

Meeting Summary Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) Rovaniemi, Finland, 29-30 October 2018

2018-11

Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG)

Arctic Council Secretariat

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Overview:

The third regular meeting of the SDWG under the Finnish Chairmanship took place at Rovaniemi, Finland, on 29-30 October 2018. Approximately 87 participants attended this meeting, including representatives of seven (7) Observer states, nine (9) other Observer organizations, three (3) Working Groups (ACAP, CAFF, EPPR) and two (2) invited experts (Arctic Economic Council, SITRA). Please see the attached participants' lists for more detailed information¹.

1. The SDWG Chair, Pekka Shemeikka, welcomed new Heads of Delegation (Kingdom of Denmark, AAC, ICC and RAIPON). On Day 2 the SDWG received a welcome from SAO Chair, Ambassador Aleksi Härkönen, including some comments about preparations for the Ministerial meeting in May 2019 and the work of the SAOs to develop an Arctic Council strategic plan.

Decisions of Note:

2. The SDWG Chair updated the participants on a number of events since the SDWG Levi meeting in March 2018. During this period the SDWG Chair participated in a number of important events, including: a) High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in New York, July 2018; b) UArctic Congress in Oulu and Helsinki in September 2018; c) SDWG Arctic Resilience Forum in Rovaniemi, September 2018; and d) Arctic Environment Ministers Meeting in Rovaniemi, October 2018.
3. At its Rovaniemi Meeting, the SDWG provided strong support for one (1) new project, subject to further development of the formal project proposal template which will be submitted for endorsement at the SDWG Meeting in Kemi in February 2019:
 - a) **Gender Equality in the Arctic III** [Leads: Iceland, Sweden, Finland, Canada]
4. Seven (7) concept papers and/or presentations were introduced a number of project areas for possible consideration. Formal project proposals may be developed and presented for endorsement at a future SDWG meeting in relation to:
 - a) **International Arctic School** [presented by Russian Federation, Northern Forum]
 - b) **Arctic Food Innovation Cluster** [presented by Canada]
 - c) **Indigenous Peoples Contaminants Action Program (IPCAP) - Current Projects and Future Collaboration** [presented by AIA]
 - d) **Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic II** [presented by ICC]
 - e) **Economy of the North IV (ECONOR IV)** [presented by Canada]
 - f) CAFF/SDWG cooperation on **Mainstreaming Biodiversity in the Mining Industry** [presented by CAFF]

¹ Representatives from all Arctic States and Permanent Participants participated in this SDWG meeting. Sixteen observers participated, including the EU and six non-Arctic states (Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, South Korea & Switzerland) and twelve Observer organizations (Arctic Institute of North America, Association of World Reindeer Herders, Circumpolar Conservation Union, IASSA, Northern Forum, UArctic, UNEP and WWF).

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- g) PAME/SDWG project for 2019-2021 to develop an **information handbook or reference guide** as a practical tool for engagement with Indigenous Peoples and local communities, guided by the MEMA Part II Findings for Policy Makers Report and associated MEMA Database [letter submitted by PAME Chair]
5. In addition, the project proposal in relation to an **Arctic Network on Occupational Health in the Arctic** [proposed by Finland], remains a possibility for endorsement if a second lead country can be identified.
6. The SDWG removed one inactive project from its work plan: **Arctic Generation 2030** [Leads: Norway, Finland]. If funding can be secured, this project will be reintroduced during the Icelandic chairmanship.
7. The **Arctic Resilience Action Framework** (ARAF) was approved by SAOs at their meeting in New York in April 2017 and its implementation was assigned to SDWG with secretariat support to be supplied by the Arctic Council Secretariat rather than by the SDWG Secretariat. SDWG formally added ARAF to its 2017-2019 Work Plan in June/July 2017. Participants heard an update on the implementation of the ARAF project, including matters relating to the **Arctic Resilience Forum** held in Rovaniemi, Finland on 10-11 September 2018. At its meeting in Rovaniemi on 29-30 October 2018, the SDWG discussed completion of the ARAF work for the Ministerial Meeting in May 2019. The SDWG will seek further guidance from the SAOs regarding the future disposition of ARAF.

Other activities:

8. SDWG participants heard conceptual presentations and conducted a thematic discussion on **Sustainable Economic Development—low-carbon, resource-efficient circular economy**. Presentations and commentaries were provided by:
- Mr. Jan Dusik, Principal Adviser, Strategic Engagement for the Arctic and Antarctic, Acting Director, Europe Office United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment): **Striving for low-carbon and resource-efficient circular economy globally and in the Arctic: An informal discussion paper**
 - Mr. Ernesto Hartikainen, Senior Lead, Carbon-neutral Circular Economy, Finnish Innovation Fund SITRA: **Circular economy: evolving international opportunities**
 - Ms. Anu Fredrikson: **Commentary: An Arctic Economic Council Perspective**
 - Ms. Gunn-Britt Retter: **Commentary: An Indigenous Perspective.**

Discussions on this subject will continue at future SDWG meetings.

