

**Meeting of Senior Arctic Officials
FINAL REPORT
28-29 November 2007
Narvik, Norway**

In Attendance:

Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs)

Chair: Karsten Klepsvik
Canada: Adèle Dion
Denmark: Mikaela Engell
Finland: Tauno Pesola (Interim)
Iceland: Ragnar Baldursson (Substitute)
Norway: Robert Kvile
Russian Federation: Alexander Ignatiev
Sweden: Helena Ödmark
United States: Julia L. Gourley

Permanent Participant (PP) Representatives

Arctic Athabaskan Council (ACC): Chief Gary Harrison
Aleut International Association (AIA): Victoria Gofman
Gwich'in Council International (GCI): Bridget Larocque
Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC): Patricia Cochran – IPS Chair
Russian Arctic Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON): Rodion Sulyandziga
Saami Council (SC): Stefan Mikaelsson

(Full list of acronyms on the last page)

1. Welcoming Remarks

The Chair of the Senior Arctic Officials, Mr. Karsten Klepsvik, convened the meeting at 9:00 on November 28, 2007 and gave the welcoming remarks.

2. Introduction to Narvik and Social Events

For information only.

3. Introduction of new SAOs and PPs

The interim SAO from Finland, Tauno Pessola, was introduced. Ragnar Baldursson was welcomed as substituting for Iceland's SAO, Jon Egil Egillson. The Danish SAO introduced the new Head of Delegation for Greenland, Maliina Abelsen of the Greenlandic Home Rule Government. Chief Gary Harrison of AAC introduced Bill Erasmus as the incoming international chair for the AAC.

4. Approval of the Agenda

Discussion: SAOs welcomed organization of the agenda by theme. It was suggested that reporting under the general Working Group theme be integrated as sub-items under the thematic areas. However, with the exception of two points, it was preferred that any suggestions for large-scale restructuring of the agenda be taken into account for the next meeting. Finland requested addition of the EU Northern Dimension at the next meeting.

Decision: The agenda was approved with Item 8.1b on the PSI moved under Item 17.1 and item 8.2 on non-CO2 drivers of climate change moved under Item 9. To the extent possible, Working Group discussion items will be integrated with thematic areas for future meetings.

5. Approval of New Observers

Issue: Ad-Hoc Observer applications were circulated for comment and approval ahead of the meeting.

Discussion: The European Commission delivered a statement underlining that the Arctic is a priority in the EU Northern Dimension Framework document. The EC has adopted a “Blue Book” on Maritime Policy. Many Arctic Council countries, including non-European, contributed to the work. The EU maritime policy promotes implementation of an integrated ecosystems approach and the EC is pleased with Arctic Council efforts in this regard. The European Environmental Agency (EEA), member of the EC delegation, stated that it provides independent environmental advice for policy and decision making and is actively working on Arctic issues, including in cooperation with AMAP and UNEP GridArendal.

Decision: The European Commission was admitted as an ad-hoc observer to the meeting.

6. Approval of Draft Report of the SAO Meeting, 12-13 April 2007, Tromsø, Norway.

Decision: SAOs approved the Report of the SAO Meeting, 12-13 April 2007 with two deletions requested by China. The Report will be posted on Arctic Council website.

7. Update on Implementation of the Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP)

Issue: In Salekhard, Working Groups were requested to provide key project information for the update of the SDAP. The SAO Chair provided an update on implementation of the SDAP and noted that the format had been simplified to facilitate submission and review of the major WG deliverables. The Arctic Council Secretariat compiled this information for SAO review.

Discussion: It was noted that the new format is a departure from the previous SDAP format agreed in Reykjavik (different headings and subheadings), but that the simplified format has succeeded in progressing the work. It was suggested that the new format may not comply with the SDAP mandate from the Ministers and may need to be approached differently and called something new, e.g. “Arctic Council Action Plan”, if the agreed format with headings based on the three pillars of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) was not retained. It was requested that the new format should provide for projects implemented by WGs jointly, distinguish between approved and proposed projects, and archive “implemented projects”.

Decision: Members of the Arctic Council were invited to submit any additional specific comments to the Arctic Council Secretariat and a new draft will be prepared.

8. Presentations from Working Groups (items requiring SAO decision or guidance)

8.1. ACAP

Issue: ACAP presented 4 projects requiring SAO action.

8.1a ACAP Indigenous Peoples Community Action Initiative

Discussion: ACAP was congratulated on its cooperation with Permanent Participants and indigenous communities to identify and remove local sources of contamination. ACAP was encouraged to expand this work to other communities provided there is sufficient funding and commitment from all Parties involved, and to continue to strengthen participation of the PPs and the IPS. AIA encouraged expanding the project to the Commander Islands and Kamchatka as a continuation of the previous AIA led research that showed high level of contaminants in the area. The Bering Sea Sub-network (BSSN) villages were suggested as a co-location for ACAP activities. ICC indicated it would like a major role in working with ACAP on this project. Canada expressed interest to become more involved. Russia noted that much of ACAP's work is carried out in Russia in cooperation with Roztechnadzor and that a representative of Roztechnadzor could be co-chair in the ACAP group. An updated mandate for ACAP in its new capacity as an AC working group was requested.

Decision: SAOs approved expansion of ACAP Indigenous Peoples Community Action Initiative to other indigenous communities, and requested ACAP to strengthen involvement of PPs and IPS. Given that ACAP only recently became a WG, ACAP was requested to present its updated operating guidelines and Rules and Procedures at the next meeting.

8.1b Integrated Hazardous Waste Management Strategy (IHWMS)

Note: *Moved to agenda Item 17.1 on the Project Support Instrument (PSI).*

8.1c ACAP Cleaner Production Program at Norilsk Nickel Company

Discussion: ACAP introduced its Cleaner Production Program model developed at Norilsk Nickel Company, a significant emitter of pollutants in the Arctic. Norilsk Nickel Company will self-fund further activities based on this model.

Conclusion: The follow-up activities by Norilsk Nickel Company were heralded as an important example of the sustainability and replicability of ACAP activities.

