EU ARCTIC INFORMATION CENTRE CONSORTIUM PRESENTS RESULTS OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT IN BRUSSELS



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On Thursday 11 September, nineteen top Arctic institutes throughout Europe (including the International Polar Foundation) formally presented the results of the work done to investigate the feasibility of establishing a permanent EU Arctic Information Centre (EUAIC), a "network of networks" designed to provide quick and easy information about the Arctic to policy-makers.

The highly-anticipated all-day seminar entitled "The EU in the Arctic, the Arctic in the EU" welcomed more than 170 participants at the Residence Palace in the European District in Brussels.

Funded by the European Union, a pilot phase to test the capabilities of the EUAIC consortium was launched in February 2013. During one year and a half, the network of expert Arctic institutions undertook several projects aimed at providing key information about the Arctic to policymakers.

The consortium's deliverables include:

- A Strategic Assessment of Development of the Arctic, which examines trends and developments taking place in the European Arctic (which included in-person and online

consultations with a many Arctic stakeholders from a variety of backgrounds)
- A Gap Analysis of Arctic information and communication needs
- A European Arctic Initiatives compendium, which presents flagship initiatives EU member states are undertaking in the Arctic regions
- Assessments in Policy-Making, a report that looks at to what extent assessments can influence Arctic policy-making
- Fact sheets, which serve as a quick and handy reference for different aspects and issues facing the Arctic, including climate change, maritime transport, fisheries, oil and gas resources, mining, land use, and social and cultural changes.

Before the network presented their results in the afternoon, two morning sessions were held with high-level speakers form the EU Commission, Members of the European Parliament, and the Finnish Foreign Ministry (including Finnish Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja and Finland's Ambassador to the Arctic Council Hannu Halinen).

The mandate of the consortium, which is headquartered at the Arctic Centre at the University of Lapland in Rovaniemi, Finland, is to provide support to the the EU as it continues to develop its Arctic policy. Both the Council of the European Union and the EU Parliament have supported the establishment of an EU Arctic Information Centre.

For more information on the EU Arctic Information Centre consortium and its activities, please consult the consortium's official website.