STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARCTIC

The EU in the Arctic, the Arctic in the EU
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INTRODUCTION

Rapid development of the Arctic, as well as the challenges and opportunities that it brings, demand an effective use of science-based information, influential and fast reactions from the decision- and policy-makers as well as pro-active work by relevant communication and research centres. The greatest challenges to our common future have to be addressed in advance by those who will tackle them.

EU IN THE FRONTLINE OF CO-PRODUCTION OF ARCTIC KNOWLEDGE

The co-production of knowledge through science-policy interaction is seen as necessary to fully comprehend the impact of the EU policies on the future of the Arctic region. Increasing awareness, understanding and knowledge about the Arctic and its changing political, socio-economic and environmental landscape requires policy-makers to participate in and benefit from multidimensional dialogue and information exchange between the EU officials, science and civil society. With the project presented in this brochure, the EU combined science-based information with the views and perspectives of Arctic stakeholders and took on a frontline role in carrying out global-level impact assessments for policy-makers in the Arctic.

The STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARCTIC focusing on seven main trends provides (i) key messages regarding the development of the Arctic regions, (ii) suggestions for future development of the EU Arctic policy framework, and (iii) key thematic findings and recommendations regarding the EU policies affecting the Arctic.

The ASSESSMENTS IN POLICY-MAKING: CASE STUDIES FROM THE ARCTIC COUNCIL presents tools for increasing the quality of decisions and policies regarding the Arctic, and described cases from the Arctic Council.

EUROPEAN ARCTIC INITIATIVES COMPENDIUM serves as an inventory of current initiatives, projects and policies of significance to the Arctic.

GAP ANALYSIS defines what policy-makers need to know about the Arctic, where that information is located, and how can it be made available.

NETWORK FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS presents potential services and products provided for the use of the European Union by the EU Arctic Information Centre.

The Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment of development of the Arctic (12/2012 – 6/2014) was a Preparatory Action project financed by DG Environment of the European Commission. The project was carried out by a network of 19 leading Arctic research and communication centres and universities in Europe with extensive activities in and knowledge of the Arctic.
THE ASSESSMENT

The ‘Strategic Assessment of Development of the Arctic: Assessment Conducted for the European Union’ report considers the trends and developments taking place in the European Arctic today. That includes a view to 2030, with an emphasis on the uncertainties. The analysis has been conducted on the basis of seven themes focused on change. The implications of Arctic changes for the European Union as well as the role of EU policies and actions in the Arctic are examined. The European Arctic is understood here as the part of the circumpolar Arctic located between Greenland and northwest Russia (Figure 1).

The report is the main outcome of the ‘Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment of development of the Arctic’, a project funded by the European Commission and carried out by a network of 19 European research and communication institutions specialised in Arctic affairs, led by the Arctic Centre, University of Lapland. It contributes to the EU Arctic Information Centre initiative. All project partners participated in the assessment work, but the results and findings are the sole responsibility of the authors of the Strategic Assessment of Development of the Arctic report. The full version of the report is available at www.arcticinfo.eu.

The objective of the assessment was to “assess the impacts of development in the Arctic and of EU policies affecting the Arctic region on the political, economic and environmental landscape of the EU and the Arctic region.” The assessment work, conducted between April 2013 and May 2014, proved highly challenging owing to its broad scope and the ambitious programme of stakeholder involvement.

Enhancing dialogue between Arctic actors, experts and EU policy-makers was a focus. Therefore, involving Arctic stakeholders through workshops, an online questionnaire and direct outreach comprised a key component of the study. The authors developed recommendations by building on ideas proposed by stakeholders.
Figure 1: European Arctic as Defined in the Strategic Assessment of Development of the Arctic and accordingly to the Arctic Human Development Report (AHDR). Source: Arctic Portal, 2014.
DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARCTIC: KEY MESSAGES

1. Arctic environmental and socioeconomic changes are driven primarily by climate change and the global economy, with demand for resources remaining a key driver of economic developments. Nevertheless, other factors, such as regulatory frameworks, prove to be critical in many cases.

