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 Supported in part by NSF grant PCM-8406049.

Arctic Research in the National Interest

A. L. WASHBURN AND GUNTER WELLER

The Arctic Research and Policy Act of 1984 was designed to advance arctic research in the national interest. Some of the research fields that require attention are weather and climate; national defense; renewable and nonrenewable resources; transportation; communications and spacedisturbance effects; environmental protection; health, culture, and socioeconomics; and international cooperation. A research framework recommended by the Arctic Research Commission includes, in order of priority, integrated investigations to understand: (i) the Arctic Ocean (including the marginal seas, sea ice, and seabed) and how the ocean and atmosphere operate as coupled components of the arctic system; (ii) the coupled atmosphere and land components and how their interaction governs the terrestrial environment; and (iii) the high-latitude upper atmosphere and its extension into the magnetosphere with emphasis on predicting and mitigating effects on communications and defense systems. A separate recommendation is for high priority research to resolve the major health, behavioral, and cultural problems related to the arctic environment. Recommendations are also made concerning support services and management.

HE ARCTIC IS IMPORTANT FOR MANY REASONS—DEFENSE,

economic, political, and scientific (1-4). The Arctic Research

and Policy Act of 1984 has now put some of these interests into sharper focus. Its stated purposes are "to establish national policy, priorities, and goals and to provide a Federal program plan for basic and applied scientific research with respect to the Arctic, including natural resources and materials, physical, biological and health sciences, and social and behavioral sciences" [5, Section 102(b)(1)]. The act established two cooperating groups to carry out its intent: (i) an advisory Arctic Research Commission consisting of five presidential appointees and the director of the National Science Foundation, who serves as an ex officio, nonvoting member, and (ii) an executive Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee, consisting of a representative from ten named federal agencies and possibly others, which is chaired by the National Science Foundation representative. Passage of the act reflected an increasing awareness in Alaska, in Washington, and among scientists and others that U.S. arctic

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Fig. 1. The Arctic, showing various boundaries including the boundary defined by the Arctic Research and Policy Act of 1984.

Continuous permafrost Discontinuous permafrost Treeline Minimum pack ice extent Maximum pack ice extent Boundary of the Arctic as defined by the act

research was lacking in continuity and overall direction (6). In contrast to antarctic research, where responsibility for programs and logistics is centered in the National Science Foundation whose focus is science, arctic programs are divided among numerous federal and state agencies whose work may include facets of science, but whose missions are generally in other domains that rarely focus on the Arctic.

The act specifies national concerns regarding arctic research, including energy resources, national defense, fisheries, global weather processes and forecasting, health and adaptation to arctic conditions, communications, arctic technologies and transportation, fragmented federal research, logistical support, gaps in research, cooperation with state and local governments in collecting basic data, long-range effects of development, international cooperation, and arctic policy [5, Section 102(a)].

Research imperatives abound if the United States is to attain a position in arctic research equal to U.S. interests and international status. In this article, no attempt is made to distinguish between basic and applied science except to emphasize the fundamental tenet that basic research is mandatory for long-range scientific progress in the Arctic, as elsewhere. To some extent emphasis is on the U.S. Arctic, but the act and many national concerns involve the entire Arctic.

The "Arctic"

Many definitions attempt to delimit the Arctic, the most common being (i) the Arctic Circle, which crosses many otherwise dissimilar areas; (ii) the region north of the 10°C isotherm for July; (iii) the region north of tree line; and (iv) the region north of the southern boundary of continuous permafrost (Fig. 1). The latter three boundaries are rather similar. The southern limit of pack ice is used for arctic waters. All definitions encompass high latitudes with their long summer days and long winter nights. As used in the Arctic Research and Policy Act of 1984 (5, Section 112), "'Arctic' means all United States and foreign territory north of the Arctic Circle and all United States territory north and west of the boundary formed by the Porcupine, Yukon, and Kuskokwim Rivers; all contiguous seas, including the Arctic Ocean and the Beaufort, Bering, and Chukchi Seas; and the Aleutian Chain." This special definition emphasizes Alaska as the U.S. Arctic and the nation's international role as an Arctic-rim country. Whatever its exact definition, the Arctic includes many physical, biological, and anthropogenic attributes that, collectively, set it off from all other environments. In practice, what is termed "Arctic" may depend somewhat on the nature of the problem being addressed, and a flexible perspective is adopted for this overview.

