



## **Food Security and Food Sovereignty Definitions, Food Security Conceptual Framework, and defining terms from the,**

***Alaskan Inuit Food Security Conceptual Framework: How to Assess the Arctic From an Inuit Perspective.***<sup>1</sup> The report can be accessed through this link - **[Full Technical Report](#)**

**Food security** is the natural right of all Inuit to be part of the ecosystem, to access food, to care-take, protect and respect all of life, land, water and air. It allows for all Inuit to obtain, process, store and consume sufficient amounts of healthy and nutritious preferred food; foods that are physically and spiritually craved and needed from the land, air and water, which provide for their families and future generations through the practice of Inuit customs and spirituality, languages, knowledge, policies, management practices and self-governance. It includes the responsibility and ability to pass on knowledge to younger generations, the taste of traditional foods rooted in place and season, knowledge of how to safely obtain and prepare traditional foods for medicinal use, clothing, housing, nutrients and, overall, how to be within one's environment. Food security includes the recognition that food is a lifeline and a connection between the past and today's self and cultural identity. Inuit food security is characterized by environmental health and is made up of six interconnecting dimensions: Inuit Culture, Availability, Accessibility, Health and Wellness, Stability, and Decision-Making Power and Management. This definition holds the understanding that without food sovereignty, food security will not exist.<sup>2</sup>

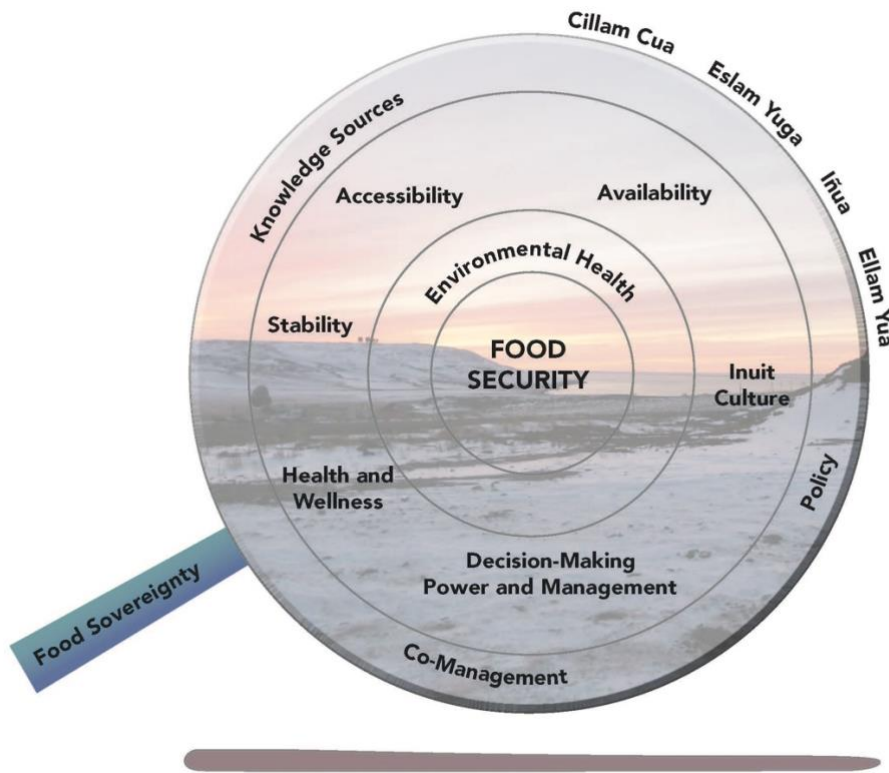
**Food sovereignty** is the right of Inuit to define their own hunting, gathering, fishing, land and water policies; the right to define what is sustainable, socially, economically and culturally appropriate for the distribution of food and to maintain ecological health; the right to obtain and maintain practices that ensure access to tools needed to obtain, process, store and consume traditional foods. Within the Alaskan Inuit Food Security Conceptual Framework, food sovereignty is a necessity for supporting and maintaining the six dimensions of food security.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> All information on this document comes directly from the Alaskan Inuit Food Security Conceptual Framework: How to Assess the Arctic From an Inuit Perspective.

