

# SLiCA

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Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic



## **IPY Launch & SLiCA Release**

**SLiCA Results Workshop, March 22, 2007**

Institute for Social and Economic Research, ISER,  
University of Alaska Anchorage, UAA



# IPY Launch & SLiCA Release

The importance of a mixed cash- and harvest herding based economy  
to living in the Arctic – an analysis based on

A Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic;  
Inuit, Sámi and the Indigenous Peoples of Chukotka

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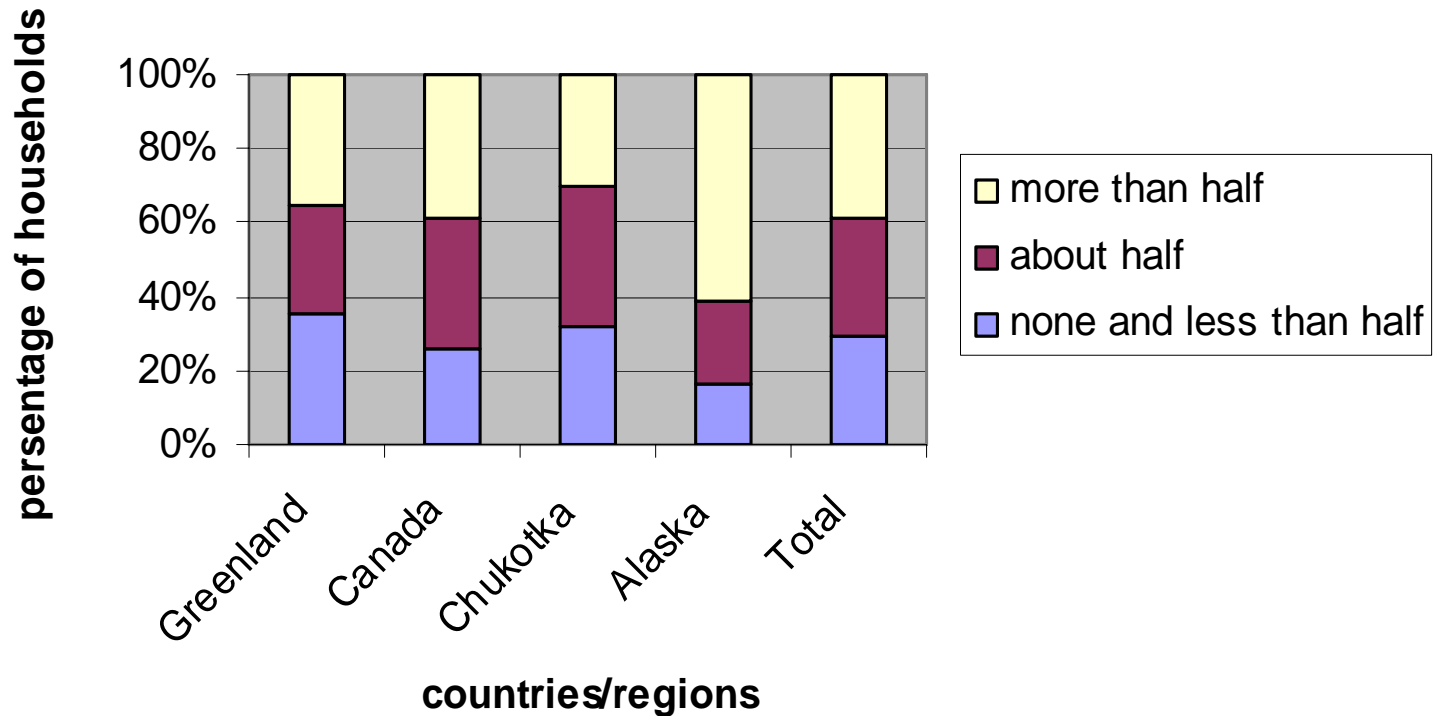
<http://www.arcticlivingconditions.org>



