

**Meeting of Senior Arctic Officials
Stockholm, Sweden
20-21 March 2013
Final Report**

1. Introduction

1.1 Opening of Meeting and Welcoming Words

The SAO Chair, Gustaf Lind, welcomed all 150 delegates to Stockholm to the last formal SAO meeting under the Swedish Chairmanship.

1.2 Introduction of new SAOs/ PP HoDs

The SAO Chair welcomed Jonas Allanson as new Senior Arctic Official (SAO) for Iceland, Else Berit Eikeland as new SAO for Norway, and Patrick Borbey as newly appointed SAO Chair for the incoming Canadian chairmanship.

1.3 Approval of the Agenda

The draft agenda as distributed before the meeting was approved.

1.4 Special Mention

1.5 Approval/welcoming of written reports

1.5.1 SAON progress report to SAOs March 2013

Decision: SAOs welcomed the SAON progress report as submitted to this meeting.

1.6 Earlier decisions

1.6.1 SAO decision to task EPPR with the responsibility of maintaining and updating the Operational Guidelines

Background: At their informal meeting in Tromsø on January 21-23 2013, the SAOs decided to task EPPR with the responsibility of maintaining and updating the Operational Guidelines which will be annexed to the Agreement on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response.

Decision: SAOs decided that in the future, the EPPR working group of the Arctic Council is to be responsible for maintaining and updating the Operational Guidelines as described above.

Thematic Areas

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

2.1 Information about the Kiruna Ministerial, 15 May 2013

Background: The Chair informed on the process towards the Ministerial meeting and on the framework plans for the meeting itself, which will take place in Kiruna, a mining city in Northern Sweden. The meeting will start with a working dinner for Arctic states' Ministers only in the evening of 14 May. Also on 14 May some side events, open to the general public, will take place. Information about this will be posted on the Arctic Council website when finalized. On 15 May, the formal meeting will start in the morning, in Kiruna City Hall. After the meeting, there will be lunch for all delegates in the Visitors Centre in the Kiruna Mine, followed by presentations about major Arctic Council projects. A dinner will be arranged in the evening, in Jukkasjärvi outside Kiruna. All delegates are urged to register and make travel arrangements to Kiruna as early as possible.

Conclusion: For information only.

2.2 Task Force on Institutional Issues (TFII)

Background: The Chair of the TFII, Ambassador Andreas von Uexküll, presented his final report on the establishment of the standing Arctic Council Secretariat, and other TFII issues. He informed that the TFII had now completed all the tasks in its original mandate; Updated Rules of Procedures has been negotiated, Arctic Council Secretariat (ACS) administrative framework established, Host Country Agreement was signed in January 2013, a Director has been hired and the ACS is now operational. During the Swedish chairmanship, the TFII has been given other tasks, to negotiate an "Observer Manual", and to assist the SAOs by holding "SAO preparatory meetings"; three such meetings have been arranged, where the Kiruna vision, the Kiruna Declaration and the SAO report to Ministers have been prepared. Final approval of the documents negotiated by the TFII is planned to take place at the Ministerial meeting in Kiruna.

Conclusion: For information on achievements in the TFII.

2.3 Report from the Arctic Council standing Secretariat Director

Background: The Director of the standing Arctic Council Secretariat (ACS), Mr. Magnús Jóhannesson, gave an update on administrative issues. He reported good progress after his first 7 weeks in office. The progress made would not have been possible without the support from the interim secretariat, from MFA Oslo and from the Chairmanship. The interim secretariat will end its tasks on 31 May 2013, and the Standing ACS will take on its full functions from 1 June 2013. The registration process in Norway for the ACS had now been completed.

The Director underlined that his first priority was to ensure that the ACS will be operational when the Canadian chair takes over, and to ensure that the services from interim ACS continues

uninterrupted. The AC website has currently more than 600 visitors every day. Four available positions have been posted, and the aim is that the ACS will have at least 5 people employed from 1 June.

