

# Instructions for submitting Observer reports

## Introduction

This document provides the reporting template and instructions for Observers required to report during the **Icelandic Chairmanship (2019-2021)**.

The deadline for submission is **1 December 2020**.

According to the "[Arctic Council Rules of Procedure](#)" (Annex 2), every **two years** Observers are requested to submit to the Chairmanship up-to-date information about relevant activities and their contributions to the work of the Arctic Council. The following **19 Observers** are requested to submit their report by **1 December 2020**:<sup>1</sup>

- France;
- Italian Republic;
- Japan;
- People's Republic of China;
- Republic of India;
- Republic of Korea;
- Republic of Singapore;
- Spain;
- International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC);
- Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO);
- North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO);
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP);
- Arctic Institute of North American (AINA);
- Association of World Reindeer Herders (AWRH);
- Circumpolar Conservation Union (CCU);
- International Arctic Social Sciences Association (IASSA);
- International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA);
- University of the Arctic (UArctic), and;
- International Maritime Organization (IMO).

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<sup>1</sup> These include Observers admitted at the 2019 Rovaniemi Ministerial meeting, who will be reviewed for the first time during the Russian Federation's Chairmanship (2021-2023).

## Role of Observers

The role and responsibilities of Observers, as well as criteria for admission to the Arctic Council, can be found in the “Arctic Council Rules of Procedure” (Annex 2) and the “[Observer Manual for Subsidiary Bodies](#).”

The primary role of Observers is to observe the work of the Arctic Council. Observers contribute to the Arctic Council primarily through engagement at the level of Working Groups, Task Forces, and/or Expert Groups. Observers are invited to the meetings and other activities of the Arctic Council unless the Senior Arctic Officials decide otherwise. Observers may also propose projects through an Arctic State or a Permanent Participant.

## Report submission

Observer reports should include the relevant information described below and in the template.

- (a) A description of the Observer’s contributions to the work of the Arctic Council since the time of the Observer’s most recent submission, or in the previous two years, with special focus on contributions to the subsidiary bodies through project participation and support, as well as collaboration with Permanent Participants;
- (b) If applicable, a description of the Observer’s future plans to contribute to the work of the Arctic Council, with special focus on contributions to the subsidiary bodies through project participation and support, as well as collaboration with Permanent Participants; and,
- (c) If applicable, a description of the Observer’s contributions to other aspects of the Arctic Council and its goals not covered in the previous sections since the time of the Observer’s most recent submission, or in the previous two years.

Observer reports should be submitted electronically to the **Arctic Council Secretariat** via email: [acs@arctic-council.org](mailto:acs@arctic-council.org) not later than **1 December 2020**. Please bear in mind while preparing your report that all Observer reports will be published online in the *Observer* section of the [Arctic Council online Library](#).

If an Observer fails to submit a report, the Arctic Council will consider this to mean that the Observer **is no longer interested in maintaining its status** as an accredited Observer to the Arctic Council.

## Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

KINGDOM OF SPAIN

Date of submission:

1<sup>st</sup> December 2020

Observer's website, if appropriate:

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28071 Madrid.  
ESPAÑA

## Observer Report

Please describe in no more than two pages your state's or organization's contributions to the work of the Arctic Council's Working Groups, Task Forces, and/or Expert Groups since the time of your most recent report, or in the previous two years. Please highlight contributions to specific projects, such as through proposals, concept development, in-kind and financial support, and hosting of meetings. Please detail any collaboration with Permanent Participants, such as project proposal endorsement and support.

Since joining the Arctic Council as an Observer, after Salekhard Ministerial Meeting in 2006, Spain has endeavoured to meet its new Arctic duties by participating in the relevant Arctic Council meetings, plus giving consideration to strategies and actions that might increase the level of cooperation and interaction between Spanish institutions and their equivalent Arctic partners. Here I will make reference only to the latest events, data or elements worth mentioning.

