

Arctic Council SAO Meeting Yellowknife, Canada 22-23 October 2014

Final Draft Report

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1. Introduction

1.1 Traditional Welcome

A traditional welcome and an opening prayer was offered by Philip Liske, an Elder from the Yellowknives Dene First Nation.

1.2 Approval of Agenda

Agenda item 8.2 (Video Presentation by the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity) was moved after agenda item 6.3.1 (The Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA): Follow-up, Implementation Plan, the ABA Congress).

Agenda item 4 (U.S. Arctic Council Chairmanship Program) was moved to the start of day two.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: The agenda, as amended, was approved.

2. Update from the Chair of the Senior Arctic Officials

The Chair of the Senior Arctic Officials (SAOC) thanked the people of Yellowknife and the Yellowknives Dene First Nation for hosting Senior Arctic Officials. He also welcomed several new Heads of Delegation to their first SAO meeting. He noted the unique and indispensable role of Permanent Participants in the work of the Arctic Council and expressed his appreciation to those who attended the workshop on enhancing Permanent Participant capacity, which had taken place immediately prior to the meeting. The SAOC also commented on the breadth of work conducted by the Arctic Council's working groups and task forces, as well as the importance of showing concrete outcomes and deliverables at the 2015 Ministerial Meeting. The Ministerial Meeting will be held April 24-25, 2015 in Iqaluit, Nunavut, Canada. It will be preceded by a showcase event in Ottawa on April 23 to highlight the results achieved over the course of the Canadian chairmanship.

In addition, the Chair of the Senior Arctic Officials said that he was pleased to have attended the founding meeting of the Arctic Economic Council at the beginning of September, as well as a conference in Washington, D.C., hosted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI). Canada is working with the United States to facilitate a smooth transition to the U.S. chairmanship.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: None.

3. Chairmanship-led Initiatives

3.1 Arctic Council Archiving Project

The Director of the Arctic Council Secretariat (ACS) and a representative from Library and Archives Canada (LAC) provided an update on the Arctic Council archiving project. There are several components to this initiative, including:

- Making past reports and publications more easily accessible in an Open Access repository that is housed and maintained by the ACS;
- Creating clear and consistent records management policies, procedures and tools for records held by the ACS;
- Procuring and implementing a records management system for records held by the ACS; and
- Identifying and digitizing records from early chairmanships, in collaboration with the national archives of Arctic Council Member States and Permanent Participants

The first component is supported by the Government of Norway, with expert advice from the University of Tromsø. LAC is providing expert advice and in-kind support on the other components of this initiative.

At the meeting, the Director of the ACS formally launched the Open Access archive. The archive can be accessed via the Arctic Council website: <https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/>

The representative from LAC provided an update on the other components of the initiative. She noted that over the summer, a *Policy on Records Management for the Arctic Council Secretariat* and *Guidelines for the Disposition of Records of the Arctic Council Secretariat* were approved. This was followed by the development of three additional documents: *Guidelines on the Release of Records held by the Arctic Council Secretariat*, *Guidelines on Access to Records held by the Arctic Council Secretariat* and an Integrated Records Management Tool. Together, these documents will provide the framework for the Secretariat's records management system.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: Several state and Permanent Participant delegations welcomed the work, and expressed the importance of this work for developing the Arctic Council's institutional memory and for raising the visibility of the Arctic Council.

During his summary, the Chair of SAOs noted that the *Guidelines on the Release of Records held by the Arctic Council Secretariat* and the *Guidelines on Access to Arctic Council Records* were approved at the Executive Meeting. The deadline for comments on the excerpt of the *Integrated Records Management Tool for ACS Documents*, presented for information, was extended to November 15, 2014.

The Open Access repository was noted as an important initiative. The SAOs directed that all working groups will work with the ACS to store their reports in the Open Access repository.

3.2 Promoting Traditional Ways of Life

In May, SAOs and PP HoDs were asked to submit examples of best practices on promoting traditional ways of life, for use in a compendium. Canada's Senior Arctic Official reminded SAOs and PP HoDs of this request and thanked those who had already submitted. She urged others to do so promptly.

