# Science Diplomacy Negative

## File Explanation

This file contains negative answers to the Science Diplomacy Affirmative.

#### Arctic Science Advantage Answers

The best negative argument is that new research won’t change policy. Even if the affirmative plan generates highly accurate data about Russian permafrost, political barriers to action are overwhelming. The Trump administration rejects action on climate change, and has adopted an energy policy that has prioritized new drilling of fossil fuels. There are also good arguments that question the inevitability of permafrost tipping points and the impact to global warming.

Not every affirmative team will read an Arctic disease impact. The argument in the 1NC block is starred because you may have to omit it.

#### Arctic Diplomacy Advantage Answers

Most of the arguments here are very strong. Two of the arguments implicate the first advantage as well – if you win them, you probably defeat the entire case. They are “Russia says no” and the “fragmented governance turn”. The argument is that Russia will use the plan to try to create fissures within the Arctic Council and it will cause Arctic cooperation to break down.

Another very strong argument is that there is no Arctic war. A strong investment of time here will make it difficult for the affirmative to win that this advantage has an impact.

#### Track 2 Counterplan

This counterplan requires knowing a few terms:

**Track 1 Diplomacy** – this means official government-to-government interactions between states. In the context of the affirmative, government scientists working for the National Science Foundation would be considered Track 1.

**Track 2 Diplomacy** – this means unofficial interactions between nongovernmental actors. They might be funded by governments, but the scientists being funded are not considered official government representatives. In the context of the affirmative, a National Science Foundation grant to private scientists would be considered Track 2.

**High North Talks** – this is an unofficial forum sponsored by a non-governmental organization (The Geneva Centre for Security Policy) that sponsors unofficial meetings between representatives of different Arctic states. It is considered Track 2 since it is unofficial.

**Arctic Council –** this is the most prominent intergovernmental organization in the Arctic, and it sponsors meetings between scientists from different Arctic states. It is Track 1, since it involves official representatives.

**Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation** – this is a formal agreement negotiated by the Arctic Council to encourage official exchanges of scientists, equipment, and data between Arctic states.

The affirmative plan conducts scientific exploration under the auspices of the Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation, which means it goes through official Arctic Council channels and is considered Track 1.

The counterplan conducts scientific exploration under the auspices of the High North Talks. This means that the United States will fund private scientists to meet with Russian scientists in an alternative forum. It is Track 2. The counterplan will claim to solve the case because unofficial linkages between scientists are a form of science diplomacy that can influence official interactions.

The **net benefit** is the Russian appeasement disadvantage (in a separate file). The 1nc link evidence to that disadvantage is about working with Russia in an official capacity. The counterplan does not do this.

# Case

## Arctic Science Advantage Answers

### 1NC Arctic Science Advantage Answers

#### 1. No risk of permafrost tipping points

National Science Foundation, 2020 – press release “Warming Climate unlikely to cause major methane release” 2/28, <https://www.nsf.gov/news/warming-climate-unlikely-cause-major-methane> //DH

A long-feared scenario in which global warming causes Arctic permafrost to melt and release enough methane—a potent greenhouse gas--to accelerate warming and cause catastrophe probably won't happen.

That is the conclusion of a study appearing in the journal Science that began more than 20 years ago as a query posed by Jeff Severinghaus, a geoscientist at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. A National Science Foundation-funded research team led by the University of Rochester's Vas Petrenko that includes Severinghaus analyzed samples of gases trapped in ice during a period of deglaciation between 18,000 and 8,000 years ago. That period is considered a partial analog for the current era of global warming.

The researchers conclude that even if methane is released from permafrost and other stores known as methane hydrates, very little actually reaches the atmosphere.

"It is a rare piece of good news about climate change," said Severinghaus, "so I'm happy to come to the public and say this is something we don't have to worry about."

Severinghaus said the study is bolstered by its reliance on a definitive source of data. Measurements of the carbon-14 isotope are considered a reliable and unambiguous indicator of permafrost and hydrate methane. Because carbon-14 has a half-life of some 5,730 years, much older carbon from permafrost and hydrate deposits contains virtually no carbon-14.

When plants die, they decompose into carbon-based organic matter in the soil. In extremely cold conditions, the carbon in the organic matter becomes trapped by permafrost—frozen ground--instead of being emitted into the atmosphere. Permafrost is mostly found on land, mainly in Siberia, Alaska, and Northern Canada.

Along with organic carbon, there is also an abundance of ice in permafrost. When the permafrost thaws with rising temperatures, the ice melts and the underlying soil becomes waterlogged, helping to create low-oxygen conditions. That creates an ideal environment for microbes in the soil to consume the carbon and produce methane.

#### 2. Warming’s not an existential risk. Progress on emissions reductions limits the impact.

James Pethokoukis, 2025 - fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. Interviews Toby Ord, Senior Researcher at Oxford University’s AI Governance Initiative. “My chat (+transcript) with researcher Toby Ord on existential risk.” 1/31 <https://fasterplease.substack.com/p/my-chat-transcript-with-researcher> //DH

**RCP = Representative Concentration Pathway; it’s a scenario that models impacts of climate change (with higher numbers being worse)**

Pethokoukis: Let's just start out by taking a brief tour through the existential landscape and how you see it now versus when you first wrote the book The Precipice, which I've mentioned frequently in my writings. I love that book, love to see a sequel at some point, maybe one's in the works . . . but let's start with the existential risk, which has dominated many people's thinking for the past quarter-century, which is climate change.

My sense is, not just you, but many people are somewhat less worried than they were five years ago, 10 years ago. Perhaps they see at least the most extreme outcomes less likely. How do you see it?

Ord: I would agree with that. I'm not sure that everyone sees it that way, but there were two really big and good pieces of news on climate that were rarely reported in the media. One of them is that there's the question about how many emissions there'll be. We don't know how much carbon humanity will emit into the atmosphere before we get it under control, and there are these different emissions pathways, these RCP 4.5 and things like this you'll have heard of. And often, when people would give a sketch of how bad things could be, they would talk about RCP 8.5, which is the worst of these pathways, and we're very clearly not on that, and we're also, I think pretty clearly now, not on RCP 6, either. So the two worst pathways, we're pretty clearly not on, and so that's pretty good news that we're kind of headed more towards one of the better pathways in terms of the emissions that we'll put out there.

What are we doing right?

Ultimately, some of those pathways were based on business-as-usual ideas that there wouldn't be climate change as one of the biggest issues in the international political sphere over decades. So ultimately, nations have been switching over to renewables and low-carbon forms of power, which is good news. They could be doing it much more of it, but it's still good news. Back when we initially created these things, I think we would've been surprised and happy to find out that we were going to end up among the better two pathways instead of the worst ones.

The other big one is that, as well as how much we'll admit, there's the question of how bad is it to have a certain amount of carbon in the atmosphere? In particular, how much warming does it produce? And this is something of which there's been massive uncertainty. The general idea is that we're trying to predict, if we were to double the amount of carbon in the atmosphere compared to pre-industrial times, how many degrees of warming would there be? The best guess since the year I was born, 1979, has been three degrees of warming, but the uncertainty has been somewhere between one and a half degrees and four and a half.

Is that Celsius or Fahrenheit, by the way?

This is all Celsius. The climate community has kept the same uncertainty from 1979 all the way up to 2020, and it’s a wild level of uncertainty: Four and a half degrees of warming is three times one and a half degrees of warming, so the range is up to triple these levels of degrees of warming based on this amount of carbon. So massive uncertainty that hadn't changed over many decades.

Now they've actually revised that and have actually brought in the range of uncertainty. Now they're pretty sure that it's somewhere between two and a half and four degrees, and this is based on better understanding of climate feedbacks. This is good news if you're concerned about worst-case climate change. It's saying it's closer to the central estimate than we'd previously thought, whereas previously we thought that there was a pretty high chance that it could even be higher than four and a half degrees of warming.

When you hear these targets of one and a half degrees of warming or two degrees of warming, they sound quite precise, but in reality, we were just so uncertain of how much warming would follow from any particular amount of emissions that it was very hard to know. And that could mean that things are better than we'd thought, but it could also mean things could be much worse. And if you are concerned about existential risks from climate change, then those kind of tail events where it's much worse than we would've thought the things would really get, and we're now pretty sure that we're not on one of those extreme emissions pathways and also that we're not in a world where the temperature is extremely sensitive to those emissions.

#### 3. Research won’t change policy. Politics blocks effective climate action.

Birgitte Annie Hansen, 2025 – reporter. “Arctic Council Working Groups Must Persist Despite Putin and Trump, Says Researcher” High North News, 5/28, <https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/arctic-council-working-groups-must-persist-despite-putin-and-trump-says-researcher> //DH

One of the Arctic Council's six Working Groups, the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP), recently released its Arctic Climate Change Update 2024, summarizing key trends and impacts on the Arctic climate.

Sadly, the Arctic region continues its downward spiral in terms of climate. The report shows that extreme weather events, wildfires, melting ice, and ocean acidification have become the new normal in the Arctic. In fact, the negative developments are speeding up.

The report presents proposals for action to counteract this development; however, gaining political traction has become increasingly difficult over the past decade.

"While the Arctic Council Working Groups do not have much political influence today, it is important that they carry out their work and function as an agenda-setting body," says Svein Vigeland Rottem, Researcher at the Fridtjof Nansen Institute, to HNN.

"There will come a time after Trump and Putin."

Enough research, more action

In recent years, many have argued that there is sufficient research on the impacts of Arctic climate change; what is really needed is action by decision-makers. Yet, in the current political landscape, the multilateral climate action needed in the Arctic is far-fetched.

After the Ukraine War, all scientific cooperation with Russia was discontinued. The Arctic Council's work was temporarily paused in March 2022. Since February 2024, the council's working groups have resumed official meetings in digital format, while meetings at the diplomatic and political levels have remained paused.

The council has primarily focused on surviving after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and has only recently managed to start looking toward the future.

On the other side of the Atlantic, US President Donald Trump has launched his own attack on science through mass firings, cuts in funding, and limitations to research and education.

With this, climate action—a highly cooperative field—has been put on the back burner and will likely remain there for some time.

"The Working Groups are asking themselves why they are doing this and why they should continue, but it is crucial that they continue their work, albeit to a lesser degree than before," says Rottem and continues:

"There might not be any direct political results right now, but it is important to persist even in the face of geopolitical challenges."

"If the working groups were to disintegrate, it would take a very long time to rebuild those knowledge networks. We are seeing the start of this in Trump's USA right now."

#### 4. Trump cuts are irreversible. Institutional capacity for Arctic science has been gutted.

Mia Bennett, 2025 - is an associate professor in the University of Washington's Department of Geography. She researches the politics of infrastructure development in the Arctic by combining fieldwork and critical remote sensing. “US Arctic research faces “existential threat”” Cryopolitics, 2/22, <https://www.cryopolitics.com/2025/02/22/us-arctic-research-faces-existential-threat/> //DH

The choice may now be moot. Under Trump, even climate scientists who would prefer to somehow stay below the political fray cannot. The administration has made their work by definition political. Climate science is seen as “climate fanaticism,” and the temple of worship must be rooted out. Project 2025, the political initiative promoted by the Heritage Foundation and dozens of conservative partners across the US and which is serving as a playbook for the Trump administration, spells out its goals for all to see:



Of course, science has never been neutral, and objectivity is something of a mirage. Perhaps what is more valuable and reliable is intersubjectivity, or when personal biases are removed through the collective process of scientist after scientist coming to the same observation or finding. When it comes to climate change, a study published in 2021 found that 98.7% of climate scientists and 100% of expert-level climate scientists agree that human activities are making the Earth warmer. At least the “fanatics” can agree.

Trump seeks to exorcise anyone and everyone working on climate change. Though his push has only been in the works for one month, it will leave scars for decades to come. Many universities that are heavily dependent on federal funding, including some departments at my own institution, have frozen faculty hiring and are rescinding or stopping graduate student admissions. This will deal generational blows. Institutions can be torn down overnight, but they cannot be rebuilt in a day. His vitriolic efforts will also hasten the trajectory to a world that is at least 2°C warmer – one in which the Arctic as we know it is totally and utterly gone.

US Arctic science and the communities they risk abandoning

The cuts to scientific funding are enormous. Government agencies are collapsing and institutional knowledge is disappearing overnight. NOAA may soon be incapable of issuing warnings about hurricanes, let alone the state of the Arctic ice cap. In times like these, it is crucial to build and maintain community with whatever means possible, whether that means getting together in small groups to maintain a sense of solidarity or working virtually with international colleagues who might have access to precious research funding.

US science must take a stand, for its survival depends on it. I hesitate to say that the world’s survival depends on it, for the world will continue in some form, just as it would if a nuclear war went off. But a world without US contributions to climate science and polar science, where it has been a leader for decades, will not be a pretty one.

A paper led by former NASA climate scientist James Hansen published earlier this February found that in the past two years alone, global temperature skyrocketed 0.4°C. The authors observe that “polar climate change has the greatest long-term effect on humanity” due to the potential for polar ice melt to inject huge amounts of freshwater into the North Atlantic Ocean. This could shut down the Gulf Stream within the next 20 to 30 years with disastrous effects on the global environment, from rising sea levels along the US East Coast to colder winters in Europe and flipped seasons in the Amazon. Given Trump’s policies, this tipping point may come sooner than ever, though still long after he could face recrimination.

#### \*5. Arctic disease isn’t a threat

Isabella Turilli, 2025 – pursuing an MPhil in International Relations at Oxford University; previously a research associate for global health, economics, and development at the Council on Foreign Relations. Prior to joining CFR, she conducted and published research with the Center for Global Health Science and Security, the Bansal Lab, and as a Fellow with the Global Irish Studies Initiative. “Are Arctic Viruses "Zombies"?” The Arctic Institute, 3/25, <https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/arctic-viruses-zombies/> //DH

The unstoppable spread of a zombie virus

In the 2002 film “28 Days Later,” it takes less than a month for the virus responsible for “zombifying” the public to traverse the world. But would a “zombie virus” of the Arctic variety necessarily wreck this havoc?

Simply put, no. Viruses have variable infectiousness, and there are myriad barriers that can stop them from successfully spreading. The most obvious is geographical – a virus needs a host to climb a mountain or cross an ocean, and without one, its capacity for spread is limited. But a pathogen may be unsuccessful in spreading a disease even when it is able to come into contact with a host. Disease susceptibility is an elusive concept, a complex calculation balancing genetics, environment, target demographic of the disease, medical history, living and working conditions, and more. Most importantly, not all viruses are able to infect humans. In April of last year, researchers isolated strains of defrosted “Methuselah microbes” which are indeed virulent – but only to amoebae.

The bottom line is that being exposed to a disease does not automatically lead to infection. Diseases are extinguishable in ways that the Hollywood zombie is not.

The inevitable doom of another pandemic

Between its sudden emergence and frenetic spread, the zombie – much like the frozen virus – conjures a sense of doom. Yet we have reason to be hopeful about our ability to defeat a “zombie virus.”

The last century has seen remarkable growth in human resilience against outbreaks. Vaccination, for example, has been nothing short of a public health miracle. The World Health Organization’s Expanded Program on Immunization has “saved 154 million lives over the past 50 years.” Between 2020 and 2021, the COVID-19 vaccine is estimated to have prevented at least 19.8 million deaths globally. That level of success is particularly remarkable given that it took less than a year from the first sequencing of the SARS-CoV-2 genome to the first emergency authorization of its vaccine.

The world’s current capability to address outbreaks of infectious disease is historically unprecedented, and we should not mistake a virus’ ability to spread and cause illness as tantamount to a pandemic. As frightening as zombies may be, their viral counterparts need not cause the same type of fear.

