

# THE ARCTIC GOVERNANCE PROJECT

A sustainable future for the North



# **Many Voices – One dialogue**

**Why are we here?**

**What do we hope to accomplish?**

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Tromsø, Norway

29 January 2010

## Our point of departure

The Arctic is currently experiencing a period of rapid and transformative change - what scientists often call a “state change”

- 1.** The Arctic leads the world in terms of the scope and pace of climate change.
- 2.** Coupled with globalization, this has fueled a “gold rush” mentality among those interested in oil and gas development, shipping, fishing, tourism, and so forth.

## What makes such periods particularly challenging?

1. Thresholds, tipping points, and non-linear changes are to be expected
2. Abrupt changes are entirely possible
3. Emergent properties are complex
4. Regional-global linkages become tighter

## What is the role of governance?

- It's easy to get carried away with the implications of these developments
  - Visions of an “Arctic meltdown” are highly exaggerated
  - The Arctic is not the “Wild West” with regard to governance, as Hans Corell has observed
- Still, it's prudent to think hard about how to steer or manage Arctic processes to promote good things and avoid bad things during times of rapid change
  - Our goal is stewardship: sustainability with justice
  - Conditions of transformative change create windows of opportunity as well as challenges

## The Arctic is not a blank slate

- **Governance systems in the Arctic are already well-developed**
  - There is no need to reinvent existing arrangements that work well
- **The Arctic is also a governance compass**
  - There are important success stories
  - The Arctic is a source of innovative initiatives of broader significance
  - There are additional opportunities for innovation

## What is the way forward?

- **Building on success**

Respecting achievements, while avoiding complacency about the needs of the future

- **To this end, the AGP White Paper addresses the following themes:**

- Critical questions – setting the Arctic agenda
- Governance principles – formulating normative guidelines
- Performance standards – evaluating the results
- Key findings – identifying ways forward

## What is the role of the AGP?

### Who are we?

An unofficial initiative rooted in civil society

Collectively, we have long and deep experience with Arctic issues

### What can we contribute?

1. A venue for thoughtful, non-partisan, off-the-record consideration of needs and opportunities for governance in the Arctic
2. A mechanism for stimulating dialogue among those who care about such matters
3. A source of suggestions policymakers can take or leave as they see fit



## What happens after Tromsø ?

- The AGP Steering Committee will develop a revised and enhanced version of the White Paper based on input from this meeting
  - Particular focus on strengthening the section on key findings
- We will present our ideas in a range of policy and policy-relevant settings
  - Emphasis on dialogue

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