

# INTRODUCTION

## The Energy in the Arctic

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The inaugural Fulbright Arctic Initiative (FAI) program is moving into its final phases, and FAI scholars are looking towards finding new and continued synergies between their research efforts. The articles in this issue of the *Arctic and International Relations Series* represent the excellent work done by scholars contributing to the theme of “energy” for the FAI project. This collection exemplifies not only the FAI team’s diverse approaches to energy but also the Arctic researchers’ energy and dedication to scholarship itself. This volume presents the independent, individual projects by some of the FAI scholars. Though each author addresses the issue of energy from a different perspective, their combined efforts tell a comprehensive story about energy in the Arctic and the ways in which energy issues will likely develop in the future.

It was not a foregone conclusion that such diverse research projects would coalesce in such a way that together they could provide a well-rounded and insightful view into the role of energy in the Arctic. The volume is divided into three different sections, telling different parts of the Arctic energy story. The first section addresses “Listening and Learning” and focuses on the importance of community engagement and consultation with government and industry to ensure that all voices are at the negotiating table when energy needs and issues are at stake in the Arctic. The first article in this section by Noor Johnson reveals the challenges involved in ensuring adequate community consultation whereby what is required by law is not always reflected in practices on the ground. She further reflects upon mechanisms that could improve the consultation process, to the benefit of all concerned. Maria Tysiachniouk examines benefit-sharing practices between extraction industries and local communities, and concludes that benefits are not negotiated equally or evenly amongst Indigenous communities in the Russian Federation. She identifies different types of benefit-sharing practices and discusses the ways in which Indigenous groups may indeed be harmed by some of the arrangements. Anne Merrild Hansen further explores the relevance of consultation by examining processes of impact assessments in the case of Greenland, drawing upon experiences from Alaska, which has similar social structures to those in Greenland. Hansen uses social disruption and boom–bust theories to assess the benefits and potential of impact assessments in Greenland.

The next section is concerned with the next stage and examines approaches to “implementing” energy options in the Arctic. Greg Poelzer looks at the options governments and communities have in meeting their energy requirements while mitigating against climate change and explores renewable energy options for Arctic communities. He focuses on the experiences of Northern Saskatchewan and the provincial government’s commitment to reduce the province’s reliance on non-renewable energy resources while increasing Indigenous community well-being through cleaner energy options. Gwen P. Holdmann makes the case for knowledge export industries drawing upon the experiences and knowledge generated from the geothermal resource development in Iceland. She argues that the sharing of such knowledge provides new opportunities for small communities looking for better energy options. Laura Sokka makes us think critically about the ways in which we explore renewable energy options, focusing on forest biomass as a renewable alternative that has both positive and negative impacts. Without developing this resource in a balanced and

sustainable way, it is possible that the use of forest biomass could produce increased carbon emissions rather than mitigate against climate change.

The final section looks at energy in the Arctic in broader terms, from international law to energy and environmental security. Bjarni Már Magnússon examines the implications of the United States' continued refusal to become a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) that impacts jurisdiction over the two hundred nautical mile zone. Although the United States has made sound arguments in its insistence to not become a party to the convention, Magnússon argues that the United States nevertheless benefits more by joining this important mechanism of international law. Finally, I take a look at the tensions evident between energy and environmental and economic security, and how these tensions potentially play out at different levels of analysis – from the individual and community to the state and the international domain. I argue that understanding energy security in the Arctic means taking seriously the values and priorities of Arctic communities, as well as the ambitions of the state, to attempt to find the best balance in energy policy.

It is said that the Arctic is the proverbial “canary in the mine” where climate change is concerned. Energy security today is inextricably linked to changes in the climate and the decisions Arctic states and communities make regarding their energy options. This volume attempts to explore important stages in making these decisions: from increasing our understanding of community needs through consultation and fair and equitable practices in sharing the benefits of these energy choices, to breaking new ground in energy options by pursuing renewables. These decisions have local, regional, national, and international implications. They will impact the future development of legal agreements and cooperation in the Arctic, as well as the values of Arctic communities and states that are considered integral to the long-term survival of the northernmost region on the planet.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many thanks to the Fulbright Arctic Initiative scholars who have contributed to this publication and to the University of Washington for supporting this important endeavor.

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