

# **ARCTIC SCIENCE IN GLOBALIZATION: What is the most important question in Arctic research?**

**The Northern Research Forum session at the 2nd Arctic Circle**  
Reykjavik, Iceland in October 31, 2014

Short Report (January 2015)

By Northern Research Forum

## **The NRF SESSION “ARCTIC SCIENCE IN GLOBALIZATION**

The “Arctic Science in Globalization: Beyond IPY 2007-2008” session - with theme “What is the most important issue in the globalized Arctic, as well as the most relevant question for Arctic science, within the next 5-10 years?” - took place on Friday, 31<sup>st</sup> of October at 18:40-20:00 at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Arctic Circle in Reykjavik, Iceland.

It assessed the impacts, relevance and future of Arctic science, emphasizing the future (e.g. ICARP III), searching for the so-called ‘NASA’ question. In other words, the session aimed to examine, (re)define and discuss what is the most important / relevant / challenging issue in the globalized Arctic, and following from that what is the most important / relevant / challenging question for Arctic science within the next 5-10 years. Among raised issues and questions, which can be provocative, could be e.g., "Do values and politics trump science?", „Should science take the Arctic Paradox seriously?“, "The Anthropocene - too scary to be true?", “What is the ultimate price of mass-scale utilization we are ready to pay?“, "Need for paradigm shift - a mission impossible?".

There were eight invited speakers (see below) from all over the Arctic region, and Central Europe. These were researchers and emerging or senior experts on Arctic science, knowledge and education. Each of them made a short - max. 5 minutes - presentation addressing the topic: “What is the most important / relevant / challenging issue or question in the globalized Arctic, and for Arctic science, in the next 5-10 years?” Prof. Lassi Heininen, chairman of the NRF Steering Committee, was the moderator of the session.

Presentations were followed by lively open discussion by the audience. It was divided into two parts: 1<sup>st</sup> round was for questions & comments from the audience, and 2<sup>nd</sup> round was for speakers’ short responses and possible short comments by the audience.

The most important points of the speakers were following (see below):

**Rasmus Bertelsen** (IR and Education, University of Aalborg, Denmark):

- The place of the Arctic in global environmental and political-economic processes in general and in a political-economic system in transition, the aftermath of the Cold War and the Rise of Asia.

**Heather Exner-Pirot** (Social Sciences, University of Saskatchewan, Canada):

- Dialogue, technologies and innovations, i.e. how to use and apply technology better locally, build clusters and have more knowledge-based dialogue.

**Matthias Finger** (Energy and Resources policy, technology, EPFL, Switzerland):

- Currently there is “disconnection“, and thus the challenge is how the two dynamics, the Arctic and Global will be combined with each other.

**David Hik** (Biology and Science policy, IASC / Canada):

- There is ICARP III, and thus no need to go „beyond the IPY“, for how to organize ‚interdisciplinarity‘.

**Gunhild Hoogsensen Gjörv** (Political sciences, UiT – The Arctic University of Norway):

- Gender and equality in the Arctic is important in the interchange between the local and the global area. Here we need bring together all the concept of security together – food security, military security, environmental security, human security, etc.

**Halldor Johannsson** (Arctic Portal, Iceland):

- Policy maker like information prepared in a digestive way – scientist need to learn that and step out of our boxes.

**Steingrimur Jonsson** (Oceanography, University of Akureyri, Iceland):

- The Arctic Ocean (only 1% of the oceans) so it is not so big, but it has a high percentage of fresh water, and therefore climate change can have a great consequences for the Arctic Ocean.

**Gleb Yarovoy** (Political sciences, Petrozavodsk State University, Russia):

- The social relevant of science is very important, even crucial. Since Political sciences are, or should be, provocative, there should be more ‘new’ thinking, and Arctic science should always promote peace and peaceful debate.