THINK ARCTIC

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNANCE FOR A SUSTAINABLE ARCTIC

2021–2023 ARCTIC COUNCIL RUSSIA'S CHAIRMANSHIP

# BACKGROUND MATERIAL FOR THE SPIEF SESSION "INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AS A GUARANTEE OF ARCTIC SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT"

ROSCONGRESS Building Trust

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# BACKGROUND MATERIAL FOR THE SPIEF SESSION "INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AS A GUARANTEE OF ARCTIC SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT"

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## 1. International Cooperation in the Arctic: Institutions and Priorities for Sustainable Development

In the late XX-early XXI centuries the Arctic has become a strategically attractive region for many countries because of its economic potential: it contains significant reserves of oil and gas, a considerable amount of fishery resources, and countries are interested in the potential of the region as a transport corridor for international shipping[1]. On the one hand, climate change, namely its consequences in the form of global warming and melting of Arctic Sea ice has created favorable conditions for the exploitation of the Arctic and its transport routes, but on the other hand, it brings several climate-related risks, which calls for a strong action from the arctic states.

At the same time, multilateral cooperation in the Arctic region has been an important part of the international relations agenda since the 20th century. The legal regime of the Arctic is enshrined in the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which establishes the rights and responsibilities of Arctic and non-Arctic states[2]. In 2008 the Arctic states reaffirmed their commitment to the rules established by the document[3]. The United States, though it has not ratified the UN Convention, have been stressing the importance of following the rules stated by the Convention[4]. The states signed the Ilulissat Declaration, which sets their intention to cooperate on an equal basis to solve various problems of the region, including reduction of environmental risks and coordination of rescue operations[5]. Another important component of the Arctic legal regime are the bilateral agreements governing the delimitation of the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of the coastal countries[6]. In addition, international cooperation in the region is being strengthened within the framework of multilateral institutions. At present, the Arctic states interact on regional issues on many multilateral

1 Chilingarov, A. (n.d.). Rossia v Arktike: Vozmozhnosti dlya mezhdunarodnogo sotrudnichestva v regione i ego specifika [Russia in the Arctic: Opportunities for International Cooperation in the Region and its Specifics]. Retrieved June 2, 2022, from https://russiancouncil.ru/analytics-and-comments/analytics/rossiya-v-arktike-vozmozhnosti-dlya-mezhdunarodnogo-sotrudni/
2 United Nations. (1982). United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf
3 Five countries adopted a declaration on cooperation in the Arctic. (2008, May 29). Lenta.RU. Retrieved June 2, 2022, from https://lenta.ru/news/2008/05/29/arctic/
4 Voronov, K. (2010). Arkticheskie gorisonti strategii Rossii: sovremennaya dinamika [The Arctic Horizons of Russia's Strategy: Current Dynamics]. World Economy and International Relations. № 9. 54-65.
5 Ibid
6 Voronov, K. (2010). Arkticheskie gorisonti strategii Rossii: sovremennaya dinamika [The Arctic Horizons of Russia's Strategy: Current Dynamics]. World Economy and International Relations. № 9. 54-65.

platforms, such as the Arctic Council, the Barents/Euro-Arctic Council, the Northern Dimension, the Northern Forum, the International Arctic Science Committee, the University of the Arctic, the Forum "Arctic: Territory of Dialogue", and others. The platforms differ from each other in their composition and terms of reference. **The key formats for international cooperation are the Arctic Council and the Barents/Euro-Arctic Counci**l.

**The Arctic Council**, established in 1996, is the main high-level intergovernmental forum regulating and coordinating the relations of the states in the Arctic region. Its members include eight countries: Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden, and the United States. In addition, 38 actors have official observer status in the organization. There are three categories of official observers of the Arctic Council: non-Arctic states (India, China, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Japan and others), intergovernmental and interparliamentary organizations (Nordic Council of Ministers, UN Development Program, UN Environment Program, etc.) and non-governmental ones(Association of World Reindeer Herders, World Wildlife Fund, University of the Arctic and others). Six associations of Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic are permanent members of the organization: the Arctic Athabaskan Council, the Aleut International Association, the Gwich'in Council International, the Inuit Circumpolar Council, the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, and the Saami Council[7].

The Arctic Council has **six working groups**:

- Arctic Contaminants Action Program (ACAP);
- Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP);
- Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF);
- Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPRP);
- Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME);
- Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG)[8].

Within each of these, there are international bilateral and multilateral projects in their areas of activity. There are also task forces in the intergovernmental forum, which are created for a period of time to work on specific problems[9]. At the moment, there are no projects being carried out by task forces. However, now functions Black Carbon and Methane Expert Group, which since 2015 has been evaluating the Arctic Council's Framework for Action on Black Carbon and Methane, reporting

7 Arctic Council. (n.d.). Permanent Participants. Retrieved May 26, 2022, from https://arctic-council.org/about/permanent-participants/
8 Arctic Council. (n.d.). Working Groups. Retrieved May 26, 2022, from https://arctic-council.org/about/working-groups/
9 Krasnopolskii, B. H. (2020). Koordinatsiya mezhdunarodnih organisazi severo-arkticheskih regionov: k programme predsedatelstva Rossiiskoi Federatii v Arkticheskom sovete. [Coordination of International Organizations of the North Arctic Regions: Toward the Program of the Russian Federation Chairmanship of the Arctic Council]. The Arctic and the North, (41), 148-162.

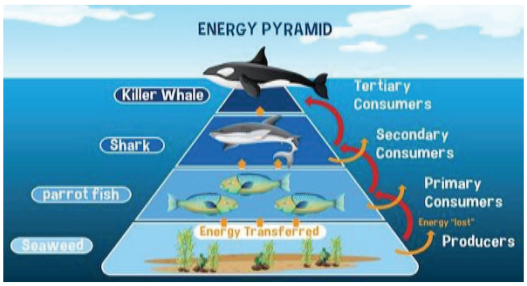
on interim progress in this area and making recommendations on actions needed for states to further reduce emissions of these greenhouse gasses[10].

**The Arctic Council promotes cooperation on environmental protection and sustainable development in the region**. The Arctic Resilience Reports issued in 2013 and 2016 highlighted the importance of deepening the sustainable socio-environmental development agenda within the Arctic Council[11]. The key areas of interaction of the intergovernmental forum are: Arctic indigenous peoples, biodiversity conservation, climate change and environmental protection, global ocean pollution, and emergency prevention and response. Within these areas, the Arctic Council promotes international cooperation, facilitates projects to create a database about the region, conducts activities to monitor and assess the climatic and environmental situation in the Arctic, and offers recommendations to improve the situation based on the results of its research. Within the framework of the Arctic Council, the states have concluded several legally binding agreements to deepen cooperation in existing areas of interaction: Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic (2011), Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic (2013), Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation (2017)[12].