8.1d Work with non-Arctic countries that are sources of significant Arctic contamination

Issue: ACAP requested to broaden the participation of non-Arctic countries in ACAP to include those with significant sources of contamination to the Arctic. ACAP emphasized that it would not do projects outside of Arctic, but further actions by non-arctic states to address these contaminants. A formal agreement between ACAP and UNEP Chemicals was

suggested as one way to develop cooperative activities to address mercury releases from outside of Arctic.

Discussion: Concern was raised not to duplicate mandates or activities in other bilateral and international fora. The majority preferred that ACAP concentrate its limited resources on the considerable work to be done on sources and practical/concrete projects within the Arctic area. There was agreement on the importance to find ways to regulate/minimize pollutants entering the Arctic and that Member States should be active in all relevant fora.

Decision: SAOs were not prepared to expand the mandate of ACAP to include activities outside of the Arctic. Member States were encouraged to engage actively in other bilateral and multilateral instruments through which States can pursue steps to regulate/minimize pollutants entering Arctic.

8.2. AMAP

The AMAP Chair reported on the work of AMAP's 6 expert groups. Upcoming deliverables include an updated Mercury assessment to be completed in 2011 (including links to climate change), an updated Radioactivity assessment in 2009, a Human Health Assessment to be delivered in 2009, and several POPS science papers to be published in 2008 with an overall summary in 2009. Climate change related work includes a proposal for an updated assessment of the cryosphere, an Arctic carbon cycle assessment, downscaling climate scenarios for the Arctic, and the study of non-CO2 climate drivers. AMAP is an active partner in the SAON process.

8.2a Workshop on the application of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)

Issue: The AMAP Climate Expert Group recommended that AMAP organize a workshop in 2008 on the application of Unmanned Aircraft Systems to issues in the Arctic. AMAP strongly recommended the AC to become aware of this technology to complement and fill the gaps in existing monitoring programs (i.e. between satellite and ground based observations).

Discussion: There was concern that the initiative might duplicate other global and arctic processes (such as SAON) on improving monitoring, but opinions differed whether UAS fits under the umbrella of SAON. Some suggested that the very technical issues related to UAS may be better suited to specialized agencies. There was wide support that a workshop could be a useful first step to discuss the many issues to be resolved (including technical feasibility and some potential legal and security issues).

Decision: SAOs approved a workshop on the application of UAS to Arctic science and environmental issues. AMAP was requested to ensure aviation authorities in each state and participants from a range of monitoring networks are fully involved. The organizers were asked to give full consideration to linkages with the SAON process and to provide a detailed proposal for interagency consideration before the workshop.

8.2b Non-CO2 drivers of climate change

Note: was moved to climate change section of the agenda.

8.3. CAFF

Issue: CAFF's cornerstone program, the CBMP, will be discussed under the monitoring thematic agenda item. CAFF reported that the Flora Group's Boreal Vegetation Mapping project application to Nordic Council of Ministers was well received. Cooperative activities with other working groups are underway. The CAFF/AMAP Coordinated Monitoring Effort status report was submitted to the SAOs and will be discussed under a thematic agenda item. CAFF also cooperates internationally with; *inter alia*, the CBD, IUCN, and Arctic Council Observers including WCMC, GRID. CAFF has endorsed the BIRDHEALTH, CAVIAR and EALAT projects.

Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA)

Issue: CAFF presented the draft work plan and financial strategy for the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA) endorsed by the Arctic Council Ministers in Salekhard 2006. The ABA will consist of multiple activities: a 2010 summary report based on the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program (CBMP) indicators; an in-depth scientific report to be completed by 2012; an overview report in 2013; and policy recommendations in 2013. Permanent Participants will be the primary source of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and TEK will be integrated into each chapter. Preliminary estimates of resource needs were presented.

Discussion: CAFF was congratulated for development of the ABA work plan and financial strategy. The USA announced that it will join Finland to co-lead the ABA. Several countries are exploring funding opportunities (USA, Denmark/Greenland). Canada has scientific data ready to contribute. Russia noted its interest in the ECORA project and that it would provide experts to contribute to the 2009-2011 CAFF workplan. Permanent Participants indicated their strong support for the ABA. The AAC has started to raise funds and has begun an outreach program to engage their communities and to look at methods of data collection. AAC offered to be a lead author to incorporate TEK and stressed the importance of the Ecosystem Goods and Services section. On questions of finance, CAFF noted that the ABA Steering Committee will discuss funding arrangements. The Chair urged CAFF to complete the ABA as soon as possible and reminded the meeting that the sequence of deliverables is important and that the science report needs to be completed before recommendations can be made.

Decision: SAOs endorsed the schedule of activities and deliverables as put forward in the ABA Work Plan and Financial Strategy. Finland and the USA will co-lead the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment. The Chair welcomed potential funding offers, and noted that additional lead countries would further facilitate the work.

8.4. EPPR

8.4a Progress report on Russian initiative on accident prevention and safety systems development in economic and infrastructural projects in the Arctic

Issue: The EPPR Chair updated on EPPR activities since taking over the Chairmanship and presented the main priorities of the EPPR in 2008. In particular, EPPR is working to improve

the “Circumpolar map of natural resources at risk from oil spills” and announced plans for a workshop on circumpolar maps in early in 2008, with participation of other WGs and relevant experts. The results from the workshop will be presented at the next SAO-meeting.

Russia presented its proposal for an Arctic Council project on “An accident prevention and safety systems development in economic and infrastructural projects in Arctic” and announced that an exercise would be held in the port of Varandei in October 2008 to which all AC member states were invited and that a seminar on “cold climate”-related topics will be held in Dudinka in Russia, co-organized with the Swedish Rescue Services Agency, later in 2008.

Discussion: The EPPR workplan was widely endorsed. Many countries raised the importance of cooperation with Russia on safety and security in the Arctic, especially oil and gas transport, and are considering ways to be involved in the Russian proposal.

Decision: SAOs endorsed the EPPR workplan, including the mapping workshop, for 2007 – 2009.

