

Arctic science ministerial

May 10, 2021

In news: India participated in the 3rd Arctic Science Ministerial (ASM3).

About the ASM-

- India shared its plans to contribute observing systems in the Arctic, both in-situ and by remote sensing.
- The country would deploy open ocean mooring in the Arctic for long-term monitoring of upper ocean variables and marine meteorological parameters.
- **ASM3, jointly organised by Iceland and Japan, is the first Ministerial meeting being held in Asia.**
- The meeting was designed to provide opportunities to various stakeholders, including academia, indigenous communities, governments and policymakers, to enhance collective understanding of the Arctic region, and engage in constant monitoring, and strengthen observations.
- The **theme** for this year is **'Knowledge for a Sustainable Arctic'**.
- The first two meetings- ASM1 and ASM2, were held in the USA in 2016 and Germany in 2018, respectively.

India and the Arctic:

- The Arctic is commonly understood to refer to the region above the Arctic Circle, north of latitude 66° 34' N, which includes the **Arctic Ocean with the North Pole at its centre.**
- Much of this Ocean falls within the jurisdiction of **five Arctic littoral states – Canada, Denmark (Greenland), Norway, Russia and the USA (Alaska).**
- Three other Arctic nations – **Finland, Sweden and Iceland** – along with the five littorals form the Arctic Council.

- The Arctic is home to almost four million inhabitants, of which approximately one-tenth are considered as indigenous people.
- **India became the observer of Arctic Council in 2013** and its membership as an observer was renewed in 2018 for another five years.
- It has also deployed a multi-sensor moored observatory called **IndARC** in the Kongsfjorden fjord since July 2014.
- The **National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR)**, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India, is the nodal agency for India's Polar research programme, which includes Arctic studies.
- India's Ministry of External Affairs provides the external interface to the Arctic Council.