Book of Abstracts

North Atlantic Forum 2024
Sustainable Livelihoods: Regenerating Integrated Development through Innovative Communities
Atlantic Technological University
Connemara, Ireland
June 17th - 21st, 2024

A1 - Housing Panel

The Theory, Practice and Policy of Affordable Housing in Rural Areas
Panellists: Lorcan Sirr, Kevin Heanue, Christopher Mitchelmore, Hugh Brennan

Abstract:
This session provides an opportunity for policy makers, practitioners and researchers to exchange on the under researched topic of Affordable Housing in Rural Areas. Drawing on Irish and international evidence and research, the session will explore questions such as 1) how are housing markets in different types of rural areas theorised; 2) what are the policy instruments aimed at the provision of affordable housing in rural areas and 3) what examples are there of community-led solutions to the provision of affordable housing in rural areas. Although clearly part of broader housing system debates, this session seeks to surface any specifically rural dimensions to affordable housing analysis, policy and provision.

The Context of Affordable Housing in Rural Ireland
Lorcan Sirr

Abstract:
This paper will explore what affordable housing means in legislation and practice. It will look at how affordability has been created over decades for rural dwellers and hjow the concept of affordability is threatened by housing output and hierarchical planning. Some aspects of affordability and not under the control of either purchasers or even the State, and these will be identified, as will the aspects of affordability that are controllable. Examples of how affordability has been created will be used to demonstrate how initial and ongoing affordability can be generated in a rural Irish context.

The Affordability Gap for Housing in Peripheral Rural Ireland
Kevin Heanue

Abstract:
Twenty two years ago I published an article in Administration exploring The Affordability Gap for Housing in Peripheral Rural areas. Focused on a case study of North West Connemara and utilising what at the time were proprietary unique data sets on holiday home numbers, property prices and local household incomes, the research showed that average local house prices were 8 times average local incomes; an affordability gap larger than the national figure. This current paper revisits the topic for the same area using a mixture of readily available Central Statistics Office (CSO) and other data and analysis and proprietary qualitative data from a local community survey, focus groups and key informants. The research shows that the affordability gap for housing is still the same, is still larger than the national figure and housing affordability is a major community concern. The policy, practice and integrated development implications are discussed.

Developing for the changing landscape of small rural communities
Christopher Mitchelmore

Abstract:
St. Anthony Basin Resources Inc., through collaborative partnerships became a housing developer at the risk of losing its higher income retirees due to no alternative housing option available to meet their needs. SABRI Estates Inc. is a 26-unit property made up of a mix of housing to serve retirees in the community, offering market rental rates and rent-geared to income. Government policy restricts its affordable housing units to incomes of $32,500 or below. Our organisation worked to deliver a new housing option as our working professionals aged, they could downsize and sell their large family home to the next generation of families and working professionals. Private developers would not make such an investment, as the return on investment is too long. As a social enterprise we see this as a natural investment to sustain and grow community, as population ages to attract more investment and development in housing. We work with our partners to support them with new affordable housing projects as we explore other housing development solutions.

Affordable Housing: Its not a complex matter.
Delivering Integrated Affordable Housing in Sustainable Communities
Hugh Brennan

Abstract:
This presentation will explore how Ó Cualann Cohousing Alliance has been operating and what it has learned from the delivery of affordable housing in Ireland over the past 8 years; what is achievable in the delivery of affordable housing at scale in Ireland and why this is not being done. We also look at why complicating an issue like housing, particularly affordable and social or public housing and shifting blame on to those in need of adequate housing, particularly immigrants, plays into the hands of rampant capitalist or neo-liberal practitioners and why simplifying the matter could lead to a changed environment in housing in Ireland.

A2 - Well Being and Belonging

Rural Community Wellbeing Data Dashboard Development
Nelson Rogers & Danielle Letang

Abstract:
There are many systems for assessing quality of life and wellbeing, although these systems are usually designed for cities or regions. Rural communities need easy access to reliable information relevant to the multiple aspects of rural wellbeing. The Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) is working with rural communities, organisations, and experts to create a dashboard that displays key wellbeing indicators with related data. The Canadian Standards Association (CSA) has developed a new standard to address these challenges, with a set of indicators to assess rural community wellbeing including economics, demographics, society, environment,

housing, health, education, and institutions. These indicators provide a standardised approach to understanding wellbeing using readily available data sources, common definitions and methods, and a rural focus. The ROI wellbeing dashboard is largely based on the CSA standard. The goal is for rural governments and organisations to use data to assess and improve the various components of community wellbeing.

Scottish Island Futures
Andrew Jennings

Abstract:
In 2023 Andrew Jennings ran four themed workshops which explored potential futures facing the Scottish islands in 2050 and beyond. The events investigated the following questions:

1. How will vibrant, successful island populations be maintained into the future?

2. What level of autonomy will best serve the island communities going forward?

3. How can the islanders best engage with the changing environment?

4. How can islands become sustainable, and how can large-scale developments be absorbed by small island communities?

5. What role will island cultures and languages have in future scenarios?

The participants came from a range of disciplines from inside and outside academia and provided many fascinating thoughts and insights. This contribution will reflect on some of the most salient and interesting visions of the future potentially awaiting the Scottish islands.

