



Research aspects of Pikialasorsuaq

Parnuna Egede Dahl, Oceans North Kalaallit Nunaat

UArctic Workshop

Nuuk, April 8, 2025



Who is Oceans North Kalaallit Nunaat?

“We promote marine protection and the sustainable use of marine living resources in partnership with the Greenlandic society”

- **Environmental NGO & non-profit charitable organization**
- **Based in Nuuk, Greenland**
- **Established in 2021 by Oceans North Conservation Society**
- **Legally independent, own board**
- **Funded by international foundations**

Our Team



Jenseeraq Poulsen, Executive Director

Karen Motzfeldt, Special Advisor

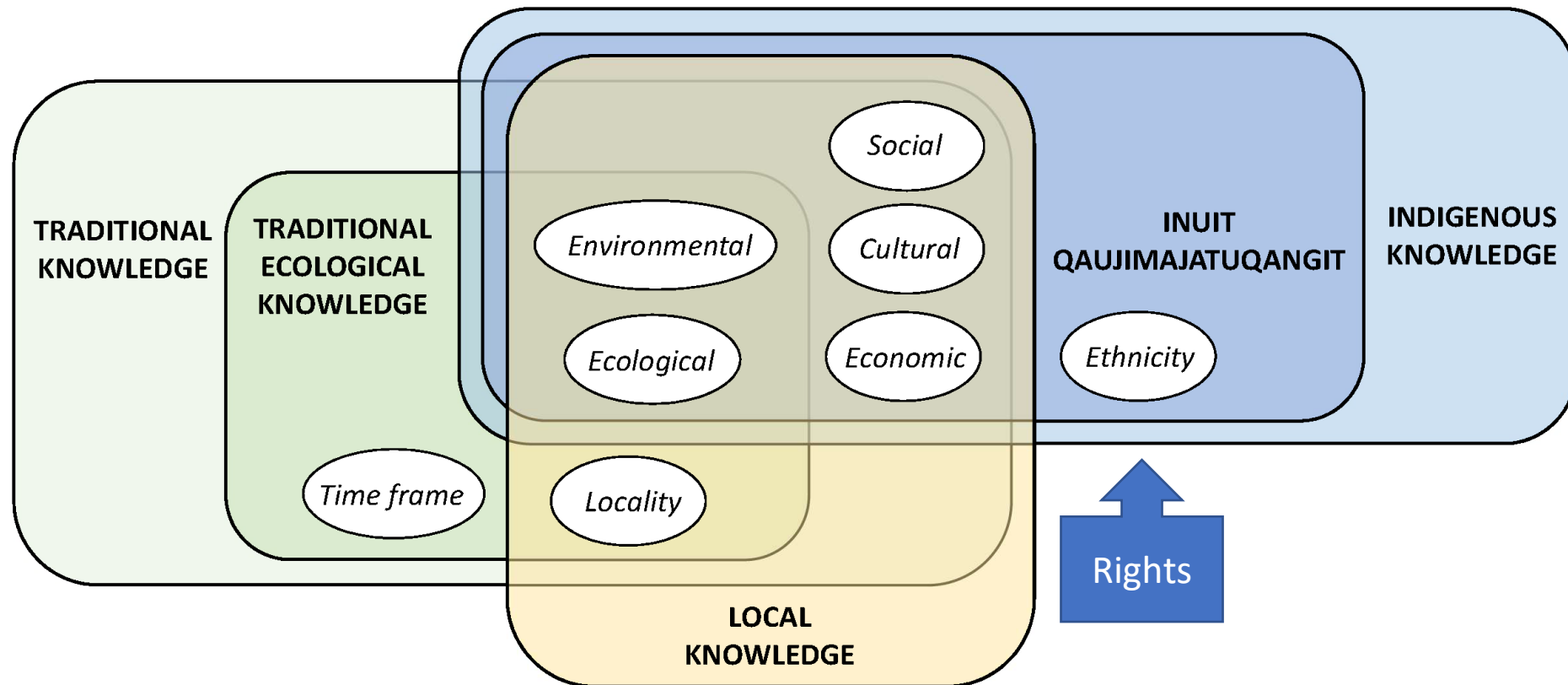
Parnuna Egede Dahl, Special Advisor

Tukumminngiaq Olsen Lyberth, Special Advisor

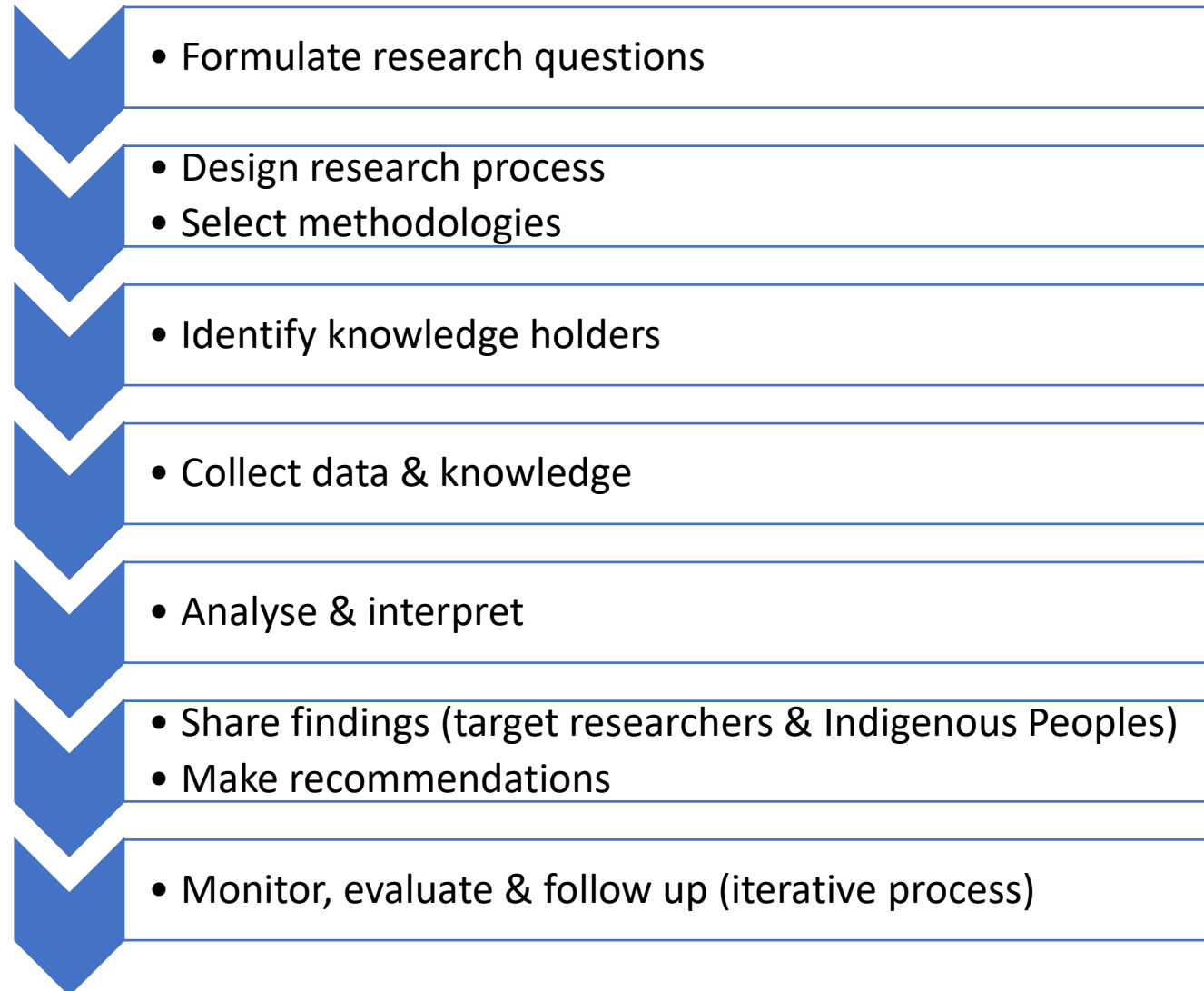
Sara Paninnguaq Lundblad, Special Advisor

