An application of the resilience assessment framework to pre-existing case studies in the Arctic

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Abstract

As one of the most rapidly changing regions of the world, the Arctic is garnering increasing interest not just for its significant development potential, but also from researchers and policy makers seeking to better understand potential impacts of changes at local to global levels and the Arctic’s capacity to cope and adapt. The Arctic Resilience Interim Report, a project of the Arctic Council published in the spring of 2013, documents numerous potential biophysical and social thresholds as well as sources of adaptive and transformative capacity with the objective of informing policy and management options. Using a resilience assessment framework, a set of case studies explore some of the challenges and sources of resilience in particular places across the region and serves to connect local livelihoods across scales to the broader question of pan-Arctic resilience. Four pilot case studies illustrate the diversity of systems and issues spanning the Arctic region from increased shipping in the Bering Strait, wildlife and subsistence systems in the southwest Yukon, reindeer herding in Finnmark, to resilience perspectives on food security in the north. This presentation draws on the experience of applying a resilience assessment framework on systems and research carried out from other starting points for the report. The overarching question to be addressed is – what can be learned from an application of the resilience assessment framework to pre-existing case studies? In addition, how the template-based approach might inform development of a rapid assessment process will be discussed. This presentation will contribute to an ongoing evaluation of resilience assessment approaches and will highlight several key emerging themes from the practice of operationalizing resilience including challenges around knowledge integration and analyzing cross-scale interactions.

Keywords: resilience assessment, Stakeholder engagement