AMAP Progress Report

1999-05

U.S. Chairmanship

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Progress Report from AMAP to the SAO meeting in Anchorage, USA, May 5-6, 1999.

1: Organization
Since the last meeting of the SAOs in Iqaluit, September 1998, the AMAP Working Group (WG) has elected a new Chair Hanne Petersen of Denmark is the new AMAP WG Chair, replacing Lars-Erik Liljelund. Unfortunately, AMAP has been unable to confirm its new vice Chair and work is ongoing to resolve this situation. There have been no changes in the composition of the AMAP Secretariat.

2: Follow up since last SAO meeting
AMAP Working Group Meetings
Since the last SAO meeting, the AMAP WG has held one meeting, the Twelfth AMAP WG Meeting, in Helsinki, December 7-10, 1998. The main issues on the agenda were the AMAP Strategic Plan for 1998-2003; the assessment products to be produced during 1998-2003 (see attachment 1); the AMAP Monitoring and Effects Programme and the preliminary National Implementation Plans (NIPs) to fulfill this work. Minutes from the 12th AMAP WG meeting have been circulated to the SAOs. Also during the 12th meeting of the AMAP WG, the AMAP Assessment Steering Group (ASG) was re-established to oversee the preparation of the new assessments and carry out the main drafting work for the future assessment reports, etc., concerning pollution issues excluding climate change and UV effects (see below). Terms of References (ToR) for the ASG are attached (attachment 2). An Assessment Steering Committee (ASC) was also established as a joint group between (at present) AMAP, CAFF and IASC. The ASC will to oversee and be responsible for preparing the assessment products related to climate change and UV effects; the ToR for this group are presented in attachment 3.

Related to assessment products to be prepared by AMAP and the time schedule for the presentation of the reports, AMAP has earlier sent a letter to the SAOs in which it was proposed that, if the SAOs so wish, AMAP would attempt to prepare reports for major international fora that are scheduled to take place during 1999-2003 and where it would be highly desirable to promote Arctic issues. The letter highlighted especially the Rio+10 meeting planned for 2002 and the upcoming IPCC meetings as events where the Arctic Council or countries could present reports highlighting the Arctic situation.

Assessment Steering Group Meetings - the trend and effects programme
The first meeting of the re-established AMAP ASG was held in Washington D.C., March 8-10 1999. Lead Country experts from the Arctic countries participated. For the future assessment work, countries have undertaken to lead the work related to the various component assessments as follows: Persistent Organic Pollutants - Canada and Sweden, Heavy metals - USA, Radioactivity Norway and Russia, Oil - Norway and Russia, Acid - Finland, TBT - Iceland, Human health - Denmark and Canada. The AMAP Secretariat is presently responsible for coordinating the work on Combined effects. The meeting discussed the products to be prepared, the needs for new data on sources, levels and effects, the development of the monitoring programme for trends and effects, methodologies, QA/QC, flow of data, etc., and issues relating to crossfertilization between the groups and
arrangement of workshops, etc. Minutes of the ASG meeting will be circulated in the near future. In parallel with the ASG meeting, the AMAP expert group on radioactivity held a three days meeting in Washington D.C. to plan the detailed work to be done on radioactivity issues.

Assessment Steering Committee Meetings - the Climate and UV programme
The first meeting of the ASC was also held in Washington D.C., March 11, 1999, with participants from AMAP, CAFF and IASC. The meeting discussed the assessment work to be performed, assessment strategies and content, organization of the climate and UV work, data needs in relation to ongoing and new research and monitoring programmes, cooperation with other international organizations, etc. The United States has taken on the task as Lead country for the work under AMAP related to climate and UV. At the meeting, Robert Corell (USA and IASC) presented a draft proposal for work that should be incorporated in the assessment of effects in the Arctic due to changes in climate and UV. The proposal was strongly supported by the AMAP and CAFF representatives, however, since the scope of the proposed work also included direct and indirect effects on socio-economic aspects, the meeting agreed that IASC should present a concept paper to the SAO meeting in Anchorage for their consideration. Minutes from the ASC meeting are finalised and will be circulated in the near future.

