

Draft

The Visibility of the Arctic Council

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Preface

The chair of the Arctic Council transferred from the United States to Finland at the Ministerial Meeting in Barrow, Alaska in October 2000. In its current role as the chair of the Arctic Council, Finland has stated the need to improve the visibility of the Council as one of the priorities during its chairmanship in 2000-2002:

"During its chairmanship Finland will aim at raising the Arctic Council's profile as a promoter of Arctic issues of global significance in relation to other international institutions. During the Finnish chairmanship the Council will also examine how its information activities should be improved to strengthen its external image" (Program for the Finnish Chair of the Arctic Council 2000-2002).

The aim of the present study was therefore firstly to clarify the knowledge and views of the local inhabitants, indigenous peoples, decision-makers, and scientists living in the arctic region on the activities of the Arctic Council and secondly, to find the means to improve the flow of information from and the visibility of the Arctic Council. The study was conducted using a questionnaire directed to the inhabitants of the eight Arctic countries.

This study is an independent study funded by the Ministry of Education in Finland and it is conducted by the Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland¹⁾.

¹⁾ The Arctic Centre at the University of Lapland is a multidisciplinary institute of arctic research, exhibitions and a data and information service located in Rovaniemi, Finland. <http://www.arcticcentre.org/>

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to clarify the knowledge and views of the local inhabitants, indigenous peoples, decision-makers, and scientists living in the arctic region concerning the activities of the Arctic Council and to find the means to improve the flow of information from and the visibility of the Arctic Council. The study was conducted using a questionnaire distributed to the inhabitants of the Arctic countries at public libraries, through the Arctic Council homepages, in international meetings, at exhibitions, and during university lectures. Three hundred and fifty-four answers were received from the eight Arctic countries. In addition, 51 answers were received from non-Arctic countries.

The study showed that the Arctic Council is rather poorly known among the inhabitants of the Arctic countries. One-third of the respondents did not know what the Arctic Council is. The most well-known working groups of the Arctic Council were the AMAP (Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme), the SDWG (Sustainable Development Working Group), and CAFF (Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna); the least known were EPPR (Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response) and PAME (Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment). In addition, Arctic Council reports were rather unknown among the people who do not deal with the Arctic Council in their work. In general, many of the reports were found to be of high quality, interesting and informative, but sometimes too theoretic and insufficiently distributed to give general audience: people did not know where and how to find them.

Almost 70 % of the respondents thought that Arctic Council conducts important intergovernmental co-operation in the Arctic region and that its working groups perform important environmental assessments. Many respondents had high expectations for the Arctic Council in the future. The main expectation was to achieve a better standard of living for the arctic communities and to conserve the arctic environment. Respondents wrote that more attention should be paid to the people of the Arctic countries and not only to the environment. The Arctic Council could benefit by creating new opportunities for economic, cultural, and political life in the Arctic regions. People hoped for concrete projects that would employ local people, e.g. in the field of new technology and the sustainable use of natural resources.

63 % of the respondents of the all eight arctic countries, and 81 % of Russian respondents had not received sufficient information about the activity of the Arctic Council. The study showed the most important groups that should be informed are local people in general,

indigenous people, reporters, local and provincial officials and students. It became evident that TV and/or radio are the most important means for disseminating information about the Arctic Council. TV and radio can easily reach extensive masses of people, including those who do not have access to the Internet. The usefulness of TV and radio as a source of information was particularly emphasized by the Russian respondents (92 %). Besides the mass media, popular reports, public events, homepages, and the Arctic Council bulletin are also or would be important means for increasing the information flow from the Arctic Council.

Because the Arctic Council is funded by its member states on a voluntary basis, no special resources so far have been separately allocated to create a communications strategy or to hire an information manager for media relations.

We recommend that the Arctic Council starts to publish an Arctic Council Bulletin, to organize public events in connection with Arctic Council meetings to start discussions with the local people, and to create an electronic network for fast dissemination of information. Concerning the dissemination of information, more attention should be paid to the use of TV, radio, and reporters. We are look forward to maintaining the Arctic Council's homepages, to publishing high-quality popular reports with some improvements (with, for example, a more effective distribution), and to disseminating information in conjunction with arctic exhibitions.

Finally, when information about the activity of the Arctic Council is disseminated, the fragmented audience should be better taken into consideration. This means that information should be more effective reconciled firstly for the needs of different language groups, particularly Russian and indigenous people and secondly, for the needs of people of different age and education.

Key words: Arctic Council, questionnaire, information dissemination, communications strategy

1. Introduction

1.1. Arctic Council

The Arctic Council was established on 19 September 1996 in Ottawa, Canada. It is a high level intergovernmental forum that provides a mechanism to address the common concerns and challenges faced by the Arctic governments and the people of the Arctic. The members of the Council are Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden, and the United States of America. The Association of Indigenous Minorities of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation, the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, the Saami Council, the Aleutian International Association, the Arctic Athabaskan Council, and the Gwich'in Council International are Permanent Participants in the Council. There is provision for non-arctic states, inter-governmental and inter-parliamentary organizations, and non-governmental organizations to become involved as observers.

The main activities of the Council focus on the protection of the Arctic environment and sustainable development as a means of improving the economic, social, and cultural well-being of the North. Assessing the state of the arctic environment (e.g. the effects of pollution and global change, promoting environmental protection, environmental health, and sustainable development) is an important part of the challenging duties of the Arctic Council. The Council meets at the ministerial level biennially. The Chair and Secretariat of the Council rotates every two years among the eight Arctic States, beginning with Canada in 1996. The United States served as Chair from 1998-2000 and Finland has assumed the Chair for 2000-2002.

At the AEPS Ministerial meeting held in Alta, Norway in June 1997, the existing working groups of the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) were integrated within the Council. The working groups are: AMAP (Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme), CAFF (Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna), SDWG (Sustainable Development Working

Group), EPPR (Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response) and PAME (Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment) (Arctic Council 1996-2000).

