



Arctic Panel:

The Arctic Crossroads: Climate, Culture & Diplomacy in the High North

Interactive Panel Debate with Leading Experts on the Arctic Region

30 November 2023

15:00 – 17:00

[Schouwburgstraat 2 - Leiden University, The Hague](#)

Auditorium A0.06

Norway is currently chair of the Arctic Council. On 30 November, the Royal Norwegian Embassy in The Hague will organise an Arctic Panel in collaboration with the MSc International Relations and Diplomacy programme at Leiden University. The panel debate will explore various aspects of the Arctic region's development. A number of distinguished speakers, including policymakers, researchers, and regional representatives, will address topics like climate change, sustainable economic development, Arctic peoples, and challenges/opportunities in the High North.

The format of the panel will involve short presentations by the speakers, followed by a dynamic discussion led by Senior Arctic Analyst Marisol Maddox of the Wilson Center Polar Institute. After the panel debate, there will be ample time for the students of the International Relations and Diplomacy (MSc) programme, as well as other stakeholders, to join the discussion with the panellists.

Background

On 11 May, Norway took over the chairship of the Arctic Council¹ from Russia for a two-year term. Due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, all official Arctic Council meetings were temporarily halted. Despite these challenges, Norway is committed to guiding the Arctic Council through uncertain times.

The Arctic Council is a crucial platform for knowledge creation and information exchange on a range of Arctic challenges. Its role is to provide guidance on these pressing issues. In recent years, the consequences of climate change have played a particularly important role in the work of the Council and its working groups.

Norway has set the following priorities for its chairship of the Arctic Council: the oceans, climate and environment, sustainable economic development, and the people of the north. Through these focus areas, Norway is committed to the Council's objective of ensuring a stable and sustainable Arctic region.

¹ *The Arctic Council is an intergovernmental forum which facilitates cooperation among the region's eight states and its Arctic Indigenous Peoples and local populations. Its primary focus is on sustainable development and environmental protection.*



Program

Moderator:

Marisol Maddox, Senior Arctic Analyst, Wilson Center Polar Institute

Panellists:

- **H.E. Bård Ivar Svendsen**, Norwegian Ambassador to the Netherlands
- **H.E. René van Hell**, Arctic Ambassador of the Netherlands
- **Anja Márjá Nystø Keskitalo**, Saami Council (Advisor EU unit)
- **Martine van den Heuvel-Greve**, Wageningen University & Research (Scientist and R&D Arctic)

Set up for Arctic Panel on 30 November

(Time and topics can be adjusted)

15:00-15:10 **Registration**

15:15 – 15:25 **Setting the scene – current situation in the Arctic region**, *Marisol Maddox, Wilson Center*

15:25 – 15:33 **Norway's Chairship of the Arctic Council**, *H.E. Bård Ivar Svendsen*

15:33 – 15:40 **Dutch priorities for the Arctic / Arctic Council**, *H.E. Rene van Hell*

15:40 – 15:50 **How (future) human activities impact the Arctic marine environment**

Martine van den Heuvel-Greve, Wageningen University

15:50 – 16:00 **Climate, Culture, and Diplomacy – An Arctic Indigenous Perspective**

Anja Márjá Nystø Keskitalo, Saami Council

16:00 – 16:10 **Reflections:** *Moderator summarizes van den Heuvel-Greve & Nystø Keskitalo's interventions, followed by first reflections from both ambassadors on alignment of expert concerns with national Arctic ambitions.*

16:10 – 16:40 **Themes for panel discussions:**

How does climate change and biodiversity loss in the Arctic interplay with traditional security challenges?

Is it possible to have sustainable economic development in the Arctic without harming the environment?

16:40 – 17:00 **Q&A session with the audience**

17:15 – 18:15 **Reception**