

AUGUST 2022 ANALYSIS –
THE ARCTIC
CONVERSATION ON
TWITTER

OBSERVATOIRE DE LA POLITIQUE ET LA SÉCURITÉ DE L'ARCTIQUE (OPSA) and
OBSERVATOIRE DES ADMINISTRATIONS PUBLIQUES AUTOCHTONES (OAPA)



OBSERVATOIRE DE LA POLITIQUE
ET LA SÉCURITÉ DE L'ARCTIQUE



OAPA

Observatoire des administrations
publiques autochtones

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This analysis studied how the Arctic region was talked about on Twitter during the month of August 2022. The intensity and nature of coverage will be put in perspective to capture trends since May 2021.

NUMBER OF ARCTIC MENTIONS: The trend in the number of mentions of our 5 keywords was up in August. A significant increase was observed in the first part of August. The keywords Saami / Sami and Inuit / Inuk surged. This increase can be attributed to the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples and the 22nd Saami Conference, which took place from August 12 to 14. The number of mentions of the term Arctic also jumped in the first part of the month and at the end of the month. The first increase was fueled by the release of new data on climate change in the region. The second increase can be attributed to the NATO Secretary General's visit to the Canadian Arctic. The number of mentions of the term Greenland also increased at the end of the month. This increase was due to discussions about the melting of the Greenland ice and to the Arctic Circle Forum in Greenland.

