



Meeting of Senior Arctic Officials
Final Report
19-20 October 2010
Tórshavn

In Attendance:

Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs)

Chair: Lars Møller

Canada: Sheila Riordon

Denmark/Greenland/Faroe Islands: Mikaela Engell, Inuuteq Holm Olsen (Greenland), Elin Mortensen (Faroe Islands)

Finland: Hannu Halinen

Iceland: Greta Gunnarsdottir

Norway: Karsten Klepsvik

Russian Federation: Anton Vasiliev

Sweden: Helena Ödmark

United States: Julia L. Gourley

Permanent Participant (PP) Heads of Delegation (HoD)

Aleut International Association (AIA): Victoria Gofman

Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC): Cindy Dickson

Gwich'in Council International (GCI): Serena Petruska

Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC): Jimmy Stotts

Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON): Dmitry Berezhev

Saami Council (SC): Geir Tommy Pedersen

1.1. Welcoming Remarks

Kate Sanderson, The Faroe Islands, welcomed the participants to Tórshavn. **Lars Møller, SAO Chair**, welcomed delegates and noted the importance of the meeting as one of the last before the 2011 Ministerial.

1.2 Introduction to Tórshavn and Social Events

Decision: For information only.

1.3 Introduction of new SAOs, PP HoDs

Serena Petruska, Vice Chairperson, was welcomed as the Head of Delegation for the GCI.

1.4 Approval of the Agenda

Decision: The agenda was approved with one amendment: adding “Information about the Environmental Ministers’ Meeting in Ilulissat in June 2010” under item 11 “Any other business”.



1.5 Approval of Ad-hoc Observers

Decision: Four states (the People’s Republic of China, Japan, the Italian Republic and the Republic of Korea) and the EU Commission were approved by SAOs as ad hoc observers to this meeting.

2.1 Communication and outreach

Background: Giles Norman, Chair of the Contact Group, and Director of the Canadian International Centre for the Arctic Region, presented the Group’s conclusions and recommendations. (His and all other meeting presentations are available from the password protected area of the Arctic Council website). Norman put the following questions before the SAOs:

1. Do you approve the draft Communications and Outreach guidelines?
2. Do you approve the suggested objectives?
3. Do you approve the suggested process to develop the strategic communication plan for the Arctic Council?

The Contact Group recommended that the roles and responsibilities related to communications and outreach of the various components of the Arctic Council (AC) be more clearly defined (the AC Chair, secretariat, working groups, Member states and PPs); and a brief overview of what these roles might be were given. The need for, and challenge of, producing AC informational material both in the Russian and English languages were underlined.

The logo is a communications tool, which can be viewed either as a branding tool, or as a symbol of approval. The Group recommended that the AC logo be seen as a branding tool to be placed on all products linked to Ministers/SAOs. Arctic Council products should clearly indicate what policy recommendations are being made (if any) and disclaimers should be included in order to signal that the content has not been approved or endorsed by SAOs. Finally, in order to produce an AC strategic communications plan, the group recommended that SAOs first approve the draft objectives, and then obtain the advice of external expertise to lead the process forward. Norman suggested that such a plan can then be put forward to Ministers for approval.

Discussion:

All SAOs welcomed the Contact Group’s work, with many being prepared to approve the objectives and the draft Communications and Outreach Guidelines, including to implement them as soon as possible, and to start the process of developing a strategic communication plan (hybrid model). Norway, Canada, Russia, Sweden and Iceland offered to contribute to the development of the plan. The increased focus on outreach material also in Russian was welcomed, and the question of translating future reports to additional languages in order to reach out to local communities in the North was mentioned. It was requested that the guidelines be a “living document” to be reviewed and updated regularly. In all, the discussion showed a need for further clarifications, and it was requested that the Communications and Outreach guidelines be seen in relation to the general process of strengthening the AC, as well as to the future role/function of a permanent AC secretariat and the AC budget. If that process led to a successful outcome, the Guidelines could be approved at the Ministerial in Nuuk. Some commented that to approve guidelines also for use of logo would be first time in history of AC to have an official logo, and



that it would be a change of policy to start using it as only a promotion tool (not symbol of approval). Canada noted that it had been a heavy workload to chair the Contact Group, and that it was not certain that this could continue much longer. It was noted that the PPs had always had an important role in outreach to local communities, and that their roles should be more clearly built into the communication plan from the beginning. Many noted that the further work needs clear Terms of Reference and timeframe. Giles Norman offered to lead a break-out group of interested parties during the remainder of the meeting to try to reach consensus on a provisional approval of some or all the recommendations.

Decision: SAOs endorsed the objectives of the strategic communications plan as drafted and the hybrid approach as the basis to proceed further with the development of the strategic communications plan which included that expert advice should be sought to develop the strategic communications plan. Terms of reference and the identification of who would provide the expert advice needed to be further considered. The Contact Group was asked to suggest further next steps in initiating the development of the strategic communications plan at the next SAO meeting, including proposals on the issues raised by SAOs. Several countries said they intended to provide financial support.

SAOs also agreed that the draft Arctic Council Communication and Outreach Guidelines be prepared for approval by Ministers at the Ministerial Meeting in Nuuk in conjunction with the results from the wider discussions on strengthening the Arctic Council.

2.2 Lessons to be learned from the Deputy Minister's Meeting 27 May 2010 and the Information Day of the Arctic Council 28 May 2010

Background: The first formal Deputy Minister's Meeting (DMM) and Information Day (IDAC) in the history of the Arctic Council were held in Copenhagen 27-28 May 2010. The Chair gave a short report of the meetings, explained that these meetings were new to the Arctic Council, and invited SAOs and PPs to discuss and evaluate them. The purpose of the evaluation was to give guidance and provide new ideas to future chairmanships in arranging meetings of the same kind.

