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RUSSIAN-CANADIAN COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARCTIC REGION

2021-2022

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RUSSIAN-CANADIAN COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARCTIC REGION

1. Canada's Arctic Strategy: Priorities, Objectives and Mechanisms

1.1. Main Policy Areas

The Arctic is central to national priorities for identity and security and is an integral part of Canada's national values and interests. The Canadian Arctic covers 40% of the country's territory, more than 200 thousand people live in Arctic territories, more than half of whom are representatives of the northern Indigenous peoples.

Many departments of the Government of Canada, both inside and outside the country, are involved in promoting Canada's Arctic priorities.

As part of its Arctic policy, Canada strives to address the causes and consequences of climate change, to establish relations between the northern Indigenous peoples and representatives of other peoples of Canada based on trust and mutual respect, support for sustainable economic development of the North¹. To achieve these goals, work is carried out with local communities, NGOs and NGOs within Canada, as well as with international partners.

Global Affairs Canada is responsible for coordinating and guiding the international aspects of Canadian Arctic policy. This work is mainly carried out by Nordic and Polar Relations Division in Ottawa, and the Canadian International Arctic Centre (CIAC), located in Oslo, Norway, as well as by Canadian embassies around the world. Canada is an active member of the Arctic Council, the main international forum for Arctic cooperation.

The main objectives promoted by Global Affairs Canada's in the circumpolar Arctic include:

- Lead in implementing the International Arctic Policy contained in Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework;
- Support the identification of targeted, innovative trade and commercial opportunities for the North, benefiting Northerners;
- Help position Canada as a global leader in Arctic science and research;
- Assert Canadian positions and contribute to raising Canada's profile on Northern issues, through an active advocacy strategy involving Northern participation.

¹ Canada and the Circumpolar Regions // Government of Canada [Electronic resource]. URL: https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/international_relations-relations_internationales/arctic-arctique/index.aspx?lang=eng (date of access: 20.11.2021)

In September 2019, Canada released the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework, which defines general priorities of the Government of Canada's activities in the Arctic up to 2030 and beyond. It is noted that the document was developed jointly with residents of the northern regions, territorial and provincial governments, Indigenous peoples, Inuit and Métis. The Policy Framework replaced 2009 Northern Strategy and 2010 Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy. Part of the document was the Pan-Territorial Vision for Sustainable Development, a set of principles for the development of the northern regions of Canada in the field of sustainable development. The document was compiled by the prime ministers of Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut².

To achieve certain results at the international level, Canada's Department of International Affairs will implement Arctic and Northern Policy Framework in line with priority areas for Canada's international engagement in the Arctic, namely: strengthening the international order; strengthening cooperation with Arctic and non-Arctic states; the desire for a clearer definition of Canada's territorial boundaries in the Arctic.

Protecting territorial boundaries is a significant priority of Canadian policy. On May 23, 2019 Canada filed a submission to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf at United Nations. This follows a decade of scientific and legal work to determine the limits of Canada's undersea landmass in the Arctic. This marks the first step in the process set out in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea to obtain international recognition for the outer limits of the continental shelf in the Arctic Ocean.

1.2. Compliance of Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework with the UN Sustainable Development Goals

As it is noted in the document, a key international commitment underpinning Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework³ is the 2030 United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Goal 1: Canadian Arctic and Northern Indigenous Peoples Are Resilient and Healthy

Canada strives to minimize the problems of lack of medical care, lack of educational opportunities and high unemployment rates inherent in the Arctic and northern regions. Attention is also paid to the problems of growing prices, unfavorable housing conditions, and low life expectancy among the population of the northern territories of Canada. The northern regions are also characterized by a relatively high level of crime, includ-

² Arctic and Northern Policy Framework - Pan-Territorial Chapter // Government of Nunavut [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.gov.nu.ca/executive-and-intergovernmental-affairs/information/arctic-and-northern-policy-framework-pan> (date of access: 20.11.2021)

³ Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework. Goals and objectives // Government of Canada [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1560523306861/1560523330587#s6> (date of access: 20.11.2021)

ing violent assaults (with the victims often being girls and women), and by the suicide rates that exceed the overall Canadian statistics.

To improve the quality of life of the northerners by 2030, Canada will strive to develop the economy, health and education system in the Arctic territories, promote free movement of goods and services between Canadian Arctic and northern territories of other states, and also examine the best international practices in improving the situation of northern Indigenous peoples.

The main objectives under this goal are directly in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals: eradicate poverty (SDG 1: No poverty) and hunger (SDG 2: Zero hunger), provide good housing conditions, reduce suicide, ensure mental and physical health (SDG 3: Good health and well-being), create an enabling environment for children with a focus on educational and cultural development (SDG 4: Quality education), intensify the fight against violence towards Indigenous girls and women (SDG 5: Gender Equality), adopt culturally acceptable approaches to justice, activate restorative justice measures and other alternatives to imprisonment (SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions).

Goal 2: Strengthened Infrastructure that Closes Gaps with Other Regions of Canada

Infrastructure problems become obstacles to the connection of the Arctic regions of Canada with other parts of the country. Those issues complicate the delivery of food, internal movements of people and energy supply, which leads to a significant increase in prices for goods and services in the Arctic area. About 70 northern settlements are accessible only by airplanes, since water and road routes are available only during summer and spring. It all leads to increasing gaps in the level of development of the Arctic and non-Arctic regions of Canada.

Due to special attention traditionally paid to climate change issues and environmental agenda as a whole, infrastructure development will also be necessary to improve the quality of environmental monitoring in the Arctic zone (SDG 13: Climate action). Canadian authorities plan to invest extensively in roads construction and creation of transmission lines, in development of phone and Internet communications in the northern regions. They will also put efforts to simplify the northerners' access to electricity, including by connecting settlements to hydroelectric power stations, conductors of clean energy (SDG 7: Affordable and clean energy).

Goal 3: Strong, Sustainable, Diversified and Inclusive Local and Regional Economies

The economy of the northern territories of Canada traditionally experiences development difficulties due to many obstacles to business activities: low level of infrastructure development, high energy costs, dispersion of the population and its low level of education and qualifications (compared to other regions of the country), difficult access to banking and legal services.

