

PERSPECTIVE

Some considerations regarding corporate social responsibility in the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Russia

Onur Limon¹ & Hasibe Tugce Tasik²¹Republic of Türkiye Ministry of National Defence, General Staff, Ankara, Türkiye; ²The Turkish Energy Strategies & Policy Research Center, Ankara, Türkiye

Abstract

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices—by which companies contribute positively to society through their voluntary actions and initiatives—have advanced slowly in Russia. In Russia, the separation between the state and business is not clear, as is the difference between state-owned companies and nominally ‘private’—but still state-controlled—companies, and this has shaped CSR. CSR as practiced in Russia is state-initiated to an extent greater than that in many other countries. The Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug (YNAO), in the Russian Arctic, has a significant population of indigenous people whose way of life has traditionally been based on reindeer herding, fishing and other subsistence activities that are threatened by the ecological damage caused by the hydrocarbon extraction that is carried out in the region by large state-owned or state-controlled corporations such as the parastatal corporation Gazprom. CSR has the potential to ameliorate some of the problems faced by residents of the YNAO, including difficulties relating to transportation, the supply of goods, health care and environmental protection. To achieve this, the CSR roles of the different parties involved need to be better defined and the CSR actions should shift emphasis from modernizing the larger settlements of the YNAO to improving the lives of people who maintain a more traditional way of life on the tundra. Drawing on interviews, government and company documents, and Russian and non-Russian scholarly papers, this Perspective piece considers some aspects of CSR in the YNAO and points to topics of future research.

Keywords

Arctic; governance; gas and oil industry; transportation; Russian indigenous peoples; Siberia

Correspondence

Onur Limon, Republic of Türkiye Ministry of National Defence, General Staff, Ankara, Türkiye. E-mail: onurlimon2538@gmail.com

Abbreviations

CSR: corporate social responsibility
YNAO: Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug

Introduction

CSR rose to prominence in the 1990s and 2000s and is still relatively new as a subject of study (Khayrullina 2017; Levdokymova 2019). Developing heterogeneously around the globe, CSR has a conceptual terminology that varies from place to place, as does its development trajectory, the way it is organized and the extent of stakeholder involvement (Hitztaler & Tynkkynen 2020). Although there is no consensus on the precise definition of CSR, it is broadly defined as a set of initiatives that enable the economic development of a company and also provide benefits to employees and communities (Hitztaler & Tynkkynen 2020).

According to Carroll (1991), CSR consists of economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic responsibilities. Economic responsibility is concerned with profitability, insofar as the company's existence and the fulfilment of its social

responsibility depend on making money. Legal responsibility involves the requirements imposed on a company by the law. Companies are not only expected to operate for profit but also to comply with the laws and regulations—for example, regarding security, crime, employment and the environment—issued by state or local authorities. Ethical responsibilities, in the context of CSR, are understood as practices that are not codified by the rules of law but are expected by society. Examples include paying employees fairly, not conducting business with oppressive regimes and being environmentally conscientious. Philanthropic responsibility encompasses corporate activities that are carried out to meet societal expectations of the company being a good ‘corporate citizen,’ such as charitable donations, community development projects, support for educational or healthcare initiatives and broader community contributions that are not inherently linked to core business operations.

CSR is a form of corporate self-monitoring, with the ideal aim of compliance with government regulations, general moral principles and global standards (Henry et al. 2016; Hitztaler & Tynkkynen 2020). Given suitable institutional conditions (Levdokymova 2019), CSR ensures that the local inhabitants are provided with social services, goods such as foods, other products and benefits. CSR is a worldwide phenomenon in which regional cultural differences influence the way it is implemented locally.

In this Perspective article, we offer preliminary thoughts about CSR in the YNAO, in northernmost Russia, in the post-Cold War period, that is, from the early 1990s until Russia's invasion of Ukraine in early 2022. We gathered information from scholarly publications by Russian and non-Russian authors, official reports and other documents produced by government authorities at various levels, publicly available statistics and reports available from the Russian oil and gas companies Gazprom, Lukoil and Rosneft. Our requests to Gazprom, Gazprom Neft, Novatek and Lukoil, to discuss their practices in the YNAO directly with representatives of those companies, went unanswered. Information about transport and supply-chain activities in the Arctic region of Russia was obtained from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Second European Department, via e-mailed communications. Our proposal to work with the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North was not accepted.

