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Organisational Design for Co-Management : Comparing Four Committees in Nunavik

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Article abstract

The *Brundtland Report* focused on the importance of institutional arrangements in solving pressing resource problems. Co-management arrangements have been an important avenue for Aboriginals to participate in the management of country foods, and the environments that support them. *The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*, signed in 1975, created several co-management bodies that focus on environments and wildlife. This paper draws on the extensive body of literature on co-management to develop three principles to evaluate these arrangements. These principles have to do with the ability of committees to adapt to changing environments and demands, their effectiveness in influencing government decision-making, and their ability to represent Aboriginal cultures and values. Each of the co-management bodies created by the *Agreement* is evaluated according to these criteria.

Organisational Design for Co-Management : Comparing Four Committees in Nunavik*

Evelyn J. PETERS**

The Brundtland Report *focused on the importance of institutional arrangements in solving pressing resource problems. Co-management arrangements have been an important avenue for Aboriginals to participate in the management of country foods, and the environments that support them.* The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, *signed in 1975, created several co-management bodies that focus on environments and wildlife. This paper draws on the extensive body of literature on co-management to develop three principles to evaluate these arrangements. These principles have to do with the ability of committees to adapt to changing environments and demands, their effectiveness in influencing government decision-making, and their ability to represent Aboriginal cultures and values. Each of the co-management bodies created by the* Agreement *is evaluated according to these criteria.*

Le Rapport Brundtland *a souligné l'importance des arrangements institutionnels pour résoudre les problèmes liés à la gestion des ressources naturelles. Pour les autochtones, les arrangements de cogestion*

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* I wish to express my appreciation to all of the members of the co-management committees who generously gave of their time and shared their insights, despite their very busy schedules. Michele Dupuis and Nicole Gombay conducted the interviews, and I very much appreciate their skilful work. The research was funded by an SSHRC MCRI #412-97-0014 : "Sustainable Development in the Arctic : Conditions for Food Security". Errors of omission and interpretation are my responsibility.

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représentent une façon de participer à la gestion des ressources fauniques et à la protection environnementale. La Convention de la Baie-James et du Nord québécois, *signée en 1975, créa plusieurs comités de cogestion ayant pour objet l'environnement et les ressources fauniques. Cet article examine la littérature sur la cogestion et en dégage trois principes généraux. Plus particulièrement, ces principes interrogent la capacité des comités de cogestion de s'adapter aux nouvelles demandes et défis environnementaux, d'influencer les décisions des autorités gouvernementales et de représenter la culture et les valeurs autochtones. Chacun des comités de cogestion créés par la* Convention *est évalué suivant cette grille.*

Contents

In the past three decades, there has been considerable attention paid to co-management as an important mechanism for the effective management of natural resources. Co-management offers the possibility of reduced conflict over resources use[1], increased incorporation of local knowledge[2], enhanced resource sustainability[3], and the potential for circulating benefits back into the community[4]. In the context of concerns about food security, co-management committees can play an important role in protecting environments and managing wildlife resources to ensure the continued availability of country foods.

The term "co-management" encompasses a variety of organisational arrangements, functions and levels of power-sharing. It ranges from relatively simple arrangements with government managers sharing power with users over limited resources and geographic areas, to legislated arrangements evolving from Aboriginal self-government negotiations. The stakeholders involved, the institutions created and the types of responsibilities

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1. E. PINKERTON, *Co-operative Management of Local Fisheries : New Directions for Improved Management and Community Development*, Vancouver, University of British Columbia Press, 1989 ; D.M. DUFFY, M. ROSELAND and T.I. GUNTON, "A Preliminary Assessment of Shared Decision-making in Land Use and Natural Resource Planning", *Environments*, vol. 23, n° 2, 1996, p. 1.
2. M.M.R. FREEMAN, "The Nature and Utility of Traditional Ecological Knowledge", *Northern Perspectives*, vol. 20, n° 1, 1992, p. 9 ; T. SWERDFAGER, *Cooperative Wildlife Management : A Discussion Paper*, Ottawa, The Canadian Wildlife Service, 1992 ; P.J. USHER, "Traditional Ecological Knowledge in Environmental Assessment and Management", *Arctic*, vol. 53, n° 2, 2000, p. 183.
3. M. GADGIL, F. BERKES and C. FOLKE, "Indigenous Knowledge for Biodiversity Conservation", *Ambio*, vol. 22, nos 2-3, 1993, p. 151 ; T. SWERDFAGER, *op. cit.*, note 2.
4. S. HAWKES, "The Gwaii Haanas Agreement : From Conflict to Consensus", in M. ROSELAND, D.J. DUFFY and T.I. GUNTON, "Shared Decision-Making and Natural Resource Planning : Canadian Insights", Environments, vol. 23, n° 2, 1996, p. 87 ; B.F. NOBLE, "Institutional Criteria for Co-management", *Marine Policy*, vol. 24, n° 1, 2000, p. 69 ; E. PINKERTON, *op. cit.*, note 1 ; D. WITTY, "The Practice Behind the Theory : Co-management as a Community Development Tool", *Plan Canada*, 1994, p. 22.

exercised vary widely[5]. Levels of power sharing vary from information sharing, to an advisory role, to user partnership with government bodies[6]. While some authors suggest that lower levels of power sharing do not represent true co-management, it is clear that even advisory bodies can have a significant effect on government decision-making[7]. As a result, this paper adopts Notzke's[8] general definition : "Co-management" broadly refers to the sharing of power and responsibility between government and local resource users. This is achieved by various levels of integration of local and state level management systems." Co-management arrangements have been instituted in a large number of countries internationally, and some of these institutions have long-term experiences with public participation in natural resource management[9].