The arctic climate is cold but mean annual temperatures range widely from 0°C at Murmansk in the Soviet Union through -12.2°C at Point Barrow, Alaska; -16.2°C at Resolute in Canada's High Arctic, and -18°C over the central Arctic Ocean, to -28.1°C at the crest of the Greenland Ice Sheet. Most of the Arctic is quite arid; precipitation at Point Barrow is 104 mm (roughly comparable to Yuma, Arizona) and at Murmansk is 401 mm (similar to Salt Lake City, Utah) (7). However, desiccation of the soil is retarded by permafrost.

While a few arctic areas have warmer winters than other areas farther south (8) and many have a rich tundra vegetation, some parts of the Arctic are cold deserts largely devoid of vegetation, with snow accumulating mainly as drifts, leaving many windblown stretches of bare ground the year-round.

Glaciers are common on highlands such as the Brooks Range of Alaska, and small ice caps occur on the mountains of Canada's Eastern Arctic islands, Norway's Svalbard Archipelago, and the Soviet Union's Novaya Zemlya. However, the huge Greenland Ice Sheet—1,802,000 km² in area and up to 3,400 m thick—accounts for over 80% of Northern Hemisphere glacier ice.

The central Arctic Ocean is covered with moving pack ice, often about 3 to 3.5 m thick but thinner or absent in newly opened leads and many meters thick in pressure ridges. This central pack normally blocks all ships except submarines and powerful icebreakers. Although most coastal waters and marginal seas are open to navigation in summer, hazardous ice floes can persist.

The natural resources of the Arctic that are globally important include energy sources, minerals, and fisheries. Soviet mineral development is partly responsible for such Arctic urban centers as Vorkuta and Norilsk, whose populations exceed 100,000; the population of Murmansk, primarily a naval base, also exceeds 100,000. The largest Scandinavian urban centers north of the Arctic Circle have a much smaller population (10,000 to 30,000), their main thrust being fishing and shipping in Norway, and mining in Sweden. In Svalbard, Greenland, Arctic Canada, and Arctic Alaska, the largest centers are still smaller (2,000 to 10,000) (9). However, Arctic resource development can be areally extensive without involving large urban centers, as shown by the Prudhoe Bay and Kuparuk oil and gas fields in Alaska, which have only a small year-round population but about 300 km of roads connecting numerous scattered buildings.

The total indigenous population of the Arctic is between 800,000 and 900,000, most of whom, except about 140,000, live in the Soviet Union (9, p. 18). The largest groups speak different languages, each having numerous dialects. Alaska as a whole has some 21,900 Indians (mostly in southeastern Alaska), 8,100 Aleuts, and 34,100 Inuits (Eskimos) (10).

Atmosphere and Climate

At high latitudes the upper atmosphere, with magnetosphere and ionosphere, serves as "the earth's window to space" in that particles from the sun are focused primarily on polar regions where they give rise to magnetospheric and ionospheric phenomena that have a direct impact on important space processes. The phenomena can also strongly affect communications and defense capabilities (11). Thus the charged particles precipitating into the ionosphere, causing auroras, can interrupt radio communications during magnetic storms. Communications with satellite and radar systems become vulnerable; the high background noise that the aurora can induce in optical and infrared sensors used by surveillance spacecraft is of special concern. Electric currents induced in long conductors such as telephone cables, power lines, and pipelines can cause failure or serious damage.

Global weather and climate are sensitive to processes in the arctic atmosphere. Among them, the strong albedo feedback, which accompanies changes in the seasonal distribution of snow and ice, intensifies climatic variability, not only in the Arctic but also farther south (12). Moreover, any temperature increase due to the greenhouse effect from the buildup of various gases, including the release of carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels, is intensified in the Arctic because of the melting of snow and ice and the accompanying reduced albedo and changes in energy balance. Temperature increases predicted by some numerical models (13) would affect the distribution of sea ice, navigation in the Arctic Ocean, the northward extent of agriculture, and tree line, and as land-based glaciers melted, perhaps cause global rise of sea level sufficient to significantly affect low-lying coasts. For Arctic Alaska a temperature rise of 6°C in winter and 1°C in summer, although rather speculative, has been considered possible. Such an increase would probably benefit oil exploration and agriculture, have a slight or no impact on the timber industry, and, because of thawing of permafrost, more or less adversely affect other industries (14). However, estimated global and polar temperature increases, their timing, the magnitude of projected sea-level rise, and the nature of other effects include many uncertainties (15); careful monitoring of even small climatic changes and effects becomes critical for prediction (16), whatever their cause.

