

MEETING BETWEEN RESEARCHERS AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Establishing good relationships between researchers and the members of Indigenous communities is a lengthy process. Before embarking on this process, it is important to be aware of the realities of Indigenous communities, particularly the right ways to collaborate with them on research projects.

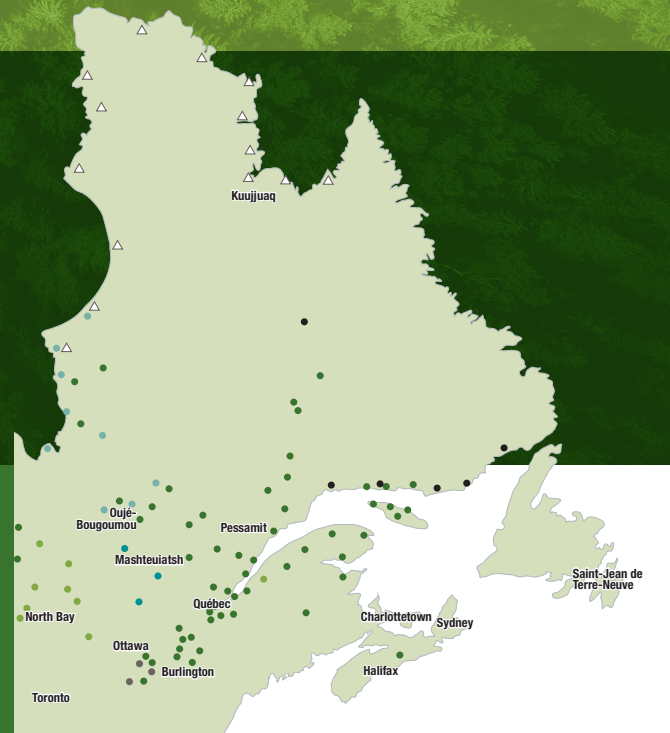
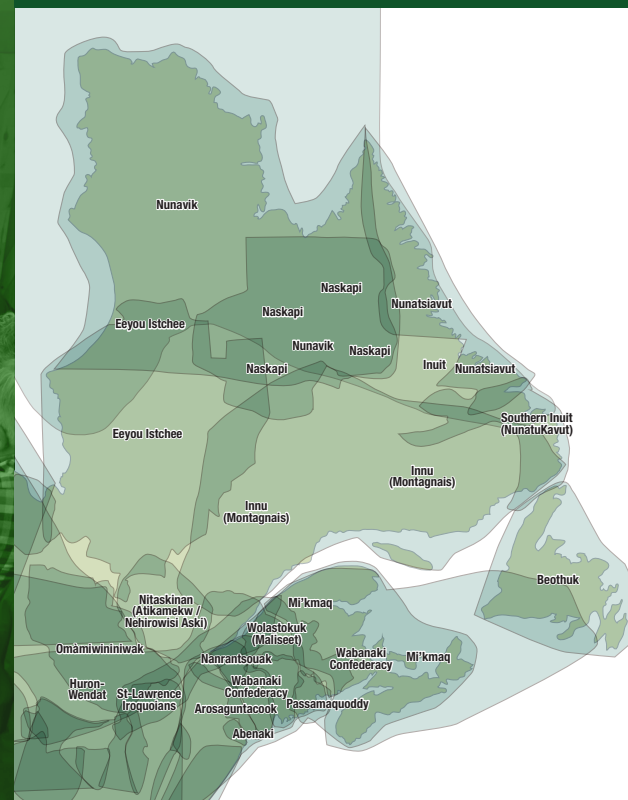


Figure 1 - Maps of Quebec

At the top are research activities carried out by the Laurentian Forestry Centre (information collected at a workshop held on January 11, 2019). At the bottom are the traditional Indigenous territories (native-land.ca). Thus, virtually all research activities take place in traditional Indigenous territories.



Stages

Natural Resources Canada researchers can take the following steps to initiate a relationship.



KNOW the realities of Indigenous communities, taking every opportunity to better understand the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

TOOLS

- Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada;¹
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission reports.²



IDENTIFY communities to work with.

TOOLS

- Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Information System (ATRIS);³
- Maps of Amerindian and Inuit communities of Quebec;⁴
- Map of traditional territories.⁵



LEARN ABOUT the community with which you wish to collaborate.

It is important to be familiar with elements of the community's history, language and present-day circumstances. The community may also have a protocol governing collaboration on its research projects.

TOOLS

- Community website, books on the community or about the Nation.



FIND OUT whom to contact within the community.

TOOLS

- Colleagues who have experience working with the communities;
- Program Officers from Natural Resources Canada;
- Community website.



MAKE INITIAL contact and hold a meeting (ideally in person).

¹ <https://indigenouspeoplesatlasofcanada.ca/section/first-nations/>

² <http://www.trc.ca/index.html>

³ http://sidait-atris.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/atris_online/home-accueil.aspx?lang=en

⁴ http://www.autochtones.gouv.qc.ca/nations/cartes_communautes_en.htm

⁵ <https://native-land.ca>

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(CONTINUED)

Every Indigenous community is unique, and each research project must adapt to local realities. Some approaches that work with one community may not be appropriate for a neighbouring community. Researchers must be attentive and listen carefully. It is preferable to foster a natural dialogue rather than leading a technical discussion, so as to avoid potentially asserting yourself as an authority. When appropriate, discuss the style of research protocol that should be adopted.

