

THE ARCTIC ENVIRONMENT EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVES ON A CHANGING ARCTIC

EMBASSY OF FRANCE, KONGENS NYTORV 4, 1050 COPENHAGEN K
12 JUNE 2017, 16.30-18.30

Time	Item
16.30-16.45	François Zimeray , <i>Ambassador of France to Denmark</i> Welcome
16.45-17.15	Hans Bruyninckx , <i>Executive Director, European Environment Agency</i> Key findings from EEA Arctic Environment report, relevance to the EU Arctic Policy, the Arctic Stakeholder Forum and strengthening the knowledge base.
17.15-17.45	Laurent Mayet , <i>Special Representative of France for Polar Affairs</i> Priorities in the National Roadmap for the Arctic and the Arctic Science Strategy 2015-2020. Engagement with AC observers in addressing Arctic challenges and opportunities.
17.45-18.00	Ann-Marie Nyroos , <i>Ambassador of Finland to Denmark</i> Priorities for Finland's chairmanship of the Arctic Council 2017-2019 and reflections on the Arctic Stakeholder Forum (15-16 June, Oulu, Finland) and EU role in the Arctic.
18.00-18.30	Q&A Light refreshments served

The importance of the Arctic environment and its role in the climate system has been increasingly recognised and the changing Arctic are getting attention in a national, regional and global context. Similarly there has been increasing awareness that changes in the Arctic have effects beyond its boundaries. For the same reasons the EU has identified the Arctic as a priority region in the **7th Environment Action Programme** and in 2016 the EU Commission launched an [integrated EU Arctic policy](#) to position the Union with respect to the changes in the region and foster cooperation with Arctic partners in addressing the opportunities and challenges ahead. In response the Council of the European Union adopted [conclusions](#) in 2016 broadly welcoming the EU Arctic policy and the European Parliament adopted an own initiative report and [Arctic resolution](#) in 2017.

One of the EU initiatives are an [Arctic Stakeholder Forum](#) (ASF) aiming at streamlining the use of EU funding in the Arctic and identifying common investment priorities. The first high-level ASF will be held in Oulu/Finland on 15-16 June 2017 with Timo Soini, the Finnish Minister of Foreign Affairs, as host and from the EU the High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini and Commissioner Karmenu Vella will attend. The Arctic importance to Europe has also been recognised at national level and in addition to the EU Arctic policy some 12 European states have in recent years launched **national Arctic or Polar strategies**, policy papers, roadmaps or research programmes to address the challenges and opportunities in the region, including France which has launched a National Roadmap for the Arctic as well as an Arctic Science Strategy 2015-2020.

Many of the drivers and trends that affect the Arctic region, the environment and its people, are challenges that Arctic states are not solely responsible for or can solve in isolation. Thus Europe has a role to play with regards to the future of the Arctic and on 15 June 2017 in the margins of the ASF the **EEA will launch an Arctic report** that addresses some of the key questions and trends that Europe has to consider. Both in terms of discussing the European and global footprint in the Arctic as well as addressing what implications a changing Arctic will have for Europe in environmental, economic and societal terms. Finland on 11 May for the next two years took over the **chairmanship of the Arctic Council** from USA, and as an EU Member State Finland will be in a good position to facilitate cooperation and synergies between efforts of the Arctic Council and the EU.

These will be some of the topics to be addressed in an **Arctic Environmental seminar** held at the French Embassy in Copenhagen with **François Zimeray**, Ambassador of France to Denmark as host and **Hans Bruyninckx**, Executive Director, European Environment Agency, Laurent Mayet, Special Representative of France for Polar Affairs and **Ann-Marie Nyroos**, Ambassador of Finland to Denmark as speakers.