

MP-IDSA *Policy Brief*

India's G20 Presidency: Opportunity to Resume Engagement in the Arctic

Anurag Bisen

February 16, 2023

S*ummary*

The suspension of scientific exchanges in the Arctic, as a protest against Russia's 'special military operations' in Ukraine, is likely to severely impede global climate change mitigation efforts. The resumption of the dialogue would need a multilateral mechanism having relevance, stakes, and heft, to effect a change in the status quo. India's theme of its recently assumed presidency of the G20, and its Arctic Policy, released in 2022, both encapsulate the idea that the world is one family—Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam or 'One Earth·One Family·One Future', resonant with the interconnectedness of the Arctic with the rest of the world. India, using the Sherpa Track, can use its presidency to expeditiously revive scientific exchanges in the Arctic.

On 24 February 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced the launching of a “special military operation” in Ukraine. In protest against Russia's actions, on 3 March 2022, seven¹ (A7) of the eight members of the Arctic Council (AC), announced a historic suspension of participation in all activities of the council.² This was followed on the same day by the Nordic Council of Ministers.³ This unprecedented step, taken for the first time since the formation of AC in 1996, came at the time of Russia's presidency, for the period 2021–2023.

Immediately thereafter, on 4 March 2022, the European Commission and the Barents Euro-Arctic Cooperation⁴ (BEAC) suspended cooperation with Russia in research, science, and innovation.⁵ The United States, on 11 June 2022, decided to ‘wind down institutional, administrative, funding, and personnel relationships and research collaborations in the fields of science and technology with Russian government-affiliated research institutions and individuals’.⁶

Moreover, Finland and Sweden, both AC members, submitted applications for NATO membership in May 2022. This could lead to an eventual AC comprising Russia pitted against seven NATO members. The A7 issued a Joint Statement on 8 June 2022, on the limited resumption of AC cooperation activities, ‘on projects that do not involve the participation of Russia’.⁷ Lending support to an isolated Russia, on 15 October 2022, China refused to recognise the legitimacy of the limited resumption of the Arctic Council and stated that it will continue collaboration with Russia and other Arctic nations in pursuance of its interests.⁸

Present Status

Apart from cooperation between the US Coast Guard and the Russian Border Guard on maritime safety on either side of the Bering Strait,⁹ and enforcement of treaty-

¹ Canada, Finland, Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and the United States.

² Barry Scott Zellen, [“The World Needs the Arctic Council Now More than Ever”](#), *The Barents Observer*, 19 April 2022.

³ [“Nordic Council of Ministers Suspends All Cooperation with Russia”](#), Nordic Co-operation, 3 March 2022.

⁴ BEAC member states include Russia, Finland, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and the European Union.

⁵ [“Commission Suspends Cooperation with Russia on Research and Innovation”](#), European Commission, 4 March 2022; [“Statements regarding Barents Euro-Arctic Cooperation”](#), The Barents Euro-Arctic Council, 4 March 2022.

⁶ [“Guidance on Scientific and Technological Cooperation with the Russian Federation for U.S. Government and U.S. Government Affiliated Organizations”](#), The White House, 11 June 2022.

⁷ [“Joint Statement on Limited Resumption of Arctic Council Cooperation”](#), Global Affairs Canada, Government of Canada, 8 June 2022.

⁸ Melody Schreiber, [“China Will Not Recognize an Arctic Council without Russia, Envoy Says”](#), *ArcticToday*, 17 October 2022.

⁹ Yereth Rosen, [“Despite Ukraine War, US and Russia Continue Emergency Cooperation in the Bering Strait”](#), *ArcticToday*, 11 April 2022.

based commitments such as the ban on fishing in the Central Arctic Ocean¹⁰ and aeronautical and maritime search and rescue in the Arctic,¹¹ there is a complete lack of engagement between Russia and the West in the Arctic. Much of the research and data sharing between scientists has been put on hold due to restrictions imposed by funding agencies in Europe and the US. Several field experiments originally planned for the region have shifted to the North American or European Arctic.

The curbs have led to cutting off data on permafrost research from Russia, a key source of information for climate models that help researchers to predict future warming.¹² The suspension is despite the existence (since 2018) of a legally binding *Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation* between the eight Arctic Council members,¹³ whose sole purpose is to enhance cooperation in Scientific Activities towards the development of scientific knowledge about the Arctic.

