



# NWT Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program

## Decision-Maker's Needs Workshop: Setting Monitoring Priorities

### Draft Summary Report

November 16 & 17, 2011

Elk's Hall, Yellowknife

#### Participants:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Applejohn, Andrew	GNWT - ENR
Binder, Richard	Inuvialuit Game Council
Blouin, Stephanie	AANDC - HQ
Cliffe-Phillips, Mark	Wek'eezhii Land and Water Board
Culhane, Michele	AANDC
Davies, Jan	NWT Water Board
Ehrlich, Alan	Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
Fournier, Mike	Environment Canada
Garner, Kerri	Tlicho Government
Grieve, Sheryl	North Slave Metis Alliance
Heron, Tim	NWT Metis Nation
Joudrie, Teresa	AANDC
Kelly, Erin	GNWT - ENR
Kent, Rob	Parks Canada
Kindopp, Rhona	Parks Canada
Koe, Fred	Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board
Lange, Marc	AANDC
Leonard, Deanna	Fisheries and Oceans Canada
McCutchen, Nicole	GNWT - ENR
McMullen, Jane	GNWT - ENR
McNeill, Jason	GNWT - ENR
Mead, Doug	Canadian Association for Petroleum Producers
Nevitt, Zabey	Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board
Racher, Kathy	Wek'eezhii Land and Water Board
Semmler, Mardy	Gwich'in Tribal Council
Snortland, Jody	Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board
Thompson, Amy	Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board
Tsetta, Chief Ted	Yellowknife Dene First Nations

## Welcome, Facilitator Intro

### Workshop Objectives:

- Discuss the NWT Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program’s (CIMP) mandate, role and strategic plan;
- Develop a shared understanding of cumulative impacts, and identify and confirm a set of shared priorities for cumulative impact monitoring for the next five-to-ten years in the NWT; and
- Foster a shared commitment to working collaboratively to improve environmental and cumulative impact monitoring in the NWT.

Facilitated discussion: On the history of CIMP – the good, the bad, and the lessons learned. (*refer to Appendix 1 for presentation*)

### **CIMP mandate, vision, purpose, goals, objectives, outcomes:**

CIMP is a legislative and comprehensive land claim requirement and part of an integral system of land and water management. The scope of CIMP is multi-disciplinary and extends beyond the biophysical world to include socio-economic and cultural components.

It was felt that the role of CIMP, with respect to the big picture, is not well defined. In order for CIMP to be successful, it needs to have clear expectations and must manage them accordingly.

### **Information & data management:**

Part 6 of the MVRMA clearly states that CIMP is to analyze scientific data, Traditional Knowledge and other pertinent information for the purpose of monitoring the cumulative impact on the environment . CIMP currently needs to focus less on collecting data and more on analyzing data, determining cause and effect, and demonstrating environmental trends.

There was a consensus that CIMP-funded projects have not been directly used for decision making. To date, the information collected through CIMP-funded projects has not been consolidated, analyzed or synthesized, and therefore not made readily available to all relevant decision-makers. This was identified as a gap and an area for improvement.

The NWT Discovery Portal (<http://nwtDiscoveryportal.enr.gov.nt.ca>) is a ‘virtual library’ for environmental monitoring knowledge in the NWT and hosts all CIMP-funded projects results and reports. This information management system is not envisioned to be a data warehouse for existing databases – instead, it serves as a gateway to link to other existing data sources.

### **Process for the standardization of protocols**

Usability, accessibility, compatibility and comparability of data and information are essential.

There is a clear need for standardization of data collection and management. However, there was concern among workshop participants regarding developing common protocols for community-based monitoring projects. It was mentioned that there are many ways to collect data on a particular VC. However, for certain metrics, the method of measurement does not need standardization (e.g. there are multiple ways to measure the total length of a fish and each possible way should give you the exact same value). However, metrics that need

---

---

to be measured should be standardized.

The process leading to standardization of protocols involves common approaches and designs. This process is principle based (e.g., using a pathway approach). It is important for CIMP to clearly specifically define what is meant by standardization and what requires standardization. The process of prioritization and ensuring a minimum standard for data collection and management should be described in CIMP's 5-year strategic plan.

