

Project Team

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For additional information about the project, please refer to the project website:

www.arctic-transform.org

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TRANSATLANTIC POLICY OPTIONS
FOR SUPPORTING ADAPTATIONS IN
THE MARINE ARCTIC

Why the Arctic?

The Arctic region is considered by scientists and experts to be the world's harbinger of climate change. Temperatures are rising in the region at almost twice the rate as the rest of the world. At the same time, the rapidly melting sea-ice is also a source of feedbacks that further fuel the rising temperatures around the globe. Given the wide reach of the impacts, developments in the Arctic environment are rightfully a worldwide concern.

Regionally, the physical change in the Arctic will introduce new opportunities and challenges affecting human activity and the marine environment. The expected localised impacts are accompanied by new debates concerning commercial activities, environmental governance and indigenous peoples, highlighting a need for developing policy options to govern the expansion of activity in the Arctic. In response to this need, Arctic TRANSFORM convenes experts from both sides of the Atlantic and from a range of disciplines to discuss the emerging issues and possible solutions. Impacts affecting the Arctic marine environment are being considered in terms of the economy, environment, society, research, and policy decision-making.



Goals & Objectives

The goal of the Arctic TRANSFORM project is to develop transatlantic policy options for supporting adaptation in the marine Arctic environment. It places a special emphasis on involving a broad range of stakeholders to address the major climate issues facing the region. This is achieved through the creation of five thematic working groups with representatives from indigenous communities, environmental groups, the offshore hydrocarbon industry, the shipping industry, and the commercial fishing industry.

Key project objectives include:

- To promote mutual exchange in the working groups among EU and U.S. policymakers and stakeholders on approaches to Arctic governance and adaptation;
- To provide a comparative analysis of existing policies and make recommendations with substantial buy-in as to how to strengthen co-operation between the EU and U.S.; and
- To encourage dialogue and thus improve conditions for further transatlantic policy development and more effective protection of the Arctic marine environment.



Activities

During the course of the project, which runs from January 2008 to June 2009, there will be two stakeholder-based workshops and a final conference to present the policy options in Brussels, Belgium.

The first meeting provided an opportunity for the co-chairs of the working groups to meet the project team, review the Arctic policy context report and discuss next steps in preparing the comparative analysis between U.S. and EU Arctic policy.

A second meeting brought together all project partners as well as external academics, policymakers and other stakeholders for a two day workshop. Participants discussed ways to further transatlantic dialogue on possible methods of collaboration between EU and U.S. policymakers in developing adaptation strategies to cope with the effects of climate change on the Arctic marine environment.

The final conference, to be held in Brussels on 9 March 2009, will bring together 150 participants representing EU and U.S. policymakers and Arctic stakeholders to engage in dialogue related to project activities. The final conference will provide means of reaching a wide audience to solicit feedback and disseminate results.

