Environment scanning workshop and report 1

Blue-Action Case Study Nr. 5

Workshop participants at the Second "Yamal 2040" workshop in Potsdam, March 2017. © Julia Baronina, IMEMO

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Summary for publication

The Yamal 2040 Scenario Workshop series is a part of the international research project "Blue-Action – Arctic Impact on Weather and Climate" funded through the European Union's Horizon 2020 Programme. This project aims to evaluate the impact of a changing Arctic on northern hemisphere weather and climate; to improve the safety and wellbeing of people in the Arctic and across the northern hemisphere by reducing risks associated with a changing climate and Arctic operations; and to support evidence-based decision-making by policymakers worldwide. This specific work is carried out as case study 5 "Yamal 2040: Scenarios for the Russian Arctic" within Work Package 5 "Developing and Valuing Climate Services and Information Services" of Blue-Action.

The Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS) in cooperation with Foresight Intelligence and the Primakov National Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the Russian Academy of Science (IMEMO) develop forward-looking scenarios to better understand the risks and opportunities associated with future developments in the Arctic. This case study looks at a specific region, the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug in Arctic Russia: a region with substantial ongoing and planned petroleum and shipping activities. Together with stakeholder groups, Blue-Action is co-developing a suite of scenarios to describe possible futures for the Yamal-Nenets region in 2040, incorporating cutting edge climate predictions with environmental, social and cultural concerns, economic opportunities, and political and legal developments.

Scenarios are developed, assessed, and used together with stake- and rights-holders at a series of workshops using various foresight methods, tailored to the project's needs. These methods allow to constructively deal with cognitive biases, thus enabling participants to think out of the box when planning the future. Such an approach is very helpful in tackling complex issues linked to numerous interacting uncertainties.

Two of a total of three planned workshops were conducted in Moscow (RU) and Potsdam (DE) in December 2017 and March 2018, respectively. During the first workshop, a diverse group of stakeholders and scientists exchanged their views about the multitude of factors influencing the future of the Yamal region and identified a set of key influencing factors and their projections. At the second workshop, participants used these projections to elaborate three different scenarios as to what the region could look like in 2040.

At the third workshop planned for September 2018, stakeholders will elaborate how to use the developed scenarios in their decision-making.