At a special meeting in Oslo, April 5-6, 1999, representatives from AMAP, CAFF, IASC and WCRP (World Climate Research Programme) met and drafted the concept paper on the proposed Arctic Climate and Impact Assessment (ACIA) programme, to be presented to the SAO meeting in May 1999. As mentioned above, this document will be presented by IASC and, depending on the reaction from the SAOs, a detailed follow-up planning will take place during the summer and autumn. A final programme should be ready for presentation to the next SAO meeting planned for October 1999.

Proposals for the content of such a programme will also be discussed by international experts during an IASC Arctic Summit meeting arranged in Tromsø, April 25-28, 1999. In addition, during the last year, AMAP and CAFF have arranged two workshops in order to identify possible priorities in such a programme, and to clarify which existing programmes should/could be included in a close cooperation to fulfil the ministerial request. The Tromsø meeting will provide important further input to this process.

Workshops arranged
As part of a joint cooperation between AMAP, EEA (European Environment Agency) and ICES (International Council for the Exploration of the Sea), AMAP arranged an international workshop on "Biological effect methods to be applied to detect combined effects in the marine environment", in Copenhagen, November 16-17, 1998. Nearly 60 experts from almost all European coastal states and one from the United States participated. A special workshop report (84 pages) recommending methodologies for related scientific work and future cooperation involving research and field experiments has been produced and circulated. The report is also available on-line on the Internet from the AMAP website.

Most participants attending the workshop also attended a special session on 18 November, to coordinate the development of combined effects related research applications to the EU 5th Framework programme. The research that hopefully can be initiated through this mechanism will be of great interest for the AMAP work in the future.
Translation of the SOAER
The AMAP State of the Arctic Environment Report (SOAER) was first presented at the AMAP Symposium in Tromsø, June 1997. The report has now been translated into Russian and a presentation of the Russian language version took place at the Norwegian Embassy in Moscow on February 26, 1999. The translation was possible thanks to financial support from the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat, RAIPON, Denmark, Norway and USA. In addition to the original English version, the SOAER is now therefore available in Danish, Greenlandic, Norwegian, Russian and Saami. Discussions regarding a possible German language version are now underway following external interest in such a production.

AMAP website and the SOAER and AAR on CD ROM
On the basis of financial support from Norway, USA and UNEP, the AMAP Secretariat is currently preparing CD-ROM versions of the scientific AMAP Assessment Report (AAR) and the SOAER. In addition, the text of the SOAER is available on the Internet via the AMAP website; this presentation of the SOAER will be enhanced to include graphical products. The AMAP website (http://www.grida.no/amap/amap.htm) is increasingly being utilised as a source of Arctic information (currently ca. 2000 homepage accesses per week). Consequently, the AMAP Secretariat has been working to upgrade the content of the site. Recent activities have included making the (ca. 500) graphical products prepared for the AMAP assessment available on-line, making AMAP reports and documentation available on-line, and supporting the AMAP WG (contact information, electronic document distribution, etc.).

AMAP Strategic Plan
At the SAO meeting in Whitehorse, the AMAP Work Plan for 1998-2003 was accepted. To avoid confusion between this and the annually updated programme for activities under the AMAP WG, this longer-term plan has been renamed as the AMAP Strategic Plan for the period 1998-2003. Based on decisions made at the Ministerial meeting in Iqaluit, the AMAP Strategic Plan for the period 1998-2003 has been updated by the AMAP WG at their meeting in December 1998 and a printed version will be circulated during the summer of 1999.

AMAP Monitoring and Effects programme for contaminants
The AMAP programme for gathering of new environmental data, including information on pollution and human health has been under preparation during 1998 and 1999. The overall monitoring programme has been divided into a levels and trend programme and an effects programme, and an additional part addressing source related information needs, etc. Individual components within these programmes specify priority contaminants to be monitored, methodologies to be applied, QA/QC issues, etc. The draft sub-programmes for the AMAP monitoring programme developed by expert groups used different styles, formats and concepts and consequently considerable work is currently underway to prepare a consistent documentation of the programme for the coming period. The final programmes document is expected to be circulated summer 1999.

