

Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Arctic (VACCA)

A status report to the SAO-meeting April 2008

1. General

Project Coordinator: Birgit Njåstad, Norwegian Polar Institute (njaastad@npolar.no).

Participating Arctic states and Permanent Participants: All SDWG members and observers are invited to contribute to the project, and have identified Points of Contact.

2. Project description

Project objectives (for full description refer to project proposal¹):

- To undertake a scoping study which will collect and disseminate information on the expertise, existing and ongoing research and adaptation strategies/measures on adaptation to climate change in the Arctic. The scoping study will also form basis for the preparation of a background document for the workshop (see next bullet).
- To arrange an international expert/stakeholder workshop in which leading experts, policy makers working group representatives and key stakeholders will meet and discuss relevant issues related to vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, preparing recommendations for potential future work related to the issue within the Arctic Council.

3. Project progress

A five phase process has been defined for the project:

Phase 1: Identify information which should be collected and disseminated through the scoping study.

- Completed October 2007.

Phase 2: Develop a tool for collecting and disseminating information.

- A web based survey form was completed in December 2007, and was made available through the SDWG web portal (<http://portal.sdwg.org>). There have been some technical issues related to the web based form. However, an "old-fashioned" questionnaire has also been available for use.
- Further work is required to develop a tool for dissemination of the information collected (note, however, that the information will be shared through reports prepared in Phase 4 of the project). Discussions have been initiated regarding development of a searchable (through web) database, but in order to effectuate such work there need to be commitment on continued deliverance to the database (unless it is up to date at all times the database will have little function).

Phase 3: Collect the required information (Phase 1) from the various national and observer representatives.

- The first deadline for input was set to 15 February 2008, but further effort is required to complete the survey phase.

¹ "Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Arctic (rev. 3 – 18 June 2007)" - circulated to and approved by the Arctic Council members.

- By mid-April around 100 inputs (adaption/vulnerability actions) had been received, primarily from Canada, Finland and Norway. Some countries have provided information in a different format, and consideration need to be given as how to incorporate this into the scoping study.

Phase 4: Analyze the collected information in order to provide a background paper to the planned workshop.

- A contract with Centre for International Climate and Environmental Research in Oslo (CICERO) to implement this phase has been agreed to.
- The main work will be done in the period May-July, and the analysis report will be available by August 2008.
- The analysis will take a SWOC (strength, weakness, opportunities, constraints) approach looking at what is happening, what is not happening, what is going well and what is not going so well with respect to adaptation and vulnerability to climate change in the Arctic context.

Phase 5: Plan and arrange a workshop.

- Dates for the workshop have been set (22-23 October 2008 in conjunction with the fall SDWG meeting).
- Initial considerations re. organizing structure has been made both for the practical aspects of the workshop and for the content aspects.
- CICERO will be responsible for preparing the content of the workshop.
- It is the intention to use the SDWG/VACCA contacts as a advisory group for the Workshop, and initial communication in this regard is envisioned to take place during the SDWG meeting in May 2008.

General:

- The project coordinator presented project status at SDWG meeting in Vadsø, October 2007
- The project coordinator has attended an internal VACCA-workshop in Canada, presenting the project framework.
- The project coordinator has visited with the VACCA-contacts in the US, presenting the project framework .

4. Anticipated deliverables for 2009 Ministerial.

The following deliverables are envisioned for the 2009 Ministerial meeting:

- Databases with record of relevant activities related to vulnerability and adaptation to climate change in the Arctic, including tools for input of new information and potential tool for dissemination of information
- Scoping study report (analysis of information provided through the Spring 2008 survey)
- Report from workshop, including recommendation on potential relevant AC actions