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## ACAP Progress Report to SAOs –SAO meeting

17-19 November 2020

### Introduction

Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, the second ACAP meeting in 2020 was held online on September 23-24, 2020 for two afternoon calls. Representatives of all eight Arctic States, four Permanent Participants (AIA, ICC, RAIPON and Sámi Council), three Observer States (Italy, Japan, Spain), three Observer organizations (NEFCO, UNEP/Grid-Arendal, WMO), IPS and ACS took part in the online ACAP-II 2020 meeting. The ACAP WG meeting focused on updates on projects from the Expert Groups (EGs) and on identification of deliverables for the 2021 Arctic Council Ministerial meeting. Expert Groups (EG) have continued to develop and implement projects, and progress has been made in priority areas of the ACAP work plan. The relevant sections of the Amarok were updated after the meeting.

On September 22, prior to the WG meeting, ACAP held a Webinar on Mercury and its Combined Effects with Other Contaminants on Health and Ecosystems, which brought together 67 experts and representatives of the Arctic States, Permanent Participants and Observers to discuss mercury-related challenges in the Arctic, as well as available regulations and instruments, and possibilities to enhance cooperation to reduce pollution. Following the presentations by AMAP and ACAP's EG on SLCPs, experts from Sweden, Norway, Russia, Canada and the United States presented their efforts to eliminate, reduce or remedy negative effects of mercury pollution/cocktails of contaminants through individual projects, national policies and regulations to follow up on the Minamata Convention. ACAP sees the September webinar as one of the steps in paving the ground for a more dynamic expert network for continuous interaction between different research, monitoring and action entities to ensure relevant, feasible and successful response to the challenges at hand.

ACAP will continue the practice of arranging workshops/webinars featuring the work of ACAP Expert Groups in conjunction with ACAP WG meetings, whenever feasible.

### Summary of progress on ACAP projects

#### [Expert Group on Short Lived Climate Pollutants \(SLCP EG\)](#)

The project *Mitigation of black carbon and methane emissions from APG flaring in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation* is expected to be completed during the Icelandic Chairmanship of the Arctic Council. SLCP EG Members have reviewed the Draft Final Report of the project *Mitigation of Short-Lived Climate Pollutants from Associated Petroleum Gas (APG)-Flaring Phase 2: "The Use of New Methodology to reduce APG Flaring at Remote Fields"* funded by PSI. Canada has recently provided additional edits to the report to correct factual inaccuracies concerning Canadian polices and those have been sent to

NEFCO. ACAP WG has requested NEFCO to submit a revised version of the Report to ACAP in October 2020. The detailed report provides an analysis of the technological and economic effects of implementation of the Novoportovskoye investment project (Stage II), as well as an analysis of the current regulatory systems in all Arctic Member states, aimed at the reduction of soot and methane emissions, including emissions from APG flaring. In addition, the report addresses APG reinjection technology scaling and commercialization potential in the Russian Arctic Zone given the geographic and geological characteristics of the assets and relevant environmental impacts in different scenarios. ACAP is seeking ways to highlight this report and encourage greater implementation of flaring reductions in the Russian Arctic Zone.

The workshop for this project, originally scheduled for April 28-29 in Moscow, will be held as a webinar on 27-28 October 2020. The aim of the webinar is to take stock of knowledge on the scale and characteristics of emissions from the oil and gas sector, present and discuss current and possible mitigation actions and strategies. It will bring together state officials from Arctic States, ACAP representatives, representatives from relevant industries with operations in the Arctic as well as researchers and other stakeholders engaged in issues related to oil and gas sector black carbon and methane emissions to share their knowledge and perspectives and to discuss ways to enhance efforts. This will cover both broader issues related to policies and measures, but also focus on specific examples of actions which have had a proven track record.

Work on the *Phase-out of Ozone Depleting Substances and Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases at Fish and Seafood Processing Enterprises of the Murmansk Oblast (Phase II)* project and *Pilot Project for Reducing CO<sub>2</sub> and Black Carbon Emissions on the Rivers of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation* is moving forward. For the latter, an Inception Report has been provided and the Project Steering Committee (PSC) has been established. The PSC has had its meeting recently.

