Module 1
Self-Determination as a Contemporary Characteristic

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Key Terms and Concepts

- self-governance
- self-determination
- Sami Assembly
- Home Rule

Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Upon completion of this module, you should be able to

1. define what is meant by self-government and self-determination.
2. discuss the different forms of political self-determination in the circumpolar North and outline the similarities and differences between them.
3. identify and discuss the ways in which a circumpolar regional identity is emerging.

Overview

Expressions of regionalism and nationalism have been important forces shaping social and political change for more than a century. These phenomena have not been unknown in the circumpolar North. In fact, the circumpolar North has given birth to innovative political arrangements to accommodate the aspirations for self-governance of indigenous peoples. It has also given birth to models of

devolution to public regional governments seeking greater control over the affairs of their citizens. The circumpolar North has also tried to build a circumpolar regional identity that involves and cuts across all of its eight countries. Organizations such as the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC), the Arctic Council, and even the University of the Arctic are evidence of these efforts.

This module helps to set the stage for the next nine modules to follow. Those modules focus on expressions of self-determination in terms of identity and language; media, arts, and literature; and education, recreation, and family. Before we embark on that exploration, it is essential first to discuss what we mean by terms such as regionalism, nationalism, and self-determination. These terms are usually associated with matters of politics; however, it is often politics and the institutions that emerge from politics that frame issues of self-determination in areas as diverse as language, education, and family.

Lecture

Perspectives on Regionalism, Nationalism, and Self-Determination

Regionalism, nationalism, and self-determination refer to processes by which social collectivities seek greater autonomy from larger societies or distant governments. All of us belong to at least one political community and, thus, have at least one political identity. Political identity is important in defining the group(s) to which we feel we belong and in defining what values we share in common. In many countries, people have more than one political identity. In Canada, for example, a person may feel attachment as a member of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band, as a resident of the province of Saskatchewan, and as a citizen of Canada. Some identities are stronger than others. Where a political identity expresses itself in terms of attachment to a region or place, such as Chukotka or the Yukon, we are observing the phenomenon of *regionalism*. Where a political identity expresses itself in terms of attachment to a people, such as the Dene nation, we are observing the phenomenon of *nationalism*. This course focuses on expressions related to the latter phenomenon.

Movements towards self-determination are common in societies that comprise two or more peoples. (Of the eight countries in the North, only Iceland has a single people and so is exceptional in this respect.) Where the political identity of a people provides the basis for quests for greater political autonomy, either within a nation-state or completely independent of it, we are observing a movement towards political self-determination. Political self-determination may lead to greater autonomy, which manifests in an increased use of the indigenous or minority language and/or an enhanced political representation within existing

political institutions. Where greater autonomy leads to the creation of a local or regional government within the state that has the right to make laws governing people and activities within a local or regional community, we are talking about self-government. In other words, self-government is a form of self-determination; but not all forms of self-determination take the form of self-government.

Following are different examples of the emergence of political self-determination in the circumpolar North.

Models of Political Self-Determination

Greenland

Greenland's path to self-determination began after events related to the Second World War. The Nazi invasion of Denmark in 1940 severed Greenland's communications with Denmark almost completely for several years. Then the building of Allied military bases in Greenland and the influx of American goods and soldiers further reinforced a sense of independence from Denmark (Caulfield 1997, 34–35). And finally, the period of decolonization around the world that came after the Second World War led to the suggestion that Greenland integrate with the Danish state (Petersen 1987, 105).

Following the recommendations of a joint Greenlandic-Danish commission, a ten-year state modernization plan, known popularly as G-50, was established in 1950. This was followed in 1953 by the official ending of Greenland's colonial status after a referendum vote in Denmark (but not in Greenland, though it is safe to assume Greenlanders would have voted in favour, too). The G-50 plan led to both the abolition of the trade monopoly of the Royal Greenland Trade Company—Det Kongelige Grønlandske Handelskompagni (KGH)—and to the creation of a single provincial council for all of Greenland, which in turn led to a greater sense of national identity (Caulfield 1997, 35).