The Canadian authorities actively support the development of the economy based on northern Indigenous peoples' traditional crafts, commercial fishing, development of cultural industries and sustainable tourism. At the same time, special attention is paid to attracting foreign direct investment and finding new opportunities for concluding bilateral or multilateral free trade agreements. The main objectives in Canada are to reduce the income gap and to fight discrepancies in living standards between the inhabitants of the Arctic and non-Arctic territories of Canada (SDG 10: Reduced inequalities). They also strive to increase the number of jobs for northerners (SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth), optimize the process of natural resources extraction so that the process is economically profitable and causes minimal harm to the environment (SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production).

Goal 4: Knowledge and Understanding Guides Decision-making

Difficulties in accessing education for northern Indigenous peoples have already been noted above. Nevertheless, Canadian government is concerned about the limited access of northerners to scientific research projects conducted by local and international teams in the Arctic. In accordance with the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework, Canada seeks to involve local residents (both women and men) in research (SDG 5: Gender equality), to encourage them to cooperate with scientists and to independently decide what type of research will be most useful for the development of their regions. There is also a desire to increase the number of sociological and demographic scientific projects aimed at developing recommendations for improving the quality of life of Indigenous peoples. An important goal is also to develop access to education (SDG 4: Quality education) and to reduce the gap in access to research between people in the Arctic and non-Arctic regions (SDG 10: Reduced inequalities).

Goal 5: Canadian Arctic and Northern Ecosystems are Healthy and Resilient

The Arctic zone of Canada is warming 2–3 times faster than other parts of the planet, which leads to infrastructure problems, risks to the ecosystems of the sea and land, and to negative impacts on the inhabitants of the north.

At the moment, the Canadian authorities are aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving the quality of weather and climate change monitoring systems, as well as at disseminating information on responsible attitudes to nature and ways to counteract natural disasters among residents of the Arctic regions (SDG 13: Climate action, SDG 14: Life below water, SDG 15: Life on land).

Goal 6: The Rules-based International Order in the Arctic Responds Effectively to New Challenges and Opportunities

The Arctic and North Policy Framework notes that Canada has made a significant contribution to the establishment of international order in the Arctic, but current climate and geopolitical trends threaten national boundaries and international law, and Canada calls on international institutions and organizations to cooperate in order to prevent acts of violation of international agreements. It is also mentioned that Canada is ready to contribute to the establishment of a new order in the Arctic region, which will meet its national interests: improving the quality of life of the peoples of the north, protecting ecosystems, increasing attention to the opinion of local communities, in particular Indigenous peoples, protecting national borders. To achieve these goals, it is planned to actively interact with the Arctic and non-Arctic states (SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals), as well as to broadcast the official position on international platforms (forums, international organizations).

Goal 7: The Canadian Arctic and North and its People are Safe, Secure and Well-defended

Arctic is becoming a region of military buildup and display. The current situation has caused much controversy regarding the definition of national borders of states and international waters available for navigation. Canada takes a hard-lying stance on the Northwest Passage, considering it part of Canadian territorial waters, which could complicate international shipping in the Arctic Ocean.

In order to secure its borders and residents of the Arctic territories, Canada increases the presence of the Canadian Armed Forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Border Service in the northern regions. Through such measures, Canada seeks to assert its sovereignty and, at the same time, to increase the preparedness of the inhabitants of the region for natural disasters.

Goal 8: Reconciliation Supports Self-determination and Nurtures Mutually Respectful Relationships Between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Peoples

From 2007 to 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission operated in Canada. It has prepared a final report, which also became an integral part of the Canadian Arctic and Northern Policy Framework. The Commission's report refers to the need to reconcile Indigenous peoples and other Canadians through the dissemination of comprehensive information on the history of Indigenous peoples (including the peoples of the North) and on the damage caused to local people in the process of developing Canadian territories. The Canadian government has publicly acknowledged its policy mistakes towards the Inuit and Indians. Canada will continue to act in accordance with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and strengthen mutual understanding among citizens in order to contribute to the development of a common future.

Table 1 - Alignment of the Sustainable Development Goals with Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework 2019

<p>Goal 1: Canadian Arctic and northern Indigenous peoples are resilient and healthy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eradication of poverty and hunger; • ensuring mental and physical health; • creating an enabling environment for children, with emphasis on education and culture; • intensifying the fight against violence against Indigenous girls and women; • culturally acceptable approaches to justice, strengthening restorative justice and other alternatives to imprisonment. 	1 – No poverty
	2 – Zero hunger
	3 – Good health and well-being
	4 – Quality education
	5 – Gender equality
	10 – Reduced inequalities 16 – Peace, justice and strong institutions
<p>Goal 2: Strengthened infrastructure that closes gaps with other regions of Canada</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitoring the state of the environment in the Arctic zone to combat climate change in the Arctic; • investment in the construction of roads, the development of mobile and Internet communications; • simplification of access to electricity, including by connecting settlements to hydropower systems 	13 – Climate action 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure 7 – Affordable and clean energy
	10 – Reduced inequalities 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth 12 – Responsible consumption and production
<p>Goal 3: Strong, sustainable, diversified and inclusive local and regional economies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • narrowing the gap in income and living standards between arctic 	



<p>and non-Arctic dwellers;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing the number of jobs for northerners; • optimization of the process of extraction of natural resources so that the extraction process is economically profitable and brings minimal harm to the environment 	
<p>Goal 4: Knowledge and understanding guides decision-making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • investing in educational projects for residents of the Arctic territories; • equal involvement of women and men of the northern territories in scientific research; • reducing the gap in access to education and science between the inhabitants of the Arctic and non-Arctic territories. 	<p>4 – Quality education 5 – Gender equality 10 – Reduced inequalities</p>
<p>Goal 5: Canadian Arctic and northern ecosystems are healthy and resilient</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing knowledge about the responsible consumption of natural resources among Indigenous minorities; • reduction of pollution of land and water bodies in the northern regions; • development of interregional and international cooperation to combat climate change in the Arctic. • 	<p>12 – Responsible consumption and production 14 – Life below water; 15 – Life on land 13 – Climate action; 17 – Partnership for the goals</p>
<p>Goal 6: The rules-based international order in the Arctic responds effectively to new challenges and opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing Canada's leadership at international venues where Arctic issues are discussed; • increasing the representation of Canadian citizens, and in particular the north, in international forums and negotiations; • strengthening bilateral cooperation with the main Arctic and non-Arctic states; • a clear definition of Canadian maritime boundaries in the Arctic. 	<p>16 – Peace, justice and strong institutions 17 – Partnership for the goals</p>



