

PAME PROGRESS REPORT TO SENIOR ARCTIC OFFICIALS. 23-24 April 2008, Svolvær, Norway.

2008-04

Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME)

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<http://hdl.handle.net/11374/851>

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1. Follow-up since last SAO Meeting 28-29 November 2007

PAME held its working group meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland 26-27 September 2007 and PAME National Representatives held a conference call on 12 March that focused on the go forward planning to complete PAME projects and seek SAO and ultimate Ministerial approval. Next PAME meeting will be held in St John's, Newfoundland 31 May and 2-4 June 2008.

PAME's objectives are based on Ministerial mandates as identified in PAME's Work Plan 2006-2008 accompanied by a set of specific actions. The joint PAME/SDWG project on Best Practices in Ecosystem-Based Ocean Management in the Arctic (BePOMAr) led by Norway is an addition to the current PAME Work Plan. PAME emphasizes its relevance to the PAME/LME Project.

Summary of progress on the following PAME projects is provided in this report:

- Evaluation and Update of the Arctic Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines – **Agenda Item 4.2**
- Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA) – **Agenda Item 6.1**
- Regional Programme of Action for the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (RPA) – **Agenda Item 14.3**
- Ecosystem Approach – Large Marine Ecosystems – **Agenda Item 14.6**

The main item of PAME business for this SAO meeting will be for the PAME Chairman to outline the proposed processes and timelines for finalizing PAME deliverables, including SAO reviews, in the Fall 2008 and early winter 2009.

2. Collaboration with other Working Groups

PAME continues to actively communicate with the other working groups of the Arctic Council on the need to collaborate on forwarding its work plan with their representation at PAME meetings. The AMAP Oil and Gas Assessment and its possible application and inputs to relevant PAME projects (i.e. AMSA and LME) is fully recognized. For example, the work on indicators by the PAME expert group on LMEs will be shared with other Arctic Council

Doc# apr 08 – 14.6e

Agenda Items: 4.2; 6.1; 14.3 and 14.6

working groups that may be working on other indicators of relevance e.g. SDWG working on socio-economic indicators, AMAPs various assessments and CAFFs biodiversity assessment. The Best Practices project has relevance to all of PAMEs work, in particular the LME work.

PAME is also seeking comments on the draft updated RPA from the other working groups and has to date received replies from AMAP; EPPR and SDWG. Further communication and inputs from other working groups will be sought as the updating of the RPA progresses.

Summary of Progress on PAME Projects

***Evaluation and Update of the Arctic Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines
Agenda Item 4.2***

The Arctic Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines were first published in 1997 and updated in 2002. These Guidelines recommend voluntary standards, technical and environmental best practices, management policy, and regulatory controls for Arctic offshore oil and gas operations. A workshop was convened December 7-8, 2007 in Miami, Florida, immediately following the 2007 International Regulators' Offshore Safety Conference - Improving Offshore Safety Through International Cooperation, to solicit comments on the existing Guidelines. Council country representatives, Permanent Participants, and other experts attended the workshop.

Comments on the Guidelines before, during, and after the workshop have been incorporated into a revised draft of the Guidelines. This revised document will serve as the point of departure for further comments and discussion and has been posted on the PAME website for participants to review in advance of the next PAME meeting (scheduled for June 2-4), at which the Guidelines will be discussed.

Below is the timeline and process for further review of the Guidelines:

| ACTION | TIMELINE |
|--|-----------------------|
| Revised Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines posted to PAME website for comment | March 13, 2008 |
| Comments on Guidelines due to PAME Secretariat and posted on website | May 1, 2008 |
| Guidelines (March 13 version) discussed/revised during PAME Meeting based on comments received by May 1 and additional comment made at PAME Meeting. | May 31 - June 3, 2008 |
| US-led Electronic Working Group continues to revise Guidelines. | June 3 - Fall 2008 |
| Fall PAME Meeting finalizes Guidelines and seeks Working Group approval of Guidelines. | Fall 2008 |
| Fall SAO Meeting reviews and approves the Guidelines. | Late Fall 2008 |
| Spring Ministerial Meeting adopts the Guidelines. | April 2009 |

Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA) – Agenda Item 6.1

Since the Narvik SAO meeting good progress on the 7 AMSA chapters has continued. As reported in November 2007, the AMSA findings are due for completion in December 2008. Two, successful workshops on *Arctic Marine Incidents* and *Permanent Participant Marine Use* were held in March 2008.

Recent AMSA Accomplishments:

- Three regional case studies to 2020 under development ~ Bering Strait (US) , Canadian Arctic (Canada), and NW Russia (Finland) - 1/08.
- Chapter 7 (Infrastructure) drafting underway - 4 Co-lead Authors - 1/08.
- Chapter 4 (Human Dimension) well underway with Lead Author, Henry Huntington- 1/08.
- Contracting for Chapter 5 (Futures) section on Arctic Marine Tourism - 2/08.
- 18-20 March 08 Workshop on Arctic Marine Incidents, University of New Hampshire Coastal Response Research Center, Funding by US NOAA.
- 25-26 March 08 Ottawa Workshop on Permanent Participant Arctic Marine Use, Funding by Canada's Ministry of Indian & Northern Affairs
- Completion of AMSA Scenario Narratives - 4/08.

