

CULTURALLY SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT FOR NORTHERN PEOPLES

Canadian Experiences, Russian Opportunities

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Russia is going through a period of profound transformation, from a socialist to a capitalist economy. This transformation plays out differently for different regions and peoples of Russia, but the Indigenous peoples in the North are now faced with some of their greatest challenges — and perhaps opportunities. During the Soviet period, these peoples struggled to retain elements of their traditional lifestyles, cultures and economies; now that the Soviet system is collapsing, such traditional elements may become more important, for two reasons: there is a pressing need for “subsistence income” with the breakdown of Soviet-provided services, and there is an opportunity to develop more freely along culturally appropriate lines. Northern peoples will need to make decisions about how to develop their economic systems. Without State-provided infrastructure and employment, regional resources and skills will be critical to northern livelihoods. Soviet models of economic development have been devastating to northern Indigenous ways of life — will northern peoples now be able to raise from the ashes their own culturally sensitive, economically viable and environmentally sustainable livelihoods?

The Second International Working Seminar on Problems of Northern Peoples¹, held at the University of Northern British Columbia in May 1996, provided an opportunity for Russian and North American academics, Indigenous peoples, and government representatives, to exchange experiences on the subject of northern ethnic peoples’ economic development. This paper is based on one presented at that workshop, concerning experiences with traditionally based economic initiatives from the Northwest Territories (NWT) of Canada. Subsequent discussion at the workshop touched on the potential for such initiatives to benefit northern Russian Indigenous peoples. Impressions from that discussion have been included here, not as a comprehensive review of the Russian situation, but as an indication of possible future directions.

RUSSIAN CONCERNS REGARDING CULTURALLY SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Russia and Canada share some characteristics in their northern territories; demanding climatic/environmental conditions; remoteness from metropolitan centres in the southern regions by vir-

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tue of distance and poorer transportation/communication links; significant Indigenous populations struggling to maintain their cultures; rich renewable and non-renewable resources which have often been extracted in industrial-scale developments; northern Indigenous peoples who have benefitted little from the extraction of these resources from their homelands, and who are often marginalized and poor; and decision-making and financial support dependent on officials or others in distant centres.

As in Canada's North, many of the Russian Indigenous peoples still practice a traditionally based economy based on hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering. This economy provides a crucial element of peoples' earnings, in the form of food and materials, as well as cash (Berger, 1978; Ames et al, 1988; Usher & Weihs, 1989; Espiritu, 1997; Fondahl, 1998), and is often complemented by other cash infusions from wage work or transfer payments. A fundamental concern, in both regions, even while modern industrial or resource extraction developments may go on, is that the traditional lifestyle must be able to continue. Indigenous peoples' ways of life, cultures and economies are adapted to their northern environments, and are crucial to the survival of their societies. "Without reindeer, there will be no Even. For hundreds of years, the Even have been a people only through the traditional way of life with reindeer" (Robbek²).

However, Indigenous peoples in northern Russia have had to struggle to maintain their traditional ways of life and livelihood. Soviet pressures for Native absorption into industrialization programs, and the pollution and degradation from that industrialization have had destructive effects. There has been a severe reduction in the numbers of Native peoples able to participate in traditional occupations, and because of massive influxes of non-Native workers over the past decades, those Native peoples also have much reduced influence over political decisions in their own regions (Espiritu, 1997).

NORTHERN CANADIAN DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE

Tradition and Change: Development Approaches in the NWT

Historically, the economy of the Northwest Territories of Canada has included elements of resource hinterland, persistent land-based Native

economy, and welfare-dependent transitional communities (Zaslow, 1988; Bone, 1992; Elias, 1991). Earlier approaches tried to assimilate northerners into the Canadian mainstream economy; increasingly, approaches are sought which are tailored to the northern environment, geography, and cultures (Economic Development & Tourism, 1990). The traditional Native economy has persisted throughout these changes in government development policy, and has provided an important backbone for household and community economies. Now, a body of experience is beginning to be built up, which proves the potential viability of "modern" developments based on traditional resources, skills and values (Myers, 1994; Wuttunee, 1992; Elias, 1991).

When northern Canadian Native peoples were moved into permanent settlements, it was assumed by government administrators that they would take up the life-style and work-style of southern Canada. The traditional way of life was seen as a dying mode, and development programs sought industrial initiatives that would create regular, wage-paying employment (Sivertz, 1961; Zaslow, 1988).

