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The Arctic Resilience Action Framework; Background and Discussion  
Questions for SAOs

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ARAF Chair

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## **The Arctic Resilience Action Framework**

### Background and Discussion Questions for SAOs

October 2016 SAO Meeting – Portland, USA

#### Background

The Arctic Council has made many contributions to the understanding of Arctic change and its impacts. In recent years, the Arctic Council has increasingly emphasized the importance of resilience and climate change adaptation. The Swedish Chairmanship (2011-2013) initiated the Arctic Resilience Report (ARR) project to evaluate strategies for resilience and adaptation. The Canadian Chairmanship (2013-2015) initiated development of the Arctic Adaptation Exchange Portal, which is intended to disseminate useful adaptation information to researchers, decision-makers and communities. A suite of resilience initiatives are being implemented under the U.S. Chairmanship (2015-2017) which include expanding community-based monitoring efforts, planning for invasive alien species, improving our management approach to health issues at the human-ecosystem interface, and delivering the final ARR scientific report.

In March 2016 in Fairbanks, USA, the Arctic Council Resilience Workshop brought together Arctic Council Member States, Permanent Participants, Observers, and Working Groups to discuss resilience-building approaches. Participants agreed that a collaborative framework which outlines shared resilience priorities and facilitates a platform for continued discussion will be important for advancing coordinated resilience actions in the region. A Drafting Committee (chaired by the United States) and a Review Committee (co-chaired by Finland and Saami Council) have worked together to develop a draft Arctic Resilience Action Framework (ARAF), with input from many technical and policy experts across the Arctic Council.

#### Proposed Timeline (October 2016 and Beyond)

As requested at the March 2016 SAO meeting in Fairbanks, the draft ARAF will be presented at the SAO Meeting in October 2016 to solicit additional input, feedback and direction. Following the October 2016 SAO meeting, feedback will be incorporated and additional direction from the SAOs will be addressed. Upon completion, the Drafting and Review Committees are prepared to present a final draft for approval at the March 2017 SAO meeting in Juneau, USA if requested by SAOs or the US Chairmanship.

The Action Areas that have been suggested (Section IV) are intended to be feasible, yet ambitious. Once a final draft is approved, Arctic Council entities and other Arctic stakeholders could be encouraged to identify current implementing actions and submit additional commitments that support the ARAF Action Areas. The submission of implementing actions is expected to be an ongoing process. Suggestions for monitoring progress and updating the ARAF with emerging priorities are presented in the draft ARAF (Section V). While implementation of the ARAF is cross-cutting, and requires the engagement of Arctic Council Member States, Permanent Participants, Working Groups, Observers, international fora/groups, private sector, academia, civil society, and others, it is recommended that implementation and monitoring be as simplified and as streamlined as possible.

### Questions/Areas for Discussion

The Drafting Committee and Review Committee Chairs welcome feedback from SAOs and PPs. They especially appreciate feedback on the Action Areas and suggestions for implementation and monitoring.

The following questions are posed for specific discussion:

1. Finalization of the framework:
  - a. Is the draft appropriate to use as a basis for developing a final Arctic resilience framework (or “ARAF”), acknowledging that additional feedback will be incorporated after the October 2016 SAO meeting?
  - b. If so, is there agreement that the Drafting and Review Committee chairs should present a final draft for approval at the next SAO meeting in March 2017?
2. Implementation of the framework:
  - a. We received comments regarding the need to record and track the submissions of implementing actions that relate to the ARAF Action Areas (from Arctic states, PPs, and Working Groups). Is there an entity that may be in a position to collect submissions of implementing actions, once a final ARAF is approved?
  - b. The biennial Arctic resilience forum, as described in the draft ARAF (see Section V), has been proposed as an appropriate and feasible way to take stock of progress towards implementing the ARAF. Do SAOs and PPs have suggestions for other means to “mainstream” this document in the working of the Arctic Council and its Working Groups?