Discussion: SAOs agreed that the DMM had been very useful as a strategic tool for strengthening the AC. The closed session over dinner was considered to have been particularly productive and helpful in that it resulted in the mandate to SAOs to develop proposals for strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council. The need to define a clearer strategic role for Deputy Ministers was noted, as well as the need to clarify whether the DMM will have the mandate to adopt new observers to the AC and take other significant decisions between Ministerial meetings. With respect to the IDAC several SAOs and PPs expressed that there is potential for arranging such meetings differently/better in the future. It had not been clear who the main target group for the IDAC had been and thus the meeting had not been as useful as it could have been. Many wished for more interactive discussions and dialogue at future IDACs, and some noted interest in opening the IDAC to media/external interests. Some suggested that consideration should be given to holding future IDACs back to back with SAO meetings instead of DMMs.

Decision: SAOs concluded that the comments made will be of great value for the next chairmanship(s) when they start their work on planning/arranging the next DMM and IDAC.

3.1 Climate Change and the Cryosphere – Snow, Water, Ice and Permafrost in the Arctic – SWIPA



Background: SWIPA is one of the major deliverables for the 2011 Ministerial meeting. Morten Skovgaard Olsen, SWIPA Chair, gave a short progress report. Following some minor setbacks the SWIPA process is now back on track for finalization in time for Nuuk as agreed in Ilulissat. The science report (580 pages) is progressing nicely, and the layman report (60 pages) is in its draft stage - focusing on what climate change means for the society. Production of 3 SWIPA films is in progress. The second draft of the layman report is to be sent out in December to the AMAP HoDs. This will allow some time for national consultations with SAOs, before the 19-21 January AMAP WG meeting where final drafts of the SWIPA products will be prepared. All products will carry the AC logo and appropriate disclaimers.

Discussion: SAOs welcomed that SWIPA, one of the major deliverables for the Ministerial, is on track and commended the great and complex research being undertaken.

The layman report will contain policy recommendations and be sent out 4 weeks before final approval by the AMAP WG, thus allowing for national SAO consultations. It was noted that the scientific report is important also for non-arctic countries and globally.

Decision: SAOs thanked AMAP for its progress report and look forward to receiving the draft policy recommendations.

3.2 Short-lived Climate Forcers (SLCF) Task Force

Background: The Task Force Co-Chairs, Benjamin DeAngelo (USA) and Håvard Toresen (Norway) gave a short progress report. The task force has kept major focus on black carbon because it is the particular pollutant requiring the most action and thus offers the greatest opportunity for an Arctic Council contribution to the global climate debate. There will be at least one more meeting before the Ministerial (in February). The products for the Ministerial will be a technical report (a first draft is expected to be ready in November 2010), and a brief summary for policy makers with recommendations. The Co-Chairs asked for SAO guidance on the question of how to proceed with the summary for policy makers and the question on recommendations. Emission inventories for black carbon are being estimated for the first time. This is a very important achievement for which the Arctic Council can take credit, as improved data on emissions make it possible to improve mitigation measures. The largest emission sources can now be identified and are 1) transport: on-road and off-road diesel vehicles, 2) residential burning, 3) agricultural/open burning: a large source in some countries (Canada, Russia, USA) 4) shipping: currently a small source, but of concern given an expected increase, 5) gas flaring, a potentially significant source, but largely unknown- due to lack of data availability. As of now it is not possible to formulate recommendations on gas flaring.

Emissions are projected to come down by 2030 (Reductions from transport emissions account for almost all projected decline. Other sources are projected to remain largely unchanged without additional measures). Taking early action is considered to have “no regrets” because of health and other co-benefits of mitigation. Geographical factors also matter, (i.e. it is not only the size of emissions) in that emission sources near, but not in the Arctic may have disproportionate impacts. The task force has so far focused on black carbon, but this does not mean that methane and tropospheric ozone are less important- it means that other work has been done in these areas as compared to black carbon. Nevertheless, the Task Force hopes to be able to say something about methane in its upcoming reports. Location and timing of emissions is not as relevant for methane as for black carbon given that methane is globally well-mixed. Any methane reduction is important for the Arctic, however, because of its high GWP (global warming potential), its short residence time in the atmosphere, and its contribution to tropospheric ozone creation. The AMAP Chair confirmed that the



SLCF expert group is well integrated in the work of the task force. The report from the AMAP SLCF expert group is expected to be ready in January.

Discussion: SAOs were pleased with the progress report, noting that the task force is doing important work and showing AC leadership. The work being done nationally is very important. Priority now should be to understand the remaining scientific uncertainties. The AC should try to come to consensus on practical policy recommendations, but also aim at taking early actions because of health and other “no regret” benefits. To develop the policy recommendations on concrete, immediate actions it is now important to bring in the policy experts of different governments. Several noted that the national actions would need to be tailored to different country’s needs and emission sources. It was suggested that the work of this task force be continued beyond the Ministerial 2011, because of the need to look further into other black carbon emission sources (e.g. gas flares), methane and troposphere ozone. The form, in which the work should continue, would have to be discussed further. The AMAP Chair said that the SLCF expert group would be pleased to continue, and that it could also address the other two short lived forcers, if necessary. The timing and order of policy recommendations were extensively discussed. It was noted that it should be a priority to try to collect data on gas flaring, likely to be available from industry. There was satisfaction that the task force focused on the impact and geography of emissions, not on magnitude only. PPs expressed that they should be better integrated/included in the work of the task force. They encouraged demonstration projects, for example in ACAP. A question arose about the possibility of adding black carbon to the revised Gothenburg protocol of the UNECE LRTAP Convention. The TF co-chairs said that this will be discussed at the next LRTAP meeting in December 2010. The task force’s summary for policymakers will be ready for SAO review in March 2011.