Arctic haze due to industry-generated air pollution initially moving across the Arctic from lower latitudes is an increasing problem (17), affecting climate and, because of acidic pollutants, possibly food chains as well. Despite these large-scale climatic influences and the significance of arctic weather for regional forecasting and for understanding global weather, vital knowledge is lacking because Arctic observing stations are widely scattered and air-sea-ice interactions are physically complex.

The Hydrosphere

The Arctic Ocean influences (along with antarctic waters) about three-quarters of the world's oceans (18), and it is the focus of national defense imperatives and important geopolitical issues (3). Among other problems, the acoustical characteristics of the Arctic Ocean and adjacent seas as affected by differing water masses and the background noise of ice movement, internal waves, and other influences are of key interest in detecting submarines beneath the sea ice (19). The acoustical characteristics are also important in studying the effect on whales of offshore oil activities and possible tanker traffic (20). Improved understanding of the ocean's dynamics and interactions with the atmosphere and sea ice, including the complex air-sea-ice system of the fluctuating marginal ice zones, is important for advancing knowledge not only of ocean processes but also of weather and marine life (21-23). Overall, probably less is known about the Arctic Ocean than about the atmosphere, land, or biotathe other primary components of the Arctic system.

With respect to the freshwater hydrology of Arctic lands, "The potential future water needs of industry are great, but the paucity of water resources data in the Arctic Region hinders a full understanding of hydrologic processes and the efficient development and use of the resource" (24, p. 22). Better information is needed on ground-

water movement, water supply, and sewage disposal in permafrost areas and on the freezeup and breakup of arctic rivers and lakes and their energy-generating potential.

The Cryosphere

The cryosphere—snow, ice, and frozen ground—forms a mantle on most Arctic lands and seas seasonally or perennially. As climatic responses to atmospheric and oceanic processes, glaciers and permafrost can store information on past environments. Permafrost temperature profiles can record former temperatures, and oxygen isotope and carbon dioxide research on cores from the Greenland Ice Sheet are furnishing vital information on climatic changes. Also, particulates in the snow and ice are providing significant data on hemisphere-wide pollution (25). In the physics of ice, such a fundamental characteristic as the flow law of ice for polar ice sheets is not yet firmly established (26).

The arctic pack ice not only influences defense strategy but is obviously critical in general maritime commercial transportation, including tanker traffic. Forecasting specific rather than average changes in ice distribution is problematical without having much more information than is currently available. Important strength characteristics of ice that affect the design of piers and offshore drilling structures are poorly known (27-29). The glacial history of large parts of the Arctic remains controversial (30). The fact that former widespread shelf ice in the Canadian Arctic Archipelago was only recently identified (31) illustrates how little is known about the history.

Permafrost, subsea as well as terrestrial, strongly influences engineering practices. Measures to prevent ground collapse should be taken if the construction could cause thermal changes and thawing of ice-rich permafrost. Knowledge of the distribution and thickness of permafrost, especially subsea permafrost, is inadequate (32). Off the Beaufort Sea coast it may occur in multiple layers and in places may impact drilling as far as 55 km offshore (33).

The cryosphere is an important resource. In most of the Arctic, water stored in snow and glacial ice and then released as runoff to rivers and lakes during seasonal thawing is much more significant than rain as a source of freshwater. Shelf ice can be a transportation resource in some places since sections may break off from their parent glaciers and drift around the Arctic Ocean as ice islands, measuring several kilometers in diameter. They may last for years and form platforms for research programs.