Despite the increasing familiarity of co-management arrangements and recognition of their potential benefits, there has been relatively little analysis that explores aspects of institutional structure and organisational design that maximise their ability to operate effectively[10]. Institutions form the structures through which decisions are made and actions are taken. The purpose of this paper is to compare elements of institutional design of four co-management committees established pursuant to the 1975 *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*, with a focus on Nunavik, Quebec. The paper explores the perspectives of participants on elements of institutional design that facilitate or constrain the work of these committees. Many

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5. F. BERKES, P. GEORGE and R. PRESTON, *Co-Management : The Evolution of The Theory and Practice of the Joint Administration of Living Resources*, TASO Research Report, Second Series, No. 1, Program for Technology Assessment in Subarctic Ontario, Hamilton, McMaster University, 1991 ; C. NOTZKE, "A New Perspective in Aboriginal Natural Resources Management : Co-management", *Geoforum*, vol. 26, nº 2, 1995, p. 187.
6. F. BERKES, P. GEORGE and R. PRESTON, *op. cit.*, note 5.
7. E. PINKERTON, "The Contribution of Watershed-Based Multi-Party Co-Management Agreements to Dispute Resolution : The Skeena Watershed Committee", in M.D. ROSELAND, M. DORLI and T.I. GUNTON (ed.), *op. cit.*, note 4, p. 51, 56 ; P.J. USHER, "The Beverly-Kaminuriak Caribou Management Board : An Experience in Co-management", in J.T. INGLIS (ed.), *Traditional Ecological Knowledge : Concepts and Cases*, Ottawa, UNESCO Canada/MAB, 1993, p. 111.
8. C. NOTZKE, *loc. cit.*, note 5, 187.
9. A.K.J. BICKMORE, *Evaluating the Co-management Institutions Created by the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement and the Inuvialuit Final Agreement with Planning Criteria*, unpublished M.Pl. thesis, Kingston, Queen's University, School of Urban and Regional Planning, 2002.
10. D.E. LANE and R.L. STEPHENSON, "Institutional Arrangements for Fisheries : Alternate Structures and Impediments to Change", *Marine Policy*, vol. 24, nº 5, 2000, p. 385 ; B.F. NOBLE, *loc. cit.*, note 4.

evaluations of co-management arrangements rely on the perspectives of analysts who are not part of these committees. Here we attempt to present the views of "insiders".

The analysis is based on interviews conducted in the summer and winter of 2000 with almost all of the committee members on four co-management committees — the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Co-ordinating Committee, the Kativik Environmental Quality Commission, the Kativik Environmental Advisory Committee, and the Federal Review Committee — North. Since the interviews were conducted, the Nunavik Commission tabled its report recommending the creation of a new form of government in Nunavik, for all of its residents. In 2003 the governments of Quebec, Canada, and Makivik Corporation representing the Inuit, signed a Framework Agreement which established a formal process for negotiating a new form of governance in the region. These developments may mean that aspects of the co-management committees may change in the near future. Nevertheless comparing the four committees as they worked in 2000 may help identify relationships between elements of organisational design and effectiveness in meeting particular objectives.

1 Elements of Institutional Design : A Literature Review

Co-management committees have many goals and this paper explores institutional design in relation to three of them — institutional adaptiveness, effectiveness in influencing government decision-making, and ability to represent Aboriginal values and interests. These elements are key because they have to do with the main spheres of activity of co-management committees — their internal operation (adaptiveness), their external influence (effectiveness), and their relationship with their Aboriginal constituency.

1.1 Adaptiveness

For several decades, researchers have emphasized the need for adaptive structures in environmental and resource management[11]. Mulvihill and Keith[12] define adaptiveness as "the ability to remain functional amidst contextual complexity and difficulty, to shift directions and approaches where

11. F. BERKES and C. FOLKE (ed.), *Linking Social and Ecological Systems : Management Practices and Social Mechanisms for Building Resilience*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000 ; B. MITCHELL, *Resource and Environmental Management*, Harlow, Longman, 1997.
12. P.R. MULVIHILL and R.F. KEITH, "Institutional Requirements for Adaptive EIA : The Kativik Environmental Quality Commission", *Environmental Impact Assessment Review*, vol. 9, n° 4, 1989, p. 399.

appropriate, to perceive and seize opportunities, and to be sufficiently innovative as to effect change." Folke, Berkes and Colding[13] define adaptive institutions as having the "ability to reorganize under changing circumstances". Much of the work on adaptive organisations follows Holling's[14] suggestion that the limits of our knowledge of ecological and social systems means that management will be faced with uncertainty and unexpected results. Rondinelli[15] draws on his experience with development projects to argue that adaptive institutions are needed because organisations operate in increasingly complicated environments under conditions of rapid change. Similarly Trist[16] has suggested that institutions work in complex and even turbulent contexts which create the need for resilience and an ability to adapt.

There is some work that addresses aspects of institutional design that facilitates adaptiveness. One theme is that while organisational goals, mandates and processes should be well-defined, they should also be broad enough to allow for flexibility and innovation. Mitchell[17] suggests that general or vague goals provide "scope to custom-design implementation to suit differing conditions". They also allow local actors to modify processes and goals to meet local needs and conditions. Mulvihill and Keith[18] suggest that if mandates and processes are defined but not rigid, organisations can respond to new and unexpected problems and challenges. Jacobs and Mulvihill[19] note that institutions should have no more detail than necessary for their operations, so that they can be continuously self-organising.

