



Northern Research Forum

The 4th NRF Open Meeting **The Borderless North**

Oulu and Tornio, Finland and Haparanda and Luleå, Sweden, October 5-8, 2006

- **Early-Registration Deadline: September 15, 2006**
- **For on-line registration and other information, please go to <http://www.nrf.is> or <http://thule oulu.fi/nrf2006>**

Themes, Case Studies, Project-Day Topics and Special Sessions

Main Theme: *Tech-knowledge in Economies and Cultures*

Themes and sub-themes of Plenary Sessions and Square Hours

Plenary I: 'Tech-knowledge' and its Application to the Economies, Energy Policies and Cultures in the North

Technology is the driver of economies in the 21st century and is critical to all aspects of life in the North from the development of energy policies to the designing of infrastructure for rural communities. "Tech-knowledge" envisions the nature of technology and the impact it has on society and culture. The term implies an understanding of the interdependent role of technology and societies, and therefore it needs to be conceptualized. This requires, among other things, the careful incorporation of traditional and local knowledge with scientific knowledge in analysis, synthesis, and decision making. Northern appropriate technologies and capacity building is critical to the north in this era of globalisation and particularly as it affects environment and energy issues.

The North is a focus of oil and gas exploration and extraction as developed countries and industrial centres seek to cope with predictions that the world is close to reaching the peak of conventional fossil fuel production. 'Energy Security' has become a critical issue for governments and it is apparent that there will be an increased impact of globalisation in the North and increased demands for transport of energy from the North with the accompanying social, cultural and environmental risks. Locally or regionally sustainable appropriate or alternative energy for the North rather than mega-projects will guarantee better energy security in the long term.

Presentations will focus on one or more of the following sub-themes:

- 1) Northern appropriate technologies and resources – developed, adopted, adapted and exploited.
- 2) Appropriate energy and the increase in flows of globalization and transportation in the North.
- 3) Linking technology and social science in natural resource management for sustainable development.

Plenary II: Borders, barriers, interactive cultures and borderlands – is the North becoming a common borderless space?

Borders, boundaries and borderlands in the North are being both bridged and strengthened, at the same time. For example, on the one hand, there is bilateral discussion on the position of borders, dictated by the search for resources, and at the same time indigenous peoples are creating borderless space through organisations such as the Inuit Circumpolar Conference. Additionally, bridges of knowledge and technology exist with the

University of the Arctic, agreements between the University of Alaska and Yukon College, the Finnish-Russian Cross-Border University and partnerships between the European Union and Russia in education and science.

One educational requirement in northern communities is that technology requires “tech-knowledgey,” incorporating locally-relevant experience and skills. It is as important to learn from elders about the epistemology of indigenous knowledge systems and worldviews as it is to learn the western science views. Tech-knowledgey can be borderless. There are interactive cultures and economies across borders creating borderless spaces. The Tornionjoki-river valley, a focus of this NRF, is one such example. An interesting question is ‘Are there applications of history which have encouraged a change from border-building to region-building?’.

Presentations will focus on one or more of the following sub-themes:

- 4) The borders, barriers and bridges of knowledge and technology.
- 5) “Tech-knowledgey”; education requirements in northern communities.
- 6) Learning the epistemology of indigenous knowledge systems and worldview.
- 7) Interactive cultures across borders & applications of history: from border-building to region-building.
- 8) The new European minority policy and legislation – realization and consequences in the fields of economies and cultures.

Plenary III: Societal impacts of flows of globalization and climate change in the North – The influences of Northern dimensions, policies, strategies and programmes

Flows of resources and merchandise out of the Bothnian Arc to the south, what we will refer to as “flows of globalization,” have ranged from timber and tar in the ‘old days’ to steel, cell phones, and techno-based expertises in more recent times. Currently a reverse flow may be evident with transfer payments, tourism and ‘Ikea’. Are the centre-periphery structures breaking down due to globalization and regionalization? Is the Oulu phenomenon mostly techno-growth and faith in technology or can it be ‘tech-knowledgey’ sensitive to culture, education, and local governance?

A case study of Kostomuksha (a town in the Russian Karelia) may be an example of regionalization in the global economy in contrast to the ‘China Phenomenon’ which can provide parallels to the North.

There are northern policies, both existing and envisioned. Norway has published a Northern Strategy in the form of a white paper, Canada is discussing a northern strategy, Russia has a number of policies in the north and the EU has its established Northern Dimension. There are also programmes across borders such as the Nordic Council of Ministers’ Arctic Co-operation Programme and Arctic Council with Working Groups such as AMAP, CAFF, and Sustainable Development. All promise stability, peace, and prosperity while implementing sustainability, but what are the real societal influences of them? And how do they increase human security, especially in the context of unprecedented climate change?

