THE HENRY M. JACKSON SCHOOL
OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
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TASK FORCE

The Donald C. Hellmann Task Force Program

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Indigenous and International Relations in a Warming Arctic

Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies

University of Washington, Seattle

Task Force Report Winter 2024

Indigenous and International Relations in a Warming Arctic

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PREFACE

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In both Canada and the United States, China's aspirations as a polar power are impacting the balance in Arctic international relations. In a warming Arctic, melting ice is opening new shipping routes, creating new opportunities for natural resource extraction, and accelerating other processes of globalization. China considers itself a near-Arctic nation and now serves as an Observer on the Arctic Council, which is the leading intergovernmental forum promoting cooperation in the Arctic. At the same time, Arctic Indigenous Peoples, particularly Inuit, have become increasingly effective at influencing domestic and international policies concerning the Arctic. In this Task Force, students address ways that policies may impact China's role in the region and what impact, if any, China's role in Arctic policy might have on Arctic Indigenous Peoples, Canada, the United States and beyond.

Arctic warming is a key component in the complexity of Arctic international relations, which encompasses Indigenous rights and priorities, Arctic and non-Arctic nation-state politics, influence and evolution of governing bodies (e.g., the Arctic Council), local and global economics, and militaristic history and influences. While Arctic policy is developed to solve social and international problems, in seeking to understand policy we must ask whose voices are dominant and whose are not well represented or even absent in the development of a particular policy, or in decision-making processes. International relations and policies that impact the homelands and lives of Arctic Indigenous Peoples are inherently linked to questions of justice and the rights of Inuit and Inuit communities. This is particularly important as international interests, such as China's, increase their focus on the Arctic. The students were encouraged to incorporate the science of ice into policy reports dealing with issues in the social sciences.

Part of the course included a research study tour to Ottawa over the last week of January 2024 where students met with scholars, the Norwegian Ambassador, scientists, leaders and representatives from Inuit organizations, Nunavut Sivuniksavut school students, and federal

government departments. We strongly encouraged the students to use these visits to ground their research in the actual functioning of Canadian federal departments, Inuit approaches to ice loss and other issues, and the research of key scholars in the field. Perhaps, most importantly, we asked the students to consider how we might think about policy differently – how we might think about policy from an Inuit perspective and therefore challenge how we develop, create and implement policy. We are extremely proud of how the students identified issues they felt were critical to addressing the complexity of Indigenous and international relations in a warming Arctic, and how each student addressed a problem from their own viewpoint and way of knowing.

In addition to the many offices and individuals that met with the Arctic Task Force in Ottawa (see Appendix A), we wish to thank the following for their time and energy in making both the capstone course and Ottawa program a success:

Tony English, Gail Schmitz, Maggie Chen, and James Anderson, Business Office, Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies (Jackson School); Marion Ferguson, Canadian Studies Center, Jackson School; Jaime Fitch and Lauren Dobrovolny, Office of Academic Services, Jackson School; Phil Shekleton, Center for Global Affairs, Jackson School; Katherine Kroeger, UW Study Abroad office and the UW Study Abroad Finance and Administration team; Emily Keller with UW Libraries; and all of the individuals and organizations that were so tremendously generous with their time in Ottawa. For a list of all individuals and units that met us in Ottawa, see Appendix A.

This Task Force, including the Research Study Tour to Ottawa, is part of the Don C. Hellmann Task Force Program, Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington, Seattle and is the capstone experience in the undergraduate International Studies Program and the Jackson School's International Policy Institute. Funding was made possible, in part, by the Government of Canada; the Canadian Studies Center, East Asia Center, and Center for Global Studies with Title VI grant funding administered by the International and Foreign Language Education office in the Office of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of

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INTRODUCTION

NICOLAS MELJAC AND DESAREE HUYNH

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Impacts of Climate Change on the Arctic Region

Since the turn of the 20th century, there have been alarming trends regarding warming temperatures in the Arctic. The region is currently experiencing warming in surface air temperature at a rate four times faster than the rest of the world, and is expected to reach the 2°C warming threshold, which was set by the Paris Agreement in 2015 as soon as 2043, as opposed to in 2051 for the global average[1]. This makes the region even more vulnerable to the damaging effects of climate change.

A significant part of this Task Force aims to assess how the effects of climate change impact Indigenous Peoples. To understand the effects of climate change on the landscape and the Indigenous populations, it is crucial to observe the changing geographic layout of the Arctic.

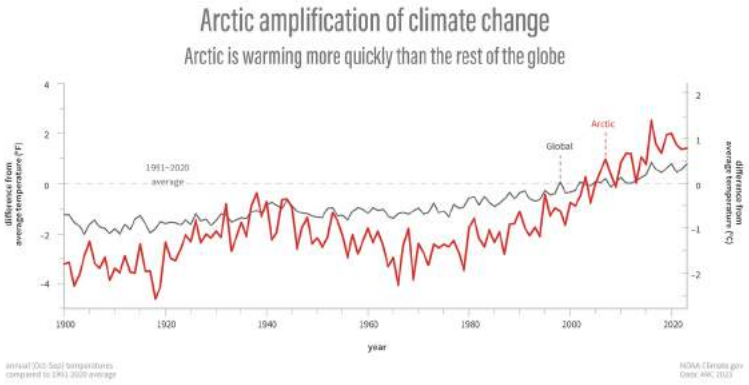
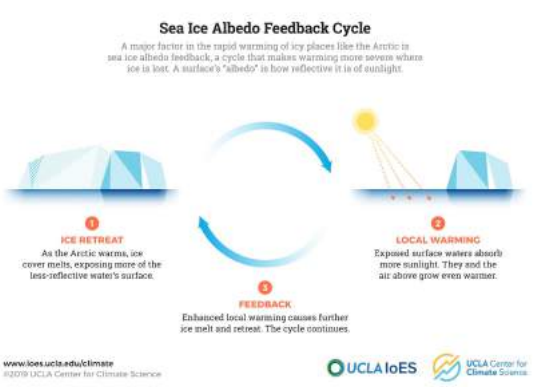


Figure 1. Global and Arctic Yearly Temperature, difference from 1991-2020 average, NOAA Climate.gov

A significant impact of Arctic warming is the progressive loss of summertime sea ice from the Arctic Ocean. Greenhouse gas emissions are warming the atmosphere, melting the sea ice, and exposing the open ocean which absorbs more solar radiation, leading to more warming. This sea ice albedo feedback cycle is illustrated in Figure 2.

[1] Duffey, Alistair, Robbie Mallett, Peter J. Irvine, Michel Tsamados, and Julienne Stroeve. "ESD Ideas: Arctic Amplification's Contribution to Breaches of the Paris Agreement." Earth System Dynamics, November 14, 2023.



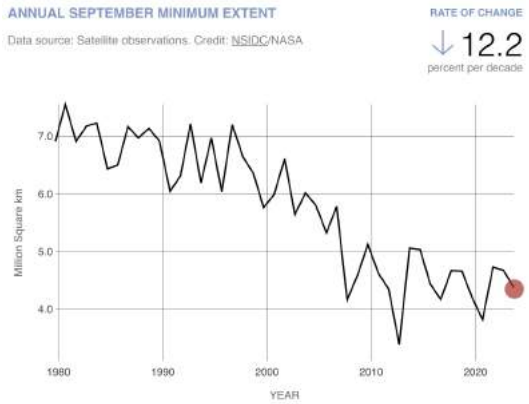


Figure 2. 'Left', Sea Ice Albedo Feedback Cycle, UCLA Center for Climate Science

Figure 3. 'Right', Arctic Annual September Sea Ice Minimum Extent, Global Climate Change, NASA

Figure 3 shows how the end-of-summer minimum in sea ice extent has decreased by around 12% every decade since 1980. The IPCC Sixth Assessment Report states that there is a high likelihood that the Arctic will see its first ice-free September in the year 2050.[2] The access to the Arctic Ocean and Arctic seabed that is possible because of this ice loss has led the Arctic to be considered a 'frontier' region by many countries, inevitably leading to significant changes in the region.

Implications of Arctic sea ice loss discussed in this report include:

- Opening of new shipping routes in the Arctic Ocean
- More natural resource extraction in the Arctic
- Increased scientific research in the region
- More natural resource extraction in the Arctic
- New political issues between Indigenous Peoples and the states they reside in
- Challenging the way of life and culture of many Indigenous Peoples
- New interests from non-Arctic states in the Arctic, including countries like China
- Increased militarization in the Arctic

[2] IPCC, 2023: *Climate Change 2023: Synthesis Report.* Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Chapter 9

All of these effects will be key in shaping what the region will look like throughout the 21st century. Each chapter of the report will look at these issues from different angles, whether it be how policy impacts China's growing role in the region, the effects of climate change, or China's impact on Indigenous groups. Each chapter will include several policy recommendations on these key issues.

Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic

Figure 4. Six Indigenous Permanent Participants at the Arctic Council, Philippe Rekacewicz/UNEP, GRID-Arendal

To understand the Arctic Region, it is important to understand the six different Indigenous organizations who are Permanent Participants in the Arctic Council, as shown in Figure 4. Each one of these organizations has a seat on the Arctic Council, which is a way that the Indigenous Peoples that these organizations represent actively participate in Council activities and advance the interests of Indigenous communities.[3] This report focuses on the

[3] "About the Arctic Council." Arctic Council

human rights of the Indigenous Peoples and their right to sovereignty in the Arctic. Ice is an integral part of the Inuit definition of homeland and the Inuit consider ice as a human right.[4] The melting ice severely affects their transportation routes and animal migration routes. The changes in the region will not only affect their economies but also their physical and mental health, melting ice severely affects aspects of their lives like transportation routes and animal migration routes. In short, the well-being of the land and the people are tightly related.

Investigating Indigenous *and* international relations in a warming Arctic is essential for comprehending the full scope of climate change and determining mutually beneficial next steps. This Task Force report incorporates perspectives from multiple Indigenous groups (especially the Inuit, the Sàmi, and RAIPON), presents their interests in the region, and looks at different ways that climate change and state actors (especially Canada, Russia, China, and the US) have been affecting their way of life.

Research Methods and Chapters

Our Task Force team used a wide range of research methods to understand the possible impact of international relations and policies, and especially China's activities, on Arctic Indigenous Peoples, Canada, and the United States. With the support of University of Washington librarians, we used sources from the UW Libraries, along with government documents such as Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework and the Arctic Policy of China played an essential role within our research.

A large part of our research was conducted through firsthand experience, from January 27 to February 3, as our Task Force team had the opportunity to meet with various Arctic scholars, ambassadors, government officials, Indigenous organizations, Inuit students, and an Inuk Artist. These visits included engagements with the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Inuit Circumpolar Council, Oceans North, Global Affairs Canada, and Nunavut Sivuniksavut. Our perspectives and knowledge regarding Arctic issues benefitted from these engagements and personal interactions. Being able to discuss Indigenous priorities with the President of the Inuit Circumpolar Council, the importance of Indigenous voices in international governance with highly regarded members

[4] The Sea Ice Never Stops: Circumpolar Inuit Reflections on Sea Ice Use and Shipping in Inuit Nunaat. Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, 2014.

of the Canadian government, as well as ask questions regarding the upcoming release of the Canadian Defence Policy at Global Affairs Canada, all furthered and solidified our report findings and our recommendations. Within each chapter, policy recommendations and ideas on how to address pressing issues involving the Arctic, Indigenous populations, and the Arctic environment will be provided.

The report is organized into five sections:

- **Section I: Rising International Competition in the Arctic**

  This section discusses the international competition arising through trade routes and resource extraction within the Arctic.

- **Section II: Indigenous Self-Determination**

  This section highlights Indigenous voices through self-governance in the Nunavik region as well as within realms of international governance.

- **Section III: The Emerging Presence of China**

  This section examines China's emerging presence through its scientific research and strategic militarization and as an observer state on the Arctic Council.

- **Section IV: China's Impact on Indigenous Populations**

  This section weighs the impact of Chinese and Russian collaboration on Indigenous Peoples and leadership within a globalizing Arctic.

- **Section V: Impact of a Changing Arctic on Indigenous Communities**

  This section considers the various consequences faced by Indigenous youth and Arctic communities.

At the end of the report there will be a full list of recommendations, categorized by the target audience for each recommendation.

SECTION I:

Rising International Competition in the Arctic

The first section of this Task Force report will provide context for the current conditions in the Arctic through the topics of geography, climate change, and resource extraction. First, we will lay out the nuanced layers of cartographic perspectives on Arctic mapping. Chapter 1 compares nation-state mapping and Indigenous counter-mapping of the Canadian Arctic for the purpose of territorial claims and education. Chapter 2 examines the impacts of climate change on Arctic land and sea, and the various feedback loops that perpetuate it. Chapter 3 evaluates two current resource extraction projects in the Arctic and the geopolitical implications of China's involvement in them.

CHAPTER 1

AVA SEIFRED

Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies

Comparing Nation-State Mapping and Indigenous Mapping in the Arctic

Introduction

The Arctic is a region of ice, water, and land. The Arctic is not only an important place ecologically, but recently it has become an important place economically. This has led to nation-states coming in again to try to claim land, just as they did hundreds of years ago, and extend their claim beyond land-based margins hoping to take control of the water for its possible resources and access to shipping routes.[5] To do this, these states create conventional maps to chart the region and its potential assets to a nation state. However, when they set out to map these places, they do not acknowledge the Indigenous communities in the Arctic. Nation-state mapping conventionally defines land based on physical geography, divided into neat land borders and along longitude lines.[6]

This chapter will address: How have Indigenous Peoples challenged these conventional maps? Indigenous counter-mapping, the challenging of conventional maps, flips geographic information presented by nation-state mapping. The fight for placenames, redefinition of territory (not just land, but water and ice as well), and complete redefinition of land without government boundaries all play a role in the counter-mapping movement.[7]

Defining the Arctic region: Why does everyone want a stake in it?

The Arctic region is made up of sea ice, ocean, and the land of eight countries. These countries are Canada, the US, Russia, Denmark (Greenland), Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland. Of these countries, five littoral countries (Canada, US, Denmark, Norway, Russia, and arguably Iceland) all determine the boundaries of their Arctic borders based on what the other

[5] Fabbi, Nadine. "Introduction to the Arctic." January 4, 2024.
[6] Mia M. Bennett, Wilfred Greaves, Rudolf Riedlsperger, and Alberic Botella. "Articulating The Arctic: Contrasting State and Inuit Maps of the Canadian North." *Polar Record* 52, no. 6 (632)
[7] Mia M. Bennett, et. Al. "Articulating the Arctic: Contrasting State and Inuit Maps of the Canadian North." (632)

littoral countries have done.[8] However, conflict does arise in these cases, as territorial conflict can occur when lines are drawn. Territorial boundaries are important to Arctic states because they determine their sovereignty over locations that can have resources including oil and gas, dictate control of shipping routes, and the ability to enact foreign policy objectives like militarization of coasts or conduct scientific research.[9] These territorial boundaries are defined by maps made by each country to show where their boundaries are.

Nation-state Mapping

Nation-state maps are conventional maps that visualize a space within a state's territory. Conventional maps are maps that one would see on a wall in a classroom, with political boundaries and major cities shown with each country a different color. Normally, these are shown in the Mercator projection.[10] A projection is how a map takes a three-dimensional object (like a globe) and projects it onto a two-dimensional surface. Every projection distorts the globe in some way. The Mercator projection particularly distorts the polar regions, making Greenland and Antarctica seem bigger than they actually are.[11] Since Mercator is one of the most used projections, this can subconsciously distort our views on the polar regions[12]. Why is this important? Because our own worldviews, ways of thinking, and ideas of what maps look like inform our map-creation process[13] and how decisions related to territory are made. Mercator projection maps also commonly center on Greenwich, England, because that is where the Meridian longitude line goes through. It was important for maritime travel, which is what the Mercator map was created for. The map was created by a Flemish man, Gerardus Mercator in 1569, who, in line with the Western thought of the time, chose to center the map on Europe.[14] Thus, when one thinks of a map, they are likely thinking of the Mercator projection map, a product of Western cartographic thought.

[8] Mia M. Bennett, et. Al. "Articulating the Arctic: Contrasting State and Inuit Maps of the Canadian North." (631)
[9] Fabbi, Nadine. "Introduction to the Arctic." January 4, 2024.
[10] Gov.au. "Commonly Used Map Projections." Accessed February 19, 2024.
[11] Arcgis.com. "Mercator." Accessed February 19, 2024.
[12] Gov.au. "Commonly Used Map Projections."
[13] Rundstrom, Robert A. "A Cultural Interpretation of Inuit Map Accuracy." *Geographical Review* 80, no. 2 (April 1990): 155–68. (155)
[14] Arcgis.com. "Mercator."

When done by the state, mapping supports how the state structures its territory. State maps in the Arctic mainly visualize its physical geography and natural resources. The Arctic is within the 60th parallel and is seen for its straight baselines along the coast and continental shelves[15], which per the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea, dictate where the state's sovereign territory off the coast is located.[16] State maps will also include their international borders to other countries in the Arctic, whether they be land or sea borders. The representation of these borders depends on which country is making the map, as it will reflect what that country claims are its international borders.[17]

These concepts can be seen in Canada's state maps of the Arctic. The idea of the North has long been an integral part of Canada's identity. Due to the visualization of the Arctic based on its physical geography and natural resources, people first think of the North as Canada's northern frontier.[18] Recently, they have been moving their domestic and foreign policy to more officially center the North.[19] Canada has divided the North into three territories: Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. In terms of the greater territory of the North, the Canadian Government has inconsistently depicted the boundaries of the Arctic region.[20]

Canada was a colonized country of the British and French starting in the 1600s. Eventually, the French colonies were passed to British control, and in 1867, four provinces (Quebec, Ontario, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia) banded together to become the Dominion of Canada. This was a self-governing state within the British Empire, and slowly accumulated more provinces.[21] In 1931, the Statue of Westminster granted British dominions autonomy, and Canada finally received full independence in 1982 under the Canada Act.[22] This history informs the Canadian cartographical perspective, because of colonization Canada's perspective is informed by British perspectives and British cartographical thought.

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[15] Mia M. Bennett, et al. "Articulating the Arctic: Contrasting State and Inuit Maps of the Canadian North." (632)
[16] United Nations: Ocean and Laws of the Sea. "United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 Overview and Full Text," July 21, 2023.
[17] Mia M. Bennett, et al. "Articulating the Arctic: Contrasting State and Inuit Maps of the Canadian North." (632)
[18] Ibid. (632)
[19] "Arctic and Northern Policy Framework." Government of Canada, 2019.
[20] Mia M. Bennett, et al. "Articulating the Arctic: Contrasting State and Inuit Maps of the Canadian North." (633)
[21] "LibGuides: History of the British Empire (1815-1914): Canada," 2020. https://pacificu.libguides.com/c.php?g=1064774&p=7745059.
[22] BBC News. "Canada Profile - Timeline." *BBC*, February 1, 2012. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-16841165.

Case Study #1: Atlas of Northern Canada Map, Made by Natural Resources Canada, 2012

Figure 1. Map of Northern Canada.[23]

[23] (2012). Northern Canada / Nord du Canada. *Natural Resources Canada, Geomatics Canada, MCR Series*, 36, https://doi.org/10.4095/289594

The Northern Canada map was produced by Natural Resources Canada in 2012. As this is an official government map, they include both the French and English geographical names for major places, because those are the two official languages of Canada.

However, there are some inconsistencies in the map as well. The boundaries between Canada and Greenland and Canada and the United States (US) are classified differently, despite both being international boundaries. The line between Canada and the US is classified as an international boundary, while the line between Canada and Greenland is a dividing line. This may be due to the territorial dispute between Canada and Greenland over Hans Island. From 1973 until 2022, the border was undefined in Hans Island, a tiny island between Canada and Greenland. This undefined border was then resolved in a 2022 agreement between the two countries. Despite experts calling the dispute insignificant, this island could likely be the reason for the absence of a true international border on the map.[24]

It is also interesting to see how Canada defines its international borders beyond the coast. In the *Northern Canada* map, the Government Canada shows the US-Canada border extending directly from the coast of Yukon-Alaska to the Northern Pole. However, if we were to see the same map created by the US, they would define this line differently. The US depiction of this border can be seen in the map below created by the US State Department. This line has been a point of disputed territory between Canada and the US, where the US claims a line that follows the continental shelf more to the right than the line we see here that Canada claims.[25] In this map, Canada choses to outright claim this contested territory. The extension of this line to the North Pole suggests that the border also fully goes to the Pole, due to the nature of how they represented their Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The color of the EEZ is just a shade darker than the ocean, so it can easily blend in, whereas the international boundary line is black. Since it is hard to see, one might assume that Canada's territory extends to the North Pole.

[24] Hofverberg, Elin. "The Hans Island 'Peace' Agreement between Canada, Denmark, and Greenland." *Libary of Congress Blogs* (blog), June 22, 2022. https://blogs.loc.gov/law/2022/06/the-hans-island-peace-agreement-between-canada-denmark-and-greenland/.

[25] United States Department of State. "Announcement of U.S. Extended Continental Shelf Outer Limits," December 19, 2023. https://www.state.gov/announcement-of-u-s-extended-continental-shelf-outer-limits-2/.

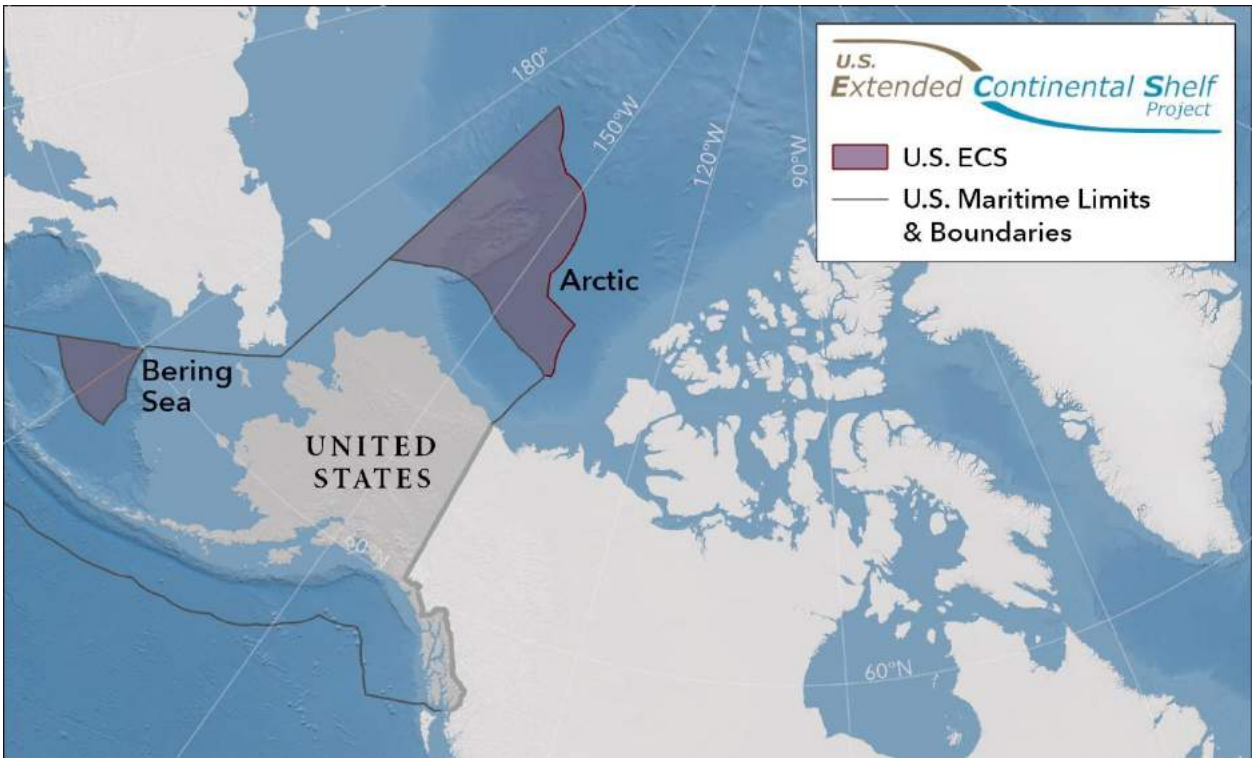

Figure 2. Alaska extended ECS and Maritime boundaries.[26]

Unlike other maps of the North that Canada has produced (for example the *Northern Strategy* map in 2009), the Northern Canada map includes the northern parts of its southern provinces. The dividing line between the northern territories of the Arctic and the southern territories rests at the 60th parallel north. The inclusion of these parts of the territories does signify an effort to include neighboring communities below the 60th parallel into the definition of the North. These communities sit close to the Arctic, but normally are not included due to being below the 60th parallel. Due to this lack of inclusion, they become on the fringes of the Arctic, marginalized within Arctic public policy because of their location. The inclusion of these fringe communities on this map shows a step in the right direction of depicting the North as not just above the 60th parallel.[27]

Overall, this map is a conventional map of Canada's north. It shows the boundaries of the provinces and international borders of Canada. The Northern Canada map is from the sixth

[26] (2023). US Extended Continental Shelf Regions. *United States Department of State, The Outer limits of the Continental Shelf of the United States of America: Executive Summary.*
[27] Mia M. Bennett, et. Al. "Articulating the Arctic: Contrasting State and Inuit Maps of the Canadian North." (630)

edition of the Atlas of Canada, which houses a curated collection of maps online. According to Natural Resources Canada, the Atlas of Canada was developed to fill a "national need to broaden [the] knowledge of the geography of Canada" as economic and demographic conditions became more multifaceted[28]. Here, one can see that the worldviews of the people that created this map have informed and influenced the creation of it[29], including southern Canadian geographical thought and territorial agendas of the Government of Canada because the Canadian government created this map.[30] In turn, governmental cartographic ideologies and territorial agendas reflect onto the entirety of Atlas of Canada, due to all the maps inside it being government-made, and all informed by these same agendas and ideologies of the Government of Canada.

Indigenous Counter-Mapping

Indigenous Peoples have thought of colonial mapping as an "instrument of indigenous erasure".[31] It is a reorganization and reconception of their traditional lands. To challenge these traditional, colonial maps, Indigenous Peoples have been counter-mapping. Counter-mapping is where one views a space outside of preconceived cartographical thought, especially one that is outside of the perspective of a Mercator projection map made by a nation-state. These maps put Indigenous thinking and knowledge first, creating maps that replace lines of nation-states or provinces with their own boundaries and edges, and may not depict places in their anglicized names. This action gives protection from Imperial erasure, as it revitalizes and visualizes Indigenous knowledge.

Map-making is also a deeply political process. How we draw maps and how we see our world are intertwined, as mapmaking is a form of world creation.[32] These colonist map-creations, as well as surveying, have caused the erosion of Indigenous territory. Thus, remapping and counter-mapping assert the Indigenous presence, redefine the world as a place built on Indigenous persistence, and breaks down the permanency of the political world as we know it.[33]

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[28] Natural Resources Canada. "About the Atlas of Canada." Canada.ca, December 31, 2014. https://natural-resources.canada.ca/earth-sciences/geography/atlas-canada/about-atlas-canada/16890.
[29] Rundstrom, Robert A. "A Cultural Interpretation of Inuit Map Accuracy." (155)
[30] Mia M. Bennett, et. Al. "Articulating the Arctic: Contrasting State and Inuit Maps of the Canadian North." (635)
[31] Gaudry, Adam. "Maps." In *Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada.* Canadian Geographic, 2018.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Gaudry, Adam. "Maps." In *Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada*.

Inuit counter maps and mapmaking revitalize Inuit knowledge and sense of place. Historically, Inuit visualizations were quite different from European spatial thought. The accuracy of Inuit maps shocked British and Danish explorers.[34] But recently, Inuit maps have divided the North (Inuit Nunangat) into settler-colonialist boundaries instead of relying on their traditional ways of visualizing the land.[35] This is because, even if Inuit mapmakers try to draw upon Indigenous knowledge in creating a map, that map will still subconsciously be informed by the very western maps it tries to counter.[36] Inuit Nunangat is the collective name of the four territories of the Inuit people, which make up the autonomous land claims of the Inuit. These territories are: the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, Nunavut, Nunavik, and Nunatsiavut. The autonomous land makes up 40% of Canada's landmass and 72% of its coastline.[37] Thus, it is important that all this space can be charted. Inuit counter-mapping can chart this space in a way that allows Inuit people to assert their own claims over their own autonomous region, however they deem political, socially, or geographically important. Even if it is just attaching placenames to locations, it still asserts Inuit culture and influence. Indigenous epistemologies often do better than non-Indigenous epistemologies to represent a space cartographically. Not only is it important for Inuit people to make maps, it can also be beneficial for our spatial understanding.[38]

[34] Rundstrom, Robert A. "A Cultural Interpretation of Inuit Map Accuracy." (158)
[35] Mia M. Bennett, et. Al. "Articulating the Arctic: Contrasting State and Inuit Maps of the Canadian North." (632)
[36] Mia M. Bennett, et. Al. "Articulating the Arctic: Contrasting State and Inuit Maps of the Canadian North." (631)
[37] Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. "Who We Are," April 14, 2016. https://www.itk.ca/national-voice-for-communities-in-the-canadian-arctic/.
[38] Mia M. Bennett, et. Al. "Articulating the Arctic: Contrasting State and Inuit Maps of the Canadian North." (632)

Case Study #2: 2023 Map of Inuit Nunangat

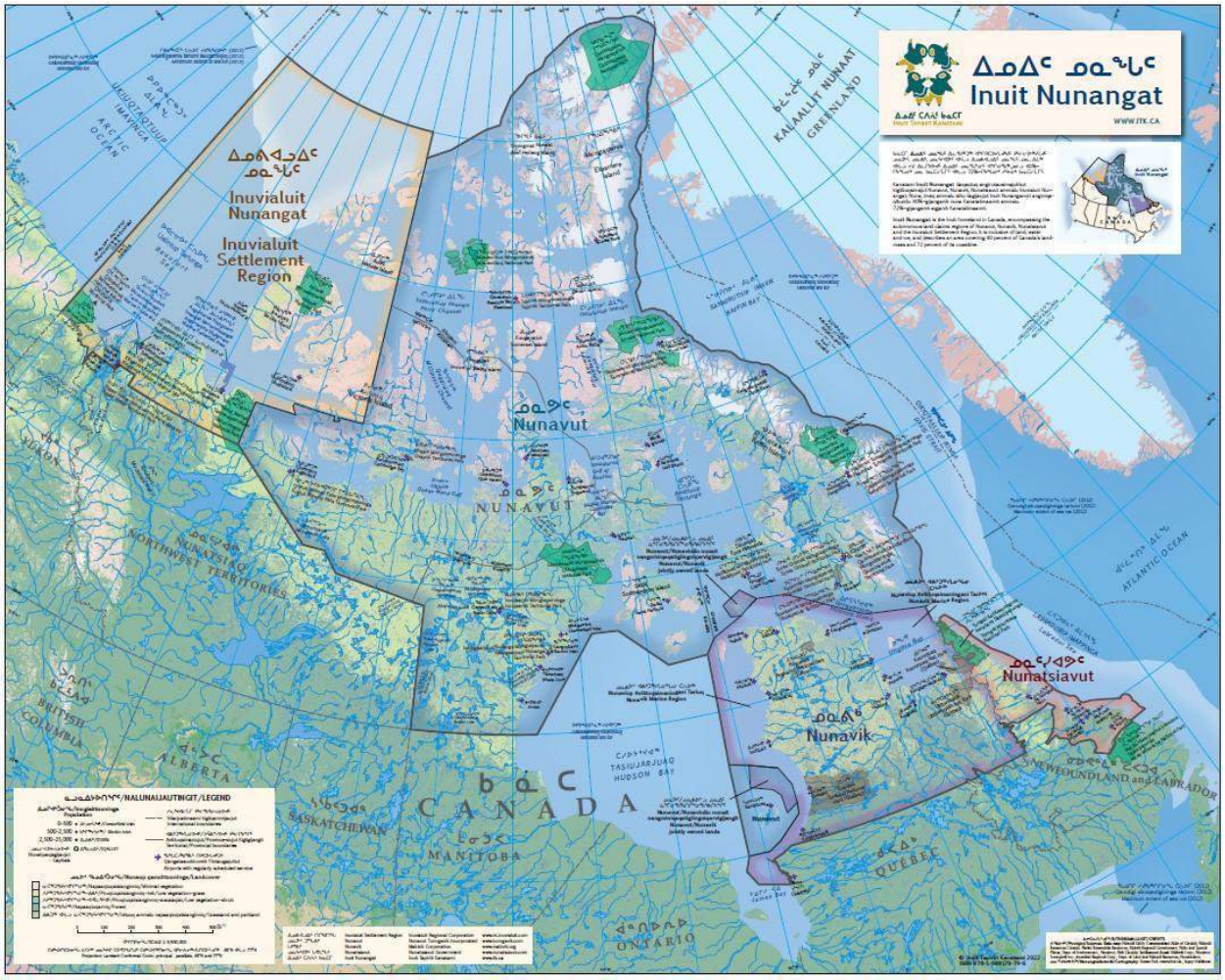

Figure 3. Map of Inuit Nunangat.[39]

Inuit counter-mapping work like the Igliniit Project and the Pan-Inuit Trails redefine how Inuit people envision space, while other projects like the maps made by *Inuit* Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) frame their maps by tweaking Western political thinking.[40] In comparing the Atlas maps made by the Government of Canada to Inuit mapping, I have chosen to study a map of the Inuit Nunangat made by ITK. The ITK is the national Inuit association of Canada[41]. This map was published in 2023 to show the Inuit Nunangat. According to Bennett et al., "ITK has adopted

[39] (2023) Inuit Nunangat. *Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami.* https://www.itk.ca/inuit-nunangat-map/
[40] Mia M. Bennett, et. Al. "Articulating the Arctic: Contrasting State and Inuit Maps of the Canadian North." (640)
[41] Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. "Who We Are"

western cartographic thinking" during the creation of their maps. However, as a map to show and encompass the land claims of the Inuit, it makes sense to relate it to a map-style that a possible audience may have already seen (like a Mercator projection map). The projection shown here is the Lambert Conformal Conic, which along the standard Canadian parallels used here, distorts Canada to a lesser degree than other projections.

The four territories here are shown in different colors. These territories are inclusive of not only the land, but also the water and sea ice within the territorial boundaries, all of which are integral to the Inuit way of life.[42] According to Jenn Parrott, Director of Innovation, Science, and Climate Change for the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, these lines follow the boundaries of the Inuit land claim agreements. The boundaries set in the land claims are due to a Western need for clarity and sovereignty and are only there for legal reasons. Inuit people extend, inhabit and traverse land, sea, and sea ice beyond these boundaries. They should not be read in a limiting manner[43]. However, in certain places these boundaries extend beyond the EEZ shown in the Northern Canada map: for example, the Inuvialuit Settlement region extends beyond the EEZ zone. This is per their 1984 land claim agreement: *The Western Arctic Claim: The Inuvialuit Final Agreement*. The land claim follows the US-Canada border per its Canadian representation until the 80th parallel, well beyond the EEZ zone.[44] As established in the first case study, their land claim is in disputed territory. This is important to note, as now Inuit land claims have become intertwined with Canadian geopolitics.

The Inuit Nunangat is 72% of Canada's coastline[45], and as Canada tries to gain geopolitical assets (like natural resources and control of shipping routes) off the coast using baselines and mapping to stake their claim in the Arctic[46], whose coastline and sea are they claiming for these geopolitical objectives? They are claiming the land of the Inuit, which they have done for hundreds of years.

[42] "Inuit Nunangat." In *Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada*. Canadian Geographic, 2018.
[43] ITK Talk, Jan. 20th 2024
[44] Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. "The Western Arctic Claim: The Inuvialuit Final Agreement," 1984. (14)
[45] Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. "Who We Are"
[46] Fabbi, Nadine. "Introduction to the Arctic." January 4, 2024.

ADJUSTED BOUNDARY ——————— (See Areas A-1)
ORIGINAL BOUNDARY - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - (See Areas A-2)

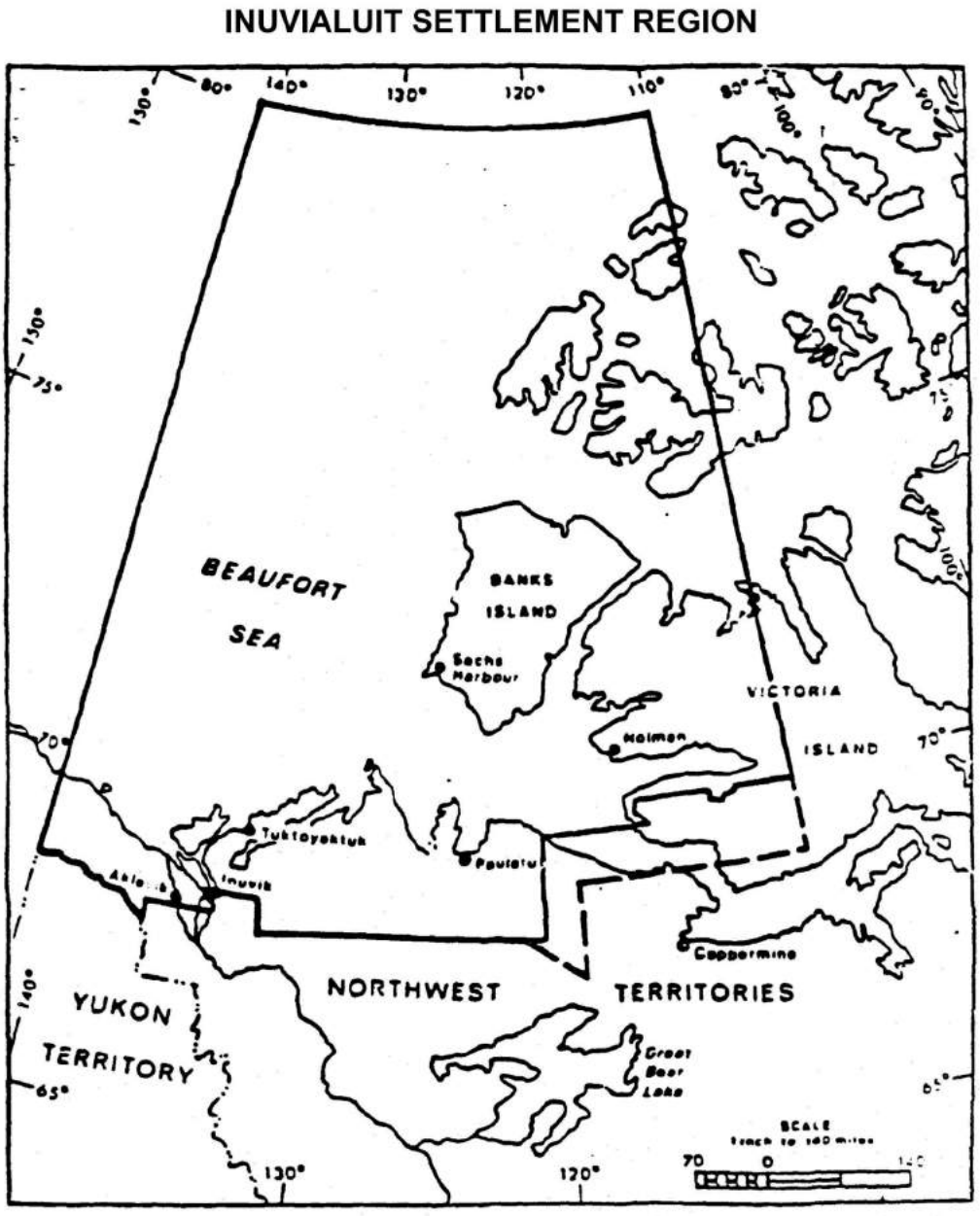

Figure 4. The Inuvialuit Settlement Region.[47]

[47] (1984) The Western Arctic Claim: The Inuvialuit Final Agreement. *Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.* https://yukon.ca/sites/yukon.ca/files/eco/eco-ar-western_arctic_claim_inuvialuit_final-agreement.pdf

Placenames can be a path to uphold Indigenous worldviews. A placename is a name for a cartographic location. There can be many different forms of placenames in many different languages, but anglicized placenames have been dominant in cartographic maps. In this map by ITK, there are three different placenames included for each location: one in Inuktut syllabics, one in Inuktut roman orthography, and one in English. Roman orthography (in Latin letters) is used in Alaska, the Northwest Territories, Labrador, and Greenland, while syllabics are used in Nunavut and Nunavik.[48] The map shows the syllabics first, then the roman orthography, then the English name. This could be because most Inuit people prefer syllabics over roman orthography.[49] Placenames on this ITK map are only detailed in the Inuit Nunangat; outside of it, it only shows province and country names. This excludes Inuit communities and peoples living outside the Inuit Nunangat, who are now not represented on the map.

Overall, the ITK map does a more accurate and complete job of showing placenames than the Atlas maps, which only show the anglicized version. The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) is trying to remedy this. One of their objectives in their strategy plan for 2020-2025 is to include Indigenous voices and names as a part of their placenames and place-naming process.[50] They also have a Geographical Names Database that includes all the names for places, including Indigenous names. These Indigenous placenames have become part of a project called *Stories from the Land: Indigenous Place Names in Canada*, an interactive map that houses all the names and origins, family language, dates, and more information. But despite these efforts to include placenames by the Government of Canada, why are they not on an Atlas map of the North? The Atlas is supposed to fill a layer of foundational knowledge for the people of Canada, so if placenames are not included on the map, placenames will not be included in that initial layer of knowledge.[51] Placenames are important for Indigenous awareness, and if that awareness is not integrated into that initial layer, it will be difficult to create further recognition and reconciliation for Indigenous peoples if they are invisible on a map.

[48] Tusaalanga.ca. "Writing the Inuit Language." Accessed February 19, 2024. https://tusaalanga.ca/node/2505.
[49] Gaudry, Adam. "Maps." In *Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada*.
[50] "Strategic Plan: Geographical Names Board of Canada 2020-2025," October 2020. (10)
[51] Natural Resources Canada. "About the Atlas of Canada."