CSR in the Russian context

CSR is a relatively new concept in Russia and is easily distinguishable from CSR in other parts of the world because of its key role in promoting the state's national development agenda (Khayrullina 2017). Representatives of Russian companies often define CSR as activities such as paying taxes, creating jobs and obeying the law (Kuznetsov et al. 2009) and activities that extend beyond that are not viewed as business responsibilities (Crane et al. 2013). This is a narrower interpretation than the general global understanding of CSR. However, the Russian government imposes a broader definition of CSR—encompassing environmental issues, sustainability, social welfare, labour protection and so on (Zavyalova & Ostrovskaya 2020)—that aligns more closely to standards in other countries.

The main difference between Russia's CSR practices and those of Western countries is that Russia lacks a clearly defined set of CSR goals as well as a system for how companies should approach CSR (Zavyalova & Ostrovskaya 2020). Another difference is that in Russia the government intervenes more directly in corporate

affairs than it does in many other countries (Khonyakova & Tulaeva 2013; Henry et al. 2016). As elsewhere in the world, the Russian government offers incentives aimed at encouraging companies to start socially oriented programmes. In some Russian cases, it is less an 'incentive' to carry out CSR than a mandatory condition for operating in certain markets and regions (Levdokymova 2019). At the same time, the financial support that the Russian state provides for CSR is very limited (Khonyakova & Tulaeva 2013; Henry et al. 2016). For example, the state offers a tax exemption for companies that perform philanthropic work with their net profits (Zavyalova & Ostrovskaya 2020).

CSR as practiced in Russia is a state-initiated model (Hitztaler & Tynkkynen 2020). It involves a limited number of stakeholders, including the government, business owners and their employees, with limited involvement of local communities (Khayrullina 2017). Russian CSR initiatives mostly focus on social and economic concerns, a legacy of Soviet paternalistic welfare (Henry et al. 2016). In Russia, governmental paternalism with respect to businesses is fostered by greater—compared to many other countries—competition in the marketing of exports, the need to attract foreign capital and the opportunity to participate in consortia in the development of hydrocarbon resources (Hitztaler & Tynkkynen 2020). Large state-owned or state-controlled 'private' enterprises, like Lukoil, Gazprom, Gazprom Neft and Novatek, wield significant influence in various sectors that are of vital importance to the Russia's economy—from energy and raw materials to telecommunications and banking. As strategic instruments of the state, they align their strategies with national interests, playing a crucial role in the implementation of the government's economic development plans (Zavyalova & Ostrovskaya 2020).

The political nature of CSR in Russia is also related to gaps in local or regional governance. Companies often become providers of public goods because local institutions are overworked, local governments fail to enforce relevant regulations or public authorities deliberately shift governance tasks to private actors (Scherer et al. 2016). This is very evident in Russia, where large companies can dominate local economies. In these cases, the provision of infrastructure, social services and other local public goods becomes an internal matter for that company, which takes action especially when local governments are unable to adequately fulfil this role.

The YNAO

The YNAO is in north-western Siberia and is part of the Urals Federal District (Fig. 1). Over half of the YNAO's



Figure 1. The YNAO (outlined in light red), indicating important settlements and major rivers. The Tazovsky District is shaded in light red. Dark red lines indicate borders between neighbouring administrative areas. Yellow lines represent existing and planned railway lines in the YNAO and this is not intended to be comprehensive or up to date; the current status of segments that were planned for construction several years ago is unknown. (Main map source: Google Earth, 18 April 2024, with numerous additions and other modifications. The inset map is by Stasyan117, accessed at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_Russia_-_Yamalo-Nenets_Autonomous_Okrug.svg on 18 April 2024; the original map, which is available under a CC BY-SA 4.0 licence, has been modified by the addition of the country name and the Arctic Circle. Railway sources: Bambulyak et al. 2015; Kovalenko et al. 2018; Mangazeja 2018.)

769 300 km² area lies within the Arctic Circle. It adjoins the Nenets Autonomous Region and the Komi Republic along the Ural Mountains to the west. It borders the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Region in the south; to the east lies the Krasnoyarsk Krai. The Ob, Taz, Messoyakha and Nadym are the most important rivers (GYNAO 2021). In the south there are highlands—the Siberian Ridge and the Northern Sosvenskaya Highland—and in the west are the spurs of the Polar Urals (1333 m a.s.l.). About 35% of the region is swampland (GYNAO 2021). The YNAO encompasses three different climatic zones: the Arctic, Subarctic and the belt of the Siberian plains to the north-west known as taiga. The region experiences extreme climatic variation. Winters are long and

very cold and bring many storms and heavy snowfall. On average, the temperature is about -26.5°C in January and 13.3°C in July (World Weather Online 2024).

