

Rural Governance in the Canadian Periphery

Lessons Learned for Regional Development

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*Regional Development Policy –
Challenges, Choices, and Recipients
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Overview

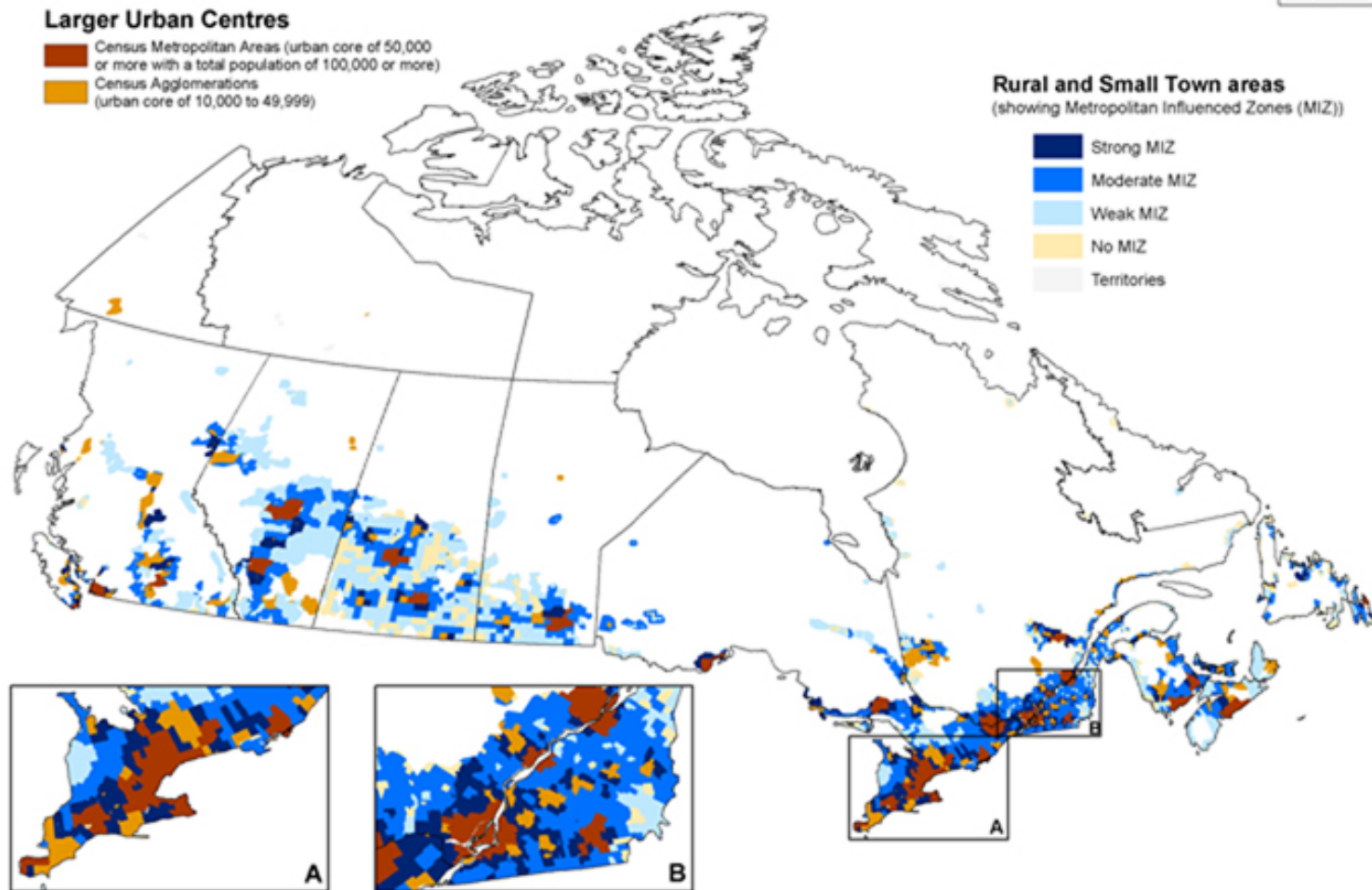
- Identification of the Canadian periphery
- Canadian Context of rural governance
- Six emerging themes
- Implications of emerging themes
- Summary