In fact, this anticipated life-style/work-style revolution did not occur. In fact, relatively few long-term developments were generated in remote northern, Native communities, and Native peoples were often reluctant to move away from their home communities in order to take up jobs elsewhere (Whittington, 1985). Certainly, some regional centres have fared better, with economies developing on the basis of government employment, transportation networks, and service centres for outlying regions, for example. In some places, large-scale resource developments did occur, providing employment and income to local peoples, but more often, employment went to workers from southern Canada. In many cases, these developments were relatively short-lived, drawing people away from their traditional land-based livelihoods to jobs as heavy equipment operators for instance, then leaving them without jobs or the accustomed cash income when the project closed down. Beaufort Sea/Mackenzie Delta oil and gas exploration and development were responsible for intensive economic activity while they lasted, but when the world price of oil fell in 1985, the oil companies left town, leaving no lasting economic legacy which would continue without the oil activity. In hindsight, the NWT Legislative Assembly's Special Committee on the Northern Economy (1989)

characterized this period as “economic growth rather than economic development.”

The second reason is that, contrary to predictions, the traditional, land-based Native economy has not ceased to exist. Indeed, research in the late 1980s showed that 80% of Native households in the NWT had at least one active harvester, and that those harvesters were earning, on average, \$10–15,000 in “domestic income,” that is, food, materials and fuel used by the household alone (Ames et al, 1988). For many Native communities of the North, there are few other options for employment and income in the formal, wage-paying sector — in a community of 800 there might only be 50 jobs, many of them often held by workers from the South. Thus, “working” on the land — hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering and processing — is extremely important for providing income in the form of food, furs, and other materials that the household can use, and perhaps sell in part. This importance is not just in economic terms, however; social/cultural values still place high regard on harvesting and processing skills, and on sharing the produce of one’s harvest.

Occasionally, over the past decades, there have been experiments with development approaches in northern Canada that were more in tune with Native resource use patterns, notably the Special Agricultural and Rural Development Agreement, which supported primary producers and renewable resource-based projects. The more common approach was to try to mimic the western, European economic model — and with varied success (Seguin, 1991; Clancy, 1985). In the past decade, however, since the decline of the Beaufort oil play, government programs, Native communities and Native development corporations have been experimenting with development of renewable resource-based enterprises, as a way of providing economic opportunities more in keeping with Native culture and the northern environment (Myers, 1994; Department of Renewable Resources, 1993).

Developing Renewable Resources for Northern Communities

A review of six federal and territorial government programs, operating between 1978 and 1992, found 473 projects that had attempted to develop commercial enterprises based on traditionally based renewable resource uses (Figure 1 lists the sectors of interest). These projects

FIGURE 1
Renewable resource sectors

Country food
Commercial fishing
Forestry
Fur, leather, by-products and crafts
Tourism
Sport hunting
Sport fishing

received total funding of nearly \$20 million (Myers, 1994), a small amount compared to the billions of dollars of funding contributed by the federal government to mining or oil and gas exploration and development. But this modest sum has had a respectable impact. A sample of 70 projects (15% of the total number funded) shows that 52 of the 70 projects were aimed at actually starting up or supporting an active commercial enterprise (rather than simply doing a feasibility study), and that 73% of them were continuing to operate at the time of the survey (they ranged in “age” from 2 to 25 years). This compares very favourably with the success rate of new small business starts in southern Canada (Gardner, n.d.). The sample included a range of initiatives, such as hunting, processing and distributing a variety of country foods; fisheries projects of various sizes; harvesting and processing wood products for fuel or lumber; hide processing and crafts supply, production and distribution; outfitting, accomodating and occupying tourists, sport hunters and fishermen.

Before we look at the experiences and characteristics of successful projects, it is useful to review an approach to categorizing northern communities that was adopted by the Government of the NWT (GNWT). Its Economic Development Strategy (Economic Development & Tourism, 1990) defined three categories of community (see Figure 2). These recognize that each type of community has certain characteristics, needs and perhaps preferences regarding lifestyle and economy. As can be predicted from their descriptions, the characteristics of these communities have some influence on the nature of successful projects.

From the sample of commercial enterprises analyzed in this study, it appears that Level III communities, where job needs are greatest

and traditional pursuits are most important, have undertaken the largest proportion of active renewable resource development projects in this sample. Level I communities, on the other hand, which have more diversified economies, seem to have been more tentative about renewable resource development, as the majority of their projects in this sample were only feasibility studies.

