



Inuit Circumpolar Council

Pre-Budget Submission

2023



Recommendations

#1: Continue Global Arctic Leadership Initiative (GALI) funding for Arctic Council engagement — \$3.5M, or \$700,000/year for 5 years.

#2: Support international marine governance to advance a safe and affordable Arctic shipping fleet and strengthen the Inuit voice within the International Maritime Organization (IMO) — \$10M, or \$2M/year for 5 years.

#3: Maintain our strong Inuit voice in the implementation of the Central Arctic Ocean Treaty — \$1.25M, or \$250,000/year for 5 years.

#4: Support activities to advance climate change discussions and actions to safeguard the Arctic, including representation at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change — \$3.75M, or \$750,000/year for 5 years.

#5: Increase international Arctic sovereignty and human security in the Arctic — \$2.5M, or \$500,000/year for 5 years.

#6: Support Inuit knowledge in Arctic research, Inuit-led conservation and biodiversity work — \$2.5M, or \$500,000/year for 5 years.

#7: Develop a clear communications strategy for international issues across Inuit Nunaat — \$2M, or \$400,000/year for 5 years.

About Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) Canada

The Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada is a non-profit organization led by a board of directors comprising the elected leaders of the four Inuit land-claims settlement regions. The organization is managed by an elected executive, consisting of a president, a vice-president international, a vice-president national (who is the President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami - ITK), and a secretary-treasurer. Staff members are responsible for day-to-day operations, under the direction of the executive director.

ICC objectives are:

- To coordinate and facilitate cooperation among Inuit land-claims settlement organizations on international matters;
- To promote collaboration between Canadian Inuit and Inuit from Chukotka, Alaska, and Greenland;
- To take measures at the international level to protect and promote Inuit rights related to Inuit health, culture, language, values, human rights, or other matters that impact the ability of Inuit to shape their society within the circumpolar Arctic and the world at large; and,
- To maintain an on-going dialogue with ministries of the Canadian Government on issues of international importance to Inuit.

Introduction

The Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada's 2023 pre-budget submission is focused on high-priority areas that align with the international and Arctic foreign policies of the Government of Canada, specifically the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework, as well as initiatives that fulfill the current Ministerial mandate letters. Sustained support as outlined in this pre-budget submission is required to further develop partnerships that unite Inuit and allow us to leverage our unique position as a circumpolar people to influence the development of Arctic policies that will ensure a peaceful, prosperous, and cooperative Arctic region. Together, Inuit and Canada can be international leaders on matters that impact all aspects of our Arctic homeland.

Inuit marine governance is an essential guarantor of human and environmental security in the Canadian Arctic. ICC Canada requests a five-year commitment to strengthen and enhance Inuit marine governance and action in seven main areas:

1. Continue Global Arctic Leadership Initiative (GALI) funding for Arctic Council engagement — \$3.5 million, or \$700,000/year for 5 years.

The inherent right of Inuit to self-determination is the basis for our continued and active involvement in Arctic decision-making. Arctic nations may be faced with a new permanent geopolitical arrangement should Russia remain outside the Arctic Council's consensus-based forum that has guided Arctic cooperation since 1996. Inuit have a major stake in the outcome of this geopolitical shift. Not only was ICC one of the founding members of the Arctic Council, but our engagement on circumpolar issues predates the Council itself.

As noted in all Ministers' mandate letters, they must *"implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and work in partnership with Indigenous Peoples to advance their rights."* ICC has been a key author and influencer of UNDRIP by promoting these rights within Inuit Nunangat and Inuit Nunaat and is recognized as a leader amongst Indigenous peoples around the world. Ongoing GALI funding from Global Affairs Canada will enable ICC Canada to support Canada's international efforts towards achieving the goals of UNDRIP at home and abroad by ensuring Inuit have a strong voice at the Arctic Council and its associated forums and projects.

2. Support international marine governance to advance a safe and affordable Arctic shipping fleet and strengthen the Inuit voice within the International Maritime Organization (IMO) — \$10 million, or \$2 million/year for 5 years.

The Arctic Ocean and its coastal seas serve as our "highways" year-round. In the open water season, we rely on marine transportation for the delivery of necessary goods and services. We see firsthand that Arctic shipping traffic is increasing. We know it will continue to increase as the

ice melts and waterways change. Inuit are bound to the marine environment and the shipping industry—it is an essential service. The complexities between economy and environment require careful measurement and balance to protect our Arctic marine environment for generations to come. We must have a say on how shipping is developed, governed, and regulated in order to preserve our homeland.

Supporting efficient Arctic shipping and protecting the marine environment is of utmost importance for Inuit. The Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard is mandated to “*develop a comprehensive blue economy strategy [...] to create good middle class jobs and opportunities for ocean sectors and coastal communities, while advancing reconciliation and conservation [...]*” ICC Canada can help. In partnership with Memorial University, we have proposed the *Qanittaq Clean Arctic Shipping Initiative* that combines Inuit knowledge with naval engineering and shipbuilding to support Canada’s goal of building the Arctic fleet of the future.