Demonstrate intercultural skills by:

- Respecting the authority of the community and informing oneself about their concerns.
- Showing respect towards their sites.
- Paying attention to the vocabulary used:
 - Avoiding technical terms such as "study site" or "field work," as such designations do not reflect the value of the territory as a complex socio-ecological system.
 - Avoiding possessive pronouns in certain situations, such as "my" study site.
- Ensuring the project is presented clearly, using appropriate vocabulary and expressions.
- Learning about the community's past experiences and impressions with respect to research or research organizations.

TOOLS

- Table of good practices in: *Démarche de co-création de connaissances avec les communautés autochtones. Approche de base : éthique de la recherche.*
- *Le petit guide de la grande concertation* by La Boîte Rouge VIF.⁶

⁶ http://www.laboiterougevf.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Extrait_guide.pdf

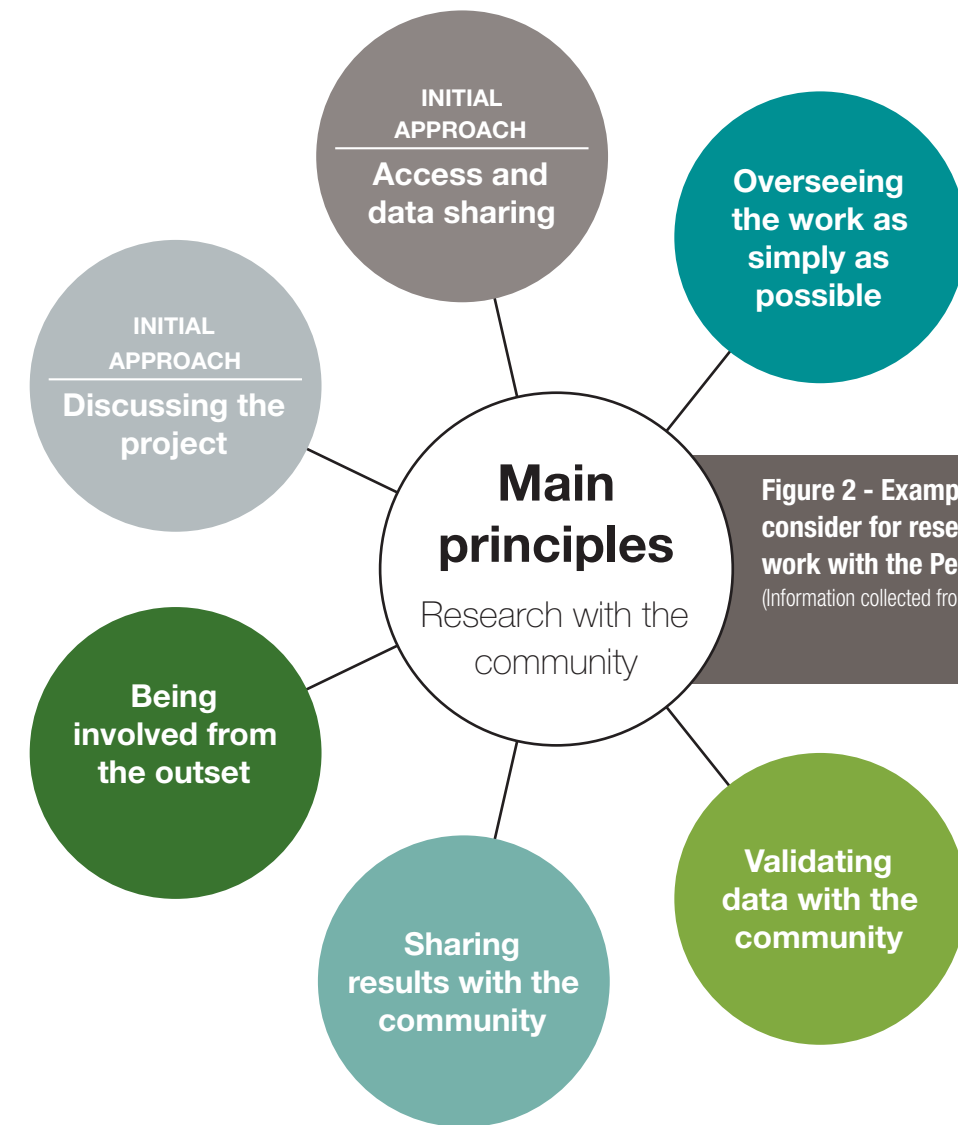


Figure 2 - Examples of principles to consider for researchers who wish to work with the Pessamit community. (Information collected from a workshop held March 21, 2019)

Recommendations

- 1 Create a liaison officer position to maintain relations between researchers and members of Indigenous communities.**
- 2 Develop a tool that allows researchers to keep up with their colleagues' research and their interactions with the communities.**
- 3 Implement measures to facilitate the establishment of informal relationships with community members, with the goal of building trust.**

Sources: Théberge D., M-A Picard, J. Leguerrier, J-M. Beaudoin and F. Grenon, 2019, *Démarche de co-création de connaissances avec les communautés autochtones. Approche de base : éthique de la recherche*. Report submitted to the Canadian Forest Service. Université Laval.