The Ukraine conflict has resulted in the cessation of funding for dozens of international scientists at Russia's Science Station in Siberia, studying climate change in the Arctic environment since 2000. These scientists maintain instruments that measure how quickly climate change is thawing the Arctic permafrost and how much methane is being released. This is likely to lead to interruption of the continuous measurements at the station since 2013 and will compromise scientists' understanding of the warming trend in the Arctic. Also, since two-thirds of the permafrost region is in Russia, cessation of engagement will cut off our understanding of global changes to permafrost.¹⁴

A leading researcher specialising on climate change and greenhouse gases having vast experience in the Arctic as well as the Antarctic has noted that scientists' access to field sites has been cut, thereby preventing 'ground truthing' of data, inability of maintaining data quality (protocols) and loss of data sharing, all of which are leading to an 'environmental emergency'.¹⁵

As an unintended consequence of the suspension of scientific cooperation in the Arctic, the Arctic research of the five Asian Observer countries—India, China, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore—also stands affected. This is because, as per the rules for the Observer States, their engagement in the Arctic Council is primarily at the level of Working Groups and they can only propose projects through an Arctic State

¹⁰ Melody Schreiber, "[A Long-awaited Central Arctic Ocean Commercial Fishing Ban Takes Effect](#)", *ArcticToday*, 25 June 2021.

¹¹ "[Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic](#)", Arctic Council, 2011.

¹² "[For the Climate's Sake, Keep Arctic Communication Open](#)", *Nature*, 20 July 2022.

¹³ "[Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation](#)", Arctic Council.

¹⁴ Gloria Dickie and Dasha Afanasieva, "[Ukraine Conflict Hurts Russian Science, as West Pulls Funding](#)", *Reuters*, 11 April 2022.

¹⁵ Author's interaction with Prof. Jérôme Chappellaz, Professor at EPFL and Director of Research at CNRS, France, on 23 January 2023.

or a Permanent Participant.¹⁶ With the freeze in AC affairs, these countries will have to significantly scale down their Arctic research through the AC Working Groups and rely solely on bilateral partnerships with the Arctic countries.

Arctic and Climate Change

In 2013, UN Secretary-General Ban ki-Moon warned that the “the Arctic is a bellwether. The risks there should warn our whole world”.¹⁷ In a seminar in Svalbard, Norway, on 9 and 10 May 2017, the Norwegian Minister of Climate and Environment cautioned that “What happens in the Arctic, does not stay in the Arctic”, while flagging the Arctic warming, likely to have disastrous consequences worldwide.¹⁸ Although it has been known for some time that the Arctic is warming faster than the rest of the world, new studies show that the Arctic is heating four times faster than other parts of Earth.¹⁹ The two direct fallouts of accelerated Arctic warming are sea-level rise and the thawing of permafrost.

From 1971 till 2019, the Arctic snow cover and the extent of Arctic Sea ice have shrunk by 21 per cent and 43 per cent respectively, and all regions of the Arctic experienced a net loss of land ice.²⁰ This land ice loss in the Arctic is a major contributor to global sea-level rise.²¹ According to latest estimates, the Arctic will be largely ice-free by the late 2030s, thereby profoundly weakening the Arctic's function as a global cooling system.

A *National Geographic* report states that rising sea levels can have devastating effects on coastal habitats causing destructive erosion, wetland flooding, aquifer and agricultural soil contamination with salt, and lost habitat for fish, birds, and plants.²² It further states that flooding in low-lying coastal areas is forcing people to migrate to higher ground, and millions more are vulnerable to flood risk and other climate change effects. Since 40 per cent of the world's population lives within 100 kilometres of the coastline,²³ the rising sea levels are expected to flood hundreds of cities worldwide.

Cognizant of the increasing and “unthinkable” risks of rising seas to billions around the world, on 14 February 2023, the UN Security Council held its first-ever debate

¹⁶ [“Arctic Council Observers”](#), Arctic Council.

¹⁷ [“Secretary-General, in Video Message to Arctic Circle Assembly, Welcomes Dialogue Towards Long-Term Goals of Sustainable Development”](#), United Nations, 12 October 2013.

¹⁸ [“‘What Happens in the Arctic, Does Not Stay in the Arctic’ - Climate Change in the Arctic Will Have Global Consequences and Cannot Be Ignored”](#), NATO Parliamentary Assembly, 17 May 2017.