## *The importance of a mixed cash- and harvest herding based economy to living in the Arctic*

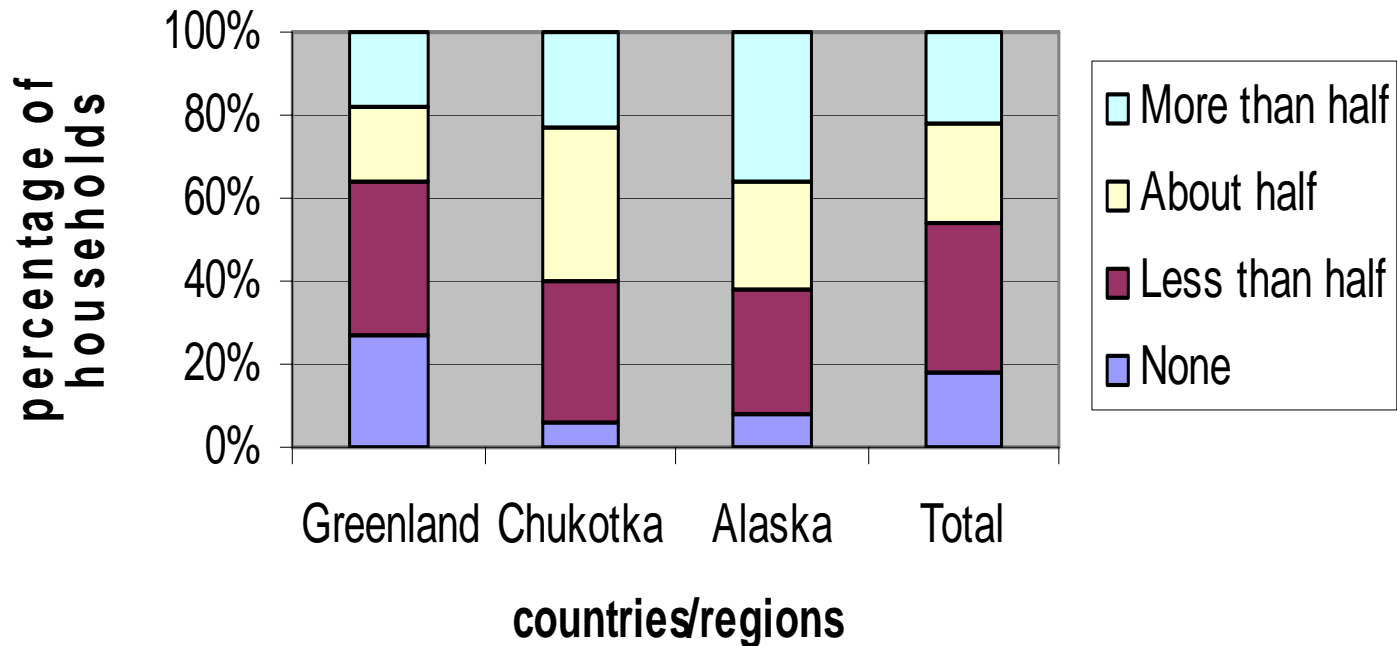
- This theme is one of five international analysis themes suggested by the indigenous peoples' representatives participating in SLiCA.
- The international core questionnaire applied in the Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic, SLiCA offers opportunities to examine
  - the importance of a mixed cash- and harvest herding based economy to living in the Arctic;
  - relationships between traditional hunting, fishing and herding activities and activities in the market economy sector;
  - the respondents' satisfaction with the actual composition of the different activities as well as the preferred composition and the relationship to the overall well-being and the individual.
- The analysis is based on more than 7,000 personal interviews with Inuit adults in Greenland, Canada, Chukotka, and Alaska.

## Proportion of meat and fish the household ate that was traditional food



1. Two out of every three Inuit households perceive that half or more of their household's food supply is made up of traditional food;
2. Traditional food seems to account for the largest part of the diet in Alaska, whereas it counts for a somewhat smaller part of the diet among Inuit in Greenland, Canada and Chukotka.

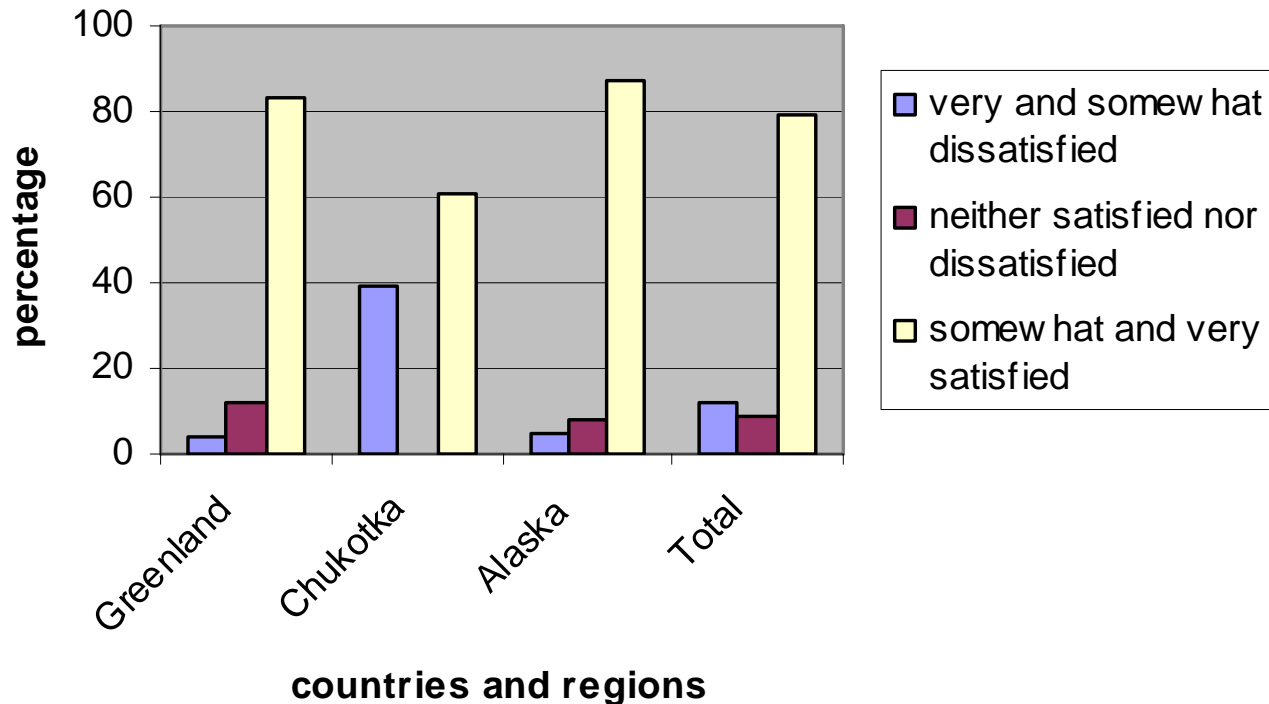
## Proportion of all meat and fish eaten by household that was harvested by household



