FOURTH ARCTIC FUTURES SYMPOSIUM DRAWS RECORD INTEREST



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With a record 200 participants gathering in Brussels for lively debate on an the challenges and opportunities facing the Arctic region, the 2013 Arctic Futures Symposium has been the event’s most successful year to date.

International interest in the event and the range topics discussed has continued to grow since Brussels premier Arctic event began in 2010.

Held on October 16th and 17th, the symposium focused on Canada’s "Development for the People of the North" theme as they chair the Arctic Council. The symposium brought together an international and multidisciplinary group of speakers, including Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs Didier Reynders, and a number of Senior Arctic officials, representatives from the EU Commission and the EU Parliament, including Vice-President of the European Parliament Isabelle Durant.

Researchers in the natural and social sciences presented some of the changes seen in the Arctic as well as some of the problems local populations in the Arctic are facing.

The symposium also examined both local and broader interests, hosting representatives from Arctic Communities including the mayors of Tromso and Alaska's Northwest Arctic Borough, as well as members

of the Sámi reindeer herding community. Representatives from the oil and gas, mining, fishing and shipping industries provided a view on the current and future economic possibilities in a changing Arctic.

The International Polar Foundation would like to thank its supporting partners, including the Belgian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Statoil, and our partners in the EU Commission-funded Arctic NGO Forum, with whom we organized the Arctic shipping workshop on October 17th. We would also like to recognize our partners at the EU Arctic Information Centre and the North Norway European Office for their in-kind contributions to the symposium.