

Summary of Progress Report of the ACAP Working Group.

2011

Arctic Contaminants Action Program (ACAP)

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Summary of Progress Report of the ACAP Working Group

The ACAP Working Group meeting took place 5-6 October 2011 in Helsinki, Finland. In attendance were representatives from: Denmark, Finland, Norway, Russian Federation, Sweden, United States and NEFCO.

Below is a summary of developments and main decisions from the last ACAP meeting which may be of potential interest to SAOs:

PSG Short lived climate forcers/Black Carbon Contaminants (BCC)”(USA, Russia).

The SLCF PSG held its meetings in March and October 2011 where the PSG agreed to consider a number of activities.

The PSG also discussed an initial coordination meeting on a US led project on Reduction of Black Carbon from Diesel Sources in the Russian Arctic and USEPA issued the RFA. This US coordinated project will work to reduce black carbon emissions in the Russian Arctic and will work to: assess primary sources of black carbon in the Russian Arctic, develop a baseline emission inventory for black carbon from diesel sources, implement targeted, on-the-ground demonstration projects for reducing black carbon from diesel and establish policy recommendations and financing options for reducing black carbon diesel sources.

While the project will be focused in the Russian Arctic, the project will collaborate more broadly to leverage resources and expertise from across arctic countries.

Russian Federation expressed interest to support the program but stressed the importance to include the indigenous people (RAIPON) into the project. RAIPON has to develop a link to BC program in Russia. Other countries and organizations reported on the readiness to send and circulate project proposals, contributing to the black carbon issue solutions in Arctic: on improving residential heating (Norway), on reduction of fuel combustion, use of end-of-life equipment etc. (NEFCO), green pottery (Sweden) and evaluation of combined heat and power systems (CHP) to reduce the fuel consumption (Finland).

PSG “Reduction of Mercury Emissions in Environment in Arctic States”:

PSG members are currently developing project concepts and proposals for those project areas identified at the last PSG meeting (non-ferrous metals production, industrial gold mining, artisanal gold mining, as well as a possible follow-on to the ongoing U.S. – Russia coal-fired power plant mercury control project). The PSG chair recently received a draft project proposal from NEFCO for a pilot installation of mercury and multi-pollutant control equipment at a large zinc smelter in the Russian Federation. PSG continue to follow related bilateral and other efforts which support the mercury release reduction objective of the PSG:

- Closed out work on a project on the Mercury Containing Waste in NW Russia, which aimed to demonstrate ways to improve the system for collection, transport, storage, and treatment of mercury containing waste in NW Russia.
- Completed a project in the Russian chlor-alkali industry to reduce mercury releases to wastewater and improve mercury monitoring systems in several Russian chlor-alkali facilities. These ongoing efforts have reduced mercury releases to the environment by about 1 ton per year.
- Developed a proposal for ACAP consideration for collaboration with several Russian research institutes to demonstrate the effectiveness of sorbents for reducing mercury emissions in the coal sector at a coal-fired power plant in the Russian Federation.

PSG “Reduction/Elimination of releases of Dioxins/Furans in the Russian Federation with focus on the Arctic and Northern Regions” (Sweden)

The activities of the PSG were reported by new PSG Chair (Sweden) on his business assessment trip to Vorkuta cement plant, which is heavily polluting the environment by dust (600 kg/h) and belong to one of the Barentz hotspots. The new equipment was bought and delivered but installation in the process. The installation may help in reduction of dioxin emissions with minor efforts.

PSG “Environmentally Safe Management of stocks of obsolete and prohibited pesticides in the Russian Federation”:

ACAP has continued activities to prevent release of obsolete pesticides into the Arctic environment by developing pesticide inventories, repackaging and improving storage conditions. In 2009 inventory and safe storage activities in Altai Krai were completed resulting in 4972 t obsolete pesticides. ACAP will review the technologies as soon as such capacity will be developed. PSG Chair reported on the obsolete pesticides inventory continuation in 2011, when presence of obsolete stocks in 4 remote and Northern districts of Krasnoyarsk Krai were inventoried. The PSG final report on phase I and II will be prepared for the Ministerial meeting in 2013 and a draft outline for the final report was presented to ACAP WG participants. ACAP Chair pointed out that one of the hotspots which is ready for exclusion from the list is the storage of pesticides in Karelia, which were destructed by “EcoKem” in Finland. Currently there are no possibilities to destroy obsolete pesticide stocks in Russia in an environmentally sound manner.

