



Best Practices in Collaborative Research with Northern Communities: A Synopsis from Early Career Researchers

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Abstract

Combining scientific and traditional knowledge is crucial to understand environmental systems across circum-Arctic regions, where climate change is most striking. However, building collaborative partnerships between visiting scientists and local, indigenous traditional knowledge holders in Northern communities presents challenges. The workshop “Community-based Research: Do`s and Don`ts of Arctic Research” was organized as an IASC cross-cutting initiative at ICOP2016 in Potsdam, Germany, to facilitate dialogue between Early Career Researchers (ECRs) and Northern residents. This workshop resulted in a diverse list of considerations and sustainable practices to improve traditional and scientific knowledge exchange, and collaborative Northern research. An extensive list of positive (Do`s) and few negative recommendations (Don`ts) was generated together with ECRs and Arctic representatives. Many good ideas on research design, active communication and community involvement developed from fruitful discussions. This study provides an example of bottom-up strategy development in order to enhance knowledge transfer between scientists and northern indigenous communities.

Keywords: science communication; community-based research; citizen science; Early Career Researchers; PYRN workshop; ICOP2016

Introduction

Research in Arctic and Sub-Arctic environments presents unique challenges and obstacles, in particular when research is undertaken near indigenous communities by non-local, non-indigenous researchers. Non-local researchers may be less familiar with local norms, customs, social systems and protocols, leading to inevitable challenges for the scientists, and the communities.

The Idea

Fellows of the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) initiated an IASC cross-cutting activity to facilitate

dialogue between Early Career Researchers (ECRs) and Northern residents. A workshop session on “Community-based Research: Do`s and Don`ts of Arctic Research” was organized during the Permafrost Young Researchers Workshop on 18-19 June 2016, during the 11th International Conference on Permafrost 2016 (icop2016.org) in Potsdam, Germany.

Workshop Organization and Structure

Two 90-min sessions were held in order to allow up to 60 participants to take part in the workshop. Four experts were invited to discuss their background in the context of

