**ICE LAW Project – Final Conference**

**25-27 April 2019**

**Durham, UK**

The ICE LAW Project held its final conference on 25-27 April 2019 in Durham, UK, in conjunction with the first annual summer school organised by the Durham Arctic Research Centre for Training and Interdisciplinary Collaboration (DurhamARCTIC). The conference featured four invited keynote lectures, three paper sessions, and a roundtable discussion where leaders of each of the ICE LAW Project’s five subprojects reflected on lessons learned from the Project’s experiment in interdisciplinary/international collaboration as well as discussing ongoing projects that would build on networks formed during the grant period. The full programme can be found at <https://icelawproject.files.wordpress.com/2019/04/final-schedule-revised.pdf>.

In the first keynote lecture, Bruce Forbes (University of Lapland, Finland) drew on his research in Finland and Russia to stress the complex interrelations between social, climatological, and biological systems. He stressed that simplistic explanations of “overgrazing” or “climate change” fail to identify either the threats to Arctic ecologies or communities’ resilience. This theme was extended by keynoter Chris Burn (Carleton University, Canada), who discussed the problems of translating these complex interdependencies onto regulatory systems that seek to identify single causes and predictable outcomes. He thus concluded by emphasising the need to integrate indigenous and local perspectives into Arctic research, not just to incorporate “stakeholders” into research practice but to develop findings that can be translated into practicable and effective policy that is relevant to Arctic peoples.

Problems with making research and activism rooted in non-Arctic systems relevant to Arctic peoples was considered further by Rachael Lorna Johnstone (University of Akureyri, Iceland), who reflected on her career as an activist lawyer and how her decision to work within via legal frameworks has limited the scope of her interventions. The fourth keynote speaker, Michael Bravo (University of Cambridge, United Kingdom) drew on his research on conceptualisations of the North Pole to propose a reorientation of our attitudes toward the Arctic by focusing less on poles – points, destinations – and more on lines – lines of movement but also the dynamic, indeterminate lines of matter and physical state that are at the heart of the ICE LAW Project.

These four keynote lectures were complemented by 13 paper presentations from scholars from Canada, China, Finland, Hong Kong, Italy, Russia, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Presenters included members of the ICE LAW Project leadership team, colleagues who had attended previous workshops, and individuals who were entirely new to the Project. The papers were selected to continuity with the Project’s three years of workshop but also build a momentum that would continue after the formal conclusion of the ICE LAW Project in July 2019.

Transmission of findings to future Arctic research was also promoted through integration with the DurhamARCTIC summer school. The summer school brought in 22 early career researchers from universities in Argentina, Canada, China, Czechia, Finland, Hong Kong, India, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States, who presented posters at the ICE LAW conference as well as contributing to discussion following the paper and keynote presentations. DurhamARCTIC students also participated in the roundtable discussion at the end of the ICE LAW conference, where subproject leaders reflected on the experience of interdisciplinary exploration as well as discussing what the network had learned about the needs for, and implications of, developing a legal framework that acknowledges the complex geophysical environment of the world’s frozen regions.

At the conclusion of the conference, as the DurhamARCTIC students began a two day workshop on science communication and its translation into policy, the ICE LAW Project leadership met to map out two joint-authored articles: a methodological reflection on the experience of interdisciplinary collaboration and an article exploring the implications of a legal system restricting the right to break sea ice.