

- 1) Régis Simard – *Vers un planification intégrée du développement des territoires nordiques* – James Bay Joint Action Mining Committee (TJCM).
- 2) Martin Pelletier – *Bilan de la recherche*, Cree-Québec Forestry Board – QCFB;
- 3) Graeme Morin – *Public Participation in the Section 22 JBNQA Assessment and Review Procedure* – JBACE;
- 4) Evert Nieboer – *Multi-community Environment-and-Health Study* – McMaster University;
- 5) Johanne Morasse – *Gestion intégrée des ressources et du territoire* – Regional Land and Natural Resource Commission for James Bay (CRRNT-BJ);
- 6) Marie-Ève Gosselin and Mireille Gravel – *Review of FaunENord's activities in the JBT since 2001* – FaunENord;
- 7) Nicole Fenton – *UQAT in Eeyou Istchee James Bay: Developing knowledge and human and natural resources* – UQAT;
- 8) Colin Scott – *Research needs for environmental protection in the Tawich coastal zone* – McGill University;
- 9) José Gérin-Lajoie – *Knowledge acquisition in collaboration with northern communities* – Centre for Northern Studies (CNS).

The purpose of these short presentations was to familiarize participants with the presenters' work in relation to the workshop objectives with a view to defining an initial contextual platform for the ensuing discussions. The participants had received a discussion support document prior to the workshop to suggest avenues for reflection (see Appendix to these proceedings).

The presentations were followed by a 30-minute plenary session during which the facilitator, Catherine Lussier, gave a brief overview of each of the four issues to be discussed, namely:

- **Issue 1:** Constraints on acquisition of knowledge and its dissemination in non-technical language.
- **Issue 2:** Transparency and confidentiality: issues related to information sharing, especially local and traditional knowledge.
- **Issue 3:** Reinforcing analytical capacity (empowerment) within communities and organizations in the Territory.
- **Issue 4:** Establishment of an information management system (database) or knowledge-acquisition program.

The first two hours in the afternoon were devoted to group discussions. Participants broke up into four sub-groups, with each one addressing topics relating to one of the four issues, using the discussion support document for guidance.

- **Issue 1 sub-group:** Identification of the principal constraints and possible solutions.

- **Issue 2 sub-group:** Identification of the consequences of each aspect of the transparency/confidentiality paradox and possible compromises.
- **Issue 3 sub-group:** Identification of the objectives and the available resources (tools, budgets, human resources).
- **Issue 4 sub-group:** Identification of the types of information to be managed/disseminated; the goals of creating a system; existing examples or similar cases/needs.

The spokespersons for the sub-groups gave the results of their respective discussions, following which the issue concerned was discussed by the whole group.

The second day began with an opening prayer, followed by remarks by Jean Picard, who outlined the results of the discussions and the issues addressed.

The rest of the morning was spent determining the procedure for creating the database and, in particular, the required financial and human resources.

The workshop ended with a roundtable to allow each participant to express his or her opinion on the purpose of the exercise. Some also shared their views on how the defined objectives could be achieved. Mr. Voyageur thanked the participants and Mr. Coon delivered the closing prayer. Afterwards, the participants were invited to take part in a traditional Cree meal and go on a guided tour of Murray's Lodge, a Cree cultural camp. Activities ended at 3:00 p.m.

RESULTS OF DISCUSSIONS BY ISSUE

The workshop enabled a rich exchange of ideas and discussions through presentations, plenary sessions and focus groups. The content of the discussions on each of the four major themes is summarized below. The issues identified and discussed are first presented, followed by the proposed solutions.

ISSUE 1	CONSTRAINTS ON ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE AND ITS DISSEMINATION IN NON-TECHNICAL LANGUAGE
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The participants were invited to brainstorm on the constraints on the acquisition of knowledge about the Territory based on the following four questions:

- a. What type of knowledge are we referring to? (Distinguish between environmental and social aspects.)
- b. What are the constraints and requirements related to acquisition of information derived from local knowledge and knowledge known as ecological, traditional or Aboriginal knowledge?
- c. What are the factors (arising from the environment or the assessment process) that hinder the acquisition of knowledge?

