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Indigenous Energy Diplomacy in the Arctic: Probing the Complexity with Cases in Sápmi and the Inuvialuit Region

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Conflicts over energy resources are not new, nor is the discourse of multiple crises. At least two oil crises occurred in the 1970s, both caused by disruptions of oil supplies from the Middle East. These crises were followed by an oil glut and the drastic drop in oil prices in the 1980s.[1] The current global oil and energy crisis began in 2021 in the wake of the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic, when the world was faced with shortages and increased oil, gas, and electricity costs. Factors playing into the current energy crisis include oil price wars, supply-demand disparities, and accelerating climate change, all of which were further exacerbated in February 2022 by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Whereas a couple of decades ago, the discourse of multiple simultaneous crises focused on the excesses and failures of economic globalization, today, we increasingly talk about "polycrisis": a combination of multiple interacting, systemic crises that compound the risks and threats to humanity and the planet.[2]

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1. Robert D. Hershey Jr., "How the Oil Glut Is Changing Business," *New York Times* (website), June 21, 1981, https://www.nytimes.com/1981/06/21/business/how-the-oil-glut-is-changing-business.html.

2. Lourdes Beneria, "Markets, Globalization and Gender," in *Gender, Development and Globalization: Economics as if All People Mattered* (New York: Routledge, 2003); Mario Blaser, Harvey Feit, and Glenn McRae, ed., *In the Way of Development: Indigenous Peoples, Life Projects and Globalization* (London and New York: Zed Books and International Development Research Centre, 2004); David McNally, *Another World Is Possible: Globalization and Anti-Capitalism* (Winnipeg, CA: Arbeiter Ring, 2006); Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents* (New York: Norton, 2002); and Adam Tooze, "Chartbook #130: Defining Polycrisis – From Crisis Pictures to the Crisis Matrix," Chartbook (website), June 24, 2022, https://adamtooze.substack.com/p/chartbook-130-defining-polycrisis.

"Indigenous energy diplomacy" is a relatively new term, but Indigenous peoples have long practiced various forms and degrees of traditional kinship diplomacies as well as more recently engaged in mainstream diplomacy in global politics and international relations on issues related to energy and in particular, energy resource Indigenous energy diplomacy within the Arctic region. Energy diplomacy is a complex practice that differs among Arctic Indigenous peoples, such as the Sámi and Inuit energy diplomacies in the current context of energy crisis and energy resource conflict.

Standard definitions of diplomacy are state driven and state centric and have been a central focus of study in International Relations, a discipline that has traditionally excluded Indigenous peoples as global actors from its analyses of politics.[3] International Relations has also long remained blind to Indigenous diplomacies, begging the question, "What forms of diplomacy are considered to be legitimate?" In addition to very limited knowledge of traditional diplomatic conventions among many Indigenous peoples, a key challenge is whether mainstream, dominant conceptions could or should be employed when considering and discussing Indigenous diplomacies, which are typically founded upon distinct ontologies of reciprocity and relationality.[4]

Indigenous diplomacies as established practices are neither new nor homogenous. Yet Indigenous diplomacies have received more sustained scholarly attention only in the past few decades, thanks in part to growing Indigenous advocacy in multilateral arenas, such as the UN and

3. David Bedford and Thom Workman, "The Great Law of Peace: Alternative International Practices and the Iroquoian Confederacy," *Alternatives* 22, no. 1 (January 1997); J. Marshall Beier, *International Relations in Uncommon Places: Indigeneity, Cosmology, and the Limits of International Theory* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Neta C. Crawford, "A Security Regime among Democracies: Cooperation among Iroquois Nations," *International Organization* 48, no. 3 (Summer 1994); and Franke Wilmer, *The Native Voice in World Politics: Since Time Immemorial* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1993).

