

## **Arctic Council Archiving project**

Submitted to the SAO meeting in Yellowknife, 26-27 March 2014

Arctic Council Secretariat – Library and Archives Canada

### Outline

The objective of the **Arctic Council Archiving project** is to enhance the institutional memory of, and thereby strengthen the Arctic Council. It is a three-part initiative:

- 1) The first part of this project is being conducted by the Arctic Council Secretariat in collaboration with the University of Tromsø. This aims to make previous and future Arctic Council official reports available as Open Access documents.
- 2) The second part of this initiative aims at making available to the public relevant Arctic Council records that might be of interest to the public such as decisions, meeting reports and other material from all meetings of Ministers, Senior Arctic Officials and Working Groups, statements from meetings at the political level and Records of Decisions from meetings. This part is closely linked to part 3, more particularly to the adoption of a disclosure policy.
- 3) The third part of this project will complement the two others by putting in place a comprehensive and consistent system to manage Arctic Council information – including unpublished reports; official correspondence (including email) to and from the Arctic Council, meeting, operational and administrative records; and data – from the moment of creation until they are either destroyed or transferred to the archives according to mutually agreed policies and procedures. This is where Library and Archives Canada advice will be the most critical as this part is the cornerstone for the preservation of future archives.

As a result of this project, Senior Arctic Officials and other stakeholders will have access to relevant, reliable, authoritative and timely information that supports, informs and documents their decision-making activities and facilitates collaboration between all members and participants. This is especially important for a multi-lateral forum where work is carried out collaboratively across the circumpolar region. An effective records management system must be based in clear policies and guidelines that reflect a common understanding and consensus among all interested parties (Members, Permanent Participants, Working Groups, Task Forces, etc.). Therefore, the policies, guidelines, roles and responsibilities that will frame the Arctic Council Secretariat's records management system will need to be developed collaboratively.

### Roles and Responsibilities

- **Senior Arctic Officials:** Endorsement and budgetary allocation from Arctic Council Secretariat operational budget.
- **Arctic Council Secretariat:** Project Management, financial support and direct implementation.
- **Library and Archives Canada:** Expert advice.
- **Member States, Permanent Participants and Working Groups:** Commitment to maintain Arctic Council archives over the long-term.

## Proposed Action Plan

### Phase 1: Planning (October 2013 – April 2014)

- Develop a detailed project plan based on assessment of Arctic Council records management and archival needs.
- Detailed plan to be circulated to SAOs/PPs intersessionally.

### Phase 2: Implementation (April – December 2014)

- Develop and adopt a records management system, policy and procedures for Arctic Council records.
- Prepare a disclosure policy for approval by Senior Arctic Officials and Permanent Participants at the Winter 2015 SAO Meeting.

### Phase 3: Long-term sustainability (January – March 2015, and ongoing).

- Training and engagement of staff and stakeholders
- Systems maintenance and update.