UPDATE ON HUSARCTIC RESEARCH PROJECT

Editorial

by Kamrul Hossain

Yet another year has passed, and HuSArctic is approaching to its fourth and final year of life. This is the third issue of the HuSArctic Newsletter and provides an update of our past and planned activities. While we have experienced significant achievements so far (thanks to the HuSArctic team, and its national and international collaborators), we look forward to the outcome of our final seminar, to be held during fall 2018. We plan to bring together all of our project collaborators, including the participants from our last seminars, to this final event in order to explore new possibilities to continue our work in this exciting discipline – human and societal security in the Arctic.

One of the major events we organized this year was an international conference entitled: Human and Societal Security in the Circumpolar Arctic with specific focus on the Barents region: Environment, Sustainability and Development. The conference took place in three different cities, including Rovaniemi and two border cities – Hetta and Kautokeino – in Finland and Norway, respectively. We chose these locations deliberately in order to combine our event with the local and traditional Sámi celebration, Marian Päiva (St. Mary’s day), organized by the Hetta City Council every year. In addition, we had a full day session held at the Sámi University College in Kautokeino, Norway. Our idea was not only to communicate scholarly scientific interactions amongst ourselves within the thematic areas of the research project, but also to provide our participants with firsthand impressions and understandings, of the region and its actors. Hence, in addition to presentations given by the regional actors (Personnel at the City Council and Scholars and Researchers from Sámi University), our event included two cultural excursions in both Hetta and Kautokeino. The conference was indeed a great success – we had over thirty engaging academic and scientific presentations given by well-known scholars, project team members, and other participants from all across Europe and North America.

As a follow-up of the conference, we have received a great number of submissions for consideration for our final publications. We have been carrying out a rigorous review process during last six months and will finalize the selection of papers soon. Meanwhile, our book proposal has been accepted by Brill Academic Publisher, where we aim to integrate successful papers as individual chapters.

Moreover, we have had also great success in publishing a number of peer-reviewed articles and book chapters including a recently published article in the Nordic Journal of International Law, and also a book) entitled: Rethinking multifaceted human security threats in the Barents Region: a multilevel approach to societal security, published within the Juridica Lapponica series. In addition, two other book manuscripts are being prepared for submission to Routledge and Springer, respectively, focusing on the general themes of the HuSArctic project. Their publication is anticipated before the end of 2018. Alongside these achievements, researchers within the team have presented their studies and results at many international scientific conferences, such as ICASS 2017.

This newsletter provides a brief overview of the activities that the HuSArctic team has undertaken in the past year. I hope you have enjoyed reading about our most recent project updates!

DR. KAMRUL HOSSAIN

Principle Investigator, Project Lead
Director at the Northern Institute for Environmental and Minority Law, Arctic Center
HuSArctic activities

Participation of HuSArctic in National and International Events

On 11th of December 2016, Kamrul Hossain gave a talk as part of Sámi-Ainu Joint seminar at the L-Plaza meeting room in Sapporo, Japan. The title of the talk was: "Indigenous peoples and enhancement of capacity building for the promotion of human security" In his talk, Prof. Hossain highlighted the need for developing alternative approach from the indigenous peoples themselves to promote a better understanding concerning issues that affect them.

On 22nd and 23rd of December 2016, Kamrul Hossain represented HuSArctic at the International Conference on Envisioning our Common Future held at the University of Dhaka. He gave there a presentation entitled: "Implications of climate change: North-South human security dilemma" highlighted particularly the impact of climate change where he brought human security questions prevalent at the global south as well as at the global north. He particularly showed the inter-connections of human security challenges having impacts in all across the globe as common threats resulted from the implications of climate change.

On 26th of January 2017, Dorothée Cambou has given a talk as part of the Arctic Frontiers conference during the Expert Meeting on Good Governance and the Arctic organized by K.G. Jebsen Centre for the Law of the Sea at the Arctic University of Norway (UiT). The Expert Meeting on Good Governance and the Arctic offers an interdisciplinary overview of the good governance tools applied to the Arctic with a specific focus on the role of indigenous peoples’ participation in environmental decisions. During the meeting, Dorothée Cambou gave a presentation entitled "The right to "supra-state self-determination": the emergence of a new right for indigenous peoples in the Arctic region?". During her talk, she explained that the right of indigenous peoples to self-determination includes an external aspect, which implies the right of indigenous peoples to participate in decision-making process at the supranational or international level. In the Arctic, indigenous representative have managed to gain a presence at the international level through their participation in institution such as the Arctic Council and the Barents-Euro Arctic Council. Nevertheless, as she concluded, there is a long road before the right of indigenous peoples to self-determination can fully be operationalized and many reforms still need to be achieved to that end.