¹⁹ Emilee Speck, [“‘A Bellwether for Climate Change: Arctic Warming 4 Times Faster than the Rest of the World, Study Shows’](#), Fox Weather, 12 August 2022.

²⁰ [“Life in One of the Fastest-Warming Places on Earth”](#), Arctic Council, 10 May 2021.

²¹ [“Arctic Climate Change Update 2021: Key Trends and Impacts”](#), Report, Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme, 2021.

²² [“Sea Level Rise, Explained”](#), *National Geographic*, 16 February 2022.

²³ [“Percentage of Total Population Living in Coastal Areas”](#), United Nations, 2021.

on the phenomenon's global implications.²⁴ Speaking on the debate, the UN Secretary-General described sea level rise as a threat multiplier which is “creating new sources of instability and conflict” and warned that the danger was “especially acute for some 900 million people living in coastal zones at low elevations—one out of every ten people on earth”.²⁵

As permafrost melts or degrades, it emits methane and carbon dioxide. Methane's impact on climate change is 25 times greater than carbon dioxide over 100 years. While the Arctic was previously considered a carbon sink, it has now emerged that largely due to permafrost thaw, the region is emitting more carbon than it is absorbing. With estimates that the world's permafrost contains up to 1,700 billion tonnes of carbon, almost double the amount of carbon in the Earth's atmosphere, its complete degradation would lead to catastrophic consequences all over the world.²⁶

Impact of Suspension in Scientific Engagement

An article in *High North News*, lamenting the stoppage of scientific collaboration in the Arctic, remarked that “the people in the North are living with climate changes that do not take breaks, even though the cooperation with Russian scientists has done so”.²⁷ The breakdown in scientific engagement also presents a practical problem, given that Russia stretches over 53 per cent of the Arctic Ocean coastline and its Arctic population accounts for nearly half of the population living in the Arctic worldwide.²⁸ Even in terms of natural resources and hydrocarbon reserves in the Arctic, Russia accounts for more than the rest of the Arctic states put together. In 2007, Russian reserves of natural gas made up about 81 per cent of the total reserves of the Arctic states.²⁹ Russia, therefore, is a major stakeholder and difficult to ignore, as far as the Arctic is concerned.

According to Professor Valery Konyshev³⁰, a leading expert on the Arctic and Professor of International Relations at Saint-Petersburg State University, Russia, it is necessary to accumulate data persistently from sensors distributed throughout the Arctic for the study of:

- * Conditions, dynamics and consequences of permafrost thawing;
- * Dynamics of ice melting in the Arctic seas;

²⁴ [“Sea Level Rise Poses ‘Unthinkable’ Risks for the Planet, Security Council Hears”](#), *UN News*, 14 February 2023.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Alina Bykova, [“Permafrost Thaw in a Warming World: The Arctic Institute’s Permafrost Series Fall-Winter 2020”](#), The Arctic Institute, 1 October 2020.

²⁷ Trine Jonassen, [“Important Arctic Research Could Be Lost in the Wake of Russia's War”](#), *High North News*, 26 August 2022.

²⁸ [“The Russian Federation”](#), Arctic Council.

²⁹ Arnfinn Jørgensen-Dahl, [“Arctic Oil and Gas”](#), ARCTIS, 2010.

³⁰ Author's interaction on 15 February 2023.

- * Acidification of the Arctic Ocean and its consequences;
- * Monitoring weather conditions and weather forecasting;
- * Loss of biodiversity in the Arctic;
- * Degradation of environmental conditions for indigenous peoples.

He avers that without continuously updated data from all across the Arctic, it is impossible to create climate change mathematical models that predict consequences for the environment, as well as further global changes. The data is also needed to study the mechanism of unpredictable consequences of climate change in the Arctic in distant lands, especially in non-Arctic states.

Prof. Konyshv also considers international Arctic scientific cooperation necessary for the development of geo-engineering methods such as for reflecting solar energy ('solar geo-engineering') and reducing the concentration of carbon in the atmosphere, to counteract negative climate change and enhance living conditions and economic activity. He states that it is fundamentally impossible to achieve this without a coordinated policy of states in the region and without which it would lead to catastrophic outcomes. Reiterating that exclusion of Russia from the scientific research in the Arctic is irrational and not in the long-term interests of both the Arctic and non-Arctic states, he calls for joint international efforts to strive for resumption of scientific exchange in the region.

