

Tradition-based shelters and food security

BELOW: Nancy (left) with
school counsellor Darlene in
front of the neen khan built
with students the previous
year



Dr. Nancy Mackin

September 25 2018 Webinar
presentation for Climate Change
and Health Adaptation Program

www.mackinportfolio.com



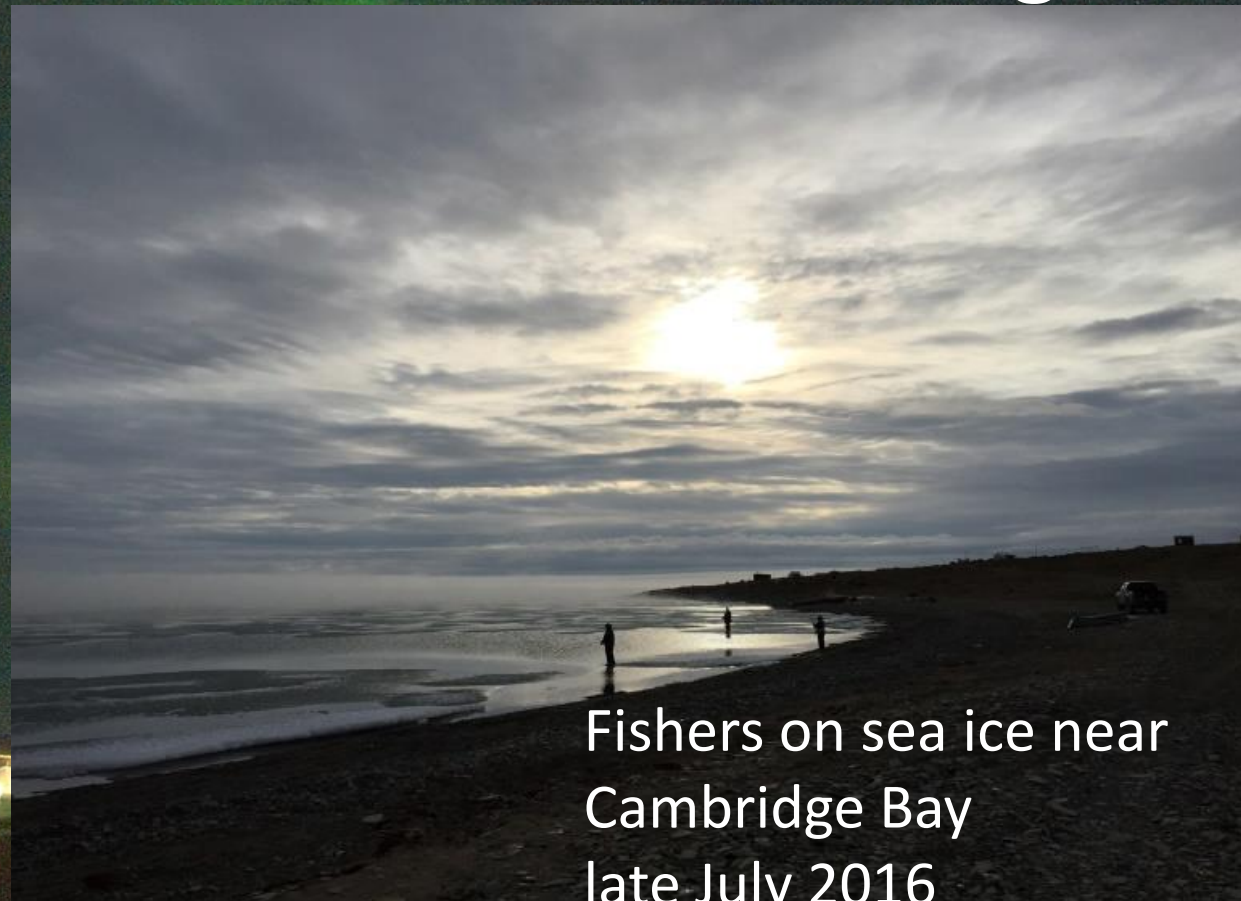
Cost of store-bought food increases as you move into remote communities

In remote regions of the north, Indigenous knowledge of shelter building helps sustain the supply of country foods

Below: willow frame shelter we built in 2016 with
students and Inuit and Gwich'in knowledge-holders