On 25th and 28th of March 2017, Dorothée Cambou participated in the 3rd International Conference on Sustainable Development (ICSD), held at the International University of Sarajevo, Bosnia. He gave a presentation: "Implications of climate change in the Arctic: human security and societal sustainability", which highlighted various components of challenges in the Arctic having implications for human security that result in consequences for societal sustainability, particularly in the Arctic regional context.
Between 27th and 30th of April a delegation from NIEM has actively participated at the workshop: Societal security: a discipline in the making! The workshop was held at the St. Petersburg State University. The delegation consisted of Kamrul Hossain, Dele Raheem, Anna Petrétei attended. The workshop has been organized as part of the newly NordForsk funded project led by UiT – Arctic University of Norway, where NIEM is one of the consortium partners. The workshop attracted approximately 15 academic presentations exploring various dimensions in relation to societal security.

On 11th of May 2017 Kamrul Hossain gave a key note lecture at the seminar entitled “Geopolitical changes: New global political and economic reality”, held in Barcelona, Spain. The seminar has been jointly organized by Centro de Estudios Internacionales (CEI), International Catalan Institute for Peace and the Faculty of Law of the University Barcelona. Prof. Hossain's talk highlighted the geopolitical repercussion of melting sea ice in the Arctic. He particularly stressed on the emerging new realities facing the Arctic in response to possible resource development and increase in maritime transportation via Northern Sea Route. The title of his talk was “Arctic melting: Fighting for border resources or opening up new routes?”

On 19th of May 2017 Dele Raheem attended the launch of the Finnish Lapland’s food program that took place at the Multidimensional Tourism Institute, Rovaniemi. The launch was preceded by four workshops from 10th November 2016 to 8th May, 2017. The vision set forward by the program is scheduled to take effect from 2025, there will be interactive and collaborative possibilities to realize the vision of the program. The research aspect will involve LUIE, University of Helsinki, and the Arctic Centre / University of Lapland.

Between 20th and 21st of June 2017 in Shanghai took place the International Symposium on Law and Governance: Emerging Issues of the Polar Regions, held by the Center for Polar and Deep Ocean Development of Shanghai Jiao Tong University. The HusArctic lead – Kamrul Hossain, and one of the project core team members – Dorothee Cambou gave there a talk. Prof. Hossain’s presentation – “Climate Change and the Arctic Security: an Inter-Face Between High Politics and Soft Cooperation”, underscored several challenges in the Arctic having implications for human security and the sustainable development of the region. Dr. Cambou presentation focused on the development of renewable energy in the Arctic and its impact on the human rights of indigenous peoples, more particularly those of the Sami people. Both presentations put emphasis on the need to account for the human security challenges faced by the population of the Barents region, including its indigenous communities, to promote societal security in the region.

On 11th of September 2017 Kamrul Hossain gave a talk at the seminar on “Human security in the Arctic” organized jointly by the Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA) and the Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland. The seminar took place at the FIIA premises in Helsinki. Prof. Hossain has assessed the current geopolitical shift prevailing in the Arctic, and whether the shift as such might have a nuance to lead to security tensions, and if yes, then what security. Based on his assessment, Prof. Hossain has evaluated that the Arctic would not probably be a region to be bringing any hard security tensions, at least in the near future – he suggests that Arctic is more a human security region.

On 18th of September 2017 HuSArctic researchers: Kamrul Hossain, Mike Sheehan and Gerald Zojer participated in an EcoHuCy project seminar in London.

The EcoHuCy project (“Enablement besides Constraints: Human Security and a Cyber Multi-disciplinary Framework in the European High North”) focuses on the interrelations of human security and cybersecurity, with a regional focus on the European High North. During the project seminar the HuSArctic researchers presented their potential contributions to the EcoHuCy project. Kamrul Hossain's talk was on “The evolving information-based society and its influence on traditional culture: framing community culture and human security of

On 20th of September 2017 Dorothée Cambou presented her research project about the impacts of renewable energy on the rights of indigenous peoples at the Arctic Energy Summit. The panel session was organised by the Ministry of Environment of Finland. The conference took place between 18th and 20th of September 2017 in Helsinki, Finland. During this session, the invited speakers discussed more particularly the topic of environmental impact assessments and the energy sector.

