



Silavut Asianguvalliajok

Nunatsiavut Climate Change Workshop

Concerns & Priorities

March 2024



Table of Contents

Overview of Silavut Asianguvalliajuk.....	3
Observations & Concerns.....	3
Let's SOAR Towards Our Shared Vision For Climate!.....	9
What's Blocking Us From Taking Action?.....	10
Priority Actions for Addressing Climate Change in Nunatsiavut.....	11
What Are The Actions For "Me, We, and Others".....	13

Overview of Silavut Asianguvalliajuk

Silavut Asianguvalliajuk, the Nunatsiavut Climate Change Workshop 2024 was held in Nain, Nunatsiavut from March 18-22, 2024. The workshop convened communities, organizations, institutions, and governmental bodies to engage in discussions pertinent to climate change in Nunatsiavut. The aim was to stimulate innovative thinking and identify actionable solutions and pathways forward to inform strategies for mitigation, adaptation, and ongoing monitoring in Nunatsiavut.

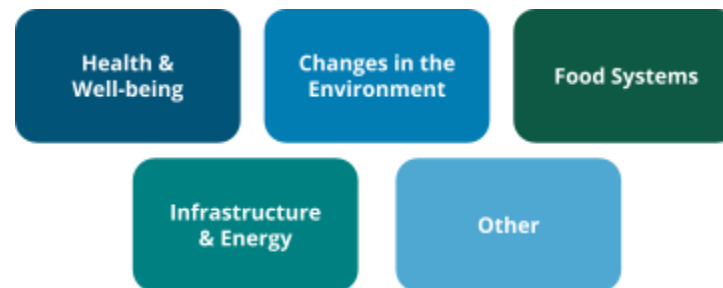
The objectives of this workshop were to:

1. Update on completed and ongoing activities in Nunatsiavut (projects, initiatives, plans, etc.)
2. Identify concerns and priorities of communities
3. Identify resources, support, and funding opportunities
4. Form collaborative and strategic solutions to inform climate action in the region
5. Build a climate-minded network in Nunatsiavut

This report acts as a summary to the [detailed workshop report](#), highlighting what community members feel is important when it comes to climate adaptation and monitoring. It gives their concerns and priorities a chance to be expressed clearly in a way that is representative of the communities and allows for the voices of Labrador Inuit to be strengthened.

Observations & Concerns

Community members shared their observations and concerns related to each of the following themes:



Health & Well-being

OBSERVATIONS

- Changes in the ice impacting cultural activities
- Access to cultural language only for some (dependant on program & financial access)
- Influence of southern diet & activities (e.g. processed food) leading to more sickness
- Severe & challenging weather limiting access to healthcare

CONCERNS

- Colonized rules (government policies) that go against tradition (e.g., using Elder knowledge, liability limitations for land based activities)
- Generational impacts: Will youth have the same experiences?
- Shame associated with cultural practices (e.g. hunting) due to government regulations

OTHER COMMENTS

Strengths

- Inuit are resilient and strong with a wealth of knowledge
- The need for access to more resources (e.g. schooling, language, and institutions)

Healthcare Challenges

- Access to healthcare
- The distance for long-term care support means people are away from family, friends and community (very difficult when navigating death and extreme sickness)
- Transport to hospitals is challenging
- Health issues affecting Inuit communities disproportionately (e.g. cancer in Nain, Hopedale)

Environment & Health

- Changes in wildlife availability impacting health and traditional food sources.
- Stress associated with carrying out activities and task impacted by climate change (e.g. melting ice affects ice fishing and transport)

Community well-being

- Decline in traditional activities due to changing ice conditions, making activities more difficult. (e.g. harvesting berries, hunting)
- Limited access to cultural and language resources outside the region, compounded by budget constraints.
- Efforts to sustain traditional practices (e.g. caribou hunt) and reclaiming language for future generations. ("Programs should sustain, not shame!")

