



To: Arctic Council Chair and Arctic Council Secretariat
From: Peter Sköld, President, IASSA
Date: 24 November 2016

MEMORANDUM: Report on Recent Relevant Activities

BACKGROUND

IASSA is a professional association (a social science association), based on voluntary membership, representing Arctic social scientists, with the Arctic and social sciences both defined in a broad and inclusive manner, encompassing all Arctic and subarctic regions, and all disciplines pertaining to the humanities and the social sciences.

IASSA's **objectives** are

- to promote and stimulate international cooperation and to increase the participation of social scientists in national and international Arctic research
- to promote communication and coordination with other research organizations
- to promote the active collection, exchange, dissemination, and archiving of scientific information in the Arctic social sciences
- to promote mutual respect, communication, and collaboration between social scientists and northern people
- to facilitate culturally, developmentally, and linguistically appropriate education in the North

IASSA membership is open to any individual interested in Arctic social sciences. IASSA collects modest membership dues. Members receive *Northern Notes*, IASSA's electronic newsletter, and may subscribe to IASSA.Net, IASSA's e-mail listserv. Membership dues contribute to secretariat costs (to which the host institution for the secretariat also contributes) and assist towards activities that further the objectives of IASSA, such as representation at Arctic Council meetings. Membership fees also support the running of ICASS, which requires sponsorship from academic and other organizations as well.

ELECTIONS/CHANGES IN GOVERNANCE AND SECRETARIAT LOCATION (2014)

In May of 2014, at the International Congress of Arctic Social Scientists (ICASS VIII), a new council and president were elected (with term starting in September 2014). Peter Sköld was elected as president (2014-2017). Council members elected included incumbents Andrey Petrov, Tatiana Vlasova, Alona Yefimenko and Florian Stammer, and new councilors Gertrude Eilmsteiger-Saxinger, Grete Hovelsrud and Diane Hirshberg. Gail Fondahl also remained on the council as outgoing president. With the

election, the secretariat moved to Peter Sköld's institution, Arctic Research Centre at Umeå University (Umeå, Sweden). Gabriella Nordin has been appointed as Secretary to IASSA for the period 2014-2017.

The IASSA Council meet physically or by Skype at a regular basis of 5-6 annual meetings

INTERNAL ACTIVITIES

IASSA's core activity is the organization of a triennial congress. In May 2014, 470 IASSA members from 26 countries converged on the main campus of the University of Northern British Columbia, in Prince George, B.C., for the Eighth International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences. This proved to be the largest ICASS yet. Running from 22- 25 May, the Congress included four key-notes, three plenary panels, 109 sessions involving 411 papers, and 38 posters.

The theme of this Congress, Northern Sustainabilities, encouraged a wide diversity of papers discussing environmental, social, cultural, political, and economic aspects of sustainability. The IASSA work is focused also on the active involvement of the Arctic indigenous peoples in its programs and projects, as well as the coordination of research with the communities of the Arctic Region. Part of this process was a special session at ICASS Congress VIII titled: The Arctic Council Permanent Participants: Past Reflections, Future Challenges where the group of experts and leaders from the Permanent Participants organizations took part (Gunn-Britt Retter, SC, Jim Gamble AIA, Lisa Mack, AIA, Pavel Sulyandziga RAIPON, Jim Linklater GCI, Okalik Eegeesiak, ICC, IPS). Together with the ARR, the Arctic Human Development report integrates and recognizes Traditional Knowledge of the Arctic indigenous peoples, which is in line with the Arctic Council mandate/priorities. Arctic Council Permanent Participants representatives also took part in other sessions, panels and ICASS activities at the congress.

ICASS IX will be arranged in Umeå, Sweden 8-12 June 2017. When the call closed 7 October 2016 IASSA Secretariat had received 185 proposals for scientific session which encourages us to believe that the conference will keep a significant position in Arctic research. A novelty of ICASS IX is the introduction of five plenary panels (bibliometrics, education, extractive industries, infectious diseases and extractive industries). Moreover, a structure consisting of 21 ICASS themes has been established with a chair appointed for each theme, being responsible for the compilation of sessions. The purpose is to keep this organization for the arrangement of forthcoming ICASS conferences too.

Another key activity of IASSA is the publication of an electronic newsletter semi-annually, *Northern Notes*. The newsletter may be found at www.iassa.org. The latest issue was published in May 2016, and the next is planned for early December 2016. IASSA also maintains a listserv, with announcements posted regularly by members.

The Extractive Industries Working Group Working of IASSA has been actively working with the University of the Arctic over the past years. Together the groups

have established a Thematic Network, which organises a Pan-Arctic PhD programme that holds two courses a year on an alternating basis in Universities in the Arctic in three continents (North America, Europe and Russia / Asia). The last such course was in Neryungryi, Yakutia, Siberia.

The IASSA General Assembly was held on 25 May 2014. New by-laws were approved. According to the new by-laws, in the future the IASSA President will be elected directly by the membership (not appointed from the newly elected Council members), and candidates for president may choose to run with a proposal to host ICASS at institutions other than their own.

