Model Arctic Council for sustainable development

Third UArctic Congress

Iceland
17th May 2021
MAC is experiential learning event at which pupils or students simulate real-world Arctic Council

NORMAC Senior Arctic Officials Meeting (Norwich, UK, March 2019)

Arctic Council Senior Arctic Officials Meeting (Rovaniemi, Finland, November 2018)

Source: Polar Aspect; Arctic Council (right image)
Since 2016, I’ve designed and run numerous MACs for schools and universities, in person and online.

- **MACBILBAO**
  Colegio Ayalde, Spain

- **NORMAC**
  Norwich School, UK

- **NORMAC UNIVERSITY**
  Trent University, Canada & University of East Anglia, UK

- **OMAC**
  Online, worldwide (including delegate training)

- **GEOG MAC**
  Trent University, Canada (online course-based MACs)

- **WYCOMAC**
  Wycombe Abbey, UK

- **TRYKOMAC**
  Trent University, Canada & Yukon University, Canada

Source: Polar Aspect

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Polar Aspect MACs have thus far engaged hundreds of pupils and students from many home countries.

Raising awareness of Arctic region, peoples and challenges amongst youth around world

Source: Polar Aspect

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Pedagogical research shows diplomatic simulations such as MAC deliver valuable educational benefits

- Significant and better-retained learning
- Teaching tailored to variety of learning styles
- Improved independent learning skills
- Cooperative learning and co-creation of knowledge
- Improved communication and interpersonal skills
- Understanding of ambiguities and power dynamics of IR
- Appreciation of diverse or conflicting perspectives and beliefs
- Enjoyable, motivating and empowering learning

Source: Polar Aspect
MUN Impact is a global community that believes in the power of Model United Nations to inform, inspire, and motivate its participants to action in support of the Sustainable Development Goals.

As a community we will:

- Be a hub for sharing stories of impactful MUN activities, best practices, and ways to support, through action, the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Act as a platform through which the United Nations can engage the MUN community, share information and act as a source of inspiration.
- Deliver experiential learning opportunities for students that are focused on the SDGs and that bring together diverse individuals from around the world.
- Host world-class, student-planned and executed events that allow for further sharing and collaboration around the SDGs.

MAC similarly suited for teaching about and promoting Arctic sustainable development.

Source: MUN Impact (logo and mission statement); UN (SDG graphic); Polar Aspect analysis

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MAC agendas naturally revolve around sustainable development issues

- Rapid climate change
- Vulnerable indigenous cultures
- Limited access to public goods (e.g., education, health care)
- High cost of living
- Poor community infrastructure
- High pollutant concentrations
- Narrowly-based local economies
- Constrained physical and digital connectivity
- Fragile ecosystems
- Dependence on natural resource extraction

Source: Polar Aspect

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By highlighting these issues, MAC banishes notion sustainable development isn’t applicable in Arctic

Look carefully at this ‘photograph’!

Source: Coldimages/iStock.com (left); Greenpeace (right); Polar Aspect analysis
Indeed, MACs serve as general antidote to dubious popular conceptions of Arctic
MAC rule of consensus requires delegates to grapple with tensions in sustainable development

Ottawa Declaration (1996)

‘Decisions of the Arctic Council are to be by consensus of the Members’ (Article 7)

‘It is the need for consensus (not just a majority) that makes it truly special’ – Teacher

Source: Stephanie McMillan/Cartoon Movement (left image); Arctic Council (right image and text); Polar Aspect analysis

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MACs foreground Arctic Indigenous perspectives on sustainable development and relations to land

Potential multiplicities of meaning of Arctic sustainable development only understood through cultural lens

Source: Mats Nyvolds/Sermitsiaq (left image); Hamlet of Clyde River/Greenpeace (right image); Polar Aspect analysis

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1. Education, sustainable development and the Arctic

2. The educational value of diplomatic simulations

3. The educational benefits of Model United Nations

4. Model United Nations and sustainable development

5. Model Arctic Council and sustainable development

6. Effective educational use of Model Arctic Council

7. Coda: From Model League of Nations to Model Arctic Council

...in D Hirshberg (ed), *The Role of Education in Sustainable Development in the Arctic*, Springer
Finally, please don’t hesitate to be in touch if you’d like to sponsor, host or take part in Polar Aspect MAC

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- Adjunct Professor of Canadian Studies at Trent University (Canada)
- Managing Director of UArctic Læra Institute for Circumpolar Education
- Teacher of PPE and Geography at Norwich School (UK)
- Former civil servant with Government of Nunavut in Canadian Arctic
- Passionate about Arctic education and Arctic ‘philosophical geography’

I’d be delighted to hear from you!

Source: Polar Aspect
Thank you / Ḍakka ykkur fyrir

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