



Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna

CAFF PROGRESS REPORT SENIOR ARCTIC OFFICIALS

Haparanda, Sweden, November 14-15 2012



Photo: Tom Middleton, shutterstock.com



ARCTIC COUNCIL

Note: This report is a summary of key activities and developments from April to November 2012 and does not represent a comprehensive list of CAFF activities, priorities and projects. Timelines and dates are subject to change.

Response to AC Priorities

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The common priorities agreed upon for the Norwegian, Danish and Swedish Chairmanship period (2007-2013) are concerned with climate change, integrated resource management, the International Polar Year (IPY), Indigenous peoples, local living conditions, management issues and biodiversity.

These priorities are integral to CAFF's objectives and mandate to address the conservation of Arctic biodiversity, and to communicate its findings to the governments and residents of the Arctic, helping to promote practices which ensure the sustainability of the Arctic's living resources.

CAFF's Arctic Biodiversity Assessment and the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program are two key contributions towards understanding the impacts of climate change and other stressors on biodiversity and the sustainable use of the Arctic's living resources. In 2013 the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment will:

- provide the first description of the current state of Arctic ecosystems and biodiversity
- create a baseline for use in global and regional assessments of biodiversity
- provide a basis to inform and guide future Arctic Council work
- provide up-to-date scientific knowledge

- identify gaps in the data record
- identify key mechanisms driving change
- produce scientific and policy recommendations

The Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program will coordinate and feed harmonized and integrated biodiversity monitoring information into Arctic Council processes.

These activities will create a dynamic process in which information remains up-to-date, relevant and easily accessed by scientists, decision makers and Arctic residents.

Summary of progress on CAFF projects

Three products will be released in May 2013

1) Full scientific technical report:

Current status: all but one chapter has undergone peer and country review.

2) Summary report for policy makers

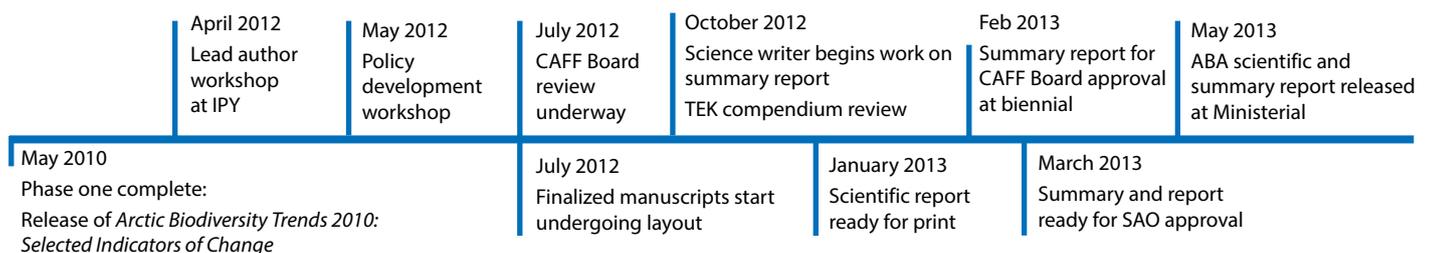
Current status: in development and will contain a key findings and policy recommendations.

3) TEK Compendiums: TEK collected in the ABA process

Current status: in development

A communications plan is in place and an accompanying film has been developed with UNEP-GRID Arendal. CAFF is discussing a possible Arctic Biodiversity Symposium to be held some time after the ABA release. A symposium will bring together those with an interest in Arctic biodiversity to discuss ABA findings and implementation.

Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA)



www.caff.is/aba

Arctic Sea Ice Associated Biodiversity

Phase one: Identify issues, authors, outline and actions that will form the substance of a technical report. Phase complete.

Phase two: March 2012 Saint Petersburg meeting provided input into technical report. Russia agreed to be co-lead with Canada and the U.S.A.

Phase three: Report and accompanying recommendations for action in development to be finalized in October for SAO approval in November.