Belonging in Islands: Knitting Narratives and Materiality Together to Research the Value of Heritage
Lynda Harling Stalker & Kathryn A. Burnett

Abstract:
Belonging is the connections we make, have and experience with others that shape our biographies. It is experienced and narrated through and by our relationships, culture, and materiality (May 2013). This is also central to notions of islandness. Islandness is about belonging to an island that transcends many other forms of connections we might have -- it is a "metaphysical sensation" (Conkling 2007). Because of this phenomenon, "Islandness thus helps maintain island communities in spite of daunting economic pressures to abandon them"(ibid). This presentation will explore how the heritage of islandness, both tangible and intangible, on North Atlantic islands can be researched and presented in such a way that aids in increasing the sense of belonging in the face of multiple social changes (e.g. depopulation). We will explore how narratives and material culture can be employed in creative ways to

provide islanders and researchers with tools to tackle social challenges they may face.

A3 - Migration

More Than a Migrant, More Than a Worker: Lessons From Prince Edward Island, Canada, on Labour-Based Migration
Eliza MacLauchlan & Ryan MacRae

Abstract:
Employers are increasingly bringing migrant workers to rural Prince Edward Island, Canada to fill their permanent labour gaps. Some migrant workers obtain their permanent residency, bringing their families and creating community, while others continue to work on a seasonal and contractual basis. This presentation draws on research completed through the Temporary Foreign Worker Maritimes research project, a collaboration between Dalhousie University, St. Thomas University and Cooper Institute, a Prince Edward Island community development organisation. Based on interviews with migrant workers in various stages of migration, as well as employers, service providers and provincial government, this presentation will provide a better understanding of current realities of labour-based migration in a rural, island context, and the successes and failures of this form of migration.

Transnational Resettlement Dynamics in Cape Breton: A Catalyst for Economic Resurgence and Demographic Stability
Mahir Abrar & Faria Sultana

Abstract:
This paper undertakes a comprehensive exploration of the transformative impact of migration on Cape Breton, a rural island community in Nova Scotia that is grappling with economic challenges and population decline. Amid the global migration wave driven by geopolitical shifts, climate change, and economic transformations, we focus on the unique experiences of migrants who have chosen Cape Breton and are actively contributing to its economic revitalization. Through an in-depth examination of the challenges and opportunities associated with the reception, settlement, and active integration of migrants, our research uncovers the nuanced processes contributing to the region's economic revitalisation and the cessation of population decline.

We employ a multi-faceted approach, considering local and regional factors, including the urban-to-rural counter-urbanization trend driven by lifestyle choices. By investigating various models and explanatory concepts that have emerged from the dynamic interactions between migrants and the host community, this study illuminates the complex factors that influence successful integration. Additionally, we highlight the collaborative responses of both the government and the private sector to the influx of migrants, identifying effective strategies and potential areas for improvement, and emphasising the importance of collective responsibility in this process.

Migrants' Experiences and Hopes - Living in Rural Ireland
Breandán Ó Caoimh

Abstract:
The EU Rural Pact recognises that growing numbers of migrants are seeking to develop their livelihoods in rural areas. Migration presents opportunities for rural communities to strengthen their economic bases and benefit from increased diversity, creativity and knowledge capital. At the same time, rural areas can be challenged to cater for incomers, due to service and infrastructural deficits, distance from decision-making, poor governance, mis-information and prejudices among some members of the so-called 'host community'. Rural actors increasingly recognise the importance of information (including survey data) in guiding their approaches.

This paper draws on a survey of 400+ migrants and focus groups with 100+ migrant participants, many of whom moved from Ukraine to County Kerry over the past three years. It provides insights into their experiences of living in rural Ireland, and it outlines the issues they have faced in integrating into local communities. The paper also puts forward their recommendations and desires for a more inter-cultural society, and it identifies opportunities for rural communities and those who now call rural Ireland their home – for however long.

Building Sustainable Communities Through Immigration and Housing: A Review of Ontario International Agricultural Workers
Damilola Oyewale

Abstract:
This study evaluates the impact of the Ontario Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) on housing for International Agricultural Workers (IAWs). Focusing on the agri-food economy, the PPS outlines land use planning policies to guide development and promote sustainable communities. The research aims to assess the impact of the PPS in shaping living conditions and welfare for IAWs, examining unique challenges faced by them identified through extensive literature reviews.

Objectives include evaluating the PPS's impact on IAW housing, gathering perspectives from local government planners on policy implementation, and identifying opportunities for improvement. A mixed-methods approach was utilised starting with document reviews of the 2020 and 2023 revised draft PPS, with thematic analysis identifying key themes. Key informant interviews with planners also provided qualitative insights which were recorded, transcribed, and thematically analysed using NVivo.

The study contributes valuable insights for policymakers and planners, informing improvements in living conditions and the overall well-being of IAWs for the overall agri-food economy of Ontario.

Evening Pub Session - Emerging Voices

<u>Emerging Voices in Sustainable Livelihoods</u>
Panellists: Ryan Gibson, Laurie Brinklow, Sheila Downer & Karen Keaveney

Abstract:
This session highlights rural sustainable livelihood initiatives taking place by community practitioners and students from across the North Atlantic region. These initiatives will share insights on how rural, island, and northern communities are striving for integrated sustainable futures. The session will provide an opportunity for more experienced researchers, scholars, and practitioners to get a sense of emerging themes and preoccupations – as well as a way to foster new partnerships and mentoring relations.

