

CAFF PROGRESS REPORT SENIOR ARCTIC OFFICIALS

Stockholm, Sweden March 2012



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ARCTIC COUNCIL

Note: This report is a summary of key activities and developments from November 2011 to March 2012 and does not represent a comprehensive list of CAFF activities, priorities and projects. Timelines and dates are subject to change.

Response to AC Priorities

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The common priorities agreed upon for the Norwegian, Danish and Swedish Chairmanship period (2007-2013) are concerned with climate change, integrated resource management, the International Polar Year (IPY), Indigenous peoples, local living conditions, management issues and biodiversity.

These priorities are integral to CAFF's objectives and mandate to address the conservation of Arctic biodiversity, and to communicate its findings to the governments and residents of the Arctic, helping to promote practices which ensure the sustainability of the Arctic's living resources.

CAFF responds to Arctic Council priorities with circumpolar projects and activities that focus on Arctic Council efficiency, working group cooperation, data integration, spatial information, and outreach and communication.

CAFF's Arctic Biodiversity Assessment and the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program are two important contributions towards understanding the impacts of climate change and other stressors on biodiversity and the sustainable use of the Arctic's living resources. In 2013 the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment will:

- provide a description of the current state of Arctic ecosystems and biodiversity
- create a baseline for use in global and regional assessments of biodiversity
- provide a basis to inform and guide future Arctic Council work
- provide up-to-date scientific knowledge
- identify gaps in the data record
- identify key mechanisms driving change
- produce scientific and policy recommendations

The Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program will feed harmonized and integrated biodiversity monitoring information into Arctic Council processes. These two programs will create a dynamic process in which information remains up-to-date, relevant and more easily accessed by scientists, decision makers and Arctic residents.



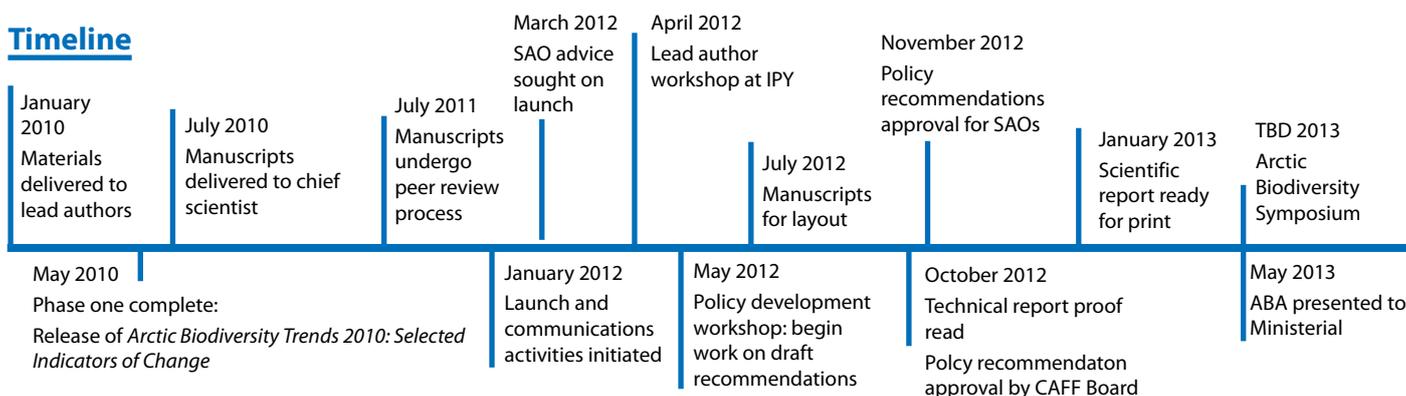
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Summary of progress on CAFF projects

Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA)

- Memo to SAOs will seek guidance on ABA release, including options for holding an Arctic Biodiversity Symposium.
- Policy workshop scheduled for May 2012 to begin development of policy recommendations.
- **All but two drafts received** and undergoing peer review, with one chapter finalized.
- Short film based on key findings from the *Arctic Biodiversity Trends 2010: Selected Indicators of Change* in development.
- TEK compendiums in development and scheduled for completion by late 2012.

