

COPING WITH CLIMATE CHANGE

Arctic Canada

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In response to erosion and slumping at one fishing lake hunters have started to fish at new lakes. (Photo credit: John Keogak, Sachs Harbour)



With reduced sea ice cover, stronger winds, more storms, and increasing rates of coastal erosion, the community of Tuktoyaktuk installed rip-rap erosion control measures to protect the town. (Photo credit: Jennifer Turner, University of Guelph)



People in Holman are eating more store food (brought in by plane) as the risks of catching animals increase and they become harder to catch. (Photo credit: Tristan Pearce, University of Guelph)



Throughout the Arctic, hunters are packing supplies for several extra days when they travel since they now expect to get caught out by sudden changes in the weather. (Photo credit: Tristan Pearce, University of Guelph)



There is evidence that climate change is already occurring in the Arctic and posing significant risks and hazards to Canada's Inuit population. Hunting and fishing remain vital both culturally and economically for many Inuit communities, and climate change threatens these activities. Climate change also threatens community and industrial infrastructure. Many communities are responding in innovative and effective ways to these changes. This display documents coping strategies currently being undertaken by Inuit in Canada. Successful coping, however, comes with costs: costs which may be financially and culturally unacceptable in the future.



In response to increased unpredictability associated with the weather and the ice, hunters in Igloolik are taking along immersion suits which provide buoyancy and protection from the cold water in case they fall in. The Igloolik Hunters and Trappers Association has provided these suits at a discounted price. (Photo credit: James Ford, University of Guelph)



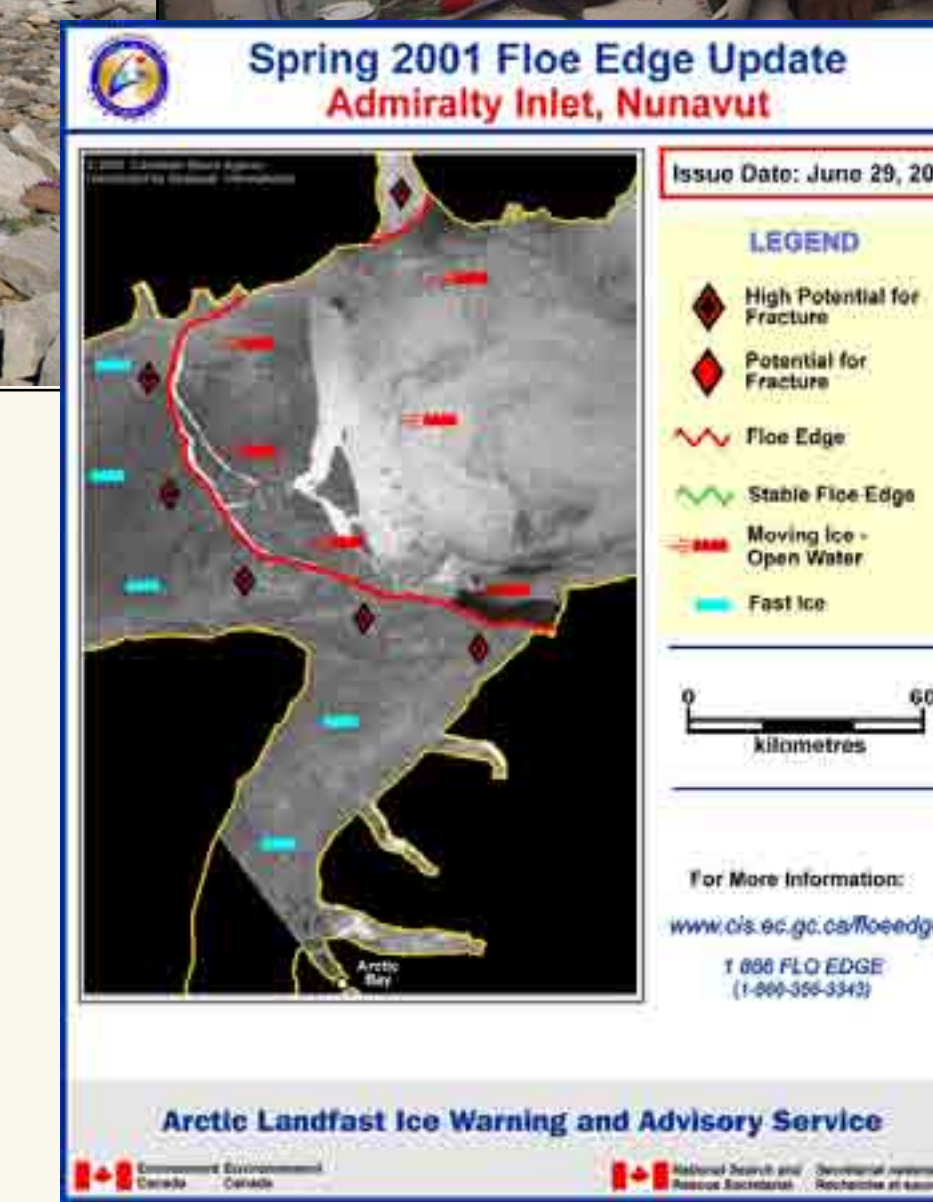
Theo Ikkuqmaq of Igloolik tests the ice thickness. In response to thinner ice and changes in ice dynamics, hunters are taking more care when travelling. (Photo credit: Gita Laidler, University of Toronto)