Between 28th and 29th of September 2017 Kamrul Hossain represented HuSArctic at the 20th International Symposium on “The Environment and the Industry”. The conference was organized by the National Research and Development Institute for Industrial Ecology – ECOIND, based in Bucharest. The title of Prof. Hossain’s presentation in the Symposium was “The Arctic case: A paradox between environmental change and economic globalization?”

On 23-24 November 2017, Kamrul Hossain led a team composed of Anna Petrétei, Marcin Dymet and Mirva Salminen to the final workshop under the “Societal Security – A discipline in the making” project held at the UIT Arctic University of Norway. The project is funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers. The workshop has been attended by a group of scholars from Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden, who discussed various aspects of societal security from diverse perspectives. The two-day event attracted a great enthusiasm to promote cooperation amongst the network members for the further advancement of the understanding of this emerging new discipline.

On 13th of October Kamrul Hossain, Dorothee Cambou and Dele Raheem and Assi Harkoma participated in the workshop organised within “The Food (in)Security in the Arctic: Contribution of Traditional and Local Food to promote Food Security with Particular Reference to the European High North” project. The workshop took place at the Council for Baltic Sea States (CBSS) in in Stockholm, Sweden and it brought together around 16 internationally renowned scholars from all across Europe and North America, including from Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Russia, Spain and Sweden, to discuss on various aspects of food security in relation to traditional and local food contribution to sustainable supply of food chain as it applies to food security in the Arctic.

Events organized within the HuSArctic project

HuSArctic mid-term conference

More than 15 different nationalities represented, with young researchers and scholars coming from all over the world to discuss Arctic-related issues. This has been the exceptional outcome of the 3 days International Conference on Human Security in the Barents Region, organized by the HuS Arctic research group in three different location (Rovaniemi, Enontekiö and Kautokeino).

The main aim of the project is to address the challenges that people living in the Arctic must face, from human security perspective. In this sense, the participation of many scholars and researcher with different backgrounds and from different countries has resulted in an added-value for the success of the conference, as well as for the quality of the research that has been conducted so far.

As a matter of fact, having discussions about food security, protection of the Arctic environment and its non-economic value, securitization of the Arctic, management of natural resource and disaster management due to climate change and exploitation projects in the region, has given a glance about the challenges that the Arctic region must face.

The outcomes and papers presented in this Conference will be an integral part of the proposed book on Human Security in the Barents Region, to which the HuS Arctic research group is working. Next appointment is for the next year final Conference, in which we will celebrate the launch of the book. Looking forward to see you all again!

Find us online

http://www.husarctic.org
New approaches to understanding Human Security in the Arctic

by J. Miguel Roncero & Helene Peterbauer

The mid-term conference of the HuSArctic project has brought together a good number of Arctic researchers in a truly multidisciplinary spirit. Colleagues from all over the world have gathered in Northern Finland and Norway to present their research and get constructive feedback. It has been an occasion to learn from each other, and to challenge each other as well.

The conference has allowed us to learn beforehand how other colleagues are approaching the many challenges of Human and Societal Security in the Arctic; and also to present before them a new research approach to understand how Human Security in and on the Arctic is socially perceived and constructed through works of fiction, and how literature and literary research can play a much bigger role in understanding how societies perceive phenomena as threats to their security. For us, this has been a time to show a new way to approach security studies beyond, for example, policy analysis or research interviews. We wanted to show that Human Security, as a whole or in its elements, is a topic present at the societal level in the Arctic, and that works of fiction written by Arctic authors on the Arctic do reflect the many challenges linked to Human Security.

But the well-chosen locations and dates have also allowed us to approach the Arctic in a different and always welcome way: the celebration of St Mary’s Day (Marianpäivät) in Hetta, for example, has offered an opportunity to share a yearly awaited time with the locals, and check the secondhand books being sold at the market. For Arctic researchers living South of the Arctic Circle, chances like the one brought by this conference do not only have great academic value; in a more personal way, they offer a chance to come up North, to a land we strive to understand better, and to a topic that, no matter if in the Arctic or elsewhere, affects us all.

