



## Policy Brief 2: Recommendations

# Justice in Environmental and Social Impact Assessments

The question of whose knowledge counts is crucial to EIAs.

However, the research found that it is not given its due. Affected groups see the information produced as sometimes being unreliable, flawed or biased toward the developer. Indigenous knowledge tends to be neglected in favour of scientific knowledge.

In addition, because EIAs do not generally account for legacies of past injustices, they are often met with mistrust by indigenous communities and a sense that the old patterns of dispossession are being reproduced.

What can be done to make environmental impact assessments work better and serve a broader range of concerns? Our research points to several possible ways forward, among them:

- 1** Factor in injustices and legacies of past harm so as to be able to engage with actual social complexity
- 2** Widen the scope of what forms of knowledge are included, not least by recognizing indigenous knowledge
- 3** In the European Arctic, incorporate an analysis of social impacts (inspired by North American practices)
- 4** Pay specific attention to the needs of vulnerable groups

