IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF OFFSHORE OIL ACTIVITIES IN THE ARCTIC
SANNE VAMMEN LARSEN AND ANNE MERRILD HANSEN
THE DANISH CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Greenland

- The world's largest island (2,166,086 km²) – one quarter is covered in ice
- 56,000 inhabitants – NUUK?
- Part of the kingdom of Denmark combined with self-rule
- Fishery and related industry is the dominant sector
Background

Increased resource extraction activity in Greenland
- Mining
- Oil

Licensing and exploration

Sensitive arctic environment: EIA is an important safeguard
- Need for development in a Greenlandic context
- Learning from other experienced Arctic countries?
- Comparative study of requirements in legislation: Greenland, Denmark, Norway, Canada, Alaska

Methodology

Document study:
- Legislation
- Guidance

Quality assurance
- Advisory board
- Competent authorities
- You!

Workshops with actors in Greenland
- Initial: Focus the study
- Final: Discussion of results
What is assessed when?

Key points for Greenland:
- Norways strategic approach
- Canada and Greenland have specific separate social assessments

Public participation

EIA best practice principles:

“EIA should be…Participative - the process should provide appropriate opportunities to inform and involve the interested and affected publics, and their inputs and concerns should be addressed explicitly in the documentation and decision-making”. (International Association for Impact Assessment 1999)

Zoom in on exploration drilling (Norwegian exception)
Participation in the EIA process

Key points for Greenland:
- Information about decision?
- Possibility for appeals?

Points for further analysis

The Norwegian strategic approach:
- Save resources and provide simplicity
- Requires good quality SEA

Social impacts in separate IA or not?
- Simplicity and participation fatigue
- Depth/quality of assessment

Are the demands for public participation enough?
- No specific demand for early participation – is common practice enough?
- Striking a balance between clear demands and flexibility
- Need for clarity regarding information on decision and appeals