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ACAP Progress Report to SAOs –SAO meeting

1-2 December 2021

Introduction

The second ACAP Working Group meeting in 2021 was held online on September 8-9, 2021 over two half-day virtual meetings. Representatives of seven Arctic States (Canada, Kingdom of Denmark (only day 2), Finland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, USA), three Permanent Participants (AIA, RAIPON and Saami Council), two Observer States (Japan, Spain), three Observer organizations (Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea (ACOPS), NEFCO, UNEP/Grid-Arendal), IPS and ACS took part in the online ACAP-II 2021 meeting. The ACAP WG meeting focused on the updates on the current ACAP projects and new project proposals, and discussed ACAP's Communication and Outreach Plan for 2021-2023, as well as ACAP's procedural documents. 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 Amarak were updated after the meeting.

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](#) was completed in 2021 and produced several deliverables for the 2021 Ministerial meeting in Reykjavik: 1) *Phase 2 report of the project "The Use of New Methodology to reduce APG Flaring at Remote Fields"*; 2) *Report on the ACAP Webinar on Black Carbon and Methane from the Oil and Gas Sector with policy recommendations*; and 3) a series of short videos, describing the challenges related to the flaring of associated petroleum gas (APG), highlighting the economic and environmental benefits of mitigating emissions of SLCPs from APG flaring and promoting best practices in the oil and gas industry with respect to APG flaring.

[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 about 85 case studies highlighted. Over the past year, project leads have worked with EGBCM and added links to [emissions inventories from Arctic States and Observers](#) to the platform. An Arctic Fellow with the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) Working Group is researching additional case studies. The expert group encourages Arctic Council Observers to submit case studies for inclusion in the platform.

The [Phase-out of Ozone Depleting Substances and Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases at Fish and Seafood Processing Enterprises of the Murmansk Oblast \(Phase II\)](#) project has made good progress. To date, tenders have been held for the three largest recipients of technical assistance for the Project (LLC "FC

"Polar Sea+" (Norebo holding), LLC "MurmanStroy" (Virma holding), and Murmansk State Technical University (MSTU)). Contracts have been signed and work has begun at MSTU to establish a training center. The supply of equipment for service companies in the Murmansk Oblast has been completed and a contract for the conversion of a small fish-processing enterprise (TD "Samson-Trade" Ltd) is being finalized.

Work has also begun on the development of a feasibility study and technical documentation for an ODS and F-gases recycling and disposal system. Procurement of equipment will be carried out based on the results of this work and the tender is scheduled for the beginning of 2022. Active negotiations are underway with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation and the Federal Agency for Fisheries related to creation of a regional program for phasing out ODS and F gases in the fishing industry of Murmansk Oblast. A Project website is now available in English and Russian, with comprehensive information about the project and the progress of its implementation (https://www.ozoneprogram.ru/eng/project_murmansk/).

Phase 1 of the [Pilot Project for Reducing CO₂ and Black Carbon Emissions on the Rivers of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation](#) concluded with a finalized Pre-Feasibility Study. The final report included: analysis of existing vessels with a deadweight tonnage ranging from 2,000 to 7,000 tons in the territory of the Russian Federation above 60°N; an overview of the existing regulatory practices and standards; an investigation of new technologies and assessment of their effect on emissions; the identification of potential additional beneficiaries; and an outline including key steps for the Feasibility Study(ies). The SLCP EG reviewed the Phase 1 final report in May 2021. The Russian project beneficiary is considering a possible proposal for a second phase.

The SLCP EG is working on the development of the "Wildland Fire Management Practices and Emissions of Black Carbon and Other Air Pollutants" project proposal, in close cooperation with other AC working groups that are working on wildfire issues, including CAFF, EPPR and AMAP.

Indigenous People Contaminants Action Program (IPCAP EG)

Two of the IPCAP EG projects produced deliverables for the 2021 Ministerial Meeting in Reykjavik – [the Circumpolar Local Environmental Observer \(CLEO\) Initiative](#) and the [Kola Waste project](#).

Circumpolar Local Environmental Observer Network: Summary for Policymakers (backed up by the full CLEO Report) describes the origins of the Local Environmental Observer (LEO) Network and its expansion from North America to Nordic countries (Finland, Sweden, Norway), covering most of the Sápmi territory. The Summary provides an overview of different national and international efforts and events contributing to the advancement of the CLEO Initiative, and of its key accomplishments, such as raising awareness on environmental change among diverse knowledge systems to better understand and respond to local impacts of climate change and to communicate events related to broader trends. It also presents lessons learned, findings and ways forward.