2. Climate change has profound impacts on Arctic biodiversity, landscape and livelihoods, but limited influence on current and expected industrial, economic and social developments.

3. Current economic and social developments are generally moderate and expectations for the near-term are modest. However, even a modest increase in economic activities requires a response.

4. Arctic developments are closely interconnected.

5. The European Union is affected by the changes in the Arctic.
THE EU ARCTIC POLICY FRAMEWORK: SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The EU policy towards the Arctic is an evolving process. Building from previous policy statements, there is a prospect that a comprehensive policy framework stating EU interests and goals will be formulated. In that regard, this section puts forward a set of suggestions derived from stakeholder input, the analysis of EU policies and the Strategic Assessment of Development of the Arctic report’s thematic recommendations.

1. The EU is encouraged to continue and to reinforce investment in gaining knowledge and better understanding of Arctic changes and their implications.

2. Constructive engagement of Arctic actors in EU decision-making should be enhanced.

3. Diversity within the Arctic region needs to be taken into account.

4. The EU should pay special attention to the European Arctic.

5. An EU policy framework for the Arctic needs to adapt to the complex landscape of governance in the region.

6. Co-operation with Arctic partners within venues of Arctic regional governance remains, despite the challenges involved, a key priority both in the European Arctic and at the circumpolar level.
STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARCTIC

EU POLICIES AFFECTING THE ARCTIC: KEY THEMATIC FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE ARCTIC

Due to climate change, the Arctic is the most rapidly changing region on Earth. There is clear evidence that change has already occurred due to emissions of greenhouse gases and aerosols from human activities, which affect the fundamentals of the Arctic ecosystems and the lives of the Northerners. Over the second half of the 20th century, warming in the Arctic led to increased loss of snow cover in spring and summer and simultaneously increased snowfall during boreal autumn and winter. Arctic sea-ice change has been linked to changes in mid-latitude weather patterns that increase the probability of extreme weather events, such as droughts, floods and heat waves in summer and cold snaps in winter. The warming trend also appears to result in increased precipitation in northern Europe. The sea level rise is also one of the main concerns.

The EU can influence Arctic climate change by limiting its own emissions, including short-lived climate forcers, and championing an effective and broad global climate agreement. The EU has made progress in curbing GHG emissions, partly through policy measures in energy, transport and efficiency improvements, and has set targets for further gains in the period to 2030. The EU, as a key actor in the UNFCCC negotiations, can highlight the Arctic within international processes and support any potential initiatives coming from the Arctic Council. Eventually, the EU is in a good position to support adaptation in the region (inter alia, via the EU’s 2013 Adaptation Strategy).

The EU is encouraged to increase its efforts and contributions to enhance sustained observation activities in the Arctic in order to improve understanding of climate change mechanisms and effects in the region. This can be done by, for example, using the framework of European Research Infrastructure Consortia or Horizon 2020 infrastructure funding.

Current satellite-based earth observation systems do not fulfil user needs for communication and monitoring. The EU should address this shortcoming through EU-funded satellite programmes. Both for decision-making in the near term and for long-term guidance for Arctic adaptation and sustainable development, climate indicators specific to the Arctic should be identified and corresponding data obtained. Moreover, in the European Arctic, there is a clear role for the EU in moving gradually from adaptation planning to implementation and undertaking concrete actions.
CHANGES IN ARCTIC MARITIME TRANSPORT

Arctic maritime transport is still dominated by internal and destinational traffic (including cruise tourism), highly interlinked with extraction of Arctic resources. This is likely to remain the case in the coming decades. Trans-Arctic shipping is slowly emerging, but there are major constraints for its rapid expansion. The EU may gain access to new resources and growing trade. European ship owners and maritime industries expect economic gains. However, the Arctic is a frontier region for shipping with high risks and various environmental concerns.

The EU influences Arctic shipping by contributing to shaping international standards and regulations, legislating on member states’ responsibilities as port or flag states and building up Arctic maritime infrastructure such as through its satellite programmes.