4. Ravi de Costa, "Cosmology, Mobility and Exchange: Indigenous Diplomacies before the Nation-State," *Canadian Foreign Policy* 13, no. 3 (2007); Leanne Simpson, "Looking After Gdoo-naaganinaa: Precolonial Nishnaabeg Diplomatic and Treaty Relationships," *Wicazo Sa Review* 23, no. 2 (Fall 2008); J. Marshall Beier, "Introduction: Indigenous Diplomacies as Indigenous Diplomacies," in *Indigenous Diplomacies*, ed. J. Marshall Beier (New York: Palgrave, 2009); and Joseph Bauerkemper and Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark, "The Trans/National Terrain of Anishinaabe Law and Diplomacy," *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 4, no. 1 (January 2012).

Arctic Council.[5] Notwithstanding this recent interest, we must bear in mind Indigenous diplomacies continue to be "far more nuanced and complex, and more wholly *sui generis* than a focus on recent developments at the UN alone might reveal them to be."[6] Indigenous diplomacies need to be engaged "as meaningful in themselves and on the terms of their own founding, not merely for their having come finally and belatedly to be taken seriously by states (and, even more belatedly, by disciplinary International Relations)."[7]

Contemplating Indigenous diplomacies in the twenty-first century and in the context of systemic global crises across multiple axes, Makere Stewart-Harawira emphasizes the need for the "reembedding of Indigenous philosophies and ontologies at the heart of [Indigenous] diplomatic endeavors."[8] Stewart-Harawira outlines the gradual process of restructuring Indigenous self-determination as economic development (instead of political status) through ideologies and frameworks of neoliberal economics and neoconservative politics evident in land claim agreements and treaty settlements negotiated between Indigenous peoples and states. These agreements and settlements have resulted, Stewart-Harawira suggests, in the "corporatized governance structures and politico-economic endeavors of today [that] bear little resemblance to historical Indigenous modes," which ultimately benefits the state more than Indigenous peoples.[9] In the Arctic, a prime example of this approach and restructuring is the 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, which saw the establishment of regional and community Alaska Native corporations as part of a settlement of Indigenous rights to pave the way for oil and gas production and development.[10]

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5. James Youngblood Henderson, *Indigenous Diplomacy and the Rights of Peoples: Achieving UN Recognition* (Saskatoon, CA: Purich, 2008); Sheryl Lightfoot, *Global Indigenous Politics: A Subtle Revolution* (New York: Routledge, 2016); Frances Abele and Thierry Rodon, "Inuit Diplomacy in the Global Era: The Strengths of Multilateral Internationalism," *Canadian Foreign Policy* 13, no. 3 (2007); Dorothée Cambou and Timo Koivurova, "The Participation of Arctic Indigenous Peoples' Organizations in the Arctic Council and Beyond," in *Routledge Handbook of Indigenous Peoples in the Arctic*, ed. Timo Koivurova et al. (London: Routledge, 2020); and Nikolas Sellheim, "The Arctic Council and the Advancement of Indigenous Rights," in *Arctic Triumph: Northern Innovation and Persistence*, ed. Nikolas Sellheim, Yulia V. Zaika, and Ilan Kelman (New York: Springer, 2019).

6. Beier, "Introduction," 2.

7. Beier, "Introduction," 2.

8. Makere Stewart-Harawira, "Responding to a Deeply Bifurcated World: Indigenous Diplomacies in the Twenty-First Century," in *Indigenous Diplomacies*, 209.

9. Stewart-Harawira, "Responding," 215.

10. Martha Hirschfield, "The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act: Tribal Sovereignty and the Corporate Form," *Yale Law Journal* 101, no. 6 (April 1992).

This chapter considers these two modes proposed by Stewart-Harawira of placing Indigenous ontologies at the center of their diplomacies on the one hand, and reinscribing Indigenous self-determination as economic development, to illustrate the diverse landscape of contemporary Indigenous energy diplomacy. The chapter focuses on Sámi reindeer herding in Norway vis-à-vis the wind industry and the energy security development in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region in the Northwest Territories, Canada.