Referring to the institutional and policy level, Spain has attended and actively participated as an Observer at:

- **Fairbanks (2017) and Rovaniemi (2019) Ministerial Meetings.**
- All the **SAO Meetings** during the Finnish and the current Icelandic Chairmanships of the Arctic Council. The Delegation made up by Dr. Antonio Quesada, Secretary of the Spanish Polar Committee, as Alternate HoD and I, Francisco Aguilera, as HoD and Spain's SAO.
- The **Finnish AC Chairmanship, plus the Embassy of Finland in Madrid** hosted an event in Madrid, March 2019, to introduce the Arctic Council and review the cooperation between Spain and the AC. In exchange, the **Embassy of Spain in Helsinki** hosted also an event, in November 2019, on *Environmental Issues in the Arctic*, with experts from Finland and Spain.

Referring to the Working Groups, Experts Groups and other AC connected fora, a great increase in Spanish participation has been registered since the last Report.

- I. ACAP.** Spain attended to the *ACAP Webinar on Mercury and its Combined Effects with Other Contaminants on Health and Ecosystems*, on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2020; and then, to the ACAP Plenary session on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> September. The Spanish Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge (MITERD) has been tasked with the responsibility to follow the ACAP activities and represent Spain at its meetings. The HoD is Ms. Irene Olivares, assisted by the relevant departments within the said Ministry.
- II. AMAP.** Spain has attended to the last AMAP plenary Meetings, and specifically the one taking place on 6-8 October 2020. Before that, Spain had already submitted to AMAP as requested information on researchers and activities related to AMAP's goals and targets, carried out by Spanish institutions or individuals in the Arctic. Spain did also nominate 4 researchers who made themselves available for the revision of Chapters 2 and 6 of the "Observational records indicating Arctic physical climate change" and "*Climate change impacts on the Arctic ecosystems and Arctic ecosystems feedback*" reports from the EG on Climate. Spain has not however received confirmation as of the writing of this Report whether this offer was accepted. Mr. Peio Oria, from the Spanish Agency of Meteorology (AEMET) is the HoD of Spain at AMAP Meetings and is in charge of coordinating a network of agencies and researchers in Spain with competence in the fields of interest of AMAP. Spain, through its Council on Nuclear Safety, CSN, prepared also a presentation during the 7<sup>th</sup> *Int'l Conference on Radioactivity in the Arctic and other Vulnerable Environments*, held in 2018. In another EG, there is another Spanish contribution at the report on "*POPs and climate change*", which was written in 2020, where Prof. Jordi Dachs (IDAEA-CSIC) is co-author of Chapter 2.2, "*Physical Environment: Levels and trends*", of the AMAP POPs and Climate Change Assessment
- III. CAFF.** Spain has regularly attended to all the last CAFF plenary Meetings, including the last one on 16-17 September 2020. Among the avenues of collaboration between Spain and CAFF, AMBI can be mentioned as the most important one. Spain is currently working towards providing AMBI / CAFF with a location and support for the hiring of an expert to be the coordinator for the African-Eurasian Flyway. The office is meant to be located in Seville, Spain, near the Doñana National Park. The Spanish Polar Committee and CAFF are also meant to sign the ROC and a MoU on this and other ways and means of bilateral cooperation.

Spain (Dr. Andrés Barbosa, CSIC) further participated at:

- o Attendance to CAFF: *Mainstreaming in Arctic Biodiversity - online Arctic Mining Panel discussions* Nov 17-18 (First session).
- o Attendance the 29 October 2020 to the *African-Eurasian Flyway (AMBI) online meeting*.
- o Contribution to the review of the AMBI work plan for the midterm evaluation
- o Attendance the 4th June 2020 to the meeting of *AMBI midterm evaluation discussion*.

While MITERD represented Spain at the *Biodiversity and Mining in the Arctic* seminar, 17-18 November 2020.

The Spanish HoD at CAFF Meetings is Mr. Borja Heredia, from the MITERD, who also coordinates a network of agencies and individuals interested in CAFF's work. Dr. Andrés Barbosa, from the CSIC, is the Spanish Representative at AMBI.