8.5. PAME

Issue: The PAME Chair reported on progress to update the 2002 *Arctic Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines* with a projected delivery date of mid to late 2008, and announced a Guidelines workshop to be held 7-8 December 2007 in Miami, Florida. The PAME/Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) expert group has been established with experts from all Arctic Council countries. Work on indicators is ongoing and will be shared with other AC working groups, e.g. SDWG work on socio-economic indicators, AMAP and CAFF assessments. The PAME Chair reiterated that the working map of the 17 Arctic Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) was endorsed by Ministers in 2006 and is the LME working map of the Arctic Council.

The joint PAME/SDWG project on Best Practices in Ecosystem-Based Ocean Management in the Arctic (BePOMAr Project) has relevance to the PAME/LME project, Oil and Gas Guidelines and RPA. PAME continues to encourage PPs participation in its work and representatives from AMAP, CAFF and EPPR participated at the last PAME meeting and the RPA Workshop.

Discussion: The floor was not opened for discussion due to time constraints.

Conclusion: For information only.

8.6. SDWG

Issue: The SDWG Chair introduced the new vice-chair, M. Tomsen, Greenland. He noted the five SDWG thematic areas and the main activities under each, several to be discussed in detail under the thematic agenda items. The Arctic Information & Communication Technology (ICT) Assessment survey instrument is completed; however, authors and funding for the next steps of the assessment are not secured. Challenges for the SDWG include the need for a broader range of experts to take part in SDWG work (i.e. human health, adaptation, statistics, and energy), securing funding for endorsed projects (i.e. for the ICT), and the need for broader participation of both Member States and PPs in project activities.

Discussion: The “Circumpolar Information Toolkit on Minerals, Oil and Gas for Indigenous People and Northern Communities” (Canada lead) was widely supported. The SAO Chair noted that funding and participation are also issues for consideration under the “Effectiveness and Efficiency” agenda item. Two SAOs preferred not to have back-to-back SDWG-SAO meetings, while PPs suggested back-to-back meetings facilitate their participation.

Decision: SAOs endorsed the new SDWG project “Circumpolar Information Toolkit on Minerals, Oil and Gas for Indigenous People and Northern Communities”. The SDWG was asked to take note of SAO and PP views on back-to-back meetings.

8.6b Russian proposal for a project on satellite system development for the Arctic region

Issue: This item was submitted directly to SAOs by Russia for their consideration, following a technical presentation to the SDWG in late October. The Arctic Council is being asked to participate in defining basic technical parameters of a satellite system for the Arctic region. The major part of the project is to be financed by the Russian Federation, partial financing is expected to come from the interested Arctic states.

Discussion: Russia was thanked for its useful work. It was suggested that such a system might be better discussed in the context of the goals of SAON, and that some AC member states are already in cooperation with Russia on some of the technical aspects. If the item is to be submitted for formal consideration, a formal proposal will need to be received by the SDWG within the 90 days required for submission of new proposals.

Conclusion: For information only at this time.

THEMATIC AREAS

9. Climate Change

9.1. Progress report on Climate Change and the Cryosphere – Snow, Water, Ice and Permafrost in the Arctic - SWIPA

Issue: The 2006 Ministerial approved Norwegian priority studies of reduction of snow and ice in the Arctic. Norway presented a proposal for an AC Cryosphere project to SAOs in April 2007. The AMAP Chair introduced the 3rd draft implementation plan on the Cryosphere Project, now referred to as SWIPA – Snow, Water, Ice and Permafrost in the Arctic. The report is targeted for completion for the 2011 Ministerial

Discussion: The importance of the project in principle was widely noted, and that with some streamlining, improvements, and modification of the time schedule, the project should be able to move forward.

There was some concern that the proposed scope of the project appears to have expanded and that if not streamlined the project could not go forward. AMAP confirmed that the project is not intended to be a large-scale ACIA-2, but rather a detailed look at three key issues of cryosphere dynamics. Most agreed that the value-added of the project was to synthesize and

integrate new research, including that conducted during IPY. AMAP was reminded of the importance to focus on impacts, including on the human dimension. The importance of a sequential process to produce the policy recommendations following completion of the science report was agreed.

Clarification was sought on linkages with ongoing research under IPY, the potential for duplicating IPY activities, and the capacity of experts involved in IPY to also contribute to the project. AMAP stressed that the AMAP Climate Expert Group developing the project consists of many scientists closely involved in IPY projects, and they are aware of what is already being done through other avenues. AMAP underlined that this synthesis and integration effort not being undertaken elsewhere.

A question was raised about the role of the Arctic Council if the work on the sub-projects would go forward with or without AC endorsement. It was recognized that even without AC endorsement the scientific institutions involved would likely decide to go ahead with national work on some aspects of the sub-projects themselves. For example, Denmark emphasized the importance they place on the Greenland Ice Sheet subproject. Norway also stated it may be prepared to go forward with the Arctic sea ice subproject outside the Arctic Council forum if necessary. However, an Arctic Council project to facilitate circumpolar cooperation and to integrate all the information between the three sub-projects was important to form a holistic view of what is happening. Sweden offered to take the lead for the third sub-project (on permafrost and snow cover).

An ad hoc-group continued discussion on outstanding issues in the margin of the SAO meeting.

Decision: The SAOs did not reach consensus on approval of this project. AMAP was requested to submit a revised proposal for discussion and decision by the SAOs at the next meeting.

9.2. Presentation on Adaptation project

Issue: The SDWG Chair updated on the SDWG's progress to implement the first phase of the AC adaptation project "Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Arctic (VACCA)". The guiding principles, the type of information to be collected, how it would be collected, and the process for preparation of a scoping paper were outlined. The Association of World Reindeer Herders (WRH) presented the EALAT project on the adaptation of reindeer herding to climate change, with a focus on the results of a Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District community-based workshop held in September 2007.