B1 - Coastal and Marine Dynamics

<u>The Galway Hooker, Resilience and Future Prospects</u>
Brian McGrath & Padraig O'Sabhain

Abstract:
A family of boats in the West of Ireland known as the 'Galway Hooker' occupies iconic status in the region's maritime heritage and identity. While central to the economic, social and cultural life and connectivity of coastal communities over centuries, the boats faced near terminal decline in the middle of the last century. The 1970s onwards saw a revival of boat building, sailing, and festivals celebrating the hooker and the craft of sailing, helping to secure a degree of continuity between past and present through skill, language and local knowledge transmission (Ó Sabhain and McGrath 2019; 2020). But the need to purposefully keep alive the craft of sailing within families and communities remains an ongoing concern, resonant of wider issues facing coastal and marine cultural heritage as described by Flannery et al (2022). In this presentation we examine the challenges and risks to maintaining the Hooker as a form of tangible and intangible heritage, and the experience of voluntary organisational effort in attempts to secure its resilience as coastal and marine cultural heritage.

<u>Mi'kmaw Community Partnerships in Research</u>
Avery Velez, Chief Terri Greene, Erica Samms Hurley, Kelly Vodden, Heather Hall, & Christina Smeaton

Abstract:
University-community partnerships leading to genuine co-development and collaboration are essential in designing and implementing relevant, respectful research that addresses community priorities and advances integrated development in creative and innovative ways. Presenters, including a Mi'kmaw Chief and two Mi'kmaw academics, will reflect on their experiences working in partnership to advance community priorities through effective collaboration. Presenters will discuss two examples of partnerships in the Chief's territory: 1)

an engagement between academics, communities, governments, and farms that consisted of a three-day workshop of ceremony, dialogue, visioning, and relationship-building and 2) a feasibility study conducted by Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador's graduate students on a kelp forestation and aquaculture project as part of the Marine Biomass Innovation project. These projects reflect the kind of respect and reciprocity essential in community-partnered and Indigenous research. Presenters will share about the processes of developing and implementing these projects and the successes and challenges faced along the way.

Coastal Metrics: Taking Measure in the Wetlands Through Research-and-Design
Helen McFadden, Steve Larkin, & Kevin Donovan.

Abstract:
As County Mayo's pilot Decarbonising Zone (1), Mulranny village must reduce its carbon emissions by 51% before 2030 and become a resilient role model for rural coastal communities.

Analogous to Ireland's 250 saltmarshes (2), Mulranny's coastal edge is dynamic; it is constantly being authored by myriad processes, is always evolving, and is now under threat. Ireland has already lost 75% of its coastal wetlands (3) and the Anthropocene demands new ways of working which are sustaining of both the physical and cultural context (4).

Drawing on active engagement (5) with Mulranny's community, stakeholders, researchers, and Mayo County Council this paper will consider how rural community development can sustainably respond to climatic coastal challenges. The paper will do this by exploring a 'knowledge exchange framework' (6) in which architectural design-thinking is guided by interdisciplinary research on geomorphology, anthropology, community engagement, and local and national policymaking. This framework will be key to sustainably designing, managing and measuring our coastline.

Motivating Sustainability Transformations Through Sense of Community Belonging: The Infamous Case of Fogo Island, Newfoundland and the Regeneration of its In-Shore Fishery
Sara Langer

Abstract:
Small scale fisheries are endangered due to multiple, complex climate and sustainability crises affecting not just the economic industry of the community but also its social and cultural fabric that holds the community together and the wellbeing of people's livelihoods. Fogo Island off the coast of Newfoundland provides a successful example of how a small, isolated island community took collective action in 1967 to regenerate its fishing economy through changing relationships with their environment, selves, and others. The community harnessed their collective sense of belonging to their home and used local knowledge and resources to transform not just their fishery but also their wellbeing and livelihoods. This case study

provides insights into locally driven sustainability transformations that touch on the physical world, the economic, and the psychological. We can learn from Fogo Island how small, isolated fishing communities have the internal power to build resilience and manage their economies and resources sustainably, and that economic metrics fail to present a holistic conception of a community's well being and strength of sense of belonging to the community.

B2 - Asset Based Tourism

St. Colman, Cromwell, Comcakes, and the Craig: Heritage Tourism and Local Livelihood on Inishbofin Island
Ryan Lash

Abstract:
Inishbofin, 5km off the coast of Connemara, is home to 184 residents and harbour to thousands of visitors in the summer tourist season. This paper explores how heritage resources - tangible, intangible, and biocultural - play a key role in the maintenance of both islanders' pride in a distinctive identity and a tourist trade based on the 'repeat custom' of habitual visitors from within Ireland.

Since 2008, the Cultural Landscapes of the Irish Coast (CLIC) project has undertaken community-based archaeological and ethnographic research on Inishbofin. Work has included public excavations, co-authored publications in a variety of media, and collaboration in a number of heritage tourism events, including guided walking tours and festivals.