The EU should contribute to improved regulation of Arctic shipping by supporting high standards in the Polar Code, supplemented by additional measures to address invasive species, heavy fuel oil and emissions to air. The European Commission should follow the current discussions on heavy fuel oil within the Protection of Arctic Marine Environment working group of the Arctic Council.

The EU should also consider stronger involvement in international co-operation on maritime infrastructure and research. Examples of possible contributions are hydrographic mapping, better sea-ice, meteorological and oceanographic observations and forecasts, ship surveillance, communication systems, and search and rescue capabilities. EU support to the Galileo and Copernicus programmes and its SafeSeaNet and CleanSeaNet initiatives are important in this context. More support for monitoring is needed in order to improve the understanding of environmental conditions and the impacts of shipping as well as to find effective measures to reduce negative impacts. There is also wide scope for technological innovation in ship design, emission and waste reductions, cleaning hulls and ballast water in Arctic conditions.
CHANGING NATURE OF ARCTIC FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

Fishing is a vital economic activity in the Arctic. Fisheries are characterised by fluctuations that may be exacerbated by climate change. Arctic coastal states are currently exploring possibilities for establishing a fisheries management regime in the Arctic Ocean, even though it seems unlikely that large-scale fisheries will be established in the area in the future. Aquaculture production is growing fast and becoming a crucial part of the economy in many Northern communities.

The EU is a major consumer of Arctic fish and is keen to ensure good co-operation with Arctic states in the sustainable management of marine living resources. The EU influences Arctic fisheries via food safety standards, legislation related to the port state and flag state responsibilities of its members, and participation in international and regional regulatory frameworks.

The EU can improve management in the light of the Common Fisheries Policy reform and contribute to enhanced co-operation, information sharing and research, with inclusion of local and traditional knowledge. EU efforts to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing should be further strengthened. The EU should address the need to reduce fishing capacity by decreasing incentives for economically unsustainable fisheries.
DEVELOPING OIL AND GAS RESOURCES IN ARCTIC WATERS

While interest in Arctic offshore hydrocarbon exploitation has increased in recent years, actual developments have been slow to follow, with major differences across the Arctic region. Critical factors that EU decision-makers need to take into account are the local benefits of resource development, risks, responding to which requires appropriate regulations, as well as gaps in knowledge and research efforts.

Meeting the growing demand of EU citizens for energy in a safe and environmentally responsible manner is a key challenge for EU institutions. The EU has limited, but multifaceted, functional competences that enable it to play a role in promoting high standards for resource development including through support for developing technologies specific for Arctic application, efforts to address climate change and relations with Arctic partners.

Funding and investment frameworks can facilitate high standards for regulators and industry to ensure that Arctic hydrocarbon developments are environmentally and socially responsible. It is recommended that the EU increase its support for research on the Arctic environment and relevant technology advances. This would improve risk assessment related to oil and gas developments in Arctic waters and foster technology developments particular to the region such as oil spills in ice conditions. Cross-disciplinary research programmes are an important mechanism, such as within the Horizon 2020 programme. Despite numerous challenges, the EU should continue and strengthen energy dialogues with non-EU Arctic partners within existing forums. One option would be to include energy issues in the Northern Dimension Policy.
MINING IN THE EUROPEAN ARCTIC

The European Arctic is currently experiencing an upsurge in mining activities, but future developments will be highly sensitive to mineral price fluctuations. The EU is a major consumer and importer of Arctic raw materials. As the EU is concerned about the security of supply, it encourages domestic mineral extraction, among others, via its Raw Materials Initiative.

Both Arctic communities and industry call for enhanced information flows, as well as improved and more inclusive decision-making frameworks. It is recommended that the EU should adopt a more integrated and transparent view and clearly articulate its interests related to mining in the European Arctic. Building trust and facilitating mechanisms to enhance dialogue with the residents of the North, including indigenous peoples, is an important element of such integration. Information platforms may be based, for example, on INSPIRE infrastructure for spatial information in Europe (designed to contribute to environmental decision-making) or the outcomes of projects like Promine (which mapped European mineral resources). The EU could also support the collection and sharing of mining data and knowledge, for example via the Horizon 2020 programme or the European Innovation Partnership on Raw Materials.

