

Adaptation Actions for a Changing Arctic - status report.

2015

Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP)

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1. General

The overall objective of The Adaptation Actions for a Changing Arctic (AACA) project is to enable more informed, timely and responsive policy and decision making in a rapidly changing Arctic. The mandate of AACA part C, led by AMAP, is to “*produce information to assist local decision makers and stakeholders in three pilot regions in developing adaptation tools and strategies*”. AACA made good progress in 2014 across the three pilot regions, see map page 5. There have been one or more regional workshops in each of the three regions and two workshops at the Integration Team level (i.e., including all regions).

Author teams are largely in place in all three regions (not all regions have fully populated their authors teams) and cross-regional thematic meetings are being conducted for the scenarios, impact assessment, and drivers author teams.

There are differences in status for the three regions, but the status has improved since the last report to the AMAP working group in September 2014.

2. AACA activities at the strategic (enterprise framework) level

In order to ensure that science effectively informs adaptation actions, the science, monitoring, assessment and decision-making communities have begun to work together in a more collaborative manner. And in doing so, have begun to develop methods for effective and iterative consultation and resultant derivative product development that have led to the much-needed evolution of the assessment products themselves, thereby ensuring that the subsequent scientific investigations are highly-relevant to societal issues and needs, and that any derivative reports, decision-support tools or communication products are also providing maximum cost-benefit.

To this end, the United States has strengthened the AACA leadership team; Tom Armstrong, the former U.S. HoD to AMAP, assumes the role of overall lead of AACA, representing the United States. In close cooperation with the rest of the AACA leadership Armstrong will have specific focus on developing AACA’s enterprise framework in line with the previously approved approach. Armstrong’s principal role in the AACA leadership will be in ensuring that the different scales of scientific assessment are effectively coordinated and that all scales of assessment are also well coordinated with other aspects of the AACA enterprise as well, including early-development consultative meetings between scientists and decision-making communities, subsequent scenario development, science assessment priority setting, assessment product and online report development, translational product development, decision support and decision performance metric development and analysis, as well as adaptive management implementation.

While all of these components (and others) are integral to the overall collaboration between science and decision-making, it is important to realize that many of these elements will take time to effectively develop. The AACA leadership team, will work together in developing the sustained process timeline and related milestones for the establishment of the enterprise’s key components.

2.1 AACA activities at the integration team level

The focus of the Integration Team has been on clarifying objectives, roles and responsibilities between the INT and regional teams; organizing and coordinating the regional teams; and negotiating a shared structure for the regional tables of contents.



The INT co-chairs and AMAP Secretariat hold weekly telecons; attend each of the meetings and telecons of the regional teams and cross-regional thematic meetings. Jan Rene Larsen has taken an increased role in AACA focusing on the Baffin Bay/Davis Strait region and Jon Fuglestad continues to coordinate activities within the INT leadership and with the other two regional teams.

The INT has arranged two workshops during 2014; one in January in Washington DC and the second in Ottawa in December. In addition several all-team telecons have been arranged.

AACA sessions were arranged at both the Arctic Biodiversity Congress in Trondheim, Norway and at Arctic Change 2014 Conference in Ottawa, Canada. The sessions at both conferences were successful with an audience of 60-70 at both events.

Accomplishments

To coordinate efforts across the three regions, the INT has organized several cross-regional meetings: scenarios, impact assessment, and drivers. These meetings are between the authors of the respective chapters. The scenario (future thinking) cross-regional crop is chaired by Ben Preston, US, and lead author for the scenario chapter in the BCB region. The cross-regional drivers' work is led by John Walsh, University of Alaska-Fairbanks. The corresponding leadership position for the impact assessment cross-regional meetings has not yet been filled. The cross regional meetings provide a platform for the authors from all three pilot regions to discuss common issues and develop a shared approach to the scenario work. The INT co-chairs are pleased with the progress by these cross regional teams and will organize similar cross-regional meeting with the adaptation options authors.

At the INT workshop in Ottawa in December a timeframe toward completion of the regional reports and the pan-Arctic report was accepted.

The INT co-chairs are now focusing their efforts on the pan-Arctic report. A draft outline is being developed as a starting point for a writing team. The key next step for the pan-Arctic report is the identification of co-chairs/lead authors who will complete the report outline, identify chapter lead authors and move the report forward.

