

## Why GAO Did This Study

Norway, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States participate in the Arctic Military Environmental Cooperation (AMEC) program, a multilateral effort that seeks to reduce the environmental impacts of Russia's military activities through technology development projects. AMEC has primarily focused on Russia's aging fleet of nuclear submarines. Section 324 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004 required GAO to review AMEC, including its relationship to the Department of Defense's (DOD) Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program. In accordance with the act, GAO (1) assessed the extent to which AMEC supports and complements the CTR program, (2) identified AMEC member countries' financial contributions to the program, (3) assessed AMEC's future program objectives, and (4) evaluated DOD's proposal to expand its technology development activities to Russia's Pacific region.

## What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends, among other things, that DOD determine whether AMEC activities should include improving security around Russian nuclear submarine bases, and whether DOD's technology development efforts should be expanded to nuclear submarine dismantlement in Russia's Pacific region. DOD concurred with all of our recommendations.

[www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-04-924](http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-04-924).

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Gene Aloise at (202) 512-3841 or [aloisee@gao.gov](mailto:aloisee@gao.gov).

# RUSSIAN NUCLEAR SUBMARINES

## U.S. Participation in the Arctic Military Environmental Cooperation Program Needs Better Justification

### What GAO Found

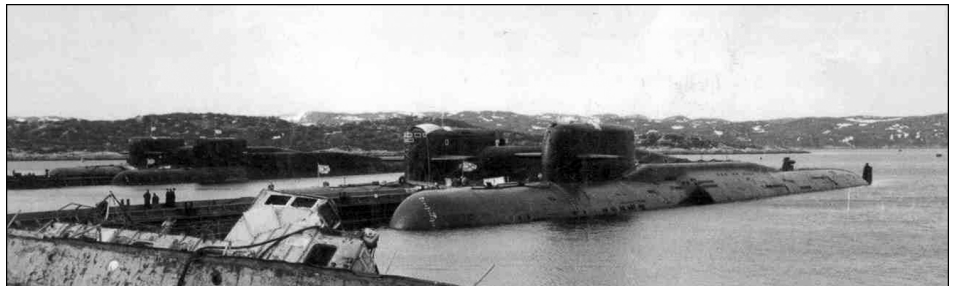
In a 1999 program plan to the Congress, DOD stated that AMEC projects would support the goals of the CTR program. However, we found that only one of eight AMEC projects designed to support CTR's objective of dismantling Russia's ballistic missile nuclear submarines has done so. This project involved development of a prototype 40-metric ton container to store and transport spent (used) nuclear fuel from Russia's dismantled submarines. Despite AMEC's limited contribution to CTR, DOD officials, including CTR representatives, said that most of the projects can be used to support dismantlement of other types of Russian nuclear submarines. In addition, U.S. and foreign officials cited other benefits of U.S. participation in AMEC, including promoting U.S. foreign policy objectives, particularly with Norway, and facilitating military-to-military cooperation with Russia.

From 1996, when the program was established, to April 2004, AMEC member countries had contributed about \$56 million to the program. The United States has been the largest contributor, providing about \$31 million, or about 56 percent of the total. However, the overall U.S. contribution has decreased from fiscal year 1999 to fiscal year 2004 as U.S. funded projects have been completed and as other AMEC member countries have increased their assistance.

In May 2004, AMEC developed a draft strategic plan to guide its future efforts. The plan, which is currently being reviewed by AMEC partners, proposes improving the security of Russia's nuclear submarine bases and securing spent nuclear fuel from dismantled submarines. However, securing bases could be contrary to U.S. policy, which preclude assistance to most operational Russian military sites that contain nuclear weapons, including certain naval facilities.

DOD wants to expand its dismantlement technology development efforts to Russia's Pacific region, but has not adequately analyzed the condition of Russia's decommissioned nuclear submarines in the Pacific and their impact on the environment. Furthermore, DOD has not identified specific projects that would be needed beyond those already done in the Arctic region.

### Decommissioned Russian Nuclear Submarines



Source: DOD.