

# Instructions for submitting Observer reports

## Introduction

This document provides the template for Observer reports and instructions for submission of reports for Observers.

The deadline for submission is **1 December 2018**.

According to the “Arctic Council Rules of Procedure” (annex 2), every two years Observers are asked to submit to the Chairmanship up-to-date information about relevant activities and their contributions to the work of the Arctic Council. The following 22 Observers are asked to submit a report by 1 December 2018:

- Germany
- The Netherlands
- Poland
- Switzerland
- The United Kingdom
- International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)
- International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM)
- OSPAR Commission
- Standing Committee of the Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region (SCPAR)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN-ECE)
- United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)
- World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
- West Nordic Council (WNC)
- The EU
- Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea (ACOPS)
- International Arctic Science Committee (IASC)
- International Union for Circumpolar Health (IUCH)
- National Geographic Society (NGS)
- Northern Forum (NF)
- Oceana
- World Wide Fund for Nature - Global Arctic Program (WWF)

## Role of Observers

The role and responsibilities of Observers, as well as criteria for admission to the Arctic Council, can be found in the “Arctic Council Rules of Procedure” (annex 2) and the “Observer Manual for Subsidiary Bodies.”

The primary role of Observers is to observe the work of the Arctic Council. Observers contribute to the Arctic Council primarily through engagement at the level of Working Groups, Task Forces, and/or Expert Groups. Observers are invited to the meetings and other activities of the Arctic Council unless the Senior Arctic Officials decide otherwise. Observers may also propose projects through an Arctic State or a Permanent Participant.

## Report submission

Observer reports should include the relevant information described below and in the template.

- (a) A description of the Observer's contributions to the work of the Arctic Council since the time of the Observer's most recent submission, or in the previous two years, with special focus on contributions to the subsidiary bodies through project participation and support, as well as collaboration with Permanent Participants.
- (b) If applicable, a description of the Observer's future plans to contribute to the work of the Arctic Council, with special focus on contributions to the subsidiary bodies through project participation and support, as well as collaboration with Permanent Participants.
- (c) If applicable, a description of the Observer's contributions to other aspects of the Arctic Council and its goals not covered in the previous sections since the time of the Observer's most recent submission, or in the previous two years.

Observer reports should be submitted electronically to the Arctic Council Secretariat via email: [acs@arctic-council.org](mailto:acs@arctic-council.org).

The reports should be submitted to the Arctic Council Secretariat not later than **1 December 2018**. Please bear in mind while preparing your report that all Observer reports will be published on the official Arctic Council website ([arctic-council.org](http://arctic-council.org)).

**If an Observer does not submit a report, the Arctic Council will consider this an indication that the Observer is no longer interested in maintaining status as an accredited Observer to the Arctic Council.**

## Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

Federal Republic of Germany

Date of submission:

30 November 2018

Observer's website, if appropriate:

<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/themen/internatrecht/einzelfragen/arktis>

Information for appropriate contact person

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Job Title: Desk Officer for Arctic Policy

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Division E21  
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10117 Berlin  
Germany

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

Yes  No

## Observer Report

Please describe in no more than two pages your state's or organization's contributions to the work of the Arctic Council's Working Groups, Task Forces, and/or Expert Groups since the time of your most recent report, or in the previous two years. Please highlight contributions to specific projects, such as through proposals, concept development, in-kind and financial support, and hosting of meetings. Please detail any collaboration with Permanent Participants, such as project proposal endorsement and support.

Germany, an Observer state on the Arctic Council (AC) since 1996, has contributed continuously and substantially to the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies for more than 20 years. A partner in and for the Arctic region and its local communities and indigenous peoples, Germany has openly shared its expertise in the domains of research, science and technology as a contribution towards implementing the objectives of the AC. As a leading research nation, Germany is highly committed to preserving the Arctic environment and promoting sustainable development. Research and technology in combination with a rules-based governance system are key to supporting our common goal of peaceful, environmentally safe and sustainable development of the Arctic.

As a proponent of multilateral cooperation on Arctic issues, Germany views the AC as the preeminent Arctic regional forum and high-ranking intergovernmental decision-making body. As an Observer, Germany fully respects the exclusive rights of the members of this regional body to take decisions with respect to the Council. Nonetheless, while the AC decides regionally, its decisions are increasingly having a global impact. Similarly, the processes that drive Arctic change originate to a large degree from south of the Arctic Circle. Bearing this in mind, Germany participates regularly in the meetings of the Senior Arctic Officials (SAO), actively engages in Observer Sessions and provides Observer Statements. Germany actively and regularly participates as an Observer in all Working Groups, Expert Groups and Task Forces of the AC. German experts have repeatedly emphasized the significance of, and their appreciation for, the free exchange of opinions and information with experts from AC member states and indigenous peoples' organisations.

