



Czech Republic
Arctic Council Observer
Candidate

Czechia on Its Way to Achieving
Arctic Council Observer Status

Working Together for a Sustainable Arctic



Czech field research station "Nostoc"
in Petunia Bay (Svalbard)



Czech research station "Julius Payer House"
at Longyearbyen (Svalbard)

Czech Science in the Arctic

- Czechia has a long tradition of involvement in Arctic research.
- From the 1960s-1980s, a number of Czechoslovak scientific expeditions to the Arctic were organized and successfully completed.
- Since 1989, the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice has been involved in supporting ongoing Arctic research activities.
- Czechia has been operating its own Arctic Research "Josef Svoboda Station" in Svalbard since 2015 and wishes to present the results of its work at international scene and for the benefit of Arctic science.
- Czechia publishes "Czech Polar Reports", a semi-annual international journal of original research papers related to the polar regions.

Czechia's Contributions to International Arctic Research Activities

- Since 2012, Czechia has been participating in the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) providing advice to the Arctic Council.
- Czech experts participate in UArctic, FARO, APECS, ISIRA, NSF, Arctic-FROST Network, IARPC, INTERACT, EU-PolarNet, etc.
- The University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice regularly organizes Polar Ecology Conferences (2012, 2014, 2016 and 2020).
- Masaryk University in Brno regularly hosts Students in Polar and Alpine Research Conferences and annual workshops on biosciences in polar and Alpine research.



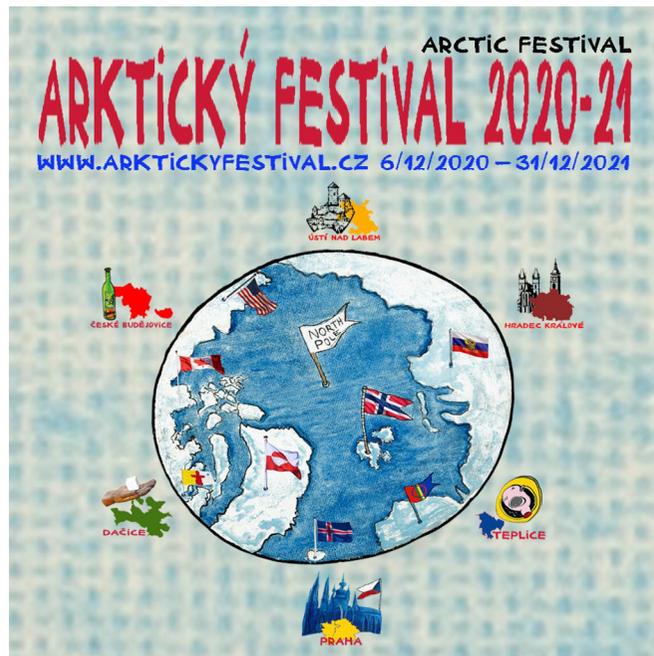
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Ecological research at Josef Svoboda Station

Working with and for Indigenous People

- Czechia conducts numerous educational and cultural activities focused on raising the public's awareness of the indigenous people of the Arctic. Czechia has a long tradition of translating the original literature of these indigenous cultures into Czech.
- Czechia hosts a traditional festival of Czech and Arctic science and culture called the Arctic Festival, which features Sámi, Inuit and other Nordic artists to raise the public's awareness of the original cultures of the Arctic.



A rubber boat (zodiac) transports Czech students and scientists in Petunia Bay.

Czechia wants to contribute:

- to Arctic research in climatology, glaciology, geology, geomorphology, hydrology, limnology, microbiology, botany, zoology, parasitology, geophysics, social sciences and international relations;
- to projects of the Arctic Council confronting the challenges faced by local communities including the impact of economic activities on animal migration routes, the impact of marine microplastic debris on food security, the impact of mass tourism on natural habitats and the availability of new biotechnologies to aid in the sustainable development of the Arctic;
- to work on detecting, understanding and minimizing the negative impacts of human-induced climate change in the Arctic;
- to raising the Central European public's awareness of indigenous Arctic cultures;
- to educating the next generations of Arctic scientists and experts.

“The dramatic environmental changes in the Arctic are affecting us all, Arctic as well as non-Arctic countries. It is in the best interest of the Czech Republic to help understand these processes and to minimize the impacts of climate change. The Czech Republic has a long tradition of polar research and I am convinced it can enhance its contribution further in assuming larger than local responsibility.

Irrelative to our geographical position our place is by the side of Arctic states. I strongly believe the Observer Status of the Czech Republic in the Arctic Council would tremendously increase the potential for mutual collaboration between scientists, researchers, universities and other actors.“

Tomáš Petříček
 Minister of Foreign Affairs
 of the Czech Republic

*From the letter to the Arctic Council Secretariat,
 7 December 2020*