Canada's Senior Arctic Official also informed delegates that Canada was working towards producing a video which will support the advocacy component of this initiative. The initiative will be profiled at the showcase event in Ottawa, immediately prior to the Iqaluit Ministerial meeting.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: States and PPs that had not yet submitted their data were urged to do so. During the discussion, several Permanent Participant delegations provided examples of their own best practices verbally, and emphasized the importance of promoting traditional ways of life.

4. U.S: Arctic Council Chairmanship Program

On the second day of the meeting, the Senior Arctic Official for United States provided an overview of preparations for the U.S. chairmanship (2015-2017). The presentation covered:

- the key individuals of the US Arctic Council Chairmanship structure;
- the overarching goals of the Chairmanship program;
- The thematic areas of focus, with specific initiatives under each thematic area;
- The public outreach initiatives planned for the US Chairmanship;
- Other planned activities related to the Chairmanship; and
- Initiatives to strengthen the Arctic Council itself.

The U.S. chairmanship brand is: "One Arctic: Shared Opportunities, Challenges and Responsibilities." The three proposed organizational thematic areas are: Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change in the Arctic; Stewardship of the Arctic Ocean; and Improving Economic and Living Conditions.

The US SAO emphasized that the work presented under each thematic area is intended to be housed under the existing Working Groups, to reduce the number of Task Forces.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: No decision was requested on this item. During the discussion, many delegations noted the high ambition of the program and reacted positively to details presented. The United States and the Chairmanship both offered to facilitate the collection of input from all delegations during the weeks ahead.

5. Task Forces

5.1 The Task Force for Action on Black Carbon and Methane

Canada's Head of Delegation to the Task Force for Action on Black Carbon and Methane presented on behalf of the co-chairs. Citing contributions from all States, most PPs, ACAP, AMAP and some accredited Observers, she said the Task Force is at the end of its work towards achieving concrete results in the Arctic. The framework document is taking shape, though issues remain for discussion at the next meeting and intersessionally. Further work will be presented at the March SAO meeting, and the Task Force is in the process of considering how it may best contribute to the showcase event in Ottawa immediately prior to the Ministerial meeting in Iqaluit.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: No decision was requested on this item. During the discussion, various delegations encouraged the TFBCM to:

- invite accredited Observers to join in implementing the framework document;
- work towards a politically binding agreement that could figure prominently in the upcoming Iqaluit Declaration; and
- continue pursuing follow-up mechanisms for the future.

5.2 The Task Force to Facilitate the Creation of a Circumpolar Business Forum

On behalf of the Task Force Chair, Canada's Senior Arctic Official provided a brief update on the founding meeting of the Arctic Economic Council, which was held September 2-3 in Iqaluit, Canada. She reviewed the outcomes of the meeting, including the themes which emerged on encouraging strong market connections and encouraging public-private partnerships for infrastructure investment. The AEC Executive Committee's next meeting will be held on the margins of the Arctic Circle conference, followed by a meeting of the full Arctic Economic Council on the margins of the upcoming showcase event in Ottawa.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: No decision was requested on this item. During the discussion, delegations expressed strong support for the Arctic Economic Council and for the business expertise that it could offer to the Arctic Council. The Chair of the SAOs noted that this is one of the flagship initiatives for delivery at the 2015 Ministerial meeting.

5.3 The Task Force for Enhancing Scientific Cooperation in the Arctic

The Senior Arctic Official for the Russian Federation presented on behalf of the Task Force co-chairs. He provided an update on the status of work. A next meeting may take place in late February in Oslo, Norway. Norway, Russia and the United States will provide a draft agreement to be circulated to the task force members six weeks prior to the meeting.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: No decision was requested on this item. There was no consensus on the type of arrangement – MoU or a legally binding agreement – that would be delivered by this Task Force. The SAOC reminded delegates of the wording in the Kiruna SAO report to Ministers and asked for clarity from the Task Force on what type of product would be delivered at the Iqaluit Ministerial Meeting. Delegates expressed some concern about the relatively short timeline between February and the Ministerial, as well as different views on the extent to which traditional and local knowledge should be included in the work of the Task Force.