AMAP Monitoring programme for climate and UV
Parts of the AMAP programme concerning climate and UV effects issues are under development in close cooperation with CAFF, IASC and other international programmes involved in such studies, see special presentation to the SAO meeting regarding an Arctic Climate Impact Assessment Programme (ACIA). It is intended that the programme will be finalised during the autumn of 1999.
National Implementation Plans (NIPs) for 1998 - 2003

At the 11th AMAP WG meeting in Girdwood, USA, a time schedule for the development of the AMAP monitoring programme and its National Implementation Plans (NIPs) was decided (point 5 in the Minutes). In the main, this plan has been followed, however, to date only a few countries have provided information on their preliminary NIPs. The new NIPs will be fully described in the AMAP Project Directory (AMAP PD). The version of the AMAP PD that was prepared to support earlier AMAP assessment work (describing some 500+ Arctic related projects) is still accessible from the AMAP website. The AMAP PD will be upgraded and its information content updated during the second half of 1999.

It should be noted that the AMAP PD also contains information on programmes and projects that are relevant to other Arctic Council groups (e.g. CAFF). AMAP had previously agreed to a request from CAFF that the AMAP PD also be used to record their project information, however this initiative was not followed-up after relocation of the CAFF Secretariat to Iceland. The potential therefore exists for extension of this existing information system to serve wider goals within the Arctic Council, as an alternative to establishing new systems. There is an apparent unawareness of existing operational systems in a number of recent proposals concerning making research information available over the Internet, etc.

AMAP Thematic Data Centres (TDCs)

Based on the kind offer from Denmark, an AMAP thematic data centre (TDC) for human health data is now under construction within the Danish Institute for Clinical Epidemiology (DIKE) in Copenhagen. When established, this will bring to five the number of AMAP TDCs. The AMAP atmospheric TDC (NILU), marine TDC (ICES), freshwater TDC (FWI-DFO) and radioactivity TDC (NRPA) have continued operations during 1998/1999 to compile data for use in future AMAP assessment work. Long-term planning of activities at the data centres is hampered by the lack of secured funding for these activities for periods beyond the current year.

3: Planned future work

Workshops and International Conferences to be arranged

As a part of the assessment work, international workshops and conferences have proven to be an efficient means of bringing together experts and gaining access to the most up-to-date information. In connection with the future assessment work, the AMAP Secretariat, together with Norwegian and Canadian Institutes, has arranged a workshop on "Techniques and Associated Uncertainties in Quantifying the Origin and Long-Range Transport of Contaminants to the Arctic", Bergen, Norway, 14-16 June 1999. The workshop will focus on the need for improvements to existing models and reporting systems for information on sources, with a priority on POPs, mercury and radionuclides in atmospheric and aquatic environment.

The 4th International Conference on Environmental Radioactivity in the Arctic will be held in Edinburgh, Scotland, September 20-23 1999. This will be a joint conference between the Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority, the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, the International Union of Radioecologists, and AMAP. The conference will provide new information related to radioactivity issues including sources and risks. Based on
the new information presented at the conference and other new data and information, a draft report intended for the Ministerial meeting in 2000 will be prepared and considered by the AMAP WG.

International Symposium on Biomarkers of Human health. AMAP together with the US National Institute of Health and other US institutes will arrange an international conference on the use of biomarkers and their development for use in studies of (Arctic) human health. A planning meeting will take place April 27 1999 in Bethesda, Maryland, USA. The final programme and dates for the symposium will then be decided. The outcome of this symposium can be very important for the future AMAP human health programme.

International workshop on POPs and Human Health. AMAP is in the process of arranging an international workshop on human health and POPs to be held in Rovaniemi, Finland, January 17-21 2000. This workshop will discuss the new scientific data available regarding sources, levels and effects. Based on material presented during the workshop, a draft report intended for the Ministerial meeting in 2000 would be prepared and considered by the AMAP WG.

4: Special projects under implementation and development

The PCB project in Russia
At the Ministerial meeting in Iqaluit, this project was presented and supported. At present all eight Arctic countries have raised financial support for this project. In addition, the Netherlands as observers to AMAP and the Arctic Council, has expressed interest in supporting the project.

A Steering Group, comprising representatives from all supporting countries, has been established and met in Helsinki, back to back with the AMAP WG meeting in December 1998. Experts to implement the first phase of the project have been nominated, both from Russia and Western countries. A first meeting of the Russian and Western experts took place in Oslo, November 18 1998, back to back with the bilateral seminar between Norway and Russia on PCB. The tasks for the experts were discussed, and experiences from similar activities in Western countries were considered.