These experiences show how locally-curated engagements with heritage - whether archaeological monuments, music traditions, or biodiversity - can generate both pride among islanders and perceptions of belonging among habitual visitors. Inishbofin provides a possible template for the development of heritage tourism, wherein archaeological research can support the local stewardship and promotion of heritage as sources of identity and livelihood.

Community-Led Heritage Tourism: Building Community Tourism Networks on Top of Historic Networks
John Tierney & Amanda Slattery

Abstract:
The parish land organisation system in Ireland is approximately 1000 years old. Over 2500 Irish graveyards have mediaeval origins and form an island-wide network based on this mediaeval parish system. Since 2011 the Historic Graves Project has surveyed and published 800 of these graveyards to www.historicgraves.com, with over 100 surveys done in partnership with Ballyhoura Development CLG in Limerick & North Cork. The surveys are done as collaborations combining community expertise in local heritage with archaeological technical know-how to build a database which augments a local sense of place with improved

diaspora and tourist engagement; whilst also gathering detailed archaeological data.

As part of an Horizon Europe project named SECRETOUR we are now exploring the development of a sustainable, regenerative method of building a network of sites and expanding into a national trail using co-created, low cost, pocket-sized brochures/pdf trails and dynamic QR technology to measure tourism engagement.

The LIVE Project: Catalysing Sustainable Tourism in Coastal Ireland and Wales Using the Ecomuseum Model
Lucy Talor, Fidelma Butler & Orlan Beslin

Abstract:
The LIVE project (Llyn Iveragh Ecomuseums) was a 3-year collaborative cross-border project that aimed to enable coastal communities on two rural peninsulas in Ireland and Wales to promote their natural and cultural assets, creating opportunities for sustainable tourism, especially outside of the traditional peak tourist seasons. LIVE used the Ecomuseum model of co-operative marketing to create a powerful suite of digital and non-digital resources for eco and educational tourism. The project facilitated workshops, education programmes and knowledge exchange sessions to build a network of Ecomuseum ambassadors and citizen scientists on both peninsulas who are engaged with their local environments and heritage.

One of the original stated goals of the project was to establish an ecomuseum on the Iveragh Peninsula, which it failed to do. However, perhaps this failure was one of design more than implementation, or perhaps it was inevitable because of the pre-existing context, and perhaps it was not a failure but a first step in progressing the local situation towards a more regenerative model of tourism in the future. There are certainly lessons to be learned and potential to do more.

B3 - Local Governance

Navigating Economic Development Challenges in an Island Context
Audrey Keating

Abstract:
Island communities face unique challenges in the context of economic development. The Magdalen Islands, a small archipelago located in the Gulf of Saint-Lawrence in Québec, presents a compelling case study as to how to successfully navigate these challenges. Over the last decade, the remote community has transformed its isolation into a leverage for development. It celebrated the 2014 Decree on insularity, a provincial legislative milestone recognizing the territory's island status, and effectively marketed its controlled environment and strategic location to attract investments. The community's development plans prioritise its assets and capacity while balancing economic goals and social acceptance. The community has its share of trial and error to find an approach that promotes sustainability, economic

diversification, and prosperity while preserving its identity and environment. The Magdalen Islands' experience demonstrates the importance of strategic planning and effective communication in rural and remote communities. By prioritising unique attributes and leveraging them effectively, these communities can overcome challenges and achieve sustainable economic development.

Rural Local Governments: Building Economic Development Capacity through Entrepreneurialism
Joshua Barret

Abstract:
Local government reform has accelerated since the early 1980s, with local governments learning to adjust to changes in responsibilities as they cope with the socio-economic restructuring pressures that are challenging the viability and susurHowever, local governments struggle with outdated financial and jurisdictional structures even as senior governments ask them to become more 'entrepreneurial' for a broader range of responsibilities and approach to operations. The future resilience of rural local governments and their communities may depend upon entrepreneurial strategies to support independence, resilience, and new pathways to economic renewal. The purpose of this paper is to identify factors that influence the capacity of rural local governments to become entrepreneurial. These findings help fulfil a research gap in rural local governments and path dependency and provide potential application for rural local governments.

Governing Networks for Island Futures - The Scottish National Islands Plan: A Roadmap for Transformational Change
Adele Lidderdale

Abstract:
Scottish island sustainability challenges are characterised by convergent complex issues which resist policy interventions. 'Idiosyncratic governance' between peripheralised islands and centres of power is normative (Baldacchino, 2010) and autonomous policy innovations often emerge that challenge political convention. In response to such a challenge the Scottish Government published a suite of "island proofing" policy-measures culminating in the National Islands Plan (the Plan). The Plan provides "a framework for action in order to meaningfully improve outcomes for island communities… [and] islands and island communities with an opportunity to draw lessons and distil good practices for island communities elsewhere." (Scot Gov, 2019; Sindico and Crook, 2019). Despite broad agreement between stakeholders on the scope of the Plan, efficacious implementation has varied; characterised by divergent intra-island local governance strategies and sustainability.

Social network analysis may promote learning and understanding between actors across implementation networks (Ramia, et. al., 2017; Scott, 2017) in the complex context of island

policies by fostering more meaningful participation.

