

The 1987 Canada and polar science report described in some detail how northern Canadian residents view science and research as a two-edged sword. It can be beneficial but it can also be detrimental. Quite often there is conflict between the traditional knowledge of the aboriginal people and the scientific data bases of the non-aboriginal researchers. Northerners object to the outside or southern scientific activity that excludes, ignores and dismisses their knowledge and information. They resent the fact that everything is controlled from southern Canada.

I would just like to again elaborate on some examples. Some years ago during caribou surveys in the Keewatin region in my riding of Nunatsiak, the biologists found there was a decreasing herd at the time. The numbers were roughly 150,000, down from 450,000. At the time the Inuit hunters of the Keewatin said that that just was not the case. It was not possible and they knew it. Again, they said some have moved. Sometimes there are movements in different years, sometimes the caribou come right through, in this case, Rankin Inlet. At other times they do not come through Rankin Inlet in big herds. The Inuit hunters are very, very knowledgeable about the movement of caribou, because they have hunted for as long as we have been around the Keewatin region, which is roughly about 4,000 years, I believe. The biologists did their survey and decided that there were only 150,000.

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It was going to start imposing quotas. People who came from the South who were allowed to hunt five caribou a year were suddenly told that they could hunt only one caribou a year. They wanted to hunt more than one. It was the Inuit who use the caribou for food and clothing who felt the hardship.

Whether it was different biologists or the same biologists, a year or two later the movement of caribou was different again. The report came back saying a mistake had been made and there were still 450,000 caribou. That is a good example of the contradiction between the knowledge of the Inuit, the authorities and the biologists at the time.

I admit that the relations between the biologists and the Inuit have improved somewhat over the past few years. The biologists realize that the Inuit knowledge is vital to research. We have maintained that it was always

vital to any kind of research because of our intimate knowledge and very strong ties to the land.

I will give you another example of where it has not improved. This example is so recent that it is still ongoing. The communities of Lake Harbour, Pangnirtung and Iqaluit have hunted beluga whales for as long as they have been around, which is a long time. They have always hunted beluga whales, but earlier this year the Department of Fisheries and Oceans decided that there were not enough belugas. They wanted to do away with any form of hunting for the next 10 years.

The Hunters and Trappers Association and the hunters in those three communities told the officials that they did not know everything about belugas. After a conducting a sporadic survey they tell us there were only a few hundred. They wanted to tell the hunters that they could not hunt for the next 10 years.

The newly formed Nunavut Planning Commission intervened and decided that perhaps imposing a quota of five for each community would be sufficient. This was all right until, again, the hunters and trappers said: "What about us? What about our views? Do we not count? We are the ones who hunt the animals. We know where they go. We know their movements. We know the land because we hunt around Lake Harbour, Iqaluit and Pangnirtung."

This issue is still ongoing, but it is another case of where the people's knowledge of the land was not considered before the decision to impose some restrictions on the hunting of the beluga whales was made.

Since then, there have been ongoing discussions about that issue. I hope it will be resolved to the satisfaction of the hunters of those communities, rather than to the satisfaction of other groups.

Again, I must reiterate that the hunters are not going to kill for the sake of killing. They have never done so. They kill for food and when hunting is done in those communities, it is self-regulated. In some cases, there are quotas. We have the quota system on polar bears, but it is self-regulated if there is no quota system. I just wanted to point those things out.

There is a conflict between traditional and scientific knowledge. I just gave two examples. Unfortunately, it seems to be the case that interest about the Arctic peaks in southern Canada when there are sovereignty, military concerns or economic development interests. From a