

TRENT-YUKON MODEL ARCTIC COUNCIL

TRYKOMAC
DECLARATION

MARCH 2021



TRYKOMAC DECLARATION

On the occasion of the First Ministerial Meeting of the Trent-Yukon Model Arctic Council

1. **WE**, the Ministers of the Arctic States of the Trent-Yukon Model Arctic Council (TRYKOMAC), joined by representatives of the Indigenous Permanent Participant organisations of TRYKOMAC;
2. **HAVING GATHERED** online on 26th March 2021 at the First Ministerial Meeting of TRYKOMAC;
3. **CONFIRMING** the commitment of TRYKOMAC to raise awareness of the Arctic as a region; promote respect for Arctic peoples and their Indigenous rights; and enhance understanding of the diverse societies, economies, cultures and ecosystems of the Arctic;

HEREBY DECLARE:

Arctic permafrost thaw

4. **RECOGNISING** the need for swift and effective action to be taken to halt the thawing of the permafrost, and to mitigate its effects;
5. **RECOGNISING ALSO** the deep and ongoing cultural, historical and spiritual connection of Indigenous peoples to the land, sea, flora and fauna of the Arctic region;
6. **RECOGNISING FURTHER** and **RESPECTING** local Indigenous ecological knowledge, in the form of oral histories, as contributing alongside modern scientific technologies to the understanding of baseline historical permafrost extent, so that future projections may be more accurate;
7. **NOTING WITH CONCERN** that the consequences of thawing permafrost disproportionately affect Indigenous and rural peoples;
8. **CONSIDERING** the desire of all Arctic States and Indigenous peoples to protect, promote, and pursue the full realisation of the inalienable rights of all Arctic populations, such as those enumerated in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

9. **APPRECIATING** and **ENDORISING** the research done to date by states, universities, and other organisations into thawing permafrost and its consequences;
10. **AFFIRMING** the need for a sustainable growth strategy to mitigate and adapt to permafrost thaw, which does not place economic gain over environmental security;
11. **AFFIRMING ALSO** that any measures taken to mitigate and adapt to permafrost thaw must account for the mental wellness and overall human security of Arctic communities;
12. **BUILDING UPON** energy transitions taking place in Arctic communities, so that of low-carbon energy options are economically viable;

HEREBY RESOLVE TO:

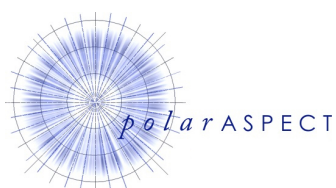
13. **COMMIT** to increasing, from the next annual governmental budget, funding for:
 - a. Projects researching the impacts of circumpolar permafrost thaw;
 - b. Projects to develop infrastructure resilient to permafrost thaw;
 - c. Projects researching heavy metals released into terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems due to permafrost thaw;
 - d. Evaluation of current infrastructure regulation to ensure it addresses current and future issues of stability in the Arctic due to permafrost thaw;
 - e. Grants available to individuals and organisations to mitigate and repair damage caused by thawing permafrost;
 - f. Further research into natural solutions to the problem of permafrost thaw;
 - g. Indigenous communities which reside wholly or partly within their borders;
14. **PROVIDE** mapping and monitoring resources such as GIS, as well as appropriate equivalent training, so that local settler and Indigenous communities can contribute to national and international research projects regarding the extent and state of annual terrestrial and submarine permafrost, which may otherwise be overlooked;

15. **CONFIRM** that the mandates of the Arctic Monitoring Assessment Program Working Group; the Protection of the Marine Environment Working Group; and the Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response Working Group, in order better to address changing Arctic realities, include:
 - a. Monitoring, collecting data on, and analyzing the environmental effects of permafrost and glacier thaw;
 - b. Developing a standardised grading system for permafrost stability, the better to inform infrastructure risk-mitigation planning;
 - c. Protecting the environment from the more deleterious effects of permafrost thaw;
 - d. Preparing for emergencies in an ever-changing environment;
 - e. Developing capabilities in collaboration with local Indigenous and settler communities to be better prepared to deal with emergency situations;
16. **ENSURE** that Indigenous voices are included in decision-making processes regarding planning and development in the circumpolar Arctic;
17. **COMMIT** to the protection of Indigenous communities when considering steps to be taken to address permafrost thaw, including matters of language, culture and religion; hunting, fishing and traditional economic practices; land use, including herding and other grazing use; mental and physical wellness;
18. **CALL UPON** non-governmental organisations working within the Arctic States to help strengthen cooperation amongst the Arctic States by building collaborative projects, and by sharing scientific and research knowledge, skills, talents, expertise and equipment;
19. **PROMISE** to strengthen industrial best-practice amongst companies whose operations in the circumpolar region may be impacted by permafrost thaw, in order to prevent or mitigate any resulting environmental damage from the release of industrial pollutants due to infrastructural inadequacy; and **FURTHER PROMISE** to hold to greater account companies found in violation of such best practice;
20. **RECOMMIT** to reducing greenhouse-gas emissions, in line with the 2016 Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

to levels previously agreed in national and international treaties, policies, and agreements, and in line with targets to prevent and mitigate future permafrost thaw.

Disclaimer

This TRYKOMAC Declaration represents the collective agreement of the student delegates to the March 2021 Trent-Yukon Model Arctic Council (TRYKOMAC), an educational event for universities, and it does not necessarily reflect the views of Polar Aspect, Trent University, Yukon University or Universities Canada.



TRENT-YUKON MODEL ARCTIC COUNCIL IS AN EDUCATIONAL EVENT OF TRENT UNIVERSITY AND YUKON UNIVERSITY
IN COLLABORATION WITH AND FACILITATED BY POLAR ASPECT
AND FUNDED IN MARCH 2021 BY UNIVERSITIES CANADA