



# Warm floe of money

*Longyearbyen gets 200M+ for new port, other biz projects seen as climate change beneficiaries*

**By MARK SABBATINI**  
**Editor**

Climate change means Longyearbyen's ship is coming in. Lots of them, actually, as Norway's government is allocating more than 200 million kroner for a new port and other projects intended to help the city get more green from global warming.

Funding for the port is included in the National Transport Plan for 2014-2023, which was released Friday. The allocation is half of the projected cost, with the city expected to pay for the remainder, with the assistance of private industry if necessary.

Northern areas such as Svalbard are among those most impacted by climate change, and Longyearbyen is seeing an upward trend in both the number and scope of vessels, especially cruise ships, according to the plan.

"The main challenge for Longyearbyen is to serve the various ship traffic within a relatively short season, with existing capacity constraints at port facilities," the report states.

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ARLID LYSSAND / SYSSELMANNEN

A young polar bear lies dead at Isbukta after approaching the campsite of two skiers, who said they had no choice but to shoot the animal when two shots from a flare pistol failed to scare it off.

## Skiers kill polar bear

*Two men say warning shots fail to scare animal away from campsite*

**By MARK SABBATINI**  
**Editor**

Two skiers on a long-distance expedition shot and killed a polar bear approaching their campsite this week in what Svalbard's governor is calling an apparent case of self-defense.

Ola Johannessen and Christian Hager were camped at Isbukta when the young bear weighing 119 kilograms approached, they wrote in their expedition blog (<http://track.ullanna.no>).

"We fired the first of two signal shots respectively 100 and 50 meters," they wrote in

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GOOGLE MAPS

An expedition tracking map pinpoints the site of a fatal polar bear shooting in the lowest marker.

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## Using solar to mine more coal?

*Store Norske hoping for lower costs and emissions with new supplemental system at Svea*

**By MARK SABBATINI**  
**Editor**

A coal company using solar panels in the hope they can burn less oil. Now *that's* an alternative energy plan.

Store Norske is planning to test a solar power generator this summer from the Narvik startup company Solbes in an effort to lower expenses and pollution at its Svea coal mine.

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ESPEN JOHANNESSEN / SOLBES

A monitor gathers weather data at Svea to assist with the installation of a solar power system.





SYSSELMANNEN

A cruise ship docks at the main harbor in Longyearbyen. A proposed new port expanding westward (away from the city center) to accommodate increased cargo and other traffic is receiving half of its projected 400-million-kroner cost in the Norwegian government's 2014-2023 transportation plan.

## Not all thrilled with impact of new port

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"During the processing of the plan Parliament emphasized including the strong national interests and international obligations relating to the archipelago. Parliament also believed that this implies a strong government involvement, including the upgrading and construction of heavy infrastructure such as port facilities."

Local city and business leaders generally greeted news of the port allocation enthusiastically. But some residents, as well as environmentalists elsewhere, are expressing a number of concerns ranging from the impact of more vessels to the true cost of the port being much higher than projected.

"This is just the beginning," wrote Torfinn Hjalmar Johansen, a J.M. Hansen employee, in the reader comments section of a *Svalbard-posten* article. "Perhaps in your time you will be (un)lucky enough to see oil drilling platforms from your window in boathouse area."

Among the organizations seeking to have the Arctic declared a sanctuary is Greenpeace, which last week dropped a flag on the ocean floor at the North Pole and claims to have three million people signing a petition supporting the proposal.

More tourism and cargo shipping will significantly benefit Longyearbyen, and it's possible to do so responsibly, said Marianne Aasen, head of Bydrift, the city's infrastructure agency.

"Tourists are going to come anyhow, but if they stay in the fjords instead of going farther

north that's a good thing," she said.

As for cargo, Aasen said she envisions Longyearbyen as a stop rather than a destination, especially if Greenland follows through on plans to expand its mining exports.

"We would be a nice hub between Greenland the mainland," she said.

There appears to be little doubt of Greenland's intentions. Premier Aleqa Hammond, in an interview with international journalists Tuesday, said fishing and tourism have little growth potential, making mining the key to raising the necessary revenue to allow the territory to become economically self-sufficient, a prerequisite for Greenland's political independence from Denmark.

"Unemployment has exploded over the past four years," she said. "It has put us in a situation where if we want to invest in health and education, we need new income that will have to come from the future mining industry, whether we like it or not."

Aasen said there is no specific start of end date for a new and expanded port, nor is a plan for the remaining funding in place.

Among other recent allocations to boost the long-term Longyearbyen economy as the dominant coal industry declines is 800,000 kroner to fund a strategic industry analysis, which was announced by Justice Minister Grete Faremo during a visit this week.

**There's more! Visit [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) for the complete story.**

## HEADLINES STOLEN FROM SVALBARDPOSTEN

VERDENS NORDLIGSTE AVIS

### Barentsburg mine reopens as man's death called accidental

Barentsburg's coal mine is operating again as investigators are calling the death of a worker April 4 an accident resulting from being hit by a boulder. The Ukrainian man in his 30s was a security supervisor checking a pressure monitor at the bottom of the mine when the accident occurred, said Johan Furebotten, audit manager for the Norwegian Labour Inspectorate in northern Norway. "Our people are still in Svalbard and will follow the case in the normal way when they are back," he said.

### Jason Roberts, BBC get OK to film bears, with restrictions

Svalbard film producer Jason Roberts and the BBC have been given limited permission to film in east Svalbard despite Roberts' violations on previous projects that resulted in fines, according to the Svalbard governor's office. Roberts was recently fined 50,000 kroner for illegally disturbing polar bears during last year's filming of the BBC series "The Polar Bear Family and Me." He was also fined 10,000 kroner last December for forging an e-mail that allowed him to lease a cargo transport helicopter for a different project. The new permit authorizes the use snowmobiles for the BBC series "Pole to Pole," but prohibits access to some areas he hoped to visit, requires the crew to retreat if a bear shows any sign of being disturbed and mandates such encounters be reported to the governor.

### Pinch-thieves of polar bear's fur at museum peeve officials

Svalbard Museum officials are despairing after discovering visitors are ripping hairs from a polar bear on display since 2006. A sign stating taking hair was illegal was sufficient until last fall, but more aggressive measures are now in place. "We have set up cameras to monitor the bear," said Museum Director Tora Hultgreen. "We are going to set up a trip flare, which is enabled as a divider. If that does not help, we need a separate alarm to sound if someone goes closer than one meter." If all else fails, the bear will be enclosed in a glass case, she said. A man who groomed the bear will also visit to see if repairs are possible.

## Weather forecast for Longyearbyen

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Partly cloudy. E winds to 45 km/h. High -10C (-16C wind chill), low -14C (-20C wind chill). Sunrise 2:05a; sunset N/A	Clear. E winds to 18 km/h. High -13C (-18C wind chill), low -17C (-22C wind chill). Sunset 12:15a; sunrise 1:39a; sunset N/A	Partly cloudy. SE winds to 18 km/h. High -14C (-18C wind chill), low -17C (-22C wind chill). 24-hour daylight	Cloudy. SW winds to 35 km/h. High -4C (-10C wind chill), low -14C (-19C wind chill). 24-hour daylight
<b>Extended forecast:</b> Sunday, p. cloudy, -3C (-9C), -8C (-14C), light 24:00h; Monday, cloudy, 0C (-7C), -3C (-10C), light 24:00h; Tuesday, rain/snow, 0C (-7C), -0C (-7C), light 24:00h; Wednesday, snow, 0C (-8C), -2C (-10C), light 24:00h			

Data provided by storm.no



ARLID LYSSAND / SYSSELMANNEN

Two skiers await the arrival of investigators from the Svalbard governor's office after fatally shooting a polar bear as it approached their campsite at Isbukta. Officials said the encounter appears to be a case of self-defense and the men said they are continuing their 600-kilometer trek.

## Bear shot; 2nd during past month

### INTRUDER, from page 1

the entry dated Thursday (April 17, reflecting a delayed *Icepeople* presstime). "The bear came at speed towards us, and we chose and shot it. The governor was here just and measured the distance to 18 meters. We had already agreed on a safety distance of 30 meters from a menacing bear."

"All is well with the guys notwithstanding," the expeditioners added. "We are at Isbukta and continuing south through the glaciers in the morning."