- IV. **EPPR.** Spain has been attending to the EPPR plenary meetings since EPPR-I Helsinki, 2018. The Directorate General of the Merchant Marine (DGMM), Ministry of Transportation of Spain, has been tasked with the participation and follow-up of EPPR issues, and projects. Spain, for instance, submitted information on the application and the *Polar Code* to Spanish-flagged shipping. There are also proposals of bilateral cooperation between Spain and some Arctic States on EPPR issues. One of the projects where there could be cooperation between Spain and EPPR is in the field of radiation, where the Spanish Nuclear Safety Council (CSN) has shown interest.
- Among the contributions from Spain to the activities of the WG was a presentation given at EPPR-II 2019 in Reykjavik by a representative from MITERD on the Spanish experience in dealing with wildfires, an issue of great concern now to the whole Arctic community and where Spain does have experience. Spain did participate at the *EPPR Wildland Fire Project* meeting last June 2020, although more information is expected on the goals and targets of the Project so that a specific contribution from Spain may be available. This is a field where Spain does see herself more than willing to work with her Arctic Partners.
- V. **PAME.** Owing to the nature of the WG's tasks, aims and fields of study, the representation of Spain at the Group is dual, as some issues fall within the responsibilities of MITERD (then, the Spanish HoD is Ms. Sagrario Arrieta), or within the responsibilities of DGMM (then, the Spanish HoD is Ms Ana Núñez). Spain has been repeatedly attending to the plenary meetings of PAME since 2018. Spain, through the Transports Attaché at the Spanish Embassy in London, Mr Andrés Galván, has further attended to the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Arctic Shipping Best Practice Information Forum, and does intend to continue its participation at these fora. Spain has also been answering all requests for information to Members and Observers issued by PAME and finds, in general, the contents of the work of this WG of particular interest.
- Following requests from PAME, in order to appoint experts for the ML-RAP (Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter in the Arctic), Spain appointed Ms. Marta Martínez-Gil, from MITERD.
- VI. **SDWG.** Since 2017, Spain has been present in all the Plenary Meetings of the SDWG, including the two held virtually during 2020 (8-9 June and 26-28 October), and attended by the new HoD, Mr. Guillermo Marin, from the Foreign Ministry. Spain is studying with great interest all the projects promoted by this Working Group, with the corresponding relevant Ministries and organizations, with a view to eventually take part and contribute actively to these endeavors. To that effect, the Chairmanship already submitted specific requests that have been properly channeled, though the COVID19 pandemic and its effects has put a brake on its implementation.
- VII. **BCMEG.** Spain does have submitted its 2020 report on emissions of black carbon and methane to this EG and appointed Ms María Navarro, from MITERD, as her national expert on emissions to support the works of this EG.
- VIII. **6<sup>th</sup> Arctic Leaders Forum.** Spain attended, through a Counsellor of the Embassy of Spain in Helsinki, Ms Alicia Cocero, to this great event in Rovaniemi, Finland.
- IX. **Arctic Meteorological Summit.** Held at Levi, Finland, on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2018, Spain, which is already in intense cooperation with some Arctic nations on meteorological sciences, was represented by Ms Carmen Rus and Mr Julio González Braña, from the Spanish meteorological agency, AEMET.
- X. **TFAMC, Task Force on Arctic Marine Cooperation.** Spain did participate in some of its sessions thanks to Mr. Benito Núñez, current Head of the DGMM.
- XI. **TFICA, Task Force on Improved Connectivity in the Arctic.** Mr. Alfredo Timmermans, from Telefónica, represented Spain at its meeting in Washington, D.C.
- XII. **SAO Marine Mechanism.** Held in October 2020 in hybrid mode, in Reykjavik and in the net, and chaired by Iceland, Spain has attended through representatives of the Spanish Polar Committee, MITERD, DGMM and the Foreign Ministry.

