

## Senior Arctic Officials (SAO) Report to Ministers

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## **A. Introduction**

### **1. Report from the Kingdom of Denmark on its chairmanship of the Arctic Council 2009-2011**

At the Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Tromsø on 29 April 2009 the Kingdom of Denmark – Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands – took over from Norway the chairmanship of the Council. The Danish Minister of Foreign Affairs presented the Danish chairmanship program and its priorities, which include the Human Dimension, the IPY Legacy, Climate Change, Biodiversity, Integrated Resource Management and Operational Cooperation.

The Senior Arctic Officials held four regular meetings during the Danish chairmanship: in Copenhagen, 12 – 13 November 2009, Ilulissat, 28 – 29 April 2010, in Tórshavn, 19 – 20 October 2010, and in Copenhagen, 16 – 17 March 2011. Meetings among SAOs and PPs were held in connection with all the regular meetings. In addition, drafting meetings to prepare for the Nuuk Ministerial Meeting in Nuuk on 12 May 2011 were held in Ottawa, 7 – 9 December 2010, Tromsø, 26 – 27 January 2011, Copenhagen 12 – 14 April 2011 and Nuuk, 9 – 11 May 2011.

In accordance with the Tromsø Ministerial Declaration the first ever Deputy Ministers meeting was held in Copenhagen on 27 May 2010 and a "Symposium" (Information Day) for more general information exchange with both Working Groups and Observers was held in Copenhagen on 28 May 2010.

The Danish chairmanship met with the Working Group Chairs and Executive Secretaries in Copenhagen on 8 September 2009 and 1 March 2010 and with counterparts representing the other "Councils of the North" in Kirkenes on 23 March 2010 and in Copenhagen on 7 April 2011. The Danish chairmanship furthermore met with the accredited observers and applicants for observer status in Warsaw on 26 March 2010.

The Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Premier of Greenland presented the Arctic Council (AMAP) report on "The Greenland Ice Sheet" to the COP 15-conference in Copenhagen on 14 December 2009 at a national side event where the Foreign Minister of Norway and former Vice President of the United States, Al Gore, also presented their "Melting Ice" report. A message from the Arctic Council on climate change was sent to the COP 16-conference in Cancun in December 2010.

On the occasion of the Danish chairmanship a meeting among Arctic Environment Ministers was held in Ilulissat in June 2010. This meeting was held outside the auspices of the Arctic Council and complemented the work of the Council. The Arctic Health Ministers' Meeting held in Nuuk in February 2011, recognized the continued health challenges and noted the need to improve physical and mental health and well-being and empowerment of indigenous peoples and residents of Arctic communities.

On the Public Diplomacy side the Danish chairmanship has given numerous interviews to domestic and foreign media and participated in more than 20 Arctic seminars etc., most of them in European capitals.

## **B. Strengthening the Arctic Council - Institutional Matters**

### **2.1. Background**

At the Deputy Ministers' meeting on 26 and 27 May 2010, it was decided to produce a document that is to address the following questions:

- The role of observers and the format for their participation
- The question of a permanent secretariat
- The question of budgetizing expenditure
- The nature of the decisions taken in the Arctic Council and the increased use of task forces

This document contains a balanced and comprehensive "package solution" proposal to Ministers to strengthen the Arctic Council and solve the observer question while maintaining the key role of the Arctic States and Permanent Participants (PPs).

The decisions made at the AC Ministerial Meeting in Nuuk on strengthening the Arctic Council are to be implemented, including any consequential amendments to the Rules of Procedure, during the Swedish Chairmanship.

A Task Force will, during the Swedish Chairmanship, make recommendations to the SAOs on the implementation of the decisions in this paper as necessary and also propose consequential amendments to the Rules of Procedures.

### **2.2. Communications and Outreach**

Global interest in the Arctic has increased dramatically. The Arctic Council (AC) is the premier international forum for issues affecting the Arctic, and yet the organization has a limited international profile. There is a sense that information concerning the AC's initiatives and successes is not reaching a wider audience. i.e. the Arctic Council has a good story to tell but word is not getting out.

As a response to this growing interest, in the 2009 Tromsø Declaration Arctic Council Ministers "Decide[d] to develop guidelines for engagement in outreach activities and an Arctic Council communication and outreach plan based on common priorities."

At the Nov 2009 Senior Arctic Officials (SAO) Meeting, the Danish Chairmanship asked Canada to lead a contact group from interested Member States, the Chairmanship, Permanent Participants (PPs), Working Groups and the AC Secretariat. SAOs agreed to start an intercessional process and to create a contact group for communications and outreach. The goal of the Communications and Outreach Contact Group was to provide SAOs and PPs with draft communications guidelines and recommendations on elements of a strategic communications plan in order to improve the effectiveness of Arctic Council communications and outreach.

Based on responses to two questionnaires and participants' suggestions, an analysis of the current state of Arctic Council outreach and communications efforts was presented to SAOs and endorsed at their meeting in Ilulissat in April 2010 in order to respond to the ministerial decision.

The Contact Group presented its final report to SAOs at their meeting in Torshavn in Oct 2010, including draft *Arctic Council Communications and Outreach Guidelines*, a report on *Elements*

of an AC Strategic Communications Plan and Recommendations concerning Websites. SAOs endorsed the proposed objectives of the strategic communications plan and the hybrid approach for its development. At the March 2011 SAO meeting, an updated version of the draft *Arctic Council Communications and Outreach Guidelines* was submitted to SAOs for their consideration and adopted.

Many of the recommendations of the Contact Group have already been taken into account by the Members and the Working Groups of the Arctic Council, including the development of Working Group communication plans, and in the improvements made to the AC and Working Group websites.

The Draft *Arctic Council Communications and Outreach Guidelines* have been submitted to Ministers for approval in an appendix to the Nuuk Declaration. SAOs recommend to Ministers that the Draft Guidelines be adopted as drafted. The report on *Elements of an AC Strategic Communications Plan* has also been appended to the Nuuk Declaration.

Future work - The upcoming Swedish Chairmanship has indicated its intention to continue efforts in the area of communications and outreach by completing the development of a Strategic Communications Plan for the Arctic Council which will be submitted for approval during the Swedish Chairmanship.

### **2.3. Project Support Instrument (PSI)**

With the recent announcement of the decision of the government of the Russian Federation to provide 10 million Euro's to the Project Support Instrument (PSI) in 2011-2013 all necessary conditions to launch the PSI have been met.

The start of the functioning of the PSI provides significant support for the elimination of contaminants in the Arctic, as well as an important precedent of funding for Arctic Council projects which is conducive to the strengthening of the Council.

## C. Task Forces and Related Outcomes

### 3. Agreement on cooperation in Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic

At the 2009 Ministerial Meeting in Tromsø, the Arctic Council decided to establish a Task Force with a mandate to develop an international instrument on cooperation on Search and Rescue operations in the Arctic. The Task Force, co-chaired by Ambassador Anton Vasiliev of the Russian Federation and Ambassador David Balton of the United States, met five times: in Washington (December 2009), in Moscow (February 2010), in Oslo (June 2010), in Helsinki (October 2010), and in Reykjavik (December 2010).

The Task Force concluded its work by elaborating the Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic. The Agreement is the first legally binding instrument negotiated under the auspices of the Arctic Council. It also represents the first legally binding agreement on any topic ever negotiated among all the eight Arctic states. The signature of the Agreement in Nuuk demonstrates the commitment of those states to enhance their cooperation in addressing emerging issues in the Arctic region.

The negotiation of the Agreement proceeded in a highly collaborative spirit, with all governments committed to a positive outcome. For each Party, the Agreement defines an area of the Arctic in which it will have lead responsibility in organizing responses to search and rescue incidents. The Agreement also commits Parties to provide appropriate assistance in the event of such an incident and to take other steps address growing search and rescue needs in the Arctic region.

Following signature of the Agreement in Nuuk, each Arctic Council Member will undertake the necessary internal procedures required for its entry into force. Canada will serve as Depositary for the Agreement, which will enter into force 30 days after the Depositary has received notification from all eight Members that they have completed their respective internal procedures.

Canada is also organizing a table top exercise among search and rescue agencies of the Arctic Council Members as a first step toward implementation of the Agreement.

### 4. Short-Lived Climate Forcers (SLCF)

The Arctic Council Ministerial Tromsø Declaration from April 2009 created the Task Force, charging it:

*to identify existing and new measures to reduce emissions of these [short-lived climate] forcers and recommend further immediate actions that can be taken and to report on progress at the next Ministerial meeting*

In November 2009, the Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs) further refined this charge through the approval of Operating Guidelines that agreed the Task Force could initially focus on black carbon; include national representatives, permanent participants and a variety of experts; cooperate closely with the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP) Short-Lived Climate Forcers (SLCFs) Expert Group; and report periodically back to the SAOs on progress. The Task Force has been co-chaired by Norway and the U.S.

The focus on black carbon does not represent a judgment by the Task Force that black carbon is more important than methane or other climate forcers in terms of Arctic impacts. Rather, this focus acknowledges the unique role black carbon may be playing in the Arctic, its need for study as a frontier area of science, and the need for new technical analyses and emission inventories to inform the Task Force's recommendations regarding black carbon emission reduction measures.

The Task Force convened three in-person meetings over the course of the last two years and produced two products that are being delivered in time for the Arctic Council Ministerial meeting in May, 2011: a "Progress Report and Recommendations for Ministers" and an underlying technical report focusing on black carbon emissions, future emission projections, current policies and regulations in the Council nations that are relevant for black carbon, and an identification and characterization of additional black carbon emission mitigation options. The language contained in the Progress Report and Recommendations represents Task Force efforts to obtain as much consensus as possible among all Task Force participants.

The Task Force also jointly worked with the AMAP Expert Group to identify a set of modeling scenarios to gain better insights about the significance of Arctic climate effects of different black carbon sources from different regions, both within and outside of Arctic Council nations. The Task Force's recommendations point to the importance of improved emission inventories and data sharing for black carbon, as well as the need to consider additional mitigation options for key emission sources such as diesel vehicles and engines, stationary diesel engines, residential heating, marine shipping, agricultural burning, prescribed forest burning and wildfires.

Regarding future work for black carbon, the Task Force recommends continued focus on the costs of implementing certain measures, the additional emission reduction potential of some measures, potential Arctic climate benefits, and potential health benefits. Regarding methane, the Task Force notes that the Arctic Council and Council nations may be able to leverage existing efforts to encourage additional methane reductions, both within and outside Arctic Council nations, by communicating and demonstrating the climate benefits of such measures specifically for the Arctic region.

**SAOs recommend Ministers to:**

**Decide** to extend the timeframe for the work of the Task Force, allowing it to complete its mandate, and to report to Ministers at their next meeting in 2013.

## **5. Oil Spill Preparedness and Response**

The Arctic is likely to see increased shipping and efforts to exploit the natural resources of the region in the coming decades. This, in turn, increases the potential for harm to both human life and the Arctic environment. Recent events such as the sinking of the M/S EXPLORER in 2007 in Antarctic waters and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010 in the Gulf of Mexico underscore these dangers.

Arctic Council working groups have developed various oil-related and emergency response-related products, but there is no marine oil pollution response instrument specific to the Arctic. The International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation (OPRC) is a framework for international cooperation in combating incidents or threats of marine oil pollution, to which all eight Arctic States are parties. Article 10 of the OPRC promotes the development of bilateral and multilateral agreements for oil pollution preparedness and response, such as on a regional basis.

The Senior Arctic Officials recommend that the Ministers mandate a task force to develop an international instrument on Arctic marine oil pollution preparedness and response. We further recommend that the EPPR working group in close collaboration with other relevant working groups develop recommendations and/or best practices in the prevention of marine oil pollution. The preliminary or final results of both should be presented at the next Ministerial meeting in 2013.

## **6. Arctic Change Assessment and an Arctic Resilience Report**

The Arctic region is currently in a period of rapid change - environmentally as well as politically and economically. Climate change is the driver that has received most attention, but a number of other drivers are also relevant for the Arctic, such as demographic change and increased global demand for the resources of the region.

To this end a scoping exercise will be undertaken to review the need of an integrated assessment of multiple drivers of Arctic change, including an Arctic Resilience Report. The projects will address questions on how the Arctic, in particular indigenous peoples, are affected by current and planned activities, how negative effects can be minimized and how resilience can be strengthened.

Scoping activities will take place in the fall of 2011. These will include a workshop to involve all AC WGs and other relevant expertise and result in a proposal for the SAO meeting in November 2011.

## **7. Ecosystem-based Management (EBM)**

Human activities in the Arctic are increasing, and planning and management of these activities on a cross-sectoral basis can assist in reducing conflict among activities and in supporting the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

The Senior Arctic Officials recognize the desirability of exchanging information regarding marine and landscape planning and management among the Arctic States, and encouraging compatibility of planning approaches on an ecosystem basis.

We recommend that Ministers convene an ecosystem-based management (EBM) expert group, reporting to the Senior Arctic Officials, composed of governmental experts from the Arctic States and representatives of the Permanent Participants. The expert group should consider developing a common understanding of EBM, consider EBM principles for marine and terrestrial areas, and consider developing Arctic-specific guidelines for applying the ecosystem approach to all relevant areas of work in the Arctic Council. If appropriate, the work of the expert group could be presented at the next Ministerial meeting in 2013.

## **8. Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (SAON)**

In the spring 2009, the Arctic Council decided to lead further development of SAON and established the SAON Steering Group (SG), composed of representatives from the Arctic Council, the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). The SG worked most closely with the eight Arctic countries and consulted with experts in community-based monitoring and in data management. It created a new website ([www.arcticobserving.org](http://www.arcticobserving.org)) where all SAON reports can be found. The SAON SG further specified the potential roles and responsibilities of SAON and agreed that the consultation and planning processes for SAON had gone as far as needed, and that a transition to an implementation phase was the next logical step. The Arctic Council endorsed this view and

called for an implementation plan, to include “institutional framework” and an initial list of tasks to be undertaken. The report to the Arctic Council and the International Arctic Science Committee on “Plan for the Implementation Phase of SAON” was delivered in February 2011.

A small intercessional contact group was formed by several Arctic Council states and PPs to address procedural issues related to the SAON Steering Group. The contact group ultimately recommended to the SAOs that the Arctic Council and IASC continue their partnership on the SAON such that it could create its own operating guidelines. The SAOs have decided with IASC on the following procedures:

- The Arctic Council will provide the Chair of the SAON Board
- IASC will provide the vice-chair of the SAON Board
- The PPs will have the same status on the SAON Board as they have in the Arctic Council
- The SAOs will review the SAON structure in two to four years time and make any necessary adjustments to the structure at that time
- AMAP and IASC will jointly provide secretariat support to the SAON





## D. Working Groups

### 9. Reports from Working Groups on their achievements 2009-2011 and deliverables with SAO recommendations for Ministers

<b>I. ARCTIC CONTAMINANTS ACTION PROGRAM (ACAP)</b>
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#### Main Achievements 2009-2011

ACAP continues to address on-going environmental challenges such as contamination from hazardous chemicals and waste and is responding to new and emerging threats to the Arctic, such as SLCFs. As it moves forward, ACAP will have to consider how to balance available expertise and financial resources among the many pressing issues the Arctic Council has tasked it to undertake. In addition, with respect to implementing concrete emission reduction projects, the progress ACAP is able to make is contingent upon the legal, technical and financial commitments of member states.

Over the coming years, ACAP will also need to consider how to broaden its activities so that they are circumpolar in nature and therefore more effectively make progress in reducing overall contamination in the arctic environment and exposure of at-risk, arctic populations.

The three new Project Steering Groups (PSGs) were created to develop an integrated hazardous waste management strategy in Russia (IHWMS), mitigation measures for short-lived climate forces (SLCF) and involvement of indigenous people (IPCAP) in environmental projects in Arctic:

#### 1. INTEGRATED HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (IHWMS)

The IHWMS PSG was created by the ACAP Working Group. Project Steering Group (PSG) chaired by Russia, co-chaired by USA and Norway has finished development of Terms of Reference (TOR), which was finally approved on 3 September 2010 at the regular ACAP working group meeting in Oslo.

