

# EU Arctic Information Centre

As a network of European actors with extensive activities in, and knowledge of, the Arctic





## EU ARCTIC INFORMATION CENTRE

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**DESIGN AND LAYOUT**

Arctic Portal  
[arcticportal.org](http://arcticportal.org)



# A proposal to establish

## **EU Arctic Information Centre**

### **As a network of European actors with extensive activities in, and knowledge of, the Arctic**

Proposed by the:

- Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland, Finland

The presentation has been prepared in collaboration with:

- Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research, Germany
- Arctic Centre, University of Groningen, Netherlands
- Arctic Portal, Iceland
- Committee on Polar Research Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland
- Ecologic Institute, Germany
- ESF European Polar Board, France
- Finnish Meteorological Institute, Finland
- International Polar Foundation, Belgium
- Pierre and Marie Curie University, France
- Sami Education Centre, Finland
- Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom
- Thule Institute of the University of Oulu, Finland, University of the Arctic Thematic Networks
- Tromsø Centre for Remote Technology, University of Tromsø, Norway
- UNEP/GRID Arendal

The European Environment Agency (Copenhagen, Denmark) participated in the planning process.

The core partners will include their networks to co-operate across Europe and the Arctic with the aim of raising the level of awareness and knowledge of the Arctic and its European dimension.

Rovaniemi, Finland / April 2011

## Recent references in favour of establishing an EU Arctic Information Centre

European Commission Arctic Communication, November 2008:

**“Explore – together with Nordic countries – possibilities for creating a European Arctic Information Centre”**

European Council Conclusions on Arctic Issues, December 2009:

**“The Council invites the Commission together with Member States to examine the merits of establishing an information centre on Arctic issues in the EU”**

European Parliament report on the sustainable EU policy for the High North, January 2011:

**“...requests the Commission to explore as a key priority the establishment of an EU Arctic Information Centre as a joint, networked undertaking, taking into account suitable proposals; notes the proposal by the University of Lapland in this respect; considers that such a centre needs to be capable both of organising permanent EU outreach to the major actors relevant to the Arctic and of channelling Arctic information and services towards the EU’s Institutions and stakeholders.”**

Finland’s Strategy for the Arctic Region, June 2010

**“Finland works for achieving the following goals: ...the EU establishes an Arctic Information Centre in conjunction with the Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland”**

Alexander Stubb, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, June 2010

**“Lack of knowledge breeds suspicion and uncertainty. In the Arctic this concerns both the Arctic Council and the EU. The Council is considering a Communications and Outreach Strategy, and the EU is contemplating opening an Arctic Information Center. These projects receive our full support.”**

Proposal of the Saami Parliamentary Council on EU Arctic Information Centre, September 2010

**“... The Finnish Council of State has proposed establishment of the EU Arctic Information Centre in Rovaniemi, Finland in connection with the Arctic Centre already operating there. SPC supports EU’s intention of establishing an arctic information centre and considers it appropriate for the centre to be established within the arctic region. SPC also supports the proposal of the Republic of Finland to establish the arctic information centre in Rovaniemi....The Centre should be responsible, in particular, for establishing dialogue with the Arctic Indigenous Peoples in compliance with the Commission’s Arctic Statement. Dialogue would be facilitated if the Centre located within the arctic region.”**

Ninth Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, European Parliament, Brussels 13-15 September 2010

**“Move forward on the plans by the European Commission to set up an EU Arctic Information Centre, taking note of the idea to set up such a centre as a network with a hub at the Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland, Finland, and cooperating with relevant research institutions.”**











# Summary of the proposal for an EU Arctic Information Centre

**The proposed EU Arctic Information Centre provides a channel for dissemination of Arctic information within and outside the EU. The EU Arctic Information Centre offers access to relevant and updated Arctic information. The EU Arctic Information Centre gives support to the formation and continuation of EU's Arctic policy and helps to guarantee its coherence.**

The recent EU Arctic documents refer to a gap in the dissemination of Arctic information across Europe and a need to improve the diffusion of European related information in the Arctic regions. In response, the EU Commission and Council have expressed the need to explore the possibility of establishing an EU Arctic Information Centre. The European Parliament calls for a joint, networked undertaking, and highlights the proposal - outlined in this document - by the University of Lapland in Finland. This initiative is supported in the Finnish Arctic Strategy adopted in the Finnish Parliament in June, 2010.

This proposal outlines a solution – the EU Arctic Information Centre is formed through an all new collaborative structure of key players that have expertise, skills and contacts on Arctic issues, and who are committed to ensuring that the recognised information gap between the EU and the Arctic is filled.

The Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland will host the headquarters of the EU Arctic Information Centre but the EU Arctic Information Centre will also have a presence in Brussels, Belgium, that can be provided either by one of the cooperating nodes based in Brussels or by other arrangements. The fact that the hub of the network is located within the geographical arctic region and in Rovaniemi, where the current circumpolar Arctic co-operation was initially launched, demonstrates that the EU does attach great importance to Arctic issues. This proposal has the official support of the Sami Parliamentary Council, thus also bringing in the indigenous peoples from the European Arctic region.

