



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARCTIC

Experts convene in Rovaniemi to discuss climate change and human security

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Scientists and other experts from across the North met this week at Arktikum, University of Lapland, in Rovaniemi, Finland to address issues of climate change and human security, in a workshop organized for University of the Arctic Institute for Applied Circumpolar Policy (led by Dartmouth College and the University of Alaska at Fairbanks).in conjunction with the University of Lapland and the UArctic Thematic Network on Geopolitics and Security.

Held from September 6th to 8th, 2010, the workshop's aims included disseminating scientific knowledge about impacts of climate change and exploring the real impacts of climate change on northern peoples and societies and their (human) security. The structure and participants were designed to promote dialogue between the scientific and policy communities on these critical issues, and produce material for decision-making.

Speakers at the conference included Dartmouth College's Kenneth Yalowitz, Svein Mathiesen of Kautokeino's EALAT Institute, Durham University's Andrew Baldwin, Royal Institute of Technology's Annika Skoglund and Mikhail Kalentchenko from Murmansk, Russia as well as many from University of Lapland and elsewhere in Finland (for a full list of speakers, see the Workshop Program at http://www.uarctic.org/NEW_RovaniemiWorkshop_program_310810_ceOca.pdf.file)

Discussions during the workshop highlighted the need to see climate change as a phenomenon not just existing in computer models and scientific reports, and risks, but as a current reality that is already changing environments, livelihoods and societies in the North. These changes inevitably transform our perceptions of security, pose significant challenges for how we can adapt and react to face them and finally, what might be human responses.

The main organizer Lassi Heininen from University of Lapland remarked on the success of this workshop in building on earlier meetings "The main aim to seek fresh thinking and bold new ideas on climate change and human security based on multidisciplinary discussion was successfully reached. This means on one hand, deeper understanding on the interrelationship

between them like for example, that climate change might mean a change in problem definition on security paradigm, and on the other, new ideas and concepts for human responses which are among the main findings of a final report.”

The discussion of this week’s workshop served as a follow-up to two earlier conferences organized by the Institute, “The Arctic Climate Change and Security Policy” in Hanover, NH December 2008, and “Considering a Roadmap Forward: The Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment” in Fairbanks, Alaska in October 2009, and also from the design and experiences of the Open Assemblies of the Northern Research Forum (www.nrf.is).

Organizing the workshop at the Arctic Centre, University of Lapland continues to demonstrate Rovaniemi’s legacy as a hub of Arctic science and international policy, as well as highlight the considerable expertise concentrated in the academic and governmental actors in Lapland.

About the organizers

*The **University of the Arctic Institute for Applied Circumpolar Policy** was established in 2008 by the Dartmouth College and the University of Alaska at Fairbanks. The two earlier conferences by the UArctic Institute were “The Arctic Climate Change and Security Policy” in Hanover, NH December 2008, and “Considering a Roadmap Forward: The Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment” in Fairbanks, Alaska in October 2009.*

*The **Thematic Network on Geopolitics and Security** is a joint TN between the University of the Arctic (UArctic) and the Northern Research Forum (NRF), it was established in 2009. The two focus areas of the TN are studies on northern Geopolitics and studies on security and security dimensions in the North, and the main aim is to combine these two areas together and draw up a holistic picture on northern geopolitics.*

*The **University of the Arctic** is a cooperative network of over 100 universities, colleges, and other organizations committed to higher education and research in the North. Our members share resources, facilities, and expertise to build post-secondary education programs that are relevant and accessible to northern students. Our overall goal is to create a strong, sustainable circumpolar region by empowering northerners and northern communities through education and shared knowledge.*

*The **University of Lapland** located in Rovaniemi in Finnish Lapland, is an international, multidisciplinary institution whose areas of expertise include Arctic affairs and tourism*

research. Teaching and research at the University centre on northern and Arctic issues, tourism, art and design, law, education and the social sciences.

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