

ARCTIC FUTURES SYMPOSIUM 2022

BIOGRAPHIES OF SPEAKERS
AND MODERATORS



Arctic Futures Symposium 2022 Speaker Biographies



Torbjørn Aag

Project Manager, Kunnskapsparken Helgeland, Nordland County

Torbjørn Aag is project manager and business developer at Kunnskapsparken Helgeland AS.

He works with the development of competence initiatives for businesses and connecting companies to public funding agencies, instrument apparatus and R & D.

Kandidat Helgeland is a regional trainee program where we recruit young people with a high level of formal education to the region's business life, public enterprises and some municipalities. The trainees are employed in various companies while as facilitators we organise an attractive onboarding program with management courses, networking initiatives and social gatherings for the trainees.

Torbjørn has worked with Kandidat Helgeland since its establishment in 2010. In 2022 the trainee scheme recruited 168 candidates to Helgeland, and around 75% are still in the region.

Torbjørn is also concerned with the tourism and culture industry and is involved in projects as a facilitator for innovation and competence development.



Pita Aatami

President, Makivik Corporation

Mr Pita Aatami was elected President of Makivik Corporation in January 2021. He previously held the position from 1998-2012. From 2013 – 2020 he was the President and CEO of Air Inuit, a wholly-owned Makivik Corporation subsidiary.

His history with Makivik Corporation goes back to 1987 when he was elected Board Member for the community of Kuujjuaq, where he grew up. In 1993 he was elected Treasurer of Makivik Corporation, a position he held until becoming President in 1998.

Mr Aatami was previously Chairman of First Air, President of Kuujjuamiut, Halutik Enterprises, and Director of Air Inuit and Seaku Fisheries. He is the past President of the Nayumivik Landholding

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Corporation in Kuujjuaq, and was the Deputy Mayor of Kuujjuaq for ten years, as well as the past President of the Kuujjuaq Recreation Committee. He started the Kuujjuaq Youth Camp in his community.



Kristín Linda Árnadóttir

Deputy CEO, Landsvirkjun

Kristín is the Deputy CEO at Landsvirkjun, which is Iceland's largest power-producing company, producing 100% renewable energy from hydroelectric, geothermal and wind facilities. Landsvirkjun is one of Europe's largest renewable energy producers.

Kristín is the former Chair of the Arctic Council's Expert Group on Black Carbon and Methane (EGBCM). The group's main objective is to assess and report on the progress of the implementation of the Arctic Council's Framework for Action on Black Carbon and Methane.

Kristín was Director General at the Environment Agency of Iceland for over 12 years and participated actively in environmental issues relating to the Arctic.



Forest Banks

Project Development Manager, Battelle

Mr Forest Banks is a Program Development manager for Battelle and has been supporting scientific research for the past 20 years. Primarily focused on remote operations in logistically challenging locations, Forest's research support has included managing Systems Integration/Remote Sensing installations for the National Ecological Observatory Network, operations and construction of the IceCube Neutrino Detector at the South Pole, and integration of the Lowell Discovery Telescope in Happy Jack, Arizona. His work has taken him to over 70 countries, and he's particularly drawn to the polar regions.

Forest strongly focuses on community collaborations, indigenous culture and inclusion, workforce development and STEM education.

Forest lives with his wife and two kids in the foothills of Northern Colorado and enjoys carpentry, mini-farming, Fishing, beer, and Nordic travel.

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Erik Bergkvist

Member of the European Parliament, Social Democratic Party

Dr Erik Bergkvist has been a Social Democratic member of the European Parliament since 2019 and the voice of Northern Sweden in Europe. His focus is to create an equal Europe, both within and between Member States. The Union's regional and growth policy is at the heart of this work.

Dr Bergkvist has a good deal of political experience, both as a chair of the Northern Region Västerbotten and as a municipal board member in his home city of Umeå. He holds a PhD in Economics from Umeå University.

Dr Bergkvist worked with Arctic-related issues in his role as a regional politician in Västerbotten and in the context of his engagement on a European level. He is a member of the European Parliament's committee of regional development and the Arctic Friendship Group. He was recently elected as Vice-chair in SEArca with a special focus on Arctic matters. Furthermore, he has also been Vice-chair for the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR).



Nicole Biebow

Project Manager, EU PolarNet, Alfred Wegener Institute

Dr Nicole Biebow is the Coordinator of the EU project EU-PolarNet 2, having previously served as Executive Manager of EU-PolarNet 1. She is also the Coordinator of the EU-funded Arctic Research Icebreaker Consortium (ARICE). In October 2021, she was elected Chair of the European Polar Board (EPB).

She leads the International Cooperation Unit at the Alfred-Wegener-Institute (AWI) in Germany and is responsible for all international relations of the AWI. She maintains an extensive network of contacts in the European/International science and policy communities.

Nicole received her PhD in Marine Geology at GEOMAR in Kiel in 1996.

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Geneviève Brisson

Déléguée Général, Québec Government Office in Brussels

Geneviève Brisson took up her position as Delegate General of Québec in Brussels on January 17, 2022. Before her appointment, she was employed as a senior director of global government affairs at Enerkem, a company offering high-tech solutions to produce advanced biofuels and renewable chemicals from non-recyclable waste.

Throughout her career, Geneviève Brisson has occupied many strategic positions in government and institutional relations, as well as in business development in the energy and environment sectors, and in Indigenous affairs.

She previously worked for several major Québec energy industry players, including Hydro-Québec, one of the world's leading producers of hydroelectricity, and Énergir, Québec's main distributor of natural gas.

Ms Brisson also boasts solid experience in the areas of government and policy. For instance, she worked as a political advisor on both Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development in Canada's House of Commons and in the National Assembly of Québec.

Ms Brisson's diverse professional experience and her renowned engagement and leadership have earned her key roles in numerous networks and an appointment as Co-Chair of Conseil des Entreprises en Technologies Environnementales du Québec (CETEQ). She has also served as a board member for several companies and organizations, including Écotech Québec (which represents clean technologies), SWITCH (alliance for a green economy), Association québécoise de production de l'énergie renouvelable (AQPER), and Connexion internationale de Montréal.

Geneviève Brisson holds a degree in political science from Université du Québec à Montréal and also completed a year in northern studies at the University of Stockholm.