Conclusion: For information on progress in establishing the standing Arctic Council Secretariat.

3. Climate, Environment and Biodiversity

3.1 Adaptation Actions for a Changing Arctic (AACA)

Background: The AACA project consists of three sections; A), B) and C)

Section A) The SDWG Chair, Mikael Anzén, noted that the AACA Section A) has considered key findings and recommendations from existing Arctic Council assessments and other relevant national and international reports over the past ten years. A synthesized report based on selected assessments and reports have been circulated for consideration. The SDWG present the final report to the April SAO meeting for review and approval.

Section B) The Canadian SAO, Sigrid Johnson, reported that since Canada offered to lead section B) in the summer 2012, there has been progress in collecting information on climate change adaptation activities relevant to the Arctic region and in the preparation of a report. A planned work shop had to be cancelled, so the report is not yet ready, but the co-chairs will produce a report and will seek SAO approval in the intersession. Canada hoped to continue the AACA project as one of their main priorities.

Dr Elena Nikitina (Russian co-chair) noted that the draft report was almost ready, and the project had already resulted in several lessons. More than 100 templates from the states and PPs were received, including both national processes and concrete adaptation actions around the Arctic. One of the main lessons is that adaptation is something the Arctic Council should focus more on in the future.

Section C) The AMAP Chair, Russel Shearer, informed about progress so far. In Haparanda SAOs agreed to have phased approach to section C). Phase 1 will end in Kiruna. One workshop was held in Seattle, and the next will be in St. Petersburg 22-24 April. A draft implementation plan for Phase 2 will be produced for SAO's approval at the 23-24 April informal meeting. Phase 2 will include downscaling of climate models and cumulative impacts studies in three regional areas. Phase 3 will run from 2015-2017, with the final deliverables being foreseen for the 2017 Ministerial.

Conclusion: SAOs concluded that the work with recommendations in Section A) should continue and that they look forward to the final version at the April meeting. SAOs will also await the implementation plan report on Section C) at their April meeting. The importance of coordination among the different sections and with other, related projects (notably the ARR) was underlined. SAOs encouraged everybody to consider how the project findings and conclusions are to be implemented- plans for implementation should be integrated from the start. SAOs reminded that SAO decision is needed on all projects and phases before starting major work.

3.2 Arctic Resilience Report (ARR)

Background: Johan Rockström, chair of the ARR project, introduced the ongoing work. The ARR interim report summarizes how global change affects the Arctic. The purpose of assessing resilience is to prepare for change. He informed how certain tipping points could lead to irreversible change. The ARR project studied the social resilience among the Arctic communities, notably how resilience is “built into” the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples of the Arctic. The interim report is due at the Kiruna ministerial meeting. In its next phase, for which Sweden will be the main sponsor, it is proposed to work on how this knowledge may best be transformed into management and policies.

Conclusion: SAOs expressed strong support for the project work so far, as summarized in the Interim report. The need for improved communication and outreach was underlined; however it was also clear that it is often a question of having enough resources available. The way traditional knowledge has been integrated in this project from the start was praised. There are interlinkages between different projects in the Arctic Council; the Council has to work continuously on improving coordination generally.

3.3 Short-Lived Climate Forcers (SLCF)

Background: The Task Force co-chairs Håvard Toresen (NO) and Caroline Dickson (SE) reported on progress made in SLFC task force, and on their Draft summary report “Recommendations to Reduce Black Carbon and Methane Emissions to Slow Arctic Climate Change” which was submitted to this meeting. The Task Force is also preparing a technical support document.

In their presentation, the co-chairs underlined that the recommendations from 2011 are still valid, and the challenges remain the same. All states can reduce their emissions. The recommendations are fairly simple to implement, cost- efficient- and have significant health benefits. Without new measures, emissions will continue to rise. More than 30% of methane emissions are from AC member states. But Arctic states should also cooperate with other states to reduce total emissions. The task force has taken note of the proposal from the Ministers of Environment to negotiate a black carbon Instrument, but to make any recommendation on this is beyond the task force mandate.

