



# NWT Plain Facts

*On Land and  
Self-government*

## Beaufort-Delta / Gwich'in and Inuvialuit Self-Government Negotiations

The Beaufort-Delta Self-Government Negotiations are the first in which a First Nation group, the Gwich'in, and an Inuit group, the Inuvialuit, are pursuing self-government together. The negotiations involve the Government of Canada, Government of Northwest Territories, the Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC), and the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC).

### The region and the people

There are 8 communities in the Beaufort-Delta Region: Inuvik, Aklavik, Fort McPherson Tsiigehtchic, Tuktoyaktuk, Sachs Harbour, Holman and Paulatuk. Approximately 7,000 people live in the Beaufort-Delta Region. Communities are often a mix of Gwich'in, Inuvialuit, other Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people.



Under the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement, the GTC (on behalf of the Gwich'in) was granted ownership of 22,329 km<sup>2</sup> of land in the Northwest Territories. The GTC obtained subsurface (mineral) rights in about one quarter of this land, and in an additional small parcel. Also, the GTC (on behalf of the Tetlit Gwich'in) received 1,554 km<sup>2</sup> of land in the Yukon.

The Inuvialuit Final Agreement provides for grants to the Inuvialuit totaling 90,643 km<sup>2</sup> of land, located near the communities of the Western Arctic Region and in Cape Bathurst. (The Western Arctic Region is the portion of the Inuvialuit Settlement Region located outside the Yukon.) Of this, one seventh includes subsurface rights. The Agreement also contains provisions dealing with the Yukon North Slope.

### The goal of negotiations

Self-government in the Beaufort-Delta Region will establish what powers the Beaufort-Delta governments have and clarify the relationships of those governments with the federal and territorial governments. More decisions about what happens in Beaufort-Delta communities will be made, or strongly influenced, by the people living in the Beaufort-Delta Region.

With self-government addressed, Aboriginal and territorial governments may find it easier to encourage businesses to develop resources. Resolution of land claim and self-government issues creates a more stable and predictable environment that encourages political, social and economic development.



## Progress so far

### 1984

The Inuvialuit and the Government of Canada sign the ***Inuvialuit Final Agreement***, the first land claim agreement in the Northwest Territories.

### 1992

The Gwich'in and the Government of Canada sign the ***Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement***.

### 1993

The IRC and the GTC submit a **joint proposal for regional public government for the Beaufort-Delta Region** of the western NWT.

### 1995

The ***Federal Policy on Aboriginal Self-government*** (commonly referred to as the *Inherent Right Policy*) is introduced by the Government of Canada.

### 1996

**The Beaufort-Delta Process and Schedule Agreement** regarding self-government is negotiated and signed. The AIP is then negotiated over the next 5 years.

### October 2001

An Agreement-in-Principal (AIP) is initialled by the negotiators of all parties involved.

### April 16, 2003

The AIP is signed. It establishes the basis for a Final Agreement that will implement self-government for the Gwich'in and the Inuvialuit through a combination of public government and Aboriginal government. It is significant because it is the first stand-alone self-government AIP in the Northwest Territories, and because it provides for both Aboriginal and public governments.

### What is being negotiated now

The parties are now working toward a Final Agreement for self-government in the Beaufort-Delta Region.

The AIP set out the structure of each of the proposed Beaufort-Delta governments, and identified the powers that those governments would have with respect to several subjects, including: culture and language, child and family services and adoption, health, social services, income support, education, training, local government operations, and justice and policing. The Final Agreement will provide some further details concerning certain of these issues.

Other items being negotiated in the Final Agreement include whether it should be given constitutional protection, and what preparatory work needs to be done, such as training and other capacity building activities. Also being discussed are the financial arrangements among the federal, territorial and Beaufort-Delta governments that will be needed to ensure that self-government works.

## For more information:

For more Plain Facts on land and self-government in the NWT, visit the Plain Talk website at [www.inac-ainc.gc.ca/nt/pt](http://www.inac-ainc.gc.ca/nt/pt)

For general information on DIAND policies, programs and services, visit the NWT Region's website at [nwt-tno.inac-ainc.gc.ca](http://nwt-tno.inac-ainc.gc.ca)

## To contact us:

Communications Directorate  
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, NWT Region  
P.O. Box 1500, Yellowknife, NWT, X1A 2R3  
Phone: (867) 669-2576 Fax: (867) 669-2715

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