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Patti Bruns

Secretary General of the Arctic Mayors' Forum

Patti has been Secretary General of the Arctic Mayors' Forum since August 2022. Patti came to the AMF from the Canadian International Arctic Centre where she served as Senior Policy Advisor. She previously held the position of Executive Secretary of two Arctic Council Working Groups – ACAP (Arctic Contaminant Action Program) and EPPR (Emergency Prevention Preparedness and Response). Patti has a deep knowledge of the Arctic through her work with the government, multilateral fora and the consultancy sector.



Melody Brown Burkins

Director, Institute of Arctic Studies, Dartmouth University; UArctic Chair in Science Diplomacy and Inclusion

Dr Melody Brown Burkins is the Director of the Institute of Arctic Studies, Senior Associate Director in the John Sloan Dickey Center for International Understanding, and Adjunct Professor of Environmental Studies at Dartmouth. With over 30 years of experience as a polar scientist working in both academia and government, she is an advocate for policy-engaged scholarships, experiential education, and the support of science policy and diplomacy initiatives advancing sustainability, equality, and inclusion in the Arctic and around the world.

Dr Burkins was born and raised in Fairbanks, Alaska, and has a deep appreciation of the issues facing Arctic communities. Her career - spanning polar science, policy, and diplomacy - includes service as the energy and environment advisor to US Senator from Vermont Patrick Leahy, as the first female Chair of the US National Committee to the International Union of Geological Sciences, Chair of the US National Academies' Board on International Science Organizations (BISO), and Governing Board member of the International Science Council (ISC). Today, in addition to her role as UArctic Chair, she is honoured to serve as Special Advisor and Assembly Representative to the UArctic global network, as a Foundational Fellow of the ISC (FISC), and as a member of the 4th International Conference on Arctic Research and Planning (ICARP IV) Steering Committee.

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Burkins earned her B.S. in geology at Yale and both her M.S. and PhD at Dartmouth, focusing her doctoral studies on earth, climate, and ecosystem studies in the Antarctic Dry Valleys.



Marie-Anne Coninsx

Former Ambassador at Large for the Arctic, European Union; Senior Fellow, Egmont Institute; Board Member, International Polar Foundation

Marie-Anne Coninsx was the first EU Ambassador at Large for the Arctic (2017 - 2019) before her retirement after 35 years as an EU official. During her career as a European diplomat, she was the EU Ambassador to Canada and EU Ambassador to Mexico, and served at EU Delegations with the United Nations in New York (US) and Geneva (Switzerland), providing her with extensive experience in multilateral issues.

She began her career in the Legal Service of the European Commission and worked for 12 consecutive years as a Staff Member in the Cabinets of three Commissioners. She also worked in the External Relations Department at EU HQ, overseeing relations between the European Union and Latin America.

Ms Coninsx studied law at Ghent University (Belgium) and carried out her post-graduate studies at Cambridge University (UK) and at the European University Centre in Nancy (France). As a Belgian citizen, she is fluent in Dutch, French, English, German, and Spanish.



François Delhaye

Director, Directorate of Economic Affairs, Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Joining the Belgian Foreign Service in 1933, Mr François Delhaye has served as First Secretary for the Belgian Embassy in Riyadh (KSA) and for the Belgian Permanent Mission to the IAEA, Vienna (Austria). Between 2007 and 2009, he worked as Deputy Spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Before that, he also served as Economic Counsellor and Minister Counsellor for the Belgian Embassy in Kinshasa (RDC).

Between 2009 and 2011, Mr Delhaye worked as Deputy Permanent Representative to NATO (Brussels). After this, and until 2014, he

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worked for the Cabinet of the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs as Security and Defense Adviser. Until 2018, Mr Delhaye then served as Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Iran and, until 2022, as Ambassador to the Republic of India. Now, he holds the position of Director of the Economic interests section at the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Mr Delhaye studied Political Science at the Université Libre de Bruxelles and obtained a Diploma in International Relations from the Johns Hopkins University – Bologna Centre. He also speaks French, Dutch, English, and German fluently.



Hákun Djurhuus

CEO, SEV (Faroese electric utility company)

Hákun Djurhuus has been the CEO of the Faroese electric utility company SEV since 2008. Before taking on his current position at SEV, he was the Managing Director of Shell in the Faroe Islands. Hákun holds an MSc in Civil Engineering from the Technical University of Denmark.

SEV has received the Nordic Council Nature and Environment Prize for its ambitious targets and the creative nature of its efforts to reduce dependency on fossil fuels to reach its target of a 100% renewable energy supply onshore by 2030.

The Faroe Islands are a small but highly advanced country isolated in the North Atlantic. The green transition in the Faroe Islands will demonstrate how quickly and effectively converting to a sustainable energy sector works and can serve as a demonstration case and a testbed for larger communities.



Angelina J. F. Eichhorst

Managing Director Europe, European External Action Service of the European Union

Ambassador Angelina Eichhorst has been the European Foreign Service Managing Director EUROPE since September 2021. Before that, she was the Acting Managing Director then the Managing Director for Europe and Central Asia (2019-2021), the Deputy Managing Director/Director for Western Europe, Western Balkans and Turkey and the Chief Negotiator for the EU-facilitated Belgrade Pristina Dialogue (2015-2019).

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Since 1996, Ms Eichhorst has served with the European Union at different external relations Directorates General in Brussels, Jordan and Syria. In Lebanon, she was the EU Ambassador/Head of Delegation (2011-2015). She also worked in Egypt, Somalia and New York in the private sector, the United Nations, research institutes and non-governmental organisations (1989-1996).

Born in the Netherlands, Ms Eichhorst holds a Master's Degree in languages and cultures of the Middle East and in International Relations. She also holds postgraduate diplomas in international law, human rights and the law of international organisations. She freely converses in Dutch, English, French, German and Arabic, and has a good understanding of Italian and Spanish.



Gizem Ezras

Head of Section and Counsellor for Agriculture, Fisheries and Environment, Mission of Canada to the EU

Gizem Eras joined the Canadian Mission to the EU in August 2022 as Head of Section and Counsellor for Agriculture, Fisheries and Environment.