PSG “Reduction/Elimination of Sources and Releases of Brominated Flame Retardants”:

The ACAP project steering group on brominated flame retardants (BFR) has operated as an information exchange network in 2009 and 2010. The group has continued the search for phase II activities (identify projects to reduce emissions of BFRs in the Arctic). Waste management in smaller settlements in the Arctic has been identified as a possible topic for a phase II activity and the group has considered co-operation with other groups under ACAP on this. There has been preliminary contact with the project steering group on Integrated Hazardous Waste Management Strategy (IHWMS) and the Indigenous Peoples Contaminants Action Program (IPCAP) to encourage them to include BFRs in their scope of work and to identify possible projects for collaboration. So far no conclusions have been drawn. Norway has been the lead country of the BFR group from 2004-2010 and has withdrawn from the leadership as of 2010.

The BFR PSG is in an information exchange status now. As result of discussion it was decided:

- ACAP should update SAOs on what was accomplished in this PSG and note ACAP agreement that it should be changed/closed for now due to lack of appropriate experts with resources to undertake further activities;
- In the report to SAOs, ACAP may wish to include specific numeric information readily available on trends on BFR contamination in the arctic. If such information is not available, we may wish to note to SAOs and raise the possibility of ACAP undertaking an update on the status of BFRs in the Arctic;
- ACAP also recognizes that much of problem stems from use of products containing BFRs and ESM of products containing wastes and that to eliminate BFRs in Arctic would require more comprehensive legislative frameworks;
- the ability of ACAP to eliminate BFRs is minimal without additional support (from PSI and governmental level);

- pilot projects and awareness raising activities could be undertaken by ACAP but there has been no support both in terms of available experts and finances provided by countries to ACAP to develop such a project. Having a suitable expert(s) with the support to initiate projects is necessary and the SAOs may wish to consider the relative priority of continued work on BFRs.
- ACAP agrees that it should be closed or adjoin with IHWMS for now because there is no country able to lead this PSG.

“Phase-out of PCB`s in the Russian Federation” (Russia, USA, NEFCO),

At the moment Phases 1 and 2 of PSG workplan (inventories) are completed and RF is waiting for a new equipment for POPs destruction. The destruction Phase will start at the end of 2011.

Also in 2011 RF completed the project on the review of destruction facilities in Arctic, with the conclusion that mobile units will be the best solution. RF will provided ACAP members with the website, containing the project report.

It was decided to include the Norwegian expert in the PSG and to identify local partners in regions. The pilot projects can be implemented in regional technoparks. Some regional authorities are ready to provide co-funding from the regional budget.

“Integrated Hazardous Waste Management Strategy in the Northern Regions of Russian Federation (IHWMS)”(Russia, USA, Norway)

IHWMS PSG meeting took place in Moscow in June, 2011. The project proposal called “The Integrated Hazardous Waste Management in the Northern Regions of the Russian Federation” was developed by NEFCO, circulated to ACAP members and commented by Norway and USA.

“Indigenous Peoples Contaminants Action Plan (IPCAP)” (Russia, USA, Norway, RAIPON).

IPCAP PSG will have a meeting in Luleo, in November 7, 2011. The program and invitation were sent recently to ACAP members. The decisions were as follows:

- ACAP has to provide some guidance to IPCAP on the organization of the PSG meeting;
- at the PSG meeting it should be more than 1 representative from permanent participant;
- Saami were interested to participate in the meeting and have to be invited to the meeting.

Discussion on PSG Organization and Arrangement, Administrative Matters

Several issues were raised and discussed.

Permanent Secretariat

The issue of how the new Arctic Council permanent secretariat will work was discussed. The AC task force will focus on setting up the secretariat and ACAP as a WG should provide some views on what type of secretariat support we would find useful for their consideration. ACAP does not currently have a permanent Secretariat instead favoring an informal arrangement where administrative functions are performed by the government chairing ACAP. As the Arctic Council itself becomes a more formal entity, some within ACAP thought it would be appropriate to examine secretariat arrangements that provide for greater continuity. At least one delegate cautioned that there are no new resources from the countries to support the secretarial work.

Agree:

- The chairman and the vice-chair volunteered to develop a paper on activities or responsibilities could be undertaken by a permanent secretariat on behalf of ACAP. This document could be prepared for discussion 30 days prior to next ACAP meeting for discussion and then ACAP would provide agreed input to the TF for its consideration.
- Russia will specify the costs of Secretariat based on her experience. At a future meeting, ACAP may wish to explore the possibility of adding 1 more person to the new AC Secretariat.
- ACAP will explore the possibility to have the permanent ACAP Secretariat.

