

Jurisdiction, sovereignty, and Canada's ability to enforce

Participants who addressed the issues of jurisdiction, sovereignty, and enforceability, discussed them as issues that relate to other items, including wildlife and pollution. Because we do not live in isolation, these become important international issues.

Points raised involving jurisdiction and/or sovereignty, and ways in which it impacts on northerners in their daily lives, thus appear throughout this report. In addition, participants suggested that, as Canada has no ability to police its waters and exert sovereignty, it needs to develop a capacity to support developments in the north and ensure sovereignty.

The ability to enforce regulation in other areas is also seen as important; for example, tourists trespass on Inuit lands and archaeological sites without permission, despite the existence of international standards for tourism. The presence of an increasing number of cruise ships, and the significant impact of such numbers in so short a time, was mentioned as an example.

Participants further agreed that interjurisdictional problems exist that need to be addressed. It is not possible to divorce domestic policy from foreign policy issues. The Nunavut Land Claim Agreement contains areas in which interjurisdictional activities and negotiations are required, and which must be recognized in foreign policy creation.

Relationships and communication

Participants noted in diverse ways the importance of the relationship of northerners with each other, both nationally and in the circumpolar context, and with southerners of all nations. The importance of educating southerners to northern issues and realities, both those specific to the north and those that may have major impact on an unaware south, underlay many comments about education, barriers, etc.

Many felt that, by strengthening northern ties, we can increase the collective northern voice. Thus a strong voice coming from the circumpolar north may be able to exert a stronger impact on southern-dominated policy development in the various nations involved.

Also expressed was a need for increased cooperation. There are models of outside bodies, both nationally and internationally, that deal with tourism, for example, and include representation from all groups involved. We need such models and we need active lobby groups.

Research

Participants suggested a number of areas for consideration within the framework of developing northern foreign policy: