



Thematic Program for the 6th Open Assembly of The Northern Research Forum

Oslo and Kirkenes, Norway in 24-27 October 2010

First Draft

Assembly Theme: **Our Ice dependent World**

Overall objective: To address the impact of dwindling ice - terrestrial as well as ocean bound - on the complex interface of nature and society in all climatic zones of the world, with an emphasis on the Arctic, the Antarctic and the Himalayans. In light of the man-made part of climate change, particularly meaning global warming, and the natural phenomena of ice is gradually becoming a *concept of global politics – a common heritage of humankind*- affecting societal life in quite dramatic ways on a global scale. This turn in the interrelationship and working of the society/nature interface is the focus of the Assembly.

Conference venue: Thon Hotel Opera, downtown Oslo and Thon Hotels, Kirkenes

Sunday 24 October

Preparation I: **10.00-17.00**
Joint meeting by NRF young researchers and NRF SC

Preparation II: **17.00-18.30**
Business meetings of NRF Theme Projects Groups

Registration: **17.00 – 19.00**
Thon Hotel Opera

Session: **19.00 – 20.00**
Opening of the Conference

20.00 – 21.30
Reception

Monday 25 October

Late registration: 08.00 – 09.00
Coffee and tea is served

Morning session: 09.00 – 12.30

Introduction to the work of Open Assembly

Panel: The interface of nature, society, culture and livelihood on ice: Global implications

Purpose: To emphasize the social/cultural/economic/natural impact of ice on the well-being/functioning of the societal and natural world at large - to show the interdependency of the human/natural interface on a global scale as expressed in the cold, temperate and tropic zones. The approach should be transdisciplinary, spanning the gorge between the soft and hard sciences and the divide between society (shipping, industry, ideal organizations, etc.), politics and science.

Focus: *Geographically:* To address the combined impact of ice in the Arctic, the Antarctic and the Himalayans, on land and in the sea - in all climatic zones.
Thematically: To paint the big picture of the living planet Earth and its relationship to humanity by addressing global social, economic, industrial, cultural and natural variables and their interdependencies.

Organization: This panel should be composed of esteemed *senior representatives* from research, industry, ideal and political organizations – national and international. Examples of organisations/units to be represented with high-level individuals: IPCC, AMAP, UN, World Bank, Antarctic Treaty System, Lloyd, national governments (Netherlands, Bangladesh, small ocean states etc.), industry, shipping, ideal organizations etc.

Four steps:

A. *Plenary session* involving a panel of 4-5 senior presenters and 2-3 young researchers (together max 7), and one discussant invited from research, politics and societal organizations. (Whenever the term *societal* is used in this program the reference is to industry, shipping, labour unions, banks, ideal organizations, economic forums etc.)

B. *Open discussion*

C. *Break-out sessions*

D. *NRF young researchers are selected* to as rapporteurs of the panel and open discussion. The report will be presented at the concluding session on the last day of the Assembly and included in the proceedings.

Each breakout session is chaired by a member of the Steering Committee/Organizing Committee. The Chair and the young researcher of each breakout session are responsible of making an extended and more in-depth report from each session based on the original report

provided by young researchers. The reports will have to be finished that very same evening and distributed to the participants of the roundtable discussion next day.

Lunch: **13.00-14.30**

Afternoon session: 14.30 – 18.00

Panel: **Humanity, Communities, Minds, Perceptions and Knowledge on Ice**

Panel discussion: Panel discussion composed of researchers (young/senior) and representatives of societal/political organizations from different climate zones. To keep the interest and presence of a steady audience, young researchers should be integrated in the panel along with senior participants.

Purpose: The purpose is fivefold: A. To address how communities traditionally have adapted to the ice environment and how it has affected their history, culture, politics, economics, social relationships etc. Here the focus will be on communities – native and non-native – living in the ice-bound areas of the world. B. To address how communities in different climatic zones are coping and adjusting to climate change and the shrinking ice regimes on land and in the sea. C. To discuss the societal and economic significance of ice in the perceptions of representatives from different societal sectors and climate zones. Indigenous, non-native, polar and non-polar imageries. To what extent are global warming affecting and changing perceptions of the utility of ice in all walks of life? How are imageries on ice transmitted between individuals, societal actors and the international community? Is global warming making ice a global concept of political, cultural, economic and societal change? Does ice in science differ from ice in politics and economy? Does ice in politics and economy differ from ice in arts? Do the various perceptions have a common denominator? etc. D. To discuss the production, utility and communication of ice knowledge in science and native communities to “users” in society and politics – locally, nationally and internationally. E. To draw up future prospects: Climate change – anticipated/likely consequences for Mankind – economic, cultural, social etc - and planet Earth. This point links naturally up to the content of the first panel.

Focus: *Geographically:* local, regional, continental and global consequences. *Thematically:* Perceptions as a basis of political and societal action and cultural and societal identification and change in light of climate change / global warming and ice reductions. Changing parameters and societal effects of shrinking ice in terms of economy, culture, politics, philosophy etc.

Organization: Four steps:
A. *Plenary discussion*. Each panel has 4-5 presenters, 2-3 young researchers and one discussant.
B. *Open discussion*
C. *Break-out sessions*
D. *NRF young researchers are selected* to as rapporteurs of the panel and open discussion. The report will be presented at the concluding session on the last day of the Assembly and included in the proceedings.

