



THE ROLE OF *INUIT QAUJIMAJATUQANGIT* IN DECISION MAKING WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF FISHERIES CO-MANAGEMENT IN NUNAVUT, CANADA

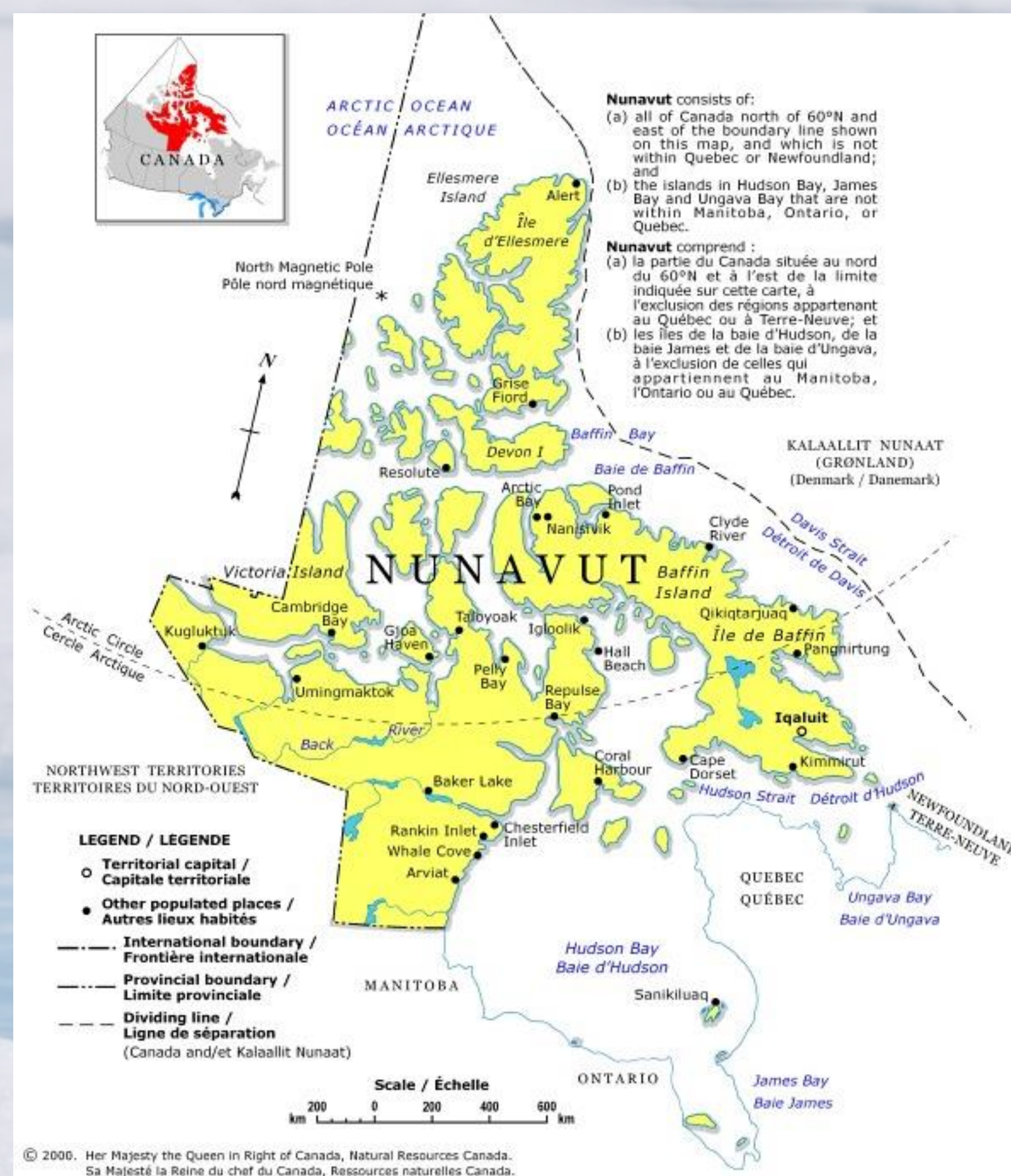
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INTRODUCTION