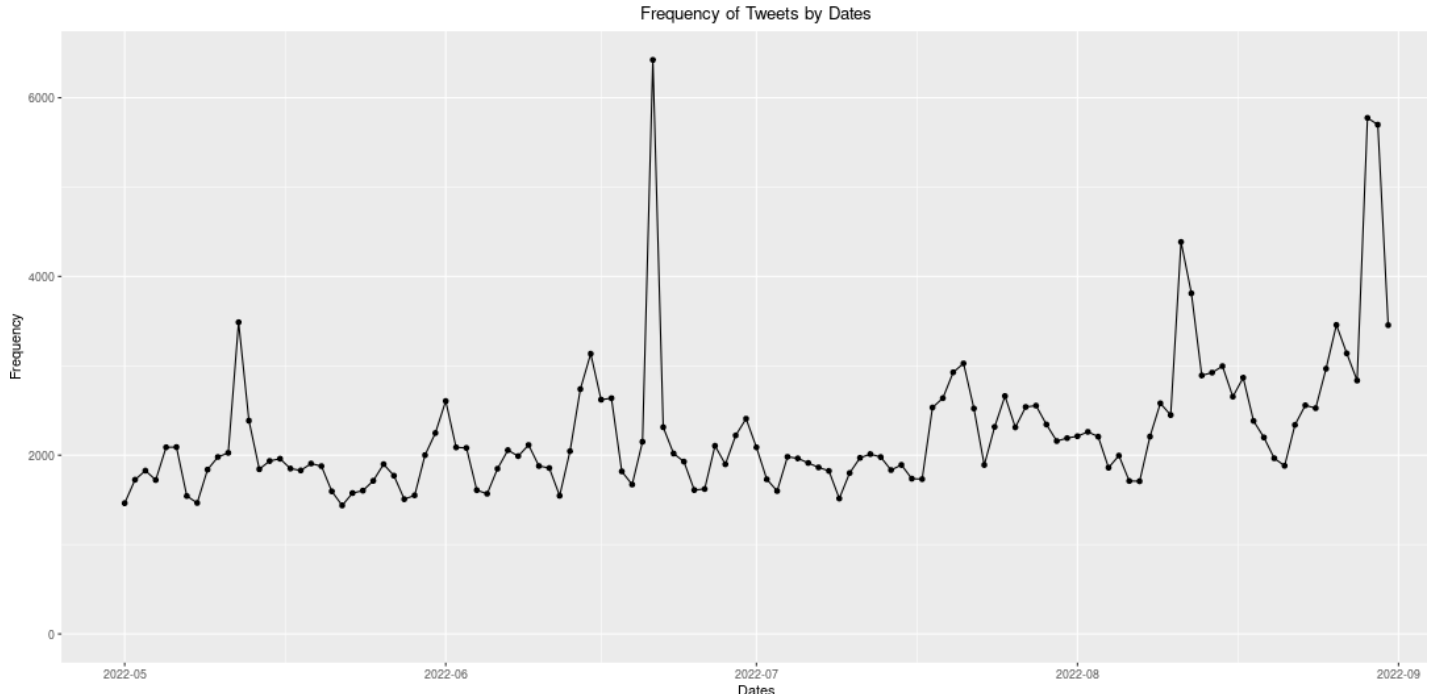


Figure 1: number of mentions of “Arctic”, “Inuit” and “Inuk”, “Saami” and “Sami”, “Greenland”, and “Arctic Council” on Twitter from May to August 2022.

SENTIMENT ANALYSIS: Negative tweets trended upward throughout August but increased significantly by the end of the month (Figure 2). Negative tweets decreased slightly while positive tweets increased in the first half of August (Figure 3). This increase in positivity was observed for the terms "Greenland", as the Arctic Circle Forum in Nuuk was presented as a booster for cooperation in the circumpolar world. It was also observed for Indigenous issues, as the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples and the signing of the Indigenous Collaboration Commitment prompted the celebration of indigenous peoples' achievements and contributions.

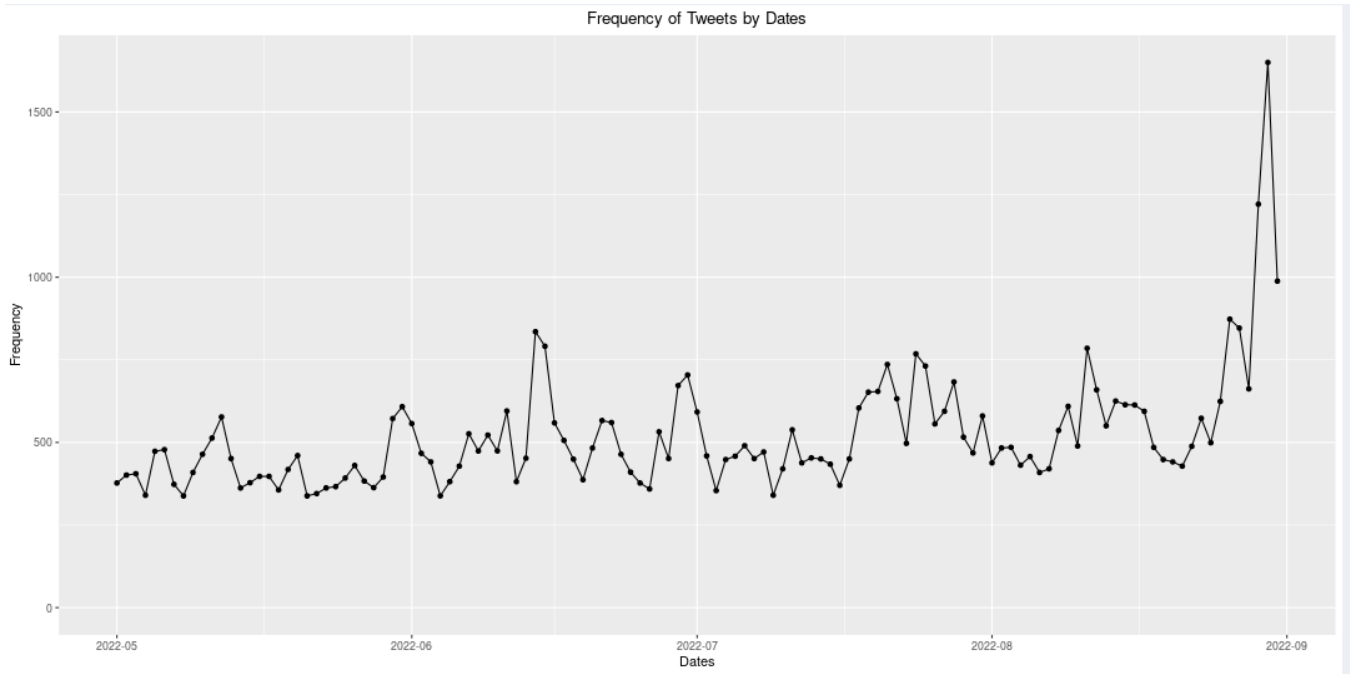


Figure 2: number of negative tweets from May to August 2022.

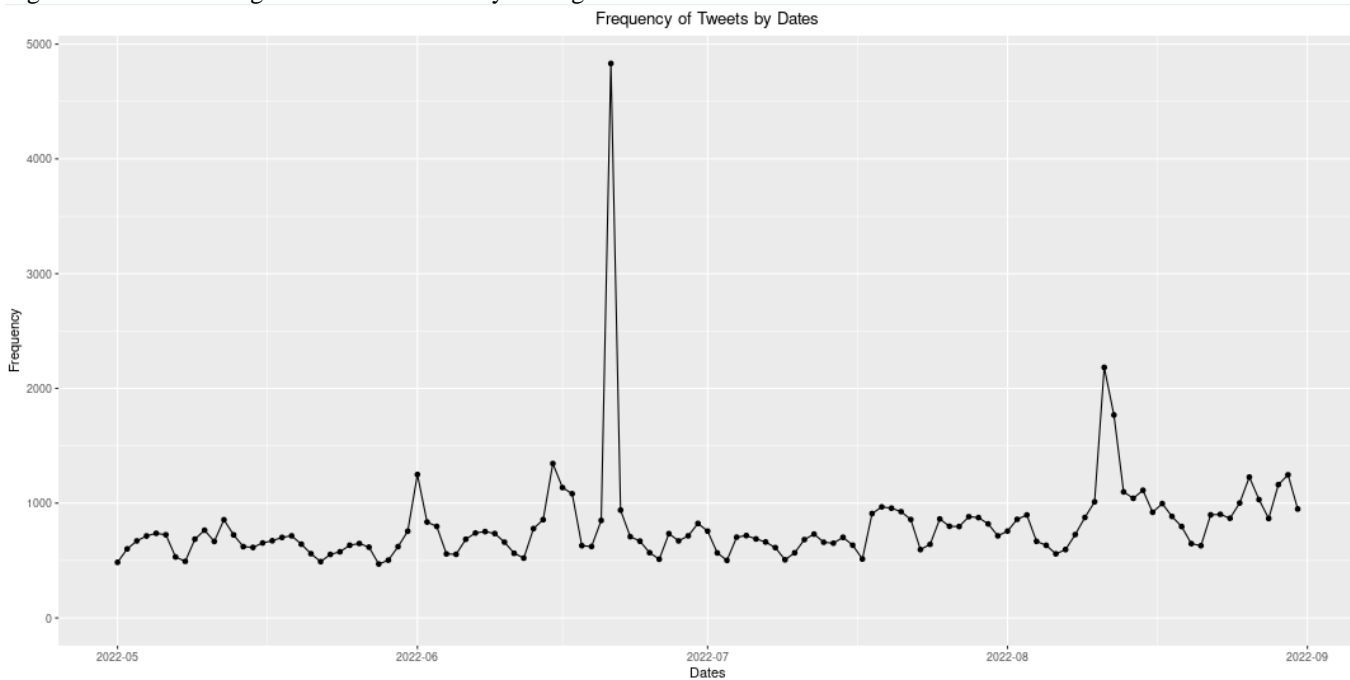


Figure 3: number of positive tweets from May to August 2022.

STORIES AND THEMES: Climate issues dominated the Arctic conversation in August 2022. Climate change was discussed by users in terms of global warming, methane, climate catastrophe, sea ice, wildfire and science. This was propelled by the publication of a scientific study on accelerated warming in the Arctic. The association with the term zombie is explained by tweets about Greenland's "zombie ice", which is melting rapidly and is responsible for sea level rise. Energy project impacting wildlife in the Arctic has also been a key story for many users. This trend can be seen by observing the co-occurrence of hashtags (Figure 4). The impacts of climate change on wildlife were also discussed in connection with the discovery of a Greenland shark in the Caribbeans (figure 5).

Then, the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples on August 9 and 22nd Saami Conference brought indigenous issues to the forefront as evidenced by the association of the terms indigenous, Inuit and Métis. The associations with the terms "standwiththegwichin" and "protectthearctic" indicate that indigenous issues were also discussed in relation to environmental protection as an oil driller exited Arctic Refuge.

Looking at co-occurrence of words (figure 5) and the co-occurrence of hashtags (figure 4), strategic competition and tensions between Russia and the west colored the Arctic conversation. This tendency can be seen in the associations of the hashtags "Russia", "NATO" and "Canada". The visit of NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg to Nunavut fueled this discussion. Users also discussed the implications for China of possible Finnish and Swedish membership in NATO (Figure 5). The appointment of the first Arctic ambassador by Joe Biden's administration colored the discussion on strategic competition.

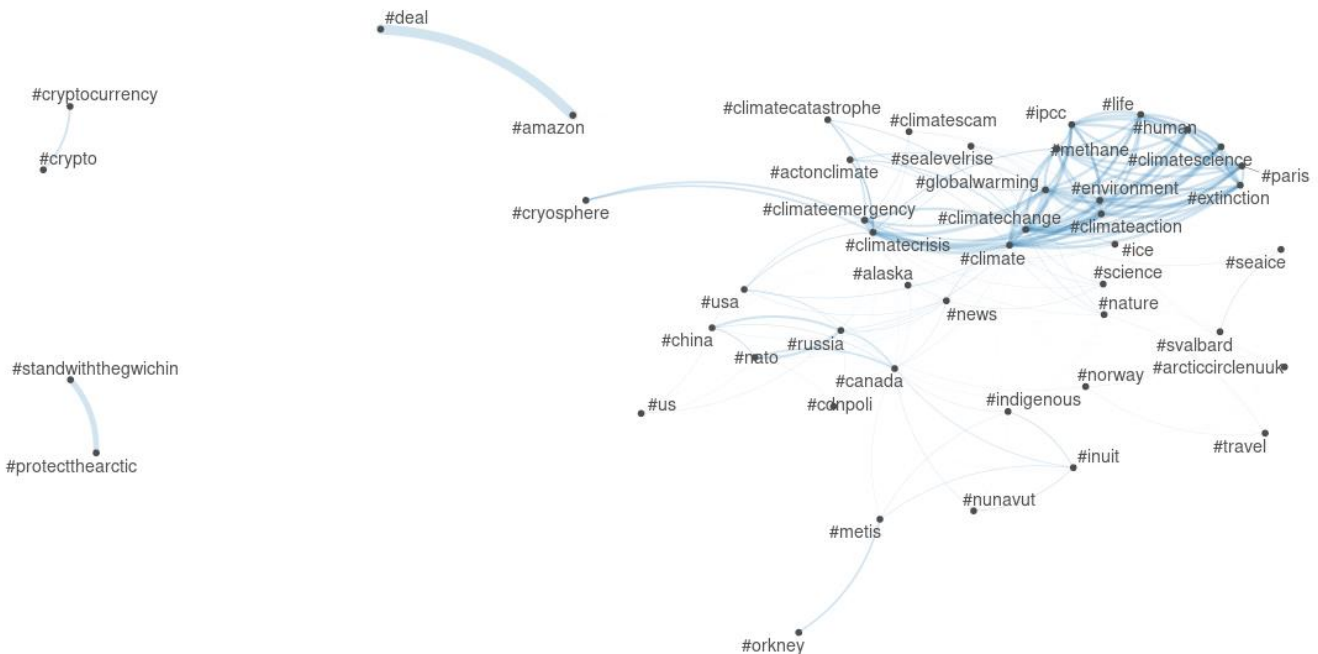


Figure 4: co-occurrences of hashtags in August 2022.

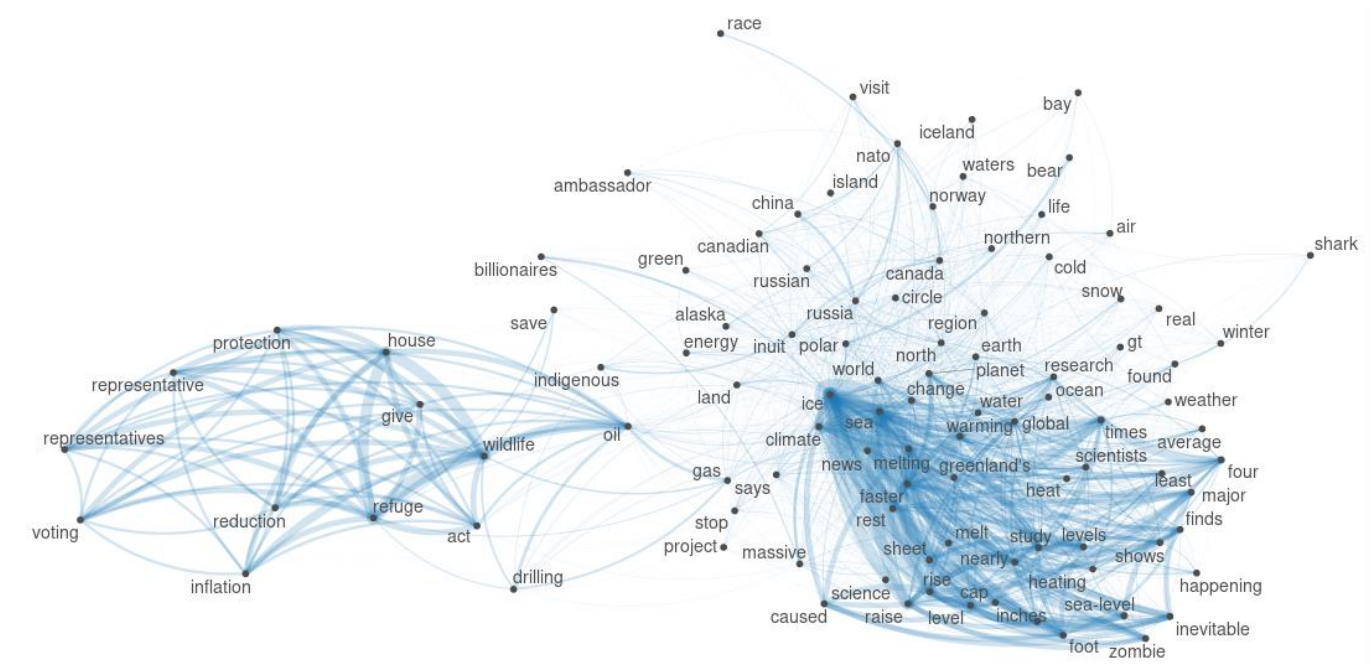


Figure 5: co-occurrences of words in August 2022.

TWEETS MOST RETWEETED BY USERS – TOP 10, AUGUST2022

1. Message linking floods in Pakistan with global warming
2. Message linking floods in Pakistan with global warming
3. Scientific discovery by scientists about trees growing in the Arctic tundra
4. Post highlighting a day of massive gains for the Greenlandic ice sheet
5. Message on study documenting the Greenlandic ice melt
6. Photo of seals
7. Photo of show goggles perfected by Inuit hunters
8. Photo illustrating the effect of global warming in the Arctic
9. Post on Inuit representation in television shows
10. Message informing about the speed of the ice melt in the Arctic

DISINFORMATION RATE THIS MONTH: 9%

FOCUS OF DISINFORMATION: disinformation continued to be present in August, remaining at a high level for 4 straight months. Again, Arctic disinformation equated climate disinformation: 89% of all disinformation was made of climate deniers.

This phenomenon is interesting as different parts of the globe were wrestling with crushing heatwaves. A lot of the attention is focused on the variations of the Greenlandic ice sheet with climate deniers attempting at finding any piece of data supporting their ideas. The #climate scam was the most often repeated one among users spreading disinformation.

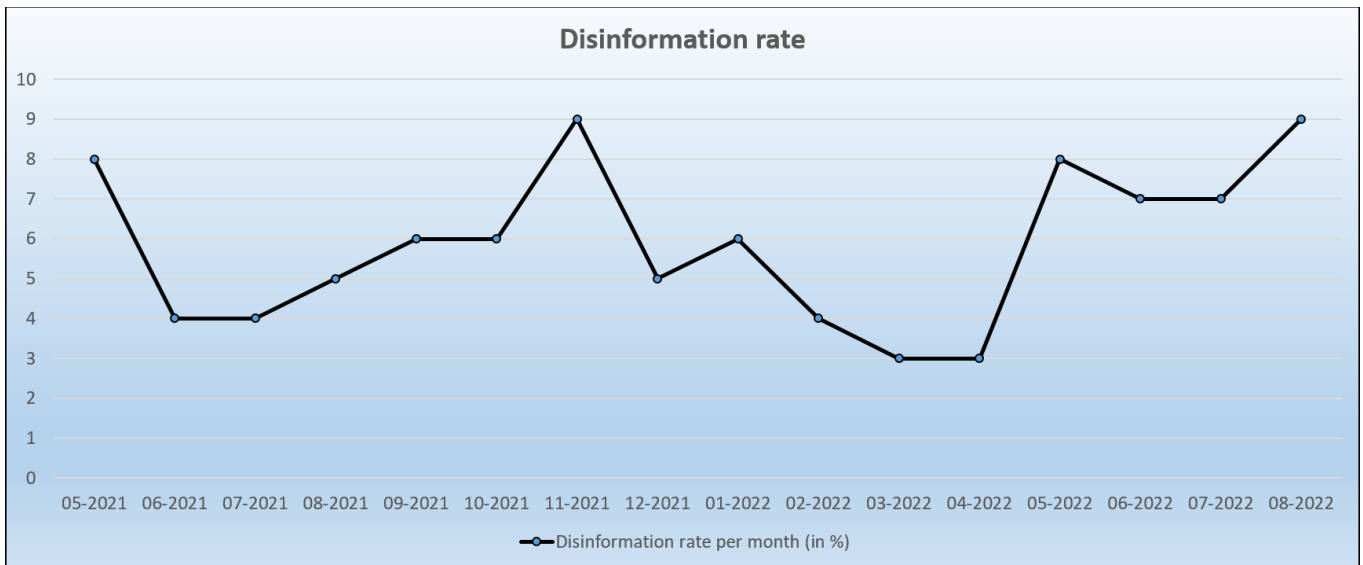


Figure 6: number of tweets spreading disinformation among the 500 tweets most retweeted per month from May 2021 to August 2022.

NOTES

We have collected tweets posted on Twitter from May 2021 to the present, updating the dataset every month. Seven keywords are tracked to analyse the nature and intensity of the Arctic conversation on Twitter: “Arctic”, “Inuit” and “Inuk”, “Saami” and “Sami”, “Greenland”, and “Arctic Council”.

We then proceeded to remove terms that used these words while not being related to the Arctic region. For more information about the data collection and the packages used to extract data, please consult our open-accessed, interactive database at the following: https://labovirtuel.enap.ca/shiny/demo_arctic/en/

The disinformation rate on page 5 is calculated by analysing the 500 tweets most retweeted in a month containing our keywords. The disinformation rate is the number of posts promoting disinformation divided by 500.



**MONTHLY ANALYSIS – THE
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