

Progress report from AMAP to the SAO Meeting in Rovaniemi, Finland, June 12-13, 2001.

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Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP)

Arctic Council Secretariat

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1. Updated work plan

AMAP is following an approved work plan for the period 1998 – 2003 as outlined in the document 'AMAP Strategic Plan: 1998-2003'. This plan is based on the Ministerial requests from Alta, 1997, and Iqaluit, 1998, and has been further developed the new requests from the ministerial meeting in Barrow, 2000.

The main task for AMAP during 2001/2002 is the production of the AMAP assessment reports that will be delivered to the Ministers at their meeting in Inari in September 2002. To prepare these assessments, AMAP has arranged a number of expert meetings and workshop over the last two years, and additional meetings are arranged for the coming nine months (see Annex 1).

In 2002 AMAP will arrange two major international conferences/symposia as part of its strategy for communicating the results of its 2002 assessments. The 5th International Conference on Environmental Radioactivity in the Arctic and Antarctic will take place in St. Petersburg in June 16-20 2002. This is a joint arrangement between several national and international organizations/agencies, and AMAP. The 2nd AMAP International Symposium on Environmental Pollution in the Arctic will be arranged by AMAP, together with Finnish institutions, and take place in Rovaniemi in conjunction with the Ministerial meeting in Inari in September 2002. This Symposium will be arranged in a similar manner to the First AMAP International Symposium that was held in Tromsø in 1997 in connection with the Alta ministerial meeting. It is intended that this event will help promote the Inari ministerial meeting by presenting new and emerging scientific findings.

AMAP, together with CAFF and IASC, have actively followed-up the Ministerial decisions regarding ACIA, and the process is now well underway. Two ACIA related workshops have been arranged during the first half of 2001, the expert groups for the drafting are more or less established, and the outline content of the report that will be produced in 2004 is well advanced. The most significant problems at the present time appear to be related to funding of certain types of monitoring and research in the Arctic that are required to provide new and important data for this assessment.

The RAIPON/AMAP project on 'Persistent Toxic Substances (PTS), Food Security and Indigenous Peoples of the North' has been initiated. The project, which is partly funded by GEF, was delayed during 2001 due to problems related to funding arrangements. Thanks to co-financing from Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Russia and the United

States, and donations from WMO, Nordic Council of Ministers, WWF and the Salamander Foundation, GEF funding has now been released and the project is now being implemented according to the plan. There is, however, still insufficient funding to fully realize all the goals of the project. Despite the delays incurred it is intended that as much data as possible arising from the project will be incorporated in the AMAP 2002 assessments.

Phase 2 of the 'Multilateral Cooperative Project on Phase-out of PCB Use, and Management of PCB-contaminated Wastes in the Russian Federation' has also now been initiated. An uncertain situation regarding financing of the project, which again was partly responsible for delaying the start-up, has been overcome. All eight Arctic countries have decided (or announced their intention) to support the project, although some potential donors are still to make their final decision regarding their financial contribution. Russian experts have, therefore, started part of the work on the basis of available funding. A close cooperation with the NEFCO 'Fast Track' PCB project has been established. Potential donors and investors for the third phase of the project (e.g., the World Bank and EBRD) have been invited to take an active part in phase two. It is intended to deliver a report to the Ministerial meeting in 2002

2. Summary of on-going and planned activities

The AMAP 2002 Assessment: Monitoring and data gathering activities

AMAP is currently mid-way through the work to produce the assessments that will be presented to the Ministerial meeting in Inari, September 2002. New data and information regarding pollution of the Arctic environment and its implications for health of human inhabitants of the region are being gathered from national, bilateral and international programmes being performed in the Arctic and adjacent areas. Part of these data are being compiled at AMAP Thematic Data Centres (TDCs) that are currently being operated for contaminants in atmospheric, marine, and terrestrial/freshwater compartments, and for sources and levels of radioactivity. These TDCs are located at the Norwegian Institute for Air Research (NILU), the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), University of Alaska – Fairbanks (UAF), and the Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority (NRPA), respectively. Lack of funding for the core activity of data management, relative to the situation that existed during the equivalent period of AMAP phase 1, has limited the potential contribution of the AMAP TDCs to the assessments that are currently ongoing.

The AMAP 2002 Assessment: Coordination and support

To facilitate identification of monitoring and research activities in both member countries and other countries that are relevant to the AMAP assessments, an AMAP Project Directory (AMAP PD) has been produced. More than 220 research and monitoring projects are currently registered in the PD. The PD is established as an Internet resource (on-line database) to provide a low-maintenance system that is accessible to the general public. Information compiled in the PD is therefore available to the wider scientific community to improve communication about 'who is doing what' in Arctic research and monitoring. Several other organizations (both Arctic Council groups and other national

and international organizations) have expressed interest in also entering their information concerning projects and programs in the AMAP PD. The PD can be found at www.amap.no/amappd.

