

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH ARCTIC DECLARATION. On the occasion of the Senior Arctic Officials' Meeting of The Arctic Council. 8 - 9 November 2011, Lulea, Sweden.

2011

Students on Ice

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INTERNATIONAL YOUTH ARCTIC DECLARATION

On the occasion of the Senior Arctic Officials' Meeting of

The Arctic Council

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We are 72 secondary school students from 15 countries who came together on the 2011 Students on Ice Arctic Expedition. We journeyed from Iceland to Greenland to Labrador to Nunavik, Canada. We embarked on this voyage to gain first-hand knowledge of the Arctic regions and to expand our understanding of not only the rich environment, history and cultures of the Arctic, but also the challenges they face. As a body of international students, we present a global youth perspective on Arctic issues.

Whereas there is undeniable evidence of global climate change,

Whereas it is expected the Arctic Ocean will be ice free for a significant part of the year in less than 30 years, changing ways of life for indigenous peoples, and

Whereas Arctic cultures and communities require healthy ecosystems,

We hereby:

Recognize that the Arctic Council is uniquely able to bring Arctic states and indigenous peoples together to work on issues of common concern in the circumpolar regions,

Recognize that people in the Arctic have the right to a healthy economy, based on the development of sustainable industries that protect the social, cultural and natural environment of the Arctic,

Recognize the commitment of the Arctic Council to the preservation of indigenous languages and cultures,

Recognize the vital role of the Permanent Participants in the work of the council,

Recognize the important role of the Arctic Council in focusing world attention on Arctic issues,



Recognize that youth are key stakeholders in the Arctic, both now and in the future, and **support** the education and active engagement of youth in the work of the council,

Support the efforts of member states and Permanent Participants to strengthen the Arctic Council, and commend the recent signing of the Agreement on Cooperation in Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic, as well as the creation of the Task Force to Develop Recommendations and/or Best Practices in the Prevention of Marine Oil Pollution in the Arctic, and

Are **encouraged** by the forthcoming Strategic Communications Plan for the Arctic Council.

We would like to encourage the Arctic Council to:

Establish a youth advisory body to engage youth in the work of the Arctic Council, advise on policy development, and emphasize the global impacts of Arctic issues through outreach and community engagement,

Support discussion about the Arctic's environmental, cultural and social challenges in the curriculum content of Arctic states, to increase awareness of the Arctic's environmental and cultural heritage,

Continue to **consult** with Permanent Participants to inform actions undertaken by the Arctic Council,

Continue to **support** and **expand** scientific research in the Arctic regions to inform regional and global environmental policy development,

Encourage international cooperation to address global climate change and other circumpolar issues,

Support multilateral cooperation for preparation and response to oil spills and environmental crises, and

Engage in further discussion to develop fair standards for the regulation of industries such as fisheries in the Arctic regions.

We extend our gratitude to the Kingdom of Denmark for its leadership as chair of the Arctic Council from 2009 to 2011, and send our best wishes to the Kingdom of Sweden as it assumes this office for the next two year term.

Email: alumni@studentsonice.com