SDWG Expert Groups

9. The SDWG received reports from its Arctic Human Health Expert Group (AHHEG) and its the Social, Economic, and Cultural Expert Group (SECEG). A concept paper by SECEG entitled: **Exploring the way Social, Economic and Cultural Expert Group (SECEG) could work better** was presented and discussed. SDWG is continuing to work with SECEG to enhance role of this expert group within the SDWG.

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Status of SDWG Projects

10. In Rovaniemi, the SDWG heard progress updates on eighteen (18) projects, with a particular focus on deliverables for the 2019 Ministerial and current plans for follow-on work during the Icelandic Chairmanship:
- a) **Arctic Generation 2030** (removed from work plan)[Leads: Norway, Finland]
 - b) **Arctic Children - Preschool Education and Smooth Transition to School** [Leads: Russian Federation, Finland, Canada, RAIPON]
 - c) **Teacher Education for Diversity and Equality in the Arctic** [Leads: Canada, Finland, Norway, Russian Federation]
 - d) **Arctic indigenous youth, climate change and food culture (EALLU)** [Leads: Canada, Norway, Russian Federation, U.S., AIA, Saami Council]
 - e) **Operationalizing a One Health approach in the Arctic, Part 2 (One Health)** [Leads: Canada, U.S., Finland]
 - f) **Circumpolar Resilience, Engagement and Action Through Story (CREATeS)** [Leads: Canada, Finland, Kingdom of Denmark, ICC]
 - g) **Gender Equality in the Arctic II** [Leads: Iceland, Sweden, Finland, AIA]
 - h) **The Arctic as a Food-Producing Region** [Leads: Canada, Norway, Iceland, GCI, ICC]
 - i) **Arctic Remote Energy Networks Academy (ARENA)** [Leads: Canada, Finland, Iceland, U.S., GCI, AIA]
 - j) **Arctic Renewable Energy Atlas (AREA)** [Leads: Canada, U.S., GCI]
 - k) **Arctic Energy Summit 2017** [Leads: Finland, Iceland, Russian Federation]
 - l) **Arctic Energy Summit 2019** [Leads: Iceland Finland]
 - m) **Arctic Sustainable Energy Futures Toolkit** [Leads: Canada, GCI, Kingdom of Denmark, Netherlands]
 - n) **Assessing the Use of Heavy Fuel Oil (HFO) in Indigenous Communities** [Leads: U.S., Canada, AIA, CCU, in cooperation with PAME]
 - o) **Solid Waste Management in Small Arctic Communities** [Leads: Canada, Finland, AIA]
 - p) **Good Practice Recommendations for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Public Participation in EIA in the Arctic (Arctic EIA)** [Leads: Finland, Kingdom of Denmark, Canada, GCI]
 - q) **Zero Arctic: Concepts for carbon neutral Arctic construction based on tradition** [Finland, Canada]
 - r) **Arctic Resilience Action Framework** [USA, Sweden, Finland]
11. Project deliverables for many SDWG projects are still being finalized. The SDWG has an internal deadline of 05 January 2019 to receive these deliverables in order to approve them at its meeting in Kemi, Finland on 5-7 February 2018.

Observer Engagement

12. The SDWG continued to employ the new format for its agenda, first initiated at the Inari SDWG meeting, to allow greater Observer engagement in agenda items relating to

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project work and other SDWG activities where greater Observer involvement would be beneficial. Observers made valuable interventions and contributions to the agenda.

SDWG Work Plan:

13. The SDWG discussed the process and timing for development of the ***SDWG 2019-2021 Work Plan***, including coordination with other Working Groups, for approval by SAOs and Ministers. A first working draft of this work plan will be circulated to SDWG HODs on 12 November 2018 for review prior to sending it to SAOs on 15 November 2018.

Cross-Cutting Issues:

14. The SDWG welcomed the participation of ACAP, CAFF and EPPR at the Rovaniemi meeting. The discussions included valuable information on activities in the other working groups and possible areas for ongoing cooperation.

Communications:

15. The SDWG received an update from Canada on the work of its communications committee including the development of a photo library and new Facebook page for the working group.

Upcoming SDWG Meetings:

16. The final SDWG meeting of the Finnish Chairmanship will be a three-day meeting in Kemi, Finland on 4-6 February 2019.