A vital pillar of Germany's contributions to, and activities in, the Arctic region is Arctic research through institutional base funding and additional project funding in strategic fields of international cooperation. The Alfred Wegener Institute Helmholtz Centre for Polar and Marine Research (AWI) coordinates German polar research. AWI also provides necessary infrastructure – such as the research icebreaker “Polarstern”, the research aircraft “Polar 5” and “Polar 6”, and the German-French Arctic research base AWIPEV on Spitsbergen (Svalbard) – to national and international scientific efforts and collaboration. Other major German research institutes that actively contribute to the AC include the German Aerospace Center (DLR), the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS), and the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR).

German Contributions to Subsidiary Bodies of the Arctic Council (selected excerpt):

The German government supports multilateral cooperation on Arctic issues – primarily in the Arctic Council. Germany strives to continually enhance its input to this forum, in particular through increased and intensified participation in all working groups.

ACAP: Dr. Heike Herata (German Environment Agency, UBA) has participated in the ACAP Working Group since 2017. The task of ACAP is to initiate and support projects to reduce or prevent the input of pollutants by certain substances (such as Black Carbon, POPs, Mercury and short-lived climate pollutants) and waste in the Arctic region. She participated in working group meetings and provided expertise by UBA, in particular with regard to black carbon, waste, and microplastics. The Arctic Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter developed within the project established under PAME and the proposals and work of the EGBCM (where UBA experts are involved) could form the basis for ACAP to initiate further concrete projects and will strengthen the collaboration within the various initiatives.

AMAP: Germany's national polar institute, the Alfred Wegener Institute, Helmholtz Centre for Polar and Marine Research (AWI) concentrates on observational and modelling studies of all elements of the Polar Earth System. Main research foci in the Arctic include climate change and its impact on global climate processes. Many of AWI's research activities are highly relevant for AMAP. Dr. Björn Rost is participating in the activities of AMAP's Expert Group on Ocean Acidification. He is a contributing author of the AMAP Assessment 2018: Arctic Ocean Acidification. Dr. Andreas Herber contributed to the work of AMAP's Expert Group on Short-Lived Climate Forcers. Prof. Hugues Lantuit was newly appointed as a permafrost expert to contribute to the follow-up of the 2017 Snow, Water, Ice and Permafrost in the Arctic (SWIPA) assessment. To identify additional contributions and to further strengthen the German participation, Germany appointed Dr. Volker Rachold (Head of AWI's German Arctic Office) as the national delegate to AMAP.

EPPR: Hans-Peter Damian (German Environment Agency, UBA) has participated in EPPR meetings as well as in the meetings of the TFOPP (Arctic Council Task Force on Arctic Marine Oil Pollution Prevention) since 2013 and provided comments and remarks to all relevant topics. Germany will also provide information about the OSPAR Offshore Industry Committee, especially about the major challenges arising from the current decommissioning of many oil platforms in the North Sea.

PAME: Prof. Dieter Piepenburg (Alfred Wegener Institute, AWI) and Dr. Janos Hennicke (Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, BfN) contribute with their expertise on issues concerning the identification and designation of marine protected areas (PAME Expert Group “Pan-Arctic network of MPAs”) as well as to the “Ecosystem-Based Management Expert Group”.

PAME Project on Marine Litter in the Arctic: Rita Fabris (German Environment Agency, UBA) and Dr. Melanie Bergmann (Alfred Wegener Institute, AWI) have participated in the project on Marine Litter in the Arctic since 2017 when it was established within the PAME Working Group. Currently, Phase I of the project – the preparation of a Desktop Study on Marine litter and Microplastics in the Arctic – is about to come to an end. The German experts have made various contributions within the preparation of this study and took part in the Arctic Marine Litter workshop in Akureyri, Iceland in June 2018.

Marine litter has been a major topic on Germany's environmental agenda during its G7 and G20 Presidencies as well as in OSPAR and HELCOM. Suitable measures include eco-design, waste avoidance, optimal recycling, and environmentally sound storage of waste.

Underwater Noise in the Arctic State of Knowledge Report (CAN/WWF): Mirjam Müller (German Environment Agency, UBA) and Dr. Janos Hennicke (Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, BfN) are participating in the work of PAME to develop a state of knowledge report (literature review) on impacts of underwater noise on the Arctic marine ecosystem, including the identification knowledge gaps. In a first step, the relevant literature on this topic was collected. Currently, the second version of the draft report is circulated for commenting. Based on her extensive experience in underwater noise and its impact on the polar marine environment, Mirjam Müller in cooperation with the BfN will provide the German input to the revised draft.