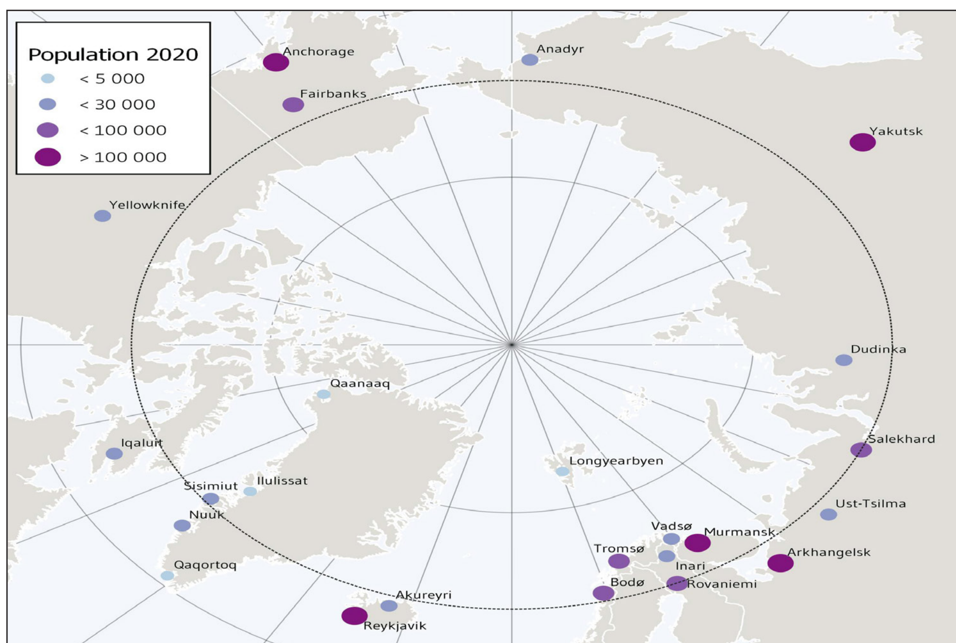

Figure 16-1. Population centers in the north

The Sámi and the Inuit are both transnational in the sense their traditional territories (and present-day regions) span across several nation-states (see figure 16-1).[11] The Inuit territories range from Alaska and the Canadian Arctic to Greenland and Siberia, Russia, and the Sámi region extends from central Norway and Sweden to northern Finland and the Kola Peninsula in the northwest of Russia. "Transnational" is a misleading term, considering how both people regard themselves as one people who have lived on their territories well before the existence of the nation-states. Both peoples have long traditions and forms of kinship diplomacies, though they have received very little scholarly attention (at least as diplomacies). Voluntary associations, collective persistence, political realism, adaptability, and strategies to avoid win-lose confrontations,

11. Arto Vitikka and Arctic Centre, "Population Centres in the North," Arctic Centre (website), n.d., accessed on April 1, 2023, https://www.arcticcentre.org/EN/arcticregion/Maps/Cities.

among others, have characterized traditional Inuit diplomacy.[12] The Sámi practiced internal forms of diplomacy such as the Verdde system, which is characterized by reciprocal relations and exchange between Sámi families of different livelihoods.[13] Historical Sámi trading relations on coastal regions go back to at least 800 AD, but very little is known of related diplomatic practices.[14]

Since the early days of the global Indigenous movement in the 1960s and 1970s, the two Arctic Indigenous peoples, the Sámi and the Inuit, have been in the forefront of advancing Indigenous diplomacy and international cooperation. The Sámi Council, a Sámi nongovernmental organization established in 1956, was involved in forming the World Council of Indigenous Peoples at the Tseshaht reservation in Port Alberni, British Columbia, in October 1975.[15] The Inuit Circumpolar Council (formerly the Inuit Circumpolar Conference), an Inuit nongovernmental organization, was established in 1977. The two Arctic Indigenous nongovernmental organizations played a major role in the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations in the 1980s and, later, the drafting of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) and the establishment of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (2010). Furthermore, the Sámi Council and the Inuit Circumpolar Council are two of the three founding Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council, the third being the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, which represents 40 Indigenous peoples living in the north of the Russian Federation.