Conclusion

The Arctic and Canadian North have been depicted in many ways although being the same land, ocean and sea ice. They have been seen through different worldviews, ideologies, and perspectives. State maps have long been seen as the dominant view of the world, and Inuit maps have stepped up to counter those ideologies. There is no right or wrong map, only a path to visualize space. The space of the Arctic is becoming increasingly important as climate change impacts the region and geopolitics move to center on it. Thus, how we view the area becomes increasingly important as well, as our cartographical perspective on the Arctic will influence our decision-making for the region. Therefore, it is important to consider all maps of the Arctic when making decisions, as to expand one's worldview and outlook on the region in order to make the best decision possible for all members of the Arctic.

Policy Recommendations:

- Update the Atlas Maps: Atlas maps are one of the most commonly seen maps in the world, and they should include the initiatives of the Geographical Names Board of Canada. It would also allow for further recognition of Indigenous peoples if the government of Canada were to follow through and place placenames on maps that are easily found.

- Support Inuit People in Policy making related to the Arctic: Inuit representation is necessary in decisions about shipping routes and resource extraction, as these decisions may be enacted on land and water they legally own.

CHAPTER 2

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Climate Change in the Arctic Land and Sea: Impacts on the Environment , Economy, and Indigenous Communities

Introduction

The Arctic air temperature is warming up at a rate that is up to four times as fast as the global average due to climate change. A factor that leads to this warming includes the increased carbon dioxide release, which enhances the planetary greenhouse effect. Additionally, the sea ice albedo feedback cycle leads to sea ice loss and ocean warming, while increased methane gas is released as permafrost thaws on land.[52] As significant environmental change is occurring in the region, emphasis must be placed on the impact it has on communities, especially Arctic Indigenous Peoples. Not only does this disrupt habitat for humans, but it also upsets natural ecological cycles with a broader impact on the rest of the globe.

However, some countries see opportunities as the ice melts. For example, the melting ice removes a barrier to international trade, allowing for faster and less expensive shipping, avoiding exclusive reliance on currently used cross-continental travel routes such as the Suez Canal. Less ice in the sea also opens the door to increased tourism in the Arctic through cruise ships. While there may be economic gains, expanding access to the Arctic by international actors is a stress on the environment and can negatively impact Arctic Indigenous Peoples.

First, this chapter will focus on Arctic land and begin by analyzing the effect of thawing permafrost on the production of greenhouse gasses, looking into two feedback loops: the sea ice albedo feedback and smoke from wildfires. Then, it will examine the impact of thawing permafrost on Arctic infrastructure, and implications for Indigenous Peoples. Next, the chapter will shift focus to the sea, evaluating the consequences of changing habitats for two apex predators: the invasive killer whale and the native polar bear. With these environmental changes in mind, the economic incentives for increased travel in the Arctic can be considered further in

[52] NOAA, "Arctic Report Card 2023," *NOAA Arctic*, accessed February 21, 2024, https://arctic.noaa.gov/report-card/report-card-2023/.

the context of their impacts on marine life, specifically the beluga whale and how it is affected by underwater acoustic noise. The beluga whale serves as an example for how the decrease in resources impacts Indigenous communities and increases food insecurity.

Climate Change Impacts on Arctic Land: Permafrost Loss and its Environmental Effects on Indigenous Communities

Environmental Impacts: Permafrost Loss Perpetuates Atmospheric Warming

Permafrost, a layer of soil which remains frozen for a minimum of two years, is thawing due to climate change. It is estimated that 66% of Arctic communities are constructed on permafrost, and 13.2% of these communities will be at risk from the implications of permafrost thaw in the next couple decades.[53] Thawing permafrost has a variety of consequences, including the creation of methane gas-emission craters and also a state of environment which leads to an increase in wildfires.[54] These effects not only have potential to devastate communities, but also contribute to further global warming.

Gas-emission craters first began appearing in Siberia in 2014. Mounds in the soil, known as *bulgunnyakh* by the Yakut People in Siberia, are a layer of frozen ground pushed up by water and methane gas below it.[55] Degrading permafrost can weaken the seal of soil covering the natural gas, building pressure and leading to an explosion, driving large blocks of soil and ice into the air.[56] The warmer temperature of the soil raises the temperature of the methane, which creates a heat-producing reaction.[57] This creates a volatile area with risk of impact from debris. In this process the methane – a potent greenhouse gas – is released into the atmosphere. This sets up a feedback cycle, with the release of methane gas further heating the atmosphere which thaws more permafrost.

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[53] AMAP, "Arctic Climate Change Update 2021: Key Trends and Impacts - Summary for Policy-Makers," May 2021, http://hdl.handle.net/11374/2621.

[54] RAIPON, "Thawing Permafrost - The Arctic, Our Changing Home," Arctic Council, accessed February 6, 2024, https://arctic-council.org/explore/topics/arctic-peoples/our-changing-home/permafrost/.

[55] Richard Gray, "The Mystery of Siberia's Exploding Craters," BBC, November 30, 2020, https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20201130-climate-change-the-mystery-of-siberias-explosive-craters.

[56] Evgeny Chuvilin et al., "Evidence of Gas Emissions from Permafrost in the Russian Arctic," *Geosciences* 10, no. 10 (October 2020): 383, https://doi.org/10.3390/geosciences10100383.

[57] Evgeny Chuvilin et al., "A Gas-Emission Crater in the Erkuta River Valley, Yamal Peninsula: Characteristics and Potential Formation Model," *Geosciences* 10, no. 5 (May 2020): 170, https://doi.org/10.3390/geosciences10050170.

As temperatures warm, the absence of water from the surface level of soil above permafrost causes droughts, which enhances wildfires.[58] "In 2021, Arctic wildfires accounted for a third of the worldwide wildfire CO2 emissions."[59] In the summer of 2021, forest fires in Siberia were more widespread than any other wildfire of the year, with smoke from the forests of Yakutia reaching all the way to the North Pole.[60] This creates a problem when bright, white ice, having a high albedo and reflecting solar energy, is covered by soot and ash. The reflectivity of the snow and ice is compromised, and these dark particles absorb solar energy faster, contributing to faster melting of land ice and sea ice.[61] The soot remains on the ice even after the wildfire event has ended (see Figure 1.)

Figure 1. The ice of a Canadian glacier covered with soot from a nearby wildfire in 2019.[62]

[58] "Arctic connected | Wildfires are devastating the Arctic," WWF Arctic, last modified July 24, 2023. https://www.arcticwwf.org/newsroom/features/arctic-connected-wildfires-are-devastating-the-arctic/.
[59] "Arctic connected | Wildfires are devastating the Arctic," WWF Arctic, accessed February 21, 2024, https://www.arcticwwf.org/newsroom/features/arctic-connected-wildfires-are-devastating-the-arctic/.
[60] NASA and MODIS Land Rapid Response Team, "Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer," Image of the Day - August 7, 2021 - Smoke from Siberian Wildfires, August 7, 2021, https://modis.gsfc.nasa.gov/gallery/individual.php?db_date=2021-08-07.
[61] "Berkeley Lab Quantifies Effect of Soot on Snow and Ice, Supporting Previous Climate Findings | Research UC Berkeley," posted March 5, 2012, https://newscenter.lbl.gov/2012/03/05/snow-albedo/#:~:text=A%20new%20study%20from%20scientists,well%20as%20forest%20fires—reduces
[62] Margot Vore, *Untitled*, 2019, photograph, CBC News, file:///Users/jacob/Zotero/storage/8QDP7NG8/darkening-glaciers-wildfires-melt-rate-1.html

Impact on Indigenous Communities

Permafrost thaw has a global impact, especially due to methane increase, but currently Indigenous communities in the Arctic are most directly impacted.[63] In regards to the environmental change occurring in Arctic lands, Indigenous Peoples "hold an intimate knowledge and connection with the land, waters, and sea ice developed over thousands of years of… use and occupancy of the Arctic."[64] The Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the national Inuit organization in Canada, reports that due to broader societal inequities, Indigenous infrastructure is built to a lower standard than other Arctic infrastructure, making it more vulnerable to damage caused by climate change. Arctic communities also face barriers of low funding and training for construction.[65] Indigenous communities depend on constructing homes and buildings on permafrost. When the upper layer of permafrost melts, the ground of the highland is left deformed and difficult to use. Roads cannot be driven on, houses sink, and towns become isolated.[66] Additionally, the Inuit use permafrost as a natural refrigerator, storing food in underground ice cellars. Cellars are being flooded and food is being ruined.[67] The town of Tuktoyaktuk, an Inuit community in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, reports that "permafrost thaw has endangered the integrity of homes, roads and important cultural sites, as well as the coastal environment."[68] Indigenous way of life is guided around the relationship a community has with ice and the environment, and important cultural traditions are being impacted by permafrost loss.

An additional impact of permafrost thaw is that bacteria and viruses, previously having been frozen within the permafrost, are able to be released, exposing humans and animals to pathogens

[63] "If You're Not Thinking about the Climate Impacts of Thawing Permafrost, (Here's Why) You Should Be | UN News," January 30, 2022, https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/01/1110722.
[64] "Inuit Call for the Tools Needed to Protect the Arctic," created November 1-12, 2021. https://iccalaska.org/wp-icc/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/20211028-en-ICC-COP26-Position-Paper.pdf.
[65] "ITK Climate Change Strategy," 2019, https://www.itk.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/ITK_Climate-Change-Strategy_English.pdf.
[66] RAIPON, "Thawing Permafrost - The Arctic, Our Changing Home."
[67] Ibid.
[68] Library of Parliament Resident Publisher (Loprespub), "Global Methane Pledge: Reducing Methane Emissions in Canada," HillNotes, June 9, 2022, https://hillnotes.ca/2022/06/09/global-methane-pledge-reducing-methane-emissions-in-canada/.

such as anthrax. As an example of the potential threat, it was estimated that 2000 reindeer and even one person died in 2016 from anthrax exposure in the Yamal-Nenets territory in Siberia.[69]

Case Study: Infrastructural Concerns of the Permafrost Under the Kangerlussuaq Airport

Infrastructure built on permafrost is at risk of collapse as the frozen soil foundation it is built upon degrades. Dr. Malagi Vallierme shared with our Task Force group about the concerns with the permafrost supporting the Kangerlussuaq International Airport on the west coast of Greenland.[70] In 2019, it was reported by the High North News that the airport was in danger of a shutdown by 2024 due to an unstable foundation.[71] A section of 300 meters (984.25 feet) of the runway has been damaged from permafrost thaw, and it is expected to cost 270 million euros to complete the repair.[72] However, there is no indication that once the repairs are completed, the airport would be protected from future damage due to continued degradation of the permafrost. In part because of the unreliable access to a major airport in this region of western Greenland, three regional airports are being expanded to accommodate larger planes in the towns of Nuuk, Qaqortoq, and Ilulissat, previously being unable to do so. This dilutes the profit that the town Kangerlussuaq receives from the airport into alternative towns.[73] Potentially, the economic boom would be beneficial for these communities, but Kangerlussuaq, a town of only a few hundred people, might be left behind with a declining economy.

[69] Elisa Stella et al., "Permafrost Dynamics and the Risk of Anthrax Transmission: A Modelling Study," *Scientific Reports* 10, no. 1 (October 7, 2020): 16460, https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-020-72440-6.
[70] Magali Vullierme, "Impact of Climate Change on Arctic Indigenous Peoples: The Examples of Permafrost Thaw and Human Security" (Univeristy of Ottawa, January 29, 2024).
[71] From Malte Humpert, "Greenland's Kangerlussuaq Airport to Close For Major Commercial Traffic in 2024 Due to Climate Change," updated January 20 2020, https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/greenlands-kangerlussuaq-airport-close-major-commercial-traffic-2024-due-climate-change.
[72] Páll Finnsson, "The Threat of Permafrost Thaw Is Looming in the Arctic," Nordregio, October 15, 2018, https://nordregio.org/nordregio-magazine/issues/arctic-changes-and-challenges/the-threat-of-permafrost-thaw-is-looming-in-the-arctic/.
[73] "Will Kangerlussuaq Remain an International Airport? | Polarjournal," created February 20, 2023, https://polarjournal.ch/en/2023/02/20/will-kangerlussuaq-remain-an-international-airport/.

Climate Change Impact on Arctic Seas: Losses for Key Arctic Species and Impacts on Indigenous Communities in Relation to Potential Economic Gains

Environmental Impacts

Sea ice is vital to all who live in the region. Functioning as a platform for life and transportation during the cooler months, and year-round where it remains, it is used by all Arctic inhabitants. The Inuit Circumpolar Council expressed that "life in the Arctic is dependent on movement, and that sea ice is integral to this movement."[74] However, the sea ice that so many inhabitants rely on is disappearing, leading to decreased access for hunting. "September Arctic sea ice is now shrinking at a rate of 12.2% per decade, compared to its average extent during the period from 1981 to 2010."[75] Additionally, the sea ice albedo feedback cycle plays a role again; when the white ice melts, the dark ocean water absorbs more solar energy, further warming the region. Environmental impacts of sea ice loss are evident when examining the altered killer whale migration patterns and the habitat loss of the native polar bear.

i. The Killer Whale Invasion of the Arctic

Killer whales (*orcinus orca)* are apex predators. With no threats except for humans, killer whales have historically avoided the cold temperatures of the Arctic winters. Unlike other Arctic whales, killer whales have a dorsal fin, which scrapes the top of sea ice, harming the whale. However, with melting sea ice, they have found new territories in the Arctic receptive to their winter-feeding needs. Marine researchers have observed "the [killer whale's] presence is enough to tip the ecosystem's balance as prey species adjust their behavior."[76] The presence of a killer whale disrupts feeding patterns of other whales. When a native whale, for instance a bowhead whale, senses a killer whale nearby, they will move away from it to avoid danger. Often, they will move further north to cooler temperatures where the predator cannot follow.[77] Killer whales will also insert themselves as predators in an existing food web, preying on the seals, fish, and

[74] ICC Canada, "The Sea Ice Is Our Highway," March 2008, https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/20080423_iccamsa_finalpdfprint.pdf.
[75] NASA, "Arctic Sea Ice Minimum | NASA Global Climate Change," Climate Change: Vital Signs of the Planet, accessed February 9, 2024, https://climate.nasa.gov/vital-signs/arctic-sea-ice.
[76] Rasha Aridi, "As Arctic Sea Ice Retreats, Orcas Are on the Move, Spurring Changes in the Food Chain | Smart News| Smithsonian Magazine," created December 3, 2023, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/orcas-move-in-as-arctic-sea-ice-retreats-spurring-changes-in-the-food-chain-180979163/.
[77] "A Whale Murder Mystery in the Arctic," *University of Washington College of the Environment* (blog), created February 4, 2021, https://environment.uw.edu/news/2021/02/a-whale-murder-mystery-in-the-arctic.

plankton that other predators rely upon.[78] The supply of food cannot keep up with the increased demand. Finally, killer whales live up to their name, preying upon native whales, including bowhead and gray whales.[79] Other than humans, bowhead whales have never had any predators, so it remains to be seen what the long-term implications of an increased killer whale presence are. Experts predict that the changing migration patterns coupled with increased marine traffic has potential to further endanger bowhead whale populations. Although Western scientific research has framed this problem as a recently emerging one, Indigenous Peoples have encountered the fear of killer whales in marine life before. The term *aarlirijuk* means "fear of killer whales" and describes a bowhead whale retreating under ice to where a killer whale cannot follow.[80]

ii. Polar Bears without a Platform

The native apex predator of the Arctic, the polar bear, is also in crisis amongst melting sea ice. As land mammals, polar bears require a foundation to live, hunt, and exist on. Much of their habitat is the sea ice in the Arctic.[81] Since 1986, polar bears have been classified as a species "of special concern" by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada, citing habitat loss, prey availability, and exposure to human activity.[82] Because the polar bear's diet exclusively comes from the sea, they must stay close to the sea ice to have access to their main food source: ringed seals (see figure 2).[83] Ice also plays a vital role during the reproductive process. Mother bears build dens to stay safe during the birth of their cubs, staying in it for months afterward to allow for the new family to build strength.[84] Without the sea ice, polar bears are found on land more often and for longer periods. Compared to the 1990's, polar bears in the

[78]"Killer Whales Lingering in Increasingly Ice-Free Arctic Ocean," *UW News* (blog), created December 3, 2021, https://www.washington.edu/news/2021/12/03/killer-whales-lingering-in-increasingly-ice-free-arctic-ocean/.
[79]NOAA Fisheries, "First Direct Evidence of Killer Whale Predation on Bowhead Whales in the U.S. Pacific Arctic Documented by Scientists | NOAA Fisheries," NOAA, March 1, 2022, Alaska, https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/first-direct-evidence-killer-whale-predation-bowhead-whales-us-pacific-arctic."
[80] Corinne Purtill, "Melting Arctic Is a Bonanza for the Ocean's Natural Born Killers," *The New York Times*, December 2, 2021, sec. Science, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/02/science/killer-whales-arctic-ocean.html.
[81] "Canada's Marine Life Atlas- Oceans North," created February 2018, https://www.oceansnorth.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/en-06-canadas-arctic-marine-atlas-chapter-six-marine-mammals.pdf.
[82] "Canada's Marine Life Atlas- Oceans North."
[83] "Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami: Arctic Wildlife," created October 25, 2001, https://www.itk.ca/arctic-wildlife/
[84] Ibid.

2000's spent an approximate month longer on land at a time in which they are usually on ice.[85] This is important because during the months on land, polar bears are reliant on the energy reserves in their bodies. They are not prepared to survive for an extra month without nourishment, and the lack of food is causing further challenges, including lower reproductive rates and declining body conditions.[86]

Figure 2. Polar bears rely on coastal sea ice as a platform to hunt.[87]

Economic Implications

Although there are devastating effects on the environment by the melting sea ice, including increased access for invasive species and greater habitat loss, many in the international arena see the opening summertime waterways in the Arctic as an economic opportunity, in both shipping and tourism. Summertime sea ice in the Arctic has historically prevented large cargo ships from passing through the region, but the significant loss of sea ice extent and thickness in the summers of recent decades has allowed icebreakers to access previously frozen pathways.

Two routes have been examined: the Northwest Passage and the Northern Sea Route. A third route, the Transpolar Sea Route, is also a subject of discussion, but currently is still covered with year-round ice.[88] Opportunists such as international transportation companies claim that the shorter maritime routes offer a chance to improve and streamline international shipping, citing the fact that routes such as the Northern Sea Route can be up to 30-50% shorter than current

[85] Kristin L. Laidre et al., "Interrelated Ecological Impacts of Climate Change on an Apex Predator," *Ecological Applications* 30, no. 4 (2020): e02071, https://doi.org/10.1002/eap.2071.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Madison Stevens, *Untitled*, 2022, photograph, Polar Bears International, https://polarbearsinternational.org/news-media/articles/can-polar-bears-live-on-land
[88] Jan Pawelski, "Arctic Shipping Routes as Alternative to the Suez Canal," *Scientific Journals of the Maritime University of Szczecin* 70, no. 142 (June 30, 2022): 41–51, https://doi.org/10.17402/507.

alternatives.[89] The Northern Sea Route boasted a record 9.7 million tons of cargo passing through its waters in 2017.[90] In 2021, it saw 31 million tons.[91] Experts also call to attention the fact that these Arctic routes offer an alternative from those in the south, avoiding accessibility challenges associated with current routes, such as the Suez Canal. For example, when the Suez Canal was blocked by a large cargo ship for six days in September of 2021, up to seventeen billion United States Dollars were held back from delivery.[92] Issues with dependance on the Suez Canal is not isolated; a current confrontation between the US and the Houthis in the Red Sea furthermore proves reliance on a single canal to connect the East and West can be risky.[93]

Despite the potential opportunities, who owns jurisdiction of these routes is an international concern. Canada claims sovereignty over the Northwest Passage, but on the other hand, the European Union and the United States claim that it falls within international waters. Similarly, Russia has claimed entitlement to the Northern Sea Route, which has been disputed by the United States and other Western powers.[94] On both of these sides, there is concern about the use of these routes. However, a route from Russia to the West is not a goal that the international community seems to be pursuing in the short-term future, especially after enacting international sanctions against Russia following their 2022 invasion of Ukraine.[95]

Additional elements of trade routes are the lack of infrastructure to support potential emergencies and what these routes mean for the opening of Arctic tourism. Severe weather storms in the Arctic can damage or strand ships, restricting communication. In remote areas,

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[89] Björn Gunnarsson and Arild Moe, "Ten Years of International Shipping on the Northern Sea Route: Trends and Challenges," *Arctic Review on Law and Politics* 12 (February 8, 2021): 4–30, https://doi.org/10.23865/arctic.v12.2614.

[90] Rachael Gosnell, "Caution in the High North: The Geopolitical and Economic Challenges of the Arctic Maritime Environment," War on the Rocks, June 25, 2018, https://warontherocks.com/2018/06/caution-in-the-high-north-geopolitical-and-economic-challenges-of-the-arctic-maritime-environment/.

[91] Portnews, "Cargo Transportation on the Seaport in 2020 Increased by 4.7%," Портньюс, January 11, 2021, https://portnews.ru/news/307245/.

[92] Jade Man-yin Lee and Eugene Yin-cheung Wong, "Suez Canal Blockage: An Analysis of Legal Impact, Risks and Liabilities to the Global Supply Chain," ed. P. Khvedelidze, B. Gechbaia, and K. Goletiani, *MATEC Web of Conferences* 339 (2021): 01019, https://doi.org/10.1051/matecconf/202133901019.

[93] Peter Eavis, "Red Sea Attacks Pose Another Threat to Global Economy," *The New York Times*, December 19, 2023, sec. Business, https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/19/business/red-sea-suez-canal-shipping.html.

[94] Gabriella Gricius, "Geopolitical Implications of New Arctic Shipping Lanes," The Arctic Institute - Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, March 18, 2021, https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/geopolitical-implications-arctic-shipping-lanes/.

[95] Eytan Goldstein, "Eclipsed, Again: Russia's Northern Sea Route Will Have to Wait," Harvard International Review, February 24, 2023, https://hir.harvard.edu/eclipsed-again-russias-northern-sea-route-will-have-to-wait/.

there are little-to-no established support networks to respond. The coastal communities, many of whom are Indigenous communities, are not necessarily trained or supported to respond to potential crises that occur with increased shipping traffic, including oil spills that degrade their environment and resources.[96]

Tourism in the Arctic often manifests itself as cruises, which have many of the same impacts as cargo ships: contributing to pollution, habitat degradation, and potential for oil spills.[97] Arctic tourism has increased in recent years across all Arctic states.[98]

Impact on Indigenous Communities

Indigenous Peoples have always hunted for food, and the decline of wildlife harvest have led to increased food insecurity.[99] Inuit hunters report that "formerly safe travel routes [have] become insecure due to a warming climate and melting ice."[100] Increased shipping and those impacts on the environment further lead to the sea providing less and less nourishment for those who need it.

Case Study: The Importance of the Beluga Whale

The beluga whale, also under attack from invasive killer whales, is one of the most important food sources for the Inuit.[101] Not only do Inuit communities eat the meat, but they also burn the oil from the blubber as a heat source, and the bones are used for crafting tools.[102] This vital resource is tracked by Indigenous knowledge of feeding and breeding grounds in addition to migration routes. Inuit hunters know what "time of year beluga forage in their hunting areas" and how to historically access them, but adjustments to traditional migration routes disrupt that.

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[96] Andrey Todorov, "Arctic Shipping: Trends, Challenges and Ways Forward | Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs," August 23, 2023, https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/arctic-shipping-trends-challenges-and-ways-forward.
[97] Gosnell, "Caution in the High North: The Geopolitical and Economic Challenges of the Arctic Maritime Environment."
[98] Patrick T Maher et al., "Arctic Tourism: Realities & Possibilities," 2014, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275945995_Arctic_Tourism_Realities_Possibilities
[99] "ICC: Food Security Across the Arctic," created May 2012, https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/icc_food_security_across_the_arctic_may_2012.pdf
[100] Ibid.
[101] K.J. Lefort et al., "A Review of Canadian Arctic Killer Whale (Orcinus Orca) Ecology," *Canadian Journal of Zoology* 98, no. 4 (April 2020): 245–53, https://doi.org/10.1139/cjz-2019-0207.
[102] "Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami: Arctic Wildlife."

As important as the beluga whale is, their population is under pressure by several factors. Not only have they been introduced to a new predator through the killer whale, but increased shipping in their territory has created an excruciating amount of underwater acoustic noise. Since the sea ice has melted, the increase of ship traffic only adds to the noise under the water. Propellers, engines, and sonar are easily picked up by this species that specializes in echolocation. Anthropogenic noise irritates belugas and drives them away from their migration pathways, preventing them from accessing their feeding grounds and breeding sites.[103] In the Cook Inlet in Alaska, the beluga population has declined from 1300 in the 1970's to less than 300 today, and researchers have linked the decline to a low birth rate.[104] With limited access to their breeding grounds, belugas are unable to sustain their population, causing concern for Indigenous communities who depend on them as a resource.[105]

Policy Recommendations

Sustaining Indigenous Voices in International Organizations Amid Global Economic Change

Concerns with increased shipping in the Arctic are on the horizon. As a self-proclaimed near-Arctic state, China asserts its goal to participate in the development of new trade routes and the emerging tourism industry.[106] China's role in the Arctic remains to be seen, but it would be logical for it to invest in Arctic shipping routes, considering its major export-based economy. Because China holds an observer state position on the Arctic Council, continuing to support Arctic Council workmanship that advances Indigenous priorities for shipping laws is more important than ever. The Arctic has the potential to be at the forefront of the global economy in the near future, and international organizations must respect Indigenous priorities.

[103] Manuel Castellote et al., "Anthropogenic Noise and the Endangered Cook Inlet Beluga Whale, Delphinapterus Leucas: Acoustic Considerations for Management," *Marine Fisheries Review* 80, no. 3 (May 2019): 63–88, https://doi.org/10.7755/MFR.80.3.3.
[104] NOAA Fisheries, "Beluga Whale | NOAA Fisheries," NOAA, updated January 17, 2024, Alaska, https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species/beluga-whale.
[105] K. Breton-Honeyman et al., "Inuit Knowledge of Beluga Whale (Delphinapterus Leucas) Foraging Ecology in Nunavik (Arctic Quebec), Canada," *Canadian Journal of Zoology* 94, no. 10 (October 2016): 713–26, https://doi.org/10.1139/cjz-2015-0259.
[106] The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, "China's Arctic Policy," January 2018, https://english.www.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2018/01/26/content_281476026660336.htm.

Mandating Regulations on the Production of Underwater Acoustic Noise

Currently, the regulations on underwater acoustic noise exist as entirely voluntary practices set by the International Maritime Organization. It has been determined that the ships causing the most harm to marine life are large cargo ships. Most of the guidelines preventing such noise are acknowledged but not implemented, due to their voluntary nature.[107] In order to sustain the Arctic ecosystem, the International Maritime Organization, in partnership with Indigenous groups such as the Inuit Circumpolar Council and nation-state governments, should mandate these regulations. Noise pollution has doubled in the past six years, and there are no signs of it slowing down, especially with the loss of sea ice potentially increasing Arctic travel routes.[108] Recently, the guidelines have been updated, but remain non-compulsory.[109] Further research is required to help restore marine life to its natural patterns, but steps can be immediately taken to conserve it today.

Promoting the ICC to Permanent Consultative Member of the IMO

One step that has recently been taken by the international community is to accept the ICC's 2021 application for provisional consultative status on the UN's International Maritime Organization. Since then, the ICC has used their seat at the table to "[enable] national input and [create] an opportunity for national Inuit interests to be represented."[110] An action that should be promoted is to accept the ICC's application for permanent consultative status in order to advance Indigenous priorities and protect rights in their own territories. Within the IMO, the ICC wishes to implement Indigenous knowledge, create an equitable framework to reduce greenhouse gasses, diminish underwater noise, and protect Indigenous lands from invasive species.[111] These goals have a greater chance of being accomplished with a permanent seat at the IMO's table.

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[107] Malte Humpert, "IMO Updates Guidelines on Noise Pollution, But No Mandatory Rules for the Arctic," updated January 31, 2023, https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/imo-updates-guidelines-noise-pollution-no-mandatory-rules-arctic.
[108] Ibid.
[109] IMO, "Addressing Underwater Noise from Ships - Draft Revised Guidelines Agreed," January 30, 2023, https://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/Pages/WhatsNew-1818.aspx.
[110] "A Victory for Inuit at IMO – Indigenous Knowledge to Be Included to Deal with Underwater Ship Noise Pollution | Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada," January 24, 2022, https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/news/a-victory-for-inuit-at-imo-indigenous-knowledge-to-be-included-to-deal-with-underwater-ship-noise-pollution/.
[111] "International Maritime Organization (IMO) Position Paper | Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada," January 22, 2024, https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/news/international-maritime-organization-imo-position-paper/.

CHAPTER 3

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Resource Extraction in the Arctic: China's Recent Investments in Russia and Greenland

Introduction

From oil and natural gas, to iron ore and uranium, the Arctic holds valuable resources that are increasingly more accessible due to a warming climate and melting sea ice. For many Arctic and non-Arctic States, natural resources are one of the primary incentives that drive interest in Arctic policy. Natural resources throughout the Arctic are strategically important to the relevant actors for several reasons including potential economic advantage, and access to the Arctic region. In fact, Arctic States are in dispute over maritime jurisdiction in the Arctic Ocean and access to the continental shelf, primarily because of the potential for off-shore drilling. International agreements including the United Nation Convention on the Law and the Sea (UNCLOS) have established what is referred to as the Exclusive Economic Zone from 12 to 200 nautical miles off the coast.[112] Although UNCLOS has helped alleviate disputes over access to Arctic resources, conflicts still arise, including but not limited to the disagreement between the United States and Canada regarding the international maritime boundary in the Beaufort Sea. Such disagreements are of priority for the relevant actors because of potential resource extraction within their boundaries.

Non-Arctic States like China are also increasingly interested in accessing natural resources in the Arctic. The UNCLOS notes that "The Area and its resources are the common heritage of mankind", referring to the Arctic Ocean beyond the continental shelf and outside an Arctic States jurisdiction.[113] China's Arctic Policy leans into this by acknowledging the sovereignty of Arctic States and also emphasizing the rights China has to the Area in regard to resource extraction. China asserts the Arctic as the Northern Extreme Region- a term that implies that the Arctic is a "Global Commons", a view not shared by Arctic States or Indigenous

[112] United Nations: Ocean and Laws of the Sea. "United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 Overview and Full Text," July 21, 2023.
[113] Ibid.

Peoples. The section of China's Arctic Policy on the Utilization of Resources states China will "respect the laws of the Arctic States, and proceed in a sustainable way on the condition of properly protecting the eco-environment of the Arctic and respecting the interests and concerns of the Indigenous Peoples in the region".[114] As a non-Arctic state, China often partners with Arctic States like Russia to insert themselves in resource extraction projects.

In a region as vulnerable as the Arctic, resource extraction can have substantial impacts on the surrounding environment. Increased commercial activity, as well as contamination and pollution in and around project sites have negative impacts on the native flora and fauna. Indigenous communities often depend on hunting and fishing, and the health of their communities are closely intertwined with the health and wellbeing of their environment. Foodstuffs and other consumables are substantially more expensive in northern communities because of high transportation costs. Since food security is already an issue for Arctic Indigenous communities, threats to their local food supplied by hunting and fishing have an even greater impact. In addition to the indirect effects on local populations, many resource extraction projects directly impact the physical health, economic stability, and cultural wellbeing of communities.

The following chapter will explore China's involvement in resource extraction in the Arctic thus far, and how extraction projects are impacting Indigenous communities. To do so, I will explore two cases of China's involvement in Arctic resource extraction including Novatek's Yamal Liquified Natural Gas (LNG) Project located in northwestern Russia, and the Kvanefjeld rare earths project in southern Greenland. For each case, I will evaluate the impact that the projects have on the surrounding environment and Indigenous communities, as well as the geopolitical implications of China's involvement.

Yamal LNG Project, Russia

The Yamal Liquefied Natural Gas Project is one of several large extraction projects located on Yamal Peninsula in northwestern Siberia. The project is primarily owned by the Russian company Novatek with a 50.1 percent stake, in addition to Total Energies France, and the China National Petroleum Corporation, both with 20 percent stakes, and finally the Silk Road

[114] The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China. 2018. "China's Arctic Policy." The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China. Xinhua News Agency. https://english.www.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2018/01/26/content_281476026660336.htm

Fund, a Chinese government investment fund that holds a 9.9 percent stake in the project.[115] The project began the first phase of operations in 2017, and will supply the European and Asian markets with 16.5 million tonnes per annum.

The Indigenous population native to the Yamal Peninsula are the Nenets people, semi-nomadic reindeer herders. In the Yamal District, there are an estimated 5,000 Indigenous reindeer herders owning 60% of the reindeer population in the region.[116] From a source of food, to clothes and shelter, Nenets are significantly dependent on reindeer for their way of life. Furthermore, reindeer are reliant on access to healthy grazing pastures. Ultimately, the health and stability of Nenets and their environment are closely intertwined. Along with rapid changes in the ecosystem due to climate change, the exploitation of resources in the Arctic is significantly threatening the native reindeer herding grounds of the Nenets people. As Laura Henry highlights in her study *Reindeer, Oil and Climate Change*, Nenets people do not officially own their land, which the reindeer herd graze and travel through, it is owned by the state. Nonetheless it is important to the culture and history of Nenets, and vital for their herds. As extraction projects continue to grow in size and numbers across Siberia, their infrastructure is cutting into historical grazing lands for reindeer, and restricting their migration patterns. "Not to be on my land any longer feels as though I have lost my home. Here we have a very respectful attitude toward the land... The oil company comes and as a result, a piece of land is taken away" said a nomadic herder from Krasnoe reflecting on the impact of resource extraction.[117]

A projected impact assessment of the Yamal LNG project was produced by Environ in 2014 that particularly highlights the environmental and social impacts of the extraction. Part of the assessment was a potential impact on the environment, including assessing the air quality and the pollutants produced by the construction and operations of the project. Although assessed as low impact and negligible, the report did note that "The primary potential vegetation impacts are associated with nitrogen deposition on lichen. Lichen are of particular importance in the region as a source of food for reindeer, and lichen pastures in the Yamal district are known to be

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[115] "About the Project." Yamal LNG, 2015. http://yamallng.ru/en/project/about/.

[116] Schwalbe, Daria. Rep. *The Yamal LNG Project and the Nenets Reindeer Nomads*. GegenStrömung - CounterCurrent, n.d. https://multinationales.org/IMG/pdf/yamal_lng_project_report_schwalbe_final_web.pdf .

[117] Henry, Laura, Maria Tysiachniouk, and Svetlana Tulaeva. Rep. *Reindeer, Oil and Climate Change: Pressures on the Nenets Indigenous People in the Russian Arctic*, n.d. https://www.ucis.pitt.edu/nceeer/2013_827-06_Henry_2.pdf.

particularly sensitive due to overgrazing by reindeer".[118] This is one of many examples of how the report failed to acknowledge the presence of nomadic Indigenous People in the project zone and how important and interconnected Indigenous communities are to the environment.

The Social Assessment portion of the Environ evaluation better identified the impacts of the Yamal LNG on Indigenous people. Approximately 56 families or 280 people use land within the Licensed Area for migration and reindeer herding, and greater numbers temporarily migrate through the land.[119] The assessment covers several categories of impacts on local populations, primarily the community health, safety and security, land use, economy and employment, population influx, and cultural heritage. Below is a collection of the top four areas of social impacts on Indigenous communities by the Yamal LNG.[120]

1. Community health, safety and security: risk of conflict, increases possibility of diseases, increased access to drugs and alcohol
2. Land use: physical loss of land for reindeer herding, displacement of reindeer into new and neighboring pasture and subsequent overgrazing of pastures
3. Economy and employment: priority access to employment (grazing areas are at capacity and unemployment is rising in Indigenous communities), access to health and education facilities
4. Cultural heritage: loss and damage to sacred heritage sites, mitigation of construction around the Salyangylnato 1 site

The most notable impact is regarding land use for Nenets people. The report states that "the construction of linear facilities, including the airport runway, the network of above-ground gas gathering pipelines and intra-field roads, does have the potential to limit access to reindeer pasture lands (and also freshwater fishing areas and cultural heritage sites)".[121] In order to mitigate the effects, Environ suggests that in coordination with Indigenous communities crossing points are agreed upon and constructed over linear facilities and over pipelines for the passage of people, ski-doos, and reindeer. The reality of these crossing points in similar resource extraction

[118] Hancox, Jonathon, and Ivan Senchenya. "Environmental and Social Impact Assessment: Concise Description of the Assessment Results ." Environ, October 2014. http://yamallng.ru/upload/NTS%20Issue%202%20ENG%20IS%20clean%20v2.pdf
[119] Henry, Laura. *Reindeer, Oil and Climate Change.*
[120] Ibid.
[121] Ibid.

projects were illustrated in Henry's conversations with Indigenous community leaders who state "Near Karnataka, there are eight pipes all going parallel to one another. Each pipeline has crossings for reindeer in different places. For the deer, passage is impossible. A large territory for reindeer is lost because of that situation".[122] Other crossing points were too spread out and difficult to find, and more still had arches that were too short for reindeer to pass under. Infrastructure like crossing points for reindeer are a step in the right direction in mitigating the disruptive effects of resource extraction projects on Indigenous communities, however it requires conversation with communities to understand what systems are most effective, in addition to the commitment of financial resources to implement them. There is currently a disconnect between the companies intentions to accommodate Indigenous groups and the environment, and the functionality of their efforts.

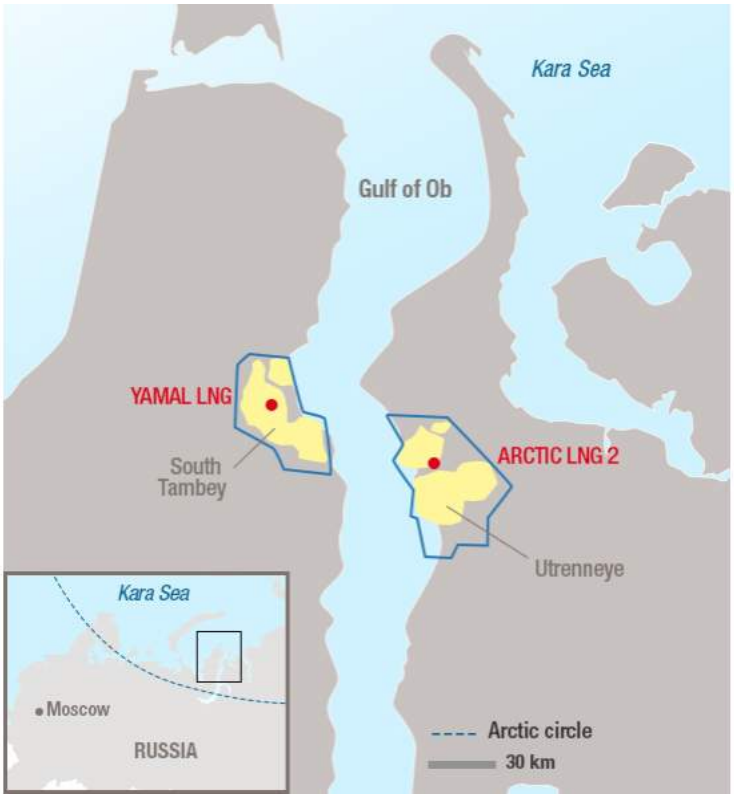

Figure 2. Map of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, demonstrating the proximity of Novatek's Yamal LNG and Arctic LNG 2[123]

[122] Schwalbe, Daria. Rep. *The Yamal LNG Project*.
[123] Infrastructural synergy of the Northern Sea Route in the International Context - Scientific Figure on ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Yamal-LNG-and-Arctic-LNG-2-projects-18_fig3_330648496 Accessed 26 Feb, 2024

Yamal LNG is one of three large resource extraction projects operated by Novatek. The most recent is known as Arctic LNG 2.[124] Located directly across the Gulf of Ob, in the Gydan Peninsula, the project is still under construction according to Novatek. Arctic LNG 2 is particularly relevant to the conversation about China's involvement in resource extraction. With the current geopolitical situation including the war in Ukraine and subsequently Finland's acceptance into NATO, Russia is increasingly isolated, both politically and economically. Facing various sanctions, Russia no longer has the same access to western markets and technology it had several years ago. China has taken this opportunity to fill the gap. After American company Banker Hughes refused to deliver enough gas turbines for the Arctic LNG 2, the Chinese Harbin Guanghan Gas Turbine Company made an agreement with Novatek to supply the remaining 16 gas turbines.[125] Arctic LNG 2 serves as an example of how China as a non-Arctic state is able to partner with Russia in order to gain a foothold in Arctic activity. Similarly, China's involvement in the Kvanefjeld Project is another example of its strategic use of resource extraction projects.

Kvanefjeld Project, Greenland

The Kvanefjeld Project, located on the southern tip of Greenland, is a rare earth elements (REE) mining project that consists of several mining sites, as well as a concentrator and a refinery. The project is primarily owned by Australian based company Greenland Mineral and Energy of Energy Transition Minerals, and was developed with the state owned China Nonferrous Metal Mining (NFC) until 2016 when it was announced that Chinese rare earth mining company Shenghe Resources Holding Co Ltd had gained a 12.5% interest in Greenland Mineral and Energy, making Shenghe the largest shareholder.[126] Greenland, and sites like Kvanefjeld, serve as case studies of Chinese foreign policy in the Arctic.