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13. C. Folke, F. Berkes and J. Colding, "Ecological Practices and Social Mechanisms for Building Resilience and Sustainability", in C. Folke, F. Berkes and C. Folke (ed.), *Linking Social and Ecological Systems : Management Practices and Social Mechanisms for Building Resilience*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 414, 426.
14. C.S. Holling (ed.), *Adaptive Environmental Assessment and Management*, Toronto, Wiley, 1978.
15. D.A. Rondinelli, *Development Projects as Policy Experiments : An Adaptive Approach to Development Administration*, London, Routledge, 1993.
16. E. Trist, "The Environment and System-response Capability", *Futures*, vol. 12, nº 2, 1980, p. 113 ; E. Trist, "Referent Organizations and the Development of Inter-Organizational Domains", *Human Relations*, vol. 36, nº 3, 1983, p. 269.
17. B. Mitchell, *op. cit.*, note 11, p. 142.
18. P.R. Mulvihill and R.F. Keith, *loc. cit.*, note 12, 408.
19. P. Jacobs and P.R. Mulvihill, "Ancient Lands : New Perspectives. Towards Multicultural Literacy in Landscape Management", *Landscape and Urban Planning*, vol. 32, nº 1, 1995, p. 7, 14.

Size of membership has an effect on the ability to create positive group dynamics essential for adaptive decision-making. Noble[20] notes that governments and larger organisations must balance the need for appropriate level of diversity of members to represent regional interests, with the fact that limited memberships facilitates communication and decision-making. Similarly Mulvihill and Keith[21] argue that while diversity (to represent regional interests) and redundancy (to provide reserve capacity) are important, "an organization's efficiency with regard to decision-making decreases in direct proportion to its size [...] [and] positive group dynamics may be more easily achieved and sustained in smaller organizations".

Finally, adaptive organisations are characterised by their ability to interact with and co-ordinate initiatives with other relevant institutions[22]. Trist[23] emphasises the need for "referent" institutions that identify emergent issues and work out with other institutions "desirable futures and [ways of] modifying practice accordingly". Mobilizing resources and developing a network of external relations is important to this function. Mitchell[24] notes that " more participants will bring more information and perspectives to help define issues and develop solutions". Folke, Berkes and Colding[25] see the capacity to operate at more than one level as an important characteristic of adaptive institutions. The implication for institutional design is that organisations should have a membership that is relevant to the issues under consideration, and that members are embedded in communications networks that facilitate communication and the flow of information.

1.2 Effectiveness

A number of design criteria seem to support effective intervention by co-management organisations in government decision-making. Drawing on the experience of non-legislated co-management structures, Mulvihill and Keith[26] conclude that a legislative base enhances the power and credibility co-management organisations have, allowing them to assume a prominent

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20. B.F. NOBLE, *loc. cit.*, note 4.
21. P.R. MULVIHILL and R.F. KEITH, *loc. cit.*, note 12, 404.
22. B.F. NOBLE, *loc. cit.*, note 4, 70.
23. E. TRIST, "Referent Organizations and the Development of Inter-Organizational Domains", *loc. cit.*, note 16, 275-276.
24. B. MITCHELL, *op. cit.*, note 11, p. 142.
25. C. FOLKE, F. BERKES and J. COLDING, *loc. cit.*, note 13, 424.
26. P.R. MULVIHILL and R.F. KEITH, *loc. cit.*, note 12, 405.

place in the decision-making system. Winn[27] places less emphasis on legislation, but indicates that a co-management organisation should be established by a formal agreement.

Much of the discussion about the ability of co-management organisations to influence government decision-making has been based on the kinds of powers allocated to these organisations. Berkes, George and Preston[28], for example, proposed an ascending scale of community participation in natural resources management. The lowest levels of the scale are dominated by a lack of cooperation between community users and government managers : managers make all the decisions and rarely share information with users. In the middle levels, managers and users exchange information and begin to make decisions together. Users make most of the decisions in the top levels of the scale. Co-management organisations which integrate local and statement management fall at the upper levels of the scale. At the same time, Notzke[29] notes that it is difficult in practice to categorise co-management institutions according to their decision-making power. For example, committees with advisory power can have a significant effect on government decision-making[30].

Moreover, the establishment of co-management organisations through legislation and agreements and the specification of their powers are not sufficient to establish an effective role in decision-making. Landmann[31] notes that in order to be useful, governments must accord committees a place in decision-making structures. Legislation and agreements must be implemented in the sense that governments regularly consult them, that they are linked with appropriate governmental organisations, that government participants have decision-making ability and that co-management bodies are provided with the support, financial and technical, that allows them to play an appropriate role[32].

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27. S.N. WINN, *Co-management under the Inuvialuit Final Agreement : Bridging the gap between indigenous self-regulation and state-based resource management in the Western Arctic*, unpublished M.A. thesis, Ottawa, Carleton University, 1991, p. 117.
28. F. BERKES, P. GEORGE and R. PRESTON, *op. cit.*, note 5.
29. C. NOTZKE, *loc. cit.*, note 5, 190-191.
30. P.J. USHER, *loc. cit.*, note 7.
31. P. LANDMANN, *Co-management of Wildlife under the James Bay Treaty : The Hunting, Fishing, and Trapping Coordinating Committee*, unpublished M.A. thesis, Quebec, Université Laval — Faculté des études supérieures, 1988, p. 57, 58.
32. G. OSHERENKO, "Wildlife Management in the North American Arctic : The Case of Co-management", in M.M.R. FREEMAN and L.N. CARBYN (ed.), *Traditional Knowledge and Renewable Resource Management*, Edmonton, Boreal Institute for Northern Studies, 1988, p. 92, 103 ; E.J. PETERS, "Native People and the Environmental Regime in the

1.3 Representation of Aboriginal values and cultures

Because co-management arrangements involving Aboriginal people have the opportunity to incorporate indigenous systems of knowledge and management, they are viewed as having the potential to contribute to the maintenance and development of Aboriginal people's cultures and societies. Richardson and Green[33] note, with respect to the Haida :

> This is perhaps the most important reason for co-management — to provide a means for different cultures with conflicting values to share in a resource. Management of fisheries resources by one culture results in the almost complete loss of the ability of the resources to provide for the values of another culture.

