

**Meeting of Senior Arctic Officials
Luleå
8-9 November 2011
Final Report**

1. Introduction

1.1. Opening of Meeting and Welcoming Words

Gustaf Lind, SAO Chair, welcomed the delegates to Luleå and the first SAO meeting under the Swedish chairmanship.

1.2. Introduction of new SAOs/ PP HoDs

New Senior Arctic Official of the Kingdom of Denmark, Nauja Bianco and new Head of Delegation for the Saami Council, Åsa Larsson Blind were welcomed to the Arctic Council as new Heads of Delegations. Nauja Bianco presented the new SAOs of Greenland, Naja Lund, and the Faroes, Hanna í Horni.

1.3. Approval of the Agenda

Decision: The agenda as distributed 27 October 2011 was approved.

1.4. Special mention

Presentation: **The SAO Chair** explained that items for this new agenda point will be used for information only. Sweden wants the agenda at SAO meetings to be short and focused on decision items or discussion items that are important as part of preparations for deliverables at the next Ministerial. Two issues were mentioned:

- Declaration from Students on Ice on Arctic cooperation.
- CAFF statement to 15th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) of the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD), in Montreal, Canada.

2. Administrative Issues/ Effectiveness and Efficiency of the Arctic Council

2.1. Information about the plans of the Swedish Chairmanship

Presentation: **The SAO Chair** presented his team in Stockholm: Andreas von Uexküll (Ambassador/SAO), Mikael Anzen (SDWG Chair), Paola Albornoz, Jeanette Krantz and Annette Rosenberg and the employees at the Arctic Council Secretariat in Tromsø. He gave a short introduction of the plans of the Swedish Chairmanship, underlining that the Council, after Nuuk, has entered a new, dynamic phase, and that Sweden will make sure that the Arctic Council is prepared for and is taking concrete action to address the challenges of increased activity in the Arctic.

2.2. Task Force on Institutional Issues (TFII)

Presentation: The Chair of the TFII, **Andreas von Uexküll, (Sweden)**, gave a short update of the process to date and the plans for the TFII work. The TFII had its first meeting in Stockholm on 26-27 September 2011, where a first review of the formal documents necessary to implement the decisions from the Ministerial meeting in Nuuk was done. The next meeting is in Reykjavik on 30 November-1 December. The task force will continue its work as mandated in the Nuuk documents, and in addition TFII had been asked to undertake a new task of producing an Observer Manual for the Arctic Council (ref. Nuuk SAO-report page 51).

Discussion: It was underlined that the timeline for the TFII process is quite tight. In order to have the Arctic Council Secretariat operational no later than at the beginning of the next chairmanship, several administrative decisions during 2012 on budget and regulatory framework, are imperative by the member states.

3. Climate, Environment and Biodiversity

3.1. Arctic Change Assessment (ACA)

Presentation: **Stein Rosenberg, (Norway)**, presented the background for the ACA: During the last two decades, the Arctic Council has done several assessments. Groundbreaking research projects on pollution, climate change and other topics have been completed. In this decade the Arctic Council should take the next step: into adaptation. The question is what can be done in the many communities around the Arctic to adapt to the changes? Step 1 of the ACA study is to look at the combined effects of different pressures on local communities. Step 2 will be the development of adaptation strategies. The Arctic Council has tried earlier to do something related to adaptation, without success. Now the time is ripe.

Russel Shearer, AMAP Chair, presented the mandate for the ACA as formulated in the Nuuk declaration, and reported from the ACA workshop held in Oslo on 28-30 September 2011. He explained that the key words for the ACA are *integration* (what do all the assessments mean when considered together) and *regionalization* (the Arctic can be seen in different scales and as many different regions; large cities/small villages, coast communities/inland communities- how are they affected differently by the changes?) ACA should involve all working groups of the Arctic Council. The timeframe for the project is 2012-2017. At the scoping workshop potential priority areas for the ACA were discussed: themes, drivers and stressors. Shearer emphasized that SAOs will steer the ACA process, and the ACA management structure for the ACA would report to SAOs. Shearer proposed that the ACA Scoping Team to continue the scoping process until Deputy Ministers meeting in May 2012.

