AFTER THE ICE...

Polar Ice as a New Arena for Conflicting Interests and Social Research

Igor Krupnik, Smithsonian Institution, NIC-5, 18 July, 2013
Arctic ice as a ‘cultural scape’ for polar indigenous people

Today’s hunters test the ice off Igloolik, Canada. Photo: Claudio Aporta, 2003

A Yupik hunter on the shore-fast ice off the village of Ungaziq in Chukotka, 1929

Photo: Aleksandr Forshtein, Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, St. Petersburg, Russia
Sea ice as a familiar space
Ice as a Home...

Traditional winter camp of the Canadian Inuit of snow houses on the shore-fast ice

“Aua’s spring ice camp of snow houses” (Knud Rasmussen, “Across Arctic America,” 1927)
Inuktitut place names along traditional trails and traveling routes between Iglulik and Arctic Bay

Claudio Aporta 2009, “The Trail as Home”
“Eskimo Mermaid’ (kununigaq) pictured by Inuit artist James Kivetoruk Moses (1900–1982). In various parts of the Arctic, community knowledge includes information on such supernatural creatures, like big worms, dwarfs, and wild giants that live on or under the ice.
Top: Over 30 indigenous sea ice terminologies have been recorded for the SIKU project in 2007–2010.

Right: The ‘Wales Inupiaq Sea Ice Dictionary’ (2012) has over 100 ice-related terms in the dialect of Kingikmiut, the People of Wales, Alaska.
Treasures of Local Knowledge about ice and climate change
Arctic Warming: It’s Everybody’s Bell!

Average Monthly Arctic Sea Ice Extent
September 1979 - 2012

2012 sea ice minimum
http://svs.gsfc.nasa.gov/vis/a000000/a003900/a003998/index.html
Without a human touch, the frozen sea turns into a mass of cracks, hummocks and ridges, a cultural desert, the ‘wild ice’
Non-indigenous ice scapes

Ice scape created by the “Fram” sailors during their Arctic drift in 1893–1896

http://www.ub.uit.no/northernlights/Images/nansen01d.jpg

(Below) The crew of HMS Terror icebound in the Arctic prepares the ship for safe wintering

http://www.thearcticinstitute.org/2011/10/34358679-search-for-sovereignty.html
26 Native Alaskan communities are declared as ‘high-risk’; some are literally sand-bagged.

12 communities have already decided to relocate to higher ground at enormous estimated cost: $95-125M for Kivalina (population 374), $80-130M for Newtok (population 354), $100-200M for Shishmaref (population 563), about $2M per household.


http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/
Land or Sea:
The ice’s legal dimensions
The legal status of Arctic sea ice in the United States and Canada

BETSY BAKER* and SARAH MOONEY

aVermont Law School, South Royalton, VT, USA;
bClass of 2013, Vermont Law School, South Royalton, VT, USA

The treatment of sea ice in USA and Canadian law has failed adequately to allocate and manage demands on Arctic sea ice among competing uses. Decision makers have generally categorized sea ice as either land or water, a binary approach that ignores its unique characteristics and the services it provides to many different users. Agency action and related litigation in the USA demonstrate sea ice user conflicts and highlight the tendency of US law to protect only one type of user at a time. In Canada, two recent Inuit Land Claims Agreement create zones that encompass sea ice. Yet both systems are beginning to acknowledge sea ice as a component of larger systems and as a resource with multiple uses and users. Both countries have the seeds of mechanisms in place to allow multiple users of sea ice to provide input on planning decisions affecting sea ice. While much work lies ahead, and none of these steps on its own clarifies the legal status of sea ice, combined they provide a modest foundation for beginning to better balance competing uses of sea ice in a warming Arctic.

Over the last quarter century, US and Canadian law have categorized sea ice inconsistently as land or water, and international law has unquestioningly treated sea ice as water in another form. These approaches no longer suffice in an era when
Native/Inuit Perspectives

Photo: Igor Krupnik, Gambell, Alaska, February 2009
At least two dozen bowhead whales are killed each spring in North Alaska from camps along the edge of shore-fast ice. Hundreds of people are on the ice hunting, towing and butchering the whales.
Global Arctic Programme

THE LAST ICE AREA

Enter WWF

Narwhals are often found near the ice edge.

VISION

As the climate warms, Arctic sea ice is disappearing. Almost every summer, the amount of remaining ice gets smaller. That summer ice is vitally important to a whole range of animals from tiny shrimp to vast bowhead whales, and to local people.

One stretch of ice is projected to remain when all other large areas of summer ice are gone. This is the Last Ice Area.

About the Last Ice Area
The WWF “Last Ice” Target Area
The WWF argues that the need to preserve the “Last Arctic Ice” could come in less than twenty years from now and that it is working with the Inuit Circumpolar Council and other Inuit organizations in Canada and Greenland to gain their support and leadership for the plan.
Whose Ice: A Question for 2030 (or 2020)

Thin young ice with patches of open water in mid winter is the new face of the Arctic to which people have to adapt, as climate change progresses.
Thank you !