



HOUSE OF LORDS

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE ARCTIC

CALL FOR EVIDENCE

The House of Lords Select Committee on the Arctic, chaired by Lord Teverson, was appointed on 12 June 2014 to consider recent and expected changes in the Arctic, and to consider their implications for the UK and its international relations. The Committee invites interested individuals and organisations to submit evidence to this inquiry.

The Committee in particular will explore the following key issues in detail, and would welcome your views on any or all of the following questions. Please note that questions are not listed here in any particular order of importance.

Written evidence should arrive no later than 29 September 2014. Public hearings will be held in July, October and November 2014. The Committee will report to the House, with recommendations, in February 2015. The report will receive a response from the Government, and the report and response will be debated in the House.

Background

Over the last fifty years access to the Arctic Ocean has become much easier as the average extent of summer sea ice has declined. The melting of the ice – along with other physical changes – presents a set of unique and rapidly evolving risks and opportunities. These have led to an intensification of international interest in the region. The UK, the Arctic's 'nearest neighbour' and an observer state in the Arctic Council, published an 'Arctic Policy Framework' in October 2013 but UK interests in the changing Arctic stretch far beyond Government, to encompass commercial actors, researchers, those concerned with preserving Arctic ecosystems and livelihoods, and many others.

Scope

The effects of recent and expected climate change in the Arctic region form the background to the Committee's inquiry, but the Committee will not be looking at the direct effects that climate change in the Arctic might have on the rest of the globe, such as worldwide sea level changes. The Committee's focus will be on the opportunities and risks that changes in the Arctic will bring, including their impacts on UK interests, and the UK's international relations.

Questions

1. What are the main issues arising from recent and expected changes in the Arctic region? How will these changes impact upon the Arctic, and what is the impact for the UK?
2. Will changes in the Arctic lead to new economic and commercial opportunities? What are these opportunities, and how might they be delivered? What should be the role of the UK Government, of British businesses and of other sections of civil society?
3. How should economic development be balanced with environmental protection in the Arctic? Are appropriate systems in place to ensure the correct balance is found and maintained? How should the UK be involved in establishing this balance?
4. What are the human aspects of the expected climatic and economic changes in terms of local populations, current and future?
5. Are there sufficient data on the Arctic to make informed policy decisions? If not, where are the gaps and how should they be remedied?
6. Are there climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies local to the Arctic that should be deployed or tested? What contribution can the UK make?
7. Are current international governance and security arrangements appropriate for dealing with anticipated challenges in the Arctic? How should the UK support the Arctic states in their stewardship of the region?
8. How effectively does the UK interact with Arctic governance structures? Is the UK Government's approach, as set out in the Arctic Policy Framework, proportionate and appropriate?

Instructions for submitting evidence

Written evidence should be submitted online using the written submission form available at <http://www.parliament.uk/arctic-written-evidence-form>. This page also provides guidance on submitting evidence.

If you have difficulty submitting evidence online, please contact the Committee staff by email to arcticcom@parliament.uk or by telephoning 020 7219 6084. The deadline for written evidence is 29 September 2014.

Short submissions are preferred. A submission longer than six pages should include a one-page summary.

Paragraphs should be numbered. All submissions made through the written submission form will be acknowledged automatically by email.

Evidence which is accepted by the Committee may be published online at any stage; when it is so published it becomes subject to parliamentary copyright and is protected by parliamentary privilege. Submissions which have been previously published will not be accepted as evidence. Once you have received acknowledgement that the evidence has been accepted you will receive a further email, and at this point you may publicise or publish your evidence yourself. In doing so you must indicate that it was prepared for the Committee, and you should be aware that your publication or re-publication of your evidence may not be protected by parliamentary privilege.

Personal contact details will be removed from evidence before publication, but will be retained by the Committee Office and used for specific purposes relating to the Committee's work, for instance to seek additional information.

Persons who submit written evidence, and others, may be invited to give oral evidence. Oral evidence is usually given in public at Westminster and broadcast online; transcripts are also taken and published online. Persons invited to give oral evidence will be notified separately of the procedure to be followed and the topics likely to be discussed.

Substantive communications to the Committee about the inquiry should be addressed through the clerk of the Committee, whether or not they are intended to constitute formal evidence to the Committee.

This is a public call for evidence. Please bring it to the attention of other groups and individuals who may not have received a copy direct.

You may follow the progress of the inquiry at <http://www.parliament.uk/arcticcom> and [@LordsArcticCom](https://twitter.com/LordsArcticCom).

22 July 2014