

Arctic Council Task Force for Action on Black Carbon and Methane. 5th Meeting, Iqaluit, September 29-October 1, 2014. Summary report.

2014

Arctic Council Task Force for Action of Black Carbon and Methane (TFBCM)

Arctic Council Secretariat

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5th Meeting, Iqaluit, September 29-October 1, 2014

Summary report

Introduction

The Task Force for Action on Black Carbon and Methane (TFBCM) met in Iqaluit from September 29 to October 1. The meeting was chaired by France Jacovella, (Canada), and Jon Kahn, (Sweden). Representatives from all Arctic States with the exception of Iceland attended the meeting. Two Permanent Participant (PPs) organizations (Saami Council, Arctic Athabaskan Council), and the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP) were present. Four observers were also in attendance: the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom, the European Union and United Nations Environment Programme/Climate and Clean Air Coalition.

The meeting was focused on the September 16th version of the Framework Document prepared by the co-chairs and included text-based discussions on all sections of the document. Key areas of debate in the text are now identified in square brackets and the final version will be subject to reaching consensus. Key issues discussed included the common vision, national reporting and arrangements for the implementation of the Framework from 2015 onwards. The following summarizes these discussion items:

Common vision:

One of the main questions remaining for the task force is to agree on the common vision. Two alternative paragraphs are now bracketed in the Framework to reflect the discussions and different points of view. Both options are considered aspirational and collective.

The “quantitative option” proposes an aspirational collective emission reduction by, for example, 50 percent by 2030 for black carbon and calls for action to reduce anthropogenic methane. The “qualitative option” on the other hand proposes accelerated reductions of black carbon “well below [current levels] by 2030”, for example, and significant reductions for methane.

Most indicated a preference for a quantitative vision, which is an aspirational political target aimed at catalyzing more ambitious action that builds on the existing trajectory of declining black carbon emissions. Others indicated a preference for a qualitative target, noting the challenges of a quantitative option in the absence of robust baseline data for all sectors and cautioned the use of a fixed year and percentage without clear evidence as to the rationale for such figures. Work will proceed on advancing discussion on this issue intersessionally.

National reporting:

One of the key elements of the Framework will be to introduce arrangements for periodic reporting (within every 2-year chairmanship cycle) from the Arctic states on their black carbon and methane emissions, actions, best practices and other elements. It was proposed that the draft reporting templates would be simplified and further discussion focused on two sections: inventories and mitigation actions. It was decided that an intersessional teleconference with national experts was needed to further flesh out the guidance that these templates should contain, both for the reporting countries and for the Arctic Council Secretariat, along with other possible working groups, to compile the information. A draft Annex to the Framework was also introduced which elaborated the proposed elements to be included in national reports.

Many stressed the need for national reporting and/or emission summaries related to inventories to be consistent with submissions to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP) and to the well-established process under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), to avoid unnecessary duplication of reporting and to avoid the

potential for inconsistencies between Arctic Council summaries and official data under either CLRTAP or UNFCCC.

Implementation post 2015:

To implement the arrangements following a Ministerial decision, the Framework proposes a 2-year iterative process, which is now further elaborated in an Annex to the Framework. Many noted the need for this process to assist in ensuring progress, greater transparency and enhanced implementation of the Framework. The process currently outlined includes a series of steps, which will involve national reporting, information exchange and the development of a synthesis report with policy recommendations for Arctic Council Ministers. The idea of introducing a broad, higher level policy dialogue, for important audiences and decision makers outside of the Arctic Council for example, was also introduced and discussed.

In terms of the mechanism for the iterative process, it is envisioned that existing Arctic Council structures would be used to the largest extent possible. For example, the Arctic Council Secretariat would assist in compiling, and making available, national reports and AMAP would assist in any scientific analysis for portions of the synthesis. Other working groups may also be engaged, such as Arctic Contaminants Action Program (ACAP). A group consisting of policy experts from states, PPs and with observer participation is proposed to convene periodically. It is this group that on a biennial basis would assess the collective progress towards the common vision and prepare the report containing a synthesis and policy recommendations to Arctic Council Ministers.

Observers also had an opportunity to provide their views on the discussions and many focused their interventions on the portion of the Framework related to observer action. Some interventions also addressed the vision and basis for establishing a target. All observers were generally supportive of the Framework and the ambition of the Task Force. Observers in attendance indicated an interest in cooperation and a willingness to contribute to the process, however, it was also mentioned that observer states in general might be more willing and able to contribute if they also are invited to take part in the full cycle of the process, for example through the “new group” or the high level policy dialogue on the topic of black carbon and methane. Use of positive language in the observer section of the Framework was encouraged.

Next Steps:

To ensure continued progress on the Framework the following areas of intersessional work were agreed to:

- 1) To develop language and rationale related to a US proposal for text on expanded or increased monitoring capability in the Arctic. (**USA**, Finland, AMAP)
- 2) To further revise the national reporting templates and convene an intersessional teleconference to discuss these templates. **All** agreed to send names/ contact information of representatives who would participate in this teleconference by October 9. (**Finland, USA**)
- 3) To develop brief information that could further inform a quantitative common vision, including the sectors included and rationale on the expected decline in black carbon emissions. (**USA**, Finland)
- 4) To prepare a draft Terms of Reference for the new policy/program/review group (needed for the Senior Arctic Officials (SAO) Report to Ministers 2015). (**Canada**, USA, AAC)

All intersessional work should be submitted to the co-chairs no later than **November 1**. Co-chairs will then aim at sending out material for the next meeting two weeks in advance.

The Task Force will meet again on **November 17-18 in Tromso, Norway**. Currently no additional meetings are scheduled for this Task Force.

List of Participants

Akhtar	Farhan	UNITED STATES
Campbell	Michelle	CANADA
Cerqueira	Julie	UNITED STATES
Cerutti	Rita	CANADA
DeAngelo	Benjamin	UNITED STATES
Dickson	Caroline	SWEDEN
Farrell	Kevin	UNITED KINGDOM
Forsgren	Anna	SWEDEN
Jacovella	France	CANADA
Kahn	John	SWEDEN
Kupiainen	Kaarle	FINLAND
Larsen	Carsten Moberg	KINGDOM OF DENMARK
Larsen	Jan Rene	AMAP
LeFranc	Maurice	UNITED STATES
Moulton	Jamessee	CANADA
Otto	Martina	UNEP
Plumadore	Rebecca	CANADA
Rautalahti	Elina	FINLAND
Reinhart	Froeydis	CANADA
Rosenthal	Erika	AAC

Staffansson	Jannie	SC
Torensen	Havard	NORWAY
Turk	David	USA
Vaaja	Nina	ARTIC COUNCIL SECRETARIAT
Vignati	Elisabetta	EU
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