Discussion: Several member states noted that the ACA proposal had matured, but that there is a need for more information and clarifications on what an ACA entails. Specifically, several member states indicated that before moving forward, there is a need for a more concrete understanding of what this initiative is; what the deliverables will be; and how they will lead

to concrete results. SAOs requested to receive an updated and more specified project proposal by no later than late January, well ahead of the March SAO meeting. It was mentioned that ACA could consider different regional structures in the Arctic and the need for local/regional approach. A common management structure for ACA, ARR and EBM was proposed by the chair and discussed with deviating views. Some states stated that there is still a need of understanding the essence of ACA before deciding on a management structure. It was explicitly stated that ACA should have a holistic ownership and should be lead holistically. It was argued that EBM, as a management tool, is and should be separate from the ACA (and ARR). The importance of having a clear focus in such a big undertaking was underlined. CAFF noted that the ACA also relates to flora and fauna. The human factor is the single most important factor impacting on biodiversity. PPs noted that PPs and indigenous experts should be included in the project from the start, and the ACA budget should allow for travel support to PPs. The following questions were also raised: How would the regular ongoing national work in Arctic states and within AC Working Groups fit into ACA? What would be the anticipated budget for the project? How would the ACA relate to other international science related activities? Will the time and effort required by this project mean that others should not take place? The offer from AMAP to provide secretariat support to the ACA was appreciated. AMAP stated that linkages with work on the national level had been one of questions at the scoping workshop. The response had been positive and 160 projects were reported. In response to a question about whether the ACA is a project or a process, AMAP answered that it is both.

Conclusion: A scoping group was instructed to continue the scoping process, with a specific focus on content and products. It was decided that SAOs will have the possibility to comment on a draft proposal for ACA intercessionally before the spring SAO meeting. AMAP was instructed to coordinate an updated ACA proposal for submittal to SAOs in December/January. The new proposal will be on the agenda at the SAO meeting in March 2012 and if approved be forwarded to the Deputy Ministers Meeting in May 2012 for their consideration. The SAO Chair will take responsibility for the development of a management structure for the ACA/ARR and possibly EBM.

3.2. Arctic Resilience Report (ARR)

Presentation: **Andreas von Uexküll, (Sweden)**, introduced the Swedish proposal, which had been developed after a scoping workshop in Stockholm 26-28 September 2011. He noted that rapid change is ongoing in the Arctic, and that such changes can affect the available livelihoods of people, the economic viability of communities and development of entire regions. Some of these changes may be irreversible. Usually more than one driver of change is at play and we need to understand their interactions. Resilience is about the ability of a system to cope with shocks and at the same time preserve its main functions. Preparing for change should be a priority. The ARR aims to understand Arctic change by identifying potential shocks and large shifts in ecosystem services, and to analyze how that might affect societies. The different steps of the ARR project were described, and it was noted that the ARR is part of the wider Arctic Change Assessment (ACA), and closely linked to the EBM Expert group. The ARR may be seen as a supporting activity providing input to both processes. The Chair of the ARR, Mr. Johan Rockström, Executive Director of Stockholm

Resilience Center and Executive director of the Stockholm Environment Institute was presented.

Discussion: Several of the working groups noted that the ARR may be useful and interlinked with ongoing work in their groups. The project proposal as presented was broadly welcomed by both member states and PPs. The importance of involving the PPs from the beginning of the process, and the question of financing of PP participation was underlined. The management structure of the ARR, and the interconnections with ACA and EBM were debated. Canada indicated that they are exploring whether and how it would be possible to co-chair the ARR, as the anticipated timeframe of the ARR involves a deliverable at the end of the Canadian chairmanship.

Decision: The ARR project as presented was approved as an Arctic Council project.