### Extend: “No Permafrost Tipping Points”

#### Sea level rise contains the bulk of methane release

M. N. Dyonisius et al, 2020 - Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY “Old carbon reservoirs were not important in the deglacial methane budget” Science, v. 367 N. 6480, 2/21, <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.aax0504> //DH

In contrast to old carbon reservoirs, contemporaneous CH4 sources such as wetlands and biomass burning emit CH4 with a 14C signature that reflects the contemporaneous Δ14CO2 at the time (15). Our Δ14CH4 measurements for the OD-B transition are all within 1σ uncertainty of the contemporaneous atmospheric Δ14CO2 (19) (Fig. 1A), indicating a dominant role of contemporaneous CH4 sources. We used a one-box model (see section 4.2 of the materials and methods) (20) to calculate the amount of 14C-free CH4 emission into the atmosphere (Table 1, fig. S9, and table S10) (20). Our box model shows that the total 14C-free CH4 emissions during the OD-B transition were small [on average, <13 teragrams (Tg) of CH4 per year, 95% CI upper limit]. Combined with earlier Δ14CH4 data from the YD-PB transition (15), our results argue strongly against the hypothesis regarding old carbon reservoirs being important contributors to the rapid CH4 increases associated with abrupt warming events (Dansgaard–Oeschger events) (9). This conclusion is consistent with previous studies (13) showing no major enrichment in the CH4 deuterium/hydrogen ratio (δD-CH4) concurrent with the abrupt CH4 transitions (CH4 from marine hydrates is relatively enriched in δD). It has been shown that even at a relatively shallow water depth of ~30 m, ~90% of the 14C-free CH4 released from thawing subsea permafrost was oxidized in the water column (21). We hypothesize that during the OD-B transition, relatively rapid sea-level rise associated with meltwater pulse 1-A (17), combined with CH4 oxidation in the water column (22), may have prevented CH4 emissions from disintegrating marine hydrates and sub-sea permafrost from reaching the atmosphere.

Our measurements of 14CH4 during the Bølling–Allerød interstadial (14.45 to 13 ka BP) and the early Holocene (10 to 8 ka BP) warm period (Fig. 1A) provide an opportunity to assess the likelihood of delayed CH4 emissions from old carbon reservoirs in response to warming. The onset of marine hydrate dissociation might lag the initial warming signal on decadal (23), centennial, or even millennial (18) time scales. Permafrost degradation could also lag a warming signal on decadal and centennial time scales (24) depending on local environmental conditions such as permafrost depth, soil types, and moisture content (4). During parts of the early Holocene, Arctic temperatures were likely warmer than today (25), providing a good analog for Arctic conditions in the coming decades. Proxy reconstructions of thermokarst lake initiation (11) and land permafrost degradation (10, 24) suggested a potential increase of CH4 emissions from these processes during both the Bølling–Allerød interstadial and the early Holocene warm period. However, our Δ14CH4 measurements (Fig. 1A and Table 1) show no evidence of delayed 14C-free CH4 emissions after warming. These results are consistent with present-day observations that carbon from thermokarst lakes and permafrost is predominantly emitted in the form of CO2 rather than CH4 (4, 26), and that CH4 emissions from permafrost systems are dominated by relatively contemporaneous carbon (26, 27).

Because carbon stored in permafrost is not expected to be 14C free (28), we also attempted to use our 14CH4 results to calculate the possible magnitude of CH4 emissions from thawing old carbon in permafrost (Section 4.3) (20). This calculation assumed that the 14C activity of permafrost CH4 emissions follows the predepositional age of terrigenous biomarkers released from thawing permafrost (7500 ± 2500 years old relative to our sample age) (10). Resulting CH4 emissions from old permafrost carbon range from 0 to 53 Tg CH4 per year (table S10) (20) throughout the last deglaciation and may have contributed up to 27% of the total CH4 emissions to the atmosphere (95% CI upper limit) at the end of the OD-B transition (14.42 ka BP). However, we consider this calculation speculative (see section 4.3 of the materials and methods) (20).

When the global sea level was lower, exposure of continental shelves may have resulted in higher CH4 emissions from natural geologic seeps (29). A recent study also inferred the existence of CH4 hydrate deposits underneath ice sheets and suggested that the proglacial meltwater discharge is likely an important source of CH4 to the atmosphere (5). Ice sheet retreat during the last deglaciation may have destabilized the subglacial hydrate deposits, which contain old, 14C-depleted CH4. However, our data, which span most of the deglacial ice retreat and sea-level rise (Fig. 1F), argue strongly against both hypotheses. The 14C-free CH4 emissions were small throughout the last deglaciation (Table 1) and appear to be insensitive to both global sea level and ice volume.

#### Carbon release from permafrost melt is only 2% of emissions under middle of the road scenarios

David Thorstad, 2023 - professor of philosophy at Vanderbilt University. Cites John Halstead, professor of Natural Resources and the Environment at the University of New Hampshire "Exaggerating the risks (Part 4: Halstead Continued)." Ineffective Altruism. 1/28 ineffectivealtruismblog.com/2023/01/28/exaggerating-the-risks-part-4-halstead-continued/ //DH

What about arctic permafrost? A great deal of carbon is currently trapped in the arctic permafrost, and as the world warms, permafrost will gradually melt, releasing carbon into the atmosphere. At Halstead reminds us, the IPCC currently projects that each 1°C of warming will lead to 18 gigatons of carbon (GtC) released from arctic permafrost. That is roughly two percent of the amount projected to be released by 2100 on a middle-of-the-road scenario (RCP 4.5) by the IPCC. As before, this is a regrettable catastrophe, but hardly an existential threat.

### Extend: “Warming’s Not Existential”

#### Consensus expectations are that impacts will be mild

Glen Lyons 2022 – independent energy consultant. “Climate Change Demands Free Markets.” Journal of New Finance - UFM Madrid. 2/24, <https://jnf.ufm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1038&context=journal> //DH

Moreover, having an important cause like climate change motivating the IPCC’s work can inadvertently lead to a zealousness and emotional drive that overwhelms the needed dispassionate reason needed to continue moving the science forward. “The demonization of some things and sanctification of others, though perhaps helpful in spurring social action, may be more harmful to us in the long run by giving unconscious permission to breach that code and thereby eroding the foundation of the scientific discipline. …while many papers point out what appear to be biases resulting from industry funding, we have identified here, perhaps for the first time, clear evidence that white-hat biases can also exist in opposition to industry interests.” (Cope and Allison 2010)

4.4. Independent Views

Most climate forecasts seem to originate from a group with at least some bias. One group of objective forecasters, objective because their interest is in forecasting rather than climate science, was gathered by the Good Judgment Inc. Good Judgment created the Superforecasters and has put out their own climate report. Superforecasters aren’t experts in climate change but are experts in forecasting. Broadly speaking the consensus expectations from the Superforecasters are for mild impacts. (Good Judgment Inc. 2022)

#### Empirically – humanity has survived much hotter temperatures than even worst-case projections

David Thorstad, 2023 - professor of philosophy at Vanderbilt University. Cites John Halstead, professor of Natural Resources and the Environment at the University of New Hampshire "Exaggerating the risks (Part 4: Halstead Continued)." Ineffective Altruism. 1/28 ineffectivealtruismblog.com/2023/01/28/exaggerating-the-risks-part-4-halstead-continued/ //DH

But I will bite. I think Halstead is quite convincing in arguing that the paleoclimate data does not give us good reason to expect climate change to bring about irreversible existential catastrophe any time soon, and probably gives us good reason to expect that it won’t.

The first thing to note is that the earth has been much hotter in the past than even the most dire warming projections predict it will soon become. During the Paleocene-Eocene thermal maximum (PETM) 55 million years ago, the earth was an astounding 14-17°C above the pre-industrial average, but species extinctions were limited. Here is Halstead:

Overall, in the PETM, temperatures were upwards of 17°C higher than pre-industrial levels and the only species that went extinct that we know of was a single-celled marine organism, and on land it was a time of ecological flourishing, persistence and diversity.

But if the scorching temperatures of the PETM did not lead to existential catastrophe, why believe that lower levels of warming will now destroy humanity? We saw in Part 2 that even Ord seems concerned by this thought:

The best argument against … unknown mechanisms [for extinction] is probably that the PETM [Paleocene–Eocene Thermal Maximum] did not lead to a mass extinction, despite temperatures rapidly rising about 5 degrees Celsius, to reach a level of 14 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial temperatures.

Toby Ord, The precipice

However, Ord suggests that even though the PETM was hotter than the 21st century will be, warming during the PETM was slower than the rapid warming we are now experiencing:

Most importantly, anthropogenic warming could be over a hundred times faster than warming during the PETM, and rapid warming has been suggested as a contributing factor in the end-Permian mass extinction, in which 96 percent of species went extinct.

Toby Ord, The precipice

Fair enough. But Halstead has something to say about that too.

Citing Willis and MacDonald (2011), Halstead reminds us that we have seen rapid warming before:

a. In Greenland, temperatures may have risen by 10°C, though this may be an error in climate proxies.

b. In the Swiss Alps and other parts of Europe, a warming of 2 to 5°C appears to have occurred in 200 years or less.

c. In the Sierra Nevada of California, rates of warming in the late glacial may have been 4 to 5°C every 500 years around 15,000 years ago.

d. At the higher latitudes of the Northern Hemisphere, there were increases of 5°C and more over a few decades (11,700 years ago).

e. Data from Greenland ice cores suggest that a >10°C warming may have occurred over 20 to 6 years (13,000 to 11,000 years ago).

f. In California, warming at the close of the Younger Dryas (13,000 years ago) may have been on the order of 3°C in less than 100 to 200 years.

g. For the entire Southwest US, a general warming of 4°C may have occurred in less than a century (13,000 to 11,000 years ago).

Halstead, Climate change and longtermism

Just as history gives us abundant evidence of large mammals surviving temperatures hotter than the earth is projected to be by 2100, history also gives us evidence of survival at rates of warming comparable to the worst-case scenarios in the IPCC report.

Even the worst-looking scenarios give cause for comfort. For example, in the beginning of the Holocene (~10,000 BCE), climate change did seem to play a role in the extinction of megafauna (large animals). But there is little evidence of plant extinctions, and many megafauna survived. In particular, Halstead notes, humans lived, and by all appearances thrived during this time. And as for the megafauna who perished, a live scientific hypothesis is the overkill hypothesis: they died because we killed and ate them. (Halstead assigns this 90% credence, but notes that many scientists may be closer to 50%). All of this gives us every reason for confidence that today’s humans, with greater numbers, technology, and forewarning than our ancestors, can survive ongoing climate catastrophe.

### Extend: “Research Won’t Change Policy”

#### Trump decision-making isn’t based on data

John Holdren, 2025 - John Holdren is the Teresa and John Heinz Research Professor of Environmental Policy at Harvard Kennedy School and co-director of the Science, Technology, and Public Policy Program in the School’s Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. “The Arctic faces historic pressures from competition, climate change, and Trump” Policycast Podcast, Episode 284, 5/15, hosted by Ralph Renalli. <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/faculty-research/policycast/arctic-faces-historic-pressures-competition-climate-change-and-trump#transcript> //DH

John Holdren: Well, I think it is a factor, but disentangling what Trump’s motivations might be is a fool’s errand, if I may say so. It’s undoubtedly partly that, but who knows whether that’s simply his argument to attract corporate support or whether it’s really important to him? I think one of the things that’s important to Trump, he wants to become the first president in a very long time to expand US territory. He thinks he’ll get on Mount Rushmore if he can take Greenland and make Canada a 51st state.

But the other thing Trump seems to want is simply to have the power to do whatever he wants. And he’s been knocking down guardrails. He’s been knocking down obstacles to his uninhibited exercise of power in practically every domain he can think of. And so it’s hard to interpret what he’s doing to science in the United States, and worldwide as well, without concluding that he’s simply against science, against universities, because he’s against facts. He’s against use of analysis in decision-making. He’s against independent opinion. That’s why he’s going after not just the media, he’s going after libraries and museums. He’s not just going after the diversity, equity and inclusion agenda, he’s going after the climate change agenda, the toxic substances agenda, every aspect of environment—he’s going after windmills, for heaven’s sakes. And again, it’s hard to see that as anything but a violent reaction against everybody who’s had the temerity to disagree with him about anything.

#### Trump doesn’t care about warming data

Peter Aldhous, 2025 – science and data reporter based in San Francisco. “Trump Administration Decommissions Sea Ice Data That Sounded an Alarm on Arctic Climate Change” Inside Climate News, 5/7, <https://insideclimatenews.org/news/07052025/trump-administration-cuts-sea-ice-data-center/> //DH

Key datasets used to monitor the impacts of climate change in the Arctic have emerged as the latest victim of cost-cutting by the Trump administration at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The National Snow and Ice Data Center (NSIDC), based at the University of Colorado Boulder, announced Tuesday that NOAA was ending its support for data products that document the extent and thickness of sea ice, the accumulation of snow and the retreat of melting glaciers. “As a result, the level of services for affected products below will be reduced to Basic—meaning they will remain accessible but may not be actively maintained, updated, or fully supported,” the center noted.

This blindsided scientists who use the NSIDC’s data. “That’s incredible. Let us walk blindfolded and not gather any information about our surroundings,” said Eric Rignot, a glaciologist at the University of California, Irvine, when informed of the decision by Inside Climate News.

For now, the NSIDC datasets are not disappearing. Some are updated by automated data feeds—for sea ice, the data comes from orbiting satellites. But without ongoing support from NOAA, any technical glitches will take longer to fix, and the NSIDC will struggle to support any users who need help.

“This change in support limits our ability to respond quickly to user inquiries, resolve issues, or maintain these products as thoroughly as before,” the NSIDC said in a statement emailed to Inside Climate News.

The center is now calling on scientists, educators and others who use the data to help show why it is valuable. “If you rely on these products in your work, research, education, or planning, we invite you to share your story at nsidc@nsidc.org,” the announcement pleaded. “Your input can help us demonstrate the importance of these data sets and advocate for future support.”

NSIDC’s Sea Ice Index, in particular, has been a bellwether of climate change in the Arctic, which is warming nearly four times faster than the rest of the globe. The index has charted a steady decline in Arctic sea ice cover, sounding an alarm when it reached a record low in September 2012. The data has been crucial to media coverage of climate change at the poles, used by reporters and graphics specialists to show a tangible effect of global warming.

Beyond its central role in monitoring climate change, the NSIDC data has important operational uses spanning from commercial fisheries to national security.

“It’s also used for weather and climate prediction, supporting Alaskan communities, guiding shipping and economic activities, informing fisheries management, protecting marine ecosystems, and underpins countless other Arctic geopolitical and security decision-making needs,” said Zack Labe, a climate scientist who regularly posts online visualizations of the threatened datasets. “Any reduction or elimination of these data product services will have significant consequences, well beyond just tracking the state of sea-ice loss.”

Given its widespread use, NOAA’s decision to decommission the Sea Ice Index shocked NSIDC staff. But the budget cuts being demanded of the agency have forced NOAA into difficult decisions. “With the cuts that have to be made, there’s just not a lot of wiggle room,” said Ann Windnagel, program manager for the NOAA collection at the NSIDC.

The NSIDC isn’t the only source of data on sea ice and other aspects of the “cryosphere,” as frozen parts of the Earth are collectively known. Notably, the European Union’s Copernicus Earth observation program also maintains data on sea ice. But Copernicus lacks NOAA’s mission to support U.S. communities, businesses and other organizations affected by warming in the Arctic.

Cuts at NOAA are also eroding the scientific workforce needed to make sense of the data compiled by the agency. Labe, who until recently worked at NOAA’s Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory in Princeton, New Jersey, is a case in point. Since Elon Musk’s Department of Government Efficiency took aim at NOAA in February, Labe has been fired, then rehired, then fired again.