Discussion: The VACCA project progress was welcomed by all, with an emphasis on project outputs that are relevant and accessible to northerners and that will help enable adaptation actions. The SDWG was encouraged to make full use of the SLiCA and ECONOR information in the project. The AAC and GCI brought their project on climate stresses on caribou to the attention of the VACCA project lead. Sweden announced its Swedish Climate and Vulnerability Committee report will be released at the end of 2007.

Conclusion: For information only at this time.

9.3. Presentation on Climate Change Sound Water Management and Ice Conditions of Large Siberian Rivers

Issue: Presentation by Russia on "Climate Change Sound Water Management and Ice Conditions of Large Siberian Rivers", a Russian project to be implemented under UNEP-GEF with potential links to AC projects such as on the cryosphere and adaptation. The project has been under development since the 2004 AC Ministerial in Reykjavik, in close cooperation with Arctic Hydra. The project will assess the social and economic consequences of climate change impacts on river runoff, ice conditions, water pollution and pollutants transport to the Arctic Ocean for several large Siberian rivers and develop recommendations for adaptation. The Project is ready to be submitted to UNEP/GEF. With other projects viewed as co-funding, it is easier to get co-funding by GEF in place.

Discussion: Russia clarified that the project is not an AC project, but is linked to a previous AC project. AMAP has, in close cooperation with Arctic Hydra, worked with Russia to develop it as a circumpolar project involving international experts and encourages consideration of possibilities of co-financing.

Conclusion: For information only. SAO Chair encouraged participants to consider funding opportunities.

The Sao Chair announced that discussion on item 8.2b Non-CO2 drivers of climate change was postponed until the next meeting due to time constraints.

10. Energy

10.1. AMAP Oil and Gas Assessment

Issue: The AMAP Chair introduced the AMAP Oil and Gas Assessment. Lead authors presented an overview of each of the chapters, and the AMAP Chair gave a detailed presentation of the 12 key findings and recommendations. AMAP informed of plans to present the Assessment at the Arctic Frontiers Conference in Tromsø, January 2008; at the Russia Offshore 2008 Conference in Moscow (February 6-7); and the Alaska Forum on the Environment, Anchorage (February 11-14). SAOs were requested to offer guidance and comments on the release of the Oil and Gas Assessment, specifically at the three events mentioned above.

Discussion: The SAO Chair congratulated the AMAP team on the Assessment and reminded participants that the briefing to the SAO meeting was confidential as the report has not yet been formally released. The SAO Chair noted the 2004 and 2006 Ministerial Declaration texts mandating the SAOs to receive the report on behalf of the Ministers, and for SAOs to determine when and how to release it.

Many states expressed appreciation to AMAP for the Assessment and stated that their Ministers are eager to receive the Assessment. Different views of the SAOs role in receiving the Assessment were expressed. The Assessment was presented as two documents - the science report and the overview report. Since each had a separate set of key findings and recommendations, clarity was sought as to whether the recommendations in the Overview Report are intended to be scientific or policy recommendations. If the latter, further clarity

was sought on Arctic Council process to deal with policy recommendations from/approved within a Working Group and what the SAOs role to respond to the WG recommendations should be.

AMAP clarified its understanding that the scientists prepare the scientific assessment and write the scientific conclusions and recommendations. The key findings and policy recommendations in the Overview Report were based on the science recommendations in the scientific assessment and negotiated among the AMAP Working Group heads of delegation with extensive national review. It has not been the policy for SAOs to alter Working Group reports. The precedent is for SAOs to receive the work of the Working Group and to recommend elements to bring forward in the SAO's report to Ministers. The Ministers then decide how to respond to the SAO Report.

Most SAOs agreed that the SAO mandate from Ministers was to receive the Assessment and any recommendations from the Working Group and to focus their decision on publishing and releasing the report. Most felt the Overview Report contained policy recommendations based on the scientific assessment and were satisfied with the WG process that had been undertaken for national review. Most were of the view the WG was responsible for the recommendations in the Overview Report and that it was not the SAOs role to change those recommendations. The Arctic Council's recommendations regarding the Assessment would be captured in the subsequent SAO Report and Ministerial decisions. Some underlined that they did not have the authority or mandate to discuss the details of the Assessment's recommendations at this meeting.

Other states felt that if intended as policy recommendations, the national review had been insufficient. They felt strongly that it is the responsibility of the SAOs to make sure they are comfortable with the release and that a process for approval of the policy portion of the Assessment within governments was needed. Another view was that the Overview Report should be a synthesis of the science report with only science recommendations, and that any policy recommendations would require that a third report be written (not clear by whom).

The SAO Chair restated that these are recommendations from the Working Group and that the role for SAOs is to receive them. The SAO Chair also clarified that the Assessment would be released in January as an Assessment prepared by AMAP for the Arctic Council. It is expected there will be a debate among SAOs on the recommendations at a later date and that this would be reflected in the SAO Report to Ministers. The SAOs responsibility was not to change a report received from a Working Group.

A request was made for more time to review the overview report and recommendations in capital. Sweden requested clarification from the SAO Chair on how the process for SAO deliberation on how to respond to the AMAP OGA recommendations would be organized in advance of the 2009 Ministerial. The Saami Council thanked AMAP and asked that it be noted that the position of the Saami Parliament in Norway is not taken into account in the case study from the Barents Sea in the chapter on social and economic effects.

Decision: It was requested that SAOs try to complete their review of the executive summary and recommendations section of the overview report by no later than mid-January in time for the Arctic Frontiers Conference. It was also decided that the scientific assessment and the overview report minus the executive summary and recommendations could be published and

publicly released at the Arctic Frontiers Conference. The executive summary and recommendations could only be released if the comments could be addressed prior to the Conference. Further decisions regarding how to proceed will be done through email.

10.2. Outcomes of the Arctic Energy Summit

Issue: The SDWG noted the three components of the Arctic Energy Summit (AES): 1) An educational outreach program; 2) A Technology conference, and 3) An Arctic Energy Action Team. The AES technology conference was held in Alaska 15-18 October 2007. An Arctic Energy Action Team is being formed to address common problems related to the development and deployment of energy in the Arctic. Information on the AES can be found at: www.arcticenergysummit.org

Conclusion: For information only.

