

Arctic Council Secretariat Communications Implementation Plan

This version reflects all changes requested at Yellowknife SAO meeting, March 2014

Contents

ONE-PAGE OVERVIEW.....	2
PURPOSE / OBJECTIVE.....	3
CURRENT STATUS.....	4
GROUP 1: Inhabitants of the Arctic.....	5
GROUP 2: Scientific Community	7
GROUP 3: Journalists	8
GROUP 4: The policy community and policymakers.....	11
GROUP 5: NGOs with an Arctic interest.....	13
GROUP 6: Business sector.....	15
GROUP 7: Internal audience	17

ONE-PAGE OVERVIEW

This document exists as a plan of the concrete actions that the Arctic Council Secretariat, in cooperation with the Chairmanship and other Arctic Council actors, proposes to carry out its role in the implementation of the *Communications Strategy for the Arctic Council* (CSAC) approved 15 May 2012. It focuses primarily on:

- building awareness in target groups;
- building relationships; and
- increasing the Arctic Council's presence on popular, widely-used communications platforms.

An assessment of ongoing activities indicates that many of the initiatives prescribed in the CSAC are already underway, and that a number of the key messages are coming across successfully.

This implementation plan is structured according to the seven target groups and primary channels described in the CSAC. It matches the most promising channels to each target group, and presents some possible concrete initiatives.

Target Group 1: Arctic inhabitants is focused on (1) developing tailored, traditional media products for the most popular channels in particular regions, (2) conducting in-person outreach via events and targeted meetings, and (3) expanding the Arctic Council's footprint on social media. It assumes the close involvement and advisement of the Permanent Participants (PPs).

Target Group 2: Scientific community is focused on identifying ways the Secretariat can support the work already being done by the Working Groups (WGs).

Target Group 3: Journalists is focused on (1) increasing the frequency with which news items appear on the website, (2) expanding the Arctic Council's footprint on social media and (3) engaging in face-to-face outreach at conferences and other events attended by target journalists.

Target Group 4: Policy community and policymakers is focused on (1) increasing the quantity of material available on the Arctic Council website, (2) reaching policymakers through media and (3) targeted outreach.

Target Group 5: NGOs with Arctic interests is focused on (1) increasing the frequency with which news items appear on the website, (2) expanding the Arctic Council's footprint on social media, and (3) reaching NGOs through media.

Target Group 6: Business sector is focused on (1) reaching the business community through media, and (2) targeted attendance at industry-focused conferences and events.

Target Group 7: Internal audiences is focused on (1) expanding the use of the C&O Group as a forum for information sharing, (2) developing a monthly internal newsletter, and (3) further supporting the use of the Arctic Council website as a "hub" for internal communications and collaboration.

PURPOSE / OBJECTIVE

This document proposes concrete steps for the implementation of the *Communication Strategy for the Arctic Council* (CSAC) approved on 15 May 2012 at the Deputy Ministerial Meeting in Stockholm, Sweden. It is **focused on activities that are within the scope of the Arctic Council Secretariat**, but identifies important cooperation with Working Groups (WGs), Permanent Participants (PPs), States and Task Forces (TFs) for many activities. Although it does not prescribe communications activities for the WGs, PPs, TFs or States, the Secretariat can offer input on the communications work of the WGs, PPs, TFs or States, as desired.

Section 6 of the CSAC, which deals with *Roles & Responsibilities*, clearly states that the Arctic Council Secretariat has “a key role in implementing the communication strategy”, which is “to plan, implement and coordinate external communication measures carried out within the Arctic Council” as well as to work on “developing internal communication”. This work, however, is to be conducted “under the supervision of the Chairmanship.” Indeed, “the Chairmanship has overall responsibility for the implementation of the communication strategy” and all measures proposed in this implementation plan would at all times be conducted with the Chairmanship’s supervision and cooperation.