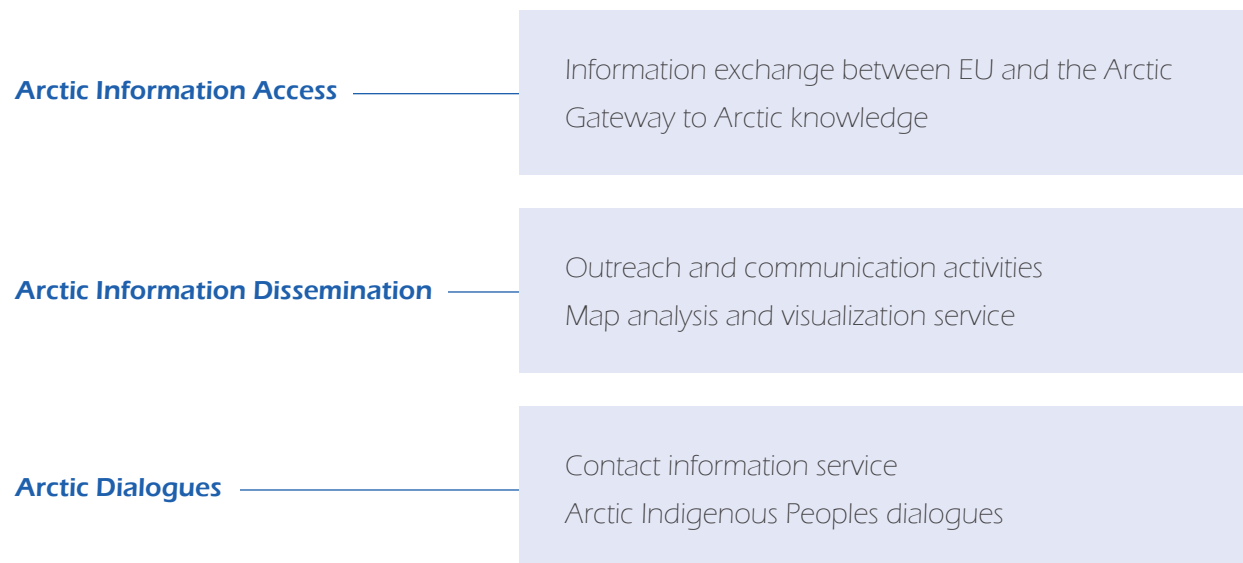
The overall aim of the proposed EU Arctic Information Centre is to facilitate two-way information exchange between the EU and the Arctic, as well as offering targeted services by processing and aggregating information for different needs and target groups. In general the EU Arctic Information Centre aims to increase awareness and understanding about the circumpolar as well as European Arctic affairs and related strategies, policies and activities by:

- providing easily accessible Arctic and European Arctic related information sources
- disseminating European and Arctic related information and services
- serving and stimulating dialogues related to the Arctic

The intended users of the EU Arctic Information Centre are the EU institutions, European countries, and their citizens including Arctic Indigenous Peoples, research institutions, the private sector and other stakeholders. In addition, it is envisaged that governments, citizens and stakeholders outside Europe will also be using the EU Arctic Information Centre to gain access to European policies and activities in or affecting the Arctic.

The EU Arctic Information Centre does not carry out research, it does not have a representative or a policy development role and it is not a data base or an archive. Instead, it will be a “one stop shop” which aims to disseminate information and activities that require outreach and communication excellence. The network of partner organisations already have unique expertise in both fields while also having extensive connections to European and Arctic research entities and projects. The EU Arctic Information Centre is also open to relevant European institutions, which will provide further information, knowledge and insight into Arctic issues.

**...it will be a “one stop shop”  
which aims to disseminate  
information and activities**











# Proposal for an EU Arctic Information Centre

## MOTIVATION

The Arctic houses 0.05 % of the world's population despite covering almost 20 % of its surface area. While always a key region for the EU, today the Arctic is growing in importance mainly because of emerging economic opportunities – shipping routes and access to resources. But with this come concerns and the need for proper management and stakeholder engagement in future decision-making.

Environmental deterioration due to climate change and impacts from industrialization will be key issues in the future, as well as the rights of the indigenous people in the Arctic, among others.

Access to reliable, detailed information about the Arctic, its people, and the science and research being carried out now and in the future should and will influence any decision-making processes for the region.

**...easily accessible  
information is not  
currently available**

A wealth of information already exists, from EU and EU Member States, regional organizations, agencies, local practitioners, research institutes and Arctic Indigenous Peoples. However, easily accessible information is not currently available, especially related to results of ongoing research projects and discussions with indigenous peoples' representatives.

A clear, science and research-based focus taking into account all stakeholder viewpoints and ensuring responsible decision-making is needed.

The proposed EU Arctic Information Centre will cater to this need – providing a storehouse for information, a forum for all related work being carried out and an outreach function to ensure that relevant information is available to all relevant audiences.

It will promote a shared vision for the Arctic and build trust by providing and popularizing information and stimulating an atmosphere of participation, dialogue, networking and partnerships between all who have an investment and stake in the Arctic.

## THE PROPOSAL

Through experience, the network partners understand the increasing needs for an EU Arctic Information Centre. Requirements have been expressed by multiple stakeholders, including the need for researchers to more efficiently disseminate the results of their work in the Arctic and the European Arctic Indigenous Peoples expressing the need for a closer dialogue with the EU.

Another potential key audience, the private sector, is seeking contact material, information and channels for updated information about research results or specific rules for the needs of their Arctic operations. An information portal would greatly benefit business and potential development in the region.

Furthermore, the European Institutions and Member States themselves have a stake in the development of the region, and as such they would benefit from access to current, up-to-date information about the Arctic.

In response to all these needs, the Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland, together with a group of Arctic-related European institutions propose here the establishment of an EU Arctic Information Centre.

Most of the Arctic information today is directed towards specific experts and professional target groups and is not easily found in one location. The proposed EU Arctic Information Centre aims to offer wider and more comprehensive access to Arctic information and its sources.

Certain Arctic web services are available today (e.g. the Barentsinfo.org hosted by the Arctic Centre in Finland or the Arctic Portal in Iceland) that provide a wealth of Arctic information and links to various institutions. However, these services do not represent the EU perspective and they are not geared towards providing access to EU initiatives and ongoing projects, or to EU policy options and Member States engagement, or making the information available in different EU languages.

The focus of this proposal is an EU Arctic Information Centre that provides a holistic understanding about impacts of climate change and the modern development trends of the Arctic and through this contributes to the sustainable development and environmental protection of the Arctic Region. The Arctic Information Centre includes both perspectives of “the Arctic in the EU” and “the EU in the Arctic”, aiming to better understand the Arctic in Europe and to increase awareness of EU policies in and affecting the Arctic.

**...the Arctic and  
the European  
Arctic Indigenous  
Peoples expressing  
the need for a  
closer dialogue  
with the EU**



## MAIN OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the proposed EU Arctic Information Centre are:

- to identify and make available information about existing and planned EU activities in the Arctic of relevance for the Arctic and to provide easy access to it
- to serve as an information channel between Europe and Arctic regions and countries for EU and Arctic citizens and institutions
- to communicate and provide information to European citizens, the private sector, EU institutions and its Member States, about the status and trends in the Arctic and facilitate Arctic dialogues and sustainable development strategies
- to enhance the European Arctic information channels and networks between EU institutions, scientific experts, decision-makers, stakeholders, NGOs, Arctic local and indigenous peoples



## TARGET GROUPS AND USERS

The EU Arctic Information Centre will target a diverse range of stakeholders. EU policy and decision makers, media and interested citizens, leaders of European research projects, science exhibition and museums centres, teacher's networks and private entrepreneurs are a few examples of stakeholders who have expressed an early interest in a European Arctic information service. Thus, the main intended clients are:

- EU institutions and decisions makers
- residents in the Arctic and indigenous people
- experts, researchers, academics
- local and national administrations
- the private sector, industry and technology development sector
- general public (e.g. schools, tourists, media) both inside/outside EU
- NGOs



## ADDED VALUE

The aim of this proposal is to create a synergy that goes much further than any institution or single unit can serve separately. Therefore, the EU Arctic Information Centre is supported by a network of institutions with a long history of providing professional Arctic communication and educational services. By combining forces, the users can be served considerably better than what can be done by an individual institution alone.

