

# Instructions for Observers subject to review

## Introduction

This document provides the reporting template and accompanying instructions for Observers to be reviewed during the **Icelandic Chairmanship (2019-2021)**.

The deadline for submission is **1 June 2020**.

According to the "[Arctic Council Rules of Procedure](#)" (Annex 2), every **two years** Observers are requested to submit to the Chairmanship up-to-date information about relevant activities and their contributions to the work of the Arctic Council. Every four years, from the date of being granted Observer status, Observers will be reviewed at the Ministerial meeting. The following **20 Observers** will be reviewed at the next Ministerial meeting, and are requested to submit their review report by **1 June 2020**:<sup>1</sup>

- Germany;
- The Netherlands;
- Poland;
- Switzerland;
- United Kingdom;
- International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN);
- Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM);
- OSPAR Commission (OSPAR);
- Standing Committee of the Parliamentarians of the Arctic Regions (SCPAR);
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN-ECE);
- United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment);
- West Nordic Council (WNC);
- World Meteorological Organization (WMO);
- Advisory Committee on the Protection of the Seas (ACOPS);
- International Arctic Science Committee (IASC);
- International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES);
- International Union for Circumpolar Health (IUCH);
- Northern Forum (NF);
- Oceana; and,
- World Wildlife Fund for Nature – Global Arctic Program (WWF).

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<sup>1</sup> These include the Observers reviewed before the Fairbanks Ministerial meeting in 2017 as well as Observers admitted that year.

## Role of Observers

The role and responsibilities of Observers, as well as criteria for admission to the Arctic Council, can be found in the “Arctic Council Rules of Procedure” (Annex 2) and the “[Observer Manual for Subsidiary Bodies](#).”

The primary role of Observers is to observe the work of the Arctic Council. Observers contribute to the Arctic Council primarily through engagement at the level of Working Groups, Task Forces, and/or Expert Groups. Observers are invited to the meetings and other activities of the Arctic Council unless the Senior Arctic Officials decide otherwise. Observers may also propose projects through an Arctic State or a Permanent Participant.

## Report submission

Observer review reports should include the relevant information described below and in the template.

- (a) A description of the Observer’s contributions to the work of the Arctic Council since the time of the Observer’s most recent submission, or in the previous two years, with special focus on contributions to the subsidiary bodies through project participation and support, as well as collaboration with Permanent Participants;
- (b) If applicable, a description of the Observer’s future plans to contribute to the work of the Arctic Council, with special focus on contributions to the subsidiary bodies through project participation and support, as well as collaboration with Permanent Participants; and,
- (c) If applicable, a description of the Observer’s contributions to other aspects of the Arctic Council and its goals not covered in the previous sections since the time of the Observer’s most recent submission, or in the previous two years.

Observer review reports should be submitted electronically to the **Arctic Council Secretariat** via email: [acs@arctic-council.org](mailto:acs@arctic-council.org) not later than **1 June 2020**. Please bear in mind while preparing your report that all Observer reports will be published online in the *Observer* section of the [Arctic Council online Library](#).

If an Observer fails to submit a report during the review process, the Arctic Council will consider this to mean that the Observer **is no longer interested in maintaining its status** as an accredited Observer to the Arctic Council.

## Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

Republic of Poland

Date of submission:

29.05.2020

Observer's website, if appropriate:

[www.gov.pl/dyplomacja](http://www.gov.pl/dyplomacja)

### Information for appropriate contact person

Full name:

Piotr Rakowski

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Telephone:

00 48 22 5239 331

Organization or department:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Job Title:

Senior advisor for Arctic affairs

Full  
mailing  
address:

Legal and Treaty Department  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Al. Szucha 23  
00-580 Warsaw, Poland

**Is your  
state or organization interested in continuing as an Observer of the Arctic  
Council?**

**Yes**  **No**

## Observer Review Report

Please describe in no more than two pages your state's or organization's contributions to the work of the Arctic Council's Working Groups, Task Forces, and/or Expert Groups since the time of your most recent report, or in the previous two years. Please highlight contributions to specific projects, such as through proposals, concept development, in-kind and financial support, and hosting of meetings. Please detail any collaboration with Permanent Participants, such as project proposal endorsement and support.

Since last report (December 2018) Poland's contribution to Arctic Council's continues. However, it needs to be noted that the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 caused a general disturbance to potential further engagements and initial plans.

Nevertheless, there are several actions being undertaken to strengthen Poland's its engagement in the future.

As previously, Poland's overall engagement into Arctic Council's work may still be divided into two applicable categories:

1. expert one
2. political one.

At the expert level, Poland continued its Observer activity with selected Working Groups and monitored activities of other subsidiary bodies. In the reporting period, Poland participated in the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment Working Group (PAME) on relatively regular basis. It also includes PAME Shipping Expert Group.

Poland continued its engagement in the initiative to strengthen the role of the Observers. Poland is one of the sponsors of the project to organize a specific workshops alongside aforementioned Shipping Expert Group to be devoted to specific Arctic shipping environment.

Polish representative used to hold the position of the co-leader in the Benthos group that was established under the auspices of the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna Working Group CAFF. The expert was participating in majority of the meetings, contributing to the group's work and providing overall support.

Poland submits to the Arctic Council biennial National Reports on Enhanced Black Carbon and Methane Emissions Reductions. Poland submitted two National reports (in 2015 and 2018) and plans to submit the third one in 2020. The reports are in accordance with the encouragement for Observer States included in the "Enhanced Black Carbon and Methane Emissions Reductions. An Arctic Council Framework for Action."

