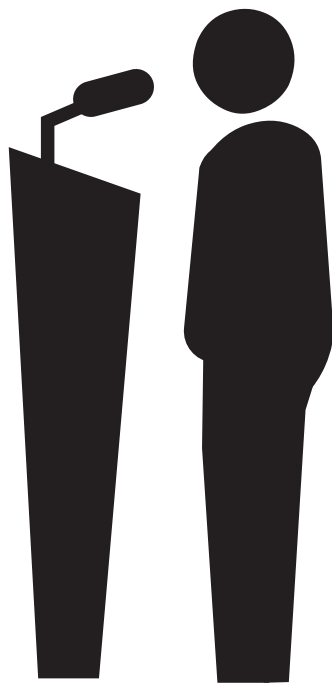


ARCTIC FUTURES SYMPOSIUM

BIOGRAPHIES OF SPEAKERS
AND MODERATORS





Jeanette Hammer Andersen
Professor in Marine Bioprospecting, University of Tromsø
Board Member, Biotech North

Jeanette Hammer Andersen is a Professor in marine bioprospecting at UiT- The Arctic University of Norway and Head of the Natural Products Platform Marbio at UiT. She is a Board Member of Barents Biocentre AS and Biotech North, a regional cluster for biotech companies. Recently, she also joined the programme board of FORNY2020, which is the Research Council of Norway's programme on commercialising R&D results. Jeanette has been involved in several successful grant applications from both regional, national and EU programmes. Currently, she is a work package leader in the ERA-NET Mbt project Neptuna, H2020 RISE project OceanMedicines and the H2020 ITN project MarPipe. Her research interest and focus is the discovery of novel bioactive compounds in marine environments.



Lars Balslev
Head of Section, Premier's Office, Government of Greenland

Dr. Lars Balslev is specialised in corporate governance, management accounting and organisational development. His associates, Bachelors, Masters and Ph.D. degrees have strengthened his management skills. Today he works in a political environment where he, on behalf of the Premier Minister of Greenland, manages the ownership of a large group of state-owned enterprises. He is passionate about the development of such enterprises and tries to promote the involvement of stakeholders in the development of corporations which play a critical role in society.



Susan Barr
President, International Arctic Science Committee (IASC)

Dr. Susan Barr is President of the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC). She was educated at University College, London and the University of Oslo, Norway. Her degree is in Historical Archaeology and she has since 1979 worked solely with polar history and cultural heritage. From 1998 to 2016 she acted as Polar Advisor at the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage. She has extensive field experience in both the Arctic and Antarctic and is the author of a number of books and articles concerning polar history and heritage. She was the Founding President of the International Council on Monuments and Sites' (ICOMOS) International Polar Heritage Committee (IPHC) and is currently Vice President. She is a member of the Research Council of Norway's Programme Committee for polar science and of various other polar committees and editorial boards. She is a member of the Board of the Fram Museum in Oslo and is currently assisting with their publishing and exhibition work, in addition to her work for IASC.



Erik Bergkvist
Chairman of the Regional Board, Västerbotten Region, Sweden

Dr. Erik Bergkvist is the Regional Councillor and Chair of the Executive Committee in Västerbotten Region, Sweden. He has a PhD in Economics from Umeå University 2001. He is a member of the Social Democratic Party since 1981 and is also a board member. He is also Vice-chairman of the Norrlands Foundation (Norrlandsfonden), Vice-chairman of Almi Nord, as well as member of the Västerbotten County Council. Erik has been very active in the European policy debate. Among other issues, he has emphasized the need for stronger cohesion within EU policy to tackle social, economic and environmental challenges. As well as championing the position of regions in policy-making, building partnerships and promoting solidarity within Europe and between regions. He is a full member of the Executive Committee of the Baltic Sea Commission and an alternate member of the CPMR (Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions) political bureau.

**Anders Møller Christensen****Advisor and former Assistant Governor, Danmarks Nationalbank**

Anders Møller Christensen has a MSC in Economics from the University of Copenhagen. He has worked with the Danmarks Nationalbank and the Danish Central Bank since 1982. Presently he is acting as an advisor. Anders has devoted time to Greenlandic issues for almost 30 years.