Almost three quarters of the projects in level III communities were undertaken by new businesses, which may be related to their success — only 62% were continuing at the time of the survey. Conversely, only half of the projects in level II communities were undertaken by new businesses, and this group enjoyed 81% continuation. In level I communities, two-thirds of projects were by new businesses, and three quarters are continuing to operate.

What Makes Enterprises Work?

A review of results from this sample of 70 NWT projects shows that a number of characteristics appear to have an influence on the success of renewable resource enterprises, and on their appropriateness to northern Native communities (Myers, 1994). Below, are recommendations regarding such renewable resource development, based on the northern Canadian experiences. These were presented to the Workshop on the Problems of Northern Peoples, and elicited some discussion of what might also be useful in northern Russia.

1. Use Indigenous peoples' traditional resources and skills as the foundation for community economic development

Renewable resource-based development projects can provide an important cash supplement to the domestic income that Indigenous peoples earn from the land, where these projects are desirable and acceptable to Indigenous groups, and where they can be sustained by the resource base, not conflicting with existing subsistence or other uses. By developing the resources and skills that people have used down through the ages it is possible to work from a solid foundation which people can easily grasp. Resource capacities, technologies for harvesting and processing, and resource management factors are known, understood and respected.

Experience in northern North America has shown a continuing preference by Native peoples there, for pursuing land-based livelihoods (Bone, 1992; Kruse, 1991; Hobart, 1982; Wenzel, 1991). Often, industrial work/wages are taken up in order to earn needed cash, but as soon as sufficient earnings are made, people return to harvesting activities. Even those holding full-time wage-jobs continue to be actively involved in land-based pursuits in their free-time (Usher & Weihs, 1989; MacLachlan et al, 1996). Indeed, northern Canadian mines have consistently had trouble engaging their quotas of Native workers in their workforces. There is always speculation in some quarters that younger generations will

not pursue the traditional lifestyle, but hunting and related skills are still much-valued parts of Native cultures, so that modern commercial enterprises which draw on the culturally based values and skills may provide a desirable option for wage-paying work with meaning.

2. Build in traditional as well as innovative approaches

If these kinds of enterprises are building on the traditional Native economy, should the enterprises stay traditionally oriented? The NWT projects ranged from very simple, traditional activities, such as collecting firewood for sale, or running a Native-style tourist camp, to very innovative ones, such as collecting sea cucumbers (a previously unused resource) for sale to Japan, or processing game meat into salamis, pastramis and other products. The results seem to indicate that enterprises which combined tradition and innovation fared better than those which leaned to one extreme or the other. The largest segment of the sample were projects which used modern, technological approaches; these achieved 67% continuation. The sub-sample of projects which used very traditional approaches or techniques

achieved only 50% continuation. However, those projects which combined elements of traditional and modern approaches achieved 75–88% continuation. Might it be that combining traditionally rooted skills or resources with some innovations appeals to community residents who are seeking to combine new economic opportunities with their traditional lives and knowledge?

In our workshop, it was noted that industrial-type forestry practices had less favourable consequences for Indigenous people than did traditional family-based forestry endeavours, the former being associated with safety problems, minimal local economic benefits, and exploitation of the people (Kogontchin). It was suggested that Native families who live “back in the woods” fare better despite relying on lower technology. These families may still require government assistance with product transportation and processing, but their less technology-intensive livelihoods serve their needs adequately.

Technology has been assumed to be necessary for the development of northern economies; this may be so, but experience seems to suggest that some care should be taken, to ensure that: the technology is simple enough to

FIGURE 3

Renewable Resource Traditions and Opportunities in Russia

Traditional reindeer herding is still viable and important to northern peoples, providing clothing, food, shelter and cash income; it could also support further commercial development, and blend tradition and innovation. All products of the harvest are currently used — antler, glands, skins, hooves and meat. Further international markets exist or can be developed for many of these. For instance, one small enterprise has begun producing reindeer skin sleeping bags for herders, state hunters and “hobby hunters,” using the by-product of the meat harvest (Volgin, Fondahl).

Fur production (sable, fox, squirrel) has also been a long-time tradition of northern Russian peoples; though affected by European boycotts, this sector is still very important to Indigenous peoples’ livelihoods (Robbek). Fur farming is felt to be alien to the Indigenous traditions, though it could be useful in the transition from older lifestyles to more market-oriented ones.

