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As a doctoral student at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Lapland, in Rovaniemi, Finland, I study the politics of nature and society in the Arctic context. While my major is in the Political Sciences, I approach my research from a transdisciplinary angle, which also reflects my past.

I started out as a mechanical engineer before moving on to an oil and gas extraction company, where I worked in the project management group. During my engineering work I had already realized that technological progress has impacts on socio-economic realities. This pushed my interest increasingly towards the dichotomy of technology and human development. It also led me to give up my full-time employment as technician and to study International Development at the University of Vienna, where I graduated as “Magister” in 2014. Taking advantage of my diverse background, I focused my studies on the dynamics and interplays of energy politics and socio-economic developments. In 2010, a student exchange brought me to the University of Lapland, where I attended the Arctic Studies Programme and added an Arctic regional focus to my research interests.

I fell in love with the North, so much so that a few years ago a small village in northern Finland, in the middle of Lapland, became my new home. This has allowed me to experience an Arctic lifestyle and Arctic challenges first hand, which brings additional motivation and insights to my research.

My current research interests are in the fields of political ecology, hegemony theories, energy politics, environmental politics, and sociology of technology studies. These are brought together by a regional focus on the Arctic. My dissertation examines how the prevailing economic development paradigm materializes in environmental governance in the Arctic and how this challenges human security in the region. In particular, I explore how the drivers and motives for mass-scale natural resource extraction are reflected in the transforming political discourses of Arctic environmental govern-



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ance. The hypothesis is that the dominant agendas in Arctic governance increasingly favour the interests of the global elites rather than those of the Arctic population or the environment.

Because all forms of politics have an environmental dimension and environmental politics also simultaneously incorporates socio-economic interests, politics can be seen as an issue of the relation between society and nature. The interests of different groups or actors incorporate different societal relationships with nature. These relationships compete with each other for generalization in political discourses, in order to materialize a group's interests into a political regime. My research seeks to elaborate how different societal relationships with nature, both regionally and globally, struggle for generalization within Arctic governance. My research should help to better understand the dynamics between global and local interests in the Arctic and consequently contribute to finding ways and strategies for developing an ecologically democratic and sustainable future for the Arctic region.