Document Title
SDWG Working Group progress report to SAOs

Agenda item number
15

Submitted by
SDWG

Document filename
SAOFI202_2018_LEVI_15F-1_SDWG-Progress-Report

Number of pages, not including this cover sheet
4
Progress Report  
Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG)  
Levi, Finland, March 21-23, 2018

Overview:

The next SDWG Meeting will take place in Levi, Finland on 19-20 March 2018, immediately prior to the SAO Meeting. Approximately 95 participants are registered for this SDWG meeting. Updates and progress reports on 13 active SDWG projects and activities will be received at that time.\(^1\) Six (6) proposals for new projects will also be considered. The SDWG Chair’s summary of the meeting will be delivered to ACS for distribution to SAOs on the evening of 20 March 2018.

SDWG Projects and Activities:

The first regular meeting of the SDWG under the Finnish Chairmanship occurred at Inari, Finland, on September 21-22, 2017. Approximately 60 participants attended the meeting, including representatives of seven Observer states and 10 other Observer organizations.\(^2\)

1. In Inari, the SDWG received presentations from:
   a. Ms. Tiina Manila-Aikio, Chair of the Finnish Saami Parliament, about the Saami Parliament;
   b. Mr. Rene Söderman, the Finnish SAO, about Finnish priorities and the SDWG; and
   c. Mr. Sami Pirkkala, a representative from the Finnish Prime Minister's office, about Agenda 2030 and Finland’s approach to it.

2. The SDWG work plan was reviewed for the period 2017 to 2019. Updates were received on 12 projects under 10 of 12 thematic areas set out in the new SDWG Strategic Framework (2017).

Inari Decisions of Note:

3. Since February 2017, the SDWG endorsed 3 new projects intersessionally. These projects were identified as “under development” in the work plan submitted to SAOs prior to the 2017 US Ministerial:
   - **Arctic Generation 2030** [Leads: Norway, Finland]: a project to forge a strong and globally-connected community of future Arctic leaders;
   - **Arctic Children-Preschool Education and Smooth Transition to School** [Leads: Russian Federation, Finland, RAIPON] a project aimed at identifying educational projects, methodologies and best practices to prepare Arctic indigenous children for enrollment in school;
   - **Solid Waste Management in Small Arctic Communities** [Leads: Canada, Finland, AIA]: a project to examine, among other things, current best practices in solid waste management among the Arctic States.

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\(^1\) See Annex 1 for a list of SDWG projects.

\(^2\) Representatives from all Arctic States and Permanent Participants participated in this SDWG meeting. Seventeen observers participated, including seven non-Arctic states (France, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, South Korea, Spain & Switzerland) and ten Observer organizations (Arctic Institute of North America, Association of World Reindeer Herders, IASC, IASSA, International Red Cross, Northern Forum, West Nordic Council, WWF and UArctic).
4. The *Arctic Resilience Action Framework* (ARAF) was approved by SAOs at their meeting in New York in April 2017. Through an intersessional process in June/July 2017, the SDWG formally approved a project template for ARAF and ARAF has been added to the SDWG work plan.

**Other activities:**

5. At its Inari meeting, the SDWG discussed possible projects respecting:
   - *Occupational Health in the Arctic* [suggested by AHHEG/Finland]
   - *Arctic Construction Survey: results and possible next steps* [suggested by Finland]. These 2 projects will be revisited in Levi, along with new proposals entitled:
     - Circumpolar Resilience, Engagement and Action Through Story (CREATeS) [Canada, Finland, ICC]
     - Arctic Food Innovation Cluster [Canada]
     - Arctic Sustainable Energy Futures Toolkit [GCI]
     - Assessing the Use of HFOs in Indigenous Communities [USA, AIA, CCU]

6. The SDWG has now submitted to the *SDWG ANNEX to the Arctic Council Common Operating Guidelines* to SAOs for their review and approval.

7. In February 2018, the SDWG approved a new project proposal template, with annexes relating to a) procedures for submitting, endorsing and managing projects; b) tracking recommendations & follow-up; and c) communications.

**Co-Vice Chairs for Finnish Chairmanship:**

8. In Inari, the SDWG welcomed two new co-vice chairs for the Finnish chairmanship: Reid Creedon (USA) is the co-chair for Arctic states and Outi Paadar (Saami Council) is co-chair for the Permanent Participants.

**SDWG Expert Groups**

9. At plenary meetings the SDWG receives reports from its Arctic Human Health Expert Group (AHHEG) and its the Social, Economic, and Cultural Expert Group (SECEG). SECEG also met in Inari on 21 September 2017 and conducted a workshop in Inari on 23 September. SECEG is actively examining its role within SDWG and will make recommendations to the SDWG by the end of the Finnish Chairmanship.

10. SECEG has been involved in PAME’s MEMA project which has been continued into the Finnish Chairmanship.

11. The AHHEG reported on its role in SDWG projects relating to health and held a joint meeting in Inari with the AMAP Human Health Expert Group (31 Sept.-01 Oct. 2017). AHHEG continues to cooperate with the International Circumpolar Surveillance (ICS) network, a former long-running project of the SDWG that began in 1999 to track infectious diseases in the Arctic.
Observer Engagement

12. The SDWG employed a new format for its agenda at the Inari meeting to allow greater Observer engagement in agenda items relating to project work and other SDWG activities where greater Observer involvement would be beneficial.

Cross-Cutting Issues:

13. The SDWG will consider a project proposal in Levi to contribute to PAME’s request for collaboration on its heavy fuel oil (HFO) project, specifically related to on-shore use by indigenous peoples and local communities of HFO as well as the extent to which peoples and communities rely on ships that burn HFO to deliver supplies and provisions.

Upcoming SDWG Meetings:

14. The next SDWG meetings will be:
   • Levi/Kittilä, 19-20 March 2018
   • Rovaniemi, 29-30 Oct. 2018
   • Kemi, 5-6 February 2019.
ANNEX: Current SDWG Projects

1. Arctic Generation 2030
2. Arctic Children-Preschool Education and Smooth Transition to School
3. Teacher Education for Diversity and Equality in the Arctic
4. Arctic Indigenous Youth, Climate Change, & Food Culture (EALLU)
5. Operationalizing One Health in the Arctic, Part 2
6. Good Practice Recommendations for Environment Impact Assessment and Public Participation in EIA in the Arctic (Arctic EIA)
7. Gender Equality in the Arctic II
8. Arctic Adaptation Exchange Portal
9. The Arctic as a Food Producing Region
10. Arctic Remote Energy Networks Academy (ARENA)
11. Arctic Renewable Energy Atlas (AREA)
12. Arctic Energy Summit 2017
13. Solid Waste Management in Small Arctic Communities