In 2021, the Arctic Council states approved the **"Arctic Council Strategic Plan 2021-2030"**[13] which enshrined the priority of sustainable development for the region over the next decade. The key goals of the "Arctic Council Strategic Plan 2021-2030" include:

**Arctic climate** (SDG 13 - Climate Action) - examination and assessment of the effects of climate change, etc.;

10 Arctic Council. (n.d.). Expert Group on Black Carbon and Methane. Retrieved May 26, 2022, from https://arctic-council.org/about/task-expert/egbcm/
11 Nilsson, A. E., & Larsen, J. N. (2020). Making Regional Sense of Global Sustainable Development Indicators for the Arctic. Sustainability, 12(3), 1027. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12031027
12 Konishev, B. H., Sergunin, A., (2011). Mezhdunarodnie organisatii i sotrudnichestvo v Arktike [International organizations and cooperation in the Arctic]. Bulletin of international organizations: education, science, new economy, 6 (3), 27-36.
13 Arctic Council. (2021). Arctic Council Strategic Plan. Retrieved May 26, 2022, from https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/handle/11374/2601/




**healthy and resilient Arctic ecosystems** (SDG 15 - Life on Land) - cooperation in pollution prevention, monitoring and assessment, and biodiversity protection;

**healthy Arctic marine environment** (SDG 14 - Life Below Water) - protection of marine biodiversity and sustainable usage of marine resources of the region;

**sustainable social development** (SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-being) - improving living conditions and well-being of Arctic residents; **sustainable economic development** (SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) - cooperation on environmentally friendly innovations, sustainable investments, etc.;

and **two goals to strengthen the Arctic Council as a mechanism for cooperation** (SDG 17 - Partnerships for the Goals), which aim to share knowledge and information between states and strengthen constructive dialogue between them.

Every two years, one of the Arctic Council member states takes over the chairmanship of the Council. In 2021-2023, the Arctic Council is chaired by the Russian Federation, which took over the chairmanship from Iceland (2019-2021)[14]. Russia has set itself the task of **"Responsible Governance for a Sustainable Arctic"**. The priorities of the Russian chairmanship of the Arctic Council are: 1) **Arctic population, including indigenous peoples**, 2) **environmental protection**, **including**

14 Arctic Council. (n.d.). Past Chairmanships. Retrieved May 26, 2022, from https://arctic-council.org/about/previous-chairmanships/

**climate change issues**, 3) **socio-economic development**, and 4) **strengthening the Arctic Council**[15].

In the first area, Russia seeks to develop human capital in the Arctic, support indigenous peoples of the North, including the digitalization of certain Arctic settlements (SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), and improve living conditions for Arctic youth (SDG 4 - Quality Education).

The second priority area focuses on mobilizing joint efforts by states in pollution monitoring and assessment, hydrometeorology, and Arctic flora and fauna conservation and species and their habitat protection (SDG 14 - Life Below Water, SDG 15 - Life on Land). Also, within the framework of this direction Russia places great emphasis on the sphere of prevention and liquidation of emergency situations.

The third area of the Russian presidency concerns deepening economic cooperation, developing infrastructure and sustainable navigation, for example, in the waters of the Northern Sea Route, as well as Arctic tourism (SDG 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production), in particular through the exchange of experiences and practices between the Arctic countries.

The last area is devoted to intensifying cooperation among the Arctic Council states (SDG 17 - Partnerships for the Goals).

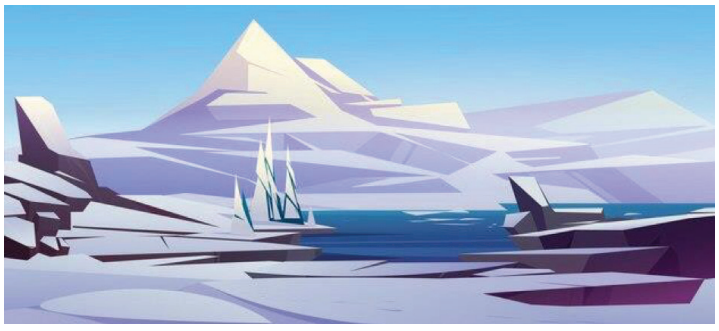
The Russian Federation, for which the Arctic has important geographical, economic, military-strategic and environmental significance, has actively participated in the work of the Arctic Council during its presidencies (2004-2006, 2021-2023) and beyond[16]. Russia sees the forum as an important mechanism to promote multilateral cooperation in the Arctic region. As well as other states of the Arctic Council, Russia takes part in financing of the forum's projects: from 1996 to 2019, Russia aided 25 projects within the Forum and allocated big money to the Arctic Council Project Support Instrument (PSI), becoming its donor in 2011[17]. In 2005-2006, Russia contributed to international events that focused on protecting and conserving the Arctic environment[18]. Thus, the Russian Federation has made a significant contribution to the development of Arctic Council projects, taking the lead in funding them[19].

From 1996 to 2019, Russia took part in more than 76 projects of the Arctic Council[20]. Most of these projects were implemented on the territory of the Russian Federation and focused on biodiversity protection and emergency prevention. It can be explained by the large length of the state coastline in

15 Arctic Council. (2021). Russia's Chairmanship Programme for the Arctic Council 2021-2023. Retrieved May 26, 2022, from https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/handle/11374/2646
16 Tikhonov, A.B. (2018). Arkticheskij sovet, kak klyuchevoj instrument mnogo storonnego sotrudnichestva arkticheskih civilizacij [The Arctic Council as a key instrument for multilateral cooperation among Arctic civilizations]. Bulletin of the Institute of World Civilizations, 9(2(19)), 662-664.
17 Voronchihina, D.N. (2019). Arkticheskij sovet kak mezhdunarodnyj forum sotrudnichestva gosudarstv: uchastie Rossii [The Arctic Council as an International Forum for State Cooperation: Russia's Participation]. ARS ADMINISTRANDI, 11 (2), 306-329.
18 Ibid
19 Ibid
20 Ibid

the region, which requires more attention to internal problems[21]. The Russian Federation highlighted the last direction, prevention, and liquidation of the consequences of emergency situations in the Arctic, which was caused by increased human activity in the region. Within the framework of the Arctic Council, Russia initiated a project on "Safety systems in the implementation of economic and infrastructure projects in the Arctic[22]" and developed with the United States the Arctic Search and Rescue Agreement in 2011, which was the beginning of a major joint training exercise[23]. During its first chairmanship of the Arctic Council, 2004-2006, Russia initiated 24 projects, which were implemented not only within the Arctic zone of Russia. After 2009, when Russia adopted its official course on the development of the Arctic region, it began to pay more attention to environmental security, in particular it initiated the project "Biodiversity, traditional nature use and climate change in the Russian Arctic: assessment and adaptation strategy development" within CAFF[24], and co-chaired with Canada the project on adaptation to climate change in the entire region[25]. In 2011-2021, Russia continued not only to participate in international projects in the Russian Arctic, but also acted as their author, focusing more on measures to protect ecosystems (SDG 14 - Life Below Water, SDG 15 - Life on Land) and climate change (SDG 13 - Climate Action), for example by initiating a project together with Norway, Sweden and the USA to reduce dioxins, furans and mercury content[26].

However, in early March 2022, the Arctic Council's activities were suspended. Seven forum states (except for Russia) refused to send their representatives to Arctic Council events in Russia, and also suspended their participation in the activities of its subsidiary bodies[27].