Decision: SAOs welcomed the work undertaken so far by the SLCF task force and the AMAP expert group, and approved the plans for ongoing work and the finalization of the first part of the work in time for the 2011 ministerial. SAOs asked the task force to take into account the many comments at this meeting. For example, now is the time to bring in the policy experts, and to be clear about scientific uncertainties. However, these issues should not prevent members from implementing early action measures that will also have many other positive effects. The SAOs asked the Task Force to ascertain whether methane and tropospheric ozone should be looked into, and encouraged the Arctic states to provide the TF with data on gas flaring. SAOs also underscored the importance of involving Permanent Participants and undertaking outreach. Finally, SAOs asked the Task Force to consider possible post Nuuk activities.

3.3 Short Lived Climate Forcers and Contaminants Project Steering Group (SLCFC PSG) –

Background: ACAP Chair Andrey Peshkov presented the topic of black carbon and other short-lived climate forcers. In light of the importance of this issue and the need for early action, ACAP has agreed on terms of reference for a Project Steering Group (PSG) on short lived climate forcers and other contaminants with the clear mandate of decreasing black carbon in the Arctic. The group will focus its initial work on black carbon projects and work closely with the Short Lived Climate Forcers Task Force (SLCF TF) and the AMAP SLCF expert group. Following endorsement by the SAOs, ACAP is prepared to convene the first meeting of the PSG in November 2010, develop initial project proposal(s) and undertake initial project activities, to be included in the ACAP work plan 2011-2013.

Discussion: The new PSG was warmly welcomed by the SAOs, and the Terms of Reference were endorsed with a small amendment suggested by Norway to be able to quantify the goals/results of reduction of black carbon: a new #9 in the section "Mandate and function" :



9. *In cooperation with AMAP and SLCF TF establish a process that aims at quantifying the short and longer term emission reduction results of the projects. (By emission inventories, statistics, monitoring etc.)*

It was underlined that the three SLCF entities within the AC should cooperate, and pursue the same goal. Some SAOs expressed a desire to have demonstration projects get underway quickly and preferably in time for the Nuuk ministerial. Norway informed that it had set aside USD 1 million to early action measures. Finland, Sweden and others also offered to contribute to the work

Decision: SAOs agreed on the establishment of an ACAP PSG and approved the draft Terms of Reference, as amended by Norway. SAOs requested the PSG to develop initial project proposals, and to organize its work such that the results of the projects are measurable. SAOs welcomed the announced contributions by members and NEFCO.

3.4 COP 16 in Mexico

Background: As decided in Ilulissat, the Chair reported on the result of his investigation into the possibility of AC representation/side event in Mexico during the COP 16. Unlike in Copenhagen, there is no possibility for Denmark to organize a side event in Cancun. Instead, the Chair proposed that the AC or the eight Arctic states submit a statement to the COP, regarding the ice melting in the Arctic with potential local, regional and global consequences. This message could take the form of a letter signed by the Chair of the Arctic Council – the Foreign Minister of Denmark – on behalf of the Arctic Council, following prior approval in accordance with the Rules of Procedure. The 9th Conference of the Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region last month suggested that a strong Arctic message to combat climate change should be raised at COP16.

Discussion: Because it is not an international organization with its own legal status, the question on whether the AC can send such a message to the COP was discussed. The AAC mentioned that the Arctic states and AC observers signed a collective statement to the COP in 2005. An agreement to follow the example from 2005 was made, and Denmark offered to draft the text.

Decision: SAOs agreed that the individual states, and the PPs, if they wish, send a written message to COP16. The text should stay within agreed language and factual information. The Chair will draft and circulate a text within one week.

4.1 The Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA)

Background: The CAFF Chair Aevar Petersen provided an update on the the current status and progress made in the scientific assessment. The work with the three components of the scientific assessment is progressing very well. (www.caff.is/aba) Canada, Greenland, Finland, Sweden and the US are coleads. The Arctic Biodiversity Trends 2010 Report was the Arctic Council contribution to UN Biodiversity year as well as the CBD COP10 report, where, for the first time the Arctic was specially featured. Visit www.arcticbiodiversity.is for updated information. SAOs stressed at their previous meeting the need to follow up on the key findings. Petersen informed that several initiatives are underway, i.e. on sea ice ecosystems, protected areas and on marine sensitive areas (AMSA recommendation IIC). CAFF is working on the strategic follow up.

Discussion: Russia thanked CAFF for making summary report available in Russian, and informed that Russia will chair CAFF after the next Ministerial. It was noted that SAOs should revisit financial contributions to the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment. Arctic biodiversity, flora and fauna is at the heart



of indigenous peoples interest. This assessment deserves increased attention. Hopefully, next year, CAFF will be able to start developing the ABA policy recommendations.

Conclusion: SAOs welcomed the progress report and encouraged CAFF to continue along the lines explained.

5.1 Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic: Inuit, Sámi and the Indigenous peoples of Chukotka (SLiCA)

Background: Project leader Birger Poppel summarized the major objectives and conclusions of the finalized SLiCA project which began more than 10 years ago (www.arcticlivingconditions.org). A CD-Rom containing relevant SLiCA data will be released in Nuuk. If funding is obtained, a SLiCA anthology will be available in May 2011. Poppel suggested that the AC consider running a benchmark study like SLiCA every 10 years.

