wildlife harvesting and local dialects of Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun.



Through the Nunavut Agreement, Inuit received defined rights and benefits in exchange for surrender of any claims, rights, title and interests based on their assertion of an aboriginal title.



The Nunavut Agreement established an integrated resource management system for the whole of the Nunavut Settlement Area, a vast area of land and marine waters rich in both natural resources (such as minerals, oil and gas) and renewable resources (such as fish and wildlife).

Importantly, the Nunavut Agreement established a requirement for the formation of a public government for Nunavut and 5 independent institutions of public government with a role in land and resource management. These institutions were structured in a co-management fashion with representation from the Designated Inuit Organization, the Government of Nunavut and the Government of Canada.

# Nunavut Regulatory System

Development proposals must satisfy requirements of:

- Land use planning
- Environmental Impact Assessment
- Water and Land Use Licensing
- Timelines, information requirements and best practices are similar to and informed by other Canadian jurisdictions



Focusing on the regulatory system applicable to resource development projects, we have separate institutions that are responsible for land use planning, environmental impact assessment, and water licensing. The integrated nature of the system *requires* varying levels of coordination amongst these Boards, which is ensured through specific legislative provisions and more practically through the regular communication required to carry out our respective duties.



- Screen project proposals to determine whether or not a review is required
- Gauge and define the extent of regional impacts
- Review ecosystemic and socio-economic impacts of project proposals
- Determine whether project proposals should proceed, and if so, under what terms and conditions
- Monitor projects that have been approved to proceed



## Nunavut Impact Assessment

*What types of project proposals does the NIRB assess?*

- Roads / trails
- Marine infrastructure
- Research
- Mineral exploration
- Mining
- Telecommunications
- Oil & gas
- Nuclear power
- Tourism
- Hydro-electric



We assess all types of proposed development projects, from infrastructure projects like roads and ports, to mineral exploration and mining projects, hydro developments, etc.

# Nunavut Impact Assessment

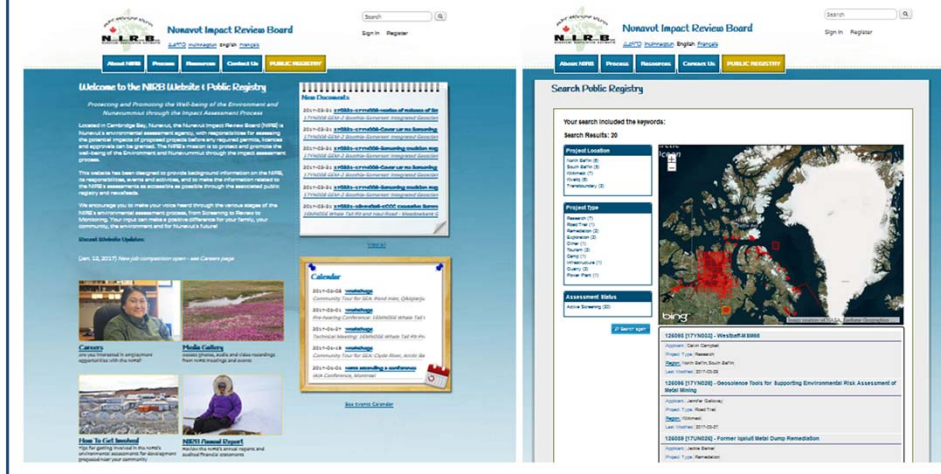
- Impact Assessment Processes in Nunavut include:
  - Issues scoping
  - Development of an Environmental Impact Statement
  - Public commenting opportunities
  - Language requirements – translation/interpretation
  - Community meetings
  - Newsletters, notices, public engagement programs
  - Online public registries
  - Technical workshops
  - Community roundtables
  - Public Hearings

Δεζῖν Ἰῖῖ - Ikajuqtigiinniq  
*"Working together for a common cause"*

While the Board's processes are comparable to other Canadian jurisdictions, there is an especially strong focus on promoting and enabling public engagement throughout. This is reflective of the objectives of the Nunavut Agreement, which ensured rights for Inuit to participate in decision-making concerning the use, management and conservation of land, water and resources in the Nunavut Settlement Area.