Another important format for multilateral cooperation in the Arctic is the **Barents Euro-Arctic Council**[28] (BEAC), established in 1993. The permanent members of the organization are Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Finland, Russia, Sweden, and the European Commission. They believe that the Arctic Council and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council are complementary

21 Ibid
22 Arctic Council. (n.d.). Safety Systems in Implementation of Economic and Infrastructural Projects. Retrieved May 26, 2022, from https://arctic-council.org/projects/safety-systems-in-implementation-of-economic-and-infrastructural-projects/
23 Tikhonov, A.B. (2018). Arkticheskij sovet, kak klyuchevoj instrument mnogo storonnego sotrudnichestva arkticheskih civilizacij [The Arctic Council as a key instrument for multilateral cooperation among Arctic civilizations]. Bulletin of the Institute of World Civilizations, 9(2(19)), 662-664.
24 Aksnes, D., Osipov, I., Moskaleva, O., & Kullerud, L. (2016). Arctic Research Publication Trends: A Pilot Study. Retrieved May 26, 2022, from https://www.elsevier.com/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/204353/Arctic-Research-Publication-Trends-August-2016.pdf
25 Arctic Council. (2017). Senior Arctic Officials' Report to Ministers. Retrieved May 26, 2022, from https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/bitstream/handle/11374/1909/MMUS10_2017_FAIRBANKS_SAO-Report-to-Ministers_13138_v1.pdf?sequence=9&isAllowed=y
26 Zagorskij, A. V. (2016). Rossiya i SSHA v Arktike [Russia and the United States in the Arctic]. Workbook' № 30/2016: Russian International Affairs Council, 1-24.
27 RIA novosti. (2022). MID nazval reshenie Arkticheskogo soveta priostanovit' rabotu neracional'nym [Foreign Ministry calls Arctic Council's decision to suspend work irrational]. Retrieved June 2, 2022, from https://ria.ru/20220304/sovet-1776541667.html
28 Barents Euro-Arctic Council. (n.d.). Cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region. Retrieved May 26, 2022, from https://www.barents-council.org

organizations[29]. The chairmanship alternates between Norway, Russia, Finland, and Sweden, with Finland holding the rotating chairmanship from 2021 to 2023. Similar to the Arctic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council has working groups that reflect the cooperation of the states in certain areas: health and social issues, education and research, culture, forests, tourism, transport and logistics, business cooperation, environment, indigenous peoples, youth support and rescue cooperation.

In addition, there is a **Regional Council** within the organization, which consists of 13 entities from different states. Like the Barents/Euro-Arctic Council, there is a rotating chairmanship every two years, but the Regional Council is chaired in turn by the administrative subjects, not the states. The Nenets Autonomous Okrug (NAO) holds the presidency from 2021 to 2023. The priorities of its presidency are to increase cross-border mobility in the Barents Region, develop a diversified and sustainable economy, including tourism, improve the quality of life of the indigenous population, and develop human capital, in particular by creating comfortable living conditions[30]. The Barents/Euro-Arctic Council and the Regional Council promote regional cross-border cooperation between Russian regions and their neighbors Norway, Finland, and Sweden[31].

So far, cooperation with Russia within the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and its subsidiary bodies has been suspended by the other member states of the Council[32].

Another important initiative within the framework of international cooperation in the Arctic is the **Northern Dimension**[33], which is a joint policy of four actors: the EU, Russia, Norway, and Iceland. The joint policy is implemented through four partnerships, which focus on environmental issues (SDG 13 - Climate Action, SDG 14 - Life Below Water, SDG 15 - Life on Land), public health and well-being (SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-being), transport and logistics (SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure). Formally, all members of the initiative are equal, but the trajectory of development of this format of cooperation in the Barents region is set by the strategic relations between the EU and Russia. This is because the main projects of the initiative are focused on North-West Russia due to the importance of the challenges in those territories[34]. Another explanation is that the EU takes the initiative to strengthen the northern region in the first place, and the reason why EU-Russia relations are prioritized is the possibility to develop good neighborly relations between two

29 Krasnopolskii, B. H. (2020). Koordinatsiya mezhdunarodnih organisazi severo-arkticheskih regionov: k programme predsedatelstva Rossiiskoi Federatii v Arkticheskom sovete. [Coordination of International Organizations of the North Arctic Regions: Toward the Program of the Russian Federation Chairmanship of the Arctic Council]. The Arctic and the North, (41), 148-162.
30 Barents Euro-Arctic Council. (n.d.). About the Regional Council. Retrieved May 26, 2022, from https://www.barents-council.org/barents-regional-council/about-the-council
31 Konishev, B. H., Sergunin, A., (2011). Mezhdunarodnie organisatii i sotrudnichestvo v Arktike [International organizations and cooperation in the Arctic]. Bulletin of international organizations: education, science, new economy, 6 (3), 27-36.
32 Interfax. (2022). Sovet Barenceva/Evroarkticheskogo regiona priostanovil sotrudnichestvo s Rossiej [Barents/Euro-Arctic Council suspends cooperation with Russia]. Retrieved June 2, 2022, from https://www.interfax.ru/russia/827077
33 Northern Dimension. (n.d.). About the Northern Dimension. Retrieved May 26, 2022, from https://northerndimension.info/ru/o-nas/
34 Bailes, A. J. K., & Ólafsson, K. Þ. (2017). The EU Crossing Arctic Frontiers: The Barents Euro-Arctic Council, Northern Dimension, and EU-West Nordic Relations. In N. Liu, E. A. Kirk, & T. Henriksen (Eds.), The European Union and the Arctic (pp. 40–62). Brill.

important players on the international scene[35]. However, in early March, the EU, Norway and Iceland suspended all cooperation projects with Russia within the Northern Dimension[36].

In addition, **the EU-Russia Cross-Border Cooperation Programs** (CBCPs), which are aimed at strengthening sustainable development in certain regions, have been actively developing. Since 2007, three CBCPs have been in place for the development of the Arctic region: Kolarctic, Karelia, and Russia-Southeastern Finland[37]. Despite the fact that Russia's participation in CBCPs has been temporarily suspended since 2022, the programs have already achieved some success in supporting economic development in the regions (SDG 8 - decent work and economic growth), improving living standards and conditions for people in these regions (SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG 13 - Climate Action, SDG 14 - Life Below Water, SDG 15 - Life on Land)[38].

## 2. Russian policy in the field of sustainable development in the Arctic

The Arctic region is of great importance for the Russian economy since it contains significant reserves of natural resources. In addition, the importance of the region is determined by the location of the objects of strategic deterrence forces, as well as the residence of indigenous people on its territory. The main threats hindering the development of the Arctic include climate change, declining population growth, migration outflow, poor quality of life and the development of transport infrastructure. Also, there is a relatively low competitiveness of business entities in Russia, the discrepancy between the education system and the needs of the economy and the social sphere, the delay in the development of the infrastructure of the Northern Sea Route, the lack of an emergency evacuation system and the provision of medical care to crew members of ships, a low level of development of information and communication infrastructure, a high proportion of local generation of electricity based on the use of economically inefficient and environmentally unsafe diesel fuel, the growth of conflict potential in the Arctic[39].

Taking into account all the challenges associated with the development of the Arctic zone and ensuring national security, in 2019 the state administration system was reorganized: a new composition of the State Commission for the Development of the Arctic was approved and its powers were expanded, the Ministry of the Russian Federation for the Development of the Far East and the

35 Markushina, N. YU. (2016). Severnoe izmerenie: Rossiya i ES - voprosy aktual'nosti [The Northern Dimension: Russia and the EU - Issues of Relevance]. Advances in modern science, 9 (12), 182-185.
36 EU NEIGHBOURS east. (2022). "Severnoe izmerenie": ES, Islandiya i Norvegiya priostanavlivayut sotrudnichestvo s Rossiej i Belarus'yu ["Northern Dimension": EU, Iceland and Norway suspend cooperation with Russia and Belarus]. Retrieved June 2, 2022, from https://euneighbourseast.eu/ru/news-and-stories/latest-news/severnoe-izmerenie-es-islandiya-i-norvegiya-priostanavlivayut-sotrudnichestvo-s-rossiej-i-belarusyu/
37 EEAS Website. (2018). Rossiya i ES podpisali novye programmy prigranichnogo sotrudnichestva [Russia and the EU signed new programs of cross-border cooperation]. Retrieved May 27, 2022, from https://www.eeas.europa.eu/node/38395_ru
38 Kolarctic CBC.(n.d.). Kolarctic. CBC 2014-2020.Retrieved May 27, 2022, from https://kolarctic.info/kolartic-2014-2020/
39 Official Network Resources of the President of Russia. (2020). The Strategy for the Development of the Arctic Zone of Russia and Ensuring National Security until 2035 was Approved. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from http://kremlin.ru/acts/news/64274

Arctic was formed, also there was made a decision to expand the competence of the institutions for the development of the Far East to the Arctic zone.