Discussion: Finalization of this project is a major AC achievement. The project results are especially important for the indigenous peoples of the Arctic, as there has always been a lack of data on living conditions of indigenous peoples. The data collected is already being used and methods on how to follow up/use the data in the future were discussed. Canada raised its intention to follow-up on how to ensure Canada's data is best reflected in the final report. The Saami Council thanked the financing institutions that had made the project possible.

Decision: SAOs thanked and congratulated the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) and everybody involved in the SLiCA project for its completion. The project is a major Arctic Council achievement providing a solid socio-economic knowledge basis about the living conditions in the Arctic and an excellent foundation for policy making. The report should get widespread circulation and be of use also to other projects dealing with human dimension questions, such as the planned Arctic Human Development Report II.

5.2 Status update on SDWG strategic planning, projects and activities

Background: The SDWG Chair, Marianne Lykke Thomsen, provided an update on the outcome of the SDWG work. The phase 1 report from the work on a strategic plan will be distributed to the SAOs, who may wish to reference this report in the SAO report to Ministers. Anticipated deliverables for the 2011 Ministerial from SDWG are: the Circumpolar Tool kit on Mining; a report from the health project CIRCHOB (<http://circhob.circumpolarhealth.org/>); the IPY/ Ealat project report including policy recommendations and a documentary movie; the Hope and Resilience report, with a DVD (Canada has offered to translate it into Russian).

An "Arctic Human Development Report II" proposed by Iceland is currently under consideration. If accepted by SDWG, the proposal will be forwarded to SAOs for their approval prior to the Ministerial. If approved, the project will be led by Iceland and Canada, and be a deliverable for the 2014 ministerial. The SDWG wishes to increase its focus on health issues and is attempting to convene a meeting of Arctic Health Ministers and indigenous experts/PPs in February 2011 in Nuuk.

Discussion:

SAOs expressed support for the SDWG efforts, and stressed the importance of keeping a strong focus on the human dimension in the Arctic. It was proposed to ensure that SDWG issues are not always discussed as the next to last item on the agenda. The expectation that the Strategic Plan will contribute



to making the SDWG more efficient and help raise its level of activity was expressed. Moreover, there was support for Canada's suggestion that SAOs and PPs engage in a more robust discussion on the work of the SDWG thus providing some helpful direction on the way forward in enhancing its effectiveness. It was argued that new project proposals kept the SDWG going; thus identifying new projects should be prioritized. The proposed Health Ministers' meeting received broad support, with SAOs requesting that the dates and agenda be made available as soon as possible. Status reports for the Arctic Electronic Memory Project and the Arctic Entrepreneurship project were requested. The SDWG Chair emphasized that the SDWG continues to be acutely underfunded, making it a challenge for SDWG to engage in all the projects and activities proposed by SAO's and other actors.

Decision: SAOs thanked the SDWG for its report and its important work.

6.1 The Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA) Recommendations

Background: Atle Fretheim, the PAME Chair noted that the follow-up work of the AMSA recommendations was progressing according to plan. The deliverable for the Ministerial in 2011 will be a full report on the status of all recommendations and proposed AMSA-related activities for 2011-2013.

Discussion: SAOs welcomed the work on the AMSA recommendations follow-up as an excellent example for future assessments. The agreement between CAFF/AMAP/SDWG on the recommendation IIC) was noted with satisfaction. The way the AMSA recommendations have influenced the global work in IMO was a good example of how the AC can work together in influencing other international fora.

Decision: SAOs welcomed the progress made and expressed satisfaction with the follow up and the way in which it demonstrates AC leadership, and reflects the Council's influence on the Arctic-related work of other international fora. SAOs look forward to receiving the status report on the AMSA follow-up activities at the Nuuk 2011 Ministerial meeting.

6.2 Arctic Ocean Review (AOR)

Background: Atle Fretheim, PAME Chair, gave a progress report for the AOR project. SAOs had previously requested they be closely consulted during the process of finalizing AOR Phase I. An expert workshop was convened in Washington DC 13-14 September 2010. Inputs from this workshop in addition to comments received in writing have resulted in substantial amendments to the Phase I draft report. The Phase I report is to identify potential gaps in the instruments governing the Arctic marine environment, which will be analyzed in the AOR Phase II report (2011-2013). The AOR Phase I report will summarize the number of instruments governing the Arctic marine environment. Following the review and revision process, the final draft will be submitted to the SAOs for approval and delivery to Ministers in March 2011.

Discussion: SAOs supported the project and were pleased with its progress. The lack of a human dimension to the AOR was brought up, and the AOR team was asked to consider its inclusion to the extent it fits with the scope of the project. This and some other issues of interest not covered by AOR mandate was mentioned in the discussion, possibly as follow-up project(s). Norway was pleased to see that integrated ocean management is addressed as a separate section in the draft report, but noted caution with making too general statements, as the Arctic is a vastly diverse region.



Conclusion: SAOs welcomed the progress made, and approved the plans to finalize the AOR project phase I as outlined by PAME. A decision on how to address areas not covered by the current AOR mandate was deferred to a later stage.