Intergenerational

- Modernization impacting health (e.g. increased store-bought foods leading to health issues like diabetes)
- Land-based activities are important for healing and community well-being, but access is difficult due to cost and bureaucratic barriers
- Loss of cultural activities for future generations due to ice conditions

Changes in the Environment

OBSERVATIONS

- Berries and animals affected due to shrubs taking over & invasive species
- Air quality
- Permafrost thaw and erosion
- Avalanches
- Water (sea level rise, more rain)

CONCERNS

- Having enough berries
- Warming quickly & drying out
- Hot and humid
- Smoke and bad air
- Loss of permafrost, erosion, and changes in snow and ice conditions impacting travel and wildlife habitats
- Need to keep practice of caribou hunt
- Loss of access to land and sea resources
- Loss of traditional knowledge, such as predicting winds and assessing travel routes, due to changing weather patterns.

OTHER COMMENTS

Traditional food sources

- Snow thaw impacting berry quality and vegetation growth.
- Decline in certain berry species due to shading by shrubs.
- Changes in mussel picking due to earlier ice melt and potential health risks with warmer water.
- Erosion and permafrost thaw on cabin relocation and land stability.
- Importance of traditional hunting practices, including caribou hunting methods and naming animal parts.
- Impact of environmental changes on cultural activities like geese hunting and berry picking.

Wildlife and fishing

- Changes in fish sizes and species distribution
- Changes in predatory animal numbers (e.g. bears & eagles) affecting prey populations.
- Geese populations are shifting, with some species decreasing and others increasing.
- Diet changes among animals due to vegetation growth and range shifts.
- Fewer traditional species (e.g. small birds, caribou, seal pups, etc.)
- New species seen - sharks, birds, sea turtles, whales - including invasive species
- Shifts in wildlife populations and behaviors due to climate change

Climate and weather

- Unstable weather patterns, including inconsistent cold and warm temperatures and sudden temperature fluctuations.
- Changes in thunderstorm frequency and intensity, with some occurring in unusual months.
- Increased precipitation of contaminants affecting air and water quality.
- Impact of jet stream changes on snowfall distribution, with less snow in Labrador affecting travel.

Human impacts & adaptation

- Challenges with transportation, including ski doo accidents and difficulties in accessing resources like wood and fuel.
- Observations of microplastics in fish, indicating potential environmental pollution.
- Concerns about the reliability of traditional hunting methods and risks of avalanches.
- Economic implications, such as increased costs of products and impacts on traditional activities like berry picking.

Food Systems

OBSERVATIONS

- Not many seals
- Less partridges
- Unpredictable weather
- More community gardens and chickens
- Shorter hunting season
- More illnesses
- Invasive species
- Lack of traditional Inuit values (less people sharing food/hunt)

CONCERNS

- Nutrition and accessibility, diet changes, adjustments
- Pollution (microplastics, waste, fuel spills)
- Lack of accountability and communication
- Finances and affordability
- Diseases
- Delays in food and resources
- Caribou (ban, children not accessing it)
- Food security (cost, inflation, access)
- Children are not experiencing tradition country foods (caribou)

OTHER COMMENTS

Cost of food and hunting/harvesting supplies

- Inflation affecting high cost of food
- High cost of tools (fishing supplies, bullets, gas) making essentials more expensive to hunt and harvest
- Difficulty in accessing country foods earlier in the year and concerns about the reliability of transportation for food delivery.

Health concerns and research

- Health issues among community members, including high blood pressure, due to lack of access to nutritious country foods and increased processed foods.
- Pollution affecting the region (e.g. fish in Makkovik, berries by old Hopedale military bases)
- What research is being done on cancer in Nunatsiavut.

Cultural preservation and traditional practices

- Important to hold Nunatsiavut Inuit values over provincial government values in decision-making.
- Maintaining traditional practices through community-led initiatives like food co-ops, gardening, and raising chickens.
- The loss of traditional hunting skills and access for hunters.

Community resilience & adaptation

- Adaptation strategies such as acquiring caribou from other regions and learning to eat new foods like moose.
- Efforts to mitigate impacts of environmental changes through workshops, discussions, and community-led initiatives.

Food insecurity and changes to country food

- Food insecurity due to the caribou ban, shortages in community
- Impact of weather unpredictability on food delivery, hunting, and country food preservation.
- Challenges with invasive species, pollution, and changing textures of traditional foods like seal fat.

