



WHAT DOES THE ARCTIC HAVE TO DO WITH THE SDGs?

PROGRESS ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IS UNDER THREAT

ARCTIC CHANGE PUTS **ALL 17 GOALS AT RISK**

The Arctic plays a bigger role in the success of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) than has ever been considered. To achieve the SDGs we need the Arctic.

HELP THE ARCTIC, **HELP HUMANITY**

THE **LEAST RESPONSIBLE**

The countries that are highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change will become more so as rapid Arctic warming amplifies threats that magnify inequalities. Many climate vulnerable countries are the least responsible for historic CO2 emissions but will experience the brunt of the impacts of Arctic change.



Find out how the Arctic amplifies inequalities in these SDGs:



AN ARCTIC WARNING

The Arctic Ocean holds only 1% of the world’s ocean but its impact on the global climate system is disproportionately large. The Arctic marine domain comprises about a third of the world’s coastline, and the Arctic Ocean contains one-quarter of the world’s continental shelf — it is of immense socio-ecological importance. Loss of Arctic sea ice and snow cover will increase global warming by 25 to 40%. Thawing Arctic permafrost stores more than twice the amount of carbon than that currently in our atmosphere.

Find out why ice is essential for life on Earth.



KEY TO A BETTER WORLD

Warming in the Arctic causes impacts that extend far beyond its borders and carries significant economic costs. The amplified effects of climate change also threaten the development of cities and communities, disrupt supply chains and threaten food security. The push for renewable energies on Indigenous Arctic lands warns of 'green colonialism'.

Threats to key global resources in the Arctic may lead to further conflict.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

No Poverty (SDG 1)

The Arctic keeps our planet cool. Loss of Arctic sea ice and snow cover will increase global warming by 25-40%. Unchecked, climate change will push as many as 130 million people into poverty over the next decade. Stabilizing Arctic change is central to reducing this figure.

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Zero Hunger (SDG 2)

Hunger has increased for the first time in over a decade. For example, in the African Sahel, where over 30 million people are currently suffering from hunger, and where climate fluctuations are blamed for roughly 80% of the unreliable crop harvest. Arctic warming alters the jet stream and changes weather patterns, which risk simultaneous crop failure around the world leading to global food shortages and widespread food insecurity.

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Good Health and Well-Being (SDG 3)

Loss of Arctic snow and ice heightens the risk of heatwaves and heat stress events, droughts, other forms of extreme weather and increased disease. This will lead to a rise in humanitarian crises. Indigenous Peoples in the Arctic also face threats to their food, cultures and livelihoods that dependent on the predictability of the climate.



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Quality Education (SDG 4)

A warming Arctic is linked with stronger storms. Extreme rainfall is associated with poorer cognitive ability, lower rates of school enrolment and increases in child labour. The Arctic increases the risk of heatwaves, and heat-exposed students are less likely to receive quality education. Access to quality education is a long-term struggle in many Arctic communities.



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Gender Equality (SDG 5)

The Arctic's central role in the global climate system amplifies gender inequalities. In the North American Arctic, Indigenous women and girls comprise 70-90% of trafficking victims and are often left to face challenges securing food, water and fuel. Men face a disproportionately high suicide rate, stemming in part from a loss of identity due to climate change. Climate-driven disruption of gender roles parallels and increase in gender-based violence and inequitable mortality rates.



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Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6)

Arctic change raises the risk of floods, droughts, and other extreme weather, as well as rising sea levels. This disrupts access to clean water and sanitation by damaging infrastructure and causing saltwater intrusions into drinking water supplies, leading to water insecurity. In 2021 and 2022, residents of Iqaluit became water insecure after an underground fuel tank leached hydrocarbons into the town's fresh water source.

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Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG 7)

Transitioning from fossil fuels to clean and affordable energy is key to the bold climate action we need this decade and beyond. However, some renewable energy projects in the Arctic are perceived by local communities as a form of 'green colonialism.', stripping away their rights of Indigenous Peoples.

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Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8)

In 2020 alone, costs from extreme weather reached roughly US\$190 billion across the world. By 2300, Arctic warming is estimated to induce global economic impacts of more than US\$66 trillion. In Sápmi, reindeer husbandry is dependent upon predictable environmental conditions in which there is consistent access to food sources and migration routes.

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Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (SDG 9)

Warming in the Arctic directly contributes to the hundreds of billions of USD per year in climate-related costs, which means that capital needed for industrialization is diverted toward recovery efforts following climate-related disasters. The Arctic contains an estimated 22% of the world's untapped fossil fuel reserves and trillions of dollars of rare earth minerals. The melting ice has also opened shortened shipping routes to industry. However, the exploitation of both of these is offset by the global damage that Arctic warming poses globally, including risks for the agricultural, insurance and water-reliant sectors, as well as those with assets in coastal regions that are facing sea level rise and extreme weather, both of which damage roads, bridges and other infrastructure.



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Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10)

Extreme weather is 5 times more likely to displace low- and middle-income populations, and to disrupt employment. In the Arctic, Alaskan communities threatened by sea level rise and coastal erosion are left without government aid, increasing Indigenous inequalities.



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Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11)

Loss of Arctic sea ice and snow drives global heat stress, making already-hot parts of the world unbearable for living and working. Warming in the Arctic changes jet stream patterns, which in 2022, has led to extended heat stress throughout much of Europe and Asia. Elsewhere, by 2050, Southeast Asia could see a 16% reduction in labour productivity because of the rise in heat stress.



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Responsible Consumption and Production (SDG 12)

The melting Arctic is encouraging a race to gain access to emerging natural resources. The Arctic already supplies the world with roughly 10% of its oil and 25% of its natural gas. It is estimated to hold 22% of the Earth's undiscovered oil and natural gas reserves. These reserves must remain untouched and banks cannot keep financing this. Historically, the Arctic has been treated as a wasteland for nuclear testing, leading to widespread radioactive contamination.

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Climate Action (SDG 13)

The Arctic is an indicator of climate stability. Today, science shows that the Arctic is in crisis, with all indicators on land, sea, and air showing rapid decline. There is about 40% less sea ice now than there was in the 1980s. This loss of Arctic sea ice, together with snow reductions, will exacerbate global warming by 25 - 40%. Greenland's melting glaciers alone hold the capacity for 7.4m of sea level rise, which would cause worldwide devastation.

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Life Below Water (SDG 14)

The Arctic Ocean is key to ocean health around the planet as it has the biggest impact on the worldwide oceanographic circulation systems, and is thus responsible for water and food security around the world. Since 1980, the amount of summer Arctic sea ice has halved, changing the entire global marine biome and circulatory patterns.

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Life on Land (SDG 15)

The Arctic is warming 4 times faster than the rest of the planet. This record warming is altering ecosystems of land-based species globally, and it is increasing the prevalence of infectious diseases that threaten lives and livelihoods across the world. Melting permafrost unlocks greenhouse gases and increases the risk of wildfire. Together, these sources of emissions could contribute as much as 40% of the global carbon budget in achieving the Paris Agreements.



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Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions (SDG 16)

As it is warming 4 times faster than the global average, the Arctic is a new hotspot for geopolitical tension. Global nations are racing to claim the Arctic's natural resources and territories as access increases due to melt. In this process, those who rely on the resources and lands, such as Sámi reindeer herders and Inuit hunters, are forced to look elsewhere for livelihoods.



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Partnership for the Goals (SDG 17)

The fate of the Arctic will affect the future of humanity. Addressing threats to and from these global commons requires partnerships from all sectors and countries.



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