And, of course, the magnificent spectacle that the Northern Lights brought the closing night of the conference reminded us of how unique this region of our planet is. It was indeed a perfect meeting.

Photo by J. Miguel Roncero
The recent HuSArctic mid-project conference event in Rovaniemi and other locations across Sápmi in late March was an opportunity to learn about very different challenges to human security in the Arctic. Among the groups which are of particular relevance in this regard are indigenous peoples. While Arctic communities often have developed resilience against challenges brought by the harsh environment, increasing pressures, often enabled and amplified by climate change, can exceed the limits of such resilience. As I had tried to show in my presentation on the use of domestic Finnish law (specifically, the Act on the Sami Parliament and the Mining Act) by the Finnish Sami Parliament, with new challenges, law can become a tool to compensate for this enforced reduction of resilience. But the Arctic is also challenging - and often also dangerous - for those who only come here for a short time, for example as tourists. Here, too, law can help, even in situations which are characterized by large scale damages.

As I had unfortunately not been able to attend the entire event, I’d like to come back to one issue which had been touched upon during the discussion on Saturday morning: the liability of cruise ship operators in the event of an accident. Today, modern cruise ships are small towns; they house thousands of tourists and crewmembers. Many of the people on board have never been on such a vessel before and many more, including crewmembers, are coming to the Arctic without prior regional experience. In a recent article (S. Pääkkölä / S. Kirchner, Polar Health Risks, Seafarers’ Rights and Training in International Law, in: 28 University of San Francisco Maritime Law Journal (2016), pp. 225-235), Susanna Pääkkölä and I had written about the potential use of seafarer training as a tool for the reduction of health risks in the Arctic. On 1 January 2017, the Polar Code finally entered into force, strengthening technical requirements for ships which operate in Arctic or Antarctic Waters, thereby providing a technical approach to the problem of increased vessel operations in the High North. Indeed, the final version of the Polar Code now also highlights the importance of training. But there is an other tool to enhance safety more indirectly: insurance requirements. In international shipping law, insurance obligations on the basis of international treaties exist with regard to several threats emanating from ships, from oil tankers to bunker oil or wrecks (see in detail S. Kirchner, Multiple Risks and Limited Law: Compensation for Oil Spills in the Context of Long-Term Damages to Arctic Coastal Communities, in: 30 Ocean Yearbook (2016), pp. 267-281). What these approaches have in common is that the flag state requires the presence of an insurance, more specifically, the presence on board of a document issued by the flag state administration which confirms that an appropriate insurance has been obtained. The presence of such a document (which, like the insurance, has to be renewed every year) can be controlled by port states and its lack can lead to the vessel being detained temporarily (which has significant economic consequences for the owner/operator). Parallel rules exist in the context of several international treaties, including the Athens Convention relating to the Carriage of Passengers and their Luggage by Sea (PAL), which entered into force in 2014, and the European Union’s Passenger Liability Regulation 392/2009 (PLR), which entered into force in late 2012 and which is almost (see S. Kirchner / G. Tüngler / J. M. Hoffmann, Carrier Liability for Damages incurred by Ship Passengers: The European Union as a Trailblazer towards a Global Liability Regime?, in: 23 University of Miami International and Comparative Law Review (2015), pp. 193-214) identical to PAL. This approach frees the flag state to some degree from having to engage in in-depth regulation. Instead, the forces of the free market come into play: an insurance company will ensure that a ship which it is about to ensure conforms with its safety expectations. Even more so when it is clear that the vessel is meant to be operated in particularly dangerous waters, such as the Arctic Ocean. Despite its growing popularity, compared to other industries, cruise shipping remains an industry with few players. Also, only very few insurance companies can actually shoulder the risk associated with a vessel which transports thousands of tourists. Accordingly, it is not easy for vessel operators to obtain an insurance and industry-standards are likely to remain high due to the significant economic interests involved and the limited offers available on the insurance market.

In such a situation, indirect regulation can go a long way towards improving human safety in the Arctic. What this approach requires is something which should be present during all activities in the Arctic: a willingness and capability to honestly assess threats (or at least recognize one’s own limitations of doing so) and to react accordingly in order to minimize risk to oneself and others.

