

Report of SDWG to SAOs Selfoss, Iceland, 4-5 May, 2004

Introduction

This summary report is based on the meeting of the Sustainable Development Working Group of 3 May 2003. The Working Group last met on 22 October, 2003. The report covers: 1) Developments since the last SAO meeting; 2) New and ongoing Activities; 3) Deliverables at 2004 Ministerial Meeting, 4) Questions/decisions for SAOs; and 5) Future meetings.

1. Developments Since Last SAO Meeting

Progress reports on individual SDWG projects can be found on the new SDWG website: www.sdwg.org.

The SDWG website, sdwg.org, formally opened in November 2003 and a Russian site has been prepared, and will be open soon for public viewing.

Work on the Sustainable Development Action Plan has been conducted since the last SAO meeting under the lead of the Russian Federation, with the assistance of a Task Force established at the Oct 2003 meeting of the SDWG. The Task Force has met once, in Ottawa, Canada, on 25-27 February 2004. It considered a draft SDAP produced by the Russian Federation; based on the comments of the Task Force Russia then produced a new draft of the SDAP and two discussion papers, which were submitted to the SDWG and SAO meetings.

2. New and ongoing Activities

Projects

The SDWG now has 11 active projects, with a wide range regarding scope and content. These projects are:

- Women's Participation in Decision-making Processes in Arctic Fisheries Resource Management (Norway)
- The Arctic Human Development Report (Iceland)
- Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic, SLICA (Denmark/Greenland)
- A Family-based Reindeer Economy and the Status and Management of Wild Reindeer/Caribou populations (Norway)
- Product Development and Processing in Sustainable Reindeer Husbandry ("Ofelas") (Finland)
- Children and Youth (Canada)
- Circumpolar Infrastructure Task Force (CITF) (US)

- Co-management of Marine Resources in Arctic Areas (Saami Council)
- Ecological and Cultural Tourism (Finland/US)
- Telemedicine (US)
- Emerging Infectious Diseases (US)

Almost all projects reported progress in their work, and many reported some anticipated deliverables at the upcoming Ministerial Meeting in November 2004 (see below). The details of the status of each project will be available in the full SDWG meeting report. Individual project reports are also available now on www.sdwg.org.

3. Deliverables at 2004 Ministerial

Several deliverables are anticipated from the SDWG at the Fourth Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Reykjavík, Iceland, in November 2004:

Capacity-Building Best Practices

Canada introduced at the 3 May 2004 meeting of SDWG the penultimate draft of a compendium entitled: *Capacity Building Overview of the Arctic Council*. It is intended to be presented as a glossy publication at the Ministerial Meeting.

Arctic Human Development Report

The Arctic Human Development Report is reporting good progress in the development of chapters, while the short time available will result in tight deadlines for chapter reviews and preparations for printing. The Table of Contents has been reorganized and made more logical, while the basic content remains unchanged. Chapters have been posted on the SDWG website, and will soon be available in versions that are available for final comment. A joint meeting of the Report Steering Committee and Lead Authors took place in Tromsø, Norway, on 3-4 April 2004.

The co-chair of the AHDR emphasised some key points on the AHDR and its anticipated findings at the SDWG meeting:

- The AHDR will be a scientific, fully peer reviewed document. Authors will be responsible for content, which will not be politically negotiated, while care will be taken to avoid offending sensibilities.
- The AHDR will not contain policy recommendations, but will be policy-relevant, identifying gaps and issues which could influence SDWG agenda.
- The AHDR will identify some components of well-being that are important for Arctic residents, which are not measured in UNDP Human Dev. Reports, such as: fate-control, cultural continuity, and contact with nature.

SDWG projects

Many of the SDWG projects will produce final reports or other deliverables at the 2004 Ministerial meeting (see table).

4. Activities requiring guidance from SAOs

Sustainable Development Action Plan

The SDWG discussed a draft Sustainable Development Action Plan, that has been drafted by Russia with assistance by a special Task Force that was designated for this task, and to organize a possible workshop, at the Oct 2003 meeting of the SDWG.