Globally, the Arctic Council is a unique intergovernmental forum because its core structure involves Arctic Indigenous peoples through the category of Permanent Participants (currently, six Arctic indigenous organizations) that have full consultation rights in the Council's negotiations and decisions. Notwithstanding this right and the Arctic Council

12. Frances Abele and Thierry Rodon, "Coming in from the Cold: Inuit Diplomacy and Global Citizenship," in *Indigenous Diplomacies*, 118.

13. Inger-Marie Oskal, "Verddevuohta Guovdageainnus – ovdal ja dál," in *Cafe Boddu: Essaycoakkáldat 1*, ed. Harald Gaski (Kárásjohka, NO: Davvi Girji, 1991); and Sheelagh Daniels-Mayes and Kristina Sehlin MacNeil, "Disrupting Assimilationist Research Principles and Practices in Australia and Sweden: Self-Determination through the Enactment of Indigenous Diplomacies," *Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations* 21, no. 1 (Fall/Winter 2019).

14. Lars Ivar Hansen, "Trade and Markets in Northern Fenno-Scandinavia A.D. 1550–1750," *Acta Borealia* 1, no. 2 (1984); and Roger Kvist, "Den samiska handeln och dess roll som social differentieringsfaktor-lule lappmark 1760–1860," *Acta Borealia* 3, no. 2 (1986).

15. Douglas Sanders, *The Formation of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples* (Copenhagen, DK: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 1977).

being premised on active, meaningful participation and the involvement of circumpolar Indigenous peoples, the Permanent Participants were not consulted about the suspension of the Council's activities in 2022 due to Russia's war in Ukraine. This omission shows how during states of exception, diplomacy with Indigenous peoples is neglected, even within established frameworks of diplomacy such as the Arctic Council.

Energy Diplomacy

During the 1979 second oil crisis, caused by the Iranian Revolution, energy diplomacy emerged to characterize states' objectives to provide and guarantee energy security. Today, energy diplomacy is seen as an important tool of foreign policy that seeks to improve access to energy resources and markets through dialogue, negotiation, lobbying, and advocacy.[16] The growing impact of energy on national security and the economy explains the emergence of energy diplomacy.[17] Also practiced by multilateral institutions, energy diplomacy comprises several variants. For example, the objective of contemporary EU energy diplomacy is to expedite the global energy transition.[18]

Because the climate crisis is upon all of us, the urgency to move away from fossil fuels and decarbonize all sectors of society rapidly has been growing. Climate change has both direct and indirect consequences on Arctic Indigenous peoples. Direct impacts include permafrost thaw; increased rain on snow, which leads to icing; and wetter and windier weather in general, all of which severely imperils traditional economies and livelihoods.[19] Indirect impacts consist of increased pressure on Indigenous territories by accelerating extractivism and renewable energy projects in the name of green transition.[20]

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16. Marco Giuli, "Getting Energy Diplomacy Right: A Challenge Starting at Home," European Policy Centre (website), October 23, 2015, https://www.epc.eu/en/Publications/Getting-energy-diplomacy-right~1d05b0.

17. Ana Bovan, Tamara Vučenović, and Nenad Perić, "Negotiating Energy Diplomacy and Its Relationship with Foreign Policy and National Security," *International Journal of Energy Economics and Policy* 10, no. 2 (January 2020).

18. Anna Herranz-Surrallés, "An Emerging EU Energy Diplomacy? Discursive Shifts, Enduring Practices," *Journal of European Public Policy* 23, no. 9 (2016).

19. Nicholas Tyler et al., "The Shrinking Resource Base of Pastoralism: Saami Reindeer Husbandry in a Climate of Change," *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems* 4 (2020).

20. Alexander Dunlap, "The 'Solution' Is Now the 'Problem': Wind Energy, Colonisation and the 'Genocide-Ecocide Nexus' in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, Oaxaca," *International Journal of Human Rights* 22, no. 4 (2018).