- d. What are the consequences of the scattered nature of the existing knowledge, data and studies on the northern environment?

Issues and challenges identified:

- University researchers do not always have the training needed to communicate with the community in an appropriate manner, particularly when it comes to transferring knowledge. The challenge consists in communicating information in non-technical language, a crucial factor in the social acceptability of projects.
- Time constraints related to the type of project concerned make it difficult for researchers as well as developers or stakeholders to enter into genuine dialogue with the local community. However, everyone involved needs targeted and appropriate support in order to build and maintain this kind of relationship. Time constraints remain a constant hurdle, though.
- The Crees seek advice from Elders and their institutions, whom they trust. Because they do not have the same relationship of trust with outside researchers, they keep them at arm's length.
- Cree knowledge and concerns are poorly understood and neither effectively disseminated nor effectively incorporated into research. Research does not take the Cree reality or perspective into account.
- There are legislative restrictions on the acquisition, quantity, quality and extent of information available to the public.
- The political implications of research, i.e. the credibility, independence and ownership of data, are an obstacle that cannot be overlooked.
- Too often, research is private research conducted under the auspices of the developers.
- The confidential nature of certain data – especially data on use and occupancy of the territory – can be an impediment to the dissemination of sensitive information.
- The “incorporation” of Cree traditional knowledge into impact assessment – often an actual requirement – is not enough to guarantee that the inherent value of traditional knowledge is truly taken into account.
- Stakeholders and the public at large often have a hard time understanding scientific data.

Solutions:

- For Cree concerns and knowledge to be truly taken into consideration, mechanisms and procedures must be developed to help build stronger bonds of trust and mutual respect in the long term, as well as facilitate Cree participation and the development of research partnerships with Cree communities. In setting up a network of knowledge sharing, it will be important to avoid re-creating the typical opposition existing in the North between traditional knowledge and scientific knowledge and between Jamesians and Crees. The new network should place emphasis on collaboration to ensure a genuine interface between research, the territory's inhabitants and traditional knowledge.

- It is not enough to just include traditional or local knowledge in research reports. Traditional and local knowledge must be treated as more than just descriptors of the Cree way of life providing historical information or observations that are useful for comparison purposes. Cree knowledge must be seen as an integral part of assessment, which is why it is important to build long-term partnership relationships.
- A first step in setting up the knowledge-sharing network would be to identify the respective interests and goals of the players in a network that will provide an interface between researchers, consultants, stakeholders and community members. In other words: What is the goal of knowledge acquisition for each player?
- Creating a database managed by a designated body could facilitate information sharing. Protocols governing private or confidential data could be established. Such a database would also make it possible to target players/bodies for specific research projects and detect/avoid duplication and overlapping.
- The new Cree governance structure could eventually play a key role in the creation of the knowledge-sharing network.
- Everyone involved in the knowledge-sharing network must strive to adhere to each other's objectives such that all players benefit in the long term. In this regard, it will be in the developers' interest to get involved in a network that will greatly contribute to ensuring the social acceptability of their projects.
- Consolidated regional funding is crucial to setting up and maintaining a centralized data transfer and dissemination system. Public funds should automatically be set aside by the bodies responsible for resource development in the territory. Industry – such as in the forest sector – could also be approached to help fund research with the support of government grants.
- Since it is impossible for all academic stakeholders to develop long-term relationships with Aboriginal communities, the information exchange system could serve as an interface between researchers, the public and communities.
- Information, its format and the communication tools must be tailored to the target populations. More specifically, using non-technical language should be the preferred tool for transferring knowledge.
- Inspiration can be drawn from the participation initiatives and mechanisms put forward by Hydro-Québec in its monitoring and follow-up programs for the Rupert diversion project.
- Consideration should be given to using local media (radio and publications) and new networking technologies to facilitate Cree engagement and involvement, and to disseminate information.
- For the information management and exchange system, a list should be drawn up containing the names of people to contact in the communities and at the regional level for all aspects related to information gathering and exchange.

