



JUSTNORTH

Newsletter

Miles' Law Emerges in JUSTNORTH Policy Lab

Miles' Law is an old adage that says *where you stand depends on where you sit* which indicates your perspective on an issue is shaped by where you are positioned in relation to that concern. In a co-production Policy Lab, members from JUSTNORTH's Legal and Policy Framework team put this aphorism to the test on several issues emerging from the project's case study results.

During the Arctic Futures Symposium in Brussels from 29-30 November 2023, JUSTNORTH held a Policy Lab as a side event to the international conference bringing together Arctic stakeholders. Registered participants in the event came from JUSTNORTH's four different stakeholder groups: Local and Indigenous Citizens (also rightsholders), Industry, NGOs, and Policymakers. Two key issues were broadly discussed.

Issue 1: Legacies of Past Harms/Injustices

Fieldwork results from the JUSTNORTH case studies point to past harms in economic development as having a cumulative impact on Arctic stakeholders. This affects their attitudes towards current economic activities and proposals, including their perceptions of decision-making, and the overlapping impacts of multiple economic activities taking place in a given area. This includes legacies of unfairly distributed environmental hazards and the cultural or emotional impacts of unfair processes and outcomes, such as from colonial practices or state-led development.

At the Policy Lab, participants were asked if this issue is a problem that could impact the future of sustainable economic development. While the perspectives of the participants varied widely, there was overall agreement that the significance of past harms for economic decision-making in the Arctic and the need to discuss it. Another voice suggested that green colonialism – a notion closely associated with past experiences of harm – is a minority perspective that should not be prioritised.

One stakeholder perspective is that NGOs using the media as a tool for raising awareness on issues of environmental protection or minority rights is an obstacle to economic development.

Points emerging in the discussion include:

- Low trust is impacting dialogue and implementation of the European Green Deal and impact assessments.
- Companies are concerned about speed in navigating national decision-making processes.
- When outsiders make decisions or pursue economic development in or about the Arctic, there is a sense that Arctic citizens are not in control of their own destiny.
- Respect for the rule of law, including minority rights, is essential in planning and development processes.

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Photo credit: Corine Wood-Donnelly

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Update on Project Progress

How long is JUSTNORTH?

JUSTNORTH is a 3.5 yearslong (42-month) research and innovation action. The project started in June 2020 and currently plans to finish in November 2023. As of the date of this newsletter in December 2022, JUSTNORTH is already over two-thirds through its working time. We now have only 1 year remaining, to reach the scheduled finish.



This means that the project team is now working hard to analyse the data collected in the field and to make progress on the project's main outcomes: JUSTscore, the project documentary and our EU policy recommendations.

Stay updated with project results published and available on the project website www.justnorth.eu under the outcomes menu.

JUSTNORTH Open Science Day Report

On 11 October, JUSTNORTH held its second annual conference, including an Open Science Day for stakeholders and students to participate in Akureyri, Iceland.

The conference was deemed a success, even though Iceland's infamous weather posed challenges for the conference hosts at the Stefansson Arctic Institute. Some of the event's activities, including a trip to Húsavík, had to be cancelled due to a fierce Icelandic winter storm that closed down the roads. Many of JUSTNORTH team members in transit were 'stranded', but fortunately found a safe haven in the capital city of Reykjavik.

The team travelling from Reykjavik to Akureyri the day after the storm by bus were treated to magnificent views of Icelandic nature and the mountains covered with a

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fresh layer of snow. However, there were cautionary reminders of life in the Arctic environment, when we could see upturned cars abandoned in snowbanks on the side of the highway.

The hybrid event was attended in person by a sizable group, including 23 JUSTNORTH team members-- and 18 external participants, including visiting

students from UiT the Arctic University of Norway and the University of Akureyri. The online component had 34 registered participants, plus a few of the JUSTNORTH team who weren't able to make the day in person given the travel complications from the storm

During this event, the project's Steering Committee also met to discuss project concerns and progress.

JUSTNORTH at the Arctic Circle Assembly

On 13-16 October, JUSTNORTH team members participated in the Arctic Circle Assembly in Reykjavik, Iceland.



Following the JUSTNORTH annual conference, many of the project team stayed in Reykjavik for the major Arctic event of the year. JUSTNORTH team members from the University of Sussex, Cardiff University, the University of Lapland, Nord University, Uppsala University, the Stefansson Arctic Institute, and the Western Norway

Research Institute participated in a number of panel events.

