

Report from the EPPR working group to the SAO meeting in Anchorage 5-6 May 1999 by the chair

1. Introduction

Since the Iqaluit Ministerial meeting the EPPR working group has had one meeting in London 31 October 1999. This meeting was to facilitate the work in the working group which was put forward as it was decided in Iqaluit by implementing the Strategic Plan of Action that was endorsed at the Ministerial meeting. The meeting was attended by representatives from Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden and the United States of America.

2. New Projects

EPPR brochure

An EPPR brochure is being developed by Finland and Sweden to fill the same purpose as the web site - to make EPPR more known by the public. The brochure will be distributed during the autumn.

Development of a standardised approach to shoreline cleanup assessment technology (SCAT)

This project exists as a possible future project in the Strategic Plan of Action. Canada has volunteered as lead country and will come with a written proposal at the 1999 EPPR meeting. The proposal will be put forward for approval at the September/October SAO meeting.

3. Ongoing projects

Circumpolar map of resources at risk from oil spills in the Arctic

This project was endorsed at the Iqaluit meeting and is now in progress under the lead of Norway. This project will synthesise existing information on sources of spills and internationally important biological resources that could be at risk in the event of an oil spill. The end product of this project will be a Global Information System (GIS)-based database. According to the schedule the project will be finalised by the September 2000.

Development of an EPPR web site

To make the work of the EPPR working group available to the public and also to make the public aware of the work of the EPPR working group there is now being developed a web site under the lead of the United States of America. The connection between the Arctic Council web site and the EPPR web site will be discussed. At the EPPR meeting in Svalbard there should be presented a web site that is ready for approval.

Revision of the Rules of Procedure of the EPPR working group

New operating guidelines for the EPPR working group are being developed in accordance with the Terms of Reference of the Arctic Council. These guidelines are developed in co-operation with the other working groups and there will be a proposal on this matter at the next EPPR meeting.

Arctic Guide

The Arctic Guide is being up-dated on regular basis every year and this up-dating is now being done. After that a new up-dated Arctic Guide will be available.

Source control management and prevention strategies for high risk activities in the Arctic

This project has been on ice during the last year and it will be taken up for discussions at the next working group meeting. Every country, where high risk activities are identified, is free to take initiatives in this project.

Analysis of Agreements and Arrangements

This project is being finalised at the moment by the lead country Canada.

4. Next EPPR meeting

The next EPPR meeting will be in Norway, Spitsbergen, 8-12 September 1999.