Seasonal rounds & marine planning

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Marine Planning Forum

Montreal, February 2026

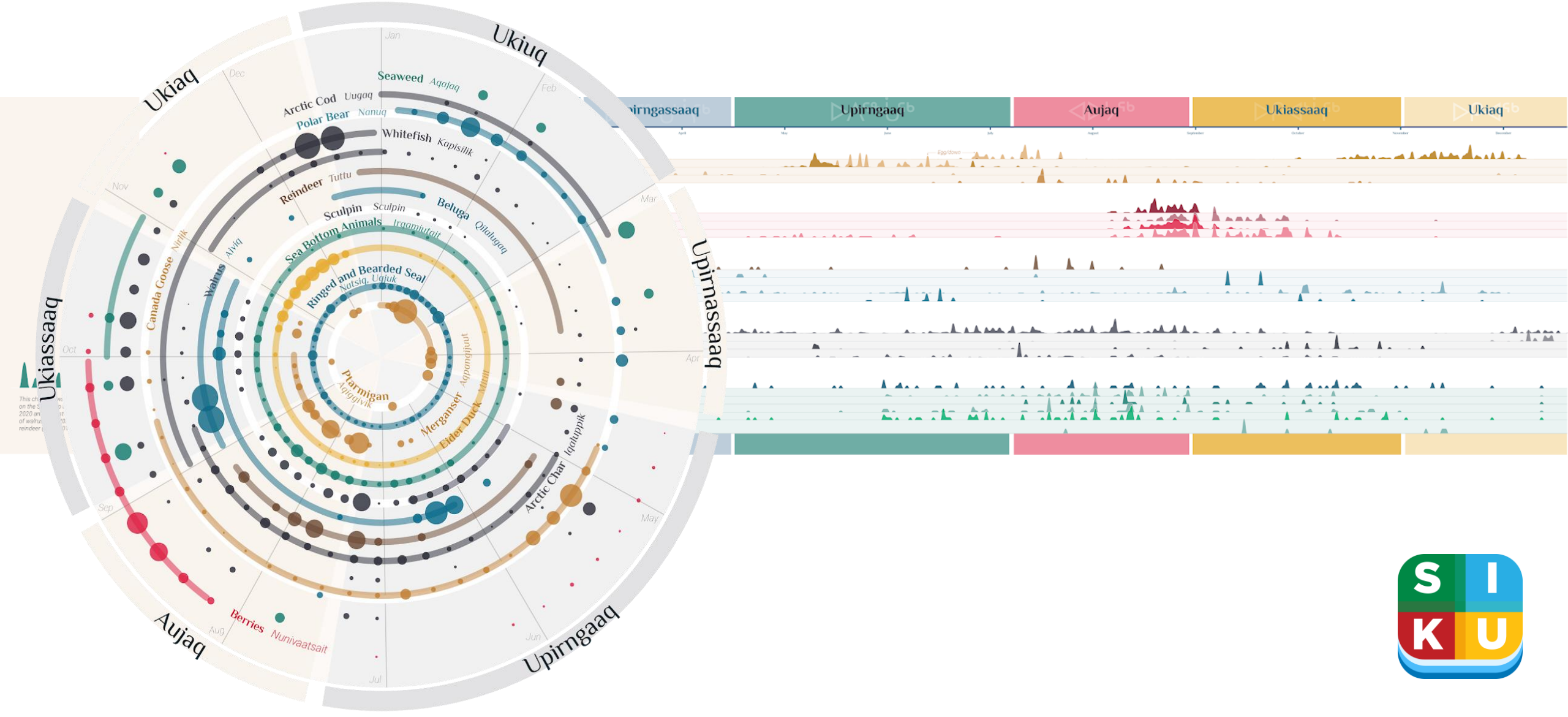
What is a seasonal round?

- Calendar
- Relationship: people, place, environment
- Harvest & travel activities
- Migration patterns

Why create a seasonal round?

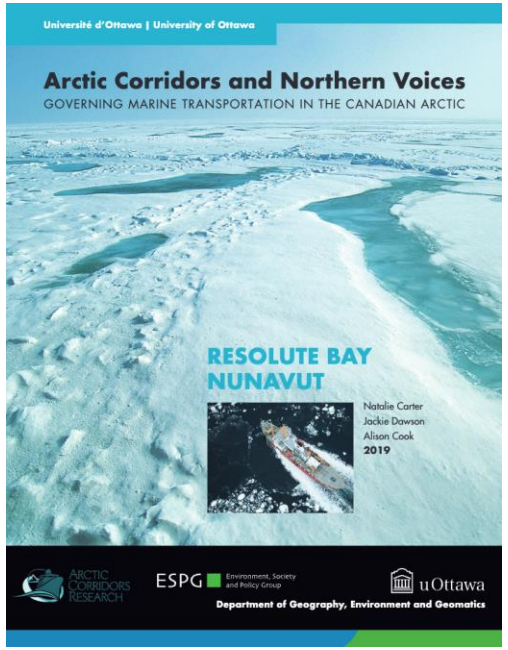
- To inform sector-based planning
- To gather information about species and weather patterns
- To map change over time
- To plan for the future