Fisheries are also important both for subsistence needs and commercial markets. They still use “primitive technology” — drying, salting, freezing and smoking, though the sector is frequently dominated by non-locals. More modern technology may be required to augment this sector in the North (Volgin). Besides food production fish-skin clothing was a traditional product that it might be possible to develop for current markets.

Berries, mushrooms and medicinal plants could achieve commercial importance, given appropriate research, knowledge or marketing. Indigenous traditional knowledge about these kinds of products, particularly medicines, must not be pirated by corporations or others involved in the development process (Erikson).

Arts and crafts have the potential to generate cash income, given adequate supplies and accessible markets. A Native network of crafts producers and marketers was suggested as one way to give crafts-products better exposure (Erikson).

be manageable/affordable by the people using it; people are adequately trained; the technology is "clean"; and it is acceptable to local peoples. Workshop participants supported a combination of traditional products and innovation as a means to achieve appropriate economic development, and support family and locally based subsistence activities.

3. Support management structures and options which fit Indigenous cultures and practices.

Government-funded economic development programs in northern Canada have traditionally encouraged private ownership of business enterprises, but it appears that this is not always appropriate or helpful. In level I communities of the NWT (see Figure 2), where there is a more developed formal economy, as well as a body of experience, role models and advisory assistance, private entrepreneurs undertook 78% of the projects in the sample; in level II communities the proportion was 70%. These projects achieved 67% and 75% continuation. By comparison, in level III communities, where there is less business experience or access to advice/assistance, private entrepreneurs on their own undertook 35% of the sampled projects, and only 29% of those continued to operate.

Conversely, in Level III communities, community-based groups (Native and community development corporations, and Hunters and Trappers Associations) have been responsible for a larger proportion of renewable resource enterprises, which have achieved 71–86% continuation rates. This may reflect a culturally based feeling that resources are not "owned" by individuals, but are a common endowment; as well, differing degrees of business expertise probably play a part.

In the Russian context, the *obschina* may be a natural organization for small-scale renewable resource developments. These family-based groupings, newly recognized by Russian legislation as the basis of Native social/economic organization, have their traditional livelihoods as a foundation for further development (Fondahl, 1995). Should they be given clear, recognized, protected rights to land and resources, credit, and decision-making powers, these *obschinas* could be the locus for resource-based developments that complement existing land uses and Indigenous needs. Workshop participants emphasized the important role that *obschinas* could

play in northern Indigenous development and resource management, especially where an entire community has organized into an *obschina*, or when several *obschinas* have come together in association, such as in a Joint Stock Society (*aktsionoe obshchestvo*), which coordinates selling of the group's products.

In essence, the *obschinas* can be compared to level III communities in the NWT, as these are relatively remote, relying on a land-based livelihood, and wish to preserve aspects of the traditional way of life. In larger centres, or towns, characteristics of level I and II communities pertain; transportation linkages may be better, there may be a more developed industrial or commercial base, or even wage-paying jobs, though little experience with enterprise development to date. These northern nodes are going to be the first to benefit from a diffusion of expertise from larger, better-connected centres of Russia, while remote communities will be the last to access expertise or capital. Like some NWT communities, people in many Russian communities lack direct experience with enterprise development or marketing. Participants at the workshop identified the need to make legal and economic advice available to the *obschinas* to overcome this.

4. Don't expect to get rich

It must be noted that many of the projects reviewed in the NWT are small or seasonal; they provide some cash income, often a relatively small amount, which the entrepreneur may use to support his or her other, traditional economy activities, or perhaps another enterprise. So these enterprises may not make their participants rich, but they do help to support the continuing traditional economy, and probably supply the foundation for future economic activities.

With the perception of high unemployment, it is perhaps tempting to pursue large "solutions" through larger development projects, but in fact, the results show that smaller projects are more likely to survive. At least three quarters of those worth less than \$30,000 have continued to operate, and only a third of those have received subsequent government funding. On the other hand, 63% of those projects costing between \$30,000 and \$90,000 have survived, with 80% receiving further funding; 69% of those worth from \$110,000 to over \$1M have continued to operate, two-thirds of them requiring additional funding. Though the better viability of smaller

projects is antithetical to the usual Soviet approach to development, this finding was a welcome idea to the Russian participants at the workshop.