<p>Goal 7: The Canadian Arctic and North and its people are safe, secure and well-defended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> strengthening Canada’s cooperation with international partners on state security and protection of the population of the Arctic territories; improving the speed of prevention and response to security incidents in the Arctic and the North; enforcing Canada’s legislative and regulatory framework governing transport connecting, border integrity and environmental protection in the Arctic and the North; enhancing nationwide emergency management capacity in the Arctic and northern communities; maintaining public safety through effective and culturally sensitive crime prevention initiatives in the Arctic regions. 	<p>16 – Peace, justice and strong institutions</p>
<p>Goal 8: Reconciliation supports self-determination and nurtures mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> protection and enforcement of the rights of northern Indigenous peoples; providing opportunities for the Arctic and northern peoples, within the framework of which they are able to independently conclude treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements with the head of state (the British monarch), which will provide the basis for their permanent relationship; the restoration and strengthening of the Indigenous culture, including national languages; working with Northern Governments and Indigenous peoples’ organizations to bridge the socio-economic gap between Arctic Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians. 	<p>10 – Reduced inequalities</p>

Compiled by the authors on the basis of Canada’s Arctic and Northern Policy Framework 2019.

1.3. Mechanisms and Formats of Canada’s International Cooperation Multilateral Mechanisms

Canada considers the Arctic Council, the Arctic Coast Guard Forum, the Arctic Economic Council and various UN organizations, including the International Maritime Organization, to be the leading multilateral formats for discussing the Arctic agenda.

The Arctic Council, founded in Canada 25 years ago, remains the leading forum for cooperation on Arctic issues between Arctic states and Indigenous peoples. On May 20, 2021, at the Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting, Marc Garneau, Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, announced the establishment of a permanent secretariat for the Council's Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) at the Northern Quebec University Institute of Laval University and signed a Ministerial Declaration. The establishment of a permanent SDWG secretariat at one of Canada's leading universities demonstrates the country's significant role in Arctic research and the importance that Canada attaches to interaction within the Arctic Council., through a number of federal departments and agencies, is actively involved in the scientific and technical work of the Arctic Council, where many unique projects are being⁴ implemented.

This work is carried out in the following six expert working groups:

- 1. The Arctic Contaminants Action Program (ACAP)** aims to prevent adverse effects, reduce and ultimately eliminate pollution of the Arctic environment;
- 2. The Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP)** provides reliable and comprehensive information on the state and threats to the Arctic environment, as well as scientific advice to support Arctic governments in taking remediation and preventive measures related to pollutants;
- 3. The Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF)** programme aims to conserve Arctic biodiversity and bring the results to the attention of Governments and Arctic residents, promoting practices that ensure the sustainability of Arctic natural resources;
- 4. The Emergency Prevention, Preparedness, and Response (EPPR)** program is designed to promote prevention, preparedness, response, and search and rescue to environmental and other emergencies and accidents;
- 5. The Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME)** includes policy and non-emergency pollution prevention and control measures related to the protection of the Arctic marine environment from both land and sea activities;
- 6. The Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG)** proposes and implements measures to be taken by the Arctic States to promote sustainable development in the Arctic, including opportunities to protect and improve the environment and the economy, culture and health of Indigenous peoples and Arctic commu-

⁴ Canada and the Arctic Council // Government of Canada [Electronic resource]. URL: https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/international_relations-relations_internationales/arctic_council-conseil_arctique/index.aspx?lang=eng&_ga=2.232951710.1061223987.1636486565-666925720.1636486565 https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/international_relations-relations_internationales/arctic_council-conseil_arctique/index.aspx?lang=eng&_ga=2.232951710.1061223987.1636486565-666925720.1636486565 (date of access: 20.11.2021)

nities, and to improve the environmental, economic and social conditions of Arctic communities as a whole.

Canada is also actively participating in the Arctic Coast Guard Forum, which brings countries together to respond to maritime emergencies, the Arctic Economic Council and the University of the Arctic, a project that brings together institutions of higher education and research centres involved in Arctic studies.

The Nordic Council is a significant intergovernmental organization for Canada, including representatives of Sweden, Norway, Finland and Iceland. Not being a member of the organization, Canada is actively accelerating the development of joint projects with 4 countries. For example, in 2018–2019, a joint project “Nordic-Canada Health Collective” was functioning, the main purpose of which was to supply high-tech medical equipment from the member countries of the Nordic Council to Canada⁵.

Canada is seeking to integrate the Arctic agenda, in particular the issues of improving the quality of life of Indigenous minorities, into its multilateral trade agreements, for example, in the USMCA (Canada-USA-Mexico Free Trade Agreement). In the USMCA, Canada has successfully included a clause affirming that Canada can take or support the measures it deems necessary to meet its legal obligations to Aboriginal peoples. Other provisions recognize the roles and priorities of Aboriginal peoples in sections covering environmental protection, investment, textile industry development, and, which confirms Canada’s commitment to and ability to benefit from trade and investment for More Equitable Access to and Ability of Aboriginal Peoples to Trade and Investment⁶.

Bilateral Mechanisms

The Arctic and North Policy Framework notes the importance of Canada’s engagement with Arctic and non-Arctic states. First of all, these are the United States and Denmark.

Demographic, geographical and socio-economic similarities between the Canadian Arctic, American Alaska and Danish Greenland serve as the basis for cooperation between states. The specificity of the Canadian approach is cooperation not only at the level of central governments, but also at the level of the leadership of territories and provinces, at the level of organizations representing the interests of Indigenous minorities. Canada also plans to expand its participation in existing bilateral partnerships, such as the North American Aerospace Defense Command.

⁵ Nordic-Canada Health Collective // Nordic Innovation [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.nordicinnovation.org/programs/nordic-canada-health-collective> (date of access 27.11.2021)

⁶ International Chapter. Arctic and Northern Policy Framework // Government of Canada [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1562867415721/1562867459588> (date of access: 27.11.2021)



With the U.S. and Denmark, Canada is seeking a peaceful bilateral settlement of maritime boundary disputes. With the United States, Canada has a territorial dispute in the Beaufort Sea area, with Denmark — in relation to the Lincoln Sea and Hans Island.