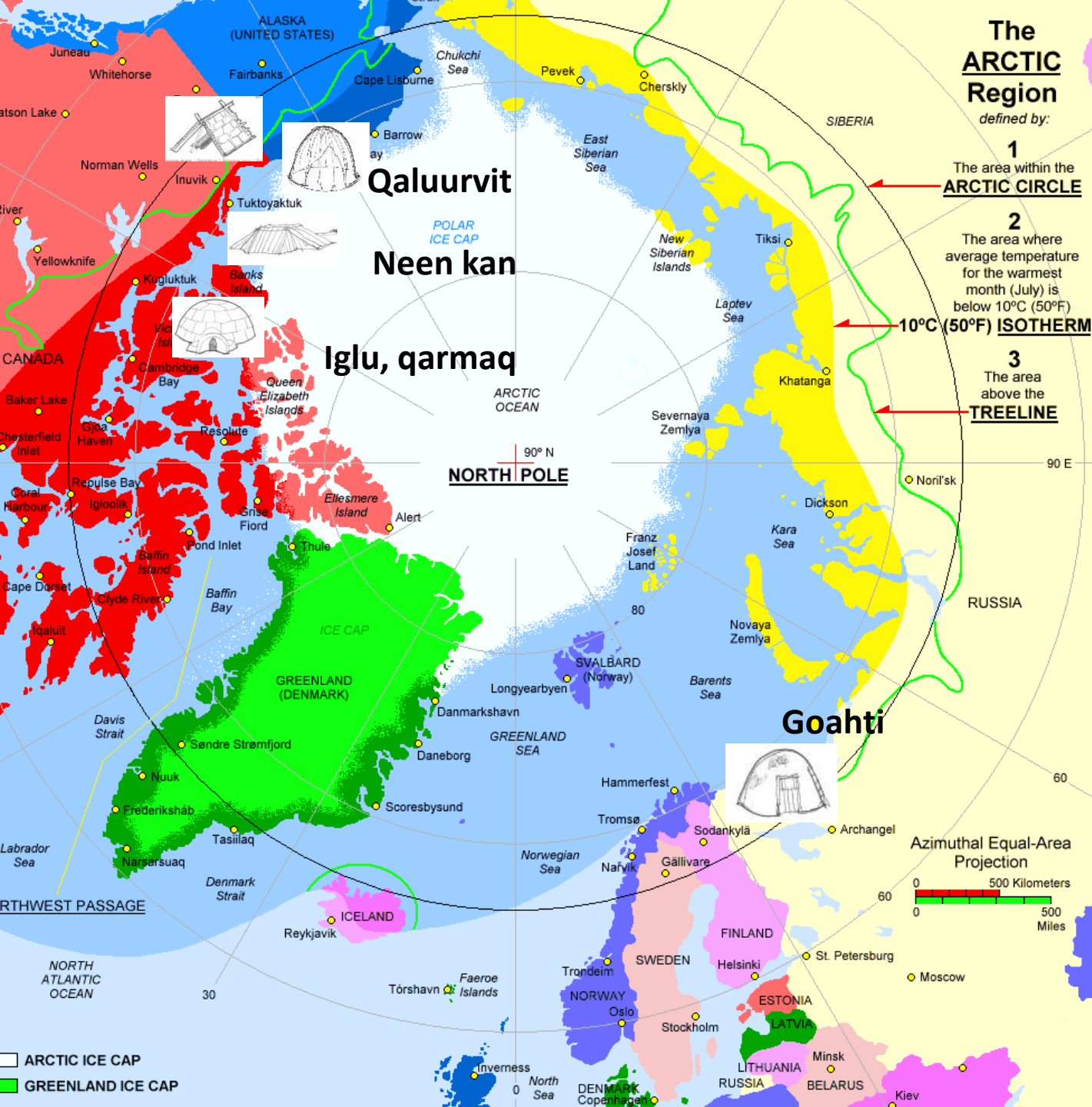
Climate change melts sea ice, worsens
sudden storms: harvesters may
become stranded and have to stay
overnight