Prior to her assignment in Brussels, she was posted for 5 years to the Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C. as the Agriculture and Fisheries Counsellor.

She has worked at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Global Affairs Canada in Ottawa, Canada in various areas of trade policy, including in trade in goods and services, tariffs and non-tariff barriers, geographical indications (GIs), pharmaceutical patents and trade remedies. Since 2005, Gizem has also been involved in numerous free trade agreement negotiations for Canada, including the Canada-EU Comprehensive and Economic Trade Agreement (CETA), the Trans-Pacific Partnership (now the CPTPP) and the Canada-US-Mexico trade agreement. She also has private sector experience as an olive oil exporter.

Gizem has served as a board member of the Women in International Trade (WIIT) D.C. and was the Chair of the Washington Agricultural Roundtable (2020-2021).

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Gizem has also lived in Italy, Chile, Bangladesh, Iraq, Turkey and the UK. She has a Master's degree in International Trade Policy and Theory from the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs in Ottawa, Canada and a Bachelor's degree in Business Studies from City University in London, UK.



Frida Fossland

Project Manager, the North Sweden Green Deal, Region Västerbotten

Frida Fossland is the Senior project manager of the North Sweden Green Deal. She has expertise in skill supply and business development at Region Västerbotten.

The North Sweden Green Deal project explores new ways of building the sustainable North Sweden of the future.

The project's total budget is SEK 112,500,000 (≈10,350,000€). The project is being co-funded with 50% funding from the Regional Development Fund. Focus areas in both regions are on attraction of workers, skills supply and sustainable physical planning.



Mads Qvist Frederiksen

Director, Arctic Economic Council

Mads Qvist Frederiksen is the Director of the Arctic Economic Council (AEC). Located in Tromsø, Norway, the AEC is an independent business organization established in 2014. It facilitates Arctic business-to-business activities and sustainable economic development. The AEC provides advice and a business perspective on the work of the Arctic Council.

Before joining the AEC in March 2021, Mr Frederiksen worked as a Senior Advisor in the Global Trade and Investment unit at the Confederation of Danish Industry. There, he was responsible for Arctic business development and policy. Before that he worked as a communication advisor for MADE (Manufacturing Academy of Denmark), as a journalism trainer in Kabul, Afghanistan, and as a journalist for the Danish department of Defense.

In addition to Arctic policy and trade promotion, his previous work was with sanctions and export control, development work, foreign investments, communication strategy, journalism, training, and capacity building.

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Mr Frederiksen is originally from Denmark. He holds a Master's degree in Middle East Studies from the University of Southern Denmark and a Bachelor's degree in Journalism and Contemporary history from City University and Queen Mary, University of London.

Mr Frederiksen has lived and worked in Denmark, Norway, Algeria, the United Kingdom, Iran, and Afghanistan.



Clara Ganslandt

EU Special Envoy for the Arctic, European External Action Service

Clara Ganslandt is Head of the Western Europe / Arctic / Regional Division (Europe 1) within the European External Action Service (EEAS) since 2019. The Division is in charge of EU relations with non-EU Western European countries Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland, Andorra, Monaco, San Marino and the Holy See. The division monitors political and economic developments in these countries and leads political dialogue, covering foreign policy and global issues.

As of 1 September 2022, Clara Ganslandt is also Special Envoy for Arctic Matters. Previously, Clara Ganslandt was Head of the Division for Partnerships and Agreements with Third States and International Organisations (EU-NATO, EU-UN relations in the field of crisis management) within the EEAS Security and Defence Policy Directorate (2015-2019).

Before taking up that position, she was Head of the EEAS Division for Non-Proliferation and Disarmament and Chair of the Council of the European Union's Working Party on Global Disarmament (2011-2015).

Clara Ganslandt is a Swedish national. After her law studies, she entered the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1990. Following Sweden's accession to the EU in 1995, she joined the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union in Brussels to work on the new structures set up in the framework of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).

She joined the European External Action Service at its creation in 2011. She has worked in many foreign policy domains, including non-proliferation and disarmament, legal, institutional and financial aspects of the CFSP and policy coordination.

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She holds a Master of Laws (LLM) from Lund University in Sweden and also studied at the College of Europe in Bruges and the Institut d' Etudes Politiques in Paris.

Clara Ganslandt is married with two children. She has a keen interest in jazz music, contemporary art and hiking.



Kjell Giæver

General Manager, Arctic Energy Partners and Chairman, North Norway Energy Cluster (EiN)

Kjell Giæver is the general manager of Arctic Energy Partners and Chairman of the North Norway Energy Cluster (EiN)

Kjell Giæver family's background has historical origins from the German city of Jever (which became Giæver in Norwegian) and is the 12th generation living and working in North Norway since the late 17th century.

Arctic Energy Partners have 250 member companies.
(www.arcticenergy.net)



Neil Gray

Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development, Scotland

Neil Gray was born and brought up in Orkney and was educated at Kirkwall Grammar School. He graduated from the University of Stirling in 2008 with a first-class Bachelor of Arts Honours degree in politics and journalism.

He was elected to represent Airdrie and Shotts Constituency at the 2021 Scottish Parliament election.

He had previously won the Airdrie and Shotts Westminster seat in 2015 and held it on two subsequent occasions before resigning to stand for the same area in the 2021 Scottish Parliament election.

Before becoming an MP, Mr Gray worked for former Scottish Government Health Secretary Alex Neil MSP as his Airdrie and Shotts constituency office manager.

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Lars Haltbrekken

Chair, Arctic Delegation, Norwegian Parliament

Lars Haltbrekken, current Member of Parliament for Sør-Trøndelag, Socialist Left Party, is also a Member of the Standing Committee on Energy and the Environment, occupying this role since October 2017. Since 2021, Mr Haltbrekken is also a Substitute Member of the Election Committee and will occupy the role of Member and Chair of the Delegation for Arctic Parliamentary Cooperation until 2025.

In his early career, Mr Haltbrekken has been an adviser for the Norwegian Farmers and Smallholders Union and chair of the Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature.



Alain Hubert

Founder and President, the International Polar Foundation

Alain Hubert is a Belgian explorer, certified mountain and polar guide, a civil engineer, and the President and Founder of the International Polar Foundation (IPF). With the IPF and support from sponsors from the private sector and the Belgian State, he built the the first zero-emission polar research station, the Princess Elisabeth Antarctica.

