



Billy Day , Environment

Inuit, Inuvialuit, NT □□

The Northern landscape has always been central to the long life of Billy Day. The Inuvialuit Elder, born in the 1930s in the Mackenzie Delta, Northwest Territories, still calls that region home and serves as an engaging ambassador for the protection of the natural environment of his home and his people.

After 14 years working with the Government of Canada, Billy moved his family back to the land to live a traditional life of hunting, trapping, fishing and whaling. During the 1970s, he became involved with the negotiations for the Inuvialuit Final Agreement and was the last President of the Committee for Original People's Entitlement (COPE), established to protect the Aboriginal community's cultural and political rights and to protect their lands.

The Inuvialuit Final Agreement came into effect in 1984 and since that time Billy has worked tirelessly to promote the goals of that agreement: to preserve Inuvialuit cultural identity and values within a changing northern society; to enable Inuvialuit to be equal and meaningful participants in the northern and national economy; and to protect and preserve the Arctic wildlife, environment and biological productivity.

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Billy's achievements and beneficial impact have not been confined to the Northwest Territories. Throughout his life, Billy has been an effective ambassador not only for the Inuvialuit but for all Inuit. In 1996 he actively participated in a meeting in California that resulted in the founding of the World Council of Whalers. He has been particularly active in promoting the value of country food consumption and dealing with the contaminants issue from an Arctic perspective.

Billy has been a consistent and persuasive advocate for the conservation of fish and marine mammals, the protection of land and water, and the use of traditional knowledge in achieving these goals.