Fish-WIKS (Fisheries - Western and Indigenous Knowledge Systems) is a five-year pan-Canadian partnership between Indigenous and Western research institutions and scholars that aims at understanding different Indigenous knowledge systems from coast to coast to coast, how they influence the decision-making process in fisheries governance in Canada and how they can enhance the current regime which has been found to be ineffective, likely unable to adapt in due time to rapid changes induced by climate change, and at odds with several policies and legislations such as the Oceans Act or Supreme Court rulings affirming the legal recognition of Indigenous rights to resources and to managing them.

STUDY AREA

My PhD research will focus on decision making within the framework of fisheries co-management (mainly marine mammals) in the Territory of Nunavut. Nunavut is the largest territory in Canada (ca. 2 million km²), the least populated (ca. 32,000 in 2011) and the newest. It was created through the Nunavut Lands Claim Agreement (NLCA, 1993) and the Nunavut Act (1993) and came into being on April 1, 1999.



WILDLIFE CO-MANAGEMENT UNDER THE NLCA

- Co-management, a form of power sharing between government decision makers and resource users, is stipulated by the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, a modern treaty between the Inuit of Nunavut and the Government of Canada.
- The NLCA calls for an effective system of wildlife management that complements Inuit harvesting rights, fosters public participation, and reflects the traditional and current patterns of Inuit harvesting.
- The main instruments of wildlife management is the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB), a nine-member co-management board that is made up of government appointees and delegates from the Regional Wildlife Organizations.
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) remains the ultimate management authority.