3.3. Short-lived Climate Forcers

Presentation: Mr. **Håvard Toresen, (Norway)**, SLCF Task Force co-chair, provided a status update on the Task Force, which was given an extended mandate in Nuuk. He referred to current work on short lived climate forcers in other international fora, such as UNEP, IMO, CLRTAP and IPCC, and the importance of relating the work of the Task Force to the dynamics of these activities. He presented the achievements of the Task Force so far and the work plan for the next period. In accordance with its new mandate the Task Force will continue with refinement of its black carbon work, but also focus on methane and tropospheric ozone. Toresen also outlined the intention to strengthen the collaboration of the Task Force (more policy oriented) with AMAP (scientific background) and ACAP (demonstration projects) in response to its renewed mandate.

Discussion: The status report was welcomed and generally the work of the SLCF Task Force received support as being of global importance. Reference was made to a global process on SLCFs, and the need to ensure linkages are maintained. It was mentioned that the EU is doing similar work related to short lived forcers and the negative impact on human health that may be relevant for the work of the Task Force. The need for the three different AC groups to continue to cooperate closely was underlined by many delegations. The importance of timing, and ensuring that the scientific report aligns with the timing of policy recommendations report was highlighted, as the scientific report is an important input to the development of the recommendations. SAOs agreed with the TF proposal to address tropospheric ozone as it relates to methane emissions and currently not address non-methane emission precursors, as they are largely already addressed by air quality policies that aim to control local levels of ozone. AMAP stated that it has established a new expert group on methane, led by Canada and expanded its SLCFs Expert Group to now include tropospheric ozone and organic carbon, in addition to black carbon. AMAP will continue its SLCFs scientific work, in close collaboration with the Task Force. The AMAP scientific report from the expert group will be available on the Arctic Council website shortly. The Arctic Council should not conduct its work in isolation, but in dialogue with relevant global initiatives and processes. The need to start demonstration projects and concrete work under ACAP was also underlined.

Conclusion: SAOs were pleased with the progress in the work of the Task Force and encouraged cooperation between the Task Force, AMAP and ACAP. The Task force was

requested to continue its work, taking into account the directions provided by the SAOs at the meeting.

3.4. Arctic Ecosystem-based management (EBM) Expert Group

Presentation: The EBM Expert Group (EG) met in Washington, DC on October 18-19, co-chaired by the United States and Iceland. On behalf of the Co-Chairs, **Elizabeth McLanahan, vice chair of PAME**, gave a report on the work shop. Issues for discussion were definitions of EBM, previous references, how the EBM has been applied in the Arctic and lessons learned. Experts agreed to continue work in two e-groups, one on EBM definitions and principles and one on commonalities and gap analysis. It is important to draw on previous work both within the Arctic Council and in other fora. For example, the best practices of EBM had already been identified in the *Best practices in ecosystem-based oceans management in the Arctic* study (SDWG, 2009). There was agreement on the importance of increasing terrestrial competence in group; possibly by holding the next meeting back to back with the next CAFF Territorial Experts group meeting? The EG will probably meet two more times, and will continue to report back to SAOs.

Discussion: The EBM work received general support. In response to questions about why it is necessary to have an EBM experts group given that the AC has supported the principle of EBM for many years, it was noted that for the first time a group will look an integrated way in at EBM in *all* areas of the Arctic: marine, terrestrial, near-coastal, and coastal. Earlier, PAME has done work on marine EBM, CAFF on terrestrial and AMAP has used EBM a key principle in its work. Observers and experts both from within and outside the Arctic Council will be invited to contribute. Canada accepted to co-lead the work on gaps/lessons learned, and to lead the work on the definitions/principles, and noted that it looked forward to contributions from external experts. It was noted that EBM is a tool for development and conservation of environment. The Arctic Council had already identified best practices, and the work of the expert group will build on the information that already exists.. As there is a lack of data, it is important to focus on how to improve data. PPs noted that a more holistic view to management is appreciated and expressed a hope that this process would lead to a useful tool for all indigenous inhabitants. CAFF noted that EBM is one of the founding principles of CAFF, and that they will be happy to contribute.