ISSUE 2

TRANSPARENCY AND CONFIDENTIALITY: ISSUES RELATED TO INFORMATION SHARING,
ESPECIALLY LOCAL AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Participants were invited to discuss this issue by drawing on the following questions:

- a. What are the constraints related to the confidential nature of the information acquired from sources such as holders of local knowledge?
- b. Is it possible to characterize these data and the criteria used to determine whether they are confidential?
- c. How can we facilitate access to information and scientific and/or local data produced in the context of impact assessments without jeopardizing their confidential nature?
- d. What are the transparency constraints related to proponents of development projects? Is access to such information an issue?
- e. What regulation or guidelines exist in this area?
- f. What are the constraints or deficiencies related to the enhancement of local knowledge (i.e. confidentiality versus conservation issues)?

Issues and challenges identified:

- Obtaining digital data is not obvious in a culture based on a strong oral tradition. This is an obstacle.
- The Crees need to be reassured about the use of information they provide and, in particular, the protection of sites they do not want made public.
- Even though Cree communities have been the subject of many studies, they are often unaware of the existence and content of these studies, much less the results.
- The Crees need to trust that the data collected from them will be respected and will not be disclosed without their consent.

Solutions:

- If we want to create a knowledge network and a collaborative system for joint knowledge production, researchers and the Crees will need to understand each other. It will be a learning experience for both parties. For example, the reasons why specific quantitative data are needed for a specific research project (e.g. to protect species of special interest) must be explained to the Crees.
- Adapted research protocols that define the needs and terms of reference for the research must be developed.
- It will be important to define agreements with research groups to determine the type of data (specific or general) to be disclosed.
- We need to avoid disclosing raw data, as they are not of public interest.

- To ensure that information gets back to the communities, research protocols must include the requirement to conduct follow-up activities. Follow-up with the communities should be standard practice.
- Future research protocols should provide for translation of research findings into English and summaries of the research in Cree.
- The database could be just one aspect of the knowledge network, but all summaries, abstracts and metadata should be available on the future network.
- We need to consider the human resources required to maintain, organize and disseminate the information generated in the database.

<p>ISSUE 3 REINFORCING ANALYTICAL CAPACITIES (EMPOWERMENT) WITHIN COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS IN THE TERRITORY.</p>
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The following general questions were designed to fuel discussion of this issue:

- a. What are the constraints related to strengthening the analytical capabilities of the communities and the entities in the Territory to improve the use of existing data?
- b. Do the communities lack human resources who are adequately prepared for the task?
- c. How can we describe the relationship between researchers who are involved in environmental assessment and the communities?

Issues and challenges identified:

- The Crees are generally poorly informed about the research conducted in the territory.
- Consequently, they are unable to use the knowledge generated to improve their own abilities to control or manage development in the territory.
- Research projects are too often designed elsewhere than in the communities and this top-down approach creates problems, including in the appropriation of the knowledge generated.
- Cree traditional knowledge is challenged by climate change, diminishing their power over their environment. The Crees are no longer protected by their knowledge; they have to get to know the land all over again.

Solutions:

- It was suggested that training be provided directly in the communities so that members can acquire the skills needed to generate information themselves and take action based on the data obtained through the research (e.g. water quality monitoring techniques).
- Emphasis should be placed on the co-production of research, so that all parties benefit from the knowledge acquired. Co-production of research is contingent on a certain degree of exchange and sharing, and this philosophy should be explicit in all material produced for or arising from the network.
- Field researchers working in Cree territory should explain the advantages of participating in the research to the Crees, in a clear and simple manner using words that are easy to understand and in a way that encourages the Crees to participate.
- Greater focus should be placed on the empowerment that knowledge acquisition and sharing brings. Both parties gain when Crees participate as partners in the different stages of research. In return, the Crees help researchers by sharing their knowledge with them.