Euler diagram of knowledge concepts

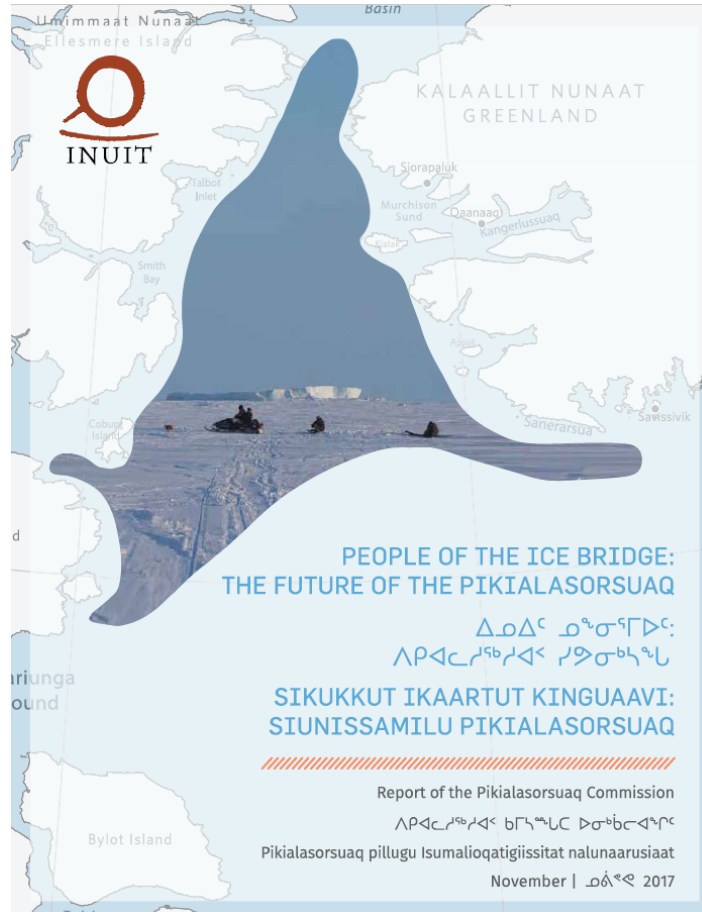
User knowledge = subset based on occupation



Co-production of knowledge



Inuit & scientific knowledge sources



- North Water Polynya Conference, CPH (Nov. 22-24, 2017)
- Pikialasorsuaq Commission report: “People of the Ice Bridge: The future of the Pikialasorsuaq” (Nov. 2017)
- NOW project: “Living resources and human societies around the North Water in the Thule area, NW Greenland” + Piniariarneq (2017)