Alain Hubert obtained his Civil Engineering diploma from the Université Catholique de Louvain (UCL) in 1974. As an adolescent, he became an avid practitioner of outdoor sports including marathons, canyoning, skiing and paragliding.

Alain has always been an entrepreneur who lives for adventure and strives to achieve. Early in his career, he founded a co-op specialising in carpentry and joinery (CHERBAI) in the Ardennes region of Belgium.

He has gone on a number of major polar and mountaineering expeditions. His achievements include being the first Belgian to ever reach the North Pole in 1994 with Didier Goetghebuer, a world record autonomous crossing of Antarctica (3924 km in 99 days) with Dixie Dansercoer in 1998, and five attempts at Mount Everest. The Arctic Arc expedition with Dixie Dansercoer in 2007 was the first ever Siberia-Greenland crossing via the North Pole.

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During his expeditions, Alain Hubert witnessed the pace and magnitude of climate change firsthand and decided to dedicate himself to that cause. He collaborates with scientists and collects ground truth data for them during his expeditions (for example snow depth data for the CryoSat mission during the Arctic Arc Expedition in 2007).

In 2002 he founded the International Polar Foundation along with climatologist André Berger and glaciologist Hugo Decleir. The International Polar Foundation supports polar scientific research, promotes informed action on climate change, and the development of a sustainable society.



Morten Høglund

Senior Arctic Official, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway

Morten Høglund was appointed Senior Arctic Official (SAO) for Norway in October 2021 and, before that, as the first dedicated Norwegian ambassador to ASEAN in Jakarta in 2017. Before these postings, Mr Høglund was a Senior Official ASEAN at the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Special Adviser for Arctic Affairs.

Mr Høglund served 12 years in the Norwegian Parliament and 2 years as Deputy Foreign Minister. He has served as Deputy Mayor in two Norwegian counties. As a Member of Parliament, Mr Høglund chaired the Parliament's Arctic delegation and has also been Chair of the Circumpolar Arctic Parliamentary cooperation.

Mr Høglund is married and has four children. He has a long history in Chinese Dragon Boat Racing, including founding the Oslo Dragon Boat Club and co-founding both the European and International Dragon Boat Federation.



Johanna Ikävalko

Director of the Arctic Centre, University of Lapland, Finland

Dr Johanna Ikävalko (b. 1965) dissertated at the University of Helsinki, Finland, in 1997 with hydrobiology/sea ice biology as her main field of research. She has lived and done research abroad, e.g. in Germany (Institute for Polar Ecology), Australia (Australian Antarctic Division) and the US (University of Santa Cruz, California).

After her active career in science, she has moved more to its implementation. From 2009-2013 she was affiliated as the Head of Environment at the Finnish Farmers' and Forest Owners' Association,

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after which she was the Head of the Marine Research Unit at the Finnish Meteorological institute. Johanna has also worked as a ministerial adviser at the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

During Finland's presidency at the Arctic Council in 2017-2019, she successfully led the priority "Meteorological Cooperation", after which she worked as an expert for the Arctic Council working group Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme Secretariat.

Dr Johanna Ikävalko has been directing the Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland since early 2021.



Tórheðin Jensen

Chief Marketing Officer, Varðin P/F; Chair of the Faroese Council for Research, Development and Innovation

Tórheðin Jensen is CMO at Varðin P/F. Varðin P/F was founded in 1985 and is the largest fishing company in the Faroe Islands with operations covering the whole value chain - from fishing and processing to international sales. He is also a board member in several companies including Nemlia - a Faroese company which develops monitoring technology used in elderly care to ensure a better quality of life.

In 2021 Mr Jensen finished his DBA (Doctor of Business Administration) at Reading University. His thesis was about Knowledge dynamics in the Faroese seafood cluster - Innovations in a Highly Tacit Environment. It was a case study including two in-depth cases, comparing fisheries and salmon farming.

Mr Jensen was recently appointed as the first chair of the new Research and Innovation Council which is tasked to advise the government and the industry about strategic work on research and innovation.



Moa Johansson

CEO, Containing Greens

Moa Johansson is one of the founders and the CEO of Containing Greens. With studies in Political science and a thesis within the area of Swedish agriculture.

The company was founded in 2020 with the idea to make northern Sweden more self-sufficient and sustainable in the future. Today, the company has taken the idea further through pilot projects and collaborations. The pilot project carried out together with the Swedish

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Research Institute in Luleå has shown the potential of the use of waste heat for cultivation in arctic climates. By looking at the untapped resources of Northern Sweden, Containing Greens is constantly working to connect these to create industrial symbiosis locally.

The great motivator for Moa Johansson is to see how the innovation can be scaled up and used throughout the Arctic climate zone, contributing to sustainability one plant at a time.



Line Kjelsrup

Cluster Manager, Biotech North

Line Kjelsrup is the Cluster Manager for Biotech North, a knowledge-based industry cluster within marine biotechnology and marine health products. Biotech North is located in Tromsø, Norway, and serves the biotechnology and bio marine sectors in the northern part of the country. The goal of the cluster is to increase the members' innovation and competitiveness and consolidate the position of Tromsø as “The Hot Spot for Blue Biotech”.

Kjelsrup is from Tromsø and has a Master of Science in Fisheries and Aquaculture from the UiT-The Arctic University of Norway. She has previously worked in the Ministry of Fisheries, Norway Seafoods and NCE Aquaculture. For 7 years she was the fisheries envoy for the Norwegian Seafood Council to Sweden. And for two years she worked as a Program Manager for Arctic Frontiers before she started the job as Cluster Manager for Biotech North in early 2020.



Kathleen Larkin

Arctic Security Officer, Office of Nordic, Baltic, and Arctic Affairs, U.S. Department of State

Kathleen Larkin serves as the Arctic Security Officer at the U.S. Department of State. Ms Larkin joined the State Department in 2013 as a Presidential Management Fellow and served as a budget analyst in the Bureau of Budget and Planning from 2013-2015. During her fellowship, she participated in two development rotations, covering an extended staffing gap on the Albania Desk and serving in the Political and Economic Section at the U.S. Embassy in Lisbon, Portugal. From 2015-2019, Ms Larkin served as the Bosnia and Herzegovina Desk officer in the Office of South Central Europe, where her portfolio included political and economic developments, human rights, counterterrorism, the rule of law, and sanctions.