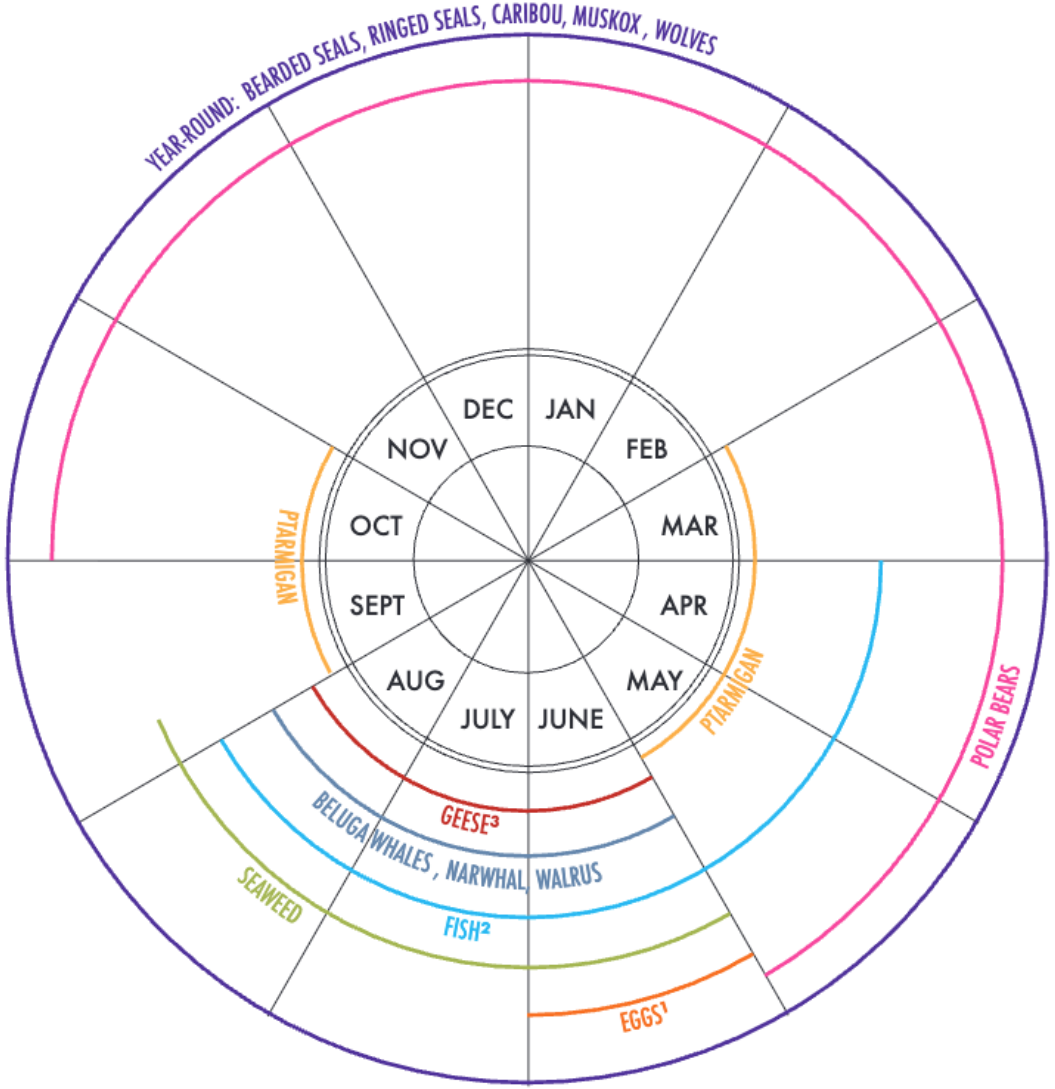
Qikiqtait Calendar (SIKU)



Harvesting Cycle Resolute Bay NU
(Arctic Corridors)

- Selected Knowledge holders (n=8)
  - Participatory mapping
  - Focus groups
- One round for each community
- Identifies harvested species





[1] EGGS: Arctic Terns, Snow Geese, Brants, King Eider Ducks
[2] FISH: Arctic Char, Cisco, Salmon, Lake Trout
[3] GEESE: Snow Geese, Brants, Canada Geese, King Eider Ducks

https://ruor.uottawa.ca/server/api/core/bitstreams/439c831d-bfd5-4b2d-9c6e-8609e0ea21bb/content