**The development plan for the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation can be divided into several areas**: development of the social sphere, economy, infrastructure, science and technology, international cooperation, environmental protection and environmental safety, ensuring the protection of the population and territories of the Arctic zone from emergencies, ensuring public safety and ensuring military security.

**Social development**

Objectives in the social sphere include modernization of the healthcare system, development of high-tech medical care (SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-being). Also, it is planned to increase the availability of quality general education (SDG 4 - Quality Education), eliminate the risks of harm to public health caused by climate change, including the risks of the spread of infectious and parasitic diseases, such as ulcers and tularemia (SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-being, SDG 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation). Ensuring the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, support for traditional culture, preservation, and development of the languages of indigenous people are also of importance. The need to form a modern urban environment in settlements is noted. To this end, a significant role is given to state support for housing construction and the creation of a system of social guarantees provided to citizens of the Russian Federation who work and live in the Arctic zone[40] (SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities).

**Economic development**

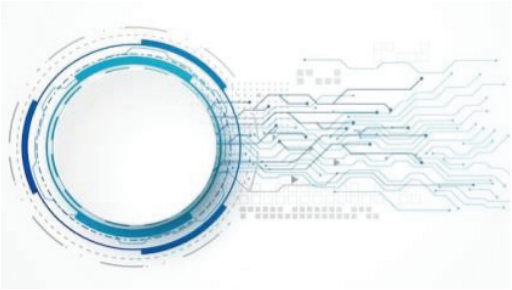
The economic policy of the Arctic zone is aimed at introducing a special economic regime that facilitates the transition to a circular economy (SDG 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production). Particular attention is paid to the development of the industrial sector, in connection with which the state encourages the development of existing industrial production, the creation of modern technologies for the development of new deposits and provides support to fish and livestock complexes (SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure). To improve the quality of life of the Arctic people, state support programs for traditional economic activities are elaborated. In addition, it is planned to develop tourism infrastructure and encourage the influx of people into the Arctic zone in order to increase employment rate.

40 Official Network Resources of the President of Russia. (2020). The Strategy for the Development of the Arctic Zone of Russia and Ensuring National Security until 2035 was Approved. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from http://kremlin.ru/acts/news/64274

**Infrastructure development**

In the Arctic agenda, a significant role is given to the development of seaport infrastructure, shipping routes (especially the Northern Sea Route), hub ports, airport passes and local roads (SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities). Taking into account the need to develop the Northern Sea Route, it is planned to improve the system of vocational and additional education to create qualified personnel (SDG 4 - Quality Education). Another goal is to provide indigenous peoples with sources of energy supply and means of communication (SDG 7 - Affordable and Clean Energy, SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure).

**Development of science and technologies**



The importance of conducting research, developing technologies, and creating scientific and educational centers for the development of the Arctic (SDG 4 - Quality Education, SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) is noted, with special attention paid to hydrographic and deep-sea research. It will also meet the objectives of ensuring security along the Northern Sea Route, considering the rapid climate change. In addition, to achieve these goals, it is planned to cooperate with other states and develop a comprehensive plan for international scientific research (SDG 17 - Partnerships for the Goals).

**Protecting the environment and ensuring ecological safety**

The Arctic is considered as a region where environmental problems should be solved, and the natural environment should be protected[41]. **The order of the Ministry for the Development of the Far East of Russia "On approval of the Plan for adaptation to climate change in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation"**[42] lists adaptation measures to global climate change. They include: the formation of an interdepartmental working group, the preparation of reports on the state, trends, and problems of adaptation to climate change, the development of a "road map" for the implementation of engineering and technical solutions, monitoring the state of the microflora of the natural environment, etc.

41 Official Network Resources of the President of Russia. (2017). Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of April 19, 2017 No. 176. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/41879

42 Climate Center of Roshydromet. (2021). Order of the Ministry for the Development of the Far East of Russia dated November 26, 2021 N 221 "On approval of the Plan for adaptation to climate change in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation". Retrieved April 26, 2022, from http://cc.voeikovmgo.ru/ru/novosti/novosti-partnerov/1518-prikaz-minvostokrazvitiya-rossii-ot-26-11-2021-n-221-ob-utverzhdenii-plana-adaptatsii-k- izmeneniyam-klimata-arkticheskoj-zony-rossijskoj-federatsii

In addition, Russia seeks to protect the Arctic environment by creating specially protected natural areas, minimizing emissions to the atmosphere and water, and preventing negative environmental consequences during the extraction of natural resources (SDG 14 – Life Below Water, SDG 15 – Life on Land). Another goal is the adaptation of the economy and infrastructure of the Arctic zone to climate change (SDG 13 – Climate Action). A special role is played by the creation of a unified system of state environmental monitoring and a state system for the prevention and liquidation of emergency situations, which will allow to regularly assess the environmental and socio-economic consequences of the mining and emergency in the Arctic and form a set of measures to eliminate them.

**International cooperation development**

The main task in the development of international cooperation is the implementation of foreign policy activities aimed at preserving the Arctic as a territory of peace, ensuring the stability of the region, and promoting cooperation between the Russian Federation and other states (SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals). This form of interaction is facilitated by the active participation of the Russian state and public organizations in the work of the Arctic Council and other international forums dedicated to the Arctic issues. In addition, the need to comply with international legal norms in the field of management of the Arctic region is especially emphasized, regarding the rights of the Arctic states to geological exploration and development of resources of the continental shelf. **In the decree "On the Economic Security Strategy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2030"**[43], the Arctic is mentioned in the context of global climate change, which may intensify competition for Arctic resources. The creation of a unified search and rescue system, strengthening ties between indigenous peoples through the educational, humanitarian, and cultural exchange of young people from different countries and the development of general principles for investment activities in the region are also highlighted as important areas of international cooperation.

43 Official Network Resources of the President of Russia. (2017). Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of May 13, 2017 No. 208. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from http://kremlin.ru/acts/bank/419Goal №4: Development of science and technologies
- conducting scientific research and introducing new technologies;
- development of a plan for international scientific research.

**Ensuring protection of the population and territories of the Arctic zone from emergency situations**

Much attention is paid to identifying and analyzing the risks of natural and man-made emergencies, as well as developing ways to prevent such situations (SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities). It is planned to design measures and create technical means for carrying out emergency rescue operations. In addition, the importance of improving the methods of protecting the population and developing a system for predicting emergency situations in the Arctic zone is emphasized.