1.2. The information activity of the Arctic Council

At present, the responsibility for providing information about the activity of the Arctic Council to the different target groups has largely belonged to (1) the Arctic Council secretary of the chair country, (2) the five working groups, and the programmes, projects and action plans of the Arctic Council, (3) the Permanent Participants and (4) the Observers at the Arctic Council, all of which have own information flows about their activities. The information activity of the secretary of the chair country has included the Arctic Council homepage (<http://www.arctic-council.org/>) as a principal source of information. Besides the homepages (see links from AC homepage), information flow is composed of scientific, political, and popular reports, brochures, and press conferences during the ministerial, senior arctic officials' and other Arctic Council meetings, newspaper and magazine articles, and TV and radio interviews.

The Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council, i.e. indigenous peoples, have their own independent information activity through, for example, the ICC (Inuit Circumpolar Conference), the IPS (Arctic Indigenous Peoples Secretariat), and RAIPON (Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North). In addition, the Observers of the Arctic Council have their own information activity. For example, the WWF Arctic Programme (World Wide Fund for Nature International Arctic Programme) has actively reported about the work of the Arctic Council by publishing the quarterly Arctic Bulletin. A joint exhibition "*Arctic Rings of Life*" was established in 2001 in co-operation with the WWF Arctic Programme, the UNEP Grid-Arendahl, and the Arctic Centre at the University of Lapland. It is located at the Arktikum in Rovaniemi, Finland.

2. Questionnaire for Improving the Flow of Information from the Arctic Council

2.1. Background

The aim of the questionnaire was to clarify the knowledge and views of the local inhabitants, indigenous peoples, decision-makers, and scientists living in the arctic region on the activities of the Arctic Council, and to find the means to improve the flow of information from and the visibility of the Arctic Council.

The questionnaire was distributed to the inhabitants of the eight Arctic countries in 2001 at public libraries, through the Arctic Council homepages (<http://www.arctic-council.org/whatsnew.asp>), via electronic and surface mailing lists, personal contacts, at international meetings, at exhibitions and during university lectures. The questionnaire was distributed in English, Russian, Swedish, Finnish, and Saami.

The total number of returned answers from the eight Arctic countries was 354. In addition, 51 answers were received from non-Arctic countries. Most of the answers were from Finland (66 %), followed by Russia (12 %), the USA (8 %), Canada (5 %), Norway (4 %), Sweden (3 %), Island (1 %), and Denmark (1 %). The percentage of answers from males was slightly higher (53 %) than those from females (47 %). Over 60 % of the answers were received from people less than 40 years of age.

Almost the same number of answers were received from pupils or students (26 %) and officials (25 %), followed by scientists (16 %) and other paid employees (12 %). 9 % of the respondents marked that they are indigenous and 10 % practice hunting, fishing or reindeer herding as part of their livelihood. 8 % of the persons who answered the questionnaire were employed in an association and 6 % had privately owned businesses. A very low percentage of the respondents were reporters (2 %), unemployed (3 %), or retired (3 %).

2.2. Visibility of the Arctic Council at present

2.2.1. Knowledge about the Arctic Council

One-third (31 %) of the respondents answered, “I don’t know what it is” when they were asked about their knowledge of the Arctic Council (**Table 1**). Those who had heard of the Arctic Council mentioned that their contact was mostly through newspapers and magazines (29 %), TV (18 %) or radio (16%), or at work (19 %).

Table 1. Knowledge of the respondents about the Arctic Council.

Knowledge about the Arctic Council	(%)	N
I don't know what it is	31	110
I have heard the AC mentioned on TV	18	65
I have heard the AC mentioned on the radio	16	58
I have heard the AC mentioned in newspapers, magazines	29	103
I have heard the AC mentioned in meetings	16	56
I have heard the AC mentioned in AC publications	15	53
I have heard the AC mentioned at work	19	68
I am familiar with the activity of the AC through TV	3	9
I am familiar with the activity of the AC through the radio	3	11
I am familiar with the activity of the AC through newspapers, magazines	13	45
I am familiar with the activity of the AC through homepage	23	82
I am familiar with the activity of the AC through publications	14	48
I am familiar with the activity of the AC through work	17	61
I deal with the AC in my work, not at all	20	21
I deal with the AC in my work, daily	24	25
I deal with the AC in my work, weekly	13	14
I deal with the AC in my work, monthly	10	11
I deal with the AC in my work, annually	33	35
I have participated in meetings of the AC	13	45
I am familiar with the reports of the AC	15	54

The respondents who answered that they are familiar with the activity of the Arctic Council mentioned the Arctic Council homepage (23 %) and contact at work (17 %) as the two main means for their familiarity with it. One-fourth of the respondents dealt with the Arctic Council at their work daily and one-third annually. 13 % had participated the meetings of the Arctic Council and 12 % were familiar with the reports of the Arctic Council (**Table 1**).

The answers to the question “How well-known do you think the activity of the Arctic Council is at different levels?” are presented in **Figure 1**. The answers clearly show that the respondents think the Arctic Council is the least known on the local level (49 %), and best known on the provincial level.