The population of the YNAO is 541 500, which makes for a population density of 0.71/km². Approximately 45 000 Komi-Zyryans, Selkups, Khanty, Nenets, Mansi and Evens—that is, nearly half of the Russian Arctic’s indigenous population—live north of the Arctic Circle in the YNAO (GYNAO 2021). There are approximately 14 600 indigenous people who live as transhumant pastoralists on the tundra of the YNAO. The health, culture and social welfare of indigenous peoples are closely linked to their means of subsistence, including reindeer herding and fishing (GYNAO 2021).

Levels of food self-sufficiency and agricultural production are low in the YNAO, which produces less than 10% of the agricultural products, and about 11% of the poultry and livestock (including reindeer), that its inhabitants consume (Strategy Draft of YNAO 2021). The total area dedicated to growing vegetables in agro-industrial complexes is only 50 hectares (Jaungad 2019). State support for the agricultural industry in the YNAO is 1.9 billion RUB, which is 2.5 times more than the average in the Russian Arctic (Strategy Draft of YNAO 2021). Health services, especially for nomadic communities, are another challenging area. Overall, the healthcare infrastructure appears to be strained, as indicated by declines in medical personnel and the number of hospitals (Rosstat 2021a, b, c, d).

The industrial resources (including technology, infrastructure, raw materials, energy resources and skilled labour), productive activities and minimum subsistence level of the YNAO region are lower than the average in the rest of Russia. The small labour force in the region, transportation difficulties, high energy costs for the production of goods and services and overall harsh conditions result in high costs (Procenko et al. 2018).

On the other hand, the YNAO is the region of Russia with the most abundant oil and gas deposits. With natural gas reserves exceeding 50 trillion m³, the YNAO's natural gas reserves make up approximately 80% of the nation's total stock (The Arctic 2021). Gas production is carried out by the large companies, Gazprom, Rosneft and Novatek. Though the YNAO's economy depends heavily on income from oil and gas production and local communities, the indigenous peoples in the YNAO nevertheless have a low average standard of living (Schwalbe 2017).

Transportation routes

Supply-chain problems have plagued the YNAO for many years on account of the harsh climate, sparse settlements, an inadequate transportation infrastructure and terrain that is difficult to navigate. According to data from the Second European Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, the general situation in the Russian Arctic (M. Shkurenko, pers. comm. 2021) is that sea transport along the Northern Sea Route is used to move large volumes across long distances, whereas river, road and air transport are used for short and medium-range distances.

Sea freight is the most useful method of transporting goods and products in the Russian Arctic (Sergeev et al. 2021). The Northern Sea Route, which began to be used in the 1970s-80s (Pogrebnjak 2019), includes more than 70 transshipment bases and ports that link the large rivers

of Siberia to the Barents, Kara, Laptev, East Siberian, Chukchi and Bering seas and thereby to the world. The bulk of the cargo moving along the Northern Sea Route consists of oil, coal, petroleum products, liquified natural gas and solid minerals produced in the adjacent regions and exported to Europe, North America and the Asia-Pacific region. The volume of cargo transported along this route in 2020 amounted to 32.97 million tonnes (in 2019, 31.5 million tonnes) (M. Shkurenko, pers. comm. 2021). During nine months in 2021, 24.22 million tonnes of cargo were transported along the Northern Sea Route, 3.5% more than in the same period in 2020 (M. Shkurenko, pers. comm. 2021).

In the 1950s-80s, the delivery of goods to the north, which was crucial for the development of natural resource extraction, was mainly carried out via rivers (Pogrebnjak 2019). In the eastern Russian Arctic, the Yenisei River, especially the deeper waters in the Krasnoyarsk region, is still the main line of transportation. The natural deep-water route from the mouth of the Yenisei allows sea vessels capable of carrying 15 000 tonnes of cargo to pass inland to the city of Dudinka. The main transport artery in the west is the Lena River, with tributaries in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). Since large cargo delivery hubs are absent in the middle reaches of the Lena River, this river is the main way in which goods are delivered to Yakutia (M. Shkurenko, pers. comm. 2021). However, the river can be navigated only if the water level is sufficient, which varies seasonally and with climatic conditions. It is therefore not used year-round.