**Ensuring public safety**

Measures in this direction will be taken to modernize the structure and staffing of the internal affairs bodies and the troops of the National Guard of the Russian Federation. Also, one of the goals is to prevent extremist and terrorist activities and reduce the level of crime in the region (SDG 16 - Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

**Ensuring military security**

Since the Arctic is a zone of strategic interests of the Russian Federation, much attention is paid to ensuring military security in the region, thus it is necessary to improve the composition and structure of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, equip them with modern types of weapons, and develop the basing infrastructure (SDG 16 - Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

| | |
|---|---|
| **Goal №1: Social development**<br>• modernization of the healthcare system;<br>• increasing the availability of quality general education;<br>• elimination of risks of causing harm to the health of the public;<br>• formation of a modern urban environment. | • SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-being<br>• SDG 4 – Quality Education<br>• SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation<br>• SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities |
| **Goal №2: Economic development**<br>• gradual transition to a circular economy;<br>• modernization of the industrial sector;<br>• development of tourism. | • SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure<br>• SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production |
| **Goal №3: Infrastructure development**<br>• construction of seaports and sea routes;<br>• development of the vocational education system;<br>• improving the living conditions of the indigenous population. | • SDG 4 – Quality Education<br>• SDG 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy<br>• SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure<br>• SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Goal №4: Development of science and technologies**<br>• conducting scientific research and introducing new technologies;<br>• development of a plan for international scientific research. | • SDG 4 – Quality Education<br>• SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure<br>• SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals |
| **Goal №5: Protecting the environment and ensuring ecological safety**<br>• creation of specially protected natural areas;<br>• adaptation of the economy and infrastructure of the region to climate change;<br>• reduction of environmental pollution. | • SDG 13 – Climate Action<br>• SDG 14 – Life Below Water<br>• SDG 15 – Life on Land |
| **Goal №6: International cooperation development**<br>• development of cooperation between the Russian Federation and the countries of the Arctic, including through multilateral formats;<br>• creation of joint projects in the field of education, investment, support of the indigenous population, etc. | • SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals |
| **Goal №7: Ensuring protection of the population and territories of the Arctic zone from emergency situations**<br>• identification and analysis of the risks of emergency situations;<br>• development of technologies for emergency rescue operations. | • SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities |
| **Goal №8: Ensuring public safety**<br>• improvement of the structure of authorities;<br>• prevention of criminal, extremist and terrorist activities. | • SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions |
| **Goal №9: Ensuring military security**<br>• improvement of the composition and structure of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation;<br>• equipping the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation with modern types of weapons. | • SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions |

## 3. International initiatives and projects in the field of sustainable development of the Arctic region

Over the past decades international cooperation in the Arctic region in the field of sustainable development has become more intensive. Russia is getting involved in large-scale bilateral and multilateral initiatives and projects. Priority areas of joint activities in the Arctic, which are also mentioned in the national Arctic strategies of the states, include: environmental protection and combating climate change, transport and logistics, energy, science and education, support for the residents and the indigenous peoples of the Arctic, and sustainable tourism.

**Environmental protection and combating climate change**

The issues of climate change and the preservation of Arctic ecosystems play a significant role in international cooperation in the Arctic. Russia takes part in projects in this area on a bilateral and multilateral basis, including initiatives implemented on the basis of international platforms, such as the Arctic Council and the Barents/Euro-Arctic Council.

A great deal of attention within this area of cooperation is given to sustainable forestry. For example, Russia and Finland, due to their long land border and close socio-economic ties, have been implementing joint projects for the development of sustainable forestry for a long time. In 2001, the countries signed a corresponding agreement to coordinate the Russian-Finnish program for **the development of sustainable forestry and biodiversity conservation in Northwest Russia**[44].

In addition, since 2006, Russia and Canada began cooperating **on restoration of the forest bison population on the Eurasian continent**, which is coordinated by the Government of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) and the Canadian National Parks Management Agency[45]. To increase the bison population in Yakutia and restore the historic habitat of the species, bison are imported from Elk Island National Park located in Alberta, Canada, which also contributes to the maintenance of biodiversity of Arctic ecosystems. As a result of this project, the population of wood bison in Yakutia increased from 30 to 250 animals by 2020[46].

In 2018, to prevent unregulated fishing in the high seas section of the central Arctic Ocean by implementing sustainable fishery use measures, **an agreement to prevent unregulated fishing in the high seas and central Arctic Ocean**[47] was signed, joined by Russia, Canada, USA, the Kingdom of Denmark (for Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Iceland, China, the Republic of Korea,

44 Ministry of Natural Resources of the Russian Federation. (n.d.). International treaties and agreements with the participation of the Ministry of Natural Resources of Russia. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://www.mnr.gov.ru/activity/international_agreements/

45 TASS. (2021). The population of forest bison in Yakutia has increased to 250 individuals in 15 years. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://tass.ru/obschestvo/12555153

46 Ibid

47 The Codex Consortium. (2018). Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation "On Signing an Agreement on the Prevention of Unregulated Fishing on the High Seas in the Central Part of the Arctic Ocean" dated August 31, 2018 No. 1822-r. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://docs.cntd.ru/document/551032531

Japan, and the EU. As part of this agreement, there are also plans to create a joint research program to gain knowledge and expertise on the marine ecosystem of the central Arctic Ocean and subsequently develop approaches to sustainable marine fisheries.

**Several projects in the field of environmental protection and combating climate change are being implemented in the Arctic Council**. For example, within the framework of the **Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) working group**, Russia, Canada, the United States, Norway, and a number of Arctic Council observer states, including China, have been participating since 2013 in **the Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative[48] (AMBI)**, which aims to identify migration patterns of Arctic birds and improve their habitat conditions (SDG 15 - Life on Land).

In addition, **the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) is coordinating the project "Advancing Arctic Resilience"**[49], in which Finland, Iceland, Russia, and the United States participate. The project will develop roadmaps to address the effects of melting permafrost that will contribute to a number of UN SDGs, such as SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-being, SDG 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation, SDG 9 - Industrialization, Innovation and Infrastructure, SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG 13 - Climate Action, and SDG 17 - Partnerships for the Goals[50]. Also, as part of the SDWG, **the Arctic Food Innovation Cluster project**[51] has been underway since 2019, where a number of studies have been conducted with Russian participation in agroforestry, aquaculture, and biotechnology, which will be used to develop a sustainable approach to agroforestry that combines traditional forestry and agricultural methods. The project also conducted research on White Sea algae to assess the potential for their use in food production.

According to the results of the **ThinkArctic** project meetings, together with representatives of Finland, Canada and China, **there is great mutual interest in deepening cooperation in the field of environmental protection and combating global climate change** and expanding the portfolio of joint projects to monitor climate change, to improve fresh water quality, which is necessary to preserve biodiversity in the Arctic and prevent the spread of diseases among residents of the region that arise due to declining water quality.

Also, during the ThinkArctic, **foreign experts emphasized the need to establish data exchange between states**, which will improve the quality of scientific research in the region. For example, exchanging information on climate indicators, including permafrost melting rates

48 Arctic Council. (n.d.). Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://www.caff.is/arctic-migratory-birds-initiative-ambi/central-east-asian-flyways
49 Arctic Council. (n.d.). Advancing Arctic Resilience: exploring aspects of arctic resilience connected to the impacts of permafrost thaw. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://sdwg.org/what-we-do/projects/advancing-arctic-resilience-exploring-aspects-of-arctic-resilience-connected-to-the-impacts-of-permafrost-thaw/
50 Arctic Council. (2019). Advancing Arctic Resilience: Information, capacity, and networks for navigating impacts of permafrost thaw SDWG Project Proposal. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/bitstream/handle/11374/2744/SDWG_2021-10_Online_Plenary-07a1_Arctic-Resilience-Project-Proposal_2021-09-06-3.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
51 Arctic Council. (2019). Proposal to SDWG: Arctic Foods Innovation Cluster. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/bitstream/handle/11374/2484/Proposal-re-ARCTIC_FOOD_INNOVATION_CLUSTER-as-of-14-Jan-2019.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

(in Eastern Siberia and in Canada's northern regions), precipitation, greenhouse gas emissions, methane, and black carbon, is of great value.