Some Arctic countries such as Norway and Iceland, generate nearly all their energy from renewable resources. At the same time, Norway is a major oil-producing country globally, with plans to boost production further in 2023.[21] Fossil fuel extraction also remains the mainstay of energy and the economy for Russia and Alaska. Russia is expanding the development of its Arctic gas reserves, and renewable energy production continues to be insubstantial.[22] Renewable energy policy frameworks such as Green Deals, however, are pushing for more extensive renewable energy development in the Arctic. The 2021 EU Arctic policy, for example, seeks to "stimulate an innovative green transition" and asserts oil, coal, and gas need to stay in the ground.[23]

Arctic Indigenous Energy Diplomacies

Everyday energy security concerns, such as the high cost of heating and lighting homes and communities in a region where winters are long and dark, are shared by most Arctic Indigenous peoples. But considerable variance exists between, say, remote Inuit communities in the Canadian Arctic with widespread reliance on a discontinuous electric grid infrastructure and Sámi communities in Scandinavia that are connected to reliable national energy grids and supply lines. Indeed, up until fall 2022, electricity in northern Sweden, including in Sámi communities, was cheaper than in the south of the country due to the high production capacity of hydroelectricity in the north.[24] Arctic Indigenous energy concerns and hence, diplomacies can also radically differ from one another in their approach to the global energy transition. Although the Inuvialuit in the Northwest Territories of Canada seek to switch to wind energy, the Sámi in Scandinavia consider wind energy green colonialism. In short, although energy insecurities are shared, the solutions are not.

21. Charles Kennedy, "Norway to Boost Oil & Gas Production as It Expects Record 2023 Revenue," Oil Price (website), October 6, 2022, https://oilprice.com/Latest-Energy-News/World-News/Norway-To-Boost-Oil-Gas-Production-As-It-Expects-Record-2023-Revenue.html.

22. S. A. Dyatlov et al., "Prospects for Alternative Energy Sources in Global Energy Sector," *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science* 434 (2020); and N. Y. Kirsanova, O. M. Lenkovets, and A. Y. Nikulina, "The Role and Future Outlook for Renewable Energy in the Arctic Zone of Russian Federation," *European Research Studies Journal* 21, Special Issue no. 2 (2018).

23. Josep Borell Fontelles, *A Stronger EU Engagement for a Peaceful, Sustainable and Prosperous Arctic, Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions* (2021) 27 (Brussels, BE: European Commission, October 13, 2021).

24. Peter Sköld, "Perpetual Adaption? Challenges for the Sami and Reindeer Husbandry in Sweden," in *The New Arctic*, ed. Birgitta Evengård, Joan Nymand Larsen, and Øyvind Paasche, 2015 ed. (New York: Springer, 2015).

Arctic Indigenous peoples are not, by and large, in a position of engaging in energy diplomacy in the conventional sense. The peoples are not states with their own foreign policy and are not in charge of national security and the economy, although exceptions exist. Greenland, with its population nearly 90-percent Inuit, has jurisdiction over the national economy per the 2009 Act on Greenland Self-Government. In many ways, Indigenous territories in the Arctic are today ground zero for the transition away from fossil fuels, both in terms of the critical minerals and resources needed for the shift and areas suitable for large-scale wind and hydro development. In such a context, Arctic Indigenous energy diplomacy is both obvious and necessary because it involves activities that improve Indigenous participation and involvement in national and regional energy governance, including planning, policy and decision making, implementation, and construction.

In many ways, Indigenous peoples such as the Sámi, Inuit, and others have already been engaging in energy diplomacy for decades. One could suggest one significant dimension of Indigenous international diplomacy has always been about energy development. Energy diplomacy has gained a new critical edge for nation-states and Indigenous peoples alike in the past few years. Nevertheless, Arctic Indigenous energy diplomacies are not uniform. Although Arctic Indigenous peoples share many similarities, the regions and peoples' approaches to energy security and energy development differ notably and significantly. A problem shared across the region is despite Arctic Indigenous peoples having long engaged in energy diplomacy (even if it has not been called such), the region has been deliberately overlooked and dismissed by state and corporate actors.