5.4 The Task Force on Arctic Marine Oil Pollution Prevention

The Senior Arctic Official for the Russian Federation presented on behalf of the Task Force co-chairs. He provided an update on the status of work, noting that the Task Force has agreed to an arrangement which is not legally binding, and that much of the text has already been successfully negotiated.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: No decision was requested on this item. During the discussion, delegates mentioned:

- some interest in seeing a legally-binding agreement arise eventually;
- the importance of this product in terms of public diplomacy; and
- the value of avoiding duplication of ongoing work elsewhere.

In his summary, the SAOC noted the progress that has been made and welcomed steps towards a robust action plan.

6. Working Groups

6.1 Arctic Contaminants Action Programme (ACAP)

The Vice-Chair of ACAP presented on behalf of the Working Group.

6.1.1 Reduction of Black Carbon

The report and pamphlet, “Reduction of Black Carbon Emissions from Residential Wood Combustion in the Arctic – Black Carbon Inventory, Abatement Instruments and Measures” were presented for SAO approval.

Citing the priority that ACAP has placed on black carbon in recent years, the ACAP Vice-Chair pointed out that this is one of several projects focusing on the issue. She reviewed the data that have motivated the studies, noting an increase of wood consumption across Arctic Council States and the increasing availability of national black carbon inventories. She then reviewed the most central data from the report, and presented the recommendations for both national and pan-Arctic action, noting that there is still potential to reduce black carbon emissions further with the aid of new technologies and practices. The recommendations can be found in

the ACAP presentation from the SAO meeting, and the report and its associated pamphlet can/will be made available prior to the ministerial both in hard copy and electronically.

The ACAP Vice-Chair also cited the possibility of future collaboration with PAME to work on emissions from ships.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: The report and pamphlet, “Reduction of Black Carbon Emissions from Residential Wood Combustion in the Arctic – Black Carbon Inventory, Abatement Instruments and Measures” were approved.

6.2 Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP)

The Chair of AMAP presented on behalf of the Working Group.

6.2.1 Short-Lived Climate Pollutants: AMAP Assessments on Black Carbon and Methane

AMAP presented first on its own work on short-lived climate pollutants, including black carbon, tropospheric ozone, and methane. These issues will be combined into one short-lived climate forcers summary report for policymakers.

Regarding black carbon and tropospheric ozone, the AMAP Chair reviewed the detailed data and analytical elements which will be present in the forthcoming technical report from AMAP. Regarding methane, the AMAP Chair reviewed the ongoing work of the methane expert group and provided an overview of the forthcoming technical report on this issue. Approval of the key findings and recommendations emerging from this work is expected to take place within AMAP in February 2015 and then by SAOs in March for delivery to the Ministerial.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: This was not a decision item.

6.2.2 The Human Health Assessment (HHA)

The AMAP Chair presented the Human Health Assessment (HHA) as a key example of the importance of updating assessments in order to stay abreast of trends. The upcoming edition of the HHA will include information on trends in contaminant levels, health effects of contaminants, risk assessment and communication of risk, and strategies for adaptation. He cited some of the particular challenges that arise when dealing with health-related issues, and noted the value of working especially closely with PPs in these sensitive areas.

In addition to the issues covered directly on the agenda, the summary will address new and emerging concerns, human health risk communication, and the need for global and national actions to address current and future issues of concern.

Some Permanent Participant delegates noted that cooperation with AMAP in this area was positive, and that this work should be done with due deliberation, not rushed.

Some State delegates noted the contributions of AMAP's work on POPs to the Stockholm Convention.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: This was not a decision item.

6.2.3 The Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP) Assessment

The AMAP Chair noted that this "edition" will be an update of the 2005 assessment, and that it will focus on persistent organic pollutants in air and biota. The report focuses mainly on the trends of legacy POPs in air and biota.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: This was not a decision item.

6.2.4 The Radioactivity Assessment

The AMAP Chair noted that the upcoming update on Radioactivity in the Arctic will provide new information on issues covered in the 2009 edition of the report, including: trends in levels of radiation at Arctic sites; updates on decommissioning of facilities and handling of waste; and radiation associated with accidents and industrial activity.

He noted that peer review of an aggregated summary for policy makers of pollution issues is ongoing, and that delivery of the aggregated summary of the Human Health Assessment, the Persistent Organic Pollutants Assessment, and the Radioactivity Assessment is planned for one month in advance of the March SAO meeting.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: This was not a decision item.

