

and Indigenous peoples have been actively promoting international action to address these global issues, highlighting the human dimension.

International Issues

Long-Range Transboundary Pollutants

The Government of Canada and northern Indigenous communities share a deep concern for the effects of pollution on northern ecosystems and human health and have worked together with the international community in pursuit of legally binding treaties, both regionally and globally, to reduce long-range transboundary air pollution such as persistent organic pollutants. This also included federal funding of the Canadian Arctic Indigenous Peoples Against POPs (CAIPAP) to enable Indigenous peoples to play an active role in international activities to reduce such contaminants. A recent success has been the completion of a regional protocol on POPs to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution. The vulnerability of the Arctic and its Indigenous peoples to POPs has been noted in this protocol. Global negotiations sponsored by the United Nations Environment Programme are under way toward an agreement on POPs. Indigenous peoples in northern Canada are working with the Saami Council, the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, and the Aleut International Association to promote a comprehensive and verifiable global POPs convention.

At home, the federal government has developed a unique partnership with northern Indigenous organizations to implement the Northern Contaminants Program. The program brings together federal departments, territorial governments, and Indigenous organizations working to reduce and, where possible, to eliminate contaminants in traditionally harvested foods and to provide information on their use.

Climate Change

The Inuit Circumpolar Conference began discussing climate change in its general assemblies in the 1980s. In 1992, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was negotiated for the purpose of curbing greenhouse gas emissions and limiting their concentrations in the atmosphere. The UNFCCC provided a framework for international cooperation on climate change, but without binding commitments on greenhouse gas

The Sustainable Communities Initiative is assisting Canadian communities to increase their capacity to plan and make decisions by providing access to information about natural resources and socioeconomic issues via the Internet. The program was initiated by the Government of Canada in partnership with communities across the country and all levels of government.

The information gathered by the communities is map-based and can be shared at the discretion of the community. Information generated by a community can be accessed in several ways: digitally on CD, electronically through the Internet, or on paper.