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Before joining the State Department, Kathleen worked at several federal agencies including the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of the Interior, the Department of Justice, and the Department of Defense, gaining expertise on topics ranging from performance management to land rights of Native Hawaiians.

Kathleen holds a B.A. in History from Harding University in Arkansas and an M.P.A. from the American University in Washington, D.C. Ms Larkin is originally from Colorado Springs, Colorado.



Rasmus Leander Nielsen

Associate Professor, Department of Arctic Social Science and Economics, University of Greenland; Head of Nasiffik

Dr Nielsen is Head of Nasiffik (Centre for Foreign and Security Policy) and Associate Professor at the Department of Arctic Social Science and Economics, Ilisimatusarfik (University of Greenland).

He holds a PhD from the University of Southern Denmark and has previously worked as editor-in-chief at an online magazine and as an assistant lecturer at the University of Copenhagen.

His main research interests include Greenlandic foreign policy, Arctic security and cooperation, International Relations and EU studies.

Dr Nielsen is a widely used expert and commentator on Greenland and Arctic Affairs.



Egill Þór Nielsson

Senior Adviser at the Icelandic Centre for Research (Rannís).

Egill is a representative for Iceland to the IASC Council and the Arctic Science Funders Forum, an ExCom member of the European Polar Board, and a board member of the Icelandic Arctic Cooperation Network.

Previously, he was Executive Secretary of the China-Nordic Arctic Research Center (CNARC) and a Visiting Scholar at the Polar Research Institute of China (PRIC), as well as working as an adviser for both

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private and public organizations, including projects for the West Nordic Council, Port of Akureyri and Icelandair Cargo.

Egill has MSc degrees in Social Anthropology from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and in International Business and Marketing from the University of Iceland (including an exchange semester in the MBA program of Paris School of Business) and is a PhD candidate in History at the University of Iceland and Political Science at the University of Lapland (joint degree).



Willfred Nordlund

Vice-Chair, Arctic Delegation, Norwegian Parliament

Willfred Nordlund, former Vice-chair of the Nordland County Government and Member of the Standing Committee on Local Government and Public Administration, has been a Member of Parliament for Nordland Centre Party since 2017.

Currently, Mr Nordlund is a Member of the Sortland Municipal Council and Chair of the Standing Committee on Business and Industry. Mr Nordlund will also occupy the role of Member and Vice-Chair of the Delegation for Arctic Parliamentary Cooperation until 2025.

Mr Nordlund holds a Bachelor's degree in marketing and economics from the BI Norwegian Business School.



Anja Márjá Nystø Keskitalo

Advisor EU unit, Saami Council

Anja Márjá Nystø Keskitalo is from Guovdageaidnu in Norway. Keskitalo graduated from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology with a Master of Science in Geography.

She previously worked as a trainee on the Filling the EU-Sápmi knowledge gaps project run by the Saami Council, and she now works as an advisor for the EU unit, focusing particularly on youth and research-related topics.

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Sara Olsvig

Chair, Inuit Circumpolar Council

International Chair of Inuit Circumpolar Council Sara Olsvig is a PhD-candidate at Ilisimatusarfik, the University of Greenland. Sara Olsvig served as member of the Parliament of Denmark (2011 – 2015) and the Parliament of Greenland (2013 – 2018). She has been the leader of the political party Inuit Ataqatigiit.

Olsvig was Vice Premier and Minister of Social Affairs, Families, Gender Equality and Justice in the Government of Greenland from 2016 to 2018. Olsvig was member (2011 – 2014) and Chairperson of the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region from 2013 to 2014. Olsvig is an appointed member of the Constitutional Commission of Greenland and member of the Human Rights Council of Greenland.

Olsvig holds an MSc in Anthropology and has previously worked as Executive Director for the Inuit Circumpolar Council Greenland, to which she today is a delegate.

Sara Olsvig lives in Nuuk, Greenland with her partner and their children.



Elle Merete Omma

EU Coordinator Head of EU unit, Saami Council

Elle Merete Omma is a Sámi raised in a reindeer herding family in Norway and Sweden. Ms Omma assumed full-time duties at the Sámi Council as the EU coordinator in 2017. She came from the position of the previous Executive Secretary at the Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat in Tromsø.

Previously she was employed as a Senior Adviser in the Department of Saami and Minority Affairs in the Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Modernization. She holds a Master's in Law from the University of Oslo.

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Andreas Østhagen

Senior Research Fellow, Fridtjof Nansen Institute

Andreas Østhagen is a Senior Researcher at the Fridtjof Nansen Institute – a Norwegian independent research institute located in the home of Nobel peace prize laureate and Polar explorer Fridtjof Nansen.

He is also a part-time Senior Adviser at the High North Center for Business and Governance at Nord University in the Norwegian Arctic. In 2021-2023 he was a Fulbright Scholar at the Wilson Center and the Belfer Center at Harvard University. In addition, Andreas holds several affiliations: as a Senior Fellow at The Arctic Institute, a network-think tank; as a Global Fellow at the Wilson Center in Washington, DC; and as an Associate Professor at Oslo New University College where he teaches the course “Geopolitics of the Arctic”.

From North Norway, Østhagen specializes in Arctic security affairs as well as ocean politics and governance more broadly. He is the author of ‘Coast Guards and Ocean Politics in the Arctic’ (2020) and ‘Ocean Geopolitics’ (2022).

Østhagen holds a PhD in international relations from the University of British Columbia in Canada; a Masters in European and international affairs from the London School of Economics, and a bachelor’s degree in political economy from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology.



Urmas Paet

Member of the European Parliament (Renew Europe Group)

Urmas Paet has been a Member of the European Parliament since November 2014. He specializes in foreign and security policy issues. He is the Vice-Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, a member of the Security and Defence Committee as well as a substitute member of the International Trade Committee. Mr Paet is also the Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee Working Group on Eastern Partnership.