Canada plans to build relationships with Russia on key issues on the Arctic agenda, such as Indigenous issues, scientific cooperation, environmental protection, shipping and search and rescue⁷.

A special role in Canadian international cooperation is played by interaction with the Nordic countries - Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Interaction with these states on the development of the north and the Arctic takes place mainly within the framework of the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Canada plans to build relationships with Russia on key issues on the Arctic agenda, such as Indigenous issues, scientific cooperation, environmental protection, shipping and search and rescue.

2. Russian-Canadian Cooperation in the Field of Sustainable Development

2.1. Bilateral Cooperation between Russia and Canada in the Arctic

Russia and Canada act from similar positions in the area of sustainable development of the Arctic region and establishing international partnership in the “Northern dimension”. Contacts between officials, experts, representatives of the academic community are maintained in different areas, including issues concerning the rights of Indigenous peoples of the North, the continental shelf, climate, environmental protection, fishing, and shipping in the Arctic.

Russia and Canada remain focused on the fullest possible disclosure of the potential of the Arctic as a territory of peaceful dialogue and sustainable development, combining scientific and technical achievements of the 21st century with the cultural and historical traditions of the northern indigenous population. The Arctic region has the potential to become a starting point for strengthening cooperation between Russia and Canada. At the same time, it is worth noting the importance of separating the Arctic agenda, on which Russia and Canada are able to successfully cooperate, from other issues on which the two states have confrontation.

Russian-Canadian cooperation is distinguished by a well-developed legislative framework. In the field of cooperation in the Arctic region, the first comprehensive document was the Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of Canada on Cooperation in the Arctic and the North, signed on June 19, 1992⁸. Among other areas of cooperation, the following were identified that are in line with the UN SDGs:

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of Canada on Cooperation in the Arctic and in the North, 1992 // Official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. [Electronic resource]. URL: https://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/international_contracts/2_contract/-/storage-viewer/bilateral/page-433/48734?_storageviewer_WAR_storageviewerportlet_advancedSearch=false&_storageviewer_WAR_storageviewerportlet_fromPage=search&_storageviewer_WAR_storageviewerportlet_andOperator=1 (Date of access: 23.11.2021)



- Development of linkages and contacts between Indigenous peoples;
- Rational land use and land management;
- Prevention of the transfer and effects of harmful pollutants on the environment;
- Education and training;
- Fisheries sciences and technologies;
- Healthcare;
- Tourism.

In the field of environmental protection, on May 8, 1993, Russian Federation and Canada signed the Agreement on Cooperation on Environmental Issues⁹. Cooperation on a number of issues, including the protection of marine biological resources, combating climate change and monitoring, was envisaged under this agreement.

The Ukrainian crisis of 2014 had a serious negative impact on Russian-Canadian relations¹⁰. In this context, Russia and Canada face the task of maintaining the Arctic agenda as isolated from issues that cause major contradictions in bilateral relations. Russia and Canada are striving to resume and develop cooperation in the Arctic, in particular in the context of sustainable development. At the same time, Russian-Canadian cooperation in the Arctic, including issues of sustainable development issues, has the potential to become a starting point for restoring cooperation on a broader range of issues.

For example, on May 20, 2021, on the sidelines of the ministerial meeting of the Arctic Council in Reykjavik, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation S. V. Lavrov talked with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada M. Garno. One of the main topics of the conversation was cooperation in the Arctic and in the North¹¹. Russian-Canadian cooperation in the Arctic is possible in the field of environmental protection, in the scientific sphere, and in the area of Indigenous peoples' rights protection.

Cooperation in the Field of Education and Science

In the context of growing foreign policy tensions, alternative diplomatic tools for promoting cooperation, for example, science diplomacy, are of sole importance.

⁹ Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of Canada on Cooperation on Environmental Issues, 1993 // Official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://mddoc.mid.ru/api/ia/download/?uid=9a385953-efad-4a61-bbfe-185dcb0bf985> (Date of access: 11.26.2021)

¹⁰ Viakhireva N. Russia-Canada Relations in the Period of Crisis, 2014-20 //Canadian Journal of European and Russian Studies. – 2020. – T. 14. – №. 1. – S. 30-54.

¹¹ Russian Foreign Minister's meeting Sergey Lavrova with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada M.Garnon Official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. [Electronic resource]. URL: https://www.mid.ru/diverse/-/asset_publisher/zwI2FuDbhJx9/content/o-vstrece-ministra-inostrannyh-del-rossii-s-v-lavrova-s-ministrom-inostrannyh-del-kanady-m-garno (Date of access: 23.11.2021)



Dialogue and Cooperation in the Arctic”¹². The conference was attended by experts, diplomats, researchers, representatives of the business community and Indigenous peoples of the Arctic. In addition to the issues of Russian-Canadian cooperation, the conference discussed the problems of Indigenous peoples and the Arctic environment in the context of sustainable development.

In 2017, an agreement was signed to strengthen international scientific cooperation in the Arctic. All Arctic countries, including the Russian Federation and Canada, have become parties to this agreement. The purpose of this agreement is to strengthen cooperation in the field of scientific activity to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the development of scientific knowledge about the Arctic. The parties agreed to make maximum efforts to facilitate the entry and exit to the research area of scientists, research platforms, materials, also make efforts to ensure free access to research infrastructure, data and research results. In addition, the parties pledged to promote the expansion of opportunities for the inclusion of students receiving education at various levels and young scientists in scientific activities, with the aim of training future generations of researchers and increasing the potential and competence to improve knowledge about the Arctic. An important element of the Agreement is Article 9 — “Traditional and indigenous knowledge”, which obliges the Parties to encourage, where appropriate, the use of indigenous and traditional knowledge, the development of dialogue between researchers and traditional knowledge holders, as well as the involvement of indigenous knowledge holders in research activities¹³.

In April 2021, the Center for Canadian Studies of St Petersburg University held an international scientific conference “Cooperation between Russia and Canada in the Arctic at the Federal and Regional Level: Infrastructure, Economic Opportunities and Well-Being of Northerners”. High-level diplomats, representatives of the world academic community, members of public associations took part in the discussion on several scientific issues¹⁴.