This implementation plan is segmented according to the seven target audiences identified in the CSAC. Each section explores one target group, identifies the most important channels for reaching that segment, and proposes some concrete initiatives using those channels.

Recognizing that resources for communications efforts are limited, and that not all initiatives described below can be undertaken with the resources currently available, the Arctic Council Secretariat will focus in particular on:

- further increasing the awareness among target groups of information / materials about the Arctic Council, its activities and its research available on the website arctic-council.org and, in many cases, on the websites of the Working Groups;
- building relationships with key individuals outside the Arctic Council who work on Arctic-related matters; and
- increasing the presence of the Arctic Council in other channels, including selected social media platforms.

Please note that the implementation plan which follows is a **proposal**. The Arctic Council Secretariat will operate in accordance with initiatives that are endorsed by Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs) and under the guidance of the Chairmanship.

The **role of States, WGs, TFs and PPs** in the proposed initiatives listed in this plan includes making efforts to suggest and contribute regular and frequent content (raw or finished) covering their Arctic Council-related activities for the Arctic Council Secretariat to shepherd towards publication

CURRENT STATUS

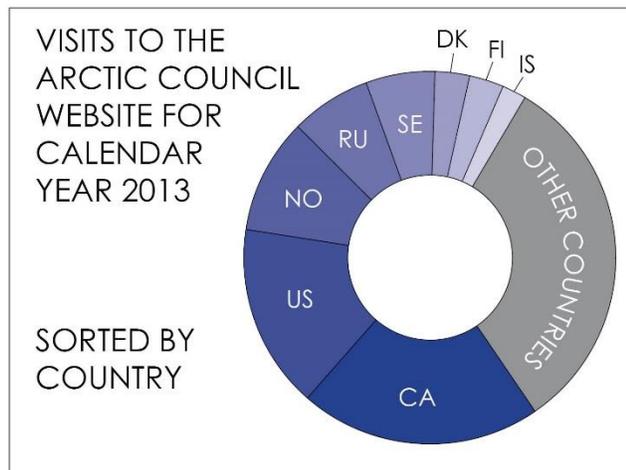
The current communications activities of the Secretariat, working in close partnership with the Chairmanship, include:

- Producing regular written and photographic content for arctic-council.org
- Adding materials from the Chairmanship, WGs, PPs and TFs to arctic-council.org as instructed
- Updating and improving the usability and appeal of arctic-council.org
- Monitoring Arctic Council mentions in traditional and social media
- Monitoring traffic to arctic-council.org
- Drafting articles for other outlets, e.g. the *Arctic Herald*
- Preparing and distributing communications products for SAO meetings and other occasions
- Providing support to the @saochair Twitter account
- Building contacts with analysts, academics and journalists
- Developing internal communications protocols and practices

It is important to note that, based on ongoing monitoring, it appears that some of the key messages found in section 4 of the CSAC are already being successfully communicated. In particular, the following two messages have been conveyed in many media mentions:

“The Arctic Council is the most prominent, credible and relevant international forum for Arctic issues.”

“The Arctic Council promotes sustainable development for the benefit of Arctic inhabitants and communities.”



GROUP 1: Inhabitants of the Arctic

Outreach to Arctic inhabitants will be most successful if it is based upon an understanding of the unique ways in which people in Arctic communities seek out and consume information. This, of course, will be very different from community to community, requiring distinct initiatives for different regions. In addition, it is critical to identify what kinds of information are of **actual value and interest** to residents of the North. Interviews and conversations with the PPs, as well as with long-time Arctic inhabitants, are underway and will inform any initiatives.

From the CSAC: “Member State publics, including indigenous peoples, and people who live in, or in close proximity to the Arctic geographical area, are important target groups and they should know about the Arctic Council’s work so as to better inform policies and strategies they develop for their communities.”