The contract between the AMAP Secretariat and the Centre for International Projects (CIP), the Russian performing entity for the project, was signed on February 25 1999. The project implementation has started, and the final report on Phase I of the project is expected within one year.

Pollution, Food Security and Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic Russia
The objective of this project is to assess pollution impacts on the human health of indigenous peoples of Arctic Russia, and to ascertain the level of country food contamination as a result of pollution from global (long-range transported) and local sources. A main focus of the project will be on POPs, however other pollution factors will also be covered, in addition to important aspects such as nutrition and social-economic factors. This three-year project is expected to provide essential information to the assessments that AMAP has been requested to perform during the next years.
The project was initiated by ICC and is supported by the Global Environmental Facilities (GEF) which has allocated 25,000 US dollar for preparation of the Project Proposal. Two planning meeting have been held (London, August 1998 and Moscow, April 1999). A small drafting group will meet in Oslo in late-May 1999 to finalize preparation of the Project Proposal. It has been agreed that RAIPON, the Governmental Executive bodies of the Russian Federation (State Committee for Environmental Protection, Ministry of Regional Policy and Ministry of Health), ICC and the AMAP Secretariat will participate in the project implementation. The AMAP Secretariat plans to involve AMAP lead experts in fields relevant to the subject of the project.

GEF financing requires at least 50/50 share with the other sources (matching finances). In-kind contributions from Russia will be one of the matching sources. The project organizers hope that the other seven Arctic countries will provide financial support to this project. In addition, the AMAP Secretariat and ICC are currently seeking financial support from the UN Foundation and several other private foundations.

This project has strong links, not only to AMAP objectives, but also to the “Children and Youth” Project, Danish/Greenlander Nutrition study, and the Russian-Norwegian bilateral projects on health of Saami and Nenets Peoples. The AMAP Secretariat aims to coordinate these projects if possible to allow their funding to be looked upon as matching support for the GEF project. However, extra funding from the Arctic countries is still important if this project is to be approved by GEF.

After final approval by the Russian GEF Focal Point, is planned to present the Project Proposal to GEF in June 1999. If this proceeds according to plan, the first sub-projects could be initiated in summer/autumn 1999.

Children and Youth
At the meeting held in Toronto, March 22-23 1999, AMAP took responsibility for the biophysical health element - environmental contamination, nutrition, reproduction health and infectious diseases- with the understanding that its responsibilities up to March 2000 would be based on existing data and information. This work will be coordinated and integrated into the AMAP work related to human health, and it is of special interest to integrate the focus on children and youth with the above mentioned project in Arctic Russia.

Anderma station
Based on funding from Canada and the Nordic Council of Ministers, the AMAP Secretariat together with Canada and the Russian government has established an air monitoring station at Anderma, Russia, for monitoring of long range transport of pollutants (POPs, mercury, etc). Existing funding ensures two years of operation of the site. The station will provide essential data, both to AMAPs basic assessment work and also to the project regarding the health of Indigenous Peoples of the Russian Arctic.

5: International cooperation

UN-ECE
Preliminary discussions are underway between the AMAP Board and the Working Group on Effects under the LRTAP Convention regarding a close collaboration on effect monitoring issues.
AMAP-UNEP
The AMAP Secretariat was invited to attend the UNEP Governing Council meeting in Nairobi, February 2-5 1999. The Executive Secretary participated in the panel of Chemicals, and Klaus Töpher, Executive Director of UNEP expressed a wish for close cooperation on the following up of the AMAP findings.

AMAP also participated in the UNEP Regional Asian-Pacific Workshop on management of POPs (Hanoi, 16-19 March 1999) organized by UNEP-Chemicals. During this Workshop, AMAP presented results of the AMAP assessment of POPs, and on the scope of the PCB project in Russia. It was agreed to establish closer cooperation and exchange of information between AMAP and UNEP-Chemicals.

Sustainable Development workshop
The AMAP Chair participated in an informal workshop in Akureyri, Iceland, (April 8-10 1999), prepared by IASC, the Arctic University and the Stefansson Arctic Institute. The objective of the workshop was to generate ideas to enhance the Arctic Council in its effort to propose steps to be taken to advance sustainable development in the Arctic.