The Lithosphere

Little is known about the geologic evolution of the Arctic Basin; acquisition of deep cores from the ocean bottom and of paleomagnetic data are essential to determine its tectonic and sedimentary history (34). The sedimentary history may also provide clues to changes in climate and sea-ice cover. The interpretation of even the uppermost sedimentary layers of the lithosphere is still open to debate (35). The continental shelves are highly significant sources of oil and gas, and offshore exploration for these resources (Fig. 2) presents many geologic and engineering problems. The stratigraphy and structure of some Arctic lands are very complicated, and in Alaska this includes juxtaposition by extensive faulting and lateral displacements of terranes of quite different origin.

Overall, oil, gas, coal, and mineral resources of the Arctic are large, especially the energy resources of Alaska (36). In 1983, the Prudhoe Bay field had a proved crude oil reserve about a quarter that of the entire United States (37). However, mean-value esti-

mates of still undiscovered, potentially recoverable oil and gas in Arctic Alaska (onshore and offshore) are speculative. For instance, they were drastically reduced by the Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service in 1985 as a result of disappointing drilling results and revised analytical techniques. Thus offshore oil estimates were lowered from 1981 projections by 73%, from 12.2 billion to 3.30 billion barrels, and offshore gas estimates, by 78%, from 64.6 to 13.85 trillion cubic feet (1.8 to 0.39 trillion cubic meters). The methodology on which the revised estimates are based is now being reviewed (*38*).

Coal resources of the Alaska North Slope range from an identified 150 billion to a hypothetical 4 trillion short tons, reflecting limited surface exposures and scattered drilling. Alaska's coal resources as a whole have been estimated as making up 50% of the total in the United States and 15% of world resources (39).

Alaskan mineral resources are considerable, with eight world-class deposits (\$1 billion or more) in Arctic Alaska. Minerals include barite, beryllium, cobalt, copper, fluorite, lead, silver, tin, tungsten, and zinc (39, pp. 14–15). The overall potential is unknown. Only 4.5% of the bedrock geology of Alaska has been mapped on a scale of 1 mile: 1 inch (39, p. 14), and "Less than 25 percent of the known mineral deposits in Arctic Alaska have been tested by even a single drill hole ..." (40, p. 70). It was only recently that the Brooks Range Red Dog lead-zinc deposit was discovered, possibly one of the world's largest (40, p. 65).

Uncertainties regarding Alaskan oil, gas, coal, and mineral resources emphasize the large amount of research still required for accurate inventories and sound planning. Similar problems confront other Arctic-rim nations. Additional difficulties include unstable oil prices, assessing transportation systems for offshore oil and gas, addressing the associated pollution dangers, and, in some countries, sensitive sovereignty issues.

The Biosphere

Improved information is needed in research areas involving fishes, marine mammals, birds, and terrestrial wildlife and vegetation (41), especially in relation to ecosystems (22, 42).

The Arctic accounts for some 10% of the world's fish catch, the cod family, capelin, and herring among the most important. The Bering Sea is the world's most productive for the Pacific (walleye)



Fig. 2. Concrete Island Drilling System (CIDS) about 10 miles off Cape Halkett, Beaufort Sea coast, Alaska, 27 March 1985. The thick ice was a protective barrier created by pumps spraying seawater around CIDS except for an opening at the back of CIDS to egress. The deck of CIDS measures 295×312 feet (90×95 m) and is about 45 feet (14 m) above sea level; the ice barrier averaged about 60 feet (18 m) high and rested on the sea floor at a depth of about 50 feet (15 m). [Photo by Air Photo Tech, courtesy of Exxon Company, U.S.A.]

pollock. The pollock has an estimated equilibrium yield of 1.1 million metric tons, and it accounted for 78% of the foreign Bering Sea catch in 1978; here, a single net haul may bring in 100 metric tons of fish (43). The Kotzebue Sound salmon fishery is particularly important for Alaska (44). Marine mammals, especially seals, are also valuable commercially, but some of the mammals such as the bowhead whale, and fish such as the arctic cisco, are endangered. The bowhead whale is a well-known example of a conservation problem for which critical data are still lacking (45). Data are also needed for the shelf ecosystem of the Bering Sea and for most other Arctic shelf ecosystems on which renewable marine resources depend.