1. Five out of ten Inuit households perceive they harvested about or more than half of all the meat and fish the family ate;
2. Six out of ten Inuit households in Chukotka and Alaska perceive that household members harvested about or more than half of what the family ate;
3. Less than ten percent did not harvest at all.

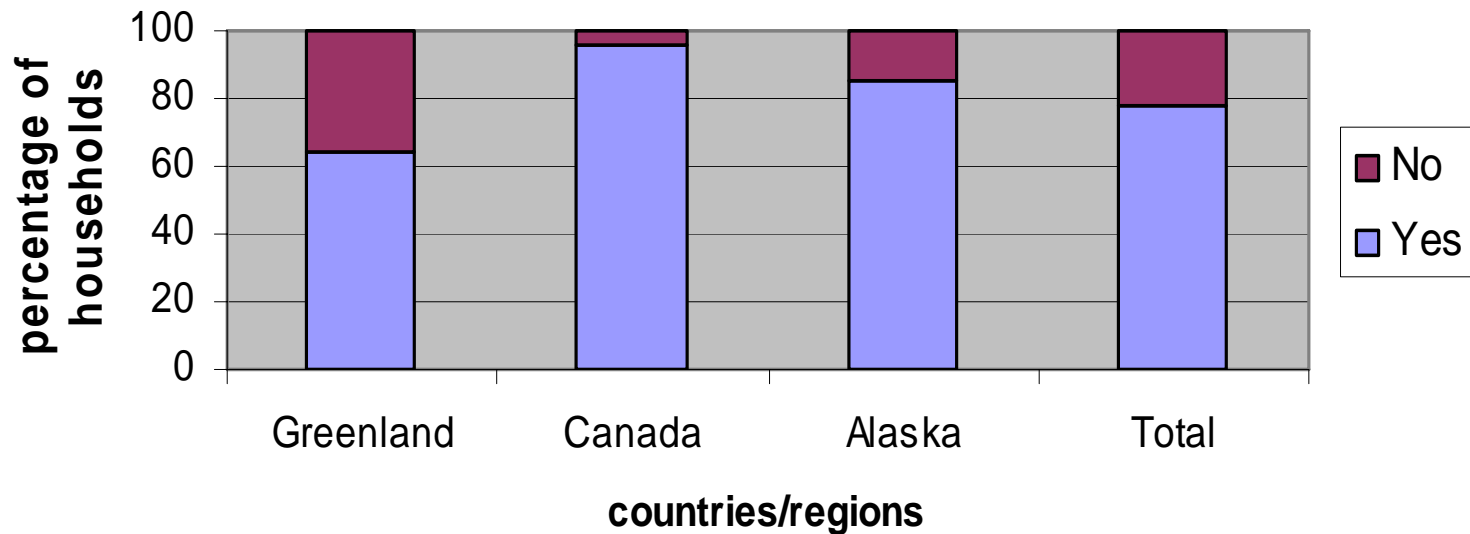


## Satisfaction with combination of production activities



1. More than three out of four Inuit are somewhat or very satisfied with their combination of cash and subsistence activities;
2. Five percent and less are somewhat or very dissatisfied with this combination in Greenland and Alaska whereas four out of ten Inuit in Chukotka are somewhat or very dissatisfied with the cash-/subsistence mix.