Meanwhile, the Trump administration has dismissed volunteer researchers working on the congressionally mandated National Climate Assessment, prompting the American Meteorological Society and the American Geophysical Union to step into the breach by supporting a similar effort.

Right from the start of the second Trump administration, officials began taking important environmental data offline. Initially, the cuts focused on online tools used to assess the impacts of pollution and climate change on low-income communities—part of a broader assault on environmental justice initiatives that the administration has characterized as Diversity, Equity and Inclusion programs.

But the NSIDC announcement provides the latest sign that data used by climate and other environmental scientists to monitor the planet’s health are also threatened. NOAA’s National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service “Notice of Changes” web page currently lists a variety of data sources being decommissioned, including data from environmental monitoring buoys, on earthquake intensity and listing geothermal springs.

In a note about the changes posted last month, NOAA suggested that users nominate data sources they want to be saved to the Data Rescue Project, a volunteer effort to archive important federal government data.

“If any of these data products are of interest — the community must act quickly,” NOAA warned.

Still, private efforts to archive important environmental data can’t fully replace the federal government, said Robert Rohde, chief scientist with Berkeley Earth, a leading nongovernmental source of historical temperature data. “Berkeley Earth is trying to step into the vacuum, but frankly we don’t have the resources—and no one does,” he said.

### Extend: “Trump Cuts Irreversible”

#### Trump gutted US Arctic climate science research infrastructure

Mia Bennett, 2025 - is an associate professor in the University of Washington's Department of Geography. She researches the politics of infrastructure development in the Arctic by combining fieldwork and critical remote sensing. “US Arctic research faces “existential threat”” Cryopolitics, 2/22, <https://www.cryopolitics.com/2025/02/22/us-arctic-research-faces-existential-threat/> //DH

The evisceration of climate change research

During the Cold War, nationally-scaled military, security, and economic interests motivated a great deal of research in all of the eight Arctic states, including the US and Russia but also Canada and the Nordic countries, as an article led by historian Ronald Doel explains. This trend seems to be rearing its head again.

The difference between science during the Cold War and today is that the US and Russia are willfully ignoring and even attacking work on climate change despite it being one of the most pressing issues facing the region. Even the US security establishment recognizes this fact. In 2014, the Pentagon released a report noting that climate change posed “immediate risks” to national security.” In 2017, Trump’s former defense secretary James Mattis acknowledged in Senate testimony that climate change was real and that it posed a threat to US overseas interests and Department of Defense assets around the world. Under Trump 2.0, that threat has somehow simply disappeared – as have the people working on the bête noire of the new administration.

In the month since Trump has taken office, over 10 percent of the US National Science Foundation has been fired, including “all of its experts, a class of contract workers who are specialists in niche scientific fields,” according to Politico. Making matters worse, the experts did not have to be let go. Instead, NSF leaders decided to fire them in the interest of “fairness” given that probationary workers were required to be made redundant. In a sudden return of McCarthyism, NSF staff meetings are no longer recorded out of fear of who might get a hold of the tapes.

Entire programs are now gone, too. The entire staff at the Human Environment and Geographic Sciences Program, which has funded research into issues such as climate change and human-environment relations, has been shown the door. Millions of dollars in funding that was set to be awarded by the NSF in the coming weeks to researchers who had spent countless hours refining their proposals are now likely to never see the light of day.

#### Trump empirically blocks climate governance

Gabriela Argüello, 2021 – Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Law focusing on Large Scale Collective Action at the Centre for Collective Action Research “Large-scale collective action in the Arctic Ocean: the role of international organizations in climate governance” Ocean & Coastal Management

Volume 211, 1 October 2021 Science Direct, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0964569121001903> //DH

The case of the U.S. shows the fragility of climate governance cooperation under different presidential administrations. During the Obama Administration, the U.S. held the Arctic Council's chairmanship and the priorities of the U.S. government were, among others, to address climate change effects on the Arctic Ocean.92 However, the Trump's administration dismantled Arctic structures dealing with climate change impacts in the region.93 In June 2017, President Trump announced the withdrawal from the Paris Agreement.94 This political action weakened not only Arctic climate governance but also the confidence in multilateral governance frameworks. On 20 January 2021, Biden's administration rejoined the Paris Agreement.95 However, it will take time to re-build dismantled climate structures in the Arctic.

Palosaari and Tynkkynen point out that climate change’ international discourses are not reflected in national policies where a tension exists between reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the possibility to engage in future oil and gas exploitation.96 Concerning oil and gas reserves, “Arctic continental shelves constitute one of the world's largest remaining prospective areas."97 In fact, several Arctic coastal states, e.g., Canada, Denmark, and Russia, have either claimed or have submitted a continental shelf claim to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf.98 For instance, the Trump's administration granted offshore oil leases in the Chukchi Sea.99 In 2018, the IMO's Vessel Traffic Management System for the Bering Strait100 was the product of a Russian and the U.S. initiative. Such Management Traffic System will improve the conditions for offshore oil and gas operations.101

#### Trump will block international action on climate

Irina A. Strelnikova et al, 2025 – PhD in Law National Research University–Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs School of International Regional Studies Associate Professor “Will the Arctic Cooperation System Accommodate Global Geopolitical Changes?” Russia in Global Affairs, April, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/390366859_Will_the_Arctic_Cooperation_System_Accommodate_Global_Geopolitical_Changes> //DH

Certain changes have already occurred even in the treaty-based Arctic regimes.

The atmosphere of cooperation has been damaged at the International Maritime Organization, which devised the Polar Code (Koivurova and Shibata, 2023). Political bias, such as boycotting or avoiding engagement with Russian representatives, has forced Russia to withdraw from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea, which recommends quotas for fishing in the North Atlantic (The Fishing Daily, 2024). The Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears continues to operate, and its members even hold video consultations, but some of its work has been curtailed; for example, data on human-bear conflict is no longer exchanged. While the Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation formally survives, cooperation between Russian and other Arctic states’ scientists has largely ended (Rees and Büntgen, 2024).

These trends are likely to continue under the Trump Administration, especially given its climate/environmental policy. During his first term, in 2019, Trump refused to sign the Arctic Council’s declaration, since it mentioned the Paris Agreement, and Mike Pompeo harshly criticized China and Russia at the Council’s ministerial meeting in Rovaniemi (Arctic Council, 2019). International cooperation is likely to become even more fragmented now, especially given the new U.S. administration’s position on environmental and climate issues.

### Extend: “Arctic Disease Not A Threat”

#### Their impact is empirically false

Rachel Mackelprang et al, 2025 - California State University Northridge “Cooling perspectives on the risk of pathogenic viruses from thawing permafrost” ASM Journals mSystems Vol. 10, No. 2 1/8, <https://journals.asm.org/doi/10.1128/msystems.00042-24> //DH

CONCLUSIONS

Currently available data indicate that there is no increased risk of human viral pathogen emergence from permafrost compared to other environmental sources. We do not claim that viral pathogens in permafrost pose zero risk or that surveillance of putative viral pathogens in permafrost is unnecessary. However, there is currently no evidence that human or animal viral pathogens frozen in permafrost pose an imminent disease outbreak threat. Though climate change is accelerating thaw, the entry of microbes from ancient permafrost into the modern environment is not a new phenomenon. Permafrost is continually and naturally exposed to the modern environment by processes such as erosion, cryoturbation, frost heave, solifluction, wildfire, and climate fluctuations (151–153). Humans have been in the Arctic for more than 40,000 years (Alaska up to 25,000 years and Scandinavia ~5,000 to 12,000 years) (154–156). This suggests that people are and have been regularly exposed to viruses from permafrost soils, with no clear evidence for large-scale health consequences.

#### No unique risk of permafrost viruses – soil viruses can’t spread to humans or animals

Rachel Mackelprang et al, 2025 - California State University Northridge “Cooling perspectives on the risk of pathogenic viruses from thawing permafrost” ASM Journals mSystems Vol. 10, No. 2 1/8, <https://journals.asm.org/doi/10.1128/msystems.00042-24> //DH

The theoretical risk posed by permafrost viruses with microbial hosts to human populations can be evaluated by exploring the origin and evolution of pathogenic viruses and examining whether there is precedent for microbial viruses spilling over to humans or animals. Host jumps between closely related species are common at evolutionary timescales; 61% of human pathogens and 75% of emerging human pathogens have zoonotic origins (122). The likelihood of successful host jumping decreases as the phylogenetic distance between hosts increases (123–125). Viruses bind specifically to molecules on the host cell surface, rely on the host’s cellular machinery for replication, and must evade the host’s immune system (126–128). As a result, they are typically highly adapted to specific hosts and can only “work” in hosts with similar molecular pathways (129, 130). Given the large phylogenetic distance between soil microbes and humans, such a shift would be extraordinarily unlikely, if not impossible.

Investigating the origins of human pathogenic viruses shows that microorganisms are not a source of spillovers. The majority of zoonotic viruses (>80%) are from mammals, while the remaining ~20% are primarily from birds (87, 124, 131, 132). Instances of viruses infecting both humans and other vertebrates, such as reptiles, are rare (131, 133, 134). Non-zoonotic viruses, such as papillomaviruses and herpesviruses, which are host specific, offer insights into potential host jumps in the more distant past. For these viruses, the host phylogenetic tree roughly mirrors the viral phylogenetic tree (135–137). For example, human papillomaviruses are most closely related to papillomaviruses with non-human primate hosts, and the phylogenetic distance between viruses increases with evolutionary distance between hosts (136, 138, 139). These evolutionary relationships can largely be attributed to co-speciation between virus and host and occasional instances of interspecies virus transfer (135, 137, 140). However, there is no evidence to support a microbial origin for these viruses (135, 137, 139, 141, 142).

The lack of precedent for microbial viruses jumping to human or animal hosts suggests this scenario is unlikely to arise from thawing permafrost. Humans are constantly exposed to an enormous diversity of viruses from the environment. Viruses are crucial members of all Earth’s ecosystems (143), and soils are perhaps the largest viral reservoir on Earth (144). In some soils, viral abundance can exceed more than one billion per gram, and similar counts are found per gram of human intestinal content (144–146). Billions of viruses can be swallowed during a swim in the sea (147, 148). Despite this constant bombardment, there is no indication that microbe-infecting viruses represent a major disease risk for humans, wildlife, or domestic animals (87). Research, surveillance, and prevention strategies aimed at mitigating the risk and impact of future pandemics do not identify these viruses as potential threats (90, 149, 150). There is no reason to think that viruses from permafrost represent a greater risk for spillover than viruses maintained in other environments such as temperate soils and aquatic systems.

#### Current surveillance solves

Isabella Turilli, 2025 – pursuing an MPhil in International Relations at Oxford University; previously a research associate for global health, economics, and development at the Council on Foreign Relations. Prior to joining CFR, she conducted and published research with the Center for Global Health Science and Security, the Bansal Lab, and as a Fellow with the Global Irish Studies Initiative. “Are Arctic Viruses "Zombies"?” The Arctic Institute, 3/25,

<https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/arctic-viruses-zombies/> //DH

The unexpected rise of an unknown disease

In the 2013 film World War Z, Brad Pitt’s character is stuck in traffic – a gridlock that seems normal until its cause is revealed to be the outbreak of a zombie apocalypse. Within the first ten minutes of the film, the zombies’ rise turns the world upside down. Our inability to predict their resurrection is one of the aspects that makes these viruses so fearsome. In the words of infectious disease researcher Jeremy Farrar, “if you don’t see [it], you will always respond too late.”

But we are already learning how to expect these kinds of viruses. The International Circumpolar Surveillance (ICS) program operates in eight countries, creating a network of hospitals, laboratories, and public health officials that monitor health status and report cases of concern. The program, which started in 1999, is a “successful example of collaborative surveillance,” supplemented by national disease tracking units run by individual member states. The United States, for example, operates the Arctic Investigations Program that coordinates with tribal communities to “evaluate…infectious threats that may be climate sensitive.” These efforts are also supported by the International Health Regulations, a recently-amended treaty that outlines surveillance, notification, and verification steps its 196 member states are bound to follow.

Viruses can only evade detection for so long, and we have a plethora of programs to detect their emergence. In all likelihood, we will avoid “World War Z.”

#### Current treatments can prevent Arctic disease that’s capable to spreading to humans

Valerie Brown, 2024 – science writer based in Oregon. She has covered environmental health, climate, nuclear waste, and microbiology, among other subjects, receiving an explanatory journalism award from the Society of Environmental Journalists “A rising danger in the Arctic” Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 11/25, <https://thebulletin.org/2024/11/a-rising-danger-in-the-arctic-microbes-unleashed-by-climate-change/> //DH

But Paul Hunter, a professor of medicine at the University of East Anglia who has studied Covid and infectious diseases related to extreme weather, is not worried about the viruses that have actually been revived from permafrost because “none of them are human pathogens, they’re all protozoan viruses.” Further, Hunter says, because all the “zombie viruses” that are human pathogens are familiar, if they are revived they can be handled with vaccines and antibiotics. “Currently there’s nothing to suggest there would be something coming out that would be a new disease that would infect humans,” he adds. Much of the viral DNA found in permafrost is degraded, so even if the viruses remain intact, they are unlikely to be infectious.

## Arctic Diplomacy Advantage Answers

### 1NC Arctic Diplomacy Advantage Answers

#### 1. Russia says no to cooperation

JP O’Malley, 2024 – journalist for the Byline Times “Can the West and Russia Co-operate to Save a Melting Arctic?” Byline Times, 9/16,

<https://bylinetimes.com/2024/09/16/can-the-west-and-russia-co-operate-to-save-a-melting-arctic/> //DH

**Jennifer Spence is Project Director of the Arctic Initiative at the Harvard Kennedy School’s Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs**

Jennifer Spence said it was getting increasingly difficult for Western scientists to maintain any kind of relationships with Russian researchers. “There are more restrictions and more concerns about the personal safety of researchers in Russia,” she said. “The Russian government does not want Russian scientists to participate in researcher-to-researcher collaboration with their Western counterparts and so Russian researchers are starting to feel that pressure.”

“There have been some cases of Russian scientists accused of handing over data to foreign partners,” said Anna Morgenstern, “which was previously just considered normal scientific practice.”

#### 2. The Arctic Council fails. Consensus and funding rules limit its reach.

Rachael Lorna Johnstone, 2025 - professor of law at the University of Akureyri, Iceland, and at the University of Greenland. She is a specialist in polar law and international human rights law. “The Arctic Council: Challenges to the “Science” in Science Diplomacy” 4/23, <https://www.unak.is/is/samfelagid/frettasafn/frettir/the-arctic-council-challenges-to-the-science-in-science-diplomacy> //DH

The Arctic Council is currently facing the biggest challenge to its existence in its nearly 30-year history – and things can still get worse. I want to outline some procedural, practical and political roadblocks to its success as a forum for science diplomacy and suggest some alternatives.

The first procedural challenge: The Arctic Council works on a consensus-basis. All eight Arctic State members must accept every project. To put it another way, it is a veto system; any Member State can block any activity or refuse to adopt any report.

The Arctic Council emerged from the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) and has, from the very beginning, been focused primarily on environmental science and increasingly on Indigenous wellbeing. Nearly everything they do is coloured by the reality of anthropogenic climate change.

However, today, one Member State rejects the established climate science; and, moreover, rejects the scientific method as evidenced in rapid changes to healthcare research and public policy. Artificial Intelligence (AI) flagging of trigger words, including “climate change,” “indigenous community,” “equity,” and “gender”, puts at risk many of its central projects, not just the many ostensibly focused on climate research, but also sustainable development activities like the keystone, Icelandic-led, Gender Equality in the Arctic project.

A related practical challenge that is not new but is worsening, is funding capacity. All States have limited funding, but the situation is particularly acute in Russia and is rapidly worsening in the United States: the former because of an expensive war and occupation of Ukraine; the latter owing to political choices to cut science funding and exclude unfavoured topics.