Inuvialuit Energy Diplomacy

In 1984, the Inuvialuit region, which is in the western Arctic and is one of the four Inuit regions in Canada, was the first to sign a land claim settlement. The settlement was also the first such agreement in the Northwest Territories. The Inuvialuit Final Agreement was followed by the establishment of the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation the same year. The agreement establishes the Inuvialuit own 90,000 square kilometers, including 13,000 square kilometers on which the Indigenous people have subsurface rights. The agreement also included a payment of 152 million Canadian dollars from the federal government. The Inuvialuit Final Agreement provides the Inuvialuit with wildlife harvesting rights in the region. Omitted from the 1984 negotiated

agreement, self-government is currently being negotiated with the federal and territorial governments.

In my visit to one of the Inuvialuit communities, Inuvik, in September 2022, I learned the community of over 3,000 inhabitants is almost entirely dependent on diesel. The inhabitants consume five million liters of diesel annually, making Inuvik the Northwest Territories' largest diesel-powered community. In addition, Inuvik recently switched from natural gas to diesel, partly because of the failure of the Mackenzie Gas Project.[25] Today, the fuel used for home heating, diesel, is being trucked from southern Alberta. To enhance local energy security and lower the cost of living, Inuvik is in the process of constructing a wind turbine 20 kilometers outside town. Officials hope the single turbine, which arrived on a barge during my stay, will reduce the amount of diesel needed for power in the community by 30 percent. The Inuvik Wind Project is one of the countless victims of rising transport and other costs, as well as supply-chain problems. As a result, the project was more than $20 million over budget as of September 2022.[26]

Many Indigenous communities are energy insecure due to their remoteness, the high cost of energy, aging infrastructure, and the associated carbon footprint and pollution.[27] This phenomenon, which is not new, has been created by colonial energy governance based on centralized, large-scale extractive energy sources that rarely generate local benefits.[28] To change these circumstances, Indigenous communities have been taking control of their energy production and, hence, their energy security and

25. Walter Strong, "Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Project Officially One for the History Books," *CBC News* (website), updated December 28, 2017, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/mackenzie-valley-gas-project-no-more-1.4465997.

26. "'Milestone' Hit as Wind Turbine Arrives in Inuvik, but Project Now More Than $20M over Budget," *CBC News* (website), updated September 21, 2022, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/inuvik-wind-turbine-project-costs-1.6590597.

27. Makenzie MacKay, Brenda Parlee, and John R. Parkins, "Towards Energy Security in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region: Insights from Community Members and Local Residents," *Local Environment* 26, no. 9 (2021).

28. Mary Finley-Brook and Curtis Thomas, "Renewable Energy and Human Rights Violations: Illustrative Cases from Indigenous Territories in Panama," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 101, no. 4 (July 2011).

governance over the past decade. Often, these initiatives involve renewable energy, such as solar and wind.[29]

The reasons for Indigenous peoples to appreciate renewable energy include local economic benefits, reliability, community suitability, capacity building, environmental concerns, and energy autonomy. But the development of renewable energy in Indigenous and other communities is often met with considerable institutional barriers. A recent study from the western Arctic suggests, "the idea of community renewable energy is too simplistic in the highly complex governance landscape" of the Inuit Settlement Region.[30] Local, bottom-up energy approaches are important, but equally important is carefully considering the large number of diverse actors involved in energy governance. As an example, national energy policies can limit opportunities for communities to enter the energy market. In the Northwest Territories, bureaucracy and the Northwest Territories Power Corporation's monopoly in the electricity market are seen as barriers to community involvement in and leadership of projects.[31] Moreover, as the Inuvik Wind Project demonstrates, vast distances, minimal infrastructure, and the high cost of transportation and construction greatly impede any energy development in the Arctic, making the attainment of Indigenous and local energy security a major challenge.

