



Nieuwsbrief 35

april 2015

Reportages uit Siberië

Gerard Jacobs

Meer dan *vijftien* jaar reisde de journalist Gerard Jacobs door Siberië. Hij zag hoe de Sovjet-Unie ineens stortte en de bewoners van Siberië op de puinhopen van de communistische heilstaat een nieuw bestaan probeerden op te bouwen. Hij publiceerde tussen 1986 en 2005 zijn reportages onder meer in *De Volkskrant* en hij won voor zijn film *Stalin had een brug beloofd* een Gouden Kalf op de Nederlandse filmdagen. Op 20 april blikt hij terug op zijn reizen en vertoont hij fragmenten uit de documentaire *Goud, verloren in Siberië* (regie Theo Uittenbogaard) en *Stalin had een brug beloofd*.

Op verzoek van IMAKA besteedt hij extra aandacht aan de oorspronkelijke bevolking van Siberië die hij op zijn reizen ontmoette: de Khanten, Evenken, Joekagieren, Shorzi. "Wij sterven uit," klaagt een oude Evenk begin jaren negentig in de documentaire 'Goud, verloren in Siberië'.

Is er sindsdien veel veranderd in Siberië? Niet voor de Khanten, de Joekagieren, de Evenken. Officieel is hun status nu beschermd maar in het Rusland van Vladimir Poetin is het lot van de oorspronkelijke bevolking, in een economie die afhankelijk is van de inkomsten van olie en gas en die gedomineerd wordt door 'Robber barons', zo mogelijk nog verslechterd. De Khanten en Evenken, de Shorzi en Joekagieren zijn verder gemarginaliseerd, hun weidegronden zijn verloren gegaan, hun cultuur is verdwenen. Nog slechts een enkeling houdt de tradities en de taal in ere.

Gerard Jacobs was correspondent in o.a. het Midden-Oosten en Afrika, voor *De Volkskrant*, *De Haagse Post* en het *NOS-Journaal*. Sinds 1986 reist hij voornamelijk door Siberië, Indonesië, de Arabische wereld en zuidelijk Afrika. Hij geeft nu les op de School voor de Journalistiek en publiceerde vijf boeken met reisverhalen. Meer informatie over hem:
<http://www.reisverhalengerardjacobs.nl>

Wanneer 20 april 2015

Hoe laat 19:30 uur

Waar Arctisch Centrum, A-weg 30 (ingang Herman Colleniusstraat)

Toegang € 2,00; studenten € 1,00.

Komende Imaka-activiteiten

1 juni 2015: Film “De vergeten held – Sjef van Dongen”

onder auspiciën van IMAKA wordt de film *De vergeten held – Sjef van Dongen* vertoond in Forum Images, Groningen. Zie alvast: http://hatsiekiedee.tv/De_vergeten_held.html ; meer informatie in de volgende Nieuwsbrief.

13 juni 2015: bezoek aan Scheepvaartmuseum Amsterdam

met rondleiding door prof. dr. Joost Schokkenbroek

Literatuur

Leben in Eis

Het dagboek van fysicus Hauke Trinks waarin hij verslag doet van een eenmans-overwintering in 1999 met zijn stalen jacht in Mushamna, Spitsbergen. Gedurende de wintermaanden doet hij onderzoek naar de mogelijkheid dat het leven op aarde oorspronkelijk in het zee-ijs is ontstaan.

Hauke Trinks *Leben im Eis*. National Geographic Adventure Press, 2007. ISBN 978-3-492-40232-3

Overige activiteiten

SEES

Volg de voorbereidingen van deze unieke wetenschappelijke expeditie naar Edgøya, Spitsbergen op www.sees.nl!

Russia plans new floating Arctic Research Station



North Pole-40 was Russia's so far latest floating research station in the Arctic, operational from October 2012 to May 2013.

Amidst Arctic sea ice reaching all-time minimum for late winter, the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources says that Russia plans to establish a floating research station on an ice floe.

Photo: AARI

By Trude Pettersen

According to the Ministry, the floating research station “North Pole-41” is already in the making. “The station will be an important instrument in securing Russian presence in the Arctic, and will give Russia the opportunity to give new priorities to scientific research from the ice,” the Ministry of Natural Resources says, according to RIA Novostie

Russia has had floating research stations in the Arctic since 1937. Normally a station was established on an ice floe in September-October, and some two dozens of scientists would spend the winter there, measuring climate and weather conditions. The researchers and all the needed equipment has usually been brought to the ice by icebreaker, but this year the plan is to drop everything in parachutes from planes, much the same way as the annual Barneo station is established, Sever Post reports.