The overall objective of this Project is to develop an IHWMS for selected Northern regions of the Russian Federation, aimed at improving waste management practices in order to decrease the negative impact on the Arctic environment from hazardous waste streams.

Other objectives include:

- facilitating the development of environmentally sound hazardous waste management in Russia;
- sharing knowledge and lessons-learned regarding the development and operation of hazardous waste management systems in the other areas of the Arctic; and
- leveraging expertise of relevant ACAP PSGs.

The IHWMS focus on most hazardous (Russian 1 and 2 hazard) waste categories and the regional hazardous waste management systems for such wastes.

The IHWMS are in process of development recommendations for waste management system(s) in selected region(s), including identification of the waste producer(s) (industry) and other stakeholders, storage, collection, transportation and environmentally sound management (e.g., treatment, destruction, or disposal) of the waste. The IHWMS projects identify existing gaps and barriers in the current waste management system(s).

## **2. OBSOLETE PESTICIDES**

ACAP has continued activities to prevent release of obsolete pesticides into the Arctic environment by developing pesticide inventories, repackaging and improving storage conditions. In 2009 inventory and safe storage activities in Altai Krai were completed for 4972 t obsolete pesticides. The improved storage activities have now been completed in 9 Northern Russian priority districts directly impacting the Arctic where 6500 t of solid and liquid pesticides, including persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and mercury containing pesticides have been stored safely. Pesticide inventories have continued in Krasnoyarsk Krai in 2009 and 2010, where 225 t have been placed in safe storages where necessary.

ACAP experience and practices for pesticide management have been shared with Moldova, Kirgizia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, and Tadzikistan. Currently there are no facilities to destroy obsolete pesticide stocks in Russia in an environmentally sound manner.

## **3. MERCURY**

ACAP expresses its gratitude to the government of Denmark for its longstanding chairmanship of this PSG and congratulate the United States and the Russian Federation on their election as the new co-chairs. Under the new leadership, this PSG has been reconstituted as an "umbrella" PSG which can, in principle, undertake multiple, simultaneous projects on mercury. The PSG has agreed to continue work and explore new projects to reduce mercury releases from the following sectors which constitute large sources of global emissions: coal combustion, non-ferrous metals production, and small-scale and industrial gold scale mining, as well as addressing the issue of mercury-containing wastes. An existing project on mercury containing waste in NW Russia, which aimed to demonstrate ways to improve the system for collection, transport, storage, and treatment of mercury containing waste has concluded and a report to ACAP on next steps is anticipated in the fall of 2011. In addition, in 2010, the PSG completed a project in the Russian chlor-alkali industry to reduce mercury releases to wastewater and improve mercury monitoring systems in several Russian chlor-alkali facilities. These ongoing efforts have reduced mercury releases to the environment by about 1 ton per year. A U.S. and Swedish funded coal-fired power plant mercury control project in is underway in the Russian Federation, and the PSG is considering proposing a second phase of this project to disseminate and replicate the results. A project concept for controlling mercury releases from non-ferrous metals smelting has also been put forward, and the PSG expressed interest in working in this sector. Lastly, the PSG has decided to invite experts with financial and technical resources to participate in the PSG, although project activities would remain limited to action within the eight arctic states.

## **4. DIOXINS**

The ACAP project "Reduction/Elimination of Emissions of Dioxins and Furans in the Russian Federation with Focus on the Arctic and Northern Regions Impacting the Arctic" has entered into phase III activities i.e. identification and promoting implementation of control technologies in order to reduce/eliminate formation and release of dioxins and furans to the environment from point sources e.g. pulp and paper mills, metal industries, cement kilns and waste incineration plants affecting the Arctic. The project steering group has continued to search for further activities in order to reduce emissions of dioxins and furans from e.g. the waste incineration plant in Murmansk.

## **5. BROMINATED FLAME RETARDANTS (BFRs)**

The ACAP project steering group on brominated flame retardants (BFR) has operated as an information exchange network in 2009 and 2010. The future work on BFRs under ACAP is under consideration.

## **6. SHORT-LIVED CLIMATE FORCERS (SLCF)**

In 2010 ACAP agreed to Terms of Reference for a new Project Steering Group (PSG) that would undertake initial activities on black carbon and other SLCFs to enhance pan-arctic cooperation to reduce these contaminants and to help better define the costs and benefits of mitigation measures.

The PSG held its first meeting on March 22, 2010 to develop concrete projects to achieve Arctic black carbon reductions. Initial activities will focus on diesel black carbon, forest fires, and combined heat and power. The United States has committed five million dollars to these efforts. The PSG closely coordinates with the Short-Lived Climate Forcers Task Force and its membership is open to observers who bring technical and/or financial resources.

## **7. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES CONTAMINANTS ACTION PROGRAMME (IPCAP)**

The PSG IPCAP Terms of Reference was approved during the ACAP Working Group Meeting in Oslo (Norway, September, 3, 2010). The PSG will have 2 co-chairs: one from PPs, other from State Members. So far RAIPON, Russia, USA and Finland expressed their wish in participating in the PSG. It will include State Members, PPs and experts.

ACAP in September 2009 finalized and adopted ACAP Project Process Description and Guideline, The document provides a description of the process for the development of specific Arctic Contaminants Action Program (ACAP) Projects.

### **SAOs recommend Ministers to:**

**Acknowledge** the activities of the ACAP working group over the period 2009-11, and **approve** the ACAP work plan for 2011-13 in section 10.I.

<b>II. ARCTIC MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME (AMAP)</b>
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### **Introduction**

The Arctic is today the "Global Barometer" regarding the trends and effects of climate change and long-range transported pollutants. The AMAP WG has over the past two-year period presented several high-level reports that document the trends and effects of climate change and pollution both at local and regional scales within the Arctic, as well as how feedback from the Arctic may affect global systems. Based on the results presented in the AMAP scientific assessments, AMAP has prepared clear calls for actions on the political level to reduce the threats to the Arctic ecosystems, societies and humans, especially the Arctic Indigenous Peoples. A major challenge for AMAP's work is implementing, on behalf of the Arctic Council, secure long-term monitoring and research on the whole Arctic environment. The call for the Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (SAON), to secure networks of stations and platforms where research and monitoring can be performed, and to improve the sharing of collected data, is of highest priority if we are to effectively document and explain what is occurring in

the Arctic and document the effects that any mitigation actions taken may have. This situation requires substantial political and financial support to the work AMAP is implementing.

### **Main achievements in 2009–2011**

#### **AMAP delivers the following reports to the 2011 Ministerial Meeting:**

- *The Climate Change and the Cryosphere: Snow, Water, Ice and Permafrost in the Arctic (SWIPA)* products, comprising the full scientific report, a layman's report including a summary for policymakers, and three films.
- *AMAP Assessment 2011: Mercury in the Arctic* scientific report and layman's report.
- *The Impact of Black Carbon on Arctic Environment* report.
- The Plan for the Implementation Phase of SAON.

#### **In addition, AMAP has in this period produced and released the following reports:**

- *The 2009 AMAP Assessment of Persistent Organic Pollutants in the Arctic.*
- *AMAP 2009 Assessment of Human Health in the Arctic.*
- *AMAP 2009 Assessment of Radioactivity in the Arctic.*
- *Oil and Gas in the Arctic: Effects and Potential Effects* Volumes 1 and 2.
- The Arctic Report Card 2010.
- AMAP Strategic Framework 2010+

### **Major activities in addition to the assessment work:**

#### **Evaluation of AMAP strategic framework, monitoring programme and assessment strategy:**

During 2009-2011, AMAP conducted a major review and evaluation of its work. As part of this evaluation, an external panel of experts was convened to consider the work and products of AMAP in the context of stakeholders that have a need for information on Arctic environmental and health issues. This panel consulted a large number of relevant stakeholders ranging from indigenous peoples and local governments to international organizations and industries. The outcome of this review and resulting suggestions for improvements were reviewed at an AMAP workshop held in February 2010. These results were used to revise the AMAP Strategic Framework document, which was approved by SAOs in 2010. Based on this approved document, work has been initiated to revise and update the AMAP Assessment Plan and the Monitoring Programme for Trends and Effects of contaminants, climate, and human health.

#### **Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)**

The UAS Expert Group, co-chaired by Norway and the United States, has been working to assist the Arctic science community to understand the possibilities and challenges of UAS and has worked with civil aviation authorities in Arctic countries concerning the operation of UAS for research purposes in the Arctic. The Expert Group has been preparing: 1) a website that lists points of contact to national UAS experts and civil aviation authorities; 2) a safety case outline: a comprehensive description of what a safety case should include and methodology for estimating risks and the effect of mitigation; 3) a report on the use of UAS in Arctic research; and 4) a demonstration campaign during the spring of 2011 in Svalbard. UAS is a tool that may provide a substantial improvement of the monitoring and research in Arctic areas.

#### **Arctic Ocean Acidification (AOA)**

An Arctic Ocean Acidification Expert Group has been established under the leadership of Norway. The group has begun work on an assessment report of Arctic Ocean Acidification covering the carbon dioxide system in the ocean, biogeochemical processes, responses of organisms and ecosystems, and the economic costs of acidification in the Arctic Ocean. SAOs approved AMAP's request to conduct a full scientific assessment of AOA for delivery in 2013.

### **Combined effects of climate change and contaminants**

AMAP has coordinated a project partly funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers and some Arctic countries on the combined effects of climate change and contaminants, covering the transport of contaminants to the Arctic, uptake by marine organisms, and potential impacts on human health. A report on the results of Phase 1 of this project is complete and in press; Phase 2 was initiated in 2010.

The AMAP Secretariat is also Project Coordinator for the EU-funded FP7 project ArcRisk (Arctic Health Risks: Impacts on health in the Arctic and Europe owing to climate-induced changes in contaminant cycling) as well as lead partner for the communication and dissemination of the results of the project. A total of 21 partners from twelve countries, including six Arctic countries, are participating in the project, which will run until the end of 2013.

### **AMSA IIC report**

Based on a request from PAME, AMAP under the coordination of Norway and in cooperation with CAFF has prepared an initial report on the identification of Arctic marine areas of heightened ecological significance, to follow up Recommendation IIC of the 2009 Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment. This report will be completed by the end of 2011, including supplementary information on areas of heightened cultural significance prepared by SDWG.

### **Cooperation with other AC WGs**

AMAP has actively worked with other Working Groups of the Arctic Council, including the joint work with PAME and CAFF on the AMSA IIC report, work with PAME on the Arctic Ocean Report and the ecosystem-based approach to marine management. AMAP has also worked with CAFF on the CBMP via AMAP representatives on the marine and freshwater groups. The AMAP Human Health Assessment Group has coordinated with the SDWG Human Health Experts Group.

### **Cooperation with international organizations**

AMAP has conducted work with UNEP Chemicals in the preparation and publication of a joint AMAP/UNEP report on Global Emissions of Mercury. AMAP prepared a four-page outreach document on the key results of the AMAP mercury assessment for the second UNEP global mercury negotiations session held in Chiba, Japan, 24–28 January 2011. Similarly, together with the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention a joint technical report was recently prepared containing a comprehensive review of the inter-linkages of climate change and persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and their impacts on the environment and humans. The report was released at the UNEP Governing Council 26 Meeting held in February, and was the subject of discussion at COP 5 of the Stockholm Convention which was held in April 2011.

### **Outreach and communication**

AMAP has been designing a new website to provide better outreach to readers with different levels of interests from scientists, policy-makers, to the general public. Discussions are also occurring on the need for an outreach and communications plan for AMAP that supports the overarching Arctic Council plan under development.

### **Early Career Scientists**

There is a need for early career scientists to play an increasingly important role in future Arctic Council work. In this regard, the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS) should be more involved in Working Group activities.

### **International Polar Decade (IPD)**

The International Polar Year 2007/2008 (IPY) was officially concluded in March 2009. One of the most important IPY achievements is that the new level of knowledge of the Polar Regions made it possible to draw preliminary conclusions that the processes determining the environmental changes of Polar Regions may be predictable at the decadal time scale.

However, practically exploiting this predictability requires a coordinated continuation of long-term observations and studies that started during the IPY and comprised its legacy. AMAP has discussed the potential value of supporting the development of an International Polar Decade (IPD) with WMO, ICSU, and other organizations as a means of supporting longer-term observations in the Arctic, maximizing the IPY legacy, and following up the SWIPA project.

A workshop was held 14-15 April at the Arctic and Antarctic Research Institute in St. Petersburg, Russia, hosted by Roshydromet and co-sponsored by WMO. There were 49 participants representing 16 international and 23 national organizations. The workshop was successful in assessing the interest and scoping out an International Polar Decade. It represented the first multi-stakeholder consultations on the IPD initiative.

**The Arctic as a Messenger of Global Processes – Climate Change and Pollution**

More than 400 Arctic scientists and experts from 20 countries have been gathered in Copenhagen May 3-6, 2011 at the conference: "The Arctic as a Messenger of Global Processes – Climate Change and Pollution". The conference was organized by the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme and the universities of Aarhus and Copenhagen.

Based on the presentations and conclusions from the conference, the co-chairs prepared a summary statement on the current scientific understandings relating to climate change and pollution in the Arctic and presented it to the Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs and current Arctic Council Chair Mrs Lene Espersen.

Two scientific AMAP assessments on climate change (SWIPA) and pollution (mercury) have been at the core of the conference.

**SAOs recommend Ministers to:**

**Acknowledge** the activities of the AMAP working group over the period 2009-11, and **approve** the AMAP's work plan for 2011-13 in section 10.II,

**Encourage** continued international coordination within the areas of observations, data access and management, access to study areas and infrastructure, education, recruitment and funding, outreach, communication and assessment for social benefits, and benefits to local and Indigenous Peoples,

**Recognize** the significant contributions of Indigenous Peoples to the IPY legacy, and their potential role to further develop their institutions, networks and initiatives during a potential International Polar Decade.

**III. CONSERVATION OF ARCTIC FLORA AND FAUNA (CAFF)**

**Introduction**

The Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna Working Group (CAFF) is the Biodiversity working group of the Arctic Council and its mandate is to address the conservation of Arctic biodiversity, and to communicate its findings to the governments and residents of the Arctic, helping to promote practices which ensure the sustainability of the Arctic's living resources.

Successfully conserving the natural environment in the face of rapidly increasing development requires accurate baseline data on long-term status and trends of Arctic biodiversity, habitats and ecosystem health. CAFF's projects provide data for informed decision making in resolving the challenges which are now arising in trying to both conserve the natural environment and

permit regional growth. This work is based upon cooperation between all Arctic countries, indigenous organizations, international conventions and organizations. The objectives of CAFF are:

- 1) to collaborate for more effective research, sustainable utilization and conservation;
- 2) to cooperate to conserve Arctic flora and fauna, their diversity and their habitats;
- 3) to protect the Arctic ecosystem from human-caused threats;
- 4) to seek to develop more effective laws, regulations and practices for flora, fauna and habitat management, utilization and conservation;
- 5) to work in cooperation with the Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic;
- 6) to consult and cooperate with appropriate international organizations and seek to develop other forms of cooperation;
- 7) to regularly compile and disseminate information on Arctic conservation;
- 8) to contribute to environmental impact assessments of proposed activities.
- 9) To provide policy recommendations to facilitate more knowledgeable decision-making and sustainable use of the Arctic's living resources.

### **Response to Arctic Council priorities**

CAFFs work in 2009 – 2011 emphasized monitoring, climate change, integrated resource management, conservation, communication and outreach. Focus was placed upon the need for developing an effective response and providing updates on changes in Arctic biodiversity e.g. due the impacts of climate change and using the best available knowledge. The Key findings from the *Arctic Biodiversity Trends 2010* report reflect the concerns and directions outlined in the Tromsø Declaration and the common priorities agreed upon for the Norwegian, Danish and Swedish Chairmanship period of the Arctic Council (2007 – 2013).

