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WWF Observer report to the Arctic Council

Introduction

This WWF memorandum on relevant activities related to the Arctic Council is a summary of WWF's key activities, contributions, and engagements with the Arctic Council during the period since last report – February 2015 – May 2016 directly relevant to the Arctic Council agenda. WWF is doing significant work at local and national levels which directly contribute to implementation of the Arctic Council decisions and recommendations, including developing knowledge, new tools, management approaches, policy work and communication and awareness. These activities are not included into this report.

WWF is the sole circumpolar environmental NGO accredited observer of the Arctic Council (AC) with offices and Arctic programmes in seven Arctic nations and a long-time contributor to the Arctic Council processes. WWF will continue to support the further development and **strengthening of the Arctic Council** as a place where states, Indigenous Peoples, Observers and business can work together to protect Arctic peoples' wellbeing, and Arctic ecosystems and the services they provide for the benefit of people in the Arctic and beyond. WWF values its engagement with the Arctic Council and is looking forward to further enhancing its contribution to Arctic Council projects and processes.



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Cover sheet

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Date of submission:

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Is your state or organization still interested in continuing as an Observer of the Arctic Council?

Yes No



Observer Report

WWF contributions to the work of the Arctic Council's Working Groups, Task Forces and/or Expert Groups

1. Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience

WWF worked to include a resilience perspective in all regional and final circumpolar reports of the Arctic Council flagship project Adaptation Actions for a Changing Arctic (AACCA), in pursuit to incorporate biodiversity resilience and stewardship principles in practices and policies concerning adaptation to change in the Arctic. WWF is a member of the project integration team and a regional report co-author for Barents Sea and Davis Strait/Baffin Bay.

WWF is a member of the Arctic Resilience Report/Assessment team.

WWF is engaging with the Arctic Council Resilience Framework (ARF) committee to contribute biodiversity/ecosystem relevance to its scope and purpose.

2. Stewardship of the Arctic Marine Environment

WWF is participating in the Task Force on Arctic Marine Cooperation (TFAMC). WWF submitted to the AC our position on "whys and hows" in relation to the future needs for enhanced cooperation to manage the Arctic marine environment. In May 2016, WWF submitted to TFAMC Heads of Delegations, SAO, and Permanent Participants the Policy options paper – Options for Arctic Marine Cooperation spelling out WWF's vision for options to enhance cooperation in the Arctic marine environment. WE also published a special edition of our Arctic magazine The Circle fully devoted to this topic.

WWF initiated and is co-leading development and delivery of the PAME project "Linking area-based conservation measures to categories of Arctic marine biodiversity" to provide guidance to coastal states on the implementation of marine protected areas networks.

WWF secured funding support to the project (USD 230,000).

WWF is a member of planning group to prepare a detailed program for the PAME international conference on implementation of the ecosystem approach (EA) for Arctic Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs). WWF is also a member of PAME's EA expert group who is leading the organization of the conference for PAME.

WWF organized and financially supported (CAD 7,500) work to compile existing Russian legal requirements for engagement of local communities into decision making process for marine based activities (126 entries of Russian laws and "sublaws" including legal requirements from 7 Russian Arctic regions) as a contribution to PAME MEMA project (Meaningful Engagement of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in Marine Activities).



In June 2016, WWF submitted to PAME proposals for mitigating the risks associated with the use and carriage of HFO by vessels in the Arctic. WWF also submitted to PAME comments on how to Prioritize PAME's shipping-related work as well as our current top shipping related priorities for PAME.

3. Conservation of Arctic Biodiversity

WWF had initiated, organized and co-led with Sweden the TEEB for the Arctic Scoping Study, in partnership with CAFF, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the UNEP TEEB office, and GRID-Arendal. WWF secured major funding support for the project (CAD 243,000). The scoping study is an important step in delivery on Arctic Biodiversity Assessment recommendations and early implementation of the Actions for Arctic Biodiversity plan. Senior Arctic Officials approved the report at their October 2015 meeting.

WWF submitted and presented to CAFF Board (September 2015, Tromsø) an Analysis of Options for Future Cooperation outlining synergies between WWF Arctic Strategic Plan and CAFF Actions for Arctic Biodiversity. At the same meeting, WWF presented its methodology for reporting on conservation progress to inform CAFF efforts to develop indicators to monitor implementation of the Actions for Arctic Biodiversity plan.

WWF participated in a CAFF planning workshop to develop CBMP strategy for coastal biodiversity.

WWF provided data for CAFF/PAME work on inventory of existing marine protected areas in Arctic (specifically for Russia).