Conclusion: SAOs thanked the EBM expert group for the report, appreciated the good discussion, and wished good luck to the EBM expert group in its future work.

3.5. Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA)

Presentation: **Mark Marissink, Chair, ABA steering committee**, gave an overview of the policy process for developing the recommendations that will flow from the ABA. There are five lead countries of the ABA, and it consists of three components: 1) trends report 2010, 2) scientific assessment (2013) and 3) policy recommendations. Marissink outlined the work plan for the coming two years of the ABA. The policy recommendations will be presented for SAO review in the autumn of 2012. The ABA will be an important deliverable at the Ministerial meeting 2013.

Discussion: SAOs expressed gratitude to CAFF for active communication work and a good website. ABA was seen as a worthy response to the need for an Arctic policy regarding biodiversity. The *Arctic Biodiversity Trends 2010: selected indicators of change* report was well received. It was noted with appreciation that the final product thinking is already taking place for the ABA. It was also noted that in terms of process, the science component will be completed first, followed by the policy recommendations, which would be agreed to by CAFF HoDs and then forwarded to SAOs for review. The suggested way forward for policy recommendations was supported.

Decision: SAOs thanked CAFF for their work, and asked that the ABA policy process continue according to the directions defined at the meeting. The ABA Steering Committee should consider implementation and follow up already at this stage of the project.

3.6. Outcomes from the ACAP Working Group meeting September 5-6 2011

Presentation: **Andrey Peshkov, ACAP chair**, presented a report from the latest ACAP meeting and expressed frustration with the current structure of the WG. Peshkov addressed the fact that ACAP has existed for 8 years and has completed a number of projects. In two ACAP projects on contamination the first and second phases have been completed, that is identifying and localizing the contaminants. However, the third phase of these projects, destroying and removing the contaminants, cannot begin due to the lack of funding and absence of appropriate technologies and equipment in the Russian Federation. Peshkov suggested that the PSI mechanism could be used to fund the 3rd phase of pilot projects and to launch them officially. However, he enquired whether previous Arctic Council approval of ACAP projects is enough for implementation within the PSI framework. Peshkov also asked SAOs to clarify the requirements for closing an ACAP project. He noted that the Project Steering Group (PSG) for the Brominated Flame Retardant (BFR) project should be closed due to lack of appropriate experts with resources to undertake further activities. This does not mean that the BFR pollution is lessening, in fact reports show increasing BFR contamination in the Arctic. To eliminate BFRs in the Arctic would require comprehensive legislative frameworks and additional support from both PSI and governments. The ACAP SLCF PSG held meetings in March and October of 2011. Several projects are being discussed. Peshkov noted that it is important for the Arctic Council to coordinate all of the groups engaged in SLCF to avoid duplication of work.

Discussion: SAOs supported the closing of the PSG BFR project. Regarding coordination within the AC on Short Lived Climate Forcers, SAOs were of the opinion that the current three part system works well, with different aspects being done within different parts of the council. The following sequencing was mentioned: 1) AMAP provides scientific evidence ; 2) task force provides recommendations for general AC policies and 3) ACAP implements or facilitates concrete actions of recommendations. The importance of ACAP's work for Russian indigenous communities was recognized. RAIPON informed about the first Indigenous Peoples Contamination Action Program (IPCAP) meeting held on 7 November in Luleå as a venture to make an inventory of contaminants in indigenous communities and to raise awareness. It was noted that all AC activities should be circumpolar, and not only cover one part of the Arctic. SAOs also suggested that new projects to be funded by the PSI should be

vetted in the same way as non-PSI projects – i.e. through the normal working group work planning process. There was no discussion of whether previously approved ACAP projects could be eligible for PSI funding.

Conclusion: SAOs adopted the new ACAP work plan without BFR, and gave guidance on how the SLCF work should be organized between the Task Force, ACAP and AMAP.