### Key Findings from Arctic Biodiversity Trends 2010 report:

1. Unique Arctic habitats for flora and fauna, including sea ice, tundra, thermokarst ponds and lakes, and permafrost peatlands have been disappearing over recent decades.
2. Species of importance to Arctic people or species of global significance are declining;
3. Climate change is emerging as the most far reaching and significant stressor on Arctic biodiversity;
4. The extent of protected areas in the Arctic has increased, although marine areas remain poorly represented;
5. Long-term observations are required to identify changes in biodiversity;
6. Changes in Arctic biodiversity are creating both challenges and opportunities for Arctic peoples;
7. Changes in Arctic biodiversity have global repercussions.

CAFF has been developing baseline biodiversity information, species red lists, conservation strategies, status and trends information. CAFF has recognised that the nature of the changes occurring requires effective and rapid responses. For this reason CAFF through the *Arctic Biodiversity Assessment* (ABA) is not producing a traditional static assessment but rather creating a baseline of current knowledge and at the same time developing the engine i.e. *The Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme* (CBMP) will feed data into this baseline allowing it to become a dynamic living tool. This tool which will be sustainable and able to produce regular and targeted assessments and analyses, which can be focused upon regional analyses, specific species groups, habitats or a variety of stressors. An important challenge being addressed is to shorten the gap between collection and analysis of data and its presentation to decision makers.

### **Main achievements and deliverables for 2011 Ministerial**

The achievements and deliverables are grouped thematically to match CAFFs program areas.

### **1) Monitoring (CBMP)**

The CBMP takes an ecosystem-based management approach, operating as a network of networks coordinating existing species, habitat and site-based networks, and identifying gaps in networks. The enormous geographical scope of Arctic biodiversity necessitates a targeted and streamlined approach to monitoring. In this light, the CBMP is coordinating a multidisciplinary, ecosystem-based approach to research and monitoring through the development of five integrated Expert Monitoring Groups (EMGs). Each EMG deals with one of the Arctic's major systems (marine, coastal, freshwater, terrestrial) and is tasked with developing both background material on current situations and long-term integrated monitoring plans.

#### **Marine Monitoring Plan**

The Marine EMG has completed the first of these Arctic marine biodiversity monitoring plans and has started implementation. This constitutes a major step towards providing integrated monitoring throughout the Arctic which is essential in improving our understanding and ability to detect, plan for, and react to changes in the Arctic. This plan is a major deliverable.

The Freshwater EMG has finalised a framework document on Arctic freshwater biodiversity monitoring and a monitoring plan is scheduled to be completed in 2011. The Terrestrial EMG has just been established.

#### **Monitoring Frameworks**

In support of the EMGs and their circumpolar monitoring plans a series of monitoring frameworks have been developed. Completed frameworks include: seabirds, marine mammals, shorebirds, rangifers, human-wild rangifer systems and tundra. Monitoring frameworks under development include a polar bear research and monitoring framework. A background paper on polar bear monitoring has been developed and the monitoring plan is scheduled for completion in time for the next meeting of the range states in October 2011. A Pan-Arctic Protected Areas background paper has been developed and a monitoring framework is scheduled for completion in September 2011. Partners of the CBMP include the biodiversity monitoring networks on individual themes that underpin the program such as Circum-Arctic Rangifer Monitoring and Assessment (CARMA) (reindeer and caribou), Arctic Birds Breeding Conditions Survey (ABBCS) (mainly shorebirds), CBird (seabirds), the Bering Sea Sub Network (BSSN) (selected fish, species, marine mammals and the marine environment).

Further work has been accomplished with regards to assessing the status and trends of Arctic seabirds and flora. A research project conducted by CAFF's Seabird expert group (CBird) on the migration of the Arctic Tern received attention worldwide. CAFF's Flora expert group is developing the Circumpolar Boreal Vegetation Map (CBVM) which will mark a significant contribution towards monitoring, and research on the Arctic environment.

#### **Monitoring Deliverables:**

- Marine Expert Monitoring Group (CBMP), Monitoring plan;
- Marine Expert Monitoring Group (CBMP), Background paper;
- Freshwater Expert Monitoring Group (CBMP), Background paper;
- Polar Bear Monitoring Plan (CBMP), Background paper;
- Arctic Birds, International breeding conditions survey bulletin 2010;
- Bering Sea Sub Network (BSSN) (Russian, English), Final report on Phase 1;
- Seabird Information Network (SIN) (CBird), Technical paper outlining the structure and organization of SIN;
- Circumboreal Vegetation Map: Concept paper.



## **2) Assessments**

The CBMP has developed series of assessments, indices and indicators which have provided a wealth of data and insights into the status and trends in Arctic biodiversity – for example, The Arctic Species Trend Index, protected areas, and linguistic diversity.

### **The Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA)**

The ABA, to be completed in 2013, will synthesize and assess the current state of the Arctic's ecosystems and biodiversity, create a baseline for use in global and regional assessments of Arctic biodiversity and produce recommendations to inform and guide future Arctic Council work. The *Arctic Biodiversity Trends 2010 Report*, produced by some of the world's leading experts of Arctic ecosystems and biodiversity, was the Arctic Council's contribution to the UN's International Year of Biodiversity in 2010 and is a preliminary product of ABA. The report is based on twenty-two indicators and provides a snapshot of the trends being observed in Arctic biodiversity today.

### **The Arctic Species Trend Index (ASTI)**

This index allows for a composite measure of the overall population trends of Arctic vertebrate populations (between 1970 and 2004). The Index tracks over 1,000 datasets, gives broad trends and identifies potential causes of those trends, whether due to natural phenomena or human-induced stressors.

### **Assessment Deliverables:**

- Arctic Biodiversity Trends 2010: selected indicators of change report;
- Arctic Biodiversity Trends 2010 summary report (available in Chinese, English, Swedish, Danish, German, Greenlandic, Icelandic, Russian and Norwegian);
- Arctic Species Trend Index 2010 (ASTI);
- Circumpolar Boreal Vegetation Map (CBVM), proceedings 2008, 2009 and 2010;
- Pan-Arctic checklist of lichens 2010;
- Analysis and update of Arctic protected areas dataset;
- Arctic Terns migration, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences ;
- Final report assessing the results of ECORA – An integrated ecosystem approach to conserve biodiversity and minimize habitat fragmentation on the Russian arctic;
- Arctic seabirds in the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement.

## **3) Methods and tools**

CAFF contributes to the development of tools and methods required to facilitate the work of the Arctic Council. Examples include:

- The Seabird Information Network, which contains information on location of seabird colonies in the Arctic and will include productivity estimates, facilitating early detection of seabird trends.
- The Arctic Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) developed by the Arctic National Mapping Agencies, allows for the creation of a harmonized map covering the entire arctic region. This will facilitate more robust handling and manipulation of data for both research and management purposes. All Arctic Council countries have approved the ASDI project and the implementation plan has been agreed upon.
- The Community Based Monitoring (CBM) Handbook which was developed to help enhance the role of community based observations in monitoring projects in the Arctic. The Handbook provides a broad assessment of CBM and explores the experiences of different CBM programs in an effort to highlight the best and most successful practices.

### **Methods and Tools Deliverables:**

- Arctic Spatial Data Infrastructure (Arctic SDI), Concept and principles paper;

- Arctic Spatial Data Infrastructure (Arctic SDI), Project plan;
- CBM handbook: Lessons from the Arctic ( available in English and Russian);
- Arctic Biodiversity analysis tools for mapping and analysis;
- Seabird Information Network (SIN).

#### **4) Cooperation with Arctic Council working groups**

In Salekhard 2006, Ministers requested Senior Arctic Officials to continue to examine the organization of the Arctic Council to improve its effectiveness and efficiency. Bearing this in mind CAFF has been developing cooperation's with other Working Groups. CAFF is cooperating with AMAP in the development of the Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks Process (SAON). CAFF and AMAP are cooperating on the organisation and development of the project on Arctic marine sensitive areas (AMSA II(C)). AMAP also contributes to the CBMP. CAFF is exploring the development of cooperation with the SDWG, for example on the development of a human health index. CAFF also cooperates with the SDWG on SAON and the AMSA II(c) project. CAFF cooperates with PAME on the AMSA recommendations and on communication and outreach regarding published Arctic information.

#### **5) International Cooperation**

CAFF cooperates and communicates with a wide variety of international organisations and conventions. CAFF and the Association of Early Polar Career Scientists (APECS) signed an MoU, to provide a vehicle for APECS members to increase their knowledge by becoming actively involved in international science and policy projects. At the same time, CAFF benefits from the participation and input of new ideas by young scientists.

CAFF and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) have an MoU and CAFF has contributed to the development of the recent third Global Biodiversity Outlook report from the CBD. This report contains for the first time a section on the Arctic. CAFF held a side event at the CBDs tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) in Nagoya, Japan in October, 2010. The decisions from COP10 invite the Arctic Council to provide relevant information and assessments of Arctic biodiversity, in particular information generated through CAFFs CBMP and assessment activities. Subsequently the agenda for the upcoming SBSTTA-15 scheduled for November, 2011 contains an item focusing on „Assessments of Arctic biodiversity“.

#### **6) Communications and Outreach**

A series of communication tools, such as films, brochures, postcards and posters have been developed for CAFF projects such as the ABA and the CBMP. Focus is being placed on the continuing development of the CAFF web portals, all of which are being restructured into an Arctic Biodiversity portal to allow for easier management, communication and outreach activities.

CAFF and PAME are cooperating in the development and management of a web information system whereby data collected and published through CAFF and PAME activities is being made easier available ([www.arcticdata.is](http://www.arcticdata.is)). All other Working Groups have also been invited to participate. This project aims to improve cooperation between the working groups, and the effectiveness and efficiency of the Arctic Council.

#### **Communications and Outreach Deliverables:**

- ArcticBiodiversity.is - portal for the Arctic Biodiversity Trends 2010 report;
- ArcticData.is (CAFF and PAME) - ArcticData allows access and download of data published through CAFF and PAME Working Groups;

- Arctic Report Cards in a cooperation with NOAA and AMAP are issued annually and provide a timely source for clear and concise environmental information on the state of the Arctic. CAFF's CBMP is editor for the biological components;
- Proceedings of the fifth international flora workshop;
- Short films on the CBMP, the Arctic Species Trend Index (ASTI) and on the Arctic Biodiversity Trends 2010: selected indicators of change report;
- A series of postcards and highlighting the Key Findings from the Arctic Biodiversity Trends 2010: selected indicators of change report and the ASTI.

**SAOs recommend Ministers to:**

**Acknowledge** the work of the CAFF working group over the period 2009-11, and **approve** the CAFF work plan for 2011-2013, as outlined in section 10.III,

**Welcome** the first circumpolar marine monitoring plan developed by CAFF's Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme and **recognize** that this constitutes an important step towards improving our ability to detect and understand the causes and effects of change in the Arctic marine ecosystem.

**IV. EMERGENCY PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE (EPPR)**

**Introduction**

EPPR's mandate covers a wide range of activities: emergencies involving oil, hazardous noxious substances, radiation, and natural disasters. With climate change and the movement towards increased resource development in the Arctic, EPPR will remain focused on developing and informing best practices on the infrastructure and procedures needed to respond to emergencies in the Arctic. There are many opportunities for EPPR to engage in relevant projects and activities; however the challenge is to carefully select those projects that constitute true priorities which benefit from the expertise that resides within EPPR and where the outcome results in tangible contributions to emergency prevention preparedness and response in the Arctic. In addition, the multi-disciplinary focus of EPPR presents a challenge for delegations to engage experts to address the full portfolio of subjects. Focusing on practical activities such as technical information exchanges, exercises, and projects to improve preparedness and response through the use of technology have been successful strategies enabling EPPR to achieve its goals.

Behavior of oil and other hazardous and noxious substances in Arctic waters (BoHaSa)  
Norway initiated the BoHaSa project in response to a request in the Salekhard Declaration. The BoHaSa report presents a compilation of current knowledge and expertise on the behaviour of hazardous substances in Arctic waters to promote the development and use of technologies and working methods that improve the ability to respond to accidents involving such substances.

The report outlines some of the risks present in the Arctic associated with oil and HNS shipping activities as well as the international transportation protocols and conventions which apply to these substances, past incidents involving these substances, and summarizes shipping trends. The main body of the report contains a summary of what is known about the behaviour of various spilled substances, HNS and oil, in Arctic conditions.

### **Source Control: Ten Year Summary and Phase IV Report**

EPPR's Source Control Project incorporated risk assessment methodology and hazard reduction mitigation strategies into industrial operations at facilities handling radioactive and other hazardous materials. The systemic all hazards approach to risk assessment and hazard mitigation enhanced the safety of nuclear operations in the Arctic region. The final report on the project, "Source Control: Ten-plus Years of Cooperation," will summarize each of the four phases covered by the project, including Phase IV, which details the application of risk assessment methodology to the transport of radioactive sources at the Scientific Institute of Atomic Reactors in the Russian Federation (NIAAR).

### **Final Report: NERPA Exercise Arctic 2010**

Exercise "Arctic-2010" was conducted in July 2010 at the FSUE "Nerpa" Shipyard in the Murmansk Region in northwest Russia. The purpose of the exercise was to assess consequences and response capabilities to a radiation emergency in the northwest region of Russia. The final report describes in detail the radiological emergency response exercise conducted at "Nerpa" Shipyard facility in the Russian Federation. In addition, a brochure on EPPR's radiological exercises has been produced.

### **Glossary of Nuclear Terms for Development of Public Information Reports Regarding Risks Related to Nuclear/Radiological Accidents**

Under its Community Radiation Information series, EPPR produced the "Glossary of Nuclear Terms for Development of Public Information Reports Regarding Risks Related to Nuclear/Radiological Accidents" to assist public information specialists in communicating to the public about radiation and accidents to the public and media. The glossary (in draft) was used to prepare press releases during the exercise at the "Nerpa" Shipyard in July 2010.

### **Preventing Radiological incidents and emergencies**

- EPPR continued Source Control work at the Scientific and Research Institute of Atomic Reactors in the Russian Federation (NIIAR) to assess risks and pinpoint preventative measures to reduce risks. The process yielded recommendations to improve safety of transportation of radioactive sources at the NIIAR facility.
- Updated radiation survey and personal monitoring equipment was delivered to the Emergency Response Team at the Zvezdochka facility to meet response requirements identified in EPPR's exercise "Arctic 2008." Training on the equipment was also provided.
- Technical Crisis Center support to EMERCOM's Crisis Situation Management Center continued, focusing on training and enhancing the ability to leverage the radiological scientific and technical expertise within the Nuclear Safety Institute (IBRAE) in the event of a radiological incident or emergency.
- The Radiation Survey Simulation System, a computer-based training tool, was developed to provide a training experience with realistic scenarios, site specific data, and a suite of response actions for emergency response personnel at facilities where radiation hazards are present. The Radiation Survey Simulation System has been provided to 6 facilities in the Russian Federation.

### **Main achievements during 2009 – 2011**

In addition to activities related to preventing radiological incidents and emergencies listed above (Source Control Project, Conduct of Radiation Emergency Exercises, Glossary of Nuclear Terms) EPPR's achievements are outlined below.

#### **Arctic Rescue**

- A seminar was held in August 2009 in Anadyr, Russia entitled "Emergency prevention and the coordination of emergency responses in Arctic conditions including consequences for the environment." The conference examined a wide range of

emergency scenarios and recommendations for improving preparedness and response systems.

- EPPR Arctic Rescue activities, led by the Russian Federation, identified a gap in circumpolar SAR which has been addressed by the SAR Task Force.