In November 2019 Urmas Paet founded the European Parliament-Arctic Friendship Group and serves as the Chair of the group. As of 2021, he is also the Chair of the European Parliament-Indonesia Friendship Group. Urmas Paet is the rapporteur of the European Defence Union Report, the EU Arctic Policy Report,

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the Cyber Defence Report and the Report on the State of EU Cyber Defence Capabilities.

Before joining the European Parliament, Urmas Paet was the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Estonia for almost ten years. Urmas Paet has also served as a Minister of Culture and as the Head of the Nõmme City district in Tallinn. He majored in Political Science and started as a journalist on Estonian Radio and the daily newspaper *Postimees*.



Samu Paukkunen

Deputy Director, Finnish Institute of International Affairs

Mr Samu Paukkunen is the Deputy Director of the Finnish Institute of International Affairs. He has served in several different national agencies, including the Finnish defence forces, in the Office of the President of the Republic of Finland (where he worked as a foreign and security policy expert) and in the Parliament of Finland (where he was responsible for Arctic cooperation).

Mr Paukkunen has presented his work to political leaders and senior officials from a variety of government agencies, including the Arctic Council, World Bank, and European and North American decision-makers. He has several publications related to Arctic geopolitics and hard security.



Krista Perälä

Chair of the Executive Board of the Student Union of the University of Lapland, member of the Arctic Five Student Team

Krista Perälä is the Chair of the Executive Board of the Student Union of the University of Lapland, and a member of the Arctic Five Student Team. She will soon have a Bachelor in Social Sciences, finishing her degree in Tourism Research.

She has been very active in the field of student advocacy, focusing on themes such as educational and social politics and municipal affairs. She has acted in different decision-making bodies and working groups of student associations, the student union and the university administration. Not only is she familiar with the Arctic thanks to her studies and positions of responsibility, but also by being born and having lived in Rovaniemi, Lapland, Finland.

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Eivind Van Petersson

State Secretary of Norway

Mr Eivind Van Petersson has been the State Secretary of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 2021. Before his appointment, he was employed as a Foreign and Defense Policy Adviser at the Norwegian Labor Party Parliamentary Group.

Between 2010 and 2016, Mr Petersson worked as a Diplomat at Norwegian Embassies in South Sudan, South Africa and Germany. Earlier in his career, he also took part in the Foreign Service Trainee Programme at the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and has been a Communications Adviser for the Universities Norway (UHR).

Mr Petersson earned his Master's degree in European and International Politics at the London School of Economics (LSE) and his Undergraduate degree in International Studies and European Studies (EU) at the University of Oslo. He was also an exchange student at Freie Universität Berlin in 2005.



Martin Phillips

CEO Europe and Group COO, Talga

Mr Phillips is an experienced project manager, commercial manager and company director with over 25 years of global metals and mining sector experience. As Talga's European CEO, Mr Phillips oversees the establishment of the company's vertically integrated, low-emission battery and advanced material production. This encompasses mine and production plant development in northern Sweden, pilot processing operations in Germany and product R&D in Cambridge, UK.

Building on an early career that included engineering roles in battery recycling programs and smelting innovations at MIM's Australian and UK operations, Mr Phillips constructed and managed operations and implemented growth strategies for offshore smelting businesses.

Mr Phillips holds a Bachelor of Chemical Engineering (Honours) and a Graduate Diploma in Applied Finance and Investment. He is a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and the Australasian

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Institute of Mining and Metallurgy and holds a Confederation of British Industry (C.B.I.) Engineering Award.



Jasper Pillen

Federal Deputy, Belgian House of Representatives

Jasper Pillen was born in Bruges on May 31st, 1984. After studying at Sint-Leo college in Bruges, he studied law in Kortrijk and Leuven at the Catholic University of Leuven. Graduating with a Master in Law, he also studied for a Master of Comparative and International Politics in Leuven.

In 2008 Jasper Pillen started his professional career at the FPS Foreign where he was active as a lawyer in the European Law Board in January 2012. He followed up the transposition of European directives. He also became a member of the Foreign Affairs Crisis Team (part of B-Fast) and was an OSCE election observer in the Russian Federation.

At the beginning of 2012, he started to work as the Dutch spokesperson for Olivier Chastel, the Minister of Budget and Administrative Simplification (MR) in the government of Prime Minister Di Rupo. In 2014, when the government of Prime Minister Michel was formed, he became the Dutch-speaking spokesperson for first Minister Galant and later on Minister Bellot, both MR ministers responsible for Mobility and Transport.

Jasper Pillen's political career started when he was 18 years old. For six years he was the vice president of Jong Vld, the Open Vld youth wing. He was elected as a member of the Bruges City Council in 2012. He was reelected in 2018 and was designated by the group as its leader. On July 1st, 2021, he became Alderman of Civil Affairs and Education in Bruges.

He became a member of Parliament on October 1st, 2020. He is the Vice-Chair of the Defence Committee.

In February 2022 he became Vice-President of Open Vld.

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Greg Poelzer

Professor, School of Environment and Sustainability, University of Saskatchewan

For over thirty years, Greg Poelzer has engaged in research focused on comparative politics and policy as it relates to Aboriginal-state relations, energy and resource development in the Circumpolar North, capacity-building in northern regions, and northern development. He has written extensively on the historical and contemporary aspects of communities located in the Circumpolar North and the Canadian sub-Arctic, focusing on Aboriginal development, the development of regional infrastructure, and the mining sector. His previous works have also examined community engagement in environmental assessment for resource development and strategic environmental assessments for Arctic offshore energy planning and development. Greg's co-authored book, *Arctic Front: Defending Canada in the Far North* was awarded the Donner Prize for excellence and innovation in Canadian public policy writing.

Greg is a Professor in the School of Environment and Sustainability (SENS) at the University of Saskatchewan. He is the Co-Director with Bram Noble of the SSHRC Partnership Grant (2019-2026) Community Appropriate Sustainable Energy Security (CASES), which spans 17 Indigenous and Northern communities across Canada, Alaska, Norway, and Sweden. He is Co-Lead, with Beth Rink, of the Fulbright Arctic Initiative III.