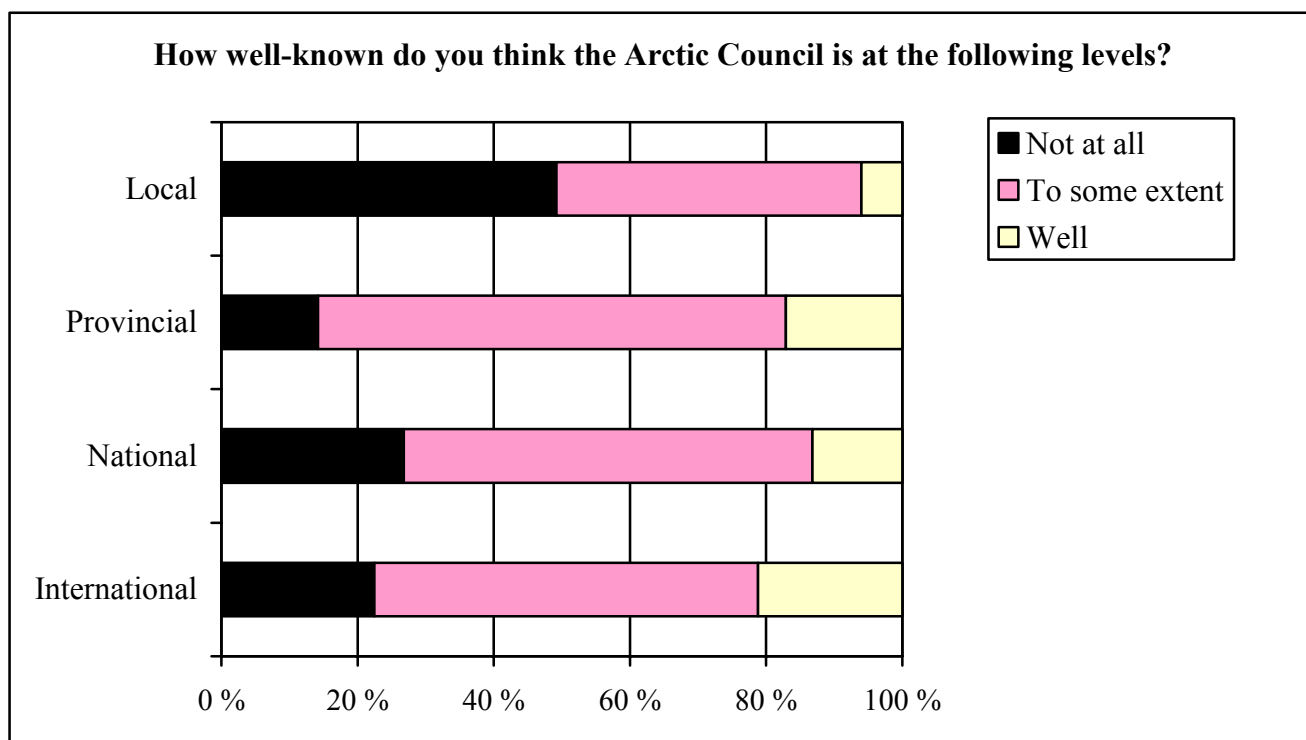


Figure 1. Answers of the respondents to the question “How well-known do you think the activity of the Arctic Council is at local, provincial, national and international level?” (N=235-250).

When the respondents were asked how well they knew the Arctic Council working groups, approximately 60 % of those who answered the question knew nothing of them (**Figure 2**). The most well-known working groups of the Arctic Council were the AMAP (Arctic

Monitoring and Assessment Programme), SDWG (Sustainable Development Working Group), and CAFF (Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna); the least known were EPPR (Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response) and PAME (Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment).