### **Development of Safety Systems in Implementation of Economic and Infrastructural Projects**

- The exercise "Barents Rescue 2009," hosted by the Russian Federation, was conducted from September 8-10, 2009 in the Murmansk region of Russia.
- Objectives of the exercise were to: assess the functional use of existing cooperative agreements; improve information exchange; and develop practical experience concerning the coordination of rescue services in the Barents region.

### **Co-operation on oil spill and HNS response in the Arctic**

- EPPR developed a prioritized master project list for future work by evaluating recommendations from the Opening the Arctic Seas: Envisioning Disasters and Framing Solutions workshop. This list will be the basis for project planning discussions at the June 2011 EPPR meeting.

### **Managing the cold conditions – A systematic approach**

- "Responding to Cold Emergencies - EU's Cold Conditions Module"- seminar was held at the Crisis Management Centre (CMC) Finland in November 2010

### **Guidelines and Strategies for Oily Waste Management in the Arctic Regions**

- The Guidelines project, led by Canada, was completed in 2009. The Oily Waste Calculator, a companion software application to aid planners and decision makers, was developed to support the guidelines. This software is available from EPPR.

### **SAOs recommend Ministers to:**

**Acknowledge** the work of the EPPR working group over the period 2009-11, and **approve** the EPPR work plan for 2011-2013, as outlined in section 10.IV.

## **V. PROTECTION OF THE ARCTIC MARINE ENVIRONMENT (PAME)**

### **Introduction**

Arctic marine activities are likely to expand considerably as a result of increased resource demand and improved marine access. These activities will increase risks to the environment and its ecological processes. Hence, strengthened efforts are needed by Arctic states to develop adequate and timely national and international regulations and measures to reduce the risks and the potential negative impacts of shipping and other activities in Arctic waters. Existing and emerging challenges to the health of the Arctic marine environment warrant a more integrated ecosystem based approach to address future needs related to shipping, oil and gas development, fisheries, coastal zone development, and other ocean-related activities. The work plan and activities of the Working Group of the Arctic marine Environment (PAME) is developed to respond to these challenges by giving priority to measures related to shipping and offshore oil and gas activities, and to apply an ecosystem approach to integrated ocean management in order to maximize environmental protection and sustainable use of the marine environment. Through this, the Arctic Council has an opportunity to provide international leadership on the global sustainable development agenda. In the implementation of these activities PAME will work in close cooperation with the other Arctic Council working groups.

**I. Deliverables to the 2011 Ministerial Meeting:**

- Phase I Report from the HFO project
- AMSA status report on the follow-up of AMSA recommendations
- AOR Phase I Report and AOR Workshop Summary
- EA Workshop Report
- 2011-2013 PAME Work Plan

**II. Main achievements of PAME during 2009-2011.**

- **Arctic Marine Strategic Plan (AMSP 2004) – Implementation Status:**

Several of the specific PAME Working Group activities have been aimed at implementing the AMSP 2004 and the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment. The other Arctic Council working groups AMAP, CAFF, EPPR and SDWG have provided response to the status of the AMSP strategic actions and their replies clearly show that all the strategic actions have been completed or are progressing according to plan and are expected to conclude within this or the next workplan period. Based on this, PAME in cooperation with the other Arctic Council working groups is developing a process to update and expand, as relevant, the AMSP 2004 to improve a coordinated and integrated ecosystem approach to marine management.

- **Follow-up of the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment Report (AMSA 2009):**

PAME is following up the recommendations from the AMSA 2009 Report and SAOs have approved a matrix developed by PAME for this work where each recommendation has been assigned the appropriate responsibility for follow-up, and reporting on progress and status is provided to PAME. PAME has prepared an AMSA 2011 Status Report reflecting the status and progress on all 17 recommendations promoting the safety and environmental awareness of current and future Arctic shipping activity. The AMSA 2011 Status Report involve multiple stakeholders and apply at national, Arctic Regional, and international levels. The recommendations are aligned under three themes: Enhancing Arctic Marine Safety; Protecting Arctic People and the Environment; and Building the Arctic Marine Infrastructure. The Report notes that significant progress is being made in implementing the recommendations.

Experts on Arctic-relevant issues of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) have been invited to meetings of PAME in an effort to provide the continuum of relevant work within the Arctic Council and visa versa. There has been a significant increase in their participation and collaboration on relevant measures to reduce the environmental impacts of shipping in Arctic waters.

- **Recommendation I(B) – IMO Measures for Arctic Shipping:**

Work is well underway in IMO to develop a mandatory Polar Code and PAME will continue to receive regularly update on its progress. Phase I of the project on the identification of, environmental risks and options for, avoiding or minimizing risks regarding the use and carriage of heavy fuel oil (HFO), aiming at establishment of appropriate international regulations has been finalized and will be submitted to the 2011 ministerial as part of reporting progress achieved in follow-up and implementation of AMSA recommendations. PAME has approved the project proposal for Phase II of the (HFO) project for the period 2011-2013.

- **Recommendation I(D) - Strengthening Passenger Ship Safety in Arctic Waters:**

Work is ongoing at IMO on several initiatives to improve passenger vessel safety and PAME will continue to receive regularly update on its progress. Tour operators are strongly encouraged to implement, share and improve best practices for operating in such conditions. Representatives from the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators and the Cruise Lines International Associations have presented their respective practices or standards at PAME meetings. A report has been prepared identifying relevant international, national, and industry best

practices standards with a menu of options for further PAME action based on information from Arctic Council Member States along with information provided by the cruise ship industry and others on any best practices or standards that may help improve the safety, sound navigation, and environmental protection of Arctic cruise ship operations.

- **Recommendation II(D) – Specially Designated Arctic Marine Areas:**

PAME has approved a project on follow-up of Recommendation II(D) for the purpose of environmental protection in regions of the Arctic Ocean for implementation in 2011-2013. Work is under way by AMAP/CAFF/SDWG on the follow-up of Recommendation II(C) on identification of Areas of Heightened Ecological and Cultural Significance in the Arctic, and its products will form an important base for the implementation of Recommendation II(D).

- **Arctic Ocean Review Project (AOR)**

The AOR is a two-phased project that will analyze the status and trends in the Arctic marine environment (AME); review global and regional measures in place for the protection and sustainable use of the Arctic; and provide advice to Arctic Council ministers in early 2013 as to how the management of the AME can be strengthened. Phase I (2009-2011) of the project focuses on information gathering and outreach and outlines existing measures. Phase II (2011) will analyze the information collected in Phase I with an emphasis on areas where the Arctic Council can effectively add value to the existing mechanisms of governance for the Arctic marine environment.

This work progressed through consultations with Working Group, including a meeting with Working Group Chairs and Secretaries held in Copenhagen on 2nd of March 2010 and by sharing drafts of the AOR Phase I Report with particular focus on their respective expert inputs on relevant chapters.

AOR Communication and Outreach Plan has been developed and published and an AOR expert workshop was held 13-14 September 2010 in Washington D.C to gather input on the status and trends of the Arctic marine environment. AOR Workshop Summary Report is available on the PAME homepage.

PAME has approved the project plan for Phase II of this project for the period 2011-2013.

- **Ecosystem Approach to Management (EA) project**

PAME continued to advance the work towards implementation of the ecosystem approach to assessment and management by taking into account the previous work on the Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) and the summary of Observed Best Practices for Ecosystem-based Ocean Management (as a part of the 2009 Best Practices in Ecosystem Based Oceans Management in the Arctic project) and other relevant Arctic Council work on this issue.

A PAME Group of Experts on the Ecosystem Approach to Management has been established and a workshop on the EA project was convened in Tromsø, Norway 22-23 January 2011 in connection with the Arctic Frontier Conference 28-29 January 2011 and addressed the following issues:

- Review and update the working map on Arctic LMEs and provide justification for the chosen boundaries based on ecological criteria.
- Prepare a synthesis of existing or planned reports on ecosystem status, trends and pressures for regional ecosystems in the Arctic area.

The EA Workshop was prepared and organized in collaboration with relevant experts from the AMAP and CAFF working groups in an effort to coordinate existing and future work on EA to management.

- **Follow up on the 2009 Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines (OOGG 2009)**

The need for and possible development of specific guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) within the offshore oil and gas industry has been assessed. A contact group was established and a questionnaire developed and sent to all Arctic countries. This questionnaire included inquiries on the legal base, responsible authority/agency, stakeholders, traditional knowledge, public consultations and review processes. Based on the replies received, PAME agreed that there is currently no need to develop harmonized Arctic EIA Guidelines beyond what is currently available in the OOGG 2009. In addition, Arctic countries have provided links to respective EIA reports and practices as a means of information sharing and which is available on the PAME homepage.

PAME has approved project proposal for the 1) Arctic Oil and Gas Management, Regulation and Enforcement a Legal Regime Web-Based Information Resource and requested that the project proposal for 2) Health, Safety and Environmental Management Systems and the Use of Best Operating Practices for Offshore Arctic Oil and Gas Drilling Activities—A Report and Possible Guidelines be refined and based on the outcomes of ongoing domestic and international processes for further consideration and direction by PAME.

- **Collaboration with other working groups and communications**

PAME continues to actively communicate with the other working groups of the Arctic Council in developing its work plan and in involvement in projects. EPPR is working on the AMSA follow-up activities on Recommendations II(F) on Oil Spill Prevention and III(C) on Circumpolar Environmental Response Capacity, and provide regular updates to PAME. AMAP, CAFF and SDWG are working on follow-up of AMSA Recommendations II(C) on Areas of Heightened Ecological and Cultural Significance.

Representatives from all Arctic Council working groups and Permanent Participants were invited to contribute to the AOR Phase I process and to participate in the AOR Expert Workshop (13-14 September 2010). Furthermore, initial steps have been taken in inviting the other Arctic Council working groups to consider the inclusion of the review of the Arctic Marine Strategic Plan (AMSP 2004) in their respective work plans for 2011-2013, as a matter of full cooperation.

**SAOs recommend Ministers to:**

**Acknowledge** the work of the PAME working group over the period 2009-2011 and **approve** the PAME working plan for 2011-2013, as outlined in section 10.V.

<b>VI. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP (SDWG)</b>
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**Introduction**

The SDWG is chaired during each biennial period by the same country chairing the Arctic Council. The Chairmanship of Denmark, Greenland and Faroe Islands of the SDWG began in April 2009 following the Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting (April 2009) in Tromsø, Norway. ICC (Greenland) and Sweden acted as SDWG Co-Vice-Chairs.

**A. Challenges**

The Sustainable Development Working Group conducts activities to address six broad challenges facing the peoples of the Arctic:

- **Arctic Human Health**: Developing concrete initiatives to improve the health and well-being of Indigenous peoples and other Arctic residents.



- Arctic Socio-Economic Issues: Advancing our understanding of the socio-economic conditions of Indigenous Peoples and Arctic communities.
- Adaptation to Climate Change: Reducing vulnerability and implementing adaptation initiatives related to climate change in the Arctic, including practical community-based actions.
- Energy and Arctic Communities: Considering the unique demands of the Arctic region as an energy consumer, and the importance of environmentally friendly economic activity in the energy sector to ongoing social and economic development in the Arctic region.
- Management of Natural Resources: Managing of natural resources in a holistic and integrative manner, to further the socio-economic development of the region and to ensure the well-being of Indigenous Peoples and Arctic communities.
- Arctic Cultures and Languages: Supporting Arctic cultures and effort to reduce the loss of Arctic Indigenous languages.

## **B. 2009-11 SDWG Deliverables by thematic area**

In response to the mandate provided by Arctic Council Ministers in Tromsø, the Sustainable Development Working Group undertook activities to improve our understanding of the human condition under the umbrella of thematic areas. The following are the projects and initiatives completed, and organized respectively within the framework of the SDWG thematic areas.

### **1. Arctic Human Health**

**Hope and Resilience in Suicide Prevention Seminar** (Greenland/ Denmark/Canada) Planned and implemented in collaboration with Inuit Circumpolar Council (Greenland) and the Government of Greenland, the "Hope and Resilience in Suicide Prevention" seminar was held in Nuuk, Greenland on November 7-8, 2009. This first activity under the auspices of the SDWG Arctic Human Health Expert Group (AHHEG) brought together social workers and health practitioners, researchers, policy makers and politicians to exchange best practices aimed at reducing the number of suicides in the Arctic countries, particularly among youth. The seminar participants produced recommendations for future actions, a DVD including a video produced by the youth participants and a seminar report which was translated into Russian with funding provided by Canada.

### **Circumpolar Health Observatory (CircHOB) (Canada/Denmark/Greenland)**

CircHOB ([www.circhob.circumpolarhealth.org](http://www.circhob.circumpolarhealth.org).) is an international collaborative health information system housed in Yellowknife, Canada. The purpose of this project is to monitor trends and patterns in health status, health determinants, and health care. It also provides a continuous knowledge base and analytical support to decision-makers, service providers, academic researchers and consumers. CircHOB promotes capacity building through training and research and has been identified by the Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks initiative (SAON) as a Task. CircHob maintains a searchable and interactive databank where relevant circumpolar human health publications and statistical reports can be sourced. The website currently contains circumpolar health data for 2000-04 and the 2005-09 data updates are underway.

### **Circumpolar Nutrition Guide** (Canada/Denmark/Greenland)

An AHHEG project and managed by the Greenland Institute for Health Research, this 2-year project assembled existing information on nutritional guidelines in circumpolar countries to inform government health agencies and community organizations on circumpolar wide nutritional approaches and structures. The final report on this project was peer reviewed and completed by AHHEG. It was published as a Circumpolar Health Supplement in the International Journal for Circumpolar Health in 2011 ([http://www.ijch.fi/CHS/CHS\\_2011\(8\)](http://www.ijch.fi/CHS/CHS_2011(8))).

**Arctic Human Health Initiative** (AHHI) (USA)

The Arctic Human Health Initiative, led by the United States, began as an International Polar Year (IPY) coordinating project to serve as a focal point for human health research, education, outreach, and communications activities. The overall goals of the AHHI are to increase awareness and visibility of human health concerns of Arctic peoples, foster human health research, and promote health strategies that improve health and well being of all Arctic residents. Following the conclusion of the IPY, 28 projects have continued under the AHHI umbrella. AHHI has now been incorporated into the Arctic Human Health Expert Group. A Circumpolar Health Supplement of the International Journal of Circumpolar Health (2010:6) describes the vision of the AHHI and the nature of its projects. The website (<http://www.arctichealth.org/ahhi/>) contains journal articles and other publications emerging from AHHI projects.

**2. Arctic Socio-Economic Issues**

**Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic** (SLiCA) (Denmark/Greenland)

The Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic (SLiCA) ([www.arcticlivingconditions.org](http://www.arcticlivingconditions.org)) was an international joint effort of researchers and Indigenous Peoples aimed at: measuring living conditions in a way relevant to Arctic communities; documenting and comparing the present state of living conditions among the indigenous peoples of the Arctic; improving the understanding of living conditions to the benefit of Arctic communities; and to providing local, regional, national and international organizations an improved basis for decision-making. Phase I of the project consisted of the development of an international core questionnaire and phase II focused on validation of data, data entry, processing of data and analyses. An executive summary of SLiCA findings will be presented to the AC Ministerial Meeting in Nuuk, Greenland.

**3. Adaptation to Climate Change**

**EALAT: Reindeer herding, traditional knowledge, adaptation to climate change and loss of grazing land** (Norway/ Association of World Reindeer Herders (WRH))

The EALAT project was initiated in 2006 and was designed to gather information about the environmental changes which Arctic reindeer herders are facing and to give concrete examples of herders' traditional knowledge leading their adaptation to changing conditions, e.g. traditional uses of grazing land. In all, 18 workshops were held in herding communities in the most important reindeer herding regions. The challenge of EALÁT- Information is to transfer herders' knowledge into action for sustainable development of the Arctic. The EALÁT work in Russia has developed into two regional centres for reindeer husbandry. It is recommended for SAOs that the work and methods of EALÁT are continued with a focus on circumpolar reindeer herding youth. For the Nuuk Ministerial Meeting, EALAT produced a final report based on data from community workshops completed; an Executive Summary with graphics and recommendations; and a 30-minute documentary movie.