CAFF: Prof. Dieter Piepenburg (Alfred Wegener Institute, AWI) has been involved (e.g., as a reviewer) in the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA), and as the German member of the Benthos Marine Expert Network (MEN) of the Marine Ecosystem group of CAFF's Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program (CBMP) since 2016. He contributed to the State of the Arctic Marine Biodiversity Report (SAMBR) published in 2017. Currently, his home institution (AWI) will lend support to the ongoing pan-Arctic benthic sample survey of the CBMP-marine's MEN group by offering the use of PANABIO, a Pan-Arctic Information System on Benthic Biota, which is being developed by the working group he is leading at AWI.

SDWG: Dr. Kathrin Stephen (Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies, IASS) contributes to SDWG and to the Social, Economic, and Cultural Expert Group (SECEG) and, in cooperation with the German Arctic Office, establishes contacts between German experts and SDWG project leaders where appropriate. During the Finnish Chairmanship of the AC, Dr. Stephen was actively involved in the design and commenting of the SECEG concept paper, which discusses the mandate of the expert group with a focus on SDGs. Regular meetings and exchanges with permanent participants and other Observer states and organisations have resulted in numerous opportunities for cooperation within IASS's international Arctic projects, such as the inclusion of representatives of the Association of World Reindeer Herders in the EU's Horizon 2020 "Blue Action" project. Consultations are currently underway on possible cooperation in new research projects.

Prof. Otto Habeck (University of Hamburg) was appointed Deputy for the SDWG. He liaises with the Social and Human Sciences Working Group of International Arctic Science Committee, IASC, with International Arctic Social Sciences Association, IASSA, and International Permafrost Association, IPA.

CAFF/AMBI: The Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative (WSFI), coordinated by the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS), Wilhelmshaven, Germany, actively supports and cooperates with CAFF's Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative (AMBI) with regard to its priority conservation issues and actions (Gerold Lüerßen, CWSS).

At the 13th Trilateral Governmental Conference on the protection of the Wadden Sea in Leeuwarden in May 2018, Germany together with Denmark and the Netherlands declared to extend their cooperation in the context of the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative, especially towards the Arctic. Germany as the current Presidency of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation (TWSC) very much welcomes the cooperation with CAFF and supports the hosting of the new AMBI African Eurasian Flyway Coordinator at the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat in Wilhelmshaven/Germany.

EGBCM: Michael Strogies (German Environment Agency, UBA) has participated in the Expert Group of Black Carbon and Methane since 2017, an expert group which is laying the foundations for the formulation of ambitious reduction targets for its member states. He especially provided expertise in the field of monitoring Methane and Black Carbon emissions. Specific attention was given to fulfilling the reporting requirements set by the Arctic Council. As consequence, Germany provided the first National Report on Black Carbon and Methane by the end of 2017. The report will be updated by end of 2018 and will then, for the first time, contain data on Black Carbon projections.

TFAMC: Tim Packeiser (acting on behalf of the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, BfN, and the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, BMU), participated in selected meetings of the TFAMC, followed the discussions and deliberations of TFAMC I and TFAMC II and informally exchanged views with representatives of AC Members States as well as other Observers concerning options for regional cooperation on marine nature conservation.

TFTIA: Dr. Simon Plass (German Aerospace Center, DLR) provided expertise in the field of terrestrial and satellite communications for the areas of maritime, land-based, and aeronautical Arctic users and therefore supported the final report of the TF.

If applicable, please describe in no more than one page your state's or organization's future plans for contributing to the work of the Arctic Council's Working Groups, Task Forces, and/or Expert Groups. Please highlight intentions to contribute to specific projects and to collaborate with Permanent Participants.

Germany will continue its active work via its experts in all working groups, task forces and expert groups as outlined above. Many projects will be continued in the following years.

The following is not meant to be a complete list of intended future contributions.

ACAP: The Arctic Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter developed within the project established under PAME and the proposals and work of the EGBCM (where UBA experts are involved) could form the basis for ACAP to initiate further concrete projects and will strengthen the collaboration within the various initiatives.

PAME Project on Marine Litter in the Arctic: The German Environment Agency, UBA's experience will be drawn upon for the second phase (2019-21) on reviewing the need for and establishing a Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and a respective monitoring plan, for which Rita Fabris could provide her expertise from the environmental perspective. UBA is already aiming to sensitize the general public in Germany to litter issues in the Arctic within education and outreach projects. Based on the recommendations in the upcoming action plan, further projects will be developed.