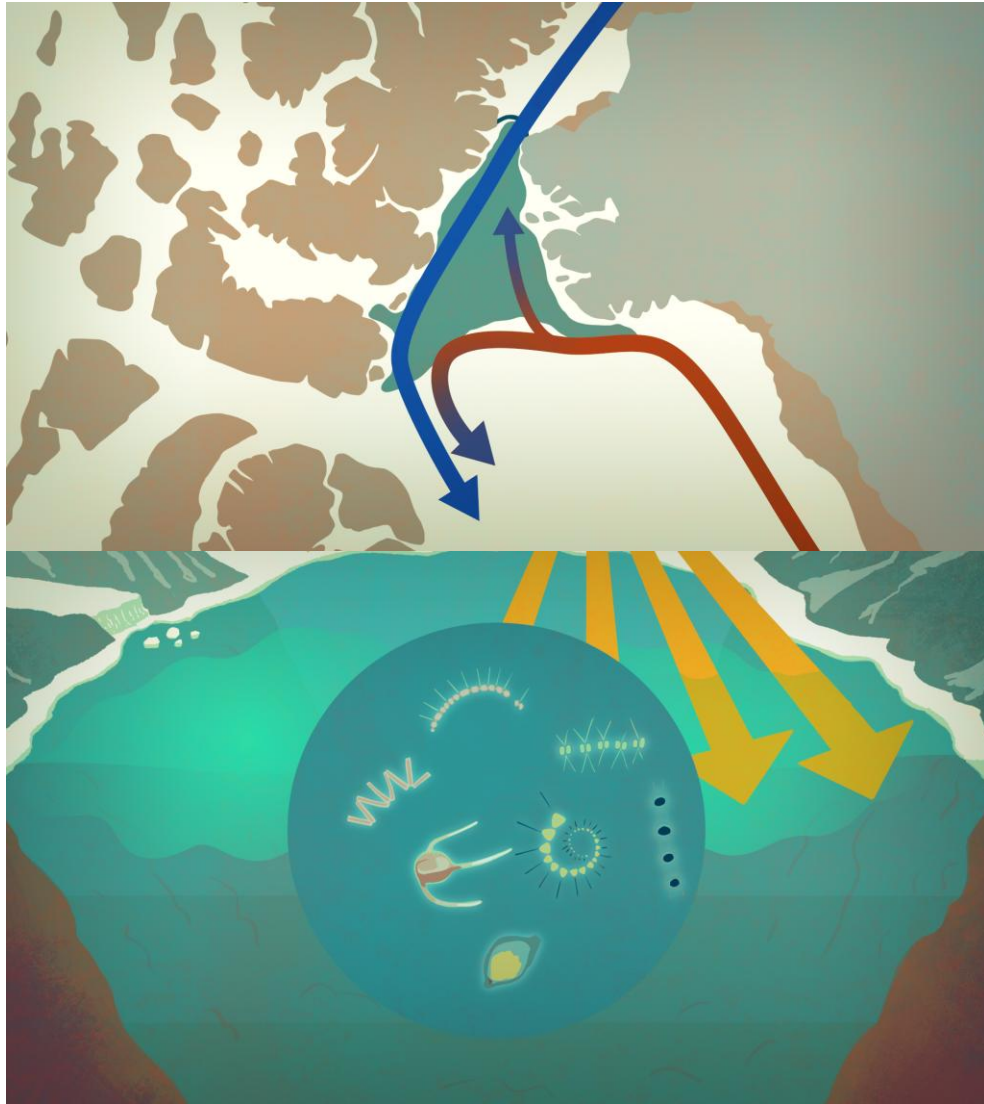
ONKN's partnership with ICC-Greenland



Corporation agreement (Jun. 6, 2024) aiming at:

- Promoting Inuit participation in management & protection of Arctic Ocean
- Safeguarding & managing sensitive ecosystems such as Pikialasorsuaq
- Ensuring ICC-Greenland's continued work to promote Inuit-led management of Pikialasorsuaq

“What is Pikialasorsuaq?” – animated video



- Released at signing ceremony of Letter of Intent between governments of Canada and Greenland (Oct. 2023)
- Science explainer: What is a polynya, how does it work, why is it important?
- https://youtu.be/t-Z_cd5iQRw?si=nPYKfsaYj6PWobgi

“The Ice Bridge” – blog posts on website



- “Monitoring the Wildlife of Pikialasorsuaq” by Fernando Ugarte (Jan. 26, 2024)
- “A Haven for Seabirds in Pikialasorsuaq” by Anders Mosbech (Apr. 8, 2024)
- “A Hotspot of Marine Biodiversity in the Arctic” by Tom Christensen (May 15, 2024)