India and the Arctic

The relevance of the Arctic for India can be broadly explained under three categories: Scientific Research, Climate Change and Environment; Economic and Human Resources; and Geopolitical and Strategic reasons.

The Arctic and the Himalayas, though geographically distant, are interconnected and share similar concerns. The Arctic meltdown is helping the Indian scientific community to better understand the glacial melt in the Himalayas, which has often been referred to as the 'third pole' and has the largest freshwater reserves after the North and South Poles. They are also the source of the main rivers in India, including the Ganga and Brahmaputra, the basins of which support a population of about 600 million and 177 million respectively³¹ and generate over 40 per cent of India's GDP.³² The study of the Arctic is therefore critical to Indian scientists and it is for this reason that India is the only developing country, apart from China, to have a permanent

³¹ "[Brahmaputra Basin](#)", Report, Ministry of Water Resources, Government of India, March 2014, p. 4.

³² "[Assessment of Water Quality and Sediment to Understand the Special Properties of River Ganga](#)", NMCG-NEERI Ganga Report, National Mission for Clean Ganga, p. 15.

research station in the Arctic since 2008.³³ India has undertaken 13 scientific expeditions to the Arctic since 2007.³⁴

The changes occurring in the Arctic are yet to be understood fully, but apart from affecting global weather, climate, and ecosystems, they also influence the monsoons in India.³⁵ During the southwest monsoon season of June to September, India receives nearly 80 per cent of its annual precipitation. India's agriculture, which is the primary source of livelihood for about 58 per cent of India's population and contributes around 20 per cent to the GDP,³⁶ is directly dependent on the monsoons. Therefore, a deficient monsoon can have a significant negative impact on India's economy as well as other human and development indices.

The rising sea levels can have a significant impact not only on India's 1,300 island territories and maritime features and the welfare of 1.3 billion Indians, but also in India's immediate neighbourhood.³⁷ It has been estimated that by 2100, if sea levels rise to the projected 80 cm or higher, it could necessitate the relocation of up to 30 million people in countries like Bangladesh.³⁸ To put it in perspective, this is three times the 10 million refugees that fled to India before the 1971 war. The most obvious country of refuge would be India. The burden on India because of such a large-scale rising sea level-induced influx would be nothing short of catastrophic. The underwater meeting held by the Maldivian cabinet in 2009 to flag the nation's existential threat over rising sea levels is all too vivid in the collective public memory. India would again be the first port of call for the displaced Maldivians.

There are also some good consequences arising out of global warming induced changes in the Arctic. The warming Arctic is leading to increased availability and accessibility of resources. The Arctic has the potential to secure India's energy and rare earth mineral deficiencies. For India, geopolitically, the Arctic is of special significance as its two most significant strategic partners, the United States and Russia, and its principal adversary, China, are locked in an ever-increasing direct strategic contestation. While India has adroitly balanced the geo-political and geo-economic ramifications arising out of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, it needs to remain engaged in the Arctic region, to secure its increasing national interests.

³³ [“India in Arctic”](#), National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India.

³⁴ [“Polar Science and Cryosphere Research \(PACER\)”](#), Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India.

³⁵ [“Arctic Climate Change Update 2021: Key Trends and Impacts”](#), Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP), Arctic Council.

³⁶ [“Contribution of Agriculture Sector towards GDP”](#), Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Government of India, 3 August 2021.

³⁷ [“India's Arctic Policy-Building a Partnership for Sustainable Development”](#), Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India, March 2022, Article 1.1.3.

³⁸ Babul Hussain et al., [“Climate Change Induced Human Displacement in Bangladesh: Implications on the Livelihood of Displaced Riverine Island Dwellers and Their Adaptation Strategies”](#), *Frontiers in Psychology*, Vol. 13, 2022.