**4. Energy and Arctic Communities**

**Arctic Energy Summit** (AES) (USA)

Arctic Energy Summit was the first phase of a two-year IPY project held on 15-18 October, 2007. The Summit brought focus to the areas of developing resources while addressing the need for affordable energy in rural areas throughout the Arctic. The goal was to initiate technology transfer on issues related to the Arctic as an emerging energy province. To sustain the momentum, an Arctic Energy Action Team (AEAT) was established to develop a roadmap for the enhancement of extractive energy recovery in the Arctic and deployment of energy sources to total Arctic communities. The energy challenges identified were: coal mining in the circumpolar north, tidal power, and alternative transportation fuel in the Arctic. The Arctic Energy Summit report was published and is available electronically on the SDWG website (<http://portal.sdwg.org/>).

## 5. Management of Natural Resources

### Circumpolar Information Guide on Mining for Indigenous Peoples & Northern Communities (Canada)

The mining information guide is a layman's version aimed at providing the information and best practices to strengthen Indigenous Peoples and Arctic communities and their capacity to better understand and take advantage of the opportunities offered by mining development in their region. The mining guide includes explanations and best practices on the mining industry; contributions to sustainable communities; integration of environmental, social and economic considerations; protection of traditional ways of life; issues and problems common to both Indigenous Peoples and Arctic communities; and, potential opportunities and benefits for communities. The Guide is posted on the SDWG website (<http://portal.sdwg.org/>).

### C. Achievements

- Over the course of the Chairmanship, the SDWG has completed its internal and external assessment of its operations and effectiveness, in consultation with other AC Working Groups and other stakeholders, as a first step toward completing the SDWG Strategic Plan. As a first phase the SDWG examined key areas that are influencing and/or asserting pressure on the work of the SDWG. Its findings underscored the need for the SDWG to strengthen its operational and institutional capacity in order to keep pace with the rapid changes occurring in the Arctic.
- As an example of the SDWG efforts to create effective mechanisms to bring together the requisite expertise to improve its institutional capacity, the Arctic Human Health activities were energized during the Chairmanship of Denmark, Greenland and Faroe Islands by the launch of the Arctic Human Health Expert Group. The AHHEG provided guidance on circumpolar human health issues and priorities, and undertook practical actions to acquire knowledge and to build capacity in the circumpolar region. The AHHEG was also engaged in the planning of and actively participated at the Arctic Human Health Ministers' Meeting held in Nuuk, Greenland in February 2011.
- The integration of local and traditional knowledge and collaborations that include Indigenous Peoples and Arctic communities as respected partners in research is a critical link to building knowledge and capacity at the community level. The SDWG/IPY EALAT and the Circumpolar Mining Guide for Indigenous Peoples and Northern Communities were examples of strengthening the capacity of Indigenous Peoples and Arctic communities.

### SAOs recommend Ministers to:

**Acknowledge** the activities of the SDWG working group over the period 2009-11, and **approve** the SDWG work plan for 2011-13 in section 10.VI,

**Emphasize** the need for capacity building for local indigenous communities in face of climate change and land use change in the Arctic, including courses in impact assessments for reindeer herding youth,

**Underscore** the need for SDWG to continue its reform process in order to strengthen its operational and institutional capacity toward developing a more integrated and inclusive approach in prioritizing and managing its activities,

**Note** the need for a comprehensive overview of human development in the Arctic and **call for** an assessment of the current state of human development in the Arctic and its relationship with climate change and other factors affecting Arctic communities,

**Take note** of the incoming Swedish Chairmanship's intention to propose activities concerning Food and Water Security and Safety, and to initiate a dialogue with the private sector on how business can contribute to sustainable development in the Arctic.



## **10. Working Group Work Plans for 2011-2013**

<b>I. ARCTIC CONTAMINANTS ACTION PROGRAM (ACAP)</b>
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### **ACAP Work Plan for 2011-2013**

ACAP will continue, as outlined below, to undertake activities and implement projects approved by the Ministers:

1. Review progress in reducing contaminants the Arctic, including the impact of ACAP projects and capacity built through ACAP as well as complementary national actions of Arctic Council member states.
2. Cooperate with other Working Groups, in particular PAME and AMAP, and the Short-Lived Climate Forcers Task Force (SLCF TF) to exchange information on contamination levels in the Arctic and progress in reducing the releases and exposure to these contaminants. ACAP-related content will be posted on the website.
3. Develop an Integrated Hazardous Waste Management Strategy (IHWMS) focusing on the Northern Regions of the Russian Federation that will address, among other items, disposition and destruction of collected contaminants, mercury containing wastes, brominated flame retardants (BFR), POPs including PCBs and obsolete pesticides. A report presenting a framework or components of the strategy for at least one region will be delivered to the Ministerial meeting in 2013.
4. Undertake projects on short-lived climate forcers (SLCFs) including diesel black carbon reductions in the Arctic, taking into account needs of indigenous populations, and additional projects on SLCFs that ACAP may wish to implement as part of its new SLCF contaminants project steering group.
5. Complete obsolete pesticides inventory and interim safe storage project. The report on the inventory and safe storage phases will be delivered to the Ministerial meeting in 2013.
6. Assess together with the Russian experts and Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology the environmental performance of Russian planned facilities for destruction of hazardous waste, including obsolete pesticides, PCBs and other POPs for implementation of at least one demonstration project on environmentally sound destruction of obsolete pesticides and PCBs. A report on the assessment and demonstration project will be delivered to the Ministerial meeting in 2013.
7. Promote implementation of control technologies for reduction/elimination of dioxin/furan releases at point sources including pulp and paper mills, metal industries, cement kilns and waste incineration plants in the Russian Arctic. A report summarizing information on sources and possible control techniques will be delivered to the Ministerial meeting in 2013.
8. Prepare Terms of References and business plan for projects to address mercury including products, coal-fired power plants, non-ferrous metal production, mining and mercury-containing wastes including in cooperation with the UNEP Global Mercury

Partnership, and in support of the international negotiation process to develop a global legally binding instrument on mercury.

9. Continue to consider the feasibility of activities to reduce brominated flame retardant (BFR) releases to the Arctic.
10. Enhance involvement of Arctic indigenous communities in reducing exposure and impact of contaminants in their communities by implementing projects addressing contaminants as stated in the Indigenous People Contaminants Action Program (IPCAP) ToR.
11. Continue cooperation with the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and NEFCO to address "hot spots" in the Arctic.
12. Continue cooperation with NEFCO to finance and facilitate implementation of ACAP projects and mobilize the Project Support Instrument (PSI).
13. Explore possibilities to address the contamination issues arising from the oil, gas, mining, and shipping sectors in the Arctic based on the findings and recommendations of the Assessment of Oil and Gas Activities in the Arctic by AMAP and the PAME Arctic Ocean Review and related Arctic Council initiatives in these areas.
14. Enhance outreach and information exchange to promote projects of ACAP.

## **II. ARCTIC MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME (AMAP)**

### **Work Plan for 2011–2013 with tentative deliverables**

#### **AMAP Trends and Effects Monitoring Programme**

- AMAP is currently updating its monitoring and assessment implementation plan in accordance with the approved *AMAP Strategic Framework for 2010+*. The *AMAP Trends and Effects Monitoring Guidelines* and *AMAP Assessment Guidelines* documents are being updated during 2011.
- As part of its ongoing work, AMAP will continue to coordinate Arctic monitoring and research activities (based largely on national programmes) to provide the information necessary for assessment of relevant issues, including:
  - spatial trends in levels of contaminants;
  - temporal trends in levels of contaminants;
  - biological effects of contaminants and associated trends;
  - climate change;
  - effects of climate change;
  - human and ecosystem health effects ;
  - combined effects of contaminants, climate change and other stressors.
- AMAP will continue to coordinate and expand activities to ensure appropriate data reporting and archiving, including reporting of data to AMAP thematic data centres.
- AMAP will support CAFF in the further development of the CBMP and implement biological effects monitoring components of the CBMP as a component of the AMAP monitoring implementation plan.

### **Ongoing and Planned AMAP Assessments**

- The AMAP Arctic Ocean Acidification (AOA) Expert Group has been established and is engaged in work to complete the first AMAP assessment of this issue. The results of this assessment are due to be delivered in 2013.
- The AMAP Short Lived Climate Forcers (SLCF) Expert Group is currently updating its assessment to include data and information on black carbon from sources outside of the Arctic. The report of this work will be available in 2011/12.
- The AMAP SLCF Expert Group will be expanded to include experts on tropospheric ozone and methane with a view to conducting assessment of these additional forcers of climate change as well as black carbon for delivery in 2013.
- The AMAP Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Expert Group are developing safety guidelines and undertaking other work including a cross-jurisdictional flight pilot project (planned to take place in 2011/2012) to demonstrate the use of UAS in Arctic environmental monitoring.
- As part of its ongoing work, AMAP will determine the need for follow-up activities and products in relation to the oil and gas assessment, SWIPA and mercury assessment, and for updating assessments of other AMAP relevant issues (POPs, radioactivity, human health, contaminant transport and fate, etc.) and if appropriate develop plans for these activities.
- As part of its ongoing work, AMAP will continue to evaluate emerging 'Issues of Concern' relating to pollution and climate change and their effects of Arctic ecosystems and human populations.

### **Assessment activities in cooperation with other AC Working Groups**

- AMAP (together with CAFF and SDWG) will complete the final report on AMSA II(c) for delivery at the end of 2011.
- AMAP plan to contribute to an update of the 2004 Arctic Marine Strategic Plan (with PAME)
- AMAP plan to contribute to an update of the Arctic Ocean Review (with PAME)
- Subject to AC approval, AMAP are prepared to develop a process to establish a multi-partner integrated assessment of 'Arctic Change', based on the large number of relevant assessments conducted by the various AC working groups in recent years, including those currently under preparation.

### **Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks**

- AMAP plan to implement the recommendations for Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (SAON) and to continue to co-lead the development of this work on behalf of the Arctic Council together with IASC. AMAP will represent the Arctic Council and provide the Chair of the SAON Board and IASC will provide the vice-chair.
- AMAP plan to establish an agreement and working procedures for the Secretariat support for the SAON, together with IASC. AMAP and IASC will jointly provide the secretariat support to SAON.

## **Communication and Outreach**

- AMAP will continue to develop its outreach and communications plan as a component of the implementation of the 'AMAP Strategic Framework', taking into account the developments under the Arctic Council communications strategy. As a first step a small AMAP project group will be tasked to consider this issue further during 2011.
- The new AMAP website will be launched by summer of 2011. The AMAP website has been redesigned to better serve the needs of various user communities.
- AMAP will implement planned follow-up communication and outreach activities associated with the SWIPA and mercury assessment delivery, including production and dissemination of films, translated reports, fact-sheets and other outreach products including educational materials.
- AMAP will complete the publication of the oil and gas assessment scientific assessment. Volumes 1 and 2 have been published; Volume 3 is due to be published later in 2011.

## **Support for International Activities**

### **Projects and Joint Studies**

- AMAP experts will finalise the report on Phase 1 (in 2011) and conduct Phase 2 of the Nordic Council of Ministers funded project on *Combined Effects of Contaminants and Climate Change*. Phase 2 of the project is due to be completed by 2013.
- AMAP experts will continue to implement the EU-funded (FP7) project *ArcRisk*. AMAP Secretariat is responsible for management and outreach components of this project. The project was initiated in June 2009 and will be completed in November 2013.
- AMAP is participating in the further development and implementation of special projects in Russia, including the project on the Lena and other Siberian rivers, and follow-up of the Persistent Toxic Substances project.

### **Cooperation with Intergovernmental and International organizations**

- AMAP will continue to cooperate with UNEP-Chemicals on activities connected with the UNEP global mercury process. As a follow-up to the joint UNEP/AMAP work to prepare the technical report on *Global anthropogenic emissions of mercury to the atmosphere in 2005*, and the AMAP contribution to the UNEP 'Paragraph 29 study', AMAP has been requested by UNEP-Chemicals to coordinate and participate in a project to further update information on global emissions of mercury in support of the ongoing UNEP mercury INC process.
- AMAP will continue to cooperate with UNEP on activities connected with the Stockholm Convention. As a follow-up to the joint UNEP/AMAP work to prepare the technical report on *Climate change and POPs: Predicting the Impacts*, AMAP plan to collaborate with the Stockholm Convention Secretariat to prepare a side-event at the COP5.
- AMAP will continue to cooperate with UN ECE in relation to relevant LRTAP activities.
- The AMAP POPs, Mercury and Human Health Expert Groups will take into account the possible needs for providing Arctic information products in connection with, e.g., effectiveness and efficiency reviews of the international agreements under UNEP and UN ECE, and information relevant to adding new chemicals to existing conventions when considering their plans for future update assessment activities.
- AMAP plans to contribute to the proposal for an International Polar Decade (with WMO and other interested organizations). International organizations included in the IPD discussions



to date, in addition to WMO, IASC and AMAP have included:

International Arctic Social Sciences Association (IASSA)  
NordForsk, which is the funding agency for Nordic research cooperation acting under the Nordic Council of Ministers  
European Environment Agency (EEA)  
SAON  
European Science Foundation (ESF)  
European Polar Board (EPB)  
Indigenous Peoples Secretariat (IPS)  
University of the Arctic (UArctic)  
Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs (COMNAP)  
European Commission (EC)  
Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) UNESCO  
Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS)  
UNEP GRID-Arendal.

- AMAP plans to cooperate with the UNFCCC IPCC. The IPCC will prepare its next assessment of Global Climate Change in 2013-14 and the SWIPA assessment results will form an important contribution to this process.
- As part of its continuing work, AMAP will participate in relevant international meetings and symposia to communicate AMAP results and information on ongoing activities.

### **III. CONSERVATION OF ARCTIC FLORA AND FAUNA (CAFF)**

#### **CAFF Work Plan for 2011 – 2013**

##### **Introduction**

The Conservation of Arctic Flora & Fauna Working Group (CAFF) is the Biodiversity working group of the Arctic Council and its mandate is to address the conservation of Arctic biodiversity, and to communicate its findings to the governments and residents of the Arctic, helping to promote practices which ensure the sustainability of the Arctic's living resources.

To successfully conserve the natural environment and allow for economic development requires baseline data on long-term status and trends of Arctic biodiversity, habitats and ecosystem health. CAFF's projects provide data for informed decision making in resolving the challenges which are now arising in trying to both conserve the natural environment and permit regional growth. This work is based upon cooperation between all Arctic countries, indigenous organizations, international conventions and organizations. The objectives of CAFF are:

- to collaborate for more effective research, sustainable utilization and conservation;
- to cooperate to conserve Arctic flora and fauna, their diversity and their habitats;
- to protect the Arctic ecosystem from human-caused threats;
- to seek to develop more effective laws, regulations and practices for flora, fauna and habitat management, utilization and conservation;
- to work in cooperation with the Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic;
- to consult and cooperate with appropriate international organizations and seek to develop other forms of cooperation;
- to regularly compile and disseminate information on Arctic conservation;
- to contribute to environmental impact assessments of proposed activities.

CAFFs work in 2009 – 2011 has emphasized climate change, integrated resource management, conservation, communication and outreach. Stress has been placed upon the need for an effective response, producing updates on changes in Arctic biodiversity e.g. due to the impacts of climate change and using the best available knowledge. The Key findings from the *Arctic Biodiversity Trends 2010* report reflect the concerns and directions outlined in the Tromsø Declaration and the common priorities agreed upon for the Norwegian, Danish and Swedish Chairmanship period of the Arctic Council.