A substantial amount of information about the Arctic is available already within research institutions in the EU as well as in agencies and libraries. The same applies to EU related information. The EU Arctic Information Centre can bring added value in:

- a holistic understanding of the Arctic and its role in the EU
- increasing the visibility for the EU in the Arctic region
- connecting Arctic Indigenous Peoples to the EU
- providing audience to Barents Euro-Arctic Region information
- connecting non-EU Arctic information providers to this new information system
- offering an easy tool to professionally distribute information and creating channels for dialogues
- channel services from the Arctic areas to the users in the European Union
- to develop an international archive that stores satellite images for future use, research or otherwise

**By combining forces,  
the users can be  
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The EU Arctic Information Centre's activities will improve information access and availability, knowledge sharing and communication about the Arctic covering many governance sectors – such as Arctic societies, economies and use of natural resources, cultures and natural environment, transport, fisheries and fishing, hunting, animal welfare, energy, mining, infrastructures, tourism and research but also cultures, indigenous peoples' and local livelihoods.

The EU Arctic Information Centre will also contribute to better dissemination of EU related information like EU documents, and papers on current affairs and future developments in remote European areas located in the Arctic for which access and availability of related information are not readily found.

The Centre can disseminate information about national European Arctic activities, consortia and projects and also increase European awareness about several international Arctic organizations by e.g. distributing information about the Arctic Council (policies and assessments), the International Arctic Science Committee (science) and the European Polar Board (European Arctic research infrastructures), the University of Arctic (education), European Environment Agency (environmental monitoring data) or activities like Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (SAON), Svalbard Integrated Arctic Earth Observing System (SIOS), International Study of the Arctic Change (ISAC) and Polar View (access to latest polar data, maps and forecasts).

## NETWORK PHILOSOPHY AND BENEFITS

The network model allows participating institutions to bring their own experience and develop special activities into an all new structure of co-operation. This strategy will also contribute to make the functioning costs of such a centre more economically efficient. The EU Arctic Information Centre is only realistic if it is built on existing Arctic outreach and communication structures that co-operate as a network. This has been taken into account when determining which European institutions should be included in the initial network model. Each node already has a wide co-operation network that covers especially the Arctic research institutions in Europe, which are essential information sources for the outreach activities. However, more institutions are expected to join and co-operate with the network as the Centre grows and develops further.

The aim of the network model is to make this proposal realistic, cost effective and avoid overlapping use of resources.

Even if the EU Arctic Information Centre leans on the best available information, either carried out by the participating nodes themselves or their partners, the EU Arctic Information Centre is not a research entity by itself and it does not carry out research. The participating nodes have good connections to Arctic information sources, like research institutions, as well as to their surrounding regional setting, local communities and national media.

The Centre will also have capacity if needed to contribute and help Arctic discussions and dialogue inside EU institutions.

**The participating nodes  
have good connections to  
Arctic information sources...**



## SERVICES AND PARTNERS

The goal of the EU Arctic Information Centre is to offer Arctic information services both to those who seek information and to those who need to disseminate information. The information services rely on existing outreach and communication tools, such as websites, dialogue activities, information aggregation and processing methods, libraries and science centre exhibitions that are adapted and adjusted to the end users and clients.

The services are produced in co-operation with the participating nodes/partners of the network and/or the managing entity, given that the EU Arctic Information Centre will be established with a budget. In the future new needs may arise, but the proposed services to form the core activities of the EU Arctic Information Centre are:

### EU Arctic Information Centre



#### (i) Facilitating the information exchange between EU and the Arctic

- Information about EU Arctic policies
- Information about international Arctic policies
- Information about Arctic projects of EU, European Countries, institutes and organizations
- Information on Arctic changes and trends (economic, environmental or social) that will or might affect the EU

**The goal of the EU Arctic Information is to offer Arctic information services...**





(ii) Gateway to Arctic knowledge

- Basic information on different topics and in multiple EU languages
- Responses to information requests
- Connections to existing information sources through an extended Arctic network
- Link to the main existing Arctic information services like the Arctic Portal, Barents Euro-Arctic Region Information Service and BarentsWatch
- Establish an off-line service that grants access to offline satellite data, and statistics based on this source of information

(iii) Arctic people and governance information services

- Arctic Indigenous Peoples dialogue and contact information service and information exchange for the EU
- Link and contact information to Arctic regional and EU representatives
- Information about governance, economics livelihood, impact assessment activities
- Maintain and develop the Arctic governance compendium

(iv) Outreach and communication activities

- Dissemination service for EU Arctic research and development projects
- Popularizing the scientific results through science exhibition communication tools and means such as touring exhibitions, science shows and demonstrations, interactive media, discussion forums, and information campaigns for the wider public
- Developing and offering informal education packages and providing teachers with training materials on Arctic-European related issues
- Support and promotion of Arctic indigenous culture shows and art happenings in Europe
- Media services

(v) Information service to provide syntheses, maps and visualization

- A web-based IT service as an automated and user-assisted merging of different data sources (climate, environment, social, economic, transport)
- Linking to Global Monitoring for Environment and Security services, and integrating existing European and international information services into Arctic perspectives
- Based on AISSAT - satellite data; provide an annual statistic of economic ship-based activities in the Arctic areas



## IMPLEMENTATION

The structure presented in this proposal will serve as a suggestion for the EU Arctic Information Centre's practical implementation. The EU Arctic Information Centre can be quickly established following approval by the relevant EU institution and budget allocation. The network is open for new institutions to join and take on certain responsibilities with regard to making their services and information available for the EU Arctic Information Centre.

