

Activity Report 1999-00

Field Programs

The Committee was active in numerous monitoring and research activities during 1999-00. The third year of a 3-year project to evaluate the state of the important cisco and herring populations in the vicinity of Tuktoyaktuk was completed. A final report is in preparation. Char monitoring was carried out at Holman, Paulatuk and Shingle Point. Community-based charr fishing plans that depend upon the monitoring information have been implemented for the Hornaday and Kuujjua Rivers near Paulatuk and Holman respectively.

The Committee provided support for the first year of satellite telemetry program to monitor the movements of ringed seals that were tagged in the vicinity of Holman. It also worked with DFO and representatives of the Gwich'in and Sahtu Renewable Resource Management Boards to develop an integrated fishery management plan for inconnu. Since the quality of country foods continues to be a significant concern in the communities but information related to contaminants is often not accessible, the Committee retained an independent

consultant to gather and collate all information related to contaminants in fish and marine mammals from studies carried out in or near the Settlement Region.

In co-operation with the HTC's, the Committee continued to sponsor the beluga harvest-monitoring program. Whale monitors employed by HTC's are stationed in each of the active whaling camps within the ISR. They collect biological information from each whale harvested. Committee staff provided program and logistic support, co-ordinated the collection of any special samples, and collated all data.

Student Mentoring

With the goal of increasing the number of beneficiaries involved in the technical aspects of fish and marine mammal management, the Committee continued its Student Mentoring Program. With support of Department staff, both in Inuvik and Winnipeg, and with financial assistance from the Brighter Futures program, four high school students participated in office and field projects in the Inuvik and Aklavik areas.

Beaufort Sea 2000

In mid-September the

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Committee's long-planned Beaufort Sea Conference 2000 took place in Inuvik. Three and a half days of workshops and presentation sessions brought elders, school students and HTC reps from the region together with scientists and managers from across Canada and as far away as Japan to focus on the major issues facing the Canadian Beaufort Sea during the next decade. Co-sponsored by the Fisheries Joint Management Committee, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Arctic Institute of North America and the Aurora Research Institute, the conference



From Left, Robert Bell, Burton Ayles, Billy Day, Max Kotokak Sr., and Don Dowler

provided a forum where 150 delegates, more than half of whom were from the six communities of the Settlement Region met to explore a variety of issues ranging from the effectiveness of co-management, and the application of new technologies such as satellite telemetry to consideration of new tools for managing human impacts on ocean resources. "It was a tremendously successful conference" said conference chair

Don Dowler. "I don't recall a session where the level of participation of community people, and especially students and elders, was so high." In his closing remarks to the participants, recently appointed chair of the Canadian Polar Commission, Michael Robinson, noted that the co-management model that has been developed and refined in the western Arctic is a model for the rest of the world, and is now being applied to resource management conflicts from Africa to New Zealand.

Beluga Whale Agreement

Finally in March the Committee participated in the signing of the user-based Inuvialuit-Inupiat Beluga Whale Agreement. Under discussion for nearly ten years and patterned after a highly successful polar bear agreement, the document commits the signatories to share harvest information, cooperate on research and management studies, share traditional and practical knowledge related to harvesting, and in general take a cooperative approach to their interactions with Eastern Beaufort Sea stock of beluga whales.