

REPORT ON THE
Tracking Change Global Knowledge Symposium
held in conjunction with the
United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)
April 22 to May 3, 2019

This document provides an overview of the scheduled events of the 2019 Tracking Change Global Knowledge Symposium. A detailed summary will be made available as well as video and audio recordings will further supplement this overview.

SETTING THE STAGE

The Tracking Change... research program has developed over the last four years to advance knowledge through community-university research activities in the Mackenzie River Basin with emerging projects in the lower Mekong River Basin (Mun River) and in the lower Amazon Basin (Tapajos River). Every two years, project participants from across the three watersheds gather at the Global Knowledge Symposium to share experiences, observations and ideas. This year, the Symposium was held in New York City in alignment to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII).

UN PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

The UNPFII is a high-level advisory body to the Economic and Social Council. The Forum was established on 28 July 2000 by Resolution 2000/22, with the mandate to deal with indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights.

Each year since 2002, the Forum meets for ten days at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City, where forum members and delegates of Indigenous Peoples' Organizations from across the globe gather to raise awareness and increase outreach on Indigenous issues and to make recommendations to the Economic and Social Council. The Eighteenth Session of the UNPFII took place from April 22 to May 3, 2019 in New York City.

Tracking Change Global Knowledge Symposium at UNPFII 18

This year's Global Knowledge Symposium was held in conjunction with UNPFII 18 because of the alignment of the project to the theme of the 2019 Forum which was "Traditional Knowledge: Generation, Transmission, and Protection". The bi-annual Global Knowledge Symposia are designed to:

- Create opportunities for Indigenous community participants from diverse river basins to share their own local and traditional knowledge about social-ecological change and develop a better understanding of its significance at global scales;
- Develop a deeper understanding of the knowledge, practices, and beliefs of Indigenous fishers through place-based learning activities;
- Identify and advance theories and conceptual frameworks that can help explain trends and patterns in the livelihoods of fishing communities in the Mackenzie-Mekong-Amazon;
- Strengthen research collaboration between graduate students, junior and senior faculty and community knowledge holders (fishers) and partners from Canada, Thailand, and Brazil;
- Build global academic-community-policy networks that can effect change in the governance of the Mackenzie-Mekong-Amazon;
- Catalyze critical thinking about the methodological best-practices for studying and communicating about fisher knowledge and practices;
- Advance community reporting and academic publication through knowledge mobilization exercises.

The Tracking Change project team, along with researchers and representatives from projects across the Mackenzie, Mekong and Amazon basins attended parts of the Forum to showcase the progress, results and plans of their work over the past four years. The goal of our attendance at this event was to increase the project's profile, network with key influencers, and establish connections with other Indigenous communities, organizations and researchers from other parts of our world to share stories and create hope.

Participants of the Symposium were able to meet with other academic and community researchers and to share their research related to fishing livelihoods by making formal presentations. They each had the opportunity to participate in group thinking activities and to network with attendees of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at the United Nations.

PRE-CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIONS

Tracy Howlett and Kevin Ahkimnachie participated in Week one of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII 18) from April 22nd to April 26th. On April 25th Kevin Ahkimnachie of Treaty 8 spoke at on the topic of *Working in a "good way"*. Kevin's statement can be viewed via UN Web TV: <http://www.trackingchange.ca/in-the-media/kevin-ahkimnachie-speaks-at-18th-session-of-the-united-nations-permanent-forum-on-indigenous-issues-unpfii18/>

Monday April 29, 2019– Registration and Reception

Participants arrived throughout the day on 29 April. Registration was at the hotel, and the opening dinner and mixer was held at Patsy's Pizzeria.

Tuesday April 30, 2019– Orientation & Forum Day

The first morning of the Symposium focused on ensuring everyone was registered to enter the United Nations building and to review the agenda. The day was started by Leon Andrew who provided a prayer. To open the meeting, Vice Chief Joe Tsannie spoke of the value of traditional knowledge in relation to scientific knowledge, and acknowledged all delegates and encouraged them to speak from the heart and use the opportunity to present their message to the rest of the world. Brenda Parlee welcomed all delegates to the meeting. The delegates then did a round of introductions with participants introducing themselves, their organizations, who they were representing, and their goals in participating in the meeting. The morning was used to review the agenda, and do a practice run of the presentation in the afternoon.

PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES – SIDE EVENT

TRACKING CHANGE: LOCAL AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE IN THE MACKENZIE, MEKONG AND AMAZON

We were honoured to be selected as an official on-site side event as part of the Permanent Forum and hosted a 1.5 hour storytelling session in a talking circle format. The knowledge shared formed an interconnected story about the importance of freshwater ecosystems/fishing to Indigenous communities and fishing peoples and was livestreamed on UN Web TV. A summary of the speaker statements is provided in Appendix 1.

Link to Livestream: <http://www.trackingchange.ca/knowledge-mobilization/global-meetings/global-knowledge-symposium-nyc/unpfii-side-event/>

Wednesday May 1, 2019 – Workshop Day –

Church of the Covenant Fellowship Hall 310 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017

The second day of the Symposium focused internally with the participants sharing information about their own projects and collaborating to plan communication projects for the project. Once again, our day was started with an opening prayer from Leon Andrew who was followed by Reverend Cornell Edmonds from the Church of the Covenant for an official Welcome to New York. Rev. Edmonds provided an overview of the history of the Church and the mission and welcomed us to the space at the Church of the Covenant.

The theme for the day was ‘connections: how people are connected, rivers are connected, basins are connected’. Brenda Parlee provided a summary of the project. Renato Silvano gave an overview of work in the Amazon Basin, and Kanokwan Manorom provided insights into the work being undertaken in the Mekong Basin. There are broad themes around fishing, fishing livelihoods and water that are common across basins. There are also many connections through collaborations. In the morning session, Elders and Chiefs were invited to talk about changes that they have seen in their communities and regions. While this was taking place, several delegates attended the UNPFII where Chief Ahnassay made a statement about Tracking Change and the experiences of his community.

The afternoon session focused on the importance of communicating the results of Tracking Change and involved small group discussions, focused around broad themes to organize contributions to journal and/or book publications. Participants organized into four different smaller groups to deeply discuss a selection of abstracts and the contributions that might be made to Special issues of Journals or a book, etc. Each participant was asked to prepare 5-10 slides about their ideas to be shared within the small group. The three theme groups were:

- **Governance (Led By Brenda Parlee)**
- **Methods (Led By Trevor Lantz And Renato Silvano)**
- **Fisheries (Led By Fikret Berkes)**

Thursday May 2, 2019– Dialogue & Presentation Day

NORTH AMERICAN REGIONAL DIALOGUE

The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues held a Regional Dialogue for North America between Indigenous peoples and Member States. UN agencies, funds and programmes and regional and national Human Rights Institutions and academia were also welcome to attend and our group participated. The dialogue began with introductory remarks from the Permanent Forum Members, who also moderated the session. Interventions from States and Indigenous Peoples addressed specific issues and discussions were conducted in an interactive manner. Discussion points:

1. Due to land dispossession and resource extraction, Indigenous Peoples of North America often face challenges in preserving and protecting sacred lands and waters, sacred cultural practices and subsistence economies.
2. Are there barriers to Indigenous Peoples’ consultation and participation in formulating environmental and land management practices?
3. What are possible acts of reconciliation to address intergenerational traumas affecting indigenous communities?
4. As 2019 is the International Year of Indigenous Languages, what plans and actions are being undertaken to promote and protect indigenous languages in the region, including the organizing of a regional gathering of indigenous peoples, States, academics, and other stakeholders?

5. Whose voices are not in the room and why?

Overall objectives of the regional dialogues: <https://bit.ly/2V2B6Rp>

Recommendations database of the Permanent Forum: <https://goo.gl/K5U4fg>

ACADEMIC DISCUSSION

In preparing for publications, Dr. Parlee and her research team have been working to scope chapters where collaboration has already taken place and insights drawn from different ways of knowing are clear. Utilizing the editors' guidance on the volume's theme, the academic research team met to discuss create an outline. Participants identified common ground and potential synergies between authors and chapters; addressed potential overlaps and explored theoretically relationships and tensions between themes and individual papers. The intent is to create a tightly connected volume of chapters that contribute to understanding of the tensions between knowledge and power in the Mackenzie River Basin.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

After lunch, the group set up for the public presentations associated with the Global Knowledge Symposium. Both listed as official off-site side events of the UNPFII, the public events provided an opportunity to share our work with a broad audience and to partner with a local academic institution.

