

Institution: Loughborough University		
Unit of Assessment: UOA C19 – Politics and International Studies		
Title of case study: Informing national and international security policy for a changing Arctic		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2018-2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Dr Duncan Depledge	Lecturer in Geopolitics & Security	Since 1 February 2019
Professor Caroline Kennedy-Pipe	Professor of International Security & International Relations	Since 1 February 2018
Period when the claimed impact occurred: September 2018 – December 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>Environmental change is testing governance structures and driving great power rivalry throughout the Arctic. The UK and the NATO military alliance are at the forefront of efforts to maintain regional peace and stability as new challenges and opportunities emerge. Depledge and Kennedy-Pipe's research on geopolitical and security trends in the Arctic has been vital for generating notable policy shifts within:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) the UK Ministry of Defence (MOD), by informing its first 'Defence Arctic Strategy'; (2) NATO, by informing <i>Strategic Foresight Analysis 2021</i>, a major Alliance document that supports national defence policy planning in all 30 NATO members states, and (3) Estonia, by informing the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' approach as it developed an application to join the Arctic Council. 		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>Depledge and Kennedy-Pipe's research on geopolitical and security transformation in the Arctic, and its implications for both the UK and NATO, was undertaken in the School of Social Sciences and Humanities at Loughborough University. This work built on the earlier finding, highlighted by Depledge in his monograph <i>Britain and the Arctic</i> (Palgrave, 2018), that a growing number of extra-regional actors, such as the UK and NATO, are actively reassessing the opportunities and challenges presented by environmental change. Since joining Loughborough University, Kennedy-Pipe (2018-) and Depledge's (2019-) research has focussed specifically on the problem of what change in the Arctic means for defence and security planning among extra-regional actors, namely NATO, the UK and other individual NATO members with specific interests in the region, such as Estonia.</p> <p>Depledge and Kennedy-Pipe's research was conducted primarily through intensive public engagement with UK Government, Estonian Government, and NATO civilian and military officials, as well as with multiple experts and stakeholders. Interactions took place through interviews, workshops and closed meetings between February 2018 and July 2020.</p>		

During their research, Depledge and Kennedy-Pipe found that peace and stability in the Arctic is increasingly at risk because of interactions between climate change, emerging commercial competition, increasing military activity, and deteriorating relations amongst NATO allies (including the UK and Estonia) and Russia. Importantly, Depledge and Kennedy-Pipe's research has revealed that the maintenance of peace and stability in the Arctic has also become a pressing security and defence priority for extra-regional countries and alliances.

Depledge and Kennedy-Pipe published their findings in a series of articles between April 2019 and December 2020. Their key research contributions are:

- a) The creation of an original dataset of Arctic military exercises and highlighting its significance in the context of debates about regional militarisation. Specifically, this research drew attention to the previously underexplored issues of why military exercises are increasing in number in the Arctic and why so many non-Arctic states (including all NATO allies) have been participating in them. These exercises pose a particular challenge to those policymakers and experts who claim that the region is still one of low-tension and unaware of the potential for military crisis, which may produce consequences outside the Arctic [R1];
- b) The identification of future emerging opportunities and risks to the UK in the Arctic and the implications for the Ministry of Defence in formulating and delivering its first-ever Arctic strategy [R2; R3];
- c) The exposition of new modes of pressure deployed by the Kremlin on small states and allies, including in the Arctic and Baltic regions where countries such as Finland and Estonia have been 'targeted' by Moscow-inspired propaganda, which has included attempts to provoke unrest amongst Russian-speaking populations within these countries [R4].

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

R1: D. Depledge (2020). Train Where You Expect to Fight: Why Military exercises are increasing in the High North. *Scandinavian Journal of Military Studies*, 3 (1), 288-301. DOI: 10.31374/sjms.64.

R2: D. Depledge, K. Dodds and C. Kennedy-Pipe (2019). The UK's Defence Arctic Strategy: Negotiating the Slippery Geopolitics of the Arctic. *The RUSI Journal*, 164 (4), 28-39. DOI: 10.1080/03071847.2019.1605015.

R3: D. Depledge, C. Kennedy-Pipe and J. Rogers (2019). The UK and the Arctic: Forward Defence. *The Arctic Yearbook 2019*, available from: https://arcticyearbook.com/images/yearbook/2019/Scholarly-Papers/18_AY2019_Depledge.pdf. ISSN 2298-2418 (Online).

R4: Kennedy-Pipe, C. and Zaidi, I. (2020). The Hybrid Challenge and Small States. In: Brady AM., Thorhallsson B. (eds) *Small States and the New Security Environment. The World of Small States*, vol 7., Springer, Cham. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-030-51529-4_3.

The primary audience of the underpinning research comprised policy and military communities with interest and responsibility for Arctic affairs and the maintenance of existing governance structures and norms. Much of the underpinning research was therefore published in key peer-reviewed policy and military journals [R1 and R2] and contributed in a timely manner to important debates about cooperation and conflict in the Arctic, as well as Western responses to prevent the deterioration of the regional security environment. The *Arctic Yearbook* [R3] is a particularly important collection of current policy thinking on Arctic affairs. Open access and peer-reviewed, it brings together expert thinking and research from academics and

policymakers on regional trends, opportunities, and challenges. [R4] arose from a workshop with policy makers in Iceland and was written to contribute to academic and policy debates on the vulnerabilities of small states, including Arctic states such as Finland, in an era of hybrid warfare.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Depledge and Kennedy-Pipe's research on Arctic geopolitical and security trends has generated fundamental changes in attitude, understanding and policies of within the UK Government, NATO, and Estonia – an important UK and NATO ally.