**Marie-Anne Coninsx*****Ambassador at Large for the Arctic, European Union***

Marie-Anne Coninsx has been Ambassador at Large for the Arctic since September 2017. Previously, she was the EU Ambassador to Canada (2013-2017), and before this she served for four years as the EU Ambassador to Mexico. She has served in EU Delegations in New York (US) and Geneva (CH), and has extensive experience in multilateral issues. Ambassador Coninsx has been an official of the EU since 1984. She began her career in the Legal Service of the European Commission, and worked 12 consecutive years as a Staff Member at Cabinets of three Commissioners. She also worked at the External Relations Department at EU HQ, overseeing relations between the European Union and Latin America. Ambassador Coninsx studied law at Gent University in Belgium and completed her post-graduate studies at Cambridge University (UK) and at the European University Centre in Nancy (France). Ambassador Coninsx is Belgian. She is fluent in Dutch, French, English, German and Spanish, and understands basic Portuguese and Italian.

**Hanne Fugl Eskjær****Arctic Ambassador for the Kingdom of Denmark****Head of Department, Arctic Affairs and Northern America, Danish MFA**

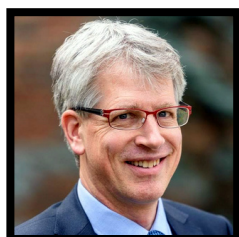
Hanne Fugl Eskjær has more than 20 years experience in international politics and diplomacy. In August 2016, she was appointed Ambassador for Arctic Affairs of the Kingdom of Denmark and Head of Department for the Arctic and North America. She represents the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Arctic Council and in the Kingdom of Denmark Forum for Arctic Research. From 2013 to 2016, Hanne Fugl Eskjær served as the Danish Ambassador to Bangladesh. Prior to this, she held postings in Damascus, Prague and the UN-mission in New York. From 2004-2007, she was European Correspondent and Assistant Secretary to the Foreign Policy Committee, and in the period 1998-2000 she worked as Senior Advisor to the Commissioner on Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Council of the Baltic Sea States. She holds a degree in Political Science from the University of Copenhagen and has studied and worked in France and the US. She has taught at the University as a part-time lecturer.

**Kjell Giæver****Director, Petro Arctic**

Kjell Giæver was born in Tromsø in 1965, but lives in Bodø. He is the 12th generation of the Giæver family, who has been trading along the coast since the Hanseatic ruled trade in the north. As a son of a fisherman from Finnmark, he has been along the entire coast and traded stockfish, and knows the pulse of the coast better than most in the petroleum industry - or in the Norwegian political landscape. Kjell is concerned about developing a sustainable arctic, making sure that the Norwegians are involved in this industrial adventure and position themselves for the future.

**Ólavur Gregersen****Managing Director, Ocean Rainforest; Partner, Syntesa**

Ólavur Gregersen has a long career as an entrepreneur and international management consultant. He is Coordinator of the European FP7 project ALL-SMART-PIGS, the Nordic Innovation project WhiteFishMaLL and NORA project MacroBiotech. He has extensive experience in obtaining private and public funding for innovative small and medium sized companies and has worked in the Faroese business community as a Business Development Adviser for the Italian oil and gas company Eni (former Agip). He led on a joint technical information service organization between the Faroese Government and Danish TIC Denmark. Major recent tasks include strategic marketing of Simprentis (Internet learning simulations for the oil sector), provision of management advice for Canadian Seaside Communications (telecom), and project management for Ocean Rainforest.

**David Hik****Professor, Biological Sciences, University of Alberta**

Dr. David Hik's research interests are focused on the ecology and dynamics of Arctic and mountain environments, the impacts of climate change, and determinants of social-ecological resilience. He previously held the Canada Research Chair in Northern Ecology, was Executive Director of the Canadian International Polar Year Secretariat, and served as President of the International Arctic Science Committee. He is a recipient of the Martin Bergmann Medal for Excellence in Arctic Leadership & Science awarded by the Royal Canadian Geographical Society and the Polar Medal (Canada). He currently serves as Scientific Director of the new Canadian Mountain Network.