6.3 Search and Rescue (SAR) Task Force

Background: At their meeting in Tromsø in April 2009, Ministers decided to establish a task force "to develop and complete negotiation by the next Ministerial Meeting in 2011 of an international instrument on cooperation on search and rescue operations in the Arctic". USA and Russia co-chair the task force. Ambassador Vasiliev of Russia reported that all eight Arctic States are actively involved in the negotiations. The national delegations are made up of representatives from various government agencies. The task force met twice since the previous SAO meeting (Oslo in June and Helsinki in October 2010). The next meeting will take place in Reykjavik in December 2010. There is agreement to negotiate a legally binding document and this means the task force is in the process of full intergovernmental negotiations where "nothing is agreed before everything is agreed". It is therefore premature to disclose details. The goal is to finalize the text of the agreement at the next meeting. However, finalizing the appendixes may require yet another meeting. The most complicated issues are left to the very end, but the co chairs believe that everything will proceed according to plan, and are preparing the agreement for signature in Nuuk. The Ambassador thanked the governments that have hosted the SAR meetings, and the Finnish Minister of Foreign Affairs for addressing the task force at the last meeting in Helsinki.

Ambassador Vasiliev then gave the floor to Mr. Igor Veselov of EMERCOM Russia, who showed a short film from a Russian search and rescue exercise. The exercise showed a plane crash in Franz Josef Land where the temperature fell to -25 degrees Celsius. This was the first time such an exercise had been conducted so far north.

Decision: SAOs thanked the co-chairs for the report, the Task Force for its good work, and expressed that they are looking forward to the signing of the legal instrument at the Nuuk Ministerial meeting.

6.4 Behavior of Oil and other Hazardous Substances in Arctic waters (BoHaSa) project

Background: The EPPR vice chair Ole Kristian Bjerkemo (Norway) presented the BoHaSa report which was developed in response to the Salekhard Declaration's request for "EPPR to gather and synthesize knowledge and expertise on the behavior of oil and other hazardous substances in Arctic waters, and to promote the development and use of technologies and working methods that improve the capability to respond to accidents that involve such substances." The BoHaSa report used the mandate to define its main objectives and is based on a review of recent literature, previous studies, and includes findings from recent R&D projects. The report discusses the risk of oil and HNS spills in the Arctic, the potential fate and behavior of such spills and response methods available today. The main focus is on spills to the sea water related to transportation and exploration and production activities. Comments on this 2nd draft report provided by November 1 will be addressed by the report writers. A final document with recommendations will be circulated to SAOs for their review by March 2011.

Discussion: SAOs welcomed the progress report on this important subject, which is especially relevant in the aftermath of the Gulf of Mexico oil spill. It was underlined that the draft recommendations should be reviewed by SAOs in March, and then forwarded to Ministers for adoption.



Decision: SAOs welcomed the draft report and asked that EPPR address the comments made by SAOs at their next meeting.

6.5 Arctic Ocean Acidification

Background: AMAP Executive Secretary Lars Otto Reiersen gave a brief presentation on this new project proposal. The subject of acidification has in the latest years proved to be increasingly important for the Arctic Ocean. If SAOs approve, AMAP will, based on the Tromsø Declaration, conduct a scientific assessment dealing with observations and potential impacts of Arctic Ocean Acidification (AOA) related to climate change for delivery to Ministers in 2013. An AMAP experts' workshop was conducted in Tromsø in May 2010 to prepare the assessment.

Discussion: SAOs fully supported the work of AMAP in this important area. Russia announced that one more Russian expert will join the work.

Decision: SAOs welcomed the work done so far and approved AMAP's proposal to conduct an AOA assessment for delivery under the Swedish Chairmanship of the Arctic Council (2013).

7.1 The Strategic Action Program for the Protection of the Russian Arctic Environment (SAP-Arctic). Cooperation in implementation

Background: Boris Mogunov, Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation presented the Strategic Action Program for Protection of the Russian Arctic Environment (SAP-Arctic). SAP Arctic was approved nationally in the Russian Federation in June 2009. The purpose of the SAP Arctic is preservation and protection of the Arctic environment, and the removal of negative environmental impacts. There have already been positive results from some pilot projects. The Russian Federation in collaboration with USA, UNEP and NEFCO have prepared a proposal (a new GEF project) on cooperation in implementation of the SAP-Arctic, realization of investment projects, as well as new demo and pilot projects. The initial project concept was considered in June 2010, and a revised draft is being presented to SAOs. A large scale programme initiative called "Arctic Agenda 2020" is supported by UNEP. The project has been already presented to ACAP and PAME meetings September 2010. SAOs are requested to support the GEF project "SAP Arctic Implementation" and the Arctic Agenda programme. The Arctic states and interested international financial institutions are invited to participate in development and further implementation of the project and the programme.

Discussion: Some of the SAOs and PPs expressed support for this project and found it a useful example of practical cooperation in the Arctic. Finland stressed the importance of informing the Arctic Council about these activities and highlighted the potential synergies with Barents Euro-Arctic Council environmental hot-spots. A clearer role for the indigenous peoples should be found. ACAP reported that the issues had been discussed at their latest meeting, and that there were interesting links also with ongoing work in other working groups.

Decision: SAOs welcomed the establishment of the Strategic Action Program for the Protection of the Russian Arctic Environment and proposals for its implementation, and called on interested parties, including Arctic States, to participate in preparing and implementing the Program.

7.2 Development of the Integrated Hazardous Waste Management Strategy



Background: Andrey Peshkov, ACAP Chair, explained that the development of an Integrated Hazardous Waste Management Strategy (IHWMS) was first identified in the 2006 Arctic Council Ministerial Declaration (Salekhard) and later welcomed in the 2009 Tromsø declaration. 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. The terms of references for the project were finally agreed at last ACAP meeting. Co-chairs are Russia, USA and Norway. Members of the Project Steering Group (PSG) are Finland and Sweden. After SAO approval of ToR, the PSG will begin project preparation activities in November 2010 and the ACAP work plan will be presented to SAOs in March 2011.