# Public Engagement

- Searchable online registries provide project information, guidance materials and digital comment forms to the public



All information related to an assessment can be accessed online from our website and public registry system. These have been designed to allow any member of the public to easily search for assessments of interest and to provide comments or questions through a simple online form in their language of choice: English, French, Inuktitut or Inuinnaqtun.

Despite low internet speeds and bandwidth limitations in Nunavut, we continue to explore ways to increase public access to assessments through the internet and other available technologies. In fact, just last night a new version of our website was launched online to improve load times and host additional interactive features.

## Public Engagement

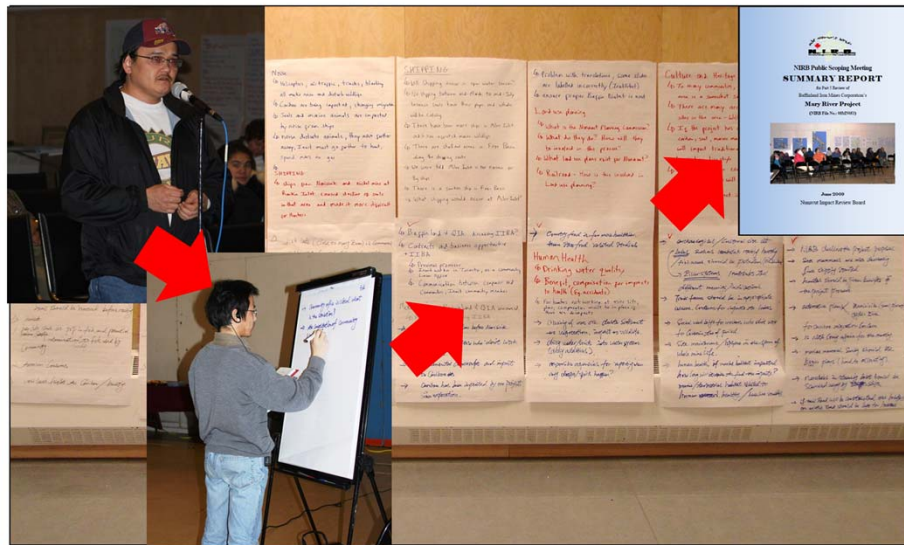
- In-person meetings are scheduled in potentially-affected communities at various stages in the assessment of a proposed project
- Information is shared and community members provide their questions and comments directly
- Public engagement is an iterative process



In addition to making information accessible online, we regularly visit communities that could be affected by a proposed development, sharing information and soliciting feedback.

Engagement is designed to be iterative throughout an assessment, requiring multiple visits to allow for familiarization with project plans and to create meaningful opportunities for information to be exchanged both ways.

# Public Engagement



We strive to ensure that engagement leads to tangible results. For example, during issues scoping, feedback provided by the public is directly linked to the establishment of information requirements that must be satisfied through the assessment.

## Local Knowledge

- The term Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit encompasses Inuit “Traditional Knowledge” (TK)
  - Encompasses local and community based knowledge, ecological knowledge (both traditional and contemporary), which is rooted in the daily life of Inuit people, and has an important contribution to make to an environmental assessment
- Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit assists greatly in making impact predictions, particularly where scientific baseline may be lacking



An important component of the feedback received is often local community knowledge or Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, which is a critical component of our processes. It plays a significant role in the preparation and evaluation of Environmental Impact Statements in terms of establishing baseline information, identifying key issues, predicting effects and assessing their significance.

Proper recognition of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit allows for creation of an Inuit lens through which impact analyses can be better understood and can contribute to more active and meaningful community engagement.