If applicable, please describe in no more than one page your state's or organization's future plans for contributing to the work of the Arctic Council's Working Groups, Task Forces, and/or

Inspired by the **Guidelines for a Polar Strategy of Spain**

([https://www.ciencia.gob.es/stfls/MICINN/Investigacion/FICHEROS/Comite\\_Polar\\_definitivo/Directrices\\_estrategia\\_polar\\_espanola.pdf](https://www.ciencia.gob.es/stfls/MICINN/Investigacion/FICHEROS/Comite_Polar_definitivo/Directrices_estrategia_polar_espanola.pdf)), which looks at, both, the Antarctica and the Arctic, Spain is resolutely committed to work with the Arctic nations and peoples towards a sustainably developed, peaceful and environmentally protected Arctic. Spain is affected by Arctic developments and is historically connected to the region.

To that effect, and now that Spain has managed to create the **domestic infrastructure and institutional framework needed to sustain a consistent policy towards the region**, it is the intention of Spain to keep the current levels of engagement, and widen them whenever possible.

Spain wishes to entertain when possible an **Arctic dialogue with Arctic States**, be that at political level during consultations when appropriate, or at technical level with the relevant institutions within the Arctic Council or each country.

Spain further wishes to share the following goals:

- **ACAP**: The Ministry of Ecological Transition finds that this WG focuses on elements under its competence and wishes to identify ways to participate at projects approved within the framework of the Expert Groups. An indication from ACAP on what might be more useful from Spain would be welcome.

- **AMAP**: The Barcelona Supercomputing Center ([www.bsc.es](http://www.bsc.es)), as well as 3 researchers from IPE-CSIC, UB and UAB in Spain, as well as 2 Spanish researchers at AU (DK) are willing to assist the AMAP Climate Expert Group. Other specific initiatives are already under consideration.

- **CAFF**: Once implemented the pledge made by Spain to sustain and provide location for the AMBI Afro-Eurasian Flyway Coordinator, focus should be given to the paragraphs of the MoU to be signed between the Spanish Polar Committee and CAFF. The relationship between both institutions stems from a previous and strong cooperation among experts from both sides. Spain further pledges to exert her diplomatic good offices with third Parties to ensure that AMBI is able to carry out its mission where appropriate.

- **EPFR**: At this WG, there seems to be prospects for further cooperation between Spain and the AC in the field of wildfires, radiation (through RAD EG) or the exchange of information regarding the implementation and problematics of the Polar Code. Spain has also been approached by some Arctic States at bilateral level on maritime traffic promotion and bunkering, due to the extensive experience of Spain as a maritime and seafaring nation, its geographical location and its role withing the IMO and related Organizations.

- **PAME**: Spain is very keen to strengthen and deepen her relationship with PAME, as its goals and projects are in line with the Spanish Government's policies at home and abroad. Marine shipping, marine pollution, marine protected areas, or attention to invasive species, among others, happen to be priorities for Spain. Through its current channels of participation at the WG, Spain intends to provide specifics on her possible contributions to the relevant projects and seek cooperation on them with Members and PPs.

- **SDWG**: Sustainable development is one the key priorities of the Spanish government. In this sense, Spain is becoming a leader in the fight against climate change and is very active in promoting the Agenda 2030 and the Paris Treaty. On the other hand, the blue economy in Spain is the largest by far among EU members, which gives Spain useful insights and experience to share with the SDWG. The gender perspective is another area where we think that the contribution of Spain could be mutually beneficial. Spain is currently studying which projects could be more suitable for Spain to contribute.

Regarding the **Icelandic Chairmanship of the Arctic Council**, Spain feels able to assist in its objectives:

- **The Arctic Marine Environment**: Other than bilaterally, through the WGs and specifically through PAME and initiatives regarding marine litter.
- **Climate and green energy solutions**: Spain is a leading country in that field and having submitted already her report on black carbon and methane emissions, is ready to assist Arctic States and PPs by sharing its expertise and participating at their initiatives.
- **People and Communities**: Spain is also a world leader in shipping, tourism and telecommunications, while has a determined public policy of promoting gender equality. Spain offers her experience on those fields to her Arctic Partners and will also seek to support the Arctic Economic Council with some Spanish input.
- **Stronger Arctic Council**: Spain supports the AC and its Chairmanship in that endeavour. That shows through active participation at the relevant Arctic Council meetings. Spain stands ready to support the Chair initiatives when appropriate.