Moreover, speakers noted the **importance of revising the climate responsibilities of the Arctic states in view of the fragility of Arctic ecosystems**. It seems that the current legislation regulating the legal status of the Arctic, in particular Article 234 of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, should be supplemented with a provision on "enhanced climatic responsibility" for countries with access to the Arctic Ocean, which implies protection of the marine environment from damage caused by industrial activities, especially from shipping (SDG 14 - Life Below Water).

**Transport and logistics**

The development of transport and logistics in the Arctic region is of great interest to the Arctic states, since it contributes both to improving the quality of life of the region's population and stimulates international trade. Thus, in 2014, **the Polar Code**[52] was signed under the International Maritime Organization, which came into force in 2017. The main purpose of the code is to ensure safe operation of ships and to protect the environment in polar regions, taking into account the risks posed by the shrinking area and thickness of ice in the Arctic Ocean. The text of the Polar Code notes that additional requirements and norms must be established for navigation in polar waters in order to avoid emergencies and not to harm the environment. In this regard, the Code prohibits the discharge of sewage, all kinds of plastics and food waste into polar waters and ice and takes measures to minimize the risk of transferring invasive species in ships' ballast water and through ships' biofouling, which will also contribute to SDG 14 - Life Below Water.

**Also in 2003, Russia and Canada launched the Arctic Bridge project**, which connects Churchill (Canada) and Murmansk (Russia)[53]by sea. However, in 2016, the bridge was suspended due to the temporary closure of the port of Churchill, reopened in 2019.

**The largest infrastructure project in the Arctic is the Northern Sea Route**. A number of international initiatives within this project are related to the construction of Arctic-class icebreakers and gas carriers. For example, Russia and Finland have great experience in building icebreakers; together with the Finnish company Aker Arctic, Russian Novatek is working on a project of an Arctic gas carrier for year-round operation on the NSR[54]. Aker Arctic and Atomenergo are also working on a project to build a heavy semi-submersible Arctic vessel of Arc5 and Arc7 class with a load capacity of 70 thousand tons, which ensures operation in narrow channels[55].

52 International Maritime Organization. (2017). Shipping in polar waters. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/HotTopics/Pages/Polar-default.aspx
53 Grainews. (2019). Grain leaves Churchill for the first time in four years. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://www.grainews.ca/daily/grain-leaves-churchill-for-first-time-in-four-years/
54 Portnews. (2021). Russia and Finland intend to cooperate in the construction of icebreakers and the development of the Arctic. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://portnews.ru/news/313432/
55 Ibid

The Finnish Helsinki Shipyard and Russia's Norilsk Nickel and Sovkomflot are partnering to build liquefied natural gas-powered tankers and icebreakers[56]. For example, by 2025. Helsinki Shipyard will build an environmentally friendly icebreaker for Norilsk Nickel to operate in the Yenisei River, Yenisei Bay and Kara Sea, which will provide access to the seaport of Dudinka[57].

Partnerships for the development of the Northern Sea Route are being established between Russia and China. In 2015, the Russian Ministry of Far East and Arctic Development and China's State Committee for Development and Reform **signed a cooperation agreement on the Northern Sea Route**. In addition, in 2017, the State Oceanographic Administration and China's National Development and Reform Committee published the **"One Belt, One Road Maritime Cooperation Concept"**[58]. Also in 2019, Russia's Novatek and Sovcomflot and China's China COSCO Shipping Corporation Limited and the Silk Road Fund **signed an agreement to establish a joint venture, Sea Arctic Transport**[59], which will produce ice-class tankers and provide LNG transportation from the Yamal LNG, Arctic LNG-2 and other current NOVATEK projects. Such projects may include the implementation of SDG 9 - Industrialization, Innovation and Infrastructure.

Great attention is also paid to the transport development of the mainland Arctic region. For example, thanks to the **successful work of the 2014-2021 programs of cross-border cooperation between Russia and Finland. "Karelia", "Russia - Southeast Finland" and "Kolarctic"**[60], several checkpoints on the Finnish-Russian border, such as "Värtsilä", "Vartius" and "Salla" were reconstructed. Also, within the framework of the Barents/Euro-Arctic Region Council, a plan was developed to create transport corridors, in particular the Vorkuta - Kotlas - Syktyvkar - Arkhangelsk - Vartius - Oulu road[61] and road route Murmansk - Raia-Joseppi - Ivalo[62].

Based on the results of the **ThinkArctic** project, the parties agreed on the importance of developing transport corridors, which will increase accessibility to the region for both the local population and tourists, as well as create conditions for greater business mobility (SDG 9 - Industrialization, Innovation and infrastructure; SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities). In the shipping industry, Finnish representatives stressed the importance of green financing principles, according to which banks and other lending institutions will provide financial support only to those businesses

56 Helsinki shipyard. (2022). Sanctions against Russia not applicable to Helsinki Shipyard – impact on order book is being examined with authorities. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://helsinkishipyard.fi/en/sanctions-against-russia-not-applicable-to-helsinki-shipyard-impact-on-order-book-is-being-examined-with-authorities/
57 Finnish-Russian Chamber of Commerce. (2022). Helsinki Shipyard to build a new icebreaker for Norilsk Nickel. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://www.svkk.ru/novosti/helsinki-shipyard-postroit-novyj-ledokol-dlya-norilskogo-nikelya/
58 Xinhua News. (2017). Full text of the Concept of Cooperation at Sea within the framework of the "One Belt and One Road" initiative. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from http://russian.news.cn/2017-06/20/c_136381457.htm
59 Novatek. (2019). NOVATEK, COSCO SHIPPING, Sovcomflot and the Silk Road Foundation have signed an agreement regarding Arctic Marine Transport LLC. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://www.novatek.ru/ru/press/releases/index.php?id_4=3243
60 Fontanka. (2018). Three programs of cross—border cooperation between Russia and the EU will start implementing 178 million euros in October. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://www.fontanka.ru/2018/08/17/075/
61 The Barents Euro-Arctic Region. (2021). Joint transport plan of the Barents Region. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from http://www.rador.ru/activities/plan/inf/300614/01.pdf
62 Ibid

that follow the principles of sustainability. To this end, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has identified "Poseidon principles", which involve supporting only green projects in the field of shipbuilding, as well as the need for companies to provide a plan to reduce emissions in accordance with IMO climate goals. Involvement of Russian companies in this project may contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and implementation of SDG 13 - Climate Action and SDG 14 - Life Below Water.

**Energy**

International energy projects are carried out primarily in the field of oil production, geological exploration, and the production of liquefied natural gas, but given the importance and severity of the climate problem, initiatives are gradually being put forward to develop renewable energy. **Russia's main technological partner in the oil and gas industry is China, whose projects include joint drilling of exploration wells in the Sea of Okhotsk at the Magadan-1 and Lisyansky** sites, use of the Chinese Nanhai VIII semi-submersible drilling platform (SSDR), and joint production of liquefied natural gas[63].The key projects in this area of cooperation are Yamal LNG, which resulted in the construction of an integrated gas treatment and liquefaction plant by Chinese company CNPC and Russian company Novatek, and Arctic LNG-2, which plans to build three process lines for LNG production[64] (SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, SDG 7 - Affordable and Clean Energy). A number of environmental measures and practices have been introduced in these projects, in particular the goals of increasing energy efficiency through improved gas turbines and flue gas heat recovery and a partial switch from fuel gas to hydrogen, development of carbon capture and burial projects, which in the future may contribute to achieving SDG 13 - Climate Action.

