

TWO-PAGER ON THE ARCTIC CLIMATE IMPACT ASSESSMENT (ACIA).

2001

Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA)

ACIA Secretariat

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ARCTIC CLIMATE IMPACT ASSESSMENT (ACIA)

Objective:

Climate variability and change, and more recently, notable increases in UV radiation, have become important issues in the Arctic over the past few decades. It has become imperative to examine possible future impacts on the environment and its living resources, on human health, and on relevant economic sectors. The Arctic Climate Impact Assessment is expected to lead to the development of fundamental and useful information for the nations of the Arctic region, their economy, resources, and peoples. The assessment will be open and transparent and the review of its conclusions is intended to be credible and rigorous; also the degree of uncertainty of the conclusions will be made clear.

Operative Outline:

Three major volumes will be completed by 2004; they are a peer-reviewed scientific volume, a synthesis document summarizing results, and a policy document providing recommendations for coping and adaptation measures. An operative outline of the sixteen chapters of the scientific volume of the assessment continues to be refined. Following an introductory chapter on the Arctic system, the next three chapters deal with the climate system; past and present changes of climate and UV; and models and scenarios of future changes. Then four chapters follow on the physical and biological systems and their response to climate and UV changes: cryosphere; terrestrial; freshwater; and marine systems. The section on impacts on humans and their activities include chapters on indigenous peoples perspectives; wildlife and conservation issues; Native subsistence issues; forests, land management and agriculture; human health; and infrastructure. A synthesis chapter completes the assessment volume.

Lead and Contributing Authors:

Broad participation of experts from many different disciplines and countries in the writing of these documents has now been established (with the possible exception of Russia; see below). The writing will be done by lead and contributing authors guided by the ACIA Assessment Steering Committee (ASC). Lead and co-lead authors, contributing authors, and consulting authors have been selected. Consulting authors will help with small writing tasks in their fields of expertise, and in the review process. Several first workshops of the chapter writing groups have taken place already and the rest will

occur before the end of the year.

Workshop in Russia:

On 29-31 May an ACIA workshop will take place in St. Petersburg, Russia. Its goal is to draw more Russians into the ACIA. Over 50 abstracts from interested Russian experts have been received and selection of a smaller group to become involved in the ACIA will occur, following the presentations and discussions of the workshop.

Climate Scenarios:

At an ACIA workshop in Stockholm in January 2001 agreement was reached on the climate models and scenarios to be used in the ACIA. The Stockholm workshop recommended that ACIA work with a single IPCC-type scenario, i.e. the SRES B2 scenario. B2 is a "moderate" climate change scenario and it contains projections out to the year 2100. The workshop recommended that ACIA implement the B2 scenario on five climate models that are readily available to scientists in North American and European centers: Canadian Climate Center, NCAR, GFDL, Hadley Center, and Max Planck Institute. The workshop further recommended that the ACIA use time slices around 2020, 2050 and 2080 which are the ones being used by the IPCC. These recommendations were accepted by the ASC at a meeting in Reykjavik on 19-20 April 2001.

Funding:

The US is the lead country for the ACIA and funds are provided by NSF and NOAA through the ACIA Secretariat established at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Contributions to the ACIA from other Arctic countries, with each country paying for the involvement of its citizens in the ACIA, have now also been guaranteed by Norway, Sweden, Canada, Finland, Denmark and Iceland. The US will pay for Russian participation.

Webpage:

The ACIA webpage, which contains details on ACIA, can be found at: <http://www.acia.uaf.edu>

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