The AMAP 2002 Assessment: Report production

Four scientific assessments (on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Heavy Metals, Radioactivity, and Human Health, respectively) are being prepared for delivery in 2002. The scientific assessment reports will be produced by AMAP the expert groups working under the coordination of the designated Lead Countries. These groups are composed of scientists from the Arctic countries, permanent participants, and some of the observing countries and organizations. Information about the composition of the expert groups and the draft list of content for the four assessments, together with instructions for the drafting work has been compiled in a document entitled 'Guidelines for the AMAP Phase 2 Assessments'. This document is available in electronic form from the AMAP website (www.amap.no).

The AMAP Working Group has decided to employ a scientific journalist from August 2001 to work together with the AMAP Secretariat in drafting the updated 'State of the Arctic Environment Report (SOAER)' that will summarize the information contained in the four issue specific scientific assessment reports.

All countries have expressed their desire for receiving copies of the proposed reports and are currently engaged in finding the necessary funding for their production. Preliminary estimates of contributions based on provisional orders for copies of the reports have been received, but these need to be confirmed in order to establish necessary contracts with the journalist and publisher to run during the second half of 2001 and into 2002. No offers of in-kind contributions to cover common costs have yet been received, which is a serious deficiency compared with the situation that existed during the same point in the preparation of the AMAP phase 1 assessments. Consequently the provision of finances necessary for the production of the reports remains a serious concern. The funding issue is central to the ability of AMAP to deliver its intended assessment reports to the ministerial meeting in 2002, and the planned contributions for, e.g., the Rio + 10 event.

RAIPON/AMAP project on 'Persistent Toxic Substances (PTS), Food Security and Indigenous Peoples of the North': Progress

More than 2300 environmental samples were collected during the 2000 field season from the four sampling areas in Northern Russia that are the focus of the project (Kola Peninsula, Lower Pechora Basin, Taimyr Peninsula, and Chukotka). In connection with this, a workshop on 'Sampling and Analysis of Persistent Toxic Substances (PTS)' was held in St. Petersburg in May/June 2000. This workshop was the first component in the PTS project activities that will address quality assurance issues. Arrangements have also been made to select Russian laboratories to undertake analyses of the environmental samples, including ensuring their participation in relevant QA/QC programmes.

Sampling of blood from pregnant women in the Russian North has also started. This PTS project activity is coordinated with the AMAP circumpolar blood-sampling

programme that has been organized to provide data for the 2002 assessments. A ring-test among laboratories involved in the AMAP circumpolar blood survey is underway and will include the Russian laboratories analyzing human blood samples under the PTS project. As a part of the PTS study, a dietary survey and survey of living conditions are also being performed. As the first part of these activities, special workshops have been organized in St. Petersburg and in Chukotka on the methodology for the dietary surveys and blood and breast milk sampling, with involvement of local medical personnel and indigenous peoples representatives.

Attempts are currently being made to obtain the resources (financial or other) to allow intercalibration and QC analyses to be conducted on a subset of the samples in laboratories outside of Russia. This is a key part of the PTS study QA work, but something that cannot be funded from the GEF support. If any countries or organizations are able to provide financial support or offer in-kind contributions to facilitate this work, they would be most welcome.

Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA): Progress

Regarding the progress for ACIA, please refer to the special report from the ACIA Chair.

3. Deliverables to the Inari Ministerial meeting in 2002

At present AMAP intend to deliver the following products to the Ministerial meeting:

- ?? The 2002 State of the Arctic Environment Report (SOAER).
- ?? Four AMAP Assessment Reports covering the four priority areas: Persistent organic pollutants, Heavy metals, Radioactivity, and Human health.
- ?? A report from phase two of the 'Multilateral Cooperative Project on Phase-out of PCB Use, and Management of PCB-contaminated Wastes in the Russian Federation', hopefully with recommendations for phase three.
- ?? A general progress report from the AMAP WG.
- ?? A progress report from the RAIPON/AMAP project 'Persistent Toxic Substances (PTS), Food Security and Indigenous Peoples of the North'.

4. Collaboration with other organizations

Arctic Council groups/initiatives

Following a request from ACAP, AMAP has produced two further Fact Sheets summarizing the Arctic Ministers Decisions to date concerning Radioactivity and Heavy Metals, respectively, also presenting relevant background material from the AMAP assessments. These Fact Sheets supplement the Fact Sheet on Persistent Organic Pollutants that was prepared in 2000. The new Fact Sheets have been published with financial support from Norway and Denmark and will be available to the SAOs at their meeting in Rovaniemi.

AMAP and CAFF held their first joint meeting on their cooperation on the ACIA work in September 2000. A second joint meeting on the ACIA cooperation and coordination of chemical, biological effects and biodiversity monitoring work under the two organizations will be held at the end of August.

The contribution of the AMAP Human Health expert group to the Children and Youth project is proceeding, however the group are still lacking information from some countries and this input is essential if the agreed contribution is to be delivered on time. The AMAP Human Health group are also centrally involved in a number of other Arctic health initiatives being developed under the Sustainable Development activities, and also in assessments planned by other international organizations (e.g. UNEP/WHO).