Similarly, the renewable resources of the terrestrial ecosystem abound in unknowns (46), such as the cause of apparently longstanding, huge fluctuations in the size of caribou herds (47). Such questions are of concern to indigenous peoples and wildlife managers. The Arctic biota as a living resource is far more fragile than most nonliving resources, and long-term scientific monitoring is mandatory to determine changes in character and to mitigate effects of encroaching industrialization.

The Peoples

The first peopling of the Americas is commonly believed to have been by way of the Bering Land Bridge during a time when sea level was lowered by growth of ice sheets. There have been repeated immigrations, but the earliest is not established (48), and many Beringian problems remain (49).

Today, the descendants of the early immigrants face rapid and highly significant changes because of intruding industrial and governmental activities, personnel, and life-styles. Working schedules and other restraints conflict with long-established indigenous cultures based on subsistence living from local resources (50) (Fig. 3). However, industry is attempting to mitigate the problem by frequently rotating days on and days off work. Alcohol and drug abuse is creating social and behavioral difficulties in some areas.

These matters have social, economic, and political overtones far more complex than might first appear (51). In Alaska, the large economic benefits accrued by indigenous peoples in return for their release of native land claims entail serious problems for future generations (52). Many indigenous peoples of the Arctic recognize that their culture and heritage are threatened and believe that when nonrenewable resources are depleted and industry departs, they will have to rely on themselves and local resources once again. This feeling, obvious in Arctic Alaska, Canada, and Greenland, is stressed by the Inuit Circumpolar Conference which calls for approval by indigenous peoples before industrial and other intrusions into homelands occur (53). Social and behavioral research may help to clarify these complex matters and suggest approaches to them; it will also aid newcomers in understanding the Arctic and its peoples.

Arctic medicine and health are additional research areas. Health problems existed before contact with Europeans (54), but many are recent occurrences (55). For instance, there seems to be an increase in cancer in some populations (56); if confirmed, determination of the cause could also aid cancer research in general. Health problems of a different kind are cited in a 1984 report, which states: "Historical conditions have resulted in the reduction and fragmentation of findings... of responsiveness to local concerns and ... of a clear federal commitment to arctic science ... have contributed to uncertain and discontinuous support for research on Arctic health. The resulting decline in health science productivity is occurring at a time when research findings are most needed in the region" (57).

Engineering and Environmental Research

Engineering research and technology directly translate much other research into the economically feasible end products for people. Arctic engineering and technology are specialties because of the difficulties imposed by the unique marine and terrestrial environment (28, 58). Driving forces include the need for energy and mineral resources, for better housing, communications, logistics, and defense, as in the modernization of the Distant Early Warning line (now the North Warning System) by Canada and the United States (59). These fields mandate continuous improvements in arctic technologies, which in some areas, such as materials science and bioengineering, appear to be lagging (60).

In addition to furthering resource exploitation and industrial development, technological advances can alleviate or prevent accompanying disturbances and dangers—for example, marine and terrestrial oil spills. Engineering has a mandate and responsibility to do so in the environmentally sensitive Arctic, and it is to industry's credit that it recognizes this as being in the best interests of all concerned. Many problems arise from varying judgments concerning environmental risks and trade-offs, and basic and applied research are critical for informed decisions. Engineering and development must go hand in hand with environmental studies and protection. Such studies require long-term baseline observations and monitoring in all the natural systems, physical and biological, against which to measure effects of development (61).

Promotion of Research

The Arctic Research and Policy Act specifies promotion of arctic research as a concern. An oft-cited problem is the lack of career opportunities for arctic scientists, which has discouraged many, including indigenous peoples, from pursuing such careers. In contrast, the Leningrad Arctic and Antarctic Scientific Research Institute has a staff of some 1800, and "literally hundreds of other scientific institutions [exist] that work partially or exclusively in the Arctic" (62, p. 174).