During the last couple of years, it has become more and more difficult to find ice floes solid enough to hold a station, and last year The Arctic and Antarctic Research Institute recommended stopping using manned stations on ice floes because of the high risks. The last station Russia established in the High North, “North Pole-40”, had to be evacuated in May 2013, because the ice floe the base was placed on, started to break apart. The 16 scientists that had spent the winter on the floe had to be picked up by a nuclear-powered icebreaker sent out from Murmansk. Russia has not had any similar station in the Arctic during the two last winters.

A recent study shows that the ice in the central Arctic Ocean has thinned dramatically over the last 40 years – from 3.59 meters to 1.25 meters between 1975 and 2012.

Russian authorities have earlier announced plans for construction of self-propelled, ice-strengthened floating platform to replace the natural ice floes for future research stations. In 2013 1.7 billion rubles (then €42 million – now €25,8 million) was allocated to this project, but since that, there have been no news about the platform.

Bron: <http://barentsobserver.com/en/arctic/2015/03/russia-plans-new-floating-arctic-research-station-18-03>

Russian Arctic awaiting investments

By Andrey Shalyov

January 24, 2014

Russia taking first steps in development of the Arctic zone.

Last autumn the Russian Government approved large-scale program of social and economic development of the Russian Arctic Zone. It is based on the Arctic Strategy of Russian Federation signed by the President in February last year and 2014 should become the first year of this plan execution. The text of this program is not officially published but it is known that it contains 60 important measures. The specially established working group coincidentally also consisted of 60 experts will once a year make a special report summed up the results of realization of the Arctic Strategy and present it to the President of Russia. The first report was promised to be prepared this week.

New breath for the High North

As it follows from the volumetric text of the Strategy the coming 7 years period is going to become a turning point for the area of 9 million sq. km. and its 2, 5 million inhabitants. The bold and ambitious program calls for realization of a number of huge investments projects in the Arctic Zone. Its authors want to cover the Arctic areas with the global systems of transport, energy, information and communication networks, to establish mechanisms of environmental safety and monitoring, to secure military safety and protection of the state border in the region. The Arctic Strategy of Russia romantically describes how new transport corridors will pierce this huge territory. New oil and gas provinces and hydrocarbon offshore fields will be developed; mining complex, fishing industry, and agricultural sector will be innovatively modernized according to the Strategy. Old sea ports will be renovated and several new and modern ports will be built along the Northern Sea Route. Common telecommunication network will tie all coastal settlements into one "Electronic Arctic". Significant part of the document is devoted to intensive development of international cooperation with neighbouring countries in the Arctic, which is seen as one of the driving forces of the program realization.

List of the lucky

The borders of the Arctic Zone of Russia are not yet legally defined. This is to be soon approved by the deputies of the State Duma. It was expected that the law on the borders of the Arctic zone will be adopted before the end of the last year but Russian parliamentarians decided to postpone it to the next session. As for today the Arctic zone of Russia includes Murmansk oblast, Nenets autonomous okrug, Yamalo-Nenets autonomous okrug, Chukotsky autonomous okrug and part of municipalities of Arkhangelsk oblast, Krasnoyarsky krai and Sakha republic. Probably the list of the arctic territories is not final. Komi republic for example is arguing to include polar city Vorkuta to this sacramental list.

21st century belongs to Siberia

The President surprisingly did not say a word about Arctic program in his annual address to the Federal Council in December last year although the Arctic was one of his favorite topics here, there and everywhere. But in his program speech to Russian parliamentarians Vladimir Putin noted a strong necessity to realize a program of development of Siberia and Far East and stressed that

developing of these vast territories should become a priority of Russia for the whole 21 century. The Government by the way has already adopted the program of development of Siberia and Far East for 2014-2025 and its cost estimated in 10 trillion rubles (\$285 billion). Many experts however pointed out that this program is rather unrealistic and their expectations seem to come true.

Nevertheless when it comes to the federal mega-projects of that kind the geopolitical reflections always prevail over economic values and from this point of view Siberia and Far East could in the eyes of the federal authorities seem even more vulnerable to outer and inner challenges than the Arctic. According to statistics for example the population of eastern territories of Russia is decreasing significantly faster than the northern European areas and the government fears that someday it may be gradually substituted by migrants from the East.

Dramatic ice edge images from northern Barents Sea

Instead of expanding like normally this time of the year, sea ice vanished last month in huge areas north of Svalbard and in the northern Barents Sea. 2015 could be all time minimum for late winter, likely to be followed by record little-ice the coming summer.

By Thomas Nilsen

March 10, 2015

Scientists with the [National Snow and Ice Data Centre](#) in Colorado, USA, who are monitoring satellite images of Arctic sea ice, presents maps showing lower sea ice extent in the northern Barents Sea the first week of March than in February. Both northwest of Spitsbergen in the Svalbard archipelago and in the waters east of Svalbard south of Franz Josef Land towards Novaya Zemlya have less sea ice this week than in February.

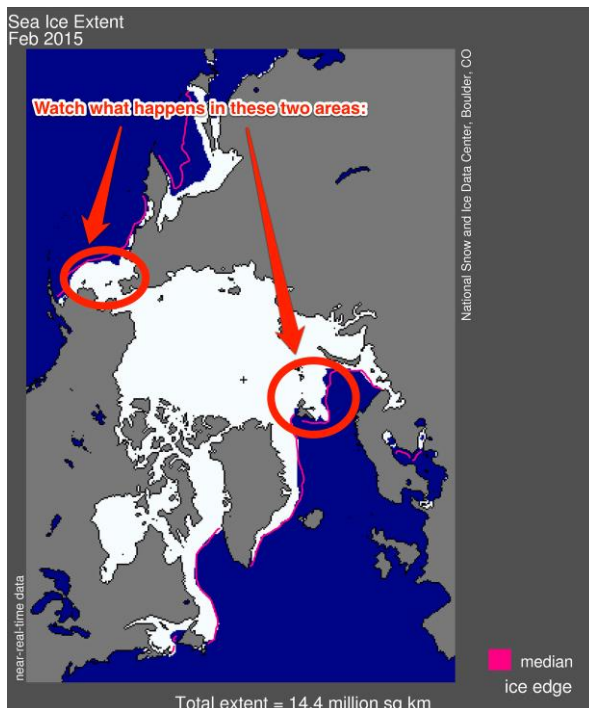
So instead of growing like normally in the first week of March, sea ice sees a dramatic shrinkage. In a [blog post published in Discover](#), Tom Yulsman has made an animation (see under) clearly showing the decrease in sea ice in the Barents Sea over the last two weeks. "It's pretty obvious, right? Dramatic shrinkage of sea ice in those areas — when it should still be growing. True, it does grow in some other places. But that doesn't make up for the losses," Tom Yulsman writes.

Sea ice extent is below average across the entire Arctic Sea. In the Pacific region, the extent is even lower than in the Barents Sea. Normally Arctic Sea ice maximum occurs from mid-March to late March, but this year the peak could already have past. If so, 2015 will see new lowest winter maximum in satellite monitoring history.

The Norwegian Polar Institute is currently heading a science expedition where the vessel "Lance" is frozen into the sea ice between Svalbard and the North Pole. The vessel drift with the ice as the team of international scientists on board studies oceanographic properties, the ice itself, meteorological parameters and ice dynamics.



Sea-ice is melting away under the feet of the polar bear (Photo: Thomas Nilsen)



You can follow the science cruise on the [blog site](#) of the Polar Institute. A NASA study shows that while sea ice has diminished in almost all regions of the Arctic, it grows in part of the Antarctic. However, global sea ice extent is decreasing since the ice in the Arctic melts more than it gains in Antarctica.

The video below shows how Arctic sea ice has melted away from 1979 to 2014. Average temperatures in the Arctic have risen by about 4°C, some 3°C warmer than average increase globally in the same 35 years period.

See:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=nEOBwIopR9I

Another study, referred by [BarentsObserver](#) last week, shows that the ice in the central Arctic Ocean thinned 65 percent between 1975 and 2012, from 3.59 meters to 1.25 meters.

A scenario published by [Arctic News](#) suggests that if the Arctic sea ice keeps falling in the same speed till end of April and then are followed by a decrease similar to the one in 2012 for the next four months, the entire Arctic sea ice could be wiped out for more than a month from September 1st.

If that happens, sunlight that previously went into melting the sea ice, as well as sunlight that was previously reflected back into space by sea ice, would be absorbed by the Arctic Ocean instead. In other words, the blog concludes; we can expect a massive warming, Arctic News reports.