## FUNDING AND MANAGEMENT

The final organization model and the way to connect the EU Arctic Information Centre into EU structures will depend on the legal status of the Centre and its budget. In this proposal the Centre functions as a network. An obvious location for the hub, the managing entity, would be at the Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland in Finland. Also, links with the communication structures of the EU bodies, like the Commission and Parliament, are essential to be functional and to guarantee the two-way flow of information to/from the Centre.

The value of the EU Arctic Information Centre and its attached network will come from the synergy of the co-operating institutions, who already host a considerable amount of Arctic information expertise. The network will need a core budget to carry out its activities. The required funding is reasonable compared to the added value and the amount of already existing information that can be efficiently mobilized through the proposed system, which is not happening today.

The establishment of the EU Arctic Information Centre and its activities in this proposal are envisaged to be funded through two different sources:

- (1) budget allocations to run and manage the EU Arctic Information Centre
- (2) project funding for special activities and periodical services

The synergy gained from the participating institutions is expected to create extra visibility for their respective information and will create an added value for each of the partners. The participating institutions are therefore expected to provide in-kind contribution to the EU Arctic Information Centre by keeping their information updated and available through the network services.

**...to guarantee the two-way  
flow of information to/from  
the Centre**





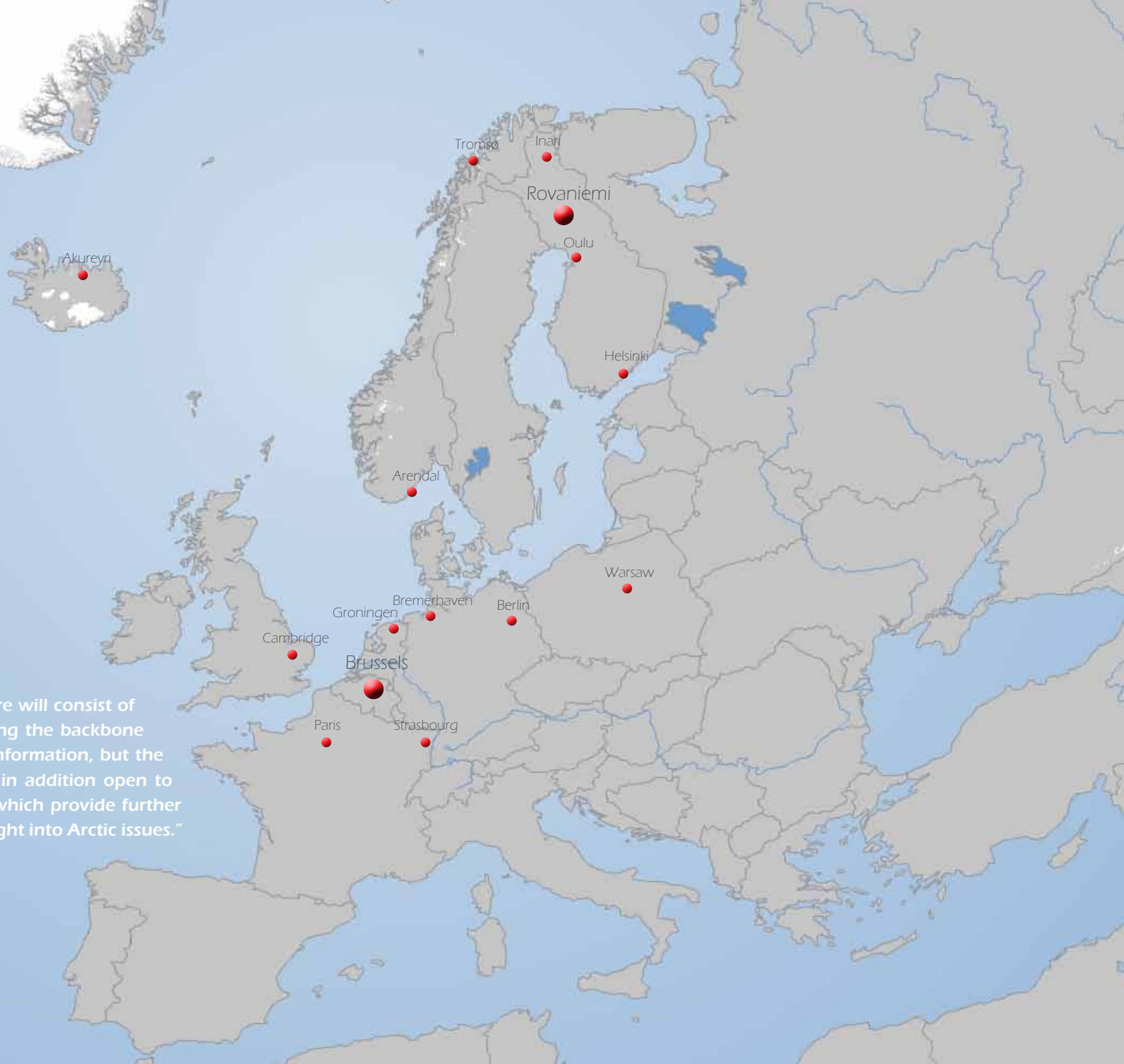
### EU Arctic Information Centre Budget

**...finally making  
available for common  
use a vast amount of  
Arctic information**

The Centre requires stable core funding to run the main activities both within the hub and in the nodes depending on the status of the proposed EU Arctic Information Centre. The basic infrastructure already exists but establishment, maintenance and the running of the services will need personnel and capacities that currently do not exist within the cooperation structures. Furthermore, processing of information material and its distribution in multiple languages is not possible without added resources. The relatively modest investment to launch and run the Centre will have the incredible benefit of finally making available for common use a vast amount of Arctic information with a high value for EU and the future of the Arctic. Funding for specific requests or unforeseen activities will be sought from various external international and national funding sources.

No specific budget estimations are mentioned in this proposal as they depend on upcoming decisions. The model presented here is flexible and can be adjusted according to different levels of scope and scale.

"The EU Arctic Information Centre will consist of a number of core nodes providing the backbone of the most relevant EU Arctic information, but the EU Arctic Information Centre is in addition open to relevant European institutions, which provide further information, knowledge and insight into Arctic issues."



