



**Arctic Oil and Gas Research Centre  
Ilisimatusarfik, Greenland**

**BRIEFING NOTE #1: 16<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2016  
INTRODUCTION TO THE ARCTIC OIL AND GAS RESEARCH CENTRE**

The Research Centre for Arctic Oil and Gas was opened at Ilisimatusarfik (the University of Greenland) on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016. The directors of the Centre are Professor Anne Merrild Hansen and Professor Rachael Lorna Johnstone. The Centre operates within the Institute of Social Sciences, Economics and Journalism at Ilisimatusarfik.

The Centre will draw together local community members, government representatives, oil and gas companies, NGOs, and academics to examine the social and economic impacts of oil and gas activities in the Arctic with an emphasis on Greenland. The Centre is based at Ilimmarfik in Nuuk but the directors will travel around Greenland to meet with different communities, holding meetings with invited stakeholders as well as open fora to ensure that all concerned persons can present their views and hear about the Centre's work.

A Greenland-based network of experts will be established tasked with researching economic and social implications of Arctic oil and gas activities and sharing their results. Researchers will be sought from around the Arctic and beyond in the fields of economics; political science; social anthropology; law; international relations; and critical geography. The network will also reach out to non-academic stakeholders and seek their contributions to the research activities.

The Centre will organise and host symposia on Arctic oil and gas, open to the public, to present findings. The directors and members of the network will participate in international conferences to share their research and promote the Centre more widely. Dissemination of research findings will be tailored to meet the different needs of different groups, with academic publications complemented with briefing notes in popular science format in Greenlandic, Danish and English, and oral presentations tailored to non-specialist audiences alongside academic conference presentations. Working papers and briefing notes will be published on an open-access basis on the Centre's website to facilitate the widest possible access.

The Centre aims to contribute to the academic development of the next generation of Greenlandic thinkers and leaders. The directors will supervise doctoral and masters students in relevant fields and teach courses at Ilisimatusarfik on sociology, international law, and oil and gas governance. They will also be involved in curriculum development at Ilisimatusarfik.

The directors' salaries are initially funded through a three-year grant from the Mineral Licence and Safety Authority (MLSA) which is administered through Ilisimatusarfik. Companies holding exclusive licences for exploration for and exploitation of hydrocarbons in Greenland make payments to the MLSA in light of agreements regarding capacity building in their respective licenses.

The directors and researchers work entirely independently of the MLSA and the oil companies. The MLSA and oil companies do not direct the research agenda or approve any research findings. The researchers are also seeking additional external funding from competitive grant bodies to facilitate expansion of the Centre's activities.

#### Professor Anne Merrild Hansen

Anne Merrild Hansen is Professor of Social Science, Arctic Oil and Gas Studies at Ilisimatusarfik, director of the Arctic Oil and Gas Research Centre, Associate Professor in Environmental Assessment and the Arctic at Aalborg University, Denmark, and a Fulbright Arctic Initiative scholar 2015-2016 with University of Alaska, Fairbanks. She is also a member of the regional 'Adaptation Actions for a Changing Arctic' team on Baffin Bay – Davis Strait for the Arctic Council. She has published widely on impacts assessments related to extractive industries, social indicators and determinants of wellbeing in the Arctic. Anne specialises in participatory and engaging research practices. She is a member of the International Association for Impact Assessment. Anne holds a PhD in environmental planning (2011) and a MSc in Engineering (2002) from Aalborg University.

#### Professor Rachael Lorna Johnstone

Rachael Lorna Johnstone is Professor of Law, Arctic Oil and Gas Studies at Ilisimatusarfik director of the Arctic Oil and Gas Research Centre and Professor of Law at the University of Akureyri, Iceland. Rachael specialises in Polar law: the governance of the Arctic and the Antarctic under international and domestic law. She is the author of *Offshore Oil and Gas Development in the Arctic under International Law: Risk and Responsibility* (Brill 2015) and has published widely on the rights of indigenous people; international human rights law; international environmental law; due diligence; state responsibility; and Arctic strategies. Rachael holds a doctorate in juridical science from the University of Toronto (2004), an MA in Polar Law from the University of Akureyri (2014), an LLM in Legal Theory from the European Academy of Legal Theory (2000) and an LLB(Hons) from the University of Glasgow (1999).

#### Website

<http://uk.uni.gl/research/arctic-oil-and-gas-research-centre.aspx> (EN)

<http://www.uni.gl/ilisimatuutut-misissuinerit/ilisimatusarfik-issittumi-uuliamik-gasimillu-sammisalik.aspx> (GL)

<http://da.uni.gl/forskning/forskningscentret-for-arktisk-olie-og-gas.aspx> (DK)