

**Title:**

**The Northern Socially-oriented Observation Network Construction: Results from the IPY PPS Arctic Project in the Russian North**

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**Abstract:** (Your abstract must use **Normal style** and must fit in this box. Your abstract should be no longer than 300 words. The box will 'expand' over 2 pages as you add text/diagrams into it.)

Socially-oriented Observations (SOO) in the Russian North were supported by multidisciplinary IPY PPS Arctic project under the leadership of Norway and funded by the Research Council of Norway, as well as Russian Academy of Sciences. The main objective of SOO is to increase knowledge and observation of changes in living conditions (state of natural environment including climate and biota, safe drinking water and foods, well-being, employment, social relations, access to health care and high quality education, etc.) as well as - to reveal trends in human resources and capacities (health, demography, education, creativity, spiritual-cultural characteristics and diversity, participation in decision making, etc.). SOO have been carried out in industrial cities as well as sparsely populated rural and nature protection areas in observation sites situated in different bioms (from tundra to southern taiga zone) of Murmansk, Arkhangelsk Oblast and Republic of Komi. SOO were conducted according to the protocol included in PPS Arctic Manual. Developed approaches of SOO based both on local people's perceptions and statistics help to identify issues and targets for life quality and human resources improvement and thus to distinguish main leading SOO indicators for further monitoring. The Northern Socially-oriented Observation Network launched by PPS Arctic is building capacity for community-based monitoring in Russia and is intended to contribute to the long-term international Sustained Arctic Observation Network activities. First results of this network show that changes in human capital (depopulation, unemployment, lack of sufficient education, marginalization etc.) are becoming the major driving force effecting land use pattern and overall sustainability. Changes in climate and biota (ice melting, tundra shrubs getting taller and more numerous, etc.) have become an add factor in accelerating or influencing social changes. In relation to the future sustainability in nature and society it is northern communities, their adaptive capacities and creativity that are decisive.

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