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Abstract:

The field of Security Studies traditionally focused on military threats to states' survival, however, since the end of the Cold War the concept of security has widened and individuals and communities have gradually become viewed as appropriate referent objects of security: Multifaceted challenges facing communities at the sub-state level are increasingly regarded as security threats, including their potential to cause instability for the larger society, thus affecting states' security. In the Arctic region, a central challenge is that inhabitants are exposed to multiple non-traditional and non-military threats resulting from environmental, economic, and societal changes, which can be understood as threats to human security. We argue that a comprehensive approach to human security overlaps with the concept of societal security, and must therefore consider threats to collective identity and the essential conditions necessary for the maintenance and preservation of a distinct society. We see the human security framework as a suitable analytical tool to study the specific challenges that threaten the Arctic population, and in turn the well-being of Arctic societies. Therefore, we argue that utilising the concept of human security can promote societal security in the context of the Arctic, and in particular, its sub-regions, for example, the Barents region.

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