



## Harvard Kennedy School Energy Policy Seminar Series, Spring 2015

### Managing Arctic Resources

Monday, March 30, 2015

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Melting Arctic ice and warming waters are opening a complex new set of questions for natural resource management in the Arctic, explained panelists at March 30's Energy Policy Seminar, organized by students as a follow-up to a Fall 2014 trip to the Arctic Circle Assembly meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland.

Panelists Susan Hackley, Managing Director of the Harvard Law School's Program on Negotiation (and a former resident of Alaska) and HKS student Jennie Hatch (MPP '15) focused especially on complex negotiations about fisheries management that may become increasingly important if schools of fish move north as waters warm. 92% of Arctic international waters are currently not governed by a fisheries management agreement. A rare opportunity exists, Hatch pointed out, to develop an agreement before the fishing industry in the area fully develops. However, there are many uncertainties about the likely future of Arctic fisheries, as it is not yet understood how they will respond to warmer and more ice-free waters.

Negotiations, panelists noted, take place in a complex political environment involving the residents of the Arctic and the eight nations with territory within the Arctic Circle (including the United States and Russia).

Professor William Moomaw of Tufts focused on what he called the "Arctic paradox," noting that as the Arctic melts due to global climate change, this causes more oil and gas to be accessible, which in turn may result in additional warming. Moomaw pointed to several possible negative consequences of oil and gas extraction in the arctic, including oil spills, increased melting due to darkening of the ice by oil, and unknown ramifications if the Arctic becomes a major site for the extraction of methane hydrates.

With these possible problems in mind, in conjunction with a worldwide policy goal of reducing carbon emissions, Moomaw argued that policymakers should consider declaring Arctic oil and gas to be a strategic reserve or, alternatively, declaring a five year moratorium on development to further assess possible risks.



The panel was moderated by Harvard Kennedy School student Kate Burkhart (MPP '16). The event was part of the Kennedy School's Energy Policy Seminar Series, which is jointly sponsored by the Energy Technology Innovation Policy research group of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs and by the Consortium for Energy Policy Research of the Mossavar-Rahmani Center on Business and Government.