



Inuit Nunangat Regional Virtual Workshop Summary Report

Lead: Carie Hoover, Inuit Nunangat Regional Coordinator

On June 23, 2020, the Canadian Ocean Literacy Coalition (COLC) held the Inuit Nunangat Virtual Workshop to review and discuss the [Inuit Nunangat Regional Report](#) and explore steps for moving forward. This workshop was part of the five regional sessions of the virtual workshops (Atlantic, St. Lawrence, Pacific, Inuit Nunangat, Inland Canada) and one national session. Participants were invited to comment on the research results (strengths, barriers, and preliminary recommendations) and discuss the following question: *How can a national strategy help advance ocean literacy (OL) in the Inuit Nunangat region?* The highlights from these discussions are captured below.

Workshop Facilitation Team

Diz Glithero (COLC), Sarah MacNeil (COLC), Noémie Roy (COLC), Carie Hoover (COLC), Barb Sweazey (Stratos), Michael van Aanhout (Stratos), Dan Adams (Stratos), Nathalie Wilson (Interpreter).

Participants

Thank you to the 27* participants who attended the workshop and contributed their insights for developing a national ocean literacy strategy.

Anna Naylor (Centre for Ocean Ventures and Entrepreneurship), Becky Segal (Arctic Eider Society/SmartICE), CarolAnne Black (CarolAnne Black, Consulting Science Writer), David Paddon (St. John's Storytelling Group), David Pearson (Laurentian University), David Zandvliet (Simon Fraser University), Deborah Donnelly (Yukon Conservation Society), Geoff Green (Students on Ice Foundation), Hali Moreland (Parks Canada), Jackie Kidd (Arctic Eider Society), Janet Stalker (Ocean School/Ocean Frontier Institute), Kiley Best (CaNOE), Lynn Moorman (SmartICE), Maia Hoeberechts (Ocean Networks Canada), Munju Ravindra (Parks Canada), Nicola Bridge (Ocean Conservation Trust), Nikki Kroetsch (Fisheries and Oceans Canada), Patrick Wells (Memorial University of Newfoundland), Sara Pedro (Laval University), Tara Donaghy (Fisheries and Oceans Canada), Tara Mascarenhas (Students on Ice Foundation), Tess Forbes (Inuvialuit Regional Corporation), Timothy Straka (Polar Knowledge Canada), Wendy Watson-Wright (7 Mile Bay), Saiqa Azam (Memorial University of Newfoundland).

*Please note that due to technical limitations, this list does not include the names of participants who joined over the phone.

Part 1: Review of the Inuit Nunangat Regional Report

Regional Strengths

The following strengths were identified in the report: Inuit leadership and community engagement; Locally-relevant initiatives; Meeting the needs of communities; Land-based programs; Long-term relationships and investments in people; and Adaptations of technology to meet Inuit needs.

No additional strengths were identified

Regional Barriers

The following barriers were identified in the report: Funding and logistical challenges to living and working in Inuit Nunangat; Technology and integration with life in remote communities; Access, ownership, sharing, and storage of data; and Jurisdictional, institutional, and systemic barriers.

Additional barriers noted by participants:

- Many regions have had similar issues with ownership and data storage remaining in communities
- The COVID pandemic has heightened many of these barriers, including technological barriers and logistical challenges to living and working in the North
- Logistical challenges are a major factor, including lack of cell-phone service, as so many communities are remote and have limited year-round access, which requires additional equipment (i.e., InReaches) for safe travel
- Funding and logistical challenges go hand-in-hand as it is expensive to do work in the North
- Technology is a huge barrier, and many teams struggle to ensure benefits to communities that don't have strong Internet access or technological resources (eg., Ocean School is an online resource)

Regional Recommendations

Participants were invited to poll on the preliminary recommendations identified in the regional report to gauge which recommendations resonated the most. The results of the informal poll are indicated in Table 1.



| | |
|---|-----|
| Inuit as Decision-makers (and Keepers of Ocean Knowledge) | 67% |
| Reframing OL Terminology to Include Inuit Perspectives | 50% |
| Long-Term Investments in Programs and People | 42% |
| Increased Connections Within, Among, and Outside of Communities | 42% |
| Partnership Support for Locally- relevant, Place-based Ocean Education and Training | 42% |

Table 1: Inuit Nunangat preliminary recommendations polling results.

Part 2: Building a National Strategy: Inuit Nunangat Insights

1. Towards a Successful National Strategy in the Inuit Nunangat Region

- Rethink/replace the term “ocean literacy” as it now reflects a much broader concept than was initially intended
 - The term does not capture the vast understanding of Elders within the region and Elders may be able to offer more culturally appropriate ways (i.e. in Inuktitut, and other dialects) to represent this term
- Support the transition from southern-led initiatives to northern-led
 - Increase or reframe leaders in the region
 - Increase capacity in the North to lead initiatives, to transition from having initiatives led by folks from the South
 - Support language programs and initiatives to decrease the language barrier between Youth and Elders; support this change within the community as it needs to come from Elders and Youth
- Reverse the model: increase literacy among southerners about Inuit and the Inuit Nunangat region to bring more action and “protection”
- Recognize the importance of diversity: Inuit have a knowledge base that is not understood among settlers
 - A national strategy needs to work in unison with current Inuit needs and wants
 - Consultation frameworks are insufficient; must work towards co-development
 - Cross-cultural understanding needs to be increased for researchers and program providers from the south who work in the region
- Ensure the national strategy gives back to the Inuit Nunangat region to help meet the needs and goals of the region

- Target sub-groups within the region, including children and youth as well as policy-makers
- Clearly help with local initiatives rather than enhancing personal research objectives
- Showcase OL as an effective means to teach and connect people with the environment.
- Provide more connections between local governments and the Canadian government

2. Towards an Effective National Strategy Overall

- Serve as a ‘meeting place’ for all for all different communities and initiatives
- Relate to local priorities across the board
- Harness the power of youth
 - Support youth (and children) in relation to the development and implementation of a national strategy
 - Engage youth groups like Ikkarvik (specific to Inuit Nunangat region)
 - Utilize innovations and technologies
 - Invest funding and time into relationship-building to identify regional differences
- Lobby to ensure voices are heard by the companies that make textbooks and influence curriculum; shift curriculum from terrestrial focus
- Find common ground in needs that are shared across
 - Differences will always exist across regions but they are amplified between the North and the South
 - Find a way for the national strategy to reflect nuanced, place-based views, not one-size-fits-all
 - Do not generalize communities or their languages across the region
- The strategy is not about telling people/regions/ organizations what to do, but how to help move forward the work that is being done