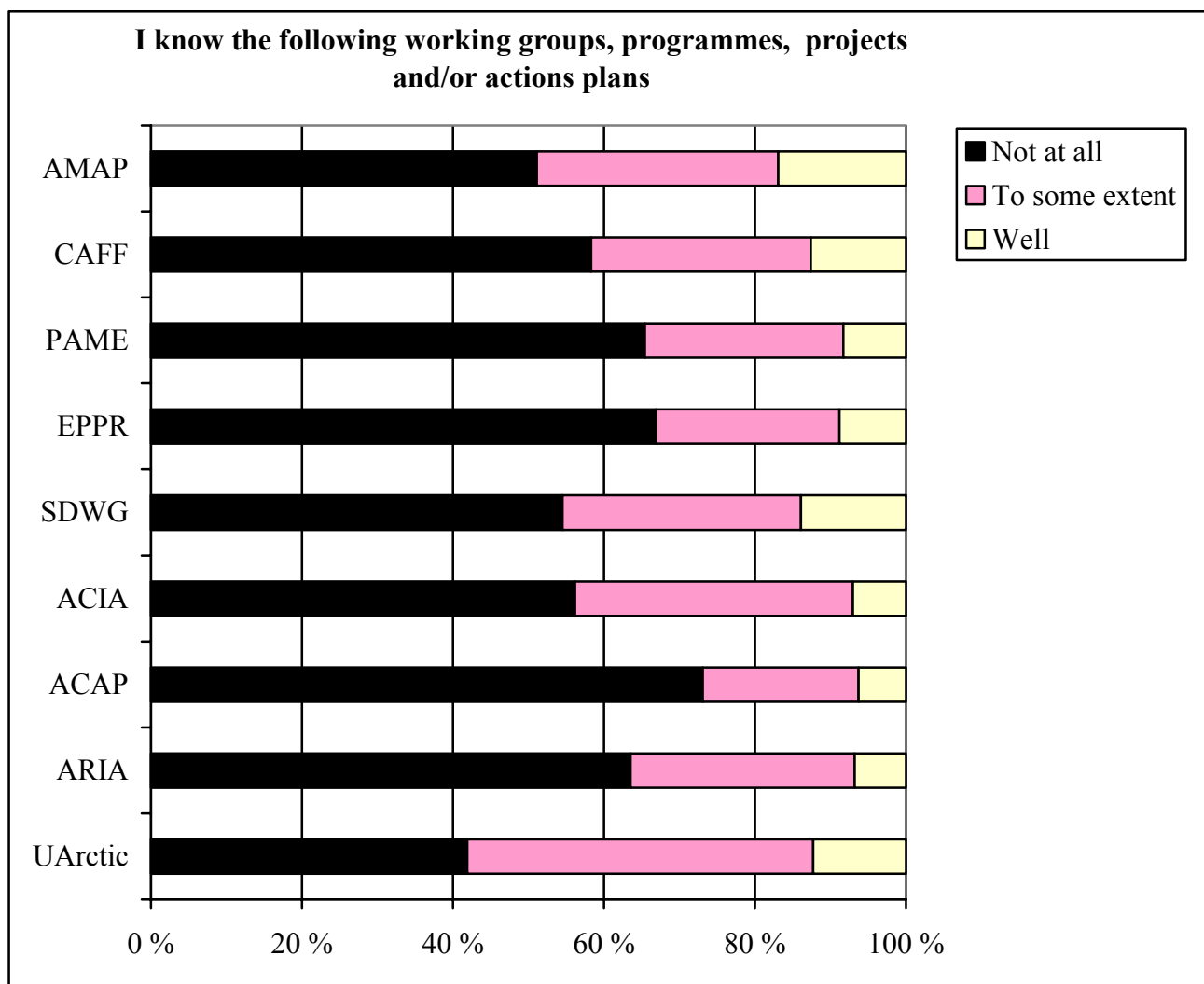


Figure 2. Answers to the question “I know the following working groups, programmes, projects and/or action plans of the Arctic Council. (N=219-231).

It is evident, that the Arctic Council reports are rather poorly known among the people who do not deal with the Arctic Council in their work. 78 % of all the respondents, who answered the question, did not know any of the mentioned Arctic Council reports (**Figure 3.**). The two

AMAP reports: Arctic Pollution Issues: A State of the Arctic Environment Report (1997) and the AMAP Assessment Report: Arctic Pollution Issues (1998) were the best-known Arctic Council reports mentioned in the questionnaire. Guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in the Arctic (1997) was the third well-known report.

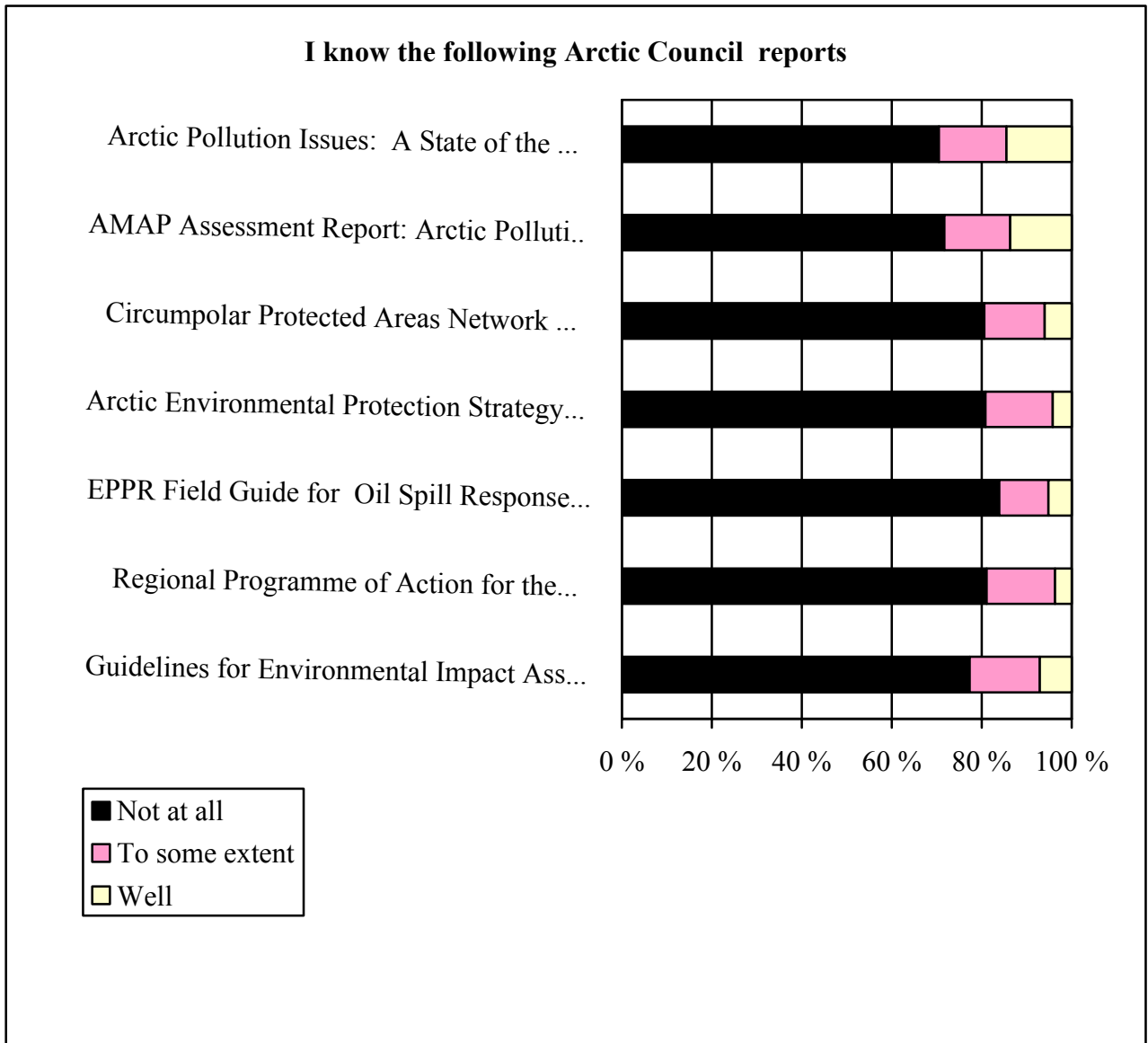


Figure 3. Answers of the respondents to how well they know some of the Arctic Council reports (N=211-220).

Those familiar with the Arctic Council reports thought that most of the reports are good, excellent, comprehensive, clear, scientific, informative, useful, necessary, interesting, important, well-edited, well-written, politically relevant and of high quality. The AMAP reports are the most well-known, and particular appreciation is given to the Russian and Saami translation of Arctic Pollution Issues: A State of the Arctic Environment (1997).

There was a group among the respondents that thought the Arctic Council reports were too scientific, uninteresting, theoretic and broad for the general public, that they were not well used and that they were prepared by and only for experts with special interests. The biggest problem however, is the poor dissemination of the reports: people did not know how and where to find them.