**Mikael Janson****Managing Director, North Sweden European Office**

Mikael Janson has been Managing Director of the North Sweden European Office, the EU office for the two northernmost Counties of Sweden; Norrbotten and Västerbotten, since 2011. Before this he served as City Commissioner in the City of Gothenburg. He has worked as an official in the municipal government and served as acting substitute in the Swedish Parliament. For several years he was responsible for the administration and marketing of a small entrepreneurial firm in electric power systems which became the leading firm in its niche in Sweden. Mikael studied technical engineering in electronics and holds a Master's of Science in Business Administration and Communication from the Universities of Gothenburg and Lund. His personal connection to the Arctic is being half Norwegian with roots from above the "Lootveggen".

**Mira Kleist****Special Advisor, Foreign Affairs, Government of Greenland****Greenlandic Representative to the Arctic Council**

Mira Kleist represents the Government of Greenland at the Arctic Council. She is responsible for coordination, negotiation and overall international Arctic relations. She acts as the government's representative at the Nordic Council of Ministers' advisory committee. Mira has worked with human rights and indigenous peoples rights. She was former Secretary to the Embassy at the Greenland Representation to the European Union (EU). Tasks included the extended EU-Greenland partnership on Arctic and environmental issues. Mira has a Bachelor's degree in European Studies and Spanish from Copenhagen Business School. She has a Master's in Global Studies from Roskilde University. Mira held the position of Head of Section in the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Greenland before being posted to the Greenland Representation to the EU. She is currently acting as Special Advisor on Arctic affairs to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

**Kuupik Kleist****Former Premier of Greenland; Advisor, Inuit Circumpolar Council Greenland**

Kuupik Vandersee Kleist was the former Premier of Greenland and former member of both the Parliament of Greenland and the Danish Parliament. He has served as a member of Executive Council of the Inuit Circumpolar Council and is now a consultant at ICC. He is a member of the Commission of the North Water Polynya and is now working as an independent consultant primarily within economic development.

**Timo Koivurova****Director, Arctic Centre, University of Lapland**

Dr. Timo Koivurova is a Research Professor and Director of the Arctic Centre, University of Lapland. As a researcher he has specialised in various aspects of law applicable in the Arctic and Antarctic region. Timo is leading and involved in many international research projects and acts in various editorial duties, for instance, as the editor-in-chief of the Brill's the Yearbook of Polar Law. He was Director of the Northern Institute for Environmental and Minority Law before becoming Director of the Arctic Centre. He has also acted as an expert in several international processes globally and in the Arctic region.

**Bo Krogvig****Senior Vice President of Communications and Public Affairs, LKAB**

Bo Krogvig is the Senior Vice President for Communications and Public Affairs for Luossavaara – Kiirunavaara Aktiebolag, LKAB. BO has served as an adviser in public affairs and corporate communications in 38 countries, directly advising heads of states and businesses on strategy, communications and public affairs. He has a key understanding of the importance of sparking dialogue between stakeholders within both the private and public sector and in the basic as well as non-basic industry. Bo Krogvig joined LKAB in 2014.

**Anniken Ramberg Krutnes****Ambassador for Arctic and Antarctic Affairs for the Kingdom of Norway**

Ambassador Anniken Ramberg Krutnes is Norway's Ambassador for Arctic and Antarctic Affairs. She was previously Ambassador for Norway to the Netherlands and Luxembourg. During her career in the Foreign Service, she was also posted to Madrid and Strasbourg. She has held various positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Oslo, such as Director General for Internal and External Services and Assistant Director General in the Legal Department, section for Law of the Sea and environmental law. She holds a Masters degree in Law from the University of Oslo and a Masters of Science in Economics and Administration from the Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration (NHH), Bergen.