The Greenland Committee of 1960 (referred to as G-60) followed the G-50, with the goals of normalizing relations between Greenlandic and Danish institutions. Ultimately, the G-50 and G-60 served three functions: demonstrating and aggravating disparities between Greenland and Denmark, especially with resettlement schemes and preferential wages to Danes; establishing a Greenlandic sense of identity; and awakening a serious political class of Greenlanders who would push for real legislative power.

The question of regional self-government was brought up in Greenland's provincial council as early as the 1960s (Petersen 1987, 105). Other early sources of support for some sort of self-government were the Greenlanders Association and the Greenlandic Youth Council, both based in Copenhagen and

both disregarded by Greenland-based politicians (Petersen 1987, 110). Still, political debate about Greenland's future was instigated by their suggestions.

Two events sparked a feeling of nationalism among Greenlanders and discontent with the Danish government in the early 1970s: the shutting down by Danish authorities in 1972 of Qullissat, a community on Disko Island built around an unsuccessful coal mine; and a referendum on Denmark's membership in the European Community (EC), also in 1972, which Danes supported but Greenlanders voted two to one against, out of concern for the allocation of fishing rights in Greenlandic waters to other EC nations. The latter event led to the formation of Greenlandic political parties and the subsequent creation of a commission on Home Rule in Greenland, which began work in 1975. The most contentious debate was over the ownership of non-renewable resources; a compromise was obtained by affirming Greenlanders' "fundamental rights" to the natural resources of Greenland in the *Home Rule Act*. (Caulfield 1997, 38)

The Danish Parliament adopted Greenlandic Home Rule in November 1978, and, after a referendum in Greenland, Home Rule was established on May 1, 1979. The authorities for Greenland's Home Rule consist of an assembly elected in Greenland called the Landsting, with representatives elected for four-year terms, and an administration headed by a Landsstyre (Executive). The Landsting elects the chair and the other members of the Landsstyre, with the chair of the Landsstyre responsible for assigning duties (Greenland Home Rule).

Nunavut

Nunavut became a Canadian territory only a short time ago, in 1999; the path to self-government, however, was long. The process began as early as the 1950s and 1960s, when the Northwest Territorial Council debated establishing a separate Mackenzie Territory in the west. Far from aiming to provide Inuit with greater independence, the motivation for the proposal was to free the west "from the constraining influence of the more 'backward' Eastern Arctic" (Cameron and White 1995, 92). Legislation was even introduced in the federal House of Commons towards separation, but the bills died when Parliament was dissolved in 1963.

Inuit did eventually submit their own proposal for a settlement of Inuit land claims in 1976, after a period of similar claims from other Aboriginal peoples around Canada. The proposal argued for the creation of a separate Nunavut territory, with the basic goal of "[preserving] Inuit identity and the traditional way-of-life so far as possible . . ." (ITC 1976, 1, as cited in Cameron and White 1995, 93). While the proposal was eventually withdrawn, its principle remained and several documents calling for the creation of a separate Nunavut territory followed the original proposal.

In 1982, the Canadian constitution underwent significant change that opened the door for creative constitutional arrangements. Non-Inuit in the Northwest Territories became more sympathetic to the Inuit cause, and a plebiscite in the territory was put forth that asked whether people were in favour of division. (It passed with a slim majority.) Finally, a new Inuit organization named the Tungavik Federation of Nunavut (TFN) was established to represent a broad coalition of Inuit organizations and interests, dealing exclusively with the Nunavut claim and associated matters (Cameron and White 1995, 94).

