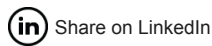
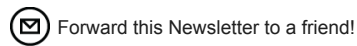


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What's new from the ArcticHubs

Dear **reader**,

We're thrilled to be back from a productive Summer break, eager to dive into the next exciting phase of our ArcticHubs project.

Since our last update, we've been bustling with activity.

Our teams has been engaged in extensive fieldwork activities, conducting enriching workshops in Finland, Norway, Greenland, Iceland and Sweden. We've also made our presence felt at international conferences, and just recently, we wrapped up our highly successful fourth Annual Meeting in Italy.

As we gear up for the coming months, we're excited to announce some key developments on the horizon. By the end of the year, we'll be releasing critical reports from WP2 that promise to shed light on pressing Arctic issues.

We're also preparing to launch further webinars and workshops from WP2, WP3 and WP5, and we're thrilled to share that the ArcticHubs based digital game is on its way to testing. Our dedicated team of ArcticHubbers will continue to foster meaningful exchanges and discussions within various sectors and among sister projects across the European Arctic.

But there's more excitement in store!

In mid-November, we have another engaging workshop with youth on the horizon, alongside the testing of the ArcticHubs digital game, set to take place in Malå, Sweden. We've got a host of other exciting initiatives in the pipeline.

In the meanwhile in this newsletter, we will be telling you about:

- A deep dive into the discussion on Social Licence to Operate (SLO) and its potential uses beyond the mining sector
- An insightful workshop with youth in Inari, Finland

- Our collaborative efforts with local stakeholders
- Recommended readings

Additionally, we'll provide a sneak peek into some **upcoming events** you won't want to miss.



Finding solutions to complex challenges: what is Social Licence to Operate (SLO)?

The project has been considering different tool for co-designing solutions in participatory way, with locals and stakeholders, on Arctic land, sea and forest use, such as [PPGIS platforms](#), [Delphi methods](#), [Q-method](#), [Unmanned forest machine technology](#).

Among these, researchers have been analysing **how the concept of SLO might be adapted across a wider variety of industrial sectors**.

Emerging from tense and conflictual settings around the mining sector, **the concept of SLO has evolved as an informal way to build a 'social licence'** between local communities and new or expanding industry activities in their locality.

Building from the precursor to ArcticHubs project, **BUSK**, in its 2018 report '[Local acceptance of industrial operations withing mining, forestry, fish farming, and tourism in Lapland and Troms/Finmark](#)' (Pettersson *et al.*), outlined **how SLO is understood** to consolidate around three elements:

- social legitimacy related to openness, honesty, and respecting local social norms
- credibility
- trust, which is negotiated in an ongoing basis, achieved over time through shared experiences and collaboration.

SLO is particularly relevant in industries with significant societal and environmental impacts. Obtaining and maintaining social acceptance and trust is often as important as complying with regulatory requirements. Failure to secure an SLO can lead to protests, legal challenges, reputational damage, and disruptions to operations, conflict over local resources.

Social Licence to Operate represents the social and community acceptance granted to an organisation to conduct its activities. It goes beyond legal compliance and involves building trust, engaging stakeholders, and operating in an environmentally and socially responsible manner.

What if SLO could be a path forward for collaboratively designing future, sustainable, and socially accepted land-use strategies (as well as resource utilisation) in the European Arctic?



Cruise ship in Westfjords, Iceland, with fish farming activity also present in fjord

Social licence to operate (SLO) – Is there a berth for this concept in Arctic cruise tourism?

Arctic cruise tourism

One corner of industry, where substantial increases in volume and rapid expansion in its reach has occurred, is in **the arena of Arctic cruise tourism**. With challenges around the more traditional livelihoods of fishing and agriculture, the arrival of cruise tourism was initially seen by the often-remote coastal communities as a way to offset those economic struggles and out-migration pressures. However, in recent years there has been **a growing debate and rising concerns about the more negative environmental and social impacts occurring in ports and destinations across the Arctic** visited by the burgeoning cruise sector. Nonetheless, exchanges relating to trust or degrees in social acceptance for cruise tourism have not yet matured or been given an opportunity to evolve. Equally, the more participatory and inclusive elements of **the SLO process have also not yet been tested out as a possible answer to tensions around unchecked cruise tourism growth in the Arctic**.

Exploring SLO around cruise tourism

In response to the absence of such interactions or a greater pooling of perspectives, some of the **ArcticHubs researchers have begun to explore whether the ‘code of conduct’ expressions of SLO** (sometimes found where the extractive industries are active) **might find a way of being applied in the as yet untested sphere of tourism**. More specifically across the more easily bounded sub-sector **that is cruise tourism**.