10.3. Discussion on preparation of the Energy Report to Ministers

Issue: In Salekhard Ministers endorsed energy, including renewable energy and environmentally friendly technologies, as an important component of Arctic Council cooperation. The SDWG was requested to report on Arctic Council activity in the field of energy to the Ministers in 2008 (now 2009), and to identify activities that the Arctic Council could consider for future implementation.

Discussion: The SDWG Chair suggested that the report should have two components: 1) a report on existing energy-related AC projects, and 2) identification of activities the Arctic Council can consider for future projects. The SDWG offered to compile a draft Energy Report with contributions from all Working Groups for submission to SAOs autumn 2008.

Decision: SAOs approved the SDWG proposal for preparing the Energy Report to Ministers.

11. Oceans

11.1. Progress report on Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment

Issue: Dr. Lawson Brigham, Vice-Chair PAME and Chair of AMSA, provided a progress report (on behalf of the three leads: Canada, Finland and USA) and chapter by chapter update on the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA). Permanent Participant Town Hall Meetings have taken place in Norway and more are planned. An AMSA survey has been sent by RAIPON to many communities in the Russian Arctic. Chapter development and writing is well underway, but challenges remain to deliver an optimal report to Ministers by 2009. Additional contributing authors for chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 is needed and involvement of experts from the maritime administration of the eight Arctic States is sought. Finally, support for editing and production is also needed.

Discussion: PAME was thanked for its excellent work, including townhall meetings and engagement of indigenous communities. The tight timelines and need for all countries to participate and provide the needed information to ensure a completed 2009 ministerial deliverable were discussed. The EPPR noted usefulness of AMSA to its work. The importance of the human dimension of the assessment was stressed and ICC noted it would

like to continue dialogue with the AMSA leads as they have not been able to actively do so in the past due to lack of capacity.

Decision: PAME was requested to take note of the comments. SAOs took note of the status of the project and were requested to encourage necessary national participation in the project.

11.2. Progress report on Best Practices in Ecosystems-based Oceans Management in the Arctic (BePOMAr)

Issue: Best Practices in Ecosystems-based Oceans Management in the Arctic (BePOMAr), is a joint SDWG – PAME project led by Norway.

Note: Presentation on this topic was postponed due to time constraints.

11.3. Regional Programme of Action for the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (RPA)

Issue: The PAME Chair reported on progress to update the 1998 RPA (Canada and Iceland co-lead) and noted that overarching objective of the RPA update is to take account of rapidly changing Arctic region, and as such will be an important response to the 2004 Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA). A short overview of key messages from the RPA Workshop held in Iceland in September 2007 was provided and the workshop report is available on the PAME homepage. The draft updated RPA will be distributed to the April 2008 SAO meeting as an information item, with the final draft RPA for SAO approval in Fall 2008 and a final updated RPA for approval by Ministers in Spring 2009.

Discussion: PAME clarified that this is an update and not a new RPA. Important linkages with other Working Group activities in the Arctic Council were raised. Russia gave a short update on the Russian NPA-Arctic and expressed its appreciation for PAME's support to it. RAIPON thanked PAME for their cooperation on the Russian NPA-Arctic project.

Conclusion: For information only.

11.4 Report on resolution recently passed by the U.S. Senate on the subject of an Arctic fisheries management agreement.

Issue: The US SAO brought to the attention of the Arctic Council a resolution recently passed by the U.S. Senate on the subject of an Arctic fisheries management agreement.

Discussion: There was strong support for building on and considering this issue within the context of existing mechanisms.

Conclusion: For information only.

12. Human Development

12.1. Progress report on coordination of human health initiatives

Issue: The SDWG Chair would like to work with other Working Group Chairs to reach agreement, by mid-December 2007 if possible, on an approach for collaboration on human health issues. It is proposed that Working Group human health representatives meet in mid-February 2008 to develop a framework for common actions on circumpolar health issues within the Council.

Note: This item was postponed due to time constraints.

12.2. Presentation on ECONOR

Issue: The first phase of the ECONOR project was finished by the end of 2006 (ECONOR I), and a second phase for 2007/2008 is currently running (ECONOR II).

Note: This item was postponed due to time constraints and will be included on the next SAO meeting Agenda.

12.3. Presentation on SLiCA

Issue: The Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic (SLiCA) is an international joint effort of research and indigenous people to measure and understand living conditions in the Arctic. SLiCA is an IPY project and part of the Arctic Human Health Initiative. SLiCA results consists of a three-part report and can be accessed at: <http://www.arcticlivingconditions.org/>.

Note: Presentation on this topic was postponed due to time constraints and will be included on the next SAO meeting Agenda.

12.4. Project on evaluation of current exposure to POPs among Indigenous peoples of the Russian Arctic and development of a strategic program on reduction of the health risks involved.

Issue: At the SAO Meeting in 2006, the results of UNEP/GEF project "POPs, Food Security and Indigenous Peoples of the Russian North" were reported and approved. A follow up study of the indigenous people heavily exposed to POPs in the Russian Arctic was recommended. The main objective of the new project proposal presented by Russian Federation is to develop actions to decrease the health risks related to the exposure to POPs of the indigenous people of Russia. The project is ready to be submitted as a UNEP/GEF project for 2009-2011. SAOs support and co-financing for the project is requested.

Discussion: The SAO Chair clarified that Russia is asking for the project to be endorsed by the Arctic Council. AMAP health group noted it is ready to participate in the work and that although this project focuses specifically on Russia, similar projects in other countries can be looked at as co-funding.

Decision: SAOs endorsed the project as an Arctic Council project and urged Member States to investigate possibilities for co-financing.