ACAP noted that they have several new projects underway, and AMAP informed that their two expert groups are continuing to provide science background knowledge to the task force and decision makers in the Arctic Council. AMAP will complete its scientific assessment work on black carbon, tropospheric ozone and methane by 2015 and will coordinate this work with the TF.

Decision: SAOs welcomed the draft summary report as presented and provisionally adopted its recommendations for delivery to Ministers in Kiruna. SAOs expressed support and praise for the work done by both the task force, ACAP and AMAP. The need to avoid overlaps, both within the Arctic Council, and globally, was underlined. The SLCF issue is an important one, where more scientific efforts are asked for, and the Arctic Council is in good position to take global leadership. The message to Arctic Council states, observers and others is that they should

implement these recommendations; take mitigation actions, as emissions of SLCFs at other geographical places affects the Arctic very seriously.

3.5 Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA)

Background: This was the second SAO discussion on the ABA. The ABA Chair (Mark Marissink) provided an overview of the Policy report and its recommendations. The ABA is led by Canada, Finland, Greenland, Sweden and the United States. Denmark/Greenland provided the chief scientist for the ABA. CAFF has developed a suite of products from the ABA project, including; 1) the 2010 Arctic Species Trend Index and findings report; 2) a full ABA scientific report and a scientific synthesis; 3) a summary report for policymakers; and 4) a traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) compendium (this will be released when completed in 2013). Communications materials and plans for an Arctic Biodiversity Symposium have also been developed. Other Arctic Council groups/projects were informed and involved during the development of the ABA. The full assessment will not be printed at the Ministerial, but will be available in electronic format. The policy report and scientific synthesis will be available in printed form at the Ministerial

Decision: SAOs welcomed the ABA summary report, and provisionally adopted the recommendations, with an amendment as presented by Norway. The ABA recommendations will be finally adopted by the Ministers at the Kiruna Ministerial.

3.6 Arctic Ocean Acidification

Background: The AMAP Chair Russel Shearer presented the current status on the Assessment on Arctic Ocean Acidification. The main message of the report is that the Arctic is very vulnerable in terms of increasing acidification, which may have major impacts on humans and environment. As two thirds of CO₂ emissions come from the Arctic Council member states and official and ad hoc observers, (with 25% coming from the Arctic States), the Council has an opportunity to demonstrate global leadership in this issue. The recommendations based on the assessment remain the same as presented to SAOs earlier, with some small adjustments. Plans for the finalization of AOA include review by SAOs in April, the delivery of a scientific report (electronic version) and a summary report to policy makers (printed) in Kiruna and the production of communication and outreach materials; most notably two short films (3 and 10 minutes). The scientific findings of the report will be released at the AOA Conference in Bergen, Norway on 6-8 May.

Decision: SAOs expressed satisfaction with the work so far, and were looking forward to reviewing the final draft summary for policy makers report at their April meeting. The AOA will be a major deliverable at the Ministerial meeting, and will most likely attract media attention. It was decided that all communication and outreach material must be approved by the Communications Contact Group before being released.

3.7 Ecosystem-based Management (EBM) Expert Group

Background: The PAME chair Elizabeth McLanahan gave a short presentation of the EBM expert group work. She noted that the report already received strong support in Haparanda, but that there had been a few issues that needed to be adjusted after that meeting. A new, final version had been

submitted to this meeting. The report responds to the mandate from Ministers in Nuuk to “recommend further activities in this field for possible consideration by the SAOs before the end of the Swedish chairmanship”. McLanahan explained that the report offers a definition of EBM including nine principles related to EBM that the Council could apply in its work in the Arctic region. Twelve recommendations are suggested, including the adoption of an explicit policy commitment by the Council to EBM.

Decision: SAOs welcomed the EBM report, and provisionally adopted it for delivery to the Kiruna Ministerial. It was concluded that it will be important to consider the implementation of the EBM principles, should it be integrated in all the Arctic Council work within the existing structure, or is an ad-hoc group needed to ensure appropriate follow-up?

