

Meeting of Senior Arctic Officials. Stockholm. 28-29 March 2012. Final Report.

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Arctic Council

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**Meeting of Senior Arctic Officials
Stockholm
28-29 March 2012
Final Report**

1. Introduction

1.1. Opening of Meeting and Welcoming Words

Gustaf Lind, SAO Chair, welcomed the delegates to Stockholm and the second SAO meeting under the Swedish chairmanship.

1.2. Introduction of new SAOs/ PP HoDs

New Senior Arctic Official of the Kingdom of Denmark, Klavs A. Holm, new Senior Arctic Official of Iceland, Hjálmar W. Hannesson, new Head of Delegation of the Gwich'in Council International, Lorraine Netro, new Head of Delegation of the AIA, James Gamble, and the new Chair of the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME) working group, Magnús Johannesson were welcomed to the Arctic Council as New Heads of Delegations.

1.3. Approval of the Agenda

Decision: The agenda of 13 March 2012 was approved.

1.4. Special Mention

The **SAO Chair** noted the work of Victoria Gofman from AIA and thanked her for the numerous years of involvement in the Arctic Council.

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

2.1. Communication and Outreach

Presentation: **Andreas Von Uexküll**, (Sweden), presented the background for the Arctic Council communication strategy. This, and all other presentations, can be found on the Arctic Council website.

Decision: The Arctic Council communication strategy was provisionally adopted by SAOs and it will be forwarded to Deputy Ministers for final approval at their meeting in May 2012.

2.2. Task Force on Institutional Issues (TFII)

Presentation: The Chair of the TFII, **Andreas Von Uexküll**, (Sweden), presented the proposals from the TFII regarding the establishing of the Secretariat in Tromsø, Norway.

Decision: SAOs welcomed the Host Country Agreement and provisionally adopted the Secretariat Terms of Reference, Financial rules, Staff rules, Job Description Director and Job Posting Director. SAOs directed the TFII to consider the proposal presented by Permanent Participants to integrate the Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat in the AC Secretariat, and provide recommendations to SAOs. The documents will be forwarded to Deputy Ministers for final approval at their meeting in May 2012.

3. Human Development

3.1. Arctic Maritime and Aviation Transportation Infrastructure Initiative (AMATII)

Presentation: SDWG Chair, **Mikael Anzén**, presented the AMATII project.

Decision: SAOs approved the Arctic Maritime and Aviation Infrastructure Initiative as an Arctic Council project under the SDWG, and noted the importance of receiving regular progress updates on this project.

4. Climate, Environment and Biodiversity

4.1. Actions for a Changing Arctic (ACA)

Presentation: Canada and Norway tabled a one page redraft of the project entitled “Adaptation Actions for a Changing Arctic”.

Decision: The SAOs decided to have a silent procedure concerning the new project, requesting SAO Head of Delegations to submit modifications to the text by April 20th. If no comments are received by this date the revised version will be considered accepted and forwarded to the Deputy Ministers for their approval.

4.2. SWIPA follow up

Presentation: **Morten Olsen**, SWIPA Chair, presented the key messages from SWIPA.

Conclusion: SWIPA shows the importance of working on adaptation. The films are useful tools for outreach activities.

4.3. SAON – Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks

Presentation: The SAON Board Chair, **Tom Armstrong** outlined the outcomes of SAON Board first meeting in Tromsø, Norway 24-25 January 2012.

Decision: Discussions will be undertaken to explore ways of developing a closer relationship between SAON and the Arctic Council. The USA will lead in developing a paper intercessionally to resolve these issues. After review within the Arctic Council the IASC will be informed about any new Arctic Council decisions.

4.4. Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA)

Presentation: An update on the ABA project was provided by **Mark Marissink**, ABA Chair.

Conclusion: SAOs were pleased with the ABA process so far and with CAFF for already considering the implementation phase. SAOs stressed the importance of careful oversight of the ABA outcomes and policy recommendations. Guidance concerning the planning of the ABA Symposium will be handled by the Chair and CAFF in cooperation with Canada.

4.5. Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme (CBMP)

Presentation: **Mike Gill**, Chair of CAFF's Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme (CBMP) presented the latest CBMP work, including the Arctic Species Trend Index (ASTI) reports.

Decision: The ASTI technical reports were welcomed and the Key findings report was endorsed. The Arctic Biodiversity Data Service was welcomed by the SAOs, especially the focus on concrete outcomes. Canada's leadership as CBMP Chair was singled out for appreciation by SAOs.

4.6. Update on the Project Support Instrument (PSI)

Background: **Husamuddin Ahmadzai**, special advisor of NEFCO, gave an update on the PSI.

Decision: SAOs noted with appreciation recent developments regarding PSI Cooperation and the status of contributions and indications. Furthermore, they encouraged parties that have pledged to deposit their contributions with the Fund Manager to enable the Fund Instrument to become operational during 2012; and requested NEFCO to ask the PSI Committee (when it is established) to clarify and make available the criteria for selection of AC Projects to be financed from the PSI.

4.7. (a) Short Lived Climate Forcers

Presentation: The co-chairs of SCLF Task Force **Caroline Dickson and Håvard Toresen**, presented an updated work plan for the SLCF work.