India's Arctic Policy—Building a Partnership for Sustainable Development' was released on 17 March 2022, and is based on six pillars, three of which are Science and Research, Climate and Environmental Protection, and Governance and International Cooperation.³⁹ These pillars are relevant for India to strive for the resumption of scientific exchange in the Arctic. India's focus on cryosphere research has assisted in increasing the understanding of the Arctic. India's arctic research includes atmospheric, biological, marine, and glaciological studies.⁴⁰ Over 25 institutes and universities in India are currently involved in Arctic research.⁴¹

Possible role for G20 and India as a Mediator

The resumption of scientific exchange is an imperative that can be ignored only at the cost of collective detriment to the world. Since there is a deep trust deficit in the Arctic, the resumption of scientific exchanges will need a mediator with legitimacy, credibility, and acceptability of all member states. It will also require the platform of a multilateral mechanism that has representation from not only the Arctic states but the world at large. No other country and organisation other than India and G20 fit the bill.

Promotion of security and stability in the Arctic region and pursuit of international cooperation and partnerships with all stakeholders in the region, *inter alia* are listed as objectives in India's Arctic Policy.⁴² Most importantly, in keeping with India's civilisational ethos of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam—The World Is But One Family*, India offers its readiness to 'play its part and contribute to the global good'⁴³ in its engagement with the Arctic. The resumption of scientific cooperation in the Arctic is one such global good that India could strive for, by bringing together the conflicting protagonists.

The theme of India's G20 presidency encapsulates the idea that the world is one family—*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* or 'One Earth-One Family-One Future'. Essentially, the theme affirms the value of all life—human, animal, plant, and micro-organisms—and their interconnectedness on the planet Earth and in the wider universe.⁴⁴

The theme also spotlights LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment), with its associated, environmentally sustainable, and responsible choices, both at the level of individual lifestyles as well as national development, leading to globally transformative actions

³⁹ "[India's Arctic Policy—Building a Partnership for Sustainable Development](#)", no. 37, Article 1.3.

⁴⁰ "[Polar Science and Cryosphere Research \(PACER\)](#)", no. 34.

⁴¹ "[India's Arctic Policy—Building a Partnership for Sustainable Development](#)", no. 37, Article 1.25.

⁴² *Ibid.*, Articles 6.08 and 6.09.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, Article 8.02.

⁴⁴ "[Logo & Theme](#)", *g20.org*.

resulting in a cleaner, greener and bluer future.⁴⁵ Speaking on assuming G20 Presidency, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, emphasised that the greatest challenges we face, *inter alia*, climate change, “*can be solved not by fighting each other, but only by acting together*” (emphasis by author).⁴⁶ He also stated that India's priority during the presidency would focus on healing our 'One Earth', creating harmony within our 'One Family' and giving hope for our 'One Future'.⁴⁷ The themes of India's Arctic Policy as well as its G20 presidency, therefore, are closely aligned.

Climate change is a key priority for India's G20 Presidency.⁴⁸ Arctic being the bellwether for global climate change and undergoing accelerated warming, is therefore, a perfect fit for India to strive towards resumption of scientific exchange. India's G20 priority is also to press for 'reformed multilateralism' towards creating more accountable, inclusive, just, equitable and representative multipolar international system fit for addressing the 21st century challenges. The resumption of engagement in the Arctic would be the perfect low-hanging fruit that could be obtained by India's leadership of the multilateral G20 mechanism.

The G20, set up in 1999, is the premier intergovernmental forum for international economic cooperation that plays an important role in shaping and strengthening global architecture and governance. The G20 members represent around 85 per cent of the global GDP, over 75 per cent of the global trade, and about two-thirds of the world's population.⁴⁹ Even though the G20 members mainly discuss economic and financial matters and coordinate policy on some other issues of mutual interest, they have invariably deliberated on other issues as well, such as the Iranian nuclear issue at the 2009 summit, Syria at the 2017 summit and the Russia-Ukraine conflict at the 2022 summit.⁵⁰

As far as the Arctic is concerned, the G20 is extremely relevant. Eleven of the 19 G20 member countries, representing a majority 60 per cent of the forum, have an Arctic stake, with three of them—the United States, Russia and Canada, being permanent members of the Arctic Council. Eight G20 countries—China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, South Korea and the United Kingdom—are Observers at the Arctic Council. Further, three other Arctic Council members (Denmark, Finland, and Sweden) and two Observers (Spain and Poland) are also represented at the G20 by the virtue of their European Union membership and EU being a G20 member. Thus,

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ “[G-20 and India's Presidency](#)”, Press Information Bureau, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 9 December 2022.

⁴⁹ “[About G20](#)”, [g20.org](#).