The Barents Euro-Arctic Council.
AMAP continued in its capacity as Observer to the Environmental Task Force (ETF). The AMAP representative took part in the 11th Meeting of the ETF (Stockholm, February 1999). During this meeting, follow-up of the activity on implementation of the NEFCO/AMAP projects were discussed, as well as cooperation with the Economic Working Group and Energy Expert Group of the Barents Council.

6: Finances
At the Ministerial meeting in Iqaluit, the Ministers did not agree on a mandatory strategy for financing joint costs, such as Secretariats. The voluntary strategy was therefore continued. The AMAP Secretariat has, over the years, received its basic operational funding from Norway, but also substantial contributions from some of the other Arctic countries and Nordic Council of Ministers, in particular to finance joint projects. For 1999, the budget for the AMAP Secretariat is approximately 3.0 million Norwegian Kroner (410.00 US dollars, exchange rate 7.4). The Norwegian Ministry of Environment has allocated 2.2 million NOK, leading to a deficit of 800,000 NOK or 100,000 US dollars. Part of this deficit can be covered by the overhead on projects that the AMAP Secretariat is administrating, but not all. The Arctic Countries are kindly requested to contribute with voluntary contributions to the AMAP Secretariat so that common costs can be covered.
### Timetable for the AMAP Assessment Reports

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**P** – progress report (information on progress in preparation of an assessment report included into the AMAP Progress Report to the Ministerial Meeting of the Arctic Council);

**I** – interim report (intermediate report on the results obtained after the last assessment, including the major results reported at the conferences/symposia organized under the AMAP auspices;

**M** – main report (detailed report on the results obtained by AMAP, in cooperation with the other fora, according to the request of the Ministers, including recommendations for actions).
Terms of Reference for the Assessment Steering Group (ASG)

Membership and Scope

The AMAP Board and the Lead Country Experts (LCEs) shall be responsible for drafting the assessments on human health, heavy metals, POPs, radioactivity, acidification, oil/PAHs, TBT, and combined effects. AMAP Working Group delegates may participate in the ASG. The AMAP Secretariat shall provide support for the work of the ASG.

Responsibilities

1. To oversee the assessment process for human health, heavy metals, POPs, radioactivity, acidification, oil/PAHs, TBT, and combined effects and, together with the AMAP Secretariat, to coordinate all work related to the preparation of the assessment reports;

2. To ensure that the assessment reports are prepared according to the decisions made by the AMAP WG;

3. To foster cooperation and cross-fertilization between the LCEs/expert groups;

4. To plan and implement, together with the AMAP Secretariat, the submission of special inputs from the observing organizations and countries;

5. To ensure, together with the AMAP Secretariat, distribution of the drafts to experts of all the participating countries and the observers, and receipt of comments from them;

6. To forward draft assessments, including conclusions and recommendations, to the AMAP WG;

7. To advise the AMAP WG regarding coordination of monitoring programs;

8. To work with the Assessment Steering Committee (ASC) to coordinate with its activities on climate and UV and on combined effects with regard to these areas;

9. To cooperate with appropriate international organizations in producing the assessments.
Appendix 3

Terms of Reference for the Assessment Steering Committee (ASC)

Membership and Scope

Representatives designated by the AMAP and CAFF Working Groups and the Lead Country Experts (LCEs) shall be responsible for drafting the assessments on climate and UV. Delegates to the AMAP and CAFF Working Groups may participate in the ASC. Representatives of other international organizations may be invited, as appropriate. The AMAP and CAFF Secretariats shall provide support for the ASC.

Responsibilities

1. To oversee the assessment process for climate and UV, and, together with the AMAP and CAFF Secretariats, to coordinate all work related to the preparation of the assessment reports;

2. To ensure that the assessment reports are prepared according to the decisions made by the AMAP and CAFF WGs;

3. To foster cooperation and cross-fertilization between the LCEs/expert groups;

4. To plan and implement, together with the AMAP and CAFF Secretariats, the submission of special inputs from the observing organizations and countries;

5. To ensure, together with the AMAP and CAFF Secretariats, distribution of the drafts to experts of all the participating countries and the observers, and receipt of comments from them;

6. To forward draft assessments, including conclusions and recommendations, to the AMAP and CAFF WGs;

7. To work with the Assessment Steering Group (ASG) to coordinate with its activities as appropriate, including work on combined effects;

8. To cooperate with appropriate international organizations in producing the assessments.