The EU regulatory framework could better contribute to harmonising environmental, economic and social assessments, paying special attention to local social issues and indigenous rights. This could be partly done within the current reform of the EU environmental impact assessment legislation. The EU, as a major global actor, can also influence international governance, standard-setting and cooperation to facilitate increased responsibility in mining activities.
Globalisation and indirectly climate change have increased the pressures on developing new mining projects, transport routes and renewable energy. At the same time, tourism and traditional livelihoods such as reindeer husbandry require large areas of pristine nature, which other activities may adversely affect.

The planning of new activities must respect the needs, culture and livelihoods of local and indigenous communities, including land rights. Proper assessment of social impacts is essential in order to mitigate conflicts between different values and interest groups. When European Arctic land-use issues are considered, EU policy-makers should pay particular attention to the aspects of human well-being and social sustainability, public participation and indigenous rights. This is especially important when these elements differ from the needs and values typical of the more densely populated areas in the south.

There is a need for enhanced information exchange between Arctic local and regional actors and EU institutions. Stronger inclusion of social aspects and challenges in the EU frameworks for impact assessment as well as in dialogue with Arctic partners including Russia is advised.
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CHANGES IN THE EUROPEAN ARCTIC

The Strategic Assessment of Development of the Arctic report’s overview of the region’s sociocultural landscape includes innovative and growing Arctic cities, thinning-out rural areas, demographic challenges, and dependence on extractive and primary industries. Indigenous peoples often experience these elements in distinct manners.

The EU has a number of programmes that support socioeconomic development and co-operation in the North, as well as relevant transport policies and environmental regulations. When designing and carrying out relevant policies, the EU decision-makers should take into account: the region’s intra-regional and core-periphery connectivity; power structures, social conflicts and cultural diversity; human-nature interactions; as well as the state of innovation, entrepreneurship and education.

An EU focus on entrepreneurship and innovation within co-operation and cohesion programmes should be continued and strengthened, with greater attention to gender issues and indigenous peoples. In particular, the activism of dynamic indigenous youth should be supported. Intra-regional accessibility and connectivity, including challenging cross-border projects, must not be neglected in the light of a focus on core-periphery connections within frameworks such as the Trans-European Transport network. The special characteristics and needs of Arctic cities and their importance for regional development need to be taken into account in EU policies and programmes.
COMMUNICATION CHANNELS TO BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN SCIENTISTS, POLICY MAKERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Global and regional assessments, primarily environmental, have become increasingly common elements in international, national and even local policy and decision making. As large-scale environmental problems and their consequences cross borders and know no jurisdictional limits. Addressing them requires cooperation among countries, interaction between scientists and policy makers, and inclusion of actors from all levels of the scale, from the local to the global. One form of responding to these challenges has become assessments as organized efforts to harness scientific information to inform policy makers both from private and public sectors at all stages of decision-making. In addition, the reasoning behind assessments supposes that a better understanding of impacts of human actions, decisions and behaviours, presented with options for alleviation of these impacts, can provide incentives for political, social and economic decision makers to carry out their policies in a more sustainable way.

Therefore, the number and importance of assessments is expected to increase even further in the future along with greater demands put on natural resources by the growing population and effects of industrialization and globalization, thus calling for concerted actions based on sound and scientifically grounded information to mitigate negative effects of these developments.

The assessments are often viewed through products they deliver, frequently in the form of a report or publication. However, they can be better understood as social processes, embedded in particular institutional settings, within which expert knowledge related to a policy problem is framed, integrated, interpreted, and presented in documents to inform decision making. Assessments constitute communication channels to bridge the gap between scientists and policy makers and are a key interface between science and policy. As such they may influence the formulation, implementation and evaluation of public policy, hence they are also of interest to business, nongovernmental organizations and regulatory offices.