6.3 Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF)

The CAFF Chair presented on behalf of the Working Group.

6.3.1 The Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA): follow-up, implementation plan, and the ABA Congress

The CAFF Chair noted that the delivery of an eight year implementation plan for the ABA is expected for the 2015 Ministerial. The upcoming Arctic Biodiversity Congress in Trondheim, Norway is part of the implementation plan for the overall ABA. The CAFF Chair noted that SAO presence was warmly encouraged, and that some participation by PPs has been funded. Norway seconded CAFF's encouragement for SAOs and PP HoDs to take part in the Congress.

Regarding the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program (CBMP), the CAFF Chair noted that the American and Kingdom of Denmark co-leads have made strides in advancing this work, and that work on many components (e.g.: the Arctic Biodiversity Data Service; the CBIRD expert group; the flora expert group) will continue into the US Chairmanship.

The CAFF Chair also cited the ongoing work under the title “The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity” (TEEB) and plans for a TEEB Scoping Study as a deliverable for the 2015 Ministerial.

The CAFF Chair noted several ideas for content for the planned outreach event in Ottawa directly preceding the 2015 Ministerial meeting, and cited as well outreach initiatives to school-age children, international conferences, communities, and industry.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: This item was presented for information. The Chair of the SAOs expressed his support for the Congress, emphasized the importance of prioritizing Arctic Council work, and highlighted the value of outreach to youth.

6.3.2 The Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative (AMBI)

The CAFF Chair noted that the implementation of flyway action plans would be an item likely to carry over to the US Chairmanship. Multiple delegations noted that this initiative, in particular, is an excellent project for the engagement of accredited Observers, and CAFF cited several Observer states and other external entities that have contributed meaningfully to the AMBI.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: See item 6.3.1

6.3.3 CAFF Deliverables for the 2015 Ministerial

Among other deliverables discussed above, the CAFF Chair noted that CAFF expects to deliver an annotated outline of a report on traditional knowledge in the work of CAFF to the 2015 Ministerial meeting, with the full report expected during the US Chairmanship.

Many deliverables were discussed during the aggregated presentation; one member State remarked on the importance of differentiating between deliverables and major milestones for the 2015 Ministerial.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: See item 6.3.1

6.4 Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR)

The Chair of EPPR presented on behalf of the Working Group. The first two points below were presented together by the EPPR Chair, with opportunity for comment and questions thereafter. The third point was presented by a representative of the Canadian Coast Guard.

In addition to the points listed below, the Chair of EPPR mentioned several ongoing, new or prospective projects or activities, including:

- An initiative on prevention, preparedness and response for small communities;
- An initiative on remotely piloted aircraft for emergency response (in cooperation with AMAP);
- An initiative to develop a database of Arctic Response Assets;

- The finalization of the first phase of the Arctic ERMA (Environmental Response Management Application); and
- A de-brief of the radioactivity exercise in Murmansk as a deliverable.

6.4.1 Circumpolar Marine Environment Risk Assessment (CMERA) – Next Steps

The Chair of EPPR reviewed the background and current status of this project. At this point in time, a Circumpolar Oil Spill Response Gap Analysis has been agreed upon by the Working Group, in order to provide a better overview of oil spill response limitations and effectiveness in the circumpolar Arctic. Next steps will be discussed at the EPPR II-2014 meeting in Seattle, coming up in December 2014.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: See item 6.4.2.

6.4.2 The IMO/EPPR Guide on Oil Spill Response in Ice and Snow

The Chair of EPPR reviewed the development of this joint initiative with the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The first draft was discussed at the EPPR I-2014 meeting in June, and the second draft is currently out for comment. The final draft is set to be discussed at the EPPR II-2014 meeting in December, after which it will be sent to the IMO for further discussion. An Arctic Council version of the Guide will be presented as an EPPR deliverable to the Ministerial in 2015.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: No decision was requested. SAOs were asked to take note that the Arctic-only version of the Guide would be presented for approval at the next SAO meeting. Several States cited their appreciation of this work (6.4.1, 6.4.2), and posed questions about overlap/coordination with related work going on in other working groups (e.g., AMAP on remotely piloted aircraft and ACAP on black carbon).