While much has been made of instances where traditional knowledge and science-based knowledge do not align, in the Nunavut-context Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit contributes greatly to assessments, more often than not helping to reinforce areas where the available science is lacking.



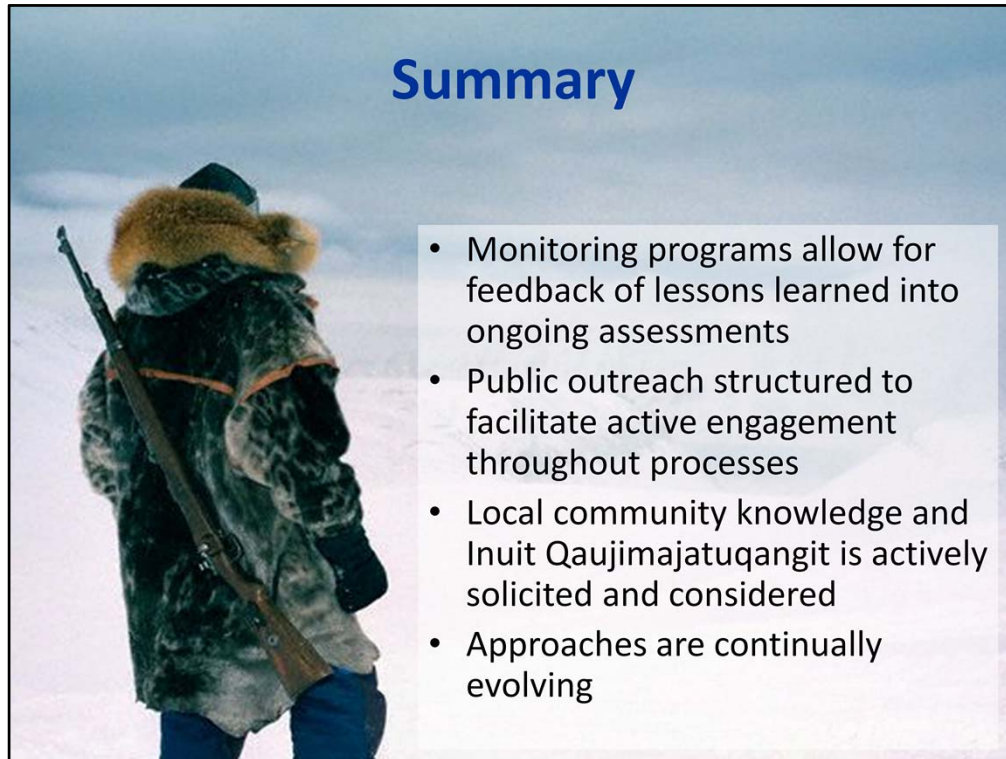
## Public Engagement



During the final phase of an assessment, a public hearing will be scheduled in the community nearest to the proposed development. The proponent, technical experts, government regulators and intervenors attend in person to present their final submissions and answer the questions of the Board.

A community roundtable is held as part of this hearing process, with community representatives from throughout the region attending to present their community's concerns about the development directly to our Board. Community members have opportunity to pose questions directly to the project proponent, government experts and other intervenors.





- Monitoring programs allow for feedback of lessons learned into ongoing assessments
- Public outreach structured to facilitate active engagement throughout processes
- Local community knowledge and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is actively solicited and considered
- Approaches are continually evolving

In summary, for this short overview the takeaway points I hoped to highlight include:

- The Nunavut process is very holistic in nature, designed to assess large and small projects, to monitor the effects of projects and incorporate lessons learned into ongoing assessments
- Our public outreach programs are structured to facilitate active engagement throughout our processes, through a variety of means
- Local community knowledge and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is actively solicited and considered, and plays a key role in designing adaptive management approaches
- And overall, our approaches for impact assessment are continually evolving

*Quajannamiik!*

*Thank you!*

*Merci!*

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