Spain will also seek to:

- set up a Spanish Polar Observatory, in charge of funding, storing, curating and making available to the international community the data from the long-time series.

- Increase/Promote participation in polar (Arctic) international observation programs and forums, connected with some calls for young researchers and research group consolidation, as well as research groups exchanges and especially polar early career scientists.

- Spanish National Policy on Polar Data, with the intention to share these data to the scientific community.

- international cooperation, based on bilateral agreements with other Partners, forr sharing research infrastructures in the Arctic and research initiatives.

- Launching scientific ad-hoc calls facilitating the interaction between Spanish teams and international teams in large projects by mean of specific calls for Strategic Networks.

- Making available Spanish technology and know-how in the Arctic in order to contribute to its sustainable development.

Expert Groups. Please highlight intentions to contribute to specific projects and to collaborate with Permanent Participants.

The most recent and important innovation at Spanish Polar (Arctic and Antarctic) capabilities has been the new legal status of the **Spanish Polar Committee, or CPE**; the inter Ministries body that coordinates Spanish policy towards the Arctic and leads the way to increase the interest of Spain towards the region. The CPE has been expanded to include new Ministries and has also been given new competences and a better legal and financial position. Spain is very optimistic about what this new situation will deliver.

Spain, as a member of the **EU**, and in coordination with the EU Arctic Council members and observers, is also actively involved in the formulation of the Arctic policy and strategy of the EU towards the Arctic; participating at discussions at the relevant fora, such as **COEST**, events in Brussels, or the attendance to the **EU Arctic Forum**, in Umeå, last October 2019. Spain did support the Arctic policy during the **EU Presidency** of Finland.

Spain is further ready and able to include **Arctic topics in her bilateral political consultations with Arctic States** and has already done so with a few of them.

In the very important field of **science**, which informs the Spanish policy towards the Arctic, examples of Spanish commitment to the region include:

- The **Arctic Science Ministerial Meeting**. Spain has participated so far in its two prior editions, in Washington D.C. and Berlin. And intends to do so again at ASM3, in Tokyo, whichever the format decided by the Icelandic and Japanese co-organizers. The Spanish Delegation will be headed at political level.
- The **European Polar Board**. At whose executive board Spain currently sits.
- The **EU PolarNet**. Which held a workshop meeting in Madrid, in 2017, while Spain also leads some Task Forces created by several working groups. Spain also sits at the board.
- Active participation on Arctic issues at International Organizations like **IMO**, **OSPAR** and others.
- Regular attendance and participation at events organized within the **Arctic Circle Forum**, in Reykjavik, **Arctic Frontiers**, in Tromsø, or the **Arctic International Forum**, in Saint Petersburg.
- **IASC**. This Committee is very important for Spain, which is very active in 5 of its 6 Working Groups.

**In order to conduct research in the Arctic Spain currently has two research vessels able to conduct polar operations: *BIO Hespérides* (Polar Ship Lloyd Ice Class 1C), and *BO Sarmiento de Gamboa* (Polar Code Certified).**

Beyond that, examples of scientific activity by Spanish teams is the following list of projects where Spain is leading or actively involved:

- **Lunar AOD comparison campaign**, carried out in Ny-Alesund, Svalbard, in February 2020 ([https://sios-svalbard.org/AOD\\_intercomparison\\_2020](https://sios-svalbard.org/AOD_intercomparison_2020)). It was supported by SIOS (Svalbard Integrated Arctic Earth Observing System). AEMET staff participated in the campaign and in the on-site workshop held during the campaign.

