



Photo credit: Eric Loring

and concerns of people living in the Barents region, in fostering ties across borders, and in developing projects that have direct advantage to the region. The Regional Council serves as a forum for discussion of matters of particular interest to Indigenous peoples. There is a similarity between the sectoral focus of Canadian circumpolar interests and those of the Barents Council.

TAKING STOCK: EMERGING ISSUES INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

The 1999 report of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development identified some successes and a number of ongoing challenges for the Government of Canada. A special study report on the Canadian Arctic was included to provide an overview of certain international environmental issues affecting the Canadian North and to identify lessons learned from the implementation of international environmental agreements and programs affecting the Canadian Arctic that could be applied to other areas.

The report took a regional perspective, focused on the Government of Canada's implementation efforts under four international agreements and programs directly relevant to the Canadian Arctic.

These agreements fit into two categories: protection of wildlife and their habitat (the International Agreement on the Conservation of

"Environmental and ecological systems in the Arctic are major contributors to global processes and the balance of life on Earth. Acting as a global climate regulator, they cool the air and absorb the heat transported north from the tropics by air and ocean currents. They also play a role in ensuring the circulation of warm and cold waters between northern and southern regions of the globe. The integrated nature of these global processes means that the Earth's climate and living systems would change if the Arctic's existing capacity to regulate temperature were altered."

—Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, 1999 Report, para. 6.8