Discussion: SAOs supported the project and took note of the suggested ToR. However it was noted that the strategy would not be sustainable until hazardous waste destruction capacity is available in Russia. The PSG should contribute to the Russian Federation government activities on destruction solutions. RAIPON asked that indigenous communities be included in the work.

Decision: SAOs welcomed the work done so far by ACAP and approved the draft Terms of Reference and Project description.

7.3 Indigenous Peoples Contaminants Action Program (IPCAP)

Background: Dmitry Berezkov, Vice president of RAIPON, explained that the IPCAP Project Steering Group was established in 2008. Draft terms of references were approved in September 2010. Industrial development of the Arctic has been accompanied by waste accumulation that represents a growing threat to safety and health of some of the Arctic residents and indigenous peoples especially. The Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council have proposed the initiation of the Indigenous Peoples Community Action Program (IPCAP) „to develop partnership with ACAP to identify and remove local sources of contamination and improve the environmental condition in indigenous communities“. The coordination of the PSG will be organized by co-chairs, one from the PPs and one from Arctic Council Member States. RAIPON, in cooperation with the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat, will now make information about IPCAP available in indigenous communities. ACAP asked that SAOs endorse the ToR for IPCAP.

Discussion: SAOs supported the project and endorsed the ToR. RAIPON expressed enthusiasm that practical, important work finally could start, after 6 years of preparations since the project idea was born. The earlier bilateral activities have contributed to increased knowledge among indigenous peoples; for example, children no longer play with hazardous waste in certain villages in the Russian Arctic. Some concerns were expressed that the ACAP work should not overlap with AMAP's work. Finland, Norway and AMAP expressed interest to contribute to the project.

Decision: SAOs welcomed the work done so far and endorsed the IPCAP Terms of Reference.

7.4 Report from NERPA emergency response exercise

Background: Ann Heinrich, EPPR Chair, gave a brief presentation on the conduct of an emergency exercise on July 28-29 2010 at the Nerpa Shipyard near Murmansk, the Russian Federation. The scenario involved a simulated leak of radioactive material during the dismantlement of the reactor compartment. In the exercise, response forces provided timely response and took appropriate mitigation actions to protect workers and the public. There were 200 participants, including



international observers. Observers gained firsthand experience. The lessons learned will be used to improve the preparedness. It was a very valuable experience. EPPR thanked Russia for hosting the exercise.

Discussion: It was noted that it is very important to conduct exercises based on worst case scenarios and possible response activities performed under the harshest conditions: in the open sea in Arctic winter time. Russia underlined that the exercise demonstrated high preparedness in the region. The Murmansk region is the most populated in the Arctic, and has the largest amount of radioactive materials. It borders to Norway, Finland and is close to Sweden, so is also important for these countries.

Decision: SAOs thanked EPPR for sponsoring the exercise and for informing about it.

7.5 AMAP Mercury Assessment and UNEP Global Mercury Negotiations - 2nd meeting of Inter-governmental Negotiating Committee (INC-2)

Background: AMAP Chair Russel Shearer gave a brief presentation and indicated that the Mercury Assessment would be delivered in time for the Nuuk 2011 ministerial. The assessment will consist of a science report and a highlights/layperson report. The work is co-led by Canada and Denmark. The assessment will be released at a critical stage for the UNEP global mercury negotiations. The next session of the global negotiations will be conducted under INC 2, which will take place in Japan in January 2011. At INC-1 held in Stockholm in June 2011, the Arctic countries met informally. They discussed the need to provide key scientific findings from the AMAP mercury assessment to the INC-2. AMAP recommended that SAOs provide strong support for Arctic countries to play key role at INC 2, and support the preparations of a summary of key scientific findings from the AMAP mercury assessment to be released at INC 2. It had been suggested during the informal meetings of Arctic countries at INC-1 that Denmark give an intervention at INC 2 in its capacity as AC Chair.

Discussion: SAOs gave their strong support to the AMAP work in this important field. SAOs requested to review the key scientific findings summary paper and Danish intervention before it is to be released at INC 2.

Decision: SAOs expressed support for AMAP's work, and once again urged the Arctic States to take a strong position at the UNEP global mercury negotiations and actively influence its outcome. SAOs also supported the proposal that AMAP prepare a brief summary of its mercury assessment with key scientific findings to be presented to the UNEP negotiations in January. It was agreed that the draft summary and proposed Danish intervention will be circulated to SAOs before the INC-2 meeting in January.

7.6 Development of an UNEP/AMAP Report on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and Climate Change for delivery to COP-5 of the Stockholm Convention on POPs

Background: AMAP Chair Russel Shearer gave a short status update on AMAP's work on POPs and its recent work with the Stockholm Convention Secretariat. Earlier AC declarations have referred to the impacts of transboundary contaminants on the Arctic Region and the need for action (e.g the Reykjavik 2004 Declaration). The AC, and in particular the PPs, played a leading role in establishing the Stockholm Convention. Recent evidence suggests that climate change can contribute to increased levels of POPs in the Arctic environment and people. This is still a new research area and a very



serious issue. UNEP/Stockholm Convention Secretariat invited AMAP to assist with producing a science report on climate change and POPs based on earlier AMAP reports, and also because UNEP wanted to use the AMAP expert network. There will be two key reports, one technical science report, expected to be ready by December 2010, and also a policy recommendations paper (to be prepared by UNEP only) for COP 5 in April 2011. AMAP requested that SAOs support AMAP's work with UNEP/Stockholm Convention Secretariat to produce a technical science report, which then UNEP will use as background for their policy paper. According to AMAP, this provides a good example of how the AC can influence environmental policy processes in other international fora.

