

Speech by Mr. Olli Pahkala, the chair of EPPR at the 3rd Ministerial meeting of the Arctic Council, 9th October 2002 in Saariselkä, Inari

Your Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen
Dear colleagues,

EPPR is one of the working groups established 10 years ago under the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy. EPPR is dealing with matters related to prevention of, preparedness for and response to accidental pollution.

Mr. Chairman

EPPR activities are highlighted in chapter 2.2.3 and annex 6 of the SAO's report to the Ministers.

I am pleased to be able to present to this ministerial meeting the final version of the Circumpolar Map of Resources at Risk from Oil Spills in the Arctic.

This Circumpolar Map is in form of an electronic GIS based set of maps, all together 72 maps. It is available to the public on the internet (at the address <http://www.akavaplan.niva.no/eppr>, or it can be reached through the EPPR web page <http://eppr.arctic-council.org>). We have distributed a color print out of selected maps to the Heads of delegations at this meeting. And in the right corner of this meeting room is a poster telling about the Circumpolar Map.

I will now show some overheads to you in order to highlight the content of the maps.

First This map illustrates the location of oil terminals, production areas and main transportation routes used in the summer time.

Second This map indicates where hotspots are located in the summer time. Hotspots are areas where oil production, storage or transportation activities pose a possible risk to biological resources and subsistent human settlements.

Next If you click on one of the hotspots you will see what species are at risk at that area during summer, autumn, winter and spring. This example is from the North Slope/ Beaufort Sea. (The maps include all in all 35 species of international arctic importance: 17 birds, 7 fishes and 11 marine mammals.)

The last map is an example of the thematic area maps; it shows marine mammals in Scandinavia and North Western Russia during summer time.

Please note, that these maps do not provide information on the specific risk oil activities pose to biological resources.

Mr. Chairman

Now I ask you to pay attention to chapter 2.2.3.2 the EPPR work plan for the years 2002-2004 (and annex 6 appendix 2). I would like to mention shortly some issues that EPPR will deal with in the future:

- Nuclear /radiological emergencies (US)
- Inventory of past natural disasters in the Arctic (Finland)
- Cooperation with AMAP (on the International conference on oil and gas activities) and PAME (on the oil transfer guidelines)

The Ministers are asked

- To take note of our progress report and work plan and
- To encourage EPPR and member countries to develop and conduct projects listed in the work plan.

Thank you ladies and gentlemen for your attention.