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PARNASIMAUTIK

What Was Said
TASIUJAQ
April 15 to 16, 2013

Parnasimautik community workshops are being organized to identify a comprehensive vision of regional development according to Inuit culture, identity, language and traditional way of life so as to protect them now and enhance them for the future, and to protect the environment. The goal of these community workshops is to continue with all Nunavimmiut the discussion on development begun by regional organizations in 2010.

Who We Are

(Culture and Identity • Harvesting • Lands • Environmental and Regional Planning)

The Inuit customary way of dealing with problems is disappearing. Why is this happening? We used to be capable of solving our own problems. What has changed? Inuit can take this back and regain their identity.

Our way of life is unique. At the same time, more and more people are depending on employment.

Young people must make the effort to speak a correct Inuktitut, to do their part to protect our identity.

Category II lands should be converted into Category I lands.

We have always depended on wildlife to survive but it is becoming costly to practise subsistence activities. Considering the caribou population crash, can we learn to herd caribou as the Sami do with reindeer?

There should be research done on the meat that we eat before industrial development takes place so we can see later what the impacts of development really are. This research should make use of traditional knowledge and be done by outside experts, not those who work for the mining companies. Should this research be carried out even before we sign any impacts and benefits agreements?

The hunter support program is very useful but the funding runs out too quickly. It helps hunters buy the gasoline they need to get to their harvesting areas.

Could those that were most affected by the dog slaughter be offered funding assistance to purchase hunting equipment and gasoline?

Our Communities

(Elders, Women and Youth • Education • Health • Housing • Justice and Social Regulation • Community development • Biofood • Employment)

Most students drop-out of school. We need to encourage young people to stay in school, to pursue their education, to get those jobs that require more qualifications. We need to be more determined to take the jobs that are available.

We need to provide training on Inuit ways. Some young people do not want to go south for an education because of cultural differences.

Going to school in the south does not necessarily mean moving away from our culture. I envy the people of Greenland, working as professionals like doctors and engineers, and using their language. We must be able to do this in Nunavik too.

Non-Inuit who work with our youth are not able to take into account our way of life. It is for us as Inuit to work at solutions for our youth.

More funding is needed for elders. We also need to get them out on the land more often.

Those sent away to jail have needs that are not being met. They are not getting help. Ungaluk Program funding should be used to help those in jail: to access country food and to stay in contact with their families.

A detention facility in Nunavik is needed because we are not able to visit our relatives in prison in the south. We also need better resources for the families of detainees and rehabilitation for detainees, like Makitautik in Kangirsuk.

After we pay our rent and groceries we have no more money left, and Nutrition North Canada is pushing us further into poverty.

We have to consider all the health issues associated with mining around our communities and make sure health care infrastructure is adequate for an increased number of users.

Our communities need mental health workers.

Some children are not properly taken care of. If children have to be taken out of the community by youth protection, it has to be done properly.

There is a shortage of housing and the houses being constructed are too small.

With children and grandchildren, the rent we have to pay is too high; we are struggling financially.

There was once a farm in Kuujjuaq with chickens, lambs and pigs. Could we do that here? And a community boat is needed to fish mussels.

Our Region

(Tourism • Mining • Energy • Transportation • Telecommunications)

We have to be alert about mining. Even if we try to say no, it will happen. Therefore, we must sign agreements to protect the environment and our harvesting areas.

We should be concerned about those ships that will be transporting mineral ore. Their ballast will be dumped in coastal waters and contaminate wildlife.

Mining site clean-up is important to prevent the leaching of contamination into our river systems. We need to make sure these sites are cleaned up.

We would benefit more from the construction of a railroad than from a road. A railroad would give us better control over what would come to the communities from the south.

Tourism development, including the creation of a park, needs to happen faster, before mining starts.

Even though Hydro-Québec may one day want to dam the Kuugaaluk river to generate electricity for mining, we do not want this. The Kuugaaluk is very important for our harvesting.

Our Vision of Development

We have to find ways to communicate more often and better with each other. We need to find ways to transfer this information to the community. Community members should meet more often as it was in the past.

We have grown up with the JBNQA, but never were we taught about it. Yet, it was negotiated by our elders, our grandparents. This lack of knowledge is hindering regional development.

We have been living with the JBNQA since 1975, and have faced many challenges since then. We now need to discuss and improve on the contents of that document. I appreciate that Inuit are sitting down to discuss our future. Your involvement makes me proud. We can use the JBNQA to attain Inuit empowerment. When we were negotiating the JBNQA, we felt quite capable. We met a lot with the communities and came up with ideas, but we left some issues for the future. Although we have often been criticized and asked why we signed the agreement, the JBNQA has improved our lives. What you are producing through Parnasimautik is easy to understand and a very good start. I hope you will go back to the government with Parnasimautik. *(Tommy Cain Sr., Tasiujaq elder and signatory of the JBNQA)*

Representatives of all local organizations were present at the Parnasimautik workshop in Tasiujaq: from the municipal council; the landholding corporation; Anguvigaapik; the cooperative; the education, community wellness and housing committees; the church, recreation and Piqalujait cultural committees; plus youth, elders, the KRG councillor, the KSB commissioner, the NRBHSS member, and the Makivik board member.