

Phase II SDWG Strategic Framework – Way Forward
Revised SEC Terms of Reference based on comments received to date
Draft for discussion purposes only

September 2012

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP (SDWG) SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL (SEC) EXPERT GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

There is a growing awareness within the Arctic Council and its Working Groups of the importance of better understanding the human influences on the Arctic environment, both for scientific progress and for providing useful information to Indigenous Peoples and Arctic communities and policy- and decision- makers.

The SDWG Social Economic Cultural Expert Group (SEC) is an integrated research community with interest in the dynamics of circumpolar human development specifically in the area of social, economic and cultural development. Balanced and timely research on the human condition and on the dynamics of environmental change in the Arctic is essential to improving circumpolar policy decision-making at all levels of society. Under the direction and upon the request of the SDWG, the SEC will propose approaches and methodologies to assist the SDWG in developing actions toward reducing uncertainties; assessing impacts; and predicting change.

I. Mandate

Under the auspices of the SDWG, the SEC expert group will support and advance knowledge gained through ecosystem and community based research to support circumpolar communities in developing practical responses to Arctic change. Moreover, this specialized capacity will lead toward greater collaboration and synergies between Arctic Council Working Groups, Permanent Participants, Indigenous and Arctic communities, academic institutions and other relevant circumpolar organizations in the development of sustainable and integrated approaches to address attendant human development opportunities and challenges.

II. Objectives

- a) To establish an interdisciplinary group **comprised** of Indigenous and Arctic community representatives, organizations, researchers, statisticians, social scientists, economists, academics, and others to provide from the Arctic region perspective further insight into the human dimensions in the Arctic.
- b) To fully engage Indigenous Peoples, Arctic communities and organizations in the development of research instruments and **analyses** to better understand community-based responses.
- c) To strengthen cooperation and collaboration between the SDWG and other Arctic Council Working Groups, observers and other organizations in the development and implementation **of specialized human dimension research to better understand the human influences on the Arctic environment.**

- d) **At the request of the SDWG**, SEC may provide timely updates/reports on SDWG **human dimension** activities at Arctic Council meetings, conferences and gatherings.

III. Roles and Responsibilities, and Accountability

- a. The SEC expert group is a subsidiary body of the SDWG and as such is accountable to the SDWG. Accordingly, pursuant to Rule 28 of the Rules of Procedure of the Arctic Council, the activities of the SEC are also subject to the Rules of Procedure of the Arctic Council.
- b. The expert group will serve as the SDWG’s institutional capacity to provide advice and to assist the SDWG in the research and production of specialized reports on Arctic human development.
- c. **At the request of the SDWG**, the expert group will undertake regular gap analyses to identify research priorities which **will assist the SDWG in framing its human development research agenda. This priority-based agenda will support the SDWG in its biennium work planning and in addressing intercessional pressures and priority adjustments.**
- d. **Under the direction of the SDWG**, the SEC **will** undertake priority based project development; review and recommend research proposals for SDWG endorsement and approval by SAOs and AC Ministers. SEC project proposals must also comply with the “SDWG Procedures for submitting, approving and managing project proposals (2006)” and “SDWG Project Proposal Template (2011)”.
- e. **As required**, the expert group may provide advice to the AC and its Working Groups on broader cross-cutting activities with a requirement for human development research and **data analysis**. Conversely, the SEC could be a conduit between the Working Groups and other stakeholders interested in working with the SDWG on its human development research priorities.
- f. **SDWG may require SEC to submit a written report 30 days prior to SDWG Regular meetings, and may request SEC to prepare and/or make presentations at SDWG and SAO meetings on its activities.**

IV. Composition

- a) **SDWG State and Permanent Participant Heads of Delegation will each nominate a representative to participate in the work of the SEC.**

V. Communications Strategy and Outreach

- a) **Within the context of the SDWG Communication Strategy**, SEC may provide assistance to the SDWG on how to better coordinate information-exchange **and communicate** SDWG

human development research results, and analyses to the AC/WGs and at other international events.

- b) Under the direction of the SDWG, SEC may develop a communication strategy to undertake **educational** and communication activities to promote SDWG human development products inside or outside the Arctic Council. These activities could include, but are not limited to **scientific conferences, symposia, and workshops aimed at researchers, students, communities, and policy makers.**
- c) **Any verbal or written communications to be delivered outside the Arctic Council are to be provided in writing at least 45 days prior to the event. All materials are to be developed in accordance with the SDWG, and/or Arctic Council Communications Strategies to allow for Arctic States and Permanent Participants to review and agree on content and messaging.**

VI. Funding

- a) **Current AC Working Groups activities and projects are funded on a voluntary basis.**