PRIORITY 1. Media

Various forms of traditional media are, in many cases, likely to be the most effective ways of reaching Arctic residents. In particular, in rural areas or in portions of the Arctic where web or mobile communications can be expensive, unreliable, or unavailable altogether, traditional media channels will be enormously important. To identify the most important channels for different regions, ongoing conversations with local residents and media representatives are crucial. In many Arctic communities, radio may be the most important communications channel, while in others it might be local newspapers.

Establishing personal relationships with local media representatives around the circumpolar north will be key in reaching out to Arctic communities. In many communities, radio, television and local newspapers are integral parts of the fabric of the communities themselves, and having positive relationships with journalists, producers and editors will be valuable in the long run. In this sense, Arctic communities may be highly specialized and unique audiences, requiring unique styles and formats of content.

Because internet and/or mobile infrastructure can be limited in the Arctic, it would be worthwhile to focus on working with northern media partners to develop low-bandwidth media options. These might include

- radio shows with transcripts, such as those produced by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and others,
- posters covering individual projects, programs or initiatives of the Arctic Council, or
- downloadable one-page infographics and educational materials laying out the work and structure of the Arctic Council.

Again, planning content that is tailored to Arctic communities should obviously be done in close consultation with Arctic inhabitants.

PRIORITY 2. In-person outreach

The outreach events already being undertaken under the Canadian Chairmanship provide an excellent model for face-to-face outreach in northern communities. First impressions from community-outreach events hosted in association with SAO meetings suggest that they are fun and engaging for the community as well as for the Arctic Council representatives. These should be continued, and it may be sensible to consider expanding them, wherever possible, to include similar events associated with WG meetings. Clearly, doing so would put an additional organizational burden on the WGs, so any such initiative would be driven by the WGs themselves.

Second, a great deal of WG research involves being physically present in Arctic communities during the research and stakeholder-consultation phases. Communications staff might usefully accompany researchers on occasion both to chronicle the process and to meet community representatives.

Finally, it may be worthwhile to explore not just scientific conferences, but major community events and celebrations in the Arctic, to see whether doing outreach events there that are integrated with the other community activities is possible and desirable. For instance, SDWG might develop an interesting program associated with the celebrations surrounding the opening or close of the Iditarod in Alaska. Perhaps CAFF could contribute to the annual Gullfest, a birding festival in the Norwegian Arctic. Or perhaps a representative of AMAP's Human Health group could take part in a community conference on social and health issues in Nunavut. Creative opportunities for connecting with northern communities in this way abound. The Communications & Outreach contact group could help to identify such opportunities.

PRIORITY 3. Website and social media

The Arctic Council website serves as the main communication channel for the Arctic Council, and provides timely information to any audience, including Arctic inhabitants. But to connect with a greater number of Arctic inhabitants, the Arctic Council must also have a presence on social media platforms that are popular among northerners (in particular, northern youth). In the community of Igloolik, for example, Facebook has been one of the most fundamental communications channels for the community, prior to the availability of mobile service. In Arctic Bay, Canada, where mobile-phone service is unavailable but where satellite internet connection is relatively stable and fast, Facebook has arisen as the town's bulletin board and messaging system.

As indicated above, ensuring an Arctic Council-branded presence on social media sites is essential to generating recognition of the Arctic Council itself.

GROUP 2: Scientific Community

Outreach to the scientific community is primarily done via the Arctic Council Working Groups, because of their substantial and long-standing networks in, and knowledge of, that community. Nevertheless, there are some ways in which the Arctic Council Secretariat could assist the Working Groups, if and when desired.

From the CSAC: “Researchers within the areas of environment, climate, energy, transport and indigenous peoples, etc. are important target groups as they contribute to local, regional and global awareness and understanding of the changing Arctic region.”

The Arctic Council Secretariat could:

- Highlight content from the Working Groups’ websites on arctic-council.org;
- Help to identify optimal conferences for Working Groups to attend / present;
- Help to identify science writers and or information designers to help with reports;
- Identify and connect to science journalists;
- Channel requests from media for presentations and quotes on Arctic science issues;
- Provide advice on social media use.