13. Monitoring

13.1. Progress report on Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (SAON). Report from the Stockholm workshop 12-14 November

Issue: At Salekhard, Ministers mandated AMAP to cooperate with other AC Working Groups, IASC and other partners to create a coordinated Arctic observing network. AMAP reported on progress in the work on Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (SAON). An initiating group of representatives from major relevant organizations has been established. A series of three workshops will conclude with recommendations in 2009 on how to implement SAON. The first SAON workshop was held 12-14 November 2007, in Stockholm, Sweden and focused on identification of existing sites and gaps in key thematic areas. The second SAON workshop will be in Edmonton, Canada 9-11 April 2008 and the third in Finland in Fall 2008. Government agencies were not sufficiently well represented at the first workshop. Promoting SAON as the Arctic component of the GEOSS (as per Salekhard Declaration) can only be done by countries themselves. The human dimension of SAON will be addressed, *inter alia*, through focus on a pan-Arctic local observation network.

Discussion: There was strong support for the SAON initiative, which is seen as an important legacy of IPY. The CAFF CBMP is considered a key biodiversity component of SAON. The participation of more government agencies, including statistical agencies was urged. The very limited participation from Russia at the Stockholm workshop was pointed out. Russia responded that it supported the SAON initiative and would make efforts ensure proper representation at the upcoming Edmonton workshop. Although several PPs were at the Stockholm workshop, their greater participation was encouraged. Canada offered to financially assist indigenous organizations to participate in the 2nd workshop in Edmonton. Some commented that ongoing implementation of national monitoring activities is as important as workshops.

Decision: The SAO Chair noted the strong support for SAON and encouraged all countries to support the SAON process and to attend the next two workshops to be held in 2008. SAOs were asked to encourage national agencies to participate in SAON.

13.2. Progress report on the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program

Issue: The CBMP Secretariat reported on the CBMP, CAFF's cornerstone program. The CBMP has IPY endorsement and obvious links to SAON. The CBMP's *Draft Five Year Implementation Plan Overview* document was endorsed by SAOs in April 2007. Recent progress includes selection of the key biodiversity indicators and indices. The data management and community-based monitoring strategies are being drafted. The full Implementation Plan is being completed for the next SAO Meeting. The CBMP welcomed new funding from Finland and Sweden but noted that commitments from other countries are required to ensure full implementation of the program.

Discussion: Norway offered to host a start-up workshop on the marine biodiversity part of the CBMP in 2008 and to co-lead a marine expert monitoring group in 2008-2009 (no such expert group currently exists). Canada, lead for the CBMP for the last 3 years, expressed appreciation for financial contributions from the US, Finland, Norway and others. The USA announced it will host a CBMP partnership workshop in March 2008 to identify additional partners. The CBMP indicators will contribute to the first deliverable for the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment and their importance was highlighted.

Decision: The SAO Chair noted the positive feedback and encouraged commitments from other countries.

13.3. Report on coordination between AMAP and CAFF to strengthen monitoring activities

Issue: CAFF and AMAP held a joint meeting to discuss a Coordinated Monitoring Effort on 18 September 2007. A Green Paper was approved at this meeting. A list of projects selected for inclusion in the joint effort is being developed.

Note: Presentation on this topic was postponed due to time constraints. The SAO Chair noted the successful joint workshop held in Copenhagen in September 2007.

13.4. Presentation by Aleut International Association on Bering Sea Sub-network (BSSN)

Issue: The Aleut International Association (AIA) reported on the Bering Sea Sub-Network (BSSN): International Community-Based Environmental Observation Alliance for Arctic Observing Network (AON), an IPY initiative led by AIA and funded by the National Science Foundation. Traditional knowledge and local observations of the changes affecting Bering Sea's natural resources will be collected simultaneously in the geographical area spanning across the Bering Sea and including diverse indigenous communities: Aleut, Chukchi, Koryak, and Yupik. The project, led and funded by a PP, will be a replicable model and provide a tool to interact TK with western science. The network infrastructure may be useful to all Working Groups.

Discussion: The WGs were invited to cooperate with BSSN, in addition to the existing partnership with the CBMP. Both PAME and AMAP noted possibilities for cooperation with the project. PPs expressed support for the project as it engages indigenous communities actively in assessment of the environment and use of TK. However, the project leads were requested to resolve concerns that there had been a lack of full coordination with some PP regional associations.

Decision: The SAO Chair encouraged the Project leads to be in close contact with the Working Groups and to resolve outstanding issues with the concerned regional PP organizations.

14. IPY

14.1. Report from the proceedings of the IPY Joint Committee 6th session in Quebec 24-26 October

Issue: The Swedish SAO, Arctic Council representative to the IPY Joint Committee, gave a report on the recent Committee meeting. The AC representative reported to the Committee that the results of IPY research would be important to on-going and future Arctic Council work, including as input to various AC assessments and reports. The Committee asked that the Arctic Council continue to help with access to areas in the Arctic for research. The Co-Chairs of the Joint Committee had subsequently written a letter to the SAO Chair

highlighting the need for governmental support for the IPY legacy, dated 2007-10-26. Three subcommittees have been established: 1) data policy and management – with a view that all IPY project data be in secure archives by 2012; 2)) observations – how to sustain improved observation of polar regions after the IPY is over; and 3) education and outreach. Long-term observations, improved collective capacity for data management, and promotion of next generation scientists have so far been identified as potential major IPY legacies. The political legacy is less clear to the Joint Committee at this stage. Canada offered the Joint Committee to host a science and policy conference in 2012.

Discussion: Canada announced that its primary legacy contribution will be establishment of a major Arctic research station, and that it looks forward to international cooperation on the initiative. Russia noted that it has a range of IPY projects in cooperation with AC Member States and indigenous organizations.

Decision: SAOs requested that IPY be on the agenda for next SAO meeting for a fuller discussion on possible AC activities in support of a comprehensive IPY legacy.

14.2. US-proposed Arctic Council/Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) joint event at the ATCM 50th Anniversary Meeting spring 2009

Issue: In connection with the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) 50th Anniversary in Baltimore and the close of IPY, the US announced that it would like to hold a high level AC/ATCM event in April 2009 with senior participation from each Member State.

Decision: SAOs strongly supported the proposal for an AC/ATCM joint meeting.

