

MODERATOR

Dr. Victoria Herrmann

President & Managing Director
The Arctic Institute



Dr. Victoria Herrmann is the President and Managing Director of The Arctic Institute. In addition to managing the Institute and Board of Directors, her research and writing focus on climate change, community adaptation, resilient development, and migration. Victoria has testified before the U.S. Senate, served as the Alaska Review Editor for the Fourth National Climate Assessment, contributes to The Guardian and Scientific American on climate policy, and was named one of the most 100 influential people in climate policy worldwide in 2019 by Apolitical. She has published in many peer-review journals and her expert opinion has appeared on CNN, BBC, and NPR among others.

Victoria currently serves as the Principle Investigator of the National Science Foundation funded Arctic Migration in Harmony: An Interdisciplinary Network on Littoral Species, Settlements, and Cultures on the Move, a major international initiative to integrate discipline-isolated research on changing Arctic migration patterns and advance knowledge on the movement of peoples, economies, cultures, and ecosystems catalyzed by environmental variability. Beyond the Arctic, Victoria studies climate-induced displacement, migration, and relocation in North America and Fiji as a National Geographic Explorer. In her first National Geographic project, America's Eroding Edges, she traveled across the country interviewing 350 local leaders to identify what's needed most to safeguard coastal communities against the unavoidable impacts of climate change. Her project, Rise Up to Rising Tides, is creating an online matchmaking platform that connects pro bono experts with climate-affected communities. The project seeks to safeguard heritage by connecting national expertise to some of the 13 million Americans at risk of being displaced due to rising waters in the coming years.

She serves on the Arctic Research Consortium of the United States' Board of Directors, on the Steering Committee of the Climigration Network, and as an IF/THEN Ambassador for the American Association for the Advancement of Science. As an Assistant Research Professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, Victoria teaches environmental communication; science communication at the University Centre of the Westfjords, Iceland; and public speaking at National Geographic Sciencetelling Bootcamps. She was previously a Junior Fellow at the Carnegie Endowment, a Fulbright Awardee to Canada, a Mirzayan Science and Technology Policy Fellow at the National Academies of Sciences, and a Gates Scholar at the University of Cambridge, where she received her PhD in Geography.

OPENING REMARKS

Mika Koskinen

Consul General of Finland in New York, Ambassador
Consulate General of Finland in New York

Mika Koskinen, Consul General, Ambassador of Finland, completed his undergraduate studies in Economy in the Economics School in France in 1990 followed by MSc in Economy, Helsinki Graduate School of Economics in Finland in 1991. He did PhD studies at the School of Economics in Bergen, Norway in 1992.

His career in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland started when he joined the Diplomatic training course in 1995. He has served as Ambassador of Finland in Peru and concurrent Ambassador in Bolivia and Ecuador in 2015-2019 and is currently the Consul General of Finland in New York where he has assumed his official duties as of July 1, 2019.



Koskinen's other postings include serving as Director of the Human Resources Unit in Helsinki and as Counsellor in the Embassy of Finland in Madrid, Spain and the Embassy of Finland in Dublin, Ireland.

FIRESIDE CHAT

Krista Mikkonen

Finland's Minister of the Environment
and Climate Change
Ministry of the Environment

Krista Mikkonen got interested in environmental issues during her general upper secondary studies. She organized Environment Days at her school and joined a nature protection organization.

She completed her Master of Science degree in biology at the University of Joensuu in 2003. During her university studies, she was involved in various kinds of activities related to the environment and nature. Mikkonen has been an exchange student abroad on two occasions: during her general upper secondary studies in Florida and during her years at the university in Namur, Belgium.



During her career, Mikkonen has worked at the North Karelia Environment Centre, as Club Developer at the Sports Federation of North Karelia and at Waste Management Company Puhas Oy. She has also written various kinds of reports on nature and environmental affairs for the Cooperative of Environmental Specialists. From 2000 to 2003 Mikkonen and her family lived in Kenya.

Mikkonen joined the Green League during her university studies. The first time she was elected to the Joensuu City Council was in 1996, and she has served as a Council Member since 2005. She was the Deputy Party Leader of the Green League in 2011–2015 and, before that, she served in different bodies of the party.

In the parliamentary elections of spring 2015, Mikkonen was elected to Parliament, where she was the first MP representing the Greens from the Savo-Karelia electoral district. In 2016–2019 she chaired the Green Parliamentary Group. Mikkonen was again elected to Parliament in spring 2019. In politics her particular focus has been on the environment, biodiversity, education and equality, and on combatting poverty.

Amanda E. Beal

Commissioner

Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Amanda Beal has served as Commissioner of the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) since February of 2019. DACF is charged with: promoting and advancing Maine's agricultural resources; protecting and enhancing nearly 18 million acres of forestland; managing more than 700,000 acres of state parks and public lands; and administering numerous science-based programs focused on resource management, land use planning, and conservation. Before leading DACF, Amanda was the President and CEO of Maine Farmland Trust and has served on the boards and steering committees of many agriculture, food system, fisheries, and conservation-related organizations over the years. She co-authored "A New England Food Vision: Healthy Food for All, Sustainable Farming and Fishing, Thriving Communities." Amanda earned a B.A. from the University of Southern Maine and an M.S. from Tufts University, having completed the Agriculture, Food & Environment program. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of New Hampshire in the Natural Resources and Earth Systems Science program. She lives in Warren, Maine, where she and her husband own a 35-acre farm and are working to establish an orchard with numerous fruit varieties, manage their 25-acre woodlot, and develop a creamery for on-farm cheese production. Amanda grew up on her family's commercial dairy farm in Litchfield, Maine.