In "Chinese Mining in Greenland: Arctic Access or Access to Minerals?", an article in the *Arctic Yearbook,* authors Anderson et. al. argue that Chinese strategic interests in Greenland's extraction projects differ depending on the type of resource and the actors involved in the project. In the case of Kvanefjeld, large state entities like Multipurpose Utilization of

[124] "Business : Project Arctic LNG 2: Arctic LNG 2." PAO Novatek Business : Project Arctic LNG 2 | Arctic LNG 2. Accessed February 9, 2024. https://www.novatek.ru/en/business/arctic-lng/.
[125] Humpert, Malte. "China To Supply Key Turbines to Novatek's Arctic LNG 2." *High North News*, May 22, 2023.
[126] Anderson, Patrik, et al. "Chinese Mining in Greenland: Arctic Access or Access to Minerals?" *Arctic Yearbook*, Accessed 11 Feb. 2024.

Mineral Resources of China Geological Survey have a smaller stake in the Shenghe company at 14%, therefore giving Shenghe more autonomy in overseas operations in comparison to larger state owned companies like NFC.[127] Anderson also claims that Kvanefjeld attracted Chinese involvement specifically because of access to rare earth minerals, while zinc projects in Greenland like the Citronen Fjord project are likely about Arctic access and a strategic geopolitical investment.

Figure 3. The Urani Naamik (No to Uranium Society) protests the Kvanefjeld project [128]

Despite Kvanefjeld being of lesser geopolitical importance to China, it still plays a significant role in China's REE monopoly, which as of 2015 produces 90% of the world's supply.[129] In his article "Part of the Master Plan? Chinese Investment in Rare Earth Mining in Greenland" Jesper Zeuthen explains how China attempted to use their monopoly to ban REE exports to Japan in retaliation of a conflict, but the industry was too fragmented to control leading to the abolition of REE quotas. As a result, among Danish authorities "fear of Chinese dominance over REE has led to fear that China would try to buy itself into controlling new projects outside of China in order to prevent these from diminishing Chinese control of REE".[130] However, Zeuthen explains that there is no evidence that China is using Kvanefjeld for "any

[127] Ibid
[128] Josefsen, Leif, 2017. Protesters of Kvanefjeld Project. Photograph. Rastof. https://raastof.ve.dk/kvanefjeld/.
[129] Zeuthen, Jesper. "Part of the Master Plan? Chinese Investment in Rare Earth Mining in Greenland." *Arctic Yearbook 2017*, 2017.
[130] Ibid.

master plan; indeed the policies of limiting the production of REE and encouraging investment in the Arctic appear contradicting. Had the strategic priority of REE from Greenland been higher, attracting investors with more direct links to the central state, such as NFC, would have been more likely".[131] Ultimately, the Kvanefjeld Project may not be reason to fear China's advancing geopolitical goals in the Arctic, however it still serves as an example of the significant impact of resource extraction projects on Indigenous Peoples.

Kvanefjeld, like Yamal LNG, would have a significant impact on the surrounding environment and local communities. The project site is five kilometers from the town of Narsaq, home to 1300 Inuit, and it lies near Kujaata, a UNESCO World Heritage site.[132] In 2021, the United Nations Special Rapporteur submitted a mandate to the Government of Greenland demanding action be taken to protect the rights of those living in proximity to the Kvanefjeld Project. The mandate was critical of the Environmental Impact Assessment of Kvanefjeld for being unreliable and downplaying the impacts of the project, which include potential gaseous emissions, artificial light, increased noise, and effects on the health of local peoples due to open-pit mining of radioactive materials. Subsequently, access to subsistence fishing, sheep farming, and tourism activities like kayaking will be limited by the project's pollution, cutting into the livelihoods of local communities.[133] A 2021 study showed that sixty three percent of Greenland's population was in opposition of the Kvanefjeld project, and furthermore a document calling for a zero tolerance policy on uranium mining citing environmental hazards was signed by 141 environmental organizations in February 2021.[134] The mandate articulates the following rights of local communities regarding the Kvanefjeld project.

> *"Local indigenous Inuit community has the right to free, prior and informed consent, or refusal of consent, regarding the mining activities in its lands. They have the right to determine their development in accordance with their own needs and interests. They have the right to protection of the environment in their traditional lands, territories and resources, including the right to not suffer from the dumping of hazardous or radioactive wastes. They have the right to receive*

[131] Ibid.
[132] Orellana, Marcus, et. al. United Nations mandate to Government in Greenland. April 19, 2021; AL AUS 2/2021 https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownLoadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=26355
[133] Ibid.
[134] Ibid.

> *the information in the EIA report presented to them in their own language and in a culturally appropriate manner, as well as the right to have all of their questions regarding the future project answered. They equally have the right to be informed on what kind of impacts the mining of radioactive elements would produce on their health, their livelihoods, and the entire Greenlandic coastal area."*[135]

The project has faced significant pushback from local communities as well as lawmakers and politicians. As of September of 2023, the Greenland Ministry of Mineral Resources and Justice has rejected the Greenland Mineral and Energy application for an exploitation license on the basis of the 2021 Act banning uranium mining in Greenland.[136] The Act came after a political upset in the 2021 election of democratic-socialist Inuit Ataqatigiit party, in addition to persistent lobbying by environmental and Indigenous organizations, citing violations of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.[137] The pushback both from Greenlands citizens, as well as recent policy makers against the Kvanefjeld project serves as an example of the value of collaboration between state and non-state actors in protecting Indigenous Peoples and the environment from the increased commercial activity in a warming Arctic.

Conclusion

Ultimately, China's role in the cases discussed above suggest that China is more motivated by the economic advantages of the resource extraction projects, than the opportunity to advance their role in Arctic affairs. Chinese companies are currently taking advantage of Russia's increasing isolation due to the war in Ukraine, and the gaps in industry that Chinese companies are conveniently able to fill, like the gas turbines for Arctic LNG 2. Simultaneously, recent Chinese investment in Kvanefjeld is evident of Chinese desire for greater control over the rare earth elements industry rather than proof of a greater Arctic initiative. That being said, the cases examined in this chapter are perhaps a snapshot of the wider picture but may not be representative of China's motivation with all current Arctic extraction projects or future projects.

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[135] Ibid.

[136] Iannucci, Esmarie. "Final Verdict for Kvanefjeld." *Creamer Media's Mining Weekly* , 12 Sept. 2023, www.miningweekly.com/article/final-verdict-for-kvanefjeld-2023-09-12.

[137] Henriques, Irene, and Steffen Böhm. "The perils of ecologically unequal exchange: Contesting rare-earth mining in Greenland." *Journal of Cleaner Production*, vol. 349, May 2022, p. 131378, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2022.131378.

Resource extraction serves both as an important aspect of Chinese involvement in the Arctic and their geopolitical interests, as well as evidence of the impact of commercial endeavors on Indigenous Peoples in a warming Arctic. As temperatures in the Arctic continue to rise, resource extraction will become more and more accessible in the Area and international waters. Groups like the International Maritime Organization (IMO) will play an important role incorporating non-Arctic States like China in conversations about resource extraction and exploitation. In order to understand the best way to protect the environment and Native Peoples from the negative impacts of resource extraction projects, Indigenous Organizations must have a seat at the table to advocate for their needs. Furthermore, they must maintain a substantial role in all decisions regarding Arctic policy, because as resource extraction demonstrates, they are impacted by any and all Arctic activity. Simultaneously, all actors in the Arctic must hold each other accountable and work together to preserve and protect the fragile Arctic ecosystem. The biggest concern specifically regarding China's role in resource extraction, is that as a non-Arctic state taking up space in Arctic conversations they will dilute the voices of Indigenous Peoples in the Arctic. The relationship between Russia and China is especially concerning, as demonstrated by the Arctic LNG 2 Project, together the two states are capable of constructing and operating large scale resource extraction projects without the supplies and assistance of western states.

Resource extraction undoubtedly has a negative impact on Indigenous communities and incorporating Indigenous voices and priorities to determine the best course of action on a case by case basis to minimize or eliminate the impacts of extraction projects on communities is vital. Incorporating Indigenous knowledge into impact assessments will help create a more tailored, and accurate picture of the baseline environment and how it will be affected. As a model, in Nunavut, the incorporation of Inuit Qaujimaningit, or Inuit knowledge, in the impact assessment process has been essential because "overlooking such knowledge can result in inadequate baseline data, challenges in linking ecological and social change to project actions, as well as a lack of local trust and confidence in the decision-making process".[138] The continuation and increase of resource extraction is inevitable, and there is no blanket solution. That being said, it

[138] Peletz, Nicole, Kevin Hanna, and Bram Noble. "The Central Role of Inuit Qaujimaningit in Nunavut's Impact Assessment Process." *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal* 38, no. 5 (September 2, 2020): 412–26. https://doi.org/10.1080/14615517.2020.1786763.

is important that projects continue to follow national and international guidelines regarding environmental impacts.

Policy Recommendations

The case studies above are valuable in identifying the nuanced impacts of resource extraction in the Arctic. Effective policy must address the dangers that resource extraction poses to local communities and the environment, and manage the relationship between state actors, non-state actors including Indigenous communities.

- Arctic and non-Arctic states must raise Indigenous voices in conversations around resource extraction and environmental justice, and Arctic states in particular must stand with, and protect their Indigenous Peoples.
- Impact Assessments of extraction projects must be produced in collaboration with local communities and with the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge, including Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit.
- All information regarding resource exploration and extraction projects, including thorough and accurate Impact Assessments must be made accessible to all relevant actors, most importantly Indigenous Peoples.
- There must be significant efforts to mitigate the social and environmental impacts of exploration and extraction projects in the Arctic, and such efforts must be in close consultation with local communities.

SECTION II:

Indigenous Self-Determination

The second section explores the topic of Indigenous self-governance. Chapter 4 emphasizes the need to include Indigenous representation when addressing sovereignty disputes, using the dispute between the US and Canada over the Northwest Passage as an example. Chapter 5 discusses the importance of understanding the history and current state of Inuit self-governance, analyzing the case of Nunavik.

CHAPTER 4

OLIVIA MYHRE

Law, Societies and Justice and English – International Relations and Human Rights minors

"Nothing About Us, Without Us": Indigenous Voices in International Governance with the Canadian Inuit and the Dispute over the Northwest Passage

Introduction

There is a famous French political cartoon from 1898 that shows the leaders of the most prominent contemporary imperialist countries, England, Germany, Russia, France, and Japan, with knives dividing up the territory of Qing China, represented as a pie, while the Emperor protests in the background.[139] The illustration was published to illustrate the imperialist scramble of those nations for China. 130 years later, the pie on the table has changed, the players have changed, but the scramble amongst nations remains the same. The Arctic drew international attention as a security issue during the Cold War, being the shortest path between the US and Russia. In recent years the Arctic has increasingly been the source of international interest due to the potential benefits found there.

The Arctic holds 22% of the world's oil and natural gas as well as abundant fishing reserves.[140] As climate change melts the summertime sea ice that covers Arctic waterways, shipping routes become more accessible, which means decreased shipping times and costs. States across the world are noticing and looking towards the Arctic. As an example of this interest, in just the past decade, the Arctic Council has doubled its number of observer states.[141] Waiting around the table for their slice of Arctic pie are the eight Arctic nations, the permanent members of the Arctic Council: Canada, Denmark (through Greenland), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States. Behind them are the observer states, including China, now a conquering power in their own right, and ready to carve out their own Arctic arena. All of the land disputes in the Arctic have been settled amongst the Arctic nation states, what remains to be

[139] "Imperialism Cartoon, 1898" Facing History & Ourselves, November 30, 2018. https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/imperialism-cartoon-1898.
[140] Council on Foreign Relations. "Arctic Governance: Challenges and Opportunities." Accessed February 22, 2024. https://www.cfr.org/report/arctic-governance.
[141] Arctic Council. "The History of the Arctic Council." Accessed February 22, 2024. https://arctic-council.org/about/timeline/.

fully settled is sovereignty over the sea ice and waters. Nations are waiting with sharpened knives, maps, and flags ready to be planted at the bottom of the Arctic Ocean if necessary to get their slice of the Arctic pie.

Excluded from both scenarios are the Arctic Indigenous Peoples, ready to contribute and give their free, prior, and informed consent to discussions that affect them. Indigenous people make up roughly 10% of the four million people that live in the Arctic and their historical lands hold a special significance for them that has historically been ignored or disregarded.[142] They have been forced to watch as their sacred territory has been divided amongst nations without regard to its Indigenous inhabitants. The Arctic Council, revolutionary for its Indigenous representation in international governance, exists in the region but its functions are limited. The Arctic Council elevates the voices of Indigenous organizations representing tribal groups in the Arctic. Indigenous organizations are given the status of permanent participants and given power almost equal to that of the member states. In no other international governing body do Indigenous groups have this level of relative power.[143] However, the powers of Indigenous organizations on the Council have their limits. For instance, formal decision making resides only with the member states. Furthermore, the Arctic Council explicitly lacks jurisdiction over issues of military security, and it is a consensus organization without enforcement powers, making it wholly unable to settle disputes of sovereignty.

Looking more internationally, the Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations merely instructs states to settle disputes of sovereignty "in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered".[144] The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) does not consider Indigenous voices in its guides for settling marine sovereignty disputes. In fact, it does not mention the rights of coastal Indigenous groups even once. There is no template for how international sovereignty disputes ought to be resolved while incorporating or respecting Indigenous perspectives and priorities. This allows for the rights of Indigenous peoples to be involved in such sovereignty discussions to be overlooked. With global warming

[142] Arctic Centre University of Lapland. "Arctic Indigenous Peoples." Accessed February 22, 2024. https://www.arcticcentre.org/EN/arcticregion/Arctic-Indigenous-Peoples.
[143] Yefimenko, Alona. "A Seat at the Table." Arctic Council, May 10, 2021. https://arctic-council.org/news/a-seat-at-the-table-how-arctic-indigenous-peoples-negotiated-their-permanent-participant-status/.
[144] United Nations. United Nations Charter. Accessed February 22, 2024. https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text.

bringing great change to the Arctic and the traditional homelands of Indigenous Peoples, addressing sovereignty disputes needs to include Indigenous representation.

This paper looks at the sovereignty dispute between the US and Canada over the Northwest Passage to illustrate this. Due to their adjacent geographical location and the subsequent interconnectivity enjoyed between their leaders and citizens, the US and Canada's relationship is one of close and deeply important ties, not merely because of their 8,891 km (5,525 mi) shared border. Nonetheless, the governments have their disagreements. The dispute over the Northwest Passage is long established. Canada claims that under the "Rupert's Land" purchase of 1869, which brought all British possessions not already annexed to another colony by July 31, 1880, under the dominion of Canada, the islands of the Arctic archipelago and the waters amongst them are sovereign Canadian territory.[145] Canada also famously employs the phrase, "historic internal waters," meaning that since before recorded memory, Canada's Inuit population has lived and used the land, ice, and water of the Arctic archipelago.[146] However, the US still fights for international jurisdiction for the strait that passes between these Arctic islands. The Passage is the shortest route between the Alaskan oil fields and the lucrative European and American East Coast markets.[147] This means that as climate change continues to affect Arctic environments and sea ice covers the passage less and less of the year, the Northwest Passage will increasingly become more valuable to American and European markets. This dispute over the Passage can only strain the historically preeminent diplomatic relationship that the US and Canada maintain between each other.

The Inuit in the area can provide some much needed perspective to this conversation, however their voices have been woefully ignored and silenced. In their 2009 Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic, the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) states that,

> *For Inuit living within the states of Russia, Canada, the USA, and Denmark/Greenland, issues of sovereignty and sovereign rights must be examined and assessed in the context of our long history of struggle to gain recognition and respect as an Arctic Indigenous*

[145] Howson, Nicholas C., *Breaking the Ice: The Canadian-American Dispute over the Arctic's Northwest Passage*, Colombia Journal of Transnational Law 26, no. 2, (1988), 347
[146] Ibid., 355
[147] Ibid., 337

people having the right to exercise self-determination over our lives, territories, cultures, and languages.[148]

The ICC, the representative organization for the Inuit on the Arctic Council, makes it clear that matters of Arctic sovereignty are of high priority for the Inuit as the territory is greatly tied to their struggle for rights and recognition on the international stage. Despite this eager investment, the ICC has also expressed that their interest and stake in Arctic sovereignty matters has been neglected, marking a key flaw in Canadian arguments for sovereignty over the Northwest Passage; the arguments lack the Indigenous involvement and subsequent legal force provided by the "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" (UNDRIP) passed the United Nations in 2007. By involving the ICC in their Arctic sovereignty argument, Canada is able to invoke the articles of UNDRIP, making their claim able to be upheld in a court of law. Under the articles of UNDRIP and its own federalist system, Canada should have national sovereignty over the Northwest Passage, as long as it remains under Inuit self government. Involving Indigenous groups in sovereignty discussions like that of the Northwest Passage gives precedent to increased incorporation of Indigenous groups into international governance.

A New Way of Thinking About Sovereignty

In 2012, Senator Charlie Watt commissioned a paper entitled, "Inuit: Canada's Treaty Partners or Free Agents?", for the Senate Liberal Caucus on "Inuit rights to the Arctic and how cooperation with Inuit is essential to Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic".[149] He commissioned the paper from Hutchins Legal Inc., "one of the most respected Canadian firms working in Aboriginal law".[150] In this paper, Hutchins Legal lays out theoretical plans for involving the Inuit in Canada's sovereignty disputes in the Arctic. The authors claim, "Canada's claims to sovereignty over the lands, waters, and ice of the Arctic will be greatly enhanced by working in partnership with Inuit, in particular by implementing the Treaties in order to confirm Canada's claim through Inuit historic title".[151] As global warming continues to alter Arctic ecosystems,

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[148] Inuit Circumpolar Council, *A Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic* (2009), Section 2.1
[149] Hutchins, Peter, Robin Campbell, and Monique Caron, *Inuit: Canada's Treaty Partners or Free Agents? An Argument for an Inuit-Canada Joint Approach to Addressing Sovereignty Disputes in the Arctic*, Hutchins Legal Inc. (October, 2012), iii
[150] "Hutchins Legal Inc.: About." Accessed February 27, 2024. https://www.linkedin.com/company/hutchinslegal/about/.
[151] Hutchins, *Inuit: Canada's Treaty Partners or Free Agents?*., v

opening the way for increased shipping traffic in Arctic waters, questions of international sovereignty must be settled so as not to upset the relative peacefulness of the Arctic Council. Hutchins Legal Inc. posited,

> *Inuit use of the ice and waters within the Area grounds Inuit rights – possibly even sovereign rights – to this portion of the Arctic waters. In fact, Inuit have the best claim to occupancy of the Area, potentially giving Inuit priority rights over its resources and the jurisdiction to insist on environmental protection standards. It would certainly give the Inuit a right to sit at the table and participate in the decisions as to how the Area may be used, including decisions determining when and if there may be resource extraction in these portions of the Arctic Ocean.*[152]

The Inuit's legal claim to the Northwest Passage is grounded in the historical use and cultural significance of the Passage to Inuit culture, for which there is a substantial burden of evidence. However, it was missing the legal backing needed to make the claim realistic. The report was written in 2012, five years after UNDRIP was implemented (notably without the support of Canada), but in the 12 years since, the body of international law has grown. With the implementation of UNDRIP in 2007 (which Canada officially became party to in 2016)[153], the Canadian implementation of the UNDRIP Act in 2021, and the UNDRIP Action Plan for 2023-2028, Inuit claims to the Northwest Passage are no longer theoretical. Mobilizing intersecting rights from UNDRIP backed by publications from the ICC and the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), "The National Voice Of 70,000 Inuit In Canada"[154], a solid case can be made for Canadian national sovereignty over the Northwest Passage through Inuit self-government. In turn, this legal framework could have radical ramifications for the international legal community.

An Intersection of Rights

This proposed case for Canadian sovereignty over the Northwest Passage through Inuit self-government of their historical lands and waters relies on the the enforcement of rights enumerated in the following four articles of UNDRIP:

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[152] Ibid., v

[153] Tim Fontaine. "Canada Now Full Supporter of UN Indigenous Rights Declaration." CBC News, May 10, 2016. https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/canada-adopting-implementing-un-rights-declaration-1.3575272.

[154] Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. "The National Voice for Inuit Communities in the Canadian Arctic." Accessed February 27, 2024. https://www.itk.ca/national-voice-for-communities-in-the-canadian-arctic/.

- Article 3: Right to self-determination,
- Article 6: Right to a nationality,
- Article 26: Right to traditional lands,
- Article 27: Right to participate in decision making.[155]

This section will explore the relevance and significance of each in arguing for Inuit self-government of the Northwest Passage extending to Canadian national sovereignty. It should be noted that as it is of the utmost importance that all arguments about or regarding the Inuit should involve and be driven by the Inuit, all of these rights mentioned have been recognized and asserted by the ICC themselves.

Article 3

"Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development".[156]

The right to self-determination is fundamental and one that has been stripped from Indigenous groups for far too long. The right to self-determination allows the Inuit to organize as they see fit and as best befits their culture instead of being forced to conform to the national Canadian culture. It allows the Inuit to act on the international stage with their own voice and agency. In their 2009 "Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic", the ICC expresses their commitment to growing self-determination. In Section 3.3 the declaration states, "the inextricable linkages between issues of sovereignty and sovereign rights in the Arctic and Inuit self-determination and other rights require states to accept the presence and role of Inuit as partners in the conduct of international relations in the Arctic".[157] The ICC is emphasizing the need for nation states to recognize and respect the independent and unique culture of the Inuit. Only on this basis can honorable negotiations between the Inuit and nation-states take place.

Article 6

"Every Indigenous individual has the right to a nationality".[158]

[155] United Nations (General Assembly). 2007. *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.*
[156] Ibid., Article 3
[157] ICC, *Declaration of Sovereignty in the Arctic*, Section 3.3
[158] UN, *UNDRIP*, Article 6

The right to self-determination does not preclude Indigenous individuals from having a nationality, nor does it preclude them from enjoying the rights and freedoms attached to membership to that nationality (ensured by Article 5 of UNDRIP)[159]. The Inuit span across four countries in the Arctic, Canada, Denmark (Greenland), Russia, and the United States. In the 2009 Declaration, the ICC declares that the Inuit are both citizens of Arctic states and Indigenous citizens of Arctic states.[160] As Canada is an Arctic state, the ICC has declared that the Inuit are citizens of Canada. The Inuit became citizens of Canada officially in 1956.[161] This was reaffirmed in the 1990 Nunavut Settlement Agreement which brought the Inuit government in Nunavut under the federalist jurisdiction of the Canadian government without compromising the Inuit's rights as Canadian citizens.[162] The federalist nature of the Canadian government is key to the argument for Canadian national sovereignty over the Northwest Passage specifically because of the way it will interact with the Inuit's right to their traditional lands.

Article 26

1. *"Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories, and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied, or otherwise used or acquired.*
2. *"Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop, and control the lands, territories, and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.*
3. *"States shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories, and resources. Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions, and land tenure systems of the Indigenous peoples concerned."*[163]

This Article is truly revolutionary because it grants Indigenous peoples the right to their traditional lands, the ramifications of which are still becoming apparent as Indigenous land claims cases have begun to pop up in Canadian courts following the passing of the UNDRIP Act. The ICC asserted and reaffirmed the Inuit's history and indigeneity to the Arctic lands and waters in Section 1 of their Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic.[164] However, legal scholars

[159] UN, *UNDRIP*, Article 5
[160] ICC, *Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic*, Sections 1.6 and 1.7
[161] *An Act to Amend the Canadian Citizenship Act*, Statutes of Canada 1956, c. 6, s. 2
[162] Agreement-in-principle Between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty in Right of Canada, Tungavik Federation of Nunavut and Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1990, 2.8.5
[163] UN, *UNDRIP*, Article 26
[164] ICC, *Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic,* Section 1

will run into a cultural speed bump when discussing Indigenous land claims in the Arctic in general as the ice covering presents a peculiar problem. The Northwest Passage is covered in ice all but three months of the year, during which it is able to be used as an international strait, however, during the other nine months of the year, the Passage is covered in ice, which is just as sacred to Inuit culture as the land. In an interview for the BBC: Earth movie, *Arctic: Our Frozen Planet*, an Inuk elder said, "the ice is Mother Nature's gift, it was meant to be traveled on".[165] UNCLOS does not share the same definition of the ice, nor does UNCLOS mention anything relating to the rights of coastal Indigenous groups. In UNCLOS's current version, the ice is merely a travel hazard, rather than an essential part of life in the Arctic for Northern peoples.[166] Future researchers must consider how UNDRIP will affect UNCLOS in future international land claims agreements and how Indigenous knowledge can be incorporated with equal status. UNCLOS cannot thoughtfully be used to restrict the rights of a coastal Indigenous group in its current state, especially by a state who is not even a party to it.

Article 27

"States shall establish and implement, in conjunction with Indigenous peoples concerned, a fair, independent, impartial, open, and transparent process, giving due recognition to Indigenous people's laws, traditions, customs, and land tenure systems, to recognize and adjudicate the rights of Indigenous people pertaining to their lands, territories, and resources, including those which were traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used. Indigenous people shall have the right to participate in this process."[167]

The principle of "free, prior, and informed consent" (sometimes called FPIC) motivates both this article and the title of this paper, "Nothing About Us, Without Us". The Inuit, like all Indigenous groups, should be involved in decision making processes which affect them. The specifics of how this looks is still being negotiated in national spheres, however the sentiment is clear, "nothing about us, without us". The Inuit have expressed a sincere and ardent interest in being involved in international land claims, "this issue is too important for us to not be involved

[165] *Arctic: Our Frozen Planet*, directed by Rachel Scott (2023; SK Films, BBC Earth), iMax.
[166] United Nations, *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea* (1982), Section 8
[167] UN, UNDRIP, Article 27

in all aspects of the decision making process".[168] The Inuit recognize the significance of sovereignty debates on their lives as they make up most of the population in the Arctic. This ought to be enough for the Inuit to be involved in international land claims discussions, however despite the interest expressed by the ICC, they have not been included to the standard of the Arctic Council,

> *In spite of recognition by the give coastal Arctic states (Norway, Denmark, Canada, USA, and Russia) of the need to use international mechanisms and international law to resolve sovereignty disputes (see 2008 Ilulissat Declaration), these states, in their discussions of Arctic sovereignty, have not referenced existing international instruments that promote and protect the rights of Indigenous peoples. They have also neglected to include Inuit in Arctic sovereignty discussions in a manner comparable to Arctic Council deliberations.*[169]

This is a blatant violation of the Inuit's Article 27 right to participate in discussions that affect them and their land. However, since 2009 when the ICC released their "Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic", the political landscape has changed. Since 2009, Canada has become a party to UNDRIP, passed the UNDRIP Act in 2021, and the UNDRIP Action Plan for 2023-2028. The priorities of the Canadian government are shifting to a more cooperative and inclusive approach to the Arctic and its Indigenous peoples. This cooperation will be key to Canada's Arctic sovereignty claims.

Together, the rights enumerated in these Articles make a solid basis for an Inuit historical title claim to the Northwest Passage. The Inuit are Indigenous to the land, ice, and sea of the Passage.[170] The Inuit have the right to their traditional lands, the Northwest Passage is definitively part of the Inuit traditional homeland.[171] This is a clear case for Inuit ownership of the Northwest Passage under UNDRIP. The ICC has even released two separate statements, the official Declaration in 2009 and another in response to US Senator Mike Pompeo in 2019,

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[168] Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), *Nilliajut 2: Inuit Perspectives on the Northwest Passage, Shipping, and Marine Issues* (Ottawa, Ontario: Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2017), 34
[169] ICC, Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic, Section 2.6
[170] ICC, Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic, Section 1
[171] ITK, *Nilliajut 2*

declaring official sovereignty over their traditional Arctic waters and the Northwest Passage.[172] According to the Doctrine of Discovery, used against Indigenous Peoples across the world to acquire their lands, a declaration of sovereignty and occupancy is all that is needed to legitimize sovereignty.[173] As the representative government for the Inuit in the Nunavut region, through which the Northwest Passage travels, the Nunavut government would likely assume control of the Northwest Passage. The specifics of this can and will be addressed under the Nunavut Devolution Agreement negotiations.[174] However, because the Nunavut government, in negotiations for its existence, entered into a federalist hierarchical relationship with the national government of Canada, technically, national sovereignty over the Northwest Passage passes to the federal government of Canada. This of course is only true with continuing Indigenous management of the land, sea, and ice, through self-government to ensure compliance with the articles of UNDRIP. The Nunavut Devolution Agreement shows Canada's commitment to upholding UNDRIP and the adoption of the UNDRIP Act into Canadian parliamentary law makes it legally defensible in Canadian courts; this creates a system of accountability for the Canadian government in the transition of responsibility to the Nunavut territorial government. Ultimately, sovereignty arguments are about who is responsible for the territory, resources, and people contained in a certain area. It is the most logical and legally justifiable to instill responsibility for the Northwest Passage in the people who live and work within it.

Ramifications and Conclusions

Applying the articles of UNDRIP to Canada's argument for national sovereignty over the Northwest Passage would settle the sovereignty dispute as the US supports the Agreement and has committed to following it.[175] The US would be morally obligated to acknowledge Inuit and Canadian joint sovereignty over the Northwest Passage. By doing so, the US would set a

[172] ICC, Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic; Inuit Circumpolar Council, *Inuit and Canada Share Northwest Passage Sovereignty – ICC Canada President*, May 8, 2019, https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/press-releases/inuit-and-canada-share-northwest-passage-sovereignty-icc-canada-president/

[173] Cornell Law School, "Doctrine of Discovery", April 2022, https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/doctrine_of_discovery#:~:text=The%20doctrine%20of%20discovery%20refers,acquires%20rights%20on%20that%20land.

[174] Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, *Nunavut Devolution*, 18 January 2024, https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1352471770723/1537900871295

[175] U.S. Department of State. "Announcement of U.S. Support for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples." Accessed February 27, 2024. //2009-2017.state.gov/s/srgia/154553.htm.

precedent formally recognizing that Indigenous Peoples, such as the Inuit, have a right to be involved in sovereignty discussions that affect them. This is a priority asserted in the ICC's Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic" which says, "the inextricable linkages between issues of sovereignty and sovereign rights in the Arctic and Inuit self-determination and other rights require states to accept the presence and role of Inuit as partners in the conduct of international relations in the Arctic".[176] The Inuit call on states to accept Indigenous Peoples into the domain of international governance as partners and equals, not just as consultants.

The inclusion of the Inuit in the Northwest Passage dispute would be a touchstone for the future of Indigenous rights on the international stage as it would also set a precedent of including them in international governance with equal force as that of a nation state. The Arctic Council is overall a progressive organization in which Indigenous organizations and nation states bear almost the same status and power. This is not the case in any other international organization, including the United Nations, under which Indigenous organizations are currently classified as having consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council.[177] This should not be the case. To quote Lisa Koperqualuk, the current president of ICC Canada, in a recent interview, "Although we are not a nation-state, we are a people, we are a nation."[178] The ICC is still working on gaining respect for their organization and other Indigenous organizations on the international stage. Their involvement in international organizations like the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and various United Nations Committees opens the door for more Indigenous involvement in international government. This could mean a new era for international governments to adapt to the inclusion of Indigenous organizations. Amending treaties like UNCLOS to recognize Indigenous sovereignty rights is just a starting place for international reform.

Reform must be led by Indigenous organizations like the ICC and nation-states must be willing to listen and grow based on their input. States must be willing to consider the heavier cost that international governance requires of Indigenous organizations in both human and financial capital. Special attention must be paid to the needs of Indigenous organizations attempting to participate in international governance. Therefore, in order to ensure their full and enthusiastic

[176] ICC, *Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic*, Section 3.3
[177] "Leaflet No. 1 - Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations System: An Overview." OHCHR, 2001.
[178] Koperqualuk, Lisa Q., Meeting with Inuit Circumpolar Council-Canada, Ottawa, 2 February 2024.

participation, wealthier nations ought to take on the financial burden of supporting Indigenous organizations in engaging in international governance.[179] States cannot just assume what Indigenous organizations will need, they must actively listen and provide substantive support to truly meet organizational needs. The international community must learn from the past and engage Indigenous groups with the respect they deserve and the deference they are due.

Policy Recommendations

- Canada should divert resources to support Indigenous organizations in the ongoing negotiations and implementations of the UNDRIP Act and Action Plan, and the Nunavut Devolution Agreement – Passing each of these pieces of legislation is a huge victory but it is merely the beginning of the work. There is much to do and Indigenous organizations need to be the guiding force throughout. Canada ought to show their commitment to the principles behind these Acts and Agreements by relieving some of the financial burden faced by the Inuit when negotiating the implementation of each. Canada ought to specifically address military security of the Northwest Passage to assuage the US's historic concerns[180].
- Canada and (preferably) both the ICC and ITK should release a joint statement basing Canadian sovereignty over the Northwest Passage in the rights afforded to the Inuit under UNDRIP – Canada ought to let the joint statement be guided by the Inuit because to put it simply: their rights, their rules.
- Canada ought to propose a partnered committee between nation-states and Indigenous organizations to review UNCLOS and revise it to reflect the sovereignty rights of coastal Indigenous Peoples – An outdated piece of law cannot in good conscience apply to people whose sovereignty rights it restricts by nature of their exclusion. It must be revised to reflect the current state of the international community.

[179] Montoya, Raquel L., Interview with the Washington State Supreme Court Justices, Seattle, 17 January 2024.
[180] Laejeunesse, Adam. "The Gentlemen's Agreement: Sovereignty, Defence, and Canadian-American Diplomacy in the Arctic." In *Breaking Through: Understanding Sovereignty and Security in the Circumpolar Arctic*, by W. Greaves & P. W. Lackenbauer. University of Toronto Press, 2021.

CHAPTER 5

ANOUK ORILLON

Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies

Self-Governance in Nunavik: Community and environmental challenges in Nunavik and how Indigenous self-governance in Quebec's North can support Indigenous-led initiatives

Figure 1. Nunavik-Quebec's Far North[181]

Introduction

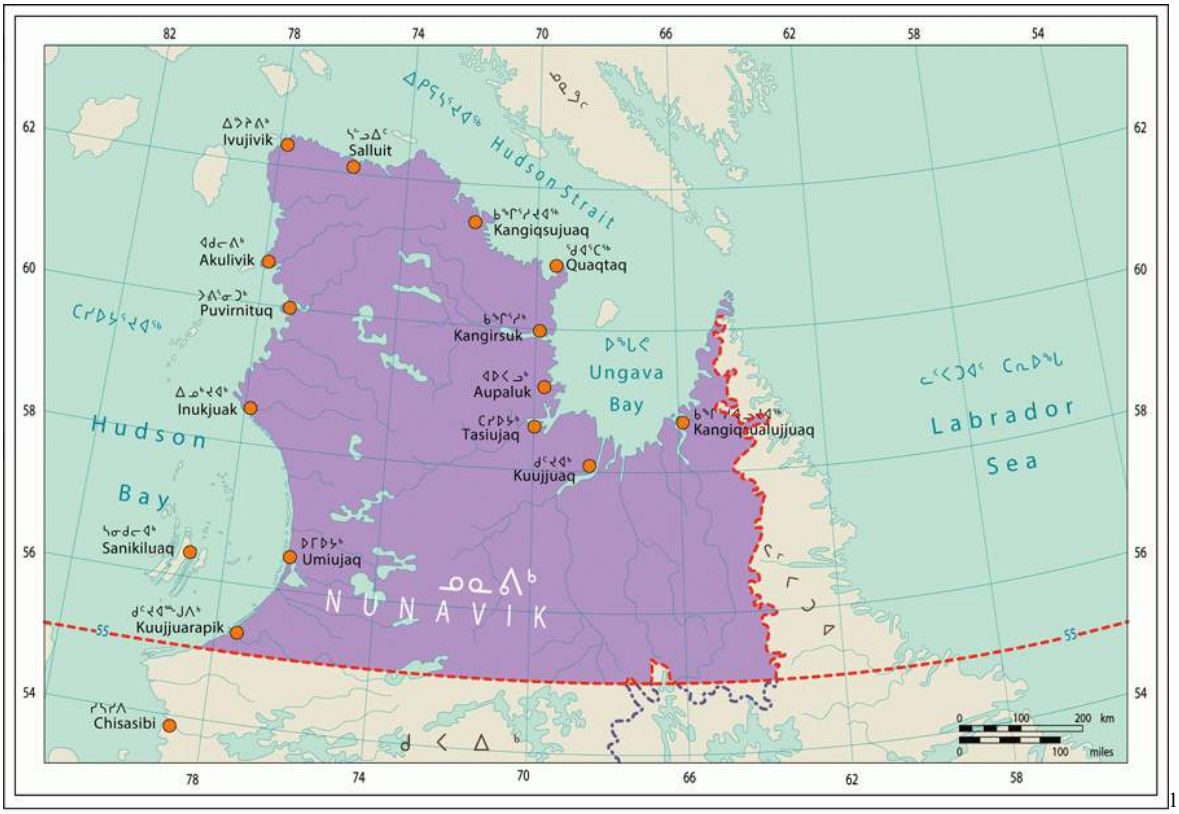
The Canadian Crown and the Northern Regions of Canada have had a complex history. Since the beginning of their presence in Canada, the Crown has instigated colonial violence against the Indigenous communities, whether it is through residential schools, harmful mining practices, or employment opportunities. This history significantly impacts the desire for Indigenous self governance. Self governance has been critical to advancing Indigenous-led priorities and Indigenous management of Arctic lands and waters.

Living in the Arctic is to live in connection with the environment. Many Arctic communities are in remote locations and people rely on the natural resources around them to survive. In addition to hunting and fishing, the Canadian Arctic has significant stores of

[181] Nunavik-Quebec's Far North

diamond, nickel, copper and other precious metals.[182] The resource extraction industry provides money and job opportunities to the region, while also being destructive to the environment and communities.

Given this history and current state of affairs, it is important to understand Inuit self governance. This report uses Nunavik as an example. By strengthening the self-governing bodies of Nunavik, the Canadian government can support how Indigenous priorities advance in the region, and also support the long journey of colonial reconciliation. This report discusses Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas as a positive example.



183

Figure 2. Map of Nunavik, Makivik Corporation

Nunavik is a region in Northern Quebec stretching from the 55° latitude line all the way to the 62° line. The majority of communities in Nunavik are coastal, relying on air and sea

[182] "The Economy of Nunavut." NWRCC. Accessed February 28, 2024. https://www.nwrcc.ca/the-economy-of-nunavut/.
[183] Map of Nunavik, Makivik Corporation,

transportation. About 90% of the population in Nunavik is Inuit. The people in Nunavik are called the Nunavimmiut.[184] The Nunavik region is relatively new to Canada, as it was joined with Quebec in 1912. Previous to 1912, the land belonged to the English Crown, but was not a part of Quebec. Then, the region of Nunavik was ceded to Quebec in the *Quebec Boundaries Expansion Act.* Unfortunately, the majority of Inuit living in Nunavik did not realize this until after the start of larger administration projects in the 1960s. These communities fall under the jurisdiction of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement and Complementary Agreements, which was one of the first comprehensive Inuit Land Claims that came to fruition in 1975.[185] Additionally, it provided legal and political status to the Inuit people in Nunavik. This agreement laid down foundational legislative work for future Inuit organizations. For example, the Makivik Corporation relies on this agreement for legislative support**.** Moreover, after the original agreement, many more regional land agreements followed. The land agreements that followed made Inuit independence and land sovereignty concrete in the Arctic, as well as in the Nunavik region. According to Maud Durand, the following land agreements also all maintained marine components.[186] The land claims agreements also allowed for the different regional organizations to take the form of a 'pseudo' self-governing body, i.e providing different legal, tax or community services.

Nunavik Government

The Nunavik self-governance project was born out of a need for Inuit representation and administration in Nunavik. Like many other colonial powers, Canada is in need of repatriation acts for Indigenous communities and Peoples. By supporting Nunavik self-governance at a federal level, the Canadian government would be opting for a new policy that would shape the future of Inuit Governance in the rest of the Arctic. Importantly, self-governance in Nunavik would promote Indigenous led conservation acts and programs.

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[184] Hordyk, Shawn Renee, Mary Ellen Macdonald, Paul Brassard, Looee Okalik, and Louisa Papigatuk. "No Time to Grieve: Inuit Loss Experiences and Grief Practices in Nunavik, Quebec." *Transcultural Psychiatry* 60, no. 6 (November 7, 2022): 917–28. https://doi.org/10.1177/13634615221135423.

[185] "Reserves in Quebec." The Canadian Encyclopedia, March 20, 2020. https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/reserves-in-quebec.

[186] Durand, Maude. "INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AND CONSERVED AREA: A TOOL FOR MARINE CONSERVATION AND STEPS TOWARDS RECONCILIATION IN THE CANADIAN ARCTIC" , July 2020.

Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement

The Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement (NILCA) was created and written in 2006. One of it's main clauses is "the Nunavik Inuit assert aboriginal rights, title, interests and jurisdiction in and to the Nunavik Inuit Settlement Area"[187], which mapped out the Nunavik Inuit Settlement Area.[188] This agreement provided geographical rights to Inuit in the Nunavik area, however, like the James Bay Agreement it provided no legal protection to self-governance. Although under NILCA there are no legal protections to self-governance specifically, NILCA has many other clauses that protect Indigenous life and priorities. Article 6 of NILCA provides legislative groundwork for land use planning that aims to protect the best interests of the people and the land. As stated in NILCA, "taking into account the interest of all Canadians while devoting special attention to protecting and promoting the existing and future well-being of Nunavik Inuit and Nunavik Inuit lands".[189]

Kativik Regional Government

The creation of the Kativik Regional Government came after the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. The Kativik Regional Government (KRG) is an organization in charge of many different issues in Nunavik.[190] A few of the responsibilities held by the KRG include: economic development at a local level, childcare services, and internet access. Additionally, the Kativik Regional Government is held in power by the *Act Respecting Northern Villages and The Kativik Regional Governmen*t. The *Act Respecting Northern Villages and The Kativik Regional Government* created foundational groundwork for the Kativik Regional Government. The Act provides legislative means for the Kativik Regional Government.[191]

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[187] "NILCA: Marine/Land Use Planning and Project Review Process - CCEK - Comité Consultatif de l'environnement Kativik." CCEK, May 2, 2023. https://keac-ccek.org/en/nilca-land-use-planning-and-impact-assessment/.