The Initiative will continue, focusing on further expansion, bridging observation systems, resolving potential intellectual property issues, continued refinement and development of the LEO Network, youth engagement and education and outreach.

[The Kola Waste Project report](#) is another deliverable, which presents results of the inventory phase and

the primary clean-up phase of this Sámi Council-led project. The project identified 43 waste dumpsites in the Sámi area on the Kola peninsula. Reduction efforts were introduced at three sites and 96 tons of waste were collected from these locations for further disposal. The project engaged local Sámi population in Sámi communities of the Kola peninsula and raised awareness of pollution risks. To support the report, a short video on the Kola Waste project was released in June 2021 (funded by Norway).

The next phase of the Kola Waste Project will focus both on further clean-up of more difficult sites on the Kola peninsula as well as on experience sharing with other communities. Communities in the Russian Arctic could gain valuable experience in better waste management practices and this experience could be shared to other communities that could benefit from such practices. This third phase of the Kola Waste Project will adapt to form a part of the circumpolar ACAP-SDWG Solid Waste Management Project (see below) ACAP will also explore possible synergies between the *Kola Waste project* and the *P2 Inventory of uses of POPs and Mercury and their Emission Sources in Murmansk Region project* (POPs and Mercury EG).

[The Community-Based Black Carbon and Public Health Assessment \(Phase 2\)](#) project leads are finalizing negotiations with NEFCO on the first contract for project implementation. 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. SLCP EG and IPCAP, in cooperation with AMAP, are also planning a series of webinars on black carbon and health hosted by different Arctic communities.

[Solid Waste Management in Remote Arctic Communities](#) is a joint ACAP-SDWG project, which will strengthen capacity for environmentally sound solid waste and marine debris management in selected remote communities across the Arctic. On 15 March 2021, the PSI Committee confirmed its Final Investment Decision regarding a PSI commitment of up to EUR 500,000 for the project. The project leads have started working with NEFCO on planning implementation and contracting. Project activities have been initiated and begun with funding provided by several Arctic States and the Saami Council. The pre-planning phase of the project involves an assessment of: 1) small, remote Arctic community (< 1500 people) solid waste practices; 2) challenges these communities face related to health, environmental and economic impacts from solid waste; and 3) best practices they have used and can share with similar communities.

[Expert Group on Waste \(Waste EG\)](#)

The Final Report for the [Rapid Environmental Assessment \(REA\)](#) project was a delivered at the 2021 Ministerial meeting in Reykjavik. The Rapid Environmental Assessment (REA) is a tool developed by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) for prioritizing pesticide contaminated sites for further intervention. The ACAP REA project was initiated to demonstrate the use of this methodology / tool, and train experts to use it in three pilot regions: Arkhangelsk Oblast, Komi Republic and Krasnoyarsk Krai. All these regions had received support from ACAP for pesticide storage improvements. The results of the project were communicated to the FAO, who are considering how to use the experience in the technical assistance activities. Given that there were leftover funds related to this ACAP project after its completion, a workshop to promote uptake of the methodology and possibly to discuss other waste

management issues is planned for 2022 in Arkhangelsk. Timing of the workshop will depend on how the COVID-19 situation develops.

Implementation of the project [*AFFF \(Aqueous Film Forming Foam\) and other PFAS-containing Foam Phase Out in the Arctic*](#) started in April 2021. [A fact sheet on the project and AFFF](#) has been developed and published online. The consultant has sent questionnaires on fire-fighting foams to relevant operators in the Arctic. A literature review draft is currently being commented on by the steering group. Project completion is tentatively scheduled for December 2022.

The first draft of Phase 0 report for the [*Reduction of Negative Impact on the Environment by Rehabilitation of Accumulated Municipal Solid Waste \(MSW\) with the Best Available Technologies – Dudinka Landfill*](#) was finalized in the first quarter of 2021. As part of Phase I, in late August a subconsultant (Proinzgroup) took samples and analyzed soil, water, air and sediment samples from the area surrounding the landfill for contaminants to estimate the releases to the Yenisey river. A Moscow-based consultant from a Russian BAT Bureau “Environmental Industrial Policy Centre” (EIPC) has been working on the project proposal. Depending on the results of the contaminants study, the project proposal can be developed after completion of Stage 1 in late 2021.. There are potential synergies between this work and the circumpolar SDWG/ACAP project Solid Waste Management in Remote Arctic Communities.