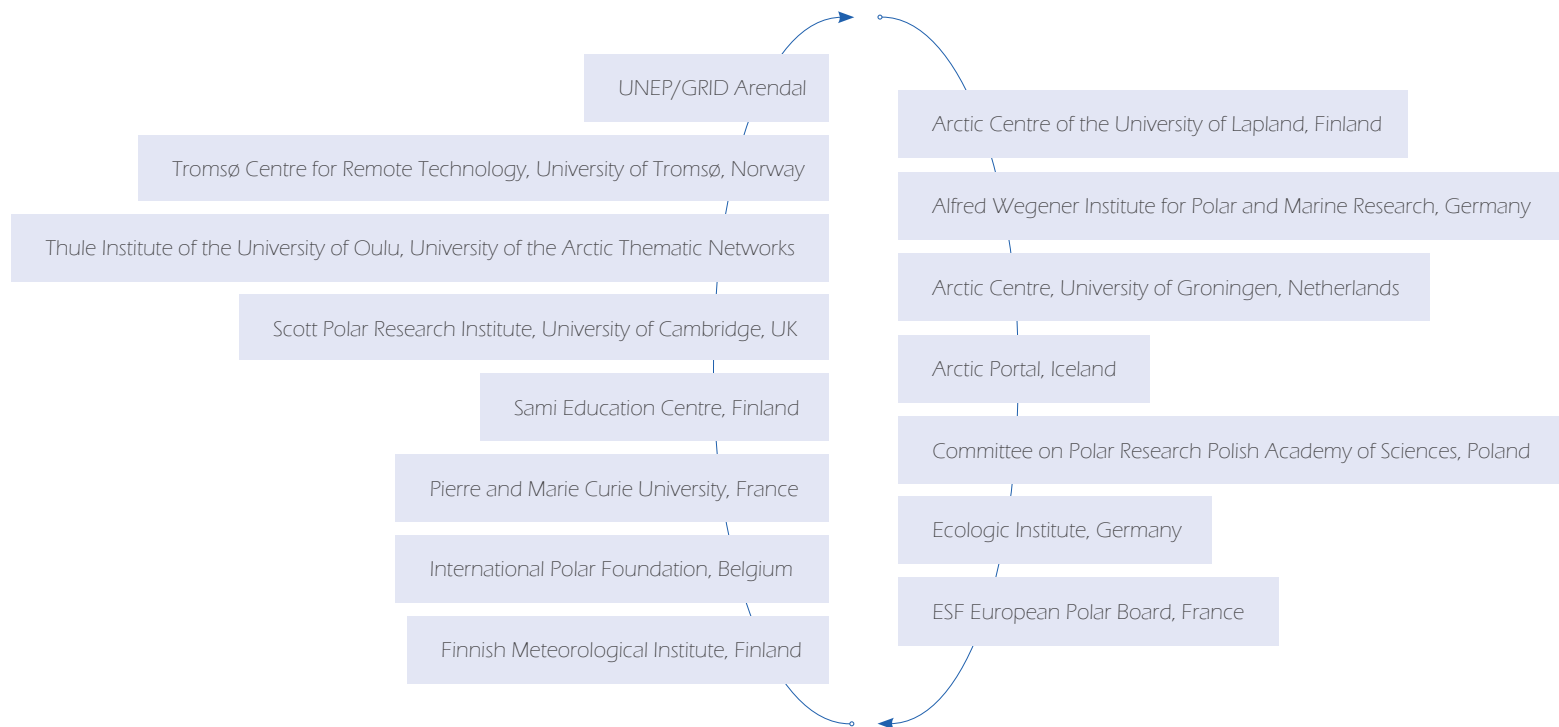


Figure - The network brings together a vast combination of Arctic information sources, practical experience, contacts and expertise. The network is open for relevant European institutions. The organisation model and the way to connect it into EU structures will depend on the EU decisions and the legal status of the Centre.

## LOCATIONS

The EU Arctic Information Centre is envisaged as a network. However, it is important that the EU Arctic Information Centre has headquarters in the Arctic of the EU. The location in the Arctic ensures fluent connections to Arctic inhabitants and it will also manifest the commitment by the EU to Arctic policies thus having high symbolic value. Besides the hub in the Arctic, the EU Arctic Information Centre will also have a presence in Brussels – either through one of the participating nodes based in Brussels or through other arrangements - in order to be able to serve and connect directly to the EU institutions.

The partners in Tromsø and Akureyri represent permanent nodes outside the EU, while the partner in Berlin and Brussels link the network to continental Europe. Such a distribution of partners will allow good possibilities for other potential members to join the network. The University of Arctic Thematic Networks provides links to extensive co-operation by circumpolar Universities and Colleges, while UNEP/GRID Arendal offers connections to global environmental fora.







**T**he following institutions have volunteered to be part of the establishment of the EU Arctic Information Centre, working in close co-operation with the European Commission and the European Parliament. The network is open for new institutions to join and take on certain responsibilities with regard to making their services and information available for the EU Arctic Information Centre.



## The Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland, Finland

[www.arcticcentre.org](http://www.arcticcentre.org)

The University of Lapland is the northernmost university in the EU. It has faculties of law, social sciences, education as well as art and design. The University's profile is distinguished by high-quality, international research on the people, societies and environment in the Arctic and the North, and it hosts the international secretariat of the University of Arctic. The Lapland University Consortium is composed of three higher education institutions in the province of Lapland: Kemi-Tornio University of Applied Sciences, the University of Lapland, and Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences. Altogether there are about 10 000 students within this consortium. Rovaniemi as a whole has a population of over 60 000.



Finland and Rovaniemi have played a key role in the history of the Arctic. The current circumpolar Arctic co-operation started when the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy was signed in Rovaniemi in 1991 after the initiative of Finland. This resulted in the establishment of the Arctic Council in Ottawa in 1996. EU's Northern Dimension Policy was also initiated in Rovaniemi in 1997. And, the extensive circumpolar co-operative network by universities and colleges, the University of Arctic, was formally launched there in 2001.

The Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland (Rovaniemi, Finland) was founded in 1989. Today it is a national and international Arctic information producer and centre of excellence, which conducts multidisciplinary research about changes in the Arctic region and their impacts. The research in the Arctic Centre is carried out in three research units: Arctic Global Change, Arctic Sustainable Development and the Northern Institute for Environmental and Minority Law. The Arctic Centre has lead and participated to numbers of Arctic international research and outreach projects funded by EU. The Arctic Centre has a permanent science centre exhibition and long experience in Arctic outreach and communications. It is also running the official Barents Euro-Arctic Region information system and has wide circumpolar cooperation networks. Currently, the Arctic Centre has a staff of about 50 people. The Centre is located in the Arktikum House by Ounas-river which is one of the main tourist attractions in Lapland, visited by about 80 000 tourists annually.

## Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research, Germany

[www.awi.de](http://www.awi.de)

The Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research (AWI) in the Helmholtz Association of German Research Centres conducts research in the Arctic, the Antarctic and the oceans and coasts of high and temperate latitudes. With its broad expertise and innovative approaches in bio-, geo- and climate sciences, excellent research facilities, a strong international network of partners and over 30 years of expertise, the AWI is amongst the world's few scientific institutions that conduct comprehensive research on the icy atmospheric, terrestrial and aquatic realms at both poles. It coordinates polar research in Germany and provides the necessary infrastructure, including permanent and seasonally staffed research stations (such as Neumayer Station III in Antarctica, the German-French research base 'AWIPEV' on Svalbard and the German-Russian 'Samoylov' station in the Lena Delta, Siberia), research vessels (such as the internationally renown "Polarstern"), research aircraft, scientific observatories and measurement systems.

The Polar Regions and the oceans are key areas for understanding of global climate and environmental change. The Arctic is warming twice as fast as other areas in the World, with profound consequences on sea level, extent and thickness of sea ice, the Greenlandic ice shelf and permafrost, and the access to new and as yet unexplored areas and resources. This provides challenges for the Arctic ecosystems and biodiversity on land and at sea, as well as for the sustainable development and future of indigenous people. The research carried out at the AWI observes, measures and quantifies the natural factors, processes and relationships in the past and present of the Arctic and analyses the interactions with other parts of the World. This forms the basis for sound prognosis of future changes in the Arctic to support the development of appropriate strategies and policy decisions to be taken at the local, national, regional and global level.





## Arctic Centre, University of Groningen, Netherlands

[www.arctic-centre.nl](http://www.arctic-centre.nl) - [www.rug.nl/arcticcentre](http://www.rug.nl/arcticcentre)

The Arctic Centre was founded on 19 January 1970. The original purpose was to stimulate the study of languages and cultures of arctic and sub-arctic peoples. When during the 1970's archaeologists, biologists and geographers joined, the scope of the Arctic Centre widened scientifically and also geographically by including Antarctica.

Nowadays, the Arctic Centre is an expertise centre for multi-disciplinary polar research in the Netherlands, aiming at getting a better understanding of the arctic environment and its use by people in past and present. Part of this research is carried out at the centre itself, by researchers in the disciplines of anthropology, archaeology, biology, geography and history working in close co-operation.

The Arctic Centre represents the Netherlands in the Council of the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) and in the working groups of the Arctic Council on Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF), pollution (AMAP) and Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG). The Arctic Centre operates the Netherlands Arctic Field Station in Ny-Ålesund and is represented in the Ny-Ålesund Science Managers Committee.

The Arctic Centre offers the Minor Arctic and Antarctic Studies for undergrad students. The courses are multidisciplinary both in content and in the discipline from which the students originate. The centre has a PhD program as well.

## Arctic Portal, Iceland

[www.arcticportal.org](http://www.arcticportal.org)

The Arctic Portal (AP), located in Akureyri in Northern Iceland, was welcomed in the ministerial declaration of the Arctic Council Ministerial meeting in Salekhard 2006. It is a comprehensive gateway to Arctic information and data on the internet, increasing information sharing and co-operation among Arctic stakeholders and granting exposure to Arctic related information and data. AP is a network of high international recognition and importance in Arctic information and data management and sharing. It consults, supports and serves as a host to many of the most important databases and websites in a circumpolar context, supporting co-operation, data sharing and outreach in science, education and policymaking.

The AP staff work closely with the Arctic Council, its working groups, projects and members giving them an extraordinary overview and knowledge of current Arctic issues, including the development of the Arctic Councils Sustaining Arctic Observation Networks – SAON. AP is managing, in close cooperation with the University of the Arctic, the development of the Arctic Atlas project and the Virtual Learning Tools project, the future in distance and Arctic education. AP has been an important component in IPY, hosting the [ipy.org](http://ipy.org) website and facilitating IPY legacy.

The Arctic Portal hosts and supports many websites of high European relevance, including: the International Permafrost Association – IPA; Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna - CAFF Arctic Biodiversity Assessment and Biodiversity Portal; Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment - PAME; International Arctic Science Committee – IASC; Association of Polar Early Career Scientists – APECS; various Indigenous organisations including Indigenous Peoples Secretariat - IPS and International Centre for Reindeer Husbandry – ICR; the Arctic Hydra project; Sustaining Arctic Observation Networks – SAON, Arctic Spatial Data Infrastructure – ASDI, International Arctic Social Sciences Association - IASSA and many more.

The participation of the Arctic Portal will include the participation of its highly valuable Arctic partners through the recently established Akureyri Arctic Cooperation Centre, bringing added scientific, social, political, technical and outreach knowledge of high European relevance.



## Committee on Polar Research Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland

[www.kbp.pan.pl](http://www.kbp.pan.pl)

Polar Research Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences was established in 1975. It is a panel of experienced research fellows, representing a variety of scientific disciplines from more than twenty scientific institutions in Poland. The activities of the Committee are determined by Scientific Board, and substantial work is conducted in five sub-committees on Climatology and Polar Glaciology; Oceanology and Ecology of Polar Seas; Ecology and the Development of Polar Terrestrial Landscapes; Surveying, Geophysics and Geology of the Polar Areas and Social Sciences and the History of Polish Polar Research.

The primary tasks of The Committee are:

- The consolidation and coordination of scientific activities of polar researchers and stimulation for cooperation between universities and other scientific institutions as well as private and government economic entities.
- Scientific patronage and assistance in the development of national research infrastructures in the Arctic and Antarctic and preparation for Polish participation in forthcoming International Polar Decade .
- Preparation and management of Arctic Science Summit Week in 2013 in Poland.

Polish Polar Committee administers the work of 400 Polish scientists and over 5 000 students of whom many are working in the Arctic and Antarctic. Their skills and knowledge will be used in the consolidation of a new European Arctic Information Network.