This is worsened by a political challenge: a securitisation of science-funding. Increasing instability in the High North pushes all Arctic States to pivot funding towards hard security topics. Money is redirected to military security and corporate security, away from human and environmental security.

This takes us back to another procedural limitation: the Arctic Council cannot replace this funding with external financing, e.g., from the EU, China or India. All projects must receive at least half of their funding from the eight Arctic States. This is a policy measure to prevent powerful observers with deep pockets from dominating decisions about research priorities. But this means that unless the eight Arctic States can finance a project to at least 50%, it cannot go ahead within the Arctic Council.

A more fundamental political challenge facing the Arctic Council is that for the first time in its history, one Member State is openly calling to annex the territory of another Member State and refusing to rule out the rule of force to achieve its ends. The Kingdom of Denmark will take the chair of the Arctic Council in May 2025. Experienced Greenlandic diplomat Kenneth Høegh will act as Arctic Ambassador and Chair of the Senior Arctic Officials; longstanding politician and current Greenlandic Minister for Foreign Affairs Vivien Motzfeldt will chair the Ministerial meeting. Alongside Greenlander Sara Olsvig, Chair of Inuit Circumpolar Council, they make a formidable team. However, it comes at a time when the Arctic Council is under existential threat. Holding high-level meetings between the Senior Arctic Officials and Indigenous Permanent Participants’ leadership, not to mention the Ministerial meeting, in Greenland or Denmark, will become increasingly difficult. In fact, the May ministerial meeting will be held entirely virtually and not live-streamed. It remains to be seen if the customary declaration will be agreed at this meeting. The 2019 Rovaniemi precedent of stalemate, at which US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo vetoed any declaration that acknowledged climate change, and the other States and Permanent Participants refused to sign a declaration that ignored this reality, does not give cause for hope, at least for a declaration with any meaningful content.

#### 3. Science diplomacy fails and is easily politicized

Tim Flink, 2020 – German Centre of Higher Education and Science Studies (DZHW) and Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin Berlin Germany “The Sensationalist Discourse of Science Diplomacy: A Critical Reflection” The Hague Journal of Diplomacy, 8/5, <https://brill.com/view/journals/hjd/15/3/article-p359_7.xml?language=en> //DH

The narrative of science diplomacy bears on the scenario of a world deteriorating by numerous grand challenges of planetary dimension which national governments are unwilling or unable to tackle. In this Dickensian portrait, science diplomacy promises to (re)install collaboration of actors and reason in international affairs. Amidst defective national egoistic policy-making, scientists and their advocates are portrayed as competent and altruistic saviours that help the world’s society solve its grand challenges and overcome its looming threats.19 The allegedly collaborative attitude of scientific researchers alludes — vaguely and affirmatively as is the entire discourse — to scientific universalism, a central element of Robert K. Merton’s Normative Structure of Science:20 that scientific claims must be assessed by the scientists irrespective of the particulars of those who are claiming, for example, race, gender, academic status, national provenance. It is important to note that scientific universalism is supposed to guide the internal social relations of the science system, and — as trivial as it may sound — that we are dealing with an ought-to norm. However, the discourse on science diplomacy feigns scientific universalism into a version of cosmopolitanism, and pretends that both would de facto constitute the inner life of scientists; that is, those alleged august men that would but only work in a collaborative manner, sharing knowledge and accepting to value truth claims regardless wherefrom. Moreover and according to this discourse, scientists would be brilliant in transferring their knowledge to avert egoistic, uninformed and irrevocably detrimental decisions made by politicians.21 Whether it is a rhetoric strategy, a firm conviction or both, these claims allow for devaluating national politics for having egoistic interests, which would need to be surmounted if cross-border challenges were to be tackled. Correspondingly, the imagined figure of a traditional diplomat is often implicitly used to substantiate that foreign policy making was incapable of grasping complex issues and overcoming national interests. Kristin Lord and Vaughan Turekian, promoters of science diplomacy, even argued that scientists were better diplomats and should ‘maybe even take the lead’ in diplomacy.22 Apart from these sensationalist promises, it is the alleged unpolitical nature of science that gets instrumentalised for political purposes.

The only problem is that such an idealised image of science hardly matches with lifeworld realities, and it does not even need 50 years of the Social Studies of Science to continuously prove that science — just as any other social system — may also contain chauvinism, fierce competition, vanity and reputation games, misconduct and unsavoury entanglements with nefarious business and political interests. To provide only a few examples with regard to its international dimensions, editors of the scientific journal Nature23 recently criticised that researchers and especially reviewers would have increasingly devalued the works of ‘others’ on the basis of national-cultural stereotypes.24 The US Department of Health’s Office for Research Integrity (ORI) even openly accuses and warns against practices of plagiarism that would be common among young scientists from ‘non-Western cultures’ (i.e., Central and Eastern European, Latin American, Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian).25 But also international scientific engagement under the heading of science diplomacy was held ethically problematic, as it also led to parachute science.26

That large parts of the discourse on science diplomacy sensationally portrays scientists as unpolitical, cosmopolitan and truth-seeking collaborators, however, seems not naive but strategic. And yet, the question is whether such raised expectations, as provided by promoters of this discourse, are not greatly overdrawn — and what happens, if they get disappointed?

#### 4. No Arctic war. The invasion of Ukraine increased restraint and crisis stability.

Tormod Heier, 2025 - Norwegian Defence University College, Norway “How the Ukraine War Stopped Arctic Brinkmanship” Arctic Review on Law and Politics

Vol. 16, 2025, pp. 58–80, <https://arcticreview.no/index.php/arctic/article/view/6837/11032> //DH

4. Conclusion

This article discussed why U.S. and Russian forces stopped antagonizing each other on both sides of the Bear Gap. Based on Schelling’s brinkmanship theory, the analysis explored the relationship between military restraints and war avoidance. Plausible explanations of “broader security concerns” and “strategic necessity” were discussed. Which conclusion can be deduced?

The main finding is that brinkmanship ceased because Russia’s invasion in Eastern-Europe made it too dangerous for the two rivals to continue a “tit-for-tat” logic outside Norway. As Europe’s largest war since 1945 unfolded, the United States and Russia could no longer push each other towards the brink of war. In the post-Ukrainian security environment, both nuclear powers accept that inadvertent crises must be mitigated. Fearing the Ukraine war will escalate beyond its borders, both parties have tempered their Arctic saber rattling. As seen from Moscow and Washington D.C., an Arctic salami-tactic aiming to install fear, uncertainty and ultimately coerce the other part to step down in the Norwegian Sea has become irresponsible. The fact that no provocative incidents have been reported on either side of the Bear Gap signifies a tacit cooperation between the two protagonists. U.S. and Russian state leaders stick to a “gentleman’s agreement”. This is not out of sympathy for each other but out of fear, anxiety and a mutual respect for each other’s destructive power.

Paradoxically, therefore, Russia’s failed attempt to rapidly seize Ukraine has led to more Arctic predictability. Russia’s failure to win decisively in Eastern Europe has, in relative terms, led to more crisis stability outside Norway. The General Staff’s military blunder and failed coup d’état in Kyiv has become a regional tranquilizer in one of the most sensitive operational areas on Earth. The finding coincides with conclusions drawn by Kristian Åtland et al., claiming

[…] the dominant pattern of Russia’s sea and air exercises on NATO’s northern flank has changed significantly in the time that has passed since February 2022. Particularly noteworthy is the shift in location […] from the Norwegian Sea to the Barents Sea.83

The finding, however, must not be interpreted as a claim of Arctic peacefulness. Malign subwater activities with attack submarines, underwater drones, and special forces preparing for sabotage against critical infrastructure on the seabed, accelerate.84 This is also the case with numerous civilian research and fishing vessels pursuing covert operations below the threshold of war. Examples are possible sabotage against fiberoptic cables, mapping of gas pipelines, hazardous maneuvers with jetfighters against personnel on oil rigs, reconnaissance on critical objects, electronic jamming of GPS signals, unexpected flows of refugees across borders, or outright provocations to map adversaries’ response time and readiness. These so-called ‘hybrid threats’ are nevertheless less dangerous than nuclear rivals aiming to “manipulate the shared risk of war”. Malign operations below the threshold of war are primarily a law enforcement issue. These challenges belong to the police rather than the military and should primarily be seen as a perennial phenomenon evolving between rivals.85 To Russia in particular, this modus operandi – in crisis short of war – has become the most likely course of action due to Russia’s military inferiority vis-à-vis NATO and the United States. Russia’s secret services, like the FSB, GRU and SVR, is therefore a more useful political instrument than the Northern Fleet or the Leningrad Military District.

Validating the conclusions, my findings coincide with historical accounts. Suggesting that “[…] the potential for conflict or cooperation in the Arctic [is] a consequence of the grand strategies of the great powers and events outside the region”,86 the brinkmanship outside Norway’s coast signify the broader great power rivalry. When tension is reasonably low, as during the malign 2014–2021 period, the Arctic is likely to experience more antagonism and dangerous brinkmanship. This is because the risk of coercive action is seen as strategically acceptable in Moscow and Washington D.C. But as tension increases, such as during the benign 2022–2024 period, restraint is likely to prevail. This is because threat-manipulation is simply too dangerous. Hazardous situations must be avoided so that regional wars in one theater do not spill over into a nuclear armageddon. Arctic brinkmanship, visualized through means of coercion and restraint, thereby fluctuates with the broader U.S.–Russian relationship.

#### 5. Turn – Fragmented governance. US-Russian Arctic cooperation emboldens Russia and divides the Arctic Council

K.M. Seethi, 2025 – Director, Inter University Centre for Social Science Research and Extension, is the Academic Advisor of the International Centre for Polar Studies at Mahatma Gandhi University, Kerala “Polar Realignment: Trump, Putin, and the Future of Arctic Power Politics” The Geopolitics, 3/11, <https://thegeopolitics.com/polar-realignment-trump-putin-and-the-future-of-arctic-power-politics/> //DH

At the same time, NATO-aligned Arctic states—Canada, Norway, Denmark (through Greenland), and Iceland—face the dual challenge of geopolitical marginalization and strategic uncertainty. Trump’s previous disregard for NATO, coupled with his preference for bilateralism over institutional frameworks, leaves these countries in a precarious position. If the U.S. pursues a transactional partnership with Russia, NATO’s role in Arctic security could be significantly undermined.

For instance, Canada and Norway—two pillars of Arctic defence architecture—may find themselves sidelined in major decisions about Arctic resource governance, shipping regulations, and military posturing. Denmark, already rattled by Trump’s Greenland remarks, could face a new reality where its geopolitical relevance is diminished not just by U.S. unilateralism but also by a Russian move toward alternative Arctic alliances. The existing framework of Arctic cooperation through the Arctic Council and various NATO exercises in the High North could suffer serious erosion.

Moreover, such a U.S.-Russia collaboration might embolden Russia to press for revisions of historical agreements, such as the 1920 Spitsbergen Treaty, thereby challenging Norway’s sovereignty over Svalbard. If Trump tacitly supports such moves in exchange for strategic gains elsewhere, it could destabilize the northern European security environment.

As NATO Arctic states reevaluate their positions, they may seek to deepen internal EU-Arctic security cooperation or strengthen trilateral frameworks with like-minded partners such as the UK or Japan. However, without clear support from Washington, their ability to shape Arctic policy and resist Russian strategic advances will be considerably weakened.

Conceivably, a Trump-Putin axis in the Arctic could create a three-tiered polar order: U.S.-Russia as primary actors, China in a recalibrating secondary role, and NATO Arctic states grappling with diminished strategic influence. The resulting fragmentation of Arctic governance would mark a historic rupture in how the region has been managed for decades—replacing cooperative multilateralism with flexible power alignments and hard-edged competition.

Conclusion

The Arctic is witnessing a new realignment of geopolitical forces. Donald Trump’s return to the White House, coupled with growing U.S.-Russia engagement, is reshaping the region’s geopolitical setting. What began as diplomatic overtures in Riyadh could now catalyse the decline of multilateral Arctic governance.

A new bilateral axis between Washington and Moscow may sideline existing frameworks like the Arctic Council, while elevating resource-driven partnerships. China, once gaining ground through Arctic investments, could find its influence constrained. NATO-aligned Arctic states such as Canada, Norway, and Denmark face growing marginalization, especially as Trump’s approach weakens collective Western leverage.

The result may be a fragmented Arctic order—driven more by great power bargaining than consensus-building. Whether this represents a lasting shift or a temporary realignment, its impact will stretch beyond the polar circle—reshaping global power equations and testing the depth of cooperative governance norms.

### Extend: “Russia Says No”

#### Russian authoritarianism blocks meaningful data sharing

Mia Bennett, 2025 - is an associate professor in the University of Washington's Department of Geography. She researches the politics of infrastructure development in the Arctic by combining fieldwork and critical remote sensing. “US Arctic research faces “existential threat”” Cryopolitics, 2/22, <https://www.cryopolitics.com/2025/02/22/us-arctic-research-faces-existential-threat/> //DH

US-Russia peace talks: What consequences for Arctic research?

While gathered around a table at the University of Washington Arctic research networking event, I asked one colleague originally from Russia what they thought the US-Russia “peace” talks ongoing in Saudi Arabia might spell for Arctic research. They noted that a resolution to the war in Ukraine under the current circumstances would prove devastating to freedom of speech, academia, and civil society in Russia. Trump, they said, was completely vindicating Putin. Russian news networks now show clips from Fox TV that exonerate the Russian war criminal. Should the war end, his grip on domestic society will only tighten. With so many of their young men dying on the battlefield, Russians badly need and want the fight to have been a worthy one.

US researchers might technically be able to return to Russia if relations are “normalized.” They may even be able to use their Visa and Mastercards during their travels, because that’s precisely what hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians and Russians have died for. Priceless sacrifices, indeed.

But my colleague emphasized that many American universities would likely still not permit sponsored travel to Russia, making it impossible to go as part of a funded and insured work trip. While Russian archives are open, it’s not safe to access them since the Kremlin has deemed any research that is even remotely critical a danger to the state. Russian researchers, too, often fear any form of communication with foreigners, let alone collaboration, lest they be seen as colluding with the enemy.

The environment for academic freedom in Russia is lethal. Researchers, journalists, and activists face jail time for any misstep. Their counterparts in the US do not face these sort of threats. Yet they are reckoning with loss of livelihood, meaning, and public acceptance. This means that Arctic research in not just one major Arctic state, but two, risks annihilation.

#### Russia’s interest in the Arctic is exclusively economic – which means it won’t return to the Arctic Council

Nicholas Parlato et al, 2024 - interdisciplinary PhD candidate at University of Alaska Fairbanks, studying marine and coastal resource governance in the North Pacific-Arctic region “The “Bear” in the Room: How do we prepare for the future with Russia?” University of Arctic, 11/20, <https://www.uarctic.org/news/2024/11/the-bear-in-the-room-how-do-we-prepare-for-the-future-with-russia/> //DH

Another issue that was raised was the question of incentive or motivation for Russia to “rejoin” the Arctic community, especially as discourse at the Arctic Circle Assembly increasingly used the language of “Arctic Seven” and “like-minded Arctic nations”. Russia’s focus on the economic development of their own Arctic Zone had historically, in the Arctic Council and elsewhere, overshadowed any shared commitments to environmental conservation or Indigenous community well-being. With the current slate of sanctions and mutual hostility, Russia’s potential incentive for returning to the Arctic Council table at full scale is dampened by its participation at multiple other “tables”, including the BRICS+ coalition, where its sovereign national agenda faces little-to-no opposition.