⁵⁰ McBride, Siripurapu, and Berman, “[What Does the G20 Do?](#)”, Council on Foreign Relations, 15 December 2022.

six of the eight Arctic Council Permanent Members and 12 of the 13 Observers are represented at the G20 (see table below).

Arctic Council Members	G 20 Representation	Arctic Council Observers	G 20 Representation
USA	Member	India	Member
Russia	Member	France	Member
Canada	Member	Germany	Member
Denmark	Represented through European Union	Italy	Member
Finland		Japan	Member
Sweden		China	Member
Norway	-	South Korea	Member
Iceland	-	United Kingdom	Member
		Poland	EU Member
		Netherlands	EU Member & Guest Country
		Spain	EU Member & Guest Country
		Singapore	Guest Country
		Switzerland	-

G20 agenda, *inter alia*, includes climate change, sustainable development, and the environment,⁵¹ all of which are under threat due to the cessation of scientific engagement in the Arctic. The G20 also represents a rare platform where engagement between Russia and the West has not ceased as yet. The G20 Presidency steers the agenda for one year and hosts the Summit, the mechanism consisting of two parallel tracks: the Finance Track and the Sherpa Track.⁵² Within the two tracks, there are thematically oriented working groups in which representatives from the relevant ministries of the member countries as well as from invited/guest countries and various international organisations participate.⁵³ The Sherpas of member countries are personal emissaries of the Leaders of the member states.⁵⁴ Under the Sherpa Track, there are 13 Working Groups (WG) and two Initiatives, to discuss priorities and provide recommendations.⁵⁵ *Environment* and *Climate Sustainability* are two

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² “[G 20](#)”, *india.gov.in*.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ “[Working Groups, Sherpa Track](#)”, *g20.org*.

such WGs that focus on environmental and climate issues and ways to mitigate and adapt to climate change.⁵⁶

Additionally, there are Engagement Groups (EGs) that bring together civil societies, parliamentarians, think tanks, women, youth, labour, businesses, and researchers of the G20 countries.⁵⁷ These groups, comprising non-government participants, provide recommendations to the G20 Leaders and contribute to the policy-making process.⁵⁸ The 11 EGs, *inter alia* include⁵⁹ Science20 (S20) that presents policy-makers with consensus-based science-driven recommendations formulated through task forces comprising international experts⁶⁰ and Think20 (T20) which serves as an “idea bank” for the G20 by bringing together think tanks and high-level experts to discuss relevant international socio-economic issues.⁶¹ T20 recommendations are synthesized into policy briefs and presented to G20 working groups, ministerial meetings, and leaders' summits to help the G20 deliver concrete policy measures.

Since the immediate resumption of scientific engagement in the Arctic is the need of the hour, the Sherpa Track can be used to expeditiously revive scientific engagement in the Arctic. The S20 and the T20 EGs could be used for driving the longer reconciliation process in the Arctic Council.

Conclusion

The Arctic is no longer the distant and cold region that it was once considered. It stands at the crossroads of several issues with global consequences such as climate change, increased accessibility and availability of resources, and an arena of global strategic contestation, that has made the region increasingly relevant to the world. As such, the stakes of a large portion of humanity cannot be decided by a select few. The suspension of the dialogue and scientific exchange in the Arctic is driven by a deep distrust that needs to be overcome by a mutually acceptable interlocutor. India's theme of G20 presidency resonates strongly with the Arctic and its impact on the world. The resumption of scientific exchange is an easy deliverable with global benefits, that India, which has the legitimacy, credibility, and relevance, should use its G20 presidency to strive for.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ “[G 20](#)”, no. 52.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ “[Engagement Groups](#)”, [g20.org](#).

⁶⁰ “[S20: Science 2023 India](#)”, [s20india.org](#).

⁶¹ “[T20: Think 20 India](#)”, [t20ind.org](#).

About the Authors



Capt Anurag Bisen (IN) is Research Fellow at Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi.

Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses is a non-partisan, autonomous body dedicated to objective research and policy relevant studies on all aspects of defence and security. Its mission is to promote national and international security through the generation and dissemination of knowledge on defence and security-related issues.

Disclaimer: Views expressed in Manohar Parrikar IDSA's publications and on its website are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Manohar Parrikar IDSA or the Government of India.

© Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA) 2023