*Black Carbon Case Studies Platform:* The ACAP website hosts this interactive platform, which provides a one-stop shop for public information on black carbon work being undertaken in the Arctic. Currently, there are more than 70 case studies highlighted. Increased outreach will be undertaken by Arctic States, PPs and Arctic Council Observers to gather more case studies that demonstrate the effectiveness of projects that reduce black carbon emissions in the Arctic. The expert group encourages Arctic Council Observers to submit case studies for inclusion in the platform. Project leads will work with EGBCM contacts to introduce emissions inventories to the platform and to develop social media and outreach communication relevant to black carbon work in the Arctic.

### [Indigenous People Contaminants Action Program \(IPCAP EG\)](#)

At its September meeting, the ACAP WG has reaffirmed its approval of the revised proposal for the next phase of the *Community-Based Black Carbon and Public Health Assessment Project*. During this phase, project partners will implement monitoring, public health characterization and community awareness measures in close cooperation with five Arctic villages – two in Alaska and three in the Russian Federation. The Project design was adjusted to meet the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic by reducing travel, encouraging virtual meetings and observing local safety precautions. An application for PSI funding for Phase 2 of the project has been submitted by ACAP to the PSI Committee to be considered at its meeting

on 24 November 2020. ACAP is also planning to hold a Webinar on Black Carbon and Human Health tentatively in February 2021. Both IPCAP EG and SLCP EG stated their interest and willingness to take part in the development of the webinar program.

The *Circumpolar Local Environment Observer Network (CLEO)* project has made good progress in the Sapmi area across borders of Sweden, Finland and Norway, and establishment of a CLEO hub in Kautokeino, Norway. Continued work is undertaken in Alaska and Canada. New funding has been received for the expansion of the CLEO Network to the Far East of Russia from the Beringia Program, with the plans to establish 2 new hubs in Yakutsk and Chukotka. This progress provides an opportunity to complete the efforts for CLEO to become circumpolar.

The report on the results of *the Kola Waste Project*, led by the Sámi Council and funded by Sweden and Norway, has been highly commended by ACAP. The IPCAP EG is planning to organize a Kola Waste Outreach Webinar and Educational Tour during the next half a year depending on the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic. This tour also aims at mobilizing schools and local communities in the CLEO network.

ACAP approved *Solid Waste Management in Remote Arctic Communities* project proposal. An application for PSI funding has been submitted by SDWG and ACAP to the PSI Committee for consideration at its meeting in November. Norway will co-lead the project together with AIA. The project design has taken into account COVID-19 considerations.

### Expert Group on POPs and Mercury (POPs & Hg EG)

The project “*P2 Inventory of uses of POPs and Mercury and their Emission Sources in Murmansk Region*” was approved for PSI funding at the PCOM13 meeting on 29 June 2020, and its implementation has started. It is currently in the Inception phase. This project is aligned with Russia’s National Implementation Plan for implementation of the Stockholm Convention.

The Inception Report for the ARCRISK - *Mercury Risk Evaluation, Risk Management, and Risk Reduction Measures in the Arctic* project was approved by ACAP intersessionally on 4 September 2020 through a silence procedure, and an application for continued funding of the rest of the project has been submitted by ACAP to the PSI Committee to be considered at its meeting on 24 November 2020.

The EG is waiting for the final decision of the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation to start working on *the Promotion of Decreased Pollution in the Arctic Region with the Introduction of Best Available Techniques (BAT)* project.

Further development of the project proposal “*P4 – Promote Unintended POPs and Mercury Emission Control Technologies in Russia*” is put on hold until project “*P2 Inventory of uses of POPs and Mercury and their Emission Sources in Murmansk Region*” has reached a sufficient stage of implementation. The pilot project *Development of Mercury Containing Waste Management Systems in the Arctic Regions of the Russian Federation* is currently on hold.

