

Progress report from the AMAP Board to the SAO Meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland, April 9-10, 2003.

1. Update on ongoing work

AMAP is following the approved work plan for the period 2003-2004 as outlined in the SAO report to Ministers, Ivalo 2002. The main task for AMAP during this period is to produce the ACIA scientific assessment and policy reports, to be presented to the Ministerial meeting in 2004. This is a joint work with CAFF and IASC. When the SAO meeting takes place a scientific cross-fertilization meeting will have been arranged in Durham, New Hampshire in USA, and back to back to this meeting a scoping workshop for the policy paper will be arranged. Report from these two events and any specific requests to the SAOs arising from the meetings, e.g. how to finance to production/printing of the ACIA reports, how to disseminate the results in a best way etc., will be presented at the SAO meeting.

AMAP is developing a new Strategic Plan for the years to come. The priority for the monitoring work is under discussion among the experts. The assessment work for the reports on petroleum hydrocarbons and acidification to be delivered in 2006 is also under preparation. John Calder from the USA has been elected as the Chair for the Assessment Steering Group (ASG) that will oversee the production of these reports. At the AMAP WG meeting in May the above mentioned issues will be further developed.

The US has initiated a workshop on mercury to be held at Point Barrow during winter/spring of 2004, and this is under development.

The 2002 AMAP Report has been circulated, including of a letter responding on the questions raised at the SAO meeting in Inari. The translation of the report into Russian, Danish and Greenlandic has been started, and the reports are expected to be circulated later this year.

The five AMAP 2002 Assessment reports are now in the line to be produced. The report on Human health has been printed and circulated to the Arctic countries and the SAOs, the report on changing pathways (climate change potential effects on contaminants) are at the printing house. The last report to be produced might be the report on heavy metals and may not be available until June.

AMAP has been asked to produce translations of the three Fact Sheets into Russian and saami, and this has been done. The production of these Fact Sheets was requested by ACAP and published as Arctic Council Fact Sheets produced by AMAP. During the winter AMAP has been approach from several instances requesting if we will produce updated Fact Sheets that would include the new findings and the international progress within some of the actual areas. The production of Fact Sheets can be viewed as a part of the AMAP strategy to disseminate the results from the assessment work, or as part of the Arctic Council dissemination strategy. The SAO is kindly asked to clarify the separation of work for production of Fact Sheets within the Arctic Council.

Special Projects

The RAIPON/AMAP/GEF project on 'Persistent Toxic Substances (PTS), Food Security and Indigenous Peoples of the North' has moved forward. Several sub-projects have been completed. The Steering Group (SG) for the PTS project met in Moscow in January 2003. Since the Ministerial meeting in Inari October 2002, the PTS project has received additional financial support from the Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM), UNEP Chemicals and UNEP/GEMS water. The project is therefore nearly full financed.

At the PTS SG meeting RAIPON presented a wish to initiate a PTS study in some other areas of Northern Russia. They informed that local governments had expressed great interest in the PTS project, and were interested to provide financial contribution to such a project within their territories. The AMAP Secretariat was asked to look into the possibility to raise additional funding to perform such a study in new geographical areas.

Phase 2 of the 'Multilateral Cooperative Project on Phase-out of PCB Use, and Management of PCB-contaminated Wastes in the Russian Federation' has made good progress and there are only two reports still to be produced in addition to the Executive Summary. At the meeting of the Steering Group for the PCB project held in March in Oslo, it was discussed that a meeting should be held in Moscow or St. Petersburg in June to present the results of phase 2. Phase 3 has been initiated as requested by the ministers, and several sub-projects are under development. For more information, see the report from ACAP.

Based on funding from the NCM, a special project to document the levels of PCB and other POPs in ring seal from Seas around Northern Russia has made good progress. The results when ready will allow a much better circumpolar view of the exposure and threats of POPs to seals and by that to the humans living of such resources.

In an attempt to ensure an active Russian involvement in the ACIA work, UNEP-GRID Arendal took an initiative during the winter of 2001 to prepare and send an application to GEF for financial support to Russia. Russian authorities, AMAP, CAFF, UNEP GRID-Arendal, RAIPON and ACIA Chair prepared a PDF-A application in January 2002 and that has been approved. Although the application was approved in general last autumn, no funding has been made available and the funding situation is at present very unclear due to new requests for documentation has been presented during January and February 2003 by the GEF administration.

