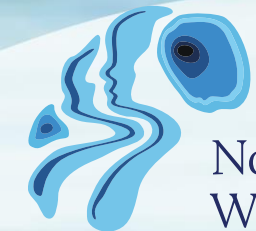


Fish as Food

Food Systems in the NWT

Andrew Spring

Wilfrid Laurier University



Northern
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www.northernwaterfutures.ca

The NWT



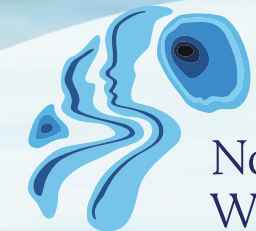
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The NWT

- Huge land mass.
- 40,000 people
- 50% of which live in Yellowknife the capital.
- Other 50% spread out amongst 32 communities
- All communities (with one exception) are connected to rivers or lakes.
- WATER plays an important role in the livelihoods of communities and their food systems.



Kakisa

- Ka'a'gee Tu First Nation
- Dehcho Region
- Community of ~50
- No store and limited services
- Year round road access



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Community Food System

- Food System relies on the harvesting of country foods to meet majority of nutritional requirements.
- Social, cultural and spiritual significance.
- Strong connection to the land.
- Sharing is a key cultural practice.



Cultural Capital

Traditional Knowledge, activities, beliefs and customs

Financial Capital

Income from wage-based economy and traditional economy or government sources (funding or assistance)

Social Capital

Social economy, building partnerships and networks

Northern Food System

Natural Capital

Ecosystem health, wildlife and country food

Political Capital

Ability to participate in decision making

Human Capital

Capacity building and leadership

Built Capital

Tools and infrastructure

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Modified from Flora et al. 2004)



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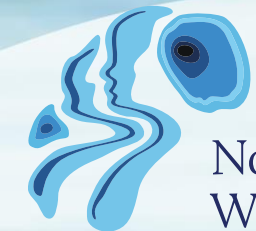
Importance of fish

- The most important food source
- Caribou and moose might be more popular, but are not always available.
- Seasonality of other foods
- BUT there is always fish.
- Some commercial fishing



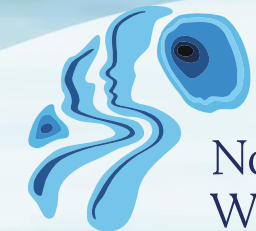
Opportunities

- Lots of lakes
- Lots of fish
- Marketable product in the territory and beyond
 - Pristine environment
- Opportunities to build more sustainable livelihoods
 - Financial capital CAN be limited in the food system
 - High cost of EVERYTHING....food, supplies,



Barriers

- Treaty and Land claims
- Land protection and governance
- Climate change



Impacts of Climate Change

Climate change impacting Natural capital

- Access and availability of country foods
- Changes to water quality and availability
- Water warming – expending more \$ to get fish
- permafrost thaw
- Weather is unpredictable - Increased risk to harvesters and infrastructure
- Contamination



Source: CBC



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Summary

- Fish IS food
- Opportunities exist to support livelihoods
- But it's complicated