15. Update from IPS – Indigenous Peoples Secretariat

Issue: The Indigenous Peoples Secretariat (IPS) Chair reported on ways that Permanent Participants are taking the lead to enhance their participation and to work more effectively within the Arctic Council. A committee has been formed to look at ways to improve organization of PPs and how the IPS might improve delivery of its services, including options to expand funding and to make IPS more independent of contributions. Terms of Reference and Operating Procedures have been revised. SAOs are requested to recommit to the continued role of IPS and to formalize PP role in management of the IPS. A report to SAOs, including specific requests, will be prepared following the IPS Board meeting 27 November 2007.

Decision: The SAO Chair welcomed the substantial presentation by the IPS and regretted the lack of time for in-depth discussion. IPS was requested to report back with specific requests.

16. Presentations from Observers and Invited Guests

Issue: A statement was delivered on behalf of the Observer States, who met in Brussels prior to the SAO meeting to discuss further collaboration with Arctic Council. The statement raised the global implications of changes affecting the Arctic region and the interest of Observer States to work with the Arctic Council on key issues such as climate change and biodiversity. Observer States are willing to organize a meeting to discuss mutual benefits and common goals. The statement drew attention to the renewed EU Northern Dimension and

EU cooperation with Iceland, Norway and Russia. Observer States are active in Working Group activities and wish to explore the longer term role they might play in the work of the Arctic Council. Observer States appreciate the enhanced outreach activities of Arctic Council.

Decision: The SAO Chair expressed appreciation for the contribution of the Observer States and took note of the statement.

16.1. Presentation by International Arctic Science Committee

Issue: The Executive Secretary of IASC provided an update on current IASC activities and informed that the results of ICARP II, the 2nd International Conference on Arctic Research and Planning in November 2005, are now published in the document “Arctic Research: A Global Responsibility” and available at: <http://www.arcticportal.org/iasc/icarp>. Arctic Council Working Groups were encourage to attend the Arctic Science Summit Week (ASSW), a summit of influential organizations engaged in Arctic and polar research to be held from March 26 – April 2, 2008 in Syktyvkar, Russia. He reiterated that observing systems, data access, scientific cooperation and next generation will be key elements of the IPY legacy.

Conclusion: For information only.

16.2. Presentation by the University of the Arctic (UArctic)

Issue: The University of the Arctic reported that the new board of governors has developed a slightly different approach to leading UArctic and outlined some of the goals of UArctic. UArctic wishes to strengthen the role of government, participation of indigenous people in programs and to increase partnerships with smaller northern colleges and universities. The UArctic Rectors Forum will be organized in Rovaniemi, Finland, on February 27-29, 2008 in cooperation with the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region.

Decision: The SAO Chair emphasized the great importance of UArctic to the Arctic Council. The UArctic was invited to submit specific proposals to the Arctic Council.

16.3. Presentation by the US Fish and Wildlife Service on the meeting of the five polar bear “range states” held in June 2007

Issue: The Alaskan Regional Director, US Fish and Wildlife Service reported on a meeting of the five polar bear "range states" in June 2007. The five states (Canada, Denmark/Greenland, Norway, Russia, and the USA) discussed a number of issues concerning coordinated management of polar bear issues, including sharing of scientific data and information between states. The five states made five agreements: 1) the need for appropriate polices and regulations on oil and gas activities, 2) shipping and large vessel traffic is an emerging issue, 3) a circumpolar action plan for conservation of polar bears is needed, 4) to establish a working group to advance issues, 5) to begin a dialogue with the polar bear specialist group.

Discussion: Norway announced that as a follow up it will invite polar bear states to a meeting of Parties to the 1973 Polar Bear Agreement in Tromso in spring 2009. The CITES regulations were seen as important tools for polar bear management and trade in polar bear

parts and products. The AAC noted that it was strange that sports hunting for polar bears was considered a legal activity.

Conclusion: For information only.

16.4. Presentation by UNESCO World Heritage Center

Issue: The UNESCO World Heritage Centre provided an overview of the implementation of the 1972 World Heritage Convention in the Arctic Region. The region is a major gap on UNESCO's World Heritage List and only in 2004 the first two natural arctic sites were included in the List: the Natural System of Wrangel Island Reserve (Russian Federation) and Ilulissat Icefjord (Denmark/Greenland), while a few mixed and cultural properties were included earlier such as the Rock Art of Alta (Norway) and the Laponia Area (Sweden). UNESCO WHC announced that the First International Expert Meeting on World Heritage in the Arctic would take place immediately following the SAO meeting on 30 November to 1 December 2007 in Narvik.

Discussion: Norway suggested that it considering to make a specific proposal on world heritage to the Arctic Council at a future date. CAFF emphasized its interest to work with UNESCO and that it would participate in the Expert Meeting.

Conclusion: For information only.

17. Administrative Issues

17.1 Update on PSI – Project Support Instrument – presentation from NEFCO

Note: taken in conjunction with

8.1b Integrated Hazardous Waste Management Strategy (IHWMS)

Issue: The managing director of NEFCO reported that the Russian Federation (RF) Ministry of Finance and Roztehnadzor have decided to focus on 1-3 projects beneficial to the RF to make the PSI operational. NEFCO was asked to submit a proposal for possible projects. This proposal is now under review in Russia.

Roztehnadzor presented the IHWMS as an important project to organize hazardous waste management in Russia. Within ACAP, development of this strategy has begun. Norway and USA also participate in this effort. Resources have been awarded to make the detailed version of this strategy and Russia proposes that this work be considered as input to the Project Support Instrument (PSI).

NEFCO clarified that the RF contribution to the IHWMS is additional to the 3 million Euro PSI threshold. The 3 million Euros is a direct contribution from donors into a fund managed by NEFCO. There are plans for direct RF contributions to the PSI also. In order to receive contributions from Russia, specific projects are needed. Projects should already be approved by the AC and Russian authorities. The IHWMS is seen as one mechanism. Subject to a positive response in Russia, others will be approached to fulfill the 3 million Euro goal. So far, there are contributions from Norway and the Saami Council totaling 340,000 Euros. Other donors have expressed interest, but require Russian contribution as a prerequisite.

