



Institut nordique
du Québec



NORTHERN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH CHAIR

Faculty of Social Sciences

MISSION

The Research Chair in Sustainable Development of the North seeks to enhance knowledge of northern issues and reframe development models to inform decision making by the provincial and federal governments and northern institutions and communities with a view to sustainable development.

CHAIR CREATION: May 2011

RENEWAL: October 2016

This research chair is part of Université Laval's Program for the Advancement of Innovation, Research, and Education (PAIRE), which aims to create a stimulating research environment for innovation, ingenuity, and creativity on the part of faculty members.

BACKGROUND

The North holds tremendous economic, cultural, and symbolic potential, and the development of its resources has been a driver of Canada's economy since the 1950s. However, although northern resources have clearly benefitted southern Québec and Canada, the benefits have been more limited for northern inhabitants. Indigenous communities and newer, resource-based communities are still too often at the mercy of development models designed in large part with a short-term perspective. These communities share several key characteristics: a peripheral position with respect to decision making, limited control over resource development, and dependence on government transfers. The North lacks infrastructure and investment, and also faces important social challenges.

CHAIRHOLDER

Thierry Rodon is an associate professor in the Political Science Department at Université Laval. He is also the Director of the Interuniversity Centre for Aboriginal Studies and Research (CIÉRA) and the journal *Études Inuit Studies*. He specializes in northern politics and community development and has extensive experience working with Aboriginal communities and northern institutions on a broad range of issues, including the social and economic impacts of development projects, renewable resource management, adapting to climate change, access to higher education in the Arctic, policy development and evaluation, as well as community participation in environmental impact assessments. Thierry was also an editor of the series *Life Stories of Northern Leaders* and has published on Nunavut, Nunatsiavut, Nunavik, and Eeyou Istchee. He helped design and implement a public service certificate program for the Nunavut government.



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OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this chair is to reframe northern development in terms of sustainable development. Doing so means putting social and human development and environmental protection on the same footing as economic development. It also means taking steps to ensure that the benefits of this development flow first to the North, where the needs are great. Only a comprehensive vision of development will bring real, long-term prosperity and improve living conditions in the region, which will help reduce transfer payments from the South. By improving relations so that the North is seen as more than just a resource-rich hinterland, Canada and the North could build a partnership that contributes to their mutual development. To this end, the Chair's primary objective is to analyze and define sustainable development models that put northern needs first and respond to the imperatives of sustainable development in a northern context.

More precisely, the Chair's objectives are as follows:

- > Take inventory of the North's natural, human, social, and financial capital and analyze the structural factors that hinder sustainable development in the region
- > Document and analyze the factors that promote sustainable northern development and draw up scenarios for the harmonious development of the North's natural, human, social, and financial resources
- > Understand and analyze the factors that contribute to the viability and sustainability of northern communities
- > Improve research capacity in the North by supporting the establishment of social science research centres in northern Québec
- > Encourage the participation and training of Indigenous researchers as part of the Chair's research projects

PARTNERS

The Chair was established thanks to the financial support of Makivik Corporation and ArcelorMittal Mines Canada. It is now financed by Makivik Corporation and Institut nordique du Québec (INQ).

The Chair has received \$5.5 million in research grants since its creation in 2011.

BENEFITS

The Research Chair helps better document the social, environmental, and economic issues in the North. Through its research, the Chair intends to generate the following benefits:

- > Provide essential data on factors hindering or helping the development of northern communities
- > Help communities, governments, Indigenous organizations, and partners with decision making and the management of development projects
- > Help train university students and researchers
- > Help train Indigenous researchers



INFORMATION

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