**Sipra Kurppa****Research Professor, Natural Resources Institute of Finland**

Dr. Kurppa Sirpa is a research professor at the Natural Resources Institute of Finland (Luke). Her research focus includes environmental impacts of food production and services, integrated food and environmental policy, environmental awareness and design, and the circular economy. She is Deputy Director of ScenoProt - Novel protein sources for food security (2015-2021). She has provided expert input into EU Rural Foresight studies and into work of the Committee for the Future of the Finnish Parliament for the National Food Strategy. She served as a member in the EU Bioeconomy Panel, and from 2014 to 2017 as a member of the National Nutrition Council. At present, she is working on the sustainability of green growth in the Arctic Finland.



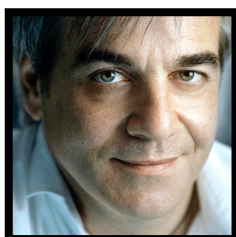
Åsa Larsson Blind
President, Saami Council

Åsa Larsson Blind is the President of the Saami Council, elected in February 2017. She has been a member of the Saami Council since 2008 and elected vice President in 2011. Larsson Blind was 2011-2015 the Saami Council board member of IPS, Indigenous Peoples Secretariat and served also in that period as the HoD for Saami Council at Arctic Council SAO meetings. Larsson Blind lives in Kiruna in the Swedish part of Sápmi, the region traditionally inhabited by the Sami people. She comes from a reindeer herding family and holds an MSc in Human Resources Management and Development. Larsson Blind has also been active in several Sámi organizations in Sweden. She has been a board member of the National Sámi Association in Sweden 2007-2011, a board member in the Sámi Educational Center in Jokkmokk 2007-2009, and the Sámi Youth organization in Sweden, Sáminuorra 2002-2007.



Christian Leffler
Deputy Secretary-General, European External Action Service

Christian Leffler has a Bachelor's degree in politics and international relations from the LSE. After completing doctoral studies at the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva he joined the Swedish Foreign Service in 1980. He joined the European Commission in 1996, where he took up the post Commission "Antici" and Head of Unit for the Secretariat General responsible for the coordination of relations with the Council of Ministers. In 1999, he became the Deputy Head of the Private Office of the Right Honourable Chris Patten, European Commissioner for External Relations. From 2002 to 2007, he was Director in charge of the Middle East and South Mediterranean in the European Commission's Directorate General for External Relations. He then spent three years as Head of Cabinet for the Commission Vice President for Institutional Relations and Communication. During 2010 Mr Leffler was Deputy Director General of the DG for Development and relations with African, Caribbean and Pacific States, as well as Senior Adviser to EU High Representative for CFSP and European Commission Vice-President. From 2011 to 2015 he was Managing Director for the Americas with the European External Action Service. Mr Leffler took up his current position in September 2015.



Jean Lemire
Envoy for Climate Change, Northern & Arctic Affairs, Government of Québec

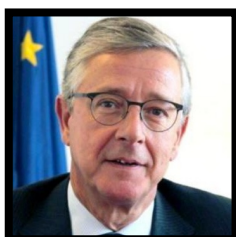
A biologist by training and renowned science communicator, Jean Lemire has conducted work on climate change and biodiversity that has led to major scientific missions. In 2001, he converted a large oceanographic schooner into a scientific research platform and production studio that took him across the world's oceans to raise awareness about key environmental issues. In 2012, following missions to the Arctic (2002) and Antarctica (2005-2006), he and his crew, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the U.N. Convention on Biological Diversity, began the 1000 Days for the Planet series, involving a three-year world expedition to examine the state of the planet's biodiversity. In association with the Sedna Foundation, he has also designed many instructional programs that have become references over the years in the field of education. Jean Lemire was appointed Envoy for Climate Change, Northern and Arctic Affairs by the Government of Québec in September 2017, thus becoming the first envoy in the history of Québec diplomacy.

**Ulrik Lyberth****Founder and Owner, Maki Seaweed Greenland**

Ulrik Lyberth is the founder and CEO of Maki Seaweed Greenland. As Greenland is a country with many opportunities to produce seaweed, he started the only company in Greenland to harvest and sell seaweed in Greenland in 2012. Ever since, he has worked passionately on his enterprise. The seaweed that Maki Seaweed sells is harvested in the Arctic Oceans off the West Coast of Greenland, north of the Arctic Circle.