[188] Government of Canada; Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada. "Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement." Government of Canada; Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, November 30, 2011. https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1320425236476/1551119558759.

[189] "NILCA: Marine/Land Use Planning and Project Review Process - CCEK - Comité Consultatif de l'environnement Kativik." CCEK, May 2, 2023. https://keac-ccek.org/en/nilca-land-use-planning-and-impact-assessment/.

[190] "Kativik Regional Government ." Kativik Regional Government. 2024. https://www.krg.ca/en-CA/general-information.

[191] "Act Respecting Northern Villages and the Kativik Regional Government." Légis Québec. 2024. https://www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/document/cs/V-6.1?langCont=en#ga:s_1-h1.

What is the Makivik Corporation?

The Makivik Corporation is an Indigenous rights organization that represents all of the Inuit in Nunavik, since its creation in 1978. As of current, the Makivik Corporation has several programs in place to support the Inuit community in Nunavik. The Makivik Corporation works in tandem with the Kativik Regional Government to combat issues in the Nunavik community[192]. Although Self-governance movements across Canada are growing, and while the Nunavik self-governance movement has laid down the framework for future self-governance movements, the road to fully establish self-governing Indigenous communities is difficult. An identifiable threat to Indigenous self-governance is the existence of established institutions. In Katie Tucker's article, the "*Path to Indigenous Self-Governance*", she states that establishing Inuit governance is difficult, as it clashes with already existing institutions. Moreover, she says that, although revolutionary, the NILCA and JBNQA Agreements do not "enshrine self-governance".[193] Without the ability to completely enshrine the rights to self-governance, the Canadian government would need to provide a legislative framework to protect this right to self governance.

Harmful Colonial Practices

British colonialism has left a lasting mark across the world, and notably in Canada. There, colonialism has a violent history with the Indigenous Peoples of Canada and institutions and legislations have caused harm. Many practices caused generational trauma that is still pervasive and have had an effect on the Nunavimmiut, ranging from discrimination in employment, mental health and suicide, health-care, and education.[194] Historical trauma is a more permanent effect of colonialism, as it not only ends when colonial systems collapse, but seeps its way into a society's every crevice, and can be found in family homes to schools to government offices[195]. Statistics reported that Nunavimmiut are "7.5 times more likely to die by

[192] "Nunavik Government." Makivvik, February 24, 2023. https://www.makivvik.ca/nunavik-government/.
[193] Faguy, Yves. National Magazine, June 23, 2023. https://www.nationalmagazine.ca/en-ca/articles/law/in-depth/2023/on-the-path-to-indigenous-self-governance.
[194] Hordyk, Shawn Renee, Mary Ellen Macdonald, Paul Brassard, Looee Okalik, and Louisa Papigatuk. "No Time to Grieve: Inuit Loss Experiences and Grief Practices in Nunavik, Quebec." *Transcultural Psychiatry* 60, no. 6 (November 7, 2022): 917–28. https://doi.org/10.1177/13634615221135423.
[195]Ives, Nicole Lamb, and Wanda Gabriel. "Walking the Decolonization Talk: Reckoning with the Past and Wrestling with the Present to Reimagine the Future of Social Work Education in Nunavik." *American Review of Canadian Studies* 52 (2022). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/02722011.2022.2090046© 2022 ACSUS.

self-inflicted injury" than the rest of the population in Quebec.[196] The Nunavimmiut population is more vulnerable to mental health crises as well as suicide, as there is a lack of mental health aid in the region[197].

However, Canada has taken steps to repair the relationship between Crown and Indigenous peoples, like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was created to provide reconciliation opportunities for those affected by the residential schools.[198] Although it is a small step forward, lasting remnants of colonialism are still felt in Nunavik. For example, non-Inuit fishing practices have harmed the surrounding environment, and have harmed important local economies, systems, and way of life of the local Inuit communities[199].

Challenges in Nunavik

Unemployment and Education

Comparing Nunavik to the province as a whole, the unemployment rate is much higher. Moreover, the education rate in Nunavik is lower, where "80% of students in Quebec graduate from high school, less than one student in five does so in Nunavik"[200]. Like other Northern Canadian communities, the mining industry is one of the area's biggest employers. However, beyond mining and public administration jobs, there is little else in terms of employment in the area. In Nunavik, about 58% of the population does not have a high-school degree, while in Quebec the statistic is at about 13%. This is a huge challenge for Nunavik, as employment that does not require a degree, or only a high school degree, is limited. Both education and unemployment are challenges faced in Nunavik. The Nunavik region relies heavily on fishing and other natural resource extraction industries. As stated in the introduction, the majority of the employment opportunities are in mining and resource extraction. Moreover, these industries do not support Inuit communities in the long term as the extraction practices can be harmful to

[196] Ibid.
[197] Ibid.
[198] Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Government of Canada, September 29, 2022. 2024. https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1450124405592/1529106060525.
[199] Ibid.
[200] Levesque, Sebastien, and Gerard Duhaime. "Nunavik Employment Profile and Trends at a Glance." *Nunivaat Analytics*, 2022. https://www.nunivaat.org/doc/document/2022-05-30-01.pdf?v=1653936262

human life and the environment.[201] While they can provide jobs to the area, they are destructive to the Inuit culture and way of life.

The Abandonment of the Asbestos Hill Mine

The mine called *Asbestos Hill,* located near Purtuniq in Northern Nunavik, was an Asbestos mine operated by the Societe Asbestos Limitee. Despite the remoteness, the mine was successful[202]. The mine employed both Inuit and southern workers and provided employment to the area. The mine also reportedly treated both Inuit and non-Inuit employees the same, and quote "[The Societe Asbestos Limitee] treated us very, very good. They treated us like everybody else".[203] Although the employees were treated well, asbestos mining can be very dangerous and exposes miners to lethal doses of asbestos.[204] The presence of the asbestos mine, or any other mine that extracts precious metals from the earth, is a double edged sword for the region. On one hand, the mining industry provides jobs and aid for the communities, however, on the other hand these practices can also destroy the environment and even the surrounding communities. In Jeanette Carney's research; *Seeking Closure: Legacies of the Asbestos Hill mine in Nunavik,* she states that employees from the Southern region would bring illicit drugs, like cocaine, up to Nunavik.[205] The movement of illicit materials furthered divides in communities as it increased addictions.[206] The closing of the Asbestos Hill mine did not have any immediate effects on the surrounding communities, since many employees were already leaving to move elsewhere. However, the mine still left a lasting impact on individuals later in life. Carney states that "[t]he mine failed to adequately remediate the mine site, leaving behind large tailing ponds, equipment, and other debris". Moreover, little to no remediation has yet to be completed.[207] Additionally, no formal links have been established between the mine and health problems within the affected communities. However, several former Asbestos Hill mine employees have

[201] Carney, Jeanette. "Seeking Closure: Legacies of the Asbestos Hill Mine in Nunavik." *Masters Thesis Report*, 2016. https://www.chairedeveloppementnord.ulaval.ca/sites/chairedeveloppementnord.ulaval.ca/files/final_report_jeanette_carney.pdf
[202] Ibid.
[203] Ibid.
[204] Ibid.
[205] Ibid.
[206] Ibid.
[207] Ibid.

died from cancer, and many believe that their work at the Asbestos Hill mine is related.[208] Additionally, for several years after the closure of the Asbestos Hill mine in the 1980s, scars of the mine could still be seen across the tundra.[209]

Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas

As climate change effects are rapidly increasing around the world, a new idea is starting to take form in Canadian policy: Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas. Like other countries, Canada has environmental goals to preserve the environment and better the future for the next generations. By 2030, Canada aims to preserve 30 percent of the land and sea. Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas is a concept that uses both western and Indigenous conservation philosophy. According to Maud Durand, in their essay, Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas were created to "promote the creation of Inuit-led protected areas while working towards achieving Canada's conservation targets".[210] These protected areas would be led by the Inuit community, and the various projects would be centered on Inuit success, while also focusing on conservation efforts throughout the region. Using Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas would be a useful way for the Canadian government to use Indigenous knowledge on conservation, as the Inuit are the original stewards of the land and region.

Policy Recommendations

- For the disparities within Nunavik, like unemployment and education, Canada must prioritize revitalization in these communities. The Crown must incentivize new ways to increase opportunities for higher education after high school.
- Although mining is recognized as an important part of Nunavik economy, for the environment, it must be re-examined. Mining is destructive to the environment, and as more precious metals are discovered in the Arctic, the Canadian government must continue to work with Nunavik organizations to prioritize Nunavimmiut livelihood. Additionally, proper remediation must follow when a mine is closed. Due to improper

[208]Rogers, Sarah. "Picking Apart the Sordid Back-Story of Nunavik's First Mine." Nunatsiaq News, n.d. https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/65674picking_apart_the_sordid_back-story_of_nunaviks_first_mine/.
[209] Ibid.
[210] Durand, Maude. "INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AND CONSERVED AREA: A TOOL FOR MARINE CONSERVATION AND STEPS TOWARDS RECONCILIATION IN THE CANADIAN ARCTIC" , July 2020.

remediation methods, even after a mine closes, damage can still be done, therefore there must be follow up for proper closing procedures that do not have an impact on the environment. Moreover, if a mine closes, there must be a safety net for the employees that would have to find employment elsewhere.

- As for the environment, the Canadian government should implement the concept of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas. The best outcome would be to provide Indigenous conservation organizations with research equipment, as well as secure funding for extended research projects. By doing so, the Canadian government would be able to not only provide employment and research opportunities to Nunavimmiut, but also allow for Indigenous centered conservation to take place. This would change the current dynamics of research and conservation in the North. It would strengthen Indigenous conservation movements, and be beneficial to the environment and the people.

SECTION III:

The Emerging Presence of China

The third section examines China's increasing role and rising ambitions in the Arctic. Chapter 6 analyzes China's role as an observer state on the Arctic Council. Chapter 7 goes into China's scientific expeditions in the region, and the potential for Chinese Dual-Use Research. Chapter 8 analyzes China's increasing military presence in the Arctic, and its partnerships with other Arctic states.

CHAPTER 6

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China: the Observer State

Introduction

The Arctic Council is a leader of cooperation in the Arctic, where their innovative structure and work is creating opportunities for Arctic states and Indigenous organizations to implement policy and priorities in the region.[211] While Arctic Council nation states and Arctic Council permanent participants are overseeing the jurisdictions and international laws on the lands surrounding the Arctic ocean, non-Arctic nation states are also interested in the laws governing the Arctic. Non-Arctic nation states can apply for membership as an observer state on the Arctic Council.

Observer states are those who are not in the Arctic territory but have interest in the work of the Arctic Council, as well as creating opportunities for international networking with Arctic nation states. Observer states can sit in on Arctic Council meetings and follow the work done on the Council. Observer states contribute to Council work through their interactive engagements with Working Groups.[212] At the discretion of the Council Chair, observer states may be invited to make suggestions after the Arctic states and permanent participants have publicized statements in Arctic Council meetings. This creates opportunities for engagement with international actors who are interested in the Arctic, especially as the Arctic environment continues to change into the future. To become an observer state on the Arctic Council it is important to:

- Be accepting and supportive of the goals of the organization,
- Recognize the sovereignty and rights of Arctic nation states and Indigenous Peoples,
- Recognize the legal framework of the Arctic Ocean, respecting values and traditions of the Arctic Indigenous Peoples and other Arctic inhabitants,
- Demonstrate political willingness and financial ability to work within Arctic Council Working Groups,

[211] "The Arctic Council." *Arctic Council*, arctic-council.org/. Accessed Jan. 2024.
[212] "Arctic Council Observers." *Arctic Council*, arctic-council.org/about/observers/. Accessed 8 Jan. 2024.

- Express what are the interests in the Arctic and have relevant work of the Arctic Council.

Overall, Council work is about cooperation. To date there are 38 observer states on the Arctic Council. This includes the People's Republic of China, a powerful state that was accepted as an observer state in 2013.

Figure 1. Observer State's delegates, among them is China, in an Arctic Council meeting in 2018 during the time that China had released its new policies related to the Arctic Council.[213]

China's acceptance into the Arctic Council was greatly debated at the time among the participants and state members of the Arctic Council, asking questions about their intentions and if they were in accordance with the Arctic Council's principles and socio-political, economic and environmental goals. Prior to joining the Council, China's interest in the Arctic was expressed in 1999 when Beijing was the first to organize an expedition in the Arctic and then again had two

[213] McGwin, Kevin. "The Week Ahead: An Observer Is as an Observer Does." ArcticToday, May 6, 2018. https://www.arctictoday.com/week-ahead-observer-observer/.

other expeditions in 2003 and 2008. Council membership was approved in 2013[214], but at this time there was a growing concern by Arctic states that China had "radical views", for example statements made in Chinese media that "no country has sovereignty in the Arctic". Furthermore, the People's Republic of China had fed into this concern because until 2018 there was not a clear Arctic policy paper that helped outsiders to understand China's intentions and future ambitions in the Arctic.[215]

Figure 2. This is the Chinese ice breaker called Xuelong, which arrived in December 2018 in the Arctic after China's expression of their intentions in the Arctic[216].

[214] Filimonova, Nadezhda, Anastassia Obydenkova, and Vinicius G. Rodrigues Vieira. 2023. "Geopolitical and Economic Interests in Environmental Governance: Explaining Observer State Status in the Arctic Council." *Climatic Change* 176 (5). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands: 50-. doi:10.1007/s10584-023-03490-8.
[215] Sun, Kai. "Beyond the Dragon and the Panda: Understanding China's Engagement in the Arctic." *Asia Policy*, no. 18 (2014): 46–51. http://www.jstor.org/stable/24905275.
[216] (ABC News, May 2019. https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/pentagon-warns-chinas-increased-activity-arctic-growing-ambition/story?id=62803073.

China's acceptance into the Arctic Council as an Arctic observer state creates an opening for a great power to have access to the Arctic region. This comes at a time when there is geopolitical interest in new shipping routes and resource extraction.[217] And, as China's role in the Arctic can continue to grow and invest in ambitions like the "Polar Silk Road".[218] As part of Arctic activities, there is also an opportunity for China to make financial investments in the Arctic. However, working in the Arctic requires working with the priorities of Arctic Indigenous Peoples and also working on Arctic environmental issues.

Countries like China have the opportunity to contribute to Council work on issues such as air pollution, with a focus on short-lived climate forcers (SLCFS) as a way to combat the SLCFs that can cause environmental damage. Arctic Council Working Groups create an opportunity to contribute to work that supports a more sustainable and livable environment.[219] In addition, Arctic Council work on Arctic biodiversity can support goals to address currently declining numbers of species, and through that work try to increase biodiversity in order to achieve food security for the inhabitants of the Arctic.[220] This work follows the key principles to "...understand, protect, develop, and participate in the governance of the Arctic."[221]

While the People's Republic of China has public involvement in these projects through Council Working Groups, there is a discreet atmosphere about their work with Indigenous groups. This leads Arctic nation states to be suspicious of China and their interests to be suspicious of China and their interests. For example, Indigenous groups in the Arctic are only mentioned 7 times as opposed to words such as "research" repeated about 46 times in China's Arctic Policy Report from 2018.[222] China's research development may benefit others in the

[217] Matthew P. Funaiole, Brian Hart. "Frozen Frontiers." *China's Great Power Ambitions in the Polar Regions*, 18 Apr. 2023, features.csis.org/hiddenreach/china-polar-research-facility/.
[218] Evan Oddleifson, Tom Alton. "China in the Canadian Arctic: Context, Issues, and Considerations for 2021 and Beyond." China Institute, January 14, 2021. https://www.ualberta.ca/china-institute/research/analysis-briefs/2021/arctic_analysis_brief.html.
[219] "Air Pollution, with a Focus on Short-Lived Climate Forcers (SLCFs)." *Arctic Council*, arctic-council.org/projects/air-pollution-with-a-focus-on-short-lived-climate-forcers-slcfs/. Accessed Jan. 2024.
[220] "Biodiversity: Awareness and Knowledge." *Arctic Council*, Arctic Council, 8 Oct. 2020, arctic-council.org/news/biodiversity-awareness-has-increased-as-has-our-knowledge/.
[221] Hong, Nong. *China's Role in the Arctic : Observing and Being Observed*. Abingdon, Oxon ; Routledge, 2020. doi:10.4324/9780429328138.
[222] Hong, Nong. *China's Role in the Arctic : Observing and Being Observed*. Abingdon, Oxon ; Routledge, 2020. doi:10.4324/9780429328138.

Arctic, but that needs to be set up carefully in order for social and environmental priorities to be met.[223]

China is interested in economic development, and there are indications that they seek to work with Indigenous groups in mining in places where they may have access to opportunities. An example, the Hope Bay gold mine is a place where China wants to buy the mine for its natural resources but also to create an economic development for the Indigenous groups living in the nunavut area.[224] "Without the deal with SD Gold, the mine may simply close down operations, which would be a loss to Nunavut workers, businesses, Inuit organizations and governments."[225] However, China has not built an opportunity with Nunavut and Canada sees this as a national security risk if they have China takeover the mine.[226]

Another case is the Doris North gold mine in western Nunavut, Canada that has suffered financially after the pandemic. Due to the labor shortage in the mines, Indigenous Peoples in this region started to take up other types of occupations, like hunting.[227] Given these challenges, it is acknowledged that China has an opportunity, and the economic strength, to make these mines viable again. It also creates an opportunity to work with the Nunavut community. However, a large power like China may still seem a threat to Canada. Even so, Nunavut does see an opportunity for employment and needed economic development to support the lives of people living in communities that may benefit from mining.[228]

China as an observer state, and in its position as an economic power, allow them to pursue buying mines such as the Doris North gold mine. If this were to occur, it would create a

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[223] Hong, Nong. *China's Role in the Arctic : Observing and Being Observed*. Abingdon, Oxon ; Routledge, 2020. doi:10.4324/9780429328138.

[224] Nunatsiaq News. "China's Interest in Western Nunavut Gold Mine Is Commercial: Legal Expert." *Nunatsiaq News*, 13 May 2020, nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/chinas-interest-in-western-nunavut-gold-mine-is-commercial-legal-expert/.

[225] Nunatsiaq News. "China's Interest in Western Nunavut Gold Mine Is Commercial: Legal Expert." *Nunatsiaq News*, 13 May 2020, nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/chinas-interest-in-western-nunavut-gold-mine-is-commercial-legal-expert/.

[226] Gaignard, Joaquim. "China, Circumpolar Indigenous People and the Colonial Past of the Arctic." *The Arctic Institute - Center for Circumpolar Security Studies*, 22 Jan. 2024, www.thearcticinstitute.org/china-circumpolar-indigenous-people-colonial-past-arctic/.

[227] Horlick S, Chatwood S. Exploring community perspectives on the impacts of COVID-19 on food security and food sovereignty in Nunavut communities. Scandinavian Journal of Public Health. 2023;51(7):1027-1032. doi:10.1177/14034948221139005

[228] Horlick, Sidney, and Susan Chatwood. "Exploring Community Perspectives on the Impacts of COVID-19 on Food Security and Food Sovereignty in Nunavut Communities." *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health* 51, no. 7 (2023): 1027–32. doi:10.1177/14034948221139005.

relationship between Indigenous groups and China, which is something that we have not seen yet. Negotiations are still pending due to various points of consideration by the Canadian government.

Figure 3. This is a photograph of the Hope Bay Gold mine being pursued by the People's Republic of China.[229]

Another case outside of Canada is the Kvanefjeld mining project in Greenland, where there are the largest resources of rare earth elements. These elements are needed for the "green energy" transition and is a sector of mining where China has a lot of control.[230] China's interest

[229] "Hope Bay Gold Mine, Nunavut." Mining Technology, November 1, 2020. https://www.mining-technology.com/projects/hope-bay-gold-mine-nunavut/.
[230] Kalvig, Per, and Hans Lucht. "No Green Future without China: GREENLAND'S MINERALS TO CONSOLIDATE CHINA'S RARE EARTH DOMINANCE?" Danish Institute for International Studies, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep30270.

in rare earth elements is increasing. “China is making great efforts to maintain this economically important position, and it classifies the REE industry and related exports as strategic.”[231] While this mining project is considered an economic revenue project for the People’s Republic of China, it is important to recognize that Naalakkersuisut (Greenland’s government) accepted the operations by the Chinese mining industry due to the continuation of need for domestic natural resource extractions. The mining operation contributed to an increase in public revenue as well as local employment for the communities living in the area.[232] The mine was strategic for China, but it also led to a new relationship with people living in Nuuk, Greenland. In addition to economic development, opportunities for training and education became available. However, it can also create conflict with Greenland due to what the possibility of China could mean to the country and to the Nuuk’s community. China entering the Arctic for resource extraction may become a threat to Greenlandic national security.

Figure 4. This is a photograph that shows the Kvanefjeld mining in Greenland.[233]

[231] Kalvig, Per, and Hans Lucht. “No Green Future without China: GREENLAND’S MINERALS TO CONSOLIDATE CHINA’S RARE EARTH DOMINANCE?” Danish Institute for International Studies, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep30270.
[232] Volpe, Marco. “The Tortuous Path of China’s Win-Win Strategy in Greenland.” *The Arctic Institute - Center for Circumpolar Security Studies*, 17 Jan. 2024, www.thearcticinstitute.org/tortuous-path-china-win-win-strategy-greenland/.
[233] McGwin, Kevin. “A Controversial Greenland Mine Passes a Key Regulatory Hurdle, and Heads for Public Comment.” ArcticToday, September 24, 2020. https://www.arctictoday.com/a-controversial-greenland-mining-project-has-passed-a-key-regulatory-hurdle-and-heads-for-public-comment/.

In summary, China continues to work in the Arctic, both as an observer state but also through activities that engage with Indigenous communities.[234] Mining industries are an example of activities that may bridge opportunities for collaboration between Indigenous groups and China. While it is not yet obvious that the outcomes of these collaborations would be positive, and nation states may continue to see China's economic investments as a national security threat, there are examples in the mining industry where China is pursuing this collaboration. China's growing power in the world cannot be seen only for economic gain, as it creates a growing challenge of power dynamics in the world.

Policy Recommendations

- A recommendation would be to acknowledge the responsibility that China agreed to in their relationship with Indigenous groups, as it was outlined in their application and approval of becoming an Observer State.
    - Work with Indigenous groups to meet their priorities and needs. Collaboration can create opportunities to improve lives in communities where non-Arctic nations may want to invest for economic gain, especially in mining.

[234] Britannica, Encyclopaedia. Jan. 2024. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, https://www.britannica.com/place/Arctic-Circle#/media/1/33160/192391. Accessed Feb. 2024.

CHAPTER 7

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China's Arctic Scientific Research

"Science is the first step and bridgehead for China into the Arctic to pursue interests defined by the core interests of the Chinese leadership: political stability, territorial integrity and economic growth. Therefore, China's scientific involvement in the Arctic and other Arctic activities should be seen in the context of these core interests".[235]

Introduction

This chapter examines China's approach to the Arctic through the lens of scientific research. China's interests in the Arctic extend in several different areas: securing access to natural resources and efficient shipping lanes, seeking an understanding of how accelerated global warming in the Arctic will impact its own environment, national security and strategic advantages, and strengthening its position as a world power through international cooperation and involvement in collective governance. In all these matters, scientific research is a powerful tool with which China can build its own capability in the Arctic and establish its prestige in the eyes of other states. Although China also conducts research expeditions to Antarctica, this chapter will focus almost entirely on the Arctic because of the key distinction that the Arctic is a homeland to Indigenous Peoples. Although China's interactions with Arctic Indigenous Peoples and the Participant Organizations that represent them on the Arctic Council are limited thus far, China's presence as a powerful new actor in the Arctic may greatly impact them in the future. In order to understand this dynamic, we must first discuss how China establishes itself among other state actors in the region: through scientific research.

[235] Xing, Li, and Rassmus Gjeddsø Bertelsen. 2021. "The Drivers of Chinese Arctic Interests: Political Stability and Energy and Transportation Security." In *China's Arctic Engagement: Following the Polar Silk Road to Greenland and Russia*, 15–37. NAADSN Engage Series.

Progression of China's Activity and Interest in the Arctic

As an Observer State on the Arctic Council, China already demonstrates an interest in Arctic scientific research. However, the scope of China's engagement in Arctic science is broader than the Council work itself. China has a substantial history of marine scientific research at both poles that serves as the foundation of their ambition in the Arctic today. Drawing from work by the Stockholm International Research Institute, scholars at the Canadian Global Affairs Institute frame the history of China's Arctic activity in four main episodes extending to the present:

1925-2007: Interest and Orientation

The first period covers the gradual but steady increase in China's activity in the Arctic. In 1925, China became a party to the 1920 Treaty Concerning the Archipelago of Spitsbergen, or the Svalbard Treaty.[236] However, it was with the creation of the Office of the National Antarctic Expedition Committee in 1981 that China began to show more direct interest in polar research. China joined the Antarctic Treaty, which protects the continent from militarist activities and emphasizes science, in 1983, launched their first expedition south in 1984, and built their first two bases respectively in 1985 and 1989.[237] Also in 1989, China founded the Polar Research Institute of China (PRIC), which contains the polar science and samples databases and the national polar archives.[238] China rechristened its Office of the National Antarctic Expedition Committee as the Chinese Arctic and Antarctic Administration or CAA, signaling an expansion of interest and capability to both poles. In 1993, China acquired its first icebreaker, a Russian-made model purchased from Ukraine and named Xue Long, or Snow Dragon.[239] Xue Long made its maiden scientific voyage in 1999 and visited the Bering and Chukchi Seas and the Canadian Basin. It made its second voyage in 2003, the same year that China established their first

[236] Millard, Bryan J.R., and P. Whitney Lackenbauer. 2021. "Trojan Dragons? Normalizing China's Presence in the Arctic." Canadian Global Affairs Institute. https://www.cgai.ca/trojan_dragons_normalizing_chinas_presence_in_the_arctic.
[237] Lackenbauer, P. Whitney, Adam Lajeunesse, James Manicom, and Frédéric Lasserre. 2018. *China's Arctic Ambitions and What They Mean for Canada*. University of Calgary Press. https://doi.org/10.11575/PRISM/34634.
[238] UArctic. n.d. "Polar Research Institute of China." UArctic. Accessed February 9, 2024. https://www.uarctic.org/members/member-profiles/non-arctic/.
[239] IASC. n.d. "IASC Organization." International Arctic Science Committee. Accessed February 9, 2024. https://iasc.info/about/organisation.

research outpost in the Arctic, the Arctic Yellow River Station in Ny Ålesund, Svalbard.[240] In 2007, China had its first interaction with the Arctic Council as a guest at a ministerial meeting. Following this meeting, China applied to be an Observer on the Arctic Council in 2007, 2009, and 2011, but it was not granted official status until 2013 because of changes discussed below.[241]

2007-2011: Awakening and Alarm

This time saw a marked shift in China's approach to the Arctic. On one hand, China took part in several initiatives to increase its marine scientific research capability, including construction of its third Antarctic base.[242] In the Arctic, China made two expeditions with the support of a number of international scientists. The second voyage, in 2010, researched changes in ice surfaces in the Bering Sea, Bering Strait, and other regions and was China's most extensive expedition to date.[243] On the other hand, despite a growing capability in scientific research, China's overall stance pivoted to focus more on geopolitical interests and strategic competition in the north. One catalyst for this was the planting of a Russian flag on the North Pole seabed, along with increasing discussion of resource extraction in international media.[244] The creation of the Ilulissat Declaration in 2008, which strongly reiterated the sovereignty of Arctic states and their desire to be the primary decision makers in the Arctic, drove a wedge between states with Arctic coastal areas and states without, which only reinforced Chinese fears of missing out on valuable positioning in the region.

From 2007 to 2009, China carried out a large-scale project, the results of which were never made public, on topics ranging from human society and transportation to diplomacy, and military factors in the Arctic.[245] In 2010, the Ocean University of China opened the Polar Law and Politics Institute, the first Chinese organization explicitly meant for polar social science research.[246] Scholars argued for the government to be assertive in the Arctic even if it meant rejecting governance structures put forth by the Arctic states, and their recommendations were

[240] Lackenbauer et. al. China's Arctic Ambitions
[241] Jacobson, Linda, and Jingchao Peng. 2012. *China's Arctic Aspirations*. SIPRI Policy Paper 34. Solna: Stockholm Intern. Peace Research Inst.
[242] Lackenbauer et. al. China's Arctic Ambitions
[243] Ibid.
[244] Millard and Lackenbauer Trojan Dragons
[245] Ibid.
[246] Lackenbauer et. al. China's Arctic Ambitions

published in leading academic journals and on government news network sites.[247] Since public critique of the government is relatively uncommon in Chinese academic institutions, the fact that scholars were able to have their work approved and published hints at the state's interest in a more willful policy for the Arctic.

This focus on researching strategic importance was the defining feature of this stage in China's Arctic activity, but notably it did not improve China's ability to weigh in on Arctic issues. Instead, it was a key part of why China's applications to become an official Observer on the Arctic Council were deferred in 2007, 2009, and 2011.[248] As a non-Arctic state developing a clear interest in the region's natural resources and geopolitical significance, China made itself out as a threat to Arctic states. This interest also earned China the distrust of Arctic Council Participant Organizations who questioned the country's domestic human rights record and lack of demonstrated engagement with Arctic Indigenous Peoples, which is discussed further in Chapter 9 of this report. Millard and Lackenbauer contend that this phase of China's Arctic activity was a "failed experiment" in resistance of the "established Arctic rulebook" given that starting in 2011, it signaled an acceptance of Arctic states' power and shifted strongly towards portraying climate change science as the main reason for its interest in the region.[249]

2011-2018: Discipline and Control

During this period, China constrained the public messaging of scholars who had previously advocated for urgency of control over natural resources. By building up its commitment to studying climate change science, it aimed to increase influence in the Arctic.[250] Especially after the deferral of China's third bid to join the Arctic Council in 2011, there was a broad awareness of the fact that advancing resource extraction ambitions would undermine any progress in China's position in the Arctic.

Scholar Lu Junyuan of Jiangnan Social University observed that Arctic states tend to use environmental protection as pretext to restrict non-Arctic states from engaging in resource

[247] Millard and Lackenbauer Trojan Dragons
[248] Gaignard, Joaquim. 2022. "China, Circumpolar Indigenous People and the Colonial Past of the Arctic." Colonialism Series 2022. The Arctic Institute. https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/china-circumpolar-indigenous-people-colonial-past-arctic/.
[249] Millard and Lackenbauer Trojan Dragons
[250] Ibid.

development in the region.[251] Arctic states also use environmental concerns to improve their own strategic positioning. For instance, Norway in the 1970s enforced its sovereignty over Svalbard by creating a fisheries protection zone in the 200 nautical mile zone around the island. Under the pretense of "[reconstituting] its fauna and flora" in the region, a power afforded to Norway in the 1920 Spitsbergen Treaty, Norway prevented outside states' access to fishing, mining, and drilling rights without having to declare an exclusive economic zone around the island. This move would have provoked the ire of other states that argued that the treaty entitled them to full access and use of areas within twelve nautical miles.[252] In the context of Arctic states' political use of the environment, China came to view international collaboration on climate change science as the best way to strengthen their ties to the region. Put succinctly by Jacobson and Peng, focusing on climate change allows Chinese scholars to "circumvent the sensitivity of Arctic resources and sovereignty issues, and to calm outsiders' jitters about China as a rising power".[253] Eagerness to cooperate with other states on scientific research also provides China with a way to build trust, reducing the risk that Arctic states, concerned about threats to their sovereignty, would block it from decision-making on Arctic issues.

In 2011, China dropped the phrase "evaluation of polar resource potential" from the National Five-Year Plan's polar section. In 2012, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Law and Treaty department ensured that all discussion of resources was struck from a workshop on possibilities for cooperation between China and Nordic States in the Arctic.[254] 2012 saw the completion of China's fifth scientific expedition to the Arctic, which made geographical surveys, installed meteorological equipment, and measured methane content in the waters of the Northern Sea Route off Russia's northern coast.[255] China became an Observer on the Arctic Council in 2013, a reflection of the political success of its apparent pivot away from resource competition. Perhaps resulting from the 2012 talks, the China-Nordic Research Center was also founded that year.

In 2014, the Xue Long sailed across the Bering Sea and into the Arctic basin north of Canada, China's sixth Arctic expedition. The following expedition in 2016 went to the Bering Sea, Chukchi Sea, and Canada Basin and studied marine meteorology, geology, and chemistry,

[251] Jacobson and Peng China's Arctic Aspirations
[252] Zimmerman, Michael. 2018. "High North and High Stakes: The Svalbard Archipelago Could Be the Epicenter of Rising Tension in the Arctic." *PRISM* 7 (4): 106–23.
[253] Jacobson and Peng China's Arctic Aspirations
[254] Ibid.
[255] Lackenbauer et. al. China's Arctic Ambitions

surveyed ice stations, and put in place observation buoys. The same year, China opened its first overseas satellite receiving station in Kiruna, Sweden.[256] After discussions in 2015, China's State Oceanic Administration also signed an agreement with Greenland to construct a permanent research station north of Denmark's Station Nord and the U.S.'s Thule Air Base, although no further progress has been made in its development.[257] [258] It is important to note that the prominence of climate change science in China's agenda during this phase did not signal the end of China's interest in the Arctic's natural resources. Rather, it demonstrates the important role that scientific research played and continues to play in the strengthening of their position as a non-Arctic state engaged in Arctic affairs.

2018-Present: Confidence and Investment

2018 represented another shift in China's approach to the Arctic, this time back in the direction of assertiveness on issues like sovereignty and resource extraction. Miller and Lackenbauer concluded in their review of China's Arctic engagement that the state was successful in using Xue Long and its research expeditions to normalize its presence in the Arctic.[259] China's scientific research on climate change was instrumental both in providing psychological reassurance to Arctic states and in establishing a technical foundation for goals like mapping future commercial shipping routes and evaluating resource potential.[260]

China launched Xue Long 2, its first domestically built polar icebreaker. With an operational range of about 20,000 nautical miles, room for a crew of 90 people, and the ability to break through up to 1.5 meters of ice, the ship is meant to deploy in the Arctic and Antarctic and greatly "boost China's polar research and expedition capabilities".[261] In the same year, the China-Iceland Arctic Science Observatory opened, China's second research station after its first in Ny

[256] Ibid.
[257] Martin, Miguel. 2018. "China in Greenland: Mines, Science, and Nods to Independence." *China Brief* 18 (4). https://jamestown.org/program/china@@-greenland-mines-science-nods-independence/.
[258] Dams, Ties, Louise van Schaik, and Adája Stoetman. 2020. "Presence Before Power: China's Arctic Strategy in Iceland and Greenland." Clingendael. https://www.clingendael.org/pub/2020/presence-before-power/.
[259] Millard and Lackenbauer Trojan Dragons
[260] Ibid.
[261] Gady, Franz-Stefan. 2018. "China Launches First Domestically Built Polar Icebreaker." *The Diplomat*, September 11, 2018, sec. Asia Defense. https://thediplomat.com/2018/09/china-launches-first-domestically-built-polar-icebreaker/.

Ålesund.[262] The station, which is built on land owned by an Icelandic non-profit and managed by the PRIC, was at first solely meant for observation and study of geomagnetic storms but now also does research on satellite remote sensing, which has recently brought up concerns about its importance in security matters.[263]

Thanks to several decades of experience with Arctic science, China was able to construct their Polar Silk Road initiative in 2018, which is linked to their growing Belt and Road trade initiative and which aims to connect Asia and Europe through logistics and transportation channels in the Arctic region.[264] The polar regions were mentioned in China's 14th Five Year Plan, published in 2021, in the context of deepening participation in "international ocean governance mechanisms" and "blue partnerships" and engaging in "pragmatic cooperation in the Arctic".[265]

At the subnational level, China's coastal regions have also emphasized connections to Arctic technology, research, and infrastructure in their Five Year Plans. Heilongjiang province has named the design of nuclear-powered icebreakers, equipment for polar underwater operations, and development of search and rescue capabilities as priority projects. The city of Qingdao in Shandong province has positioned itself as a maritime gateway for Arctic activities and is home to fabrication yards associated with the Yamal Liquefied Natural Gas project. The Ocean University of China and First Institute of Oceanography in Qingdao have both published extensive polar research.[266] In 2021, Sun Yat-Sen University in Guangdong province was the nation's first to acquire and operate its own polar research vessel, named Zhong Shan Da Xue Ji Di, which is China's third icebreaker after Xue Long 1 and Xue Long 2.[267]

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[262] The Arctic Institute. 2022. "China." Country Backgrounders. August 1, 2022. https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/country-backgrounders/china/.

[263] Dams, van Schaik, Stoetman Presence Before Power

[264] Sharma, Anu. 2021. "China's Polar Silk Road: Implications for the Arctic Region." *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs*, Arctic Strategy Special Issue, 4 (7): 67–86.

[265] Xinhua News Agency. 2021. "Outline of the People's Republic of China 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development and Long-Range Objectives for 2035." Edited by Ben Murphy. Translated by Etcetera Language Group Inc. Center for Security and Emerging Technology. https://cset.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/t0284_14th_Five_Year_Plan_EN.pdf.

[266] Eiterjord, Trym. 2023. "The Arctic in China's Subnational 14th Five-Year Plans." China Series 2023. The Arctic Institute. https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/arctic-chinas-subnational-14th-five-year-plans/.

[267] Deng, Xiaoci, and Juecheng Zhao. 2023. "China's Polar Icebreaker Conducts Sea Trials, to Boost Country's Research Capability in Polar Studies - Global Times." *Global Times*, February 7, 2023. https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202302/1284995.shtml.

Like the most recent National Five Year Plan, China's 2018 Arctic Policy White Paper alludes to economic motivations and a strong interest in upholding international governance mechanisms, particularly the Spitsbergen Treaty and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. However, the most extensively discussed topic in the paper –which represents China's most official articulation of its goals for the region– is its goal of understanding and responding to climate change through the expansion and improvement of its scientific research capabilities. China outlines its intentions for the Arctic in its 2018 White Paper by pledging the following:

- "To understand the Arctic, China will improve the capacity and capability in scientific research on the Arctic, pursue a deeper understanding and knowledge of the Arctic science, and explore the natural laws behind its changes and development, so as to create favorable conditions for mankind to better protect, develop, and govern the Arctic;
- To protect the Arctic, China will actively respond to climate change in the Arctic, protect its unique natural environment and ecological system, promote its own climatic, environmental and ecological resilience, and respect its diverse social culture and the historical traditions of the indigenous peoples;
- To develop the Arctic, China will improve the capacity and capability in using applied Arctic technology, strengthen technological innovation, environmental protection, resource utilization, and development of shipping routes in the Arctic, and contribute to the economic and social development of the Arctic, improve the living conditions of the local people and strive for common development;
- And to participate in governance of the Arctic, China will participate in regulating and managing the affairs and activities relating to the Arctic on the basis of rules and mechanisms".[268]

Actionable goals highlighted in the White Paper are as follows:

- "Improve capacity in Arctic expedition and research;
- Strengthen the construction, maintenance and functions of research stations, vessels and other supporting platforms in the Arctic;
- Promote the building of icebreakers for scientific purposes;
- Advance research in the fields of natural science, climate change and ecological environment;
- Accelerate the development of basic subjects such as physics, chemistry, life science and earth science;
- Strengthen social science research including Arctic politics, economy, law, society, history, culture and management of Arctic activities;
- Strengthen personnel training and public awareness of the Arctic;
- Train professionals specialized in natural and social sciences on the Arctic;
- Build science popularization and education centers;

[268] The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China. 2018. "China's Arctic Policy." The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China. Xinhua News Agency. https://english.www.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2018/01/26/content_281476026660336.htm.

- Publish cultural products on the Arctic to improve public knowledge;
- Encourage the development of environment-friendly polar technical equipment;
- Actively participate in the building of infrastructure for Arctic development;
- Push for the upgrade of equipment in the fields of deep sea exploration, ice zone prospecting, and atmosphere and biology observation;
- And promote technology innovation in Arctic oil and gas drilling and exploitation, renewable energy development, navigation and monitoring in ice zones, and construction of new-type icebreakers".[269]

When compared to other states and institutions, it is clear that China has made itself a robust presence in the field of Arctic research. The following data shows that Chinese research has significantly increased since 2016, making it the fourth-most active state in publishing after the Arctic states America, Russia, and Canada, and that the Chinese Academy of Sciences is one of the impactful institutions based on citations by field:

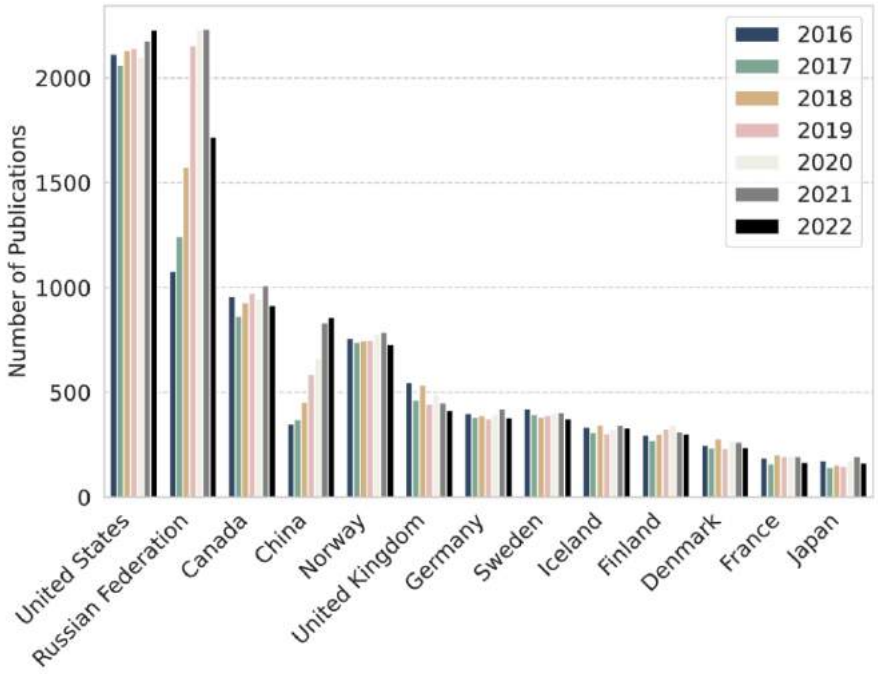

Figure 1. China Comes in Fourth for Total Arctic Scientific Publications by Country From 2016-2022.[270]

[269] Ibid.