TRACKING CHANGE: STORIES OF CHANGE

The Tracking Change: Stories of Change session was largely an overview of the Tracking Change project and a further opportunity for community researchers to talk about their work and observations of change in their homelands.

Brenda opened the public session by providing an overview of the Tracking Change project and the progress made in the previous four years. She highlighted the participants, the partnerships and the unique approaches being used across the three basins. The focus of Brenda's presentation was a summary of the four key issues which the project participants feel remain important for discussion and action. They are:

- **Sustainability of Freshwater Ecosystems and Fishing Livelihoods for Indigenous Peoples**
- **Addressing Climate Change Impacts on Freshwater Ecosystems and Indigenous Peoples**
- **Addressing the Impacts of Resource Development on Freshwater Ecosystems and Indigenous Peoples**
- **Celebrating and Nurturing Indigenous Youth**

Following this outline, Brenda handed the stage over to the project participants to present their work and experience in a session called "STORIES THAT CROSS BORDERS". The following themes were discussed:

Methods for Tracking Change

JD Storr, Aklavik, Northwest Territories

Bruce Maclean, Mikisew Cree First Nation, Alberta

Resource Development

Chief Ernest Betsina, Yellowknife, Northwest Territories,

Art Napoleon, Victoria, British Columbia

Anne Runde, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil

Climate Change

Leon Andrew, Norman Wells, Northwest Territories

Chelsea Martin, University of Alberta

Youth Perspectives

Eldon Horassi, Tulita, Northwest Territories

Carrie Kaarsgard, University of Alberta

Governance

Chief James Badger, Sucker Creek First Nation, Alberta

Wanapa Wongpinij, Ubon Ratchathani University, Thailand

Carolina Freitas, Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil

Students present their Posters informally during a coffee chat period where attendees and the project participants themselves were able to wander and network. It was a great opportunity for different communities to learn from one another. The afternoon ended with a facilitated discussion with the audience and an opportunity for one on one connections with our speakers.

TAR SANDS SONGBOOK

In the evening, we were fortunate to have Tanya Kalmanovitch join us to provide a unique musical experience called the Tar Sands Songbook.

Based on the unique relationship formed between Tanya Kalmanovitch and Cleo Reece through the Keepers of the Athabasca, Tanya, a music professor at the New School, based in New York, was invited to perform her documentary play, with music, about our complex and sometimes unseen relationship with oil. Accompanied by Andrew Boudreau, the presentation was well attended by members of the delegation and the general public. Tanya's raw, humorous, personal and affecting play was beautifully performed and certainly left the group thinking about their own relationship with petrochemicals and the earth as a whole.

Friday May 3, 2019– Learning Day

Church of the Covenant Fellowship Hall, 310 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017

The final day of the Symposium provided time for reflection, planning and a bit of exploring. The day started early with a closed meeting of the TRACKING CHANGE STEERING GROUP. This was attended by project organizers and the Traditional Knowledge, Strengthening Partnerships Working Group who discussed plans for next year, the overall feeling of the Symposium and agenda items for the June meeting in Yellowknife.

The bulk of the day was spent planning for the rest of 2019 and through to 2021. Key suggestions and discussion points included:

- The challenge of synthesizing information from all three basins and the importance of using comparative approaches to bring it all together
- The need to explore how the results of the program can be used to empower communities to use the knowledge and the networks to push for policy decisions and social action. A clear goal in relation to policy pressure and activism was discussed.
- There is real benefit in coming together. The group has a lot of common themes and it is important to use the network to share similar experiences. We are sharing, learning about industry and climate change, and maintaining skills. This research allows resilience.
- The posters are a great tool to facilitate the sharing of stories that knit together and build a broader view. Posters provide a visual and an interactive way of learning and are helpful in translating various language barriers
- We need to find ways find balance, and strengthen our powerful voice. There was the notion of a cycle of knowledge with elders and youth, changing society and the world
- We need to honour spirituality and connection to the land, the importance of the drum, of traditional songs, as guidance to lift the spirit, and empower the people
- Coming to UN was very powerful, it was useful to hear the perspectives of indigenous peoples from other countries. We need to seek out other outlets to participate in as a group.
- Moving forward we need to leverage the knowledge to effect policy and bring forward recommendations to effect change. We need to provide alternatives and ensure that we don't lose progress with changes in government.