The main JUSTNORTH panel was titled:

Just, Equitable and Sustainable Development in the Arctic: Lessons from JUSTNORTH and included Roman Sidortsov, Joan Nymand Larsen, Tanja Joona, Hannes Hansen-Magnusson and Corine Wood-Donnelly

At this year's event there was a noticeable buzz around the concept of justice and of just transition. For example, the panel (including JUSTNORTH's scientific coordinators) speaking to the theme of "A 'Just' Energy Transition for the Arctic?" had standing room only! Many younger researchers and students attending the event were especially interested in the idea of justice for the Arctic.

Some of the JUSTNORTH team also spent time at the EU Polar Cluster booth to answer questions about the project. Interest in JUSTNORTH and its results was high with the booth giving away all of its printed fact sheets about the project.





Photo Credit: Corine Wood-Donnelly

Policy Briefs

JUSTNORTH policy briefs are topical outputs drawing upon research previously conducted in the JUSTNORTH project. They have been produced by the project's Regulatory and Legal Frameworks team.

These briefs build on the findings of the research conducted in the project's 17 case studies and are underpinned by the justice guidelines developed earlier in the project.

The objective of the briefs was to assess the sustainability of the regulatory frameworks influencing the sustainability of the economic activities developed in the Arctic. The briefs make a number of key recommendations for future policy development of the Arctic.

Sustainability, understood here as the responsible use and management of spaces, common goods and shared resources with the aim of guaranteeing a fair use and enjoyment of them by future generations, is intrinsically linked to the idea of justice.

With the aim to reach a wider audience, the policy briefs constitute short analysis of different aspects of regulatory, policy and governance frameworks in the Arctic. As such, they are knowledge resources for policymakers, scholars and stakeholders/ rightsholders.

There are 6 briefs in the series. You can find set of policy briefs on our project website at: justnorth.eu/outcome/policy-briefs

Policy Brief I:

Decision-Making for Sustainable Economic Development in the Arctic

How political decisions are made and by whom are key factors shaping perceptions about whether decision-making is just and democratically legitimate.

This issue is doubly significant in the context of Arctic sustainability. The Arctic region has a long history of past injustices, driven by colonial policies and extractivism. Sustainable development—because it is

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about the use of shared and limited resources, including Arctic landscapes—is inseparable from a concern with justice.



Want to read the recommendations in this brief?
Find it here: justnorth.eu/outcome/policy-briefs

Policy Brief 2: Justice in Environmental and Social Impact Assessments

Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) are a mainstay of sustainability practice.

A legal requirement in many countries, they can function as an important tool for giving voice to stakeholders affected by development projects and new economic activities and to empower vulnerable groups. And yet, environmental impact assessments are not without problems, as this brief shows.

Across a broad spectrum of economic

This brief from JUSTNORTH centers on the question of what makes for just decision-making in the Arctic. Examining a wide range of new, large- and small-scale economic projects, JUSTNORTH researchers questioned the political processes surrounding oil and gas, mining, and wind power and tourism development across the region.

What takeaways for policymakers does the project offer when it comes to strengthening justice in political processes? As a starting point, *decisions need for those affected by it to feel that they have been treated with dignity and respect and have been given a voice in the process, regardless of the outcome.*

Going forward, JUSTNORTH research points to several steps that can be taken to address such situations:

One possible step would be to *create new supervising bodies to guarantee the inclusion of local and Indigenous communities* to ensure compliance with the law.

Another possible measure would be to *grant equal status to different economic interests competing for land use.*

A final recommendation indicates the *development of energy communities could encourage outcomes toward sustainable energy security.*

activities in the Arctic, including large wind power, mining, and transportation projects, JUSTNORTH researchers have examined stakeholder perspectives of current EIA practices.

What they found was that environmental impact assessments are often perceived as occurring too late and having too little influence on decision-making. Typically carried out when a project is already at an advanced

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stage, their role is limited. The result is a sense of disempowerment among groups affected negatively.

Public participation is a crucial feature of impact assessments but this step stands out as a deficiency, according to the research. For an EIA to be effective, stakeholders need time and resources to take part in the process, but for small organisations and communities those resources are not always available. This capacity gap is a significant obstacle.



The question of whose knowledge counts is

crucial to informing EIAs. However, the research found that different knowledge are not given due recognition.

Affected groups see the information produced as sometimes being unreliable, flawed or biased toward the developer. In these processes, Indigenous knowledge, or even local knowledge, tends to be neglected in favor of scientific knowledge.

In addition, because EIAs do not generally account for legacies of past injustices, they are often met with mistrust by Indigenous communities and a sense that the old patterns of dispossession are being reproduced.

What can be done to make environmental impact assessments work better and serve a broader range of concerns?

Our research points to several possible ways forward, among them:

--Factor in injustices and legacies of past harm so as to be able to engage with actual social complexity.

--Widen the scope of what forms of knowledge are included, not least by recognizing indigenous knowledge.

--In the European Arctic, incorporate an analysis of social impacts (inspired by practices found in some parts of North America).

--Pay specific attention to the needs of vulnerable groups

Other policy briefs in the series include:

Policy Brief 3: OWNING AND MANAGING LIVING AND RENEWABLE NATURAL RESOURCES AND BIODIVERSITY

Policy Brief 4: THE PLANNING OF ARCTIC LANDSCAPES AND SEASCAPES AND ITS IMPACT ON SUSTAINABILITY

Policy Brief 5: CLIMATE CHANGE FACTORS IN MULTI-REGULATORY RESPONSES IN THE NORTH

Policy Brief 6: GOVERNANCE INSTITUTIONS FOR THE ARCTIC

Find all the briefs on the project website at: justnorth.eu/outcome/policy-briefs

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Continued... Miles Law Emerges in JUSTNORTH Policy Lab...

- Stakeholders in economic developments express concerns about not being listened to in negotiations, which results in decision-making processes turning into courtroom battles.
- Political ownership in decision-making and permitting processes, transparency, as well as democratic participation are critical for sustainable development.

Issue 2: Promoting Local Energy Communities and Local Ownership

Across the Arctic, there is clear resistance to many renewable energy projects. JUSTNORTH fieldwork results suggest that this is rooted in concerns about the cultural landscape and traditional economic activities. This comes with the perception of increasing incompatibility of all pursued land uses, as well as the pressures of 'green colonialism' in climate mitigation and adaptation agendas, with unequal distribution of harms and benefits. One option discussed across the Arctic is facilitating renewable energy developments by making communities and Arctic inhabitants the owners of these developments with control and share in profits, benefits and decision-making powers.

At the Policy Lab, participants discussed examples of good practices and, conversely, instances where the trade-offs in development decisions were not satisfactory for local needs. Again, a diversity of positions emerged, ranging from concern for community and social buy-in for any development to the perspective that the dynamics where NGOs using the media as a

tool for raising awareness on issues of environmental protection or minority rights constitute obstacles to economic development.

Points emerging from the discussion include:

- There is a negative correlation between the size of the economic project and local ownership (usually the larger the project, the less powers locals have), leading to negative consequences for communities and a rise in activism.
- Large-scale industrial development that results in environmental pollution and insufficient energy security for local communities causes resistance to future development proposals.
- It is better to find creative solutions during planning processes than to end up in conflict or in the courts.
- Policy tools and planning processes should facilitate renewable energy development by identifying where new infrastructure can be located.

What is next?

The perspectives from the Policy Lab, and other similar events, will be used by the JUSTNORTH team to identify which issues emerging from case study fieldwork will be prioritised in the JUSTNORTH EU Policy Recommendations Report. If you are an Arctic stakeholder or rightsholder who would like to participate in this process, please contact the Scientific Coordinator Corine Wood-Donnelly at corine.wood-donnelly@ires.uu.se.



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Upcoming Events

Announcing the 3rd JUSTNORTH Conference & General Assembly 14-16 June 2023 Madrid, Spain

Mark the dates in your calendars!

The 2023 project conference and General Assembly will be hosted by Universidad Complutense de Madrid. The event will be held in Madrid, Spain at the Complutense Campus from 14-16 June. If you can't travel--the Open Science Day will also be online. The current plan is to have a 3-part event, including the JUSTNORTH Open Science Day, the project's annual General Assembly, and JUSTNORTH researcher-led one-day 'summer school' with seminars and teaching about justice and case study findings. To find out more contact Belén Franco at belenreq@ucm.es.



