



CLIMATE CHANGE AND SOCIETY AT A GLANCE

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QUICK FACTS:

The rate of warming in Northern Canada has been almost **3 times** the global mean rate since the 1940s.⁴

3X

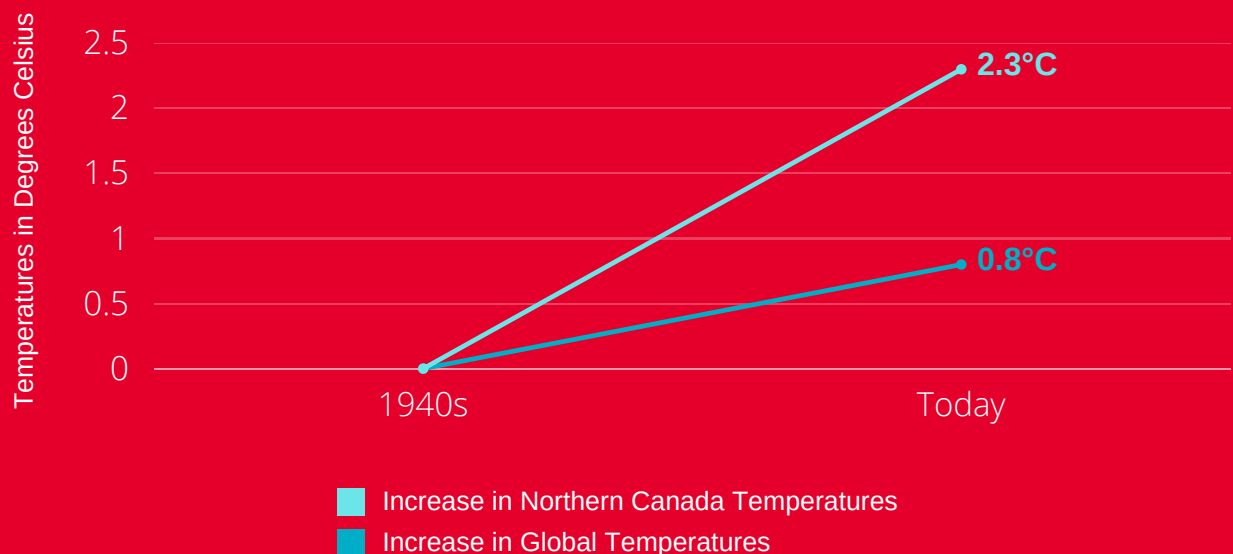
Environmental changes include decreased ice thickness, melting of permafrost, coastal erosion, rising sea levels, landslides, and altered distribution and migration of wildlife.⁵



Labrador is one of the **fastest-warming** places in the world, according to warming rates from 1980-2015.²



INCREASE IN GLOBAL TEMPERATURES VS INCREASE IN NORTHERN CANADA





HOW DOES CLIMATE CHANGE AFFECT NORTHERN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' CULTURES AND LIFESTYLES?

Historically, Northern Indigenous Peoples have depended on the land and local biological diversity as a source of wellbeing and sustenance. Thus, despite having low-carbon lifestyles that contribute little to climate change, Indigenous Peoples, globally, have been the most adversely affected by it.¹

Vanishing ice and unpredictable seasons and climate events have forced adjustment of cultural traditions that are closely linked to the land.²

As travel over sea ice becomes more and more difficult and dangerous, Indigenous Peoples are cut off from traditional hunting lands.²

As Indigenous communities are forced to adapt to various climate impacts, many people worry that knowledge and skills learned from older generations may be shifting, threatening core aspects of identity and continuity of important aspects of culture.²

Due to safety concerns, more and more Northern Indigenous Peoples are relying on expensive, store-bought, and highly processed foods instead of hunting and fishing for food.^{2,3}

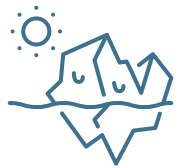
Solastalgia: the distress that is produced by environmental change impacting people who are directly connected to their home environment; or homesickness while still in place.

Eco-grief: the mourning that takes place in response to personal and psychological loss from climate change



WHAT ARE THE HEALTH IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE NORTH?

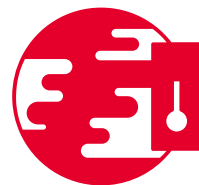
- The land is foundational for mental health for many people in Labrador and the North. As such, changes to climate, weather, and environment affect physical and mental health.
- Food security is threatened, as people are unable to hunt as often or as safely and reliably.
- Rates of injury and death may increase, as weather and ice conditions become more and more unpredictable.
- Mentally, people struggle with strong emotional reactions, including fear, anxiety, sadness, anger, and frustration, as well as ecological grief and anxiety.⁶
- Changing sea ice patterns and weather conditions also isolate people from other communities and create a feeling of being stuck.⁷





THE ROLE OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE IN CLIMATE RESPONSE

- Indigenous Peoples' identity is inextricably linked with the land, with connections to specific places spanning thousands of years. As such, Indigenous Peoples' are excellent observers and interpreters of change in the environment, and Indigenous science can offer immense insight and longitudinal understanding that is critical to verifying and evaluating climate models and climate scenarios.¹
- Indigenous knowledge can also provide a key foundation for community-based and community-led solutions for climate change mitigation and adaptation.¹
- Despite the threat of climate change being closely linked to the wellbeing of Indigenous Peoples, they are routinely excluded from decision and policy-making processes which risks exacerbating the negative climate impacts on Indigenous communities.



Policy responses to climate change should protect, support, and sustain Indigenous ways of life and culture.

ENDNOTES

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2. Mercer, Greg. "'Sea, Ice, Snow ... It's All Changing': Inuit Struggle with Warming World." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 30 May 2018, www.theguardian.com/world/2018/may/30/canada-inuits-climate-change-impact-global-warming-melting-ice.

3. Julie Sansoulet, Michèle Therrien, Joseph Delgove, Guilhem Pouxviel, Julie Desriac, Noé Sardet, Jean-Paul Vanderlinden; An update on Inuit perceptions of their changing environment, Qikiqtaaluk (Baffin Island, Nunavut). *Elementa: Science of the Anthropocene* 2 November 2020; 8 (1): 025. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1525/elementa.025>

4. Bush, E. and Lemmen, D.S. (2019): *Canada's Changing Climate Report*; Government of Canada, Ottawa, ON.

5. Berry, P., Clarke, K., Fleury, M.D. and Parker, S. (2014): *Human Health; in Canada in a Changing Climate: Sector Perspectives on Impacts and Adaptation*, (ed.) F.J. Warren and D.S. Lemmen; Government of Canada, Ottawa, ON, p. 191-232.

6. Neville Ellis, and Ashlee Cunsolo. "Hope and Mourning in the Anthropocene: Understanding Ecological Grief." theconversation.com/hope-and-mourning-in-the-anthropocene-understanding-ecological-grief-88630.

7. Cunsolo, Ashlee. *Lament for the Land*. www.youtube.com/watch?v=yi7QTyHERjY.