Ecologic Institute, Germany  
[www.ecologic.eu](http://www.ecologic.eu)

The Ecologic Institute is a private not-for-profit think tank for applied environmental research, policy analysis and consultancy with offices in Berlin, Brussels, and Washington DC. Founded in 1995, the Ecologic Institute is dedicated to bringing fresh ideas to environmental policies and to promoting sustainable development. Ecologic Institute's work programme focuses on obtaining practical results and on enhancing the importance of environmental protection and sustainable resource management in the fields of foreign and security policy, international relations and global governance structures. As an independent, non-partisan body, it undertakes applied research and analysis to increase awareness and understanding of the political, economic and technological forces driving global change. Ecologic Institute's Arctic Programme recently led several high-level EU-funded Arctic projects, including Arctic TRANSFORM (2008-2009) and the EU Arctic Footprint and Policy Assessment (2010). Ecologic Institute was named one of the top 10 environmental think tanks in the 2010 Global "Go-To Think Tank Index" of the University of Pennsylvania.





## ESF European Polar Board , France

[www.esf.org/polar](http://www.esf.org/polar)

The ESF European Polar Board (EPB) is Europe's strategic science policy organization for Polar Affairs. Established in 1995, it acts as a voice and high-level facilitator for cooperation between European national funding agencies, national polar institutes and research organisations. The EPB is concerned with major strategic priorities in the Arctic and Antarctic and has members from national Polar operators and research institutes in 20 countries. The Board is taking a central role in the coordination and management of Polar Initiatives at a European level especially in relation. Major focus areas are the implementation of a new Polar Framework MOU, the launching of joint research programmes, the coordination of Polar research Infrastructures, and policy issues in the context of the European Research Area. The EPB is also actively liaising with major polar programmes outside Europe.



FINNISH METEOROLOGICAL INSTITUTE

## Finnish Meteorological Institute, Finland

[www.fmi.fi](http://www.fmi.fi)

The Finnish Meteorological Institute is one of the world's leading meteorological institutions that produces high-quality observational data and research findings on the atmosphere and seas. The Institute uses its expertise to provide services that promote public safety and enhance wellbeing among people and in the environment. The Finnish Meteorological Institute is a research and service agency under the Ministry of Transport and Communications, Government of Finland.

FMI conducts monitoring and forecasting of sea ice in the Baltic Sea through the Finnish Ice Service, as well as researching sea surface temperature, waves, sea level and the algal situation in the Baltic Sea. FMI is involved in a number of ice and polar related research projects, and it hosts the services for Finnish Antarctic Research Logistics (FINNARP).

FMI provides the Finnish contribution to the Argo programme, concentrating on the Arctic and under-ice conditions, and takes part in the international monitoring of the exchange between the Arctic and the Atlantic. Arctic Research Centre of Finnish Meteorological (FMI-ARC) is located in Northern Finland in the middle of Lapland. In addition to the weather related operational services, FMI manages a number of thematic services.



## International Polar Foundation, Belgium

[www.polarfoundation.org](http://www.polarfoundation.org)

The International Polar Foundation (IPF) communicates and educates on polar science and polar research as a way to understand key environmental and climate mechanisms. The IPF also promotes innovative and multifaceted, sustainable responses to climate challenges, through the building of the Princess Elisabeth research station in Antarctica and the continuation of education through various websites and outreach activities. With a head office in Brussels, and centres in the UK, France, Switzerland and South Africa, the IPF has close ties with international polar science agencies and stakeholders and is currently developing the Polaris Climate Change Observatory project globally.

In 2010, in collaboration with The Greens, The Aspen Institute and the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, the IPF hosted the Arctic Futures Symposium at the European Parliament, bringing together experts, scientists, stakeholders and policy makers to discuss and debate issues facing the Arctic. This event will again be held in October 2011.

The IPF has a large educational focus, running school programs in Belgium (Class Zero Emission) and managing websites with a focus on polar science – [www.educapoles.org](http://www.educapoles.org), [www.sciencepoles.org](http://www.sciencepoles.org) and [www.explorapoles.org](http://www.explorapoles.org) as well as working with partners on outreach activities for sustainable technologies and planning.



## Pierre and Marie Curie University, France

[www.upmc.fr](http://www.upmc.fr)

Pierre and Marie Curie University, UPMC, is the largest University in France and represents 5000 permanent staff members and 20000 students. Three UPMC laboratories, LOCEAN, LATMOS and LOV are contributing to the new EU Arctic project of the 7th Framework program, the so called ACCESS project (Arctic Climate Change, Economy and Society, 2011-2015) in response to the Ocean of Tomorrow joint call launched by the EU in 2009. UPMC was the coordinator of the major EU integrated project, DAMOCLES (Developing Arctic Modelling and Observing Capabilities for Long-term Environmental Studies 2005-2010, 6th FP) during the International Polar Year and UPMC is coordinating ACCESS contributing to a decade worth of Arctic research.

LOCEAN (Laboratoire d'Océanographie et du Climat: Expérimentation et Approche Numérique) is a leading laboratory for studying world-wide general oceanic circulation and physical oceanic processes based on observations and numerical modelling. LATMOS (Laboratoire Atmosphères, Milieux, Observations Spatiales) has a long experience in the study of dynamical, radiative and chemical processes in the Earth and Planetary atmospheres using combined experimental and theoretical approaches, including various observation systems.

LOV (the Laboratoire d'Océanographie de Villefranche sur mer) is a leading center for multidisciplinary oceanographic research in France covering a variety of disciplines in oceanography: biology, biogeochemistry, geochemistry and physics. The three UPMC labs engaged in Arctic Research employed more than 100 research personnel each. LOCEAN and LATMOS are based in Paris and LOV is based in Villefranche sur Mer at the station zoologique established in 1882 and initially run by the Saint Petersburg Academy of Sciences and under French control since 1931 making this marine station one of the oldest in the world.





## Sámi Education Institute - Sámi oahpahusguovddáš, Finland

[www.sogsakk.fi](http://www.sogsakk.fi)

The Sámi Education Institute, located in the heart of the Sámi area, is a unique organisation with its functions centred in the municipality of Inari, Finland. The purpose of the Sámi Education Institute is to provide education mainly for the needs of the Sámi Area, to maintain and develop Sámi culture and nature-based occupations. The Sámi Education Institute can also conduct research and provide services, which support or are closely linked with the education.