**Björn Lyrvall****Ambassador for Arctic Affairs, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs**

In September, 2017, Björn Lyrvall assumed the position of Swedish Ambassador for Arctic Affairs. From 2013 to 2017, he served as Ambassador of Sweden to the US and between 2007 and 2013 he was Director General for Political Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Stockholm. From 2002 to 2007, he was posted at the Swedish Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels. Ambassador Lyrvall has also been working as a Special Advisor to former Prime Minister Carl Bildt and International High Representative in Bosnia and Hercegovina (1995-1997), as well as UN Special Envoy on the Balkans in 1999. Additional diplomatic posts include Leningrad, Moscow and London. Born in Hofors, Sweden, in 1960, Björn Lyrvall is a graduate of the University of Stockholm, and holds a degree in political science, Eastern European Affairs and Russian.

**João Aguiar Machado****Director General, European Commission Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries**

João Aguiar Machado is responsible for implementing the new Common Fisheries Policy and to secure sustainable fisheries, a stable supply of seafood for EU market and also prosperous coastal communities. As the DG in charge of Maritime Policy, his mission is also to promote an integrated approach to all maritime policies. Before taking up his current position, he was Director General at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport. He was responsible for developing transport policies for the European Union, integrating citizen's needs, environmental policy and competitiveness. Previously, he served as Deputy Director General at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Trade. From September 2007 to December 2008 he was Deputy Director General at the EC's Directorate-General for External Relations. Aguiar spent most of his career working on trade matters in Brussels and in EC Delegations in both Tokyo and Geneva. He studied economics in Lisbon and at the College of Europe in Bruges.

**Stephen Mooney****Director of Cold Climate Innovation, Yukon Research Centre**

Stephen Mooney is a Canadian technology and innovations specialist who guides the development, commercialisation and export of sustainable cold climate technologies. As the Director of Cold Climate Innovation (CCI) at the Yukon Research Centre, Mooney promotes the practical application of cold climate technologies for subarctic regions around the world. The main thematic areas of research for CCI include: Food Security, Alternative Energies, and Cold Climate Housing. Prior working with CCI, Mooney spent 7 years working in the field of telecommunications where he worked in product development, project management and marketing across northern Canada. He also spent half a decade developing and implementing computer software throughout the US. Stephen is certified in Professional Project Management and sits on the Board for the National Research Council of Canada.

**K.G. Moore****Environment, Science & Technology Officer, US Embassy in Copenhagen**

K.G. Moore is the Regional Coordinator for Environment, Science, Technology, and Health Affairs. Based at the U.S. Embassy in Copenhagen, he covers the Nordic, Baltic, and Western European regions, including Arctic Affairs. K.G. is a career diplomat who has served in various overseas assignments with the U.S. Department of State, including Portugal, Brazil, and most recently as Deputy Political-Economic Counselor in Tbilisi, Georgia. He served in Washington as Senior Georgia Desk Officer and in the Office of UN Political Affairs where he covered UN Security Council matters. Prior to joining the State Department, K.G. was an attorney in Denver, Colorado. He also served as a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer in Alba Iulia, Romania from 1995-1997.

**Tomas Norvoll****President, Nordland County Council and Chair of the Board, North Norway European Office**

Tomas Norvoll has been President of the County Government of Nordland, Norway, since 2013. Before this, he was Member of the Nordland County Council (since 2011), and member of the Board (1993-1997). Tomas Norvoll was elected in 1993 as representative from Nordland in the National Parliament of Norway. He was member of the Committee for Church, Education and Research. He served as a Delegate at the UN General Assembly (1995), Deputy member of the Parliament's Delegation to the Council of 2000-2001, Member of the Parliament's delegation to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (1997-2001). Tomas has been Deputy member of the Council of the Andøy Municipality (1991-1995). He has also worked as Senior Advisor for the Bodø Science Park from 2003 to 2011.