Discussion: SAOs expressed satisfaction and support for the AMAP work and were pleased with AMAP contributing to the technical report of UNEP. This was another example of how the AC makes a difference in science/policy and it was important for the recognition of the AC internationally.

Decision: SAOs thanked AMAP for the progress report – and supported its assistance to the Stockholm Convention Secretariat to produce a technical science report by December 2010.

7.7 Update on The Project Support Instrument (PSI)

Background: Husamuddin Ahmadzai of NEFCO gave a brief status report. The PSI Trust Fund with contributions from Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden; interest and bank cost, as of 31 December 2009, stands at a total of EURO 739 800.39. Since the April Update to SAOs, the Russian Federation Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) has informed that its contingent contribution had been approved with respect to the concerned Russian Ministries and domestic legislation and included in the 2010 Federal Budget. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs during summer 2010 has submitted the PSI documents to the Prime Minister's Office for the decree to enable Russia's participation in the PSI. In parallel, the MNRE has shortlisted the potential organizations that could act as the Russian Executing Agency (REA) that shall be selected to implement the PSI. Upon signing of the Contributor's Agreement with Russia and deposit of the Russian contribution, NEFCO will proceed with making PSI operational, including its contribution of EURO 450 000, and call for convening the first PSI Committee meeting, tentatively during the 4th Quarter of 2010.

Discussion: Russia reported that all documents have been submitted to the Russian government and they are only awaiting the signature of the Prime Minister.

Conclusion: SAOs noted NEFCO's report, invited all parties to consider contributing to the PSI and encouraged Parties that have pledged, to deposit their contributions and in this way make it possible for the Instrument to become operational during 2010.

8.1 SAON – Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks

Background: John Calder, Co-chair of the SAON Steering group, gave a status report on SAON. A Data Management workshop has been held, and the SAON Steering Group has met twice. Task proposals have been submitted from all interested parties. The Steering group suggests that SAON now moves from a planning process to an operational program, and outlined the draft proposal for creating the operational phase of SAON. Both the AC and the IASC will be asked to co-sponsor the operational SAON. The AC then needs consensus to approve the implementation plan. The plan is based on voluntary participation (for both Arctic and non-Arctic countries) on a task-by-task basis, so approval of the plan does not imply or require active participation by any country. Section 5 of the



draft implementation plan is crucial in describing this. SAOs are requested to consult with national delegates and do what they can to have delegates participate in the January meeting of the Steering Group to be held in Oslo. Immediate future SAON work will focus on metadata standards, data integration and access, decision support tools and workshops aimed at improving the state of Arctic observing and data management.

Discussion: There were many questions from SAOs and PPs regarding the task descriptions, financing, organization and scope of SAON. Also the status of SAON within the AC structure was debated (i.e. the relationship between SAOs and SAON). **The SAON Steering Group** co-chair explained that the task descriptions are to be modified and delivered by 1 December, and that the operational SAON would be outside both AC and IASC, and that the AC was asked to co-sponsor, or be the lead supporter of SAON. It would be too complicated for SAON to follow the AC Rules of Procedures (RoP), given the presence of Arctic and non-Arctic countries, and the bottom-up approach to task definition. The link between the AC and SAON would, according to John Calder, be that SAON reports back to SAOs on progress. But since there would not be any policy aspects in the general operations of SAON, SAOs do not need to oversee the actual work. It is proposed that both the AC and IASC establish and co-chair a SAON Board. Any country can have a member on the Board, if they so wish. PPs can also have a seat on the proposed board. AC members, Working Groups and PPs will be present, but SAON will not be operating as though it were within the AC (i.e., it would not be following the RoP).

It was noted that demonstration/pilot projects or any form of early actions will be appreciated. Some SAOs supported the Plan for initiation of the operational phase of SAON as it is, while others needed more clarification. The US volunteered to initiate and coordinate a small group of interested people to think through how to proceed with SAON before the next SAON Steering group meeting in January 2011.

Decision: SAOs decided to create an intersessional group to consider how to proceed before the next SAON meeting in January. USA volunteered to coordinate this work by email.

8.2 CBMP - Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme

Background: The CAFF Chair Aevar Petersen gave a progress report from the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme. The work with the Arctic Marine Biodiversity Monitoring Plan – is being completed in 2-3 weeks time and CAFF asked the SAOs to agree to an intersessional review process for the Marine Monitoring plan. The *Community monitoring handbook* is also being finalized these days.

Discussion: All speakers supported the CAFF work and the proposed intersessional review process. AMAP noted that they support the work of CBMP and that they participate actively in expert group(s). Also AMAP is putting CBMP related work into its implementation plans.

Decision: SAOs thanked CAFF for the report and for the work done, and agreed on the proposed intersessional review of the Arctic Marine Biodiversity Monitoring Plan.

8.3 The Arctic Spatial Data Infrastructure (ASDI)

Background: Aevar Petersen, CAFF Chair, gave a status update and reminded that SAOs in their November 2009 meeting SAOs endorsed the ASDI project. Greenland has since, through CAFF, taken lead of the ASDI project and will facilitate and coordinate the development of the Arctic



SDI with the other Arctic Council working groups. A kick off workshop for the project was held in Brussels directly prior to the SAO meeting. The project will facilitate: better and more accessible maps, better management of data, easier analyses and clearer presentations across country borders. The concept has been tested by 4 of the 8 countries (in the Barents Euro-Arctic Council). Reference was made to the ASDI website www.arctic-sdi.org.