Imappivut Seasonal Calendar

Nunatsiavut Government

- Participatory mapping interviews (n=80+)
- Combines insights from entire Nunatsiavut coastline
- Harvested species, activities & indicators of change

Arctic Science

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All kinds of seasons: articulating Labrador Inuit governance through crafting a seasonal calendar

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Abstract

Inuit have always worked within seasonal patterns, using ecological observations to make predictions about weather, ocean and ice conditions, species presence, and environmental change. Monitoring, intergenerational knowledge sharing, and strong relationships have supported Inuit as they have responded to environmental conditions through generations. This has informed a unique understanding of seasonal change that is reflective of Inuit knowledge and relationships to land, water, and ice. Calendars across Inuit Nunangat are unique to the social-ecological regions in which they were developed. In this collaboration between Inuit and non-Inuit researchers, artists, and knowledge holders, we developed a seasonal calendar for Nunatsiavut that is representative not only of activities and species harvested throughout the year, but that also depicts a Labrador Inuit relationship to seasonality. This research is part of the Imappivut Knowledge Study, a participatory research process designed by the Nunatsiavut Government to inform spatial planning in the marine environment of northern Labrador. The resulting calendar expresses an Inuit experience of the seasons as they are inexorably linked to life and wellbeing in Nunatsiavut. The calendar can be used to reframe Federal and Provincial environmental management policies, such as harvest regulations for Atlantic salmon, to align with Nunatsiavut-based indicators of seasonal change.

Key words: arts-based methods, Inuit Knowledge, phenology, seasonal change, environmental governance

Introduction

"When seals were getting handy, a whole lot of gulls would come around. And in the fall, when the foxes were handy, crows would come around. They used to let us know when animals were near" (Zack Torarak, Hopedale).

The quote above was recorded by Carol Brice-Bennett in her anthropological work *Our Footprints are Everywhere* (1977), gathered for the Labrador Inuit Association during the negotiations for the Labrador Inuit Land Claim Agreement which led to the establishment of Nunatsiavut in 2005. Nunatsiavut is an Inuit territory in Inuit Nunangat, the Inuit homelands on the lands known to some as Canada. These words from Inuit Knowledge holder Zack Torarak express how Inuit life and livelihoods are deeply connected to seasonal change. In northern Labrador, Inuit were traditionally nomadic, following Arctic char, harp seal, caribou herds, and beluga migrations across the mountains, ocean, and islands in the region (Brice-Bennett et al. 2023). Even after Labrador Inuit were relocated into permanent settlements, harvesting practices and cultural activities have persisted; to this day, families return to their ancestral harvesting places in the winters and summers (Oberndorfer et al. 2017; Cadman, Snook, et al. 2023).

Seasons and seasonal change have long dictated the social activities of Labrador Inuit, and are the measure around which life, harvesting, and family are organized (Woollett 2007). As such, seasons are a foundational part of Inuit Knowledge Systems, a logic through which Inuit maintain a relationship to the Land. To convey the place-based nuances of these changes to non-local audiences, many communities across Inuit Nunangat have created seasonal calendars that depict regionally specific climatic and ecological change (see, for example, a recently released calendar from Travel Nunavut (https://travelnunavut.ca/story/a-plan-for-all-seasons)). Observations and communication of seasonal change are essential for safety and wellbeing on the Land, but these observations embody much more than environmental knowledge; they are indicative of a particular experience and conceptualization of time, embedded in a unique cosmology, epistemology, and ontology (Aporta 2016). Thus, these calendars can be read not merely as communicating environmental observations, but also as illustrations of Inuit governance—of the logic, relationships, and rules that govern Inuit life (Chanteloup et al. 2018; Middleton et al. 2020; Sahusky et al. 2022).

Calendars are ways of structuring our experience of time embedded in a particular socio-cultural context, which can

Art by Jessica Winters

1. Insights for research

- Inuit relationship to the land is fundamental to Knowledge
- Scientific rigour requires a seasonal approach
- Put findings into context

2. Insights for management

- Developing indicators
- Species & use interactions
- Safety measures
- Changing climate & conditions

3. Insights for big picture planning

- Responsive to conditions
- Adaptive approaches
- Relationship & responsibility
- Empowerment of Inuit Knowledge

Arts in research

- Deeper engagement with the data
- More holistic understanding
- Expression of a knowledge system
- Celebration

Nakummek! Thank you!

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NUNATSIAVUT
kavamanga Government

Imappivut
Nunatsiavut Marine Plan

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