After enjoying a final lunch together, the group split up to explore New York City. Groups visited museums, sites of interest and shops while others attended the closing ceremonies for the UNPFII18. Several groups attended the Yankees vs. Minnesota Twins baseball game.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY of STATEMENTS

Kevin Ahkimnachie (Treaty 8 First Nations, Alberta) opened the session:

We all come from different parts of three major watersheds in the world – the Mackenzie River Basin in Canada, the Amazon basin and the Mekong. We are all here together to celebrate the importance of these watersheds to our communities as well as to talk about some of the stresses and threats to their sustainability.

Tracey Proverbs, Masters student at the University of Victoria (Kaska-Dena, from Liard First Nation) has worked on two projects with the Gwich'in First Nation, in Canada's Northwest Territories, where communities are experiencing rapid social-ecological changes, stemming from effects of government policy, anthropogenic development projects, and climate change, which have negative impacts on the close relationships between people and place. The voices of Indigenous community members are vital to identifying, understanding, and making decisions about changes, and providing insights into the importance of access to fish for well-being and resilient fishing practices, as well as methods to include the cultural landscape in cumulative impact studies. Collaborations are vital to relevant and impactful research.

Joella Hogan, member of the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun, spoke about water as cultural heritage, and the importance of the Peel River watershed as a source of physical and cultural nourishment, comparing the relationship with the watershed to the matriarchy that is at the core of her culture. The Peel River watershed was threatened in recent years, when a land-use planning process gone awry, proposed opening up 70% of the region for resource extraction. After a long court battle and an appeal to the supreme court of Canada, the land-use planning process was reset and the final proposed plan now will protect 89% of the Peel Watershed, in the interests of their well being and cultural, spiritual and mental health.

Chelsea Martin, Masters Student University of Alberta (Anishinaabe from the Chippewas of Nawash First Nation, Southwestern Ontario). Chelsea's thesis focused on climate change and its impact on fishing livelihoods in Dene communities in the NWT. Through this work she witnessed experienced-based learning and the importance of cross-generational knowledge sharing about a wide variety of environmental changes witnessed and endured in the Mackenzie Basin. Extractive industries and climate change have greatly impacted ways of traditional life. Elders stories, knowledge and prophecies will lead Dene communities to a more sustainable future because their knowledge is sacred and all knowing; TEK will guide the path to a more sustainable future.

Wanda Pascal, Chief of the Teetlit Zheh community of Fort McPherson in the Peel River region of the Northwest Territories. The Peel River Watershed won a Supreme Court case and the battle continues to protect the watershed. For generations the Teetlit Gwichin have lived in the watershed, they survived off these waters. As a Chief she is concerned about future generations. There are many disturbances that are impacting the water, the fish, and the people. They have had to adapt over the years, and have shown resilience. Most of our people who lived off the land have passed on, but they have passed on our traditional culture and teachings to the next generation. We now have our children practising their culture in the school and out on the land. If the water becomes polluted and the caribou suffer, we the Gwich'in people will suffer.

Ernest Betsina, Chief of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, who have lived on the lands and fished the waters for thousands of years. Mining operations that began in the late 1800s with the discovery and subsequent mining for gold, which produced arsenic trioxide dust that contaminated the land, water, and a way of life of the people. For nearly four decades much of the arsenic was captured, gathered and stored underground, so today there are some 237,000 tonnes of arsenic stored at a site a mere mile from Great Slave Lake, putting significant fresh water sources at serious risk due to climate change and the thawing of permafrost. To date there is no plan to address this problem. His plea is to work together to find solutions to ensure improved sustainability of communities and the watersheds in which they live.

Art Napoleon, Treaty 8 Tribal Association of British Columbia spoke about hydro-electric development and its major impacts on waterways, fish populations, and fishing livelihoods, as well as attendant social and cultural impacts. Cumulative impacts continue to impact on the traditional livelihoods of communities. The losses include a loss of Indigenous language, stories, ceremonies and teachings that bound together and provided a sense of community, history and belonging. The strong connection to the land and spirit realm has been weakened. Arts calls for re-access to traditional lands and waters, re-engagement in ceremony, working to find creative ways to protect wildlife and sacred sites, and the revival of teachings and traditions before there are no intact forests and clean rivers left.

Eldon Horassi, Tulita NWT provided his perspective on the importance of youth engagement. Attending the United Nations 18th Indigenous Forum will allow him to gain a new perspective from mentors that he can pass this along to his generation to provide them with the tools they can use to become aware about the projects. This can show them how they can make a difference, and that is why Indigenous youth voices matter.