Next ASDI meeting will be in Iceland, March 2011.

Discussion: SAOs expressed satisfaction with the progress report and noted that through this project the Arctic states can demonstrate their commitment for long term management of the Arctic.

Decision: SAOs thanked CAFF for the report and the work done.

9.1 Report of outcome from the IPY Legacy workshop in Oslo in June 2010

Background: **Birgit Njåstad**, from the Norwegian Polar Institute, presented the main conclusions from the IPY Legacy workshop in Oslo 9 June 2010, arranged by Norway and supported by both the AC and the ATCM. At the workshop there had been fruitful discussions, ending up with 14 recommendations within six main themes: 1) Data access and management 2) Access to study areas and research infrastructure: suggestion to introduce the Arctic as an area of science. 3) Education and recruitment: Relevant training of young expert must be secured also in the aftermath of IPY. 4) Science communication and outreach. 5) Scientific directions: maintain a common direction. 6) International Polar Decade: need for continuation of polar science. The workshop report summarizes these recommendations more in depth.

AMAP Chair Russel Shearer noted that AMAP supports this work led by Norway. He suggested 4 bullet points, summing up the possible recommendations to SAOs: 1) AC is contributing to the legacy of the IPY through ongoing and future assessments. SAON is an important AC contribution to the data management and –access. 2) The AC will support outlining emerging key research findings that will assist policy decision-makers. 3) Discussions will also continue on IPY Legacy and science to policy integration at the IPY 2012 Conference to be held in Montreal. 4) International Polar Decade (IPD): There is a need to determine expected level of commitment from the AC while considering financial constraints. AC should pursue discussions with international organizations, such as WMO, to elaborate the concept. Scope, content, funding, organization and administration of IPD will need to be defined. AMAP's recommendation on this item is to come back with more definitive views after the WMO issues its IPD statement.

Discussion: A clear goal is to maximize the outcome of the IPY. Even if many stated their full support for all the suggested recommendations, there was no consensus on endorsing them at this meeting, as there had been no specific proposals presented to SAOs in advance of the meeting. Russia noted their strong support for IPD and that they would like to see clear Arctic Council support to the IPD in Nuuk. AMAP was asked to come back with more definitive language on the role of AC under a proposed IPD after WMO issues its IPD statement. More generally, it was noted by several that there should be something in the Nuuk declaration about maximizing the IPY legacy. PPs underlined the importance of Indigenous people's engagement in the process.

Decision: SAOs underlined the importance of, and support to, the general content of the recommendations presented at the meeting. In the coming months the AC will consider if/how to mention maximizing the legacy of the IPY in the Nuuk declaration.



10.1 Working Group Progress Reports

Background: Working Group Progress Reports contain information on project progress and outcomes intended for Ministers, including special issues for SAO consideration.

Decision: SAOs took note of the reports from the Working Groups.

10.2 Revised AMAP Strategic Framework

Background: AMAP Chair, Russell Shearer gave a brief overview of the extensive stakeholder review process that was conducted leading to a significantly revised AMAP strategic framework.

Decision: SAOs approved AMAP's revised Strategic Framework.

11.1 Report from the Ninth Conference of Parliamentarians from the Arctic Region 13-15 September 2010 in Brussels

Background: Bjørn Willy Robstad, Secretary General of The Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Regions (SCPAR) gave a brief update on the outcome of the 9th Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region in the European Parliament, Brussels 13-15 September 2010. The Conference had been a success, and especially the fact that the AC Chair, Foreign Minister of Denmark, Lene Espersen, had participated had been appreciated. In the conference statement, the AC was encouraged to conclude the SAR agreement, to arrange an Arctic summit at the heads of state level, to arrange annual ministerial meetings and to establish a permanent secretariat. The statement of the conference was distributed as part of the documentation for the meeting.

Discussion: The delegate from the EU Commission noted that the EU had been happy and honored to host this conference for the first time.

Decision: SAOs noted the statement from the 9th Conference of the Arctic Parliamentarians and thanked the Secretary General of CPAR for his report.

11.2 Information about the Arctic Environmental Ministers Meeting in Ilulissat 8-11 June

Background: Frank Sonne, from the Danish Ministry of Environment, gave a brief report on the meeting that was arranged 8-11 June 2010 in Ilulissat. In cooperation with the Greenlandic government the Danish Ministry of Environment had invited Arctic Environment Ministers, PPs and AC permanent state observers to the meeting, which had been characterized by informal dialogue. The Chair's Statement from the meeting is to be found on the Danish EPA website here: http://www.mim.dk/NR/rdonlyres/475C3E16-A549-40EA-A8BF-F723363EE7EE/0/ILULISSATchairstatement_final.pdf

Discussion:

There was some discussion on whether this meeting had been/could have been an AC meeting or not. Responding to a question, the Swedish SAO noted that although no concrete plans had been



made yet for the Swedish chairmanship, it should be assumed that if Sweden would want to arrange a similar meeting, the planning would be preceded by a discussion at SAO level.

Decision: The Chair thanked Denmark for the report.

11.3 Next meeting

The Chair informed that there will be an extraordinary SAO meeting before the Ministerial meeting. It will take place in Eigtvedt Pakhus, Copenhagen, Denmark on 16 – 17 March 2011.

Closing of meeting

The Chair thanked all participants who contributed to both the discussions and the practicalities of the meeting. He also thanked the Government of the Faroe Islands for their hospitality.