

2012 saw a record loss of Arctic sea ice in the summer. Across the globe, an enormous number of scientists & experts from various organisations have warned about the unprecedented Arctic melt, a message which does not seem to have reached the majority of politicians...

For the Greens the Arctic ice melt must be a wake up call for better and faster climate Action! The political world must understand that the critical threshold in the fight against global warming has now clearly been breached and that it is time to put climate back on the political agenda! At a time when the European Institutions are freezing the debate on more ambitious climate targets and the international community dragging their feet at the international climate talks, the Greens want Europe to get greener and to encourage others to do so too!

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What is happening in the Arctic affects all of us.

If we fail to address the Arctic melt, we will see an acceleration of disastrous impacts all around the world; such as increased sea level rise, a growing number of extreme weather events, the appearance of new diseases etc. A rapidly changing climate will also have serious impacts on traditional farming leading to future shortages and increasing food prices but also a major shift in populations and communities.

Tackling the melting of the Arctic is simply tackling climate change itself.

Protecting the environment of the Arctic is therefore an international obligation. The EU must set an example to the rest of the world and call for a global moratorium on industrial development in the area of the Arctic Ocean that has historically been covered by sea ice year-round. We need a permanent, equitable and overarching treaty or multi-lateral agreement that protects the Arctic Ocean environment, the ecosystems and the local communities who depend on them.

Protecting the Arctic is protecting our planet, saving the Arctic is saving our climate!

Watch the Greens/EFA clip on the Arctic at <http://youtu.be/8PuchYfVexg>

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## 7 reasons to protect the Arctic

Why we need to speak up for more protection of the top of the world



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# The Arctic melt is a wake up call... not a business opportunity

Here is a list of 7 reasons why Europe and the rest of the world should speak up for more protection of the Arctic.

**1** The Arctic region is a unique area among Earth's ecosystems that contains immense natural treasures. It is home to abundant biodiversity, several species adapted to the unique climate, and stores the world's largest freshwater reserves in its glaciers. It's also a place that has always captured humankind's imagination.

**2** The region is already compromised by climate change. Seeing that the arctic ice is shrinking at an unprecedented rate is serious enough. The Arctic melt is a serious wake up call for more and faster action to protect our climate and should not be seen as a new Eldorado for developing dirty oil exploration, which - ironically! - accelerates and intensifies the already occurring global warming and climate change.

**3** Drilling in the Arctic should be banned as too many risks are involved. The oil industry has a long history of spills in fragile areas, and the likelihood of similar accidents in the future is very high. Cleaning up oil spills in the Arctic Ocean would be extremely difficult due to ineffective technology in extreme weather conditions.



**4** Arctic drilling will create more greenhouse gases at a time when we are trying to reduce these emissions! We must be consistent with our objectives and promises: We must put an end to those activities and invest in the development of renewable sources of energy and energy efficiency.

**5** Arctic shipping will lead to an increase of emissions of black carbon - a strong climate-forcing agent- and an increased use of dirty fuels... and thus more CO2 emissions.

**6** Increasing pollution problems or mass tourism development present a serious threat to local communities' culture, health, and environment. Arctic indigenous people rely on the existing ecosystem to survive. Damaging it would seriously undermine their quality of life but also their cultural richness and traditional wisdom.

**7** The current developments in the Arctic zone and the discovery of new energy reserves are a source of tension and serious conflicts could occur between the 8 Arctic States. Military threats are likely to increase.