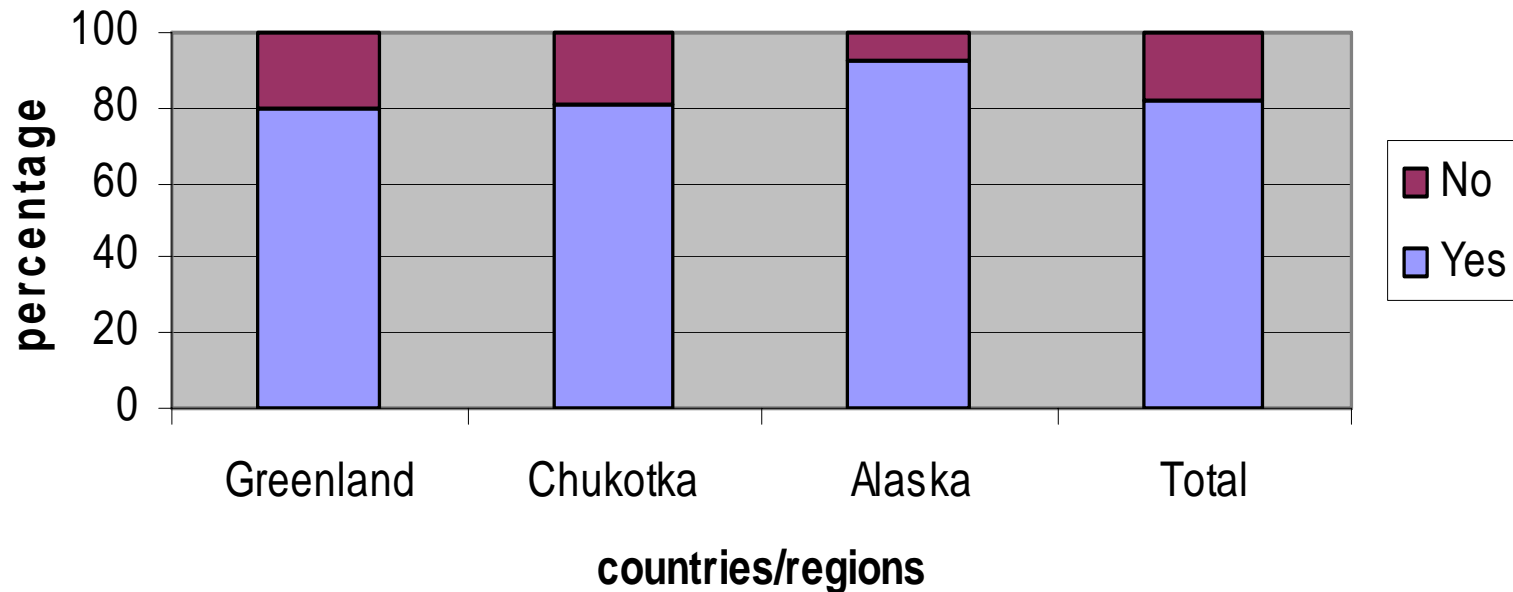
## Shared traditional food with households in other places - Greenland, Canada and Alaska



1. In Canada 96 per cent of Inuit households in the Arctic Homeland share traditional food with households other places;
2. In Greenland and Alaska the corresponding figures are 64 and 85 per cent.

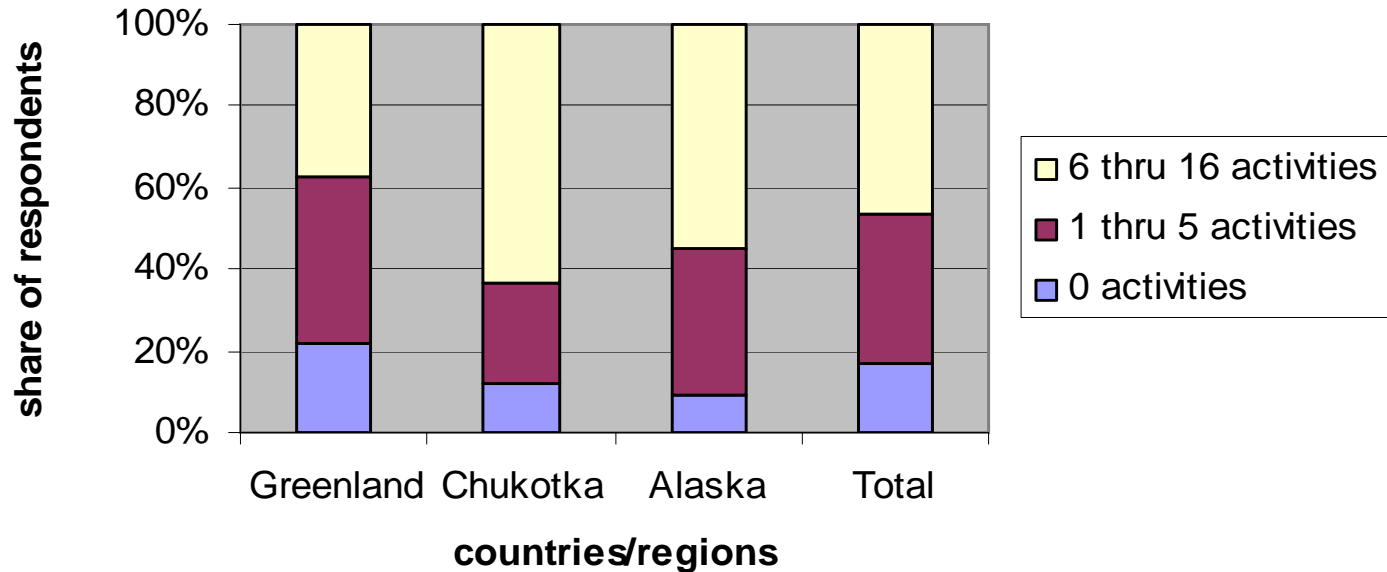


## Received traditional food from others - Greenland, Chukotka and Alaska



1. On average 80 per cent of Inuit households perceive that they receive traditional food from others;
2. Alaska ranks highest with 92 percent while 80 per cent in Chukotka and 79 per cent in Greenland receives traditional food.