3.8 Obsolete pesticides

Background: The ACAP Executive Secretary, Timo Seppälä introduced this item and noted that this is the key deliverable from ACAP for the Kiruna Ministerial. This work has been going on for many years, since 2001. Now, after two phases there are interim safe storages for 7000 tons of pesticides. Many smaller storage facilities have been emptied and cleaned up. ACAP will continue with Phase III of the project, demonstrating environmentally sound destruction of 100 tons of collected obsolete pesticides, as soon as such capacity will become available in the Russian Federation.

There will be three deliverables: 1) Fact sheet in English and Russian languages, for which ACAP requested SAOs to approve for delivery to Ministers. 2) Technical report: more detailed report of activities/lessons learned: Ministers should only take note of this report. 3) A road map will be developed on how to carry out an inventory. Seppälä suggested that SAOs should ensure that the Kiruna outcome mentions implementation of this project. When PSI becomes operational, ACAP can start the concrete implementation of phase 3.

Decision: SAOs provisionally adopted the fact sheet for delivery to the Ministerial in Kiruna, and thanked ACAP for the good and important work over the last years in this field.

3.9 Life Linked to Ice

Background: The Chair of CAFF, Evgeny Syroechkovskiy, presented the report *Life Linked to Ice: A guide to sea-ice-associated biodiversity in this time of rapid change*. The report has been approved by the CAFF board and was presented at this meeting for SAO approval. It is a response to recommendations, made through Arctic Council projects, to focus attention on the consequences for biodiversity of the dramatic changes occurring to sea ice. It is intended as a briefing and reference document for policy makers concerned with adaptive management and setting priorities for research, monitoring, and conservation actions in the context of changing sea ice.

Decision: Following some different views concerning the recommendations in Appendix 4, the final decision on welcoming this report was deferred to the April SAO meeting.

3.10 Update on the Arctic Council Project Support Instrument

Background: Husamuddin Ahmadzai (NEFCO) provided a short update of PSI, informing that the Russian Federation has been proposed as chair of PSI Committee for one year. Ahmadzai also presented the SLCP projects under preparation. The PSI pledges, deposits and allocations currently stand at 15.9 million EUR. The SAOs were requested to approve Russia to serve as the Chair of PSI committee. Arctic Council members, who had not yet joined the PSI, were invited to do so. All parties were encouraged to deposit their contributions with the Fund Manager to enable the PSI to become operational.

Decision: The SAOs expressed their hopes to see the PSI operational as soon as possible, and approved the Russian Federation as chair of the PSI Committee.

4. Oceans

4.1 Task Force on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response – Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic

Background: The Task Force Co-Chair and Russian SAO, Anton Vasiliev, provided an update of the Agreement which is in its final stage of technical preparation. EPPR has produced the operational guidelines, and Canada is working on a French translation. Also further translations should be coordinated. Vasiliev encouraged all SAOs to perform necessary domestic procedures in order to ensure that the Ministers will be able to sign the agreement in Kiruna. All technical issues or questions should be addressed to the US co-chair David Balton. The complete text will be sent to the Chairmanship in mid April for the necessary preparations before the signing ceremony.

Conclusion: For information only.

4.2 Recommended Practices in the Prevention of Marine Oil Pollution in the Arctic

Background: The EPPR Chair Ole Kristian Bjerkemo provided a short update of the EPPR project on Recommended Practices in the Prevention of Marine Oil Pollution in the Arctic (RP3), co-led by Canada and Norway. Bjerkemo highlighted the importance of prevention practices in avoiding accidents and the high costs related to these. There will be two reports flowing from this project, one technical and one summary report with recommendations.

Decision: The draft summary report and its recommendations were adopted and will be forwarded to the Ministerial in Kiruna.

