

## 4. Future Svalbard - business and sustainable development

13:30 - 15:00 Monday, 30th January, 2023

Location The Edge: Arbeidskontoret 2

Type Side Event: In-Person Only

Chairs Innovasjon Norge, Fridtjof Nansen Institute Norway, UiT - The Arctic University of Norway Tromsø

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### 239 Future Svalbard - business and sustainable development

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#### Session Description

Svalbard is a large piece of Norway far to the north. In 2025, the last Norwegian coal mine that supplies coal to Longyearbyen will be discontinued. One of the pillars of Norwegian business development on the archipelago will disappear. In line with this development, it has been important for Norway that Longyearbyen continues to be a viable local community. In the latest report concerning Svalbard to the Norwegian Parliament, the focus is on research, higher education and tourism, as well as other business activities. A desire is also expressed to facilitate the development of a more versatile business life within the framework of Norway's official Svalbard policy. In parallel, the Arctic has gained a place on the international agenda. It is in the Arctic that global climate change is most noticeable. Higher temperatures and less ice change the framework conditions for actors with interests in the region. What challenges and opportunities does Svalbard face in light of the phase-out of coal, new geopolitical realities and a changing climate?

In this side event, researchers and business actors will discuss emerging issues on Svalbard. We will take a closer look at the opportunities for business development in Svalbard. Before we directly discuss this question, it is nevertheless necessary to give a historical, legal and political introduction to Svalbard. In many respects, Svalbard differs from mainland Norway. We must first understand why Svalbard is a unique part of Norway and why the prerequisites for business development are different than in mainland Norway. Here we will hear about emerging businesses, but we also look at the political, economic and administrative challenges Svalbard faces in the years to come.

#### Speakers:

- Grete K. Hovelsrud, Professor of Environmental Sociology, Nordland Research Institute and Nord University, Bodø, Norway
- Christian Skottun, Chief Executive Officer of Telenor Svalbard AS and leader of the Svalbard Business Association (digital participant)
- Arild Olsen, leader of Longyearbyen Local Council
- Terje Aunevik, Managing Director of Pole Position Logistics
- Morten Hald, Head of the board of The University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS) and professor at the Department of Geosciences, UiT The Arctic University of Norway
- Lotte Lindbjør, regional manager for Northern Norway at United Nations Global Compact Norway
- Svein Vigeland Røttem, Senior Research Fellow at the Fridtjof Nansen Institute, Moderator