The aim of the report is to shed more light on the influence of assessments in policy-making. The report consists of two parts. The first one defines the main concepts related to assessments and distinguishes between their various types. The second part focuses on the Arctic Council, its role in the knowledge production and the assessment activities conducted under its auspices.

The report can be downloaded from the website: www.arcticinfo.eu/assessment-in-policy-making
INVENTORY OF CURRENT INITIATIVES, PROJECTS AND POLICIES OF SIGNIFICANCE TO THE ARCTIC

The European Union Arctic Initiatives Compendium includes flagship programmes, projects and policy initiatives undertaken by Member States and actors operating within states belonging to the European Union (EU), as well as enterprises undertaken by European states such as Norway and Iceland and territories such as Greenland that are highly relevant in the context of the European Arctic. In many cases they are strongly linked to the EU, for example, the European Research Area (ERA).

The compendium inventories recent relevant reports on European Union infrastructure, competencies and policies in the Arctic. The compendium summarises European Union involvement in international, regional and intergovernmental agreements and regulatory that have influence in Arctic governance. This includes research and research related agreements, as well as EU supported infrastructures of significance to the Arctic. The compendium describes EU instruments, institutions and policy areas with Arctic applications, demonstrating the scope of EU investment in the Arctic and European citizens resident in the Arctic. Additionally, the compendium identifies recent and ongoing EU endeavours in addressing major Arctic trends through the various instruments at its disposal. More than 65 endeavours are listed, including project details such as budget, partners and areas covered, as well references to their relevance in addressing a particular trend, such as for example climate change or increased mining activities in the Arctic. Finally, the compendium offers an abridged overview of structural initiatives undertaken by European Union countries, which include, where relevant, commercial and industrial initiatives.

These initiatives demonstrate a high level of capacity building within the European Arctic. Arctic initiatives do not necessarily operate exclusively in the Arctic, and that not all initiatives undertaken in the Arctic self-identify as Arctic, for example regional programmes in the northernmost Scandinavian municipalities. The compendium takes into account that not all knowledge about the Arctic is produced by research projects. Although scientific research remains a central tenet in understanding the Arctic, the EU is contributing substantial resources to sustainable arctic development through a variety of instruments and with initiatives that affect how the Arctic is known.

The report can be downloaded from the website: www.arcticinfo.eu/compendium
GAP ANALYSIS
WHAT DO POLICY-MAKERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE ARCTIC? WHERE IS THAT INFORMATION AND HOW CAN IT BE MADE AVAILABLE?

The Gap Analysis Report offers an illustrative snapshot of users’ Arctic information needs. The results help to identify and analyze the Arctic information needs of stakeholders and policy-makers and to serve highlight information and communication gaps. Surveyed respondents addressed information needs in a wide range of thematic areas such as living in the Arctic, investing, working and travelling in the Arctic, as well as governing and understanding the region.

In the area of living in the Arctic, indicated information needs focused on local communities, changes in indigenous lifestyles, Northern culture and education, changes to food security, spread of disease, demographic information, and environmental impacts. Strengthening communication exchange regarding communities in the Arctic and cultural aspects was suggested.

In the area of investing in the Arctic, limited information on i.e. evaluating business opportunities in the region, understanding environmental conditions and infrastructure, environmental impacts of mining, and oil and gas sector, as well as ice conditions and permafrost was noticed. More communication on existing national and EU legislation requirements (mining, maritime transport, and oil and gas exploitation), international standards, and corporate sustainability was advised.

The respondents also lack the information in the area of working in the Arctic, especially working opportunities, management, rights, as well as “impacts of land use strategies on innovation” and “working opportunities in SMEs of rural business”. Communication on business and employment to assist foreign entrepreneurs was desired.

In the area of travelling in the Arctic, the information is needed on the variety of topics such as navigational safety, strategies evaluating (and regulating) environmental and socioeconomic risks and impacts of Arctic shipping, research and consultation processes regarding tourism and hospitality. Strengthening communication on societies and culture, tourism and travel opportunities in the Arctic, as well as maritime transport, was seen as beneficial.