Decision: SAOs approved the proposed work plan.

(b) Climate and Clean Air Coalition

Presentation: **Julia Gourley**, USA, presented the new "Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short-lived Climate Pollutants" that has been launched by USA, Canada and Sweden on February 16.

Conclusion: SAOs took note of the information.

4.8. Arctic Agenda 2020 Program

Background: **Boris Morgunov**, Russia, presented the “GEF-Russian Federation Partnership on Sustainable Environmental Management in the Arctic under a Rapidly Changing Climate (Arctic Agenda 2020)”.

Decision: SAOs recommended the Arctic Council working groups to consider cooperation with projects under the “Arctic Agenda 2020”, and invited member countries of the Arctic Council, Working Groups and all interested parties represented in the Arctic Council to participate in developing and further implementation of the “Arctic Agenda 2020”.

4.9. Arctic Spatial data Infrastructure (Arctic SDI)

Presentation: **Bengt Kjellson**, representing the Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority gave an update on the status of the implementation of the Arctic SDI

Decision: The SAOs recognized the importance of the Arctic SDI and its contribution to improving data integration, sharing and analysis across the Arctic. SAOs encouraged CAFF and the Arctic SDI Steering Committee to look into how to formalize this cooperation through the Arctic Council, and to submit a proposal to the next SAO meeting to insure a sustainable framework for the development of this project.

4.10. Mercury Project Steering Group Terms of Reference

Presentation: **Timo Seppälä**, Executive Secretary of ACAP, explained that the Mercury PSG developed a Terms of Reference (ToR) document that outlines its structure, mandate, and membership.

Decision: Delegates noted the significant contribution the AC has made to increasing global awareness of the impact of mercury in the Arctic, and urged Arctic and non-Arctic states to work constructively towards making progress at the 4th Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to conclude a legally-binding agreement to reduce global mercury use and emissions by INC-5 in 2013. SAOs approved approve the Terms of Reference of ACAP Mercury Project Steering Group.

5. Oceans

5.1. Task Force on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response

Presentation: **Anton Vasiliev**, Task Force Co-Chair, Russia, gave an update on progress made towards a legally-binding agreement to address Arctic oil pollution preparedness and response. It was proposed to task EPPR to draft operational guidelines for the Task Force. The next meeting of the Task Force will be held June 18-20, 2012 in Helsinki, Finland.

Decision: SAOs approved the proposal for EPPR to prepare operational guidelines was approved by SAOs.

5.2. Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment - follow up (AMSA)

Presentation: **Magnús Jóhannesson**, PAME Chair, presented the progress and activities concerning the follow up and the implementation of the recommendations from the AMSA report.

Conclusion: SAOs expressed support for the progress towards the implementation of the AMSA project follow-up activities. All SAOs agreed on the importance of maintaining momentum towards the timely conclusion of a mandatory Polar Code. Furthermore, they urged the Sustainable Development Working Group to bring the AMSA 2c recommendation project to finalization as soon as possible.

5.3. Circumpolar-Wide Inuit Response to the AMSA

Background: **Mikael Anzén**, SDWG Chair, presented the Circumpolar-Wide Inuit Response to the AMSA project, a response to AMSA recommendations which aim to protect the seas and coastal zones traditionally used by Inuit.

Decision: SAOs approved the Circumpolar – Wide Inuit Response to AMSA project.

6. Working Group Administration

6.1. Working Group Progress Reports

Background: All the six working groups were given the chance to raise issues under this agenda item.

Conclusion: SAOs thanked the Working Groups for the progress reports.

7. Any Other Business

7.1. Development of National and International Financial Mechanisms Supporting Sustainable Development in Arctic Regions

Background: **Viktoria Vlasova**, Russia, gave a presentation on this proposal.

Conclusion: SAOs took note of the proposal.

7.2. International Polar Year Conference in Montreal April 2012

Background: **Sheila Riordon**, Canada, gave an update on the preparations for the “Knowledge to Action Conference” in Montreal as the concluding event of IPY.

Conclusion: SAOs took note of the information.

7.3. International Arctic Science Committee (IASC)

Background: **Volker Rachold**, Executive Secretary of The IASC, presented a summary of IASC's latest developments and future plans.

Conclusion: SAOs took note of the information.

7.4. The Arctic Herald

Background: **Anton Vasiliev** and **Aleksandr Ignatiev**, Russia, gave a presentation of the new Russian journal *The Arctic Herald*.

Conclusion: SAOs took note of the information.

7.5. World Conference on Indigenous Peoples 2014

Background: **Rodion Sulyandziga**, First vice-president of RAIPON (Russian Association of indigenous peoples of the North) outlined the plans for The World Conference on Indigenous Peoples is to be held in 2014.

Conclusion: SAOs took note of the information.

7.6. University of the Arctic

Background: **Lars Kullerud**, President of the UArctic, gave an update.

Conclusion: SAOs took note of the information.

8. Closing of meeting and dates for next meeting

8.1. Next SAO Meeting

The next SAO Meeting will be held in Haparanda, Sweden, 14-15 November 2012. Sweden will host a meeting of the Ministers of Environment of the eight Arctic states at Jukkasjärvi Ice hotel, Sweden, 5-7 February 2013.