Fishers on sea ice near
Cambridge Bay
late July 2016

**Inukshuk
commemorating 4
Japanese hunters who
lost their lives in a
storm**

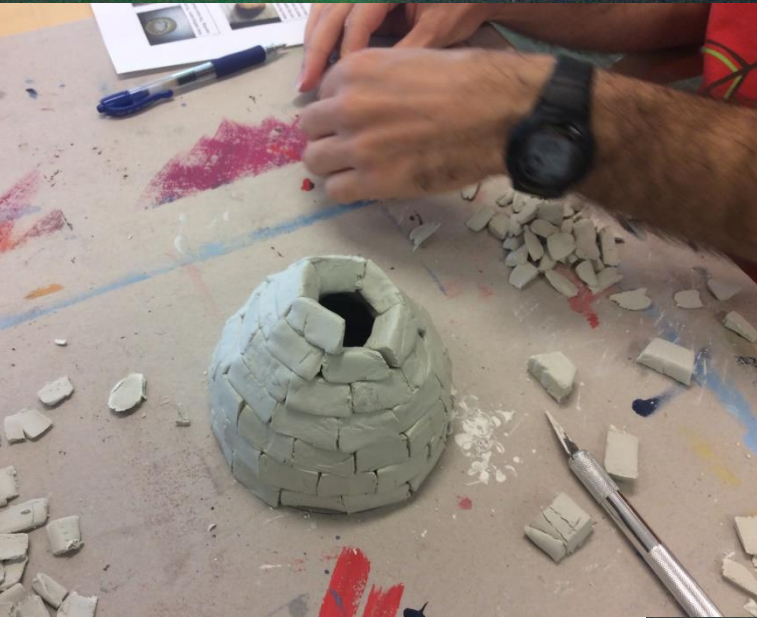




community reconstructions of tradition-based food harvesting shelters over about 5 years funded by CCHAP



Method for shelter reconstructions



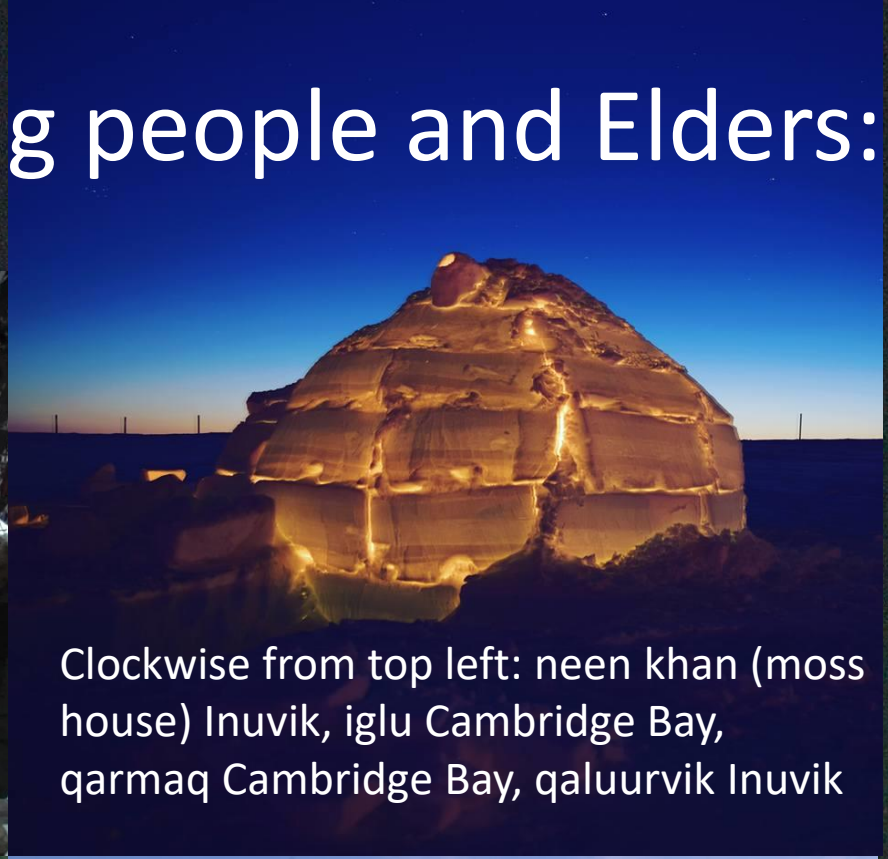
- Teaching by Elders
- Archival materials
- Involve students in Models and Reconstructions
- Community gatherings



People of all ages participated in the reconstructions



Shelters built with young people and Elders:



Clockwise from top left: neen khan (moss house) Inuvik, iglu Cambridge Bay, qarmaq Cambridge Bay, qaluurvik Inuvik



2 Videos:

Qaluurvik construction

Inuvik NWT with research in Aklavik

Idea: these birch-frame shelters are as useful now as in the past: fishers like them as ice fishing shelter