**Partnerships and governance:**

Since 1999, CIMP has focused on capacity building and building partnerships through its multi-organization Working Group. CIMP is working on putting in place the mechanisms for solid, true partnership arrangements (e.g., Memorandums of Understanding). It was felt that this is where CIMP could contribute significantly and succeed.

**Monitoring priorities:**

Participants expressed that CIMP's monitoring priorities must reflect the priority needs of decision-makers. It was also noted that priorities should also be based on stressors rather than an individual VC. Essentially, CIMP could be based on finding answers to various questions from decision-makers.

**Request for Proposals (RFP) Funding:**

Since 1999/2000, CIMP has funded approximately 220 monitoring and research projects as well as training and capacity-building projects. With respect to lessons learned, given the number of projects funded, it remains unclear how each project has helped with understanding of cumulative impacts in the north.

Many participants felt that the focus of the RFP should be narrowed by targeting funding initiatives. For each funded project, the issue must be identified, and relative information must be analyzed and synthesized. There is still a great need for projects that focus on capacity development at the community level, with an emphasis on community-based monitoring. Multi-partner proposals should be encouraged, with community based interest monitoring included as a component.

Some workshop participants felt that CIMP should not be funding A-base programs (the mandates of other departments), but it was pointed out that CIMP is meant to fund above and beyond what departments are already doing. The role of universities and how they communicate their findings back to communities was questioned by some members of the group.

Presentation: CIMP Strategic Plan for 2010-2015 – How things are different now.

***Refer to Appendix 2 for presentation.***

Facilitated discussion: Clarifications and thoughts on content of Strategic Plan.

**Strategic plan initial feedback and comments:**

It was noted that AANDC developed a draft 'straw dog' document to help guide discussions on of CIMP's path forward. CIMP staff attempted to release the Strategic Plan at this workshop but have encountered delays in approval. It is anticipated that it will be released in December 2011. This document will be distributed to

---

---

Working Group members for initial input, guidance and feedback. The draft will be revised to incorporate comments from members and a strategy to obtain comments from CIMP stakeholders will be developed and implemented. The aim is to finalize the strategic plan by March 2012 and to submit it to the Minister of the responsible authority AANDC for concurrence/endorsement.

Participants felt the overview of the strategic plan was slightly ambitious, particularly because CIMP is defined as everything to everyone. In addition, the Strategic Plan does not describe who the audience of this exercise are and that cumulative impacts should be better defined and emphasised more. As the Strategic Plan may not meet the needs of everyone, the participants were asked to think about questions they want satisfied. They came up with four questions should be asked:

1. What matters?
2. What are the combined human activities affecting the VC?
3. What is the effect?
4. What can you do?

This brought forward the comment that the Strategic Plan does place communities in the role of decision-makers. Given that what is valuable to communities is also valuable to boards, regulators, agencies and other groups, it led to the question of what is CIMP's role to communities?

Additional comments regarding the strategic plan included:

- the vision statement is incomplete
- the suggestion that RFP funding should shift to longer term targeting
- the creation of a monitoring industry within each community should be emphasized
- common language in approach and training are important,
- information about how to leverage more money from the private sector is missing
- the process of prioritization should be described in the plan and ensure a minimum standard for data collection and management.

---

## Conclusion and review of agenda for Day 2.

---

---

### **DAY 2**

Welcome, Review of Day 1, Outline for Day 2

Presentation: Summary of Results from CIMP Questionnaire on Environmental Monitoring Priorities.

***Refer to Appendix 3 for presentation***

Facilitated Discussion: Validation of information obtained from CIMP Questionnaire.

---

---

## 1. Valued Component & Urgency

The findings of the CIMP questionnaire had a strong biophysical focus and water quality and quantity, fish and fish habitat, and caribou were the biophysical components that communities care about most. Workshop participants stressed that socio-economic/cultural and cumulative cultural impacts are extremely important, however, they were not represented in the results. The group speculated that results were skewed by current mandates of organizations and the fact that not all invited parties completed the survey.

