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Summary meeting report

# Co-chairs' Summary: Task Force on Arctic Marine Cooperation

## Meeting III | Reykjavik, Iceland | June 1-2, 2016

### Introduction

The Task Force on Arctic Marine Cooperation (TFAMC) held its third meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland on June 1-2, 2016. The meeting was chaired by Jóhann Sigurjónsson (Iceland) together with Brian Israel (US) and Kjell Kristian Egge (Norway). All Arctic States and three Permanent Participant organizations (the Saami Council, the Inuit Circumpolar Council and the Aleut International Association) attended the meeting. Ten observers were present (France, Germany, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, United Kingdom, the European Union, CCU, IASC, UNEP and WWF). Representatives for three Arctic Council (AC) working groups (CAFF, EPPR and PAME) contributed as Invited Experts.

### Co-Chairs' April 28, 2016 Non-Paper

The co-chairs' circulated a non-paper on April 28, 2016 intended to facilitate the Task Force's deliberations at its third meeting, as well as internal consultations in preparation for the meeting. The first three sections attempted to synthesize the discussions to date on future needs, values or principles to guide Arctic marine cooperation into the future, as well as potential cooperative mechanisms to meet our future needs in line with our shared values. The fourth section of the non-paper identified a series of questions for discussion in Reykjavik, which were intended to enable deliberations to progress from relatively abstract concepts (e.g., "stewardship") to more specific, concrete modes of cooperation. These questions, around which most of the Reykjavik discussions revolved, were provided to delegates a month before the meeting to allow delegations time for internal coordination.

### Discussions at the Reykjavik meeting

The Task Force made significant progress toward fulfilling its mandate in Reykjavik. This progress was made possible by delegations' hard work in the intersessional period, and a constructive, collegial spirit throughout the deliberations.

Delegates expressed general satisfaction with the synthesis of the Task Force's needs assessment set forth in the April 28 non-paper. Delegates likewise expressed support for the values and principles catalogued in the non-paper, with some delegations proposing additional principles.

The majority of time in Reykjavik was devoted to discussions of function—on what marine cooperation functions should the Arctic States cooperate into the future? Guided by the discussion questions presented in the non-paper, delegates expressed a range of potential cooperative functions relating to the acquisition of the knowledge inputs essential for marine stewardship and coordination of marine stewardship efforts, including area-based measures.

These discussions in Reykjavik yielded a useful common understanding of the functional needs of the future of Arctic marine cooperation we desire. The remainder of the meeting

turned to the questions of form presented in the Task Force mandate—the optimal form for a cooperative mechanism to facilitate our desired functions. These discussions of form were relatively preliminary and do not enable conclusions to be drawn at this stage.

### The Path Forward

The fourth meeting of the TFAMC will take place September 22-23 in Portland, Maine, USA. In furtherance of the plan of work agreed in Stockholm, the co-chairs undertook to prepare a first draft of the Task Force's report to Ministers, and to circulate it one month before the September meeting. The draft report will attempt to synthesize the preliminary consensus on cooperative *functions* that emerged from the Reykjavik meeting. It will also supplement the list of values and principles with those proposed in Reykjavik. This first draft of the report will not attempt to draw conclusions on questions of form (i.e., the nature of a cooperative mechanism). Instead, the Task Force has asked the co-chairs to prepare an analysis of how the various options for cooperative mechanisms proposed to date would serve the functions, principles and values identified to date. The co-chairs intend to focus the Portland meeting on the questions of form presented in the Task Force mandate, as well as big picture issues with the draft report. The draft report will be revised and refined through intersessional deliberations and finalized at the Task Force's February 2017 meeting.