The North West Strategic Growth Partnership: A Model of Collaborative Governance and Placemaking
Caroline Creamer, Caitriona Mullan

Abstract:
In 2014, Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council, in partnership with both governments on the island, established the North West Strategic Growth Partnership (NWSGP). Today, the NWSGP, as an exemplary example of multi-level cohesion at play, is responsible for the effective alignment of existing/future programming and public resources to support the balanced development of the North West City Region. Critical to this is a process of institutional codesign, joint resourcing and a commitment to implementation. This has necessitated engagement with stakeholders in urban, rural and intermediate spaces to build on the strong functional, economic, social and physical ties between the region's cross-border communities, networks, businesses and institutions.

Since 2014, the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (a North-South-USA partnership) has been supporting the Councils in advancing the priorities of this rural and peri-urban geography. Ten years on, this paper reflects on the role of government, at different levels, as a major player in delivering transformative change through collaborative governance and placemaking.

C1 - Social Equity and Inclusion

Empowering Women in Connemara: Pioneering Sustainable Agriculture Innovations and Shaping Rural Futures
Maura Farrell, Louise Weir & Aisling Murtagh

Abstract:
Key contemporary trends, such as climate change, and the COVID-19 pandemic, bring new challenges to European rural areas. Change also brings opportunities to foster more resilient and sustainable rural regions. However, there is a need for all individuals and communities to participate in rural innovation. Traditionally, however, rural women's opportunities and contribution to innovation has been overshadowed, and often suppressed, by a patriarchal ethos. This paper focuses on foresight research carried out as part of the FLIARA (Female Led Innovation in Agriculture and Rural Areas) Horizon Europe project. The work has identified visions for sustainable farm and rural futures and the sustainability innovations needed to realise these visions. The FLIARA foresight research also involves identifying the possibilities and obstacles to enable women's contribution to sustainability innovations. The key objective is to envision women's role in the innovations required for sustainable farm and rural futures. Within an Irish context, this work was carried out in Connemara using a phased

future foresight methodology involving key stakeholders through interviews and workshops.

Transformative Community Engagement - From 'Power Over" to "Power With"

Julia Fursova, Denise Bishop-Earle, Kisa Hamilton & Gillian Kranias

Abstract:
Transformative community engagement supports the shift from patriarchal, colonial dynamics of domination and **'power over'** towards intersectional feminist de-colonizing dynamics of co-operation and '**power with**'. The paper engages participants in critical examination of community engagement practices among public and non-profit organisations inviting perspectives from the rural contexts and with attention to the dynamics of diversity, equity and inclusion within an increasingly globalised world unsettled by social and political turmoil. The paper is informed by the results of participatory action research with residents of a lower-income, multicultural neighbourhood in Toronto. However, it extends the lessons learned in the metropolitan setting to other community development contexts with similar dynamics of 'uneven' development unfolding within inequitable power relations. Informed by an intersectional feminist lens, the paper draws attention to the gendered, racialized, and under-resourced nature of community development work. The research findings argue that when approached uncritically, community engagement replicates extractivist processes and dynamics of 'power over' pervasive in patriarchal, colonial capitalism in relation to community engagement. Alternatively, a transformative approach is aligned with regenerative and participatory dynamics of 'power with'. The paper engages participants in examining their experiences in and with community engagement and offers Continuum of Community Engagement as a template for continuous learning and reflection.

Beyond Traditional Approaches: A Model for Conducting Reciprocal, Relational Research in Rural Communities

Paula Gerstenblatt, Jan Piribeck & Lisa Luken

Abstract:
Understanding the challenges of rural communities is critical for sustainability; however, conducting research to gain deeper understanding requires a reciprocal and relational approach. While residents offer valuable insight, time spent with researchers takes them away from their personal, professional, and community responsibilities. Thus, conducting research in a way that is meaningful to residents and has applied value to the community supports ethical and sustainable research. Members of our interdisciplinary team from the fields of art, social work, and leadership will share our approach and methods used to build relationships, engage participants in ways that matter to them, respect local knowledge and expertise, and offer lasting value to rural and island communities in South Greenland and Maine. Examples include relationship building prior to conducting qualitative interviews; community building activities such as collage portraiture, mapping, and public walks; and video interviews of residents discussing what it feels like to be "researched".

Empowering Health Equity: Bridging the Gap - Fostering the Right to Healthcare in Rural Landscapes

Kimberley English

Abstract:
The pandemic has had an impact on many sectors, however, has laid bare the tenuous strands holding rural and remote healthcare together. Funding and health human resource planning in Canada, and one presumes globally, has occurred from a very urban centric lens and is not reflective of the rural and remote context. Critical staffing issues have resulted in closures of emergency departments and nursing stations in remote areas. This has been a global phenomenon.

But what if the pandemic also provided an opportunity? An opportunity to consider new models of care, stronger means of attracting and retaining professionals and better decision-making methodologies to enhance rural and remote care.

True change for rural healthcare requires innovation and leadership, and to be led by rural providers and consumers of healthcare. This entails new ways of thinking about supporting health in rural environments using a social innovation approach and creating rural centres for excellence in healthcare.