Timeline



For more information:
www.caff.is/aba

Arctic Sea Ice Associated Biodiversity

Phase one: Identify issues, authors, outline and actions that will form the substance of a technical report. Phase complete.

Phase two: March 2012 Saint Petersburg meeting provided input into technical report. Russia agreed to be co-lead with Canada and the U.S.A.

Phase three: Prepare technical report and accompanying recommendations for action.

Phase four: Communication of the results and recommendations to a non-technical audience.

Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA IIC)

Draft report submitted to PAME. Cultural component incomplete. PAME will discuss at their March meeting. A final report expected for 2012.

The Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program



- The Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program (CBMP) is entering its fourth of a five-year-implementation Plan and has grown to over 80 organizational partners and 700 members. The CBMP's focus on harmonizing current Arctic biodiversity monitoring is led through its three Expert Monitoring Groups (Marine, Freshwater and Terrestrial) who are developing and implementing pan-Arctic biodiversity monitoring plans. See boxes below.
- Data gathered from the implementation of these plans will feed into **the Arctic Biodiversity Data Service (ABDS)**, a coordinated web-based data management system that accesses, integrates, displays and analyzes biodiversity data according to various user needs. This effort will provide a focal point for current and credible Arctic biodiversity data, facilitating more timely and effective decisions while also facilitating data access for scientists, policy makers, Arctic communities and the public.
- The CBMP is also incorporating and aggregating existing and historical data to establish more effective baseline understanding of the Arctic environment. The **Arctic Species Trend Index (ASTI)** reports are the latest analytical results from the CBMP with a particular focus on recent changes and trends in the Arctic marine environment and an exploration of the potential key drivers that are causing environmental change. SAOs asked to welcome two technical reports on the status and trends of marine species and spatial/temporal analysis of ASTI data, and to approve a key findings report generated from the two technical reports.
- Planned community based monitoring registry project to identify and maintain current inventory of local/TEK knowledge and datasets to facilitate their discovery and use into CBMP projects.

Marine

The *Arctic Marine Biodiversity Monitoring Plan* has been approved and is being implemented by the Marine Steering Group (MSG) and five new Marine Expert Networks (MENS). They will coordinate long-term Arctic marine biodiversity monitoring and assemble existing data to establish a better understanding of the changing Arctic.

Freshwater

Upcoming meeting in Norway in May 2012 will further develop the *Arctic Freshwater Biodiversity Monitoring Plan*. Final Plan expected in September 2013.

Terrestrial

Upcoming meeting in Alaska in May 2012 will further develop the *Arctic Terrestrial Biodiversity Monitoring Plan*. Final Plan expected in January 2013.

Timeline

December 2011 Arctic Report Cards	September 2012 Arctic Freshwater Monitoring Plan ready for Board approval	February 2013 ABDS: initial version available	April/May 2013 MEMG: First analysis from MENS
April 2012 IPY events: data launch/SIN and the ASTI reports. Various Marine meetings	May 2012 FEMG and TEMG meetings to advance Plan development	January 2013 Arctic Terrestrial Monitoring Plan ready for Board approval	May 2013 ABDS: First edition of ABDS deliverable at Ministerial

(CFG)

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- The **Circumboreal Vegetation Map (CBVM)** project produced a background paper in July 2011. This subgroup of vegetation scientists within the Flora Group and the International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS) are mapping the vegetation of the boreal region in order to integrate conservation and management at a circumboreal scale. Upcoming meeting in Russia will further discuss CBVM
- **International Arctic Vegetation Database (IAVD)** concept paper published December 2011 describes a project to create a circumpolar data management classification system for the benefit of research, conservation, education and policy-making. The IAVD project is holding a workshop in May 2012 in Russia.
- Developing a **Red List for Arctic Vascular Plants**.
- Developing an online **Arctic Plant Portal**.
- Representation at IUCN special sub-session on Arctic conservation.