Future AMSA Work:

- 29-30 April 08 - Planned, San Francisco Workshop on AMSA Environmental Issues/Impacts Using the AMSA Scenarios; Chapter 6 (Environmental Impacts) outline to be developed.
- AMSA Database due 1 May 08.
- Chapter 3 (AMSA Data) draft due 1 June 08.
- Chapter 5 (Futures) Regional Case Studies to 2020 due 1 June 08.
- 20-23 July 08 ICETECH08 in Banff, AMSA Sessions.

The PAME Chairman and AMSA Lead Country Representative presentation to the SAOs will outline the proposed process and timeline for completion of the AMSA report including recommendations for the SAOs and Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting.

Regional Programme of Action for the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (RPA) – Agenda Item 14.3

Canada and Iceland are leading the updating the *Regional Programme of Action for the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (RPA)* which is scheduled to go forward for Ministerial approval in Spring 2009.

In support of updating the RPA, Iceland hosted a one-day workshop on September 25th, 2007, in Reykjavik. Based on the feedback that was received at the RPA Workshop, an updated RPA has been prepared that recognizes the continuously evolving state of the Arctic marine environment. This revised draft features a core document component with Annexes which can be updated on a regular basis that will allow for the reporting of new threats without the need to revise the RPA as a whole.

The updated RPA also recognizes the need for a more integrated approach among Arctic Council Working Groups, and addresses this need by soliciting their input to ensure the most current information is presented. The draft updated RPA was distributed to Arctic Council Working Groups and PAME National Representatives for comments in January 2008. To date, comments have been received from AMAP, EPPR and SDWG. Comments from the remaining

Working Groups are still anticipated and consultations will continue to ensure that their comments are incorporated. Comments from PAME National Representatives are expected by 15 April 2008. The updated RPA will be revised based on comments received and distributed again for comments before being presented to PAME in June 2008, and subsequently to SAOs at Fall 2008 meeting.

Below is the timeline and process for updating the RPA:

| ACTION | TIMELINE |
|---|-------------------------|
| <u>2008</u> | |
| 1) Distribute to PAME WG and SAO's (as an information item for SAO meeting) | Early April |
| 2) Penultimate draft distributed to PAME and other Working Groups | Early May |
| 3) PAME meeting – final approval / endorsement of penultimate draft | June |
| 4) Address any final comments recommended from PAME | Late June |
| 5) Forward final version to SAO's for Approval at Fall Meeting | Fall |
| 6) PAME Secretariat to prepare / print new RPA document | Late Fall / Winter 2009 |
| <u>2009</u> | |
| 7) Forward new RPA to Arctic Ministers for Approval at Spring Meeting | Early Spring |

Ecosystem Approach - Large Marine Ecosystems - Agenda Item 14.6

The Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) Expert Group include Robert Siron (Canada); Ole Vestergaard (Denmark); Hermanni Kaartokallio (Finland); Eskild Lund Sorensen (Greenland); Olafur Astthorsson (Iceland); Hein Rune Skjoldal (Norway); Gennady Matishov (Russian Federation); Jan Thulin (Sweden), and Kenneth Sherman (United States). The Expert Group will consider initial options for introducing the 5 module indicator strategy for the assessment of three LMEs to test “proof of concept”, in the West Bering Sea, the Beaufort Sea, and the Barents Sea.

Progress is being made in assessing the utility of selected suites of LME indicators within the context of the 5 Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) assessment modules of (i) productivity; (ii) fish and fisheries; (iii) pollution and ecosystem health; (iv) socioeconomic conditions; and (v) governance. Robert Siron, Manager, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, has agreed to host a meeting of the LME expert group to take place in Montreal or Ottawa in Canada for two days in the first two weeks of May. Letters of invitation will be sent out and an agenda has been finalized. The agenda will be focused on reaching agreement on a generic suite of indicators of changing ecosystem conditions in the 17 Arctic LMEs.

The LME approach is among the topics highlighted at the upcoming 4th Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands taking place in Hanoi on April 7-10. The results of recent studies show significant warming in the world's LMEs, including in several LMEs of the Arctic. Warming is particularly accelerated in the Northern Atlantic where the fisheries benefiting from climate warming and favorable bottom up food web effects from increases in zooplankton enhancing the growth of plankton feeding species include herring, blue whiting, and capelin in

the Iceland Shelf, Norwegian Sea, and Faroe Plateau LMEs. In addition, the fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska and East Bering Sea LMEs are showing recent increases e.g. salmon and Alaska pollock fisheries biomass yields. In contrast to the Arctic Region, the more southern LMEs of the Northeast Atlantic such as the Iberian Shelf, Celtic-Biscay Shelf, and North Sea LMEs show declines in warm water plankton and a northward movement of fish stocks, a negative influence on the 4.1 million metric tons of the mean annual global fisheries biomass yields.

The US LME Program Office will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate coordination is maintained among the 3 principal Arctic Council Working Groups: shipping, oil and gas, and human dimensions of the Arctic. The working map of 17 Arctic large marine ecosystems is being applied in the AMAP Oil and Gas Assessment.

Finally, the work on Ecosystem Approach/LME has a relevance to the Best Practices in Ecosystem-Based Ocean Management in the Arctic (BePOMAr).