Environmental impact on wildlife

- Changes in wildlife migration timing and population, including decreases in seals and partridges due to environmental changes.
- Impact of microplastics and diseases on wildlife and food quality.

Communication and accountability

- Lack of communication and accountability regarding oil spills and food safety.
- Importance of informing community members about the safety of country foods and addressing environmental concerns like garbage dumps.

Infrastructure & Energy

OBSERVATIONS

- Running out of firewood - being prepared
- Permafrost / settling foundations
- Marine shipping and road clearing
- Air conditioners
- Erosion & vegetation / coastal erosion
- Fire breaks
- Water quality

CONCERNS

- Quality of work / construction
- Home heating
- Intensity if weather storms causing damage
- Everybody has a right to a warm house
- Access to housing
- We need weather stations North of Nain

OTHER COMMENTS

Housing and energy

- Challenges with availability, affordability, and accessibility of housing.
- Issues with home heating, including the impact of permafrost thawing on housing foundations.
- Calls for affordable energy and measures to address rising costs, such as universal access to housing and better insulation.
- Improving the quality of work from contractors.
- Efforts to implement solar maintenance and windmills to reduce energy costs and environmental impact.
- Concerns about mould in homes.

Water

- Need for capacity and education to maintain infrastructure, such as water and sewer lines affected by permafrost.
- Importance of preparing for runoff and flooding,

Impacts & preparedness

- Impacts on infrastructure, including floodings, stormwater runoff, and damage from unpredictable weather.
- Concerns about water quality
- Need for revegetation when developing land.

Transportation & accessibility

- Challenges with transportation costs, including flight costs and rising ferry expenses.
- Issues with road maintenance, vehicle choices, and access to the land, particularly in remote areas.
- Consideration of fire breaks, greening initiatives, and clearing roads for boat access to improve community resilience.

Other

OBSERVATIONS

Cultural and social impact

- Changes in traditional practices and cultural values, such as reduced sharing of harvested animals and the disappearance of certain bird species.

Community concerns and adaptation (disasters)

- Increase in extreme weather events, including avalanches, landslides, and earthquakes, affecting safety and infrastructure.
- Earthquakes, avalanches, storms, shifting weather, landslides, ice melt, wind
- Loss of permafrost - hard to travel, damaging homes

CONCERNS

Cultural and social impact

- Impact of environmental changes on community cohesion and well-being, including concerns about safety, trauma, and communication during disasters.
- Impacts from being stuck in community and having reduced access to cultural activities & appropriate food to wellbeing and mental health

Increasing green materials, reducing plastics

- Economic impacts of climate change, such as increased costs for green materials
- Initiatives to address environmental concerns, such as reducing plastic consumption and encouraging the use of green materials, despite cost barriers.

Community concerns and adaptation (disasters)

- Challenges accessing resources (wood and berries), exacerbated by thawing permafrost and unpredictable travel routes.
- Efforts to adapt to environment changes, such as implementing safety training for ice travel
- Address economic disparities and ensure funding supports all demographics, including youth, Elders, and families.
- Need increased communication about disasters and their causes and protocols for future events.

Let's SOAR Towards Our Shared Vision For Climate!

Participants engaged in an activity to develop a shared vision for climate using the SOAR framework as a tool.