4. Oil and Gas Spills Prevention and Response

WWF participated in the preparations for the US-Led Exercise for Marine Oil Spill Response to be held in June 2016 under the Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution, Preparedness and Response in the Arctic (MOSPA). WWF is a member of the "Planning Group" and submitted comments and recommendations to develop the final scenario.

WWF participated in a Circumpolar Oil Spill Variability Analysis (COSRVA) scoping workshop held in fall 2015. WWF contributed to the general assumptions, methodology, response systems and metocean data to be included in the COSRVA.

At EPPR meeting in December 2015, WWF presented the project: Modelling Oil Spills in the Last Ice Area.



WWF future plans for contributing to the work of the Arctic Council's Working Groups, Task Forces and/or Expert Groups.

1. Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience

Further contribute to the Adaptation Actions for a Changing Arctic and the Arctic Resilience Report/Assessment projects including development of potential follow-ups and recommendations.

2. Stewardship of the Arctic Marine Environment

Continue to contribute to the work of the AC TF on Arctic Marine Cooperation to promote the development of cooperative mechanism for the Arctic marine environment to support implementation of Arctic Council's decisions and policy recommendations.

Continue its co-leadership of the PAME project "Linking area-based conservation measures to categories of Arctic marine biodiversity" to be delivered at the 2017 Ministerial meeting.

3. Conservation of Arctic Biodiversity

Will contribute to the process of updating the CAFF Actions for Arctic Biodiversity plan and engage with specific CAFF projects, including promoting ecosystem services work, the NAMMCO-led population status review on beluga whales and narwhal, and the US/Canada/ICC led proposal to implement the recommendations of the "Life Linked to Ice" report.

4. Oil and Gas Spills Prevention and Response

Continue engagement with EPPR Response Viability Analysis to ensure adoption of reasonable operational response limits proposals and contribute to developing a deliverable which portrays an adequate and realistic picture of response viability.

Will develop and propose a new EPPR/PAME project on the ecosystem approach to management to inform marine oil pollution prevention measures including development of recommendations to identify no go zones.

5. Other future plans

Complete WWF 2050 Vision for the Arctic and share with the AC.

Follow and contribute to the development of AC working groups' work plans, where appropriate, and identify opportunities to engage with Arctic states, Permanent Participants and other Observers in emerging projects during the next chairmanship period.

Continue to play a role in promoting the protection and conservation of the Arctic region as partners in the implementation of the Arctic Council's decisions and recommendations and translating its principles into practical actions at local, national, regional and global level.

Develop an **Arctic Council Conservation Scorecard** to support strong and transparent mechanisms to monitor implementation of Arctic Council decisions and recommendations.

Develop a feasibility study for options to substitute use of HFO and diesel as a fuel for energy production in remote Arctic communities with combination of renewables.



WWF contributions to other aspects of the Arctic Council and its goals.

WWF developed initial concept and a proposal for a **Capacity Fund for Permanent Participants**. WWF supported (expertise and funding CAD10,000) the Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat (IPS) in developing a Request for Proposal to design a Business Plan and a Marketing Strategy for the Better Arctic Funding Mechanism. WWF is committed to provide financial support for the Fund when it is established.

WWF, as a global organisation, invests about **7-9 million USD** annually to its Arctic work including projects by or with Indigenous peoples organisations.

WWF provided its recommendations and suggestions for **Chairmanship programmes** to further support long-term and strategic conservation and sustainable development AC agenda.

WWF produces four times a year **The Circle** - a prominent Arctic magazine (http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/where_we_work/arctic/publications/the_circle/). Each issue of The Circle covers topics related to the various aspects of the AC Agenda (since February 2015: US Chairmanship; Ecosystem services, based on CAFF project; renewable energy; permafrost; EU and the Arctic; Arctic marine cooperation). Permanent Participants, AC Chairmanship, SAO, AC Working Group members, and Observers are frequent contributors.

WWF helped to shape the session agenda for the first **Council's engagement of Observers** meeting (Anchorage, October 2015) and submitted recommendations for the Observer's engagement.

WWF as an expert participated in the Warsaw Format meeting (Warsaw, April 2016) to share and further promote experience of Observer's engagement with the AC.

WWF hosted with our partner National Geographic Society a reception and presentation to present new images of the **Last Ice Area** and discuss the way forward to protect it during a four AC working groups in Tromsø (September 2015).

WWF jointly with CAFF and PAME organized and run the session on Arctic marine protected areas network at the Arctic Circle Assemble (Reykjavik, October 2015).

WWF provided recommendations to the draft EU Arctic Communication aimed to strengthen EU contribution and input into the Arctic Council agenda and implementation of the AC decisions.

WWF participated in a **Training Workshop for Permanent Participants** (Vancouver, October 2015) to present on the role and responsibilities of Observers and how can observers and PPs engage in a meaningful way.