Osherenko[34] identifies several criteria for success in incorporating Native people into co-management arrangements. One criterion is that the regime must have the co-operation and support of the community that it is intended to serve. In terms of institutional design, this goes beyond a requirement for Native membership and implies that co-management committees have regular ways of communicating with and obtaining the views of the communities they represent. Mulvihill and Keith[35] also emphasise the importance of contact and communication with constituents. A second criterion Osherenko suggests is that Native groups must be accorded a certain amount of authority in decision-making. Winn[36] similarly argues that shared decision-making is an important measure of the incorporation of Native people. Finally, Osherenko notes that cultural and linguistic barriers to full Native participation must be avoided. This criterion addresses elements such as the location of meetings, availability of interpretation, translation of key information into Native languages, and the use of Native systems of decision-making.

James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement", *Arctic*, vol. 52, n° 4, 1999, p. 395 ; K.L. ROBERTS, *Circumpolar Aboriginal People and co-management practice : current issues in co-management and environmental assessment*, Calgary, Arctic Institute of North America and Joint Secretariat-Inuvialuit Renewable Resource Committees, 1996, p. 3 ; ROYAL COMMISSION ON ABORIGINAL PEOPLES, *Perspectives and Realities*, Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, vol. 4, Ottawa, Canada Communications Group, 1996, p. 677 ; S.N. WINN, *op. cit.*, note 27.

33. M. RICHARDSON and W. GREEN, "The Fisheries co-management Initiative in Haida Gwaii", in E. PINKERTON (ed.), *Co-operative Management of Local Fisheries*, Vancouver, University of British Columbia Press, 1989, p. 249, 259.
34. G. OSHERENKO, *Sharing Power with Native Users : Co-Management Regimes for Arctic Wildlife*, CARC Policy Paper 5, Ottawa, Canadian Arctic Resources Committee, 1988, p. 103.
35. P.R. MULVIHILL and R.F. KEITH, *loc. cit.*, note 12, 406.
36. S.N. WINN, *op. cit.*, note 27.

2 Context and Methodology

2.1 Nunavik Co-Management Committees

Many of these issues are important for the functioning of co-management committees established under the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*, signed in 1975. While the Agreement refers to a large area in northern Quebec, Canada, this paper is concerned with the region primarily north of the 55th parallel, hereafter referred to as Nunavik. Nunavik is a sparsely populated region with approximately 10,000 people. Most of these people are Inuit, living in fourteen coastal villages and participating in a mixed economy that features wage employment as well as wildlife harvesting.

The Agreement established four committees to manage harvesting and environments in Nunavik. The focus of the committees on harvesting and environments, the establishment of regimes which take into account Native hunting economies, and the participation of regional representatives was meant to ensure Native people would have an established place in decision-making for all of these committees. Brooke[37] notes that :

> the expectations the Inuit and Cree communities had when they ratified the document, especially in the areas of lands, resources and environment, were for effective participation in decision-making, respect for their values, knowledge and traditions and confidence that hunting, fishing and trapping practices would continue and evolve in a context largely of their own making.

2.1.1 The Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Committee

Section 24 of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* establishes a harvesting regime administered by the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee (HFTCC). The HFTCC was established in 1976 as an expert body made up of Native and government members, and was to review, manage and in certain cases supervise and regulate the hunting, fishing and trapping regime put in place by the Agreement. In the words of the Agreement[38], the HFTCC is "the preferential and exclusive forum for Native people and government jointly to formulate regulations and supervise the administration and management of the Hunting, Fishing and

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37. L.F. Brooke, *The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement : Experiences of the Nunavik Inuit with Wildlife Management*, Ottawa, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1995, n. p.
38. Canada, Quebec, *The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*, Montréal, Éditeur officiel du Québec, 1976, p. 371.

Trapping Regime". The HFTCC has three members each from federal and provincial governments, and from the Cree and Inuit signatories to the Agreement (Table 1). The Naskapi joined the Committee (with two members) with the 1978 Northeastern Quebec Agreement. The Chair rotates annually from among the parties and has the tie-breaking vote.

The HFTCC supervises Native harvesting rights and the harvesting regime outlined in the Agreement, including arrangements for outfitting. The HFTCC also makes recommendations to federal and provincial governments about conservation, hunting, fishing and trapping. With the exception of its authority to establish an upper limit of kill for caribou and moose, and make management decisions for black bear in a certain limited zone, the HFTCC is advisory in nature. However, a Minister must re-consult the HFTCC prior to taking an action contrary to a recommendation.

