

Inuit Participation in Polar Bear Governance in Nunavut: Collaboration or Cooptation?

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Room H-1252

Light lunch is provided

Over the past few decades, wildlife co-management has become the dominant approach to wildlife management in Canada's northern territories. In the Nunavut Territory, the management of this iconic species engages biologists, wildlife managers, as well as Inuit hunters and representatives from Inuit organizations. This paper addresses the question of whether the project of attaining meaningful Inuit participation in polar bear governance has been successful to date in Nunavut. Drawing on theoretical insights from actor-network theory and Foucauldian analyses of governmentality, the paper argues that the overall rationale within which polar bear governance operates in this territory remains largely based on a scientific and bureaucratic framework of resource management that poses significant barriers to the inclusion of Inuit observations, values and beliefs in research and decision-making. Potential avenues for addressing some of the challenges in the making of participatory wildlife governance are also explored.

Presented by the Department of Geography, Planning, and Environment