The workshop discussion covered a variety of opinions about financing, as could be expected from a post-Soviet economy and culture in transition, as well as from a North American one also, arguably, in some flux. One perspective (Volgin) was that the government should continually subsidize Indigenous enterprises, new technology and training. Another view was that reliable credit, rather than subsidies would be more important over the long term (Balzer). From an Indigenous point of view (Robbek) came the question of whether Indigenous enterprises should even have to be profitable. From a North American viewpoint, financial support was perceived as important to the start-up of enterprises, but dependence on government or any outside funding undercuts self-reliance and pride, and makes people more vulnerable to outside-imposed changes which threaten their livelihoods; as well, it seems that governments are unlikely to have adequate funds available to them for such on-going subsidization (Keel, Myers). Given the uncertainty of government funding, the ability of people to support their own needs, in terms of food, clothing, housing and cash, is crucial.

5. Focus on local/regional markets, especially for commodities

The location of markets for the NWT enterprises has a clear impact on their success. Government economic development policy has often stressed the importance of exporting northern products, in order to bring in "foreign" exchange to the region. However, the NWT experience with "export" (to southern Canadian or international) markets is divided, according to whether projects produced commodities (meat, fish, fur & other harvest by-products, wood and arts/crafts), or provided services (tourism, sport hunting and fishing outfitters/guides).

Surprisingly, the commodities producers were more likely to succeed if they focussed on *northern* markets. This makes sense; they can produce goods to be used by their local or regional neighbours, or which are valued by other territorial residents; and they know the market, and can monitor changes in it quite easily. Northern producers have often been stung by changes in markets for their goods abroad, which

they were powerless to control—for instance, the highly variable prices for furs dictated by fashion houses in the US and Europe, then the decimation of the fur market by European boycotts, and the arctic char fishery undercut by cheaper farmed salmon from Scotland and Norway. This undermining can occur from within as well; in northern Buryatiya (Siberia) an ambitious reindeer antler processing enterprise was launched, but after one very profitable year, collapsed because of a market glut, as producers all over Siberia also entered the business (Fondahl).

Serving northern markets cuts down on the problems of transportation, timing and expense that are inevitable headaches when dealing with distant southern markets. While it does not bring money *in* to the regional economy, it can cut down on the leakage of money *out* of the region to pay for imported goods. Furthermore, serving northern markets can avoid the problem of dependence upon southern consumers of "unique northern products," who can, unfortunately, be enticed away by new "unique products" from other parts of the world.

On the other hand, the service sectors in the NWT study (tourism, sport hunting and fishing guides and outfitters), were obviously aimed at out-of-territory customers, and enjoyed an 83% continuation rate (though 53% received subsequent funding). In the workshop, it was suggested that in Russia, Indigenous cultures, lifestyles and wilderness access could be developed in the form of tourist or educational camps, schools or institutes to teach non-Native peoples about Native cultures, or about the wilderness and ecology (Murtha). Tourism, sport hunting and even "photo-hunting" are growing ways for remote, Indigenous communities in other parts of the world to augment their local economies. This kind of development must be controlled by the Native peoples themselves, but as holders of the knowledge and skills, they are in a good position to present this kind of experience to others. While northern Russia has opened up to sport hunting and fishing recently, Native peoples are not benefitting, again because of a lack of recognition of their land rights (Robbek).

As with commodities producers, however, tourism sectors run the risk of having their unique "product" supplanted by new, equally unique adventures in other parts of the world.

A focus on local and regional markets was supported by the workshop, as a way to ensure

long-term viability of local economies, but it was recognized that this would require development of local and regional infrastructure, to support transportation, stores and marketing outlets, and warehouses. The cut in Soviet subsidies for transportation of goods is likely to especially affect remote northern communities attempting to connect to distant markets or suppliers.

6. Ensure that all resource users (subsistence/domestic and commercial) are included in resource management

The achievement of economic initiatives as outlined above, relies upon effective resource planning and management. An obvious, fundamental need seems to be identification of resource development opportunities, and the interests of northern peoples—all of this development planning must be done in consultation with northern peoples and resource-users themselves. In many cases, resource information (from scientific and traditional sources) will be required in order to determine sustainable development options, and market development may also be necessary. Further, it is crucial that all users of the resources being developed or affected by development are included in management and decision-making about those resources, lands and developments. This ensures that new ventures do not destroy existing ones, or threaten the potential for others.