## **1. Monitoring**

### Monitoring groups

- a. Implementation of the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme (CBMP). *Lead – Canada*
- b. Continue development of the CBMPs Expert Monitoring Groups and development and implementation of the Arctic Biodiversity Monitoring Plans.
  - Freshwater Expert Monitoring Group. *Lead Canada and Sweden*
  - Marine Expert Monitoring Group and development of the Marine Expert Monitoring Advisory Committee (MEMAC). *Lead: Norway and the United States*
  - Terrestrial Expert Monitoring Group. *Lead: Denmark/Greenland and the United States*
  - Coastal Expert Monitoring Group. *Lead: To be determined*

### Monitoring networks and plans

- c. Arctic Breeding Birds Conditions Survey (ABBCs) CBMP. *Lead: Canada*
- d. Bering Sea Sub-Network (BSSN): A Distributed Human Sensor Array to Detect Arctic Environmental Change. *Lead: Aleut International Association*
- e. Participate in GLORIA (Global Observation Research Initiative in Alpine environments) - a worldwide monitoring network for climate change impacts on the ecology of high mountain systems (CFG). *Lead The United States*
- f. Seabird Information Network (SIN) (CBird). *Lead: United States*
- g. The Circum-Arctic Rangifer Monitoring and Assessment Network (CARMA) (CBMP). *Lead: Canada*
- h. Development of additional monitoring networks (CBMP). *Lead: The CAFF Chair*
- i. Complete a circumpolar seabird monitoring plan (CBird). *Lead: United States and United Kingdom*
- j. Develop a protected areas monitoring framework (CBMP). *Lead: Canada*
- k. Polar bear Monitoring plan (CBMP). *Lead: Canada*

### Monitoring Projects

- l. Arctic Vegetation Database - interlinked Arctic Flora and Vegetation databases (Circumpolar Flora Expert Group - CFG). *Lead: United States*
- m. Biodiversity, traditional nature use and climate change in the Russian Arctic: assessment and adaptation strategy development. *Lead: Russia*
- n. Conduct monitoring of Red list plants (CFG). *Lead: Sweden*
- o. Develop a Red list for Arctic Vascular Plants (CFG). *Lead: To be confirmed*
- p. Monitoring vegetation change in Greenland (CFG). *Lead: United States*
- q. Thick-billed Murre North Atlantic geolocator study (CBird). *Lead: Norway*
- r. Development of the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme (CBMP) Indicators and Indices. *Lead: Canada.*

## **2. Assessments**

- a. Conduct the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment - *Lead Canada, Finland, Greenland, Sweden and the United States*
- b. Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA) follow-up. *Lead: Iceland*
- c. Analysis and update of protected areas in the Arctic. *Lead: Iceland*
- d. Analysis of the decline of Glaucous Gulls in the Arctic (CBird). *Lead: Iceland and Norway*
- e. Analysis of marine protected areas in the Arctic. *Lead: Iceland*
- f. Analysis of murre banding recoveries (CBird). *Lead: Iceland and Norway*

- g. Arctic Marine sensitive areas: AMSA IIC follow-up. *Lead: Canada and Greenland/Denmark*
- h. Analysis of population and productivity data on circumpolar Black-legged Kittiwake status and trends (CBird). *Lead: Norway and the United States*
- i. Analysis of the Status and Trends of the Arctic Tern (CBird). *Lead: Greenland*
- j. Arctic Species Trend Index 2011: Marine analysis (CBMP). *Lead: Canada*
- k. Analysis of Arctic Sea Ice associated biodiversity. *Lead: Canada and the United States*
- l. Circumpolar Boreal Vegetation Map (CBVM) CFG. *Lead: United States*
- m. Complete the Panarctic Moss Checklist (CFG). *Lead: Canada*
- n. Complete the Panarctic Flora annotated checklist (CFG). *Lead: Norway*
- o. Update the checklist of Arctic lichens (CFG). *Lead: Iceland*

### **3. Conservation Strategies**

- a. Implementation of the Eider conservation strategy (CBird). *Lead: Canada*
- b. Implementation of the Murre conservation strategy (CBird). *Lead: Norway*
- c. Implementation of the Ivory Gull conservation strategy (CBird). *Lead: Canada and Norway*
- d. Develop a strategy to respond to the Key findings from the Arctic Biodiversity Trends 2010 report. *Lead: ICC and the Saami Council*
- e. Implement priority CAFF-relevant action items of the Arctic Council's Arctic Marine Strategic Plan (AMSP). *Lead: The CAFF chair*

### **4. Methods and Tools**

- a. Arctic Spatial Data Infrastructure (Arctic SDI). *Lead: Greenland*
- b. Compendium of TEK information from the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA). *Lead: Canada, Finland, Greenland, Sweden and the United States*

### **5. International Coordination**

Cooperation with other entities - current actions include developing cooperation with the following: *Lead: The CAFF Chair*

- a. The Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA)
- b. The Arctic Parliamentarians
- c. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- d. The Convention on Wetlands (RAMSAR)
- e. The European Union (EU)
- f. The European Environmental Agency
- g. GEO BON Biodiversity Observation Network
- h. The Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS)
- i. Cooperation on the development of the Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (SAON) process
- j. The International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS)
- k. The International Arctic Science Committee (IASC)
- l. The International Polar Year: Participate in planning and development of IPY Legacy issues
- m. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- n. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- o. The Polar Bear Specialist Group (PBSG)
- p. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- q. The oil and gas industry on biodiversity conservation efforts
- r. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- s. The United Nations Environment Programme Global Resource Information Database (UNEP GRID - Arendal)
- t. The United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC)
- u. The World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
- v. Wetlands International
- w. Zoological Society of London (ZSL)

**6. Communication and Outreach**

- a. CircumArctic Plant portal (CFG). *Lead: To be determined*
- b. Continued development of the Arctic Report Cards (CBMP). *Lead: Canada*
- c. Cooperation with the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS). *Lead: The CAFF Chair*
- d. Develop promotional brochures, posters, films and other communication products for CAFF. *Lead: The CAFF Chair*
- e. Development of CAFF publication series. *Lead: The CAFF Chair*
- f. Participate in relevant international symposia and international meetings to communicate CAFFs results and ongoing activities. *Lead: The CAFF Chair*
- g. ArcticData.is - (Web portal which allows access and download of data published through CAFF and PAME). *Lead: The CAFF Chair*
- h. Development of Arctic Biodiversity portal. *Lead: The CAFF Chair*

**7. Permanent Expert Groups**

- a. Circumpolar Seabird expert group (CBird). *Lead: Canada and the United States*
- b. Circumpolar flora expert group (CFG). *Lead: The United States*

**IV. EMERGENCY PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE (EPPR)**

**EPPR Work Plan 2011 – 2013**

**ACCIDENTAL OIL AND HNS POLLUTION: L – LEAD P- PARTICIPANT**

Project	Canada	Denmark/ Greenland	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Russian Federation	Sweden	USA
Develop Guidelines for International Assistance and Cooperation During a Catastrophic Incident Response								L
Arctic Rescue	P	P	P		P	L	P	P
Development of Safety Systems in Implementation of Economic and Infrastructural Projects	P	P	P		L	L	P	P
Follow-up on Behavior of Oil and other Hazardous Substances in Arctic Waters (BoHaSA) Recommendations	P	P	P	P	L	P	P	P
Update of Analysis of Agreements	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	L

Update of Environmental Risk Matrix	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	L
Pilot project: Arctic Emergency Resource Maps for Oil Spill Response (decision support tool for Arctic application)	L							L
Update the Arctic Guide for Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

**RADIOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES: L – LEAD P- PARTICIPANT**

Project	Canada	Denmark/ Greenland	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Russian Federation	Sweden	USA
Improve Technical Analysis Capabilities for Radiological Emergency Response						L		L
Technical Crisis Center support to the EMERCOM Crisis Situation Management Center, Phase II						L		L
Conduct of Radiation Emergency Exercises	P		P		P	L	P	L
Conduct of Radiation Emergency Training						L		L
Emergency Rescue Team Equipment Testing						L		L
Community Radiation Information						L		L

**NATURAL DISASTERS and OTHER HAZARDS L – LEAD P- PARTICIPANT**

Project	Canada	Denmark/ Greenland	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Russian Federation	Sweden	USA
"Managing the cold conditions – A systematic approach"			L		P	P	P	
Pilot Project: Arctic Automated Mutual Assistance Vessel Rescue Network (AAMVERNET)						L		L

**CO-OPERATION WITH OTHERS AND LIAISON ACTIVITIES**

Project	Canada	Denmark/ Greenland	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Russian Federation	Sweden	USA
Liaison with PAME working group	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Cooperation with Oil Industry	P	P	P		L	P	P	P
Coordination with University of the Arctic								L

**OTHER ISSUES L – LEAD P- PARTICIPANT**

Project	Canada	Denmark/ Greenland	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Russian Federation	Sweden	USA
Administration: Host EPPR web site							L	P
EPPR Secretariat								L

**V. PROTECTION OF THE ARCTIC MARINE ENVIRONMENT (PAME)**

**Introduction**

The PAME Work Plan 2011 – 2013 was developed according to: PAME`s mandate; priorities identified by the Arctic Council Chairmanship; direction provided in Ministerial declarations; and the Arctic Marine Strategic Plan (2004) which outlines the overall direction of the Arctic Council for the protection of the Arctic marine environment. The Work Plan is therefore structured around the three objectives from the AMSP followed by a set of specific actions which in some instances represent a continuation of ongoing activities.

Scientific research carried out in the Arctic region is greatly increasing the knowledge base in relation to the extent of the changes, the drivers of change and anticipated consequences for ecosystems and human activities in the Arctic. Existing and emerging challenges to the health of the Arctic marine environment warrant a more integrated ecosystem based approach to address future needs related to shipping, oil and gas development, fisheries, coastal zone development, and other ocean-related activities. PAME Working Group activities have been aimed at implementation of the Arctic Marine Strategic Plan (AMSP) and policy follow up to the scientific and other assessments of the Arctic Council.

**Projects and Activities**

**OBJECTIVE I: Improve knowledge and respond to emerging knowledge of the Arctic marine environment**

**BACKGROUND**

Arctic marine activities are likely to expand as a result of increased resource demand and improved marine access. This increased activity will increase risks to the environment and its ecological processes. In this regard the Arctic Council encourages the development of suitable national and international regulations and measures to reduce the risk and the potential negative impacts of shipping and other activities in Arctic waters. In addition, development of appropriate infrastructure is encouraged in order to support safe shipping in the Arctic.

**ACTIONS:**

Agreed follow-up of AMSA recommendations (Annex X) divides the AMSA recommendations into the following three categories<sup>1</sup>:

- Actions to be followed up/implemented by PAME are recommendations I(A), I(B), I(C), I(D), II(D) and II(G).
- Actions to be followed up/implemented by other Arctic Council working groups are AMSA recommendations I(E), II(C), II(F) and III(C). The PAME Chair to communicate this to the relevant working groups chairs for their consideration and for the recommendations to be included in either their respective current or future work programme
- Actions to be followed up within national implementation processes/policies with possible future requests for reporting on national activities, if needed, are AMSA recommendations II(A), II(B), II(E), II(H), III(A), III(B) and III(D)

**1. Follow-up of AMSA Recommendations**

Actions	Activities	Lead(s)
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<sup>1</sup> Actions I(A), I(B), I(D), II(D), II(G), II(A) and II(B) refer to those follow-up recommendations included in this version

**Senior Arctic Officials (SAO) Report to Ministers, Nuuk, Greenland, May 2011**

<p><b>I(B) – IMO Measures for Arctic Shipping</b> (actions 1 and 2)</p>	<p>Work is underway in IMO to develop a mandatory Polar Code.</p>	<p><b>Denmark</b></p>
<p><b>I(B) – IMO Measures for Arctic Shipping</b> (action 3) <u>Phase II of the project on Heavy Fuel Oil (HFO) in the Arctic</u></p>	<p>The aim is to forward draft recommendation(s) to the Arctic Council in the Spring of 2013 for action by member governments regarding possible additional or supplemental international actions or regulations for the purpose of mitigating or minimizing the risks associated with the use or carriage of HFO in the Arctic Ocean.</p>	<p><b>Norway US Russian Federation</b></p>
<p><b>I(D) – Strengthening Passenger Ship Safety in Arctic Waters</b> (action 1)</p>	<p>Monitor and support IMO initiatives to strengthen passenger vessel safety.</p>	<p><b>Denmark US</b></p>
<p><b>I(D) – Strengthening Passenger Ship Safety</b> (action 2)</p>	<p>Take actions to encourage the Arctic cruise tourism industry to adopt new, or update existing, best practices for operations in the Arctic.</p>	<p><b>Denmark US</b></p>
<p><b>II(G) – Addressing Impacts on Marine Mammals</b></p>	<p>PAME to invite AMAP and CAFF to assess the effects on marine mammals due to ship noise, disturbance and strikes in Arctic waters, taking note of relevant documents by organizations such as IMO, IWC, ASCOBAN and NAMMCO.</p>	<p><b>PAME Chair</b></p>
<p><b>II(A) – Survey of Arctic Indigenous Marine Use</b> <b>II(B) – Engagement with Arctic Communities</b></p>	<p>Develop activities under the themes identified in the scoping paper on Arctic Indigenous Marine Use Survey Process as prepared by AIA and Saami Council.</p>	<p><b>AIA Saami Council</b></p>
<p><b>II (D) -Specially Designated Arctic Marine Areas:</b> <i>That the Arctic states should, taking into account the special characteristics of the Arctic marine environment, explore the need for internationally designated areas for the purpose of environmental protection in regions of the Arctic Ocean.</i></p>	<p>PAME to review final II (C) report. Subsequent actions to be considered by PAME.</p>	<p><b>Finland Norway Russian Federation US</b></p>



<b>AMSA implementation progress report</b>	Update the status of the AMSA implementation progress report for submission to the 2013 Ministerial meeting of the Arctic Council.	<b>Canada Finland US</b>
<b>2. Follow up on the Arctic Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines (2009)</b>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>
<b>1) Health, Safety and Environmental (HSE) Management Systems and the Use of Best Operating Practices for Offshore Arctic Oil and Gas Drilling Activities—A Report and Guidelines</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Develop and approve TOR for project and circulate for review</li> <li>(ii) Begin compilation and comparison of existing Arctic HSE Management systems and best operating practices (possibly as product of the MRE Web-based Informational Resource project).</li> <li>(iii) Hold an open workshop on Arctic HSE Management Systems and Best Operating Practices</li> <li>(iv) First Draft Report (and Guidelines if agreed)</li> <li>(v) Final Report and Guidelines delivered to the PAME Working Group, SAOs and Ministers for approval</li> </ul>	<b>US</b>
<b>2) Arctic Oil and Gas Management, Regulation and Enforcement a Legal Regime Web-Based Information Resource</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Form a contact group to agree on project plan defining website format and content, and to contribute relevant information.</li> <li>(ii) 2) Work with Secretariat to incorporate this information as part of website or new web portal and promote the results.</li> </ul>	<b>US</b>

**OBJECTIVE II: Determine the adequacy of applicable international/regional commitments and promote their implementation and compliance**

**BACKGROUND**

Increasing human activity in the Arctic Ocean and activities in new areas pose challenges to its health and warrants an ecosystem approach to integrated ocean management to maximize environmental protection and sustainable use of the marine environment including related to shipping, oil and gas development, fisheries, coastal zone development, and other ocean-related activities. The Arctic Council has an opportunity to provide international leadership on the global sustainable development agenda through adoption of the ecosystem based approach to management of the Arctic marine environment, consistent with existing legal framework.