## Subsistence level measured by number of different activities in a year. Greenland, Chukotka and Alaska



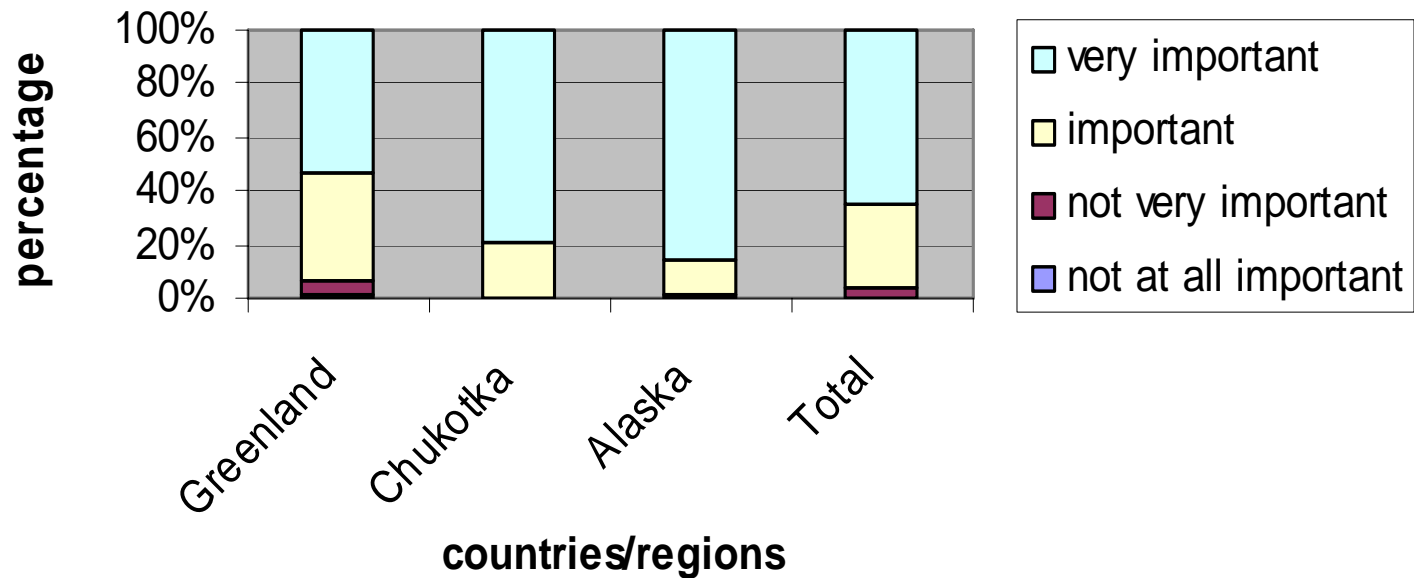
1. Almost half the Inuit participated in between 6 and 16 different hunting, fishing, gathering etc. activities within the past 12 months;
2. Another four out of ten Inuit participated in from one to five harvest activities.