Russian-Canadian cooperation in the field of science and education is also carried out in the form of joint research projects. Russian-Canadian expedition to study salmon in Alaska¹⁵, carried out in 2019, as well as a Canadian expedition to study reindeer harnesses in Yamal, carried out in 2017¹⁶ can serve as examples of successful research projects in the field of sustainable development.

¹² Conference “Canada-Russia Dialogue and Cooperation in the Arctic” // Institute of European, Russian and Eurasian Studies. [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://carleton.ca/eurus/cu-events/conference-canada-russia-dialogue-cooperation-arctic/> (Date of access: 23.11.2021)

¹³ “Agreement on strengthening international Arctic scientific cooperation” // Electronic fund of legal and regulatory and technical documents [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://docs.cntd.ru/document/542624227> (Date of application: 10.12.2021)

¹⁴ International scientific-practical conference “Cooperation between Russia and Canada in the Arctic at the federal and regional level: infrastructure, economic opportunities and well-being of the northerners” // St. Petersburg State University [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://spbu.ru/openuniversity/documents/mezhdunarodnaya-nauchno-prakticheskaya-konferenciya-sotrudnichestvo-rossii> (Date of access: 23.11.2021)

¹⁵ Scientists from Russia and Canada completed an expedition to study salmon in Alaska // TASS. [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://nauka.tass.ru/nauka/6231555> (Date of access: 23.11.2021)

¹⁶ In Yamal, anthropologists from Canada study the ancient reindeer harnesses // Komsomolskaya Pravda. Yamal. [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.yamal.kp.ru/online/news/2746427/> (Date of access: 23.11.2021)



A major platform for cooperation is the UArctic — a network of universities, colleges, research institutions and other organizations cooperating in the field of research in the North, on the basis of which various scientific conferences and meetings are held annually. Within the framework of the UArctic, a number of Canadian Institutions of Higher Education (the University of Saskatchewan, Yukon College, the University of Northern British Columbia) organized online courses “Circumpolar Sciences”, which can be attended by students from Russia¹⁷. An important feature of the UArctic is the involvement of young people — students, young researchers, thus forming a mentality among young people which values cooperation in the Arctic. Nevertheless, to increase the effectiveness of the University of the Arctic, it is also necessary to develop Internet literacy and increase the availability of computer and information technologies for residents of the northern and Arctic territories.

There are other examples of successful cooperation at the level of higher education institutions in Russia and Canada. The Arctic State Agrotechnological University, located in Yakutsk, and the Canadian Memorial University of Newfoundland are discussing joint programs on a number of problems of the Arctic zone, including the study of the process of permafrost melting, the conservation of living natural resources and the development of an economic base for indigenous peoples of the north.

Ensuring the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic and the North

Cooperation in the area of Indigenous rights ensuring is also carried out mainly at the non-state level.

One of the mechanisms for cooperation in this area is the organizations of Indigenous peoples of the Arctic. For example, the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) which apart from Canadian Inuit people also include representatives of the Chukchi and Yupik who live in Russia. Active Russian-Canadian cooperation within the framework of the ICC was carried out mainly in the 2000s. For example, in the period from 1996 to 2005, a project aimed at institution building in Russian Arctic was implemented in two phases. This project was carried out in collaboration with Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON)¹⁸. In 2017, the Inuit Polar Council held three summits on economic development, environmental management and education¹⁹.

Within the framework of this direction, it is also worth noting the work carried out within the framework of the “Kupol” Foundation. Non-profit organization “Fund for Social Development “Kupol” was established in May 2009. Its founder was JSC “Chukotka Mining and Geological Company” (part of the Kinross Gold group of companies (Canada). The “Kupol” Foundation provides funding in the following areas: Traditions of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East, including methods of traditional environmental

¹⁷ International online courses within the framework of the program “Circumpolar Sciences” // Official website of NARFU. [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://narfu.ru/international/news/obyavleniya/335716/> (Date of access: 23.11.2021) ¹⁸ Institutional Building for Northern Aboriginal Peoples in Russia (INRIPP-2) » // Inuit Circumpolar Council. [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/media-and-reports/archives/institutional-building-for-northern-aboriginal-peoples-in-russia-inripp-2/> (Date of access: 23.11.2021) ¹⁹ [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/icc-activities/icc-summits/> # (Date of access: 23.11.2021)



management, Healthcare, Education and training, Sustainable development of small and medium-sized businesses²⁰. A number of projects financed by the Fund are currently being implemented, in particular, the project for the construction of a greenhouse complex in the hard-to-reach village of Vaega²¹, the project of material and technical equipment of the “Royryrn — Semey”, in order to increase the economic efficiency of traditional fishing carried out by this community of Indigenous people.

Environmental protection

Preserving the natural diversity of the Arctic territories is a significant priority for Russia and Canada, and a number of successful bilateral projects are being implemented and are being prepared for implementation in this area.

Since 2006, there has been a project to expand the habitats of forest bison on the Eurasian continent, implemented jointly by the Government of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) and the Canadian National Parks Management Agency. For further conservation and reproduction of the population, bison are imported to Yakutia from the National Park “Elk Island” of the Canadian province of Alberta, which contributes to the restoration of the historical habitat of animals on the territory of the Sakha Republic and increases the biodiversity of the ecosystems of the North. In March 2020, at the height of the pandemic, the last 30 individuals were delivered. Thanks to the project, the population of forest bison in Yakutia has increased from 30 to 250 individuals in 15 years²².

In 2018, an agreement was signed to prevent unregulated fishing in the central part of the Arctic Ocean, in the establishing of which Russia and Canada took an active part. The agreement was open for signature by Canada, the People’s Republic of China, the Kingdom of Denmark for Greenland and the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Kingdom of Norway, the Russian Federation, the United States of America, and the European Union. The agreement aims to prevent unregulated fishing on the high seas in the central Arctic Ocean through the application of precautionary conservation and management measures as part of a long-term strategy to protect healthy marine ecosystems and ensure the conservation and sustainable use of fish stocks. It should be noted that this agreement also implied the development of a joint program of research activities in order to improve knowledge of the ecosystems of the central part of the Arctic Ocean

²⁰ Kupol Foundation // Official website of the Kupol Foundation. [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://kupolfoundation.ru/> (Date of access: 23.11.2021)

²¹ Annual Report for 2020 // Official website of the Kupol Foundation. [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://kupolfoundation.ru/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Godovoj-otchet-za-2020-god.pdf> (Date of access: 23.11.2021)

²² The population of forest bison in Yakutia for 15 years increased to 250 individuals // TASS. 1.10.2021 [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/12555153> (Date of access: 8.12.2021)

to establish the availability of fish stocks that could be harvested on a sustainable basis²³. Under this implication, in April 2019 the Russian Federation, with the assistance of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, has hosted a Scientific Conference of the signatory countries²⁴.