Evening program: 19.00-20.30
Reception hosted by one of the organizers

Tuesday 26 October

Morning session: 09.00 – 13.00

Panel: **International law, “Soft Laws” and Governance on ice: Economic, Cultural and Political Implications**

Purpose: The purpose is threefold: 1. To discuss the role of international law in regulating ice-infested areas outside of undisputed national jurisdiction. Does the volume of existing international law suffice to regulate all regulatory questions in those parts of the polar regions extending beyond national jurisdiction? What is sea ice in legal terms? Is it water in a different state, or is it a ‘semi-territory’ for transportation, hunting and science, or something in between? What role and future impact do unilateral ‘polar-specific’ actions like the sector principle have on the regulation of parts of the Arctic Ocean? What are the preconditions for unilateral legal moves in the polar regions? What are the preconditions – political and legal - for concerted action? etc. 2. To discuss the political regulatory abilities and effectiveness of cooperation between international organisations and governments to impact regional developments - on the global, continental and regional level - individually as well as collectively. The discussion should involve the role of the UN, the EU, the Arctic Council, Barents Euro-Arctic Cooperation, the Northern Forum, Aboriginal Leaders Summit, the INUIT-Conference etc. The involvement of governments should be discussed in four categories: A. as individual governments pursuing national interests, B. the *Arctic-five* (littoral states to the Arctic Ocean), C. the *Arctic eight* (the Arctic five plus Sweden, Finland and Iceland) and D. the *extraterritorial states* with an expressed interest in regional affairs (not least China, India, Japan etc). 3. To discuss the importance of international law and governance on ice to secure industrial and native economies stable operating conditions.

- Focus: *Geographically:* On the Arctic and Southern oceans (Antarctica)
Thematically: On the regulatory power of international law, national governments, international organizations and “soft laws” in coping effectively with the unique features of the polar regions, in particular sea ice.
- Organization: Four steps:
 A. *Plenary discussion.* Each panel has 4-5 presenters, 2-3 young researchers and one discussant.
 B. *Open discussion*
 C. *Break-out sessions.*
 D. *NRF young researchers are selected* to as rapporteurs of the panel and open discussion. The report will be presented at the concluding session on the last day of the Assembly and included in the proceedings.
- Lunch: **13.00-14.30**
- Afternoon session: 14.30 – 17.00**
- Panel:* **Geopolitics and International Security on Ice**
- Purpose: Twofold: 1) To discuss the drivers that make military planners designate the Arctic and the Arctic Ocean as operating theatres for securing national and international security. 2) To discuss the utility and drawbacks of ice for preserving national military security in polar sea and land areas in a historic and present perspective. What are the security implications of a melting ice cap and how does it depend and relate to the emerging remilitarization of the Arctic? Is the security conception of the Arctic being broadened to include economic, environmental and other civilian factors of strategic importance to nation states? What is the likely relationship between military and civil economic activities in extended national and international security in the Arctic? What effects do the new geopolitical emphases in terms of resources have on the forging of national and international security in the High North? What is the role of melting sea ice in the forging of a new security concept for the High North? What is the impact of environmental, economic and cultural concerns in the security equation for the Arctic? etc.
- Focus: *Geographically:* On the Arctic and the Arctic Ocean
Thematically: On sea ice as a factor – military as well as civil - in preserving national and international regional security – military as well as extended (including economic and environmental factors).
- Organization: Four steps:
 A. *Plenary discussion.* This panel has 3-4 presenters, 2-3 young researchers and one discussant.
 B. *Open discussion*

C. Break-out sessions

D. NRF young researchers are selected to as rapporteurs of the panel and open discussion. The report will be presented at the concluding session on the last day of the Assembly and included in the proceedings.

Travelling: 17:00-20:30
Departure from Oslo Airport Gardermoen to the Arctic City of Kirkenes, North Norway

Wednesday 27 October

Morning session: 09.00-12.30
Welcome Address

Panel: **Locally interesting and relevant theme**

Purpose: To have an overview of the Barents Region, one of the most interesting and advanced sub-regions of the circumpolar North and its development

Organization: Visit in one-to-two interesting sites in the region

Lunch: 12.30-14.00

Luncheon speaker, Thorvald Stoltenberg, former Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs and founding father of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region

Afternoon session: 14.00 – 17.00

Panel: **Can We Imagine a World Without Ice? Economic, Political, Social and Political Consequences.**

Purpose: To identify and discuss the interfaces of all sub-themes in a transdisciplinary/inter-sectoral perspective - to make the connections and provide an integrated picture of the challenges connected to the dwindling of ice in all climatic zones.

Organization: Roundtable discussion in plenary on all previous sub-themes and their interrelations based on the participants own reflections and the reports from the open discussions and breakout sessions of all the panels by NRF young researchers. The panel should be composed of representative from Indigenous communities, science, politics, industry, shipping, military establishment and international organizations.

Focus: On interconnections/interfaces of variables to provide a holistic, transdisciplinary/inter-sectoral perspective.

Ending of Assembly and Farewell address

Feedback: **17.00-18.30**
Meeting of the NRF Young researchers

Evening: **19.00 – 21.00**
Reception