Earlier, cooperation between Russia and Finland in the field of nuclear energy was actively developing: in 2023, with the support of Rusatom Energy International JSC and Fennovoima Oy, the Hanhikivi-1 NPP[65] (CSD 7 - affordable and clean energy) was to be launched in the Finnish province of North Ostrobothnia, but due to the current geopolitical crisis the Finnish company announced the termination of the contract with the Russian side[66]. In addition, the large Finnish company Fortum is implementing several projects related to the construction of wind power plants in Russia, and the countries have also been working on opportunities for cooperation in the field of hydrogen energy,

63 Neftegaz. (2018). On the way to the Kara Sea. Drilling platforms Arctic and Nanhai VIII left the port of Murmansk. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://neftegaz.ru/news/Geological-exploration/199847-na-puti-k-karskomu-moryu-burovye-platformy-arkticheskaya-i-nanhai-viii-vyshli-iz-porta-murmansk/
64 Novatek. (n.d.). Business : Arctic LNG 2 Project. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://www.novatek.ru/ru/business/arctic-lng/
65 Rosatom. (n.d.). Hanhikivi-1. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from http://rusatom-energy.ru/projects/hanhikivi-1/
66 Interfax. (2022). Fennovoima terminated the contract with Rosatom for the construction of the Hanhikivi-1 nuclear power plant. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://www.interfax.ru/business/839008

in particular projects to organize facilities in Karelia for the production and export of hydrogen to Finland with the support of the Russian company Severstal[67].

**Science and education**

Scientific ties between research centers and universities of states with an interest in the Arctic region are being particularly developed. Scientific cooperation in the Arctic has always been seen as a way to maintain an ongoing dialogue between the countries of the region, despite the worsening political situation[68]. The activities of the Arctic Council, the International Arctic Science Committee[69], the International Arctic Social Science Association, the International Science Initiative in the Russian Arctic (ISIRA[70]), the Russian-American Pacific Partnership (RAPP[71]), Horizon 2020[72], and the Barents/Euro-Arctic Council conferences are also aimed at reducing tensions in the interaction between Arctic countries.

**The largest international platform in this area is the University of the Arctic (UArctic[73])**, which brings together universities and training centers involved in Arctic research. Russia maintains a scientific dialogue with the Arctic states, which also contributes to more in-depth research on the Arctic region, which is also of an applied nature. For example, in 2018. Russia joined the 2017 International Agreement on Strengthening International Arctic Scientific Cooperation[74], which reinforces the importance of maintaining peace, stability, and constructive scientific dialogue in the Arctic region by developing a roadmap for marine, land, and atmospheric research in the region, as well as establishing scientific exchange among universities and research centers. In addition, the agreement also emphasizes the need for cooperation with non-Arctic states.

There are currently about 100-150 international projects and grants underway in the Russian Arctic at over 40 academic and 20-25 industry institutes[75]. International research is supported by transnational and national companies, including ExxonMobil, Statoil, Seadrill Limited, North Atlantic Drilling Limited, ConocoPhillips, and Gazprom, Lukoil, Norilsk Nickel, ALROSA[76].

67 TASS. (2021). Severstal and its partners are working on the production of "green" hydrogen in Karelia. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://tass.ru/ekonomika/12875583
68 Tishkov, A.A. (2020). Mezhdunarodnoye nauchnoe sotrudnichestvo v Arktike: prioritety v period predsedatelstva Rossii b Arkticheskom Sovete (2021-2023) [International scientific cooperation in the Arctic: priorities during Russia's Chairmanship in the Arctic Council (2021-2023)]. International Cooperation, 1, 32–39.
69 IASC. (n.d.). International Arctic Science Committee. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://iasc.info
70 ISIRA. (n.d.). International Science Initiative in the Russian Arctic (ISIRA). Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://iasc.info/our-work/isira
71 Russian American Pacific Partnership. (2021). Council for U.S.- Russia Relations. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://www.usrussia.org/rapp-forum
72 European Commission. (n.d.). Horizon 2020. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-2020_en
73 UArctic. (n.d.). China & The Arctic: A View to 2050. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://www.uarctic.org/news/2021/4/china-the-arctic-a-view-to-2050/
74 The Codex Consortium. (2017). Agreement on Strengthening International Arctic Scientific Cooperation. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://docs.cntd.ru/document/542624227
75 Tishkov, A.A. (2020). Mezhdunarodnoye nauchnoe sotrudnichestvo v Arktike: prioritety v period predsedatelstva Rossii b Arkticheskom Sovete (2021-2023) [International scientific cooperation in the Arctic: priorities during Russia's Chairmanship in the Arctic Council (2021-2023)]. International Cooperation, 1, 32–39.
76 Ibid

Nevertheless, due to the Russian-Ukrainian crisis, the University of the Arctic temporarily suspends cooperation with Russian universities and research centers and cancels the UArctic Congress in Moscow[77].

**The number of international expeditions to the Arctic increases every year**. For example, in 2017 a Canadian expedition to study reindeer harnesses in Yamal[78], and in 2019 a Russian-Canadian expedition to study salmon in Alaska took place[79]. Russia actively cooperates with China in this field. In 2016, an expedition led by the State Oceanic Administration of China and the Russian Academy of Sciences was conducted to analyze marine geology, flora and fauna, and the chemical composition of water in the Arctic region (SDG 13 - Climate Action, SDG 14 - Life Below Water, SDG 15 - Life on Land, SDG 17 - Partnerships for the Goals).

**To maintain the scientific dialogue, Russia participates in international seminars on the development of the Arctic region**. For example, in 2016. Carleton University (Canada), together with the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Canada, held a conference **"Russian-Canadian Dialogue and Cooperation in the Arctic"**[80] on the problems of indigenous peoples of the North and the sustainable development of the region. The conference was attended by diplomats, researchers, representatives of the business community and indigenous peoples of the Arctic. Also in 2022, under the leadership of the Russian Council on Foreign Affairs (RIAC) and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), **a scientific seminar on "Russian-Chinese Cooperation in the Arctic: Opportunities and Limitations"** was held, where the prospects of Moscow and Beijing cooperation in the Arctic were considered, as well as the possibilities of elaborating a common approach to developing the region. Such events contribute to the development of practical measures to achieve the UN SDGs, such as SDG 9 - Industrialization, Innovation and Infrastructure, SDG 13 - Climate Action, and SDG 14 - Life Below Water.

**Cooperation between Russia and China in the Arctic in the field of science has been particularly intense in recent years. In 2019, the China-Russian Arctic Research Center** was established during the International Arctic Forum "Arctic Territory of Dialogue", which consolidates close cooperation between the Shirshov Institute of Oceanology of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Qingdao National Laboratory for Marine Science and Technology. The Center will conduct research that addresses the effects of GIC on the Arctic, ice quality, and changes in Arctic ecosystems, which will contribute to SDG 13 - Climate Action, SDG 14 - Life Below Water. In

77 UArctic. (2022). UArctic Statement on Ukraine. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://www.uarctic.org/news/2022/4/uarctic-actions-on-ukraine/
78 Komsomolskaya Pravda. (2017). Anthropologists from Canada study ancient reindeer sleds in Yamal. RetrievedApril 26, 2022, from https://www.yamal.kp.ru/online/news/2746427/
79 TASS. (2019). Scientists from Russia and Canada have completed an expedition to study salmon in Alaska. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://nauka.tass.ru/nauka/6231555
80 Institute of European, Russian and Eurasian Studies. (2016). Conference "Canada-Russia Dialogue and Cooperation in the Arctic".Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://carleton.ca/eurus/cu-events/conference-canada-russia-dialogue-cooperation-arctic/

addition, **the Russian-Chinese Scientific Center for the development and implementation of the concept of the "Ice Silk Road"** was established under the Jilin University and the Russian Academy of Military Sciences, which will be the basis for research on Arctic shipping and the use of advanced logistics developments (SDG 9 - Industrialization, Innovation and Infrastructure, SDG 13 - Climate Action, SDG 14 - Life Below Water).