[270] Aksnes, Dag W., Christopher Blöcker, Cristian Colliander, and Lena Maria Nilsson. 2023. "Arctic Research Trends: Bibliometrics 2016-2022." Zenodo. https://doi.org/10.5281/ZENODO.7961982.

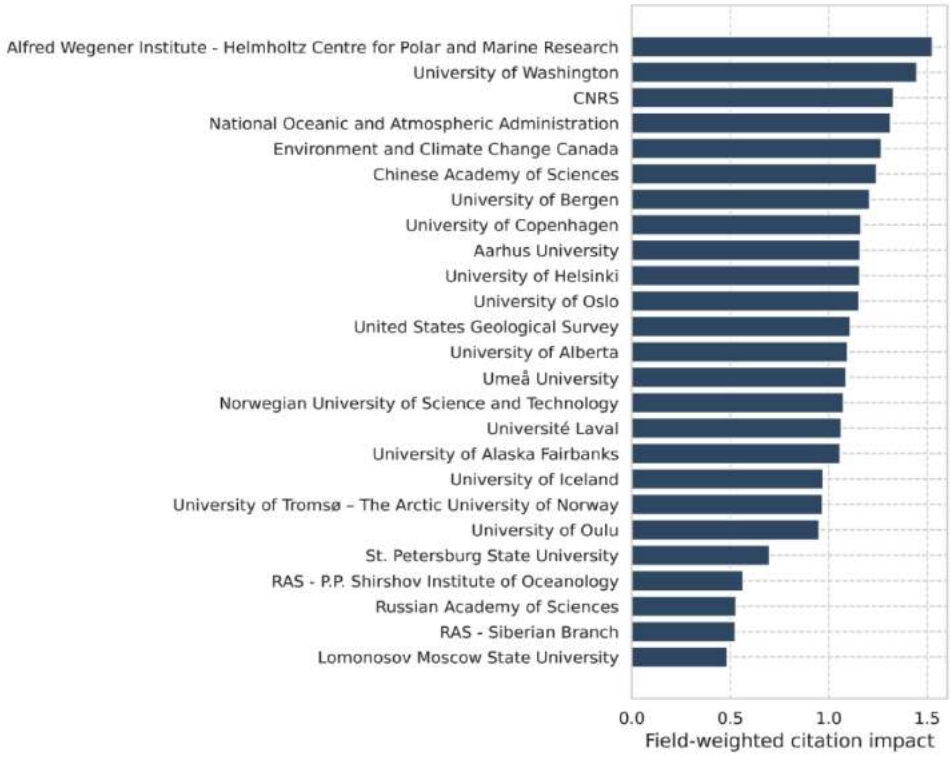

Figure 2: The Chinese Academy of Sciences Comes Sixth in Field-Weighted Citation Impact of the Largest Arctic Research Institutions.[271]

China has significantly expanded its ranks of polar experts and research centers; it refurbished its polar institute in Shanghai, adding a new campus and roughly 800 additional scientists.[272] In early 2024, the confidence that China has acquired in Arctic matters is firmly rooted in its extensive polar research, demonstrating the continued importance of scientific research in relation to diplomacy and strategy.

Climate Concerns: Impact of Arctic Sea Ice Loss on China's Environment

Although there is reason to believe that China's focus on Arctic research is politically motivated, there are also concrete justifications for the state to invest in Arctic climate change research. Chinese Arctic specialists argue that China should be considered an "Arctic stakeholder" or "near-Arctic state" because environmental changes in the Arctic also impact

[271] Ibid.
[272] Lackenbauer et. al. China's Arctic Ambitions

China's ecosystems, which then in turn affect economic development, food security, and general quality of life.[273] Ongoing research seeks to determine the extent of these impacts and whether they may be positive or negative in relation to crop yields and extreme weather events, and how these impacts may change over time.

As the Arctic warms, the temperature difference between northern and middle latitudes is lower and this causes global winds to reduce in speed, a condition that contributes to changes in weather patterns and extreme weather events in the lower-to-mid latitudes.[274] One study found that in China, this resulted in the extension of the growing season in some regions, a northward shift of the area suitable for crop growing, and increased yields; however, it also brought more intense and frequent drought, heavy rainfall, high temperature, and extreme cold, which compromised food production.[275] Overall, when there is more Arctic sea ice in the summer and fall, Chinese crop yield increases the following growing season and vice versa.[276] At least one documented weather-related disaster in China can be connected to anomalous Arctic sea-ice change. During summer and fall of 2007, there was a significant decrease of sea ice in the East Siberian, Northern Chukchi, Western Beaufort, Barents, and Kara seas.[277] The lack of ice changed atmospheric circulation patterns that generated strong flows of cold air from the Arctic and an increased amount of moisture flowing through the air. Together, these conditions brought heavy snowfall and freezing rain to Southern China in January of 2008, disrupting daily life and causing significant economic losses.[278]

It is increasingly agreed that the Arctic is warming at a disproportionate rate compared to the rest of the planet –a concept sometimes referred to as "Arctic amplification"– and that changes to the Arctic environment have far-reaching implications for the rest of the world.[279]

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[273] Jacobson and Peng China's Arctic Aspirations

[274] Moon, Woosok, Baek-Min Kim, Gun-Hwan Yang, and John S. Wettlaufer. 2022. "Wavier Jet Streams Driven by Zonally Asymmetric Surface Thermal Forcing." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 119 (38): e2200890119. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2200890119.

[275] Chen, Di, and Qizhen Sun. 2024. "Impact of Rapid Arctic Sea Ice Decline on China's Crop Yield under Global Warming." *Environment, Development and Sustainability* 26 (1): 1263–80. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-022-02757-x.

[276] Ibid. 1263-80

[277] Chen, Hongxia, na Liu, and Zhanhai Zhang. 2013. "Severe Winter Weather as a Response to the Lowest Arctic Sea-Ice Anomalies." *Acta Oceanologica Sinica* 32 (October): 11–15. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13131-013-0360-y.

[278] Ibid. 11-15

[279] Rantanen, Mika, Alexey Yu Karpechko, Antti Lipponen, Kalle Nordling, Otto Hyvärinen, Kimmo Ruosteenoja, Timo Vihma, and Ari Laaksonen. 2022. "The Arctic Has Warmed Nearly Four Times Faster than the Globe since 1979." *Communications Earth & Environment* 3 (1): 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1038/s43247-022-00498-3.

While China's interest in Arctic scientific research is validated by their exposure to the effects of Arctic climate change, it must also be acknowledged that research can and often does serve multiple purposes.

Potential for Chinese Dual-Use Research in the Arctic

Research that "generates knowledge, information, technologies, and/or products that could be utilized for both benevolent and harmful purposes" that include consequences to the environment, military materials and equipment, and national security, is defined in United States government policy and regulated as "dual use research".[280] There is a separate categorization of "born classified" for research pertaining to weapons systems and nuclear technologies.[281]

U.S. attention to dual-use research extends to concern about China's research activity, particularly given that the Chinese government employs the national strategy of "Military-Civil Fusion" with the goal of eliminating "barriers between China's civilian research and commercial sectors, and its military and defense industrial sectors".[282] China has been explicit about the dual function of their research vessels, stating during the 2023 commissioning of the ship Shiyan 06, which was sent from the navy hub Guangzhou on an expedition in the eastern Indian Ocean, that it would "provide strong scientific and technological support for homeland security".[283] [284] An analysis of China's research activity outlines the relevance of oceanographic data collected in the Indian ocean for submarine operations: "Safely navigating submarines requires thorough knowledge of complex undersea conditions. Changes in subsurface topography, currents, thermoclines, salinity, and other factors have major impacts on how submarines navigate their surroundings. Civilian oceanographic research helps to arm the PLA Navy with critical data, enhancing its capability to safely deploy in distant waters".[285]

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[280] "United States Government Policy for Institutional Oversight of Life Sciences Dual Use Research of Concern." 2014. United States Government. https://www.phe.gov/s3/dualuse/Documents/durc-policy.pdf.
[281] Oltmann, Shannon. 2015. "Dual Use Research: Investigation Across Multiple Science Disciplines." *Science and Engineering Ethics* 21 (2): 327–41. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-014-9535-y.
[282] "Military-Civil Fusion and the People's Republic of China." 2020. U.S. Department of State. https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/What-is-MCF-One-Pager.pdf.
[283] *China Global Television Network*. 2023. "China's Shiyan 6 Research Ship Sets Sail for Expedition in Indian Ocean," September 11, 2023. https://news.cgtn.com/news/2023-09-11/China-s-Shiyan-6-research-ship-sails-for-expedition-in-Indian-Ocean-1n0zYHpBtNC/index.html.
[284] Funaiole, Matthew P., Brian Hart, and Aidan Powers-Riggs. 2024. "Surveying the Seas: China's Dual-Use Research Operations in the Indian Ocean." Center for Strategic & International Studies | Hidden Reach. January 10, 2024. https://features.csis.org/hiddenreach/china-indian-ocean-research-vessels.
[285] Ibid.

Military-civil fusion has been extensively documented in the Indian Ocean, an area of economic and strategic significance for China, but the Arctic shares these attributes and the potential for dual-use research as well. The Xiang Yang Hong class of survey ships are outfitted with hulls originally built for the People's Liberation Army Navy and transferred to civilian ownership, and while Xiang Yang Hong 06 completed survey missions in the Indian Ocean, Xiang Yang Hong 01 was used for the CHINARE Arctic 10 expedition from June to October 2019.[286] [287] China's voyages have been concentrated mainly around the Bering Strait, a region of immense importance should China want to limit the United States' ability to project power out from Alaska.[288] [289] In sum, China has both legitimate interests in climate change science and national security that motivate its commitment to research activity in the Arctic.

China's Arctic Village: Tourism, Scientific Research, and Arctic Identity

Along with an increase in research expeditions, the numbers of Arctic tourists have increased dramatically. From 2006 to 2016, Arctic summer tourism grew by 400% and winter tourism in the region grew by 600%, although the development of the tourism industry has been spatially uneven and concentrated mainly in the Nordic countries, Alaska, and northwestern Russia.[290] China's Arctic Policy paper uses the specific phrase "tourist resources" to head its section on safety and sustainability in Arctic tourism, and Bennett and Iaquinto argue that this terminology aligns China's interest in increased tourism with its interest in natural resources and other sources of profit.[291] As a function of its size, China produces more tourism than any other country on earth, and the predicted international tourism boom in the Arctic will make the region, which for decades was considered a remote and unfriendly frontier, feel more like a global space. As its development of "tourism resources" increases, whether through commercial dealings, cultural, linguistic, and digital infrastructure, or through strengthened bilateral

[286] Ibid.
[287] Millard and Lackenbauer Trojan Dragons
[288] Ibid.
[289] Tice, Ryan. 2020. "The Bering Strait: An Arena for Great Power Competition." *National Defense University Press*, Joint Force Quarterly, , no. 96 (February). https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/2076097/the-bering-strait-an-arena-for-great-power-competition/https%3A%2F%2Fndupress.ndu.edu%2FMedia%2FNews%2FNews-Article-View%2FArticle%2F2076097%2Fthe-bering-strait-an-arena-for-great-power-competition%2F.
[290] Bennett, Mia M., and Benjamin Lucca Iaquinto. 2023. "The Geopolitics of China's Arctic Tourism Resources." *Territory, Politics, Governance* 11 (7): 1281–1302. https://doi.org/10.1080/21622671.2021.1887755.
[291] Ibid. 1281-1302

relations, China will be able to project more power into the region.[292] In this way, tourism, like scientific research, can be understood as an extension of China's strategic vision in the Arctic.

The Chinese state has developed unique destinations for domestic tourism that help market China as more of an Arctic space. Arctic Village in Mohe, China, is one of the country's northernmost settlements on its border with Russia. The area's history is dominated by gold mining, but the focus has been shifted towards opportunities to ride dog sleds, glimpse reindeer and other Arctic wildlife, and witness the northern lights.[293] Recently, the village also began to incorporate Arctic science into its image, showing the impact of China's growing credibility and capability in polar scientific research. The Daxing'anling Mohe Arctic Astronomy Science Base for Youth opened in 2012, followed by the Mohe Polar Experimental Museum and Mohe Polar Simulation Experiment Base in 2019. In the museum, visitors can engage with displays to learn about glaciers, the midnight sun, meteoric iron, and view models of China's Yellow River Station in Ny Ålesund, Svalbard and Xue Long 2 icebreaker.[294] Fieldwork conducted by Liling Xu, a scholar on the intersection of geopolitics and tourism, shows that the town's identity as a hub for Arctic tourism and science education comes across as an overt projection of the state onto the community. While most people traveling to the region were doing so for tourism purposes, conversation-style interviews with local residents revealed that most people did not self-identify in any way with the Arctic. This disconnect manifests as a visceral "awkwardness" that permeates the experience of the visitor as well as locals' relationships to their community.[295] Although the Arctic Village has limited effectiveness in establishing China as an Arctic or Arctic-adjacent state on its own, it is an interesting case study in how tourism and scientific exploration are used to strengthen ties to the region.

Conclusion

To end this chapter, one brief interaction illustrates the relationship between China's scientific research and the international relations of the Arctic states. In 1999, China's research vessel Xue Long 1 arrived in the coastal town of Tuktoyaktuk, located in the Inuvialuit

[292] Ibid. 1281-1302
[293] Xu, Liling. 2023. "The 'Awkward' Geopolitics of Tourism in China's 'Arctic' Village." *Tourism Geographies* 0 (0): 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2023.2286304.
[294] Xu Awkward Geopolitics of Tourism 1-18
[295] Ibid. 1-18

Settlement Region. Although the Canadian embassy in Beijing had been notified that Xue Long was planning to sail into Canadian territorial waters, local authorities were not expecting the ship.[296] The voyage was China's first national scientific research expedition in the Arctic after a little over a decade spent in the Antarctic, and it generated community-wide alarm and intense high-level discussion over the Arctic state's ability to enforce its sovereignty and defend its northern territories against potential threats.[297] [298]

This tense encounter reflects the overarching idea from this chapter that both in practice and in imagination, research and strategic positioning are inherently linked. China's growing capabilities in Arctic scientific research are an essential part of its intentions to establish itself as a significant power in the melting Arctic. China has moved through several stages of activity in the Arctic: confidence-building and exploration, awareness of the region as a stage for geopolitical competition, controlled use of climate and research diplomacy, and confident expansion of ambitions not limited to science. China's academic contributions to global understanding of the region have largely succeeded in making it a critical party on Arctic issues even as a non-Arctic state, which is a remarkable achievement, though not one celebrated by all. While a legitimate case can be made for China's interest in Arctic climate change and its impact on domestic weather conditions, suspicion that China uses its scientific research for military purposes is also justified.

In the 1999 Tuktoyaktuk case, the Canadian Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defense eventually concluded that Xue Long 1 did not do anything wrong, instead attributing the event to a series of miscommunications and framing it as a learning moment for Canadian national security operations.[299] What does this mean? It demonstrates that there is a real anxiety emanating from Arctic states and from around the world about China's involvement in the Arctic. Whether this concern is founded or unfounded, whether the balance of China's ambition falls more towards militarist expansion or genuine cooperation, it has a perceptible presence and must therefore continue to be monitored and addressed. As the Arctic region continues to evolve under a warming climate, and as geopolitical forces shift, more research will be necessary to understand China's future in the Arctic.

[296] Lackenbauer et. al. China's Arctic Ambitions
[297] Millard and Lackenbauer Trojan Dragons
[298] Lackenbauer et. al. China's Arctic Ambitions
[299] Ibid.

Policy Recommendations

This chapter identifies the following as priorities for research and policy:

- Evaluate whether China's projected spending on scientific research in the Arctic aligns with the goals and priorities online in its 2018 Arctic Policy White Paper, Brick and Road Initiative and Polar Silk Road Initiative, National Five-Year Plan, and elsewhere;
- Forecast how the progression of Chinese Arctic scientific activity may be influenced by China's economic health and international standing over the next several decades;
- Scrutinize Chinese data sharing and transparency in internationally cooperative scientific research, especially in the context of its growing alliance with Russia in Arctic resources, research, security, and infrastructure;
- Call on China to collaborate with Indigenous Participant Organizations on scientific research by:
    - Providing funding to ongoing and planned initiatives led by Indigenous Participant Organizations;
    - Incorporating data collected using Indigenous knowledge systems such as Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit into scientific publications;
    - Establishing mechanisms for data sharing between research expeditions, state and academic institutions, and Arctic Indigenous communities;
- Suggest that China to demonstrate a commitment to building relationships with Arctic Indigenous Organizations by participating in the upcoming 5th International Polar Year 2032-2033, an initiative led by the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) and the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) that aims to:
    - "Resolve outstanding major knowledge gaps through targeted attention and globally-coordinated action enabling polar researchers, knowledge holders, rights holders and stakeholders to achieve major breakthroughs in the knowledge required to protect the global environment, develop effective national and local strategies to mitigate and adapt to environmental changes, and accelerate progress towards achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals".[300]

[300] "International Polar Year 2032-33." n.d. International Arctic Science Committee. Accessed February 20, 2024. https://iasc.info/cooperations/international-polar-year-2032-33.

CHAPTER 8

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China's Strategic Militarization in the Arctic

Introduction

International geopolitical interest in the Arctic region dates to land claims in the late 19th century, which led to defined maritime boundaries with the creation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea in 1994.[301] Historically, and from the perspective of military interest, the Arctic region acted as a frontier between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Soviet Union during the Cold War and was a strategic military point for weapon systems and international positions.[302] As international interest in the region continues to develop with melting sea ice, China proclaims itself as a "near-Arctic" state and has interest in the region for a northern shipping route, resource extraction, and other potential economic gains. The Arctic's position geographically fits with China's ambitions of national security and military competition. Although *China's Arctic Policy* white paper claims their engagement geopolitically as a near-Arctic State is by promoting peace and stability through maritime trade and operations[303], their increased strategic activity says otherwise. China's vision of the Arctic goes beyond infrastructure, shipping routes, resource extraction, and scientific research, and it is using those activities to lay the groundwork for future military presence in the region. The international partnerships with Nordic nations are a strategy used by China for land access, however their close ties with Russia for the Belt and Road Initiative includes large investments between the regions, upping their military activity.

China's strategic military-type activity can be categorized into three main pillars:

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[301] Congressional Research Service. United Nations Convention on the law of the sea (UNCLOS). 2023. https://sgp.fas.org/crs/row/RL33153.pdf

[302] Sharma, Anu. "China's Polar Silk Road: Implications for the Arctic Region." Air University (AU), October 25, 2021. https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/JIPA/Display/Article/2820750/chinas-polar-silk-road-implications-for-the-arctic-region/.

[303] The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China. "China's Arctic Policy." The State Council- People's Republic of China, January 2018. http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2018/01/26/content_281476026660336.htm.

1. Technological Capabilities and Naval Arctic Strategy
2. Expanding Military Presence and Infrastructure
3. International Investments and Partnerships

In 2015, The National Security Law of the People's Republic of China, added the polar regions as a strategic region for adding value to the nation's interests, affirming in Article 32: **Article 32: "**The State persists in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, international seabed areas and polar regions, increasing capacity for safe passage, scientific investigation, development and exploitation; strengthening international cooperation, and preserving the security of our nation's activities and assets in outer space, seabed areas and polar regions, and other interests."[304]

The National Security Law also calls on the development and advancement of oceanographic technology to keep up with China's interest in evolving regions like Antarctica and new regions such as the Arctic. It states, "geostrategy and military security, asset and personal security, climate and environment security and resource- and energy security" are primary motives of China's ambitions as a global military power[305], alluding to the importance of military presence. China understands that stating their ambition of defense and security both economically and militarily in the Arctic would alarm Arctic nations who have legally defined territory in the region. Instead, China is strategically using the changing environment as a means for scientific research, while also building a military presence through infrastructure in a larger Arctic strategy.

Technological Capabilities and Naval Arctic Strategy

The technological advancements of China's scientific research are not limited to the development of devices and innovative technologies, but also include the use of these technologies in the Arctic. Monitoring the ocean using remote sensing is a key tool that China is using in maritime navigation and communication. Having the capability to detect sea ice loss will support efforts in Arctic shipping, in addition to efforts in research. Satellite imagery and

[304] Choi, Timothy and Lajeunesse, Adam (2022) Here there be dragons? Chinese submarine options in the Arctic, Journal of Strategic Studies, DOI: 10.1080/01402390.2021.1940147.
[305] Helijar, Havnes and Seland, Johan. "The Increasing Security Focus in China's Arctic Policy." The Arctic Institute - Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, July 16, 2019. https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/increasing-security-focus-china-arctic-policy/.

additional satellite-based remote sensing is a key strategy in navigating the changing ice patterns and navigation opportunities in both the Northeast and Northwest Passages.[306] China's first Arctic-observing satellite was launched in 2019 to monitor sea ice, specifically the Northern Sea Route over Russia. This microsatellite has taken over 2,500 images of the Polar regions and is being followed up with updated satellites[307]. The satellite capabilities are used for both military and civilian remote sensing and maritime surveillance as China collects intelligence relevant to their Arctic goals. Included in China's technological capabilities are fleets, like ice-breaker submarines and aircraft, as well as their delegation of expanding their Naval Presence.

Arctic Strategy: Expanding Naval Presence

With a desire to expand their military presence as a global power, China announced a 7.1% increase to their 2022 budget in defense spending to up to $229 billion, second only to the U.S.[308] The budget increase has continued through 2023. In recent years, China has become equipped with the latest aircraft and weaponry technology with an emphasis on their naval fleets. Being that the People's Liberation Army and Navy, otherwise known as PLAN, has the largest Navy in the world with a fleet of 370 ships and submarines, there is a continuous increase in ship manufacturing and production of the latest technology to drive the nation's desire of becoming a maritime powerhouse. It is expected that China's Navy will grow their battle force to 395 ships by 2025, and 435 ships by 2030. In development for the Arctic specifically, Chinese nuclear-powered submarines and icebreakers are being developed at a rapid speed, more than the U.S., which is an Arctic member state.

The technological capability of nuclear power is not a small factor in China's Arctic ambitions. Their access and use of nuclear-powered submarines are key in their militarization efforts. According to The Barents Observer in 2019, "Nuclear power has the advantage of long range and massive power, compared with diesel-electric or gas-powered engines that will have to either carry a lot of fuel or make many fuel stops during a voyage. Along the Northern Sea Route,

[306]Eiterjord, Trym. "Polar Expertise in China's 14th Five-Year Plan." The Arctic Institute - Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, December 7, 2023. for Circumpolar Security Studies, December 7, 2023. https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/polar-expertise-chinas-14th-five-year-plan/.
[307] Humpert, Malte. "Putin and XI Discuss Further Deepening of Arctic Partnership." High North News, March 24, 2023. https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/putin-and-xi-discuss-further-deepening-arctic-partnership.
[308] AP News. (2022, March 5). *China to raise defense spending by 7.1% to $229 billion*. AP News. https://apnews.com/article/business-china-congress-d03b477b646b055241e7712f86bacee6

or in the High Arctic, infrastructure and fuel deposits are rare."[309] Keeping an advanced and energy-conscious fleet will set China ahead of other exploring nations in the region. To align with the 5-year development plan of increasing their Arctic presence, China is emphasizing vessels, planes, and icebreakers as strategies for access in the region. Currently, the nation is building a third heavy icebreaker that, by 2025, will affect routes and accessibility in the Arctic region. The People's Liberation Army Navy currently operates six nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines, six nuclear-powered attack submarines, and 48 diesel- powered attack submarines.

Figures for Chinese ships taken from ONI information paper of February 2020

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Selected ship types							
Ballistic missile submarines	1	1	3	4	4	6	8
Nuclear-powered attack submarines	5	4	5	6	7	10	13
Diesel attack submarines	56	56	48	53	55	55	55
Aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers	19	25	25	26	43	55	65
Frigates, corvettes	38	43	50	74	102	120	135
Total number of China navy battle force ships, including types not shown above	**210**	**220**	**220**	**255**	**360**	**400**	**425**
Total U.S. Navy battle force ships	***318***	***282***	***288***	***271***	***296***	***286***	***290***
U.S. total above compared to China total above	***+108***	***+62***	***+68***	***+16***	***-64***	***-114***	***-135***

Figure 1. "Numbers of Chinese & U.S. Navy Battle Ships, 2000- 2030." A comparison table that shows the projection in development of Naval ships.[310]

Key Takeaways:

China's technological capabilities and advances in satellite monitoring of sea ice and nuclear-powered submarines fit their ambitions of expanding their Arctic presence, especially since China's Navy is investing and expanding at a rapid pace. The ambitions of China's development as a naval power in the Arctic is accounted for by their growth of technology and naval strategy that is specific to the Arctic environment, such as icebreakers and remote-sensing technology.

[309] Nilsen, Thomas. "Details of China's Nuclear-Powered Icebreaker Revealed." The Independent Barents Observer, March 21, 2019. https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/arctic/2019/03/details-chinas-nuclear-powered-icebreaker-revealed.

[310] Congressional Research Service. (2024, January). China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy. https://sgp.fas.org/crs/row/RL33153.pdf

Expanding Military Presence and Infrastructure

Currently, China claims four Southern research sites in Antarctica that support their framework as a "Polar Power". The stations include: the Great Wall Station, Zhongshan Station, Kunlun Station, and Taishan Station. The civilian program supports future Chinese Naval exploration as it works closely with Russia to promote natural resources and military access in the Southern hemisphere. China's scientific research presence in Antarctica has confirmed their reasoning for interest in the Arctic, however their ties with Russia on geopolitical issues have been alarming for other nations. The cooperation between China and Russia to revise the Antarctic Treaty in 2048 would expand natural resources and military operations in Antarctica. The impact would alter Russian opinion and mobility in the Arctic as a member state, as well as raise international concern given the Arctic region's value as a new and profitable region. [311]

Military-Civil Fusion (MCF) Development Strategy

Military-Civil Fusion is a modern strategy that China is using to develop military dominance. As defined by the U.S. Department of State, "a key part of MCF is the elimination of barriers between China's civilian research and commercial sectors, and its military and defense industrial sectors."[312] The definition continues, "The PRC specifically seeks to exploit the inherent 'dual-use' nature of many of these technologies, which have both military and civilian applications." The combination of advanced military equipment with knowledgeable scientists is contributing to China's military capabilities.

Since military power is a competitive role already in Antarctica, the North polar region is no different, meaning that there are international legalities and treaties to the region. However, there are heightened restrictions on military use in the Arctic due to the lack of treaties that may have laid more ground rules in other international regions, like Antarctica. Due to the restrictions, global powers like the U.S. have made "Arctic Road Maps" in which they announced their equipment and personnel for future military activities in the Arctic Ocean. Since China's status is

[311] Funaiole, Matthew P. and Hart, Brian. "Frozen Frontiers." China's Great Power Ambitions in the Polar Regions, April 18, 2023. https://features.csis.org/hiddenreach/china-polar-research-facility/.
[312] U.S. Department of State. "Military-Civil Fusion." Military-Civil Fusion and the People's Republic of China, 2020. https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/What-is-MCF-One-Pager.pdf.

an Observer state rather than a Member state on the Arctic Council, their access to the region is indirect. According to the 2022 US Department of Defense report on China, "[China's] strategy for Antarctica includes the use of dual-use technologies, facilities, and scientific research, which are likely intended, at least in part, to improve PLA capabilities."[313] Military-Civilian Fusion (MCF) is the primary strategy for developing a military presence in the region, without directly disobeying international rules, and while other global powers use this strategy in Antarctica, China is using it to ascend research into both Antarctica and the Arctic.[314]

The MCF initiative in the Arctic region plays into a larger goal of China's ambition to become a Great Power beyond the polar regions. The MCF in the Arctic would, however, add to the Maritime Power National Strategy of China's larger-scale plan of the Belt and Road Initiative.[315] What dual-use technologies are capable of in future activity in the Arctic is yet to be known, but this is something that Arctic nations need to be aware of.

MCF & Naval Expansion Case Study: China's Military Assertion in the South China Sea

China's naval strategy includes integration of military bases and maritime militia in the South China Sea. As the nation acts on its ambition of military expansion, it will be pivotal in maritime geopolitics due to military activity completely altering land and oceanic power. As researched by the Korea Maritime Institute, "The maritime militia can conduct a variety of missions from domestic security missions (e.g., search and rescue) to national defense missions (e.g., logistic support, concealment operation, surveillance, and harassment). More recently, China's militia has been assigned a special role, called "Maritime Right Protection Force System", which entails its presence in disputed water, protecting its territorial sovereignty, and

[313] US Report to Congress 2022. Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China. 2022. https://media.defense.gov/2023/Oct/19/2003323409/-1/-1/1/2023-MILITARY-AND-SECURITY-DEVELOPMENTS-INVOLVING-THE-PEOPLES-REPUBLIC-OF-CHINA.PDF
[314] Tianliang, Xiao. "In Their Own Words: Science of Military Strategy 2020." The Science of Military Strategy, 2020. https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/CASI/documents/Translations/2022-01-26%202020%20Science%20of%20Military%20Strategy.pdf
[315] Stone, Alex, and Peter Wood. "China's Military-Civil Fusion Strategy - Air University." China's Military-Civil Fusion Strategy. Accessed February 6, 2024. https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/CASI/documents/Research/Other-Topics/2020-06-15%20CASI_China_Military_Civil_Fusion_Strategy.pdf.

supporting law enforcement action."[316] The Chinese government providing fishermen with well-funded military-type resources to defend their maritime interests in the region is a part of a dual-use strategy, which is also used by the U.S. in other arenas, in order to integrate military activity in the region. The article continues, "Fishing vessels that are equipped with an advances communication system, auxiliary military devices, trained fishermen, and even small weapons are surely intimidating and will certainly raise tensions in the South China Sea." The activity in the South China Sea is important in maritime law and military activity as the Arctic begins to open as a new area for territorial mobilization.

Figure 2. "Six Chinese fishing vessels believed to be part of the People's Armed Forces Maritime Militia"[317] off the coast of Whitsun Reef, South China Sea.

[316] Lee, Hwon. "Kmi Int. J. Marit. AFF. Fish.: The Legality of Militarization of the South China Sea and Its Legal Implications." KMI International Journal of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, June 30, 2023. https://www.kmij.org/archive/view_article?pid=ijmaf-15-1-1.

[317] Martinson, Ryan D., and Andrew S. Erickson. "Manila's Images Are Revealing the Secrets of China's Maritime Militia." Foreign Policy, April 19, 2021. https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/04/19/manilas-images-are-revealing-the-secrets-of-chinas-maritime-militia/.

Key Takeaways:

According to the U.S. Department of Defense, China's Military-Civil Fusion Strategy is demonstrated through the use of technology, facilities, and research that is used by civilians to improve China's military capabilities.[318] As seen in Figure 2, China's presence in the South China Sea includes dual-use integration of military systems in their maritime militia of fishermen, using transportation as means for MCF activity. This is an example of how the Arctic region becomes an open space for geopolitical competition and naval expansion ambitions.

International Investments and Partnerships

China's agreements with Arctic states include Iceland, Greenland, Finland, Russia, and Norway, and includes an investment into the Arctic that has surpassed $90 billion in infrastructure, assets, and other projects in energy and minerals.[319] The Polar Research Institute of China began its first Arctic ground facility research in 2004 at Yellow River Station in Svalbard, Norway. From 2008 to 2016, Chinese scientific agencies were contracted through Sweden's Esrange Space Center, however the operations have been halted as of 2018 due to a disconnect of political domestic issues between the nations. In 2018, Chinese researchers continued to access the Arctic through the Nordic region by a joint operation of the China Iceland Arctic Research Observatory in Karholl, Iceland for a satellite remote sensing project. China had placement in Finland from 2017-2021 at the FMI Arctic Space Center in Sondankylä, Finland, and developed great interest, with investments of $2 billion, and in Nuuk, Greenland, but have yet to be stationed there.[320] Overall, maintaining relationships with Nordic nations for scientific research access is a vital mission in relation to China's Arctic strategies.

Aside from Nordic countries, China is actively deepening partnerships with other nations who have the seat as an Arctic State in a larger scale development of the "Polar Silk Road." The Polar Silk Road is an extension of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to expand Chinese interests

[318] US Report to Congress 2023. "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China". 2023 ://media.defense.gov/2023/Oct/19/2003323409/-1/-1/1/2023-MILITARY-AND-SECURITY-DEVELOPMENTS-INVOLVING-THE-PEOPLES-REPUBLIC-OF-CHINA.PDF.
[319] Committee on Foreign Affairs, "China Regional Snapshot: Arctic", November 29, 2022. https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/china-regional-snapshot-arctic/#:~:text=The%20PRC%20has%20invested%20over,trade%20agreement%20with%20the%20PRC.
[320] Lipin, Michael. "China Begins to Revive Arctic Scientific Ground Projects after Setbacks." Voice of America, December 6, 2022. https://www.voanews.com/a/china-begins-to-revive-arctic-scientific-ground-projects-after-setbacks-/6860756.html.

economically through resources, energy, and transportation.[321] The initiative connects to the Arctic region as a corridor for maritime expansion with exploration, research, trade, and extraction of resources, and is especially significant in Chinese polar exploration because of the high investment into the region as China has pledged to support Russia with $10 billion.[322] Beyond investment in energy, Russian-Chinese cooperation on the Belt and Road Initiative is to develop beyond the Trans-Siberian and Baikal-Amur railways, but to also include the opening of the Northern Sea Route as a stable operation to increase efficiency and economic gains in the Arctic.[323] The high interest and willingness of investing in energy is what unifies Russian-Chinese cooperation. In the Arctic specifically, China can expand their energy companies and technological capabilities by way of Russian investment and interest. The geopolitical strategy of cooperation through energy allows for an equally beneficial alliance between the nations where Russia gains energy cooperation on projects of oil and gas development in Siberia, while China can form a strategic regional advantage through Russia's Arctic access. This is an evolving relationship and as of 2023, the Polar Silk Road is becoming a more long-term strategy due to the various domestic and international challenges both China and Russia are facing, however, the large investments and overall strategy between the nations are still important to monitor.

International Partnerships Case Study: Chinese-Russian Naval Presence in U.S. Waters

On August 4th, 2023, 11 Chinese and Russian vessels sailed through the Aleutian Islands off the coast of Alaska, alarming the U.S. military due to the location being a gateway into the Arctic. In response to the joint military drills, the U.S. Navy deployed four destroyers and a P-8 maritime patrol plane to monitor the area. The concern, said by U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan, was the mutual navigation operation that Russia and China are gaining together.[324] The map below shows how close the Aleutian Islands are to the Arctic region as a prime location, but also how

[321] Eiterjord, Trym. "Polar Expertise in China's 14th Five-Year Plan." The Arctic Institute - Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, December 7, 2023. https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/polar-expertise-chinas-14th-five-year-plan/.
[322] Committee on Foreign Affairs, "China Regional Snapshot: Arctic", November 29, 2022. https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/china-regional-snapshot-arctic/#:~:text=The%20PRC%20has%20invested%20over,trade%20agreement%20with%20the%20PRC
[323] Humpert, Malte. "Putin and XI Discuss Further Deepening of Arctic Partnership." High North News, March 24, 2023. https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/putin-and-xi-discuss-further-deepening-arctic-partnership.
[324] Kochis, Daniel. "U.S. Policymakers Should Remain Wary of Chinese Ambitions in the Arctic." The Heritage Foundation, July 28, 2022. https://www.heritage.org/asia/report/us-policymakers-should-remain-wary-chinese-ambitions-the-arctic.

the United States felt obligated to respond since the military presence was in their waterways. This type of joint activity by Russia and China clearly defines their strategic partnership by military activity in a geopolitical sphere.

Figure 3. "Nearly a Dozen Russian and Chinese Ships Now Moving Away from Alaska, Officials Say."[325]

Key Takeaways:

Although there is analysis about how China's Polar Silk Road initiative has not yet come to fruition, it is worthy to note that it is a plan with both investments to back it and key relationships to support it. China has been very strategic with their international partnerships with Nordic countries and their scientific research stations, but China's larger investments and energy-specific tradeoffs with Russia remain most notable. The Naval joint operation with Russia off the Aleutian Islands is an example of how the Chinese-Russian relationship will have rippling affects in their interest in the Arctic, due to Russia's status as an Arctic member state, and geographical location to the region.

[325] Seylor, Matt, Martinez, Luis. "Nearly a Dozen Russian and Chinese Ships Now Moving Away from Alaska, Officials Say." ABC News, August 7, 2023. https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/dozen-russian-chinese-ships-now-moving-alaska-officials/story?id=102074925.

Policy Recommendations & Future Outlook

The Arctic Council and all member states must promote cooperation amid the changing landscape of the region, while also considering the geopolitical tensions that China's interest in the region may lead to. As addressed in this chapter, China's ambitions in the region go beyond resource extraction and shipping routes, but rather towards a military ambition of using their technology and dual-use research to gain naval expansion as a maritime power. The United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea and the Arctic Council must develop legal agreements to regulate maritime activity and acknowledge what is acceptable activity for Arctic Council Member nations *and* Observer nations. Amid the geopolitical competition of the Arctic, it is important to have international cooperation and strategize conflict prevention with China.

What policies must be addressed in the future of the Arctic:

- Understand that China's efforts in the Arctic go beyond resource extraction and scientific research with more focus on militarization. Using activities in Antarctica as reference for future involvement in the Arctic.
    - "Its growing contributions to Antarctic science may pave the way for China to have a greater say in the future governance of the region. For instance, in 2048, the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty could potentially be renegotiated, giving China an opportunity to shape future rules around mineral resource extraction." [326]
- Arctic Members must understand that Chinese scientific research should have access to the Arctic, but with limitations on equipment and military materials.
- To have cohesion in Arctic geopolitics, international laws must also regulate transportation through the region beyond scientific research. This includes shipping routes as tolerable in international waters but must have regulations on each nation's 200 nautical miles of ownership.
- Understand that Indigenous communities live in the Arctic, and having a military presence through equipment, technology, ships, or personnel will have direct impacts on

[326] Funaiole, Matthew P. and Hart, Brian. "Frozen Frontiers." China's Great Power Ambitions in the Polar Regions, April 18, 2023. https://features.csis.org/hiddenreach/china-polar-research-facility/.

their lives and resources. International laws and regulations of accessible land and resources allowed in the region, decided upon together with Indigenous representation, will guide tolerable actions by nations without direct consequences on those who live there.

SECTION IV:

China’s Impact on Indigenous Populations

The fourth section mentions different ways that China's increased presence has impacted Indigenous communities. Chapter 9 analyzes ways in which Indigenous Peoples have been and can continue to be included in Arctic governance, considering China's activity and intentions . Chapter 10 analyzes China's domestic treatment of its ethnic people as a case study, and examines the impact of Russian-Chinese collaborative extension onto Indigenous land.

CHAPTER 9

BB DENTON

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Inuit Leadership as a Model for Future Collaboration in an Increasingly Globalized Arctic

Introduction

Within its 2018 Arctic Policy white paper, China addresses a broad range of topics, setting itself up to be a meaningful collaborator in the region. The document intentionally avoids topics of security and militarization, and repeatedly reaffirms its belief in international law, cooperation, and the safeguarding of fragile ecosystems.[327] It even states intent to "respect the traditions and culture" and "interests and concerns" of Indigenous Peoples of the region.[328] However, China's commitment to its written policy is unclear. Under scrutiny, many of China's goals, specifically those related to shipping, research, resource extraction and governance, would primarily benefit their own interests. Further, Indigenous Peoples are only referenced from a socio-cultural perspective, with an emphasis on "culture and tradition," while their inherent right to self-determination is neglected.[329]

While the Arctic is a region of increasing global significance due to climate change, at its core it is a homeland. Nearly four million people reside in the region, five hundred thousand of whom are Indigenous.[330] Thus, concern for Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic must be a priority in all activities within the region, now and into the future. To achieve this, and in order to be a meaningful contributor to Arctic use and governance, China must solidify its commitment to centering the rights and well being of Arctic Indigenous Peoples. This must extend to all spheres of activity and power, from supporting Indigenous organizations in governance arenas outside of the Arctic Council, to addressing its neo-colonial violence towards ethnic minorities within its own borders. In order to strengthen itself as a meaningful collaborator in the Arctic, China will

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[327] The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China. *China's Arctic Policy*. (2018).
[328] Ibid.
[329] Ibid.
[330] "Permanent Participants." Arctic Council, https://arctic-council.org/about/permanent-participants/#:~:text=Out%20of%20a%20total%20of,approximately%20500%2C000%20are%20Indigenous%20Peoples.

need to compromise its own gain in order to respect the interests of Indigenous Peoples. Doing so requires work to build relationships founded on trust and respect.