Significant progress has been made since the last SDWG/SAO meeting, and some very formidable work has been done by the lead country on developing SDAP. A draft SDAP was discussed by the Task Force at a February 2004 meeting in Ottawa, Canada. A number of comments were made there, which resulted in Russia revising its draft, with some of the elements therein presented in two separate discussion papers. The new draft SDAP presented at this meeting is intended as a basis for "Phase I" of the SDAP. The discussion papers present ideas that are meant to be discussed and debated by the Arctic Council, but were deemed not to be ripe for consensus in "Phase I" but possibly at later updates of the SDAP.

Despite the progress made, there was not complete consensus within the Task Force regarding the new draft SDAP. At the SDWG meeting some questions were raised, inter alia, regarding the scope of the SDAP, stated objectives, the role and status of working groups in relation to SDAP, and how to proceed from this stage in developing the SDAP in the time before the Ministerial. It was felt that guidance from the SAOs might be helpful in this regard, as the lack of consensus in the Task Force may be partly attributable to different understandings of the mandate given so far by SAOs.

Project Proposal: Sustainable Development of Indigenous Peoples of Russian North

This project proposal was introduced by RAIPON and is being submitted jointly by RAIPON, the Russian Federation and UNDP. The project addresses the sustainable development needs of indigenous peoples in the northern regions of the Russian Federation, and aims to ensure the application of best experiences in developing the potential of indigenous communities through a number of measures. Information from pilot projects will be shared with other communities in Russia, with potential applications elsewhere in the circumpolar north.

The project proposal did receive great interest and positive comments from Member States and Permanent Participants. It was seen as being highly relevant for the work of the SDWG and with great positive implications especially for indigenous communities. It was generally seen that the project development and results would be of continuing interest and could be presented at future SDWG meetings, but some questions were raised if it constituted a cooperative Arctic Council activity, that could be endorsed by SAOs as such. Questions were raised regarding the financing of the project, and what role was foreseen by the Arctic Council and other Member States; if this was essentially a bilateral Russian/UNDP project, or if other partners were invited to actively join, and then, in what way. During the conclusion of the meeting it was

announced that Finland would become a partner in the project, and provide more details on this partnership at the fall SDWG meeting.

ICT Conference Follow-up

This item was briefly discussed at the SDWG meeting, anticipating the discussion at the SAO meeting. It was noted that two SDWG projects, CITF and Telemedicine, are working in ICT, and that they can contribute to the Conference follow-up. A question was raised if it was needed to establish new ad hoc structures on ICT, given that the topic is being dealt with by SDWG projects. A comment was made on the possible contribution of ICT to preserve and promote indigenous languages.

5. Future Meetings

The next meeting of the SDWG will be held in Whitehorse, Canada, in 8-11 September 2004 (exact dates have yet to be determined, depending on the exact length of the meeting). The purpose of the meeting will be, inter alia, to take stock of current progress, to discuss how to respond to new tasks and an increased workload and responsibilities, and to determine future priorities. Early findings of the AHDR could be presented at the meeting, as well as the SDAP-related discussion papers prepared by the Russian Federation. AHDR follow-up and the SDAP could be discussed in connection with priority-setting for the near future. Also, it was felt that the SDWG needed to discuss its future working methods, in light of the fact that the agenda has grown in size and complexity and the one-day pre-SAO meetings are feeling insufficient to deal with all the issues and project reports.

Project	Deliverables	Timing	Future meetings
AHDR	Completed Report	Ministerial 2004	
SLICA	Presentation of aggregated comparative data	Ministerial 2004	
CITF	(Present vision statements for possible inclusion in SAO report to Ministers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of aviation • A "connected Arctic") 	Ministerial 2004	<u>Aviation</u> : Seattle, WA June 14 - 17, 2004 <u>Telcom</u> : Washington, DC third quarter of 2004 <u>Shipping</u> : Cambridge, England, Mid to Late September 2004
Product Development . . . Reindeer Husbandry (Ofelas)	Presentation of completed baseline of the project	Ministerial 2004	
Family-Based Reindeer Economy . . .	The final report, <i>A Family-Based Reindeer Economy, and the Status and Management of Wild Reindeer/Caribou Populations</i>	Ministerial 2004	
International Circum- polar Surveillance	Comprehensive report on certain invasive bacterial diseases and the status of preventive measures	Ministerial 2004	Canada in the Fall of 2004
Women's Participation in Decision-making . .	Report and recommendations for further action	Ministerial 2004	17-18 June 2004 Norway International Steering Committee and Work group
Children & Youth	A report on health indicators; Top of the World website	Ministerial 2004	