GROUP 3: Journalists

Existing efforts are already underway to communicate the Arctic Council's ongoing activities and core messages to journalists. Press releases associated with SAO and Ministerial Meetings, as well as AC consensus statements on key issues such as climate change and mercury, are distributed to a large database of media contacts from all around the Arctic (and the globe). While it is not possible to measure what percentage of such send-

outs are ultimately read using the Arctic Council Secretariat's current tools, it is clear that such press releases are indeed syndicated and/or cited in major national and international news outlets.

There are several measures that the Arctic Council Secretariat could lead to build upon this existing work.

From the CSAC: "Journalists are important both as a channel and as a target group. [...] The Arctic Council should develop its media relations and establish ongoing contact with journalists. [...] Information on arctic-council.org targeting journalists with news stories, current issues and projects, messages, contact details, information about the Arctic Council and FAQs should be prioritised. [...] The Chair is responsible for information to the media, e.g. press releases, press conferences, interviews, speeches, articles, etc."

PRIORITY 1. Website

The Arctic Council homepage has been and remains today the main communication channel for the Arctic Council. It is an established online presence with a recognizable name and appearance. Monthly user statistics also show that the visits to the website are steadily increasing. The website is a portal not only for news articles but also for other materials that are valuable to journalists.

Journalists working on deadline and looking for fresh information are unlikely to take a great deal of time digging through the Arctic Council document archive, which means that the news items that appear on the homepage are extremely important. Identifying ways to speed the process of drafting and approving articles for the website would positively impact the news value of the content on the homepage, making it more appealing as a resource for journalists.

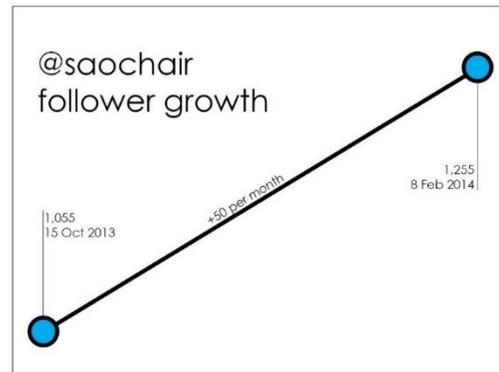
The website also allows for flexible display of different additional content that might be of interest and use to journalists, including news feeds, calendars, image galleries, and social media feeds. Keeping the public events calendar up-to-date would help journalists to maintain an overview of past and upcoming meetings and activities.

PRIORITY 2. Social media

Twitter is an excellent channel available for reaching journalists. The Arctic Council is active on Twitter already, with the @saochair account having just under 1,300 followers (as of 8 Feb 2014) and steady follower growth. The success of the @saochair account is one clear indicator of the value of this particular platform.

Activating the @ArcticCouncil account, in addition to the @saochair account and others (@AMAP_monitoring, @CAFF_Secretariat, @SDWG_Chair, @aleut_aia, etc.) would provide one central and clearly-branded account for Twitter users to follow to stay updated on the Arctic Council's activities. In addition, it would help the Council to reach out to a broader spectrum of individuals who may have heard of the Arctic Council, but who are not yet familiar enough with the Council to recognize "@saochair" as the Council's spokesperson.

The following suggested "ground rules" could help to ensure that the @ArcticCouncil account is clear to manage and used appropriately.



- All messages would be reviewed and approved through the same channels as content for the Arctic Council website.
- The account could be used to direct readers to approved materials, approved reports, approved notes to highlight upcoming and past activities, etc.
- The account could re-publish approved tweets from other Arctic Council-related accounts.
- The account could direct readers to more information on the activities of Arctic Council entities that do not already have their own accounts.
- Login information could be shared between the Chairmanship and the Secretariat, with the Secretariat performing the day-to-day management. This would ensure continuity from Chairmanship to Chairmanship, and it would take advantage of existing resources within the Secretariat for data collection and monitoring (e.g., subscription services such as "Mention" and "TweetArchivist").

