

The CLINF Nordic Centre of Excellence has received complementary funding for strengthening its focus regarding climate-change effects on infectious diseases in trans-Ural Russia



CLINF (Climate Change Effects on the Epidemiology of Infectious Diseases and the Impacts on Northern Societies) sets out to study the geographic spread of northern infectious diseases, how this spread is regulated by climate factors, and what societal effects such a spread may cause. CLINF operates “from Nuuk to Yakutsk”, which means from western Greenland to Pacific Russia. It is a Nordic Centre of Excellence, operating under the auspices of NordForsk and the Nordic Council of Ministers, with a total budget of approximately 6.5 MEUR whereof approximately 3.5 have been granted by NordForsk.

With the supplement that we call CLINF-RII, another 0.25 MEUR have been added to the original CLINF NCoE, whereof 0.15 with Russian in-kind resources (and 0.1 with NordForsk funds). CLINF-RII may be summarised as follows: With the UN Sustainable Development Goals (the UN SDGs) largely lacking an Arctic perspective, containing neither any Arctic nodes or indicators, it is important to collaborate with Russian colleagues in a joint effort to establish infrastructures and information flows relevant for societal CSI (climate sensitive infections) decision-making. The Russian part of the Arctic is huge beyond imagination, with more than 50% of its territory containing permafrost. With climate-change, and the associated risk of thawing permafrost, enormous areas threaten to transform into CSI habitat that connects with existing CSI populations at the warmer end of the climate gradient. The resulting potential for CSI migrating and expanding CSI populations threatens not only northern societies, but confines the capacity to sustainably combat emerging infectious diseases at the planetary scale. The NordForsk/CLINF-RII focus on Russia/Siberia is therefore strategically well-aimed, and a logical continuation must be the development of strategic informatic CSI infrastructures via deepened bilateral collaboration with Russian colleagues. As an overall objective, CLINF-RII aims to produce a white-paper containing recommendations regarding the establishment of such an infrastructure, backed up by a series of collaborative workshops. Continued work is therefore suggested along three interconnected themes of research: i) continued strengthening of Russian participation in building strategic CSI infrastructures and information flows across the North; ii) complement the CSI database with highly resolved CSI data, particularly covering trans-Ural Russia; iii) provide incitement for the establishment of a CSI organisation across the CLINF study region.

CLINF is equally led by the three coordinators Birgitta Evengård (UmU), Ann Albihn (SVA) and Tomas Thierfelder (SLU), and its administration is led by director Svenja Stöven (UmU). You may follow CLINF at its website www.clinf.org.

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