UNEP

AMAP have previously reported to SAOs concerning the UNEP Chemicals request to AMAP to provide the Arctic sections for the 'GEF Regional-Based Assessment of Persistent Toxic Substances'. Good progress has been made on this work and AMAP are now working together with UNEP Chemicals on (relevant aspects in) planning for a global monitoring programme for POPs, as a part of the follow-up to the UNEP POPs agreement signed in Stockholm in May.

UNEP are represented in the AMAP WG by GRID-Arendal. GRID-Arendal have collaborated with the AMAP Secretariat in the establishment of the AMAP Project Directory. AMAP and GRID-Arendal are also engaged in GIS and mapping projects relating to AMAP work.

The AMAP Secretariat has been requested to review relevant parts of the GEO-3 Global State of the Environment Report that is currently being prepared by UNEP.

AMAP have previously reported to SAOs on the request received from GIWA concerning AMAP involvement in the GIWA work. It has been provisionally agreed with GIWA that, as the first part of assessment of the Arctic Region, sub-regional/national activities will be organized by GIWA in North America and Russia. After this AMAP will be requested to make a circumpolar assessment based on sub-regional/national results. To monitor the results of these activities, AMAP participated in the Russian GIWA meeting.

European Environment Agency (EEA)

The European Environment Agency (EEA) has invited AMAP to participate in the production of the radioactivity parts of its 'Kiev' report on Europe's environment. This report is due to be published in 2003. EEA have also approached AMAP with regard to collaboration on a proposed report concerning the Arctic and Europe, which will be presented in the EEA address to SAOs.

5. External developments which may influence on the WG work

The timing of the Rovaniemi Ministerial Meeting is critical for several aspects of the AMAP work planned during 2002. This relates to both the production timetables for the AMAP reports, and the planned arrangements for the AMAP second International Symposium on Environmental Pollution in the Arctic.

In addition, planned input to other major international events, such as the Rio+10 meeting and the European environmental policy debate may depend on the timing of these events relative to the Arctic Council Ministerial meeting.

Provision of adequate financing to cover various aspects of the planned AMAP work, as noted above, is essential if AMAP's is to meet its commitments to the Ministers and carry out its current work-plan. In some cases, it is not only the provision of the total funding amount but also the timing of the availability of finances that can be critical to the work involved (for example ability to contract work by journalists, publishers, printers, etc., making practical arrangements for a major international symposia such as booking rooms, etc.).

6. Requests to the SAOs

SAOs are requested to ensure the timely availability of the necessary finances to allow AMAP to fulfill its work-plan as requested by Ministers and SAOs.

The Arctic Council is planning to present an Arctic message to the Rio+10 event. It might be expected that material arising from AMAP's 2002 assessments will form a significant part of the documentation supporting this message. One possible requirement might be a need to produce additional copies of the AMAP SOAER for distribution at the Rio+10 meeting. Financial limitations currently do not allow for a production of the report(s) over and above the demand identified by the countries to meet their own internal needs. If an additional production is to be made then the sooner this decision is taken the better, and a commitment to funding this production is required.

In a similar vein, the AMAP 2002 assessments and possible direct AMAP involvement in reports that are planned to be produced by the EEA could contribute to ensuring a high profile for Arctic issues in the European environmental policy debate – the Northern Dimension.

SAOs are requested to take these issues into consideration in their deliberations and to provide AMAP with guidance on possible needs for report production, guidance in relation to responding to requests for AMAP contributions to external environmental assessments, etc.

Annex 1: Provisional Calendar of AMAP and AMAP Related Meetings: 2001-2002

(Note - meeting dates/locations maybe changed with respect to the information presented below)

January 29-31	ACIA Scenario Workshop, Stockholm
February 5-9	AMAP Radioactivity Experts Group meeting, Luxembourg or Brussels
February 26-27	PTS Project Steering Group meeting, Moscow
March 14-16	AMAP Human Health editorial group meeting, Aarhus
April 19-21	ASC/AMAP Board meetings, Reykjavik
May 6-10	AMAP Human Health Experts Group meeting, Svalbard
May 28-30	ACIA Workshop, Russian Arctic Climate Research and Monitoring Programmes, St. Petersburg
June 6-8	AMAP Radioactivity Experts Group meeting, Oslo
June 12-15	EMEP/AMAP Workshop on Photooxidants, Particles, and Haze: Transport Observations and Models, New York
June 18-22	AMAP Heavy Metals Workshop/Experts Group meeting
August 22-24	AMAP Emissions, Sources, Scenarios workshop, Kjeller
August 27-30	ASG/Experts (Cross-fertilization) meeting, Stockholm
August 30	AMAP Heads of Delegations meeting, Stockholm
August 31	AMAP/CAFF ACIA cooperation meeting, Stockholm
October 15-19	AMAP Radioactivity Experts Group meeting
October	AMAP Heavy Metals Experts workshop
2002	
January 21 – 24	AMAP Conference and Workshop: Impacts of POPs and Mercury on Arctic Environments and Humans, Tromsø
May	AMAP Working Group meeting, Faroe Islands
June 16-20	Fifth International Conference on Environmental Radioactivity in the Arctic and Antarctic, St. Petersburg
September 3-6	Second AMAP International Symposium, Rovaniemi
September ?	Third Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting, Inari, Saariselkä