

International Studies Program

Task Force 2011



Melting Boundaries: Rethinking Arctic Governance

Climate change is fundamentally transforming the Arctic landscape. As the sea ice melts, greater access to natural resources and new shipping lanes is intensifying economic and political interest in the region. If left unchecked, unsustainable resource extraction has the potential to degrade the natural environment and threaten the human security of Arctic inhabitants. Existing governance frameworks in the Arctic require reassessment in light of these recent changes. To further understand the issue of Arctic governance, this Task Force team traveled to Ottawa, Canada for one week to meet with politicians, embassy representatives, academics and indigenous organization leaders whose insights greatly impacted our recommendations.

Policy Recommendations

- Strengthen the mandate and scope of the Arctic Council by establishing a Permanent Secretariat; clarifying the membership status of Permanent Observers; admitting the EU; and establishing a Working Group on indigenous self-governance.
- Expand community security and cooperation in the Arctic.
- Carry out greater devolution of state governance to indigenous groups.
- Pursue an ecosystem based management approach and implement hydrocarbon resource regulations.
- Establish a multilateral body to agree on delimitation of the Lomonosov Ridge.
- Invest in and improve Arctic marine infrastructure.



Photos: with Luke Henderson, Foreign Affairs & International Trade Canada; at the Danish Embassy; with Mary Simon, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami & Pita Aatami, Makivik Corporation; with Joël Plouffe, l'Université du Québec à Montréal and Sophie Thériault, University of Ottawa. Map: Inuit Communities of Canada from www.itk.ca.



Task Force Advisors:

Nadine Fabbi,
Canadian Studies Center
Vincent Gallucci,
Aquatic and Fishery Sciences

Task Force Evaluator:

Julia Gourley,
U.S. Representative,
Arctic Council

Task Force Members:

Kelsey Barrett, Editor
Scott Halliday, Editor
Colleen Kennedy, Advisory Editor
Zeina Hamed, Ottawa Editor
Victoria Choe, Coordinator
Kim Selling, Photographer
John Bryan
Monica Chahary
Griffith Couser
Kitty Gordon, Makivik Corporation
Jennifer Grosman
Ahnalee Herke
Lauren Hruska
Lisa Koperqualuk, Makivik Corporation
Dominic Maltais
Kelly Miller