Upcoming project on narwhal in Qaanaaq



Credit: Build Films

- **Title:** “Preserving and Promoting Sustainable Narwhal use in Qaanaaq” (2024-2026)
- **Community engagement:** Document knowledge on narwhals from community members

Upcoming project on narwhal in Qaanaaq



Credit: Build Films

- **Video production:**
Documentary highlighting sustainable practices & cultural traditions
- **Harvester knowledge exchange:**
Visits & workshops between hunters in Qaanaaq & Mittimatalik

ONKN engagement through Listening Tours



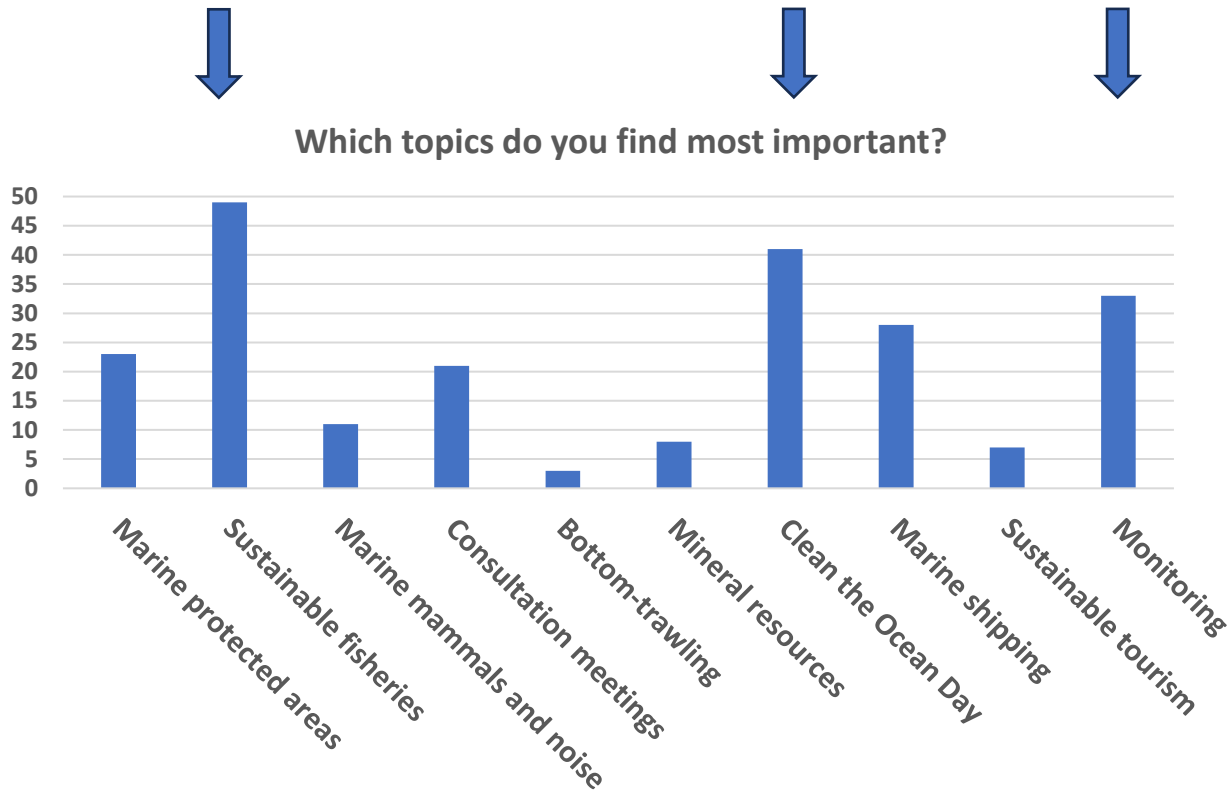
- Consultation meetings with interested citizens, local fishing & hunting associations
- Share who we are, gather input on sustainability, marine environment & fishing/hunting
- South Greenland (Sep. 2024, 15 communities, 12 days)
- Uummannaq Fjord (Aug. 2024, 6 communities, 8 days)

How are input from engagement used?

