

Memorandum to Senior Arctic Officials 17/09/2014

**Arctic Biodiversity Congress**  
*December 2-4, 2014 Trondheim, Norway*

**INTRODUCTION:**

- The purpose of the Arctic Biodiversity Congress is to promote the conservation and sustainable use of Arctic Biodiversity through dialogue and action among scientists, policy-makers, government officials, industry, indigenous peoples and civil society.
- The Congress is a follow up of the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA) which CAFF released in May 2013. It will contribute to mainstream biodiversity and ecosystem services, ensuring that the recommendations of the ABA are implemented by not just government, but many organizations and people across disciplines. The Arctic Biodiversity Congress will gather approximately 300 participants.

**GOALS:**

- To present and discuss the main scientific findings in the ABA.
- To facilitate inter-disciplinary discussion, action and status updates on ABA recommendations among scientists, government officials, policy makers, indigenous peoples and industry representatives.
- To provide scientific, policy, indigenous, NGO, academia and industry audiences the opportunity to collaborate around the themes of the ABA.
- To advise on implementation of the ABA recommendations and on development of an ABA Implementation Plan for the Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in 2015.
- To highlight the work of CAFF and the Arctic Council in circumpolar biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

**PLANNED OUTPUTS**

- Chairs' reports providing an overview of congress content and a summary of main findings.
- Input to CAFF follow-up, including on development of ABA Implementation Plan.
- Outreach and documentation through CAFF's home pages, including congress presentations.
- Scientific publication on selected papers and presentations.
- Outreach to a global audience.

**STATUS:**

- Invitations sent widely to CAFF stakeholders, with widespread interest in participation
- Registration process underway with a final deadline of October 31– register here: [arcticbiodiversity.is/register](http://arcticbiodiversity.is/register)
- Congress Secretariat operational (CAFF Secretariat and Norwegian Environment Agency).
- Congress webpage launched and communications activities being implemented.
- Arctic photo competition "[Through the lens](#)" underway with currently almost 800 entries with final deadline of October 5.
- Funding secured to arrange the Congress and establish a travel fund targeted at speakers, indigenous peoples and young scientists. Additional funding being sought for travel support.
- Program Advisory Committee providing advice on key topics identified in the ABA recommendations. Key dimensions include scientific credibility, policy relevance, identification of

policy and management related content, indigenous peoples 'perspectives, business perspectives and linkages to other CAFF and other Arctic Council efforts.

- Business advisory group providing input on how industry participation and to consider how best to reflect industry perspectives in the Congress.
- Arctic Council Observer countries and organisations are invited to participate in the congress.

**ACTION:**

- SAOs and PPs are asked to take note of progress to provide input on how their countries and organisations will be involved and to encourage stakeholders to register for the Congress.