## Expert Group on Waste (Waste EG)

The *Rapid Environmental Assessment (REA)* project on storage of obsolete pesticides has made good progress despite the COVID-19 situation. In August 2020, the consultant organized a workshop for stakeholders from Moscow, Arkhangelsk, Komi Republic, Krasnoyarsk Krai and Novosibirsk Institute for Organic Chemistry, and 16 representatives participated. These experts will identify obsolete storage facilities for pesticides in their regions. A report demonstrating REA technique is expected to be submitted for ACAP's approval later in the fall.

The *Phase-out and Environmentally Sound Management of Fire-fighting Foams Containing Perfluorooctanesulfonic Acid (PFOS) and Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) in the Arctic Region* project will be seeking funding at the next PSI Committee meeting, subject to approval from the ACAP WG. Many Arctic States have already restricted use of these toxic substances in response to pollution of their water resources and health concerns. The project is aimed at supporting transition to safer, non-fluorinated alternatives in the Arctic.

NEFCO is working on hiring a consultant to develop a feasibility study and a project plan for the *Reduction of Negative Impact on the Environment by Rehabilitation of Accumulated Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) with the Best Available Technologies – Dudinka Landfill* project. RAIPON expressed their support of the project and willingness to work with the project leads.

The *Demonstration of Management and Destruction of 250 tons of PCB in Transformers and Capacitors (Phase III)* project is delayed pending completion of the UNIDO-GEF-Russian Railways PCB project, which has been extended until the second quarter of 2021.

The *Demonstration of Environmentally Sound Destruction of Obsolete Pesticides (Phase III)* project has been cancelled by the decision of the PSI Committee, as the existing contracts between NEFCO and LLC "NPO Prikladnoy Geoekeologii" have expired and there are no prospects of continuation. Subsequently the *Information Exchange Workshop on Obsolete Pesticides Inventory and Destruction Technologies* is delayed indefinitely.

## Identification of Deliverables for the 2021 Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting

The following projects have indicated deliverables for the Icelandic Chairmanship Ministerial Meeting, May 19-20, 2021 in Reykjavik:

- Mitigation of Black Carbon and Methane Emissions from APG Flaring in the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation
- Circumpolar Local Environmental Network (CLEO)
- Kola Waste Project
- Fact sheets and potentially other communication materials on mercury and its combined effects with other contaminants on ecosystems and human health
- Rapid Environmental Assessment (REA)

## Collaboration with Other Subsidiary Bodies of the Arctic Council

ACAP has been collaborating with AMAP in connection to the ACAP Webinar on Mercury and ACAP Webinar on Black Carbon and Methane from the Oil and Gas Sector. Such collaboration helps the two WGs to align their work at the EG level

ACAP's EG on Short-Lived Climate Pollutants has been in dialogue with EGBCM on possible inclusion of policy case studies to ACAP's Black Carbon Case Studies Platform and in relation to the ACAP Webinar on Black Carbon and Methane from the Oil and Gas Sector.

ACAP has invited PAME to nominate its expert to the Project Supervising Committee for the *Arctic Green Shipping* project. ACAP has provided an input to PAME's 3<sup>rd</sup> AMSP Implementation Report and ACAP Chair provided feedback on the draft Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter in the Arctic.

## Communication and Outreach

ACAP has been working on enhancing its communication and outreach efforts. Articles on Dioxines, the APG-Flaring Project, and Mercury and other contaminants have been developed and published/or soon to be published on the Arctic Council and ACAP websites in cooperation with the ACS communications team. More articles are currently under development. ACAP is considering production of a short outreach video as one of the deliverables for the APG-Flaring Project. ACAP is planning to produce a suite of fact sheets on contaminants (mercury and POPs) for the 2021 Ministerial meeting.

## Upcoming ACAP Working Group Meetings

The ACAP Heads of Delegation will meet online on November 5-6, 2020 to discuss ACAP's contribution to the SAOs' Report to Ministers.

The next online meeting of the ACAP Working Group will take place on January 27-28, 2021 in Oslo, Norway.