

Key Messages/Concerns from the IWG Stakeholder Meeting
at the
Alaska Forum on the Environment

1. **Health/Children's health:** Community members expressed concern that there was not enough health information /data available regarding Alaska Natives including the effects of air, water, exposure to contaminants, social and economic impacts on tribes. Tribes would also like to have more autonomy in monitoring and data collection. Tribes are particularly concerned about cumulative effects of policies and actions on children's health.

Several agencies including DOI, EPA and HHS are conducting studies at various levels and in collaboration with local health departments and other entities across the state to expand on already existing information. Studies are looking at specific villages, health collaborative, oil and gas mining practices and their effects on surrounding areas, as well as cumulative impacts of other environmental factors. Many of these studies incorporate traditional knowledge as a part of the decision process. (See #1, 5, 10, 11, 15, 19, 23, 31, 39, 43, 44)

2. **Subsistence:** Tribes are concerned that current policies, air and water pollution, state environmental policies and consumption guidelines are affecting daily life. For example, traditional knowledge is very important when understanding the life cycles for fishing and fish consumption by tribal members.

Agencies already include communities in many of the decisions that are made that affect their communities. However, agencies such as EPA, DOI and HHS are instituting policies that will further increase the participation and input from tribal members to better understand traditional knowledge when reviewing and implementing federal actions. (See #7, 12, 13, 14, 17, 28, 37)

3. **Meaningful involvement:** Tribal members would like to see more transparency and ability to participate in policy and decision-making on tribal lands. Members want to have easier access to information and marked improvement in the coordination of government to government consultations. There is often a lack of communication between tribal leaders' decisions and the affect on the well-being of tribal members. Tribal members want to see action and accountability across the government.

Federal agencies are committed to consideration of all aspects of Alaska native life as they develop future policies. Agencies are working to streamline and coordinate processes across the federal government and within tribal and other EJ communities. Part of that process will include EPA's new consultation procedures. (See #4, 8, 27, 34, 38, 42)