Four sub-themes have been identified for discussion:

- 9) The flows of globalization – from timber and tar and iron ore, to tourism, steel, cell phones and Ikea: breaking the centre-periphery structures?
- 10) Kostomuksha (a town in the Russian Karelia) cf. China – regionalization of the global economy?
- 11) Northern policies and visions crossing borders: Northern strategy in Canada, Norway’s Northern Strategy, Northern Dimension of the EU, Russian policy in the North, the Nordic Council of Ministers’ Arctic Programme, and the programs and strategies of the Arctic Council.
- 12) Human Security and Climate Change in the North.

Local and regional case studies included in Plenary Sessions and Square Hours

Introductions of several local and regional case studies will be among the presentations during the 4th NRF Plenary Sessions and Square Hours. The Square Hours include presentations only by young researchers. The following case studies and themes have so far been proposed:

- 1) The Oulu phenomenon: Techno-growth and tech-knowledgey (concerns e.g. tar, education, cell phones, alternative energy, local politics, dance, ..).
- 2) The borderless twin-town of Tornio-Haparanda: From utopia into reality.
- 3) The Tornionjoki River valley and “Vittulanjätkä”: Interactive cultures in a borderless space - a unique culture.

- 4) Laponia – the management of a protected world heritage.
- 5) Sustainable Heating Systems – the development of the district heating system in Luleå.

Topics proposed for the Day of Projects

The Project-Day sessions address specific topics, ongoing projects or new initiatives. Several sessions are conducted simultaneously at different locations, and they are structured as a workshop or in the format of formal introduction/presentations followed by general discussion. The following sessions have been proposed with organization underway.

- 1) Legal challenges in the Arctic.
- 2) Gender and human security.
- 3) Traditional products in globalized society.
- 4) Results and follow-up from the NRF Workshop *Economies in the North* (Oulu, May 2005) and the ICARP 2 report on *Sustainability and Arctic Economies*.
- 5) Northern Eurasian geopolitics.
- 6) Community based research.
- 7) Environmental technology.
- 8) Searching for adventures and exotic experiences – Tourism in Lapland / the North: Santa Claus, snow, reindeer, polar bears, northern lights, midnight sun, silence...

Special sessions

Northern Travelling Film Festival

Northern films will be shown in the evenings during the 4th NRF Open Meeting

Town Hall Meeting focusing on the findings, issues, problems, opportunities and initiatives raised by the Arctic Human Development Report (2004) and the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment reports (2004-05)

School-day session

Session includes the participation of children, parents and teachers in Tornio and Haparanda

The Hosts of the 4th NRF Open Meeting

City Administration of Luleå
City Administration of Oulu
Council of Oulu Region
Luleå University of Technology

Provincia Bothiensis
Provincial Government of Lapland
Provincial Government of Norrbotten
Provincial Government of Oulu

Regional Council of Lapland
University of Lapland
University of Oulu

The 4th NRF Host Planning Committee members

- Governor Per-Ola Eriksson, Provincial Government of Norrbotten
- Chairman of the NRF Steering Committee, Lassi Heininen, University of Lapland
- Director Kari Laine, Thule Institute, University of Oulu
- Rector Lauri Lajunen, University of Oulu
- Director Pentti Lampinen, Council of Oulu Region
- Director Esko Lotvonen, Regional Council of Lapland
- Mayor Kari Nenonen, City Administration of Oulu
- Pia Sandvik Wiklund, President of Luleå University of Technology
- Governor Hannele Pokka, State Provincial Office of Lapland
- Mayor Karl Petersen, City Administration of Luleå
- Mayor Raimo Ronkainen, City of Tornio
- Rector Esko Riepula, University of Lapland
- Governor Eino Siuruainen, Provincial Government of Oulu

Governor Eino Siuruainen was elected as a Chairman and Governor Per-Ola Eriksson was elected as a Vice-chairman of the Host Planning Committee.

The 4th NRF Open Meeting is organised in cooperation with the POEM film foundation.

4th NRF Host Planning Committee contact information

Thule website: <http://thule oulu.fi>. You can also contact the 4th NRF Host Planning Committee by phone: +358 (0)8 553 3560, by fax: +358 (0)8 553 3564, or by e-mail: thule@oulu.fi

The main sponsor of the 4th NRF is  KAUPTHING BANK