The most contentious issue turned out to be the demarcation of the boundary between Nunavut and the Northwest Territories (NWT). The Inuit and Dene-Métis both contested large tracts of land in the central Arctic as traditional hunting grounds and a compromise could not be reached (Cameron and White 1995, 95). In 1991, the federal government intervened, appointing a former NWT commissioner, John Parker, to recommend a boundary. Inuit generally accepted Parker's proposal, but the Dene-Métis thought it ran too far west. A plebiscite was put forth to accept or reject the boundary, and in doing so the results provided tacit approval for the creation of Nunavut in 1992. Like the 1982 plebiscite, it passed with a narrow majority, with residents in the east voting overwhelmingly in favour of separation, and residents in the western Arctic voting three to one against (Cameron and White 1995, 94). The planning now turned to constitutional issues.

In effect, Inuit were making a land claim for the Nunavut territory, under the legal framework of the Inuit's Aboriginal rights protected by the Canadian Constitution. This arrangement was deemed unacceptable to the federal government, "considering that Nunavut was to be a public government representing, serving and including all Canadians living in the area… [and] it would be inappropriate to use a land claim with an Aboriginal group as the instrument to establish public government" (Cameron and White 1995, 94). A compromise was struck and the planning went ahead.

The *Nunavut Act* was drafted in Ottawa and passed in Parliament in June 1993 after a successful ratification vote in the eastern Arctic in October 1992. The amazingly fast and smooth process to pass such an unprecedented act with far-reaching consequences was largely because the level of popular support, both in and outside of Nunavut, for the creation of a separate territory. The Nunavut Implementation Commission (NIC) was put into place to ensure a smooth handover of political responsibilities by April 1999, the agreed-upon date of the legal transfer of power from NWT to the new Government of Nunavut.

On April 1, 1999, the territory of Nunavut was officially created, with a land mass of 1,994,000 km^2, about five times the size of Sweden. Nunavut has a population of approximately 30,000 people, and Iqaluit, a community of about 5,000 people, is its capital.

Student Activity

Read the short article by Norman Chance on the Alaskan Land Claims Settlement Act of 1971.

1. What portion of Alaska's land mass was exchanged in the settlement?

2. How many dollars passed hands in compensation payments?

3. Briefly, what were some of the arguments of indigenous peoples in favour of and in opposition to the settlement?

Scandinavia

In contrast to the form of self-determination the Inuit of Greenland and Nunavut have been able to achieve—that is, self-government—the increased self-determination for the Sami of Fennoscandia has meant more cultural rights and better political representation through Sami parliaments. Now, we'll briefly identify key historic moments leading to greater self-determination for the Sami people in the three Nordic states.

Finland

After a Finnish government commission's inquiry into Sami rights, the first Sami parliament was established in Finland in 1973. At the same time, the northern municipalities of Enontekiö, Inari, Utsjoki, and part of Sodankylä were established as the Sami Homeland. [Four thousand Sami, out of a total population of 12,000, live in those regions. (Korsmo 1996, 171)] The Finnish Sami Assembly is made up of 20 elected representatives, drawn from a pool of individuals rather than from organizations or political parties, and elected every four years. A constitutional amendment was passed in 1994 guaranteeing Sami certain rights to develop and maintain their language and culture.

Norway

The construction of the Alta dam in northern Norway in the 1970s served as a catalyst for the Sami rights movement, and, in 1980, the Norwegian Sami Rights Commission was established. The commission offered a number of recommendations, among them the creation of a Sami Assembly to replace the Norwegian Sami Council, which had acted as an advisory group to "municipal, county, and national authorities on economic, social, cultural, legal and natural-resource management issues of concern to Sami" (Korsmo 1996, 166) in various capacities since 1953. The *Sami Act*, which included provisions for the

establishment of the Sami Assembly, passed in 1987. Further, Norway became the first country to ratify the International Labour Organization Convention No. 169 (ILO C169) concerning indigenous and tribal peoples in 1989, which "committed nation-states to protect the rights of indigenous populations living within [their] boundaries . . . Compared to the response of Sweden or Finland, Norway's policy response to Sami demands was comprehensive and thorough" (Korsmo 1996, 167).