TFICA 2017-2019: The DLR-Institute of Communications and Navigation (Dr. Simon Plass) continues its work in the successor TF of TFTIA. Main focus of this work and the TF is to deepen the analyses of the different user needs versus the available technologies and services to achieve improved connectivity in the Arctic.

CAFF: The Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative (WSFI) will continue to contribute to the implementation of the update of CAFF's workplan for the African-Eurasian flyway under AMBI 2.0 (2019-2023). The WSFI is continuously supporting Guinea Bissau in the fields of capacity building, monitoring, research, and particularly in the planned re-nomination of the Bijagós Archipelago as a World Heritage site, which is one of the most critical refuges for wintering Arctic and Wadden Sea birds along the East Atlantic Flyway.

SDWG: Dr. Kathrin Stephen (IASS) will continue to provide German expertise on the future mandate and work of the Social, Economic, and Cultural Expert Group (SECEG) of the SDWG also during the Icelandic Chairmanship (2019-2021).

Germany is updating its "German Arctic Policy Guidelines" (first published in 2013) and plans to publish a revision in 2019.

If applicable, please describe in no more than one page your state's or organization's contributions to other aspects of the Arctic Council and its goals not covered by the previous sections since the time of your most recent report, or in the previous two years.

Germany, together with Finland and the European Commission, organized the 2nd Arctic Science Ministerial in Berlin in October 2018 (<https://www.arcticsscienceministerial.org>). The Ministerial was not an Arctic Council event, but coordination with the AC was ensured by Finland, current Chair of the Council. As in the AC, indigenous organizations (AC permanent participants) were invited to participate in the Ministerial and to give presentations in each session of the preceding Arctic Science Forum.

Germany also actively supported the adoption of the Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation in 2017.

The German Arctic Office organized a Polar Science and Policy Mini-Symposium at the POLAR 2018 Conference in Davos, Switzerland in June 2018, involving Finnish AC Chair Aleksi Härkönen (<https://www.arctic-office.de/en/information-platform/news/polar-2018/>).

In view of the handover of the Chairmanship of the Arctic Council from the US to Finland, the Federal Foreign Office and the German Arctic Office in cooperation with the Finnish Embassy organized a special seminar on the priorities of the Finnish AC Programme "Exploring Common Solutions" in Berlin in May 2017 (<https://www.arctic-office.de/en/forums-and-events/exploring-common-solutions/>).

As a follow-up, in October 2017 a seminar in Helsinki brought together Finnish, German, and French experts to present and discuss activities in the field of environmental research and environmental protection during the Finnish Chairmanship of the AC. The seminar was organized by the German Arctic Office and the German Embassy in Helsinki, the Finnish Environment Institute and Finnish Ministry of the Environment, and the French Embassy in Helsinki (<https://www.arctic-office.de/en/forums-and-events/german-french-finnish-arctic-seminar/>).

DLR, together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark and the Technical University of Denmark, organized a Breakout Session on Telecommunications in the Arctic at the Arctic Circle Assembly 2016 in Reykjavik, Iceland.

As an Observer, Germany (Director for European Policy Dr. Eva Kracht at the Federal Ministry for the Environment) participated in the Arctic Environment Ministers' Meeting in October 2018 and provided an Observer Statement.

Dr. Janos Hennicke (Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, BfN) is the German delegate of the OSPAR working groups on the protection of species and habitats (ICG-POSH) and MPAs (ICG-MPA), German Delegate of the OSPAR Biodiversity Committee (BDC) as well as technical secretary of ICG-MPA. He serves as link between the AC and OSPAR, whose maritime area also encompasses Arctic waters up to the North Pole, and facilitates the exchange of thoughts on those issues between the two organisations. Dr. Hennicke also supervises several projects on Arctic marine nature conservation, e.g. on Arctic MPAs and the protection of Arctic natural resources, which are funded by BMU and BfN.

Within the framework of their work, Dr. Janos Hennicke and Tim Packeiser attended other meetings and events on Arctic issues, e.g. Side Events during the BBNJ negotiations at the UN in New York, CBD COP 14, to bring forward German positions, learn about the views of others, and exchange ideas on Arctic issues in general.

Germany is actively supporting polar research and is cooperating with Arctic as well as non-Arctic countries in a variety of programs and projects in order to support the aims of the AC. In addition to bilateral scientific cooperation, Germany supports international cooperation in all fields of Arctic research through the AWI as the coordinating institution and cooperates with all Arctic Council Member States.