

Discussion Paper:
**Mechanisms to Implement the Arctic Council Sustainable
Development Action Plan (SDAP)**

The implementation of the SDAP should be based on the following principles:

- The SDAP should be implemented in stages. Its Table of Actions should be a “living” document.
- The Table of Actions should be updated every two years.
- All the Arctic Council Member States, Working Groups and other subsidiary bodies, Permanent Participants, and Observers are invited as partners to participate in the SDAP implementation.
- Each Working Group will work according to its own Work Plan, as approved by the SAOs.
- The SAOs should guide and supervise the progress of the SDAP implementation as a whole.
- Each WG should prepare materials for SAO assessment.
- The progress of the SDAP implementation should be evaluated on the basis of criteria and indicators to be agreed upon and adopted by SAOs.
- Every new action suggested for the SDAP should be considered in accordance with Arctic Council procedures.

General priority actions

During the first stage of the SDAP implementation (2004-2006) special attention will be paid to definition of gaps and priorities on each priority area mentioned in the Table of Actions with the aim to propose measures to be taken by the Arctic Council to eliminate gaps. This work will be done under the leadership of a lead country to be determined by each Working Group.

At the same time any new project proposals can be submitted as usual for their approval according to ordinary procedure.

Another general priority action for 2004-2006 is development of criteria and indicators for evaluation of the progress in the SDAP implementation. It is proposed that SDWG will be the lead Working Group for this work with participation of all other Working Groups and Permanent Participants.

Management of the SDAP implementation:

1. Monitoring SDAP implementation progress

1.1. Lead countries designated for specific actions listed in the SDAP Table of Actions will submit brief information about gaps on each priority area, proposals to eliminate these gaps and progress reports on the Arctic Council projects to the Chair of the appropriate Working Group or other subsidiary body responsible for the relevant action in advance of SAO meetings.

1.2. Chairs of the Working Groups or other subsidiary bodies will submit reports to SAOs prepared on the basis of above documents received from the lead countries.

1.3. SAOs will evaluate the progress in the SDAP implementation on the basis of above reports from the Chairs of the Working Groups or other subsidiary bodies.

1.4. SAOs shall, using the above criteria and indicators and jointly with the SDWG and other Working Groups and subsidiary bodies, prepare a report to the Ministerial Meeting on the progress of the SDAP implementation and sustainable development achievement in the circumpolar region.

2. Updating and Amending the SDAP Table of Actions

2.1. An updated and amended SDAP Table of Actions shall be adopted every two years at the Arctic Council Ministerial Meetings.

2.2. Proposals for updating and amending the SDAP Table of Actions may be submitted by Arctic Council Member States, Working Groups and other subsidiary bodies as well as by the Permanent Participants.

2.3. Proposals concerning new Arctic Council projects or other actions to be included in the SDAP Table of Actions should be made in accordance with a standard format, which is attached for consideration.

2.4. Each proposal should be considered initially by the relevant Working Group or other subsidiary body, then submitted to SAOs and, finally, to the Ministerial Meeting for adoption.

Even with SDAP implementation progress criteria and indicators available, it will be difficult to arrive at a reliable estimation of the realistic shift towards sustainable development in the circumpolar region. Therefore, it is suggested that approved criteria and indicators could be amended and developed.

The SDAP should be posted on the SDWG website, with a link on the Arctic Council website. The SDAP Table of Actions should be updated biannually by the SAO Chair in advance of the Ministerial Meeting to ensure that there is a current list of the Council's sustainable development activities and to provide a corporate memory of its capacity building experiences.

To make the SDAP successful, it might be useful to make **sustainable development models** and identify pilot areas for testing these models. Dissemination of experience gained in pilot areas should be recommended.

The SAO Chair should be in charge of the preparation of SDAP implementation progress reports for Ministers, of SDAP implementation success assessments, and of monitoring progress in achieving sustainable development in the circumpolar region.

It is also deemed useful to organize **information support** for the SDAP implementation. It could include inter alia information presentation and updating on the websites of the Arctic Council, its Working Groups and other subsidiary bodies as well as SDAP promotion in international fora and the media.

The financing of actions included in the SDAP Table of Actions should be carried out according to established practice in the Arctic Council. Lead countries for projects mandated by the Arctic Council should make efforts to enlist financing from the private sector, international financial organizations and foundations as well as regional authorities.

Format recommended for proposals on new project or other action of the Arctic Council to be included in the SDAP Table of Action

(The title of the new action proposed)

1. The new action initiator *
2. Justification of the new action
3. Brief coverage of the work to be done within the new action
4. Expected output
5. The Arctic Council Working Group or other subsidiary body responsible for implementing the new action
6. The lead country for implementing the new action
7. Suggested participants for implementing the new action
8. Dates for implementing the new action
9. New action cost estimate, \$ mln.
10. Suggested sources of financing

Proposal should be submitted for consideration at the Working Group meeting at least 30 days prior to the meeting.

* A new action can be initiated by Arctic Council Member States, Permanent Participants or Working Groups and other subsidiary bodies. Observers and organizations that are non-members of the Arctic Council may submit their proposals through a Working Group, Permanent Participant or an Arctic country SAO.