Greg also serves as an Advisor and Negotiator for SaskPower, working toward a global settlement with a major First Nation in northern Saskatchewan that will resolve historical issues and build new relationships going forward. A political scientist by training, his deep connections with industry, government, and Indigenous communities in Canada and across the circumpolar states are successfully driving both initiatives.



Séverin Schnepf

European Affairs Manager at Terma

Séverin has headed Terma's Brussels office since February 2022. An experienced professional in European affairs, he is responsible for developing and promoting Terma's European footprint and representing its positions in various EU and NATO forums. He also oversees Terma's

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participation in research and development programmes, including the European Defence Fund.

Deeply rooted in the “Brussels bubble”, Séverin has a thorough knowledge of European defence issues and related European policies (industry, innovation, green and digital transformation, funding and finance). Last year, his specific interest in the digital transformation of the Armed forces led him to coordinate and co-author the first series of the *Vauban Papers* dedicated to the impact of digital technologies on Command and Control (C2) and the conduct of operations.

Before Terma, Séverin worked in the public (French Parliament, French Permanent Representation to the European Union), private (Amarante International, CEIS-Avisa Partners), and para-public (Center for the Analysis of Terrorism) sectors. A graduate of Sciences Po Strasbourg and the College of Europe, Séverin lived in Strasbourg, Lund and Warsaw before moving to Brussels. In his free time, Séverin also teaches classes to master degree students at the College of Europe, Sciences Po Strasbourg and the Paris Catholic Institute (ICP).



Mike Sfraga

Chair, U. S. Arctic Research Commission

Dr Mike Sfraga is the Founding Director of the Polar Institute and was recently appointed incoming Chairman of the United States Arctic Research Commission by President Biden. An Alaskan by birth, Dr Sfraga is a trained geographer with a focus on the changing geography of the Arctic and Antarctic landscapes, Arctic policy, and the impacts and implications of a changing climate on political, social, economic, environmental, and security regimes in the Arctic.

Dr Sfraga served as a distinguished co-lead scholar for the U.S. Department of State’s inaugural Fulbright Arctic Initiative from 2015-2017, a complementary program to the U.S. Chairmanship of the Arctic Council. He continued as co-lead scholar from 2017-2019 served as chair of the 2020 Committee of Visitors Review of the Section for Arctic Science (ARC), Office of Polar Programs, National Science Foundation, and currently serves on the Finnish Institute for International Affairs Scientific Advisory Council (SAC).

Dr Sfraga previously served in several academic, administrative, and executive positions including as vice chancellor, associate vice

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president, faculty member, department chair, and associate dean. Dr Sfraga has testified before the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, maintains an active national and international speaking and facilitation schedule and has been featured in several major media outlets including MSNBC, National Public Radio, Voice of America, The Wall Street Journal, Alaska Public Media, CCTV/CGTN, Bloomberg News, and C-SPAN.

Dr Sfraga is the author of the biography *Bradford Washburn: A Life of Exploration*, an Affiliate Professor at the International Arctic Research Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks, and Co-Director of the University of the Arctic's Institute for Arctic Policy. He has served on several non-profit boards and advisory committees.

Dr Sfraga earned his first PhD in geography and northern studies from the University of Alaska Fairbanks.



Peter Sköld

Professor of History, Sami Culture, and Society Development, Umeå University

Peter Sköld is a professor of history, Saami culture and society development at Umeå University, Sweden. He is the former Director of the Centre for Arctic Research (ARCUM).

Sköld's research profile includes Arctic sustainable development, historical demography, population statistics, indigenous health transitions, and northern cultures. He was one of the authors of the *Arctic Human Development Report II*. Peter Sköld has an active engagement in Arctic research planning, stakeholder cooperation, and international collaboration.

Prof. Sköld was Chair of the Board of Governors of the University of the Arctic (UArctic), former President of the International Arctic Social Sciences Association (IASSA), and past Chair of WG Human and Social Sciences in the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC). He is also a Swedish delegate to the Arctic Council Culture, Economy and Geography Expert Group (SECEG), and Deputy Director of the Chinese-Nordic Arctic Research Centre (CNARC).

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In 2015 Peter Sköld was appointed Honorary Consul of Västerbotten to Latvia and in 2016 he was appointed official Climate Ambassador of Västerbotten.



Remi Solberg

County President, Nordland County, Chair, NSPA

Mr Remi Solberg was born in 1972 in Vestvågøy, Lofoten, Norway and was raised in the Lofoten archipelago and the Svalbard archipelago. He has family roots in Lofoten, with a family tradition of fishing and agriculture.

Mr Solberg graduated from tourism trade school in 1993. He has been an entrepreneur in Lofoten and Vesterålen since 2000 and CEO of multiple companies. He worked as an officer in the home guard until 2017, as a member of Vestvågøy municipal council since 2005, as the Mayor of Vestvågøy between 2015 and 2022, as a member of Lofotrådet between 2015 and 2022, and as leader of Lofotrådet between 2019 and 2021.

Since 2022, Mr Solberg is the Nordland County Council Leader.



Ana-Marie Stan

Policy Officer - Healthy Oceans and Seas/Polar Research, DG RTD

Ana-Maria Stan is currently working as Policy Officer for Healthy Oceans and Seas, in the Directorate General for Research and Innovation, European Commission, in Brussels. She has previously worked on a variety of education and culture policy topics, inside the Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture.

Prior to joining the European Commission in 2007, she worked with UNESCO in Paris, on Culture, development and intercultural dialogue, with a focus on indigenous peoples' affairs.

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Sólrún Svandal

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland

Sólrún Svandal is the Deputy Senior Arctic Official on Iceland's delegation to the Arctic Council, as well as Head of Delegation to the Council's Sustainable Development Working Group and one of the Group's two co-vice-chairs (2021-2023).

During Iceland's Chairmanship of the Council, 2019-2021, she was Adviser to the Chair of the Senior Arctic Officials.

Before the Chairmanship, Ms Svandal worked on Arctic affairs within the Foreign Ministry (2012-2015; 2017-2019) and at the Arctic Council Secretariat in Tromsø (2015-2017).