Table 1 : Co-management Committee in Nunavik

Committee	Mandate	Membership/ Appointed by	Number Interviewed
HFTCC	Supervises harvesting regime, recommends measures to governments, manages harvesting of some species	3 by Inuit 3 by Cree 2 by Naskapi 4 by Quebec 4 by Canada	2 2 2 2 2
KEAC	Reviews environmental policies and legislation, makes recommendations to governments	3 by Kativik 3 by Quebec 3 by Canada	3 3 2
KEQC	Recommends and sets guidelines for environmental and social impact assessment ; decides if project should go forward	4 by Kativik 5 by Quebec	4 5
FRC-N	Recommends and sets guidelines for environmental and social impact assessment	2 by Kativik 3 by Canada	2 3

2.1.2 The Environmental Protection Committees

Section 23 of the Agreement sets out the processes and criteria to be employed in assessing the social and environmental effects of developments north of the 55th parallel. The environmental protection committees described in the Agreement became operational around 1978. The Kativik Environmental Advisory Committee (KEAC) was established as a consultative body to responsible governments concerning the environmental regime and the formulation of laws relating to the environment. There are three nominees from each of the Kativik Regional Government representing the residents of Nunavik, Quebec, and Canada on the Advisory

Committee. The KEAC has responsibility to review existing and proposed development-related legislation and regulations (including environmental impact assessments) that affect Inuit environments, and to recommend environmental laws, regulations and other measures to responsible governments. Federal and provincial governments are required to fund a secretariat for the committees, and the committees can call on expert advice if required.

Two additional bodies deal specifically with environmental and social impact assessment processes in Nunavik. The Federal Review Committee North (FRC-N) focuses on issues falling under federal jurisdiction. Although the structure of the committee was formalised shortly after the Agreement was signed, meetings have been irregular since relatively few developments have been defined as requiring federal attention. The FRC-N is composed of two representatives appointed by the Kativik Regional Government and three representatives appointed by Canada. The Kativik Environmental Quality Commission (KEQC) focuses on matters falling under provincial jurisdiction. It is composed of four representatives appointed by the Kativik Regional Government and four representatives appointed by Quebec. The Chair is nominated by the province, but must be approved by the Kativik Regional Government. The Commission examines projects ranging from relatively simple issues such as the construction of solid waste disposal in an Inuit community, to issues as complex as the Great Whale hydroelectric project.

Federal and provincial governments fund staffing requirements for these bodies and pay for experts required in their deliberations. When a new development is proposed, these bodies make recommendations to the appropriate Administrator (federal, provincial or Kativik depending on the jurisdiction under which the proposed development falls) about the need for an environmental impact statement and its nature and extent. The Administrator makes the decision and, if appropriate, issues guidelines for the assessment to the proponent. The Commission evaluates the environmental impact statement submitted by the proponent. While the FRC-N is advisory, the KEQC decides whether or not a development may be allowed to proceed.

2.2 Methodology

The information upon which this paper is based was collected through a series of more general interviews that explored the history and operation of co-management committees in Nunavik. All of the interviews were conducted in the winter and summer of 2000. The interviews addressed three main topics : how committees functioned and their influence on govern-

ment decision-making; the role of Inuit cultures and knowledge in committee decision-making; and the contribution of committees to the protection of sources of, and access to, country foods in Nunavik. The material on which this paper is based was drawn from responses to questions in the first two sections.

While the project attempted to interview all of the members of each of the committees, the Cree and Naskapi interviews from the HFTCC were not included in the analysis for this paper. Of the remaining members, one member of one committee refused to be interviewed, one was difficult to contact and we gave up after attempting for one month to set up an interview, and one member had died shortly before the interviews were scheduled. Two interviews were carried out with members who had recently resigned, but had served on the committee for a very long period of time. It was felt that these members would provide perspectives on the committee's functioning that their recent replacement could not have. Except for the member who had died shortly before the interviews began, all of the Inuit representatives to the committees were interviewed. Three individuals were members of more than one committee. The interviews attempted to ascertain their views for each committee on which they served, separately. In total, twenty-eight of a possible thirty-one members were interviewed for this paper.

Graduate students who had experience in research in the North carried out the interviews. Interviews lasted between one and two and one half-hours. Most interviews were conducted face-to-face, but two were conducted by phone. Interviews were conducted in English or French, by choice of the respondents. One Inuit interview was conducted with an interpreter, but the remaining interviews with Inuit representatives were conducted in English. Interview questions were open-ended, and interviewers were instructed to probe certain issues if respondents did not volunteer information.

All of the interviews were taped, except one that was not, by request of the respondent. Interviews were transcribed, and the texts of the interviews were analysed according to themes identified from the review of the literature, and according to themes that emerged from the transcripts themselves. Interviews conducted in French were translated into English. There was some slight editing of some of the quotations included in this paper, when it seemed likely that the identity of the individual respondents might be revealed by the expressions used.

3 Adaptiveness, Effectiveness and Representation on Nunavik Co-Management Committees

Drawing on respondent perspectives, we addressed aspects of institutional design that might facilitate or constrain committees' abilities to meet the objectives of adaptiveness, effectiveness and representation.

3.1 Adaptiveness

3.1.1 Flexibility

According to a number of writers, adaptive organisations have clear mandates but maintain the flexibility to make changes in order to meet challenges and address problems. We attempted to assess this dimension with questions that asked participants to summarise the organisation's mandate in their own words, to indicate if there had been changes in the way the committee had functioned over time, and to describe these changes. Responses from different committee members are described in Table 1. The responses show that all of the committees had a clear mandate, but participants varied in terms of their perception of committee flexibility (Table 2). Participant comments suggest that the cultures of the different committees were quite dissimilar.