The two main railways in the Russian Arctic are the Oktyabrskaya Railway and the Northern Railway. On the Oktyabrskaya Railway, most cargo is transported from the Murmansk region to the European part of Russia; to a lesser extent, cargo is also transported to the Murmansk port for further export from Russia. In particular, apatite concentrate from the deposits of the Khibiny group is transported from Apatity Station (Murmansk region) for export through the port of Ust-Luga, in the Leningrad region, as well as to the Vologda region and the Saratov region. Cargo is transported from the Komi Republic by the Northern Railway. This is mainly coal concentrate supplied to the Cherepovets Metallurgical Plant as well as for export through the port of Ust-Luga (M. Shkurenko, pers. comm. 2021).

There are 39 airfields in the Russian Arctic. In recent years, two new airports were commissioned in Bovanenkovo and Sabetta in the YNAO, which serve as important elements of the transport infrastructure of the large-scale Yamal liquid natural gas project. Reconstruction of the existing airfield infrastructure in the Arctic regions of Russia is underway.

The network of roads in the Russian Arctic is unevenly developed and long stretches are under repair. In the Nenets Autonomous Okrug and the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, the roads are generally worse than the national average and their use is limited. The roads are used for transporting products from Arctic mines and processing plants to the railway stations in the Murmansk region. In winter, the extreme cold significantly worsens the condition of the roads, requiring costly repair work (M. Shkurenko, pers. comm, 2021). In 2021, as part of the national project, Safe, High-Quality Roads, about 40 km of regional roads and about 9 km of the Salekhard and Labytnangi municipal network were put in order. Eleven roads were scheduled for repair in the YNAO in 2022 as part of this road improvement project (Government of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug 2022).

Land networks are not sufficiently reliable; maritime networks are cost-effective but not common and aviation networks are time-efficient but costly. The Russian Arctic's infrastructure for transport and logistics is not evenly developed (especially in the west) and the use of transport links fluctuates seasonally, as mentioned earlier in the text (Sergeev et al. 2021). The inefficiency of Russian Arctic transport networks—particularly roads—and the price of transport by air and river makes the supply of goods and services provided to indigenous peoples and local communities costly (Bogdanova & Čujkova 2019).

Regardless of the significant infrastructure problems, employment in transport is important in the YNAO. The number of people employed in the various modes of Arctic transport is over 40 000; 9.5% of the jobs in the Russian Arctic are related to transport (for Russia as a whole, 7.3% of jobs are in transportation). In the YNAO, 14.2% of jobs are in transportation (Serova & Serova 2019). Employment in transportation and the agricultural industry are important sources of income among the rural population (Strategy Draft of YNAO 2021: 27).

Laws

Two legal tools that are particularly relevant for understanding CSR in the region are the federal law *Industrial Policy in the Russian Federation* (No. 488-FZ, 31 December 2014) and the *Law of YNAO Industrial Policy*, which was adopted by the YNAO Legislative Assembly on 6 June 2016. In accordance with these laws, the regional government signs 'special investment contracts' with 'international companies' (Law of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug 2016). In this context, 'international companies' include state-owned and 'private' state-controlled companies in the fuel and energy sectors, such as Gazprom,

Lukoil and Rosneft, that are based in Russia but operate in other countries as well. In exchange for the right to utilize the natural resources of the region, the contracts entail obligations in terms of social responsibility. Companies operating in emerging industrial areas of the YNAO, such as Novy Urengoy, Nadym, Noyabrsk and Salekhard, enter into annual or long-term contracts with local authorities and undertake tasks such as creating social infrastructure, implementing compensatory efforts to protect the environment, housing construction, improving traditional places of residence of indigenous peoples and solving other problems facing residents and local self-government bodies (Kugaevskij 2011). Oil and gas companies operating in the YNAO must obtain a formal operating license linking the CSR to state authorities. In contrast, a "social license to operate" (Loe et al. 2017: 308) is an informal 'license' that companies earn by engaging directly with locals and thereby gaining their acceptance and approval.

