

Mayor Ane Hansen, Welcome - 29 September 2022

Dear guests from different countries who are working with the use of participatory monitoring and management of living resources, whether you have an academic background or volunteer-based interest.

I would like to particularly welcome Minister of Fisheries and Hunting Karl Tobiassen and his staff. And the key leaders of this seminar: the staff of PISUNA in Attu. A warm welcome to the Municipality of Qeqertalik!

In Aasiaat, our community does not lack natural resources - be it animals or other natural resources. During the summer we experience and see almost all species of whales in our area. Right now it is beluga and narwhale season. Almost all the export fish of this country are fish that are fished from our region. One of the biggest bird colonies in the world are in our municipality. And land-based animals such as the caribou and muskoxen have large areas of feeding ground. The people here have a high interest in a sustainable use of the living animal resources accordingly. And they see the impact of the climatic changes.

The economical income in Greenland is primarily based on fishery. And being able to have a livelihood, providing ourselves with natural resources, is critical to us in our everyday lives. That is why Greenland Institute of Natural Resources - and the scientific work they do - is key to our government and the work they do. Despite of this, there has been an ongoing dispute between people of hunters and fishermen and the scientific representatives, in scientific works. And the dispute is ongoing. In my time as Minister of Fisheries, Hunting and Agriculture from 2009-2013, I have supported the work of PISUNA, and the reports documenting trends observed during fishery and hunting - and proposing management actions. This is because I believe that it is important in these fields, that you "open up the doors" of the Indigenous Peoples knowledge, and the scientific knowledge. I believe collaborating in participatory monitoring is important. I believe that sharing knowledge amongst each other is beneficial for all parties.

There are nine communities from our area who have been involved in the participatory monitoring work, because there is a clear interest and support from the Government. But unfortunately there is now only one community left, who are actively participating. And that is the hunters and fishermen of Attu, who tirelessly are still interested and still are keeping up the work. And they were nominated to, and won, the Nordic Council Environment Prize in 2018 for this work, which we all were very proud to witness.

Therefore, it is my hope that PISUNA once again will be clearly supported from the government, so the work of including the Indigenous people's knowledge can be integrated beneficially in ongoing scientific work in the future. We, from the municipality of Qeqertalik support this work. And therefore, we encourage the Minister to clarify the support from the government as well.

And with this, a heartfelt welcome to all of the participants from all over the world to this seminar, and I hope for you, a fruitful outcome!