Considering the context of growing international interest in the Arctic, including that of China, this chapter examines the ways in which Indigenous Peoples have been, and can continue to be, included in Arctic governance. Examinations of three cases of Inuit involvement in intergovernmental negotiations will be discussed, one of which China was a signatory of, to explore how future consultation and collaboration might be structured to strengthen Indigenous roles in governance. Specifically, the chapter will describe Inuit involvement in the Tallurutiup Imanga National Marine Conservation Area, the Pikialasorsuaq Letter of Intent, and the International Agreement to Prevent Unregulated Fishing in the High Seas of the Central Arctic Ocean. Emphasis will be on the role of collaboration in the development, management and implementation of projects impacting the region - and the Inuit who call it home.

Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC): International Inuit Advocacy

Advocacy for Inuit across the world is carried out by numerous organizations with representation at different scales, but the most visible group internationally is the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC), which has branches in each of its member states: Alaska (US), Canada, Greenland and Chukotka (Russia).[331] Guided by a vision to strengthen transnational unity, promote Inuit rights, protect the Arctic's ecosystems, and advocate for an active role of Indigenous Peoples in Arctic governance, the ICC conducts a broad range of work.[332] As one of its original Permanent Participants, and a key player in its founding in 1996, the ICC has historically conducted a large portion of its operations within the Arctic Council. Especially in recent decades, it has expanded to other venues of international collaboration. The United Nations specifically is a crucial entity in the ICC's work, as they hold Consultative Status II at its Economic and Social Council, as well as an active role in the Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP).[333] The ICC's most recent expansion, in line with their increasing interest in marine governance, has been to the International Maritime Organization (IMO), where they have

[331] "About ICC." Inuit Circumpolar Council, https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/about-icc/
[332] Ibid.
[333] Inuit Circumpolar Council. "Inuit Leadership Crucial to Protect Oceans." Press Release, 12 February 2023. https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/news/inuit-leadership-crucial-to-protect-oceans/

Provisional Consultative Status.[334] Notably, they have been the first Indigenous organization to hold this status at the forum, which is something they are hoping to build on in the future.[335]

While it is joined by five other Permanent Participants in the Arctic Council, in other venues the ICC is often the "first [Indigenous organization] at the table," functioning to socialize Indigenous Knowledge to actors who don't necessarily have a history of integrating it into their work.[336] They are firm advocates for the involvement of Inuit and their knowledge in the "development, interpretation, and implementation of all agreements, policies, laws, enforcement and other activities within [their] homelands."[337] Though this is only a brief introduction, the role of the ICC in creating various unprecedented agreements regarding Arctic governance, and in advancing Inuit leadership and Indigenous visibility internationally, must not be understated.

Contradicting Interests between China and the ICC: Sea Ice

China's Arctic ambitions may have a distinct impact on Inuit, especially when considering the dual significance of sea ice in Inuit culture and as a barrier to China's economic development in the region. Further, China's relationship with the ICC goes beyond the Arctic Council, extending to other international forums, such as the IMO.

Tensions exist between China's views and goals for the Arctic, and that of Inuit. Although China highlights the importance of "environmental protection" and "addressing climate change" in the region in its Arctic policy, it also emphasizes the economic opportunities presented by melting sea ice in Inuit homelands.[338] Resource extraction and new shipping routes are of specific interest to the state,[339] and notably have a high potential for profit. As such, there is a financial incentive for the melting of sea ice, as it pertains to not only China, but many nation states seeking to capitalize on the warming Arctic. Alternatively, though these same opportunities can be of benefit to some Inuit communities, to an extent they exist in tension with the relationship of Inuit to sea ice, and the ICC's goal to "safeguard the Arctic ecosystem."[340]

[334] Lisa Koperqualuk, Meeting with ICC Canada, Ottawa, 1 February 2024.
[335] Ibid.
[336] Ibid.
[337] Inuit Circumpolar Council. "Circumpolar Inuit Protocols for Equitable and Ethical Engagement." 2022.
[338] The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, *China's Arctic Policy*.
[339] Ibid.
[340] "About ICC," Inuit Circumpolar Council.

Generally, Inuit view sea ice as a "connective geographic entity," inseparable from the land.[341] It provides Inuit a "social surface and a place to call home," that aids them in their ability to travel and hunt.[342] Sea ice then, is crucial for a number of facets of Inuit culture and life. The differing relationships that China and Inuit have towards ice, highlights one of the tensions in their goals.

Existing Disconnects between China and Arctic Indigenous Peoples

Considering the challenges in decision making regarding Arctic warming, economic opportunity, and Indigenous lifeways, it is crucial for China to seek out the meaningful consultation of Indigenous Peoples in its Arctic affairs. To fully pursue the "win-win" benefit that it is trying to achieve through engaging in the North, China must commit to truly "accommodating" and "respecting the interests and concerns of Indigenous Peoples in the region."[343] Despite these intentions being written into its 2018 Arctic Policy white paper, there remains a persistent disconnect between the actions of China, and the interests of Arctic Indigenous leaders. Generally, China's difficulty engaging Indigenous Peoples has come from a few primary factors: its historic lack of engagement with Permanent Participants, narrow legal understanding of indigeneity, and oppressive treatment of its domestic ethnic minorities (Chapter 10, Claudia Fesko Santos).[344]

Despite showcasing support for Indigenous Peoples through contributions to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the endorsement of the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), China has been a relatively "slow learner" in an Arctic context with a "delayed interest" in Arctic Indigenous affairs.[345] In the years preceding and directly following its formal acceptance as an Observer State on the Arctic Council in 2013, its engagement with Permanent Participants was minor. Limited initial contact was made with organizations such as the Sami Council and the Indigenous People's Secretariat,

[341] Claudio Aporta. "Shifting perspectives on shifting ice: documenting and representing Inuit use of the sea ice." *Canadian Geographies* 55, no. 1, (2017).
[342] Ibid.
[343] The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, *China's Arctic Policy*.
[344] Joaquim Gaignard. "China, Circumpolar Indigenous People and the Colonial Past of the Arctic." *The Arctic Institute: Center for Circumpolar Security Studies*, 1 November, 2022.
[345] Ibid.

while others, including the ICC, were completely left out.[346] Further, after gaining observer status, little to no follow up on these contacts was conducted.[347] While government officials have made statements citing that prior to interaction with Permanent Participants, they wanted to take the time to gain more knowledge on Arctic Indigenous perspectives, it was a lackluster explanation for their complete lack of engagement with certain organizations.[348] Though ten years have passed, it set the tone poorly for China's future engagement with Arctic Indigenous Peoples, and may be reflective of deeper hesitations to engage with non-state actors more broadly.

To the previous point, China's understandings of both state sovereignty and indigeneity may complicate their ability to meaningfully engage with Arctic Indigenous Peoples. The nation maintains a stance of "non-interference" in the internal affairs of others,[349] thus the notion of long term interaction with non-state actors such as Permanent Participants may be perceived as intrusive, despite China's involvement in the Arctic Council. Further, China legally conceptualizes Indigenous Peoples as existing only in a context of post-European conquest and colonization.[350] Though it has offered public support of Indigenous Peoples, China has not implemented UNDRIP, as it does not acknowledge any of its ethnic minorities as "Indigenous" - groups whom the state continues to subject to assimilation and violence, similar to many other historically colonial states (Chapter 10, Claudia Fesko Santos). This domestic precedent, in hand with a combination of China's non-interventionist attitude and Western-focused understanding of indigeneity, raises alarm bells regarding China's intent to "respect" Arctic Indigenous Peoples, especially as it lacks any formally enforced commitments to doing so.

China's Arctic Ambitions: How might they impact Indigenous Peoples?

Beyond existing disconnects between China and Arctic Indigenous Peoples, the nation state's Arctic interests themselves have been critiqued as being foundationally neo-colonial. As

[346] Mia M. Bennet. "Scale-jumping in the Arctic Council: Indigenous permanent participants and Asian observer states." In *'Observing' the Arctic: Asia in the Arctic Council and Beyond*, ed. Chin Y. Woon and Klaus Dodds (United Kingdom: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2020), 73.
[347] Ibid.
[348] Gaignard, "China, Circumpolar Indigenous People."
[349] Chen Zheng. "China Debates the Non-Interference Principle." *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 9, no. 3, (2016): 349-350.
[350] Gaignard, "China, Circumpolar Indigenous People."

of now, China's primary tangible economic engagements in the Arctic have been through projects rooted in resource extraction and infrastructure development.[351] While some communities have expressed interest in economic opportunities of this nature, with checks and balances such as benefit sharing,[352] there nonetheless remains broad concerns around equity. Examples of unethical engagement include the Kvanefjeld Project in Greenland and the Yamal Liquefied Natural Gas Project in Russia. China's involvement in these extractive projects has played a role in the displacement of, and escalation of tensions with Indigenous Peoples (Chapter 3, Maya Russell-Hoff). As such, it is important to remain critical of the way China continues to move into the future with resource extraction projects that impact Indigenous Peoples.

When thinking about extractive projects, it is important to keep in mind the broader power imbalance that exists between Indigenous organizations and nation states (especially one as wealthy and influential as China), despite the leverage the former carry in the Arctic Council. Though the extractive industry does have the potential to generate huge revenues and provide jobs, it is fundamentally dependent on asymmetries of power and resources, as well as the dispossession of land.[353] New extractive projects require elites with access to funding, technology, and labor.[354] The industry is underpinned by some colonial ideologies, specifically the idea of a race to the bottom, for lower costs and barriers to development, for the sake of increasing profits.[355] Even in Nunavut, with its increased protections around benefit sharing for Inuit, remains an extractive economy that "continues to benefit external interests disproportionately."[356] Though the situation in the Arctic is still unfolding as we face continual climate warming, existing insights from the extractive industry offer some insight for what the future may become. Considering this, and China's track record of development projects in the Arctic, it is necessary to stay attentive to how related operations continue to develop.

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[351] Ibid.
[352] Emma Wilson. "What is Benefit Sharing? Respecting Indigenous Rights and Addressing Inequities in Arctic Resource Projects." *Resources* 8, no. 2, 2019.
[353] Anthony Beggington, et. al, "Resource Extraction and Inclusive Development: Extending the Bases of the Political Settlements Approach," *Governing Extractive Industries: Politics, Histories, Ideas*, (2018), https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198820932.003.0001
[354] Ibid.
[355] Ibid.
[356] Warren Bernauer. "The limits to extraction: mining and colonialism in Nunavut." *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 40, no. 3, (2019). https://doi.org/10.1080/02255189.2019.1629883

Resource extraction is not the only point of interest in the Arctic for China, as outlined by their 2018 Arctic Policy. When thinking about new shipping lanes, increased maritime traffic in the region could negatively impact local ecosystems, and the Indigenous Peoples whose livelihoods and culture are oftentimes intrinsically tied to them.[357] Sound pollution, oil spills and the disruption of migratory patterns by ships are only some of the threats that these developments might cause (Chapter 2, Jacob Coffler). Further, even scientific research has a potential for harm, through exclusions of Indigenous Knowledge, gatekeeping of information from local communities, and its use in military mobilization (Chapter 7, Ava Moore). Despite all of the threats presented by China's Arctic ambitions, examples exist of effective governance approaches that can protect and include Indigenous Peoples.

Tallurutiup Imanga National Marine Conservation Area

At a national level, the Tallurutiup Imanga National Marine Conservation Area (NMCA) illustrates the ways in which Inuit can be involved in all stages of Arctic governance, from project development, to implementation and management, through an emphasis on community participation. The Tallurutiup Imanga NMCA is a domestically protected area within Nunavut, Canada, established in 2019 with the signing of an Inuit Impact Benefit Agreement (IIBA).[358] Spanning 108,000 square kilometers, it is both a refuge and birthing ground for many Arctic species, such as the polar bear, bowhead whale, beluga, and most critically 75 percent of the world's narwhal population.[359] The region is home to five Inuit communities, many who rely on the NMCA for the resources it provides.[360]

The Tallurutiup Imanga NMCA represents a more localized example of co-development and management of Arctic affairs, through agreements between the Government of Canada and the regional Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA).[361] The NMCA was established with the signing of an IIBA, which not only established ecological protections but also secured millions in

[357] Gaignard, "China, Circumpolar Indigenous People."
[358] Qikiqtani Inuit Association, "Tallurutiup Imanga National marine Conservation Area Inuit Impact Benefit Agreement: Canada's Largest Body of Protected Water."
[359] Ibid.
[360] Ibid.
[361] Government of Canada; Qikiqtani Inuit Association. *Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement for Tallurutiup Imanga National Marine Conservation Area*. Ottawa: Government of Canada, 1 August, 2019.

investments into regional infrastructure and Inuit stewardship programs.[362] In creating this agreement, tours were conducted to each of the five Inuit communities of the region, to allow them input into the terms of an agreement that would ultimately most directly impact them.[363] Further, the region is set to be governed through collaboration between the Government of Canada, as well as the QIA and local Inuit communities.[364]

The QIA sees this agreement as not only a monumental "[realization] of the vision of Inuit elders who have been seeking protections for these waters since the 1960s," but also a "blueprint for what can be achieved when Inuit and the Federal Government work together."[365]

Pikialasorsuaq Letter of Intent

While it is still being developed and implemented, the Pikialasorsuaq Letter of Intent represents a recent bilateral milestone for co-management between Arctic states and Inuit. It highlights the ways in which nation states, through collaboration with Indigenous Peoples, can develop community-centered projects that address *both* ecological and social issues.

The North Water Polynya, known as Pikialasorsuaq (Greenlandic) and Savarjuaq (Nunavut dialect of Inuktitut), is the largest Arctic polynya and one of the most biologically productive regions in the North. It is located between Nunavut (Canada) and Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland).[366] As such, it is crucial to many species including migratory birds, walrus, beluga, bowhead whales, narwhals, seals, polar bears, and fish as both a habitat and breeding ground.[367] It plays a crucial role in the regional ecosystem, supporting not only many kinds of wildlife but also local communities. Additionally, some Inuit communities on both sides of the polynya share connections from across the water, enabled by sea ice highways that have been disrupted by increasing border security and melting ice.[368] As our climate has warmed and sea ice has melted,

[362] Qikiqtani Inuit Association, "Tallurutiup Imanga"
[363] Ibid.
[364] Government of Canada; Qikiqtani Inuit Association, *Inuit Impact*.
[365] Qikiqtani Inuit Association, "Tallurutiup Imanga"
[366] Pikialasorsuaq Commission. "An Inuit Vision for the Future of Pikialasorsuaq." 23 November, 2017.
[367] Ibid.
[368] Inuit Circumpolar Council. "ICC Commends Support for Pikialasorsuaq Inuit Marine Management and Inuit Mobility Rights." Press Release, 19 October, 2023.

the polynya has become less ecologically stable as development as increased in the region, putting increasing pressure on local wildlife and peoples.[369]

On October 19, 2023, the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and Canadian Coast Guard and the Minister of Agriculture Self-Sufficiency, Energy and Environment of Greenland signed a Letter of Intent (LOI) for future cooperation regarding the polynya.[370] Even though this indicates a mutual understanding and commitment to the issue at hand, it does not lay out any details for further action.[371] The LOI draws on existing efforts between Canada and Greenland to protect the region - including the ICC led Pikialasorsuaq Commission and related report titled "People of the Ice Bridge: The Future of Pikialasorsuaq."[372] The commission has been led by Inuit from Greenland and Canada who drew inspiration from the work being done in Tallurutiup Imanga.[373] They sought to build their report recommendations from the bottom up, by primarily drawing knowledge and perspectives from the local communities reliant on the region.[374] The LOI notably supports a continual partnership between the ICC, QIA, and the governments of Canada and Greenland in both the creation and management of environmental protections for the region, and even more the facilitation of free mobility for Inuit across the polynya.[375]

Though details and a more formalized commitment to the co-management and protection of the region are yet to come, the signing of the Pikialasorsuaq LOI has been applauded by Inuit organizations. ICC's International Chair Sara Olsvig spoke to the issue, in that the region "bears a deep cultural significance to Inuit, and an invaluable ecological value to the planet." She sees this initiative as providing "a unique opportunity for [Inuit] to come together to strengthen Inuit led marine conservation and build new approaches where Inuit share in marine governance and future opportunities."[376] The ICC has much hope that this future collaboration will not only help protect our global environment, but also preserve and protect the biodiversity and traditions of the unique region as well.[377]

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[369] Apostolos Tsiouvalas. "What Does the 2023 'Letter of Intent for Cooperation on the Pikialasorsuaq' Mean for the Inuit of the Region?" *The Arctic Institute: Center for Circumpolar Studies*, 2 November, 2023.
[370] Ibid.
[371] Ibid.
[372] Ibid.
[373] Inuit Circumpolar Council, "ICC Commends Support."
[374] Inuit Circumpolar Council. "ICC Canada Commends Government of Canada Support for Pikialasorsuaq Inuit Marine Management, Inuit Mobility Rights, and Cooperation with Kalaallit Nunaat." Press Release, 2019
[375] Ibid.
[376] Inuit Circumpolar Council, "ICC Commends Support."
[377] Ibid.

The Central Arctic Ocean Fisheries Agreement

The International Agreement to Prevent Unregulated Fishing in the High Seas of the Central Arctic Ocean, otherwise known as the Central Arctic Ocean Fisheries Agreement (CAOFA), seeks to manage fisheries in the region. It calls attention to not only the participation of Indigenous Peoples in international governance, but also the inclusion of Indigenous and local knowledge in Arctic affairs. On October 3rd, 2018, Canada, Iceland, the Kingdom of Denmark, Norway, the United States, the Russian Federation, the People's Republic of China, Japan, the Republic of South Korea and the European Union signed the treaty.[378] It is to be in effect for 16 years, with options for renewal after it expires.[379] The treaty has two primary goals: preventing unregulated fishing and facilitating joint research and monitoring of the region, specifically related to fisheries.[380] During its period of effect, parties have agreed to meet at least every two years to discuss implementation progress and the state of research in the region.[381]

CAOFA's origins are rooted in the 2008 Ilulissat Declaration, a landmark agreement regarding Arctic governance, which affirmed the role of the UNCLOS in the region and the sovereign rights of Arctic states.[382] The negotiations prior to this agreement however neglected to include Indigenous representatives and perspectives more broadly. Partially in response to this exclusion, the ICC adopted its 2009 Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic, calling for more Inuit participation in Arctic governance.[383] This document was followed by the 2014 Kitigaaryuit Declaration which specifically called for Inuit involvement in Arctic fisheries management.[384] Some nation states, hearing this call, chose to include Inuit representatives in their own delegations, including that for negotiations and the oversight of implementation regarding CAOFA.[385] As such, due to the advocacy of representatives from groups like the ICC, the rights of Indigenous Peoples are acknowledged within the agreement.

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[378] *Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean*. 3 October, 2018.
[379] Ibid.
[380] Arctic Council. "An Introduction to: The International Agreement to Prevent Unregulated Fishing in the High Seas of the Central Arctic Ocean." 25 June, 2021.
[381] Ibid.
[382] Klaus Dodds. "The Illulissat Declaration (2008): The Arctic States, 'Law of the Sea,' and Arctic." *The SAIS Review of International Affairs* 33, no.2, (2013): 45-55.
[383] Valentin Schatz. "Incorporation of Indigenous and Local Knowledge in Central Arctic Ocean Fisheries Management." *Arctic Review on Law and Politics* 10 (April 23, 2019): 130–34. https://doi.org/10.23865/arctic.v10.1630.
[384] Ibid.
[385] Ibid.

CAOFA's preamble begins with a callback to the UNDRIP, and further acknowledges the "interests of Arctic residents, including Arctic Indigenous Peoples," and the "importance of involving them and their communities" in the long-term conservation of the ecosystems and resources of the Arctic Ocean. Throughout the operative articles of the agreement, there is some recognition of Indigenous Peoples as well. For example, in Article 4(4) parties are obliged to take account of not only "the work of relevant scientific and technical organizations, bodies and programs" but also "Indigenous and local knowledge." In Article 5(2), the agreement encourages the participation of Arctic Indigenous Peoples in any committees or bodies that might be created related to it. After the signing of the agreement, the ICC has been active in its role of overseeing implementation. They offer a "holistic, balanced approach to understanding the Arctic that considers the entire food chain, potential impacts to Inuit food security, and recognizes that people, including Inuit, are a part of the Arctic ecosystem(s)." [386] Further, they advocate for Indigenous and local knowledge to have equal footing as that of Western science.[387]

Although the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and perspectives in this multilateral agreement cannot be understated as a huge success, the agreement is not without any faults. CAOFA is weak regarding the lack of specificity of its operative articles. While encouraged, parities are *not obliged* to include Indigenous Peoples in monitoring or implementation, rather it is up to their discretion on how to approach this. As the ICC affirms, it is important to look towards Inuit, and Arctic Indigenous Peoples more broadly, for "direction for when and how Indigenous Knowledge should be involved during engagement," and that "[they] should be involved in all work that includes [their] knowledge."[388] As such, the vague and unmandated provisions around the gathering of Indigenous Knowledge poses an issue, especially when considering the emphasis on its inclusion in affairs related to the agreement.[389] Further, it is important to note that Indigenous consultation was not mandated in the creation of this agreement, it was up to the discretion of specific states (in the end Canada, the US, and Denmark) to decide whether or not to include representatives from Indigenous organizations in

[386] Inuit Circumpolar Council. "Inuit Delegates with Strong Presence at Central Arctic Ocean Fisheries Agreement Scientific Coordinating Group Meeting." Press Release, March 23, 2023.
[387] Ibid.
[388] Inuit Circumpolar Council, "Circumpolar Inuit Protocols."
[389] Schatz, "Incorporation of Indigenous and Local Knowledge."

their delegations.[390] Although a huge step in the right direction, this agreement represents only one piece of a longer and ongoing effort.

Applying Lessons from Inuit Leadership to China's Arctic Ambitions

Though existing at different scales, including national, bilateral, and multilateral, the Tallurutiup Imanga NMCA, Pikialasorsuaq LOI, and the CAOFA all represent successes for the inclusion of Inuit priorities and leadership in Arctic governance. They highlight three key takeaways that can be applied to China's Arctic ambitions. First, they illustrate the ways in which Indigenous Peoples can be included as meaningful partners at all levels of Arctic governance and project development. Second, they show how Indigenous and local knowledge can be integrated into the same work. Lastly, they emphasize the need for the building of trusting and respectful relationships between parties, beyond specific projects and instrumental goals.

In all three case studies, though to different degrees, Inuit leaders were included in not only the development, but also implementation and monitoring of the agreements. Especially when looking at the Tallurutiup Imanga NMCA and the Pikialasorsuaq LOI, Inuit have taken a major role in the development, management, and implementation of the projects. This is due to the persistent and powerful advocacy, as well as research, of Inuit leaders and communities, but also the openness of nation-states in seeing these co-management strategies through. While not perfect, Canada and Denmark have shown commitment to reconciliation with Inuit by engaging in unprecedented agreements that facilitate collaboration between nation-states and Indigenous organizations. The Pikialasorsuaq LOI, more specifically its acknowledged intent for free cross-border mobility, is a significant step towards furthering Inuit sovereignty. In continuing to engage in the Arctic, China must mirror these behaviors, and approach Arctic Indigenous Peoples with openness and a desire to see their ambitions through. With issues such as resource extraction and shipping, China must be willing to compromise its own gain for the sake of the betterment of the lives of Arctic Indigenous Peoples. This could be through profit sharing or modifying their plans to accommodate local interests. Additionally, meaningful collaboration begins with community consultation, visible in both Tallurutiup Imanga and Pikialasorsuaq, which is something China would benefit from by bringing into its future projects in the Arctic.

[390] Ibid.

While all agreements were partially built on local and Indigenous Knowledge, the CAOFA is especially notable in that China is a signatory. The agreement mandates the inclusion of Indigenous and local knowledge in all activities related to the agreement, by all signed parties. Indigenous Knowledge is built through "long-term experiences and extensive and multigenerational observation, lessons and skills."[391] It has the ability to "identify research needs and be applied to them," and more generally give a holistic picture of the ever-changing Arctic.[392] To an extent, signing onto the CAOFA does show a commitment by China to be a responsible collaborator in the Arctic, by limiting short term projects for the sake of further research on and a deeper understanding of the region, as well as by working together with Indigenous Peoples and centering their knowledge. However, this cannot be seen as indefinite "proof" of positive intent especially as CAOFA is only the first known time that China has signed onto an agreement that obligates the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge in its implementation. Rather, it is a step in a positive direction for the future, and the nation should continue to move forward with similar steps - working *with* Indigenous Peoples to center their knowledge.

To the last point, in solidifying itself as a meaningful collaborator in the Arctic, China will need to put in long-term effort into relationship building, rooted in trust and respect. As the ICC emphasizes, "trust can take a long time to develop and can be easily and quickly lost,"[393] meaning that China will need to continuously build on its involvement in agreements like CAOFA moving into the future, hand in hand with other relationship building efforts. As aforementioned, getting community input in the development of Arctic projects, as well as collaborating with Indigenous Peoples and centering their knowledge are some steps needed to achieve this. However, additional work will have to occur outside of the region as well. China's understanding of indigeneity must shift, and its intent to support Indigenous Peoples broadly must be more formally affirmed. Addressing its domestic mistreatment of ethnic minorities will be necessary to facilitate this. How are they meant to have a foundational level of trust, if the state perpetuates neo-colonial violence within its own borders? Further, China must support Arctic Indigenous Peoples outside of the Arctic Council. As illustrated by the case studies,

[391] Inuit Circumpolar Council. "Ethical and Equitable Engagement Synthesis Report." 2022, 16.
[392] Ibid., 16.
[393] Inuit Circumpolar Council, "Circumpolar Inuit Protocols."

though the Arctic Council remains to be the primary institution of Arctic governance, as the region increasingly becomes a hub of international attention there may be agreements that come out of other spaces as well. China must continue to support Arctic Indigenous Peoples in other venues beyond the Arctic Council, such as the ICC within the IMO, something they have not done thus far. Lastly, China must alter its understanding of Indigenous Peoples in the North, and modify its Arctic Policy to fully acknowledge their right to sovereignty and self-determination, as outlined in the UNDRIP. This change could possibly help push China's understanding of sovereignty beyond nation-states, to extend towards Indigenous Peoples as well. Perhaps it may even facilitate increasing interaction and collaboration between the two sides.

Conclusion

Although China has not positioned itself in firm opposition to Arctic Indigenous Peoples, it remains unclear how the nation will or will not prioritize their engagement in its future Arctic endeavors. China must re-commit its ambitions with the ideals of collaboration it outlines in its Arctic Policy, not only with Arctic states, but also Arctic Indigenous Peoples. Drawing from the breadth of co-management and cooperative work conducted by Inuit leaders in the North American Arctic, will be paramount for China in strategizing how meaningful cooperation might be achieved. China need not be a colonial force in the Arctic. With continuous effort and respect it might be able to work towards the "win-win" outcomes in the region it desires.

Policy Recommendations

- Mirroring the work done by Inuit leaders in regards to the Tallurutiup Imanga NMCA and the Pikialasorsuaq LOA, developments in the Arctic should be mandated to have a period of community consultation before starting. These perspectives must be meaningfully accommodated, and integrated into said projects in all stages, from ideation to implementation and management.
- Developments and diplomatic agreements pertaining to the Arctic should be mandated to include Indigenous and local knowledge on an equal basis with Western science. These knowledge systems should be implemented through close collaboration with Indigenous Peoples, and should not be used without their participation.

- China should modify its 2018 Arctic Policy white paper to not only acknowledge the right of Indigenous Peoples to their cultures and traditions, but also to self-determination and sovereignty.

CHAPTER 10

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The Effects of Chinese and Russian Collaboration on Siberian Indigenous Peoples

Introduction

In light of warming Arctic temperatures and the proximity of China to Russia, unassumingly, these two states have developed strong economic ties to exploit the natural gas and oil reserves in Siberia in the past decade. China's oil expansion into Siberia has prompted discussion around the treatment of Indigenous Peoples and their right to self-determination to their traditional practices – such as reindeer herding. The difficulty for these communities is navigating the international sphere in a relatively remote area of the world. The infiltration of Chinese oil and gas deals within Russian resource extraction companies has produced roadblocks, but also awareness around the lack of communication between all parties included. For this reason, Chinese and Russian collaboration has had many effects on Arctic Indigenous communities, in cultural and economic settings.

This chapter considers China's domestic treatment of ethnic peoples as a case study for how we should consider their mistreatment of other ethnic groups and Siberian Indigenous groups. The second section will discuss Indigenous politics in Siberia in the context of Russian oil companies and the alterations of reindeer herder's livelihoods due to the increase in natural gas and oil extraction on the tundra. Then, the last section will review the Russian and Chinese collaborative impact of the extension onto Indigenous land by discussing the Kiruna Declaration, the 2012 Foreign Agent Law, and benefit sharing between Indigenous groups and oil companies.

1.1 Chinese Domestic Human Rights

China's oil expansion into Siberia has prompted discussion around the treatment of Indigenous People's right to self-determination and the threat to their livelihoods.[394] The concern

[394] "COP 28 'Transitional But Not Transformative' We Are at a Human Rights Tipping Point – ICC Chair | Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada," December 14, 2023. https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/news/cop-28-transitional-but-not-transformative-we-are-at-a-human-rights-tipping-point-icc-chair/.

for how China may interact with Indigenous Peoples stems from China's domestic treatment of their ethnic groups, most notably the Muslim minority Uyghurs in Northwest China. There is a genocide happening to these people perpetrated by the People's Republic of China (PRC) government because they do not follow cultural norms that have been put in place. This genocide includes not only forced labor, but also cultural genocide.[395] More traditional societies are at stake of being disregarded and maltreated by the Chinese government if they have these characteristics: individuality, being a member of a closed community, low or lack of social mobility, collective mindsets, the socialization for the most part through oral folk culture, oral transmission of knowledge, and the opposition of industrial society.[396] The factors are not distinct between Uyghurs and how China views Indigenous groups. To the Chinese government, traditional societies do not employ the features they value and are seen as negative, non-individualistic, and the most detrimental, the lack of industrial progress which is key to China's economic position in the world.[397]

1.1.1 Case Study – University of Washington student Vera Zhou

In a story very close to home, a former University of Washington student named Vera Zhou was able to relate a firsthand account of human rights abuses in China. She happens to be half ethnically Uyghur Muslim who came to the United States for high school and university education. However, on a trip back to China in October 2017 she was arrested and put into a camp with other ethnically Uyghur Muslims. The reason she was seen as a threat was because she had been using a VPN to access her University of Washington email. She was not charged with a crime and subsequently had no trial, yet a release date was never issued to her. In part because of her Professor, Daron Byler, a former professor at the University of Washington, he was able to work with the Chinese government to have her released. When she was, she recounted her observations. In the detention camp she was placed in was female only and surveilled all day every day. They were only allowed to speak Mandarin and the lights were

[395] Byler, Darren. "Surveillance, Data Police, and Digital Enclosure in Xinjiang's 'Safe Cities.'" In *Xinjiang Year Zero*, edited by Darren Byler, Ivan Franceschini, and Nicholas Loubere, 1st ed., 183–204. ANU Press, 2022. http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv28x2b9h.21.
[396] Reznikova, Ksenia V., Julia S. Zamaraeva, Anastasia V. Kistova, and Natalia N. Pimenova. "The Current State of Traditional Socio-Cultural Practices of Indigenous Peoples of the North (on the Example of Cultures of Selkups, Nenets, and Essey Yakuts)." *Department of Cultural Studies, Institute for the Humanities, Siberian Federal University*, n.d., 7. https://elib.sfu-kras.ru/handle/2311/69655
[397] Ibid.

never turned off. She suffered from insufficient amounts of food, beatings, and lack of bathrooms. She was released March 2018 and because of her accounts, it is possible to rationalize the fear that other Indigenous and ethnic minorities may feel with the knowledge that there is an extension of Chinese government officials controlling their land.[398]

1.1.1.1 Threat to livelihood and fear of genocide

In understanding how the Chinese government views traditional societies, including ethnic minorities domestically and Arctic Indigenous Peoples, the takeaway is that this mentality is a threat to their Arctic politics. Yet Arctic and Chinese relations have not always been negative. Historically there has been a tie between the Nenets People in Siberia through commercial exchange with Chinese traders. Velvet antler, a prized ingredient for traditional medicine in China and South-east Asia was one of the main trading products. In an explanation given by Florian Stammler, he described how another Indigenous group called the Yakuts, also in Siberia, have had an economic relationship with Chinese traders.[399] This is an important factor in the livelihood of the community because they are closer to China geographically, and when the USSR fell in 1989, there was a wave of Chinese immigration to Yakutsk, so now the community speaks Yakut rather than Chinese or Russian.[400] This is a rare instance in Indigenous/Chinese relations that stems from China signing the Svalbard Treaty in 1925. This treaty, signed in Norway, delineates the boundaries for shipping routes, fishing, and other industries as well as communication for those who signed and ratified the treaty. Even though the treaty does not include the Siberian Arctic, it was an introduction for Chinese Arctic policy.[401]

China's interest in the Arctic began formally in the 1980s with the foundation of two entities: the Polar Research Institute of China (PRIC) in 1989 and the Chinese Arctic and Antarctic Administration (CAA) in 1996. With their increasing involvement it was imperative that they respect the Indigenous way of life. This was put into words in the International Labor

[398] Byler. "Surveillance, Data Police, and Digital Enclosure in Xinjiang's 'Safe Cities.'" 183–204.
[399] Gaignard, Joaquim. "China, Circumpolar Indigenous People and the Colonial Past of the Arctic." The Arctic Institute - Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, November 1, 2022. https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/china-circumpolar-indigenous-people-colonial-past-arctic/.
[400] ibid
[401] "The Svalbard Treaty - The Faculty of Law." Accessed February 17, 2024. https://www.jus.uio.no/english/services/library/treaties/01/1-11/svalbard-treaty.html.

Organization Convention (ILO) no. 107 of 1957.[402] Unfortunately, they never ratified it. Then again, China voted in favor in 1994 for the resolution A/RES/49/151, specifically the "Importance of the universal realization of the right of Peoples to self-determination and of the speedy granting of independence to colonial countries and Peoples for the effective guarantee and observance of human rights."[403] Another case was China's vote for the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The loophole here is the fact that it is not binding since the UN General Assembly produced it and they are not a legal body.

The steps that China has taken to portray itself as favorable to Indigenous rights has consistently had exceptions and loopholes. Recently, China had delayed and now stopped their contact with the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) as we discussed in our meeting with the ICC President Lisa Koperqualuk.[404] There is a reduced and even reluctant engagement with Indigenous Peoples and most importantly in their Arctic relations, including a low attendance rate for meetings, and low submission rates for their reports to the Arctic Council Working Groups, even though this activity is required as an observer state.[405] Those in the Arctic who will be impacted the most by China's actions will be the Indigenous communities that live in close proximity to China, which are the Siberian Indigenous Peoples groups.

1.2 Indigenous Politics in Siberia

In discussing the Indigenous groups of Siberia, I will be focusing primarily on 1) the Nenets, 2) the Selkup, and 3) the Khanty, who are members of RAIPON. In Figure 1, all the Siberian Indigenous Groups lands are mapped.[406] All three of the groups I focus on are in the Yamal peninsula, where China and Russia have begun extracting oil and natural gas in a 'mutually beneficial' way. The Yamal Peninsula is denominated the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug (YaNAO) and is an important region for oil and is inhabited by one of the

[402] "Convention C107 - Indigenous and Tribal Populations Convention, 1957 (No. 107)." Accessed February 17, 2024. https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C107.
[403] Sess.: 1982-1983), UN General Assembly (37th. "Importance of the Universal Realization of the Right of Peoples to Self-Determination and of the Speedy Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples for the Effective Guarantee and Observance of Human Rights.," January 27, 1983. https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/40572.
[404] Lisa Koperqualuk, Meeting with Inuit Circumpolar Council, Ottawa, 1 February 2024
[405] Gaignard. "China, Circumpolar Indigenous People and the Colonial Past of the Arctic."
[406] "Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation." Association of Polar Early Career Scientists. Accessed February 17, 2024. https://www.apecs.is/research-archive/maps-of-indigenous-people-in-arctic/734-indigenous-peoples-of-the-north-siberia-and-the-far-east-of-the-russian-federation.html.

largest populations of Indigenous Peoples that far north in the Siberian Arctic. They are by trade reindeer herders and live a semi-nomadic lifestyle, though more and more are settling in villages partially funded by the Russian government or living in abandoned gulags.

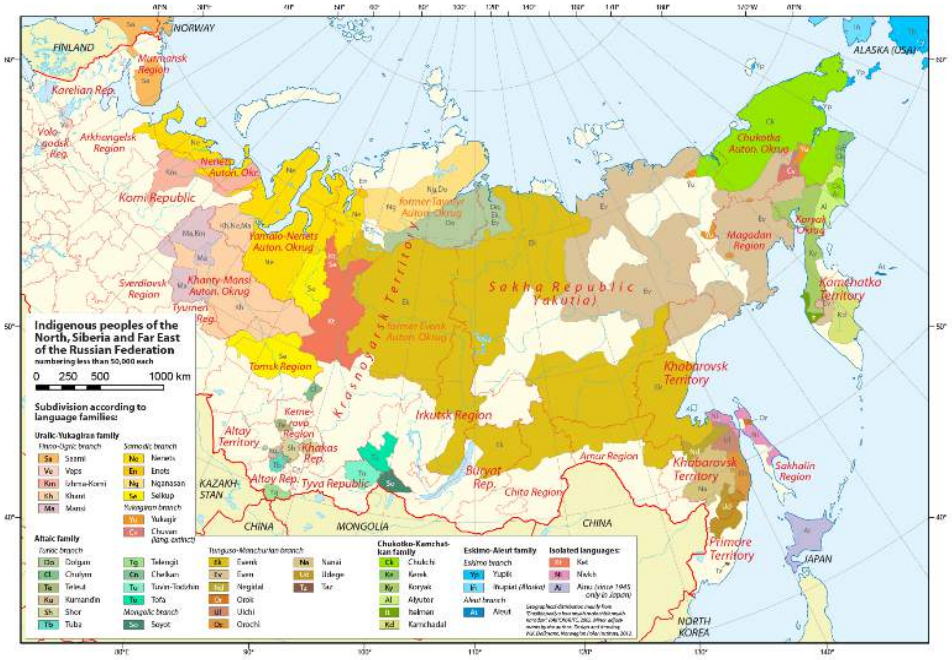

Figure 1. Map of Siberian Indigenous Groups[407]

Politically, Russia has established a law for the "territories of traditional nature use" (TTNU) yet none have been registered.[408] This is important considering that this shows the solidarization by Indigenous groups against the bureaucratic reach of the Russian government. In the following sections I will discuss why it is that there is a low rate of registration by Siberian Indigenous groups, whose reasons pertain to Russian domestic law.

1.2.1 Oil Companies

> "*Oil companies do not own the planet. I hope that you, who are going to drill in the Arctic, will think about your children and grandchildren, who will struggle for*

[407] Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia, and Far East of the Russian Federation, Association of Polar Early Career Scientist

[408] Tulaeva, Svetlana A., Maria S. Tysiachniouk, Laura A. Henry, and Leah S. Horowitz. "Globalizing Extraction and Indigenous Rights in the Russian Arctic: The Enduring Role of the State in Natural Resource Governance." *Resources* 8, no. 4 (December 2019): 179. https://doi.org/10.3390/resources8040179.

clean water, suffering from famine and crop failure. Look around. We live where the ice is thawing. We see the weather conditions change every year. A month hardly passes without some … damage done by rain, wind, or temperature. Look around you. We are here, where the water is getting warmer. People are losing their homes, their friends, their families."[409]

Oil and gas deposits are found primarily in two districts of YaNAO: Tazovsky and Yamalsky. These gas reserves have become relevant to Russia as they are 70% of all of Russia's gas reserves. In 2018 the region of YaNAO produced approximately 80% of all Russian gas. This translates to 20% of all the gas production worldwide and 433.5 billion m^3 of natural gas. Some of Russia's most prominent oil and gas companies are the following: Rosneft, Transneft, Novatek, Gazprom, Gaspromneft, Surgutneftegaz, and Lukoil. Due to the current developments of the ongoing War in Ukraine, perpetrated by the Russian Federation, these companies are all under US and EU sanctions. This, however, has not hindered their drilling and gas deals with China who has become an allied member of their search for gas in the Siberian Arctic.[410]

Figure 2. Existing and projected Russian pipelines in Siberia in relation to Chinese oil expansion projects[411]

[409] Tulaeva, Tysiachniouk, Henry, and Horowitz. "Globalizing Extraction and Indigenous Rights in the Russian Arctic: The Enduring Role of the State in Natural Resource Governance."
[410] Rehman, Maria. "Changing Contours of Arctic Politics and the Prospects for Cooperation between Russia and China." The Arctic Institute - Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, August 23, 2022. https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/changing-contours-arctic-politics-prospects-cooperation-russia-china/.
[411] Bernard, Steven "Existing and projected Russian pipelines in Siberia in relation to Chinese oil expansion projects." Petroleum Economist; Gazprom; FT research

China's involvement grew recently when the first delivery of liquified natural gas (LNG) arrived to China in July 2018. This came from a deal with Novatek and CNCP for 20% of the LNG drilled in the Yamal Peninsula. The initiative that created this possibility is the Polar Silk Road, a part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) under the Maritime Silk Road (MSR). BRI is an initiative that began in the early 2010's and gained traction most notably after the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 which secured the oil reserves of the Black Sea.[412] In figure 2 the BRI is visualized as well as all existing Russian pipelines in Siberia.[413] The settlement of businesses and non-Indigenous individuals in the Arctic has also been incentivized by the Russian Federation due to the strong ties that have been formed with China. The hope is to increase economic growth. As oil reserves are becoming limited in Russia, the Arctic provides a new economic prospect to be shared. A controversial opinion put out by the Russian government was its opposition to China becoming an observer state in the Arctic Council in 2013.[414] Despite Russia's initial opposition, now China has been an observer on the Arctic Council for over a decade and this status has helped to grow their economic relationship.