Rural dwellers have the right to care in the communities, which means rights-based understanding of healthcare and access in rural and remote areas, and healthcare in rural and remote areas needs

C2 - Food and Agriculture

Policy Barriers Hindering Mi'kmaw Food Sovereignty and Security in Bay St. George, Newfoundland (Ktawmkuk)

Natasha Pennell, Chief Jasen Benwah, Chief Rhonda Sheppard, Chief Peggy White, Emily Doyle & Erica Samms Hurley

Abstract:
Colonisation's lasting impacts have resulted in Indigenous communities throughout Canada being disproportionately affected by food insecurity. These challenges are further amplified by the unique context of Ktaqamkukeway Mi'kmaq (Mi'kmaw people of Newfoundland), who have a unique history in relation to the denial of inherent land and resource rights. This research, based on a literature review and preliminary findings from several partnered research projects, highlights the initiatives to increase food security and sovereignty which are underway in and by Mi'kmaw communities in Bay St. George, Newfoundland (Ktaqmkuk). Importantly, this ongoing study is being co-produced with Mi'kmaw Chiefs, employing a Two-Eyed Seeing approach that draws from both Indigenous and Western knowledge systems. The presenters will discuss ongoing policy barriers that hinder these efforts: such as restrictions on harvesting moose, caribou or various fish species, and restrictions in providing

country food in their school food programs. By exploring food security initiatives in Bay St. George, the unique perspectives of the Ktaqamkukeway Mi'kmaq are highlighted.

The Comeragh Upland Communities EIP Project
Owen Carton, Cathriona Foley, Catherine Kenna & Liam Beresford

Abstract:
The Comeragh Upland Communities was a European Innovation Partnership project administered by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine. Farmers have participated in Agri-Environmental Schemes, which paid them to implement habitat management measures. It helped improve their financial sustainability, but the benefits to their upland ecosystems were less discernible. The farmers realised new thinking and knowledge were required to achieve better outcomes critical to their and future generations' economic, environmental, and social futures. Payments for implementing measures will not deliver a sustainable future.

The project integrated an innovative education approach by combining the farmer's knowledge and deep-rooted connection with the uplands with those of the experts, enhancing their collective understanding of the upland's natural and cultural heritage. The engagement with the broader rural community sowed the seeds of joint ownership of the natural and cultural heritage. It provided a solid foundation to deliver outcomes for the betterment of all.

Rural Communities, Agri-Food Systems, and Planning in Transition
Sara Epp & Regan Zink

Abstract:
In a world that is facing increasingly complex problems, rural communities and agri-food systems are both extremely vulnerable and critically important. Rural communities are responsible for managing lands, protecting the natural environment, and providing resources; they are also the heart of our agri-food systems. This session will consider the important relationship between rural communities and agri-food systems. Panellists will share their perspectives and experiences regarding place-based development, rural regional governance, urban-rural interdependence, changing agricultural landscapes, sustainable production practices, workforce development, municipal capacity for agri-food systems planning, and the future of rural and agri-food system policy. Speakers will draw from a number of case studies and place-based research projects to illustrate the dynamic and ever-changing nature of agri-food systems and the local contexts in which they are embedded. Panellists for this session include faculty and student researchers from the University of Guelph, School of Environmental Design and Rural Development and Teagasc.

Addressing Workforce Development Through Innovative Approaches: Perspectives from Rural Canada

Ryan Gibson, Heather Graham, Paul Sitsofe

Abstract:
Businesses throughout rural communities are experiencing difficulty in locating labour. This challenge is hindering rural businesses, rural economies, and rural communities. This research examines the current labour shortages experienced in rural Ontario with an aim to identify potential solutions in the form of policy and practice. Using a mixed method approach, business serving organisations operating in rural communities were surveyed. Based on data analysis a series of innovative practice case studies were developed. The research identifies innovative practices related to attracting newcomers from urban areas, attracting immigrant newcomers, and attracting temporary migrants.

C3 - Community Leadership / Energy and Innovation

A Case Study of Community-Led versus State-Led Solar Projects in NunatuKavut
Regina Foley & Olive Williams

Abstract:
There are over 200 communities in Canada that rely on diesel as their primary source of energy generation, many of which are Indigenous communities. These communities must manoeuvre a variety of environmental, economic, social and health challenges associated with this diesel reliance. Fortunately, advances in clean energy technologies make the implementation of such projects more accessible, which contributes to a decreased reliance on fossil fuels, while ensuring reliability, and affordability. However, there are many injustices associated with renewable or clean energy, such as external ownership, administrative burdens, risk exposure, and the restriction of energy autonomy. Community energy and energy justice are two emerging frameworks that are posed to address these injustices. This research is situated in NunatuKavut, an Inuit territory covering central and southern Labrador, Canada, and aims to evaluate two community-level solar projects, one state-led, the other, community-led, through the frameworks of community energy and energy justice, to generate recommendations on best-practices that contribute to reliable, affordable, equitable, and autonomous energy projects.

Examining Community-Focused Approaches for Renewable Energy Deployment in Island Jurisdictions: Applied Policy Analysis and Learning in Prince Edward Island, Canada
Christine Miller, Siobhan Doyle & Andrew Halliday

Abstract:
The subnational island Province of Prince Edward Island (PEI) has the most aggressive climate targets in Canada, with goals to reach 'net-zero energy' by 2030 and 'net-zero greenhouse gas emissions' by 2040. The PEI Energy Corporation (PEIEC), a provincial crown corporation, leads PEI's energy policy development. Community-focused models of renewable energy have arisen in many jurisdictions which employ various participatory

models aimed at providing material and economic benefits to communities of interest. Understanding of the application of these models, how and why they succeed in island jurisdictions, is key.