#### Russia restricts its scientists from sharing data

Nicholas Parlato et al, 2024 - interdisciplinary PhD candidate at University of Alaska Fairbanks, studying marine and coastal resource governance in the North Pacific-Arctic region “The “Bear” in the Room: How do we prepare for the future with Russia?” University of Arctic, 11/20, <https://www.uarctic.org/news/2024/11/the-bear-in-the-room-how-do-we-prepare-for-the-future-with-russia/> //DH

One of the worrying signs that some academics shared is the exclusion of Russia and the Russian Arctic from the western research agenda, as non-security-related research will likely diminish in importance and fundability. Identified were the deeply challenging fieldwork conditions in Russia for non-Russian scientists, who could face dramatic consequences for relatively insubstantial reasons, and Russian scientists, who face oppressive review and restrictions over publishing results related to the Russian Arctic, even those evincing low levels of sensitivity at a national security level. Whether research on Russia continues to receive support from Western scientific funding and policy bodies remains to be seen, but the near-impossibility of conducting fieldwork for many may drive a shift in research and funding priorities.

#### Putin pays lip service to cooperation only for economic purposes – not meaningful research

Meduza, 2025 - a Russian- and English-language independent news website, headquartered in Riga, Latvia. Article interviews Illa Shumanov, the director of the Arctida project, non-profit organization focused on analysis and investigation within the Russian Arctic, and Arild Moe, Senior Research Fellow at the Fridtjof Nansen Institute (Norway). “Breaking the ice As the U.S. and Russia tease Arctic cooperation, climate science could offer common ground — but neither side seems interested” 4/22,

<https://meduza.io/en/feature/2025/04/22/breaking-the-ice> //DH

Though Russia’s real approach to the environment may tell a different story, Putin did devote time to climate concerns in the same speech — albeit only after blaming the West for the breakdown in cooperation. He spoke of preserving the Arctic’s “unique natural environment,” called for “environmentally friendly technologies,” and proposed a new research center to monitor the effects of climate change — not to curb them, but to guide infrastructure planning.

The Trump administration, meanwhile, for all its talk about the Arctic’s strategic importance, has slashed funding for NOAA and other agencies with Arctic research programs — and made broader cuts to climate science. That research isn’t just about protecting the environment; it also provides critical information for operating in it, like sea ice forecasts. “In the shorter term [the cuts] may not have such very clear effects,” Moe told Meduza. “But it’s a long-term problem — the administration is cutting off the possibility for long-term involvement and investments.”

Indeed, while politically the environment might be the easiest arena for the U.S. and Russia to revive Arctic cooperation, it’s not clear that either administration actually plans to start prioritizing it.

### Extend: “Arctic Council Fails”

#### Trump makes Arctic Council collapse inevitable

Rob Huebert, 2025 - professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Calgary. He also is the interim director of the Centre for Military, Security and Strategic Studies. “Can the Arctic Council survive the Trump administration? Probably not. Here’s why” Arctic Today, 3/3,

<https://www.arctictoday.com/can-the-arctic-council-survive-the-trump-administration-probably-not-heres-why/> //DH

The havoc caused by the new American administration has been devastating on a wide range of fronts. We are quite possibly witnessing the end of the western rules-based international order that has lasted since the end of World War II.

While Trump’s attention hasn’t yet shifted to the Arctic Council, it should be apparent to all that this is just a matter of time. When he does, the outcomes will be devastating. He will probably take three steps that will combine to either gut the key works of the Council, or possibly end it altogether.

First, Trump’s elimination of international aid demonstrates his policy of selfish isolationism. His decision to stop much of the assistance provided under the USAID program shows that he has no inclination to understand the benefits of a cooperative multilateral system, or a desire to continue a policy that every U.S. president since Kennedy has supported.

In addition, he has openly criticized NATO and the ICC, along with many of the U.S. economic agreements with other nations. In both his first term and now his second, Trump has shown a clear lack of support for international organizations and multilateral agreements. Specifically, he seems intent on either ending American participation or upending the agreements solely for American benefit.

Trump has already demonstrated that even if he doesn’t withdraw from the Arctic Council, he would actively gut some of the most important achievements in line with his own goals. First, he doesn’t “believe” in climate change. During Trump’s first term, the Arctic Council ministerial meeting in Rovaniemi in 2019 failed to produce a final declaration for the first time since the organization was created. This was because the U.S. delegation – under the leadership of Secretary of States Mike Pompeo – objected to the term “climate change” or any reference to the Paris Accord. There is nothing to suggest that the American position on climate change will be altered. If anything, it will probably get more strident.

Reshaping Society

Trump has also moved quickly to end American programs that are in any way associated with the issues surrounding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). It is highly unlikely that as part of this process to reshape American society, his administration would support any of the important initiatives supporting the northern Indigenous Peoples under the Arctic Council. His administration has had no qualms about ending the support that the U.S. had provided to the developing world, so he will almost certainly be unwilling to continue to provide any support of the Permanent Participants or any of the Arctic Council programs that support them.

Third, Trump has directly attacked two of the core state members of the Arctic Council. Since his second term began, he has repeatedly threatened to “take over” both Greenland and Canada. While some at first thought he was just joking, Trump has continued to say that these are his intentions. He has begun to take active steps, through the threats of a trade war to critically weaken Canada in order to make it more amendable to “joining” the U.S. Again, even if he doesn’t move to directly destroy the Arctic Council, how could Canada and Denmark work with the U.S., knowing that the Americans are actively moving to weaken or even cripple them as a state?

Fourth, the one Arctic state that Trump has attempted to improve relations with – Russia – remains also problematic for the Arctic Council. Trump’s effort to work with Russia will make the existing issues that the Arctic Council had with Russia even more difficult. Trump has already called for the Russians to be readmitted to the G-7. If he doesn’t move to end the Arctic Council, he will undoubtedly call for any sanctions against Russia to be eliminated and for the country to be fully integrated.

At the same time he is actively moving to directly be involved in assisting Russia to complete its conquest of Ukraine. In a move that is reminiscent of the conquest of Czechoslovakia through the capitulation of the U.K. and France to Germany in 1938, Trump has begun direct negotiations with Russia without the involvement of the Ukrainians. Putin now knows that it has the support of Trump.

As a result, there is every reason to believe that Russia will continue with its acts of aggression against its neighbours. This includes both Sweden and Finland, who both chose to join NATO. Putin has always made it clear that it was the possibility of Ukraine joining NATO that was one of the reasons for his decision to launch his war of aggression against Ukraine in 2014.

Scorched Earth Policy

Ultimately, this means that the Arctic Council now faces two terrible scenarios. The first is that in his scorched earth policy toward multilateralism, Trump will either move to end the Arctic Council or at least remove the U.S. as a member. He may also carry out his threat to ensure that both Canada and Denmark also cease to be meaningful members of the Arctic Council. If he truly does intend to take over Canada, it won’t even be a state. Even if he only means to weaken and reduce Canada to a vassal state, its ability to participate will be damaged – if not eliminated.

Likewise, if the U.S. takes over Greenland, Denmark’s main rational for being a member of the Arctic Council will be eliminated. Assuming that somehow the Arctic Council survives an American withdrawal, and the U.S. follows up its threats to control Greenland and Canada, the Council would have only the active membership of Finland, Sweden, Norway and Iceland.

Even if the U.S. remains in the Arctic Council, its current actions means the gutting of some of its most important missions, The U.S. won’t support actions to eliminate the causes of climate change, and it is very unlikely to support the Permanent Participants. Outside of the Council, perhaps the Coast Guard forum will continue. But even here Trump is having an impact. He has already fired Admiral Linda Pagan, the Commandant of the USCG. American officials have suggested it was because of her commitment to DEI policies.

Even more dangerously, this variant of the Arctic Council would include a U.S. whose policies are now at complete odds with the previous actions of the Arctic Council. It would also include a Denmark that has either lost Greenland to the U.S. or will need to take action to prevent this. It will include a Canada that is being continually weakened by American action, and is either actively trying to stop an American takeover or has become a vassal state to the U.S. It will also include a Russia that is being increasingly supported by the U.S. and has been given the right of conquest over Ukraine. Furthermore, if Ukraine was conquered for considering joining NATO, the future of both Finland and Sweden (which did actually join NATO) will undoubtedly be even more problematic for Russia.

These are dire times for the Arctic Council. It is hard to think of a way to maintain its many successes in supporting an understanding of the impact of climate change on the Arctic. It has also played an important role in supporting a greater awareness of the northern Indigenous Peoples in the region. And perhaps most importantly, it has served as the principal means of promoting a peaceful and harmonious international regime of cooperation.

All of this is now at risk. Perhaps Trump won’t think that the Arctic Council is worth his attention, and it can somehow remain under the American radar until the next presidential election. But as many have said in the past, hope is not a strategy.

#### Trump will kill the Arctic Council

Arne O. Holm, 2025 – editor-in-chief, High North News “The Arctic Council: On the Brink of Collapse or Still a Hope for Cooperation?” High North News, 5/9

<https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/arctic-council-brink-collapse-or-still-hope-cooperation> //DH

During the two years Norway has led the Arctic Council work, a new enemy of international cooperation has appeared. Donald Trump.

He has also used the past few days to light a fuse under that cooperation.

The other day, he reiterated the message of considering using military power to take Greenland from Denmark. When Denmark takes the chairship, it also takes the chairship over a nation that directly threatens its national borders.

Threatens own members

However, Trump is not content with threatening just one of the member countries. Canada was also told a few days ago that the country should cease to be an independent nation and be incorporated as a US state

The ambitions, if I can use such a mild expression about Trump's absurd megalomania, are strongly condemned by both Canada and Denmark.

However, Trump's obstacles to Arctic cooperation extend further than that. Under the Danish chairship, two policy areas in particular are highlighted: climate and indigenous peoples. This is emphasized precisely by Greenland's special position in the Danish leadership.

One would have serious problems rubbing sleep out of one's eyes to not have discovered that these are two topics that Trump is intensely opposed to, in addition to a general opposition to international organizations.

Therefore, the chance that the Arctic Council will collapse in the next two years is imminent.

#### US pressure on Greenland is undermining the Arctic Council

Anna Ivanova, 2025 - is a Research Assistant at The Arctic Institute. “After Norway, What's Next? The Kingdom of Denmark and the Arctic Council's Future” 5/8, <https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/after-norway-whats-next-kingdom-of-denmark-arctic-councils-future/> //DH

In recent months, the Danish Presidency of the Arctic Council has been challenged by the new US position on the Arctic, Greenland and Europe. President Donald Trump’s continued provocative statements regarding the potential transfer of Greenland to US control have heightened political tensions. However, neither the Kingdom of Denmark as a whole nor Greenland itself has supported these assertions. In April 2025, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen made an official visit to Nuuk, where she, together with Greenland’s acting head of government Múte Bourup Egede and newly elected head of government Jens-Frederik Nielsen issued a statement rejecting any external claims. This joint statement demonstrates unity within the Danish Realm in the face of external pressure.

The United States views Greenland as a strategically important territory for its missile defense and Arctic surveillance system, especially in the context of the development of the Pituffik base. This is related to the US strategic pressure on the Kingdom. Denmark’s response has been to strengthen its position in the Arctic while avoiding direct confrontation with the United States, supporting Greenland’s right to self-determination, and strengthening its defense to protect its interests in the region. However, growing pressure from the US is undermining the Kingdom’s diplomatic control over the Arctic agenda and is contributing to the decline of the Arctic Council’s influence as a platform for regional cooperation.

### Extend: “Science Diplomacy Fails”

#### Science diplomacy is political window-dressing incapable of addressing geopolitical conflict

Tim Flink, 2022 – German Centre of Higher Education and Science Studies (DZHW) and Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin Berlin Germany “Taking the pulse of science diplomacy and developing practices of valuation” Science and Public Policy, Volume 49, Issue 2, April 2022, Pages 191–200 <https://academic.oup.com/spp/article/49/2/191/6430235?login=false> //DH

**STI = Science, Technology and Innovation; HE = Higher Education**

For about twenty years, various governments of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development world have engaged in the discourse on science diplomacy (Berg 2010; Flink and Schreiterer 2010; Ruffini 2020a; Schütte 2008; Yakushiji 2009).1 In the USA, to provide a prominent example, the public discourse of science diplomacy meant converting the positive reputation of science into soft power, as it was supposed to be exerted on societies abroad (Nye 2008), in particular to rehabilitate the US image that had been squandered by the Bush administration’s previous approach to foreign affairs (Bollyky and Bollyky 2012; Gerges 2013). Thus, science diplomacy in the USA was mainly translated into an image campaign and into influencing activities.2 For other states, science diplomacy was rather about marketing and branding their own STI and HE institutions internationally and—with it—yielding partnerships for bilateral and multilateral funding (mostly projects but also institutes and big research infrastructures) or attracting attention and foreign direct investment as well as overseas student (for empirical and comparative research, see Flink and Schreiterer 2010).

In these regards, governments started to reorganize their staff and programmes in the name of science diplomacy and by reframing existing actions according to the promises of this new discourse. Or at least policymakers and science funding managers from many states enjoyed that accustomed STI and HE activities gained more weight in lieu of the new discourse, and so it made perfect sense to some actors, especially HE-exchange as well as STI-performing and STI-funding organizations, that their marketing and branding activities received the additional label of science diplomacy (Flink and Schreiterer 2010; Epping 2020; Raev 2020).

In addition, following the Lisbon Treaty of 2009 and the European Union (EU)’s strategy towards consolidating its foreign policy (Misiroli 2010), the European Commission’s Directorate General for Research and Innovation (DG Research) and the then newly founded European External Action Service (EEAS) as the EU’s diplomatic corps also realized that aligning STI and foreign policy actions had much strategic potential on offer (Flink and Rüffin 2019; Rüffin 2020): to win partners for the tackling of grand challenges and co-organizing complex and costly scientific undertakings together with the EU member states or to show coherence against other powerful states and regions in what seems to constitute a new multipolar and tensioned world order.

After the public discourse on science diplomacy was initiated, science diplomacy has arguably been stabilized by an ensemble of dedicated projects, organizations, and individual scholars as well as science managers.3 These have been fostering awareness-raising and training activities via symposia, open days, workshops, scholars-in-residence programmes as well as face-to-face and online trainings. In addition, these actors succeeded in plateauing a discourse on science diplomacy via numerous case studies, publications and dedicated communication media as well as definitional work, coming rather from the realm of STI and HE policy than from foreign politics (Flink 2020; Ruffini 2020a; Rungius and Flink 2020).

In the light of these sustained activities, now running for about fifteen years by explicit reference to the concept, science diplomacy has made it astonishingly far. However, as will be argued in this article, the reformative powers of the concept are likely to exhaust if actors remain on their current course. First, the inflationary use of science diplomacy will kick it into the long grass, i.e. the more it gets applied, the more it will dissolve into an anything-goes formula, mainly serving political window-dressing activities. Second, despite its stupendous campaigning and marketing of feel-good topics by charismatic and enthusiastic actors, science diplomacy is missing essential issues of STI and foreign affairs. In this regard, the public discourse with its campaigning for science diplomacy is decoupling from the actual actions of science diplomacy carried out by governmental actors, the latter of whom have to deal with more concrete geopolitical issues that hardly need specific marketing.