**Embla Eir Oddsdóttir****Director, Icelandic Arctic Cooperation Network (IACN)**

Embla Eir Oddsdottir has experience in research, project management, and various policy relevant issues including Arctic environmental governance. She currently leads the Icelandic Arctic Cooperation Network (IACN). Embla has held leadership roles and directed projects at the Northern Research Forum and the Stefansson Arctic Institute, Iceland. She has also taught courses on northern issues at the University of Akureyri and Western Kentucky University, where she holds the position of adjunct professor. Her educational background is interdisciplinary, and includes socio-economic development, anthropology, cultural geography, international relations, international law, indigenous studies and other topics. Embla holds a Msc in Law, Anthropology and Society from The London School of Economics and Political Science. Her undergraduate studies include socio-economic development at the University of Akureyri and interdisciplinary studies at the University of Northern British Columbia in Canada. Embla completed Masters level courses in Polar Law at the University of Akureyri

**Elle Merete Omma****EU Coordinator, Saami Council**

Elle Merete Omma is a Sámi raised in a reindeer herding family in Norway and Sweden. Omma assumed fulltime duties at the Saami Council as the EU coordinator in 2017. She came from the position as 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 Sami and Minority Affairs in the Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Modernization. She holds a Masters in Law from the University of Oslo.

**Bob Paquin****Head, Canadian International Arctic Centre, Canadian Embassy, Oslo, Norway**

Bob Paquin took up his current position as Head of the Oslo-based Canadian International Arctic Centre in 2015. Prior to this, Paquin was Deputy Director of the Human Rights Policy Division from 2013-15, Director of the Task Force on International Critical Incidents from 2011-13, Middle East Regional Policy Coordinator, 2009-11, and he undertook a temporary assignment as Political Director of the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan in 2009. Before this he worked as Senior Policy Advisor to the Assistant Deputy Minister for Bilateral Relations from 2008-09. He also served as Senior Asia Regional Strategist from 2006-2007, and in the International Crime and Terrorism Division from 2004-06. He spent three years in Singapore as the Political/Economic Relations and Public Affairs Program Manager in 2001-04, and served in the Southeast Asia Division from 1999-2001. Through 1998-99, he was the Program Coordinator with the newly-created Forum of Federations for the first International Conference on Federalism. Based in Singapore from 1993-98, Paquin undertook consulting work for the Canadian International Development Agency's Southeast Asia Regional Program. Prior to this, he worked in the private sector in the publishing industry.

**Gunn-Britt Retter****Head of the Arctic Environment Unit, Saami Council, Norway**

Gunn-Britt Retter was born and raised in the coastal Saami community of Unjárga-Nesseby near Varangerfjord in north-eastern Norway. She is a teacher of training from Sámi University College (Guovdageaidnu - Kautokeino, Norway) and holds MA in Bilingual studies from the University of Wales. Since 2001, She has worked on Arctic Environmental issues, first with the Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples Secretariat (IPS) (Copenhagen, Denmark) and since 2005 in her current position as Head of Arctic and Environmental Unit of the Saami Council. Here, Retter mainly engages in questions on indigenous peoples and knowledge related to climate change, biodiversity, language, pollution and natural resource management.

**Arne Riedel****Fellow, Ecologic Institute**

Arne Riedel is an environmental lawyer at Ecologic Institute, Berlin, where he is coordinating the Institute's activities on Arctic issues. Arne has explored national, regional and international angles on Arctic governance by researching for and advising the German government, the European Union (EU) as well as the WWF International Arctic Programme. He is particularly interested in the legal and institutional patchwork that is relevant to the Arctic region and its environment, and also in the options of engagement by non-Arctic states and actors. He is also one of the directors of Ecologic Institute's Arctic Summer College.

**Kristin Røymo****Mayor of Tromsø Municipality**

Kristin Røymo is a Norwegian politician for the Labour Party who has been Mayor of Tromsø since July 2016. Røymo holds a master's degree in Peace and Conflict Transformation from the University of Tromsø. She has worked as Head of Section for Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV), Head of the Færingen Therapeutic Society and Political Advisor in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1999, she was first elected to the municipality of Tromsø for the first time.