<p>S STRENGTHS <i>As a Nunatsiavummiut, what are our current strengths? What are we proud about?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-governance • Communities are invested in climate change • Women are very engaged • Elder, Inuit, and community knowledge • The ability to have the hard but necessary conversations • Youth learning about the land • Strong leaders • The ability for people to gather • Resilience • Different ways of knowing 	<p>O OPPORTUNITIES <i>What opportunities could we pursue? What partnerships or collaborations can our organization pursue?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term partnerships to support healing & mental wellness for community members & Youth • Land access for Elders via projects • Share messages more broadly with the community (e.g. social media, FB) • Removing restricting policies that inhibit community members from practicing their culture • Increasing Youth climate work experience in the community • Having more community workshops • Bringing government workers up to experience the North! • Learning from and working with other Indigenous groups • Building capacity within community
<p>A ASPIRATIONS <i>What are our aspirations? Our desired vision of the future?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops rotating into other communities • Inuit influence the south • An engaged and supportive government • More green options like greenhouses, community composting • Wildlife husbandry • Strong Inuit leadership on projects • Robust trails • Language protection • Continuation and strengthening of cultural programs that rebalance our ecosystem • Insurance policies that work for Inuit and respect traditional knowledge and activities • Self-determination and autonomy 	<p>R RESULTS <i>What results are we seeking? How will we know if we are moving toward</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved access to the land for all (including Middle-Age, 35-50) • Support for stable housing that support net-zero goals • A culture that is alive & well! • A community that is united & free • More successful programs • People have access to hunt • Preservation of cultural heritage (e.g. locally grown food, necessary resources are protected) • Increased self-determination in policies • Improved mental health outcomes and reduced risk of negative impacts on Youth

What's Blocking Us From Taking Action?

Participants reflected on what was blocking, or preventing Nunatsiavummiut from taking action on climate. This distinction helped participants visualize challenges to see where direct action could be taken for things “within our control” and how a different approach may need to be considered (e.g. advocacy) for things that are “out of our control”.

WITHIN OUR CONTROL

- Community sustainability programs
- Supporting each other for our mental health (e.g., providing motivation)
- Individual energy & waste management
- Influencing developments in our control in a positive way (e.g. Strange Lake)
- Our voices - how we say what needs to be done
- Communication between Elders and Youth
- Education & mentor programs
- NG being accessible, involved, communicative
- Individual choices to impact the environment
- Research that is being done (non-extractive)
- Having local level discussions to support networking & knowledge sharing
- Listening more to our Youth!
- NG's ability to influence policies
- NG's ability to build Elder & Youth inclusion

OUT OF OUR CONTROL

- The government mindset and their priorities not understanding our way of life
- The difficulties in accessing government funding
- A lack of resources to live up north
- Government laws at all levels (federal, provincial, regional/NG)
- The drivers of climate change elsewhere having an impact here
- Red tape and hoops that are restrictive to progress
- The choices of others (e.g. plastics use)
- Global industry
- Capitalism: What motivates action and who has the power?
- Lack of Inuit knowledge consideration in policies
- Intergenerational trauma smf historical trauma
- Large scale SAR: there are local teams but resources are not readily available
- Visibility of research: seeing as well as hearing
- Canadian colonial policies

Priority Actions for Addressing Climate Change in Nunatsiavut

To close the workshop, participants reflected on all they had learned, discussed, and considered, and then brainstormed key actions Nunatsiavut could take to address climate change. These actions are an important input for the development of the Nunatsiavut Climate Change Strategy, which will be developed later this year.

Independently, participants brainstormed a list of actions using a “Me” → “We” → “Others” template to ensure a comprehensive list of actions that could be done by individuals, by Nunasiavummiut, the Nunatsiavut Government, and by other partners, including government partners, researchers, businesses, etc. Top actions were discussed in groups and then shared in plenary. The entire workshop group organized actions into key groupings, outlined below.

The Nunatsiavut Government could address our [observations and concerns](#), lift the [blocks that are in our way](#), and work towards our [shared vision for climate](#) by:



Note: some are contradictory and not all participants agreed on the following actions.