The governor's office, which was notified about the incident about 160 kilometers from Longyearbyen at about 8:30 p.m., noted in a statement the skiers also had two dogs with them. No injuries to the expeditioners or dogs were reported.

"The governor has routinely initiated an investigation of the matter, but so far suggests that this has been a self-defense situation," the statement notes.

## Solar may cut costs, pollution at Svea

### ALTERNATIVE, from page 1

Espen Johannessen, Solbes' owner, said a similar system is being successfully used in the Swedish town of Piteå just south of the Arctic Circle and Svea appears to be a promising site.

"We think it is exciting that a large Norwegian industrial company like Store Norske will take the lead in the Arctic on a project like this," he said in an interview with the newspaper *Fremover*.

Extreme weather conditions and only having sunlight part of the year present challenges, but Johannessen said even part-time use of solar can make coal more environmentally friendly.

"There will be talk of a hybrid system where power generated respectively by the sun and diesel are optimized," he told the energy industry publication *Byggfakta*.

Store Norske Administrative Director Per Andersson, in the company's employee

The men, both from Gjøvik, departed March 24 on a planned 600-kilometer journey. Also part of the initial expedition was Stig Korsnes, who abandoned the trek April 9. In an interview with *Oppland Arbeiderblad*, Korsnes described his companions as nature lovers, not big game hunters or people who seek out polar bears.

"I talked to them and things are fine with them, but I guess they got a little scared," he said.

It is the second fatal shooting of a polar bear in Svalbard within the past month. A six-year-old male bear was killed in late March after climbing halfway through a window of a cabin at Hornsund in what was also deemed a case of self-defense. The most recent killing before that was during the summer of 2011 when a bear invaded a youth camp and killed a 17-year-boy.

**There's more! Visit [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) for the complete story.**

newsletter, said the project potentially has multiple benefits.

"We have an annual fuel cost of 60 million kroner to produce electricity at Svea," he said. "This also means emissions of greenhouse gases."

Store Norske will decide after this summer whether to make the solar panels a permanent installation.

Solbes workers collected weather and other data from Svea during the past winter in preparation for the test installation. One encouraging finding, according to Johannessen, is there is snow on the ground most of the year, which will increase solar radiation into the panels.

Solbes is described as a small knowledge-based niche company seeking to commercialize solar technology and research.

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## What's up

### April 17

10 a.m.: Bydrift board meeting. Næringsbygget 3, Newntoppen room.

6 p.m.: Movie: "Eventyrland," Norwegian drama, ages 15 and up. Kulturhuset.

### April 20-21

Open day at Fredheim, hosted by governor, featuring presentations about Hilmar Nøis and the history of the fishing station.

1 p.m.: Outdoor Mass at Fredheim. Svalbard Church.

6 p.m.: Movie: "The Place Beyond the Pines," U.S. drama/crime, ages 11 and up. Kulturhuset.

8:30 p.m.: Movie: "Dypet," Norwegian/Icelandic drama, ages 11 and up. Kulturhuset.

### April 22

11 a.m.: Environmental and Industrial Committee meeting. Næringsbygget 3, Newntoppen room.

8 p.m.: Trivia quiz. Barentz Pub.

### April 23

7 p.m.: Concert by Svalbard Kirkes Trio. Svalbard Church.

### April 24

5:30 p.m.: Rehearsal concert by Polargospel. Svalbard Church.

8 p.m.: Movie: "Oblivion," U.S. action/sci-fi, ages 11 and up. Kulturhuset.

### April 25

2 p.m.: Culture and Leisure Authority Committee meeting. Næringsbygget 3, Newntoppen room.

### April 28

11 a.m.: Mass. Svalbard Church.

6 p.m.: Movie: "Song for Marion," British drama/comedy, all ages. Kulturhuset.

8 p.m.: Movie: "Iron Man 3" (3D), U.S. action/sci-fi, no age limit specified. Kulturhuset.

### April 29

8 p.m.: Trivia quiz. Barentz Pub.

## What's online

**Icepeople.net** provides daily updates of news about Svalbard and the world's polar regions, plus extras for articles from the print edition. Among the latest news:

- *Law of the Sea center coming to Tromsø*
- *Lofoten islands: Cod's blessed land*
- *Tiny climate news startup wins Pulitzer*
- *An Arctic free-for-all for oil and...tusks*