1) Sustainable fisheries

2) Clean the Ocean Day

3) Monitoring



Top-three priorities in Uummannaq Fjord

- Results not representative – indicate local interests in work areas (N=79 in Uummannaq Fjord)
- Upcoming report, incl. questionnaire analysis
- Highlights need to adapt measures to local conditions
- Informs recommendations to decision-makers & strategic work



ONKN's political work on Pikialasorsuaq

- Consultation statement on Executive Order on technical regulation of fisheries (Dec. 19, 2024) – protecting polynyas against bottom-contact fishing gear
- Consultation statement on proposed Sarvarjuaq MPA (Jan. 20, 2025) – encouraging harmonization of conservation efforts between Canada & Greenland
- ONKN part of governmental reference group for Pikialasorsuaq in Greenland
- Open letters push new Naalakkersuisut – implementing Letter of Intent & designating funds to Pikialasorsuaq work

Further ideas relating to Pikialasorsuaq



Upcoming application for project:

- **Title:** “Roadmap to Greenland’s marine protected areas by 2030”
- Advocating for Greenland to meet GBF goal of protecting 30% of marine areas by 2030
- Identification of MPAs involving **science & local communities’ perspectives** → recommendations

Lessons from research project (2022)



- "Co-production of shorefast ice knowledge in Uummannaq Bay, Greenland"
- Institute at Brown for Environment and Society, Brown University & Nordland Research Institute
- Emphasis on knowledge co-production & meaningful engagement
- Field assistant with local connections & language

Exploring culturally appropriate engagement



- ↑ • Sharing Circle
- ↓ • Kaffemik (traditional social gathering)
- ↑ • Interviews (individual & focus group)
- ↑ • Ice drilling with youth
- • Facebook posts for outreach
- ↑ • Fishing trips (engaging with fishers through hands-on participation)
- • Informal discussions at cultural occasions

Case: Sharing Circle



- Elders & youth exploring cultural importance of ice
- Strength: Knowledge transfer between elders & youth
- Weakness: Use of “talking stick” could interrupt flow
- Lesson: Cultural similarity of oral storytelling adds great value

Case: Kaffemik



- Kaffemik: Traditional social gathering with foods
- Strength: Facilitates informal exploration of ice usage
- Weakness: Open invitation did not attract intended audience (Inuit)
- Lesson: Social relations & occasion very important

Challenges: Power dynamics & colonialism



Background photo: Arek Socha, Pixabay

Inuit photo: Bjarne Lyberth, KNAPK

Research photo: Arctic Research Centre

Knowledge & meaningful engagement

- Knowledge systems of Indigenous Peoples & researchers can create synergy to improve knowledge base for decision-making
- Approach research process with mutual respect & curiosity to promote open dialogue
- Discrepancies reveal opportunities for co-producing new knowledge (gold)
- Engagement of Indigenous Peoples not same as Use of Indigenous knowledge → both needed
- Provide Indigenous Peoples a genuine opportunity to influence decisions
- Process that respect Indigenous Peoples' needs, concerns & values



Qujanaq – Thank you

- E-mail: contact@oceansnorth.gl / parnuna@oceansnorth.gl
- Website: www.oceansnorth.gl
- Facebook: [@oceansnorthkalaallitnunaat](https://www.facebook.com/oceansnorthkalaallitnunaat)
- LinkedIn: [oceans-north-kalaallit-nunaat/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/oceans-north-kalaallit-nunaat/)
- YouTube: [@OceansNorthKalaallitNunaat](https://www.youtube.com/@OceansNorthKalaallitNunaat)