#### Science diplomacy fails when collaborating with authoritarian states who use it to legitimize their actions and subvert science

Tim Flink, 2022 – German Centre of Higher Education and Science Studies (DZHW) and Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin Berlin Germany “Taking the pulse of science diplomacy and developing practices of valuation” Science and Public Policy, Volume 49, Issue 2, April 2022, Pages 191–200 <https://academic.oup.com/spp/article/49/2/191/6430235?login=false> //DH

**STI = Science, Technology and Innovation; HE = Higher Education**

Science diplomacy, as was argued, will lose conceptual strength if advocates keep revving up their marketing engines and expand the scope and ambit of the concept, such as for promising an alleged empowering of the Global South or for using it as a means of expressing increased relevance of science education in both domestic and international politics. Too many promises in the name of science diplomacy cannot be lived up to anymore, neither by actors of the science system nor by actors from the political system (Flink 2020; Penca 2018; Rungius and Flink 2020). To provide a bold example: if science diplomacy was taken seriously according to the normative principles that its proponents have laid out, for example, in the Madrid Declaration on Science Diplomacy (2019), many bilateral and multilateral STI funding initiatives would have to be stopped instantly, as some of the involved parties disrespect liberal democratic and scientific norms (Tang 2019).9 In addition, it is more than doubtful that collaborations with systematically fraudulent scientific actors, authoritarian states or dubious private companies are successful acts of science diplomacy, let alone that these actions would transplant august scientific or liberal democratic values into these actors. Rather, they seem to be perilous Faustian bargains (Tiffert 2020; see also Flink 2020). One should not forget that normatively stylized concepts, such as science diplomacy, can get easily used by non-democratic and dubious corporate actors for reasons of front-stage talk, i.e. to seize public legitimacy, to spread disinformation and whitewash actions. For example, on 20 April 2021, the international magazine Foreign Policy wanted to invite to a ‘virtual dialogue on science diplomacy’, but as it turned out, the tobacco company Philip Morris had intended to sponsor the event and to send its international vice president of strategic and scientific communications on the panel who describes her job as ‘to translate the robust science behind the company smoke-free alternatives into information policymakers and the public can easily understand’.10 While the science diplomacy community immediately reacted to the event and put this liaison of a journal and a tobacco company to shame until the event was cancelled, one can also argue that it had been the massive expansion of the concept of science diplomacy in the first place that paves the way for such dubious actors. In particular, this is possible when agenda setting uses topics that turn out to be popular anyway: calling for international collaborations among enthusiastic scientists, philanthropists and responsible policymakers as well as STI managers might not need an extra motivation in the name of science diplomacy, while it is unclear if implementing science advice mechanisms in foreign policy relies much on the public discourse about science diplomacy.

### Extend: “No Arctic War”

#### Strict rules of engagement and force deployment limits prevent miscalculation

Tormod Heier, 2025 - Norwegian Defence University College, Norway “How the Ukraine War Stopped Arctic Brinkmanship” Arctic Review on Law and Politics

Vol. 16, 2025, pp. 58–80, <https://arcticreview.no/index.php/arctic/article/view/6837/11032> //DH

Hence, as U.S. and Russian forces tacitly agree to maintain a subtle sense of crisis stability in the Norwegian Sea, defined as an absence of mutual provocations, the rivals nevertheless need to display presence and agility. But contrary to the malign 2015–2021 period, post-2022 deployments are more tempered. Cautiously confined to mutually exclusive zones of operations, Russian NOTAMs are absent in the Norwegian Sea while U.S. maritime task groups are absent in the Barents Sea. Abstaining from provocative exercises also means that the two adversaries pursue a stricter rule of engagement. Careful not to invoke an Arctic escalatory “tit-for-tat” logic, this “gentleman’s agreement” can be interpreted as a sort of tacit cooperation. It allows state leaders and military commanders to buy time in case of unintended accidents. In the post-Ukrainian environment, technical or human errors close to Russia’s second-strike capabilities on the Kola Peninsula should be avoided. The operative restraints thereby provide the two opponents with more room for maneuver. If tension inadvertently spirals out of control, U.S. and Russian defense officials are allowed to calm down, communicate, and clarify misperceptions or misunderstandings. Paradoxically, therefore, Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine has contributed to a sense of Arctic predictability; a sense of crisis stability where both rivals are tied to a common interest of war avoidance.

#### Russia’s military posture in the Arctic is for deterrence only. Both sides are exercising restraint, with no risk of miscalculation

Karsten Friis, 2025 – Senior Research Fellow at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), Oslo “Arctic Spillover? Military Signalling in the European Arctic Before and After the Full-Scale Invasion of Ukraine” Scandinavian Journal of Military Studies, <https://sjms.nu/articles/10.31374/sjms.375> //DH

**Italics in original**

Conclusion

Military capacity, in terms of available systems and firepower, indicates a state’s ability to defend itself or use force to achieve its political objectives. Thus, changes in this capacity –through rearmament or disarmament, for instance – offers a basic indication of the corresponding change in ability. As this article has argued, however, a state’s level of military activity provides an equally significant indicator of its force posture. Military activity in the European Arctic, as elsewhere, has a double function: first, to train and enhance force capabilities, and, second, to signal capacity and intent to others. Signalling as a form of political communication may indicate resolve and deterrence, with anomalies or changes in military activity a good basis upon which to infer new signals. Here, it is important to acknowledge that while such changes may imply a political signal, it should not be assumed always to be the case. To this end, the article has set out empirical data regarding military capacity and activity in the European Arctic prior to and following Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, thereby providing a rough overview of both Russian and Western military activity during this period.

The data indicate that Russian military *capacity* in the European Arctic has gradually increased since about 2008. While the number of weapons platforms is not comparable to Cold War figures, today’s systems are far more capable and lethal, which largely compensates for the reduction in vessels and aircrafts. The war in Ukraine does not appear to have significantly impacted this modernization programme, as Russian activity in the European Arctic has neither increased nor intensified since 2022. Land forces, however, have been significantly reduced, which may account for the cancellation of Zapad in 2023. Air and sea forces operate more or less as before, although the total number of exercises may have been reduced. Even so, Russia continues to use the Arctic for weapons testing and maritime activity, with no indication the Kremlin considers the region to be of lesser strategic importance than before. Russia’s general deterrence posture thus remains unchanged.

Western military capacity increased significantly with Finland’s and Sweden’s incorporation into NATO. While the alliance does now represent a far more diverse military challenge to Russia as a consequence, the Nordic states possess little in the way of offensive military capacities, such as cruise missiles, and the land forces close to Kola are comparatively small. It is therefore primarily through airpower that the Nordics can signal deterrence towards Russia.

Non-Nordic Western activity and presence in the European Arctic have also increased. This began in 2019–20, from a situation of almost no presence, and increased again after 2022. Again, however, this activity is relatively limited. While the deployment of both U.S. and British carrier groups and the BTF to the north must be regarded as strong military signalling of extended deterrence, this activity was initiated before 2022. Western forces also appear to have shown restraint when it comes to displaying military force in the proximity of the Russian border or in the Barents Sea.

Importantly, there have been few reports of incidents or improper operational behaviour involving Russian aircraft or vessels from either side during this period. Compared to the Black Sea, Baltic Sea and other places, where several incidents of alleged “rogue behaviour” have been reported, the conduct of mil-to-mil relations in the European Arctic is apparently routine and professional, including after 2022. Ongoing signalling through military activity appears to be carefully calibrated by both sides to avoid potential incidents.

In short, whereas increased political tensions between Russia and the West have had a profound negative political, economic, social and scientific impact on Arctic governance and cooperation, this is arguably less the case for the military sphere, where day-to-day business remains largely unchanged.

#### Russia and China lack the capability to initiate military operations in the Arctic

Alex Little, 2024 - Alex Little is an M.S. graduate of Georgia Tech and specializes in Russian and Central Asian affairs. “NATO’s Arctic Strategy Is an Overreaction” The American Conservative, 4/26, <https://www.theamericanconservative.com/natos-arctic-strategy-is-an-overreaction/> //DH

Despite its increased operations in the region over the past few years, Russia’s ability to mount an Arctic offensive is negligible as it remains entrenched in the quagmire that is the Russo-Ukrainian War. Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine has been mired with various failures and shortcomings, including poor planning and running out of necessary supplies. Shortages have become enough of an issue for Moscow to resort to increased cooperation with pariah states, such as North Korea, to attain necessary equipment.

Regarding China, Beijing’s interest in the Arctic beyond economic endeavors is minimal. China’s main preoccupation has consistently been the Taiwan Strait, as Beijing has used various coercive tactics short of armed conflict aimed at wearing down Taiwan to capitulate to its aim of unification with the island. Military activity in the Arctic would rank extremely lowly in importance regarding Beijing’s military initiatives.

#### Lack of territorial disputes means no trigger point for war

Anna Valberg, 2024 – head of communications for the Fridtjof Nansen Institute “War in the Arctic? Researchers debunk three myths about the High North” 1/24, <https://partner.sciencenorway.no/arctic-climate-conflict/war-in-the-arctic-researchers-debunk-three-myths-about-the-high-north/2314629#:~:text=As%20the%20Arctic%20becomes%20more,in%20the%20North%20will%20occur.&text=But%20%C3%98sthagen%20clarifies%20that%2C%20unlike,no%20disputes%20over%20Arctic%20borders>. //DH

**Andreas Østhagen = senior researcher at the Fridtjof Nansen Institute who studies Arctic geopolitics**

Myth 1: The possibility of war in the Arctic

Østhagen, addressing the misconception of imminent war in the Arctic, explains that the conditions in the Arctic are often more stable and transparent than many assume.

Conflict is not easily triggered, considering the vast areas and diverse countries involved. Østhagen emphasises the enormity of the Arctic, which encompasses eight countries, four million people, and extensive ocean areas. The countries include Russia, the Nordic states, the USA, and Canada.

He notes that the significant Russian presence – with almost half of the Arctic landmass under Russian control – influences perceptions of geopolitics in the North.

Iver B. Neumann, a Russia researcher and director at the FNI, concurs that the Arctic is less likely to witness armed conflict than other global locations.

He believes the primary driver for military conflict in the Arctic is Russia's use of Murmansk as a base for nuclear weapons.

“There are three main ways to keep such weapons mobile: in aircraft, on land by rail, and at sea on submarines. Where such submarines exist, as in Murmansk, there is also significant military attention. And where there is military attention, there is also the potential for conflict,” he says.

Neumann advises caution in responding to Russia's desire for global attention and military control, stressing the importance of Norway maintaining a cool head, enforcing sovereignty, and not succumbing to intimidation.

Myth 2: Unresolved borders and a race for resources

As the Arctic becomes more accessible due to melting sea ice because of climate change, a common myth suggests a scramble for resources and land in the North will occur.

But Østhagen clarifies that, unlike in other parts of the world, there are almost no disputes over Arctic borders.

“All the borders are settled,” he says, noting that the last conflict between Canada and Greenland was resolved in 2022.

Maritime boundaries are key for resource management and potential conflict. Law of the sea grants coastal states sovereign rights for resource exploitation in their economic zones.

In the Arctic, only one maritime boundary remains unresolve. It is between the USA and Canada – two close allies.

Østhagen, who wrote his PhD on maritime disputes, foresees no major concerns regarding sovereignty or territorial issues. He believes the myth persists due to historical reasons but emphasises that, with all the land borders settled and just one disputed sea border, Arctic resources are already distributed among the eight Arctic states.

### Extend: “Fragmented Governance Turn”

#### Cooperation with Russia will collapse the Arctic Council – Trump and Putin will sideline Europe

K.M. Seethi, 2025 – Director, Inter University Centre for Social Science Research and Extension, is the Academic Advisor of the International Centre for Polar Studies at Mahatma Gandhi University, Kerala “Polar Realignment: Trump, Putin, and the Future of Arctic Power Politics” The Geopolitics, 3/11, <https://thegeopolitics.com/polar-realignment-trump-putin-and-the-future-of-arctic-power-politics/> //DH

**Spitsbergen Treaty gave Norway sovereignty over Svalbarg**

The Arctic Council, established in 1996 to coordinate peaceful cooperation among Arctic states (A8), now stands at a critical juncture. Russia’s 2022 invasion of Ukraine already suspended much of its work. Now, with Trump’s possible withdrawal from international institutions, the very foundation of circumpolar cooperation is at risk.

This emerging U.S.-Russia rapprochement could render the Arctic Council obsolete, marginalize smaller Arctic nations, and destabilize existing legal frameworks like the Central Arctic Ocean fisheries agreement and the Spitsbergen Treaty. The result could be a new Arctic order, governed not by collective interests and environmental norms but by hard power politics and economic extraction.

Europe, especially Denmark and Norway, risks being sidelined. If Trump supports a revision of the Spitsbergen Treaty or pushes forward on Greenland, it would fragment existing Arctic legal architecture. Indigenous communities—often champions of environmental stewardship and cultural autonomy—may find their voices drowned in a race for resources.

Meanwhile, climate science and biodiversity preservation—hallmarks of previous Arctic cooperation—are likely to be casualties of a transactional geopolitics that privileges fossil fuel extraction over environmental integrity. As Arctic ice melts and new shipping lanes open, the region will become a new axis of rivalry and contestation.

#### Russian cooperation is cover to justify increasing militarization and drive a wedge between the US and other Arctic states

Gabriella Gricius, 2025 – PhD Candidate at Colorado State University, a Research Fellow and the Media Coordinator for the North American and Arctic Defence and Security Network (NAADSN), and a Research Associate at the Arctic Institute. “Russia’s Double Game in Arctic is Cooperation in Name, but Confrontation in Practice” Eurasia Daily Monitor, 4/7, <https://jamestown.org/program/russias-double-game-in-arctic-is-cooperation-in-name-but-confrontation-in-practice/> //DH

Executive Summary:

* Moscow portrays itself as a constructive actor advocating for economic cooperation in the Arctic and Baltic seas while also conducting an increasing rate of hybrid attacks and engaging in provocative discourse.
* This double game of cooperation has long marked the Kremlin’s Arctic agenda, but recent months have seen an increase in this strategy of engagement and expanded Arctic militarization.
* Russia’s dual strategy of confrontation and cooperation in the Arctic seeks to exploit divisions among Western allies while portraying their actions as provocations, forcing Arctic states to navigate a delicate balance in their responses.

The Russian-hosted International Arctic Forum (IAF) held on March 26–27 painted a vision of Russia as a responsible and constructive Arctic player. The high-profile event included Russian President Vladimir Putin as a speaker and framed the Arctic as a region for cooperation between both Arctic and non-Arctic states. During his speech, Putin claimed that Russia has “advocated and continues to advocate for equal cooperation in the region” and that “unfortunately, international cooperation in the northern latitudes is currently going through difficult times” as “many Western countries have taken a confrontational course” (Forum Arctica, March 27). This image of Russia seeking cooperation in the region, however, is belied by an increasing military buildup in the Baltic and Arctic, as evidenced by exercises and provocative language (DIIS, February 14). While this two-pronged approach is not new, Russia has been intensifying its Arctic military operations in recent months, while continuing to maintain a rhetorical commitment to peace and cooperation in the region (see EDM, March 31). Responding to this approach is difficult as Western states must acknowledge that responding militarily to Russia’s Arctic strategy risks legitimizing Moscow’s narratives of Western aggression and expansion into the Arctic, which in turn could fuel Russian disinformation that is meant to weaken alliances across the other Arctic states (Topwar.ru, April 3).

During his speech at the IAF, Putin announced that “the number of [Russian] military personnel [in the region] will be increased” in accordance with the annual federal budget, to strengthen Russia’s military presence in the Arctic (see EDM, October 3, 2024; President of Russia, March 27). This buildup is part of a pattern of expanded Russian military presence in the Baltic Sea and Arctic region (High North News, August 20, 2024). Hybrid attacks are growing more prevalent since Russia’s 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine, including rising hybrid attacks on undersea cables (European Leadership Network, December 8, 2023; see EDM, February 5). While military exercises in the Barents Sea are not necessarily increasing in quantity, it is notable that exercises now include military personnel who have served in Ukraine (The Barents Observer, March 18). Russia is also upgrading its submarine capabilities, with Putin recently officiating a ceremony launching the multi-role Perm nuclear-powered submarine, part of the Project 885/885M Yasen class (see EDM, March 31). The Perm has a dual hunter-killer role as well as the ability to vertically launch cruise missiles (President of Russia, March 27; The Barents Observer, March 28). It is the first Project 885M submarine to carry Zircon hypersonic cruise missiles, which reportedly carry a 300-kilogram warhead originally designed to be an anti-ship missile but has been used against Ukrainian cities in Russia’s war against Ukraine (Kyiv Independent, March 30, 2024).