This paper explores successful island community-focused renewable energy projects. A comparative case study method is employed to determine the factors influencing successful implementation in the selected cases. Identified factors are then analysed from a PEI perspective to examine their feasibility and applicability. Potential challenges and incompatibilities are also discussed. The paper concludes that economic factors are amongst the most challenging in ensuring the successful deployment and viability of community-focused approaches to renewable energy for PEI.

Is 'Eliminating' Diesel Power from Remote Communities 'Just'? Learning from Inuit in NunatuKavut, Labrador
Nicholas Mercer & Amy Hudson

Abstract:
Throughout Canada, there are approximately 170 remote (predominantly) Indigenous communities who are not connected to the national electricity grid, instead relying heavily on localised diesel-generators for heat and power. While 'clean energy' technologies have been widely upheld as a 'pathway' for remote community sustainability, we contend that economic development strategies within colonial governance structures pose substantive risks for communities, including imposition of external values, misalignment with local needs, the creation of significant administrative burdens, amongst others. This paper reports on the results of a participatory research partnership with the NunatuKavut Community Council, the rights-based governing body who represent nine diesel-dependent Inuit communities in southern Labrador. We deploy an energy justice framework to illuminate patterns of exploitation, exclusion, and lack of Inuit recognition in energy policymaking and project development. Based on the findings of the research, we offer two novel conceptual frameworks to help steer equitable and inclusive processes of energy governance.

Rural Towns and Adapting to Changing Community Patterns: Case Studies from Ireland
Breandán Ó Caoimh, Des McCafferty, Karen Keaveney, Caroline Creamer & Gavan Rafferty

Abstract:
Rural communities in Europe, North America and elsewhere have been influenced by growing volumes of long-distance rural to urban commuting. In most geographies, the distance between place of work and place of residence has increased, and with it the duration of commutes, although the recent growth in tele-working (remote working) has reversed that trend to some degree.

This paper draws on case study material from seven rural towns on the island of Ireland (both jurisdictions) and three in Maryland (USA) that involved an extensive social survey and

interviews with community representatives, planners and commuters. It looks at how rural communities have been affected by commuting patterns, and it presents survey findings in respect of the relationship between commuting and factors such as housing, social capital (community participation), the local economy and perceptions of place. The paper also considers how rural communities can mitigate challenges and harness opportunities associated with changing relationships between where people live and where they work.

D1 - Evaluation Panel

How Do We Know We Are Making a Difference? Approaches to Evaluating the Impact of Policies, Programmes, Projects and Science in Rural Areas
Panellists: Ian Dempsey, Kevin Heanue, Elish Kelly, Niamh Hamilton Jones

Abstract:
This session seeks to highlight different yet complementary approaches to evaluating the impact of programmes, policies, programmes, projects and science in rural areas. From both an accountability for public money stance, and a learning for improvement perspective, the demand for evaluative evidence is growing and the policy and academic community are responding with a variety of different evaluation frameworks and methodologies.   Centred on four case studies from Ireland and one international case, this session will provide an opportunity for researchers, policy makers and practitioners to share evaluation possibilities and insights into the applicability, strengths and weaknesses of different approaches.

Metrics that Matter: A framework to quantify the impact and added value of the EU LEADER Rural Development Programme
Ian Dempsey

Abstract:
Since its launch in 1991, the EU LEADER Rural Development Programme has provided enabling resources to rural partnerships to support the social, economic and environmental development of their communities. Objectives, actions and outputs are elaborated in a community-led process to form multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary local development strategies, aligned with and supportive of an array of EU, national, regional and local policies and strategic plans. Three decades on, the programme is considered a success. However indicators used to monitor and evaluate its effectiveness have remained little changed; being generally rudimentary in scope and limited in ambition. With practitioner experience gained in the planning, implementation and evaluation of local development strategies in each of the six iterations of the LEADER Programme, Ian Dempsey, suggests that the use of easily available datasets and proxy values may combine to help better understand and communicate the programme's distinctive and valuable contribution to sustainable development.

Using pathways, outcomes and trajectories in the Agri-Food Sector to understand the impact of science
Kevin Heanue

Abstract:
As a research-based organisation, Teagasc is conscious of the 'impact agenda' which raises a distinction between research 'quality' (i.e. the relative excellence of academic outputs) and research 'impact' (i.e. the benefits that research outcomes produce for wider society). This paper outlines how, since 2021, Teagasc has incorporated a theory-led, case-study focused approach called Outcome Trajectory Evaluation into the evaluation of its research programme in order to get a better understanding of the contribution it makes to societal outcomes and impacts. Results to date show that the outcomes from the case studies are highly significant and resulted from high quality, relevant research and active knowledge exchange and other engagement with a range of actors in the agri-food sector. Results confirm that the outcome trajectory approach is of value in enabling a full appreciation of how Teagasc is contributing to a desired shift in the Irish agri-food sector.