2. Deliverables to the Reykjavik Ministerial meeting in 2004

The main deliverable will be the joint reporting of ACIA reports from AMAP, CAFF and IASC. In addition AMAP intend to produce a progress report that may include an update on issues of concern, e.g. the mercury situation and new POPs.

3. Collaboration with other organizations

Arctic Council groups/initiatives

Following a request from ACAP, AMAP has translated and produced the three Fact Sheets into Russian and Saami.

AMAP and CAFF are working in close cooperation with the production of the ACIA reports, and to develop a harmonized monitoring programme for the future. This will be further developed during 2003.

UNEP

AMAP have previously reported to the SAOs concerning the UNEP Chemicals request to AMAP to provide the Arctic sections for the 'GEF Regional-Based Assessment of Persistent Toxic Substances'. The final reports (global and sub-regional) from this work were presented in Geneva in mid March. The report from the Arctic that AMAP has been responsible to prepare is made available to the SAO meeting. The funding for this production was provided by Canada.

AMAP is working closely together with UNEP Chemicals on (relevant aspects in) planning for a global monitoring programme for POPs, as a part of the follow-up to the UNEP POPs agreement signed in Stockholm in May 2001. A planning meeting was held in Geneva in mid March.

UNEP is represented in the AMAP WG by GRID-Arendal. GRID-Arendal has collaborated with the AMAP Secretariat in the establishment of the AMAP Project Directory. AMAP and GRID-Arendal are also engaged in GIS and mapping projects relating to AMAP work.

AMAP has previously reported to SAOs on the request received from GIWA in 1999, concerning AMAP involvement in the GIWA work. The work is still on hold until a clear request from GIWA is received.

European Environment Agency (EEA)

The European Environment Agency (EEA) invited AMAP to assist them in the production of the radioactivity parts of its 'Kiev' report on Europe's environment. This work has been done by the experts from the lead countries Russia and Norway, and the report will be presented at the Ministerial meeting to be held in Kiev in May 2003.

EEA and UNEP are preparing a report on the links between Europe and the Arctic, regarding use of resources, pollution, climate change etc. The plans were presented to the SAO meeting in June 2001 in Rovaniemi. AMAP has made a substantial contribution to

this production. The report is expected to be presented in June 2003 in connection to the approval of the Northern Dimension Action Plan.

World Water Forum

As part of the preparation prior to the third World Water Forum meeting, held in Kyoto in March 2003, the AMAP Secretariat in cooperation with Russian government and scientists performed a special study on the Lena delta basin regarding the flow of water and threats linked to climate change and pollution within this area. The report is of great importance for the ACIA and AMAP work and for the Russian authorities. The project was funded by the World Water Forum.

EU

In relation to the 6th Frame work programme for the EU there are possibilities for a close cooperation between European countries, Canada, USA and Russia to establish joint programme related to pollution and climate change. Joint meetings have been held to explore the possibilities and initiate work that may secure research and monitoring activities.

Barents Euro Arctic Council (BEAC)

At the 10th anniversary for the BEAC in January 2003, AMAP was asked to make a presentation on the threat from pollution to the Barents region. The presentation was made by General Director of the Swedish EPA Lars-Erik Liljelund, previous Chair of AMAP.

At this meeting NEFCO was requested to update the hotspot list prepared by NEFCO-AMAP in 1995. NEFCO contacted the AMAP Secretariat with a wish to take part in such update. The AMAP Board has approved that such a work can be done. The report shall be presented to the Ministerial meeting for the Environmental Ministers of BEAC in Luleå in August 2003.

4. Requests to the SAOs

SAOs are requested to ensure the timely availability of the necessary finances to allow AMAP to fulfill its work-plan as requested by Ministers and SAOs. Even if AMAP is discussing the detailed plan for the years to come, it is very important to ensure the continuation of observations of levels, trends of contaminants and the effects due to the pollution in the arctic, so future assessment reports presented by the AMAP WG are scientifically sound and reliable. The continuations of core observation records are especially important in this connection.

SAOs is also asked to clarify the responsibility for production of different Fact Sheets.

Annex 1: Provisional Calendar of AMAP and AMAP Related Meetings: 2003-2004

March 2003	ACIA Scoping workshop, joint arrangement with CAFF
April	SAO meeting
May	AMAP WG meeting in Boulder, USA
Summer	ASG meeting
Winter 2003/2004	Joint AMAP/CAFF meeting on ACIA and monitoring
May 2004	AMAP WG meeting, tentatively in Russia?
Autumn	Ministerial meeting in Iceland
	ACIA Symposium?