Current Inuvialuit energy diplomacy takes the form of pushing for local energy security and sovereignty as part of enacting greater political autonomy, including ongoing self-government negotiations with territorial and federal governments. Land claim and self-government agreements bring limited recognition of Indigenous self-determination and economic opportunities locally and beyond by resolving uncertainty related to Indigenous land and resource rights. Wealth creation of this kind can be controversial in Indigenous communities. Not all agree with or benefit from standard capitalist and corporate economic development, which often stand at odds with Indigenous economies and

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29. Anatole Boute, "Off-Grid Renewable Energy in Remote Arctic Areas: An Analysis of the Russian Far East," *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews* 59 (June 2016); Daria Gritsenko and Hilma Salonen, "A Local Perspective on Renewable Energy Development in the Russian Arctic," *Elementa: Science of the Anthropocene* 8, no. 1 (2020); Janet Hunt et al., "Transition to Renewable Energy and Indigenous People in Northern Australia: Enhancing or Inhibiting Capabilities?," *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities* 22, no. 2 (2021); Roopa Rakshit et al., "Energy Transition Complexities in Rural and Remote Indigenous Communities: A Case Study of Poplar Hill First Nation in Northern Ontario," *Local Environment* 24, no. 9 (2019); and Robert D. Stefanelli et al., "Renewable Energy and Energy Autonomy: How Indigenous Peoples in Canada Are Shaping an Energy Future," *Environmental Reviews* 27, no. 1 (March 2019).

30. MacKay, Parlee, and Parkins, "Towards Energy Security," 1139.

31. MacKay, Parlee, and Parkins, "Towards Energy Security."

on-the-land subsistence harvesting and cultural practices that have growing significance in the context of the global food crisis. Inuvialuit energy diplomacy also demonstrates the ways in which the bureaucratization of energy governance constrains local, bottom-up approaches to energy security.

The author's intention is not to suggest the Inuvialuit are uninterested in centering their ontologies or philosophies in their diplomatic activity. Rather, the purpose of this discussion is to call attention to the obstacles to Inuvialuit diplomacy that have been established by state institutions and policies, including the federal government's formulaic framework of negotiating self-government.[32] One recent example of the Inuvialuit asserting their philosophies was the passing of the Inuvialuit Family Way of Living Law by the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation Board of Directors in November 2021.[33]

Sámi Energy Diplomacy

In Norway, the reindeer herding region extends from Finnmark county in the north to Trøndelag county in the south, covering approximately 40 percent of Norway's landmass. As a result of the cumulative, long-term effects of various forms of development (hydro, forestry, mining, tourism, and infrastructure), reindeer grazing areas have been radically reduced and fragmented in the past century. In recent years, the wind industry has played a central role in Norway's rapid energy transition. The wind industry is extremely area intensive, and its scale is even more sizable when considering the entire industrial system involved (roads and other infrastructure). This scale has resulted in the loss of pastures and the closure of migration routes. Without access to their pastures, the reindeer herders are forced to reduce the size of their herds to potentially unviable levels. About half of the wind energy construction in Norway is currently taking place in the areas that are central to reindeer herding without the free, prior, and informed consent of the Sámi people. In several cases,

32. Paul Nadasdy, *Sovereignty's Entailments: First Nation State Formation in the Yukon* (Toronto, CA: University of Toronto Press, 2017); and Rauna Kuokkanen, *Restructuring Relations: Indigenous Self-Determination, Governance, and Gende*r (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019).

33. "Inuvialuit Regional Corporation Celebrates the First Anniversary of the Passing of the First Ever Inuvialuit Law – Inuvialuit Qitunrariit Inuuniarnikkun Maligaksat," Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (website), November 25, 2022, https://www.irc.inuvialuit.com/news/inuvialuit-regional-corporation-celebrates-first-anniversary-passing-first-ever-inuvialuit-law.

wind development has ended up being considerably larger in scale than initially planned.[34]

Sámi reindeer herding districts have sued the wind industry in Norway on several occasions. The most well-known case involves the South Sámi community of Fovsen Njaarke in the Trøndelag region, which has been confronted with nearly 30 wind industry projects—considerably more than other districts. In October 2021, the Fovsen Njaarke reindeer district unexpectedly won its case against Fosen Vind energy company in the Supreme Court of Norway. The court unanimously concluded the expropriation of reindeer grazing areas by the energy firm and the licenses granted by the state were against the law. The Sámi Parliament of Norway and others have called for the demolition of the wind turbines, but the government is unwilling to follow the decision by its own supreme court. At the time of writing, the fate of the nearly 200 wind turbines in operation in the Fovsen Njaarke region is unclear.