KEYNOTE REMARKS

Jake Ward

Vice President for Innovation
University of Maine

James S. (Jake) Ward IV is the Vice President for Innovation and Economic Development. His office supports economic development by acting as a liaison for business and industry, facilitating technology transfer, and handling patenting, licensing and commercialization activities for the University of Maine. The office also supports federal and state government relations for the university's R&D mission. Vice President Ward has been the Assistant Vice President for Research, Economic Development and Government Relations since 2006.

He has served UMaine in various roles within the Department of Industrial Cooperation and the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship since joining the University in 1990. Prior to joining the University of Maine, Vice President Ward worked in private industry in software development and manufacturing. He is a member of national organizations, including the Association of University Technology Managers and American Society of Mechanical Engineers. He also serves on the boards of many state organizations including the Maine Technology Institute, the Maine Development Foundation and the Maine Center for Entrepreneurial Development. Originally from Saco, he holds a B.S. in mechanical engineering and an M.S. in ocean engineering from the University of New Hampshire.



PRESENTING FINNISH BIONEERS

Juha Honkasalo

Director of Business Development
StepOneTech

Juha has been working at StepOne Tech since 2018 when our fast growth began. He holds a MSc degree in business administration and has studied and lived in Asia and the United States as well. He's experienced as an investor and is partner of a venture capital focused on impact investing. Juha has also invested in StepOne Tech Ltd and currently is working on expanding the company to foreign markets and developing new business models.



[StepOneTech](#): Manufacturer of eFlexFuel, technology that enables gasoline and hybrid vehicles to run on renewable biofuel. StepOneTech will introduce its world-first biofuel for the motor bike market and will also announce its official U.S. market expansion, and its first U.S. hire, in California.

Ari Tanninen

SVP, Consumer Boards
Kotkamills Oy

M.Sc. (Chemistry and Paper Technology). Almost 30 years' experience in forest and packaging materials industries. Experienced professional in many leading positions through the value chain from suppliers to brand owners.

[Kotkamills](#): Renewable, recyclable products for packaging and food service industries. Kotkamills will provide an update on its solutions, including work with Lavazza and Norwich City FC. Kotkamills is one of the 12 winners of [Next Gen Cup Challenge](#) by Closed Loop Partners in 2019.



Mika Salomäki

CEO

Dolea Ltd.

Mika Salomäki is the CEO of Dolea Ltd., a Finnish clean tech company located in Helsinki. Prior to this he has been entrepreneur and inventor of sustainable single use products. Mika has a strong IPR background from family owned patent office. He further has international R&D and sales experience with Kone Oyj, IBM and Fujitsu.

Mika is 54 years of age and has a Master of Science degree in Wood Processing Technology from the Aalto University in Finland.



[Dolea](#): Producing recyclable and biodegradable drinking straws with printable advertising surface option. Dolea will discuss its recent certification as a recyclable straw and its U.S. market expansion, which will occur in 2021.

Ami Rubinstein

Deputy CEO

Sulapac

Ami has worked for over 15 years in international management and business development with both large public companies and startups, including Outokumpu and Optomeditech. He is passionate about creating ‘another Finnish success story’ and heading Sulapac’s journey to become the new standard in sustainable materials replacing plastic with engaged and empowering leadership and strategic process approach. Ami is strongly committed to Sulapac’s mission and is eager to see the innovation becoming part of people’s everyday lives throughout the world.



[Sulapac](#) accelerates the plastic waste-free future with sustainable materials that are beautiful and functional. Like nature. The Helsinki-based company was founded in 2016 by two biochemists Suvi Haimi and Laura Tirkkonen-Rajasalo and has been ranked one of the 100 hottest startups in Europe by WIRED UK.

Kristiina Kruus

Dean, School of Chemical Engineering
Aalto University

Kristiina Kruus obtained her doctoral degree from Aalto University, former Helsinki University of Technology, Department of Chemical Engineering in 1996. During 1997-2018 she worked at VTT, Technical Research Centre of Finland in different positions, the last eight years as the Research Professor in the area of applied enzymology of renewable biomasses. She has coordinated many large national and international projects and programmes for instance Bioeconomy Transformation, VTT internal spearhead programme (annual budget of ca 35 M€; 2014-17) and FinnCERES, an Academy of Finland flagship programme focusing on materials bioeconomy (2017-18). Most of Professor Kruus' scientific work is related to modification of plant biomass and their major components. Her recent research subjects are related to the limiting factors in the enzymatic hydrolysis of lignocellulosics. She has supervised several PhD students and is also a docent at the University of Helsinki, Faculty of Forestry and Agriculture. She participated in the review panel of FORMAS, the Swedish Research Council for Environment and Agricultural Sciences (2015-2018) and is currently a member of the Academy of Finland Research Council of Biosciences Health and the Environment (2016-). Since 2018 she has been an invited member of the Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters. In 2018 she was nominated as the Dean of the School of Chemical Engineering in Aalto University. She is also a member of the President's Management Team in Aalto. Kristiina Kruus is also appointed 2020 to the Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform steering group and deputy board member to the Clic innovation.



[Aalto University](#) showcases progressive bio&circular economy research, including recycled fibre technology [Ioncell](#)[®] and [Shimmering Wood Colors](#).