Identifying the Canadian Periphery

- Multiple dichotomies to describe the Canadian periphery
 - Rural – Urban
 - Heartland – Hinterland
 - Core - Periphery
- No universal accepted definition
- Characteristics include:
 - Small, aging, and declining populations (>10,000)
 - Out migration of youth
 - Large distances to urban areas
 - Natural resource based economies

Metropolitan Influenced Zones (MIZ) in Rural and Small Town Canada, 2006

using the Statistical Area Classification



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Map produced by the Remote Sensing and Geospatial Analysis Section (RSGA), Agriculture Division, Statistics Canada, 2008

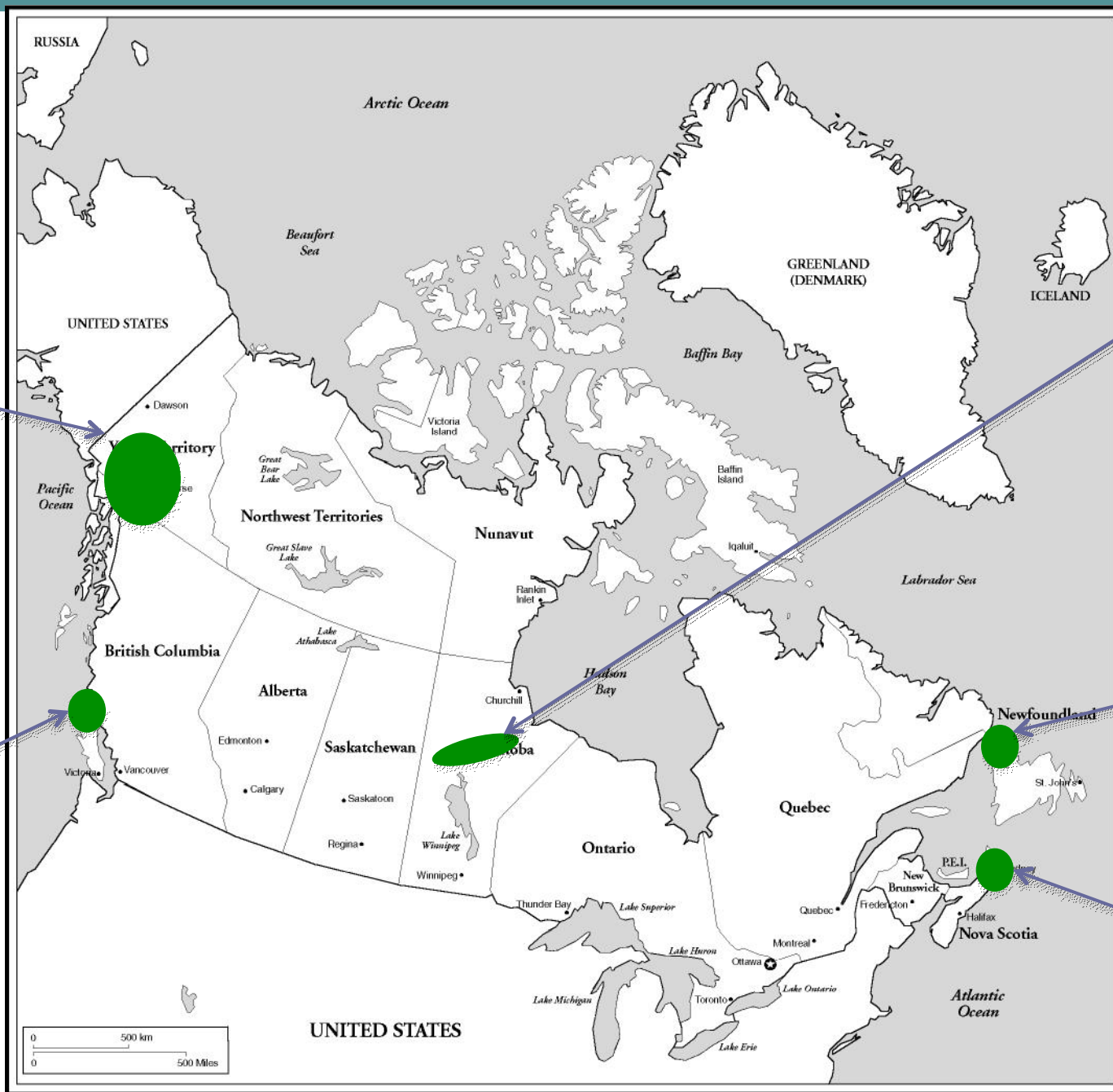


Governance in Canada Periphery

- No single government department responsible for communities in the periphery
- Governance has emerged in the Canadian periphery
 - Perceived abdication of government responsibilities being picked up at the community/regional level
 - De-concentration of power
 - Shift in jurisdictional rights

Yukon Regional Round Table

Mount Waddington CFDC



Bayline

Northern Peninsula

Bras d'Or

Overview of the Case Study Regions

Governance Initiative	Approximate Population	Number of Communities	Members	Focus
Bras d'Or	22,000	247	First Nations led network model	Resource and env'l management
Bayline Regional Round Table	3,000	6	Elected Mayors and Chief	Northern transportation, food security
Mount Waddington CFDC	6,457	27	Municipalities, First Nations, labour, business	Economic development, capacity building
Northern Peninsula	15,000	55	Joint Mayors' Council, Regional Council, Economic Development Agencies	Advocacy in tourism, transportation
Yukon Regional Round Table	22,000	13	Two members per community/First Nation	Regional cooperation capacity building, tourism



Themes Emerging

- Partnerships
- Communication
- Collaboration and shared power
- Scale
- Capacity building
- Evaluation

Themes Emerging

- Partnerships
 - Communication
 - Collaboration and shared power
 - Scale
 - Capacity building
 - Evaluation
- Importance of formal and informal partnerships
 - Multi-level engagement required from communities, community-serving organizations, government departments, academic institutions, and the private sector
 - Commitment by individuals and organizations

Themes Emerging

- Partnerships
- **Communication**
- Collaboration and shared power
- Scale
- Capacity building
- Evaluation