Moreover, Russian universities and research centers are deeply involved in academic exchange. For example, through the Finnish-Russian Cross-Border University exchange program students from several Russian[81] and Finnish[82] universities can obtain academic internships[83]. Russian universities maintain ties with universities in China, such as Anhui State Pedagogical University[84], Harbin Polytechnic University, and Beijing Polytechnic Institute in Shenzhen[85].

**Support for the residents and the indigenous peoples of the Arctic**

Projects related to the support of Arctic indigenous peoples are implemented both within multilateral platforms, especially in the working groups of the Arctic Council, and in a bilateral format.


**The Arctic Demography Index Project**[86] continues in the Sustainable Development Working Group, which began in 2020 and will be completed in 2023. The main goal of the project is to develop a methodology for calculating the demographic index, which will be based on three parameters: natural increase and natural decrease in population and migration flows. It is planned to calculate a demographic index in 19 Arctic regions, including nine regions in the territory of Russia, two in Norway, three in Finland, two in Sweden and three in Canada. The Arctic Demographic Index will be the part of the Business Index North, so the project not only contributes to the collection of relevant statistical data on migration processes in the Arctic but will also identify contradictions and conflicts in the relationship between the local population and the business community (SDG 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth).

In addition, SDWG is implementing a project on indigenous food culture, **"Arctic Indigenous Youth, Climate Change, and Food Culture"**[87]. The first phase of the project, which ended in

81 St. Petersburg State University, Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University, European University in St. Petersburg, St. Petersburg State Forestry University, Petrozavodsk State University
82 Tampere University and East Finland University
83 Embassy of the Russian Federation in Finland. (n.d.). Russian-Finnish relations. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://helsinki.mid.ru/rossijsko-finlandskie-otnosenia
84 Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation. (n.d.). Joint educational projects with Chinese universities. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://mininuniver.ru/international/china
85 MSU Faculty of Materials Sciences. (n.d.). MSU-PPI University in Shenzhen. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from http://www.fnm.msu.ru/international/mgu-ppi/
86 Sustainable Development Working Group. (n.d.). Arctic demography index. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://sdwg.org/what-we-do/projects/arctic-demography-index/
87 Arctic Council. (2019). EALLU - Arctic Indigenous Youth, Climate Change and Food Culture 2nd Phase 2019–2021 Draft v1. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/bitstream/handle/11374/2485/SDWG_2019-09_Isafjordur_Plenary-07a_EALLU-project-proposal.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

2019, focused on building a knowledge base about the food culture of Arctic Indigenous Peoples, which will contribute to the introduction of innovative practices and harmonization of relations between the scientific community, the business community, and Indigenous Peoples of the North in the field of food culture. A major role in the project is given to the involvement of youth. The second phase will include international workshops on the food culture of indigenous peoples of the Arctic with the involvement of indigenous youth.

**One of the formats for supporting indigenous peoples is the International Union for Circumpolar Health**[88], which addresses the health and needs of the peoples of the North, working to organize workplace safety, improve living conditions, and make healthcare more accessible to the local population.

**The cooperation in this field also develops on a bilateral basis and is mainly aimed at maintaining cultural contacts between the indigenous peoples**. For instance, **the World Congress of Finno-Ugric Peoples**[89] with the participation of Karels, Permian Komi, Mordva, Khanty and Mansi[90] is organized every four years with the support of Russia and Finland. Also, since 2000, **the Russian-Finnish Cultural Forum**[91] has been held which unites experts from different spheres of art. In 2021, the congress was held in an online format, with a number of sessions devoted to the concept of cultural code and its influence on urban spaces. In addition, in 2019, during the V International Arctic Forum "The Arctic - Territory of Dialogue", **the Russian Geographical Society and the Arctic Society of Finland signed an agreement on scientific and cultural cooperation in the study of the Arctic region**[92].

Arctic indigenous peoples' organizations are one track of cooperation in this area: **the Inuit Polar Council**, for example, includes Chukchi and Yupik people living in Russia, in addition to Inuit from Canada. Active Russian-Canadian cooperation within the framework of the Inuit Polar Council took place mainly in the 2000s. For example, from 1996 to 2005, a project was implemented to improve the quality of institutions of interaction between indigenous peoples and the state in the Russian

88 International Union for Circumpolar Health. (n.d.). International congresses. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://iuch.net/meetings/
89 Fenno-Ugria. (n.d.). Eighth World Congress of Finno-Ugric Peoples. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://fennougria.ee/ru/predstavitelstva/vsermirnye-kongressy/vosmoj/
90 Embassy of the Russian Federation in Finland. (n.d.). Russian-Finnish relations. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://helsinki.mid.ru/rossijsko-finlandskie-otnosenia
91 St. Petersburg International Cultural Forum. (2021). XXII Russian-Finnish Cultural Forum announced the program. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://culturalforum.ru/news/xxii-rossiysko-finlyandskiy-kulturnyy-forum-obyavil-programmu
92 Russian Geographical Society. (n.d.). RGS and the Arctic Society of Finland will conclude a cooperation agreement. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://www.rgo.ru/ru/article/rgo-i-arkticheskoe-obshchestvo-finlyandii-zaklyuchat-soglashenie-o-sotrudnichestve

Arctic. In 2017. The Inuit Polar Council held three summits focusing on economic development, natural resource management, and education[93].

**Under the ThinkArctic project**, representatives from Canada and Finland stressed the importance of maintaining cultural contacts between indigenous peoples, which can be achieved by holding joint cultural events aimed at promoting indigenous lifestyles and languages. In addition, cooperation in this area should also be carried on at the level of Arctic indigenous organizations in the Arctic Council and the Barents/Euro-Arctic Council (Working Group of Indigenous Peoples).

**Sustainable tourism**

**The development of sustainable tourism is more of a potential area of cooperation**. Arctic tourism may contribute to improving the quality of the urban environment, infrastructure, economic performance of the region and the creation of new jobs and health care (SDG 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG 9 - Industrialization, Innovation and Infrastructure, SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Towns). The Arctic, as a unique natural region, is also well positioned to create sustainable ecotourism with a focus on "getting closer to nature" and recreation, so work in this area corresponds to SDG 15 - Life on Land. However, despite the increasing flow of tourists to the Russian Arctic, the region's underdeveloped transportation and tourism infrastructure, insufficient information support, and lack of personnel with knowledge of a foreign language, especially Chinese, are significant constraints. As noted by Chinese experts, Arctic tourism should be combined with the preservation of the unique lifestyle of indigenous peoples and respect for the environment, but despite the continued growth of interest in visiting the region, the COVID-19 pandemic is a significant constraint to increasing the tourist flow and pushes back the plans for the development of Arctic tourism for years to come.

93 INUIT. (n.d.). Inuit Polar Council. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/icc-activities/icc-summits/#