Table 2 : Flexibility

	Clear Mandate With Evidence of Flexibility or Change	Clear Mandate but no Evidence of Flexibility or Change	No Clear Mandate
KEQC	8	1	
KEAC	5	1	
FRC-N	3	2	
HFTCC	5	3	

Participants from the KEQC gave the clearest indication that they recognised that the Commission had adapted to meet the challenges it faced. One participant stated :

> The rules under which the Commission acts were developed by people who, quite frankly, had no idea whether or not this would or wouldn't work. They had enough foresight to structure a set of rules that were reasonably loose and we have taken full advantage of the flexibility that these rules imply.

Others emphasised an increasing focus on social as well as biophysical impacts and the committee's growing skills and abilities to conceptualise and address these impacts. Part of this involved increasing knowledge among committee members about the perspectives of Inuit communities.

KEAC members all indicated that the mandate of the Committee was clear. Most indicated that the Committee had a great deal of scope for flexibility, but that this scope was often not realised because of the lack of resources, and because the KEAC did not have a clear place in government decision-making (these are discussed in greater detail below). FRC-N has not met very often, but participants indicated that the Committee had moved "from being concerned by process and rules to one which is more goal oriented." Similarly, another member stated : "I try to implement the spirit of the Agreement more than the letter." Several members also spoke about modifications the Committee made in its operations to attempt to reduce duplication of processes in small communities. However, more members (two) than on the KEAC or the KEQC could not identify changes the committee had made to its operation to meet needs in Nunavik.

The HFTCC had the largest number (and proportion) of participants who could not identify changes the Committee had initiated in response to challenges. Where participants did identify changes in Committee process, the main emphasis had to do with modifications to make it work more efficiently. Participants identified the establishment of working groups with representatives from each of the parties as an important step toward reaching a decision on some issues. Most of the comments, though, had to do with members gradually learning how to make things work. One participant indicated that "the Committee is getting better and better in terms of implementing its role and mandate." Another commented in a similar vein : "it is getting better all the time. It is more precise [...] things are progressing slowly but it goes according to the old saying which is "slowly but surely"."

3.1.2 Membership and Group Dynamics

Group dynamics contribute to adaptiveness and the literature suggests that positive dynamics are more easily achieved in smaller groups. The interviews did not explore the relationship between size and group dynamics directly, but we did probe whether the participants felt that committee members had the appropriate skills and linkages, and at various points we asked participants if they felt the committee was working well. Answers to these questions provided an insight into how participants felt about committee dynamics.

The Committees are composed of different numbers of members, representing different political constituencies. The smallest and simplest is the FRC-N, with five members appointed by Canada and the KRG. The KEQC and the KEAC each have nine members, with the KRG and Quebec appointing members to the former, and the KRG, Quebec and Canada appointing members to the latter. The HFTCC is the largest and most

complex, with 16 members appointed by Quebec, Canada, the Cree, the Inuit and the Naskapi. The results suggest (Table 3) that this complexity has an effect on group dynamics. At the same time, though, an analysis of the *content* of participant comments shows that the smallest and least complex committee (FRC-N) did not generate the most positive dynamics. In other words, more than size and complexity are at issue here.

Table 3 : Group Dynamics

	Group Dynamics Mostly Positive	Group Dynamics Positive & Negative	Group Dynamics Mostly Negative	No Opinion
KEQC	9			
KEAC	5	1		
FRC-N	4			1
HFTCC	2	3	1	2

Participants from the KEQC and the KEAC had extremely positive evaluations of their fellow members. The following are some samples from the KEQC :

> The committee is harmonious ; there are no political factions.
>
> I think it's the first time I have had such a relation with other Commission members. We don't make fun of anybody. You might have a stupid concern, but I don't think anybody is afraid of raising the concern. Everybody will take the concern and try to find the answer.
>
> There is a great deal of respect amongst the members for each other and that will hold it in good standing.
>
> My knowledge has always been respected.

On the KEAC, the comments about negative dynamics had to do with federal and provincial politics. However, other comments were extremely positive :

> We discuss until everyone agrees. There is always good communication.
>
> The members really respect each other which makes a committee that is willing to work so hard. The members are fantastic.

Comments from FRC-N participants were more muted, but still positive :

> There is no perfect committee but I think it is good now.
>
> Consensus comes easily.
>
> We tend to have unanimity and if we cannot, then the minority is free to express itself.
>
> We have a good committee and performs quite well.

Comments from HFTCC participants were mixed :

I'm happy with the way the committee is going. If I wasn't happy, I would let them know.

People are familiar with their areas of expertise but do not have a good knowledge of how the committee works. This wastes everybody's time.

Some people are professional and are very conscientious about being there in a professional capacity dealing with the issues at hand. Some people tend to be more politicised and will use that to their advantage.

Some meetings are tension filled, but more than fifty percent of the time we don't have conflict. There is a mix of politics and science on this committee so it is not always easy. We have some tensions on some subjects and on other subjects it is O.K.

The member of the committee are all knowledgeable and committed.

3.1.3 Networks

The third aspect of adaptiveness we address here has to do with the degree to which participants feel they are embedded in networks that allow them to make appropriate decisions. We did not explore fully the extent to which there is interaction with other organisations to work out "desirable futures", but we did ask participants whether committee members had linkages to people, organisations and information sufficient to ensure that committees had the appropriate information upon which to base their deliberations. The results showed (Table 4) that all of the committee members felt that the networks of which they were a part were appropriate and adequate for committee mandates.

