

toxic contaminants originating largely from sources outside the North. Global climate change is having an impact on Arctic ecosystems and habitat, wildlife populations, and migration patterns. Increased ultraviolet radiation due to springtime ozone depletion presents serious risks to both ecosystems and people. These changes may have very serious long-term effects on the cultures and economies of Arctic Indigenous communities.

International campaigns against hunting and trapping have been successful in creating some market access barriers to traditional northern wildlife products. Although few in number, these barriers have severely limited the international movement of these products, with devastating economic and cultural impacts on many northern Indigenous communities. High unemployment, along with health, social, and economic problems, has become a serious issue. Currently, there are few employment alternatives for northern Indigenous communities. Only in the past 10 to 15 years have these communities begun to participate in significant ways in the public service, mining, and energy sectors. Nonrenewable resource development still causes tension within some Indigenous communities.

The Government of Canada and Indigenous peoples are forging partnerships, building local capacity, and working to improve efficiencies and alternatives in northern communities. They are also collaborating to focus on expanded participation in global decision making in the best interests of this potentially prosperous, yet vulnerable, region.

*"Indigenous people and their communities...have a vital role in environmental management and development because of their knowledge and traditional practices. States should recognize and duly support their identity, culture and interests and enable their effective participation in the achievement of sustainable development."*

—Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Principle 22



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