Challenges

Limited national resources, both funding and man-hours, allocated for AACA are still a challenge. In 2015 we start the work on the pan-Arctic report and this will increase the resource challenge even further. We have no information so far that AC member states have allocated specific resources to the pan-Arctic work.

There continues to be a need to clarify questions associated with the end products of both the regional reports and pan-Arctic report. The mandate the project is to "*produce information to assist local decision makers and stakeholders in three pilot regions in developing adaptation tools and strategies*" Within each region there are many different decision makers and stakeholders with their own specific need for information. It is clear that these reports will not inform all different decision makers and stakeholders. We continue to work to clarify these points. In particular, how can AACA move beyond assessment to develop tools and strategies that can truly aid decision makers and stakeholders? What may these tools and strategies consist of? How can they be maintained and developed beyond the life of AACA? The strengthening of the US AACA chairmanship will help work with these questions and challenges.

3 AACA activities at the regional levels

The regions have focused on identifying author teams (chapter leads and contributing authors); agreeing on a standard regional table of contents, and beginning to identify critical sectors/case study targets for analysis and deciding how to develop/implement/conduct those analyses.

3.1 Barents region

The Barents team has held regular telecons during 2014 and arranged in-person Author Meetings in Finland in April, Sweden in June and Norway in October). In addition there have been separate chapter author team meeting. The next regional workshop will be held in St. Petersburg, Russia mid-April.

All coordinating lead authors and lead authors are in place. The majority of authors have been nominated and confirmed.

Main topics discussed at the latest workshop were chapters' outlines, flow through chapters, cooperation between CLAs and stakeholder involvement. Coordinating lead authors report being on track to produce a first order draft by April 30.

Downscaled climate models and empirical-statistical downscalings are being developed for the region, to obtain local-scale weather and climate information.

The Barents region team have plans for six stakeholder events to take place in the near future, which will feed into the ongoing mapping of local and regional perspectives, and the development of future narratives (scenarios).

The team is at present investigating how existing model tools can be used to analyse cumulative impacts of socio economic developments on land use, climate and biodiversity in the Barents region.

3.2 Baffin Bay/Davis Strait region

The BBDS RIT was delayed in getting started, but is now making progress and has identified authors both from Canada and the Kingdom of Denmark for most of the chapters. A revised copy of the BBDS table of contents with lead authors has been produced.

A successful workshop was held in Nuuk in June 2014 with special focus on early stakeholder involvement and consultation. This was followed by a workshop in December in Ottawa with very good participation from both Canada and the Kingdom of Denmark. The workshop was a key milestone for the BBDS with the majority of authors meeting each other for the first time. The next lead author workshop will take place in May in Copenhagen.

At the end of October, Canada forwarded an atlas of climate scenarios (atmospheric model) for the Baffin Bay side of the BBDS region as an example of material already available for the BBDS and as a potential contribution to Chapter 3. This atlas has been provided to ArcticNet IRIS 2 lead authors to help them elaborate their prognostics (assessments). The targeted date for these scenarios is 2050. These could likely be run for 2030, but won't be ready for December. The atlas provides an overview of the range of climate indicators used (and requested) by IRIS 2 lead authors.

BBDS lead authors of the Chapter 3 (Climate and socio-economic drivers and scenarios) are now working on framework scenarios that should be provided to lead authors by the end of February. A drafted document has been circulated among Chapter 3 authors.

Martin Fortier, Canadian co-chair, has stepped down as co-chair, but will continue to work in the BBDS RIT until a replacement is in place. Mickael Lemay of ArcticNet has now taken on more of a coordination role for Canada and will work closely with Martin on all follow-up activities.

3.3 Bering/Chukchi/Beaufort region

The BCB RIT has arranged two workshops this fall, a two-day workshop at the end of September in Seattle and a one-day workshop December 9 in Ottawa. In addition the RIT holds regular telecons between the co-chairs and authors. The author team is engaged and is making good progress.

The next BCB writers' workshop is planned for 23-24 March 2015 in Oslo.

BCB has a common author team for the three chapters Impact assessment, resilience and adaptation options to secure good coordination between these three chapters.

The team has found a way forward for the socio-economic scenarios work following earlier discussion.

Gary Stern, Canada, has stepped down as co-chair for the region, but remains a key author for chapter 3. Peter Outridge, Canada, has taken on co-chairmanship work for Canada.

4. Map of the three AACA regions

Note: There are minor revisions to be done to the Baffin Bay/Davis Strait region map.

