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Document Title

Memorandum to Senior Arctic Officials 25/9/2015: Educational Toolkit.

Agenda item number

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Submitted by

CAFF

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Memorandum

Memorandum to Senior Arctic Officials 25/09/2015

Education Toolkits

For information and approval

PURPOSE: To provide an overview of CAFF's Education initiative and ask for SAO approval of the educational toolkits for children.

CONTEXT:

CAFF has developed "educational kits" that communicate information to schoolchildren in the Arctic (10-11 years old) about key Arctic ecosystems and processes. This is the first step in a process to expand CAFF activities to these audiences. CAFF's Communications Strategy identifies four priority target audiences, one of which is Arctic residents. A gap exists in CAFF's communication to this audience, in particular younger audiences (as identified by the Arctic Biodiversity Congress and ABA recommendation #17).

PRODUCTS

The educational kit consists of the following products (available in both letter-size for North American audiences and A4-size for international audiences):

- Small pocket guide for children
- Leader's manual

Three versions of these documents have been produced focusing on different Arctic ecosystems and elements:

- Life Linked to Tundra
- Life Linked to Ponds
- Life Linked to Spring

The products have a series of illustrations that show various species and ecological processes of interest with accompanying text that explains how to identify the species, some interesting facts about the species, how it connects in the ecosystem and how the ecosystem works. They are intended to be used by school children, educators (formal and non-formal), volunteer groups (i.e., young field naturalists, guides/scouts, environmental groups, etc.) citizen scientists, etc.

Details on children's pocket guides

Children's pocket guides are a document that is folded to be a quarter of an A4/letter sized paper, resulting in approx. 26 pages of highly visual elements of the ecosystem in question. The pocket guides provide details on key ecological functions, species and other elements in a given ecosystem in order to provide them knowledge of key processes of that system and build an understanding and appreciation for both well-known and lesser-known species.

Details on leaders' manuals

Leader's manuals are a 30-50 page full sized A4/letter document intended to guide the educator in the child's use of the pocket guide and the ecosystem in question so that they are positioned to provide insight, activities and interpretation to children. It contains the following information

- Instructions for educators for how to carry out activities in the field and in the classroom for small and large groups
- Considerations for how to monitor different systems
- Information on safe and interesting ways of interacting with the environment
- Species identification tips
- Background information on ecosystems, species, processes to equip leaders with information to provide additional information to children
- Fun facts about the ecosystem being examined
- List of further resources

PROCESS

CAFF worked with an artist and a team of environmental education specialists to develop the content for the guides and manuals. The toolkits were reviewed by formal educators (teachers) and informal educators (museums) in order to maximize the utility and ensure products meet the needs and interest of these target audiences. The education kits were sent to the following for review:

- Primary school teacher in North Iceland (Akureyri)
- Principal of primary school in North Western Greenland (Qaanaaq)
- Director of programming and education at a wildlife preserve and outdoor education facility in Northern Canada (Whitehorse)
- An elementary school with strong First Nations' participation in Northern Canada (Whitehorse)
- Large museum in capital regions (Ottawa, Washington)
- Kindergarten class in southern Canada (Vancouver Island)
- English language international school in Finland (Oulu)

The guides were also subject to expert review by the expert networks within the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program, who are not only experts in their fields, but who also have extensive knowledge of citizen science and volunteer monitoring groups, which may aid distribution.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

- **SAOs:** To approve the education toolkits
- **SAOs:** Request support for translation/distribution of the toolkits