The Sámi Education Institute is involved in large-scale international cooperation, which has a particular focus in promoting and developing projects involved in the traditional livelihoods of indigenous peoples of the Circumpolar North. Co-operation including the studies, education, culture, traditional livelihoods and research covers the Sámi area, but extends beyond it, into the world of indigenous peoples of the North. The Education Institute manages among others, the international "BEBO" -organization which promotes the languages and cultures of reindeer herding peoples in the Arctic.



**Scott Polar Research Institute**  
University of Cambridge

Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge UK  
<http://www.spri.cam.ac.uk/>

The Scott Polar Research Institute (SPRI), part of the University of Cambridge, is a long-established centre for research into both polar regions. Its research groups investigate a range of issues in both the environmental sciences and social sciences of relevance to the Arctic and Antarctica. Its polar library has comprehensive holdings of scholarly books and journals on polar research, with exceptional archival collections from the exploration of the Antarctic and Arctic, along with extensive online resources, including bibliographic and other information. The Institute's academic, library and support staff, together with postgraduate students, associates and fellows attached to our research programmes provide a strong core of intellectual activity focused on the Arctic and Antarctic and their adjacent seas. We offer two Graduate Degree courses; a one-year Master's Degree (M.Phil.) course in Polar Studies, and a three-year Doctoral Degree course, leading to a Ph.D. degree. Both courses are closely tied to the research activities of the Institute.



OULUN YLIOPISTO  
UNIVERSITY of OULU



## Thule Institute of the University of Oulu & University of Arctic Thematic Networks

[www.thule oulu.fi](http://www.thule oulu.fi)

[www.uarctic.org](http://www.uarctic.org)

The University of Oulu is an international research and innovation university engaged in multidisciplinary basic research and academic education. It is one of the largest universities in Finland with an exceptionally wide academic base. Internationally pioneering research is conducted as a collaboration of different disciplines.

The University encompasses eight fields of study: Humanities, Education, Economics and Business, Science, Medicine, Dentistry, Health Sciences, and Technology. In all, more than 70 different specialist disciplines are represented. The strengths of University of Oulu are its broad academic base, top-level research in its chosen focus areas, and quality education.

Thule Institute is a multidisciplinary research centre in the field of environmental issues, natural resources and northern issues; one of the University's areas of focus. Thule Institute has four operational units: Centre for Arctic Medicine, NorNet, NorTech Oulu and Oulanka research station. The basis of research consists of three multidisciplinary research programmes: Global Change in the North, Northern Land Use and Land Cover as well as Circumpolar Health and Wellbeing. The research programmes are implemented jointly with different units of Oulu University, other universities, research institutes and the business sector.

The coordination office for the University of Arctic Thematic Networks is hosted at the Thule Institute. Thematic Networks foster issues-based cooperation within networks, which are focused but flexible enough to respond quickly to topical Arctic issues. They form a natural framework for development of the University of Arctic education and research, providing an optimal structure for increasing the knowledge generation and sharing across the North.

## Tromsø Centre for Remote Technology, Tromsø High North Cluster, Norway

[www.uit.no](http://www.uit.no)

As the world's northernmost university, University of Tromsø is situated in the city of Tromsø, population 70.000 of which 10.000 are students. The university has six departments: Social sciences and humanities, Science and Technology, Law, Medicine, The Arts and finally Biosciences, Fisheries and Economics. One of the main research agendas of the university is connected to Arctic issues, and especially to the maritime side of the Arctic.

In Tromsø there is substantial activity related to observation of the Earth from different orbiting technologies. Satellites and UAV's are currently the most common. The actors within this field have been steadily expanding for the last 15-20 years. Today around 250 people work within remote sensing in Tromsø.

The University and the different actors within the earth observation field have joined forces and established a common structure to better facilitate communication, projects and to increase their ability to be ahead of the ongoing processes, both in national and international terms. This Centre is Tromsø Centre for Remote Technology. The Centre is responsible for Tromsø's role in the Arctic Information Centre.

Tromsø is an Arctic hub with international connections and research cooperation worldwide. The Norwegian Government has therefore chosen Tromsø as the location for a new Arctic Centre for Climate and the Environment. Based on these institutions the Norwegian government decided in June 2010 that their ocean management and information system BarentsWatch should be placed in Tromsø.





## UNEP/GRID Arendal

[www.grida.no](http://www.grida.no)

GRID-Arendal is an official United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) collaborating centre, supporting informed decision making and awareness-raising through: Environmental information management and assessment, capacity building services, and outreach and communication tools, methodologies and products.

As UNEP's Key Polar Centre, it is involved with initiatives in the Polar Regions, and increasingly, it is broadening its focus on sustainable development of the oceans and coasts elsewhere in the world.

The Polar Programme undertakes environmental management approaches, capacity-building projects and initiatives in the Arctic within a global context. With an out-posted office in Ottawa, the program works in collaboration with numerous polar partners and stakeholders in undertaking projects and initiatives focused on the Arctic in a global context, and in the following areas:

- (i) Stakeholder processes - To facilitate and participate in stakeholder processes that recognize different values, perspectives, and knowledge, with a particular emphasis on empowering Arctic peoples.
- (ii) Assessments and Early Warning - To provide interdisciplinary polar assessments and early warning to build awareness as a foundation for decision-making.
- (iii) Capacity Building – To engage in projects and initiatives toward building the capacity of Arctic peoples to effectively manage regional challenges and to take advantage of emerging opportunities.
- (iv) Communication and Outreach - To raise the profile of the Polar Regions by providing outreach, education and communication services.

To carry out this work, the Polar Programme works closely with Partners on the international level, such as the Arctic Council working groups and the University of the Arctic, with institutions in the UNEP family, with indigenous peoples organizations and with NGO partners - and many more.









**The Saami Parliamentary Council has expressed its official support for the initiative**

## The Saami Parliamentary Council

The Saami Parliaments (Sweden, Norway and Finland) have established an official Community body, the Saami Parliamentary Council (SPC), to secure and promote the rights and status of the Saami. SPC represent Saami people on matters concerning Saami as people and represent the view of Saami people on international affairs. The Russian Saami organisations are permanent participants in the SPC, since there is no elected body for the Saami in Russia. Contact and further information: [www.samediggi.fi](http://www.samediggi.fi), President Klemetti Näkkäläjärvi



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