

Encyclopaedia of the Barents Region

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Principal objective

The proposed project aims to produce an Encyclopaedia of the Barents Region. It will be the joint achievement of an international network of scholars and scientists in the true spirit of the IPY, dedicated to create an out-reach of new and authoritative social, economic, indigenous and environmental knowledge on an important part of the subarctic high north: the Euro-arctic or Barents Region. The production will coincide with the time-span of the IPY 2007-08 and contribute continually to its out-reach by a website and a series of public presentations. Its main result will be a lasting legacy of knowledge, again in the spirit of the IPY, in the highly accessible form of a one or two volume encyclopaedia. An Internet on-line version will be provided based on low cost access or for free dependent on funding. The encyclopaedia will be the first ever on the Barents Region, unique in its multidisciplinary scope, and totally in-line with the IPY and the Norwegian policy of the high-north.

Project summary

The International Polar Year 2007-2009 is not just about research. Also of great importance is the public engagement with polar science and the involvement of local groups and of ethnic minorities. This outreach project aims at making an important part of the polar regions, the Barents Region present in the minds of people and relates it to a circum arctic and global context. Its main result will be an Encyclopaedia of the Barents Region. This will be a unique joint effort of an international network of scholars and scientists in the true spirit of the IPY, providing highly-accessible out-reach of new and authoritative social, economic, indigenous and environmental knowledge. The production will coincide with the time-span of the IPY 2007-09 and contribute continually to its outreach by a website and a series of public presentations.

The encyclopaedia will have a lasting importance and efficiently counteract the tendencies of previous IPY:s to be sudden burst of excellent work, covered by fine publicity, followed by all too often long periods of ill-funded data management, delayed publishing and thus neglect by necessity from the media and in the public sphere.

The Barents Encyclopaedia will be a new tool of reference that makes possible a contextual interdisciplinary outlook on the European Arctic. This is crucially needed for the sustainable management of northern natural resources both in fisheries, minerals and oil and gas. The encyclopaedic scientific outlook will be made complete by a full treatment of traditional knowledge including the modern enterprises of reindeer herding, coastal fishing and quality tourism. School children, undergraduate students, advanced researchers, journalists and the public will all benefit and have their interest furthered for natural and social sciences, technology and the environment of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region.