

Research Update

Many Strong Voices against the disaster of climate change

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As the long-term disaster of climate change continues to affect communities, new and creative efforts are also continuing to determine how to deal with this challenge. One project, Many Strong Voices <http://www.manystrongvoices.org> , joins communities from the arctic and from the 51 Small Island Developing States (SIDS; <http://www.sidsnet.org>) in recognition of the similar vulnerabilities to climate change that both regions experience.

Many Strong Voices, launched in December 2005 by the United Nations Environment Programme, brings together arctic and SIDS participants to share and enhance knowledge and expertise about, and to collaboratively devise strategic solutions to, climate change challenges. The research component of this project involves conducting a comprehensive assessment of vulnerability and adaptation to climate change across the SIDS, so partners are always needed for this work.

The entire Many Strong Voices programme aims at catalysing local action across the arctic and the SIDS, recognising the important and complementary contributions of sound research, outreach, and lobbying. While external and top-down interventions and exchanges are useful for supporting local action, the most effective manner of reducing vulnerability and living with climate change is through



community-based initiatives. Many Strong Voices provides the inspiration, impetus, and opportunity to build and maintain community-based processes related to climate change which are solidly based on sustainability principles, policies, and practices.

Throughout, one important theme has been recognising that climate change is just one disaster, one challenge, and one opportunity amongst many others facing these regions. Multiple stressors must be considered simultaneously to ensure that tackling one problem, such as climate change, does not create or exacerbate other problems emerging from the myriad of social and environmental issues that challenge these communities. Dealing with climate change should contribute to addressing these other issues and vice versa. With such comprehensiveness, cooperation, and exchange, Many Strong Voices will be heard, leading to action locally and globally for positive change.

For more information, see:

1. <http://www.manystrongvoices.org>

2. CICERO and UNEP/GRID-Arendal. 2008. Many Strong Voices: Outline for an assessment project design. CICERO Report 2008:05. CICERO (Center for International Climate and Environmental Research, Oslo), Oslo, Norway, full text at <http://www.ilankelman.org/articles1/msv200805.pdf>

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