The ArcticHubs teams from **the coastal hub locations of Suðeroi, Faroe Islands and Westfjords, Iceland**, have already sought out a range of voices across local stakeholders and their varying reflections concerning the interactions around fjords and coastal, where aquaculture and tourism businesses are active. These have come initially through participatory methods including [Maptionnaire surveys](#) and the joint construction of [Q-statements](#).

When approached to consider and discuss more closely the issues and challenges now faced by the further changes brought through visitation from international cruise ships and their passengers, there was considerable interest in coming together again with the ArcticHubs research teams.

Collaboration and dialogue

Through the posing of questions on whether or how greater acceptance and trust in cruise tourism might be enhanced, there was also an opportunity to move beyond the gathering of pure numbers or polarised oppositional stances. Instead, **ArcticHubs research** has more crucially sought to **look at the diverse interactions that are taking place between a destination and a visiting cruise business**.

Uniquely during the summer season, **ArcticHubs researchers have also been able to look at the angle seen onboard a cruise ship** arriving at an Arctic port, **to hear how the tourist and the cruise business are informed and perceive a destination**. This was achieved through participant observation on a cruise ship and with cruise tourists whilst visiting Arctic destinations, the delivery of presentations and discussions onboard the cruise vessel, alongside an online survey accessible whilst the ship was navigating its route around the North Atlantic.



ArcticHubs researchers presenting their research onboard Arctic cruise journey, Summer 2023

At the same time, the **ArcticHubs researchers approached from the side of the port and destination communities** looking back at that docking ship, **to understand how they experienced or understood that arrival**.

Through separate **focus group meetings in Ísafjörður and Tórshavn**, our researchers listened to the positions of local stakeholders - both those that benefit directly and have generally positive views on tourism, and those who are not involved and view cruise tourism growth and development as it stands as being problematic - and those involved in the management or governance of how the cruise sector develops around a destination.



Focus group in Westfjords, Iceland discussing cruise tourism in their hub area

Once those varying perspectives are gathered, exchanged and understood across this wider circle of interested or vested parties, only **then can it be considered**

(a) what SLO around cruise tourism in the Arctic region **might mean**

(b) if there is a viable opportunity for the SLO concept to migrate beyond its origins around the extractive industries.

Envisioning the Arctic of tomorrow: Inari Arctic youth gathering



The imperative to comprehend the trajectory of the distinctive Arctic ecosystem has drawn a diverse assembly of youth to Inari, Lapland, Finland. In August, young individuals hailing from Finland, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, and Greenland gathered beside the tranquil expanse of Lake Inari.

Their purpose?

To forge a **collective understanding**, to unravel challenges, and the **possibilities on the horizon of the Arctic.**

The event, a joint initiative by **ArcticHubs** and the [ACAF project](#) supported by the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland**, was organised by the **Sámi Education Institute**, a partner of the ArcticHubs project. With a shared goal of addressing the complex issues facing the Arctic region, the workshop facilitated **dialogue between indigenous youth and those from the majority population**, fostering a holistic understanding of the challenges that need to be tackled.

The workshop was packed with activities designed to spark discussions, encourage networking, and facilitate innovative thinking. The event featured a **keynote speech by local Northern Sámi rapper Áilu Valle**, who likely brought a fresh and resonant voice to the discussions.

Read more [here](#).

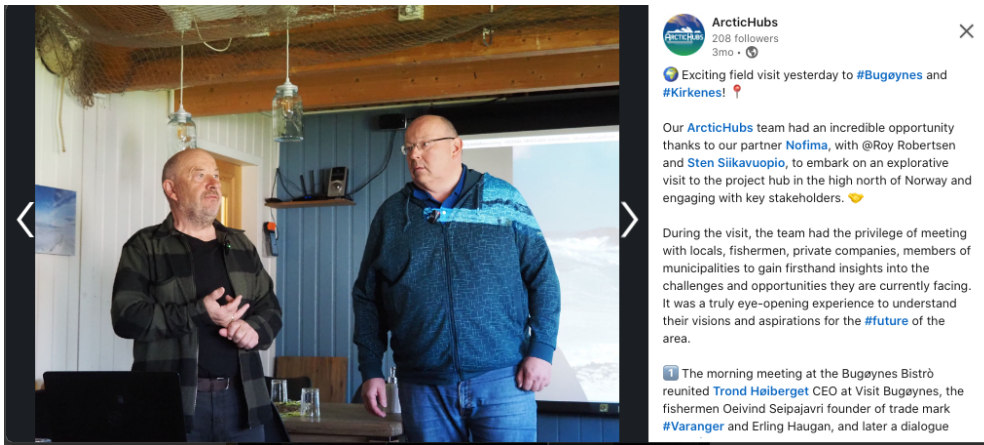


Stories and testimonials: voices from the borders, on the fringes of the European Arctic

One of the most compelling aspects of the ArcticHubs project is **the voices it amplifies**—the stories and testimonials of **those who live, work, and thrive in the Arctic**. These firsthand accounts offer invaluable insights into the **real-world challenges** and opportunities that the region presents.