4.3 Arctic Ocean Review (AOR)

Background: PAME Chair Elizabeth McLanahan introduced the latest proceedings of the Arctic Ocean Review. The table of contents remains the same as presented to SAOs in Haparanda, with Indigenous Peoples now included in a separate chapter. The AOR is not yet a final draft and is a

little bit behind the schedule, but the group is working hard to be able to finalize its report on time and to meet the deadline for delivery to the Ministerial. There are, however, two issues hindering the finalization process: one is the lack of participation by two governments, and the other that there is still some disagreement regarding the recommendations.

Conclusion: The SAO Chair urged all governments to participate actively in the AOR work, and deferred the decision on whether to welcome the report and its recommendations to the April meeting.

5. Human Development

5.1 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Background: The SDWG Chair Mikael Anzén presented the CSR project which aims to complement the sustainable development work in the Arctic with a business/economical perspective. The project is building on existing guidelines, and wants to encourage informal business dialogue in the Arctic and improve communication on CSR. The text for Kiruna Declaration is now complete, and currently SDWG is working on creating a web-based information tool on CSR in the Arctic that will be finalized in April. SDWG will review the work in April, and the final product will be presented to SAOs in the informal meeting in April.

Conclusion: The meeting was generally supportive but there were still outstanding issues. The project will be reviewed in the Informal SAO meeting in April.

5.2 Arctic Maritime and Aviation Transportation Infrastructure Initiative

Background: Nils Andreassen from the SDWG provided a short update of the current state of the AMATII project, which is co-led by US and Iceland. The outcomes of the project consist of an interactive map and of a database that Andreassen presented in the meeting. The objective of these products is to inform future activities in this field.

Decision: The SAOs were supportive and welcomed the project outcomes, encouraging future activities, updates and coordination in the field.

6. Working Group Administration

6.1 Working Group Progress Reports

Background: There was some confusion on where to find the reports. The SAO Chair reminded that all the reports can be found in the Draft SAO Report to Ministers, and promised to improve communication to ensure that the message would reach everyone on time. CAFF had also sent in a separate report. ICC kindly requested that all reports/work plans would be sent to it separately.

Conclusion: For information only.

7. Any Other Business

7.1 Report from the Meeting of Ministers for Environment, Jukkasjärvi, 5-6 February 2013

Background: Fredrik Hannerz (Sweden) reported from the Arctic Environment Ministers Meeting held in Jukkasjärvi in February. All the major environment issues of the Arctic were on the agenda of the meeting. Documents produced included a Discussion Note as well as Chairs Conclusions from the meeting. For further information, Hannerz encouraged all to visit the [website](#) of the meeting. Hannerz also pointed out that Ministers expressed their will to continue to meet in a similar format.

Conclusion: For information only.

7.2 Report from the incoming Canadian chairmanship on priorities for the 2013-2015 chairmanship period

Background: The Canadian SAO Sigrid Anna Johnson introduced the Canadian priorities for its incoming Chairmanship period of 2013-2015. She noted that a 5-step process towards consensus on the priorities was launched last autumn. Canada has introduced 10 priorities that continue the ongoing work of the Arctic Council and these will need to be accepted by all the Arctic states. All the topics and subtopics were well received when first presented in Tromsø. During its Chairmanship, Canada wants to strengthen the Arctic Council, to focus on implementation, and to minimize duplication of activities. It will pay particular attention to the involvement of the PPs.

Conclusion: For information only.

“Archives”

Background: Shawn Morton, Canada, announced that Harold Finkler will be retiring during this spring. Mr. Finkler has been part of the Canadian Arctic Council team since the beginning of the Arctic Council and he has attended all the Ministerials. The meeting expressed gratitude and appreciation to Finkler for his long service, and wished him well for his future.

8. Information about Next Meeting and Closing of Meeting

The SAO Chair thanked all the delegates for a productive meeting, and for their contributions during the Swedish chairmanship. There will be an informal SAO meeting (participation by invitation only) in Stockholm on 23-25 April, and the Ministerial meeting will end the Swedish Chairmanship in Kiruna on 15 May 2013.