APPENDIX 2: TRACKING CHANGE – SUMMARY OF ISSUES

Governance

Risk Perceptions of Drinking Water for Indigenous Communities in Northern Canada.

Neal Spicer, Masters Student, University of Alberta

Psychological and Cultural Distress from Hydro-Electric Development in the Peace River Region

Art Napoleon, Treaty 8 Tribal Association of BC

Protecting Stó:lō culture, knowledge and value systems through White Sturgeon Conservation

Carrie Oloriz. Royal Roads University and Ernie Victor, Stó:lō First Nation

Conservation and Co-Management

Carolina Freitas, Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte

Gender and Knowledge Dynamics of Inland Fishery in the Mun Basin

Wannapa Wongpinij, Mekong Studies Program, Faculty of Liberal Arts Ubon Ratchathani University

Understanding the social fabric of Indigenous communities during oil and gas pipeline public hearings.

Robert Bechtel, PhD Candidate, University of Alberta

Governance experience

Raymond Marten, Mikisew Cree First Nation

Youth as Stakeholders in Climate Change Policy and Decision-Making

Makenzie Mackay, Masters Student, University of Alberta

Protecting the Peel River Watershed

Chief Wanda Pascal, Teetlit Zheh

The Cultural Importance of Water

Joella Hogan, Nacho Nayak Dun First Nation

A Story about the Old Lady of the Falls

JC Catholique, Lustel K'e Dene First Nation

Methods

The Canoe Trip Quest for Knowledge: A Northern Cree and Denesuline Metaphor for Conducting Research

Dr. Herman Michell, Rosaline Tsannie-Burseth, Joseph Tsannie and Robin McLeod, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Canada

Placenames as Indicators of Social, Cultural and Ecological Change in the Mackenzie River Basin, Northern Alberta

Kevin Ahkimmachie, Sharlene Alook, Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta; Brenda Parlee, Zizhao Wang, University of Alberta; Laura Gaitan, Memorial University

Culturally Driven Freshwater and Fish Monitoring: The Importance of Traditional Ecological Knowledge Indicators in Understanding Aquatic Ecosystem Change in the Northwest Territories' Dehcho Region

Sydney Stenekes, University of Alberta

Mikisew Cree Whitefish Camp

Bruce McClean and Mikisew Cree First Nation

The Dehcho Community Guardian Program

Mike Low, Deh Cho First Nations

A Youth Science Knowledge Fair as Land-Based Education

Carrie Karsgaard, Educational Policy Studies, University of Alberta

Community involvement in conservation initiatives: lessons and Best Practices for Community-Based Monitoring

Cristiana S. Seixas, University of Campinas, Brazil

A Story about the Moose Hide Canoe

Leon Andrew, Sahtu Renewable Resources Board

Fisheries

Effects of the W.A.C. Bennett dam on Stream Flows of the Peace River and potential effects on Fish Community Structure and Function

Mark Poesch, University of Alberta

Fishers' knowledge identifies socio-ecological changes downstream of a proposed dam in a tropical river

Anne Runde 1,3, Renato Silvano 1,3, Gustavo Hallwass 2,3; 1 Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil; 2 Federal University of Western Pará, Brazil; 3 Fisheries and Food Institute, Brazil

More Complex than Before: Opening the Gates of the Pak Mun Dam, Fish Migrations, Domestic Water Supply and Irrigation Projects

Ian G. Baird, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Kanokwan Manorom, Ubon Ratchathani University, Aurore Phenow, University of Wisconsin-Madison

The importance of TEK during times of change in the Sahtu Region!

Chelsea Martin, University of Alberta; Leon Andrew, Sahtu Renewable Resources Board

Connections between access to fish, well-being, and the resilience of Gwich'in fishing practices to rapid social-ecological change

Proverbs, T.A.¹, Lantz, T.C.^{1,4}, Sarah Lord², Amy Amos², and Gwich'in Tribal Council Department of Cultural Heritage³, School of Environmental Studies, University of Victoria, PO Box 1700 STN CSC, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, V8W 2Y2, Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board, PO Box 2240, Inuvik, Northwest Territories, Canada, X0E 0T0

Working with archival documents related to the management of the Great Slave Lake Commercial fishery

Kristine Wray, University of Alberta

A Story about Lesser Slave Lake

Chief James Badger

Fishing in Aklavik

JD Storr