2.2.1. Views on the activity of the Arctic Council

The respondents had positive views on the activity of the Arctic Council, although fairly large group of persons did not have strong opinions one way or the other (**Figure 4.**). Almost 70 % of the respondents who answered the question thought that Arctic Council conducted important intergovernmental co-operation in the Arctic region, and that its working groups performed important environmental assessments. Hardly anyone disagreed with this. 38 % of the respondents thought that the Arctic Council has done something concrete, 51% were neutral, and 12 % thought that it has not done anything concrete.

When the respondents were presented with the statement “Co-operation between the Arctic Council and local inhabitants is strong”, 28 % of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, 58 % were neutral and only 13 % agreed or strongly agreed. 63 % of the all respondents of the eight arctic countries, and 81 % of the Russian respondents had not received sufficient information about the activity of the Arctic Council.

2.2.3. Importance and benefit of the Arctic Council

When asked about their views on the importance of the Arctic Council to one's country or community, the following was summarised:

- Intergovernmental co-operation among the Arctic countries helps to raise Northern questions and environmental problems to global importance.
- Arctic international co-operation is the way to solve cross-border environmental problems such as pollution, and conserve the Arctic environment.
- The Arctic Council means improvements to the living conditions of the Arctic indigenous peoples and the preservation of their culture.

Besides answering "I don't know" or "nothing" to the question "How could the Arctic Council benefit your country or community?", many people had high expectations for the Arctic Council in the future. The main expectation was to achieve a better standard living for the arctic communities and to conserve the arctic environment. Many respondents wrote that more attention should be paid to the people of the Arctic countries, not only to the environment. Emigration from the sparsely populated areas should be stopped by giving more responsibility and advanced federal budgets to the local programmes. The Arctic Council could also benefit by creating new opportunities for economic, cultural, and political life in the Arctic regions. Concrete projects that would employ local people should be started in the field of new technology and the sustainable use of natural resources, for example.

Many respondents wrote that the Arctic Council could bring a positive development to the arctic environment, and security and a future for their children. Children could be educated in a more "aware/conscious" way in the field of environmental protection, for example. It feels good that one's country is involved in this "Arctic process dealing with specific issues". Many wrote that through the Arctic Council, they received interesting and important information about Arctic environmental issues, international contacts and work opportunities, and that it was possible to do something to benefit the Arctic.

One-third of the respondents could see no personal relevance to the Arctic Council. For some, the Arctic Council meant bureaucracy, a waste of taxes, reading excessively difficult articles in the newspaper, empty phrases, or frustration over getting information. Some respondents

wrote that the Arctic Council is a good example of how their own non-Arctic country deals with the same issues.

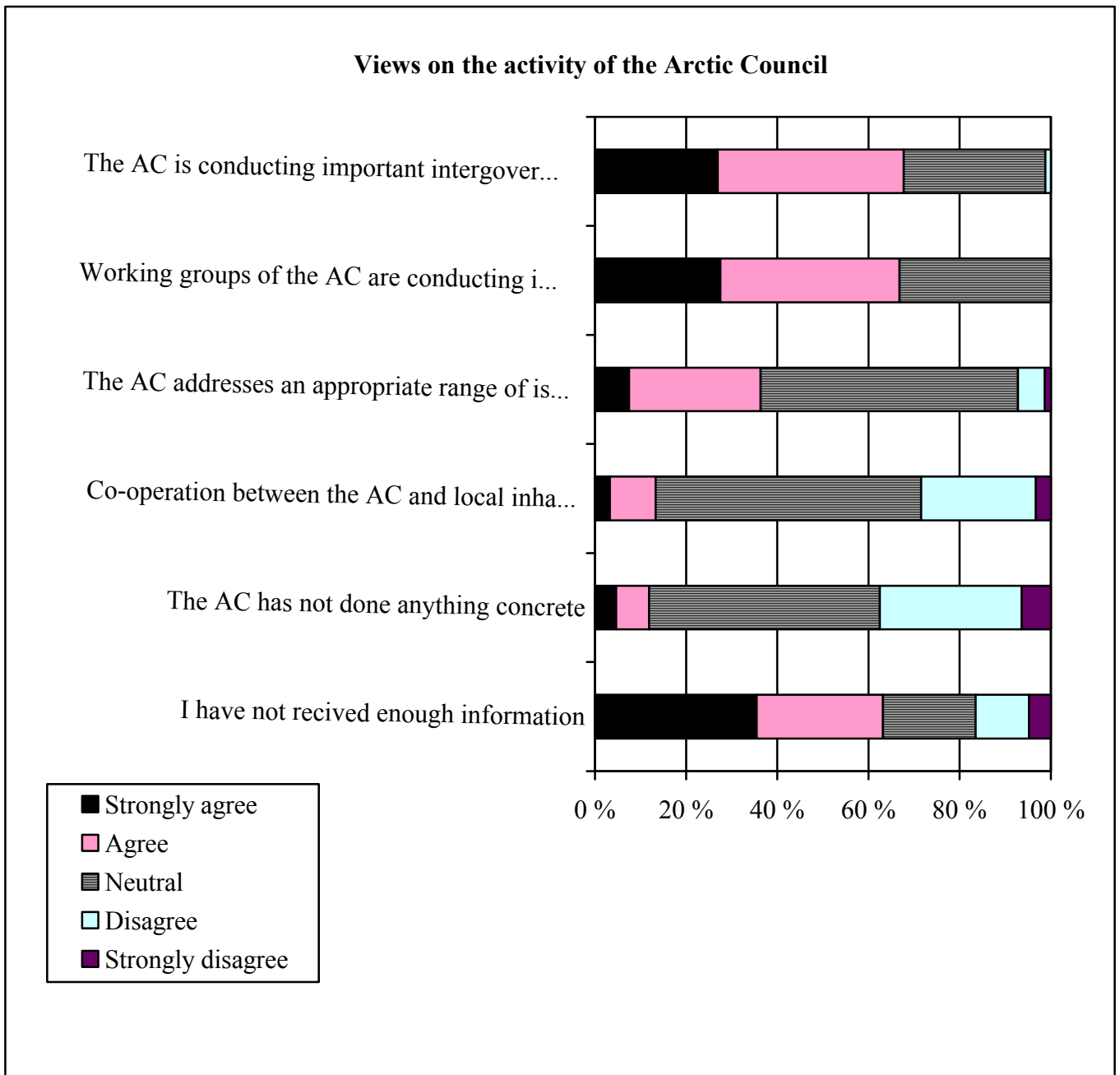


Figure 4. Views of the respondents on the visibility of the Arctic Council. (N=231-245).