6.4.3 First exercise under the auspices of the Arctic Marine Oil Spill Preparedness and Response Agreement

A representative from the Canadian Coast Guard reviewed the process and outcomes of the first exercise conducted under this agreement. The exercise considered a tanker aground in the Simpson Strait having spilled marine diesel oil.

The main objectives of the exercise were:

- To evaluate the receiving countries' integration of the notification procedures, acknowledgement and further notification of internal national competent authorities' processes or procedures;
- To evaluate the countries' ability to receive and address a specific request for assistance; and
- To evaluate the legal and procedural requirements to allow foreign resources to enter and operate (specifically in Canada, in this case) as part of the provision of mutual aid.

The validation of results and finalization of the exercise report took place in late summer of 2014, with recommended changes to guidelines in each country communicated to the keepers of those guidelines.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: No decision on this item was requested. Norway, as depositary for the agreement, noted that four States have yet to ratify the agreement. The Chair of the SAOs expressed support for such exercises, which enhance implementation of the agreement.

6.5 Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME)

The Chair of PAME presented on behalf of the Working Group.

6.5.1 The Arctic Marine Tourism Project (AMTP)

In his presentation, the PAME Chair highlighted three deliverables to the upcoming Ministerial meeting in 2015. The first of these is a product of the AMTP: a document outlining best practices in Arctic Marine Tourism. The AMTP is tied tightly with previous work on the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment, as well as with the Arctic Council's priorities under the Canadian Chairmanship. It is focused on those areas or gaps in which the Arctic Council can best add value without duplicating work that is ongoing elsewhere.

The final draft of the best-practices document is planned for circulation in January 2015, PAME approval in February, SAO approval in March and delivery to the Ministerial meeting in April.

The PAME Chair highlighted as well the cross-cutting nature of the AMTP, illustrated by its engagement with SDWG's Social, Economic and Cultural Expert Group and with the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO).

CONCLUSION / DECISION: See item 6.5.3.

6.5.2 The Arctic Marine Strategic Plan (2015-2025)

The second deliverable from PAME for the Ministerial meeting in 2015 is a revised Arctic Marine Strategic Plan, updated from the original 10-year plan from 2004. The current draft features four strategic goals:

- Improve knowledge of the Arctic marine environment, and continue to monitor and assess current and future impacts on Arctic marine ecosystems;
- Conserve and protect ecosystem function and marine biodiversity to enhance resilience and the provision of ecosystem services;
- Promote safe and sustainable use of the marine environment, taking into account cumulative environmental impacts, and minimizing risks of negative impacts from human activities;
- Enhance the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of Arctic communities and strengthen their capacity to adapt to changes in the Arctic marine environment.

Two workshops have been held so far (June 2013, September 2014) as part of the drafting process. Input has been received from States, PPs, working groups and experts. The PAME Chair also highlighted the engagement of other working groups.

The final revised version of the AMSP will be presented for approval at the PAME-I 2015 meeting, then presented for SAO approval as a deliverable to the 2015 Ministerial meeting.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: See item 6.5.3.

6.5.3 Framework for Pan-Arctic Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)

In his presentation, the PAME Chair reviewed the purpose of the proposed pan-Arctic MPA network, highlighting that it is not a binding framework but instead a network of Arctic States' existing MPA networks, which will serve to enhance collaboration on such issues as data sharing, mapping, monitoring and communications.

The timeline for development of the MPA framework mirrors that for the Arctic Marine Strategic Plan (item 6.5.2).

CONCLUSION / DECISION: No decision was requested on these items. After receiving words of support and several suggestions from delegations, the Chair of the SAOs thanked PAME for their work.

6.6 Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG)

6.6.1 Promoting Traditional and Local Knowledge

This item was presented by the Chair of the Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat's Board. The objective of the project is to develop recommendations for the consistent inclusion of traditional and local knowledge into the work of the Arctic Council. Two workshops were held during 2014, both coordinated by the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat (IPS).

Based on the deliberation during the two workshops and per the Kiruna mandate, a project proposal has now been drafted to develop practical recommendations to integrate traditional and local knowledge (TLK) into the work of the Arctic Council. Co-leadership of the proposed project by at least three Arctic States as well as the PPs is desired (US, Canada, Kingdom of Denmark and AIA look likely as project co-leads). SDWG will continue to solicit input from the other Working Groups and Task Forces.