<p>Improving Funding Opportunities that Reflect our Values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redistribute funding to Inuit organizations • Provide access to more money • Transition the focus from money, cost, and profit to quality of life 	<p>Empowering Inuit Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for Inuit • Involve Inuit at the onset of projects • Empower community members • Redesign policies, informed by Inuit knowledge • Amplify Inuit voices, concerns, and priorities • Value Inuit knowledge throughout the system (without the need for certifications) 	<p>Mobilizing for Adaptive Preparedness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide safety training for traditional activities (e.g. being on the ice/land) • Crisis response that is flexible, context relevant, and meets the needs of the community 	<p>Ensuring Sound Accountability & Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be solutions-oriented • Commit to following through on actions • Make sure plans and strategies are implemented • Communicate and show results, not just reports
<p>Creating Inclusive, Sustainable Programming & Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get more involved • Increase the equity/equality of community programs • Engage all ages • Programs accessible for all ages • Build out Elder and Youth programming • Involve more Youth in climate change initiatives • Teach our children to be “green conscious” • Increase land trips with others • Teach others about the caribou hunt and the use of caribou • Target hard to reach and less engaged audiences (those not involved in community, older Youth) • Hire dedicated Inuit climate change roles throughout the different departments • Establish long-term research relationships • Develop more language programs with the local dialect speakers (in schools, on the land, etc.) • Bring back the ‘Going off, Going strong’ program 	<p>Incentivising Sustainable Climate Solutions & Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce carbon footprint • Be more eco-friendly • Run contests for community clean up programs • NGOs/ICGs to offer green community programs (e.g., recycling, compost, solar, reducing/recycling plastics, community gardens, etc.) • Incentivize recycling programs • Encourage local gardening, invest in community gardens, and other food security initiatives • Invest in energy efficient, healthy, and warm homes • Incentivize businesses to take up green practices (e.g., composting, green materials, gardens, etc.) • Incinerators in each community • Get rid of diesel plants, eventually • Adapt transportation to Nunatsiavut’s needs • NG and others to switch to green products (e.g. reusable containers, green soaps, etc.) 	<p>Increasing Social Determinants to Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to mental health services • Develop a mental health and self-growth initiative (Sharing stories of climate change impacts) • Fund mental health supports such as on the land programs • Increase affordable and safe housing access • Create wild food sharing system between communities • Bring government officials to Nunatsiavut to learn about the realities and policy impacts (create an immersive experience for policy makers) • Reduce restrictions & red tape • Develop culturally appropriate government structures • Improve collaboration between all levels of government (e.g. engagement activities) • Regional autonomy and authority • Decolonize policies • Develop policies and regulations by and for Inuit 	<p>Improving Connection, Communication & Networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation and hosting of climate workshops and events • Create community-level climate networks • Share knowledge and observations • Learn about and share ongoing research • Researchers to report back to communities about their findings and information collected • Create a communication strategy (hire specific dedicated positions) • Remind ourselves why we do these workshops after the workshop is over • Maintain networks developed through engagement events (e.g. workshops) • Increase coordination between sectors • Share information from communities with Nunatsiavut Executive Council so they can influence ITK & Federal • Use a holistic approach to strategy development

What Are The Actions For “Me, We, and Others”?

ME	WE	OTHERS
<p>Educate yourself & build awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate myself on municipal government programs for climate change mitigation. • Share experiences and stories of climate change impacts to raise awareness. • Advocate for inclusion of all age groups, including 30-55 years, in programming. <p>Reduce my own carbon footprint & shift to better, more eco-friendly habits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement strategies to reduce my own personal carbon footprint (e.g. reducing plastic use, switching to heat pumps, etc.) • Advocate for reusable products/containers and reducing plastic items in daily life. • Implement composting and greenhouse initiatives in the community. • Participating in climate-related global initiatives (e.g. Earth Hour). <p>Engage with my community and build resilience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize my mental health and resilience by going outside and gathering with the community. • Establish mental health honorariums for self-care and support each other's mental health. <p>Collaborate and advocate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate between different levels of government to address climate change. • Advocate for meaningful work and challenge restrictive policies, particularly in collaboration with university staff. <p>Engage across generations (youth, Elders, all ages)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve school kids in reducing carbon footprint and litter pickup. • Build connections between Elders and Youth through on-land programming. <p>Continuously learning and stay engaged</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to participate in workshops, events, and committees to stay informed and spread knowledge. • Teach Youth and others about environmental consciousness and advocating for green practices. 	<p>Communicate and engage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a communication strategy to keep people updated on outcomes and actions regarding climate change initiatives. <p>Appoint specific positions as points of contact for climate change issues/projects in each department</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create community-level climate networks to inform government committees, involving Youth, Elders, and other community members. <p>Improve policies and programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make policies less restrictive and more community-driven, informed by Inuit and community knowledge. • Redesign policies to address live realities and fund sustainable programs like community gardens. • Incentivize green initiatives and provide funding for sustainable programs. <p>Enhance infrastructure and services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure better access to mental health services and affordable housing and infrastructure improvements. • Promote sustainable energy alternatives like solar power and greener materials for building improvements and retrofits. <p>Implement community programs and initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement community programs and incentives for litter pickup and recycling, including composting and community gardens. • Provide workshops for Youth on environmental sustainability and facilitate access to training for green initiatives. <p>Coordinate and empower</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve coordination between sectors and government levels for better communication and engagement. • Empower local communities with increased decision-making power and involvement in climate change initiatives. 	<p>Fund priority improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate resources to prioritize improvements based on expressed needs of Nunatsiavut Government and its people. • Financially support Inuit self-determined climate strategies, actions, and priorities. <p>Enhance communication and collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to expressed needs by implementing better communication strategies and removing restrictions. • Facilitate visits for knowledge exchange and build long-term relationships, particularly with university researchers and supervisors. • Encourage active listening and take notice of Inuit knowledge. <p>Redesign policies & support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be responsive through policy redesign informed by Inuit and community knowledge and realities. • Eventually transition away from diesel generators and provide support financially for sustainable energy solutions <p>Engage and empower community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create opportunities for community members, including Youth and Elders, to participate and contribute. • Support ongoing research and incorporate local knowledge into decision-making processes. • Seek input from local knowledge and prioritize community needs for effective programming and initiatives.