At the end of 2020, in the Arctic State Agrotechnological University (Yakutsk), a meeting was held with representatives of Russia and Canada on the implementation of a joint project to restore the number of herds of caribou reindeer in Canada. The University proposed establishment a breeding and genetic center for northern domestic reindeer breeding, develop cooperation in the direction of ecology and nature management, and also expressed its readiness to contribute to the organization of an experimental farm for breeding domestic reindeer in Canada, with the involvement of experienced reindeer breeders of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) (with the transportation of reindeer from Yakutia to Canada) for employment of the indigenous peoples of Canada. The possibility of implementing joint projects to study the processes of melting permafrost and the development of an economic base for the indigenous peoples of the north is also being considered²⁵.

Infrastructure and Transport

The establishment of cross-polar transport linkages is another important element in ensuring the goals of sustainable development in the Arctic region. The development of transport infrastructure is a key component of ensuring supply chains, on which the food security of the Arctic directly depends.

In 2003, the “Arctic Bridge” project was launched, which was supposed to connect Churchill (Canada) and Murmansk (Russia) by the sea. In 2007, shipping began along this route. However, in 2016 due to economic issues, the port of Churchill was closed²⁶. The closure of the port was negatively perceived by the local population, as a result the port and its serving infrastructure were sold to local authorities and Indigenous communities. In 2019, the work of the port was restored²⁷, but the “Arctic Bridge” is still paused.

Under the auspices of the International Maritime Organization, the International Polar Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (Polar Code) was signed in 2014. The Polar Code entered into force on January 1, 2017. The purpose of this Code is to ensure the safe operation of ships and protect the environment of polar regions by taking into account the types of risks characteristic of polar waters, reducing the consequences of

²³ Agreement on the Prevention of Unregulated Fishing on the High Seas in the Central Arctic Ocean. // Official Internet portal of legal information. 06/28/2018 [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/View/0001202106280035> (Date of access: 8.12.2021)

²⁴ Review of global and regional processes. Committee on Fisheries // Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. 02/05/2021 [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.fao.org/3/ne735ru/ne735ru.pdf>

²⁵ Arctic State Agrotechnological University is preparing a joint project with Canada // Siberian Science News. 30.11.2020 [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://www.sib-science.info/ru/news/agatu-gotovit-sovmestnyy-30112020> (Date of access: 08.12.2021)

²⁶ Agreement signed for sale of Churchill port, Hudson Bay rail line // CBC news. [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/omnitrax-churchill-port-hudson-bay-rail-line-ownership-1.3909286> (Date of access: 23.11.2021)

²⁷ Grain leaves Churchill for first time in four years// Grainews. [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.grainews.ca/daily/grain-leaves-churchill-for-first-time-in-four-years/> (Date of access: 23.11.2021)

which are not properly regulated by other instruments of the Organization. It brings together the positions of Canada and Russia regarding the regulation of navigation along the Northern Sea Route and the Northwest Passage. In particular, the document clarifies that polar waters impose additional navigation requirements beyond those that are typical for everyday practices. At the same time, according to the document, communities of coastal peoples of the Arctic can be, and polar ecosystems are vulnerable to human activities such as shipping. The connection between additional safety measures and environmental protection is emphasized, since any safety measure taken to reduce the likelihood of an emergency will obviously be very useful for the preservation of the environment.

2.2. Russian-Canadian Cooperation in Multilateral formats

The most intensive cooperation between Canada and Russia in the field of sustainable development takes place in a multilateral format within the framework of the Arctic Council.

In 2020, within the framework of the Sustainable Development Working Group under the leadership of Russia, the Arctic Demographic Index project was launched²⁸. Norway and Canada are co-leaders. The aim of this project is to develop a methodology for calculating the demographic index based on two natural parameters: natural decline and natural population growth, and one mechanical: migration flows. The project aim is to calculate the demographic index of 19 Arctic regions from 5 Arctic countries (9 regions of the Russian Federation, 2 regions of Norway, 3 regions of Finland, 2 regions of Sweden and 3 regions of Canada). The implementation of this project will contribute to the accumulation of up-to-date data on current population processes in the Arctic. The results of the project are supposed to be placed on a specially created Internet resource.

Currently, the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) is completing a project related to food security, which is titled "Arctic Foods Innovation Cluster (AFIC)²⁹". Under this project, the working group has developed the plan of establishing the Arctic Food Innovation Cluster, which is aimed to address current regional and global challenges in the field of food security. In Russia, research was underway in the fields of agroforestry, aquaculture, and biotechnology to identify how innovations can be used to promote environmentally sustainable and profitable land use systems³⁰. Under the project, a series of comprehensive studies are being conducted into the state of marine ecosystems and aquatic bio-resources in the Russian Arctic, including the use of White Sea seaweed as an ingredient of novel products. As for Canadian participation in

²⁸ https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/bitstream/handle/11374/2493/RF_Arctic%20Demography%20Index_engl._09.09.2020.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y

²⁹ Arctic Council. (2019). Proposal to SDWG: Arctic Foods Innovation Cluster. Retrieved from https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/bitstream/handle/11374/2484/Proposal-re-ARCTIC_FOOD_INNOVATION_CLUSTER-as-of-14-Jan-2019.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

³⁰ Arctic Council. Innovating the Food Industry on the World. Retrieved from <https://arctic-council.org/news/innovating-the-food-industry-on-the-top-of-the-world/>

the project, it has launched a pilot project in the Northwest Territories to create a hydroponic farm in which soilless plantcultivation technologies will be applied³¹.