Endorsement of a revised version of the proposal will be sought within SDWG in December. Recommendations on TLK are expected to be delivered to the Ministerial meeting in 2015, but further work following the 2015 Ministerial is likely.

The document "Fundamental Traditional Knowledge Principles" has been developed by the Permanent Participant representatives, and includes a working definition of Traditional Knowledge and 13 fundamental principles to strengthen the use of Traditional Knowledge in

the work of the Arctic Council. The document so far has been circulated among PPs, within SDWG, and with Working Groups and the Scientific Cooperation Task Force.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: This item was presented for SAO information and comment. No decision was required. In discussions of the Traditional Knowledge initiative, the Kingdom of Denmark and the US both expressed strong interest. Other States expressed reservations regarding the TK Principles as written. PP HoDs highlighted the extensive work which had gone into reaching the present stage and the need to focus on concrete, practical next steps.

6.6.2 Arctic Adaptation Exchange: Facilitating Adaptation to Climate Change

The SDWG Chair reviewed the objectives, target audiences and scope of the Arctic Adaptation Exchange. The portal being developed is currently in its beta phase, and is accessible to SDWG and other stakeholders for review. Since the previous SAO meeting, the University of Alaska Fairbanks has agreed to be the portal host through 2017, and discussions of the maintenance and funding of the portal after 2017 are underway. Despite the many interactive features, the portal has been designed with the reality of connectivity in the Arctic regions in mind. The designers kept the number of complex features which could slow the overall load time of the portal to a minimum, in the interest of ease-of-access by northern communities. Participation and contribution from all States, PPs, working groups and Observers are encouraged.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: This item was presented for SAO information and comment. No decision was required. Support for the Arctic Adaptation Exchange was expressed by many.

6.6.3 The Evidence Base for Promoting Mental Wellness and Resilience to Address Suicide in Circumpolar Communities

In her presentation, the SDWG Chair covered the rationale, background and objectives of this project.

The intended project deliverables include:

- An inventory of successful initiatives being implemented in the Arctic;
- Recommendations on scaling up interventions in other communities;
- Indicators to evaluate resilience and mental well-being promotion programs; and
- A symposium that will allow for knowledge sharing.

Since the previous SAO meeting, the project steering committee has met to provide oversight for the overall management of the project. In addition, planning is underway for the final symposium, to be held 25-27 March in Iqaluit. As part of the project deliverable, a synthesis report will be presented for SDWG endorsement. Assuming endorsement by SDWG, it will then be presented for SAO approval in April 2015, and presented as a deliverable at the 2015 Ministerial meeting.

As part of this initiative, two research teams have been funded. The teams include representatives from Canada, the US, Norway, the Kingdom of Denmark, and the Russian

Federation. Team A is focused on “Mental well-being and suicide prevention in circumpolar regions: Developing the evidence base and identifying promising practices”. Team B is focused on the Resilience and Suicide Prevention project, which aims to assess three suicide prevention and wellness promotion initiatives in the North American Arctic.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: This item was presented for SAO information and comment. No decision was required. Strong support was expressed for this project both among PPs and States, who cited the difficulty and the importance of the work.

7. Administrative Matters

7.1 Arctic Council Secretariat: Report from the Director

The Director of the Arctic Council Secretariat (ACS) provided an overview of the Secretariat’s work in 2014. He covered the material contained in the written update, including:

- Support for the Canadian Chairmanship;
- The tracking tool, project-costing tool, and Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM) follow-up;
- Translation of documents and key elements of the Arctic Council website into the Russian language;
- An overview of communications work and progress, including social media;
- Website management and assistance for ACAP, EPPR and SDWG;
- Secretariat support for ACAP and EPPR;
- Support provided to the TFBCM, TFSC and TFOPP; and
- Preparations for transition between the Canadian and US Chairmanships.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: No decision was requested on this item. The Chair of the SAOs thanked the Director for the work of the ACS.

