



Bundesministerium
für Bildung
und Forschung

Press Release

HAUSANSCHRIFT Kapelle-Ufer 1, 10117 Berlin

POSTANSCHRIFT 11055 Berlin

TEL 030 / 18 57-50 50

FAX 030 / 18 57-55 51

E-MAIL presse@bmbf.bund.de

HOME PAGE www.bmbf.de

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Research to Protect the Eternal Ice

International conference on the future of Arctic science / Karliczek: "Arctic research provides the basis for political decision-making"

The Second Arctic Science Ministerial is held in Berlin on 25 and 26 October. Science Ministers, Scientists and other representatives of 26 nations and regions and from the indigenous Arctic population have gathered to discuss "*Cooperation in Arctic Science – Challenges and Joint Actions*". A Joint Statement on international research in the Arctic will be signed to develop a future perspective for Arctic science. The German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) is hosting the conference together with the European Commission and Finland.

German Federal Research Minister Anja Karliczek emphasizes: "Melting ice in the Arctic due to global warming will have far-reaching consequences worldwide including for Germany. This is why we are bringing all stakeholders together – Ministers, researchers and representatives of the Arctic population. Our aim is to use the possibilities of research and innovation to work for the future of the Arctic. Research creates knowledge about climate change and thereby supports political decision-making."

The increase in Arctic air and water temperatures is well above the global average – higher than anywhere else in the world. Such warming has far-reaching consequences for both the Arctic population and the global climate. Arctic sea ice continues to shrink and permafrost is melting. Yet changes also present opportunities for economic development in the region. There are still many open questions: How vulnerable or resilient are nature and people in the Arctic? What impact does Arctic change have on the non-Arctic world? Where do we stand in

research for the future of the Arctic? These and other topics are the focus of debate at the Second Arctic Science Ministerial, which is held under the patronage of Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel. Following the 2016 First Arctic Science Ministerial in Washington D.C., the meeting in Berlin will provide another forum for improving international cooperation in Arctic science.

“An ambitious global climate policy is the only safeguard for the future of the Arctic. There is still much to learn about the consequences of climate change for the regions around the North Pole. Only by backing our actions with scientific knowledge will we be able to slow down climate change. To that end, the EU will invest EUR 70 million in Arctic research and innovation in the next two years”, says Carlos Moedas, European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation.

“Decision-makers need direct interaction with the scientific community to get vital information and to be able to comprehend its significance. It is clear that the polar region is not separate from global development, but interdependence is high. This is seen, for example, in the very recent IPCC climate report. Sustainable development is an extremely important topic in the Arctic. Finland considers that it is important to promote multidisciplinary and versatile cooperation on Arctic science and research on a global scale. In this work, we need to take into account all the stakeholders”, says Finnish Minister of Education Sanni Grahn-Laasonen.

The planned Joint Statement highlights that Germany and the international community are assuming responsibility. After all, change in the Arctic is progressing at an enormous speed. The recently published IPCC special report highlights the necessity of international scientific networking. We need international research cooperation to better monitor, understand and tackle imminent changes jointly. Our aim must be to preserve the Arctic environment while ensuring the well-being of the Arctic population.

The Second Arctic Science Ministerial will be a two-day conference: More than 250 researchers, science organizations and representatives of the indigenous Arctic population will participate in the Science Forum on 25 October. Participants will present the progress made in Arctic research since the First Arctic Science Ministerial in 2016 and propose new developments. This scientific information will provide the basis for the ministerial meeting on the second day.

Representatives of six indigenous Arctic organizations will meet with 26 government representatives on the next day. The aim of this ministerial meeting is to strengthen scientific relations between the countries in cooperation with the Arctic indigenous population. In this context, the Ministers also want to address the grand societal challenges in the Arctic. A Joint Statement on the future of Arctic science will be signed at the end of the meeting.

Learn more:

<https://www.arcticsscienceministerial.org>