Law can play an important role in this regard - but this role does not have to be direct in order to be effective.
HuSArctic Publications


HuSArctic Publication: “Rethinking multifaceted human security threats in the Barents Region: a multilevel approach to societal security”

New academic book introduces episodic and empirical evidence addressing the multifaceted aspects of human security in the Barents Region and looks at the prevalent challenges to the maintenance of societal cohesion.

The book “Rethinking multifaceted human security threats in the Barents Region: A multilevel approach to societal security” is written by researchers Gerald Zojer and Kamrul Hossain and it will introduce some of the preliminary results of the HuSArctic research project. HuSArctic is an Academy of Finland funded research project of the Arctic Centre at the University of Lapland, the aim of which is to address the multiple aspects of human security as they apply to the population of the Barents region.

Societal security is about protecting the core values of particular communities. According to the authors, communities are defined on different scales and levels, such as the subnational, national, transnational, or international levels. Defining societal security along the border of nation states comes short in addressing the particular challenges for individuals and small communities. Within the Barents Region, many communities have their particular characteristics and thus a distinct set of challenges. The book argues that societal security needs to be approached from a flexible and multilevel perspective, to enable meaningful and targeted policies that promote human well-being.


The article explores the possibility to integrate human rights impact assessment in the licensing processes of development projects in the Sápmi region.


The paper examines the international standards for conducting human rights impact assessments, and whether these would bring benefit to license granting processes in the Sápmi region. Authors suggest that the integration of such assessments in response to resource developments in the Sápmi region would on one hand bring a stronger normative value to impact assessment processes, eventually offering a greater legal protection for Sámi. On the other hand, the implementation of human rights impact assessments would also offer strengthened trust between communities and the companies, in resource extractions.
Sustainability challenges to single industry towns: the case of Pyramiden

by Gerald Zojer

During a visit to the Svalbard archipelago this summer I got the chance to visit the former mining town Pyramiden, which provides an interesting example of sustainability challenges to single industry towns. The settlement was found in the 1920s by Swedish miners and sold to the Soviet Union in 1927. Built to solely serve coal extraction, the settlement got evacuated in 1998 after the Russian government acknowledged this endeavor was no longer economically viable. On very small scale and after years without economic activities, today the settlement experiences first efforts for revitalization.

A Single Industry Town

During its peak, Pyramiden was inhabited by over 1000 people. The settlement was found in order to extract coal. During Soviet times, the town had all the amenities that can make city life pleasant: A hospital, sports hall, swimming pool, culture center, kindergarten, school, canteen, etc. For the people who worked in Pyramiden, all these services were available free of charge. This on top of a salary which was approximately 7 times more than the Soviet average attracted many people from the mainland to work there. Some supplies, such as bricks or vegetables, were produced locally. Most other supplies were shipped in from Barentsburg, another Russian settlement on the Svalbard archipelago.

Mine railway. Photo by Gerald Zojer.

After the coal extraction was no longer profitable the decision was made to close down the settlement. In some online sources the settlement is regarded as abandoned. A local tourist guide, however, rejected this notion and explains that Pyramiden can be considered to be in a state of conservation. Nowadays there are two to three employees present in Pyramiden all year around, in order to carry out basic maintenance tasks. Unfortunately there has been a period when no one took care of the settlement: Vandalism and theft lead to significant damage and untidiness within the buildings.

Development of tourism: attempted revival?

Reestablishing maintenance started about 10 years ago. Besides the maintenance workers currently there are also five to seven people in Pyramiden working related to tourism. Recently the old hotel Tulip got renovated and re-opened. Yet, tourism is still a young and underdeveloped undertaking in Pyramiden. But tourism certainly has potential to develop a local economy: Also Longyearbyen, the biggest settlement on the archipelago and which is governed by Norwegian authorities, lost its mining business after becoming unprofitable. However, also thanks to the advantage of having an airport in town,

Walking over the main square feels like walking through a ghost town. Photo by Gerald Zojer.

No more children in the class rooms. Photo by Gerald Zojer.
tourism development started much earlier. Today cruise ships with over 4000 passengers, which is double the population of Longyearbyen, land several times a year in the small harbor. Tourism on the Svalbard archipelago is clearly booming, and Pyramiden is situated in a beautiful location. Yet, at least for the moment it seems unlikely that this new economic endeavor will bring back Pyramiden to its former glory anytime soon. But looking at the history and development of Pyramiden shows clearly how difficult it can be for a single industry town, and in the absence of a diversified economy, to be managed sustainable.