7.2 Working Group Operating Guidelines

At the March SAO meeting, Senior Arctic Officials and Permanent Participants asked the Working Groups to review their operating guidelines, to ensure that they were consistent with the Arctic Council Rules of Procedure approved in Kiruna. Working Group Chairs were asked at that time to make any necessary updates and resubmit their operating guidelines for SAO/PP approval at the October (2014) meeting.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: All WGs had submitted revised operating guidelines for the meeting and SAOs tasked the ACS to review the six sets of operating guidelines, as submitted, to ensure that they are consistent with the Arctic Council Rules of Procedure and with each other. The operating guidelines were provisionally approved while the ACS completes its analysis.

7.3 Working Group Progress Reports

The Chair of SAOs invited comments or questions on any of the items raised in the Working Groups' written progress reports. No comments or questions were offered.

7.4 Project Support Instrument

A representative from NEFCO gave an update on the Project Support Instrument. He noted that a total of four projects targeting black carbon and mercury have now been approved by the PSI committee. The deadline for submitting financing requests to the 3rd PSI Committee Meeting is Monday, 26 January 2015. Many SAOs and PPs welcomed the fact that the PSI is now operational.

CONCLUSION / DECISION:

Senior Arctic Officials and Permanent Participants welcomed the first five actions listed on page 7 of NEFCO's written report:

- Note with appreciation the Fund Manager's Update on the PSI to the SAO Meeting of October 2014;
- Welcome the deposit of the first tranche of the Russian Federation contribution, an amount of EUR 5 million, of its total pledge of EUR 10 million;
- Welcome the deposit of NEFCO's contribution in the aggregate amount of EUR 1.35 million;
- Note with appreciation that the Fund Manager made the PSI operational as of the 18th of July 2014;
- Thank the Russian Chair of the PSI for his leadership in steering the first year of the PSI Committee and welcome Sweden to serve as Chair of the PSI Committee for 1015, and the United States of America as Vice-Chair, for one year beginning from January 2015.

The SAOs could not reach consensus on the final two recommended actions and further consideration will be necessary to render a final decision.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 Letter from the Permanent Participants on climate change mitigation

The Head of Delegation for the Saami Council presented a letter on climate change mitigation on behalf of all PPs. She highlighted that the intent of the letter is to reaffirm the importance of the Kiruna Declaration in which Ministers reiterated "the urgent need for increased national and global actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change".

CONCLUSION / DECISION: No decision was requested on this item. During the discussion, several delegations welcomed the letter and referred to the States' commitment to work together towards a binding outcome at the COP 21 conference in Paris in 2015.

8.2 Video Presentation – Dr. Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity

The presentation of Dr. Ferreira de Souza Dias focused on the many ways in which the work of the CBD and the work of the Arctic Council complement one another, and on the importance of continued and strengthened collaboration in the future.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: No decision was requested on this item.

8.3 Youth Engagement and the Circumpolar Art Competition

Canada's Senior Arctic Official presented a proposal to organize a circumpolar art competition.

In her presentation, Canada's Senior Arctic Official provided an overview of the competition and highlighted the importance of engaging youth in the work of the Arctic Council. She also noted that the intention would be to profile the artwork at the showcase event in Ottawa, immediately prior to the 2015 Ministerial Meeting in Iqaluit.

During the discussion, there was broad support expressed for the project and, more generally, for the involvement of youth in Arctic Council work. However, a number of questions were raised on topics such as the age requirement, the theme, and the type of artwork that would be accepted. Some delegations also noted that their Ministries of Culture would be involved.

CONCLUSION / DECISION: The project proposal to organize a circumpolar art competition was approved. Canada will continue to welcome input for the framework of the competition.

8.4 Report from the 11th Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region in Whitehorse

The Vice-Chair of the Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region (CPAR) provided a report from the 11th Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, which was held September 9-11 in Whitehorse, Canada. In his presentation, the SCPAR Vice-Chair focused on the high degree of alignment between the work of the Arctic Council and that of SCPAR, as reflected in the Whitehorse conference statement. He expressed SCPAR's desire to support the work of the Arctic Council, since issues of concern are shared between the two entities. He also cited the importance of cooperation between Arctic States, and proposed the idea of holding an Arctic Summit in 2016.



CONCLUSION / DECISION: No decision was requested on this item. During the discussion, multiple delegations expressed acknowledgement of the strong alignment between the SCPAR and Arctic Council agendas.