

Memorandum 2/11/2018

KNO12: Ideas for Enhancing Effective Communication and Outreach for Subsistence Based Households in Western Alaska: What We Learned from Alaska Native Women

This memo provides a summary of reports submitted on the session KNO12 organized at the Arctic Biodiversity Session in Rovaniemi, Finland, October 9-12 organized by the Alaska Climate Resiliency Project.

Attendance: 10

Arctic Biodiversity Assessment recommendation themes most prominently addressed in the session:

- Improving knowledge and public awareness

Key points raised in the session that were important to note:

- Questions were asked such as:
 - How to effectively reach out to women for increased involvement in Arctic programs.
 - How to include Elders in public sessions when only limited time allowed (like three minutes).
 - Are there others who can more effectively bridge communication between scientists and local people, such as local expert.
- Often women and scientists come to the same conclusion although from different knowledge sources.
- Contributions of women to understanding the changing climate comes from their unique positionality and knowledge.
- Starting from local knowledge points might yield new insights.
- Using language that is accessible, conversations which are engaging and face to face is key for successful outreach.
- Understanding traditional values, cultural practices and how science fits in supporting if not strengthening is a good starting place.

Recommendations/actions identified for how to deal with the issues raised in the session:

- Build relationships for local communication and outreach including bringing Elders into the outreach. Start with those you have the best relationship first when working with a community; have a cultural supervisor/mentor from the community who can review and guide your approach/outreach.
- Language is very important, both in terms of using interpreters as well as using words which are accessible and visuals which are engaging.
- Identify local people who can bridge the communication between scientists and the community
- For Elders wanting to submit ideas in public forum with time limits, provide Elders with opportunities to discuss ideas with a knowledgeable person ahead of time who can then synthesize their ideas and have them presented within time limit.

- Ensure those going to the villages not only go to the hubs because people in every village has their own thoughts or ideas.
- Visitors need to stay a little longer in the village to see if there are any questions.
- Follow up to see if any more questions or comments were brought up after visit

Take home message from the session:

- Participants were very interested in how to bring local people into climate change work including outreach and communications; and for some, women in particular.
- Local people not only have a unique position, from which to observe and experience climate change they additionally have insights into adaptation and resiliency.
- Science and traditional knowledge, practices and culture, working together lead to stronger responses to climate change and more resilient positioning.