Developing a framework to monitor rural development policy in Ireland: Opportunities and challenges
Elish Kelly

Abstract:
This presentation will outline the approach taken to developing a framework to monitor the effectiveness of *Our Rural Future*, Ireland's most recent rural development policy, in achieving its objectives around rural development. The framework was developed in such a way that it can be adapted to also assess the effectiveness of future rural development policies. The presentation will also outline the framework itself, along with some implications for policy-makers, practitioners and researchers in monitoring the effectiveness of rural development policies, much of which, in the context of this framework, hinges on the required data being available at an appropriate spatially disaggregated level.

TBC

D2 - Community Responses to Climate Change Adaptation

Mobilising Climate Action Stories in Rural Coastal Communities: A Proposed Approach for Community-Based Research
Brennan Lowery

Abstract:
The disruption of information deficit-based approaches is essential for overcoming persistent failures to address the climate crisis. One avenue that has recently garnered attention is the

potential for stories to motivate climate action at multiple scales. However, prevailing climate change narratives tend to prioritise intergovernmental policy mechanisms and urban-centric planning strategies, overlooking the context of rural coastal communities which are directly facing the impacts of climate change. This paper proposes a storytelling approach to understanding climate action in rural coastal communities. Building on community-based research in Newfoundland, Canada that explored how storytelling can provide rural communities with a way to define sustainability in their own context, this paper outlines a theoretical and methodological avenue for understanding climate action narratives in rural communities that will inform further community-based research. This paper contributes to the conference aims by sharing a new approach grounded in the lived realities of rural communities which other regions in the North Atlantic Rim might find useful for responding to the climate crisis.

Regionalizing the Sustainable Development Goals: Lessons Learned for Responding to the Climate Crisis from Iceland and Newfoundland
Mark CJ Stoddart, Ásthildur Elva Bernharðsdóttir & Yixi Yang

Abstract:
The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) make the concept of "sustainable development" more actionable in the context of the global climate crisis. The nature of North Atlantic societies– where political jurisdictions overlap in complex ways with land and oceanic ecologies — makes the question of who is responsible for SDG implementation and governance particularly important. We compare SDG interpretations and perceptions of SDG governance in Iceland and Newfoundland using surveys and focus groups with stakeholders from government, business, labour, civil society, academia, and youth. We ask: How do participants view the SDGs in relation to ensuring sustainable futures for their respective island societies? How do participants view the roles of government and other institutions in implementing sustainability? Answering these questions gives insight into a third theoretical question: Is it the state versus subnational distinction, or is it the common small polity/island dynamics of these North Atlantic cases that is important for understanding how the SDGs can contribute to designing sustainability in response to the climate crisis?

A Vital Conversation: Exploring Well-Being, Inclusivity, Vitality, and Belonging for Hazard Preparedness on Prince Edward Island
Laurie Brinklow

Abstract:
During the spring and summer of 2023, the Community Foundation of Prince Edward Island and the Institute of Island Studies at the University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI) embarked on a series of "Vital Conversations" with Island residents to collect insights regarding well-being and hazard readiness and response in the aftermath of Hurricane Fiona which devastated the Island in September 2022. A key concept explored during these town hall

sessions was the notion of well-being; particularly, its critical connection to hazard readiness and response. Data from a concurrent research initiative — Project Well-Being — helped ground and seed our discussions. The primary question asked was "What are the key factors, issues and responses that shape and define well-being in rural places?" Such framing helped identify which aspects of well-being are important to people on PEI – in particular, inclusivity, vitality and belonging – and identify hazard readiness and response ideas that resonate with individuals and are amenable to policy and practice interventions by organisations, communities, and government to ensure all Islanders are prepared for the "next big one."

D3 - Learning from Failure

Helping People Engage in Community Implementation of Integrated Development
Cheryl Burkhart-Kriesel

Abstract:
Community engagement is increasingly being called upon to help address wicked sustainability issues. But bringing people together in a positive manner is becoming more difficult. This session will share two quite different tools that can help involve community members in meaningful activities. The first tool is based on field research linked to water issues in the United States, but it is adaptable to all kinds of community engagement situations. As an online tool, it shares both "best practice" processes and content to enable facilitators to set the stage and implement positive community participation. The second tool is a grass-roots technique to help groups purposefully reach out to diverse and sometimes overlooked segments of their community, allowing for a broader array of knowledge, skills, and talents to be put to use. Together, these tools will give participants in this session new ways to open the door to increased community participation.

The Association Between Community Led Local Development and Local Deprivation in Ireland: Unintended Consequences of Reform?
Conor Judge

Abstract:
While often a goal of participatory development schemes, Community Led Local Development in the European Union does not explicitly seek to target the poor or more marginalised within rural communities. However, in practice, the support for more marginalised communities is often a process inherent to local development strategies and the outlook of practitioners in the field. Despite this, little is known about the relationship between the levels of funding obtained by more deprived rural communities in comparison to more advantaged areas. Using data from 15 years of Rural Development schemes in Ireland, the association between local deprivation and Community Led Local Development funding is explored. This finds a broadly positive but weakening relationship between higher local deprivation and rural development funding. It raises the question of what some of the unintended consequences of policy reform

in this area are as a potential policy failure.