Other problems are costly scientific platforms and logistics. Both need to be examined as long-range commitments. There is broad support for polar-orbiting satellites as platforms to advance atmospheric, terrestrial, and marine research (63). However, lack of enough support for earth-bound facilities has resulted in the United States being the only Arctic-rim nation without well-established, Arctic-based, scientific research stations or research support facilities. The former Naval Arctic Research Laboratory at Point Barrow (64), which closed because of budgetary retrenchment, is now operated on a much-reduced scale by the Barrow Village Inupiat Corporation. This facility's future is uncertain, and it cannot economically serve the eastern part of Arctic Alaska. In contrast, the Soviet Union has more than 100 Arctic stations. The Canadian government's Polar Continental Shelf Project uses chartered helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft and routinely establishes temporary camps throughout the Canadian Arctic Archipelago in summer and winter. It is a model of how to assist various independent and cooperative programs at minimal expense.

The United States is also the only Arctic-rim nation without an ice-worthy vessel dedicated to arctic science. Although the Coast Guard icebreakers can help to support research, the Coast Guard has overriding priorities and is not able to dedicate a suitably designed vessel and a research-trained and motivated crew to the needs of science. Here again, the Soviet Union leads with more than 20 iceworthy vessels dedicated to polar research, mainly arctic; they also have the world's largest icebreaker fleet (65).



Fig. 3. Traditional Inuit blanket toss during festival celebrating bowheadwhale catch, Barrow, Alaska, 25 June 1985. The blanket, made of walrus hide, is rhythmically manipulated to launch the performer ever higher into the air. [Photo by A. L. Washburn]

International Cooperation

In promoting arctic research, international cooperation on appropriate problems, including joint logistical support, would be of mutual benefit. Arctic-rim nations have many scientific problems in common (66) and a tradition of cooperation in polar research established by two International Polar Years and the 1957–58 International Geophysical Year. The existing research ties between the United States and Canada (67), Greenland (68), and the Scandinavian countries offer many opportunities for strengthening cooperative endeavors. Svalbard, under Norwegian sovereignty, is of interest as a locus for international efforts, since all signatories to the Svalbard Treaty have equal rights to undertake research and development, provided the region remains demilitarized (69).

Significant difficulties in international science cooperation exist in the case of the Soviet Union, but there has been some success in nonsensitive areas, including anthropology and archeology, health, environmental protection, geophysics, permafrost, and wildlife.

Priorities

Advancement of U.S. arctic research requires continuity of effort and a sense of priorities, which are subject to change with time and circumstances. These priorities are addressed in a comprehensive report (70) prepared by the National Research Council. Figure 4 summarizes the issues and lists the research fields that the committee regarded as most critical to each issue. The research fields as such are not prioritized but the report lists research needs in each field in order of priority.

Subsequently, a working paper by the Arctic Research Commission (71) concluded that the paramount national needs to which arctic research should be directed comprise national security, weather and climate, natural resources, transportation, communications and space-disturbance effects, environmental protection, and health, culture, and socioeconomics, all of which conform to recently adopted arctic research policy (72). Regarding improved prediction ability as an important criterion, the commission recommended a broad research framework to meet the national needs. Building on the concept that the Arctic is an interactive system whose core components are the atmosphere, ocean, land, and biota, the commission recommended in order of priority (71):

■ Research to understand the Arctic Ocean (including the Bering Sea and other marginal seas, sea ice, and seabed), and how the ocean and the Arctic

atmosphere operate as coupled components within the Arctic system. In accordance with national needs, emphasis should be on gaining knowledge to advance (a) discovery of nonrenewable resources, especially offshore oil and gas, and their development with minimal adverse impact on the environment; (b) prediction of ecosystem reactions to natural (for example, climatic) and human-induced disturbances, including those affecting renewable resources of the Arctic continental shelves, particularly Alaska Bering Sea fisheries and the species on which the subsistence life-styles of indigenous peoples depend; (c) forecasting Arctic weather and its impact on worldwide weather patterns; (d) prediction of climatic change resulting from changing concentrations of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, or from other causes as revealed by proxy information in marine sediments and fossils; and (e) prediction of sea ice and other conditions that affect maritime transportation and submarine operations.

Research to understand how the coupled land and atmosphere components operate within the Arctic system. Emphasis should be on understanding to advance areas of concern complementary to those of the coupled ocean and atmosphere, namely (a) discovery and development, with minimal adverse environmental impact, of terrestrial nonrenewable resources, especially oil, gas, mineral, and hydrologic resources; (b) prediction of ecosystem reactions, particularly the effects of natural and human-induced disturbances on renewable resources; (c) understanding of atmosphere-land interactions as a basis for improved weather forecasting; and (d) understanding of the history of climatic change as revealed in ice sheets, permafrost sediments, and fossils, thereby facilitating prediction of climatic change.

