ARCTIC FUTURES 2011 PROCEEDINGS NOW AVAILABLE



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The need for enhanced Arctic search and rescue (SAR) capabilities and environmental protection measures are among the main messages of the proceedings of the 2011 Arctic Futures Symposium, now available for download. Cooperation and dialogue among Arctic States, inhabitants and other stakeholders of the unique and environmentally fragile region, are also highlighted.

Held in October 2011 in Brussels, Belgium the Arctic Futures Symposium once again brought together a wide range of Arctic stakeholders, including EU and foreign policymakers, scientists, industry representatives, indigenous peoples and academics. Attendees participated in frank and animated debates on the key issues facing those living and working in the region, including indigenous affairs, transport and infrastructure, search and rescue, scientific research and monitoring, ecosystem stewardship and management of natural resource development.

“With global warming driving change throughout the region, Arctic Futures continues to provide a platform for dialogue amongst stakeholders,” said International Polar Foundation president and co-founder, Alain Hubert. “International cooperation is key to achieving sustainable policies for the Arctic that benefit the people that live and work there, protecting the region’s fragile ecosystem and exploring the way forward for scientific research and the development of natural resources.”

Arctic Futures is an initiative of the International Polar Foundation, in partnership with the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, under the themes of cooperation, science, economy and peoples in the Arctic. Featured speakers at the 2011 symposium included HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco, Iceland's President Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, and key EU and Senior Arctic Council Officials.

Key findings of the Arctic Futures Symposium 2011 report include:

- Arctic States reiterated their position that no additional treaties or legal frameworks are necessary for Arctic governance and that decisions should be made within existing legal frameworks such the Arctic Council and other multilateral agreements, which can be further developed to address future issues
- There is clear need for improvements in Arctic transport infrastructure and search and rescue (SAR) capabilities before there can be any increase of maritime traffic and other commercial activities in the region.
- The European Union is set to continue its "constructive and dynamic" role in the Arctic's future, including "preservation of the Arctic", "sustainable exploitation of natural resources" and its commitment to align its activities in accordance with the priorities of the Arctic Council member states.
- While many people living and working in the Arctic are unopposed, or even welcome development of Arctic resources, many feel that this should take place under the strictest environmental standards, while respecting the concerns and rights of indigenous Arctic inhabitants, and including them in ongoing dialogue.
- Scientific research projects across a wide range of disciplines in the Arctic – in particular long-term observation campaigns – must be supported, as it makes it possible to identify clear trends and provides policymakers with a sound basis for decision making.
- Earth Observation and remote sensing technologies play an increasing role in observing the Arctic for scientific research and providing essential information for safeguarding commercial and local activities in the region. They also provide a step change in our appreciation of the rate of change large-scale mechanisms.

"The Arctic urgently needs 21st century solutions for the issues it faces, not the tired approaches of the past," said Nighat Admin, International Polar Foundation vice-president. "This means resolutely looking forward to deliver the best outcomes for the people and environment of the Arctic."

The Arctic Futures 2011 proceedings are available here in PDF format

This year: The **2012 Arctic Futures Symposium** is scheduled for the 4th and 5th of October, in Brussels. To register your interest, contact events@polarfoundation.org