PARTICIPATION IN ARCTIC COUNCIL ACTIVITIES 2015-2016

As an observer to Arctic Council, IASSA has attended a number of meetings and related events during 2015 and 2016. President Peter Sköld attended the Arctic Council SDWG and the SAO Meetings in Whitehorse in March 2015, and the SDWG Meeting in Chena September/October 2015. Councilor Diane Hirshberg represented IASSA at the SAO in Anchorage in October 2015. Sköld again attended the SDWG and SAO Meetings in Fairbanks, and most recently the SDWG Meeting in Orono and the SAO Meeting in Portland, where he provided a report on IASSA, at which he expressed IASSA's continued interest in supporting Arctic Council's work and working with especially SDWG on relevant projects. Sköld is also a member of Arctic Council Social, Economic and Culture Expert Group, representing Sweden. IASSA intend to be represented at the meetings with SDWG, SAO and Ministerial during Spring 2017.

During Arctic Science Summit Week in March 2016, IASSA co-sponsored, along with the University of Alaska Anchorage, IASC, UArctic and the NSF-funded project Arctic Horizons, a day-long gathering titled Reframing Understandings of the North: Placing Social Sciences and Humanities at the Center of Interdisciplinary Arctic Research. Organized by IASSA Councilor Diane Hirshberg, this forum brought together over 60 participants who discussed ways to reframe Arctic research in truly inter- and transdisciplinary ways that place the social sciences and humanities alongside the natural sciences at the center of these collaborations.

IASSA participated in the UArctic Research Analytics Task Force, Diane Hirshberg, IASSA Councilor, was a co-author or contributor to all four reports and co-presented them at the 2016 UArctic Congress in St. Petersburg.

<http://research.uarctic.org/research-area/research-analytics-task-force/publications/>

Other councilors represent IASSA on several projects that have been endorsed by the Arctic Council. Councilor Tatiana Vlasova represents IASSA on the Arctic Resilience Report (ARR) project, and Tatiana also serves as IASSA's representative to the AC's Ecosystems Management Expert Group. Councilor Alona Yefimenko represents IASSA on the Adaptation Actions for a Changing Arctic (AACAA) project. Councilors Gail Fondahl, Andrey Petrov, Diane Hirshberg, Grete Hovelsrud and Peter Sköld were involved in the Arctic Human Development Report II.

PARTICIPATION IN OTHER ACTIVITIES OF RELEVANCE TO THE ARCTIC COUNCIL

IASSA has been actively engaged in a number of Arctic conferences and workshops. We have also developed our collaboration with two other Arctic Council Observer Organizations, IASC and Uarctic. The three of us had a dialogue with the White House before the Arctic meeting 28 September 2016, and we arranged an Ice-breaker for the dialogue in Arctic research, arranged at the Arctic Science Summit Week, Toyama, Japan 23 April 2015.

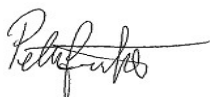
Peter Sköld has represented IASSA as a member of the ICARP III process and in the organizing committee of ASSW 2015 (Toyama) and 2017 (Prague). He has also represented the organization in panels and with individual presentations at major Arctic Research events such as COP21 2015 (Paris), ICCH 2015 (Oulu), The Arctic – Hot or Cold 2015 (Washington), EU PolarNet (Vienna 2015 and Brussels 2016), 6th Arctic Shipping Summit (Montreal), CNARC 2015 (Shanghai) and 2016 (Rovaniemi), 2nd Spanish Arctic Symposium 2015 (Madrid), International Meeting of the Arctic Council Member States, Arctic Council Observer States and International Academic Community Representatives 2015 (Arkhangelsk) and 2016 (Icebreaker 50 Years of Victory), Arctic Frontiers 2016 (Tromsø), Uarctic Congress 2016 (Saint Petersburg), and a number of universities (for instance Berkeley, Cambridge, Budapest, Laval).

Councillor Gail Fondahl chairs the Social and Human Working Group of the International Arctic Science Committee, President Peter Sköld serves as vice chair, providing a strong link to that organization. During the Uarctic Congress in Saint Petersburg in September 2016 Peter Sköld was elected to University of the Arctic Board of Governors. Generally the three scientific observer organizations – IASSA, IASC and Uarctic, have a well-developed co-operation that is extended every year. Gertrude Saxinger is as a member of the APRI /Austrian Polar Research Institute part of EU-Polar-Net, she has attended the kick-off meeting in Bremerhaven and will be attending the General Assembly in Prague 2017.

IASSA Secretariat hosted a two day program for the Senior Arctic Official of Sweden, Andrés Jato, and Sweden's SDWG delegate Elinor Blomgren, in August 2016. Multiple IASSA members take part in Arctic Council projects, and our organization has a broad collaboration with other observers, and with the Permanent Participants.

IASSA has joined the International Social Sciences Council (ISSC). Over the past several years IASSA has worked successfully to advance the role of Arctic social sciences in the world of Arctic sciences (dominated by natural and physical sciences). It is hoped that IASSA will be able to use ISSC as a venue to advance the profile of Arctic social sciences within the global context of social sciences.

Respectfully submitted by



President, IASSA (2014-2017)