**ACTIONS:**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>
<b>1) Arctic Ocean Review</b>	Phase II will follow-up on the information	<b>Canada</b>

Actions	Activities	Lead(s)
<b>(AOR) Phase II</b>	collected in Phase I by analyzing potential gaps in global and regional instruments and measures to identify opportunities and, accordingly, make recommendations for the protection and sustainable use of the Arctic marine environment.  A final AOR Report with Recommendations will be submitted to Arctic Council Ministers in 2013 for approval.	<b>Iceland Norway Russian Federation US</b>
<b>2) Update the status of the Arctic Marine Strategic Plan (AMSP 2004)</b>	<u>Phase I (2011-2013):</u> The PAME led EA Expert Group to contribute input to the development of the AMSP Phase I 2011-2013 scoping process. The delivery from AMSP Phase I should include a suggested outline for a future AMSP to be submitted to the respective working groups for consideration.	<b>Norway US</b>
<b>3) Ecosystem approach to management (7.4 in the AMSP)</b>	(i) Complete the revision of the working map of Arctic LMEs for consideration at PAME II-2011.  (ii) Prepare an inventory of existing or planned reports relevant to ecosystem status reporting based on the information compiled at the workshop and additional information supplied by members of the expert group.  (iii) Plan the further development of ecosystem status reports for the various LMEs.  (iv) Identify possible arrangements for cost-effective integration of monitoring and assessment that draw upon existing national and international programs (e.g. by AMAP and CAFF) and form an integral component of the ecosystem approach to management of the Arctic LMEs.  (v) Review methods and progress in determining ecological objectives for species and habitats that can serve as a part of the management objectives for the ecosystem approach to management of Arctic LMEs.  (vi) Refer to AMSP action Item 2) above.	<b>Norway US</b>

**OBJECTIVE III: Facilitate partnerships, programmes and technical cooperation and support communication and outreach both within and outside the Arctic Council.**

**BACKGROUND:**

There is a need to continue coordinating work with other working groups of the Arctic Council, regional and international organizations and programmes, local authorities and indigenous organizations in an effort to promote capacity building, sharing of information on the state of the Arctic marine environment

**ACTIONS:**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead</b>
1) Information outreach and efforts to increase cooperation and collaboration with international/regional organizations. <i>(From section 7.5.2 in the AMSP)</i>	(i) Liaise and exchange information with relevant organizations and programs (e.g. UNEP Regional Seas Programme) regions, and other regional programs.  (ii) Contribute as appropriate to the 2011 GPA Intergovernmental Review, to report on PAME's 2009 update of its Regional Programme of Action for the Arctic (RPA).	<b>PAME Chair/Secretariat</b>  <b>PAME Chair/Secretariat</b>
2) Build the capacity and engagement of indigenous communities and other Arctic inhabitants. <i>(From section 7.6 in the AMSP)</i>	Development and implementation of communication products and activities to support understanding of and involvement in PAME activities such as through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ PAME homepage</li> <li>○ Brochures and posters</li> <li>○ Providing our information to other organizations for posting on their websites.</li> </ul> Encourage activities and proposals from Permanent Participants	<b>PAME Chair/Secretariat</b>  <b>Permanent Participants</b>
3) Collaborations with Arctic Council Working Groups	Review work plans of other AC WGs to identify areas for cooperation and respond accordingly	<b>All</b>

**VI. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP (SDWG)**

**SDWG WORK PLAN FOR 2011-13**

**A. OVERVIEW OF THE SDWG MANDATE**

The goal of the sustainable development program of the Arctic Council is to propose and adopt steps to be taken by the Arctic States to advance sustainable development in the Arctic, including opportunities to protect and enhance the environment and the economies, culture and health of Indigenous Peoples and Arctic communities, as well as to improve the environmental, economic and social conditions of Arctic communities as a whole.

The guiding tenet running throughout the work of the Sustainable Development Working Group is to pursue initiatives that provide practical knowledge and contribute to building the capacity of Indigenous Peoples and Arctic communities to respond to the challenges and benefit from the opportunities emerging in the Arctic Region.

**B. RESPONDING TO MINISTERIAL PRIORITIES AND DIRECTIONS**

Unlike other Arctic Council Working Groups, the SDWG carries out its mandate based on specific projects approved by Ministers, rather than in accordance with a broad program mandate. At the Salekhard Ministerial Meeting (2006), this structural difference was alleviated

to some degree by through the adoption by Ministers of a mechanism giving SAOs an ongoing mandate to approve SDWG projects consistent with the overall work and priorities of the Arctic Council during inter-session.

### **C. COOPERATION WITH OTHER WORKING GROUPS AND EXPERT BODIES**

In addition, the SDWG is increasingly required to contribute to Arctic Council priority areas being carried out by other working groups and subsidiary bodies. The SDWG continues to seek more effective structures to bring together the requisite expertise on issues and activities within its mandate. Further development on the aforementioned is planned during the next biennium. During the Swedish Chairmanship, the SDWG has been approached to participate in projects currently under development with the Protection of Arctic Marine Environment, Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna and Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme working groups.

### **D. SDWG WORK PLAN 2011-13**

The purpose of the SDWG Work Plan below is to provide a framework for the work and priorities of the SDWG during the period 2011-13 that complements the existing Ministerial Declarations, *Sustainable Development Terms of Reference*, *SDWG Operating Guidelines*, *The Arctic Council's Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP)* and other emerging priority issues.

#### **I. Thematic Areas for SDWG Projects and Activities**

In addition, consistent with the overall work and priorities of the Arctic Council, the SDWG carried out projects and activities, as approved by SAOs, in the following thematic areas:

1. Arctic Human Health: *To broaden the scope and strengthen the integration of human health activities within the Council by developing concrete initiatives to improve the health and well-being of Indigenous Peoples and other Arctic residents.*
2. Arctic Socio-Economic Issues: *To advance on a better understanding of the human influences on the Arctic environment and the socio-economic conditions of Indigenous Peoples and Arctic communities*
3. Adaptation to Climate Change: *To strengthen the work of the Council by reducing vulnerability and implementing adaptation initiatives related to climate change in the Arctic, including practical community-based actions.*
4. Energy and Arctic Communities: *To consider future projects and activities in relation to the Arctic region as energy consumer, and the importance of environmentally friendly economic activity in the energy sector to ongoing social and economic development in the Arctic region.*
5. Management of Natural Resources: *To consider that Indigenous Peoples and Arctic communities rely on the sustainable use of natural resources for their health and economic well-being; increases in shipping, petroleum activities, fishing, mining as well as external influences such as climate change and variability, require that the management of resources is based on a holistic perspective.*
6. Arctic Cultures and Languages: *To support Arctic cultures; to reduce the loss of Arctic Indigenous languages and to follow-up on the Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium.*

- *Strategic Planning: To develop a more integrated and inclusive approach to managing and planning SDWG priority-based activities undertaken in collaboration with other Arctic Council Working Groups, Permanent Participants, Arctic community stakeholders and external partners.*

## **II. 2011-13 SDWG Ongoing Projects by Thematic Area**

### **1. ARCTIC HUMAN HEALTH**

#### **a) Comparative Review of Circumpolar Health Systems Report (CircHSR)**

(AHHEG/Canada/Greenland)

The purpose of this AHHEG project is to highlight different responses to similar challenges and focus on the effects of differing governance and organization. The first phase of this larger, multi-year project entails assembling national and regional profiles of the different health systems in Arctic countries.

**b) Arctic Human Health Initiative (AHHI)** (USA) Originally an SDWG/IPY project, AHHI succeeded at: serving as focal point for human health research, education, and communication and outreach activities. It also increased awareness and visibility of human health concerns; fostered research; and promoted strategies to improve the health and well being of Arctic residents. Ongoing AHHI projects are now integrated into the Arctic Human Health Experts Group's (AHHEG) portfolio of human health activities.

**c) International Circumpolar Surveillance (ICS)** (USA) The ICS established an infectious disease surveillance network of hospital and public health laboratories and authorities throughout Arctic regions to monitor emerging and infectious disease problems. The network collects and shares data between Arctic countries and assists in creating prevention and control strategies and is also an activity of the AHHEG.

### **2. ARCTIC SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES**

**a) Arctic Social Indicators (ASI)** (Iceland) ASI Phases I and II are follow-up activities to the AHDR (2004) to facilitate tracking and monitoring of key aspects of human development in the Arctic over time. The ASI Phase I, completed during the Danish Chairmanship, addressed data challenges and requirements for an Arctic Social Indicators monitoring system. Phase II involves the measurement and testing of the indicators identified within Phase I.

### **3. ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE** **No ongoing project proposed**

### **4. ENERGY AND ARCTIC COMMUNITIES** **No ongoing project proposed.**

### **5. MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES** **No ongoing project proposed.**

### **6. ARCTIC CULTURES AND LANGUAGES**

**a) Assessment of Cultural Heritage Monuments and Sites in the Arctic** (Norway) The primary objective for the Expert Group established to undertake this initiative is to develop criteria, in line with the World Heritage standard for the protection and management of World Heritage Sites, and to inform/guide the assessment of Cultural Heritage Monuments and Sites in the Arctic. This project is ongoing and will be completed during the Swedish Chairmanship.

**b) Areas of Heightened Cultural Significance AMSA Recommendation II c)** (Norway)

PAME has requested the advice of AMAP, CAFF and the SDWG on follow-up to the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA IIc) report recommendation: the identification of areas of heightened ecological and cultural significance and their vulnerability towards marine shipping in light of changing climate conditions and increasing multiple marine use. SDWG experts have met and have completed a first draft on areas of heightened cultural significance. The project will be completed by December 2011.

**STRATEGIC PLANNING**

**SDWG Strategic Planning - On a Way Forward** (Canada/ SDWG Strategic Planning Task Force)

The proposal for the SDWG to undertake a strategic planning exercise was submitted as part of its 2009-11 work plan. A first step, completed during the Danish Chairmanship, was the SDWG Strategic Plan Phase I report *Taking Stock*. The SDWG strategic planning process will be completed during the Swedish Chairmanship.

**III. NEW PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES CURRENTLY UNDER DEVELOPMENT**

The projects listed below are to be reviewed and considered for possible endorsement by SDWG and subsequent approval by SAOs.

**a) Arctic Human Development II (AHDR II)** (Iceland/Canada/Denmark/Greenland) The AHDR-II aims to provide a comprehensive overview of human development in the Arctic that can be used to assess progress toward sustainable human development; to educate the public and provide valuable material for educational instruction; and be a handbook for policy makers. The project will also provide a circumpolar assessment of human development and quality of life in the Arctic with a completion date of 2015.

**b) Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium follow-up** (Canada) This project addresses an identified need for an in-depth language assessment and the development of a long-term plan to maintain, preserve and/or revitalize Arctic indigenous languages. The projected outcomes include: assessing the state of Arctic indigenous languages and reinforcing their importance; leading and facilitating inter-regional, international, and intergovernmental activities in support of Arctic indigenous languages and enhancing language exchange and youth engagement.

**c) ICC Response to AMSA Recommendations follow-up** (Canada) This proposal consists of two actions: 1) Communicating AMSA findings to Inuit & seeking guidance to move AMSA forward, and 2) Realizing an Expanded Survey on Inuit Use of the Sea and Sea Ice. The goal is to carry out an expanded survey in Inuit communities to assess their current use of the sea and how it compares to that recorded in earlier land use studies. The activities proposed in this plan would cover the three additional regions -Chukotka, Alaska, and Greenland within the Inuit homeland.

**d) Reindeer Herding and Youth** (Russia/ Association of World Reindeer Herders (AWRH)) this project aims to build on the IPY EALAT project and the SDWG EALAT-Information project. With reindeer herding youth as a focal point for its activities, the project will seek to adopt and test new information and communication technologies, facilitate a more regular dialogue through community-based workshops and exchanges between the young reindeer herders normally separated by vast Arctic distances on matters of land use change, industry, and shared experiences.

**e) Electronic Memory of the Arctic (EMA)** (Russia) The EMA Project is designed to accumulate and represent various information resources in an Internet environment as they relate to the circumpolar world. EMA will allow the expert community to discuss issues on the history of geographical discoveries and exploration of the North, industry, geology, nature, folklore and literature, artistic heritage and ethnography.

**f) The Arctic Maritime and Aviation Transportation Infrastructure Initiative (AMATII)** (USA) This project will assess the infrastructure deficit in the Arctic by developing guidance for a robust, effective transportation system in the North. By setting benchmarks for what capacity and capability should look like and establishing a current baseline of Arctic maritime and air transportation infrastructure, the Initiative will be able to produce a gap analysis that more efficiently facilitates the application of resources by federal, regional and local governments, as well as international bodies.



## E. Annexes

### 1 Framework for Strengthening the Arctic Council

#### Establishing a secretariat

- The Arctic Council was established in 1996 as a high level intergovernmental forum to promote cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States with the involvement of Arctic indigenous peoples and other Arctic inhabitants. Since that time the rapidly changing circumstances in the Arctic have increased the challenges and opportunities facing the Arctic in both volume and complexity. The establishment of a Secretariat will strengthen the capacity of the Arctic Council to respond to these challenges and opportunities.
- The Secretariat will enhance the objectives of the Arctic Council through the establishment of administrative capacity and by providing continuity, institutional memory, operational efficiency, enhanced communication and outreach, exchange of information with other relevant international organizations and to support activities of the Arctic Council.

#### **The role, size and composition of the secretariat:**

- Under the direction of the Arctic Council, with the Arctic Council Chair responsible for the day-to-day operations, the Secretariat is to perform the following functions:

Administrative and other related duties, including: arranging and servicing meetings as required, transmitting reports to and from Arctic States, Permanent Participants, Working Groups and Task Forces, other subsidiary bodies and observers; assisting the chair in drafting meeting documents including final reports; providing services to Permanent Participants and Working Groups without a secretariat, administrative services concerning general correspondence and archiving of records; and such other services and functions as may be required and directed by the Arctic Council and its Chair.

- Communications, including: operating the Arctic Council website, including webpages of those Working Groups without a secretariat, facilitating and improving the quality and availability of information on the Arctic Council; recording, maintaining and posting, as appropriate, the records of the Arctic Council; facilitating the exchange of information among the Arctic States, Permanent Participants and Observers; and, at the request of SAOs and PPs, developing strategic communication and outreach plans and other documents under the direct supervision of the Chair in support of the Arctic Council.

Finance and Human Resources, including: managing budgets; recruiting staff; contracting for services and related activities; and liaising with the host country.

Translation: Recognizing that English is the working language of the Arctic Council, the Secretariat may possess the capability to translate important Arctic Council documents and Arctic Council communications and outreach material to and from the Russian language, but the resources necessary to fund such a capability must be provided outside the administrative budget as established by the Arctic Council.



- The Secretariat will initially be a body of up to 10 staff members, headed by a Director, with the above described functions, not including translators. The Secretariat may host secondments and internships, including in particular those of Permanent Participants.
- The overall operation of the secretariat should be reviewed, unless otherwise decided by the SAOs, after 6 years.

### **Venue of the Secretariat**

- The Arctic Council approves the establishment of a secretariat during the Swedish chairmanship, to be operational no later than the beginning of the Canadian Chairmanship in 2013.
- The Secretariat should possess legal personality in the host country and the Secretariat and its staff members and their families should enjoy such privileges and immunities in the host country as are necessary for the exercise of their functions.

### **The Indigenous Peoples Secretariat**

- The Indigenous Peoples Secretariat under the framework of the Arctic Council will be reviewed by Permanent Participants during the first year of the Swedish chairmanship to determine the feasibility of its integration with ACS. PPs will form a committee responsible for the review and, based on the results of this review, will develop recommendations on strengthening of the services provided to PP organizations.



### **Budgetizing expenditure**

- An Administrative Budget to cover the operating costs of the Secretariat, including inter alia, salaries, travel costs, web-site related costs and, if applicable, the costs of the Permanent Participant intern(s) is to be established and be determined every second year by the Ministerial meeting. Other costs are to be borne by the chair as per current practice and the Rules of Procedure, including rooms rented for meetings and interpretation at meetings of SAOs, Deputy Ministers and Ministers. The Task Force will make recommendations to the SAOs on the first draft administrative budget for the Secretariat.
- The shared portion of the administrative budget that will be divided into eight equal parts financed by all eight Arctic States should not exceed USD 1 million. Costs of secondments by Arctic States will be provided outside the administrative budget. In addition to contributions to the administrative budget, an Arctic state may make additional contributions to support approved functions of the Secretariat.