In 2021, two new programmes outlined the improvements that the government intended to make in the YNAO in areas such as agro-industry, animal husbandry, health, education and transportation (State Program of YNAO 2021b). One was announced by the YNAO administration: a state programme entitled *The Implementation of the Strategy for the Socio-Economic Development of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug Until 2035* (State Program of YNAO 2021a). This programme encompasses all the socio-economic activities that will be carried out by the local government and the authorized units of the state in the YNAO until 2035, with particular attention to the needs of indigenous people. In the same year, the federal government announced another state programme—*Conservation and Sustainable Development of the Indigenous Peoples of the North in the YNAO* (State Program of YNAO 2021b)—which has the stated aim of improving the quality of life of indigenous peoples in the YNAO, including access to reliable medical care and good education. In addition, it aims to ensure the integration of the YNAO's residents into the economic, cultural, educational and socio-political life of the country by preserving the valuable ethno-cultural characteristics and historical heritage of the region. These targets will be realized in three main areas (State Program of YNAO 2021b): linguistic and cultural preservation; socio-economic improvement and transition to digital technologies (Gürdal 2021) that will improve industrial management through, for example, automation, data integration and real-time monitoring (State Program of YNAO 2021b).

As part of the same package of programmes, the state programme *Development of the Agro-Industrial Complex and the YNAO's Agricultural-Industrial Complex* Department have provided services to support people with traditional lifestyles, such as subsidizing the delivery of

goods to trade points and hard-to-reach areas and providing firewood to indigenous peoples (State Program of YNAO 2021b: 62). The YNAO government provides grants to indigenous-owned businesses as a way of supporting their traditional lifestyle. The YNAO government also financially supports local small businesses because they create employment, organize social services (education and vocational development, cultural events, health services), supply goods to hard-to-reach places at relatively low prices and contribute to production in the region (GYNAO 2021).

The extent to which these government programmes have actually been implemented and what are their actual impacts, positive or negative, is an important area of future study.

Gazprom's stated CSR intentions

Drawing mainly from the company's own publicly available statements, we summarize further in the text the CSR intentions of Gazprom, a major Russian state-owned energy corporation with a very large presence in the YNAO. A critical analysis of the actual CSR practices of Gazprom and the other companies that are mentioned, and how their impacts measure up against the companies' stated CSR aims are topics that require further research.

On 30 March 2021, Gazprom Neft, a subsidiary of Gazprom announced that it had established a 'private' enterprise: Gazprom Neft Road Construction. The head of Gazprom Neft, A. Dyukov, and the governor of the YNAO, D. Artyukhov, signed a five-year cooperation agreement. As reported by Gazprom Neft, the company and the district will work to improve the investment climate and to stimulate scientific, technical and innovative activities, as well as environmental protection. Gazprom Neft was scheduled to begin building the first land routes between the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug-Yugra and the Tyumen Region in 2021. The company planned to build approximately 350 km of roads by 2025 (Gazprom Neft 2021). Gazprom Neft aims to develop the energy and road infrastructures in the YNAO's Tazovsky District, which is not an area where the company has a direct business need for infrastructural improvements. There are plans to build a high-voltage power line from the Tazovsky gas field to the village of Tibey-Sale. The company will provide gas to the residents of the village. Tazovsky and Gaz-Sale have planned gasification from the New Port of the Yamal region. Another project will be the repair of the access road to the village of Tazovksy. Gazprom Neft will continue to supply oil products for the social sector and the functioning of the district's life-support systems (Neftegaz 2020).

According to company statements, Gazprom also promotes an increased level of employment among the local population. It participates in regional programmes to support the few indigenous peoples of the North and to preserve their traditional way of life and culture. As part of the Gazprom to Children Program, multifunctional sports fields were built in the Novy Urengoy region, new sports and recreation complexes in Nadym were subsidized and a number of sports facilities were rebuilt (Gazprom Neft 2021). Gazprom Neft's Home Towns programme, implemented in 2012, aims to improve the standard of living and develop creative industries by supporting the initiatives of local communities and realizing its own projects in the fields of culture, education and sports (Bogdanova et al. 2021).

Ranking just after Gazprom in terms of natural gas production, the 'private' company Novatek allocated 4.1 billion RUB to supporting indigenous peoples and local communities as well as charitable projects and cultural and educational programmes (Novatek 2020: 130). It also supports the activities of non-profit organizations that provide for indigenous peoples, scientific institutions, sports organizations, veterans' associations, etc. (Novatek 2020: 44).

Financed by the 'private' oil and gas company Lukoil-Komi, the medical and social project Red Chum makes medical assistance available to people in remote rural settlements in the YNAO (Sautina 2020).

