



ACCESS
Arctic Climate Change
Economy and Society



Project no. 265863

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Arctic Climate Change, Economy and Society

Instrument: Collaborative Project
Thematic Priority: Ocean.2010-1 "Quantification of climate change impacts on economic sectors in the Arctic"

D3.52 – Yearly report on ethical issues

Due date of deliverable: **31/03/2012**

Actual submission date: **02/04/2012**

Used Person/months: 1

Start date of project: **March 1st, 2011**

Duration: **48 months**

Organisation name of lead contractor for this deliverable: **UoL**

Project co-funded by the European Commission within the Seventh Framework Programme (2007-2013)		
Dissemination Level		
PU	Public	X
PP	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	
RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	

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Scientific research during the reporting period has been carried out in compliance with ethical standards proposed in the ACCESS project.

- The awareness of the project participants on the ethical aspects was discussed during the WP meetings and individually.
- Scientific evaluation of socio-economic studies did not involve any biomedical research related to human beings
- The relevant ethical standards of FP7 were taken into account in the design of the proposed research frame, during conducting of the anthropological fieldwork and performing laboratory experiments.

Minimise impact on study marine mammals

It is important that all marine mammal research carried out in ACCESS tries to minimise its impact on animals. This will be achieved by adhering to all relevant national legislation, and to the established principle of the 3Rs: Reduction, Refinement and Replacement.

This means that researchers should:

- § minimise the number of animals disturbed by designing statistically robust studies
- § minimise interference to an individual animal by ensuring the research method used is the best available for the question being asked
- § seek alternatives to interfering with the animals by ensuring there are no appropriate pre-existing data or samples available; and ensuring that answers cannot be gained by other means, for example from modelling.

Laboratory experiments

The research activities of WP 3 included the designing and carrying out the experimental project 'Using laboratory experiments to explore social-ecological linkages in common resource systems characterized by potential abrupt changes in the resource dynamics'. The laboratory experiments have been developed to analyze how appropriators in a common pool dilemma react to potential abrupt changes in the resource renewal rate.

In relation to the laboratory experiences performed by WP 3 (Beijer institute, Sweden) the following ethical considerations have been made:

The purpose of economic experiments is only to observe behavior, not to influence the participants, physically or mentally. The participants of the experimental project were confronted with a specific problem tied to a set of different choices. The choices they make and the answers they provide are observed and recorded. Prior to voluntary participating, all participants were asked to give their consent. In this consent form they are informed that their anonymity will be ensured throughout the entire experiment. Each subject will be identified by a number and when the data is transferred to a computer file it will not be possible to tie a specific observation to an individual.

Fieldwork

Anthropological fieldwork (WP 3) on the local perception of climate change in relation to the fishery sector and aquaculture was carried out in Northern Norway and Northern Russia (Arctic Centre, University of Lapland, Finland). Taking into account ethical aspects of research practices has had a particular significance in the conducting of the field study. A special attention has been paid to a set of ethical principles for conducting social science field work in the remote and small Northern settlements. The ethical guidelines of IASSA (International Arctic Social Sciences Association) and AAA (American Anthropological Association) related has been specifically applied to these areas.

While there is a vast range of informal interactions, encounters, observations and 'participations' involved in this form of research, for the research in small localities, where companies or persons could be identified easily, appropriate confidentiality and anonymity have been of highest priority. For example, the semi-structured interviews with the managers of the fish farming industry have followed after the presentation of the research project and invitation to participate or observe the working process of economic enterprises.

The experiences from the fieldwork in Norway and Russia have demonstrated great openness among local people in sharing their knowledge about the observed changes in the marine environment. However, issues such as protection of identity, privacy, have been amongst the important ethical issues that have been always in mind.

Collection of data

- The conducted research of the first project year did not involve collection and processing of genetic information or personal data (e.g. health, sexual lifestyle, criminal justice, political opinion, religious conviction).
- Unpublished statistical data to which researcher has been given access (e.g. statistics related to Russian fish catch and landing, mapping etc.) has been collected with permission of company (subcontractor agreement). This data will be analysed and used in the joint publication.
- Collection of data related to the cultural values (e.g. cultural, social significance of fish consumption) put a particular emphasis on respect of local cultural traditions and values, presentation of the research to local community.

Concluding remark

Ethics has been given the highest priority in conducted anthropological fieldwork and laboratory experiments. It is an integral part of entire research activities, from conception to publication. However, ethics are context-dependent, and consequently definitive outcomes are rare. Collecting, defining and summarizing of these outcomes have been not straightforward task for the Ethics Board of the large scale ACCESS project. At the same time, the first year of the project was very important for the Board to refine the strategies of successful implementation the ethical requirements.