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 was extended until 31 August 2021.

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

ACAP reaffirmed its approval of the [*P2 Inventory of uses of POPs and Mercury and their Emission Sources in Murmansk Region project*](#), given the change of the Russian key partner from the Novosibirsk Institute of Inorganic Chemistry (NIOC) to the Tomsk Polytechnic University (TPU), and the PSI Committee was informed about it on 20 September 2021. This project is focused on promoting installation of control techniques aiming at limiting/eliminating release of POPs and Mercury.

The [*P3.2 – Promotion of Decreased Pollution in the Arctic Region with the Introduction of Best Available Techniques \(BAT\)*](#) project is aimed at the development of an action plan with targeted risk reduction measures for mercury releases from key sources in the Arctic. The project will primarily consist of targeted BAT training at facilities in the Russian Arctic (& Barents). On this basis, a contract for scoping (Work Package 1) has been developed and is in its final negotiation stage with “Environmental Industrial Policy Centre” (BAT Bureau). The members of the Project Supervising Committee have been nominated and the first PSC meeting was held in September 2021. The Scoping study is expected to start in November 2021.

The [*ARCRISK - Mercury Risk Evaluation, Risk Management, and Risk Reduction Measures in the Arctic*](#) project received PSI funding for Work Packages 2-6 in March 2021, the PSI Committee approved the Final Investment Decision of a PSI commitment of up to EUR 789,000 for the project. Contracting was completed in August 2021. The aim of this project is to develop an action plan with targeted risk

reduction measures for mercury releases from key sources in Canada, Norway and Russia.

The EG developed a new project proposal “P4 Inventory and Action Planning against negative effects from use of POPs and Mercury in the Ob River basin”, which was approved by ACAP through a silence procedure on 16 September 2021. The main goal of the project is to develop and implement an action plan to reduce emissions of POPs and mercury into the catchment area of the Ob’ River, which affects the Arctic. The project is in line with the objectives of the Stockholm Convention on POPs and the Minamata Convention on Mercury, and will be implemented in consultation and close cooperation with AMAP. The project is seeking PSI funding.

Collaboration with Other Subsidiary Bodies of the Arctic Council

In summer and autumn of 2021, the ACAP Chair and Executive Secretary had calls with the Chairs and Executive Secretaries of SDWG, CAFF and AMAP to discuss cross-cutting issues and plans for collaboration.

- ACAP and AMAP are planning several joint sessions on contaminants at the expert level, and intend to continue collaboration on several projects. AMAP experts reviewed and provided feedback to ACAP’s updated fact sheets on dioxins.
- ACAP and SDWG have started implementation of a joint project on solid waste management in remote Arctic communities. Potential synergies between the work of the 2 WGs in the field of community health have been identified. Youth engagement and the CLEO Initiative is another opportunity for cooperation.
- ACAP and CAFF have been cooperating within the CLEO Initiative. The two working groups, together with the AEC Secretariat, are currently working on the development of an initial concept of an innovation prize for youth with a plan to present it to all the other AC WGs.
- Another promising area of cooperation with CAFF and AMAP is the development of educational materials on pollutants, their impact on biodiversity and ways of addressing this problem.
- The ACAP SLCP EG has been developing the “Wildland Fire Management Practices and Emissions of Black Carbon and Other Air Pollutants” project proposal, in consultation with CAFF, EPPR, AMAP and EGBCM.

Communication and Outreach

The ACAP EG on Waste has developed a fact sheet on the AFFF project, which is published online. The EG on POPs and Mercury is finalizing updated fact sheets on dioxins and is developing fact sheets on mercury.

Information on ACAP’s projects and most recent deliverables has been published on the ACAP website and shared via social media.

ACAP is working with ICCI and AMAP to showcase climate-relevant ACAP projects at the Cryosphere Pavilion at COP26.

ACAP HoDs are currently drafting a Communications and Outreach Plan that will strategically guide ACAP's efforts to highlight its work, raise awareness related to Arctic contaminants and their mitigation, provide information to communities, and inform governments about policies and programs that reduce contaminants exposure for Arctic residents.

Administration and Upcoming ACAP Working Group Meetings

In 2021-2023 ACAP is chaired by the United States.

The next ACAP WG meeting is tentatively scheduled for the first or second week of February 2022.