In terms of setting CIMP priorities, it was recommended that the program have a more narrow focus; doing a smaller number of things exceptionally well would result in a more successful program. It was suggested that increasing communities' involvement in monitoring be the first target. The group also discussed the goal of having a more holistic view, combining scientific and community based monitoring, focussing on caribou which relies on water, vegetation, etc.

Concern was expressed regarding the outline of VC priorities from the questionnaire. It was felt that instead of prioritizing VCs, CIMP needs to link them together. Another approach could be to establish priorities based on categories such as geographically based, VC based, cumulative impact based or community-based.

## 2. Areas of Focus

*Discussed later in the session.*

## 3. Information Gaps

### 3.1 Theme: Baseline information

The group felt that for the most part with the group themes of information gaps. Again, it was noted again that the results of the questionnaire showed that the biophysical issues were identified more often than socioeconomic issues and in order to understand cumulative impacts on a VC, it is essential to have socioeconomic information. It was noted that the questionnaire was not distributed to social scientists.

Overall, information gaps could be grouped together, for example, the “what” could be: Baseline Information, Thresholds, Impacts of Development, Climate Change, and Community Well-being and the “how” could consist of: Methods & Approaches to Assessment and Geospatial Information. CIMP requires all of these components in order to be successful.

It was also noted that understanding the interactions between/among VCs is missing and that this is an important information gaps to fill.

### 3.2 Thresholds:

It was mentioned that understanding thresholds for environmental impacts on cultural change and community well-being is a gap that may not have been identified in the questionnaire.

### 3.3 Impacts of Development

There is a need to better define what “Impacts of Development” includes.

CIMP has a responsibility to contact all of the organizations, and regulatory and management boards to validate priorities. Participants suggested there is a need to get a better understanding on human activities and

---

---

development (e.g., what changes are occurring on the landscape?). Questions that need to be consistently asked are:

- What is the potential and degree of impact on the natural and socioeconomic environment?
- What baseline information is needed?
- What are the risks?

### 3.4 Methods / Assessment Approach

Process development is extremely important, but solutions might not come from the workshop participants. Some felt that the geographical scope, which includes all of NWT is too vast. It was suggested that departments need to begin asking the same questions. The current scope and breadth of the questions making it difficult to make decisions.

The group was reminded of the legislated mandate of CIMP and the scope of CIMP resources. The key criteria that would help the program to evaluate priorities must be identified and to determine gaps, data collected through the program should be further analysed.

*3.5-.3.7 were not discussed in detail due to time constraints*

Facilitated Discussion continued: Validation of information obtained from CIMP Questionnaire.

What are the monitoring priorities for the next 5 years?

Erin Kelly, GNWT-ENR

- Industrial development within watershed upstream along the Slave
- Can you drink the water? Can you eat the fish? What about in the future?
- VC: water, vegetation, wildlife, etc.

Mardy Semmler, Gwich'in Tribal Council

- Need to look at the big picture, the NWT as a whole – what is happening historically and presently
- GIS information of all permitted land and water uses – how can we measure past, present, future developments impacts without information? Historical map with present and proposed activities.
- Transboundary issues/impacts. Water from Yukon and Alberta (Peel Watershed and Mackenzie River basin)

Fred Koe, Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board

- Water quality due to exploration and development from the south and development in Yukon.
- Proposed Mackenzie highway and pipeline –baseline data needed.

AANDC Water Resources

- Upstream development outside of NWT – Slave River, forestry pulp mills, mines, etc. Impacts are not very well defined because baseline data is missing. Need baseline water quality data.

Zabey Nevitt, MVLWB

- Development (highway and pipeline) impacts on wildlife and people
-

- 
- Impacts on caribou by existing and new development
  - Water quality

Deanna Leonard, DFO

- Cumulative effects on fish habitat (water quality) how these variables interact on fish population in Great Slave Lake.
- How development impacts fish habitat.

Jane McMullen, GNWT-ENR

- What you can't see (e.g. air contaminants) goes into your mouth either through water, caribou, fish, etc.
- Linking across scales (communities, populations, individuals, organisms).
- Pick a couple of geographical areas – pilot area – to key in on the interactions.