SAO's were asked to support the financial contribution to the IHWMS as a Russian contribution to the funding objectives of the PSI.

Discussion: Russia noted its contribution to the IHWMS is now 1.04 million Euro. Russia will consider a monetary contribution to the PSI fund but needs an indication of the intended level of participation from other countries. SAOs and PPs, joined by ACAP, recognized that the funding of 1.04 million demonstrated a positive development in Russia's support, noting that this contribution is additional to the Russian Federation's envisaged monetary contribution to make up a substantial part of the minimum EUR 3 million that is deemed needed to make the PSI operational for its initial period. Several countries announced they will look into the possibility of concrete contributions to the PSI. Some asked for more information on the direction and the concrete projects Russia wants.

Decisions: SAOs agreed that the Russian funding to develop the IHWMS could be considered as a Russian contribution to the funding objectives of the PSI.

17.2 Discussion on Effectiveness and Efficiency of the Arctic Council

Issue: In April, 2007, SAOs requested that the effectiveness and efficiency of the Arctic Council should be regularly reviewed and should be a standing item on the agenda. The Norwegian Chairmanship prepared a draft discussion paper to highlight the progress that has been made and to develop recommendations for further steps that might be taken.

Discussion: Due to time limitations, SAOs addressed the draft discussion paper at lunch and requested an opportunity for an in-depth discussion on some of the elements in the paper, in particular on the role of Observers in the Arctic Council.

Decision: The SAO Chair will take the guidance from SAOs into account in preparations for the next SAO meeting.

17.3 Funding of PP participation in WG meetings

Issue: In Salekhard, Ministers requested SAOs to continue to explore ways and means, including funding, to better ensure Permanent Participants' active participation and full consultation in the Arctic Council.

Decision: Discussion on this topic was postponed due to time constraints until the next meeting.

17.4 Use of WG logos and endorsements

Issue: A clearer definition of policy and procedure for use of the Arctic Council logo and Working Group logos may be needed. A draft discussion paper is being prepared by the Norwegian Chairmanship and this subject will be taken up at the spring 2008 SAO meeting.

Decision: Discussion on this topic was postponed until the next meeting.

17.5 Dates of upcoming SAO meetings

- i. Spring 2008 SAO meeting tentatively scheduled for Svolvær, Lofoton Islands, 23-24 April 2008
- ii. Fall, 2008 SAO meeting tentatively scheduled for Longyearbyen, Svalbard 8-9 October 2008
- iii. April-May 2009 Ministerial

NOTE: Since the SAO meeting, these dates have been tentatively modified:

- *Fall 2008 SAO meeting 18-20 November, 2008 – location TBA*
- *SAO Editing Session 10-11 February 2009 – location TBA*
- *Ministerial Meeting tentative for 28-29 April 2009 – location TBA*

18. Any other business

18.1. Update from Danish SAO on 5-party Ministerial Conference in Ilulissat, Greenland, May 2008.

Issue: The Danish SAO announced that Danish Foreign Minister together with the Greenland Premier have invited the foreign ministers of the five Arctic coastal states to a conference in Ilulissat, Greenland, in late May of 2008. The purpose of the conference is to: 1) reconfirm commitment to existing treaties and rules, especially the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea; 2) focus on the challenges that climate change poses for the people and the environment of the Arctic; and 3) strengthen co-operation on issues such as common security, science, search and rescue and protection of the environment. A Danish delegation will visit the capitols to discuss and with a view that a meeting declaration will reflect the inputs and priorities of all the invited Arctic coastal States.

Discussion: Iceland expressed concerns that separate meetings of the five Arctic states, Denmark, Norway, US, Russia and Canada, on Arctic issues without the participation of the members of the Arctic Council, Sweden, Finland and Iceland, could create a new process that competes with the objectives of the Arctic Council. If issues of broad concern to all of the Arctic Council Member States, including the effect of climate change, shipping in the Arctic, etc. are to be discussed, Iceland requested that Denmark invite the other Arctic Council states to participate in the ministerial meeting. Permanent participants also requested to participate in the meeting. Denmark responded that the capacity of the venue may be an issue.

Conclusion: For information only.

Any other business

Comment: The Russian SAO announced that it would be his last meeting before taking up a new post as Head of the International Barents Secretariat in Kirkenes. Ambassador Alexander Ignatiev was warmly thanked for his long-time support for the Arctic Council and his outstanding leadership during the Russian Chairmanship. Sweden presented a gift.

CONCLUSION: The SAO Chair thanked participants for their flexibility with the busy agenda and adjourned the meeting.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAC	Arctic Athabaskan Council
ABA	Arctic Biodiversity Assessment
AC	Arctic Council
ACAP	Arctic Contaminants Action Program Working Group
AIA	Aleut International Association
AMAP	Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program Working Group
BSSN	Bering Sea Sub-network
CAFF	Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna Working Group
CBMP	Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program
EALAT	Reindeer Herders Vulnerability Network Study
EEA	European Environment Agency
EC	European Commission
ECORA	Integrated Ecosystem Approach to Conserve Biodiversity and Minimize Habitat Fragmentation in the Russian Arctic
EPPR	Emergency Prevention Preparedness and Response Working Group
GCI	Gwich'in Council International
ICC	Inuit Circumpolar Council
IPS	Indigenous Peoples Secretariat
IP	Indigenous Peoples
IHWMS	Integrated Hazardous Waste Management Strategy
IPY	International Polar Year
LME	Large Marine Ecosystems
PAME	Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment Working Group
PP	Permanent Participant
PSI	Project Support Instrument
RPA	Regional Programme of Action
SDWG	Sustainable Development Working Group
SWIPA	Snow, Water, Ice and Permafrost in the Arctic
SAO	Senior Arctic Official
RAIPON	Russian Arctic Indigenous Peoples of the North
SAON	Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks
SC	Saami Council
SDAP	Sustainable Development Action Plan
TEK	Traditional Ecological Knowledge
UAS	Unmanned Aircraft Systems
VACCA	Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Arctic
WG	Working Group of the Arctic Council