## Ties to Nature Table 16: Household Adults Participating in Subsistence Activities by Country

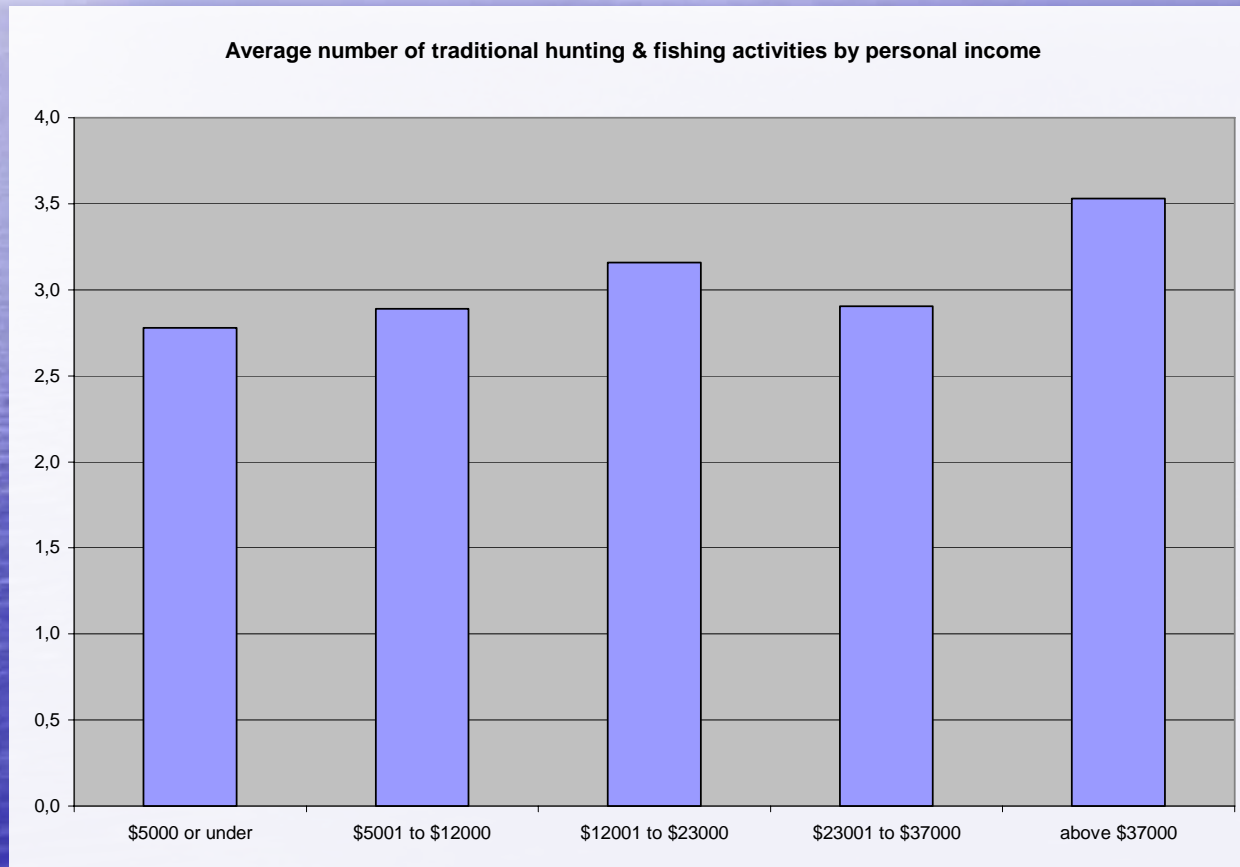
	Canada	Greenland	Chukotka	Alaska	Total
Harvest, hunt, fish	71%	47%	83%	68%	64%
Prepare for trips	71%	34%	68%	64%	55%
Make, repair equipment	46%	54%	53%	45%	52%
Butcher, preserve food	*	44%	59%	66%	52%
Maintain household camp	*	32%	73%	40%	47%
Made carvings, other goods for own use	*	13%	19%	27%	16%
Member of whaling crew or reindeer herder	*	10%	12%	24%	13%
Sold fish, meat or berries	*	7%	13%	5%	8%
Sold carvings other goods	*	5%	9%	18%	8%



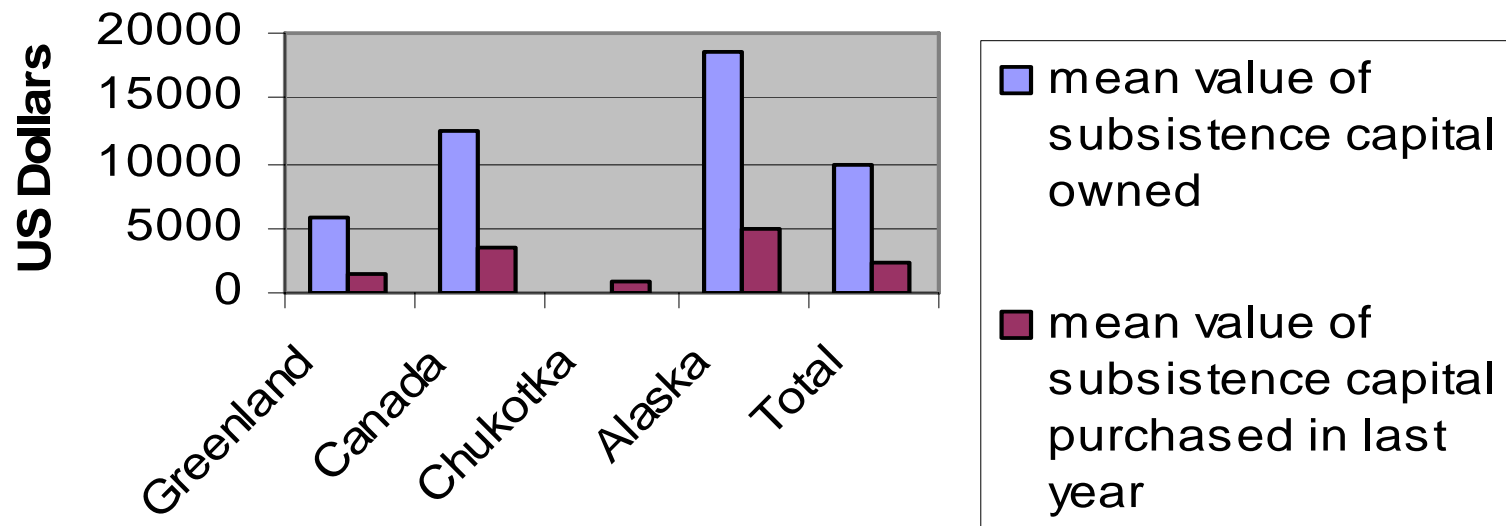
**Importance of three subsistence activities  
respondent does to maintain in her/his Inuit  
identity: hunting/fishing - harvesting of wild  
berries/plants - preserving of traditional food**



# Average number of traditional hunting and fishing activities by personal income



## Mean value in USD of subsistence capital owned and purchased in last year



A more detailed analysis of the break down of the household figures by employment and subsistence activities shows for all regions/countries that high employment and subsistence activities households has spent most on investments and low employment and subsistence activities households has spent least.