1.2.2 Reindeer Herders

By far, the most concerning aspect of the increase in oil extraction in the Arctic is the role it may play in changing reindeer migration routes, which are essential for the livelihood of the Indigenous Peoples. Global warming has exacerbated the damage, but the harm began much earlier on in the Soviet period when collective farms were enforced and Indigenous communities in the Arctic were subsidized with goods and services in return. Post-Soviet times have seen a shift towards compensation in return for land leases in oil expansion. As one resident described,

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[412] Chappell, Bill. "Russia Begins Sending Natural Gas To China As Putin And Xi Open New Pipeline." *NPR*, December 2, 2019, sec. Asia. https://www.npr.org/2019/12/02/784171826/russia-begins-sending-natural-gas-to-china-through-new-pipeline.
[413] Bernard, Steven. "Power of Siberia: China Keeps Putin Waiting on Gas Pipeline." Financial Times, May 25, 2023. https://www.ft.com/content/541f8bcb-118a-419e-869f-3273fcc9ce92.
[414] Rehman. "Changing Contours of Arctic Politics and the Prospects for Cooperation between Russia and China."

> "Lukoil-Komi pays compensation to Komi reindeer herders for damage to their territory, but only if the herding enterprise is registered and leases land in NAO where laws favor Indigenous leaseholders."[415]

In return, Indigenous groups that sign deals with oil companies receive funding for public health as is the case of the "krasnyi Chum" program that has been in effect since 2002. Now the law *On Territories of Traditional Nature Use of Indigenous Numerically Small Peoples of the North Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation* lays out a clear definition of economic associations. The requirements employ the consent from Indigenous Peoples as well as compensation for any damages that may occur. But it is important to note that oil development looks different in each village, for example in Nelmin-Nos, oil development is located far from reindeer grazing lands. This removes any direct compensation the reindeer herders might receive from oil companies, however, the funds provided to the NAO budget are still accessible to them.[416] On the other hand, in the region of Khorey-Ver, drilling has collided with grazing grounds and with only occasional informal infrastructural support. One resident in Korey-Ver described the dire situation as such: "We have only certain amount of biological resources. We are limited. That is, our current conditions do not allow us to increase the deer population for the reason that we do not have enough pasture land."[417]

One example is in relation to Nenets and their Erv reindeer cooperative that negotiates with oil companies and has the right to sell fur products. In this rare instance, the company requires the *written* legal consent from the herders for the use of their grazing lands for oil exploration and extraction, however this was not due to Russian law but rather to the herder's ability to negotiate.[418] The limitations of this are the lack of visibility on the part of gas companies and the continual struggle for representation by Indigenous communities. All was well until the tundra began to be negatively affected by the drilling, leaving the reindeer

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[415] Tysiachniouk, Maria, Laura A. Henry, Machiel Lamers, and Jan P. M. van Tatenhove. "Oil Extraction and Benefit Sharing in an Illiberal Context: The Nenets and Komi-Izhemtsi Indigenous Peoples in the Russian Arctic." *Society & Natural Resources* 31, no. 5 (May 4, 2018): 556–79. https://doi.org/10.1080/08941920.2017.1403666.
[416] Connolly, Kim Diana, Errol Meidinger, and Ezra B. W. Zubrow. "Resilience, Reindeer, Oil, and Climate Change: Challenges Facing the Nenets Indigenous People in the Russian Arctic Chapter 19." In *The Big Thaw: Policy, Governance, and Climate Change in the Circumpolar North*, 337–60. State University of New York Press, 2019. https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/163/oa_edited_volume/chapter/3130798.
[417] Tysiachniouk, Henry, Lamers, and van Tatenhove. "Oil Extraction and Benefit Sharing in an Illiberal Context: The Nenets and Komi-Izhemtsi Indigenous Peoples in the Russian Arctic."
[418] Connolly, Kim, Meidinger, and Zubrow. "Resilience, Reindeer, Oil, and Climate Change: Challenges Facing the Nenets Indigenous People in the Russian Arctic Chapter 19."

vulnerable and their pasture nutrition weakened. It is possible for herders and oil companies to have a mutually beneficial relationship, especially as with the example of the Nenets who have combined their efforts to improve their economic situation as well as the coexistence of Arctic gas development with their reindeer herds.[419]

1.3 Indigenous groups in Russia and the Chinese impact on their Land

RAIPON represents forty-one Indigenous groups or 250,000 people in Siberia, the majority located above the Arctic circle. Many of them, due to their reindeer herds, travel between lower Siberia and the Siberian Arctic circle. For this reason, the conservation of their land is imperative and oil expansion is a threat. As the Arctic Ocean opens due to loss of summertime sea ice, the Russian gas company Gazprom tested a shipment barge through the mostly ice-free waters and calculated the trade route to be 3000 nautical miles less than the Suez Canal Route.[420] The Russian government has voiced that it is possible that Indigenous Peoples will become an impediment to their attempts at resource extraction, not just with respect to oil.[421]

An important factor in resource extraction is the reindeer herding lands in Yamal. In this region, Nenet reindeer herders now inhabit the abandoned gulags and are now at threat of being displaced as the government seizes these abandoned lands. In August 2012, a collective of Indigenous Peoples supported a ban on oil production in the Arctic to maintain their land for traditional use, resulting in the Kiruna Declaration. The effects of this declaration were felt far and wide and provided a model for collaboration that had been previously absent for the Indigenous groups of Yamal.[422]

1.3.1 The Kiruna Declaration as a Model for Collaboration

The Kiruna Declaration, drafted by a collective of Indigenous Peoples in Siberia, demonstrated to the Russian Federation and to the world, their self-determination in relation to the increasing demand for resource extraction in the Arctic. In their statement they ask for there to be rules and regulations surrounding the opening Arctic Ocean due to climate change. It is in

[419] ibid
[420] NOAA Arctic. “Report Card 2023.” Accessed February 17, 2024. https://arctic.noaa.gov/report-card/report-card-2023/.
[421] Wallace, Ron. “The Case for RAIPON.” Canadian Global Affairs Institute, February 2013. https://www.cgai.ca/the_case_for_raipon.
[422] ibid

their hopes that the international world "recognize the important ongoing work in the International Maritime Organization to develop a mandatory Polar Code on shipping and decide to strengthen our collaboration in that work toward its expeditious completion…". And this does not mean closing off or eliminating the idea of drilling in the Siberian tundra. Instead, it was a welcoming statement with the intention of asking Observer states to adhere to such rules and regulations. "Welcome China, India, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea and Singapore as new Observer States, and take note of the adoption by Senior Arctic Officials of an Observer manual to guide the Council's subsidiary bodies in relation to meeting logistics and the roles played by Observers…"[423] In their delegation, the corresponding groups that formulated this declaration found it a struggle to combine their efforts since Russia had formerly banned the Arctic Permanent Participant group of RAIPON, due to the 2012 Foreign Agent Law. And this is a continuous struggle.

1.3.2 2012 Foreign Agent Law – Effects on RAIPON

2012 saw the foreclosure of many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Indigenous representative groups in Russia as the "Foreign Agent" law was put into place. The clause stated that any organization that received foreign funding would have to name itself a foreign agent based on the biannual financial audits.[424] In Russia this meant losing domestic recognition and not receiving federal funds, a necessity for many of these organizations. Considering that RAIPON is an international Indigenous organization and a Permanent Participant of the Arctic Council, they receive funds from the Arctic Council and other NGOs. Their loss of credibility and funding in Russia led to their ban to practice in the Russian Federation.[425] However, since RAIPON is a Permanent Participant, losing their recognition within Russia did not remove them from their position, and even though they lost a source of funding, the Arctic Council has kept them funded.

Since 2012, the Foreign Agent law has developed from its application of only pertaining to registered organizations to now encompass media as well as other categories that do not have to have any legal association. These subsequent Foreign Agent laws were implemented on

[423] "Kiruna Declaration (2013)," 2013. http://hdl.handle.net/11374/93.
[424] Wallace. "The Case for RAIPON."
[425] ibid

December 1, 2022. The striking difference between the implementation of this law in 2012 and in 2022 is the new regulations barring any person or organization deemed a "foreign agent" from participating in politics, including electoral candidates. Therefore, representation continues to be increasingly limited for Indigenous groups, who are represented by RAIPON, therefore left incapable of representing themselves domestically within Russia.[426]

1.3.3 Benefit Sharing – Indigenous Cooperation and Advocacy with Oil Companies

Relations between Indigenous Peoples, their lands, and the practice and potential for resource extraction requires that there be compensation for any negative impacts, such as oil spills. However, this does not justify the harm. Oil companies have allocated sections of their budget to fund housing, schools, churches, and hospitals in the far reaches of Arctic Siberia for those communities who have signed deals with them. Without contracts, other districts are kept at a disadvantage from receiving these funds. The key theme in these negotiations is the preservation of Indigenous culture if the government can benefit from these negotiations in the economic sector. Negotiations also tend to be one-sided, disregarding the actual needs of the people. And many of these Indigenous groups are nomadic, they move with their reindeer herds and therefore do not benefit from village infrastructure since they remain unregistered as TTNUs, therefore they lack government recognition.[427]

According to Russian law, to implement an industrial project, public hearings and consultations with residents must first take place. Yet resource extraction companies, primarily oil and gas companies, are not required by law to follow up or even adhere to the suggestions presented by the established communities and groups. Another factor is the inaccessibility of these meetings, usually taking place during times of the year or in places that are too far away to travel to without putting their herd or village in a vulnerable position.[428] At this point, the involvement in the international movement for awareness around Indigenous identity has been a

[426] "Russia: New Restrictions for 'Foreign Agents' | Human Rights Watch," December 1, 2022. https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/12/01/russia-new-restrictions-foreign-agents.
[427] Connolly, Meidinger, and Zubrow. "Resilience, Reindeer, Oil, and Climate Change: Challenges Facing the Nenets Indigenous People in the Russian Arctic Chapter 19." 337–60.
[428] Tulaeva, Tysiachniouk, Henry, Horowitz. "Globalizing Extraction and Indigenous Rights in the Russian Arctic: The Enduring Role of the State in Natural Resource Governance."

huge advantage, however efforts have been continuously disregarded and shut down for the benefit of resource extraction.[429]

The argument around benefit sharing is the greater wellbeing and economic growth for Indigenous communities. Russia and China have illiberal political systems that abuse economic and social inequality for the benefit of those in the higher portion of the hierarchy, leaving citizens abused in their rights. Three factors have allowed mobilization in benefit sharing throughout the Russian Federation. The first is the allowance for variation of legality at the regional level, much like our state laws in relation to our federal laws. The second factor is the understanding that most of the Indigenous mobilization on the part of RAIPON happened before the 2012 Foreign Agent Law was implemented. And the third factor is the alliances that activists have formed globally with other NGOs by not registering domestically. Although this limits federal funding, their resources are better increased globally. Forms of benefit-sharing that are employed are taxation, production-sharing agreements, socioeconomic agreements, and the provision of infrastructure such as the support for social services.[430]

Summary

From the projected intentions that China has in the Arctic, their history in the treatment of ethnic minorities, and the economic collaboration with Russia in the natural gas and oil industry, it is clear that Chinese expansion of activity in the Arctic will have negative effects on Indigenous Peoples that inhabit the Siberian Arctic circle.[431] The primary livelihood of people living in Siberia is reindeer herding which is being significantly affected by the drilling of the tundra. This drilling leads to changes in migration routes of reindeer and affects the land by degrading its surface quality and creating a more vulnerable environment for the fauna who have a decreasing food supply.

Today, Russian oil companies are suffering under the sanctions and pressures from the US and the EU due to the 2022 War in Ukraine and have also found their natural gas and oil

[429] Connolly, Meidinger, and Zubrow. "Resilience, Reindeer, Oil, and Climate Change: Challenges Facing the Nenets Indigenous People in the Russian Arctic Chapter 19." 337–60.
[430] Tysiachniouk, Henry, Lamers, van Tatenhove. "Oil Extraction and Benefit Sharing in an Illiberal Context: The Nenets and Komi-Izhemtsi Indigenous Peoples in the Russian Arctic."
[431] "Full Text: China's Arctic Policy." Accessed February 22, 2024. https://english.www.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2018/01/26/content_281476026660336.htm.

reserves decreasing. For this reason, their expansion into the Arctic, especially the Yamal Peninsula is imperative. However, Russia did not begin drilling there because of the war. This has been an ongoing process for many years. China's oil and gas deals with Russia began in the early 2010s, and since then, their encroaching interest led China to become an observer state of the Arctic, a decision Russia strongly opposed.

Today Chinese and Indigenous Peoples negotiate on oil extraction, and they use a new method of cooperation called benefit sharing. In this scenario, Indigenous groups in Russia are left with no choice but to sign deals with oil companies for the use of their land in exchange for guaranteed infrastructure for their communities. In the case that they don't sign any contract, they are disregarded by the federal Russian government and by Chinese and Russian officials active in the drilling territory. However, through collaborative representation and the continual effort of the Arctic Council and RAIPON, there is a greater chance that there will be a mobilizing force against the encroaching Chinese resource extraction in the Arctic. Advocacy by Indigenous groups must start domestically and targeted toward the Russian government and their oil companies. The Kiruna Declaration provided a strong, beginning voice for this movement and it is likely that similar efforts will be produced in the footsteps of future generations.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have tried to bring clarity on the domestic human rights abuses of the ethnic Muslim minority Uyghur population in Northeast China as a case study for how the Chinese government views and treats ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples. Given this, there is concern justifiable for the treatment of Arctic Indigenous Peoples of Arctic Siberia as Chinese influence and activity in resource extraction increases. By understanding the Indigenous politics of Siberia and organizational efforts at representation, despite the roadblocks implemented by the Russian government, it is clear that Indigenous leadership is necessary to maintain their livelihood. There will be compromises, such as use of benefit sharing and negative environmental impacts, but the Arctic Council remains strong and fit for the support of RAIPON.

Policy Recommendations

- Founding a Task Force of representatives of all countries in the Arctic Council and all Permanent Participants that can assess and monitor China's involvement in Arctic resource extraction.[432]
- Indigenous Groups who are displaced or whose reindeer herds are affected by nutrition depletion of the tundra, should receive monetary compensation in relation to the damages caused. In turn, these financial benefits could be used to provide infrastructure or cover the cost of transportation for Indigenous groups to make the trip to convene and discuss their self-determination.[433]
- The Russian government should not seize abandoned gulags from reindeer herders who use them as shelters during reindeer migrations.[434]

[432] Arctic Council. "Arctic Council Observers." Accessed February 23, 2024. https://arctic-council.org/about/observers/.
[433] Connolly, Kim, Meidinger, and Zubrow. "Resilience, Reindeer, Oil, and Climate Change: Challenges Facing the Nenets Indigenous People in the Russian Arctic Chapter 19."
[434] Wallace. "The Case for RAIPON."

SECTION V:

Impact of a Changing Arctic on Indigenous Communities

The fifth section will analyze different ways in which changes in the Arctic have impacted Indigenous communities. Chapter 11 focuses on Russia's increased militarization in the Kola Peninsula, and how this has impacted the Russian Sámi. Chapter 12 analyzes how current social-cultural changes, past colonialism, and climate change have led to a mental health crisis in Inuit youth.

CHAPTER 11

FAITH TORLAI

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The Kola Peninsula: Russia's Militarized Hinge and Home of the Russian Sámi

Introduction

Over the past two decades, Arctic states have increased their military presence in the Arctic in preparation for a more accessible Arctic caused by the loss of summertime sea ice.[435] The Russian Federation especially has begun to shift their military presence northwards to the Kola Peninsula, which has become the primary site for Arctic operations, revitalizing Soviet-era bases and missile carriers to prepare for newer and more devastating payloads.[436] In conjunction with the changing landscape, the 2022 War in Ukraine unprecedentedly changed the political scope of the Arctic by prompting Russia to collaborate more with Chinese interests and to shift European and North American relations with Russia. In response to both the changing climate conditions and greater tensions with Russia, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member states seek to support greater Arctic presence, citing security concerns.[437] Increased Arctic activity takes place on the ancestral lands of Indigenous Peoples and dramatically affects these communities through environmental changes, the viewing of their lands as a new area of interest for military purposes, and disproportionate conscription of Russian Indigenous Peoples into the Russian military.

I will start this chapter by laying out Russia's recent military developments in the Arctic. I will discuss notable Soviet-era revitalizations of bombers, as well as new ballistic missiles and carriers that have already been developed or are soon to be completed. With the expansion of military resources, the chapter will then discuss how the Kola Peninsula houses these resources and comprises major Russian defense strategies. Then, I will describe two recent developments

[435] "Arctic Sea Ice Minimum Extent", *Global Climate Change: Vital Signs of the Planet*, National Aeronautics and Space Administration Jet Propulsion Laboratory (2024), https://climate.nasa.gov/vital-signs/arctic-sea-ice/#:~:text=Summer%20Arctic%20sea%20ice%20extent,covered%20in%20ice)%20each%20September.
[436] Wall, Colin, and Wegge, Njord, "The Russian Arctic Threat: Consequences of the Ukraine War", *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (2023), https://www.csis.org/analysis/russian-arctic-threat-consequences-ukraine-war.
[437] "'Arctic remains essential to NATO's Deterrence and Defence Posture', says Chair of the NATO Military Committee", *North Atlantic Treaty Organization* (2023), https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_219529.htm.

regarding Russia: the country's greater opening to Chinese collaboration and the depletion of Russian ground forces due to their expenditure in the War in Ukraine, largely leaving the Northern Fleet untouched for Arctic purposes. Finally, this chapter will conclude with a focus on the Sámi—the Indigenous People of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia.[438] In addition to not having the right to speak out and communicate with other organizations and governments, the Russian Sámi communities are disproportionately conscripted to fight in Ukraine,[439] and within their communities, this disproportionate conscription risks destroying the Russian Sámi way of life. All Arctic states, as well as non-Arctic states who wish to use the Arctic to advance their own goals must consider the Indigenous populations they would be impacting. In the scope of a melting and militarizing Arctic, both nation states and Indigenous communities stand to benefit from collaboration and in development that follows Indigenous priorities.

Russian Military Revitalization and Arms Concentration

The loss of sea ice and the intensification of NATO's eastern front presents the Arctic as an increasingly important sphere of influence and interaction, consequently making the region more important for defense for Arctic states. Though there is no reason now for weapons to be utilized in the Arctic, positioning military resources in Arctic states' northern regions both secures one front of access and makes the north of other Arctic states vulnerable because of the shorter distances that missiles would need to cross. Due to climate change severely affecting the Arctic, Russia now acknowledges that sea ice no longer acts as a natural border in the Arctic.[440] In preparation for this greater accessibility, Russia's militarization of the Arctic has expanded in recent years, which has been shown through the Center for Strategic and International Studies' "Arctic Military Activity Tracker." This demonstrates activities by nation states in the Arctic and summarizes Russia's past decade as "revitalized Soviet-era bases, deployed missile defense systems, invested in domain awareness capabilities, increased aerial and maritime patrols, and

[438] Saprunova, Natalya, "Russia's Sami fight to save their language and traditions – photo essay", *The Guardian* (2022), https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2022/jul/07/russias-sami-fight-to-save-their-language-and-traditions-photo-essay.
[439] Ivanova, Polina, Seddon, Max, and Hall, Ben, "'We're minor losses': Russia's mobilization targets ethnic minorities", *The Financial Times* (2022), https://www.ft.com/content/ae06c532-e1ff-488a-b77c-cb93422d3dd7.
[440] Boulègue, Mathieu, "The Militarization of Russian Polar Politics", *Chatham House*, The Royal Institute of International Affairs (2022), https://www.chathamhouse.org/2022/06/militarization-russian-polar-politics/02-european-arctic-kola-bastion-and-high-north.

stepped up its exercise schedule."[441] Many vehicles and bases that the Russian Federation is currently upgrading are from the Soviet era, as they prepare to hold newer weapons that would yield high levels of destruction if launched. For example, the Tu-95 Bomber (also known as the Bear) was born in the Cold War to match the United States' aerial capabilities.[442] Although the bomber is not stealthy and may be nearing its end in the Soviet military due to recent accidents, over fifty Tu-95s are still used today because of their ability to make long distance trips while carrying a heavy payload that could include recently developed missiles, the more concerning aspect of militarization. One such missile is the Zircon (3M22 Tsirkon), a hypersonic cruise missile developed by Russia that can reach speeds of Mach 9—a speed that would "likely create a cloud of plasma around the missile, absorbing any radio waves and making the missile virtually invisible to radars", increasing the likelihood of getting past existing naval defenses.[443] This missile would be launched from submarines or surface ships with the goal of destroying other ships within a medium range (1000 km). These missiles are housed on battlecruisers and submarines docked at Murmansk in the Kola Peninsula, a strategic location should Russia decide to fire on members of NATO in Europe and North America. While the vehicles largely come from old models, the weapons stem from newer projects with destructive capabilities.

Submarines are and will continue to be an integral part of military activity in the Arctic due to their role in subversive military movements and with the disappearance of sea ice, more boats entering the Arctic will encourage more submarine surveillance. As Russia is the greatest land and coastal boundary of the Arctic, naval capability is important to them. They command an estimated fifty-eight submarines, making their fleet the largest in the world.[444] This number includes eleven nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines and nine nuclear-powered missile submarines. These vessels' primary function would be to house missiles. One great fear of strategists is the possible use of a devastating new type of torpedo, known as the "Poseidon". With the potential to cause radioactive floods and destroy coastal cities, this nuclear-powered underwater drone was revealed in 2015 as an "evolution in Russia's nuclear deterrence

[441] "Arctic Military Activity Tracker".
[442] Roblin, Sebastien, "Russia's Tu-95 Bear Is a Monster You Never Want to See", *The National Interest* (2021), https://nationalinterest.org/blog/reboot/russias-tu-95-bear-monster-you-never-want-see-197942.
[443] "3M22 Tsirkon Russian Medium-Range Cruise Missile", *OE Data Integration Network* (2024), https://odin.tradoc.army.mil/WEG/Asset/48609a8b43e30add4007fe88313b2116.
[444] "Russia Submarine Capabilities", *Nuclear Threat Initiative* (2024), https://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/russia-submarine-capabilities/.

strategy."[445] It is unconfirmed whether the Poseidon is real or a propaganda scheme to cause psychological and political pressure, but experts generally agree on the torpedo's existence and development. The United States generally recognizes the Poseidon's development, which may consequently increase American wariness of Russia's submarine fleet and its primary base: the Kola Peninsula.[446]

Figure 1: Russian Military Installations in the Arctic[447]

The Kola Peninsula plays a key role in Russia's modernization and revitalization of its Arctic military, as well as in Russia's military broadly. As NATO's alliance creates pressure on the border with Russia, the peninsula also presents the opportunity to access the strategically important GIUK Gap (Greenland-Iceland-United Kingdom Gap), which splits the Arctic from the Northern Atlantic Ocean.[448] Resulting from this focus, the Kola Peninsula has become one of the most heavily militarized areas in the world because of its status as the most accessible part of

[445] Kaur, Silky. "One nuclear-armed Poseidon torpedo could decimate a coastal city. Russia wants 30 of them", *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (2023), https://thebulletin.org/2023/06/one-nuclear-armed-poseidon-torpedo-could-decimate-a-coastal-city-russia-wants-30-of-them/.
[446] "Poseidon Class (Kanyon Class) Russian Unmanned Underwater Vehicle", *OE Data Integration Network* (2024), https://odin.tradoc.army.mil/WEG/Asset/Poseidon_Class_(Kanyon_Class)_Russian_Unmanned_Underwater_Vehicle.
[447] Wall, Colin, and Wegge, Njord, "Russian Arctic Military Installations" (2023), "The Russian Arctic Threat: Consequences of the Ukraine War", *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, https://www.csis.org/analysis/russian-arctic-threat-consequences-ukraine-war.
[448] Bermudez, Joseph S, Conley, Heather, and Melino, Matthew, "The Ice Curtain: Modernization on the Kola Peninsula", *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (2020), https://www.csis.org/analysis/ice-curtain-modernization-kola-peninsula.

the Russian Arctic.[449] The Gulf Stream brings warm water up to the Kola Peninsula and keeps the Port of Murmansk from freezing year-round, making it the only Russian port in the Arctic that stays unfrozen throughout the year.[450] These conditions are favorable for a naval base and make it the ideal location for Russia to situate its military capabilities in the Arctic. Highlighting its natural suitability for the role, Russia recently revitalized the Murmansk-based Northern Fleet to protect the emerging Northern Sea Route, which would be a cost-effective trade route due to saved distance and time.[451] As the climate warms in the Arctic, Russia turns its eye northward to prepare to control such trading routes and protect its authority through armed means. Additionally, the growing importance of this northern position is seen in Russia's recent creation of a new military district (OSK Sever, or Joint Strategic Command Sever) to better manage the Northern Fleet as a joint-level strategic command.[452]

The Kola Peninsula has become an integral part to Russia's future economic and political readiness in the Arctic region and is incorporated in several defense techniques. One strategy, called Bastion, is a newer and emerging anti-access defense strategy that protects the submarines of the Northern Fleet and the access to the Atlantic.[453] The Kola Peninsula also plays a key role on Russia's perimeter as part of the "Dead Hand" strategy. Established in the Cold War, "Dead Hand" ensures that the "Soviet Union could respond to a nuclear first strike, even if Russia's armed forces were destroyed and all its leadership was eliminated."[454] Russia holds that their military build-up is strictly defensive, although they are loaded with Kalibr-K missiles: a land attack cruise missile in service since 2015 with a range of 1500-2000 km that has the potential to carry a nuclear payload.[455] The Kola Peninsula is key as both a cornerstone of defensive

[449] Luzin, Gennady P, Pretes, Michael, and Vasiliev, Vladimir, "The Kola Peninsula: Geography, History and Resources", *Arctic Institute of North America* (1994), 7, https://www.jstor.org/stable/40511525.
[450] "Russian North", *Arctic Portal* (2024), https://arcticportal.org/shipping-portlet/hub-ports/russia.
[451] Ahmad, Shaheer, and Zafar, Mohammad Ali, "Russia's Reimagined Arctic in the Age of Geopolitical Competition", *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs,* Air University, United States Air Force (2022), https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/JIPA/Display/Article/2959221/russias-reimagined-arctic-in-the-age-of-geopolitical-competition/.
[452] Boulègue, Mathieu, "The Militarization of Russian Polar Politics".
[453] Hestvik, Geir Arne, "Combined Joint Operations from the Sea Centre of Excellence: Conflict 2020 and Beyond: A Look at the Russian Bastion Defence Strategy", Royal Canadian Navy (2024), http://www.cjoscoe.org/infosite/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Conflict-2020-and-Beyond_A-Look-at-the-Russian-Bastion-Defence-Strategy.pdf.
[454] Kaur, Silky. "One nuclear-armed Poseidon torpedo could decimate a coastal city. Russia wants 30 of them".
[455] Garamone, Jim, "DOD Establishes Arctic Strategy and Global Resilience Office", U.S Department of Defense (2022), https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3171173/dod-establishes-arctic-strategy-and-global-resilience-office/.

strategies but also as the base of the Northern Fleet, an operation largely unaffected by the War in Ukraine.

Turning to New Allies

Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine has exhausted its military and forced Russia to turn eastward for necessary investments, opening up to non-Arctic nations who wish to access the Arctic through Russia.[456] China, Russia's neighbor, already has Antarctic research stations through signing the Antarctic Treaty, but China does not have direct access to the Arctic because it is not an Arctic Nation State.[457] Currently focused on exploiting gas and oil in Siberia, Russia requires Chinese investment to develop its energy field.[458] Energy, which is a major export of Russia, is critical to the Russian and Chinese positioning in the Arctic and serves as a main motivator for the development of the Russian Arctic.[459] The War in Ukraine exacerbates the worsening tensions between Russia and the West, thus pressuring Russia to increasingly turn to China and in the process provide Chinese access to the Arctic and exploration.

The U.S government, as well as other members in NATO, has expressed skepticism that China's activity in the region is purely scientific and economic. For example, China's view that "the Arctic situation goes beyond its original inter-Arctic States or regional nature, having a vital bearing on the interests of States outside the region and the interests of the international community as a whole" has potential for the future establishment of bases that could serve military purposes.[460] China's assertion that all states have a right to engage in the Arctic gives itself outside sovereignty over the Arctic Ocean. In believing that the Arctic Ocean is an international space that all nations should have access to, China justifies current and future involvement and exploitation. The U.S Army believes that this stance allows China to justify their "presence in the high North" and potentially using "military means" to defend its

[456] Wall, Colin, and Wegge, Njord, "The Russian Arctic Threat: Consequences of the Ukraine War".
[457] "Science and Operations", Secretariat of the Antarctic Treaty (2024), https://www.ats.aq/e/science.html.
[458] Sharma, Anu, "China's Polar Silk Road: Implications for the Arctic Region", *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs*, Air University, United States Air Force (2021), https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/JIPA/Display/Article/2820750/chinas-polar-silk-road-implications-for-the-arctic-region/.
[459] Chen, Chuan, "China-Russia Arctic Cooperation in the Context of a Divided Arctic", *Center for Circumpolar Security Studies,* The Arctic Institute (2023), https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/china-russia-arctic-cooperation-context-divided-arctic/.
[460] "China's Arctic Policy", The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China (2018), https://english.www.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2018/01/26/content_281476026660336.htm.

interests.[461]

The Arctic Ocean as a new shipping route draws interest from China and many other states, as seen by the growing number of Observer States on the Arctic Council.[462] In preparation for further Arctic involvement, China has expanded its icebreaker fleet.[463] Chinese access through Russia has already seen evidence of military activity. In September 2022, Chinese and Russian warships conducted a joint exercise in the Bering Sea.[464] As climate change alters the Arctic landscape, it is not unreasonable to assume additional militaristic activity like this will continue, even as questions are raised about the state of Russia's military due their expenditure in the War in Ukraine.

In addition to turning from the West in a search for allies and investors, the War in Ukraine has forced Russia to draw on military stores elsewhere to continue a front on Ukraine.[465] The most heavily affected has been the ground fleet, as much of the invasion of Ukraine is happening over land. Although Russia trails behind NATO in aerial capabilities, the lack of exhaustion of Russia's naval and nuclear capabilities is noteworthy.[466] The maritime aspect of Russia's military is still strong, especially from the Northern Fleet which has largely been untouched by the War in Ukraine. The Northern Fleet's largely unspent numbers are especially concerning when taking into account that the Northern Fleet houses 2/3 of Russia's naval nuclear strike force, with the rest remaining in the Pacific Fleet.[467] Russia's position is situated to aim at the United States and Canada, and the European member states of NATO are within close range of the Kola Peninsula. Russia's depletion of other forces for its invasion has invited glances into its economy, which has become entirely dependent on wartime manufacturing. The war has stimulated some aspects of the Russian economy, making unemployment in Russia hit a record low of under 3% in November 2023 (down from around 4% the previous two years) and

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[461] "Regaining Arctic Dominance", Department of the Army (2021), 16, https://www.army.mil/e2/downloads/rv7/about/2021_army_arctic_strategy.pdf.
[462] "Arctic Council Observers: List of Arctic Council Observers", *Arctic Council*, (2024), https://arctic-council.org/about/observers/.
[463] "National Strategy for the Arctic Region", The White House (2022), 6, https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/National-Strategy-for-the-Arctic-Region.pdf.
[464] Gronholt-Pedersen, Jacob, and Fouche, Gwladys, "Dark Arctic: NATO allies wake up to Russian supremacy in the region", *Reuters* (2022), https://www.reuters.com/graphics/ARCTIC-SECURITY/zgvobmblrpd/.
[465] Wall, Colin, and Wegge, Njord, "The Russian Arctic Threat: Consequences of the Ukraine War".
[466] Wall, Colin, and Wegge, Njord, "The Russian Arctic Threat: Consequences of the Ukraine War".
[467] Boulègue, Mathieu, "Russia's Military Posture in the Arctic", *Chatham House*, The Royal Institute of International Affairs (2019), https://www.chathamhouse.org/2019/06/russias-military-posture-arctic/2-perimeter-control-around-bastion.

bumping its GDP growth up to 2.3%.[468] However, the intense internal demand of the arms sector's products makes this kind of growth only sustainable should a country continue to be at war.

Matching Russia's Military

The warming Arctic encourages investment in Arctic infrastructure and defense by Arctic states. Particularly the United States' military institutions are beginning to perceive the Arctic as a new frontier for military operations. Along with Russia and China, the United States sees the Arctic as a future arena of security and economic opportunity.[469] With the view that the Arctic is a potential security risk but will also see more civilian activity, the United States seeks to increase research, conduct regular military exercises, enhance military operations, reinforce existing mechanisms such as UNCLOS, and build up stable infrastructure.[470] Surveillance software is a major concern of the NATO member states as submarine activity increases in the area. Canada has pledged to upgrade an early warning radar system with Northern American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), which they collaborate on with the United States, and develop new surveillance planes to help detect submarines.[471] Currently, the Arctic is surveyed with few surveillance resources, making detection of threats in this area especially difficult. As a result, Norway launched two satellites in 2023 and plans to launch two more in 2024 to help survey the Arctic. Although Norway does cooperate with Russia, with regards to surveillance technology that cooperation between Norway and Russia is not strong. Norway refuses to host NATO bases and to conduct exercises but is a valuable member in creating a united NATO front.[472] Arctic states are preparing for vastly different conditions in the Arctic, and as Russia

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[468] Luzin, Pavel, and Prokopenko, Alexandra, *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, (2023), https://carnegieendowment.org/politika/90753.
"Russia: Unemployment rate from September 2020 to November 2023", Statista, (2024), https://www.statista.com/statistics/277043/monthly-unemployment-rate-in-russia/.
[469] "National Strategy for the Arctic Region", 6.
[470] "A Blue Arctic", Department of the Navy, U.S National Ice Center (2021), 15, https://media.defense.gov/2021/Jan/05/2002560338/-1/-1/0/ARCTIC%20BLUEPRINT%202021%20FINAL.PDF/ARCTIC%20BLUEPRINT%202021%20FINAL.PDF.
[471] Gronholt-Pedersen, Jacob, and Fouche, Gwladys, "Dark Arctic: NATO allies wake up to Russian supremacy in the region".
[472] Josefsen, Björn, "Is the War in Ukraine Affecting Norway's Security Situation", *European Security and Defence* (2022) https://euro-sd.com/2022/10/articles/27552/is-the-war-in-ukraine-affecting-norways-security-situation-during-the-cold-war-norways-northernmost-county-finnmark-was-along-with-turkey-one-of-the-only-land-areas-in-nato-that-h/.

will soon likely be the only non-NATO state on the Arctic Council (Sweden is still waiting confirmation), the defense of the other Arctic states often coincides with NATO goals. Defense of the Arctic is an increasingly important element for Arctic states in the wake of intensifying tensions between NATO and Russia.

The Sámi People of Russia

Caught up in this militarization are the Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic whose ancestral land is a major location for Russian military development. Compared to Russia, many states engaged in the Arctic include the Indigenous perspectives and rights into their approaches. An understanding of Indigenous human and ancestral rights is critical in addressing militarization in the Arctic, notably through Indigenous environmental knowledge, which includes ways to adapt to changing conditions. Along these lines, the United States' Army vows to "consider the knowledge of "[I]ndigenous populations' to improve Arctic expertise" and to "recognize their equities."[473] The Navy also views the "displacement of people and wildlife" as a threat and wants to "ensure [their] planning efforts are integrated with local, state, federal, and [I]ndigenous communities."[474] Canada's Arctic Policy is similar, seeking to "ensure that the framework respects Inuit rights and that an Inuit Nunangat approach is utilized in the development and implementation of federal policies and programs."[475]

On the other side of the Atlantic, the Sámi people, the only Indigenous People within the European Union (EU) area, interact with Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. As with many Indigenous groups, the Sámi have formed into separate parliaments based on the country they fall under, which conglomerate into the Sámi Council.[476] While the Sámi of Norway, Sweden, and Finland have been given political and protective status, the small population of Sámi in Russia have moved to create a Sámi Parliament for those of the Kola Peninsula, but it is not recognized by the Russian government, nor does it have any internet presence that would allow it to connect to international organizations and voice concerns.[477]As the militarization of the Kola

[473] "Regaining Arctic Dominance", 41.
[474] "A Blue Arctic", 16.
[475] "Arctic and Northern Policy Framework", Government of Canada" (2022), https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1560523306861/1560523330587.
[476] "About the Saami Council" (2024), https://www.saamicouncil.net/en/the-saami-council.
[477] "Neil Robinson", Sami Studies, University of Michigan Library Research Guides (2024), https://guides.lib.umich.edu/c.php?g=637893&p=4985648.

Peninsula falls on ancestral Sámi lands, Sámi from all countries are worried about the effects that militarization will have on the Indigenous communities.

Valentina Sovkina, a Russian Sámi, described her homeland as a "fragile environment", and that "any interference or development has its risks."[478] The build-up of nuclear technology has the potential for a devastating nuclear disaster that would ruin their homelands, and the paving of infrastructure for military purposes can threaten this fragile place. Russian closure to Sámi goals is blatant from a policy standpoint, as well. In September 2023, Russia withdrew from the Barents Council, an intergovernmental collaboration in the Barents Region, consequently also withdrawing the Russian Indigenous Peoples.[479] In 2007, Russia abstained from the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, a troubling public declaration not just for the Sámi, but for all Indigenous Peoples in Russia.[480] Furthermore, the Sámi struggle to demonstrate legal ownership of their land, opening up the possibility for Russia to seize the territory for further military development. The current state of the Sámi in Russia is a human rights issue, perpetuated by the Russian government with the aim of minimizing the Sámi voice.

Further problematized by the War in Ukraine and its consequences, the small Sámi population of the Kola Peninsula (about 2,000 out of about 75,000 Sámi[481]) have suffered due to restriction of movement and disproportionate drafting into the Russian military. In response to the War in Ukraine, NATO members and allies have closed their borders to Russia as security measures and as imposed sanctions. Unfortunately, the Sámi have been severely affected by the border closings. They are cut off from their kin in Norway, Sweden, and Finland physically, as well as politically as seen in Russia's withdrawal from the Barents Council.[482] One crossing is open in Norway, at Storskog, but the stricter monitoring and tighter measures are harmful to the Sámi transboundary way of life.

Lopenen, Suvi, "Local governance among the EU's only Indigenous nation – the Sami people", *Local Government Information Unit* (2023), https://lgiu.org/local-governance-among-the-eus-only-indigenous-nation-the-sami-people/.

[478] Arteau, Jean François, and Kesserwan, Karina, "Valentina Sovkina: Sami Politician and Culture Protector from the Kola Peninsula", Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington (2016),

[479] Edvardsen, Astri, "Russia Out of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council: 'Cooperation with the Sámi on the Russian Side Is Severely Affected by Russia's War", *High North News* (2023),https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/cooperation-sami-russian-side-severely-affected-russias-war.

[480] "Indigenous peoples in Sápmi", International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (2024), https://www.iwgia.org/en/sapmi.html.

[481] "Indigenous peoples in Sápmi".

[482] "Russia's war is splitting the indigenous Sami in two", The Economist (2024), https://www.economist.com/europe/2024/01/18/russias-war-is-splitting-the-indigenous-sami-in-two.

Indigenous men are disproportionately recruited to the army because of the classification as jobless by the state.[483] The Sámi people's traditional work is reindeer herding, which requires covering large expanses of land, and hunting. These types of roles are considered "not work" for Russian federal purposes, and such a classification leads to easier conscription into the Russian Armed Forces, many of whom end up in Ukraine. Professor Sarah Sokhey from the University of Colorado at Boulder has a proposition for addressing the state pressures and unemployment: to incorporate the Sámi to maintain the government's reindeer herds and train the Russian Arctic Brigade for the Arctic conditions.[484] Such developments would allow the Sámi to use their traditional livelihood to secure an income and avoid institutional harm in the form of conscription.

The opening of the Arctic to shipping drives civilian affairs to migrate north pose greater challenges to the Indigenous Peoples who have inhabited the land since time immemorial. Arctic states should consult Arctic Indigenous communities about their and their civilians' activity in the Arctic. Facing state violence and suppression, Indigenous Peoples must have their rights respected and be included in nation state involvement in the Arctic so they might benefit from Arctic infrastructure and economic advancements.

Conclusion

Through discussing Russian and NATO militarization and the effects on the Sámi people of the Kola Peninsula, these main points should be taken away:

- Russian militarization has greatly increased in the Arctic over the past two decades.
- Russian bases and aerial bombers are mainly being revitalized from their Soviet era origins, while ballistic missiles are being developed to wield destructive payloads.
- The Kola Peninsula is critical to Russian defense strategies and is the seat of their Northern Fleet, which houses the majority of Russian nuclear capabilities.
- The War in Ukraine has both exhausted Russian military capabilities and furthered the divide between Russia and the West, which encourages Russia to consider collaboration with China.

[483] "Russia's war is splitting the indigenous Sami in two".
[484] Sokhey, Sarah, "The Sami and Russian Arctic Policy", College of Arts and Sciences, University of Colorado—Boulder (2019), https://www.colorado.edu/polisci/2019/04/29/sami-and-russian-arctic-policy.

- Arctic Indigenous Peoples are incorporated into many NATO member nations Arctic Strategies, but Russia has limited the Indigenous Peoples of the Kola Peninsula, the Sámi, in their voice and visibility.
- The Sámi are impacted by the changing environment and increasing human development due to militarization on the Kola Peninsula. They are disproportionately drafted into war due to systematic classifications.

