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Arctic at stake - Experts call for improvements in governing climate-change adaptation



EU Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner and Diana Wallis, Member of European Parliament welcomed more than 120 experts from government and civil society worldwide to discuss “Transatlantic Policy Options for the Marine Arctic” at a conference in Brussels on 5 March 2009. High-level speakers from Europe and the U.S. presented their preferred policy options for addressing climate change in the Arctic with environmental experts arguing for governance structures that transcend national borders and are capable of protecting fragile Arctic ecosystems.

The conference underscored the high level of common concern for the Arctic and the importance of international collaboration for addressing the effects of climate change on ecosystems and arctic residents. Climate change is occurring more quickly in the Arctic than in any other region of the world, and future access to ice-free waters will bring new economic activities, especially in the energy, shipping, fishing, and tourism industries.

As the scale of economic activities in the region increases, nations are being forced to take co-operative action. According to Arctic experts, the current governance framework is inadequate and must be adapted to handle the new and uncertain changes underway. How to do this and to what extent was the topic of discussion at the conference.

The conference “Transatlantic Policy Options for the Marine Arctic” is the final event of the Arctic TRANSFORM project, which was funded by the European Commission’s Directorate General of External Relations in order to foster transatlantic dialogue on the issue.

A [synthesis report](#) [1] of the conference and project reports, as well as more information on the project is available online at www.arctic-transform.org [2].

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Links:

[1] http://www.arctic-transform.eu/download/Conf-summary_review-draft.pdf

[2] <http://www.arctic-transform.org/>