Research to understand the high-latitude upper atmosphere and its extension into the magnetosphere. Emphasis should be on advancing our ability to predict disturbances in space and mitigating their effects on highlatitude communication and defense systems.

Much of the foregoing priority research contributes to the health, culture, and socioeconomic concerns of Arctic residents. In addition, considered separately from the foregoing priorities, the commission recommended that:

The highest priority research in the health-culture-socioeconomic component of the Arctic system should be on studies to identify and resolve the major health, behavioral, and cultural problems that derive from distinctive characteristics of the Arctic environment and from increasing resource development, industrialization, and urbanization.

For support services and management, the commission recommended that the following matters receive high-priority attention:

			NATIONAL ISSUES IN THE ARCTIC											
Fig. 4. Matrix of major research priorities. Check marks indicate research fields having high priority in relation to national is- sues. No order of priority is implied (70).		ARCTIC AS A NATURAL LABORATORY	NATURAL HAZARDS	NATIONAL DEFENSE	CLIMATE AND WEATHER	ENERGY AND MINERALS	TRANSPORTATION	COMMUNICATIONS	RENEWABLE RESOURCES	POLLUTION	ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	HEALTH AND ADAPTATION	NATIVE CULTURE	
RESEARCH TO ADDRESS NATIONAL ISSUES	UPPER ATMOSPHERE AND NEAR EARTH SPACE PHYSICS	\checkmark		\checkmark				\checkmark	-					
	ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCES	\checkmark	\checkmark		\checkmark					\checkmark				
	PHYSICAL AND CHEMICAL OCEANOGRAPHY	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark		\checkmark		\checkmark			
	MARINE LIFE SCIENCES	\checkmark			\checkmark	\checkmark			\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark		\checkmark	
	GLACIOLOGY AND HYDROLOGY	\checkmark	\checkmark		\checkmark	\checkmark			\checkmark	\checkmark				
	GEOLOGY AND GEOPHYSICS	\checkmark	\checkmark		\checkmark	\checkmark								
	PERMAFROST RESEARCH	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark		\checkmark		\checkmark			
	ARCTIC ENGINEERING	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark		\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark		\checkmark	\checkmark		
	TERRESTRIAL AND FRESH- WATER BIOLOGY	\checkmark			\checkmark				\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark		\checkmark	
	MEDICINE AND HUMAN BIOLOGY	\checkmark								\checkmark		\checkmark	\checkmark	
	SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RESEARCH	\checkmark				\checkmark		\checkmark	\checkmark			\checkmark	\checkmark	
	ECONOMICS	\checkmark				\checkmark	\checkmark		\checkmark		\checkmark		\checkmark	

Consolidation of an Arctic data and information transfer system and related management policy to facilitate the storage and distribution of data, ready access to up-to-date research results, and rapid flow of information about research needs, including statistics and surveys (human health, demographics, socioeconomics), glaciological, anthropological and other records of past climates, natural events, and human activity in the Arctic. Providing continuity in Arctic research, including mapping, baseline

studies, and long-term monitoring of phenomena.

Furthering platform and logistic systems, in particular, assessing needs for terrestrial research sites.

Finally, the commission has recommended that in the area of federal-state cooperative research in the U.S. Arctic, priority attention should be focused on arctic data and information transfer, fisheries ecosystem research, and health.

Conclusion

The position of the Arctic in world affairs is becoming increasingly significant, and the national interest must be met with respect to security, weather and climate, natural resources, transportation, communications, environmental protection, health, culture, and socioeconomics. To meet the evolving challenges requires foresighted research in basic and applied science and careful planning to provide the necessary continuity and integration of effort mandated by the Arctic Research and Policy Act.

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 73. We thank J. G. Roederer for helpful suggestions during preparation of the initial manuscript. The comments of colleagues and the welcome criticism of an anonymous reviewer led to further improvements.

8 AUGUST 1986