### **The nature of the decisions taken in the AC and the increased use of task forces**

The Arctic Council will continue to work towards solutions to address emerging challenges in the Arctic utilizing a wide range of approaches, including: scientific assessments; policy statements; guidelines; recommendations; best practices; and new legally binding instruments. Working Groups will remain the principal means for advancing the substantive work of the Arctic Council, including the organisation of activities to follow up on findings and recommendations of assessments. However, Task Forces may be necessary for specific

initiatives that require unique expertise and, in those instances, the composition and mode of operation of the Task Force would be determined on a case-by-case basis.

**The criteria for admitting observers and role for their participation in the Arctic Council**

**Introduction:**

The Arctic Council is the leading high level forum with the objective of promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States, with the involvement of the Arctic indigenous peoples and other Arctic inhabitants on common Arctic issues, in particular issues of sustainable development and environmental protection in the Arctic. Since the establishment of the Arctic Council participation by observers has been a valuable feature through their provision of scientific and other expertise, information and financial resources. The involvement of observers should enhance and complement the unique and critical role of Permanent Participants in the Arctic Council.

**Criteria for admitting observers:**

As set out in the Declaration on the Establishment of the Arctic Council and governed by the Arctic Council Rules of Procedure, observer status in the Arctic Council is open to non-Arctic States; inter-governmental and inter-parliamentary organizations, global and regional; and non-governmental organizations that the Council determines can contribute to its work.

In the determination by the Council of the general suitability of an applicant for observer status the Council will, inter alia, take into account the extent to which observers:

- Accept and support the objectives of the Arctic Council defined in the Ottawa declaration.
- Recognize Arctic States' sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction in the Arctic.
- Recognize that an extensive legal framework applies to the Arctic Ocean including, notably, the Law of the Sea, and that this framework provides a solid foundation for responsible management of this ocean.
- Respect the values, interests, culture and traditions of Arctic indigenous peoples and other Arctic inhabitants.
- Have demonstrated a political willingness as well as financial ability to contribute to the work of the Permanent Participants and other Arctic indigenous peoples.
- Have demonstrated their Arctic interests and expertise relevant to the work of the Arctic Council.
- Have demonstrated a concrete interest and ability to support the work of the Arctic Council, including through partnerships with member states and Permanent Participants bringing Arctic concerns to global decision making bodies.

**Role of observers:**

Decisions at all levels in the Arctic Council are the exclusive right and responsibility of the eight Arctic States with the involvement of the Permanent Participants.

- Observers shall be invited to the meetings of the Arctic Council once observer status has been granted.
- While the primary role of observers is to observe the work of the Arctic Council, observers should continue to make relevant contributions through their engagement in the Arctic Council primarily at the level of Working Groups.
- Observers may propose projects through an Arctic State or a Permanent Participant but financial contributions from observers to any given project may not exceed the financing from Arctic States, unless otherwise decided by the SAOs.
- In meetings of the Council's subsidiary bodies to which observers have been invited to participate, observers may, at the discretion of the Chair, make statements after Arctic states and Permanent Participants, present written statements, submit relevant documents and provide views on the issues under discussion. Observers may also submit written statements at Ministerial meetings.

**Accreditation and review of observers of the Arctic Council:**

- Not later than 120 days before a ministerial meeting, the host country shall circulate, to all Arctic states and Permanent Participants, a list of entities that have applied for observer status.
- Observers are requested to submit to the Arctic Council, not later than 120 days before a Ministerial meeting, up to date information about relevant activities and their contributions to the work of the Arctic Council should they wish to continue as an observer to the Council.
- Every four years, from the date of being granted observer status, observers should state affirmatively their continued interest in observer status. Not later than 120 days before a Ministerial meeting where observers will be reviewed, the SAO Chair shall circulate to the Arctic States and Permanent Participants a list of all accredited observers and up to date information on their activities relevant to the work of the Arctic Council.
- "Ad-hoc observer" status for specific meetings may be granted to the present applicants for observer status according to the Rules of Procedure until the Ministers have decided upon their applications. Ad-hoc observer status will no longer be applied otherwise and appropriate amendments will be made to the Rules of Procedure.

**Observer manual:**

- An observer manual will be published by the Arctic Council to guide the Council's subsidiary bodies in relation to meeting logistics and the roles played by observers.

## 2 Communications and Outreach Contact Group: Recommendations

### Contact Group Recommendations Concerning Websites

The Interim Report noted the importance of the AC and Working Group websites as the primary means of communication with the public on the AC. In addition to references to websites in the AC Communications and Outreach Guidelines, and any direction for websites that the Strategic Communications Plan will provide, the contact group felt it was worthwhile to offer the following recommendations to better promote the AC and its Working Groups on the internet.

The Interim Report outlined some challenges including:

- the overuse of acronyms;
- a structure and content that is not based on the needs of users;
- the lack of processes to link the WG and AC websites; and
- missed opportunities to promote the work of the AC, especially in conjunction with recent news events.

#### A common tool and responsibility

The AC website is managed by the AC Secretariat. It is a tool that can be used to promote the objectives of all AC actors. The responsibility for creating and maintaining AC website content rests on all AC actors, not just the Secretariat.

#### Content Review:

In addition to the Working Groups' individual websites, each WG has a page on the AC website as do AC Member States and Permanent Participants. AC Members should note that 70% of the visitors to the AC website come from AC Member States. The highest number of visits to the AC website occurs during and immediately following the Ministerial meetings every two years.

One of the draft communications objectives presented to SAOs is to better inform Northern communities about the work of the Arctic Council. One of the ways that Northerners are informing themselves on the Arctic and the actions that their governments are taking on Arctic issues is via the AC website.

AC Members and Working Groups should review the content concerning their organizations on a regular basis. This review should be coordinated by the AC Secretariat and be timed so that new content is available before AC Ministerial meetings. It implies an increased workload for Members, WGs and the AC Secretariat. There may be ways to make this process easier using feeds to pull content automatically from WG websites, however content posted this way may need to be reviewed for consistency. When contributing updated content, Members and Working Groups should use language that will not become outdated.

<p><b>Recommendation 1.</b> AC Members and Working Groups should review the content concerning their organizations at least once a year.</p>
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#### Content Planning:

The quality, relevance and timeliness of the AC website content could be improved through longer term content planning. This planning would be led and managed by the AC Secretariat with the input of all other AC actors.

- **Content Features:** In addition to the existing “static” content on the AC mandate and structure, the AC Secretariat could identify 4-5 topics to be featured on the AC website every year. These topics would be guided by the Strategic Communications Plan and could be informed by current events or important dates: eg. International Year of Biodiversity, oil and gas, International Polar Year. The Secretariat would seek input from the AC Members and Working Groups on which topics to feature, and for content concerning AC efforts for each feature.
- **Press Room:** A Press Room page exists, but could be improved through greater coordination between the AC Working Groups and the AC Secretariat. The page could include links to recent press releases issued by WGs or the AC Chair.
- **News Feeds:** The existing news feeds on the AC and WG websites draw the attention of readers to current events affecting the Arctic. However, they do not include any information on relevant ways that the Arctic Council is responding, and they may contain opinions not shared by AC Members and WGs. The contact does not recommend the use of news feeds on the AC and WG websites.
- **News Stories:** Before posting a news story on the AC website, the AC Secretariat should consult appropriate WGs in order to include content about AC work linked to the story. This will likely mean featuring fewer news stories and additional work for the Working Groups and Members. WGs should only post news stories that are directly related to their mandates, and should include content about their relevant work or research.

### General Content about the AC

- Once the Strategic Communications Plan is developed, the content that provides an overview of the AC mandate, structure, members, etc. should be updated to align with the key messages in the plan. Additional content on the key messages of the plan should also be considered.
- A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section should be developed which would provide the answers to simple questions about the AC, its mandate and other factual questions. This could assist the Chair and Secretariat by serving as a place to refer basic enquiries, and could be informed by analysis of the keywords that are typed in the search engine on the AC website.

### Using statistics to inform the AC website content

Since 2007, the AC Secretariat has been collecting statistics about the use of the AC website. However, the Secretariat has not been using this information to make decisions. This information can be extremely helpful for knowing who is being reached by the AC website.

For example, the Interim Report noted that nearly half of AC website visitors are located in English-speaking countries (US – 22%, Canada – 21%, UK – 5%). Only 4% of visitors are located in Russia. One could conclude that the fact that the AC website is written in English is promoting use in English-speaking countries. The lack of Russian-language content means that very few Russians have access to the information shared on the AC website. As the AC struggles to decide where scarce resources for translation should be allocated, a case could be made to create Russian language versions of some of the key AC website information (About the AC, Member States, Permanent Participants, Working Groups, etc.) and then measure whether visits from Russian speakers increase.

This is only one example. The statistics collected can also be used to decide which pages should be updated more frequently, which content is not of interest to users and should therefore be improved or removed, and how to increase the number of visitors to the AC website.

**Recommendation 2.** The AC Secretariat should use the statistical information collected on AC website usage to inform their decision-making and content development processes. The AC

Secretariat should also include analysis of these statistics in their reports to SAOs on implementation of the Strategic Communications Plan.

**Content based on the needs of target audiences and users**

The Interim Report recognized that a visitor unfamiliar with the organizational structure of the AC may have a difficult time finding the information that they need on the AC website. The WGs are referred to primarily using their acronyms, and information on the projects and work of the AC and its WGs is presented according to the organizational structure of the AC – not by theme. In addition to being guided by the statistical information on the users of the AC website, the Strategic Communications Plan will provide valuable guidance on the AC target audiences, and content should be structured and developed accordingly.

**Recommendation 3.** The use of acronyms should be minimized. When they are used, their meaning should be spelled out at the first reference on every page. This is particularly important on the [AC home page](#), on the [Working Group overview page](#), in page titles and links.

Some ideas to make the AC website more user-friendly could include:

- **Sorting content by topic or theme:** Currently the only way to learn about what all parts of the AC are doing on a theme such as pollution or ice is to type the theme into the AC search engine. It would be interesting to create theme-based pages that could present a summary of the theme and link to relevant work across Working Groups on that theme. This would require the close collaboration of Working Groups and the AC Secretariat. When sharing content to be posted on the AC website, WGs would indicate the 2-3 primary topics or themes associated with the content, which the Secretariat would use to link up the content appropriately with the thematic pages.
- **Sorting content by target audience:** Some websites such as UNEP structure their content by target audience such as for scientists, students, governments, media, etc. Once the AC's target audiences are approved in the Strategic Communications Plan, pages for each key target audience could be developed that link to content relevant for that group. Working Groups and the Secretariat would need to collaborate to identify which content would be of interest to each audience.<sup>2</sup>

**Closer Links with the Working Groups:**

Both the Interim Report and the options and recommendations above call for greater integration between the AC Secretariat and the Working Groups. Measures in this regard include implementing Recommendation 14 of the Communications and Outreach Guidelines which states that "the AC logo should be displayed prominently on all [. . .] websites intended for public use that are produced by [. . .] Working Groups."

In addition, a specific process should be developed to ensure that Working Groups inform and provide content ahead of time to the AC Secretariat about upcoming news-worthy events, work or releases, such as the publication of assessments and reports. This will ensure that resources within the AC such as AC and WG websites are used to the fullest to promote the work of the organization.

Participants had differing views on whether there should be a common visual identity for the Arctic Council over and above the use of the AC logo. This discussion was primarily focused on the "look" of the AC and Working Group websites. Proponents of a common identity emphasized that this would obviously demonstrate the link between the AC and the Working Groups. Others did not feel that the investment in developing and implementing a common

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<sup>2</sup> AMAP indicates the target audiences for their popular assessments or reports. The AMAP website is currently being upgraded, including to better tailor content to particular target groups (and make it possible for these to customize the site to meet their individual preferences).

visual identity would result in enough of an increased awareness of the AC and its subsidiary bodies to be worthwhile. There was no consensus on this proposal.

Contact group participants raised the separate (but interrelated) proposal to merge the AC and Working Group websites into one larger website. There was no consensus on this proposal.

**Advantages:**

- **Lower cost:** Some WGs have in kind agreements with other organizations for the hosting of their websites, and many WG members maintain the websites on a voluntary basis. However, a cost savings could likely be obtained by having only one site.
- **Consistency and Professionalism:** By having a single (or fewer) individuals with significant experience in e-communications manage the websites, the quality of the AC and Working Group websites would likely increase and/or become more consistent across the organization.
- **Branding of the AC:** A single website and common visual identity would make the link between the AC and the Working Groups more obvious.

**Disadvantages:**

- The Working Groups now have full control over the content of their websites. Having a single website would likely mean compromise on content, layout and look of the site to accommodate the needs of so many groups.
- If one individual was responsible for posting and updating website content, WGs would probably experience more lengthy delays in having content posted than they currently do.
- The cost of redesigning the AC and WG websites will be high.
- The branding benefits are difficult to quantify.

Given the diverging viewpoints and the investment of time and funding that would be required, further thought and research is required on this topic. For example, the Communications and Outreach contact group has not undertaken a study of the cost associated with the AC and Working Group websites. The contact group has also not done a cost-benefit analysis (number of visitors to the website vs. cost of the site) of the AC family of website relative to the websites of other regional organizations (eg. Barents Euro-Arctic Council, Norden, Council of Baltic Sea States). This research and these questions could be considered by the developers of the Strategic Communications Plan.

**Recommendation 4.** Working Groups should inform and/or provide content concerning important assessments, reports or news-worthy items to the AC Secretariat ahead of publication. The AC Secretariat, in consultation with Working Groups, should develop a process for the Working Groups to follow when submitting content for the AC website

Many of the suggestions and recommendations above are common practice in the area of e-communications. However, an updated and relevant website that evolves and contains fresh, valued content requires dedicated resources armed with the requisite experience and knowledge. This function should be prioritized and supported within the AC Secretariat.

### **3 Mandate for Task Force for Institutional Issues (2011-2013)**

#### **Draft Terms of Reference**

Name: Task Force for Institutional Issues (TFII)

Members: Representatives from the Arctic Council (AC) Member States and Permanent Participants (PPs) supported by the ad hoc Arctic Council Secretariat in Tromsø.

Chair: Senior Arctic Official (SAO) of Sweden

#### Main Objectives

Present recommendations to the SAOs on

1. all necessary issues related to the establishment of the AC Secretariat in order for the Secretariat to be fully operational at the beginning of the Canadian chairmanship of the Arctic Council by 2013; and
2. consequential revisions of the AC Rules of Procedure in order to implement the decisions to strengthen the AC as set out in the SAO Report.

#### Timeline

The first meeting will take place in October 2011 and recommendations will be finalized for consideration by SAOs at the last SAO meeting in 2012.

#### Tasks

1. Draft necessary consequential revisions of the AC Rules of Procedure.
2. Develop the administrative framework for the Secretariat.
3. Engage with the Host Country on the legal relationship between the Host Country and the Secretariat, including the extension of appropriate privileges and immunities and review of any corresponding Host Country Agreement.
4. Prepare an indicative budget.
5. Arrange for the preparation of financial and HR/personnel issues, including the merit criteria for the senior staff and other core policies that should be in place at the time of establishment of the Secretariat.
6. Present elements for a first work plan of the Secretariat.
7. Propose text for the Ministerial declaration in Stockholm, May 2013.

#### SAO Guidance and TFII Progress Reports

Direction is set out in the SAO Report. The SAOs may request periodic updates on the progress of the TFII.

#### Resources and Budget

Sweden will finance meetings in Sweden. Travel costs and accommodation will be covered by participating delegations. Other Member States or PPs may propose to host meetings if they are interested.

#### Procedural issues

The ACTF is to operate in accordance with the AC Rules of Procedure and should strive to accomplish as much of its work as possible through electronic meetings (teleconference, e-mail, video conference) and only meet when necessary.