3.7. Update on the Project Support Instrument (PSI)

Presentation: **Husamuddin Ahmadzai, special advisor of NEFCO**, gave a presentation about the current status of the Project Support Instrument (PSI). PSI is a circumpolar instrument to address Arctic Council programs with focus on contaminants. Currently Russia is the major financial contributor to the PSI with a donation of 10 million Euros. The total trust fund for PSI today is 12.8 million Euros. Ahmadzai noted that changes of substance have occurred to the cooperation agreement during negotiations with Russia. This cooperation agreement was negotiated in 2008 and subsequently signed by Sweden, Finland, Iceland and the Saami Parliament. Therefore it is now important to establish a common interpretation of the PSI cooperation agreement. NEFCO is currently in the process of drafting a letter to each of the contributors that have signed the Contributors' Agreement outlining the changes negotiated with the Russian Federation. Once NEFCO has received the Russian contributions they will proceed to make the PSI operational. This includes making a call for nomination of the Contributors' representatives and convening the first meeting of the PSI Committee.

Discussion: SAOs welcomed the signing of the PSI agreement and Russia's substantial donation, and looked forward to seeing the project become operational. USA informed that they wish to donate 1 million USD by the end of 2011. SAOs recognized that the agreement between NEFCO and each country will be unique and clarifications will therefore be important. SAOs also requested that the relationship between the PSI and Arctic Council should be elaborated. Ahmadzai responded that for projects to be considered Arctic Council projects they must follow the requirements in the AC rules of procedure, however, it is the PSI donor group, including NEFCO, which will decide a project's eligibility. He also asked SAOs to review the guidelines of the PSI which were drafted in 2005.

Conclusion: SAOs welcomed the recent signing of the PSI Cooperation Agreement, thanked NEFCO for its efforts so far and wished to see a plan for the implementation phase and eligibility criteria of the PSI.

4. Oceans

4.1. Task Force on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response

Presentation: **Anton Vasiliev, (Russia)**, gave a presentation on the outcome of the first Task Force meeting and outlined the future plans of the Task Force. The first meeting took place in Oslo 17-18 October. This meeting was held back to back with an EPPR meeting, which allowed many experts to attend both meetings, and which generated certain synergies. It was agreed to follow the principle of consensus, and that "nothing would be agreed until everything was agreed." Vasiliev informed that the second session will take place in St.

Petersburg 13-14 December 2011. Vasiliev added that the three co-chairs have established good working relations. It was noted that the actions of the Task Force will play an important role during the Swedish chairmanship period 2011-2013.

Discussion: SAOs expressed gratitude for the update and were pleased to hear that the first meeting was successful. It was underlined by several delegations that this is a key undertaking of the Arctic Council and that making significant progress is important. Some suggested that liability and compensation issues were especially important to include in the agreement. Some states noted that the discussion will be challenging given the complexity of the issues and the range of implicated players. They also noted that the results should be completed by 2013 if possible, but that flexibility both in the timing and the nature of the final product is necessary, possibly with the addition of annexes to supplement the final paper at a later date. Some states reported that they would welcome a legally binding document as the end result. It was also mentioned that there should be close collaboration between those leading the prevention of oil spill work, including their participation in the discussions surrounding the Task Force.

Conclusion: SAOs thanked the Task Force co-chairs and looked forward to future reports on the progress of this important undertaking of the Arctic Council.

4.2. Marine Oil Pollution Prevention

Presentation: **Ole Kristian Bjerkemo, EPPR chair**, presented the results of the Scoping Workshop on Marine Oil Pollution Prevention held in Oslo 19-20 October. The project is co-chaired by Canada and Norway. The workshop was well-attended with approximately 70 representatives. A draft report should be commented by participants before 18 November. During the workshop the scope of the project was clearly defined on issues such as oil and gas, shipping, land based activities, and maritime surveillance. Bjerkemo noted that PAME and other Working Groups may have important input to the project. There are important links to the Task Force on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response and some other PAME and AMAP projects. EPPR hopes to have the first draft report ready in June 2012 and the final draft completed in October 2012. The final report will be completed in time for the Ministerial Meeting in 2013.