Sweden

The process for the establishment of a Swedish Sami Assembly began after the Skattefjälls (Taxed Mountains) decision in 1981. The Sami filed a lawsuit asking the Swedish Crown to declare the Sami to be the true owners of the lands they used for herding, hunting, and fishing in the county of Jämtland. The Court determined that the State owned the land, though the Sami had strong usufruct rights in the area based on usage since time immemorial (Lehtola 2002, 84). This was seen as a defeat by the Sami.

After the decision, the National Association of Swedish Sami made a request to the government in September 1981 to set up a commission of inquiry to draft a proposal for a Sami Assembly; investigate Sami herding, fishing and hunting rights; and draft legislation protecting Sami livelihoods (Korsmo 1993, 40). In response, the Swedish Sami Rights Commission was established to provide "an overview of reindeer herding law, a feasibility study of a Sami 'parliament' and a proposal to enhance the Sami languages" (Korsmo 1993, 41). The Sami Rights Commission was hampered from the beginning by apprehensions from the Sami, divisions between herders and non-herders, and a lack of interest and resources from the Swedish government.

After eight years of study, the commission presented a report that provided the basis for a legislative proposal but was later voted down by Parliament in 1990. The next government tabled a proposal that was even less attractive to the Sami, recommending against ratification of the ILO Convention that Norway had signed. The Swedish Parliament passed this proposal in December 1992; its one redeeming feature was its establishment of a Sami Assembly (Korsmo 1993, 33).

The Swedish Sami Assembly held its first election in May 1993, with representatives from 11 parties contesting the 31 seats and 3,808 registered Sami voters.

Sami Assemblies

The case of the Sami is significantly different from that of the Inuit in Nunavut and Greenland. The Sami make up a very small minority in Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Russia, numbering only 65,000–80,000 in total, with a majority

living between Norwegian borders.[1] Furthermore, most "live among members of the dominant culture and therefore do not constitute a natural territorial entity" (Korsmo 1996, 163). Sami parliaments and assemblies are not perfect solutions to meeting Sami aspirations for greater political autonomy.
Fae Korsmo argues that "[t]he separation of political institutions from territory renders the [Sami Assemblies] superfluous in national or regional decision making processes and limits the institutions' legitimacy in the eyes of constituents" (Korsmo 1996, 163). Moreover, "the lack of support for the Sami assemblies may have to do with individuals' ambivalence toward ethno-political institutions and politicized ethnicity in general" (Korsmo 1996, 173). The Sami are further hindered by their division across national borders and internal strife amongst herding and non-herding Sami, particularly in Sweden. As long as the Sami have unresolved intra-ethnic disputes and unsettled land claims, their ability to effectively influence legislation in their favour will be hindered. Nevertheless, the contributions that the movements towards greater political representation have made through the Sami parliaments should not be underestimated. Without such institutions, it would be far more difficult to acquire the necessary legitimacy to place Sami issues on the political agenda of the respective Nordic states.

Towards International Circumpolar Co-operation

In the preceding sections, we reviewed examples of self-determination across the North. As discussed in the introductory module, this is one characteristic of the transition from a secondary to a tertiary society. As this transition has occurred in the North, there has been an increasing recognition of the common problems and circumstances facing circumpolar peoples. This in turn has led to the development over the last decade of a variety of circumpolar institutions and organizations.

Arctic Council

The circumpolar North has changed much over the past two decades. During the Cold War, the North acted as a critical military space, and international co-operation across the region was viewed as either unnecessary or unfeasible. During the Russian period of glasnost and perestroika, as the relationship between East and West warmed, then-President Mikhail Gorbachev laid out a program for co-operation in a speech in Murmansk in 1987, pledging the Soviets' "profound and certain interest in preventing the North of the planet, its Polar and sub-Polar regions, and all Northern countries from ever again becoming an arena of war" (Gorbachev 1988, as quoted in Young, 180).