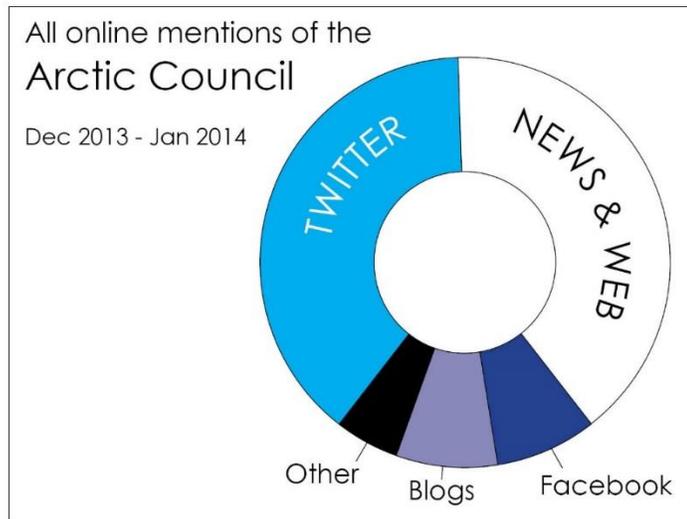
PRIORITY 3. Conference outreach

There are numerous opportunities each year to reach selected groups of journalists that the Arctic Council bodies would naturally wish to draw on, and Arctic Council representatives, such as the Chair of the Senior Arctic Officials, SAOs and PP Heads, should be present at important conferences, either as presenters or as attendees, in order to facilitate effective face-to-face networking.

A list of target conferences could be prepared by the Secretariat in cooperation with the Chairmanship.

PRIORITY 4: Other efforts

The Secretariat regularly receives requests from the media for individuals to comment on specific issues that are relevant to the Arctic Council. Such requests often have a deadline of 24 hours. As things currently stand, it is very challenging to deliver an approved individual to speak within such a short time frame. As a result, the Arctic Council loses important opportunities for media coverage. To remedy this issue, the Arctic Council Secretariat – in cooperation with the Chairmanship, PPs and WGs – should develop an approved list of speakers on the various issues that are of interest to the Arctic Council. These individuals must be approved to speak on particular issues, and must agree to be readily available to journalists if possible. Such an initiative would allow the Arctic Council Secretariat to better-serve journalists, and help ensure that there is “referral to the Arctic Council...in discussions and in connection with decisions affecting the Arctic region, so that this is seen in the media and/or in material informing decisions.” (CSAC, Section 2)



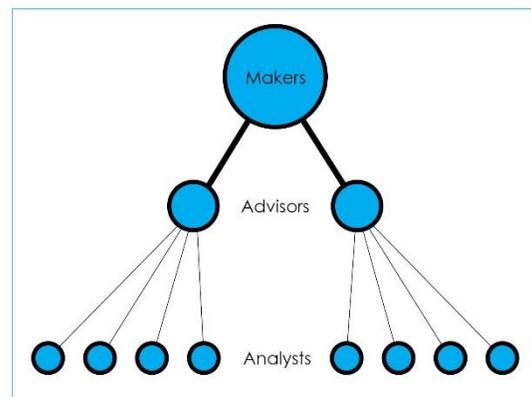
GROUP 4: The policy community and policymakers

Communication to policymakers is inherent to the Arctic Council, and the Senior Arctic Officials as well as other Arctic Council representatives channel information on an ongoing basis to their national governments.

Extra-governmental policy analysts and advisors, such as those housed at prominent think tanks (e.g. the Brookings Institution, the Gordon Foundation, the Russian International Affairs Council, the Fridtjof Nansen Institute, Chatham House, the Arctic Centre, CDFAI) are a second essential component of the “policy community”. Many such policy analysts are well-connected to policymakers. Their analysis and commentary often helps to shape policy discussions.