In November 2021, ICC became the first Indigenous organization to receive IMO Provisional Consultative Status. This milestone will enable effective implementation of the provisions of UNDRIP in the international maritime context. The inclusion of ICC might be the first step in giving Indigenous peoples a voice in this forum, with other maritime Indigenous peoples around the world watching closely as to how our status can impact shared concerns like sustainable growth of coastal communities. This funding will allow ICC Canada to dedicate substantial time and resources to the IMO.

3. Maintain our strong Inuit voice in the implementation of the Central Arctic Ocean Treaty —\$1.25 million, or \$250,000/year for 5 years.

Inuit see the connectivity between the Central Arctic Ocean (CAO) and Canada’s Pacific and Atlantic coasts. It is a vast marine system, within which the Arctic animals, plants and climate are all connected. Any changes occurring within the CAO cause numerous, complex impacts to elements in the larger system, and have direct effects on Inuit and other coastal Canadian communities.

The interests of Inuit have been recognized in relation to the CAO for the first time with the negotiation of *The International Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean*. Throughout these negotiations, and during current discussions around implementation, ICC has shared Inuit views and knowledge. The precedent that this set for Indigenous interests in the context of the high seas has been recognized across the world, as this is the first international treaty to rightfully consider Indigenous Knowledge, participation, and inclusion and have these written into the international agreement. Indigenous knowledge alongside scientific research will be important in determining effective management measures for the CAO. This funding is needed to enable ICC to continue its work on behalf of communities as the international leader for Inuit in matters relating to the CAO.

4. Support activities to advance climate change discussions and action to safeguard the Arctic, including representation at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) — \$3.75 million, or \$750,000/year for 5 years.

ICC Canada has sounded the warning on climate change for over three decades. Climate change in the Arctic has impacted every aspect of our lives. ICC is an official observer to the IPCC and brings centuries of knowledge of Inuit communities to this technical forum to enhance and support the effectiveness of climate action.

ICC will help the Ministers of Global Affairs and Environment and Climate Change to make Canada a leader in the fight against climate change. As noted in all the Ministers' mandate letters, *"[C]limate change is an existential threat [...] As Minister, I expect you to seek opportunities within your portfolio to support our whole-of-government effort to reduce emissions, create clean jobs and address the climate-related challenges communities are already facing."* We will also support the Minister of Indigenous Services in their mandate to work in partnership with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis.

ICC can also support the Minister of International Development *"to mobilize and provide climate finance in order to support developing country adaptation, mitigation and resilience, including support for small island states at particular risk of climate-related emergencies."* We are already working with Small Island Developing States (SIDS) on both shipping and climate resilience strategies and actions. This funding will enable ICC Canada to continue and expand Inuit participation and expertise on climate change action.

5. Increase international Arctic sovereignty and human security in the Arctic — \$2.5 million, or \$500,000/year for 5 years.

In 2019, ICC launched the Inuit Circumpolar Declaration on Sovereignty. ICC Canada will support the Minister of National Defence, the Minister of Northern Affairs, and other partners *"to defend Arctic sovereignty and implement the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework."* ICC Canada was part of the development team for Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework International chapter in 2019. It notes ICC Canada's role in the circumpolar region as an ally of the Government of Canada, and as a strong voice for Inuit throughout Inuit Nunaat. The first theme in the chapter is about strengthening the rules-based international order in the Arctic and *"ensur[ing] the region remains peaceful and stable."* Considering the challenges to the international rules-based order posed by Russia, ICC Canada's commitment to a peaceful Arctic region remains more important than ever.

6. Support Inuit Knowledge in Arctic research, Inuit-led conservation and biodiversity work — \$2.5 million, or \$500,000/year for 5 years.

Inuit knowledge of the Arctic includes the ocean and coastal seas, migration patterns of marine animals, current and wind observations, knowledge of the ice movements, and much more. When Inuit knowledge is joined with Western science, it builds a greater understanding of changes in the Arctic. ICC has been a leader in the United Nations on an international treaty on marine plastics and we will work with Canada to build on the Ocean Plastics Charter. ICC Canada will strengthen Canada's leadership on the international stage.

Together with the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada, the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, and regional Inuit organizations, we will continue to support Canada's *"goals to conserve 25 per cent of our lands and waters by 2025 and 30 per cent of each by 2030, working to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030 in Canada, achieve a full recovery for nature by 2050 and champion this goal internationally[...]* [T]his work remains grounded in science, Indigenous knowledge, and local perspectives." ICC led the 2017 Pikialasorsuaq Commission, and this funding would enable us to continue to develop and support Inuit-led conservation work.

7. Develop a clear communications strategy for international issues across Inuit Nunaat – \$2 million, or \$400,000/year for 5 years.

ICC Canada has been successful at representing Inuit interests at the international level. However, there is a need to consistently communicate the outcomes of these interventions back to Inuit in a clear and culturally-specific way.

This funding will support a communications team and strategy that strengthens the confidence of Inuit that their voices are heard internationally. This will be done through social media, TV and radio, and Inuktitut translation. Community radio and Inuit TV is a large source of information for Inuit and a communications team is needed to manage this. This aligns with Canada's priorities with the Decade of Indigenous Languages, as well as the task for all Ministers in their mandate letters to *"work constructively [...] with Indigenous peoples."*



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