The question of whether energy resources should be developed on Native lands and contribute to their economic development was touched on during the workshop; it was felt to be a question that each Indigenous group would have to answer for themselves. Certainly, these communities need to be included in impact identification and mitigation, compensation and management control so that energy development does not destroy other economic activities.

Should other forms of development be carried out on Native lands, some benefit can be retained for them if they have the ability to issue licences and leases; this can generate fees for the Native peoples, as well as ensure that they have a voice in the terms and conditions governing the nature of development projects. For instance, oil and gas or other energy developments, forestry developments, or sport hunting could be controlled by a licencing system which allowed Native peoples to manage those activities on

their lands, and to charge a realistic fee for their use (Keel).

People also lose economic advantage if their resources are just taken away to be processed elsewhere; a system could be designed in which a percentage of the benefit, or a royalty payment would be paid back to the *obshchiny* or responsible government for resources extracted and processed elsewhere.

The obvious foundation to all of this is legally recognized rights to and control over Native lands and resources by Native peoples. This will allow them to protect or develop their cultures and traditional lifestyles as well as new, appropriate economic opportunities.

CONCLUSIONS

Clearly, northern Russia and northern Canada share characteristics of environment, geography, and economic needs for their Indigenous peoples. As Russia evolves toward a market/capitalist economy, lessons from the NWT may be even more pertinent to the Russian North. That Indigenous entrepreneurs can modify their traditional livelihoods into commercial enterprises promises some benefits for northern Native communities whose other economic options may be limited, and whose preferences, in any case, may be to retain elements of their traditional lifestyles. The NWT experience shows the potential for culturally appropriate forms of development. Though they are market-oriented and capitalist in outline, they may still be informed by the Native cultures in which they are rooted, and take on forms of management and resource use patterns that are acceptable to Native values. These alternative forms of development may not generate large revenues, or to replace other forms of development, but they can be crucially important to subsistence at the family and community level.

Through out the workshop, it was illustrated and emphasized by participants that control of land, resources and intellectual property, by *obshchinas* or other Indigenous groups, is necessary in order to ensure that developments are appropriate to local environments, cultures and needs, and to ensure that local peoples benefit from any developments. Indigenous peoples need autonomy to formulate their own agendas and decision-making processes regarding their lands, their uses and development. Removal of intermediaries in the processes of development and

funding would ensure that funds get to the people who need them, and that they are used for the intended purposes.

Repeatedly, the workshop raised the importance of legal clarification and support for Russia's northern peoples on a number of issues: land rights and status of northern Indigenous peoples; ownership and inheritance rights for ethnic groups and others; protection of land and environment; mechanisms for self-determination; the status of territorial administrative units (villages, counties, districts) for ethnic groups; support for Native businesses and *obshchinas*. Jurisdictional issues occur at the local, regional and national levels and need to be resolved.

Government assistance is still required for development initiatives in northern Russia, ranging from simple needs such as local and regional infrastructure in the form of transportation, stores, warehouses and marketing outlets, to broader support programs such as health care, education funding, technical assistance, training, and transportation.

Fundamentally, there is a need to create sustainable livelihoods for northern Indigenous peoples of Russia. Experience in northern Canada illustrates the potential for culturally based, renewable resource enterprises to contribute to the economies of northern Native communities. Such opportunities exist in Russia, and could be augmented by improved resource information, attention to traditional knowledge, skills and values, protection of the environment, resources and resource-users, provision of supporting services in transportation and marketing, and confirmation of Indigenous peoples' land and resource rights. As the State system changes, such development could be critically important to both the commercial and subsistence livelihoods of northern peoples.

NOTES

1. The first working seminar was convened by Goskomsever in Moscow, in the summer of 1995. The second seminar was supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Circumpolar Liaison Office of the Canadian Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada and the International Programmes Office of the University of Northern British Columbia. Views expressed here are those of the author, and not necessarily of any of the supporting organizations.
2. Names without dates refer to statements by workshop participants, whose names and

affiliations are given at the end of the reference section.

3. Russian participants in the UNBC workshop found this categorization of communities a useful tool for understanding needs, and designing development approaches. Indigenous communities in Russia also vary in their size, traditionality, remoteness, resource access and economic infrastructure; it makes sense that development opportunities or policies will vary for each different kind of situation. At the same time, these communities are most closely linked to traditional skills and resources, and are home to peoples who have the best knowledge of them.

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