# Strength of the **Domestic** Economy (I)

- Two out of every three Inuit households perceive that half or more of their households food supply is made up by traditional food;
- Five out of ten Inuit households perceive they harvested about or more than half of all the meat and fish the family ate;
- On average 80 per cent of Inuit households perceive that they receive traditional food from others and two third of the households in Greenland, 85 per cent of Chukotkan and 96 per cent of households in Alaska share traditional food with other households within a 12 month period.

# Strength of the **Domestic** Economy (II)

- During a 12 month period almost half the Inuit participated in between 6 and 16 different types of harvest-related activities.
- Participation by activity differs from region to region and varies by season. Overall more than half of the Inuit participate in preserving meat or fishing, berry-picking and gathering plants etc.
- Participation in some activities also varies by gender. Half or more of both men and women fish, preserve meat or fish, and pick berries, whereas men mostly participate in hunting activities (70-80 per cent of those hunting) and the women in domestic activities (60-80 per cent in sewing, berry picking and gathering plants etc.)



# Strength of the **Domestic** Economy (III)

- Alaskan example: Seventy percent of Inuit men living in bowhead whaling communities participate as a member of a whaling crew. Fifty-six percent of Inuit women living in bowhead whaling communities directly contribute to the work of whaling crews by cooking, cutting meat, given money or supplies, or even by participation as boat crew members;
- 96 percent of the Inuit of Greenland, Chukotka and Alaska state that hunting/fishing, harvesting of wild berries/plants, and preserving of traditional food is important to maintaining their Inuit identity.



# Strength of the **Cash** Economy (I)

- Two out of three Inuit (age 15+) had a job the week prior to the interview – varying over the Arctic from one in two in Canada and Alaska to seven out of ten in Chukotka and between 8 and nine out of ten in Greenland;
- 55 per cent were employed full time in past 12 months: one out of two in Alaska and Canada and three out of five in Greenland and Chukotka;

# Strength of the **Cash** Economy (II)

- The following findings are based on dichotomising the households in relation to employment (cash economy) and subsistence activities.
- The four groups resulting from this 'double dichotomy' are (part of all that are Inuit households in brackets):
  - 1: low employment and low subsistence: (33 per cent) of all Inuit households
  - 2: low employment and high subsistence: (21 per cent)
  - 3: high employment and low subsistence: (25 per cent)
  - 4: high employment and high subsistence: (21 per cent)



# Strength of the **Cash** Economy (III)

- In both Greenland and Chukotka half of the Inuit households falls in low respectively high employment whereas 2/3 of the Inuit households falls into the low employment categories in Canada and Alaska;
- Grouped by subsistence activities 2/3 of the Greenlandic households fall within the low subsistence categories whereas the proportion of households within the low subsistence category is just above 50 per cent in Canada and Alaska. In Chukotka between half and 2/3 of the Inuit households fall within the high subsistence categories.
- The most obvious conclusion is that most households do not seem to specialise in one kind of activity, it rather seems that there is a tendency to mix activities.



# Strength of the **Cash** Economy (IV)

- Grouping the households according to the Eurostat definitions of poverty (60 per cent or below/above median income) the result is that
  - 1/3 of all Inuit households falls below the poverty level.
  - In Alaska one out of four households can be categorised as poor, whereas the corresponding figure for Greenland, Chukotka and Canada is roughly one out of three.
- The largest part of households that falls below the poverty level can – not surprisingly – be found in the low employment subgroups (10-25 per cent more in the low subsistence than in the high subsistence subgroup)

# Existence of a **Mixed** Economy (I)

- The most obvious conclusion is that most households do not seem to specialise in one kind of activity, it rather seems that there is a tendency to mix activities.
- On average 47 per cent (of all income groups) perceive they harvest half or more than half of what their households eat.
- It is often assumed that subsistence activities are mainly carried through by low income households.
- Breaking down the figures by income (PPP USD) groups:  
< 15.000; 15.000-29.999; 30.000-49.999 ; > 50.000  
does not support this assumption.