Discussion: SAOs thanked EPPR for the information and for a good start of the project. PAME noted that parts of the work that EPPR plans to undertake may already have been done by PAME or is underway; for example Arctic offshore oil and gas guidelines, health safety and environmental systems, and best use practices for off-shore oil and gas facilities. PAME suggested that EPPR should communicate with PAME during the project to avoid duplication and noted that PAME would like to take a more active role. PAME also wanted to clarify whether the breadth of marine oil pollution would be covered in the project and not just acute oil spills. Bjerkemo responded that the question should be discussed more closely in future meetings. A number of SAOs noted the importance of the Council addressing prevention. Although the initial scoping exercise produced positive outcomes, going forward it will be important to clearly define the project plan, management and budget. The SAO chair also offered help to organize the work, regarding the overlap with PAME, if necessary.

Conclusion: SAOs requested the EPPR and PAME to discuss the relevant issues bilaterally to avoid overlap, and to continue informing SAOs on the progress. The project management should consider and prepare the implementation phase as early as possible in the process.

4.3. Arctic Ocean Review (AOR)

Presentation: **Elizabeth McLanahan, PAME vice-chair**, presented an update of the Arctic Ocean Review (AOR). McLanahan noted that the goal of the AOR is to review status and trends in the Arctic marine environment in order to support Arctic marine management and to demonstrate existing stewardship. Phase 1 of the project has been completed and phase 2 has begun. The phase two report will include an introduction, six thematic chapters with a brief synopsis on trends, challenges and suggestions for improvement, as well as an executive summary with policy recommendations. The human dimension will also be included, either as a section within each chapter or as a stand-alone chapter. So far good progress has been made in confirming authors. In January 2012 annotated chapter outlines are expected, by March 2012 detailed chapter abstracts will be completed, and by June 2012 a first draft should be finalized. The report will be forwarded to SAOs for final review in March 2013 before being forwarded to Ministers for their approval in May 2013.

Discussion: SAOs thanked PAME for the work done and welcomed the report as a main deliverable at the Ministerial Meeting in 2013. It was asked how much of the assessment material is new information. SAOs also expressed an interest to receive the final report before March 2013 in order to have sufficient time to review the report and policy recommendations. McLanahan responded that the review will consist of both old and new information, but that no new research will be undertaken in this phase. Ecosystem based management will be an important component of the report. McLanahan also added that work will be done to bring a draft to SAOs earlier, in order to identify areas of potential problems as early as possible. Both CAFF and AMAP wished to clarify if their help and expertise was needed and offered their assistance. McLanahan responded that PAME would appreciate assistance.

Conclusion: SAOs thanked PAME for the report. AOR is one of the main deliverables in 2013, thus it is important that PAME continue to update SAOs on their progress and that they bring draft report with draft policy recommendations to SAOs at the earliest possible time.

4.4. Arctic Ocean Acidification (AOA)

Presentation: An update of the AOA project was presented by **Lars Otto Reiersen, Executive Secretary, AMAP**. The emission of CO₂ into the atmosphere causes acidification of the oceans. Much research has been done on this issue in other ocean regions (i.e. the Pacific Ocean on consequences of acidification for its coral reefs). Research shows there are regional differences, with the Arctic ecosystem being more sensitive to changes in its acidity. Data from ongoing research projects is now being collected from the eight member states. The next report on this issue will, in addition to a general description, discuss the ocean's biological responses to acidification, economic impact on Arctic fisheries, as well as provide conclusion and recommendations.

Discussion: SAOs expressed agreement on the importance of the Arctic Ocean Acidification project. Many of the states were about to, or had already, nominated experts to join the AMAP AOA assessment group. PAME commented that some countries had agencies looking at fisheries in this connection and wanted to make sure these agencies were involved. AMAP will work with PAME on this.

Conclusion: SAOs thanked AMAP for the work done so far in this project, which will be an important deliverable at the 2013 Ministerial.