Russia’s military build-up is reinforced by the narrative that the United States is an aggressive actor in the Arctic and that Russia is merely responding to imperialist behavior. This is evident in Putin’s responses to U.S. President Donald Trump’s recent rhetoric regarding the purchase of Greenland (see EDM, January 21). During his speech at the IAF, Putin claimed that the United States’ plan to “annex” Greenland is part of plans to “systematically advance its geostrategic, military-political, and economic interests in the Arctic” (President of Russia, March 27). Beyond the headlines on Greenland, however, Russian officials have also accused other Arctic states such as Norway and Finland of seeking confrontation with Russia. For example, one official claimed recently that Norway is seeking to militarize Svalbard (Aftenposten, December 19, 2024; see EDM, March 20). Another recent example is Russian presidential aide Nikolai Patrushev’s accusation that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s (NATO) naval forces are seeking to block Russia from the Baltic Sea and conducting cyber operations on Russian ships in the region (Kyiv Independent, March 13).

In tandem with these accusations, Russia promotes itself as a cooperative actor in the Arctic. The vast majority of panels at the IAF described Russia as a central actor for future Arctic business investment, particularly emphasizing the Northern Sea Route (Forum Arctica, accessed April 3). The event also highlighted Russia’s efforts to protect the Arctic environment and its humanitarian cooperation with other states. Beyond the IAF, Russian officials have pushed a narrative of the necessity of U.S.-Russian economic cooperation and rapprochement in the Arctic (Arctic Today, February 27; The Barents Observer, March 12).

Russia has the opportunity to use the increasing division between the United States and its European Arctic allies on issues such as Greenland to create confusion over its intentions in the Arctic and Baltic regions (see EDM, January 21). This presents Moscow with an excuse to frame any Western responses to its actions in the Arctic as aggressive (Arctic Today, February 19). Such responses would further justify, in Moscow’s eyes, an increased Russian military presence in the Arctic. For example, Poland and the Baltic states said they would recommend withdrawing from the Ottawa Convention, an international treaty banning anti-personnel mines, to prepare for Russia’s growing military threat in the Baltic space (Euronews, March 18). Such a policy response will certainly be framed in Moscow as an aggressive anti-Russia approach that warrants increased Russian military build-up. On the other hand, Moscow uses engagement by Western actors, such as Norway’s virtual participation in the IAF, as a calling card that Russia is a legitimate partner in the region (Forum Arctica, March 26; The Barents Observer, March 27). Responding to Russia’s double game of cooperation-confrontation discourse in the Arctic will come with a cost.

# Track 2 CP

### 1NC – Track 2 CP

Text: The United States federal government should significantly increase scientific exploration of permafrost in the Russian Arctic under the auspices of the High North Talks.

#### The counterplan solves through private, Track 2 diplomacy – it avoids the Russian appeasement DA because it bypasses official channels

Paul Dziatkowiec, 2024 - founder and facilitator of the High North Talks, as well as Director of Mediation and Peace Support at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy “The Geneva Centre for Security Policy and its High North Talks” 8/8, <https://www.gcsp.ch/global-insights/geneva-centre-security-policy-and-its-high-north-talks> //DH

Paul Dziatkowiec (PD): The Arctic region, once a beacon of international collaboration, is facing a significant breakdown in cooperation following Russia’s attack on Ukraine. This has led to heightened tensions and an increased risk of military confrontation, a deeply concerning development given the region’s historical significance as a model of peaceful collaboration.

While I believe there is no need for undue alarm, the current situation is troubling. The lack of trust and dialogue between Russia and the West significantly increases the potential for miscalculations and misunderstandings that could escalate into conflict. Given these risks, I would argue that there is room – particularly at an unofficial level – for maintaining channels for confidential communication to clarify misunderstandings, understand each other’s core interests, and prevent dangerous incidents.

Initiatives like the “High North Talks,” which I initiated at GCSP in 2022, are crucial in this context. By elaborating guardrails and confidence-building measures, providing informal communication channels, and injecting creative ideas into the increasingly toxic official discourse, we can make a small contribution to maintaining relative stability in the Arctic. My team is committed to contributing to these efforts to ensure a more secure and predictable future for this strategically important region.

PJ: Which lines of communications still exist between the two sides?

PD: At the official level there is of course the multilateral system, and official diplomacy, with their various forums and opportunities for direct interaction at the policymaking level. Embassies and envoys are important tools in international relations, and naturally continue as always to have a critical function. So, discussions still happen – but these days they have a less constructive flavour, and are on a much more limited scale.

We have observed that since Russia’s war on Ukraine, there are significant constraints on constructive dialogue at the official (or ‘Track I’) level. This dynamic has spread across multiple forums and diverse issues, in a massive knock-on effect of Russia’s brutal invasion. Sadly but perhaps inevitably, this affects a wide spectrum of important and urgent international issues and concerns – even many such issues where cooperation between Russia and Western countries was the norm before February 2022, for example in the Arctic, the Middle East, or Northeast Asia.

On the Arctic more specifically, there are still pockets of practical cooperation that offer some hope, and can serve as inspiration – for example on emergency response or fisheries. As mediators, we are the last ones who hold on to the positives, and conditioned to seize on openings – so I would end the answer by saying that despite everything, there is something to build on.

PJ: What exactly are the High North Talks?

PD: The High North Talks (HNT) are an unofficial dialogue platform that aims, through constructive and open exchanges, to foster peaceful collaboration in the Arctic. In the turbulent geopolitical climate, our talks provide a discreet setting for experts from all Arctic nations to constructively discuss the future of this strategically important region.

We address a wide range of interconnected issues, from environmental concerns and climate change to security, governance, and scientific collaboration. The sheer magnitude of these challenges underscores the Arctic’s significance for the entire world, making the preservation of dialogue absolutely essential.

Through our talks, we strive to develop actionable ideas that can influence decision-making and restore cooperation among Arctic states, at least on the most urgent issues. By identifying common interests, developing creative ideas, and leveraging past successes in collaboration, we hope to prevent the Arctic from becoming another arena for geopolitical conflict. It is entirely rational to condemn what Russia is doing in Ukraine, which undermines the most important tenets of our international system, and to understand the importance of punishing such behaviour, while also believing that these types of discreet, private diplomacy efforts are vital in fostering understanding and finding ways to deal with urgent problems. Ultimately, our goal is to contribute to a more peaceful and cooperative future for the Arctic, which I hope will eventually lead to the restoration of its status as a model for international collaboration.

PJ: Why are they different from talks within the Arctic Council?

PD: The Arctic Council, as the leading international forum for Arctic affairs, is vital for all Arctic states and we all want it to survive through these challenging times. Its unique structure, allowing for the participation of Indigenous Peoples’ organizations on an equal footing with states, ensures that the concerns of those most affected by Arctic developments are considered in intergovernmental discussions. This model of inclusivity and collaboration offers valuable lessons for other international bodies.

Our “High North Talks” complement the Arctic Council’s work by providing an unofficial platform for open and honest discussions on sensitive issues, fostering creativity and robust debate. This Track II (unofficial) format, which follows the Chatham House Rule, allows participants to speak freely without public scrutiny, promoting constructive dialogue on delicate topics.

The unofficial nature of the High North Talks, which are not bound by intergovernmental conventions and diplomatic protocols, makes it a unique and valuable forum in the challenging multilateral environment. It provides a safe and discreet space for experts to constructively discuss the future of the Arctic region, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities ahead.

### They Say: “Permute do both”

#### The perm is worse – state-to-state interactions limit science diplomacy – the CP alone increases flexibility

Paul Dziatkowiec, 2024 - founder and facilitator of the High North Talks, as well as Director of Mediation and Peace Support at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy “The Geneva Centre for Security Policy and its High North Talks” 8/8, <https://www.gcsp.ch/global-insights/geneva-centre-security-policy-and-its-high-north-talks> //DH

PJ: Is there a chance of a more specific dialogue again where approaches like Science diplomacy have failed?

PD: I am not sure this should be characterized as ‘failure’ but perhaps a work in progress. These things take time, patience and perseverance. I still believe that science diplomacy represents an important entry point to dialogue.

At the state-to-state level, this is more difficult to do because of the need to follow protocols, and of course national positions. Having worked previously as a diplomat both in multilateral and bilateral settings, I can say that the private diplomacy approach often provides more flexibility and room for innovation – which can be immensely helpful when official dialogue is stuck.

I am proud to lead a Mediation and Peace Support Department that has connections and skills acquired through decades of experience in both official diplomacy and ‘private diplomacy’ and can therefore meld the best of both worlds, which can be most useful when creative thinking is needed; along with the know-how to bring new ideas onto the radar of policy- and decision-makers.

#### The permutation links to the net benefit. Unofficial cooperation avoids condoning Russian aggression

Eda Ayaydin, 2025 - Postdoctoral Visiting Fellow at the Mershon Center, Ohio State University “Arctic Exceptionalism: What It Was, What It Could Be - But Should It Be?” 6/18,

<https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/arctic-exceptionalism-what-it-was-what-it-could-be-should-it-be> //DH

So, why should the Arctic remain exceptional? To preserve cooperation that manages tensions between state and non-state actors and allows for rapprochement based on balancing interests and values. Arctic peace doesn’t emerge from sameness, it is made by negotiating differences.

Or to borrow from French historian Ernest Renan’s words on nationhood: peace, too, is a “daily plebiscite”.

Cooperating with the Kremlin today is undeniably difficult. Russian militarization in the Arctic has remained at the status quo or declined as it reallocates forces to Ukraine.

Its ambitions in the Middle East have faded too, largely due to limited resources and the shifting dynamics in Syria, where the Assad government, long backed by Russia is increasingly isolated. In this context, Russia needs the Arctic.

And selective engagement with Russia, particularly to ensure safety in areas such as shipping, energy, fisheries, communication, may still prove useful. This doesn’t imply condoning aggression or legitimizing invasions. But cooperation doesn’t have to happen at the state level.

Non-state actors can still collaborate in neutral spaces to keep environmental, cultural, scientific and societal dialogue open, not for geopolitical grandstanding, but for regional stability.

This is no easy task, especially as many of these organizations have been disbanded or labeled “foreign agents” under Kremlin pressure, limiting their capacity to engage.

Trust takes time. And that’s exactly what a neo-Arctic Exceptionalism needs; time and willingness to give it a second chance. What is at stake is not simply the restoration of a rules-based order alone, but also balancing of normative commitments with the region’s lived realities and necessities.

So, Arctic peace is neither Grotian nor Hobbesian, but is relational, unfinished and shaped by those who live it, not only those who govern it.

### They Say: “Permute do the Counterplan”

#### The permutation severs the plan. Their affirmative is government to government, which makes it Track 1 – it’s about federal scientists

Dr. Larry Hinzman, 2022 - Executive Director, Interagency Arctic Research and Policy Committee, Assistant Director of Polar Sciences, White House Office of Science and Technology. For a hearing on “Amplifying the Arctic: Strengthening Science to Respond to a Rapidly Changing Arctic” Before the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology U.S. House of Representatives, 9/20, <https://republicans-science.house.gov/_cache/files/d/9/d937d36b-a22e-44af-950e-d5e752b86b1c/936E12AD9E19489C7700DD9C075DF86F304C4AA31BA7F18DE012AA4BA328C071.2022-09-20-hinzman-testimony.pdf> //DH

International Collaboration in the Arctic

The Arctic research community has long been a beacon and a bastion of international collaborations. International partnerships with European and Asian partners greatly advanced our understanding of the role of the Arctic in the global climate system. Such cooperation promotes more rapid learning and more efficient achievements.

Following Russia's further invasion of Ukraine in February, the U.S. ceased government-to-government and multilateral engagement with Russia that was not in the U.S. national security interest. Research that has been disrupted includes field studies of natural carbon emissions, permafrost degradation, large river discharges, and population dynamics of walrus, polar bears, and waterfowl. Since Russia decided to escalate this brutal war, Federal scientists have ceased these partnerships and shelved plans for new joint efforts. We have had no choice but to forgo the regular collegial communications that enriched our understanding of Arctic science since the thawing of the Cold War.

Russia’s unlawful invasion of Ukraine has caused tremendous suffering and a cascade of misery throughout Europe; the disruption of Arctic science is but one negative outcome that is far outweighed by the loss of life and threats to democracy. However, we must not ignore the impact to science, and we remain hopeful that Russia will fully withdraw from Ukraine and end this war. It was through scientific partnerships and collaborations that the U.S. and Russia developed a more open working relationship at various points in history. We remain hopeful that the scientific friendships we developed in the past can one day pave the way for mutual respect and cooperation in science and policy. It is for this reason that I worry about proposals to erect barriers to future scientific collaboration, such as a policy contained in Section 535 of H.R. 8256, the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2023, which would prohibit OSTP, NASA, and the National Space Council from collaborating with Russia.

The magnitude of the challenges associated with climate change in the Arctic are simply too great for any nation to resolve in isolation. We must continue to collaborate with our international partners, particularly in field studies and observations, but also by sharing results, accomplishments, and understanding.

#### Collaboration between state-funded scientists is government-level diplomacy

Pavel Devyatkin, 2023 – senior associate at the Arctic Institute (Washington, DC) and a PhD fellow and lecturer at HSE University (Moscow) “Can Arctic Cooperation be Restored?” 3/28, <https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/can-arctic-cooperation-restored/> //DH

We are witnessing a severing of state-to-state cooperation after Russia’s military actions in Ukraine. Right up until February 24, 2022, there was effective interstate circumpolar cooperation across various institutions and frameworks. Even just the day before, on February 23, 2022, Russia’s ambassador to Norway read an opening speech written by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at the Kirkenes Conference in the Norwegian Arctic. The speech mentioned “mutual assistance and good-neighborly relations” in the Arctic and complimented the Kirkenes conference as a setting for “constructive and depoliticized discussion of the pressing issues of international cooperation.”1)

From my experience as an American scholar based in Russia during this volatile period, I believe most Russian decision makers would still be supportive of Arctic cooperation, but government-level cooperation, such as collaboration between state funded scientists, is more difficult than ever. Some Russian decision makers are wholly pessimistic about the return of cooperation. Alexey Drobinin, director of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ (MFA) policy planning department, said, “The period of constructive cooperation between Russia and Western countries is gone for good, regardless of the outcome of Russia’s special operation in Ukraine.”2)

After seven of the AC states boycotted Russia’s AC chairmanship in March, Nikolay Korchunov, Russia’s Senior Arctic Official and Arctic Ambassador, called the pause “regrettable” and warned that it would pose “risks and challenges to soft security.” Korchunov stressed that Arctic cooperation “should not be subject to the spill-over effect of any extra-regional events.” Korchunov said, “it is of utmost importance to safeguard the project activities of the Arctic Council in order to be able to pick up where we paused and step up cooperation.”3)

Evidently, Russia places great importance on its position in the AC. Russian experts and diplomats have said Russia’s exclusion is counterproductive and irrational. Russian Ambassador to the United States, Anatoly Antonov, and Minister of Natural Resources, Alexander Kozlov, have gone as far as calling it illegitimate and claiming that the boycott violates the principles of consensus given that Russia is the chair of the AC during this period.4) Russian and international scientists have also drawn attention to data gaps that result from cutting off Russian Arctic scientists. Arctic climate research is crucial since warming in the region is a bellwether for global climate change. As such statements demonstrate, Arctic cooperation with Western states is important to Russia, especially in regard to its recognition as a great power.