Mark Cliffe-Phillips, WLWB

- Development impacts on caribou (e.g. increased access to caribou because of the development of roads).
- Watershed approach to the impacts
- No huge influence from external watersheds – so most of the impacts come from within the management area – e.g., Lac de Gras and Marion lake watershed – mining is the main impact.
- Water quality VC

Alan Ehrlich, MVEIRB

- Impacts on traditional lifestyle/practices/transmission of culture across generations from human activities (e.g., a reduced amount of preferred areas in which to practice their traditional activities).
- Specifically – examine industrial activity (exploration, other) and recreational access on the loss of culture
- Drybones Bay, Thelon, cultural sites along the Mackenzie River

Richard Binder Inuvialuit Game Council

- Impact on communities by all levels of government – many demands on the communities and the communities don't have the capacity to deal with all of the demands.
- How do you do monitoring of cumulative impacts with respect to capacity building within the community.
- Equip the communities with the knowledge they need to inform decision-makers

Doug Mead, CAPP

- Water will always be a VC that is influenced by any kind of development
- Effects on water from all petroleum O&G activities
- Sedimentary basins – Mackenzie River

Rob Kent, Parks Canada

- Water quality in the south Nahanni watershed from development outside the park

Jan Davies, NWT Water Board

- Support water quality monitoring for cumulative impact e.g., the Mackenzie River
-

- 
- Support territory wide knowledge
  - Landfills – leachates and contaminated soils, understanding the physics and chemistry of active layers in continuous and discontinuous permafrost
  - Waste facilities and their impact on water quality

Sheryl Grieve, North Slave Metis Alliance

- Understanding cultural communities and their interaction with the environment
- Vulnerability of communities – ability to survive, compete
- Community wellness – people’s relationship with each other and their land
- Demographic change, inequitable distribution among groups
- Cultural survival and existence is at risk

Tim Heron: Metis Nation

- Water quality and quantity: is the water safe to drink, are the fish healthy?
- Must look at things in a holistic way – if you don’t have healthy water, everything else is affected, including communities.
- Geographic region of interest: Slave River, Mackenzie River

Amy Thompson, Gwich’in Renewable Resource Board

- What are the impacts of development on wildlife populations?
- Distribution/expansion of wildlife population in different areas and their impact on other species – linked to climate change
- Otters have move into the Rat River where dolly varden and char inhabit – what is the distribution and prey selection of otters, how do otters influence the fish population?
- Impact of climate change on polar bears in the Gwich’in Settlement Area.

Jody Snortland, Wek’eezhii Renewable Resources Board

- Wildlife – caribou is of top priority but so are other species at risk
- Vegetation, forest (i.e., wildlife habitat) – development, natural disturbances (e.g., wildfire) need to be mapped in GIS.
- If you don’t have community and scientific input, the decisions at the end of the day are lacking.

Kerri Garner – Tlicho Government

- Bathurst caribou herd – entire range - impact of development on caribou – impact of roads associated with development, increased access, etc.
- Impact of development on caribou, traditional lifestyles, and community health and wellness.

**Next Steps: How and when will this information be used going forward?**

The Top “What” (i.e., VCs) were:

- Water quality and quantity
  - Wildlife – specifically caribou
  - Fish and fish habitat
  - People/communities
-

---

The top “Where” questions were:

- Mackenzie River, Peel basin
- Slave River at Alberta border
- Great Slave Lake
- Beaufort Sea
- Lac de Gras
- Communities
- Range of Bathurst caribou herd

Marc Lange discussed the steps the NWT CIMP will be taking, following the Decision Makers’ Workshop. A Needs Assessment will be conducted, including a gap analysis and interviews will be sent to some of the workshop participants. The Needs Assessment report will be completed by the fiscal year end. Due to the planned release in December, the Program’s Request For Proposals, some decisions will be made before the needs assessment report is completed. In particular, based on the group’s expressed interest, the RFP will continue to focus on community capacity building. Overall, the RFP will be revised so that it is more focused and better reflects the needs of decision makers.

Other items being addressed by NWT CIMP:

- A blueprint for this year will be drafted and circulated for comment
  - Quarterly working group meeting is coming up
  - Continue to strengthen partnerships, increase coordination with other organizations, and reduce redundancy
  - Work on compiling information on existing stressors and stressor indicators
-