4.5. Search and Rescue Agreement- Follow up

Presentation: **Sheila Riordon, (Canada)**, provided a short update on the follow-up of the Arctic Search and Rescue (SAR) agreement, which has the status of an international treaty. Canada as depositary is responsible for formal notification requirements under the Agreement. These include notifying international fora, such as the IMO, ICAO and the UN, when the Agreement comes into force. Russia and the United States have formally advised Canada that they have ratified the Agreement. When all Arctic states have completed their domestic ratification processes the Agreement will come into force. Work on improving cooperation has already begun with Canada hosting the first Arctic state SAR “table top exercise” in Whitehorse, Yukon 4-6 October 2011. The exercise focused on Arctic state coordination and the strategic and operational aspects of aeronautical and maritime SAR in the Arctic. The exercise also highlighted the importance of each Arctic state having in place an integrated approach to SAR. Similar “Table top exercise” should be repeated and should include sharing best practices on domestic SAR coordination in the Arctic. Riordon noted that Canadians had been reminded in recent months of the harsh Arctic conditions and the importance of SAR: a tragic plane crash in Northern Canada killed 12 people this summer, including Marty Bergmann, director of the Canada’s Polar Continental Shelf Program, and the recent death of a SAR technician during an SAR operation, in Nunavut.

Discussion: In addition to Russian and the United States, Norway and Sweden advised that they have ratified the agreement. Others are working to ratifying the Agreement early in 2012. SAOs expressed the view that the table top exercise was very useful. Delegates described ways the member states have started SAR work. Many speakers expressed sadness for the Canadian losses, especially of Marty Bergman, who many knew as a dedicated scientist in Arctic issues.

Conclusion: Follow-up and implementation of the SAR agreement is of great importance. The “Table-top exercise” was a good and powerful start.

5. Human Development

5.1. Outcomes from the SDWG Meeting, October 3-4, 2011.

Presentation: **Mikael Anzén, SDWG chair**, made a PowerPoint presentation on the objectives and planned deliverables of several project proposals for SAO approval.

Discussion: Mikhail Pogodaev from the Association of World Reindeer Herders made a brief statement on the Reindeer Herding and Youth project. All of the SDWG projects were endorsed by the delegations, but one, the Arctic Maritime and Aviation Transportation Infrastructure Initiative (USA). The USA representative gave supplementary information concerning this project. Several states requested that further refinements were needed on objectives, deliverables and implications.

Decision: SAOs underscored the importance of the human dimension work of the SDWG and reiterated the importance of strengthening the Working Group. The following projects were approved:

- a) Arctic Human Development Report II (Iceland, Kingdom of Denmark and Canada)
- b) Assessing, Monitoring, and Promoting Arctic Indigenous Languages (Canada)
- c) Reindeer Herding and Youth (Russia)
- d) Electronic Memory of the Arctic (EMA) (Russia)

The following project was deferred pending further work: Arctic Maritime and Aviation Transportation Infrastructure Initiative (USA)

6. Working Group Administration

6.1. Report from SAO Chair on meeting with WG Chairs

Presentation: **The SAO Chair** spoke about his meeting with the Working Group Chairs in Stockholm 26-27 September 2011. Issues discussed at the meeting included improving of communication both between SAO Chair and WGs, and between the WGs. A new report format; the "2-pagers" has been introduced. WGs are to send short highlights report within 2 days of the conclusion of their meetings. Guidelines for the WG progress reports will be prepared before next SAO meeting. The Arctic Council website was discussed, and routines for WG contributions will be developed.

Discussion: SAOs expressed appreciation with the "2-pagers" and with the SAO Chair efforts to improve communications with the WGs. The usefulness of the meeting was underlined by several of the WGs.