2.3. Improving the flow of information from the Arctic Council

According to the respondents, the local inhabitants in general should be informed more about the work of the Arctic Council (**Table 2.**). Reporters, who possess an important multiplier function, are ranked second. Other important groups that should be informed about the activity of the Arctic Council are indigenous people, town, county, and provincial officials and students. In addition, the respondents listed a large number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that should be informed about the activity of the Arctic Council.

It is evident, that TV and/or radio programmes are the most important means for improving the flow of information from the Arctic Council (60 %) (**Table 3.**). The importance of TV and/or radio was particularly emphasized by Russian respondents, as 92 % of the persons mentioned TV or radio. TV and radio represent the mass media, which can easily reach extensive masses of people, including a large group of people who do not have access to the Internet, people from peripheral regions and people from all social classes.

Table 2. Answers to the question “Who should be informed about the Arctic Council?”

Who should be informed?	%	N
Local inhabitants	64	226
Indigenous people	53	187
People in hunting, fishing, reindeer herding	46	163
People in privately owned businesses	34	119
Town and county officials	53	187
Provincial officials	51	182
Ministerial officials	47	165
Reporters	59	208
People in other wage employment	24	85
Pupils	40	142
Students	51	179
Other?	24	85

Popular reports (49 %), public events (44 %), homepages (44 %) and Arctic Council bulletins (41 %) formed the second important means for increasing the information flow from the Arctic Council. Overhead and slide series (10 %), multivision (12 %), and CD-ROMs (16 %) were less important.

Table 3. Answers to the question “How can the flow of information be improved?”

How can the flow of information be improved?	%	N
Arctic Council bulletin	41	146
Homepages	44	157
Scientific publications	27	96
Popular reports	49	172
Popular books	33	116
Exhibitions	37	131
Education	33	115
CD-ROMs	16	55
Multivision	12	43
Overhead and slide series	10	35
TV and/or radio programmes	60	212
Information for the chair country of the AC	23	83
Public events	44	155
Open meetings	31	109
International meetings	33	118

When respondents were asked “How would you like to change the information flow from the Arctic Council?”, the following answers were received:

- International media strategy should be developed
- The access of local people to the sources of information should be easier
- Co-operation with schools, universities and other organizations should be created
- Reports and articles should be translated into all languages, and not too scientifically written for the average citizen

- There is an urgent shortage of information materials in Russian and indigenous peoples' languages
- More easily-readable summary material is needed (cf. WWF's Arctic Bulletin)
- Exhibitions and theme days in libraries, youth events, TV discussions, articles in provincial newspapers, brochures, newsletters, and a dynamic web page are all needed
- Ministerial meetings should be organised more frequently in many more locations and higher-ranking leaders should be invited to attend them; more international press conferences and lobbying are needed
- The public should be able to follow the Arctic Council meetings on TV or personally

Only a very low percentage of the respondents who answered the question said that the present flow of information is good.

In general, when information about the activity of the Arctic Council is disseminated, the fragmented audience should be better taken into consideration. This means firstly giving consideration to different language groups, particularly Russian and indigenous people, and secondly consideration should be given to the age and educational level of the people (not too scientific information for the average citizen).

According to the visitor counter, the Arctic Council homepage (<http://www.arctic-council.org/>) so far has been visited 15 000 times per month during the Finnish chair. 2/3 of the respondents (N=138) of the present study had visited the homepages. The others had not seen the homepages, they did not know that the homepages existed or they did not have access to the Internet. For example, only 23 % of the Russian respondents had visited the Arctic Council homepages. When asked for opinions about the current homepages, the people answered that they are (very) good, positive, OK, appropriate, clear, well done, nice, useful, fine, perfect, modern, full of content, well organized, high quality, and informative. Particular liking was given to the events calendar, the front page, and to the links. Only one person stated that the Arctic Council homepages were unnecessary. The following suggestions for improvements were presented:

- Information should be provided in all languages, in Russian and indigenous peoples' languages
- The homepages should be more attractive; at present they are full of facts in a small font - to go there, one has to be interested beforehand
- Their structure and graphics could be better, documents are too hidden and mixed; the homepages should provide a central map of data and all reports should be online
- Navigation and links should be renewed, e.g. more links to academic societies are needed
- The homepages should be updated more often
- A system for sending e-mail messages for significant events should be established

3. Recommendations

Our recommendations to the Arctic Council for improving the information flow include the following:

(I) To develop a communications strategy for the Arctic Council

The purpose of a communications strategy is to develop an effective communications plan to help achieve a specific goal and reach key audiences. The communications strategy should contain the following basic elements: objectives; audience; the message to be communicated; the mechanisms/media to be used for communication; the time table and action plan; and the systems for both human and financial resources (infrastructure). It should not consider the audience as a target or an object but as an active participant of the process. Therefore, communication should not be the one-way delivery of information about the Arctic Council to the audience groups; rather, it should be an interactive process between the various parties. The communications strategy should contain both long (> over five years) and short-term aims for the exchange of information, and it should be established through the co-operation of the Arctic Council and communications specialists (e.g. Vaitilingam 2002).

