

Little Fish, Big Pond: Icelandic Interests and Influence in Arctic Governance

This paper explores the interests and influence of Iceland in the Arctic. Iceland's position as a member of the Arctic Council is the starting point, examining how this high level intergovernmental forum enables Iceland to exercise influence that belies the size of its population, economy or security capacity. This is contrasted with the exclusion of Iceland from the closer "Arctic Five" talks on Central Arctic Ocean governance and what steps Iceland can take to ensure its legal and economic interests in the seas are protected. The paper reviews the Icelandic Arctic policy, based on Hagsmunir Íslands á norðurslóðum, in light of the two earlier Arctic policy statements, Ísland á norðurslóðum (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2008) and the Parliamentary Resolution on Iceland's Arctic Policy (2011), the interests of different Icelandic stakeholders, and the objectives of other Arctic participants (Arctic and non-Arctic States, indigenous peoples, environmental NGOs and business). The approach is interdisciplinary, drawing from international relations scholarship, international law, development economics and broader research in Arctic Studies.

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