6.2. Working Group Progress Reports

Discussion: **AMAP** informed about the UNEP global INC 3, where the AC had a high profile. The Swedish Ambassador gave an intervention on importance of mercury in the Arctic. The Arctic Council booth and material were well received. The SWIPA science report is now published on the AMAP website. SWIPA films will be available in Danish, Greenlandic, Icelandic, Faroese, Finnish, French, Norwegian, Russian, Saami, and Swedish, thus making it suitable for e.g. the high school segment across the Arctic. **CAFF** noted that the CAFF chair will be available at COP 17 for the AC side event, for instance to give a lecture on biodiversity. **EPPR** informed about two new projects being discussed. These will be presented in the next progress report to SAOs. **PAME** mentioned that follow up of the AMSA report is the second priority area

of PAME (with AOR being the first). **SDWG** noted that the health group of SDWG is working on a project on food security in cooperation with the AMAP Arctic Human Health Expert Group.

Conclusion: SAOs thanked the Working Groups for their reports and for their hard work so far.

7. Any Other Business

7.1. International Polar Year Conference in Montreal April 2012

Presentation: **Rachel Mc Cormick, (Canada)**, informed about the upcoming “Knowledge to Action Conference” in Montreal as the concluding event of IPY. The event takes place between 22-27 April 2012. The Arctic Council should take the opportunity to showcase the work of the Arctic Council, including by exhibiting booths as was done at the Nuuk Ministerial.

Discussion: The AMAP Chair noted that AMAP was preparing to present both SWIPA and mercury related issues at the conference. Several abstracts had been submitted on these topics. A booth has been reserved in the exhibition area for the use of the Arctic Council. CAFF was also preparing to be present in Montreal. The Chair promised to seek a coordinated Arctic Council (Chairmanship) presence in Montreal during the IPY Conference.

Conclusion: SAOs were looking forward to the IPY Conference in Montreal, and the SAO Chair was hoping to make a strong AC chairmanship presence there.

7.2. Report on the activities of the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region (SCPAR)

Presentation: **Bjørn Willy Robstad, Secretary General of the Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region** gave a short report on the activities of the SCPAR and the preparations for the next meeting of the Standing Committee in Stockholm spring 2012. Foreign Minister Carl Bildt has been invited. The 10th Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region will take place in Akureyri 5-7 September 2012. On the agenda is "Arctic Council and Arctic governance".

7.3. Nordic Council of Ministers' Co-operation Programme 2012-2014

Presentation: **Hannu Halinen (Finland)** as the current chairman for NCM, introduced The Nordic Council of Ministers' Arctic Co-operation Programme which was approved only one week earlier. The policy objective of the Programme is "People first". Five areas of cooperation were presented; People in the Arctic, Environment and Nature, Climate, Sustainable business development and Education and Competence enhancement.

7.4. The WWF RACER project

Presentation: **Martin Sommerkorn, (WWF)**, briefly informed about the WWF RACER project (Rapid Assessment of Circumpolar Ecosystem Resilience). The project focuses on resilience and adaptation, regions as eco-systems and locates sources of ecological strength.

Discussion: SAOs thanked the WWF for an interesting and relevant presentation, mentioning that the timing of the RACER project was good in order to provide input to the ARR and EBM projects of the Arctic Council. Excellent example of how observers can contribute to the work of the Arctic Council. WWF noted that the development of the method had not been that rapid, but now done, one could follow the method and make an assessment very rapidly.

New Item 7.5: **Igor Veselov, (Russia)**, informed briefly about the Second International Arctic Forum, arranged by the Russian Geographical Society in Archangelsk, Russia. Prime Minister Putin attended, with 450 delegates. The selected topic this year was transport and infrastructure in the Arctic. The next Arctic Forum will focus on environmental issues.

8. Dates for Next Meeting and Closing of Meeting

The SAO Chair informed that preliminary dates for the next SAO meeting is 27-29 March 2012, Stockholm, Sweden. All meeting participants were thanked for their contributions to a productive meeting.

9. ANNEX 1:

Documents for information purposes (*posted on website for reference*)

9.1 International Youth Arctic Declaration

9.2 CAFF statement to the 15th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) of the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD), in Montreal, Canada.

ANNEX 2:

List of participants

List of Arctic Council Acronyms