- **SCILLA** (Summer Campaign for Intercomparison of Lunar measurements of Lindenberg's Aerosols), developed by DWD (Deutscher Wetterdienst) in Lindenberg Observatory as a comparison campaign of the remote sensing instruments with capabilities to observe atmospheric aerosols within the polar community. AEMET participated with 2 photometers CE318-T and in the subsequent workshop, held online on September, 2nd, 2020.

-**WMO - Global Cryosphere Watch**. Participation on:

- a) The preliminary Edition of WMO-No. 8, Volume II, Measurement of Cryospheric Variables. Chapters 1 and 2 (Snow best practices)
- b) 3rd meeting of the WMO-Global Cryosphere Watch -Snow Watch Team (Montreal, July 2019)

- **AERONET** (Univ. Valladolid). This is a long-term international project monitoring aerosol optical depth in the Arctic. Sites: Andenes and Ny-Alesund.

- Project (Univ. Valladolid): **Re-evaluation and Homogenization of Aerosol Optical Depth Observations in Svalbard**, Svalbard Strategic Grant, Research Council of Norway (Mar 2020, Dec 2021).

- Project (Univ. Valladolid): **"Polar AOD contributions to the T-MOSAIC campaigns"**, that received an endorsement letter by the Executive Committee of T-MOSAIC (May 2019). Collaboration with CNR (Italy), AWI (Germany), U. of Sherbrooke (Canada).

- Campaign (Univ. Valladolid) : **Arctic Night Aerosol Characterization Campaign**: towards closing the gap in the annual cycle of the Arctic AOD climatology. Ny-Ålesund, Svalbard, February 2020. Collaboration with CNR (Italy), AWI (Germany), NILU (Norway).

- Project (Univ. Valladolid): **Aerosols, Clouds and Water Vapor in Polar Regions: emphasis in nocturnal photometry**. Funded by: MINECO, Spain. Duration: Jan 2016- Dec. 2018.

- Project (Univ. Valladolid): **Enhanced synergetic retrieval of Aerosols, Clouds and Water Vapor properties in Arctic and Antarctic Regions (ePOLAAR)**. Funded by: Agencia Estatal de Investigación (Spain). Duration: Jan 2019 - Dec. 2021.

- **Glacial oscillation and climatic variability at NorthEast Greenland** (UBarcelona). 2020-23

- **Arctic Ocean resources protection**. Spain's IEO monitors all fisheries, using a system that includes a network of scientific observers aboard fishing boats, as well as biological and data analyses to ensure the sustainability of the resources exploitation. The data collected covers not only fishing statistics but, also, scientific information relevant to studies on biodiversity and biomass evolution, including an adhoc scientific cruises like the Greenland halibut bottom trawl survey in the Slope of Svalbard (2019). The IEO participates yearly, on the "Regional Coordination Meeting of North Sea and Eastern Arctic: RCM NS & EA", reporting and developing national actions related to the extractive sector (PNDB) in the North Sea and East Arctic.

- **Polar Fisheries** (Inst. Español de Oceanografía - IEO). Monitoring the effects of global change on the Arctic fisheries, in the context of sustainable and ecologically responsible fisheries.

**ECOPESLE-2** (IEO) Starting on 2016, it is a 5 years programme onboard Spanish commercial ships to monitor fishing resources in Svalbard Protected Area (ICES-IIb-2).

- **Sea Ice Dynamic Experiment (SIDEx)**. Funded by ONR (CSIC). 2019-21

- **Chasing Icebergs**. Funded by NSF (CSIC)

-**SPAIN CONTRIBUTION TO MOSAIC**: Primary aerosol transport in the Arctic Atmosphere (**SIMPATICO**) aims - by using experimental and field approaches - to link aerosol emission processes with biological activities in surface polar waters, and disseminate results. Examining the potential of changing environments on polar aerosol emissions strongly regulating our



contributions to other aspects of the Arctic Council and its goals not covered by the previous sections since the time of your most recent report, or in the previous two years.