Iglu and qarmaq reconstruction

Cambridge Bay NU

Idea: knowledge-holders' skills essential: iglus are a catenary dome, an exact mathematical form made by a carefully constructed spiral of snow blocks tested for consistency

<http://www.mackinportfolio.com/research-teaching-ethnoecology/>





reconstruction of willow-framed qaluurvik with Inuit and Gwich'in students, knowledge-holders



NWT Nan kahn or “moss house”

- Part of a lasting network of shelters for food harvesters
- Easy to build, lasts for years
- Moss grows together to form a waterproof layer that also insulates

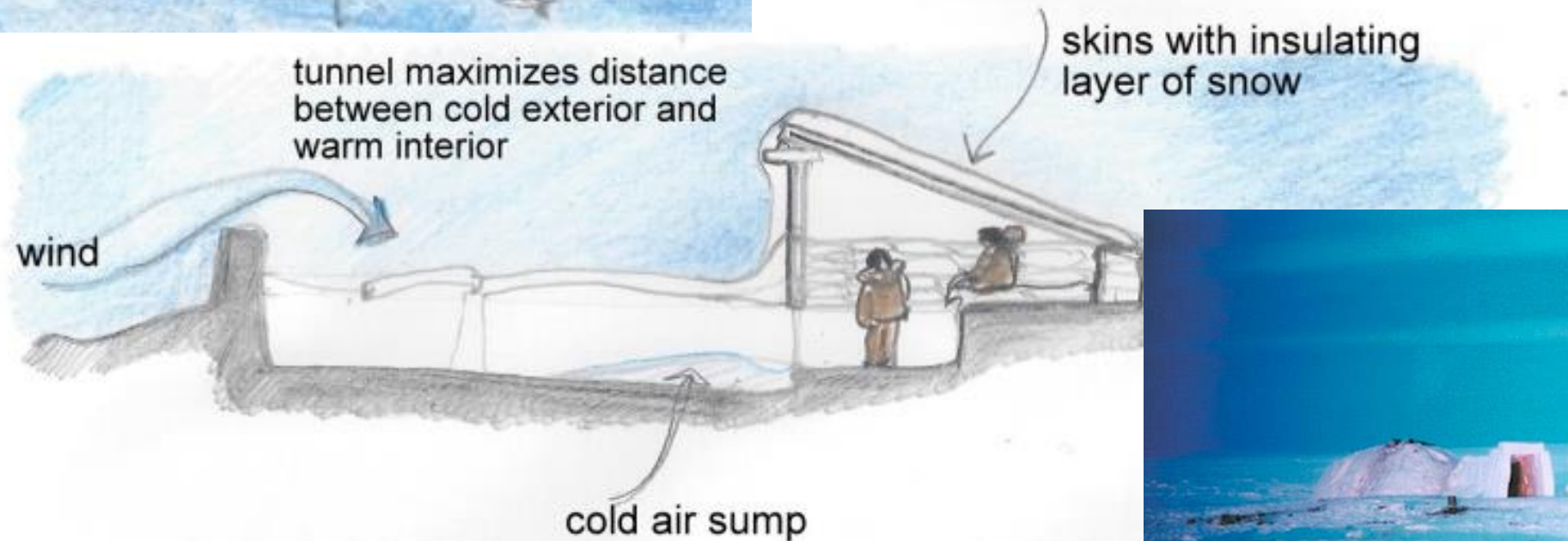


Applications: the future

tradition-based shelters improve
modern food harvesting,
knowledge-sharing



Above and below: modern adaptations
of tradition-based knowledge for food
harvesting



Take home ideas shelters and food security

- Shelters made from available materials help food harvesters survive, now as in the past
- Reconstructions provide opportunities for Knowledge-holders share their wisdom about food and shelters
- Harvesting shelter materials can enhance food supply eg willow harvesting improves sunlight for berry plants
- Inspire northern young people to become applied scientists in food and architecture



Quana/ Mahsi!

- Climate Change and Health Adaptation Program
- Knowledge-holders Persis Gruben, Emily Angulilak, Willie Simon, Alestine Andre, Mabel English
- Kitikmeot Heritage Society, Arctic College, Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute
- Dennis Allen, Inuvialuit videographer and knowledge-holder; Roy Goose photographer
- Webinar organizers and hosts
- You for attending this webinar