- Research issues must come from the communities.
- Health research is a good example: projects must be approved and the academic community takes ethical issues very seriously.
- Draw on the example of the Centre for Northern Studies, which works closely with Cree communities.
- In order for skills and knowledge to be passed on, partnerships must be built, the way Elders do with their community.

ISSUE 4	ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (DATABASE) OR KNOWLEDGE-ACQUISITION PROGRAM
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This issue entailed the biggest and least-known challenges. Discussions were fuelled by the following questions:

- a. What has been done thus far in terms of a concerted effort to acquire, pool, and disseminate knowledge on the Territory?
 - Examples of related efforts: CRA, JBACE, WCMF, CRDI, Chisasibi Research Centre, universities, etc.
 - Experience gained in other contexts (Aboriginal bodies, other provinces, other countries, etc.)
 - Under the new governance agreement
- b. What could be the institutional form of such a program?
 - What would be an adequate scope to ensure the feasibility and sustainability of such a project?
 - What types of structure, management, and authority are possible?
 - Can the requirements and specifications of such a program be formalized with definitions of its terms and actors (roles, responsibilities, protocols, code of ethics, head office, financing, partnership type, specifications, etc.)?
- c. What initiatives should be considered to promote the creation of a database containing information collected for impact assessments?
 - What types of data should be brought together within this structure?

Issues and challenges identified:

- One of the first challenges is to find ways to convince researchers and consultants to share their research findings with the communities, especially if they're the ones who fund the studies and are sensitive to the dissemination of data they believe they "own."
- Another challenge is to find the proper host for the proposed management system. Who will be responsible for maintaining and updating the network or portal? Could the new Cree governance structure play a role?
- What type of structure should be considered for the database/knowledge network/portal?
- Who will be the partners involved in setting up and maintaining the network/portal?

- Where will the funding come from? And how can we ensure long-term funding?

Solutions:

- Research protocols should contain directives or guidelines for research conducted in the James Bay Territory so as to reassure communities that projects will be conducted in a way that respects the Crees and that researchers will come back and present their research findings to the communities. One way to do this would be through a system of research permits.
- Following in the footsteps of Nunavut, a research form should be devised and automatically be completed for every research project undertaken in the Territory, before the project begins, in order to outline the project being contemplated.
- The information management system (database) must cover all past, current and future research initiatives and projects in the James Bay Territory. The first step should be to compile existing information.
- The information management system must have a policy on information sharing to prevent system abuses, but the public must have access to the metadata contained in the database. Sensitive and raw data could be made available on request, with the informant's consent. A request form could be developed and included in the software.
- The entity responsible for the information management system should have a long-term outlook as well as a stable funding source. It must also make sure that the data managers have proper training and know how to build relationships with the communities.

POST-PLENARY AND ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Jean Picard gave an overview of all the discussions and identified the points of consensus:

- The participants agreed on the need for greater coordination between researchers, transparency and accountability to the communities.
- Knowledge and skills sharing demand a long-term relationship built on trust.
- The Crees stressed to their special relationship to the environment and the land. They want to take part, be stakeholders, in research.
- Protocols are needed to set out the terms and conditions of research conducted in the Territory and communication with the communities. The protocols should contain guidance for the development of participatory research adapted to the Cree context, in particular as regards research needs and questions expressed by the communities.
- More multiple-topic research is needed at the regional level.

The ensuing discussions addressed some of the topics discussed by the sub-groups and dealt with substantive issues related to the objectives of the workshop. Below is a summary of some of those issues.

The Cree point of view

Mr. Coon used two autobiographical accounts to illustrate the Crees' attachment to the beauty of the land they've known and travelled their whole lives. He reminded those present of the importance of involving the Cree people in the development of projects in order to protect and guarantee the continuation of traditional activities and the integrity of the land for the benefit of future generations.

To avoid a situation where each party works independently, a common access-to-information structure needs to be established. Deficiencies in this regard were raised during discussions, such as developers' lack of knowledge of the Cree system of hunting territories. They need to be better informed before undertaking research in the territory.

Mr. Masty talked about the importance of having a better understanding of the Crees' different approach to hunting, the tallyman's role, the differences between the communities, and the characteristics of the Cree language and the descriptive way of speaking when dealing with researchers. People must also be careful during consultations and learn to ask the proper questions. It is important to make sure that the members of Cree communities understand the purpose of the research to guarantee fair and effective participation.

Funding

Commenting on the importance of finding funding, a participant pointed out that the existing means of funding scientific research differ from those available to local and regional governments and decision-making bodies. Thought must be given to how funding can be secured for an information management system, which is in between the two.

It was also mentioned that research funding is intended for the research, not for disseminating the findings or implementing solutions. Research funding applications should cover funding for community outreach.

Participatory research objectives and tools

There needs to be a detailed discussion of the type of participatory research we want to have and the actual ability of structures involved in development to change in order to meet the needs of each party, i.e. developers, governments and communities.

Another issue raised is the need to develop research protocols and informed consent forms that reflect the requirements of participatory research and contain clauses requiring researchers to inform the host communities of their research results and make summaries available in non-technical language. The experience developed by Hydro-Québec in working collaboratively with the Crees in monitoring/follow-up programs should be drawn on. One such example is the work carried out in conjunction with holders of Cree knowledge to restore eelgrass beds.

Determining where the system will be housed

A number of participants wondered if the Cree Research and Development Institute could be involved in developing the information management system or database. An inventory should be taken of existing structures that already manage research data to some extent. Inspiration could be drawn from the Waswanipi Cree Model Forest's efforts to integrate research interests with community interests.

Names for the network were suggested, including "Wi-Cree-Pedia"

Determining the scope of the system

A significant amount of information on northern research exists and will be difficult to manage. It may be worthwhile to break it up into years and give priority to more recent studies. The experience and website of the Cree Board of Health and Social Services would be a good reference in this regard.

In addition, the type of data to be shared in the planned management system must be defined. It will be easier to make metadata public than raw data. Suggestions include maps of projects being carried out, basic information on projects, contact information for project managers, names of projects, their duration, and so forth.

During the discussions on the need to clarify the objective of an information management system, some people preferred the idea of a knowledge network to a database. To develop a « coordinated program, » the categories of information involved must first be defined. For example, a distinction must be made between public information and purely scientific information.

While compiling existing information is important, it is also a daunting task. The criteria for including information in the system must be defined and prioritized based on a shared vision. We must avoid inventories that only accumulate data.

An agenda should also be set for the co-production of knowledge, based on the current research priorities of each partner organization.

An outlook that incorporates the Cree point of view means making health a priority in developments and environmental studies. This aspect is often overlooked or separated from social aspects, whereas for the Crees, the health of the land and the health of its inhabitants are one and the same.

FOLLOW-UP AND COMMITMENTS

The workshop ended with everyone at the table giving his or her assessment of the exercise.

Mr. Picard said that the workshop was a good start for discussions to take place, and work of achieving the targeted objectives is still ahead; but the workshop showed a clear convergence of points of view among participants.

The participants agreed to share reference works that might be useful in developing the tools for setting up the knowledge network and database.

Some of the next steps were identified:

- All of the participants agreed that it would be useful to pursue the exercise and hold more meetings, and they would like to be invited.
- The communities' research priorities need to be determined or confirmed.
- Participants representing research agencies showed an interest in continuing the discussion, and some pledged to identify their personal research priorities.
- The CNS intends to become more involved with James Bay communities and to promote the sharing of knowledge and wisdom.

- The Cree Trappers' Association's GeoConnections portal could serve as a basic model to start with.
- The participants representing Ouranos, COFEX-South, the Cree-Québec Forestry Board, the Cree Mineral Exploration Board and FaunENord said they would be interested in pursuing discussions and helping develop the project.

WORKING DOCUMENT