**Kate Sanderson****Head of Mission, Mission of the Faroes to the European Union**

Kate Sanderson became Head of the Mission of the Faroes to the European Union in September 2012. Beginning her career with the Government of the Faroes in the late 1980s, she was appointed General Secretary of the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO) in 1993 and set up the NAMMCO permanent secretariat in Tromsø, Norway. In 1998, Kate returned to the Faroe Islands as adviser in the newly established foreign service of the Faroese Prime Minister's Office. Since then she has represented the Faroe Islands on a number of bodies including the Arctic Council. She was chief negotiator for the Faroes in a number of multilateral consultations on the management of shared fish stocks and has headed delegations and held offices in fisheries organisations such as NEAFC and NAFO. She heads the Faroese delegation to the Committee on Fisheries of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation.

**Pekka Shemeikka****SDWG Chair; Senior Adviser of Arctic Cooperation, MFA Finland**

Pekka Shemeikka is Senior Adviser for Arctic issues at the Finnish Foreign Ministry. He currently chairs the Arctic Council's Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) during the Finnish chairmanship 2017-2019 and is responsible for the EU's Arctic policy at the Ministry in Helsinki. He was previously posted to Turkey as the Deputy Head of Mission. Before this he worked for the EU preparations for Rio+20 in Helsinki in 2010-2012 and as an Adviser for the UNSG's High Level Panel on Global Sustainability (GSP). Before this, Shemeikka held various positions in Brussels including relations with the European Parliament of Finland and the EU HR/SG in 2001-2009. Shemeikka has also been posted to the Netherlands and Iran in the past. Shemeikka holds a Masters degree in International Economics from the University of Helsinki.

**Árni Þór Sigurðsson****Icelandic Ambassador to the Arctic**

Árni Þór Sigurðsson was appointed Ambassador in the Icelandic Foreign Service in January 2015, and assumed his assignment as Senior Arctic Official in May 2015. Before joining the Foreign Service, Árni occupied various political positions in Iceland. He was a Member of Parliament (Alþingi) 2007-2014, where he served as Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee and Chairman of the EFTA delegation. He was co-chair of the Iceland-EU Joint Parliamentary Committee and was also a member of the Nordic Council. Prior to his Parliamentary career, Árni was City Councillor in the capital city of Reykjavik 1994-2007, i.a. as President of the City Council 2002-2005. He represented Icelandic Local and Regional Authorities at the Council of Europe 2002-2007. Previously, he has served as senior advisor in the Ministry for Communications and Transport. He holds a Master's Degree in Economics and Russian from the University of Oslo, and a Master's Degree in International Relations from the University of Iceland.



Piet Steel

Board Member, Polar Secretariat; Former Ambassador of Belgium to Vietnam

Piet Steel began his professional career as a Belgian diplomat. Between 1975 and 1997, he held various diplomatic assignments including Chief Negotiator during the multilateral trade negotiations of the Uruguay Round in Geneva, Ambassador to Vietnam and Consul General to Hong Kong. In 1997, he accepted responsibility for Public Affairs at the Solvay Group (Belgium), overseeing the chemical and pharmaceutical company's global government affairs activities. In 2005, he joined Toyota Motor Europe as Vice-President of External Affairs. In 2010, the Government of Japan appointed him as its Honorary Consul General for the Flanders region. He is Chairman of the Belgium Hong Kong Society, President of the Board Special Olympics Belgium and Member of the Board of the Polar Secretariat. He was appointed "Distinguished Visiting Fellow" of the European Business School of Regent's University in London. Mr Steel is advisor on international affairs to various companies.



Petteri Taalas

Secretary General, World Meteorological Organization

Dr. Petteri Taalas has a PhD in Meteorology from the University of Helsinki, Finland. He is the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization. Prior to this he served as Director-General of the Finnish Meteorological Institute. He has worked as a scientist and research professor at the FMI (1986-2002) and published 50 peer reviewed publications on remote sensing, global change and atmospheric chemistry. He also was Vice-chairman of European Commission Panel on Atmospheric Science from 1995 to 2002. Petteri was the lead author of Arctic Climate impact Assessment until 2002. Petteri has been recognized and involved in many international (Development and Regional Activities department of WMO (2005-2007), Member of WMO Executive Council (2008-2015), Chairman of EUMETSAT Council (2010-2014), Chairman of EUMETNET Council (2003-2005), Principal Delegate of Finland to IPCC) as in national organizations (Chairman of the board of the University of Eastern Finland (2010-2015), member of the Finnish Science Academy, Chairman of the Finnish IPCC committee (2007-2015), member of the Finnish Space board, member of the Finnish Arctic board (2009-2015), member of advisory groups of Finnish Prime Ministers) for many years. He has also participated in research projects on satellite hardware and software.