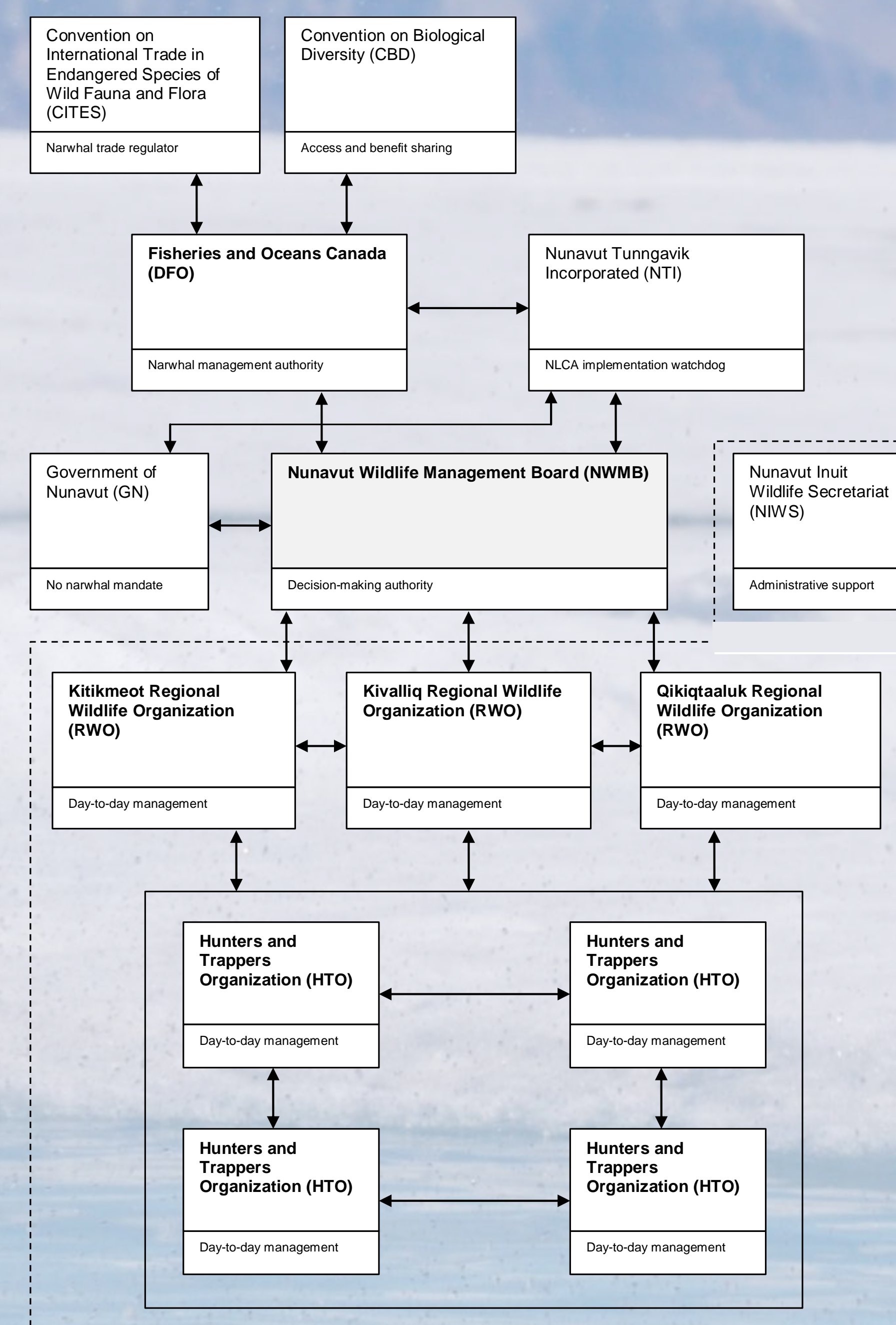


Figure 1. The Nunavut narwhal co-management partners (formal partners in bold), their responsibilities and linkages. Adapted from Armitage, 2005 and Blakney, 2009.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What would an Inuit-driven fisheries management regime look like?
- What would have to/could change under new premises brought on by the process of devolution of power from the federal to the territorial government?
- What influences the decision making of the NWMB, *i.e.* its members? What are their philosophical assumptions (epistemologies, ontologies, axiologies)?
- What do we manage for? Conservation, food, livelihood, culture, commerce...?
- Can co-management, which is a Western approach, reflect the Inuit way of wildlife management?

METHODOLOGIES

- Decolonizing methodologies (as much as possible)
 - make research relevant to Inuit (whose agenda does it serve?)
 - engage and collaborate with community members, Elders
 - take responsibility for conflicts and tensions created by the research
 - they foster peacebuilding, enable reconciliation
- Interdisciplinary methodologies
- Qualitative methodologies
 - critical discourse analysis (← power relations)
 - grounded theory

ANTICIPATED RESULTS

- Not all Nunavut fisheries co-management stakeholders are equally committed to practicing knowledge co-production thus hindering social learning.
- If not only Inuit knowledge but Inuit themselves are to be more involved and included in the management process, then their capacities need to be developed.
- The impending devolution process could provide a reason and framework to completely reshape wildlife management in Nunavut.
- Radically new approaches to wildlife management in Nunavut will likely be thwarted by a lack of political will to implement them.

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

- To understand the the current interface between the Inuit knowledge system (called *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* or *IQ*), the Western scientific knowledge system underpinning governmental decision-making processes, and fisheries management decisions within the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board
- and the potential of *IQ* for enhancing the current co-management regime

THE PROBLEM

The current co-management regime is not fulfilling its objectives as laid out in the Nunavut Lands Claim Agreement (NLCA).

ASSUMPTIONS & THEORIES

- Social health and economic development of Indigenous communities are linked to their ability to manage their own resources.
 - Co-management theory (*e.g.* Berkes, George, & Preston, 1991)
- Co-management, the joint-administration of living resources by the state and the resource users, is not the easy way out, but takes time to mature and is usually conflict laden as the two combined regimes are rooted in different world views.
 - Co-management theory; conflict theory (*e.g.* McGrath, 2003)
- Knowledge co-production, *i.e.* bringing together various sources and types of know-ledge to address a specific problem, enhances social learning and adaptive capacity within a wildlife co-management regime.
 - Adaptive co-mgmt theory (*e.g.* Armitage *et al.*, 2009; Dale & Armitage, 2011)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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