Feedback from Participants

In follow up to the March workshop, a feedback survey was sent to all participants. Thirteen responses were received with the following summarized feedback.

"I appreciated how the workshop fostered a sense of connection to other participants, land and environment - this experience will have a special place in my heart and inspire my work going forward."

What worked well?

- Community members' knowledge and experience were centred, creating a welcoming and inclusive dynamic.
- The breadth and depth of information provided to participants was impressive.
- The event was well-organized and adaptable, despite logistical challenges.
- The workshop provided a valuable educational experience, with engaging discussions and activities.

Workshop Highlights

- Stories shared by community members
- Building connections and meeting new people in person to form a climate-minded network
- Spending time on the land and the mitt-making workshop
- Meaningful conversations through structured (panels and presentations) and unstructured formats
- Learning from Joey's cabin and the research aspect

What was missing? What could have been improved?

- Last-minute logistical challenges and occasional slide mix-ups during presentations.
- Better communication and awareness of the event's schedule and activities.
- A request for cultural sensitivity training for certain individuals involved in the workshop.
- Incorporating Inuit Elder knowledge into discussions and planning.
- Involving more local Youth to provide their perspectives and how they envision the future.
- Utilizing records of weather to enhance understanding and planning.

Did you learn anything new at the workshop?

- Learned about initiatives in Nunatsiavut, especially in energy and housing.
- Gained new local perspectives and memories.
- Expanded knowledge of the Inuktitut language.
- Discovered new insights and perspectives.
- Learned about technology and potential opportunities.
- Gained understanding through research data and graphics.
- Realized the profound impacts of climate change, including loss of freedom.
- Suggested involving hunters for their unique perspectives.
- Focused on learning about research ethics, especially in Inuit contexts.

Do you feel you have a better understanding of climate change in Nunatsiavut and how we can work on climate change adaptation?

- Participants feel they have gained a better understanding of climate change in Nunatsiavut.
- There's an appreciation for hearing about the personal effects of climate change on Nunatsiavummiut, which highlights the lived reality beyond models and predictions. *"I wish this was more part of climate change gatherings everywhere - real people experiencing the real changes, not just models and predictions."*
- The educational aspect of the information presented is acknowledged, including both societal impacts and traditional knowledge.
- There's gratitude for being informed about resources and initiatives in Nunatsiavut related to climate change research and infrastructure.
- Despite gaps in discussing topics like ocean currents, participants value the focus on long-term sustainability plans for Nunatsiavut.
- Some participants have observed changes over the past 20 years, indicating a long-term perspective on climate change.
- Participants expressed challenges in understanding and supporting adaptation for Inuit communities, highlighting the need for further exploration and support in this area.