[1] There are 40,000–45,000 Sami in Norway; 15,000–20,000 in Sweden; 6,000–6,500 in Finland; and 2,000 in Russia. Accurate numbers are difficult to determine, as most Sami population censuses rely on self-classification.

The new sense of international co-operation that followed this speech manifested itself in the *Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy* (AEPS), a declaration made in 1991 in Rovaniemi, Finland, by the eight Arctic states (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, the United States, and the USSR) regarding the protection of the Arctic environment. The AEPS led to environmental protection co-operation in other endeavours, such as these four working groups: the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP); the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF); Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR); and the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME).

After the success of the AEPS, the eight Arctic states met in Ottawa in September 1996 to found the Arctic Council, "a high-level intergovernmental forum that provides a mechanism to address the common concerns and challenges faced by the Arctic governments and the people of the Arctic" (Arctic Council home page, http://www.arctic-council.org/index.html). Besides environmental issues, the new Arctic Council would also be concerned with the social and economic development of the North. Its declared objectives are to

a. provide a means for promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States, with the involvement of the Arctic indigenous communities and other Arctic inhabitants on common arctic issues, in particular issues of sustainable development and environmental protection in the Arctic.

b. oversee and coordinate the programs established under the AEPS on the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP); conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF); Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME); and Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPPR).

c. adopt terms of reference for and oversee and coordinate a sustainable development program.

d. disseminate information, encourage education and promote interest in Arctic-related issues. (Arctic Council 1996, http://www.arctic-council.org/estabi.asp)

One particularly distinguishing feature of the Arctic Council is its category of *permanent participants*, which provides for the active participation of and full consultation with the Arctic indigenous representatives within the Arctic Council. (See Box 1.1.) The permanent participants are the following:

- Aleut International Association
- Arctic Athabaskan Council
- Gwich'in Council International

- Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC)
- Saami Council
- Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON)

Box 1.1 Arctic Indigenous Leaders Summit (1991)

The first Arctic Indigenous Leaders Summit was held just one week after the AEPS was approved and the Rovaniemi Process began. Representatives from indigenous organizations adopted the following declaration and two statements.

Declaration of the Arctic Indigenous Leaders Summit

We, the Representatives of the indigenous peoples organizations of the Arctic, being the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, The Nordic Saami Council, and the USSR Association of Northern Small Peoples;

Meeting in Hørsholm, Denmark for the first Arctic Indigenous Leaders Summit to seek greater mutual understanding and to further our cooperation;

Having respect for the traditional and continuing stewardship of our lands, waters, plants and animals, and for the traditional knowledge of our peoples;

Deeply concerned for the health, well-being and ultimate survival of our peoples, including recognition of our nutritional needs and the rights of renewable resource harvesters, and for the protection of our Arctic environment, both now and in the future;

Ever aware of the changes which have affected our peoples, our lands and our rights to decide for ourselves what our future shall be;

Recognizing that there is only one Arctic, and that we share one future together;

Affirming the requirement for sustainable and equitable development in our homeland;

Requiring state governments to recognize and accommodate the rights of aboriginal peoples to self-government, lands, renewable and non-renewable resources, and to recognize their cultural, social and economic rights;

Commending the Arctic governments for their close cooperation with our organizations in the process leading up to the Declaration of Rovaniemi, and calling on those Arctic governments to fully implement the spirit as well as the words of the Declaration and of the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy;

Arctic indigenous peoples desire not only to survive, but to thrive as indigenous peoples into this 21st Century. Arctic governments must take affirmative initiatives immediately to work with their indigenous peoples to bridge the rapid global change which impacts our peoples. Adequate resources must be made available by the governments to meet the real social, health, economic and educational needs of the indigenous peoples. New partnerships between the governments and the indigenous peoples must occur to meet the often overwhelming challenges of this rapid global change. Maximum self-determination of the indigenous peoples is desired.

