



Listen to the Voice of the... North!

Awareness

- The Canadian Arctic represents over 40% of Canada's landmass and 25% of the global Arctic (1) and is home to a population of approximately 150 000 people, half of whom are Indigenous peoples (2).
- "The relationship between people and the land in all its biodiversity has existed for millennia. A warming environment has already caused significant changes to migration patterns, habitats, animal health, and thus to human health and wellbeing". (3)
- "In less than half a century, the Arctic's average annual temperature rose by 3.1C, compared to 1C for the planet as a whole" (4).
- The village of Tuktoyaktuk, Northwest Territories has the unfortunate reality of facing a double threat: rising sea levels and melting permafrost, both of which are caused by rising temperatures. The village's 962 residents are now facing one of the fastest and most devastating coastal erosions ever observed on Earth. (5)
- What happens in the Arctic will influence the rest of our planet. Changes in the Arctic can be locally devastating, but because of how the Earth's climate systems work, they also affect the rest of the world. (6)

(1) [Arctic Institute](#)

(2) [Arctic Council](#)

(3) [Arctic Policy - KAIROS](#)

(4) [May 2021 phys.org](#)

(5) [La Presse 2019](#)

(6) [WWF Arctic](#)

Listen

"The Arctic as it is a 'barometer' for the global health of the planet. Marine species dependent on sea ice, including polar bears, ice-living seals, walrus, and some marine birds, are very likely to decline, with some species facing extinction.

For Inuit, warming is likely to disrupt or even destroy their hunting and food sharing culture as reduced sea ice causes the animals on which they depend to decline, become less accessible, and possibly become extinct. What is happening affects virtually every facet of Inuit life—we are a people of the land, ice, snow, and animals. Our hunting culture thrives on the cold. We need it to be cold to maintain our culture and way of life. Climate change has become the ultimate threat to Inuit culture. Climate change is not about scoring political points. It is about families, parents, children, and the lives we lead in our communities and in the broader environment."

(4) [Sheila Watt-Cloutier, 2006](#)



"When a sparrow sings, it says, 'This is my church.' He's talking about everything around him, the landscape, the environment—that's his church. He reminds us to appreciate what God prepares for us. In springtime when birds start coming back to our part of the Arctic to nest, the kids say, 'Did you hear that one yet? Did you hear?'" It's the church bird. When we hear him, it reminds us of how important the environment is around us." ([This is My Church": Reflections on the Arctic Refuge from Sarah James](#))

"The greatest burden of climate change is falling on people in the Far North and global South—those who have contributed least to the problem. Indigenous voices in the church remind us that we are called upon to look after Creator's gifts and to pass along these gifts to our children." ([Climate Change | The United Church of Canada](#))



"For over 30 years, Inuit have witnessed an Arctic environment eroded by climate change. Living with climate change has been our reality for many years. Our home is becoming unrecognizable. Inuit have devoted much time, energy, and resources to alerting the world to the reality of climate change. The global community MUST act now to work with us in responding to this threat and do all that it can to curb climate change. We cannot wait any longer." ([Arctic | Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada](#))

"Indigenous peoples throughout the world are the stewards and guardians not only of the forests and the seas, as well as of a vast store of knowledge about the natural world, which they regard as the "library of life." ([The Green Patriarch» - Ecumenical Patriarchate Bartholomew](#))



"The Arctic is disproportionately affected by climate change due to its greater sensitivity to global temperature changes, causing sea ice and snow in the region to melt at an unprecedented rate. In turn, thawing permafrost has the potential to release billions of metric tonnes of carbon dioxide, which again fuels global warming. This is having grave repercussions on Arctic populations, biodiversity, and ecosystems, but also on the world as a whole, leading to more frequent extreme weather events globally – droughts, rainstorms and floods." [Catholic church-EU-Arctic-policy.pdf](#)

Get Inspired

Here are some inspiring biblical texts:



Behold the rainbow! Then bless its Maker,
for majestic indeed is its splendor.
It spans the heavens with its glory,
the hand of God has stretched it out in power.
His rebuke marks out the path for the hail,
and makes the flashes of his judgment shine forth.
For his own purposes he opens the storehouse
and makes the rain clouds fly like vultures.
His might gives the clouds their
strength, and breaks off the hailstones.
The thunder of his voice makes the earth
writhe; by his power he shakes the mountains.
A word from him drives on the south
wind, whirlwind, hurricane, and stormwind.
He makes the snow fly like birds;
it settles down like swarms of
locusts. Its shining whiteness blinds
the eyes, the mind marvels at its
steady fall. He scatters frost like salt;
it shines like blossoms on the thornbush.
He sends cold northern blasts
that harden the ponds like solid ground,
Spreads a crust over every body of water,
and clothes each pool with a coat of armor.

Sirach 43:11-20

With his breath God brings the frost,
and the broad waters congeal.

Job 37:10

Out of whose womb comes the ice, and
who gives the hoarfrost its birth in the
skies, When the waters lie covered as
though with stone that holds captive
the surface of the deep?

Job 38:29-30

Praise the LORD from the earth...
you sea monsters and all the deeps of the sea;
Lightning and hail, snow and thick clouds,
storm wind that fulfills his command.

Psalms 148:7-8

Take Action

- Raise awareness in your faith community about the issues surrounding the Canadian Arctic and how they relate to the rest of the world.
- Research groups and organizations that are working in the North and find ways your community can support them.



Initiatives

Sheila Watt-Cloutier: One Woman's Story of Protecting Her Culture, the Arctic and the Whole Planet! [Human Trauma and Climate Trauma As One | Sheila Watt-Cloutier | TEDxYYC - YouTube](#)

[The right to be cold: The challenge facing the Inuit \(w/ Sheila Watt-Cloutier\) - YouTube](#)

[The Right to Be Cold | CBC Books](#)

ECOLOGY NORTH: "Ecology North was founded in 1971 by a group of dedicated volunteers in response to arsenic pollution in Yellowknife. Since then our mandate has expanded considerably with projects tackling issues like climate change, waste reduction, water quality and food sovereignty." ([Ecology North](#))

[INUIT CIRCUMPOLAR COUNCIL](#) (ICC): "ICC is the body that represents all Inuit from Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka on matters of international importance."



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Communicate

- Set up a kiosk at the entrance to the hall or church where your community gathers. Display information about the Arctic, with emphasis on the Canadian Arctic. This can educate your community about the effects of climate change and its consequences on northern ecosystems.
- Use social media and your church bulletin to communicate your concerns about the importance of permafrost, sea levels, ice caps and northern communities.
- Use the poster included in this Season of Creation toolkit in your newsletter, on social media, and throughout your church where your community gathers, like the kitchen, the hall, the bathroom etc.
- Invite a guest speaker to share their experiences or messages about the importance of the North and northern communities.
- Voice your concern to your elected officials at all levels of government about the importance of Arctic Canada. September 15th is International Democracy Day, a timely reminder to communicate with relevant decision makers either through written letters, emails, or phone calls.

