

CAVIAR - Community Adaptation and Vulnerability in the Arctic Regions: Focus on northern Norway and northern Russia

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Project summary

The Arctic is experiencing rapid changes in environmental, societal and economic conditions. The particular conditions to which communities are sensitive are not well documented, nor have the conditions that might facilitate or constrain the adaptive capacity in the face of interacting climate and socioeconomic changes been substantiated. Insights into the particular vulnerabilities of Arctic communities have not been compared across the Arctic countries. Nor are these studies well connected to policy development. CAVIAR, an endorsed IPY cluster, is designed to meet these research gaps, and outlines a research strategy that develops a theoretical framework for community vulnerability assessment, refines a common methodology, establishes procedures for case studies, develops a process to compare and integrate results, and ensures direct application of research to policy. IPY offers a unique opportunity for collaboration on research challenges of this magnitude. With reference to the objectives and goals stated above, this contribution to CAVIAR is to develop four field sites in Norway and Russia, identify past, current and future exposure-sensitivities and adaptation strategies, assess community vulnerability and adaptation, determine the extent to which available meteorological data series can provide a meaningful description of local conditions that influence the sensitivity in selected communities, provide downscaled climate projections with sufficient spatial resolution for vulnerability assessment. A cross-site comparison of Norway and Russia is expected to provide vital knowledge on the social factors are most significant in shaping vulnerability, and in meeting adaptation needs. The application of a common theoretical framework and methodology allow for integrating the results with the CAVIAR projects. Such integration will provide critical and generalizable knowledge of vulnerability and adaptation to climate and other changes in the eight Arctic countries.