# Existence of a **Mixed** Economy (II)

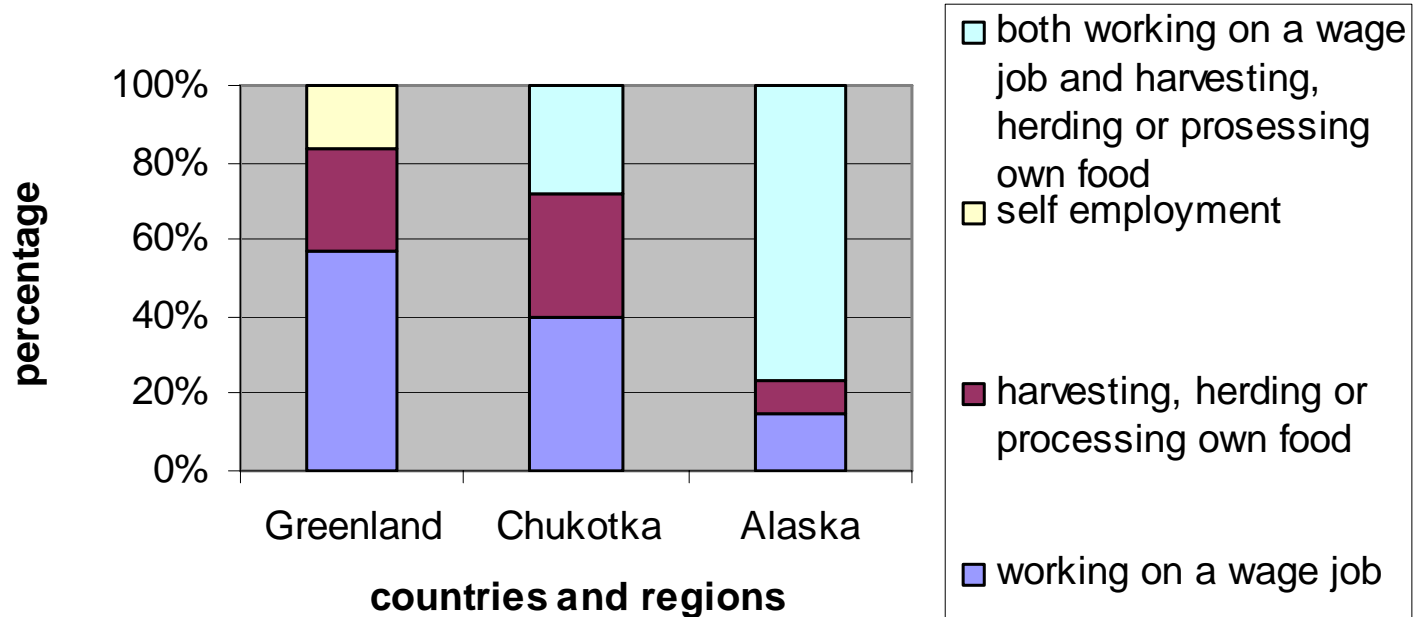
- In both Greenland and Alaska the perceived consumption of own harvest is larger among the households in the highest income groups. In Chukotka the picture is somewhat different but still 50 per cent of the households claim they harvest half of what they eat or more.
- One reason for the mix of subsistence and cash economy activities is the necessity of financing household activities in general and not least equipment for harvest activities:



# Mixed Economy and the Standard of Living

- People mostly see standard of living and the difficulty of "making ends meet" in terms of the things that they can buy. Individuals demonstrate their stated preference to live a lifestyle that combines wage work and traditional domestic production activities by choosing to engage in traditional domestic production activities even when their income is high to easily meet their needs through purchases.
- This conclusion is supported by both the pattern of investment into hunting, fishing etc. equipment and by the answers about preferred combination of activities.

## Preferred lifestyle by country/region



1. Between 27 per cent (Greenland Inuit) and 85 per cent (Alaska Inupiat) prefer a lifestyle that fully or partly include harvest activities.
2. 60 per cent of the Inuit in Greenland prefer working on a wage job;
3. More than three out of four of the Alaska Inupiat prefer a combination of harvesting, herding, processing own food and a wage job;

# Mixed Economy and Subjective Well-Being (I)

- Four-in-five Inuit (in Greenland Chukotka and Alaska) are satisfied with their combination of activities, and almost one third is very satisfied. 12 per cent are either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.
- Those whose combination of activities includes "subsistence" activities (whether they do these activities in combination with wage employment or not) are more or less as satisfied as the full time employed when the total figures are considered.
- When the three regions are considered separately the most significant difference seems to be differences relating to full-time jobs. Whereas 89 per cent of the full time employed Greenland and Alaskan Inuit state they are somewhat or very satisfied with their "mix of activities", the corresponding percentage for Chukotka 50 per cent.



# Mixed Economy and Subjective Well-Being (II)

- Whether a person is satisfied or not with the combination of production activities they pursue matters a lot to their satisfaction with life as a whole.
- Only one-in-ten of the Greenland and Alaskan Inuit who are very dissatisfied with their own combination of production activities are very satisfied with their life as a whole compared to five-in-ten of those are very satisfied

# Identifying the dimensions of well-being that explain the most, second-most and so-on amount of variation in satisfaction with life as a whole

- Below are the results of a series of stepwise multiple regressions to identify the dimensions of well-being that explain the most, second-most and so-on amount of variation in satisfaction with life as a whole.
- Many variables were grouped into categories in order of relative importance, the dimensions, or grouped dimensions most important were:
  1. Job opportunities;
  2. Amount of fish and game available locally;
  3. Combination of production activities (cash and subsistence);
  4. Influence over natural resources and environment;
  5. Job satisfaction.



# Mixed Economy and Subjective Well-Being (III)

- We can conclude that the combination of cash and subsistence activities pursued by Inuit is important to explaining their satisfaction with life as a whole. We have also seen that people appear to differ in their preference of combination of activities, so having a choice seems to be important as well.



## Concluding remarks on the significance of subsistence

- Food supply – food security – a valuable diet
- Economically
- Socially
- Culturally – cultural continuity
- Healthwise
- Less pressure on natural resources
- Contribution to diversity