Establishing positive relationships with these policy analysts and advisors in different areas of Arctic policy will be important to the successful implementation of the CSAC. Ensuring they have access to information about how the Arctic Council works, what it does, and which issues are short- and long-term priorities will also help to ensure that Arctic Council messages are conveyed effectively.

From the CSAC: «Political decision-makers who may take decisions that affect developments in the Arctic region are an important target group. They should be aware of the Arctic Council and the processes taking place in the Arctic region.»



PRIORITY 1. Website

The news items and documents housed on arctic-council.org are an excellent information resource for interested policy analysts and advisors. The value of that resource grows as materials from SAO and Ministerial Meetings, as well as from WGs, Expert Groups, and TFs are added to the website.

To maximize the effectiveness of this primary communication channel in reaching policy analysts and advisors, timely information on the Arctic Council’s ongoing activities should be made available. To ensure this, the Arctic Council Secretariat is dependent upon ongoing collaboration with the Arctic Council States, PPs, WGs, TFs and other subsidiary bodies. Plans for new projects and initiatives should incorporate ideas for website/online communications. The Arctic Council Secretariat can assist by suggesting ideas for website content, as well by drafting articles. A simple style guide for website articles is also available as a manual for planning content.

PRIORITY 2. Through media

Policy analysts and advisors rely significantly on open-source information in their work. Thus a sort of “virtuous circle” can be established by coordinated outreach to both policy analysts/advisors and journalists. Such coordinated outreach could include broader distribution of press releases on major assessments/reports, where appropriate. It could also include broader notification of launch events for major products, and more extensive coverage of the Arctic Council’s work in the press releases associated with SAO meetings.

PRIORITY 3. Outreach

Influential policy analysts/advisors, major think tanks, and other institutions could be identified according to how frequently they are cited as experts on the Arctic Council and on Arctic policy more generally. Connections could be made and maintained with these individuals in order to learn about their research interests and upcoming work, including by inviting them to approach the Secretariat for help with identifying the public documents that could be useful in their research, or in tracking down factual information about the Arctic Council, which is not always an easy task for an outside researcher. The aim is to establish good working relations beneficial to both parties.

This sort of personal outreach serves multiple purposes. First, it communicates to individual commentators that their work is noticed, and that there is interest in it. Second, it enables such analysts and advisors to write with a better understanding of the Arctic Council. Third, it encourages them to think of the Arctic Council as they write about Arctic issues in general – in particular, in those areas where they have not yet recognized the Arctic Council’s influence and engagement.

PRIORITY 4. Other initiatives

An external newsletter to subscribers (either a hand-picked group, or an open subscribership) offering regular updates of new materials that have been made publicly available, as well as announcements of upcoming meetings, outreach events, and so forth, would help to ensure that the Arctic Council remains top-of-mind for analysts. Similarly, approved contributions to well-established Arctic-focused outlets could help to achieve this goal.

Many young policy analysts and advisors are present on social media, and use LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter as part of their toolkit for research and news-monitoring. Establishing profiles on these sites that are Arctic Council-branded (under the Arctic Council name and using the Arctic Council logo) would help the Arctic Council to stay visible and prominent to this important target group. Examples of this might include an official Arctic Council page or profile on LinkedIn, Facebook, or Twitter. These could serve as additional channels to distribute approved content from the Arctic Council website, or from existing profiles that are related to the Arctic Council but not specifically branded with the “Arctic Council” name.

It is important to place Arctic Council representatives, such as the Chair of the Senior Arctic Officials, SAOs and PP Heads, as speakers at key Arctic-related conferences.