(II) To hire a person responsible for media relations

Having an information manager actively responsible for the media relations of the Arctic Council would bring about a great improvement in the flow of information. The main tasks would include managing the implementation of the communications strategy, maintaining and monitoring its effectiveness, and proposing changes to it based on consultation.

Because the Arctic Council is funded by its Member States on the voluntary basis, no special resources so far have been allocated separately in order to create an information strategy or to hire a special person for the media relations of the Council (Vaitilingam 2002).

(III) To start publishing an Arctic Council Bulletin

In practice, this means an Arctic Council Bulletin as an easily readable summary published, for example, quarterly and distributed extensively in public libraries, schools, universities, etc.

(IV) To increasingly use TV and radio in information dissemination

TV and radio have more viewers from peripheral regions and from all social classes than those that use the Internet.

(V) To increase interaction between the local inhabitants and the Arctic Council

In practice, this could be achieved through (1) organizing public events in connection with the meetings of the Arctic Council, and/or (2) the participation of the local inhabitants in Arctic Council meetings. This would create concrete discussions between the audience (local inhabitants, indigenous peoples, decision-makers, scientists, etc.) and the Arctic Council.

(VI) To create an electronic network for e-mail

In practice, this means increased up-to-date and fast electronic mailing about the significant events of the Arctic Council, e.g. new books, reports, press-releases, meetings, etc. (cf. Arctic info of the ARCUS, Arctic Research Consortium of the United States)

(VII) To intensify co-operation with educational institutions

In practice, this means public events for pupils and students, Arctic exhibitions with workshops for pupils, educational material in connection with the Arctic Council reports etc.

(VIII) To pay special attention to informing reporters**(IX) To take the fragmented audience better into consideration when disseminating information**

This means firstly (1) consideration of different language groups, particularly Russian and indigenous people, and secondly (2) consideration of the age and educational level of the people when information is disseminated. In practise reports and articles should be translated into all languages and not written too scientifically if the audience group consists of the average citizen

(X) To disseminate Arctic Council materials more effectively

In practice, this means, that the reports and other material of the Arctic Council should be distributed far more effectively to public and university libraries, schools, and to bookstores. People are interested in the activity of the Arctic Council, but they do not know where and how to get informative materials.

(XI) To continue maintaining the Arctic Council homepages with the following improvements

To increase information in Russian and indigenous peoples' languages (at least summaries)

To attach educational materials for schools and universities to the homepages

(XII) To continue publishing high-quality popular reports with the following improvements

To print larger editions of the reports

To publish reports in other native languages besides English, particularly Russian and indigenous peoples' languages

To continue publishing electronic versions of the reports in addition to hard copies

To attach educational material to the reports when possible

To pay more attention to the dissemination of the reports

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Appendix 1.

Acronyms

AC	Arctic Council
AEPS	Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy
AMAP	Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme
ACAP	Arctic Council Action Plan to Eliminate Pollution
ACIA	Arctic Climate Impact Assessment
ARCUS	Arctic Research Consortium of the United States
CAFF	Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna
EPPR	Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response
ICC	Inuit Circumpolar Conference
IPS	Arctic Indigenous Peoples Secretariat
PAME	Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment
RAIPON	Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North
SDWG	Sustainable Development Working Group
UArctic	University of the Arctic
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
N	Number of answers

Appendix 2.

QUESTIONNAIRE for Improving the Flow of Information from the Arctic Council

This questionnaire clarifies the knowledge and views of the local inhabitants, indigenous peoples, decision-makers, and scientists living in the arctic region on the activities of the Arctic Council. The aim of this questionnaire is to find the means for improving the flow of information from and the visibility of the Arctic Council.

The Arctic Council, established in 1996, is a high-level intergovernmental forum charged with promoting Arctic issues for the States in the Arctic (the Nordic countries, Canada, the Russian Federation, and the United States), with indigenous peoples serving as Permanent Participants. The Arctic Council aims at promoting sustainable development in the economic, social, and cultural dimensions for the welfare of the people living in the arctic region. Assessing the state of the arctic environment, e.g. the effects of pollution and global change, promoting environmental protection, environmental health, and sustainable development are important parts of the challenging duties of the Arctic Council. International Arctic co-operation in environmental protection has yielded many concrete results, such as *reports that assess the state of the arctic environment*, and *guidelines for the sustainable use of natural resources in the arctic region*, which are available to governments, the United Nation, bodies of environmental protection, universities, schools and companies.

Chairmanship of the Arctic Council was transferred from the United States to Finland at the Ministerial Meeting in Barrow, Alaska in October 2000. During its chairmanship, Finland will aim at raising the profile of the Arctic Council as a promoter of Arctic issues and will examine how the flow of information should be improved to strengthen its external image.

This questionnaire is a part of the independent research conducted by the Arctic Centre at the University of Lapland and its results will be given for the use of the Arctic Council Secretary. This questionnaire can also be found on the homepages of Arctic Council (**[http://www.arctic-council.org/whatsnew. asp](http://www.arctic-council.org/whatsnew.asp)**). The results of this questionnaire will be available on the homepages of Arctic Council and in popular magazines.

All experiences and opinions are valuable in order to develop the flow of information from the Arctic Council!

