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IDENTIFYING REGIONAL AND CIRCUMPOLAR ARCTIC COASTAL RESEARCH PRIORITIES

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As a consequence of climate change, changing demographics, resource shifts and extraction, and globalization, northern coastal zones are rapidly changing social-ecological systems. There is an urgent need to support formal and informal adaptation processes in ways that address the local priorities of coastal communities in the Arctic, while simultaneously addressing larger-scale issues of social-ecological change. The Circumpolar Arctic Coastal Communities Observatory Network (CACCON), following best practices in co-design, will work with governments, industries, communities, and researchers to collaborate in the identification of key research questions relevant to specific global, regional and community situations. Our starting point for this process is the existing web of community-engaged, multi-faceted, and integrative coastal observatories and knowledge hubs, represented by CACCON nodes in northwestern Russia and Chukotka (Russian Federation), Finnmark (Norway), Greenland, Alaska (USA), and Canada (Fig. 1). Through a collaborative process, research priorities from network hubs will be compiled and shared across the network. Direct community-to-community interaction creates key relationships and knowledge between local leaders and residents who are dealing with similar issues. It empowers communities with information to move forward with insights others have shared and with evidence on which to base decisions about future development.

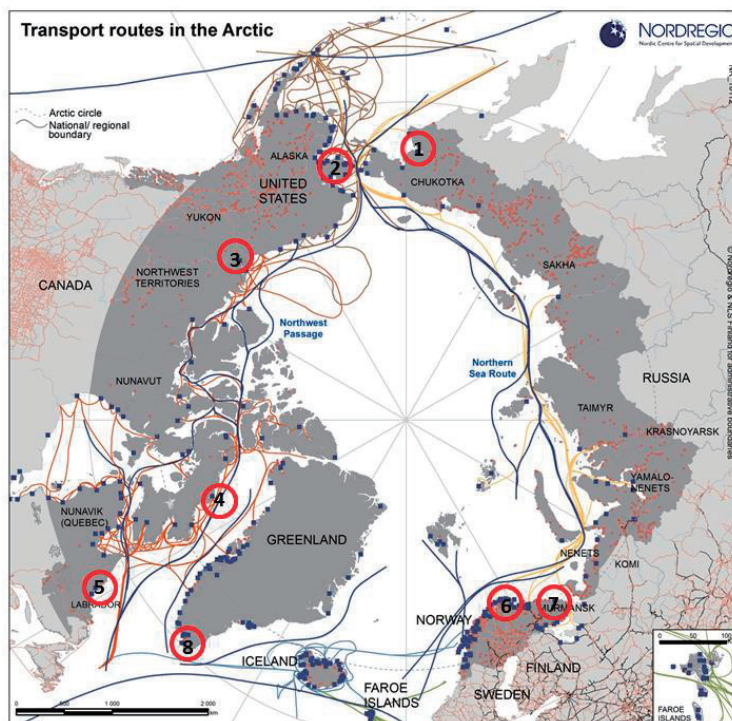


Figure 1. The circumpolar Arctic coastal zone, showing proposed initial CACCON network sites: 1–Lorino, Chukotka, Russian Federation; 2–Shishmaref, Alaska, USA; 3–Yukon and Northwest Territories, Canada; 4–Clyde River, Nunavut, Canada; 5–Nunatsiavut, Canada; 6–Unjárgga/Nesseby, Finnmark, Norway; 7–Murmansk, Murmansk District, Russian Federation; 8–Kujalleq, South Greenland. Arviat, Hudson Bay (Nunavut, Canada) not labeled.