ACAP/PSG Membership:

- Chair in co-operation with PSGs chairs develop a list of official representatives to ACAP, email distribution lists, list of PSG members, and make that list available.
- To facilitate the development of the items above, each ACAP country representative should confirm who is their country representative and should identify the names of any other individuals who should receive ACAP emails. ACAP country representatives should do so via email.
- ACAP Chair will send a request to each PSG Chair asking for their current membership list and distribute such information to ACAP country representative to verify the accuracy of country representation on each PSG.
- The Chair agreed to invite again Iceland to nominate someone to ACAP as official representative.

3.3. Participation of Non-Members:

ACAP reviewed its policies for participation of non-members and was agreement on the following:

Actions:

- non-members “that can directly contribute” to ACAP’ projects be invited to participate PSGs or ACAP activities.
- for ACAP meetings, before an invite is issued, ACAP should discuss the invitation (can happen inter-sessionally via email, no objection is agreement) and then the Chair can issue the invite.
- Specific projects - PSG chairs would issue the invite.
- ACAP should participate in policy level discussions in other international fora, EU Agencies (e.g. EEA) and other potential participants and agreed to discuss how to do so at a future meeting.

3.4. ACAP Website:

Agree:

- Explore the possibility of AC Secretariat to host ACAP website. The ACAP secretariat would update the page with relevant information.
- Develop the outdated page;
- Consider adding links to the ACAP website so that viewers are directed to the correct site.
- Password and login will be distributed to ACAP members right away

3.7. Optimization of the work of ACAP

ACAP now has 6-8 PSGs with limited resources while PSI is not operated. Some PSGs are “sleeping” (no activities) due the lack of financial support from the project leading countries, the PSGs structure need an optimization, the role and responsibilities have to be clarified on next level (3d phase) of projects development.

Agree:

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- there can be multiple projects within a PSG and it is the job of the Chair to synthesize information on all activities and report to ACAP;
- US, Norway and Finland to work on paper: what constitutes an AC approved project when mandate is broad; what do the PSGs need from ACAP.
- Chair/Vice Chair to amend operating guideline #8 to reflect the role of PSG chairs to synthesize activities of the multiple projects of the PSG. One PSG can have many projects led by different actors.

- The question of joining several PSGs in one (BFR and PCB to join IHWMS) has to be explored.

4. Project Support Instrument (PSI) was presented by NEFCO.

NEFCO updated ACAP on recent activity and began a discussion on how projects will come forward to the PSI presented. NEFCO reiterated that concrete projects (PSB, SLCF etc.) have to be developed in line with the NEFCO guidelines to be eligible for PSI funding. The proposed PSI flowchart was discussed and adopted. The concrete

projects (PSB, SLCF etc.) have to be developed in line with the NEFCO guidelines. The 1st PSI project meeting is planned for

November, assuming that RF government will sign the Agreement with NEFCO in September as expected. For operational PSI management RF in September will establish a new entity – REA – Russian Executive Agency. The project format can be different and any AC WG may apply for funding. On the other side the PSI is targeted to the elimination of pollution/contaminants in Arctic and to concrete, practical projects (excluding mapping and monitoring). The usual management way is that NEFCO refers to a number of concrete projects (PCB, Hg etc.) examining whether these projects are ready for funding or they need further development. In the latter case the NEFCO manager may assist in project preparation. The decision for funding is based on a consensus between PSI Committee members (1 competent person from 1 country) while all of them have an equal vote. The project owner is also the owner of the project results. The progress reports and other project documents will be published on a website in both languages.

- The final decision will be made by ACAP Chair after receiving the meeting agendas and invitations.
- ACAP members should provide input on the messages the Chair and Vice Chair will deliver at these two meetings and should do so in a transparent manner.

6. Initiation of procedure of ACAP Chairmanship transfer from Russian Federation to Finland

ACAP WG Chair Mr. Peshkov informed ACAP members that RF and Finland initiated the procedure of transfer of the chairmanship duties from Russia to Finland. The procedure will be completed at the next ACAP WG meeting – spring 2012.

9. Update of work with AC WGs and BEAC

Finland reported that there is a close interaction between the different groups responding to common items, like obsolete pesticides. Karelia will be excluded from the HS List at November Ministerial Conference as a result of BEAC and ACAP common efforts. ACAP will facilitate info exchange (between ACAP and AMAP, ACAP and BEAC WGE), common w/shops and facilitate coordination of common projects.