Negative impacts

While Russian oil and gas companies have adopted some beneficial aspects of CSR, their activities also have negative socio-environmental impacts in the YNAO, especially for indigenous peoples. Among the most significant problems facing indigenous peoples is ecological damage resulting from the exploitation of the YNAO's oil and gas fields. Traditional pastoral migration routes are interrupted by mining infrastructure (Golovnev 2014). Increased industrialization reduces the land available for reindeer pastoralism and pollutes rivers and local water sources (Forbes et al. 2009). More land and freshwater resources will be permanently lost or unavailable in the future. The effects of climate change compound these problems (Forbes et al. 2009; Golovnev 2014).

Damage to the environment—especially drinking and irrigation water—caused by oil spills or other mishaps can also cause disputes between oil companies and indigenous peoples, and the state is slow to respond to the complaints of local communities in such matters (Tulaeva & Tysjačnjuk 2017). Negative environmental impacts can cause conflicts among indigenous peoples. For example, in the Bovanenkovo region, the reduction of reindeer grazing

lands has increased land disputes among indigenous peoples (Golovnev 2014). Giving support to some indigenous peoples or local communities and not others may exacerbate intercommunal disputes (Loe et al. 2017).

Discussion

According to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the habitat and way of life of Arctic indigenous peoples are state-protected. The state's position on this matter is due to the small numbers of these people and their vulnerability in maintaining their lifestyles and relationship with nature, which often constitutes the material and spiritual basis of their ways of life (Martynova & Novikova 2012). The extent to which the Russian state, in fact, protects the rights of its northern indigenous peoples—particularly in the context of hydrocarbon production and environmental damage—has been criticized (Schwalbe 2017; Bogdanova et al. 2021). In spite of government programmes like the Northern Delivery (*Severnyj Savov*) project, which supplies foodstuffs, equipment and machinery to the hard-to-reach and northern regions of Russia, especially the YNAO (Galaktionov 2019), the preservation of the traditional lifestyles of the indigenous people will become more difficult with time (Forbes et al. 2009; Golovnev 2014). Many young people have migrated to cities, where they face difficulties integrating (Golovnev 2014).

Companies in the region have implemented CSR initiatives in favour of indigenous peoples, but the actual results do not always match the intended positive impact. Despite efforts to provide quality social services and support regional needs, the environmental impacts of hydrocarbon extraction and production remain and may even worsen. For example, while CSR programmes can improve infrastructure and healthcare, they cannot fully address or mitigate the environmental damage caused by commercial activities, such as habitat destruction and pollution, which directly affect indigenous communities. So, while there are CSR intentions, the concurrent ecological damage shows that a more comprehensive approach is needed to reconcile social, environmental and economic priorities in the region.

Two things can be ascertained regarding how CSR has been implemented in the YNAO. First, CSR initiatives in the YNAO are not one-sided; rather, they result from a triple partnership between the federal government, the YNAO government and businesses, which are under varying degrees of federal government control. This enables joint decision-making on the issues facing indigenous people and local communities in the YNAO. However, protocols for CSR practices within this triple

partnership have not been formally established, and the participants' different responsibilities have not been formally defined. Second, CSR strategies concerning indigenous peoples must consider the fact that these communities view nature as an integral part of their lifestyles, while the federal government and corporations focus on industrial production and expansion as a means of achieving economic progress.

Though the actions of the oil and gas industry in the YNAO may comply with CSR requirements, CSR development in the region's other industries—such as mining, construction and fishing—is completely lacking. It appears from the industrial development in the YNAO that short-term social and economic needs take precedence over long-term environmental concerns. This can be seen in the extensive exploitation of natural resources, the rapid expansion of infrastructure and inadequate environmental regulations. These actions pose a significant threat to the environment and indigenous communities and exacerbate the region's vulnerability to climate change. If local contexts and differences within and between indigenous peoples are to be understood, they must be consulted and engaged in their own way and in their own regions. We believe that a CSR should shift its emphasis from modernizing the larger settlements of the YNAO to improving the lives of people who maintain a more traditional way of life on the tundra. This approach recognizes the unique environmental challenges and cultural significance of the tundra and prioritizes conservation efforts and sustainable development initiatives tailored to this specific context.

CSR has the potential to promote social, economic and environmental sustainability in the regions where the companies operate (Hitztaler & Tynkkynen 2020). CSR can also be seen as an ideological movement “intended to legitimize and consolidate the power of large corporations” (Banerjee 2008: 51). According to Maher, “CSR does not guarantee a win-win or shared value scenario” (Maher 2014: 348). How it is carried out in Arctic Russia is potentially a fruitful area of future research; it also has a major impact on northern indigenous peoples.

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