Please use the preferred citation when referencing this material - Inuit Circumpolar Council-Alaska. 2015. Alaskan Inuit Food Security Conceptual Framework: How to Assess the Arctic From an Inuit Perspective. Technical Report. Anchorage, AK.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*



**Alaska Inuit Food Security Conceptual Framework.** “The conceptual framework provides a platform for understanding what all of food security’s facets are. The framework aids us in seeing the interconnections between the many pieces that make up food security. It provides direction for what information is needed and how to interpret that information in order to assess food security.”<sup>4</sup>

**Defining Terms** - Below are the six dimension that make up food security, a healthy environment. With each dimension we share how we define the term through our Indigenous Knowledge.

**Availability** – The ability of the Arctic ecosystem to maintain a high variety of life (biodiversity), allowing adequate transfer of nutrients and energy. It is the knowledge of seasons and how to collect, process, store and consume traditional foods, allowing for Inuit to eat what has been gathered from the previous season and harvest a variety of

<sup>4</sup> ibid



## INUIT

medicines. Inuit Culture – Food is the cornerstone of our culture and self- and shared identity. Harvesting traditional foods is how cultural values, skills and spirituality are learned – this is how all learn to be within their environments and to be part of the ecosystem. The relationship between Inuit and all else that makes up the Arctic environment aids in the maintenance of cultural and environmental integrity.<sup>5</sup>

**Inuit Culture** – Food is the cornerstone of our culture and self- and shared identity. Harvesting traditional foods is how cultural values, skills and spirituality are learned – this is how all learn to be within their environments and to be part of the ecosystem. The relationship between Inuit and all else that makes up the Arctic environment aids in the maintenance of cultural and environmental integrity.<sup>6</sup>

**Decision-Making Power and Management** – The Alaskan Inuit ability to use and value IK to manage daily activities; to build and rely on self-governance across space and time; for Alaskan Inuit to use their knowledge system in synergy with other knowledge systems, such as Western science, to equitably manage human activities within the Arctic environment and to better understand changes occurring; to apply holistic knowledge to understanding the Arctic environment through IK philosophies and methodologies; the ability to manage activities within the Arctic in a way that ensures younger generations will have healthy and nutritious foods to harvest; for Alaskan Inuit to have control over their own fate and to use their cultural value system.<sup>7</sup>

**Health and Wellness** – Physical health of all life within the Arctic and of the land, water and air; adequate passage and absorption of nutrients throughout the Arctic ecosystem; mental health related to community and household relations and self- and cultural identity; environmental integrity and productivity to withstand pollution, habitat destruction and other disturbances.<sup>8</sup>

**Stability** – The ability of the puzzle pieces (systems) to adjust to each other as shifts within the ecosystem occur. The ability to maintain sustainability through the management of human actions that support and ensure younger generations will have sufficient healthy food to harvest and that all the pieces of the puzzle maintain connected. Stability is obtained through a level of Alaskan Inuit mental security and is in reference to the legal protections for the environment against harm caused by pollutants. Mental security is also in reference to legal protection against forced assimilation, which allow for the maintenance of a level of cultural confidence and hope.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> ibid

<sup>6</sup> ibid

<sup>7</sup> ibid

<sup>8</sup> ibid

<sup>9</sup> ibid



**Accessibility** – The ability to live off the land, ocean and air and to obtain sufficient access to a diverse source of healthy food, water, animals, plants, fish, ice, etc. The ability to maintain Inuit traditional economic practices, such as trading, sharing and providing foods and medicines. It is the ability to access and maintain an economic system based on cash in connection to an Inuit traditional economic system. It is the ability to obtain skills, tools and technologies needed to collect, process and store traditional foods.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid