

Crump, J., G.K. Hovelsrud, J. Eamer, I. Kelman, and J. West. 2008. "Many Strong Voices: Arctic and Island Action on Climate Change". Poster at Arctic Change, Québec City, Canada, 9-12 December 2008.

Poster abstract:

The Many Strong Voices (MSV) programme <http://www.manystrongvoices.org> brings together vulnerable regions in the Arctic and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in a collaborative effort to document and respond to the common challenges that climate change presents to these regions. MSV supports a consortium of policy-makers, researchers, and advocates to:

- Conduct state of the art, comparative, climate change vulnerability and adaptation research.
- Develop regionally-appropriate climate change adaptation strategies.
- Produce communications, outreach and education tools that will raise the profile of their regions, highlight their concerns, and enable communities to outline their own solutions.
- Combine regional research, the design of adaptation strategies, and the production of outreach and communications materials to increase the visibility of these regions, enhance their influence on global dialogues on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and facilitate the articulation of their adaptation needs.

The peoples of the Arctic and SIDS are particularly vulnerable to climate change because their cultures and livelihoods are closely tied to land and sea environments. While communities in both regions have proven adept at adapting to changing conditions in the past, climate change will pose new and unprecedented challenges to the regions' adaptive capacity and resilience.

The impact of climate change on coastal zones is a common denominator between the two regions and provides a context for comparing vulnerability and adaptation processes and developing strategies that contribute to sustainable development in both regions by meeting the social, livelihood, and environmental needs of present and future generations. The Arctic and SIDS are barometers of global change and in this context are considered testing grounds for applied processes and programmes that will strengthen the ability of human societies confronting climate change and other forms of social and environmental change. Lessons learned through the Many Strong Voices Programme feed into policy processes at local, regional, and international levels, and provide decision-makers with the knowledge to safeguard and strengthen vulnerable regions.

Finally, the magnitude of present and forecasted climate change in the Arctic and SIDS means that these regions can be considered harbingers of what may be in store for the rest of the planet. The rest of the world therefore has an interest in the responses and solutions to climate change being generated in both regions.