Information needed regarding governing the Arctic included governance structures for environmental risk prevention, risks of resource extraction activities and their impacts on wildlife and local communities, potential oil spills, survival of invasive species in ballast water or on ship hulls, but also ways of governing urbanization, demographic shifts, and migrations. Respondents suggested communication on topics like land use, permitting process for mining projects in other countries, search and rescue (infrastructure, procedures, general incident preparedness and participation of foreign companies in response actions).

To understand the Arctic better, respondents need useful, timely and synthesized information mainly on climate change, society and culture, maritime transport, and mining. The information needed concern i.e. mapping of vulnerable species and habitats; greenhouse gas and short-lived climate pollutant monitoring; long-range monitoring and observations (including sea ice thickness and motion); natural variability, as well as present and past (geologic) climate changes.

The report can be downloaded from the website: www.arcticinfo.eu/gap-analysis
EU IN THE ARCTIC

7. October 2008
European Parliament resolution on Arctic governance

20. November 2008
European Commission Arctic communication

8. December 2009
Council of the European Union conclusions on Arctic Issues

20. January 2011
European Parliament resolution on a sustainable policy for the High North

26. June 2012
Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council. Developing a European Union policy towards the Arctic region: progress since 2008 and next steps

12. May 2014
Council of the European Union conclusions on developing a European Union policy towards the Arctic Region

12. March 2014
European Parliament joint motion for a resolution on the EU strategy for the Arctic
NETWORK FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS

NEED FOR BETTER ACCESS, DIALOGUES AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE ARCTIC

The proposed EU Arctic Information Centre (EUAIC) is a modern structure that enhances effective use of scientific information and practitioners’ knowledge in public and private decision making in the Arctic. The EUAIC is designed to operate as a so called “boundary organization” between different knowledge groups and it aims at offering information products. Through its services the proposed EUAIC would guarantee improved awareness and understanding of the Arctic in the EU, and the EU in the Arctic.

Rapid economic development and environmental changes in the Arctic result in a considerable increase in demand among various stakeholders for information about the region. Recent studies show that awareness of the Arctic is modest, and at the same time information is urgently requested by EU institutions, EU Member States, the private sector, scientists and other stakeholders operating and interested in the Arctic.

Despite the EU’s investments in research and development programmes addressing the Arctic, and regardless of the Arctic excellence institutions funded by European states at the national level, the produced information is dispersed among various projects and organizations. The lack of overall institutional memory about results and completed projects means that this information is not readily accessible for effective use by stakeholders who need it for their decisions and actions. Additionally, the produced information is often too technical and thus these stakeholders do not consider it to be useful and applicable.

Scientific information alone cannot give comprehensive answers about Arctic development. There is also a need for deep understanding of the values and knowledge possessed by the people who have long experience of living, working in the Arctic. In order to come up with influential strategies, plans and decisions, or for social licensing of new investments, it is crucial to build bridges between scientists, policymakers and the private sector by facilitating multidimensional dialogues to gain access to the full spectrum of information and to increase trust between these knowledge groups.
We propose establishment of the EU Arctic Information Centre as a collaborative structure of European Arctic excellence institutes that have expertise, skills and contacts on Arctic issues and which are committed to filling the recognized information gap between the EU and the Arctic.

The proposed EU Arctic Information Centre will improve (1) access, (2) dialogues and (3) dissemination of relevant and updated Arctic information and knowledge within and outside the EU. The EU Arctic Information Centre will support the formulation and continuation of the EU’s Arctic policy and help to guarantee its coherence. The EU Arctic Information Centre can provide a number of services to support improved knowledge about the Arctic such as:

- Think tanks for producing briefing papers, factsheets and knowledge brokering
- Documentation of the discussion in the form of reports useful for decision making
- Clearing house on the EU’s Arctic initiatives
- Impact assessments to compile scientific and stakeholders’ knowledge
- Serving the Commission in its various Arctic needs.