René Therrien

President of the Implementation Committee and Vice-Dean of Research, Faculty of Sciences and Engineering, Université Laval

Dr. René Therrien holds a PhD in hydrogeology from the University of Waterloo, Canada, and was a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Kassel, Germany. He is currently Full Professor in the Department of Geology and Geological Engineering and also Vice Dean of Research at the Faculty of Science and Engineering at Université Laval. He is president of the implementation committee for the newly created Institut nordique du Québec (www.inq.ulaval.ca). His research and teaching focus on issues related to water resources. Dr. Therrien has served on the expert panel on the Sustainable Management of Groundwater in Canada for the Council of Canadian Academies (2007-2009), and on the expert panel on the Environmental and Health Impacts of the Canada's Oil Sands Industry of the Royal Society of Canada (2009-2010). He has also co-authored a report of the Geological Survey of Canada on the Geothermal Energy Resource Potential of Canada (2011). He was previously member of the Minister's National Advisory Board for the Earth Sciences for Natural Resources Canada and member of the Canadian Geotechnical Research Board. He received an honorary doctorate from the University of Liège, Belgium and was elected fellow of the Canadian Academy of Engineering in 2017.



Andrea Tilche

DG RTD, Head of the Climate Action and Earth Observation Unit

Dr. Andrea Tilche obtained his Doctoral Degree in Agricultural Sciences at the University of Milano in 1978. His scientific career was mainly carried out in Italy where he set-up and directed the wastewater treatment laboratories of ENEA in Bologna. In 1998, he moved to the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission as Head of the Water Research Unit, and later to Brussels to lead the Water Key Action in the 5th Framework Programme. Since 2010, he heads the Unit "Climate Action and Earth Observation". He represents the EU at the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and in other international fora.



Elisabetta Vignati

Head, Air & Climate Unit, European Commission, Joint Research Centre

Dr. Elisabetta Vignati is a physicist by training, having graduated from the University of Milan. She obtained a Phd in geophysics from Copenhagen University in 1999. She worked as researcher at the national environmental research Institute in Roskilde, Denmark (1994-1999). She joined the European Commission in 1999. Throughout her career at the Joint Research Centre, she has worked as a modeller, developing applied atmospheric models with the purpose of evaluating the impact of human activities on air quality and climate. She has been both lead and co-author of 50 peer-reviewed publications. Since September 2012, she has been the Head of the Air and Climate Unit at the Institute for Environment and Sustainability. Her unit works on many aspects of air pollution and climate with the aim of providing integrated analysis in support of EU air quality and climate policies, including the Arctic, and it is strongly involved in international research projects and observation networks. Dr. Vignati also represents the EU at the Task Force on Black Carbon and Methane of the Arctic Council.



Katherine Weingartner

Arctic PIRE Graduate Research Assistant, George Washington University

Katherine conducts international research as part of the National Science Foundation's "PIRE: Promoting Urban Sustainability in the Arctic" grant to provide tools to advance urban sustainability in the region with a focus on developing an Arctic Urban Sustainability Index. As a World Wildlife Fund Fellow, Katherine conducted research on Arctic governance and development within WWF's Arctic Programme. While working in Berlin, Germany, she helped to manage the Arctic Summer College to educate international young professionals on interdisciplinary Arctic issues and contributed to the Gap Analysis Report of the EU Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment of development of the Arctic Preparatory Action project. In 2016, Arctic Deeply named her one of "Sixteen Young Leaders Who Will Influence the Future of the Arctic".