Table 4 : Networks

	Committee Networks Adequate	Committee Networks Not Adequate	No Evaluation
KEQC	9		
KEAC	6		
FRC-N	5		
HFTCC	8		

3.1.4 Summary

The size and complexity of the HFTCC seems to be a barrier to its adaptiveness, despite its attempts to facilitate decision-making through the creation of working groups. However, size and complexity are not the only variables working here. The smallest and simplest committee (FRC-N) did

not appear to be the most flexible, and there were differences between the KEQC and the KEAC, despite their similarity in size.

3.2 Effectiveness

3.2.1 Legislative Basis

All of the committees studied in this paper have a basis in legislation. Quebec legislation enacting the environmental regime was *Bill 30 : An Act to again amend the Environmental Quality Act*, assented to December 22, 1978. Legislation establishing the HFTCC was also enacted on December 22, 1978 with *Bill 28 : An Act respecting hunting and fishing rights in the James Bay and New Quebec territories*. The HFTCC had established a secretariat, opened an office, and held its first meeting by the start of 1976. All of the bodies were operational by 1980[39].

3.2.2 Powers

The decision-making powers of the committees vary — some are advisory, some are decision-making, and some have a combination of advisory and decision-making powers (Table 5). However, even among committees that have similar powers according to legislation, the ability to affect government decision-making appears to vary.

Table 5 : Powers

	Committee is Decision-Making	Committee is Advisory But Advice is Usually Followed	Committee is Advisory But Advice is Often Ignored	Can't Evaluate
KEQC	9			
KEAC				6
FRC-N		5		
HFTCC*		4	3	1

* Participants noted that the HFTCC has decision-making power over the upper kill limit for some species.

KEQC participants were unanimous in pointing out that the Commission is a decision-making body, not an advisory one. The members who had been on the Commission the longest recalled only two instances where

39. P.F. WILKINSON and M. VINCELLI, *The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement : An Evaluation of the Implementation of its Environmental Regimes*, Ottawa, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1995, n. p.

the Minister had been uncomfortable with a recommendation from the Commission and had asked them to reconsider. KEAC members indicated that the Committee was advisory, but because its role was not well defined (see below), it was difficult to evaluate the impact of its advice. Moreover, members felt that the lack of resources made it difficult for the Committee even to fulfil its advisory role.

Members in the FRC-N indicated that, although the Committee is advisory, its recommendations were almost always approved. HFTCC responses were the most mixed, with some members indicating that Committee advice was almost always followed, and others indicating that sometimes advice was ignored. In the latter case, members indicated that the Committee often worked out another strategy for implementing its advice.

3.2.3 Implementation

Committee effectiveness does not only depend on powers and whether a committee has a legislative definition (Table 6). It also depends on the whether it is accorded a place in government decision-making, and whether it is provided with resources that allow it to discharge its mandate. Participants evaluated committees very differently on these criteria.

Table 6 : Implementation

	Established in Government Decision-Making	Not Established in Government Decision-Making	No Evaluation	Adequate Resources	Resources Not Adequate
KEQC	9			9	
KEAC		5	1		5
FRC-N	5			5	
HFTCC	6	2		8	

KEQC participants unanimously agreed that the Commission had a clearly defined place in government decision-making. They indicated that funding was sufficient for day-to-day operations, and that when there were big projects, more resources were allocated.

KEAC participants showed a similar level of unanimity as KEQC respondents, but in the negative rather than in the positive. Participants felt that the KEAC had not been made a part of government decision-making structures and that it was often ignored. One participant stated, although all of the parties to the Agreement had a strong commitment to have an environmental watch dog in the North, it was not being used in real life :

> Quebec has its own expertise. Federal has its own expertise and the Region is also building its own expertise. Each of these parties thinks that it knows everything to make a decision. Inside these government bureaucracies the level of knowledge about the potential usefulness of the Committee is very limited.

Others pointed out that, although the Committee had a great deal of freedom to address what they wanted to, they had little power because governments forget that it existed. The KEAC secretariat had been relocated from Kujjuaq to Quebec City in the late 1990's, and three participants felt that the KEAC had better visibility when its main office was in the North because it was physically closer to other KRG government departments.

Participants also unanimously agreed that the budget for the KEAC was too limited to allow it to discharge its mandate, especially since it was responsible for a large region with many serious environmental issues. According to one participant : "We don't have anything to do research. We don't have anything to ask for expertise, even though it is in our mandate." Another noted that positions on the Committee were voluntary and, because members worked at other occupations, they did not have the time to fulfil the Committee mandate. These observations reinforce Wilkinson and Vincelli's[40] conclusion that :

> The mandate of the KEAC is very broad and diffuse, potentially encompassing so much that it becomes virtually impossible to discharge except perhaps with very liberal access to technical advice and with members who are available on at least a half-time basis.

In contrast, members of FRC-N felt that the Committee had a clear place in government decision-making, and that funding was generally sufficient. One participant suggested that more funding should be made available so that members could experience the North in different seasons. Most HFTCC members felt that the Committee was part of regular government decision structures, but some indicated that there were some situations where the Committee should have been consulted but had not been, because government officials did not know of its existence. Participants thought that the Committee could do more with increased resources, but that general resources were sufficient to allow the Committee to fulfil its mandate.

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40. P.F. WILKINSON and M. VINCELLI, *op. cit.*, note 39.

3.2.4 Summary

Of the three dimensions examined in this paper, the committees showed the most dramatic variation in the design characteristics contributing to effectiveness. Participants found that both the KEQC and the FRC-N were effective, in spite of the fact that the KEQC has decision-making power while the FRC-N is advisory. This suggests that legislative power is not the only factor determining the role a committee can play with respect to government decision-making. The lack of resources in the context of a broad mandate appears to be an obstacle to the effectiveness of the KEAC. It was not clear from the interviews why some participants on the HFTCC felt that the committee was not entirely effective in its influence on government decision-making.