The reports include information on:

- a. black carbon and methane historical emissions
- b. emission projections
- c. analysis of emission trends
- d. sectoral analysis of emission sources
- e. strategies, policies and measures taken by Poland to reduce emissions
- f. good practices and lessons learned for the key sectors

In 2019 Poland accepted an invitation to participate in the works of the Expert Group on Black Carbon and Methane (EGBCM). Polish experts participated in the EGBCM meeting in Reykjavik (8-10 October 2019) and in following teleconferences organized by the EGBCM Chair.

The Group's main task is to analyse information included in National Reports submitted by Member and Observer States and report back to the Arctic Council on the progress of the implementation of the Arctic Council's Framework for Action on black carbon and methane. EGBCM is presently engaged in works on the next progress report, which is due in 2021.

The Group has been divided into sub-groups, which prepare sectoral inputs to the progress report. Poland volunteered to support the sub-group that works on the waste sector.

Additionally, comments and replies were provided within the system of consultations of different documents distributed by Arctic Council WGs secretaries on regular basis.

Regarding the second category i.e. political activity, Polish representatives participated in the Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Rovaniemi (May 2019) and all Senior Arctic Officials meetings held in 2019 i.e. during Finnish and Icelandic Chairmanships.

Poland also participated in the first EU Arctic Forum in Umea (3-4 October 2019) that was organized by Sweden and the EU.

Finally, representatives of Poland took part in other major international events that dealt with international Arctic cooperation like Arctic Frontiers (January 2019), International Arctic Forum in St. Petersburg (9-10 April 2019) or Arctic Circle Forum in Shanghai (May 2019).

If applicable, please describe in no more than one page your state's or organization's future plans for contributing to the work of the Arctic Council's Working Groups, Task Forces, and/or Expert Groups. Please highlight intentions to contribute to specific projects and to collaborate with Permanent Participants.

Polish Polar Policy, a national strategy to cover both Arctic and Antarctic, has been prepared and agreed through all administrative stages and awaits adoption by the Government. It provides a sets of goals in relation to both polar regions including strengthening of the engagement into different levels of cooperation, above all with the Arctic Council. Therefore it is foreseen that the level of participation of Polish experts in other WGs and Task Forces may be extended and result in more active engagement.

Regarding already existing forms of active participation in the Arctic Council working structures, Poland will continue its engagement with the Expert Group on Black Carbon and Methane (EGBCM), including the sub-group on the waste sector, PAME (in particular via Shipping Expert Group) and CAFF (via Benthos group) WGs in forthcoming years.

Poland will also continue its engagement in the polar research in the Arctic. Poland's main scientific and research assets in the Arctic are the polar stations: Hornsund Station in Svalbard (operating annually) and 4 seasonal stations operated by Polish universities. The Hornsund Station remains the part of the global research programmes and initiatives: Global Change Programme, European Biodiversity Flagship Site, Svalbard Integrated Arctic Earth Observing System and PolarPOL. All of the researchers cooperate actively with their external partners and collaborators.

Polish Polar stations also perform important sea and land rescue functions that is of a vital importance in this very area.

Also, Poland as a member of SAON (Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks) engaged in strategic and long-term planning of national research and scientific activities to sustain their accordance with current global trends in the research area.

In 2019 and 2020 also the substantial number of research grants under Polish-Norwegian Research Programme (EEA / Norway Grants) was either initiated or continued, contributing to overall Polish polar research performance in the international context.

Permanent Participants were taking part in some of the previous Warsaw Format Meetings and its future engagement with the initiative is considered as vital. Nevertheless, one of the key principles of the Polish Polar Policy (applicable to the Arctic) and its future implementation is respect towards Indigenous Peoples' rights, interests, culture and traditions. This approach was upheld so far and will be continued.

Last but not least, Poland reassures its commitment to host meetings of the Arctic Council subsidiary bodies and/or seminars and workshops once to be organized under the auspices of the Arctic Council.

If applicable, please describe in no more than one page your state's or organization's contributions to other aspects of the Arctic Council and its goals not covered by the previous sections since the time of your most recent report, or in the previous two years.

In 2010 Poland launched an initiative called "Warsaw Format Meeting". It is a specific platform that allows the representatives of the Arctic Council Observer States, the EU and current chairmanship of the Arctic Council to engage into direct dialogue and exchange of views on relevant topics related to Arctic Council's activities and specific projects related to the Arctic.

The meetings were organized in Warsaw since its establishment and planned as biannual ones.

However, during the meeting of WFM in 2018 it was agreed that the meetings may be organized on annual basis. The last one was organised in June 2019. In the discussions the representatives of the Icelandic Chairmanship, Arctic Council Secretariat, EPPR and Permanent Participants Secretariat took part.

The WFM working meetings were also organized in the margins of SAO meetings during Finnish and Icelandic Chairmanships.

Additionally, the expert working group that was established by the Minister of Foreign Affairs i.e. Polar Task Force and that comprises the polar researchers and scientists as well as representatives of various ministries and central bodies shall continue its works and concentrate firmly on the future of the Arctic and the cooperation with the Arctic Council. The last meeting of the Polar Task Force was organised in December 2019.

Polar Task Force, through its Twitter account that was established in 2018, also supports the activities of the Arctic Council and its chairmanship.

In 2019 the project called Edu-Arctic which is an e-learning and training platform engaging both the teachers and the pupils from the different schools in many countries on various aspects of the Arctic was completed. However, the activities initiated by the project (e.g. webinars, social media campaigns) will be continued further and that is supported i.a. by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Representatives of Polish relevant institutions engage and participate in various initiatives and platforms concerning the Arctic and its future e.g. annual Arctic Circle Assemblies, Arctic Frontiers or Arctic Futures as well as collaborate and continue dialogue on bilateral basis with the Arctic states and other stakeholders.