Veli-Pekka Tynkkynen

Professor, Aleksanteri Institute - Finnish Centre for Russian and East European Studies

Veli-Pekka Tynkkynen is a Professor in Russian Environmental Studies at the Aleksanteri Institute, Finnish Centre for Russian and Eastern European Studies at the University of Helsinki, and has the Title of Docent in Russian resource and energy policy at the National Defence University, Finland. He has held several academic research projects with wide international collaboration. He leads the Research Group on the Russian Environment which consists of a dozen researchers focusing on energy and environmental policies; energy security; political power and culture in Russia. At the moment his team is focusing on the visualization and politicization of energy and waste flows in Russia and Finland (www.flowision.fi).

He outlines his multidisciplinary take on Russia in his book *The Energy of Russia. Hydrocarbon Culture and Climate Change* (Edward Elgar, 2019). Professor Tynkkynen is an experienced speaker with a wide track record in giving lectures and courses at European and Russian universities. He has delivered tens of public talks, and is frequently giving expert statements for authorities as well as being an oft-asked commentator in the media.

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René van Hell

Director, Arctic Ambassador, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands

René van Hell is Director for Inclusive Green Growth, Ambassador for Sustainable Development, and Arctic Ambassador at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (since August 2021). Prior to this, he was the Netherlands' Ambassador to Hungary.

Starting in November 2012, he was Director for International Business at the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Earlier he was appointed to that position in December 2011 at the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation.

He served as Deputy Director for Trade Policy and Global issues at the same ministry. He worked from 2004 until September 2008 as Head of the Economic Division at the Netherlands Embassy, Washington, DC. From 2000 to 2004 he was the head of an Economist Team at the Economic Policy Department of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, in The Hague.

He also worked as an economist and advisor at the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, the Permanent Representation of the Netherlands to the European Union, and was Advisor to Energy, Development Cooperation and Budget issues at the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium / Strasbourg, France.

René has a Master's in Economics, Business Administration (MSc/Drs.). He also studied at the University of Amsterdam, majoring in international economic relations.



Karen van Loon

Junior Researcher - European Programme, Egmont – Royal Institute for International Relations

Karen van Loon is a Junior Researcher in the European Affairs Programme at EGMONT - Royal Institute for International Relations. Her research interests include the Arctic, Eastern Europe, arms control and nuclear non-proliferation.

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She is an experienced educator and capacity-building specialist. She has an academic background in International Relations and Diplomacy and an MA and BA in Eastern European Studies.



Charlina Vitcheva

Director General, DG MARE

Charlina Vitcheva was appointed Director General of DG MARE, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries in June 2020. Before this, she became Deputy Director General of the JRC in September 2016. She was acting DG for the JRC from the 1st of November 2019 to the 30th of April 2020. Previous to this, she was Director of Smart and Sustainable Growth and Southern Europe at DG Regional and Urban Policy, and also held a Director's position on Inclusive Growth, Territorial and Urban Development and Northern Europe.

Before joining the Commission, Charlina spent 15 years in Bulgarian public administration including at the Permanent Representation in Brussels, dealing mainly with agricultural and fisheries issues. During this period, she was actively involved in the accession negotiations of Bulgaria and between 2000 and 2004 headed the negotiations teams in the area of agriculture and rural development, food safety, and fisheries.



Petteri Vuorimäki

Senior Arctic Official; Ambassador, Arctic Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

Finland's Ambassador for Arctic Affairs as of 1 September 2019. Finnish Senior Arctic Official in the Arctic Council. Until the fall of 2022, also Ambassador for Antarctic Affairs.

Before his current post, he served in diplomatic postings for Finland in Moscow, Pristina, Strasbourg and Brussels. Before his MFA career, he worked for the International Organization for Migration in Geneva (Coordinator for Russia and the CIS Countries) and Helsinki, and held various positions in the Finnish Labour Administration. During his tenure in Brussels, he worked in the Finnish Permanent Representation to the EU in charge of the COEST Working Party (Russia, CIS, Arctic and Northern Cooperation, European Neighborhood Policy, Black Sea cooperation), in the External Relations Directorate General of the

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European Commission (Unit for Relations with Russia) and in the European External Action Service, where he was appointed in 2011 as the first permanent chairperson for the COEST and COSCE Working Parties and subsequently as from 2015 a Senior Russia Expert.

In Brussels his primary fields of interest and responsibility were related to EU-Russia relations, the Union's Eastern Neighborhood, and various regional cooperation structures in the North, including the Arctic cooperation. He was also selected as the Chair of the Vision Group for the Council of the Baltic Sea States, which was a group of independent experts that submitted a report to the CBSS Ministerial meeting on the future of the CBSS and the Baltic Sea region cooperation.



Rasmus Wendt

Associate Professor, Department of Arctic Social Science & Economics, University of Greenland and Head of Nasiffik - Center for Foreign & Security Policy

Rasmus Wendt heads the Department for Energy and Climate under the Greenlandic Government, where he is responsible for utilities and energy investments in Greenland.

Before joining the Government of Greenland, Dr Wendt was the CEO of a business school in San Diego, California, a senior adviser to Nordic Innovation under the Nordic Council of Ministers, and an international adviser to the Confederation of Danish Industry.

Dr Wendt holds a PhD in international politics from Roskilde University, Denmark.



Thomas Winkler

Arctic Ambassador of the Kingdom of Denmark, Head of the Department of Arctic and North America of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ambassador Winkler has worked in the Danish Foreign Service since 1986, including as Legal Adviser and Ambassador of the Kingdom of Denmark to Moscow and Ottawa.

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He has worked with Arctic issues since 2004 and was instrumental in the planning and realization of the 2008 Ilulissat Conference and Declaration.

He is currently working as the Arctic Ambassador and Senior Arctic Official (Arctic Council) of the Kingdom of Denmark and head of the Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Copenhagen dealing with the Arctic, the bilateral relationship with the US and Canada as well foreign policy coordination with Greenland and the Faroes.



Ronald Wærnes

Deputy Head, Troms and Finnmark County Government

Mr Ronald Wærnes is the Deputy Head of Troms and Finnmark County Government since 2021. He is also the Executive Councillor for Finance and Culture. Mr Wærnes was mayor of Båtsfjord Municipality from 2019 to 2021, representing the Centre Party. d

Wærnes has been engaged in the Seafood industry in Northern Norway since 1994 in which he also acquired international experience.

He has a degree in food technology and business economics.