Phase four: Communication of the results and recommendations to a non-technical audience, date to be confirmed.

Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment - IIC

A review of the environmental component is complete. Currently awaiting revised draft for working group approval. The cultural component is with SDWG for development. A final report is scheduled for fall 2012.

www.caff.is/assessments



The Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program

- Convened three Expert Monitoring Groups developing and integrating **long-term monitoring plans** for marine, freshwater, and terrestrial Arctic ecosystems. These groups/plans are in various stages of development.
- The **Arctic Biodiversity Data Service (ABDS)**, a coordinated web-based data management system that accesses, integrates, displays and analyzes biodiversity data according to various user needs, was released at the IPY. Data is currently being added as it becomes available. This effort will provide a focal point for current and credible Arctic biodiversity data facilitating more timely and effective decisions while also facilitating data access for scientists, policy makers, Arctic communities and the public.
- **Arctic Species Trend Index (ASTI)** released a key findings report and two reports from detailed analysis of marine ecosystems and a spatial and temporal analysis at an IPY media event and received positive and extensive coverage
- Increased focus in engaging **industry partners** in contributing to and utilizing CBMP data efforts.
- Planned **community based monitoring** registry project to identify and maintain inventory of local/TEK knowledge and datasets to facilitate their discovery and use into CBMP projects. Metadata base initiated and pilot plan underway.
- Contributor and reviewer of major international efforts including:
 - NOAA's Arctic Report Cards
 - Biodiversity Journal
 - Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research's (SCAR) Terrestrial Biodiversity Observing Network
 - Fondation pour la Recherche sur la Biodiversite (FRB) France's National Biodiversity Indicators
 - Global Earth Observation- Biodiversity Observation Network (GEOBON)
 - Developing the Arctic Biodiversity Coalition with IASC, ISAC, WWF, INTERACT, AMAP, APECS, University of the Arctic, with the support of SAON.

Marine

The *Arctic Marine Biodiversity Monitoring Plan* has been approved and is being implemented by the Marine Steering Group (MSG) and five new and two existing Marine Expert Networks (MENs). They will coordinate long-term Arctic marine biodiversity monitoring data management and reporting. December 2012 meeting will review progress and discuss second year of implementation.

Terrestrial

Meeting in Alaska (May 2012) and Iceland (September 2012) will further develop the *Arctic Terrestrial Biodiversity Monitoring Plan*. Final Plan expected in January 2013.

Freshwater

Final *Arctic Freshwater Biodiversity Monitoring Plan* approved in September 2012.

April 2012

IPY events: data launch/SIN, ASTI reports, plenary presentation, various meetings

September 2012

Arctic Freshwater Monitoring Plan CAFF Board approved

January 2013

Arctic Terrestrial Monitoring Plan ready for Board approval

May 2012

FEMG and TEMG meetings to advance Plan development

September 2012

TEMG meeting to advance Plan development

December 2012

Marine Steering Group to meet during the ArcticNet conference in Vancouver

www.cbmp.is

CAFF Flora Group (CFG)

Photo: ozAxe, shutterstock.com

- A September 2012 meeting in Russia helped further develop the **Circumboreal Vegetation Map (CBVM)** project, an integrated map of boreal vegetation designed to better meet the needs of conservation and management at a circumboreal scale.
- **International Arctic Vegetation Database (IAVD)** will create a circumpolar data management classification system for the benefit of research, conservation, education and policy-making. A May 2012 meeting in Denmark furthered the project.
- Developing a **Red List for Arctic Vascular Plants** anticipated for February 2013
- Developing an online **Arctic Plant Portal** to house information on plant species. Will be available on ABDS.
- CFG is also the IUCN Arctic Plants specialist group.

