

Arctic Sustainable Energy Futures Toolkit

There is a growing need for Arctic communities, working closely with regional governments and utilities, to play a substantive part in the energy planning process in their respective areas. The Arctic Sustainable Energy Futures Toolkit will bring together the essential resources that enable communities to develop and champion their own energy plans.

The Arctic Sustainable Energy Futures Toolkit will be a print and web-based guide to assist communities in developing their own energy plans – to improve energy efficiency and reduce electricity consumption at a community level. This step-by-step toolkit will share best practices, resource guides, case studies, videos, templates, and pathways from across the Arctic. This knowledge transfer will help communities create and implement their energy visions. The Toolkit will also provide resources to increase energy literacy and capacity for community members.

Through the Arctic Energy Futures Toolkit, communities will be able to:



Increase energy literacy and engagement around energy infrastructure, energy efficiency and conservation, and clean energy opportunities (both small- and utility-scale projects);



Understand the impacts of diesel power reliance on social conditions, the environment, and economic development in their regions;



Examine lessons learned from communities across the Arctic;



Examine short and medium-term energy demand trends and requirements in their region;



Identify options for energy demand reduction; and



Create and implement a community energy plans.

In developing the Toolkit, the project team will follow an open and transparent process. They will engage and incorporate feedback from multiple stakeholder groups including: Member States and Permanent Participants, communities, utilities, energy subject matter experts, and others.

BACKGROUND

The need for resources like the Toolkit has been documented by independent studies. For example, in their study, *Developing Renewable Energy in Arctic and Sub-Arctic Regions and Communities*, the Fullbright Arctic Initiative Group highlighted the importance of creating “opportunities for knowledge sharing and development of core competencies at the local level in the clean energy sector.” However, they found that, “developing the human capacity can be a significant challenge for communities across the Circumpolar North.”

The Arctic Sustainable Energy Futures Toolkit will provide the needed fundamental knowledge and core competencies around clean energy so that they may develop their own community energy plans and visions. It will equip communities with the information they need to effectively collaborate with regional governments and utilities, and successfully manage relationships with interested proponents. In all, the Toolkit will enable communities to be leaders in the clean energy future of the Arctic.

NEXT STEPS

Gwich'in Council International (GCI) has received funding from the Circumpolar Affairs Directorate at Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada to conduct the preliminary research, obtain stakeholder input, and develop a prototype print version of the toolkit. GCI currently is seeking additional funding to develop complimentary online resources, disseminate the tool to communities, and test them in select communities.

There is a strong preference to pursue this project under the auspices of the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) of the Arctic Council. GCI is pleased to say that the Government of Canada has joined as a co-lead. GCI is working to secure a second Member State co-lead to facilitate the project being taken under the SDWG banner and is in active discussion with several potential co-leads.

The Toolkit will benefit communities throughout the Arctic, as they shift their energy mix from expensive diesel/coal power generation (such as is the case in Alaska, Canada, Russia, Svalbard, and Greenland) towards cleaner sources of energy. Should SDWG approval not be forthcoming, however, GCI is prepared to proceed with either bilateral or multilateral partnerships with specific entities who are interested in taking part.

We are also seeking communities who are undertaking energy planning processes that may be interested in testing the Toolkit.

INTERESTED IN COLLABORATING?

If you interested in providing input for this project, please contact Grant Sullivan, Executive Director, Gwich'in Council International at GSullivan@gwichin.nt.ca and Eryn Stewart estewart@lumosenenergy.com.



About Gwich'in Council International

Gwich'in Council International (GCI) represents 9,000 Gwich'in in the Northwest Territories, Yukon, and Alaska as a Permanent participant in the Arctic Council. GCI supports Gwich'in by amplifying our voice on sustainable development and the environment at the international level to support resilient and healthy communities.