
100 Days In: COP21 and the Arctic's Future – An Era of Energy Transition

Event

[Digital Event](#)

Date

21 March 2016

Location

Berlin, Germany

100 days after the successful negotiation of a global climate agreement in Paris, the Arctic is facing some of the warmest winter temperatures on record. As communities face threats to personal safety, livelihood, and culture, one pressing question remains: what effect has and will the COP21 agreement have on the four million people that call the Arctic home?

Arctic policymakers and residents are facing a unique opportunity to reinvent circumpolar energy development for a sustainable future. The COP21 agreement and volatile oil markets have created a path for renewable technology innovation to thrive in the high north, simultaneously providing affordable energy and economic diversification.

On 21 March 2016, this 90-minute webinar brought together three experts in conversation about the Arctic at COP21, its effects on the region today, and the prospects for renewable energy for both mitigation and adaptation.

Sébastien Duyck (Northern Institute for Environmental and Minority Law, University of Lapland) informed the international audience about the implications of the Paris Agreement on the Arctic and international climate governance. Observing long-term goals included in the Paris Agreement, he highlighted the importance of strong emission cuts for the Arctic. Despite the legally non-binding character of the Agreement, Sébastien concluded that it is sending a strong signal to all states.

Next, **Piper Foster Wilder** (Renewable Energy Alaska Project, REAP) emphasized the advantages of renewable energy in Alaska, possibly resulting in lower energy bills whilst similarly supporting climate change efforts in the Arctic region. Furthermore, she underlined the prospective of high employment rates in the renewable energy sector, a win-win situation for climate change supporters and local inhabitants of Alaska.

Last but certainly not least, **Julia Gourley** (Senior Arctic Official, Office of Ocean and Polar Affairs, U.S. Department of State) talked about the Arctic Council and the Paris Agreement. After a short introduction of the Arctic Council, Julia outlined in which way the Arctic Council can contribute to the mitigation of climate change: the Task Force on Black Carbon and Methane, the Arctic Remote Energy

Networks Academy (ARENA), the Safety Guidelines for Unmanned Aircraft Systems and generally by supporting Arctic-focused exchange programs.

A thirty-minute discussion and Q&A session concluded the event.

Organizer

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