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ABSTRACT

Socio-economic and environmental challenges and problems of single-industry cities in the Arctic

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Single-industry cities are the model cities mostly of the times when Soviet Union planned the wider

exploration of natural resources, industrialization and urbanization of its Arctic territory. But this model however is quite typical for other countries as well. Since 30's of the last century these cities along with other northern settlements played a significant role in exploration and development of the Arctic, and set up the greatest industrial potential for further socioeconomic and sustainable development of this area. Arctic single-industry cities have a number of specifics which make them different from the same cities of other territories. It is known that Northern single-industry communities (like e.g. Barentsburg, Spitsbergen) has low diversification of economy and thus are vulnerable to any factors influencing their development.

I aim to investigate socioeconomic and environmental factors which contribute to facilitation or

procrastination of sustainable development of these cities, such factors as structural changes in

economy and enterprises after collapse of Soviet Union, downsizing and depopulation, domestic and

foreign market conditions, pollution, the quality of life of local population, possible changes of resource

potential, and other key factors. We aim to answer the following research questions: Will the depressive

scenarios always end with abandoned localities (based on previous examples and case studies)? What is

the point of no return in the transition period from progressive to depressive scenario? What is the best

facilitator of sustainable development of single-industry cities in the Russian Arctic (based on all-Russian

and international case-studies)?

One of the chapters of my dissertation will be devoted to the international practices of sustainable development of such a resource communities. Is that possible to implement international strategies to the Russian reality?