GROUP 5: NGOs with an Arctic interest

When it comes to NGOs with an Arctic interest, some of the most prominent and widely-recognized (in particular, IASC, IASSA, WWF) are already integrated into the Arctic Council structure as observers. Outside this select group, environmental NGOs in particular are also aware of the Arctic Council as an influential organization

From the CSAC: “Both nationally and internationally leading and relevant NGOs, such as the major environment associations, are important target groups as they play a significant role in the debate on developments in the Arctic environment.”

in Arctic issues, citing it as an important research organization and a forum for international policy discussions.

Some of these organizations have even duplicated information from arctic-council.org on their own websites, with landing pages devoted to the Arctic Council. NGOs from outside the environmental sphere, scientific organizations and non-advocacy institutions have also demonstrated their strong interest in the Arctic Council. This being said, room remains to expand the reference to, and recognition of, the Arctic Council in these organizations’ writings on the Arctic.

PRIORITY 1. Website

Analysts from both advocacy and non-advocacy NGOs are likely to draw on the news items and documents housed on arctic-council.org, and look for new materials from SAO / Ministerial Meetings, as well as from WGs, Expert Groups, and TFs as they are added to the website.

NGOs are also likely to have a strong interest in following developments at the Arctic Council in real time. Thus, to serve this important target group, the Arctic Council Secretariat should work with the Chairmanship to ensure that information on the Arctic Council’s activities becomes available with greater frequency on the website. To do this, the Arctic Council Secretariat is dependent upon receiving information from the States, PPs, WGs and other subsidiary bodies.

Plans for new projects and initiatives should incorporate ideas for website/online communications. The Arctic Council Secretariat can assist by suggesting ideas for website content and/or by drafting articles.

PRIORITY 2. Social media

Many NGOs rely on social media as an important part of their communications toolkit. An Arctic Council-branded presence on the most widely-used social-media platforms would help to inform audiences about the Arctic Council’s work. It would also provide a good way to counteract incorrect messages that might be spread via social media.

An “Arctic Council” account, in addition to the @saochair account and others (@AMAP_monitoring, @CAFF_Secretariat, @SDWG_Chair, @aleut_aia, etc.) would provide a clear entry-point for users who are

interested in Arctic issues, and who have heard of the Arctic Council, but who require additional information.

PRIORITY 3. Other media

As with policy analysts/advisors, NGOs both contribute to and learn from open-source information and analysis on the Arctic. Accordingly, efforts to increase references to the Arctic Council in significant media outlets (see section “Group 3: Journalists”) is likely to help establish a “virtuous circle”; more mentions in the media will mean more recognition by NGOs, and vice-versa.

GROUP 6: Business sector

The Arctic Council's outreach to the business sector is already ongoing, due to initiatives such as the Arctic Economic Council (AEC). The announcement of the AEC in association with the Northern Lights 2014 conference was a success; it demonstrated that there is clearly a broad base of interest and enthusiasm for this initiative.

From the CSAC: "The part of the business sector that has an interest in the Arctic region is an important target group. This applies primarily to the resource development, energy, environment, transport and tourism sectors. They should be made aware of the responsibilities that come from being active in the Arctic."

Building on the success of the launch of the AEC and the press work done around that initiative, there are a couple of ways in which the Arctic Council Secretariat could assist with outreach to the business community.

PRIORITY 1. Media

As mentioned, it was clear after the announcement of the AEC that there is an appetite for news about private-sector engagement in the Arctic. The Secretariat could reach out to those journalists who covered the launch of the AEC and offer assistance in connecting them with the appropriate individuals for further interviews.

These individuals are also likely to be interested in similar Arctic Council work. Informal updates on such work by the TFCBF, SDWG, PAME and others could be collected from the respective entities, consolidated by the Secretariat, and delivered informally as an FYI. This would encourage these individuals to continue reporting on the Arctic Council's engagement with the private sector regularly, without waiting only for major conferences or SAO / Ministerial Meetings.

Both of the initiatives above would lead to more frequent mentions in prominent media outlets of the Arctic Council's work towards sustainable economic development in the Arctic. This will be an important way to spread recognition of the Arctic Council as "the most prominent, credible and relevant international forum for Arctic issues" associated with business.