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Circumpolar Seabird Group (CBird)

- The **Seabird Information Network** was released at IPY. Available on ABDS.
- A research proposal is in development to support a geolocator study of the thick-billed murre. This technology has provided dramatic new results in habitat use and can assist in international cooperation for conservation.
- The **Circumpolar Seabird Monitoring Plan** is scheduled to be finalized in December 2012.
- A report on circumpolar glaucous gull declines is undergoing review and scheduled for completion in 2012.
- Data is being compiled for a status and trends report of the black-legged kittewake in order to assess the species circumpolar conservation concerns.
- Undergoing review of ivory gull status and monitoring.
- The **Circumpolar Murre Conservation Strategy** is undergoing review and will be ready in 2012.

Administration and Meetings

Current Chair: Evgeny Syroechkovskiy, Russia

2013- 2015 Chairmanship: Canada

Prominent Meetings and Presentations

April 2012: Canada IPY: CBMP Expert Monitoring Group sessions and Arctic Species Trend Index report release

May 2012:
Alaska
TEMG meeting
Norway
FEMG meeting
Denmark
IAVD meeting

July 2012: Romania
Ramsar COP11: RoC
and side event

September 2012:
Iceland
Arctic Council seminar at
the Arctic Parliamentarians
conference
Russia
CBVM meeting
Iceland
TEMG meeting

October 2012:
Russia
CAFF Board Meeting

November 2012:
South Africa
Sub Global Assessment

February 2013:
Russia
CAFF Biennial Meeting
USA
CBird Meeting

Ongoing Communications Activities

- CAFF, ArcticData, Arctic Biodiversity websites
- ABDS data portal
- Report generation
- Media events, response and issues management
- Social media presence
- CAFF representation to Arctic Council communications contact group
- Side event organization for major conferences and meetings
- Internal communications
- Public inquiry response
- Project specific communications: including events, publications, multimedia, outreach materials for ABA, the CBMP, and expert groups

Collaborations

AMAP

- CBMP
- AMSA IIC
- SAON
- Arctic Report Card

SDWG

- AMSA IIC
- SAON

PAME

- AMSA IIC
- Arcticdata.is
- Ecosystem Based Management

Ramsar

July 2012 CAFF signed a with Ramsar at the COP11 in July 2012. CAFF hosted a side event.

African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA)

July 2012 CAFF signed a with Ramsar at the COP11 in July 2012. CAFF hosted a side event. Developing a RoC with Convention on Migratory Species (CMS).

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

SBSTTA Working Group, under recommendation XV/7, recommended the COP adopt a decision to welcome the CAFF report on Arctic Biodiversity and to welcome continued collaboration and utilization of CAFF monitoring and assessment information. The Conference of the Parties (COP) will meet to discuss. CAFF will be represented at CBD COP11 in Hyderabad India, October 2012.

Ongoing partnerships

In addition, CAFF cooperates with many international organizations and conventions. Some current partners include:

- Zoological Society of London

- GEOSS, GEOBON
- The Conference of the Arctic Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region
- UNEP/GRID Arendal
- UNEP WCMC
- European Environment Agency (EEA)
- International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- WWF Arctic Program
- Association of Early Polar Career Scientists (APECS)
- Wetlands International
- Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)

Deliverables for 2013 Ministerial

Photo: Wild Arctic Pictures, shutterstock.com

A range of CAFF activities and projects will be presented to the Ministerial, key deliverables include:

Deliverable #1

Arctic Biodiversity Assessment

Will deliver the scientific report and summary report and recommendations for policy makers to the 2013 Ministerial.

Deliverable #2

Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program

Will deliver the *Arctic Freshwater Biodiversity Monitoring Plan* and the *Arctic Terrestrial Biodiversity Monitoring Plan* to the 2013 Ministerial. These plans will coordinate long-term Arctic biodiversity monitoring and assemble existing data to establish a better understanding of the changes occurring in the Arctic environment.

Deliverable #3

CAFF Work Plan 2013-2015 and Ministerial Progress Report

CAFF will deliver its 2013-2015 Work Plan and additional Ministerial Progress Report during the 2013 Ministerial.

Deliverable #4

CAFF projects and activities (TBA) Please note that CAFF deliverables will be finalized at CAFF Biennial meeting in February 2013.