Through these stories, we learn about the impact of [global drivers and megatrends](#), of [climate changes](#) and global markets, of [geopolitical choices](#) on Arctic local communities, industries, and ecosystems.

In June, **at the Norway-Russia-Finland tri-border**, in Kirkness, Norway, **we heard** from fishermen, aquaculture experts, researchers, indigenous industries representatives, tourism operators, young innovators, young media and video experts and others, each sharing their **unique perspectives and experiences**. These narratives underscore the importance of ArcticHubs' collaborative efforts in driving positive change.



The importance of ongoing interaction and dialogue between different actors in a strategic area such as Varangerfjord was most strongly exemplified by the relationship between overlapping aquaculture and other fishing interests. While both operate in the same fjord, reaching common accepted solutions requires long-term exchanges and the utilisation of various platforms or approaches.



A collection of pictures from the project field trip and the seminar in Kirkenes, June 2023

On-site visits by the ArcticHubs researchers to the different companies and facilities in the **Varangerfjord hub** highlighted the local, national, and global influences on different business and management practices.

Read more about the resilience and innovation in the face of challenges in the Varangerfjord region of the Arctic, where recent policy changes (with the Russian conflict) and local adaptations have led to a dynamic and optimistic atmosphere, even in the midst of adversity.

Find [here](#) the full article to explore how this Arctic hub is addressing issues like decreasing populations and climate change, and learn how it serves as an example of coexistence and sustainability for nature-based industries in the Arctic.

WHAT'S ON



SUBMIT YOUR PAPERS!

SPECIAL ISSUE ON SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES IN THE ARCTIC: EXPLORING LAND USE CHANGES AND THEIR IMPACTS





[Jerbelle Elomina](#) successfully presented at the 39th Annual Q Conference in [#Belfast](#) at [Ulster University](#). Our colleagues from BOKU University are hitting the conference circuit, showcasing preliminary findings from our project. Join us in celebrating their dedication to advancing our research and stay updated on our project's progress.



Seija Tuulentie and Gun Lidestav presented at the [Barents Forest Forum 2023](#) in [#Rovaniemi](#), at the [Arktikum - Science Centre and museum](#). Our colleagues, Seija Tuulentie from *LUKE Natural Resources Institute Finland* and Gun Lidestav from the *Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences* presented the current ArcticHubs participatory research on scenarios for the future of forest use, in Northern Sweden and Northern Finland.



Future summit Malå, November 2023

The ArcticHubs project represented by **SLU University** will participate in various activities during the [Future summit Malå week in Sweden](#), the 10th of November 2023.

Results from previous workshops conducted in Sweden and a survey **with the aim of outlining desired futures of the forest** in Malå region will be presented and discussed the 10th November with a broad range of stakeholders in forestry, as well as reindeer husbandry. The event is open to everyone.

As part of the **ArcticHubs Game Project**, students from local schools will be involved in **testing the pilot of the digital ArcticHubs game**, where players step into the shoes of a reindeer herder.



Conferences & Events

● Rovaniemi Arctic Spirit Conference
2023

📅 13-15 November 2023

👉 **ArcticHubs, Charter and JustNorth** are running a whole session on 15th November (9:00-16:00) within the Arctic Spirit Conference: *Arctic landscapes under pressure - effects of national and international policies and businesses on land-use development*. Click [here](#) to know more.

📍 Rovaniemi, Finland

● Future summit Malå

📅 6-10 November 2023

👉 A themed week of events about the future, opportunities and jobs, in Malå, from November the 6th to 10th 2023. This year's theme: *Everyone is Needed - Future Summit Malå!*

Click [here](#) to know more and attend.

📍 Malå, Sweden

What do you think about the development of Arctic's economic activities?



Readings for you

🔍 **Lean forestry – A paradigm shift from economies of scale to precise and sustainable use of ecosystem services in forests.**

👉 [Click here to read.](#)

Multiple-use forests and reindeer husbandry – Case of pendulous lichens in continuous cover forests 🔍

👉 [Click here to read.](#)

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