### They Say: “Can’t Solve Science Diplomacy”

#### Track 2 is better at science diplomacy and will spill up to result in the plan

Sarah Dorr, 2022 - Director of Professional Development at the International Studies Association and a Research Scholar ar the University of Connecticut's Global Affairs. “How Track 2 Diplomacy Might Help Ease Russian-Ukraine Tension” 5/13, <https://jordanrussiacenter.org/blog/how-track-2-diplomacy-might-help-ease-russian-ukraine-tension> //DH

At a recent academic convention, a Russian colleague shared that he might no longer be able to place Russian and Ukrainian scholars on the same panels because of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. This sentiment reflects serious concern and sensitivity toward interpersonal relationships between citizens of these countries. Simultaneously, this apprehension overlooks the possibility that informal interactions, such as academic exchanges, might contribute to relationship-building and trust between citizens of nations at odds and that severing those relationships just adds to the existing tension.

As we know, many Western universities have ended their academic relationships with Russia, thereby closing established channels of communication and engagement. These closures translate into mutual isolation and an end to dialogue. Delegates, everyday residents, and the third parties who would have heard the stories they tell, have lost the opportunity to experience and learn from interaction with others, who might alter their existing perceptions of a different nationality in unexpected ways.

Against the backdrop of increasing Russian isolation, these interactions become even more critical. They create dialogue, trust, and separate people from the problem. As Madeline Albright observed in 2014, “Everyone is a diplomat in their own way.” Therefore, by ending formal cooperation, individual diplomatic opportunities have already been drastically reduced.

To date, formal or Track 1 Diplomacy, where diplomats, governments and international organizations formally engage, has failed to prevent the initial Russian aggression and has thus far struggled to de-escalate the war. Unfortunately, the success of future diplomatic efforts, at least in the short term, does not look likely. On Friday April 29, Russian missiles struck Kyiv, the day after the United Nations Secretary António Guterres met with Vladimir Putin in Moscow. The 29th was the same day of Guterres visit to Kyiv. This is not a critique of global diplomatic efforts at large or in this instance, but merely the most recent example of formal diplomacy’s limitations.

Academic exchanges, on the other hand, are often categorized within Track 2 diplomacy, which does not involve direct government sanction. In some cases, where formal diplomacy has initially failed, other diplomatic tracks have fared better. In essence, the end goal of relationship-building is the same, but the means to this end uses a different strategy and is carried out by different players.

One well-known example of successful Track 2 diplomacy is the Oslo Accords, signed in 1993. Notably, the signing of the Oslo Accords, by official government representatives shows that Track 2 diplomacy only goes so far. In this case Track 2 diplomatic efforts played a major role in the processes leading up to the signing of a formal Track 1 agreement.

The genesis of Track 2 approaches is often attributed to Herbert Kelman, who organized a series of workshops starting in the 1970s that facilitated communication between Israelis and Palestinians. Kelman described the objective of these workshops as “our emphasis has not been on communication as an end to itself, but on transmitting what is learned in the workshop setting to the political leadership, the political elites, and the general public in the two communities, thus helping to create an atmosphere conducive to negotiations.”

“Workshop” fails to capture the highly curated and unique nature of Kelman’s design, which contributed to its success. For starters, the workshops were held over a period of several years and were highly structured with both an agenda and rules. Perhaps most important was the selection of participants. Kelman wrote that participants “must be politically involved and influential,” part of their larger community, politically moderate, and committed to finding a “negotiated solution.”

A present-day adaptation would benefit from similar design considerations in terms of scheduling, structure, and participants. For example, workshops with academics and civil society activists could take place immediately prior to academic conventions, many of which are held at regular intervals. The convention setting would facilitate discussion following the conclusion of the workshop by transmitting findings to a wider audience through international attendance and written outputs. Academic associations could also act as non politically affiliated hosts, or what Kelman referred to as a third party.

Because of the current isolation of Russians across so many sectors, providing spaces for people to connect in spite of the underlying conflict has become even more critical to conflict resolution. As Oslo showed, unofficial interactions within these spaces can help build and reinforce relationships, and in doing so, form the foundation for future conflict resolution. And when faced with the sort of bloodshed seen in Ukraine, why wouldn’t all tools be tried?

At the start, at least, Track 2 approaches, whether in academic, diplomatic or business sectors, will directly encounter discomfort. But moving through that discomfort perhaps allows for the building of relationships that humanize conflict impacts and may lead to de-escalation and conflict resolution.

#### Track 2 keeps Russia engaged in science cooperation

Nataliya Shok and Katherine Ginsberg, 2024 - Nataliya Shok is a public policy fellow at the Kennan Institute of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Katherine Ginsbach is a senior associate with the Center for Transformational Health Law at the O’Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law at Georgetown University Law Center. “Channels for Arctic Diplomacy” Issues in Science and Technology, Spring, <https://issues.org/disease-surveillance-arctic-diplomacy-shok-ginsbach/> //DH

Nongovernmental, informal interactions (known as Track II diplomacy) among scientists from Arctic (and even non-Arctic) states could be a powerful strategy for keeping Russia engaged and communicating with the global scientific community. The first mechanism to try is for researchers in neighboring states or territories (for example, Alaska, the Russian district of Chukotka, and Yukon, a Canadian territory) to arrange for partnerships in climate research. Strategically expanding approaches to scientific cooperation in the polar regions, particularly through individual contacts, could solidify the Arctic’s significance as a focal point for twenty-first-century science diplomacy.

Second, the science diplomacy community, housed in universities and connected through national scientific academies, should continue to play a leading role in Arctic science diplomacy by incentivizing researchers to build new scientific partnerships across borders. This would require the European Union and NATO members that discontinued projects with Russian institutions after Russia invaded Ukraine to take a step forward in reestablishing collaborations with Russian partners. Resumed research partnerships should prioritize studies on the climate risks associated with permafrost thaw and the mitigation of potential reactivation of ancient microbiota and dormant pathogens. There should also be a much more significant focus on cooperation between Arctic states and Indigenous peoples’ organizations, with a research agenda that intertwines scientific and local knowledge.

And finally, the international community still working within the Arctic Council platform should prioritize establishing a network of monitoring stations in the high-latitude Arctic to swiftly identify pathogens in hot spots of microbial diversity, such as mass bird-nesting sites. Such monitoring activities can reinforce or create points of contact within Arctic states and Indigenous peoples’ organizations to buttress the goals of the Arctic Council’s 10-year-old One Arctic, One Health project, which aims to improve coordination and strategies for handling emerging threats. Improved monitoring and coordination would have multiple benefits: more opportunities to develop scientific diplomacy, stronger Arctic health and environmental security, more knowledge about the global impacts of climate change, and the potential to stimulate new initiatives to understand other microbial hot spots around the globe.

In one of the last examples of Arctic scientific cooperation with Russia before its invasion of Ukraine, a study conducted by a team of German, French, and Russian scholars identified 13 new viruses revived from ancient permafrost—the result of almost a decade of joint research. Keeping scientific connections like these alive among Arctic researchers should be a diplomatic imperative, both to deepen the global understanding of shared health and climate risks as well as to preserve peace, stability, and constructive cooperation in the region and beyond.

#### Track 2 builds trust, and eventually spills up to Track 1

Dr Michael Paul, 2024 - is a Senior Fellow in the International Security Research Division at SWP. “Back to the Future of the Arctic” <https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/comments/2024C18_FutureArctic.pdf> //DH

Even if scepticism is warranted, dialogue with Russia at an informal, expert level (Track 2) seems reasonable. This would make it possible to test potential approaches to confidence-building measures and, building on this, to initiate official talks at a formal level (Track 1) in due course. Informal talks are an instrument that stimulates reflective dialogue between actors in conflict, especially when discussions at official levels are difficult or even impossible. In today’s new mistrustful and competitive reality, it is important to restore a minimum level of stability. Dialogue between military experts from all eight Arctic states could constitute a new interim format and initiate a process in which confidence-building measures are developed.

### They Say: “Can’t Solve Arctic Research”

#### Track 2 solves – Russian scientists want to participate outside of official channels

Angelina Flood, 2025 - is the managing editor of Russia Matters. This quotes Margaret Williams, senior fellow at the Arctic Initiative at Harvard’s Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs “Arctic Experts Highlight Importance of Track 2 Cooperation Between US and Russia” 1/15, <https://www.russiamatters.org/blog/arctic-experts-highlight-importance-track-2-cooperation-between-us-and-russia> //DH

Russian marine biologist Masha Vorontsova, founder of the Russia Office of the International Fund for Animal Welfare, also spoke at the event , sharing her personal experience and recent experience traveling to Russia. She emphasized the vital role of Track 2 diplomacy within the scientific community. “We should think of track 2 right when cooperation is not possible at the level of the government, when there [are] no dialogues between the diplomats. When it was completely impossible to reach any agreements, we should think about our contacts among civil society, among scientists, and try to build on these contacts,” Vorontsova said.

According to Vorontsova, 5,000 or so scientists who signed a letter against the war in Ukraine shortly after the full-scale invasion began have found themselves on an unofficial blacklist. During her summer 2024 trip to Russia, she noticed that Russians are constructing “bubbles” in which to live and function, both at the familial and professional level. “Scientists are building … bubbles,” Vorontsova said. “I had been to several institutions. And it was like the 1980s when everybody [is] actively working, because that was the small corner of freedom to be in your lab in your institution and work.”

She stressed the importance of reaching out to the Russian scientific community to keep making holes in a new Iron Curtain. “If we're speaking of collaboration, my suggestion is, look … to the scientists inside Russia whom you trust,” Vorontsova said. “Pick them up, work with them, exchange emails, make Zooms, invite them to participate in Zooms. Invite them also out of Russia, try to get them to the conferences.”

Pavel Devyatkin of the Institute of the Arctic agreed, but argued that “there is no sweeping ban on cooperation from the side of the Kremlin.” “I agree with what Masha mentioned about holding on to small bubbles, and how important it is to still work with Russian scientists and continue to invite Russians to participate in conferences and projects,” Devyatkin said in a comment. “There's a whole generation of young Russian scientists who are interested in Arctic cooperation.”

#### Russian scientists will censor and falsify data if provided through official channels

Nicholas Parlato et al, 2024 - interdisciplinary PhD candidate at University of Alaska Fairbanks, studying marine and coastal resource governance in the North Pacific-Arctic region “The “Bear” in the Room: How do we prepare for the future with Russia?” University of Arctic, 11/20, <https://www.uarctic.org/news/2024/11/the-bear-in-the-room-how-do-we-prepare-for-the-future-with-russia/> //DH

When questioned about paths for continued collaboration with Russia, the speakers expressed divergent views. According to one perspective, collaboration with Russian scientists was impossible because the data was subject to extensive censorship and potential falsification. On the other hand, it was observed that on a peer-to-peer rather than an institutional basis, it was still possible to have meaningful exchange of research as well as communication. The data, some pointed out, while important, is also a critical window into retaining relationships. By addressing the values of science, scientific inquiry and integrity, some speakers insisted that by allowing politics to taint the work of the Arctic intellectual community, scientists had failed in core scientific commitments in spectacular fashion. It was mentioned that continuous engagement with Russian scientists has always required bravery and going against the grain, which, at times, results in paying the price of academic exclusion from western institutions. Most of the people that still visit Russia and engage scientifically were seasoned and established academics, whereas the routes for interactions on a pan-Arctic scale for young researchers are almost non-existent, presaging a generational gap in relationships and understanding.

#### Non-state cooperation is the only viable approach

Pavel Devyatkin, 2023 – senior associate at the Arctic Institute (Washington, DC) and a PhD fellow at HSE University (Moscow) “Can Arctic Cooperation be Restored?” 3/28, <https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/can-arctic-cooperation-restored/> //DH

If these new signs of Russia’s pivot to the East are alarming, then the task is now to find the gaps in the current freeze and identify areas where scientific cooperation, track 2 diplomacy and other forms of dialogue are possible between the largest Arctic state, Russia, and the seven other Arctic countries. Non-state actors, such as researchers, will now play a particularly important role as state-level cooperation is frozen. Academic conferences that bring together researchers regardless of nationality to share insights based on a common concern for the dramatic changes unfolding in the Arctic are themselves examples of science and citizen diplomacy. Recent examples include the USC-NSF Conference on Strategic Ambition and Environmental Constraint and the Calotte Academy14) Though government-level science may be restricted, cooperation at the individual-level is still manageable but laden with obstacles such as visa restrictions and closed consulates.

What specific areas are there for cooperation today? Special attention can be paid to the synergies that exist between the National Science Foundation’s Navigating the New Arctic agenda and the Russian AC chairmanship agenda. Both programs mention knowledge coproduction with Indigenous peoples as well as scientific and cultural exchanges with Indigenous knowledge holders.15) Research communities should prioritize working with Indigenous knowledge holders, not least because of their unique circumpolar organizations that go beyond national borders and could be an avenue for scientific cooperation at the international, people-to-people level.

#### Effective cooperation can only occur at the non-state level – not government funded scientists

Pavel Devyatkin, 2023 – senior fellow at the Arctic Institute “Can Arctic Cooperation be Restored?” 3/28, https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/can-arctic-cooperation-restored/ //DH

From my experience as an American scholar based in Russia during this volatile period, I believe most Russian decision makers would still be supportive of Arctic cooperation, but government-level cooperation, such as collaboration between state funded scientists, is more difficult than ever. Some Russian decision makers are wholly pessimistic about the return of cooperation. Alexey Drobinin, director of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ (MFA) policy planning department, said, “The period of constructive cooperation between Russia and Western countries is gone for good, regardless of the outcome of Russia’s special operation in Ukraine.”2)

### They Say: “Track 2 Won’t Change Policy”

#### Policy spillover empirically occurs from Track 2 – and government-first initiatives are more likely to be rolled back

E. William Colglazier, 2025 - Former Editor-in-Chief of Science and Diplomacy at the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Response to “Science Diplomacy in a Fractured World” Issues in Science and Technology, Winter https://issues.org/science-diplomacy-turekian-gluckman-forum/ //DH

In “Science Diplomacy and the Rise of Technopoles” (Issues, Fall 2024), Vaughan Turekian and Peter Gluckman provide a superb assessment of current challenges facing science diplomacy. I agree with most everything they write, but there are a few key points that merit elaboration on areas of focus for nongovernmental organizations.

The authors state that “when science diplomacy becomes disconnected from national security and economic policy, it can no longer influence policy.” In the case of nongovernmental organizations, I would prefer substituting “unaware of” for “disconnected from.” The authors are certainly correct that “national priorities inevitably carry the day” if they are considering science diplomacy carried out by governments. National priorities of governments can, of course, have considerable overlap with what many consider to be global priorities. However, nongovernmental scientific organizations and individual scientists may have a different view from their governments on national and global priorities. Governments can change over time as can the geopolitical environment.

Nongovernmental scientific organizations and individual scientists may have a different view from their governments on national and global priorities.

Nongovernmental science diplomacy initiatives, including informal track 2 dialogues not publicly encouraged by governments, can have a significant impact at a future time when a “window of opportunity” in diplomacy opens. While the most powerful science diplomacy initiatives have been partnerships between scientific communities and their governments, some of these started out as track 2 dialogues without governmental support. On the other hand, some successful science diplomacy initiatives adopted by governments were set back or reversed when geopolitics changed, as has been the case with nuclear arms control agreements, the Iran nuclear agreement, and US support for the Paris climate agreement.

I very much agree with the authors in their statement that “track 2 science diplomacy may become even more necessary.” Several such dialogues are going forward now without overt support of governments. In the case of the United States, they are carried out by nongovernmental scientific and engineering organizations as well as by individual scientists. An interesting example is cited in a recent Economist magazine article on “Inside the AI back channel between China and the West.” Writing in the journal Science & Diplomacy before the US election, I outlined my “Science Diplomacy Priorities for the United States 2025–2030.” Now I hope several of these priorities will be pursued actively by America’s scientific organizations.