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**Climate Change  
and Arctic Sustainable Development :  
scientific, social, cultural and educational challenges**

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## **ABSTRACT: BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES**

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### **Impending Social Changes in Arctic:**

#### **Providence, Thoughtfulness, and Shared Responsibility**

The global climate change has intensified the issues of sustainable development of the Arctic. However the progressive deterioration of the environmental situation in this vulnerable region had started long before the problem of global climate change was placed on the agenda. Regarding the unavoidable results of global climate change we have become concerned with possible transformation of landscapes, disturbance of permafrost, deforestation of vast territories; but most of these changes are the collateral outcome of aggressive and ethically irresponsible industrial activities, which are predacious towards nature and destructive towards traditional social space and indigenous cultural environments. Global climate change has worsened these tendencies.

It is most likely that global climate change will determine radical environmental and social changes, deep modification in sacral and historically significant places for indigenous peoples, and the disappearance or migration of their traditional settlements. Under these conditions the process of adaptation may appear extremely hard and painful, especially if it becomes associated with the probably inevitable transformation of more or less traditional societies into modern and postmodern societies, which the indigenous people have always been trying to avoid. In this respect particular long-term programmes for conservation and preservation of the cultural and historical heritage of indigenous peoples as an integral part of global cultural diversity and their education for their future needs should be developed.

The urgent tasks to mitigate and adapt to climate change require alteration in policy-making to avoid unacceptable environmental, economic, social, and cultural effects. The procedures of decision making should become transparent to the public, including indigenous populations. All business projects should pass environmental standards and be ethically verified according to such basic principles as precaution, non-harm, human rights, compensatory justice, care, and shared responsibility.

### **Recommendations:**

- To stimulate national governments and corporations to develop programmes on the

reduction of industrial pressure on nature to mitigate environmental deterioration in the Arctic.

- To call national governments, corporations, and local communities in the Arctic to develop social infrastructure in forms and modes that are supportive to indigenous cultural traditions.
- To stimulate national governments and corporations to compensate the harm caused to indigenous people by industrial development and climate change through affirmative plans, education and support programmes.
- To encourage UNESCO to facilitate the academic community's intellectual and scientific support of efforts to improve the environmental, social, and cultural situation in Arctic.