Photo Credit: Mia Landauer

Arctic Frontiers 2023

Are you going to the Arctic Frontiers conference in Tromsø over 29 January-1 February? Be sure to look up JUSTNORTH side events in the conference programme or contact Dr Majken Paulsen for details at map@nforsk.no.

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Arctic Science Summit Week 2023

JUSTNORTH will have a panel at the Arctic Science Summit Week on 21 February at 0830. Want to know more about the presentations? Check out the conference programme here: <https://assw.info/program/assw-2023-program/tuesday-21-february-2023>

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High North Dialogue 2023

Exciting plans are in development for the High North Dialogue event in Bodø over 19-20 April 2023. Stay tuned and follow updates from the event organisers: <https://www.highnorthdialogue.no>



JUSTNORTH Research Results

Read these recent scientific publications from the project team in the papers below

Journal Articles

Upham, P., K. Sovacool, B., & G. Monyei, C. (2022). Imaginaries on ice: Sociotechnical futures of data centre development in Norway and Iceland. *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/25148486221126619>

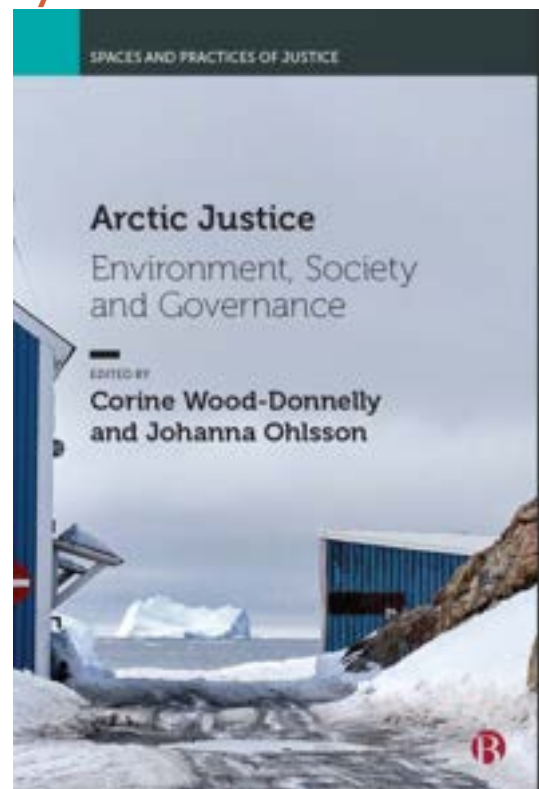
Other publications

Edited Volume: **Arctic Justice: Environment, Society & Governance**

Coming in May 2023!

This book will be open access, but if you'd like a hard copy for your library, it is available for pre-order now. <https://bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/arctic-justice>

Offering a unique introduction to the study of justice in the European, North American and Russian Arctic, this collection considers the responsibilities and failures of justice for the environment and society in the region. Inspired by key thinkers in justice, this book highlights the real and practical consequences of postcolonial legacies, climate change and the regions' incorporation into the international political economy. The chapters feature liberal, cosmopolitan, feminist, as well as critical justice perspectives from experts with decades of research experience in the Arctic. Moving from a critique of current failures, the collection champions an ethical and sustainable future for Arctic development and governance.



Chapters emerging from JUSTNORTH Research

1. Applying a Transnational Theory of Justice to the Arctic - Johanna Ohlsson
2. Responsibility of and for Structural (In)Justice in Arctic Governance – Corine Wood-Donnelly
3. A Relational View of Responsibility for Climate Change Effects on the Territories and Communities of the Arctic - Tracey Skillington
4. A JUST CSR Framework for the Arctic - Darren McCauley
5. Expanding Collective Capabilities to Conceptualise and Assess the Impact of Oil and Gas Activities on the Energy Transition in the Arctic - Roman Sidortsov and Anna Badyina
8. Planning for Whose Benefit? Procedural (In)justice in Norwegian Arctic Industry Projects - Ragnhild Freng Dale and Halvor Dannevig
9. The Complex Relationship Between Forest Sámi and the Finnish State - Tanja Joonas and Juha Joonas
11. Overarching issues of justice in the Arctic: reflections from the case of South Greenland - Joan Nymand Larsen and Jón Haukur Ingimundarson
12. Seeing Like an Arctic City: The Lived Politics of Just Transition at Norway's Oil and Gas Frontier - Anna Badyina and Oleg Golubchikov

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