(CBird)

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- The **Seabird Information Network** has been updated with a population trends index.
- The **Circumpolar Seabird Monitoring Plan** is scheduled to be finalized in March 2012.
- A research proposal is in development to support a geolocator study of the thick-billed murre. This technology has provided dramatic new results in habitat use and can assist in international cooperation for conservation.
- A report concerning circumpolar glaucous gull declines is undergoing review and scheduled for completion in April 2012.
- Data is being compiled for a status and trends report of the black-legged kittewake in order to assess the species circumpolar conservation concerns.
- CBird contributed to the Arctic Report Cards.
- The **Circumpolar Murre Conservation Strategy** is undergoing review and will be ready in April 2012.



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Deliverables for Ministerial 2013

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A range of CAFF activities and projects will be presented to the Ministerial, however, the deliverables include:

Please note that CAFF deliverables will be finalized at CAFF Biennial meeting in 2013.

Deliverable #1 Arctic Biodiversity Assessment

The Arctic Biodiversity Assessment will deliver the full scientific report and suite of policy recommendations to the 2013 Ministerial.

Deliverable #2 Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program

The Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program will deliver the Arctic Freshwater Biodiversity Monitoring Plan and the Arctic Terrestrial Biodiversity Monitoring Plan to the 2013 Ministerial. These plans will coordinate long-term Arctic biodiversity monitoring and assemble existing data to establish a better understanding of the changes occurring in the Arctic environment.

Deliverable #3 CAFF Work Plan 2013-2015

CAFF will deliver its 2013-2015 Work Plan during the 2013 Ministerial.

Deliverable #4 CAFF projects and activities (TBA)



CAFF Board at their meeting in Salekhard, Russia, February 28-March 1, 2012. Photo: Trausti Baldursson

Administration and Meetings

Current Chair: Evgeny Syroechkovskiy, Russia. **2013- 2015 Charimanship:** Canada

Prominent Meetings and Presentations

November 2011 SBSSTA, CBD: Arctic biodiversity submission	February/ March 2012 CAFF Board meeting, Salekhard, Russia	April 2012 IPY Montreal: CBMP Expert Monitoring Group sessions and Arctic Species Trend Index report release	July 2012 Ramsar COP11	October 2012 CAFF Board Meeting Chukotka, Russia
	March 2012 SAO meeting		May 2012 Deputy Ministers meeting	October 2012 CBD COP11

Ongoing Communications Activities

- CAFF, ArcticData, Arctic Biodiversity websites
- ABDS data portal
- Report generation
- Media response and issues management
- Social media presence
- CAFF representation to Arctic Council communications contact group
- Side event organization for major conferences and meetings
- Internal communications
- Public inquiry response
- Project specific communications: including events, publications, media, outreach materials for ABA, the CBMP, and expert groups



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Collaboration

AMAP

- CBMP
- AMSA IIC
- SAON
- Arctic Report Card

SDWG

- AMSA IIC
- SAON

PAME

- AMSA IIC
- Arcticdata.is
- Ecosystem Based Management

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Attended SBSTTA side event in November 2011. The SBSTTA Working Group, under recommendation XV/7,

recommended the COP adopt a decision to welcome the CAFF report on Arctic Biodiversity and to welcome continued collaboration and utilization of CAFF monitoring and assessment information.

CAFF will provide an updated information paper on Arctic biodiversity to the CBD. CAFF will be represented at CBD COP11 in October 2012.

Ramsar

CAFF to finalize a Resolution of Cooperation with Ramsar at the COP11 in July 2012. CAFF will host a side event.

African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA)

CAFF to finalize Resolution of Cooperation with AEWA.

Ongoing partnerships

In addition, CAFF cooperates with many international organizations and conventions. Some current partners include:

- The Zoological Society of London
- The Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network (GEOBON)
- The Arctic Parliamentarians
- United Nations Environment Programme-GRID Arendal
- United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP WCMC)
- European Environment Agency (EEA)
- International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- World Wildlife Fund for Nature Arctic Program(WWF-Arctic)
- Association of Early Polar Career Scientists (APECS)
- Wetlands International