Sámi energy diplomacy currently takes the form of opposing the further loss and expropriation of their territories, of which only 4 percent has not been impacted by some form of industrial development. The two key points Sámi reindeer herders emphasize repeatedly include compensation and cumulative impact. Compensating for the lost pastures is impossible because money cannot buy new ones; "extra" lands and pastures do not exist. The cumulative impact of multiple resource developments amounts to a "death by a thousand cuts." Besides being a livelihood, reindeer herding is the backbone of Sámi culture and inseparable from language preservation, especially in the South Sámi regions such as Fovsen Njaarke, where the history of colonization and state assimilation policies have operated the longest and radically reduced the number of Sámi language speakers.

The case of Sámi reindeer herders versus the wind industry and the transition to renewable energy are examples of placing Indigenous ontologies at the center of diplomatic endeavors. The Sámi case poignantly demonstrates how the dominant (in this case, the EU) energy diplomacy is on a collision course with Indigenous energy diplomacy, which focuses on resisting "green colonialism."[35] I have argued elsewhere that the other

34. Carl Österlin and Kaisa Raitio, "Fragmented Landscapes and Planscapes—The Double Pressure of Increasing Natural Resource Exploitation on Indigenous Sámi Lands in Northern Sweden," *Resources* 9, no. 104 (August 2020); and Anna Skarin, Per Sandström, and Moudud Alam, "Out of Sight of Wind Turbines—Reindeer Response to Wind Farms in Operation," *Ecology and Evolution* 8, no. 19 (October 2018).

35. Susanne Normann, "Green Colonialism in the Nordic Context: Exploring Southern Saami Representations of Wind Energy Development," *Journal of Community Psychology* 49, no. 1 (January 2021).

side of decarbonization is that Sámi reindeer herding seems to be sacrificed for the green energy transition.[36] Unsurprisingly, the direct and indirect effects of climate change have been referred to as "the Sámi paradox": The Sámi are negatively and concurrently impacted by both the warming climate as well as the renewable energy transition that seeks to address it.

Conclusion

As in the case of the Inuvialuit, achieving energy security through conventional energy diplomacy is part of Arctic Indigenous energy diplomacy, evident in the Inuvialuit case. This often conflicts with national policies and institutionalized frameworks that curtail Indigenous energy diplomacies. On the one hand, self-government may place Indigenous peoples and communities in a better position to push for greater energy sovereignty. On the other hand, bureaucratization and institutionalization followed by the establishment of land claim and self-governance structures may further contribute to the challenging policy and regulatory framework.

Another dimension of contemporary Indigenous energy diplomacy that is manifest in the Sámi case involves ensuring Indigenous futures, which depend on the survival and existence of Arctic Indigenous lands, waters, and ecosystems. If the objective of dominant energy diplomacy is to accelerate the global energy transition, as in the EU policy, the goal of Indigenous energy diplomacy is to ensure the transition is not done in a way that sacrifices the life and living conditions of those whose home is the Arctic and the High North.

This chapter has introduced the concept of Indigenous energy diplomacy and provided a quick glimpse into two recent examples of Indigenous energy diplomacy in the Arctic. Obviously, much more research in the area of Indigenous energy diplomacy is needed to shed light on current diplomatic controversies and energy conflicts as well as to advance understanding of Indigenous forms of and approaches to diplomacy on Indigenous terms. In addition, both recognizing Indigenous energy diplomacy and taking it into account in policy and diplomatic arenas are needed. Considering the eight Arctic states have, through the Arctic Council, committed to collaboration with Arctic Indigenous peoples as part of the institutional design, Arctic nation-states' policy frameworks are expected to take Indigenous energy diplomacy

36. Rauna Kuokkanen, "Are the Reindeer the New Buffalo? Climate Change, the Green Shift, and Manifest Destiny in Sápmi," *Meridians* 22, no. 1 (forthcoming).

seriously. If not, Arctic Indigenous peoples have no other option than to resort to other approaches, such as protests and peaceful, direct action, to secure Indigenous futures in their Arctic homeland.

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