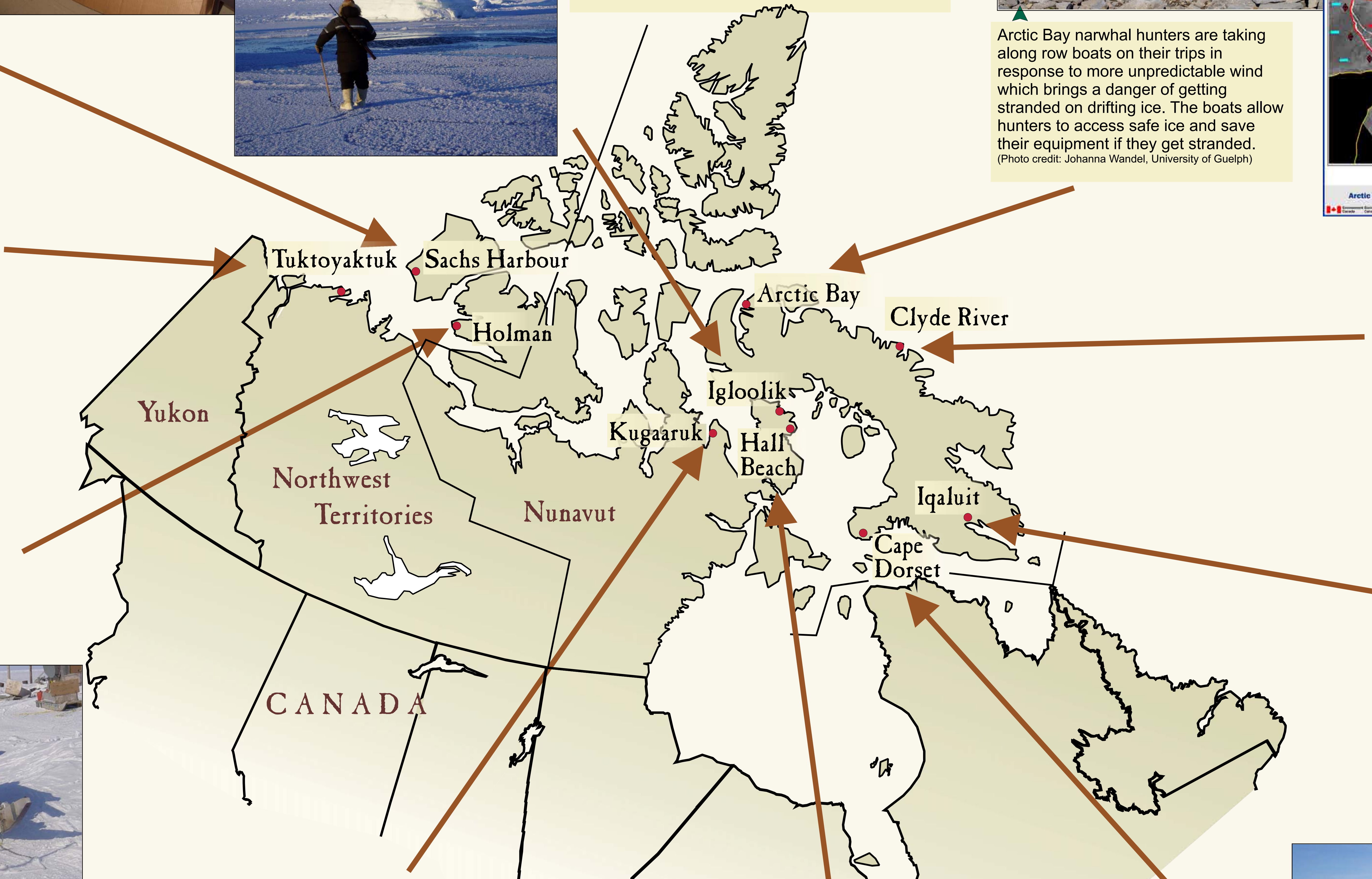
Arctic Bay narwhal hunters are taking along row boats on their trips in response to more unpredictable wind which brings a danger of getting stranded on drifting ice. The boats allow hunters to access safe ice and save their equipment if they get stranded. (Photo credit: Johanna Wandel, University of Guelph)



People are sharing information over the VHF radio regarding areas to avoid and are providing survival tips over the radio on what to do in an emergency. This has increased in recent years with hunting becoming more dangerous. (Photo credit: James Ford, University of Guelph)



Many hunters in Arctic Bay consult satellite images of the sea ice prior to travel, especially during the late spring narwhal hunt. With the ice becoming more unpredictable, such images enable dangerous areas to be identified prior to travel. (Photo credit: MSC)



Hunters rush to repair a tent ripped by high winds. Inuit are coping with many of hazards posed by climate change with the ingenuity that has traditionally underpinned their adaptability. (Photo credit: Shari Fox, Clyde River)



A notice posted on Iqaluit Gas Bar requests hunters/travellers to register details of their trips (destination, expected time away). It was set up in response to the freezing death of an inexperienced snowmobiler who got caught unprepared in a blizzard. (Photo credit: Jamal Shirley, Nunavut Research Institute)



Hunters have responded to an increase in salinity of the sea ice by taking along blocks of freshwater ice on their hunting trips for their water requirements. (Photo credit: Scott Nickels, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami)



A cement brick structure was installed in Hall Beach in 2003 to protect houses from shoreline erosion. The structure was damaged in by wave action generated by severe onshore winds during the fall of 2003. Emergency repairs were required. (Photo credit: Allan Jackson, Government of Nunavut)



A local elder describes the sea ice freezing process, different stages of thickness, and how the strong currents or waves cause ice to break up and/or become very rough by hitting each other. Traditional knowledge is important in helping people adapt. (Photo credit: Gita Laidler, University of Toronto)



Earlier spring sea ice melt makes it necessary to travel inland to access hunting areas. These routes can be much rougher and take much longer than more direct sea ice routes. (Photo credit: Gita Laidler, University of Toronto)