Several projects with the participation of Russia and Canada have been already completed and extended to the second phase. One of these projects is titled "EALLU Arctic Indigenous Youth, Climate Change and Food Culture"³² and concerns Indigenous food culture. The first phase was aimed at documentation, systematization, and exchange of traditional and Indigenous people knowledge related to food culture. Another goal of the project was to promote knowledge development for innovation, working in the intersection between Academia and business, between science and traditional knowledge. The project also focuses on youth involvement and engagement. During the second phase, the project will result in international seminars and place-based workshops with the participation of Indigenous youth.

Another mechanism of cooperation in the field of sustainable development with Russian and Finnish participation is the International Union for Circumpolar Health. The Union deals with the health problems and needs of the circumpolar regions and peoples of the North, works on organizing labor safety, improving living conditions, and access to healthcare for the local population³³.

Russian and Canadian companies also cooperate within the framework of the Arctic Economic Council (AEC). The AEC is an independent organization funded by membership fees. The activities of the AEC are aimed on promoting business cooperation in the Arctic and developing sustainable business practices in the region³⁴.

3. Prospects for the Development of Russian-Canadian Cooperation

Cooperation between Russia and Canada is largely affected by the sanctions imposed on Russian individuals and organizations by the Canadian authorities. Nevertheless, the cooperation in the Arctic region has the potential for reviving cooperation in other fields.

Working groups within the framework of Arctic Council will remain the main format of Russian-Canadian cooperation.

³¹ Innovating the Food Industry on the World // Arctic Council. [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://arctic-council.org/news/innovating-the-food-in-dustry-on-the-top-of-the-world/> (date of access: 11.11.2021)

³² Arctic Council. (2019). EALLU - Arctic Indigenous Youth, Climate Change and Food Culture 2nd Phase 2019–2021 Draft v1. Retrieved from https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/bitstream/handle/11374/2485/SDWG_2019-09_Isafjordur_Plenary-07a_EALLU-project-proposal.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

³³ International congresses. International Union for Circumpolar Health. Retrieved from <https://iuch.net/meetings/>

³⁴ About Arctic Economic council Arctic economic council. [Electronic resource]. <https://arcticeconomiccouncil.com/about/>

Interaction at the level of Russian and Canadian Groups and Associations of Indigenous Peoples

Cooperation in the field of ensuring the rights of Indigenous peoples and expanding their participation in the activities of the Arctic Council in order to preserve their languages and traditions and raise the standards of education and social security in the Arctic regions seems to be a promising direction for the development of cooperation between Russia and Canada.

Indigenous rights enduring is an important part of Canadian domestic and foreign policy in the Arctic. Indigenous peoples have important place in current Arctic and Northern Policy Framework. Moreover, the protection of the rights of Indigenous peoples is highlighted as one of the promising areas of cooperation with Russia³⁵. The importance of the historical and cultural heritage of the Indigenous peoples of the Arctic is also noted in the Strategy for the Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation and Ensuring National Security until 2035. Protecting the rights of Indigenous peoples is closely linked to SDG 10: Reduced inequalities.

Russia and Canada are working together on a number of projects aimed on Indigenous rights protection which are being implemented within the framework of multilateral cooperation formats. For instance, Canada and Russia participate in the project "Indigenous Youth of the Arctic, Climate Change and Food Culture", within the framework of the Sustainable Development Working Group of the Arctic Council³⁶.

Healthcare

Russia and Canada have vast territories in the Arctic and the North, which are home to a significant part of the Russian and Canadian people. Given the difficult climatic conditions, the remoteness of northern settlements, as well as the insufficiently developed infrastructure in the North, issues related to ensuring access of the Arctic population to medical services and medicines are of particular importance.

Currently, cooperation in this area is not sufficiently developed. However, the northern healthcare sector is a promising area of effective cooperation, both in bilateral intergovernmental formats and in multilateral and non-government formats, for example under the framework of the International Union for Circumpolar Health. Cooperation in this area will contribute to the implementation of SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being.

³⁵ Arctic and Northern Policy Framework International chapter // Government of Canada. [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1562867415721/1562867459588> (Date of access: 27.11.2021)

³⁶ EALLU - Arctic Indigenous Youth, Climate Change and Food Culture 2nd Phase 2019–2021 Draft v1 // Arctic Council, 2019. [Electronic resource]. URL: https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/bitstream/handle/11374/2485/SDWG_2019-09_Isafjordur_Plenary-07a_EALLU-project-proposal.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y (date of access: 11.11.2021)



Cooperation in the Field of Education and Science

International and bilateral scientific conferences with representatives of the universities and expert communities of the two countries will be an important platform for exchanging information and measures development to resolve problems of the Arctic zones of both Russia and Canada. Further development of joint research projects and scientific exchange seem promising. Cooperation on the promotion of the languages of the indigenous peoples of the north, on language exchanges between residents of the Canadian and Russian Arctic, including the use of online technologies, can be promising. A number of universities are developing suitable platforms for this – for example, the HSE Scientific and Educational Laboratory for Socio-Humanitarian Research of the North and the Arctic (Arctic Social Sciences and Humanities), which is engaged in research in the field of linguistics and socio-cultural anthropology. The key element of the laboratory's research is the simultaneous study of the languages and cultures of the population of the Russian and foreign Arctic, which allows us to get the most complete understanding of the linguistic and socio-cultural situation in the region³⁷.

An important area of scientific cooperation is environmental studies. It is worth noting that Russia and Canada already have certain experience in conducting joint research and scientific expeditions. For example, conducted in 2019 Russian-Canadian expedition to study salmon in Alaska³⁸. This expedition studied the factors affecting the health of the fish and developed measures, implementation of which could contribute to the restoration of salmon stocks in this region. Given the high scientific potential of both Russia and Canada in the field of studying the negative effects of climate change, cooperation in this area continues.

Cooperation in the field of science and education contributes to the implementation of SDG 4: Quality Education, SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals.

Developing Cooperation under the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP)

Countering climate change and promoting the preservation of ecosystems of the north are among the fundamental elements of the Arctic strategies of Russia and Canada, thus Russian-Canadian cooperation in field of information collection and exchange seem quite promising. The establishment of joint research projects and the development of scientific recommendations to support Arctic governments in taking preventive measures related to pollution can be an important step towards the formation of multilateral cooperation between the-

³⁷ Scientific and Educational Laboratory of Socio-humanitarian research of the North and the Arctic // HSE [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://hum.hse.ru/arctic/> (Date of access: 8.12.2021)

³⁸ Scientists from Russia and Canada completed an expedition to study salmon in Alaska // TASS. [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://nauka.tass.ru/nauka/6231555> (Date of access: 23.11.2021)

wo states in order to ensure the sustainable development of the Arctic. Cooperation in this field will contribute to the implementation of SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals.

Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection and Climate Risk Management

Joint Canadian and Russian measures countering Arctic marine environment pollution could become an important field of cooperation, which is also closely related to the development of environmental monitoring systems.

Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework notes the importance of dialogue with Russia in the field of environmental protection.

The following are noted as problems faced in this field by the northern communities of both Russia and Canada: melting of sea ice and permafrost thawing, soil erosion³⁹. Melting permafrost and coastal erosion causes serious damage to Arctic cities and infrastructure and leads to the disappearance of unique Arctic ecosystems⁴⁰. Given the importance of the Arctic territories for Russia and Canada and the special problems associated with the permafrost thawing, cooperation in this area should be expected. Cooperation in this area will contribute to the implementation of several UN SDGs: SDG 13: Climate Action and SDG 15: Life on Land. The exchange of recommendations on the development of environmental legislation to curb the pollution and consolidation on putting these issues on the agenda of the Arctic Council can bring mutual benefits to the two countries.

Development of Sustainable Tourism

Improving the standard of living in the region, which is designated as the goal of all Arctic states within the framework of their Arctic strategies, is closely related to attracting tourists to the regions. Improving the quality of the urban environment, infrastructure and increasing the availability of natural resources become can lead to more attractiveness of the region.

Development of the sustainable tourism (tourism that does not harm ecosystems and the traditional way of life of Indigenous peoples of the north) is the basis for the capital inflow to the Arctic regions. It seems expedient to launch joint tourist programs, which include destinations from the Russian and Canadian Arctic. Cooperation in the field of sustainable development will contribute to the implementation of SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth.

³⁹ Arctic and Northern Policy Framework International chapter // Government of Canada. [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1562867415721/1562867459588> (Date of access: 27.11.2021)

⁴⁰ Melting permafrost in remote areas of Russia threatens homes and infrastructure // News of Yakutia. [Electronic resource].



Cooperation at the level of the Arctic regions of Russia and Canada

According to the speakers of the Conference on Russian-Canadian cooperation in the field of sustainable development of the Arctic region, the development of cooperation at the level of the regions of Russia and Canada seems promising. For example, Salekhard and Murmansk could find their twin towns among Canadian cities. It is especially necessary and possible to develop twinning ties between Murmansk and St. Johns, which are united by the history of the northern convoys during the Second World War. It is possible to develop ties with such Canadian cities as Iqaluit, Fort McMurray — cities that are close to the Russian Arctic territories in their geography, economic structure, and history.

Russia is trying to promote the development of ties between the northern regions of the two countries, in particular Yakutia, Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Chukotka, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug, Murmansk Region on the Russian side and with the provinces of Newfoundland, Labrador, Quebec, Alberta, Nunavut and the Yukon territory adjacent to Alaska. There are already strong historical ties between some of them, which are being strengthened with the help of current and planned joint projects. The main condition for long-term equal cooperation is that the regions have their own resources, on the basis of which they can exchange and independently build international relations. The initiative should come more from local governments, regional leaders and representatives of local communities, in particular from associations of indigenous peoples of the north.

Regional cooperation is also possible in the field of exchange of experience and traditions, in the field of joint research, as well as in the field of combating climate risks. Each constituent entity of the Russian Federation was recommended to prepare its own adaptation plan to climate change by the end of 2022⁴¹, while the regions strive to create solutions whose data will meet international standards, and such experience can be valuable for residents and authorities of Canadian regions and provinces. Opposite statement is also fair that the experience of the Arctic and northern territories of Canada in adapting to climate change can be of significant benefit to Russian regions in the process of drawing up their own programs and plans.

⁴¹ Dmitry Medvedev approved the national action plan for the first stage of adaptation to climate change for the period up to 2022. // Government of Russia. 04.01.2020. [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://government.ru/news/38739> / (Date of Access: 09.12.2021)

Shipping issues in the Arctic Ocean and territorial boundaries in the Arctic

Russia and Canada have similar positions on the issue of freedom of navigation in the Arctic Ocean. In particular, the Northern Sea Route (NSR) is perceived by Russia as “a historically established national unified transport communication of Russia in the Arctic”. Part of the Northwest Passage, which runs through the Canadian Arctic Archipelago, is considered part of Canada’s territorial waters in Canada. The desire to protect their borders in the Arctic is clearly reflected in the Arctic strategies of both states. For this reason, it seems possible to develop cooperation on the issue of combining efforts to defend new conditions of navigation within the two specified sea routes at the international level, which will bring benefits for Russia and Canada.

Russia and Canada share a common approach to assessing Article 234 of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which grants coastal states the right to enact national laws and regulations to prevent, reduce and control pollution of the marine environment from ships in ice-covered areas within their exclusive economic zones. Article 234 of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea establishes the responsibility of sovereign states for ensuring environmental safety. In the context of sharp climatic changes, which will lead, among other things, to a reduction in the Arctic oceanic ice cover, the question of the rights of coastal states in accordance with Article 234 can be raised. This problem gives particular importance to Russian-Canadian cooperation in this area.

Also, Russia and Canada seek to resolve territorial disputes through dialogue, in particular, the dispute over the ownership of the Lomonosov Ridge and the Mendeleev Rise, which is resolved solely in compliance with international law and UN rules of procedure.

Information exchange

The key issue in the development of Russian-Canadian cooperation in the Arctic is the exchange of scientific information, as well as data related to climate change in the Arctic. In particular, there is the problem of the impossibility of data exchange in the current political conditions, which seriously reduces the effectiveness of decision-making in the field of sustainable development of the Arctic region.

Of great importance is the issue of information exchange on climatic indicators, such as the rate of permafrost thawing (in Eastern Siberia and in the northern regions of Canada), precipitation volumes, the level of greenhouse gas emissions, methane, black carbon. It is important to study methane emissions both on land and on the seabed, especially given the significant areas of the Canadian and Russian continental shelves. Also valuable are data on the flora and fauna of the Arctic zone, in particular on the number of animals and fish living in the Arctic territories, in the seas and rivers.