Additionally, the network members of the Preparatory Action project recognize the need for an intergovernmental panel for the EU Member States and EU institutions. Established by the EU and supported by the network of Arctic expertise institutions, i.e. EU Arctic Information Centre, the panel would facilitate discussions about EU policies regarding the Arctic region, EU Arctic Strategy, and Arctic initiatives in the EU and its Member States.

The EU Arctic Information Centre would have its hub, the Central Office, in the European Arctic in Rovaniemi at the Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland. Locating a core activity in the European Arctic demonstrates that the EU is an Arctic actor. The idea of the EU Arctic Information Centre does not overlap or compete with any other existing Arctic organization.

The report can be downloaded from the website: www.arcticinfo.eu/nfa
Factsheets

Factsheets produced as a part of the Strategic Assessment of Development of the Arctic have been primarily designed as a background material for consultations with Arctic stakeholders.
Highlighted Projects

Six projects as an example of the EU contribution to Arctic research.

1. **ACCESS**
   - **Project Coordinator:** Hans Bolscher (hans.bolscher@ecorys.com)
   - **Start Date:** 1/07/2011
   - **Duration:** 36 months
   - **EU Contribution:** 364,096 €
   - **Total Cost:** 899,730 €
   - **Main Mission and Aims:**
     - To understand and quantify the vulnerability of the Arctic environment to a changing global climate, and to investigate the feedback mechanisms associated with increasing greenhouse gas emissions from permafrost zones.
     - To evaluate Arctic climate change scenarios and their implications for Europe.
     - To engage in close cooperation with the Commission. NGO participants have no contractual arrangements with either the Press or the Commission.

2. **INTERACT**
   - **Project Coordinator:** Margareta Johansson
   - **Start Date:** 1/07/2011
   - **Duration:** 36 months
   - **EU Contribution:** 364,096 €
   - **Total Cost:** 899,730 €
   - **Main Mission and Aims:**
     - To build capacity for research and monitoring in the European Arctic and adjacent high alpine areas.
     - To develop an interdisciplinary network of Arctic and high-alpine research stations.
     - To provide information to support the sustainable development of the Arctic region and adjacent high alpine areas.

3. **Barents Mediasphere**
   - **Main Mission and Aims:**
     - To increase the visibility of the Barents Region by promoting communications in the Barents region.
     - To strengthen cross-border journalist cooperation in the region.
     - To produce media content, and organize courses and meetings for journalists.

4. **Arctic 2000**
   - **Main Mission and Aims:**
     - To provide information on Arctic environmental changes through joint research activities.
     - To capture and monitor various environmental changes in the Arctic region.

5. **CHANGE**
   - **Main Mission and Aims:**
     - To understand and model Arctic climate change.
     - To assess the impact of climate change on the Arctic region.

6. **Arctic Observing Networks**
   - **Main Mission and Aims:**
     - To monitor and model Arctic climate change.
     - To evaluate the impact of climate change on the Arctic region.

**Key Words:**
- Nuclear icebreakers
- Arctic Ocean
- Murmansk, Russia
- Polaria in Rovaniemi, Finland
- ACCESS
- INTERACT
- Barents Mediasphere
- Arctic 2000
- Arctic Observing Networks

**Project Web Site:**
- ACCESS: www.access-eu.org
- INTERACT: www.eu-interact.org
- Arctic Observing Networks: www.arcticinfo.eu/interact

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Arctic Portal
Iceland
www.arcticportal.org
The initiative of EU Arctic Information Centre
Increase knowledge, improve efficiency.

The Council requests the Commission to consider the options proposed by this project to establish an EU Arctic Information Centre to promote efficient access to Arctic information, to facilitate dialogues and to communicate on Arctic issues.

(Council of the European Union conclusions on developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region, 12 May 2014)

[The European Parliament ] reaffirms its support for, and urges the Commission to proceed with, the establishment of the EU Arctic Information Centre as a networked undertaking with a permanent office in Rovaniemi, with reference to the Preparatory Action ‘Strategic environmental impact assessment of the development of the Arctic’.

(European Parliament Joint Motion for a Resolution on the EU strategy for the Arctic, 12 March 2014)
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