PRIORITY 2. Conferences and events

Arctic Council state representatives as well as Working Group and Task Force representatives typically attend numerous conferences, both in the context of their Arctic Council work and in other roles. Adding further conferences to this list could unduly increase both the financial and time burden on these representatives. However, business-related conferences could be prioritized and targeted (e.g., the Arctic Shipping Forum, the Arctic Oil & Gas Conference, and many others). This would increase general recognition within this important target audience of the Arctic Council as an entity looking to engage with

the private sector. It would also increase the Arctic Council's presence and "footprint" at such meetings would also afford a crucial opportunity to make face-to-face contacts with colleagues from the private sector.

In addition, outreach to the business community could go hand-in-hand with outreach to Arctic inhabitants described in *Group 4: Inhabitants of the Arctic*. Insofar as outreach to local small and medium enterprises is an important focus, these outreach events in northern communities could – and should – be expanded to include meet-&-greet with local business owners and representatives.

GROUP 7: Internal audience

The CSAC indicates that the Arctic Council's communications "is dependent on efficient and regular information exchange between the Council's various actors" (CSAC, Section 6). The steady pressure of administrative and project work, however, can make this task difficult.

Improving both the efficiency and the regularity of information exchange among Arctic Council actors will take time, because it will involve the spreading of new practices. The Arctic Council Secretariat can lead by prioritizing regular (e.g. monthly) communications-focused contacts with each Arctic Council WG, PP, and State. The Secretariat can take responsibility for aggregating that information and providing a monthly "digest" to all members of the Communications and Outreach Group. This would be accomplished via the internal newsletter envisioned in the CSAC.

PRIORITY 1. Communications & Outreach Group

The Communications and Outreach Group is used as a valuable "forum" for several purposes:

- gathering feedback and input on materials of concern to the Arctic Council as a whole;
- briefings on materials associated with SAO meetings; and
- sharing information about ongoing and upcoming communications efforts and events.

Thus far, the Communications & Outreach Group has been focused on the first two bullet points from the above list (which occur rarely), and less on the third bullet. Increasing the focus on the group's function as an information-sharing entity would go a long way to making it a more active forum. This could be accomplished primarily through (1) the institution of regular one-to-one overview calls between the Secretariat and appropriate representatives from the States, PPs, WGs and TFs, and (2) the production of the monthly internal newsletter described below.

PRIORITY 2. Internal Newsletter

The Arctic Council Secretariat could work with the Chairmanship and the Communications & Outreach Group to create and distribute an internal newsletter with a structure built on standing sections and a consistent format. The Secretariat could seek and aggregate voluntary submissions of information for each internal newsletter from the States, PPs, WGs and TFs through a monthly general message sent to the Communications & Outreach Group representatives. The Secretariat could also draw on the two-pagers that are released following each Working Group or Task Force meeting. The newsletter could then be distributed to C&O Group representatives.

The internal newsletter could include such sections as:

- upcoming or recently-past communications initiatives (e.g., media products, conferences);
- media mentions (statistics and particular mentions of note);

- recent articles;
- statistics on web traffic;
- social media statistics; and/or
- quick surveys of C&O Group members

PRIORITY 3. Website

The Arctic Council website serves two very different audiences: (1) the general public, who seek information on what the Arctic Council is and what it does; and (2) the members of the Arctic Council, who use the website to access both public and password-protected documents and information.

Over the years, as the Arctic Council activity level has increased and the number of subsidiary bodies has grown, the need has arisen for several password-protected areas on the website. This function of the website should continue to be developed in order to provide a secure, organized, efficient and user-friendly solution for sharing working documents. In addition to providing access to SAO Meeting and Ministerial Meeting documents, the website should also provide password areas for the sharing of materials of the WGs, Expert Groups, TFs, and Communications Group.