- Need for enhanced communications within communities and across scales
- Distance enhances the role of communications
- Need for new forms of communications to bridge distance; often these communications methods require enhanced technology

Themes Emerging

- Partnerships
- Communication
- Collaboration and shared power
- Scale
- Capacity building
- Evaluation

- Short-term projects or issue specific arrangements provide a solid start, however, need to move beyond to more formal arrangements.
- Horizontal and vertical collaboration is essential in the Canadian periphery
- Types of power

Themes Emerging

- Partnerships
 - Communication
 - Collaboration and shared power
 - **Scale**
 - Capacity building
 - Evaluation
- Geography in the periphery is a significant consideration
 - Region represents an avenue for new forms of governance
 - Size can be overcome with communications, technology, and trust

Themes Emerging

- Partnerships
 - Communication
 - Collaboration and shared power
 - Scale
 - **Capacity building**
 - Evaluation
- New capacities required for governance initiatives
 - Leadership
 - Financial management
 - Learning and innovation
 - Conflict resolution
 - Partnership management

Themes Emerging

- Partnerships
- Communication
- Collaboration and shared power
- Scale
- Capacity building
- Evaluation

- Evidence based decisions need to be made; often evidence is lacking.
- Trying to place evaluation within short-term and fiscal years is difficult, or impossible.
- Learning-focused evaluation provides important opportunities for enhancement of governance structures and process over time.



Implications of Findings

- Implications for local and regional development
 - Transitioning from competitive to collaborative relationships with neighbouring communities and First Nations
 - Challenges related to legitimacy and accountability
- Implications for policy makers
 - Require new mechanisms for working with communities/regions as partners, not clients
 - Horizontal management across departments is required and needs to be sustained over time
- Implications for researchers
 - Need for a better understanding of new regionalism in the Canadian context



Summary

- Considerable focus on *the region* as an appropriate scale for development in Canada
- New governance initiatives built on old relationships
- Challenges related to shifting power to communities from government



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