We adopt as consensus statements of the Summit, the following:

1) Statement on Subsistence, the Traditional and Direct Dependence on Renewable Resources

2) Statement on Renewable Resource Harvesting

We agree to continue the collaboration begun here among the Arctic Indigenous Leaders by holding our Second Summit in 1993 to be organized by the Nordic Saami Council.

We further agree that in order to advance our mutual concerns, we will initiate a process leading up to the Second Arctic Indigenous Leaders Summit, to include the following issues:

- renewable resource harvesting and subsistence rights;
- traditional ecological knowledge; and
- the mandate and role of existing and future organizations relevant to the Arctic

Done at Hørsholm, 20 June 1991

Signed by
Inuit Circumpolar Conference
Nordic Saami Council
USSR Association of Northern Small peoples

The Arctic Council has biannual ministerial meetings, with Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs) meeting semi-annually. The office of the chair of the council rotates among members in two-year periods.

Some people have criticized the Arctic Council as ineffective and lacking in resources. Despite its shortcomings, the Arctic Council serves as a unique and important forum for governments and northern stakeholders to discuss the common issues that affect them, and the council holds real promise for the development of solutions to the unique problems faced by northerners.

Northern Forum

The Northern Forum is a non-profit, international organization comprising twenty-five sub-national or regional governments from ten northern countries: Canada, China, Finland, Iceland, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, Russia, Sweden, and the United States. It was officially established in 1991 but has its roots in a series of meetings. The "First International Conference on Human Environment in Northern Regions" was held in Hokkaido, Japan, in 1974. A second conference followed in 1979 in Edmonton, Alberta, and a third in 1990 in Anchorage. The foundation for the Northern Forum was laid at the Anchorage meetings, and in 1991 it was officially established.

The Northern Forum is an interesting organization, as it joins sub-national governments to discuss practical solutions to problems posed by the unique circumstances of northern regions, including the following (from the Northern Forum home page, http://www.northernforum.org/about.html):

- economies based upon the extraction of natural resources
- lack of internal capital resources
- limited infrastructural development
- harsh climates and vulnerable ecosystems
- diverse and relatively strong indigenous cultures
- sparse populations

Its existence reflects a broader international trend whereby regional governments "are increasingly endeavoring to conduct foreign relations of their own rather than acknowledging the exclusive authority of central governments in the area of international affairs" (Young, 22).

In an effort to foster co-operation with the business community and stimulate economic development, the Northern Forum also accepts commercial enterprises as members. The Northern Forum is composed of the Board of Governors; Executive Committee; Advisory Council; Regional Coordinators; Secretariat; and members.

Indigenous Organizations

The indigenous peoples of the circumpolar world represent 15%, or approximately 1.5 million inhabitants out of a total 10 million inhabitants in the North (Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat 2002). As mentioned, the permanent participants in the Arctic Council include these indigenous groups:

- the Aleut International Association, representing the Russian and American indigenous peoples of the Aleutian Islands

- the Arctic Athabaskan Council, representing the interests of Athabaskan peoples of Arctic North America
- the Gwich'in Council International, representing indigenous people living on both sides of the Canadian-Alaskan border
- the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC), representing the 150,000 Inuit living in Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka, Russia
- the Saami Council, a representative body for co-operation among the Sami of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia
- the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON), representing more than 40 indigenous peoples, with a total population of more than 200,000. (Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat 2002)

These indigenous organizations are critically important in terms of representing indigenous concerns and voices to regional and national governments and international and non-governmental organizations. Their status as permanent participants in the Arctic Council demonstrates the level of organization and political influence they have achieved. Co-operation with indigenous groups within these organizations, and among each other through the Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat, serves to strengthen indigenous claims for environmental protection, land claims, resource use, and cultural protection.

