

The role of information in sustainable resources governance in the Russian Arctic (2012-2016)

Research team: Alexey Pristupa, Machiel Lamers, Bas Amelung, Arthur Mol, Rik Leemans



alexey.pristupa@wur.nl

Introduction

The warming Arctic opens up new economic opportunities as well as creates challenges with regard to ecological quality, environmental sustainability and indigenous population. Next to it the tremendous growth in environmental information and advances in related technologies have been observed. *What role do all this information and these information systems play in Arctic governance? We investigate what forms environmental information takes, how it is organised and what it actually does with relation to ecosystem-based management endeavours in the Russian Arctic.*

Approach

Systematic literature review, 3 case studies of 3 sectors (fisheries, oil and gas, traditional indigenous activities), analysis of documents & official papers, semi-structured interviews.

Main results

- The contribution of environmental information in Arctic governance mainly spin around: enabling human safety, guaranteeing sustainable resource use and empowerment/participation of particular actor groups.
- Non-state market-driven MSC certification can reinforce state sustainability efforts, but with trade-offs ('exclusiveness'; perceived as rival to state system; trade barrier).
- Zoning, as an informational tool, can legitimise vested interests' ambitions.



Publications

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- Reindeer herders without the reindeers. The theory and practice of ecosystem approach in the Russian Arctic: the case of Kolguev Island (in preparation).
- International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences, Prince George, Canada, May 2014.
- Arctic Science Summit Week, Toyama, Japan, April 2015.
- Arctic-FROST: Resources and SD in the Arctic, St.Petersburg, Russia, August 2015.
- Arctic Frontiers, Tromsø, Norway, January 2016.