3.3 Representing Aboriginal Perspectives

3.3.1 Consulting Communities

All of the committees had a variety of ways of obtaining the views of Inuit communities. These included drawing on the expertise of Inuit representatives, talking to municipal councils, consulting communities more informally (often using the radio), formal public hearings, and community member's presentations to the committee. There was not enough variation between committees to identify major differences in consultation practices.

3.3.2 Inuit Role in Decision-making

Similarly, all of the participants felt that Inuit representatives played important roles in decision-making. Quotes from non-Inuit participants on all of the committees demonstrate considerable consensus on this issue. For example, a participant from the KEQC noted: "Since the projects are in the Inuit communities, the Inuit perspective brought to the Commission is very, very important [...] Whenever they raise a point, we consider the point. If we are not able to answer the question ourselves, we ask for the information to be presented." According to a KEAC member: "We are working collectively for the common good of Nunavik residents. And if the Inuit representatives at the table are not interested in an issue, or are opposed to a decision, we won't go far [...] We work, keeping in mind that the Inuit parties have a kind of veto." An FRC-N member stated: "The role of the Committee is to make sure that the Native people have their word and that they are part of the decision-making." "The Inuit play an important role because it is their territory [...] We can argue — we argue a lot, but we respect the decision of the Inuit" noted a member of the HFTCC.

Inuit responses did not contradict these views. Inuit members indicated that their knowledge was respected, that Inuit were satisfied with their role, and that they would say something if there were problems. One Inuk remarked : "The Chairman always asks the question : "Is it O.K. with the person who is Inuit ?" They really pay attention to what the Inuk has to say." An Inuit representative on another committee noted : "when we think there is an issue that is not being dealt with enough we just bring it up and they look at it more."

3.3.3 Cultural appropriateness

A number of reviews have suggested that the committees created by the Agreement are inappropriate for Native cultures. Problems identified included the incompatibility of decision-making processes with Inuit cultures, the difficulty Native representatives experienced making decisions for communities and individuals not directly involved in discussions, language barriers, the challenges posed by technical materials, and the infrequent use of traditional ecological knowledge in decision-making[41]. Wilkinson and Vincelli[42] note that, although committees were expected to work differently in the area referred to in the Agreement because of attempts to incorporate Native values and participation, in fact they did not meet those expectations.

In this study we asked questions about cultural appropriateness and whether participants felt that there were barriers to Native participation in decision-making. Answers were consistent across the committees, and they provided a different perspective from these earlier reviews. Participants noted that Inuit members had considerable experience working in these types of organisations and that the style of deliberation and decision-making was not foreign to them. For example, one participant stated : "We are working with Inuit organisations that are more and more following the pattern of non-traditional organisations. More and more we see a process that is quite similar to the process you would observe in a smaller city to the south." Participants also felt that Inuit representatives had experience with technical materials and that language was not a major barrier. Moreover, one participant noted that : "none of the members are that shy that they won't ask a question."

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41. L.F. Brooke, *op. cit.*, note 37 ; A. Penn, *The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement : Natural Resources, Public Land, and the Implementation of a Native Land Claim Settlement*, Ottawa, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1995 ; P.F. Wilkinson and M. Vincelli, *op. cit.*, note 39.
42. P.F. Wilkinson and M. Vincelli, *op. cit.*, note 39.

In support of these observations, Inuit representatives said that when they could not understand the language, someone translated for them. One Inuit representative noted that there were Inuit concepts that could not be translated into English, and that it was difficult to "combine ideas." In this context his strategy was to "pick one [concept] which is right for the people. That's how it works." What is interesting about this response is the acknowledgement that different cultural perspectives existed on the committee, but that it was still possible to make appropriate and culturally acceptable recommendations.

3.3.4 Summary

In the context of marked differences in participant evaluations of the other dimensions, the consensus on the issue of representation is striking. It may be that, over time, a comfort level in participating in these venues has emerged among committee members.

Conclusion

Co-management committees play an important role in contributing to food security in Nunavik, especially with regard to protecting sources of country food. A comparison of four committees, established at about the same time, involving similar groups of people, highlights some of the elements that contribute to or interfere with their ability to carry out their respective mandates. With respect to adaptiveness, the participants ranked the KEQC as most adaptive and the HFTCC as the least adaptive, with the other two committees in the middle. The size and complexity of the HFTCC seem to negatively affect its ability to be adaptive. However, because the smallest and least complex committee was not ranked as most adaptive, these factors do not seem to be the only one operating in co-management committees. According to participant's evaluations, the committees varied most in their effectiveness. Effectiveness was not directly related to legislated decision-making powers : participants felt that both an advisory committee and a decision-making committee were effective in influencing government decisions. A lack of resources in the context of a broad mandate appeared to be an obstacle to effectiveness. Participants in the four committees showed the most unanimity in their evaluations of the committee's abilities to represent Aboriginal people and cultures. Both Inuit and non-Inuit representatives felt comfortable with the committee's role in this respect.

There is one additional factor that emerged from the interviews, which is not highlighted in the literature. This has to do with the roles that indi-

vidual personalities play in making particular committees work. Inevitably, participants mentioned committed or knowledgeable individuals or groups of individuals when they described areas where committees had been successful, or had made an impact. This suggests that, in addition to organisational design characteristics that need to be in place, individual personalities can play a major role in making committees work. This aspect deserves further attention in the literature.