Case Study: Inuit Circumpolar Conference

The Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC) was officially established in Barrow, Alaska, in June 1977. The ICC holds a General Assembly every three years and represents nearly 150,000 Inuit from Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Russia (Chukotka). The goals of the ICC are as follows (from the ICC home page):

- to strengthen unity among Inuit of the circumpolar region
- to promote Inuit rights and interests on an international level
- to develop and encourage long-term policies that safeguard the Arctic environment
- to seek full and active partnership in the political, economic, and social development of circumpolar regions.

During the 1980s, Inuit recognized a number of challenges to their land and way of life as a result of the effects and outcomes of political and economic policies in the South. "These challenges included the anti-harvesting lobby, the militarization of the North, the eight circumpolar nations' lack of ocean management, the arrival of toxic chemicals from all corners of the globe, and the poorly regulated development of non-renewable resources" (Reimer 1993–94). To influence decision-making in their favour, the ICC started to develop a cohesive policy statement. Published in 1992, the *Principles and Elements for a Comprehensive Arctic Policy* outlined the Inuit position on a variety of Arctic-related issues, providing direction for the ICC in its activities (Reimer 1993–94).

Following a number of initiatives and successes, the ICC developed an international reputation for effective lobbying and promotion of Arctic environmental protection policy. In 1986, as part of the development of the *Principles and Elements for a Comprehensive Arctic Policy*, the ICC drafted their plan for Arctic sustainable development, the Inuit Regional Conservation Strategy (IRCS):

> It addresses both process and substantive issues. Enabling Inuit to promote wise management, environmental protection, and sustainable development within their homelands, the strategy functions as a mechanism whereby Inuit organizations across the circumpolar region can better co-operate and share resources and ideas; provides the basis for substantive partnerships with international organizations such as the United Nations Environmental Programme, the IUCN-World Conservation Union, and others; and is a tool for governmental co-operation in the Arctic. (Reimer 1993–94)

As a result of the IRCS, the ICC was presented with a Global 500 award from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Other activities by the ICC include their work in helping establish the Arctic Council and securing indigenous participation in the organization; their role in implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of the 2001 Stockholm Convention on the elimination of emissions of persistent organic pollutants (POPs); their contributions to the AEPS, particularly through the AMAP and CAFF working groups; participation and contribution to a variety of United Nations conferences and programs (the ICC has had observer status with the UN since 1984); as well as a role in several nationally based projects and programs.

Student Activity

Select an indigenous organization other than the ICC from the list of permanent participants of the Arctic Council and write a one-page report on the organization's history, constituency, goals, and achievements. (See fig. 1.1.)

Source: UNEP/GRID-Arendal

Fig. 1.1 Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council

University of the Arctic

The need for an institution that would provide unparalleled opportunities to share information about Arctic and northern sustainability, meet the particular needs of students in the North, and validate northern cultures, languages, and learning systems, has preoccupied northern residents for many years. In the 1990s, the transformation of the international political climate in the Arctic, combined with the growing awareness of environmental and other threats to stability, and the emergence of new information technologies, created a climate in which these visions could be put into action.

The Arctic Council first endorsed the idea of a circumpolar university in 1997, following an initial concept proposal in March of the same year and the subsequent approval of the University of the Arctic's Development Plan in October, both at meetings of the SAOs. The goal was not to simply establish a standard university in a geographically northern locale, but to redefine the way typical universities work and to focus on serving the needs of communities. Upon review of a feasibility study prepared by the Circumpolar Universities Association (CUA), the Ministers of the Arctic Council announced their support for a proposed University of the Arctic (UArctic) in October 1998, in Iqaluit, stating,

> The Ministers welcome, and are pleased to announce the establishment of a University of the Arctic, a university without walls, as proposed by a Working Group of the Circumpolar Universities Association . . . We encourage the group to continue its efforts and to consult with northern educational and indigenous authorities and colleges. We look forward to further reports on this issue and to seeking ways to promote the success of this initiative. (University of the Arctic 2001)