The authors' **pathway** to achieving this impact developed as they built their reputations as leading UK-based experts on how the Arctic is changing. They achieved this through extensive engagement with both national and international networks of policymakers, experts, and other interested stakeholders. This has involved a combination of interviews, private briefings, participation in workshops and conference presentations, as well as various appointments, including serving as special advisers to the UK House of Commons Defence Committee.

As the authors cemented their reputations within the UK Government, NATO, and Estonian Government, they were granted regular opportunities to present the research they conducted at Loughborough University.

As a result of this engagement since 2018, Depledge and Kennedy-Pipe's research has impacted how these countries and organisations devise policies and strategies for the Arctic in the following ways:

Impact 1: Scrutinising, informing and underpinning UK Defence Arctic Strategy.

Since September 2018, the UK Ministry of Defence (MOD) has drawn on the authors' 'highly respected' research in a variety of settings [S1]. This has helped 'frame and develop MOD policy towards the Arctic region' [S1].

On 6 September 2018, the authors' helped explain why the Arctic matters at the Chief of the Defence Staff Strategy Forum, which subsequently contributed to the Secretary of State for Defence's decision to produce the UK's first ever 'Defence Arctic Strategy' [S1].

On 12 August 2019, defence officials 'incorporated nearly all of [the authors'] feedback' after asking for the authors to give a 'private briefing about their research and to provide expert comment and feedback on the "Strategic Implications Paper: High North 2050" that was under development at the Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre' [S1]. As the MOD reported in November 2020, 'this paper has since been used to develop MOD and wider Government thinking on emerging challenges in the region and the UK's policy position in response' [S1].

Throughout this period, the authors have also helped the MOD 'highlight our own key messages with audiences that it would otherwise have been difficult to reach' [S1]. The MOD stressed in November 2020 that the authors' 'proactive engagement with the Ministry of Defence continues to shape MOD thinking, providing challenge and increasing our understanding of emerging challenges and opportunities in the region' [S1].

Impact 2: Informing and shaping NATO's understanding of and approach to the changing Arctic.

Since October 2018, Depledge and Kennedy-Pipe's research has impacted the work of the Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate of NATO Allied Command Transformation (ACT) in Norfolk, Virginia (USA). Specifically, "[the author's] knowledge of key issues facing the UK in

the Arctic, as well as their network of leading experts in the field from across the UK, benefitted us by informing our underpinning research and planning for *Strategic Foresight Analysis 2021*' [S2].

Notably, Depledge and Kennedy-Pipe 'contributed insightful ideas' based on their research to an 'audience of senior military and civilian staff from NATO, its allies and partner nations' during workshops in Helsinki (June 2019) and Oslo (September 2019) [S2].

Research presented by Depledge and Kennedy-Pipe on NATO's role in the Arctic at a joint Loughborough University-NATO workshop in London in December 2019, 'informed [NATO's] own thinking about NATO can respond to emerging threats and challenges in the region, and this has also been reflected in our regional report on Arctic security trends' [S2]. NATO has 'used their insights to strengthen our regional reports on Arctic security trends out to 2040 and the future of Russia. These reports have since been integrated into *Strategic Foresight Analysis 2021*' [S2].

Recognising the quality of Depledge and Kennedy-Pipe's research and impact since 2018, NATO has made it clear that it expects 'to continue drawing on Professor Kennedy-Pipe and Dr Depledge's expertise to help guide our work on the Arctic, Russia and indeed other challenges facing NATO in the years ahead' [S2].

Impact 3: Informing the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' approach as it developed an application to join the Arctic Council.

In June 2018, Kennedy-Pipe's presentation 'Security in the High North from a UK perspective' at the highly prestigious Lennart Meri Conference in Estonia gained the attention of the Estonia Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The authors were subsequently invited to Tallinn in November 2019 to brief the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence on their research findings and advise on Estonia's approach as it developed its application to join the Arctic Council.

Clarifying the Government's approach and how our work informed this, the Counsellor in the Policy Planning Department of the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported afterwards,

'...the Estonian Government has just approved a Foreign Ministry initiative to begin the process of applying for observer status at the Arctic Council. This decision has, in turn, required the initiation of a completely new process of information gathering in support of the application. Your presentation was thus timely, and highly beneficial for my colleagues from both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence, who were also present at the seminar...Your presentation of the UK's Defence Arctic strategy was very relevant and interesting. Your explanation of security dynamics in the Arctic, Great Power rivalry, and the concept of the 'Wider North' opened completely different perspectives on the place and role of Estonia and the other Baltic states' [S3].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

[S1] Testimonial from the UK Ministry of Defence, dated 27 November 2020 *from Stuart Mills, outlining the impact of Dr Depledge and Professor Kennedy-Pipe's research on how the Ministry of Defence frames and develops its policy towards the Arctic region.*

[S2] Testimonial from NATO, dated 15 June 2020 *from Rear Admiral John W. Tammen, NATO DCSO Strategic Plans and Policy, setting out the extensive contribution that Dr Depledge and Professor Kennedy-Pipe have made to NATO's work on the Arctic, Russia and other challenges.*

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[S3] Testimonial from the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dated 19 November 2019 from Riina Kaljurand, Counsellor, Policy Planning Department, setting out how Depledge and Kennedy-Pipe's presentation of their research provided new thinking and advice to support the Estonian government's application to join the Arctic Council.