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Please return the questionnaire by 31st May 2001 to:

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QUESTIONNAIRE FOR IMPROVING THE FLOW OF INFORMATION FROM THE ARCTIC COUNCIL

1. PERSONAL INFORMATION (write and tick)

NAME (optional) _____

COUNTRY: _____

REGION: _____

SEX: Female Male

AGE: < 18 19-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 61-70 > 71

EDUCATION (highest): _____

CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:	
Are you indigenous?	Which group?
Livelihood: hunting, fishing, reindeer herding	Which?
Privately owned business	Which?
Official	Town/district <input type="checkbox"/> Province <input type="checkbox"/> Ministry <input type="checkbox"/>
Employment in association	Which?
Reporter	Which?
Scientist	Which field?
Teacher	Which?
Other paid employment	Which?
Unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retired	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pupil/student	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE ARCTIC COUNCIL (tick and write)

I don't know what it is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have heard the Arctic Council mentioned	on TV <input type="checkbox"/>	in the radio <input type="checkbox"/>	newspapers <input type="checkbox"/>	magazines <input type="checkbox"/>	meetings <input type="checkbox"/>	Arctic Council publications <input type="checkbox"/>	at work <input type="checkbox"/>		
I am familiar with the activity of the Arctic Council	on TV <input type="checkbox"/>	in the radio <input type="checkbox"/>	newspapers <input type="checkbox"/>	magazines <input type="checkbox"/>	meetings <input type="checkbox"/>	Arctic Council publications <input type="checkbox"/>	at work <input type="checkbox"/>		
I deal with the Arctic Council in my work	daily <input type="checkbox"/>	weekly <input type="checkbox"/>	monthly <input type="checkbox"/>	annually <input type="checkbox"/>	not at all <input type="checkbox"/>				
I have participated in meetings of the Arctic Council		Which meetings? <input type="checkbox"/>							
I am familiar with the reports of the Arctic Council		Which reports? <input type="checkbox"/>							

HOW WELL-KNOWN DO YOU THINK THE ACTIVITY OF THE ARCTIC COUNCIL IS AT THE	not at all	to some extent	well
- local level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- provincial level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- national level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- international level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I KNOW THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMMES/WORKING GROUPS			
AMAP	Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme		
CAFF	Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna		
PAME	Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment		
EPPR	Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response		
SDWG	Sustainable Development Working Group		
ACIA	Arctic Climate Impact Assessment		
ACAP	Arctic Council Action Plan to Eliminate Pollution		

ARIA	Arctic Environmental Impact Assessment			
UARCTIC	University of the Arctic			
REPORTS				
Arctic Pollution Issues: A State of the Arctic Environment Report. 1997.				
AMAP Assessment Report: Arctic Pollution Issues. 1998.				
Circumpolar Protected Areas Network (CPAN) - Strategy and Action Plan. 1996.				
Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy. Arctic Offshore Oil & Gas Guidelines. 1997.				
EPPR Field Guide for Oil Spill Response in Arctic Waters. 1998.				
Regional Programme of Action for the PAME from Land-based activities. 1999.				
Guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in the Arctic. 1997.				
WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ABOUT THE REPORTS?				

3. VIEWS ON THE ACTIVITY OF THE ARCTIC COUNCIL (tick and write)

	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
The Arctic Council is conducting important intergovernmental co-operation in the arctic region					
Working groups of the Arctic Council are conducting important environmental assessments					
The Arctic Council addresses an appropriate range of issues					
Co-operation between the Arctic Council and local inhabitants is strong					
The Arctic Council has not done anything concrete					
I have not received enough information					
WHAT DOES ARCTIC COUNCIL MEAN					
For your country?					
For your community?					
For yourself?					
HOW COULD ARCTIC COUNCIL ACTIVITIES BENEFIT?					
Your country?					
Your community?					
Yourself?					

4. IMPROVING THE FLOW OF INFORMATION (tick or rank as many as you think are important)

WHO SHOULD BE INFORMED?	
- local inhabitants	
- indigenous people	
- people in hunting, fishing, reindeer herding	
- people in privately owned businesses	
- town and county officials	
- provincial officials	
- ministerial officials	
- reporters	
- people in other wage employment	
- pupils	
- students	
- associations, which?	
- who else?	

HOW CAN THE FLOW OF INFORMATION BE IMPROVED?	
- Arctic Council bulletin	
- homepages	
- scientific publications	
- popular reports	
- popular books	
- exhibitions	
- education	
- CD-ROMs	
- multivision	
- overhead and slide series	
- TV and/or radio programmes	
- information for the chair country of the Arctic Council	
- public events	
- open meetings	
- international meetings	

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO CHANGE THE FLOW OF INFORMATION FROM THE ARCTIC COUNCIL?
WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ABOUT THE CURRENT HOMEPAGES OF THE ARCTIC COUNCIL (http://www.arctic-council.org/)?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION!

Distribution of the questionnaire

http://www.arctic-council.org/whatsnew.asp (questionnaire in English, Russian, Swedish, Finnish and Saami)
Arctic Studies Programme students, University of Lapland, lectures 7.2.01
Social Science students, University of Lapland, Kevo field course 11-13.9.2001
IPS Stakeholder seminar, 22-24 February, 2001, Copenhagen, Denmark
SDWG meeting, SAO meeting 5-6 April, 2001, Rovaniemi, Finland
ILO Convention No. 169 and its ratification by Norway, Finland, and Sweden. Nordic Seminar 4.-5.5.2001, Rovaniemi, Finland
NARP-climate change meeting, The Arctic on Thinner Ice, 10-11 May, 2001, Oulu, Finland
Metsäntutkimuslaitoksen tutkimuspäivä 15.5. 2001. Rovaniemi, Finland
Ari Laakso, interviews with reindeer herders
Raija Kivilahti, personal contacts
Research association of Finland, mailing list
Pohjola-Norden –meeting, 2001. Rovaniemi, Finland
2 nd World Reindeer Herders' Congress, 18-23 June, 2001, Inari, Finland
Public libraries: - Lapin maakuntakirjasto, Rovaniemen mlk kirjasto, Kemin kaupungin kirjasto, Sodankylän kunnankirjasto and Inarin kunnankirjasto in Finland - Fairbanks library in Alaska - Calgary library in Canada - Nuuk library in Greenland - Luleå library in Sweden - Tromsø library in Norway - Reykjavik library in Island - Murmansk library, Russia - Exhibitions, Data and information services of the Arctic Centre
Internal mailing network - ArcticInfo (ARCUS, Arctic Research Consortium of the US) - University of Lapland - Finnish Forest Research Institute Rovaniemi Station - Finnish Agricultural Research Centre Jokioinen
Information about the questionnaire in newspapers/magazines