A key characteristic of the University of the Arctic is its inclusion of indigenous knowledge and experiences—Uarctic's *Shared Voices* principle, which states,

> The University of the Arctic must involve indigenous peoples. It must not be like other educational institutions experienced by some . . . as "systems of pain" that ignore or even repress our cultures and economies. Considerable energy and time must be devoted to recruiting indigenous people, who will retain respect for and commitment to their indigenous societies and roots, to join the university. (University of the Arctic 1997)

Officially launched in June 2001, the University of the Arctic began offering courses online and in classrooms and supporting international student exchanges between its members in 2002. It is an excellent example of co-operation, collaboration, and partnership among and between organizations, governments, and educational institutions in the North. UArctic will help further contribute to a sense of circumpolar regional identity and enhance northerners' capacities.

Summary

As shown in this module, self-determination is a vibrant force in the circumpolar North. Creative solutions reflecting local circumstances—Home Rule in Greenland and Sami assemblies in the Nordic countries—have emerged that strive to meet indigenous aspirations for greater political autonomy. At the same time, on the international level, we have seen the emergence of institutions and organizations that are fostering a new circumpolar regional identity that spans across all eight circumpolar countries. In the modules that follow, we will explore some of the other challenges and achievements in the areas of language, media, education, among others, that give full expression to self-determination.

Study Questions

1. What were the key historical events leading to Home Rule in Greenland?

2. What are the key differences between the models of self-determination of the Inuit (Nunavut and Greenland) and the Sami (Sweden, Norway, and Finland)?

3. Identify and discuss the role of different international organizations that foster a circumpolar regional identity.

Glossary of Terms

nationalism	a patriotic feeling, principles, etc.; loyalty of a people who share a common language, history, culture, religion, and/or political values; normally involves the quest for greater political autonomy.
political representation	the formal role to participate in bodies and processes that make public decisions.
regionalism	allegiance to or concern for one's region rather than one's country; loyalty to a political community based on region or place, normally involving the quest for increased political autonomy.
self-determination	the freedom of a people to decide their own allegiance or form of government; the freedom to live or act as one chooses, without needing to consult others. The quest by a group for greater autonomy from other societies and/or polities signals a movement towards self-determination.

self-government	(especially of a former colony, etc.) government by its own people; self-control. Involves increasing a group's political decision-making powers and granting that group the authority to govern over its own affairs without interference from other levels of government.

Supplementary Readings/Resources

Internet Sites

Vital Arctic Graphics from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and GRID-Arendal:
[online] http://vitalgraphics.grida.no/arctic/

Official website of the Greenland Home Rule:
[online] http://www.nanoq.gl

The Road to Nunavut: A Chronological History:
[online] http://www.gov.nu.ca/road.htm

Nunavut Land Claim Overview and a link to the official *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*:
[online] http://npc.nunavut.ca/eng/nunavut/claim.html

Inuit of Canada, illustrated publication by Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK):
[online] ftp://209.195.99.10/pub/docs/inuit-of-canada/inuit-of-canada-full-english.pdf

The Sami in Finland:
[online] http://virtual.finland.fi/finfo/english/saameng.html

Declaration on the Establishment of the Arctic Council:
[online] http://www.arctic-council.org/establ.asp

Official website of the Northern Forum:
[online] http://www.northernforum.org/index.html

UArctic General and Planning Documents:
[online] http://www.uarctic.org/publications.asp?cat=genpub

Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat:
[online] http://www.arcticpeoples.org/

Aleut International Association:
[online] http://www.arctic-council.org/aia.html

Arctic Athabaskan Council:
[online] http://www.arcticathabaskancouncil.com/

Gwich'in Council International:
[online] http://www.gwichin.org/

Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC):
[online] http://www.randburg.com/gr/inuitcir.html

Saami Council:
[online] http://www.saamicouncil.net/?deptid=2284

Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON):
[online] http://www.raipon.org/english/index.html

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