

Exploring the futures of life around Arctic fjords

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Environments and societies connected to Arctic fjords are changing rapidly. A warmer climate is an important driver of change, but other factors also play a major role, including fishing, tourism, and changing socio-economic conditions. To understand how different factors shape the future, we developed scenarios based on concerns identified by local stakeholders around Nuup Kangerlua, Greenland; Isfjorden, Svalbard; and Porsangerfjorden, Northern Norway, in fall 2022. Here we present a condensed version of three sets of narratives about what life around these fjords might look like one generation from now.

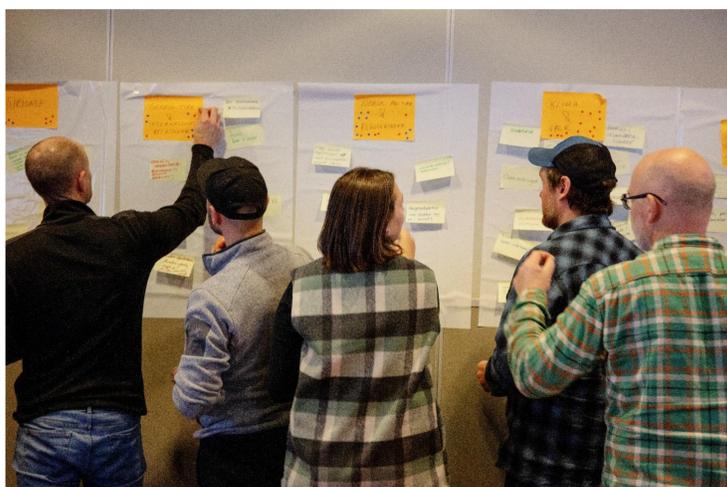
Participatory scenario exercises

The scenarios build on input from scenario workshops that included the following steps:

1. Brainstorming in response to the question: "What changes may shape life in and around the fjord in the next 20-30 years?"
2. Organizing the results of the brainstorming into ten themes.
3. Voting for the most important and the most uncertain themes.
4. Group discussions to identify resources and values provided by the fjord today and how this might change in the future.



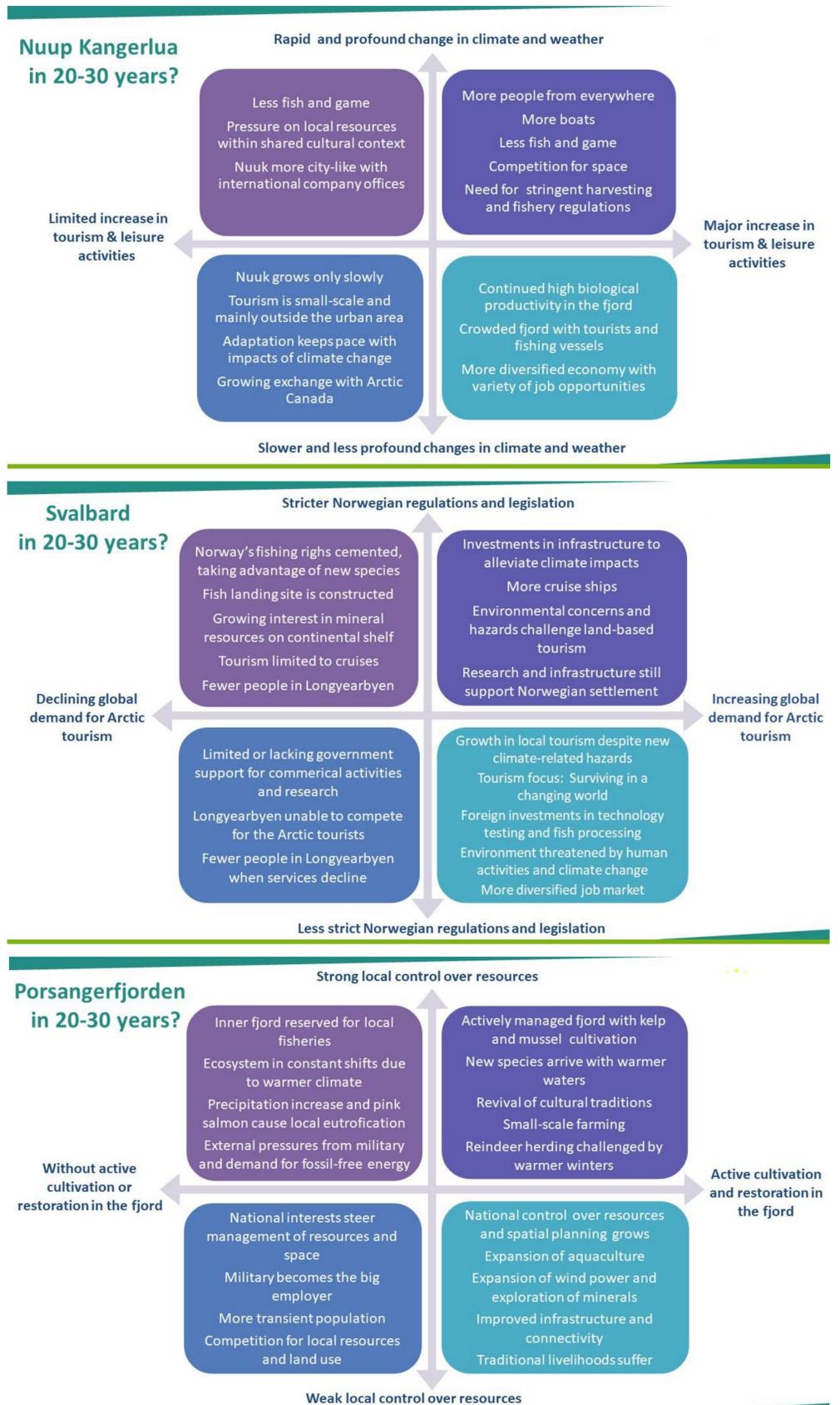
Ideas written on sticky notes are placed on a common think space.



Voting for most important and most uncertain themes by distributing sticky dots.

Based on workshop results, along with insights from literature and other fieldwork, we identified two key dimensions and elaborated four potential futures for each of the study fjords.

Potential futures



Each fjord system faces unique management challenges but the future scenarios also highlight some common lessons

1. Policies and regulations are important shapers of change, where decisions outside local reach can play a major role.
2. Increasing competition for space and resources requires management decisions.