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Draft report from the ACAP Chair to the SAO meeting 6 – 7 November 2001.

The interim ACAP Steering committee had their second meeting in Espoo November 5, 2001. All the Arctic countries, the PAME Chair and the AMAP Chair and secretariat attended and we also welcomed the distinguished representatives from the Saami Council, IPS, WWF and UNEP-Chemicals.

Project reports

3 Fact Sheets on POP's, Heavy metals and Radioactivity was reported and presented by the AMAP secretariat at the SAO-meeting in Rovaniemi in June. However, the fact sheets have been very popular and we need a reprint. A Russian version is also needed and Finland is considering supporting both the translation and the printing of a Russian version and a reprint of the English version dependant on the costs.

The project on phase out of PCB use and management of PCB-contaminated wastes in the Russian Federation is also co-ordinated by the AMAP-secretariat. The project is well into Phase II and is running smooth at the time being. However, being the most advanced of the ACAP-projects the steering group of this project face and has to solve many problems, and their experience will gain future work in other projects. Phase II have been planned to be reported within September 2002. The ACAP Committee has asked the AMAP sekretariat to produce a paper on the lessons learned and points of importance for the planning of Phase III of the PCB project.

The project on Evaluation of Dioxins and Furans in the Russian Federation is co-ordinated by Sweden. The Project is based on a Russian/United States bilateral project on Dioxin and Furans. In the transition period between these projects a fact-sheet on dioxins in Russian is being prepared. It will be distributed countrywide before the end of 2001. In addition, an outreach campaign will be organised which will include inter ministerial hearings for the public and NGOs, visits and presentations in certain regions.

A Russian consultant is preparing a Russian translation of the UNEP Standardized Toolkit for Identification and Quantification of Dioxin/Furan Releases. These activities are co-ordinated by UNEP-Chemicals. The Project plan for the ACAP project is being revised and the project will start late this year or early next year.

The project for Reduction of atmospheric mercury releases from the Arctic states is co-ordinated by Denmark. The Project Plan is under specification and the project will be started late this year or early next year. The Phase I will be an inventory of Mercury releases from all the Arctic countries. The project will be implemented in close co-operation with UNEP-Chemicals which also deals with Mercury releases on a global scale.

The project on environmentally sound management of stocks of obsolete pesticides in the Russian Federation is co-ordinated by USA in close co-operation with UNEP Chemicals as a secretariat for the project. A kick-off meeting was held in Moscow last month. The project aims at doing inventories of obsolete pesticides in several regions in Russia, analyse and characterise the pesticides and suggest waste disposal, possible use or other type of methods to prevent the pesticides to reach the Arctic environment.

Implementation of the Cleaner Production, Eco Efficiency and Environmental Management systems in the Norilsk Mining Company in the City of Norilsk is co-ordinated by the Cleaner Production Centre in Moscow. They had agreed to start the project with the management of the Norilsk Company earlier this autumn. However, the top management was changed recently and has stopped all agreements in order to revisit them. The Cleaner Production Centre in Moscow will try to re-negotiate the agreement in November, but may need some help from the Arctic Countries at a later stage.

Co-operation with UNEP.

During the first months of the co-operation we have identified that UNEP Chemicals in Geneva has related work ongoing in other parts of the world as well as in Russia. To meet the need of co-ordination and co-operation, the ACAP chair, the AMAP Secretariat and project co-ordinators from USA and Denmark met with the director of UNEP Chemicals, Jim Willis and his staff in October. UNEP expressed their interest to participate and provide expertise in four of the ACAP projects: The PCB, Dioxin/Furan, Mercury and Obsolete Pesticide projects and act as the secretariat in the Obsolete Pesticide project. UNEP will cover their own costs and will also provide 50.000 US\$ for the PCB project. UNEP Chemicals suggested to issue a common paper signed by UNEP and Representatives from the Arctic Council in order to identify the co-operation with a regional party. This may be useful both for UNEP-Chemicals and The Arctic Council when applying for future funding of projects.

As the ACAP Steering Committee is an interim group with no legal standing, I would, with your permission Mr. Chairman, ask you for an advice on how to proceed. In this respect I have two questions:

- What kind of paper can the Arctic Council agree upon; a Memorandum of Understanding, Letter of Agreement, Letter of Intent or a Letter of Co-operation? It is no matter for UNEP-Chemicals that the paper is legally binding.
- The second question Mr. Chairman is who should sign such a paper: Is it acceptable that I as the chairman of ACAP should sign on behalf of the Arctic Council?

I understand that answers to these two questions are legally complicated, but in order to give full credit to the co-operation with UNEP these problems should be sorted out. In the meantime the practical co-operation is going on and is very useful.

Financial issues

The financial situation for most of the adopted projects is satisfactory, but we need more financing at later stages. I will enclose an updated overview of the financial status in my final report to the SAO's after the meeting.

We also have approached the EU Commission, United Kingdom and the Netherlands requesting support to the projects.

We have started the process of involving the international financial institutions in the later phases of our projects and will continue this effort.

Future activities

We addressed some ideas for future projects, but need more elaboration of such ideas before we are able to discuss them thoroughly and eventually send them to the SAO meeting for consideration and decision.

Draft operating guidelines

A draft operating guideline has been forwarded to the SAO meeting. I apologise for the late arrival but I hope you are able to consider and eventually adopt the paper at this meeting.