The warming Arctic has turned the northern regions into a major plane of defense for both Russia and NATO.[485] In recent years, Russia has funded intense revival of its Arctic, Soviet-era bases and is repairing older equipment, in addition to developing faster ballistic missiles capable of carrying more destructive payloads.[486] Since the initial invasion in February 2022, the War in Ukraine has upset the previous order of policy and diplomacy, leading the countries of the West to become stronger allies in their shared condemnation of Russia's action, while Russia has withdrawn from relations with the West and has increasingly turned to non-Western countries, notably China, for investment and support. Both the increasing access to the Arctic due to climate change and Russia and China's action in the region have encouraged NATO member states, particularly the United States, to also look north and prepare to deter threats stemming from the Arctic, adding in the consultation of Arctic Indigenous Peoples as a key element of their plans.[487]

On the other hand, Russia's recent treatment of its Sámi Indigenous group is a human rights concern. The Russian Sámi have been divided by the closing of borders in response to the war. Russia has limited the extent to which their Sámi population can participate in international and national conversations and continues to disrespect traditional jobs of the Sámi, leading to their disproportionate conscription. The increasing militarization concentrated on the Kola Peninsula, the home of Russia's Sámi, further endangers and silences Russian Sámi voices and is a concerning development for Russia's entire Indigenous population.

[485] Gronholt-Pedersen, Jacob, and Fouche, Gwladys, "Dark Arctic: NATO allies wake up to Russian supremacy in the region".
[486] Wall, Colin, and Wegge, Njord, "The Russian Arctic Threat: Consequences of the Ukraine War".
[487] Alexander, Edward, and Bloom, Evan T., "No. 21: The Arctic Council and the Crucial Partnership Between Indigenous Peoples and States in the Arctic", *Polar Points,* Wilson Center (2023), https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/no-21-arctic-council-and-crucial-partnership-between-indigenous-peoples-and-states-arctic.

Recommendations

Arctic states should prepare to address conditions caused by climate change such as the opening of the Arctic Ocean and consider further investment in infrastructure that would allow easier movement and living for populations in the Arctic.

1. Arctic Indigenous Peoples should be consulted on all developments in the Arctic to both respect their ancestral rights and to offer economic opportunity.
2. Arctic states should prioritize cooperation, in comparison to militarization, and work to maintain peace in the region. One such means is through strengthening the Arctic Council and reinforcing the importance of adhering to the Council's recommendations.

CHAPTER 12

AMBER WANG

Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies

Arctic Youth and Mental Health in Inuit Nunangat: Present and Future

Introduction

"Arctic youth is not just the future but also the present," the Arctic Indigenous Youth leaders illuminated this statement in November 2019, at the first Arctic Leaders' Youth Summit in Rovaniemi, Finland.[488] Inuit Youth are thriving "as many Indigenous youth who take part in advocacy for a better future and inform [Inuit People] on [their] common path forward."[489], but simultaneously they are facing mental health challenges and that is leading to a high suicide rate. According to National Inuit Suicide Prevention Strategy, "the four Inuit regions in Canada … collectively known as Inuit Nunangat, have rates of suicide that range from five to 25 times the rate of suicide for Canada as a whole." Indigenous organizations such as ICC (Inuit Circumpolar Council) provide support and identify priorities for Inuit youth to address health disparities.[490] But, more needs to be done to address mental health. The younger generation's multifaceted challenges come from current social-cultural changes and the past influences from "colonization and transition[491]", which is intensified by unstable climatic and environmental conditions. All these factors are contributing to the crisis of mental health and well-being.

488 Arctic Council, Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat. "Arctic Indigenous Youth." https://www.arcticpeoples.com/youth#arctic-youth.

489 Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada | United Voice of the Arctic. "Important Message from Arctic Indigenous Youth:"look to the Future Not with Fear, but with Resolve": Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada." August 9, 2023. https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/news/important-message-from-arctic-indigenous-youthlook-to-the-future-not-with-fear-but-with-resolve/.

490 Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada | United Voice of the Arctic. "Health and Wellness: Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada." May 4, 2020. https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/icc-activities/health-and-wellness/.

491 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. "National Inuit Suicide Prevention Strategy." 2016. https://www.itk.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ITK-National-Inuit-Suicide-Prevention-Strategy-2016.pdf.

Figure 1. At Ottawa's Nunavut Sivuniksavut, Inuit youth carve out their place in the world. Canadian Geographic, https://canadiangeographic.ca/articles/at-ottawas-nunavut-sivuniksavut-inuit-youth-carve-out-their-place-in-the-world/

International attention is on the Arctic region for the potential of resource extraction and shipping routes; as the Arctic warms and ice melts, new actors enter the Arctic. Mental health and well-being of Arctic Indigenous communities are significant factors that need to be acknowledged and addressed, and this chapter discusses how international interest in the Arctic may present an opportunity for additional investment in Indigenous priorities, and suggestions on rights and responsibilities of funding policies.

"Past to Present" Overview

Over the past century, Arctic Indigenous peoples have been forced to navigate enormous changes to their lifestyles, cultures, and lands, all of which have increased their vulnerability to incidences of mental illness and suicide.

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ), which refers to Inuit traditional knowledge, includes the ancestral and current observations of values, such as the importance of relationships inside a family, a community, with nature, as well as decision making, working and development.[492] These ideas, passed through oral tradition, underline the Inuit ideology and Inuit identity: what to follow, how to survive, and how to hold continuity in their self-recognition. The last generation experienced a more defined transition into adulthood – this could include carrying on the

492 DeCouto, Tina Piulia. "Uncomfortable Inuk: Exploring Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (Traditional Knowledge)." The Arctic Institute - Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, January 17, 2024. https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/uncomfortable-inuk-exploring-inuit-qaujimajatuqangit-traditional-knowledge/.

responsibilities of hunting, taking care of the household or children, and practicing traditional ceremonies to communicate with the ancestors and the spirit world. Inuit felt the sense of belonging with their defined social order and customs.[493]

As an example of changes forced on communities, in the early 1960s, "the Canadian government sponsored population concentration in the Holman region".[494] Instead of isolated, scattered hunting camps, constructions such as subsidized housing, institutions, healthcare and social services were provided. Due to the quality of Inuit living conditions, more children survived compared to in the past, and the proportion of kids and teenagers in this Inuit community increased to 52 percent of the population. That is the generation of youth today, with a more extended and active social network. As technology access has grown, for example, the availability of high-speed broadband internet introduced to the community, it is providing opportunities for people to "participate equitably in society and the economy." [495] That contributes to the situation where Inuit youth are living with both traditional culture and Western influence.

"Formal schooling" and education was another idea that was brought into Inuit communities. The Circumpolar Inuit Education Summit through the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) was established in 2014 to emphasize that education is significant in "economic, cultural, social, and political development of a people, and the critical education gaps faced by Inuit today".[496] Inuit youth have bilingual education, with Inuit language and another western language (such as English, French, and others), but that learning model can take more effort to achieve post-secondary success.[497] Additionally, "traditional knowledge isn't infused into core academic courses", said by Melissa Webb (Forum Participant) from he ITK.[498] Given this, the challenges that Inuit youth are facing today are distinct from previous generations, in the aspect of Western knowledge influence.

493 Rink, Henry. "Tales and Traditions of the Eskimo." Tales and Traditions of the Eskimo, April 2003. https://sacred-texts.com/nam/inu/tte/index.htm.

494 Richard, Condon. "Inuit Youth in a Changing World." Cultural Survival, February 22, 2010. https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/inuit-youth-changing-world.

495 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. "The Digital Divide: Broadband Connectivity in Inuit Nunangat." 2021. https://www.itk.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/ITK_Telecomms_English_08.pdf.

496 Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada | United Voice of the Arctic. "Inuit Education Summit." May 4, 2020. https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/icc-activities/icc-summits/.

497 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. "First Canadians, Canadians First, National-Strategy-on-Inuit-Education-2011." 2011. https://www.itk.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/National-Strategy-on-Inuit-Education-2011.pdf.

498 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. "A Report of the 2017 Inuit Education Forum." August 2017. https://www.itk.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/inuitreport-web.pdf.

Inuit in Canada have experienced rapid changes in their communities and in the environment of their homelands. According to the ICC, "the high burden of suicide in Arctic regions cannot be understood without recognizing the negative impacts of government policies of colonization, dispossession, and cultural disruption on the social, political, and economic systems of Indigenous peoples.[499]" In addition, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) indicates that the evidence of suicide and mental illness for Indigenous youth can be categorized as due to historical trauma, social inequity, intergenerational trauma, childhood adversity, mental distress, and acute stress[500]. People need to recognize that suicide risks are not only in a mental form, but can also be "something in the environment, an experience, a behavior, something inherited, or an unknown cause".[501]

There are ways to address these challenges, but the challenges are distinct. For example, the National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health (NCCAH) found that "the challenges around both the verification of traditional knowledge and the distinctions between knowledge systems (since all societies have traditions of knowledge) often lead to barriers for applying cultural knowledge systems," and wellness is oftentimes paid less attention among the communities.[502] This chapter discusses modern risk factors and suggests ways that access to mental health and wellbeing support may expand.

1. Historical and Current Traumas Produced By Settler Colonialism

As mentioned, prior to World War II, "the majority of Inuit lived at seasonal camps on the land in smaller family units."[503] The experience of colonization by Western nations and missionaries, as well as enforced government policies and limitations, as well as forced migrations, created a hard situation that still impacts Inuit today. The loss of settlements, increased substance misuse and violence, and other traumas caused by losing families or relatives, can all be considered as historical risk factors for mental health. According to the ITK,

499 Durkalec, Agata, Christina Hackett, Tom Sheldon, and Selma Ford. "ICC - Continuing Our Unity Advancing Indigenous Suicide Prevention in the Circumpolar Arctic." Inuit Circumpolar Council, June 2017. https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/wp-content/uploads/ICC-Economic-Summit-Agenda.pdf.

500 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, "National Inuit Suicide Prevention Strategy".

501 Ibid.

502 Tagalik, Shirley. "Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: The Role of Indigenous Knowledge in Supporting Wellness in Inuit Communities in Nunavut." National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health. https://www.ccnsa-nccah.ca/docs/health/FS-InuitQaujimajatuqangitWellnessNunavut-Tagalik-EN.pdf.

503 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, "National Inuit Suicide Prevention Strategy".

when families were falling into these types of chaotic environments, children are more often "at greater risk for adversity", which leads to higher rates of suicide.[504]

Since the 1960s, the Inuit had faced challenges of language barriers and "experienced isolation and loneliness."[505] Language barriers can be stressful to Inuit youth. This includes experiencing Canadian schooling, both residential and day schools. This history develops one of the most discussed issues for Inuit youth, on whether education is more beneficial or disadvantageous for Inuit children given the impacts on mental health. As ITK emphasizes, education is helping Inuit youth to strengthen leadership skills, collaborations, communication skills, and their ability to represent a collective voice towards achieving defined priorities in life.[506] The Arctic Council is providing an opportunity for Indigenous Peoples to be part of international decision making, thus highlighting the necessity to understand policies and foreign social structures within international relations. However, within communities there are influences from Western culture, isolation due to cultural difference, and lack of support from parents.[507]

2. Climate Change and Its Impacts on Physical and Environmental Security

As emphasized by the Arctic Council, warming air temperatures due to climate change "continues to rise [the Arctic region] at three times the global annual average".[508] The evidence from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) 2023 Arctic Report Card is showing that "since 1940, annual average temperatures have risen .45 of a degree Fahrenheit (.25 of a degree Celsius) per decade", and that "sea ice extent continues to decline, with the 17 lowest Arctic sea ice extents on record occurring during the last 17 years."[509] In response to these changes, Inuit communities face threats to their physical security, including that they may have to move farther south or into cities. There is also an increasing risk of accidents on the degrading sea ice, especially when hunting.

504 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, "National Inuit Suicide Prevention Strategy"

505 Ibid.

506 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, "First Canadians, Canadians First. National Strategy On Inuit Education 2011".

507 Ibid.

508 "The Arctic in a Changing Climate." Arctic Council. https://arctic-council.org/explore/topics/climate/.

509 NOAA Arctic. "Report Card 2023." December 13, 2023. https://arctic.noaa.gov/report-card/report-card-2023/.

Figure 2. As ice melts, the Inuit strive to keep their culture alive. National Geographic https://www.nationalgeographic.com/culture/article/inuit-share-traditional-knowledge-to-survive-melting-ice-feature

As the ICC highlights in relation to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties 26 (UNFCCC COP 26) meeting in 2021, Inuit are seeing significant changes in "weather and ice patterns" as well as "distribution and abundance of wildlife".[510] Species such as polar bears, whales, and bears are all being listed as endangered[511], and furthermore nations are establishing animal protection laws to limit the hunting amount logically. However, from an Indigenous perspective, hunting as one of their traditional practices is one way of maintaining identity and connection to nature.[512] In this case, Inuit youth are protecting their hunting rights, however may not have access to actually hunt as their ancestors would do in the past. Climate change is an existential threat and a violation to human security rights, with the potential to disconnect Inuit knowledge and relationship to the

510 Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada | United Voice of the Arctic. "Inuit Call for the Tools Needed to Protect the Arctic: Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada." September 28, 2022. https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/project/inuit-call-for-the-tools-needed-to-protect-the-arctic/.

511 Smith, Duane. "Climate Change in the Arctic: An Inuit Reality." United Nations, 2007. https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/climate-change-arctic-inuit-reality.

512 Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada | United Voice of the Arctic. "The Right to Hunt Sustainably: Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada." May 4, 2020. https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/icc-activities/united-nations-and-human-rights/the-right-to-hunt-sustainably/.

Arctic coast and marine regions. This can lead to mental health challenges in the face of a lack of self-identification, belonging, and resilience when "home is becoming unrecognizable." [513]

3. Social Inequality

Comparing residents of Inuit Nunangat with all Canadians, the inequality of lifestyle and opportunities are another risk factor of mental illness. According to the ITK, 70% of the Nunavut households do not have enough food to eat, while only 8.3% of households in Canada are in the same situation.[514] The median individual income of Nunavut are approximately 22% of the median of Canadians, at the same time only 29% of people between the ages of 25 to 64 years old in Nunavut have high school diplomas, but Canadians reach 85%. In cases where there are more crowded living situations and less access to physicians and education, Inuit are feeling socially disadvantaged and unsupported. In a report from the ITK, they emphasize that "[t]oday, the average life expectancy in Inuit Nunangat is 10 years less than the Canadian average, due in part to suicide.[515]" Poverty, unemployment, and other societal determinants of health may vary regionally, but with the support of ITK, Inuit Nunangat developed groupings of 11 social determinants (figure below) to improve their life quality and reduce inequality, which can reduce the suicide rate.

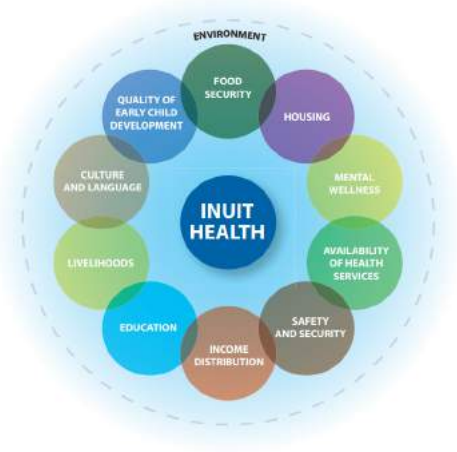

Figure 3. 11 social determinants of Inuit health in Inuit Nunangat. Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, National Inuit Suicide Prevention Strategy

513 Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, "Inuit Call for the Tools Needed to Protect the Arctic: Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada."

514 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami,"National Inuit Suicide Prevention Strategy".

515 Ibid.

4. Intergenerational Trauma and Childhood Adversity

One of the major risk factors to mental health is **"**unresolved traumatic experiences" caused by experiencing or living under "violence, serious injury, or physical and sexual abuse or assault", which can lead to "depression and substance misuse"; this has a major impact on Inuit youth. Alcoholism is one example, where "of those who reported alcohol use in the past year, 47.6% reported monthly or more frequent heavy episodic drinking, including 49.5% of males and 45.6% of females," according to statistics from Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction.[516] The United States Department of Health & Human Services, National Institutes of Health reports that "the data suggest that binge drinking is a common mode of consumption…This is unfortunate as increased substance use has been noted in other Canadian populations, particularly among youth, leading to adjustments in public health priorities.[517]" In addition to alcoholism, smoking and severe obesity are two other impacts on Inuit youth.

Figure 4. First Canadians, Canadians First. Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami National Strategy On Inuit Education, Cover Page, https://www.itk.ca/national-strategy-on-inuit-education/.

ITK's National Suicide Prevention Strategy states, "children are especially vulnerable to the harmful effects of trauma, particularly in the absence of safety and support in relationships

516 Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addition. "Substance Use, Mental Health and Suicide among Inuit in Canada." https://www.ccsa.ca/sites/default/files/2021-10/CCSA-Substance-Use-Mental-Health-Suicide-among-Inuit-Report-Summary-2021-en_2.pdf.

517 Fortin M, Bélanger RE, Boucher O, Muckle G. Temporal trends of alcohol and drug use among Inuit of Northern Quebec, Canada. Int J Circumpolar Health. 2015 Dec 16;74:29146. doi: 10.3402/ijch.v74.29146. PMID: 26689846; PMCID: PMC4696457.

with caregivers…".[518] ITK also states that, "child abuse, neglect and even the physical disciplining of children is not a part of our history or culture." Yet, in fact, in the year of 2012, "41% of Inuit in Nunavut suffered severe sexual abuse as children."[519] Researchers found that experiencing childhood abuse has a positive correlation with the suicide rate, and one of the main reasons is that there are no treatments for suicide prevention. Parents with mental illness may have an increased chance that their children experience mental illness. The impacts of trauma can overlap and increase over time, and even if the people or objects that cause the traumatic memories are no longer in someone's life, the impacts can still remain a struggle.

Supports and Action Recommendations

According to the ITK, "[u]p to 90 percent of people who die by suicide had been suffering from a mental health disorder."[520] All experiences mentioned in the previous sections markedly increase the possibility of Inuit diagnoses of mental illness, the most common ones include "mood disorders, substance abuse disorders, schizophrenia, and personality disorders."[521] However, mental distress can be managed with mental health care and suicide prevention strategies.

There are several organizations already, such as Arctic Children and Youth Foundation with the championship of Governor General Mary Simon of Canada, approaching the goal of addressing and raising the awareness of Inuit youth's mental health. These include the Inuit Child First Initiative, a federal initiative ensuring Inuit children's accessibility to equitable education, health, and social support; National Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy (NAYSPS) list out their target population, outcomes and timelines, goals and objectives and the collaboration with partnerships, governance and service providers to reduce suicide rate; National Inuit Youth Council was also established to strengthen the voices of Inuit Youth. Inuutiarnirmut Katujjiqatigiit Mental Health Counseling, Child First Initiative, and Sivumut Alluqatigiit Program, are all focusing on children's wellbeing, support, care and connection with the community.[522]

518 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, "National Inuit Suicide Prevention Strategy"

519 Healey G. Inuit parent perspectives on sexual health communication with adolescent children in Nunavut: "it's kinda hard for me to try to find the words". Int J Circumpolar Health. 2014 Oct 21;73. doi: 10.3402/ijch.v73.25070. PMID: 25405104; PMCID: PMC4215723.

520 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, "National Inuit Suicide Prevention Strategy"

521 ibid.

522 Inuuqatigiit Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and Families. "Community Initiatives and Mental Health." 2024. https://inuuqatigiit.ca/inuutiarnirmut-katujjiqatigiit/.

Within the ITK "priority Areas for Reducing Suicide Among Inuit", recommendations to improve the mental health epidemic among Inuit youth include social equity, cultural continuity, nurturing healthy children, ensuring access to mental wellness services, healing unsolved trauma, and mobilizing Inuit knowledge for resilience and suicide prevention.[523] ICC on the other hand, is focusing on implementation of interventions, evaluation and research as a future direction to address these issues.[524] Furthermore, in addition to support for Inuit youth, it is also important to pay attention to activities and working groups such as Circumpolar Inuit Health Steering Committee (CIHSC)[525] from ICC and Local2Global,[526] both of whom bring the issue into the international stage by "providing guidance and recommendations related to circumpolar Inuit health and well-being and to exchange regional information on challenges, emerging trends, and best practices responding to circumpolar Inuit health issues."[527]

Responsibility of Non-Arctic States Seeking Access to the Arctic

Foreign nation's attention and desired access to the Arctic should be recognized as a risk factor to Inuit mental health. Negative impacts that nations may have on Inuit Nunangat might cause harm to communities. For example, China is advancing Arctic ambitions,[528] and as The Congress Report of China states, "we will expand science and technology exchanges and cooperation with other countries, cultivate an internationalized environment for research, and create an open and globally-competitive innovation ecosystem."[529] However, the science and technology infrastructure can worsen climate change, Indigenous wellness and environmental uncertainty. For example, as mentioned about the "ship-ice hypothesis" in the 2022 NOAA Arctic Report Card – "Arctic shipping will increase as sea ice diminishes. This raises important questions on topics ranging from the future of Arctic trade routes to the introduction of enhanced anthropogenic stresses on Arctic Peoples and ecosystems."[530] These foreign interests and their

523 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, "National Inuit Suicide Prevention Strategy"

524 Inuit Circumpolar Council, "Continuing Our Unity Advancing Indigenous Suicide Prevention in the Circumpolar Arctic."

525 Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada | United Voice of the Arctic, "Circumpolar Inuit Health Steering Committee (CIHSC): Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada." December 13, 2023. https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/icc-activities/health-and-wellness/circumpolar-inuit-health-steering-committee-cihsc/.

526 Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada | United Voice of the Arctic. "Local 2 Global: Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada. August 10, 2021. https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/icc-activities/health-and-wellness/local-2-global/.

527 Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada, "Circumpolar Inuit Health Steering Committee (CIHSC)".

528 The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China. "Full Text: China's Arctic Policy." January, 2018. https://english.www.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2018/01/26/content_281476026660336.htm

529 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, "Full text of the report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China". October 25, 2022. https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx_662805/202210/t20221025_10791908.html

530 NOAA In The Arctic, "Consequences of Rapid Environmental Arctic Change for People". December 1, 2022.

influences on climate change may present an opportunity: how should foreign actors take responsibility for their actions that may exacerbate mental health challenges facing Inuit communities?

Foreign nation's access to the Arctic should be recognized as a risk factor to Inuit mental health, as these interactions may cause damage and lead to an additional trauma. From militarization, resource extraction, scientific research and infrastructure development, the Inuit youth now not only face western geopolitical involvement in the Arctic, but also increasing involvement from China as well. The Foreign Affairs Committee concludes: the influences of mining factories and "soft power" of Sino-Russian Arctic Research Center,[531] even tourism development are all bringing uncertain factors to the Arctic region. As China invests and studies the Arctic, it is undeniable that environmental damages that can occur in this development can further aggravate mental health challenges for Inuit youth and Inuit communities.

Developing Funding Policy

It is important to understand and address the mental health crisis that Inuit are experiencing. We need to advance action plans that organizations are developing "by working with a wide variety of partners and funders", "building in more awareness of trauma and mental health issues" and "work[ing] across silos as much as possible."[532] Increasing the dissemination of Inuit youth's voices, experiences and objectives, and program funding should be set up "in such a way that Inuit people are in a decision-making position with respect to determining how best to use funds" – solving "cultural compatibility and community issues" were defined as ensuring a "culturally-safe program environment."[533] Other funding issues identified by the ITK include "lack of consistent or long-term funding; lack of flexibility in funding criteria; and lack of uniform funding across communities."[534]

Therefore, it would be a good idea to fund these existing programs by not only the nation states in the Arctic, but also the Arctic Council observer states who were trying to enter the Arctic. Taking their responsibility to protect Inuit culture, as well as youth's mental health,

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https://arctic.noaa.gov/report-card/report-card-2022/consequences-of-rapid-environmental-arctic-change-for-people/

531 Foreign Affairs Committee, "2020 China Military Power Report", 2020.

https://media.defense.gov/2020/Sep/01/2002488689/-1/-1/1/2020-DOD-CHINA-MILITARY-POWER-REPORT-FINAL.PDF

532 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, "Promising Practices in Suicide Prevention Across Inuit Nunangat".

533 Ibid.

534 Ibid.

funding is needed. This is a chance to improve physical and emotional security for children[535], and the intergenerational relationships between youth and elders to understand barriers, belonging, and resiliency. For example, the National Inuit Youth Council (NIYC) states that "sharing [their] knowledge influences the design as well as allocation of services and support" within the "Inuit-specific policy guidance to provincial, territorial and regional government."[536] It is also important to build capacity of communities to respond to mental health issues, and the capacity of building supports for wellness programs in addition to funding to ensure success.[537]

The 2022 ICC Declaration states, that "bringing attention to the vital role of the Arctic Ocean in shaping weather and climate across the entire planet, the Arctic Ocean, sea ice and its waters are central to our overall existence, health, and well-being."[538] As the interests of foreign nations including China toward the Arctic region is increasing over time, it is necessary to develop funding policies for Indigenous mental health prevention organizations. The reduction of suicide and mental illness occurring for Arctic youth needs to be solved before shifting sights toward new Arctic ambitions in the future.

Conclusion

The seriousness of mental health as a rising crisis for Inuit youth needs more attention on the international stage. There are a lot of risk factors that could cause mental illness for Inuit youth, including historical trauma, social inequality, and the intergenerational relationship among people and culture. With a warming Arctic, climate change and international activity in the Arctic are additional potential risk factors. It is necessary to develop funding policies for Indigenous mental health prevention organizations With the theme of "Indigenous Youth as Agents of Change for Self-determination" on the The International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples in 2023, Inuit youth were sending out the message that "we should be able to "look to the future, not with fear but with resolve."[539] Inuit organizations and Arctic youth want to create a strong Arctic with a bright future. Their mission connects to an external world on a

535 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, "Alianait Inuit Mental Wellness Action Plan".

536 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, "National Inuit Youth Council".

537 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, "Promising Practices in Suicide Prevention Across Inuit Nunangat".

538 Inuit Circumpolar Council, "2022 Inuit Circumpolar Council Declaration".

539 Inuit Circumpolar Council, "Important Message from Arctic Indigenous Youth: 'Look to the Future Not with Fear, But with Resolve'".

global international stage where they speak for themselves, but it also connects with their traditions, their community, their hearts, and themselves.

CONCLUSION: POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

ALL CONTRIBUTORS - WRITTEN BY AVA MOORE
Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies

This Task Force has touched on a wide variety of subjects regarding the impacts of changing geography and politics in the Arctic. Below, we have provided policy recommendations that are categorized by whom each recommendation is addressed.

<u>For the International Community</u>

1. Add Indigenous place names to existing maps of the Arctic, and in the public realm promote usage of maps with Indigenous place names and/or maps created by Indigenous cartographers
2. Strengthen Indigenous Peoples' decision-making power within the Arctic Council, the International Maritime Organization, and other international institutions, and use extensive consultation of Indigenous organizations in all stages of the development of international regulations pertaining to the Arctic
3. Establish a partnered committee between nation-states and Indigenous organizations to review UNCLOS and update it to reflect the sovereignty rights of coastal Indigenous Peoples
4. Establish mechanisms for data sharing between research expeditions, state and academic institutions, and Arctic Indigenous communities, and integrate Indigenous knowledge systems like Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) into data collection methodologies
5. Produce impact assessments for resource extraction projects in full collaboration with local Arctic Indigenous communities and use methods that include Indigenous knowledge systems like IQ
6. Do not integrate Indigenous knowledge systems like IQ into scientific research and policy development *without* the permission and full participation of Indigenous Peoples, and do not substitute isolated concepts from Indigenous knowledge systems for Indigenous voices themselves

<u>For the International Maritime Organization (IMO)</u>

7. Make IMO regulations on the production of underwater acoustic noise mandatory instead of

voluntary and create a strategy for monitoring the implementation of these regulations

8. Update and strengthen IMO regulations on shipping in international Arctic waters and within the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of Arctic States
9. Promote the Inuit Circumpolar Council to Permanent Consultative Member status in the IMO, and call on China and other Arctic Council observer states to support this initiative

For the Arctic Council

10. Establish a task force or working group on the Arctic Council for Member States and Permanent Participants to assess and monitor activities and involvement of Observer States in Arctic affairs, paying particular attention to China, and develop stronger guidelines for how non-Arctic states involve themselves in dual-use scientific research, technology, and infrastructure projects in the Arctic
11. Gather data on the current capacity of Arctic Indigenous communities to respond to mental health issues and develop plans for how funding and other support systems can be most effectively distributed
12. Call on Arctic Council Observer States to lend their support, and potentially also funding, to programs that work to improve mental health across Arctic communities and build connections between Indigenous youth and elder generations as a condition of access to development in the Arctic

For Arctic States

13. Call on all Arctic states to improve transportation and social connectivity across northern regions, facilitating economic opportunities, greater ease of governance, access to essential services, and development of pan-Arctic identity
14. Call on all Arctic states to prioritize peaceful activity in the region over militarization with emphasis on the utility of the Arctic Council as a forum for international cooperation

For Canada

15. Call on Canada to prioritize economic and educational revitalization of communities in Nunavik and facilitate greater enrollment in secondary education
16. Call on Canada to prioritize environmental cleanup and especially proper procedure for mine remediation (making mining areas habitable) in Nunavik along with socioeconomic support to facilitate the transition away from the mining industry

17. Call on Canada to financially support Indigenous organizations during the negotiation and implementation of UNDRIP Act and Action Plan and Nunavut Devolution Agreement
18. Widen implementation of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas across Canada; provide Indigenous land stewards with research equipment and funding for extended research projects, increasing employment opportunities and human support for Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas
19. Address military security of the Northwest Passage by releasing a joint statement between the Canadian government, ICC, and ITK basing Canadian sovereignty over the Northwest Passage on the rights afforded to the Inuit under UNDRIP and the Inuit definitions of homeland
20. Call on Canada to increase funding to initiatives that support Inuit youth and support Inuit community members in the development of culturally-informed action plans to increase awareness and support for trauma and mental health issues

<u>For Russia</u>

21. Call on Russia to end the policy of seizing abandoned Glavnoe Upravlenie Lagerei (GULAG) work camps from reindeer herders who use them as temporary shelters during migration seasons
22. Call on Russia to financially compensate Peoples of the Far North who suffer displacement or whose reindeer herds are affected by nutritional depletion of the tundra with the understanding that financial compensation may be used to improve infrastructure across the north

<u>Regarding China</u>

23. Monitor Chinese data sharing and transparency in internationally cooperative scientific research; particularly the research, resource extraction, and infrastructure partnerships it makes with Russia
24. Conduct more research to evaluate how China's projected spending on scientific research in the Arctic aligns with the goals and priorities it has publicly declared in the Arctic, and use Chinese activity in the Antarctic as a foundation for understanding the capability of Chinese technology and information systems
25. Conduct further research on the impact of a Chinese military presence through equipment,

technology, ships, and personnel on the lives and resources of Arctic Indigenous communities

26. Call on China to collaborate with Indigenous Permanent Participant organizations in scientific research by financially supporting projects led by Indigenous organizations
27. Call on China to acknowledge the rights of Indigenous Peoples to self-determination and sovereignty, in addition to cultures and traditions, in future Arctic Policy documents

To conclude the Task Force, we would like to thank the organizations and people who provided us with pertinent information and experiences during our time in Ottawa. Without the valuable opportunities that were provided to us, the Task Force would not have been complete. Appendix A below shows all the names of the organizations and people we were honored to meet with during our trip to Ottawa.

APPENDIX A: OTTAWA PROGRAM

Nature Picture Library / Alamy Stock Photo

SATURDAY, 27 JANUARY 2023 – TO CANADA!

8:00 a.m. meet at SeaTac airport, United Airlines ticket counter

10:57 a.m. depart Seattle (stop-over in Chicago, 1 hr., 20 min.)

9:28 p.m. arrive in Ottawa!, taxis to hotel

Accommodation: Swiss Hotel, Contact "Sabina", 89 Daly Avenue, 613-237-0335, 8-10 a.m. daily, coffee, hot chocolate, tea; and the Barefoot Hostel (next door), 455 Cumberland Street, small kitchenette

SUNDAY, 28 JANUARY 2023 – ORIENTATION TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN CANADA & THE ARCTIC

10:00 a.m. – Leave to walk to Québec!

11:15 a.m.-Noon - Canadian Museum of History, Indigenous Tour

Location: Check in/Process payment, Group Entrance, Level 1 (Basement), 1-800-555-5621

Noon-1:30 p.m. - Lunch at the Panorama Café (Hosted by UW)

Location: On site with beautiful views of the Ottawa River and Parliament! (view from Café)

2:00-3:30 p.m. - Film Screening, *ARCTIC: Our Frozen Planet* (45 min.) and *Wonders of the Arctic* (40 min.)

Location: Ciné+ (Movie Theatre), Level 2 (Main Level)

3:30-6:00 - free time!

6:00 – Dinner together at the Barefoot Hostel (UW Hosted)
Welcome to Ottawa with special guests: Craig MacDonald, Owner/Director, Ottawa Walking Tours, 613-799-1774; and Michelle Emond (Franco-Ontarian), Fulbright Canada

MONDAY, 29 JANUARY 2023 – WALKING TOUR OF OTTAWA & U OTTAWA ARCTIC SCHOLARS PANEL

9:15 a.m. – Leave hotel for Walking Tour

10:00 a.m.-Noon - Ottawa Walking Tour with Philip Anderegg, Tour Director
Contact Information: Philip Anderegg 613-868-4596; Ottawa Walking Tours, Craig MacDonald, Director
Location: Terry Fox Statue, 90 Wellington Street

Noon-1 p.m. – Lunch on Own

1:00 p.m. – Leave Hotel for University of Ottawa

2:00-5:00 p.m. University of Ottawa Panel:

- Pascale Massot, Assistant Professor, School of Political Studies, University of Ottawa: *Canada-China Relations*
- Mathieu Landriault, Lecturer, School of Political Studies, University of Ottawa: *Arctic International Relations*
- Magali Vullierme, Researcher, North American and Arctic Defense and Security Network (NAADSN, Trent University): *Impact of Climate Change on Human Security of Arctic Indigenous Peoples* Location: University of Ottawa, School of Political Studies, Room FSS 5028

5:00 p.m. on – free time! Dinner on own

TUESDAY, 30 JANUARY 2023 – POST-SECONDARY INUIT SCHOOL & NATIONAL INUIT ASSOCIATION

9:30 – Leave Hotel for Nunavut Sivuniksavut

10:00 a.m.-Noon - Nunavut Sivuniksavut, Class with Katherine Minich, Instructor Nunavut Sivuniksavut and Lecturer, School of Public Policy and Administration, Carleton University
Location: 450 Rideau Street, Suite 201, 613-244-4942

Lunch together in Byward Market (UW Hosted)

1:15 – Leave Hotel for Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami

2:00-5:00 p.m. - Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), meeting with the Inuit Qaujisarvingat National Committee; tour of ITK and the Library
Contact: Karen Kelley, Manager, Research
Location: 75 Albert Street, Suite 1101, 613-238-8181

Dinner on own

WEDNESDAY, 31 JANUARY 2023 – GLOBAL AFFAIRS CANADA & THE NORWEGIAN EMBASSY

8:15 – Leave Hotel for Global Affairs

9:00 a.m.-Noon - Global Affairs Canada, Robert Kadas, Deputy Senior Arctic Official, 613-286-3870l Host: Rachael Muller,
Location: Lester B. Pearson Building, 125 Sussex Drive

Noon-1:30 p.m. – Lunch together in Market (UW Hosted)

2-3:30 p.m. - Royal Norwegian Embassy in Ottawa, Ambassador Trine Jøranli Eskedal
Location: 150 Metcalfe Street, Suite 1300, 613-238-6571

3:30 p.m. on – Free Time! Dinner on own

THURSDAY, 1 FEBRUARY 2023 – INTERNATIONAL INUIT ASSOCIATION & HIS EXCELLENCY Student Leads: Maya Russell-Hoff & Beatrice (BB) Denton

10:00-11:30 a.m. - Inuit Circumpolar Council, Canada, Lisa Qiluqq Koperqualuk (Nunavik), President; Daniel Aviugana, Executive Assistant
Location: 75 Albert Street, Suite 1001, 613-563-2642

11:30-1:00 – Lunch together en route to Rideau Hall (UW Hosted)

1:00-4:00 p.m. - Tour of Rideau Hall, home of Governor General Mary Simon; meeting with His Excellency Whit Fraser, Consort of Canada (C.C.) and author of *True North Rising: My Fifty-Year Journey with the Inuit and Dene Leaders Who Transformed Canada's North* (2023)
Location: 1, promenade Sussex Drive, Princess Entrance, guide will be next to fountain Contact: Tour #584529; 613-991-4422; guide@gg.ca

5:00-8:00 - National Gallery of Canada (includes seasonal refreshments and

snacks), Indigenous and Canadian Art and Nick Sikkuark: Humour and Horror
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FRIDAY, 2 FEBRUARY 2023 – INUK ARTIST, OCEAN CONSERVATION & CELEBRATION RECEPTION!

9:00-10:30 a.m. – Breakfast with Barry Pottle (Nunatsiavut), Urban Inuk photographer, Ottawa (UW Hosted) Location: Barefoot Hostel, 455 Cumberland Street, Living Area

11:00 a.m. – Leave Hotel for Oceans North

Noon-1:30 p.m. – Oceans North Canada Conservation Society, Host, Mollie Anderson, Senior Climate and Conservation Advisor, 647-823-2155
Location: 236 Metcalfe Street, Suite 301-302, 819-230-1491

1:00-6:00 p.m. – free time!

6:00 – leave hotel for reception (UW Hosted)

6:30-9:30 p.m. – Reception, Jeffrey Parker, former Consul General, Consulate General of Canada to the United States in Seattle (2004) and Latifa Belmahdi
Location: 1120 Chemin Queens Park, Gatineau, Québec, 613-203-1782

SATURDAY, 3 FEBRUARY 2023 – RETURN TO SEATTLE

9:30 a.m. - depart Hotel for airport

1:20 p.m. depart Ottawa for Seattle (stop-over in Newark, 3 hrs.)

10:02 p.m. arrive in Seattle

The Research Study Tour to Ottawa is part of the Don C. Hellmann Task Force Program, Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington, Seattle—the capstone experience in the undergraduate International Studies Program; and, the Jackson School's International Policy Institute.

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APPENDIX B: OTTAWA PROGRAM REFLECTIONS

Reflections by Jacob Coffler and Anouk Orillon

University of Ottawa Panel

At the University of Ottawa, we were grateful to be able to hear from three experts in their fields: Professor Pascale Massot, Doctor Mathieu Landriault, and Doctor Magali Vullierme. Each had much to say about their topics, including analyzing China's Arctic Policy, examining the impacts of permafrost thaw on communities, and enquiring about Russia's future within the Arctic Council. As a Task Force, we found their research and presentations unique and irreplicable; many hints of their knowledge can be found within our writing.

Class at Nunavut Sivuniksavut

We were extremely grateful to have met with the students at Nunavut Sivuniksavut and attend a class there. We learned about Canada's government structure and its interactions with Indigenous Peoples. We also got a firsthand look at Inuit music, song and dance with a live performance! It was super great getting to know all the students, and we all had so much fun going out to lunch together. Shoutout to Loren and Natalya!

Meeting with the Inuit Qaujisarvingat National Committee at the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami Office

We knew meeting with the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami would be an important stop on our trip, giving us the ability to learn about Arctic communities from the perspective of the Inuit. The Inuit Qaujisarvingat National Committee warmly greeted us and answered many of our questions. We were also so honored to be given a tour of the ITK's library and were able to gather sources for our report.

Meeting at Global Affairs Canada

Global Affairs Canada was a unique stop on this study tour, as it allowed us to hear from key policymakers in the Canadian government on a variety of topics, including maritime jurisdiction and China in the Arctic. Hearing from national leaders helped us further understand Canada's role in the Arctic and how important international cooperation is, and we got to see firsthand how important negotiation is in international affairs.

Meeting with Her Excellency Trine Joranli Eskedal, the Norwegian Ambassador to Canada at the Norwegian Embassy

We had the honor to meet with Her Excellency Trine Joranli Eskedal, the Norwegian Ambassador to Canada. Trine was recently appointed the position of Ambassador in October 2023, however, she has dedicated her professional career to diplomacy across the globe. In addition to Canada, she has been stationed in Sri Lanka and Maldives. Norway's position as Arctic Council Chair allowed for her to have a unique perspective on our report topics.

Meeting with Lisa Koperqualuk at the Inuit Circumpolar Council, Canada

We were so privileged to be able to meet with the President of ICC Canada, Lisa Koperqualuk. An expert in policymaking and research, Ms. Koperqualuk used her unique position as ICC President and Vice President of ICC International to explain to us the importance of Indigenous Knowledge in global policymaking. Her work in international shipping regulations and fostering relations between the ICC and the International Maritime Organization proved invaluable to our Task Force research.

Meeting with His Excellency Whit Fraser, at Rideau Hall

It was a privilege to meet with His Excellency Whit Fraser and tour Rideau Hall. It was a wonderful experience to hear about the history of governance and Governor Generals in Canada while touring Rideau Hall. Meeting virtually with His Excellency Whit Fraser, and hearing him speak about his book, *True North Rising*, provided us with a chance to truly get to know our expert evaluator.

Meeting with Local Artist Barry Pottle

We met with local artist Barry Pottle. Originally from Labrador, Barry Pottle's work refers to his Indigenous culture and his love for his home province! One of his pieces is featured on the cover of this report.

Meeting at Oceans North

Being at Oceans North home office was such a great experience. We learned about their environmental activism and research in the Arctic. It was also super interesting to see the dichotomy between social sciences and sciences and how it applies to research and work outside of academia.

Reception with Jeffrey Parker, former Consul General, Consulate General of Canada to the United States in Seattle and Latifa Belmahdi

At the end of our time in Ottawa, we were so grateful to be welcomed into Mr. Parker and Ms. Belmahdi's residence for a delicious home-cooked meal. Knowing that they cared about us and our research served as a perfect end to our week-long trip, and knowing their investment into us as students helped motivate us in the long process leading to the creation of this report.

The 2024 Arctic Task Force at Rideau Hall on February 1st, 2024.