



Record of Information and Decisions, ACAP-I 2021 WG Meeting

Online meeting

January 27-28, 2021

At its online meeting held on 27-28 January 2021, the Arctic Contaminants Action Program Working Group (ACAP WG) welcomed updates on the deliverables and current activities and projects from the Expert Groups (EGs), took note of the new project ideas, discussed the Working Group's contribution to the SAOs report to Ministers, including the 2021-2023 workplan, and noted the following information and decision points:

Update on the Status of the Deliverables for the 2021 Ministerial Meeting

The draft **Report on the ACAP Webinar on Black Carbon and Methane from the Oil and Gas Sector** with policy recommendations was submitted to ACAP on 27 January 2021, and **10 February was set as the deadline for comments.**

A script for the video on Mitigation of Black Carbon and Methane Emissions from APG Flaring in the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation Project is being finalized. However, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Russia currently is not able to make a statement for the video due to its reorganization. As the Finnish representative of the ACAP EG on SLCPs is not able to make a statement for the video (because the AMAP assessment report on SLCP is currently in development), the U.S. was requested to consider if an American representative could make a general statement on the impacts of flaring.

The draft Report demonstrating Rapid Environmental Assessment technique to evaluate human health and environmental threats of pesticides storage facilities in three Arctic Regions of the Russian Federation was submitted to ACAP at the end of the first day of the Working Group meeting, but it was missing Annex 5 (the results; expected 5 February). **The Waste EG Chair invited the delegations to make comments on any missing information in the main report or provide any other kind of guidance, with the deadline for comments being COB 8 February 2021. ACAP's approval of the report will depend on the submission of Annex 5.**

IPCAP provided an update on the status of its deliverables. It is expected that both **Report on the establishment of the Circumpolar LEO Network and Kola Waste Project Report will be submitted for ACAP's approval by 8 February 2021.**

New Project Ideas and Proposals

The Expert Groups provided an overview of the following new project ideas and project proposals under development:

- Wildland Fire Management Practices to Reduce Emissions of Black Carbon and Other Air Pollutants (EG on SLCP)

This project would entail the production of a report on wildland fires, fire management practices and impacts on emissions of black carbon and other air pollutants. This work will be undertaken in close coordination with other Arctic Council Expert and Working Groups which are undertaking work on various aspects of wildfires, including AMAP, CAFF, EPPR and EGBCM.



- P4 - Promotion of further implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POPs (EG on POPs and Mercury)
The goal of the proposed project is to conduct a study of the content of POPs and mercury in predatory sedentary fish in the Ob River, which is the major contributor to total riverine discharge to the Arctic Ocean. The project will also include a desk top study on emissions and discharge sources in the basin and a review of current environmental action plans at relevant enterprises and administrative entities. **ACAP requested the EG on POPs and Mercury to avoid duplication of AMAP's work when drafting the project proposal.**
- P5.2 - Russian Chlor Alkali Conversion Project (EG on POPs and Mercury)
The project is being designed to include elaboration of Guidelines on Best Environmental Practices (BEP) for Environmentally Sound Management (ESM) of Mercury Contaminated Sites in the Arctic Region and facilitation of implementation of a pilot action project on a selected site.
- P7 - Outreach to Communities, Industries and Other Stakeholders on Hazardous Substance Prevention in the Arctic (EG on POPs and Mercury)
- Carbon Limits together with Vygon Consulting have developed several project ideas to follow-up on the APG flaring project, which have been sent to the EG on SLCP for consideration.
- The EG on Waste is working on a new project idea on PCBs.
- Additional workshops on REA: As there were some cost savings during the implementation of the REA project, the EG on Waste is planning to develop a Workshop on the REA Project results and other waste management issues, which can be held in fall 2021 in Arkhangelsk in combination with the Information Exchange Workshop on PCB Destruction Technologies that has been on hold.

Updates on current projects (Recent developments)

Expert Group on Waste

The *Phase-out and Environmentally Sound Management of Fire-fighting Foams Containing Perfluorooctanesulfonic Acid (PFOS) and Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) in the Arctic Region* project received PSI funding and the work is expected to start in April 2021. NEFCO is currently working on recruiting a consultant.

ACAP welcomed a presentation on the results of Phase 0 of the *Reduction of Negative Impact on the Environment by Rehabilitation of Accumulated Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) with the Best Available Technologies – Dudinka Landfill* project, presented by a consultant from a Russian BAT Bureau “Environmental Industrial Policy Centre” (EIPC). The presentation contained an overview of four possible options for project implementation with different environmental benefits. The potential link between this work and the ongoing SDWG/ACAP project *Solid Waste Management in Remote Arctic Communities* was noted. RAIPON Head of Delegation expressed his support of the project and willingness to work with the project leads as a local expert and point of contact.

The *Demonstration of Management and Destruction of 250 tons of PCB in Transformers and Capacitors (Phase III)* project is delayed pending completion of the UNIDO-GEF-Russian Railways PCB project, which has been extended until the second quarter of 2021.



It was suggested that EG on Waste could develop a fact sheet on AFFFs.

Expert Group on POPs and Mercury

Implementation of the project *P2 - Inventory of uses of POPs and Mercury and their Emission Sources in Murmansk Region* has started after some challenges with contracting. This project is focused on promoting installation of control techniques aiming at limiting/eliminating release of POPs and Mercury.

The *ARCRISK - Mercury Risk Evaluation, Risk Management, and Risk Reduction Measures in the Arctic* project received PSI funding for WP#2. To secure PSI funding for continued implementation of the project, smaller adjustments in the project proposal were developed after consultations with Norway and the U.S., and it has been submitted to NEFCO. The U.S. is expected to confirm their approval of the project by 13 February 2021.

A project proposal for the *P3.1 – Promote unintended POPs and Hg emission control technologies in Russia* project is expected to be drafted during spring 2021 based on the findings of the P2 project.

The implementation of the *P3.2 – Promotion of Decreased Pollution in the Arctic Region with the Introduction of Best Available Techniques (BAT)* project is expected to start in spring 2021, after the study reservation has been lifted in December 2020.

The EG on POPs and Mercury is currently working on new fact sheets on dioxins, mercury, and PCBs. It was suggested that the EG could also develop a fact sheet on the BAT project. **The deadline for submitting the fact sheets to ACAP is COB 20 March 2021, to allow discussion at the ACAP meeting on 23 March 2021.**

Expert Group on Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (SLCP)

The SLCP EG provided an update on the Black Carbon Case Studies Platform, noting the ongoing work with EGBCM contacts to introduce emission inventories to the platform, and encouraged Arctic Council Member States and Observers to submit case studies for inclusion in the platform.

The *Phase-out of Ozone Depleting Substances and Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases at Fish and Seafood Processing Enterprises of the Murmansk Oblast (Phase II)* project is waiting for the approval of one of its beneficiaries. NEFCO is in the final stages of agreeing to contractual set-up and wording. Several procurements are expected to follow in February 2021. **As the Icelandic HoD who is also a PSC member for this project will be stepping down from his position after the Ministerial meeting in May 2021 due to retirement, the delegations were requested to explore a possibility of nominating their representatives to the project's PSC. The Icelandic HoD also agreed to discuss internally the possibility of his successor representing ACAP on this PSC.**

The completion report for Phase 1 of the *Pilot Project for Reducing CO₂ and Black Carbon Emissions on the Rivers of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation* is being finalized, and on 26 January the PSC held a meeting to agree on recommendations regarding Phase 2, including possible investments. **Norway requested the delegations consider nominating an additional national representative to the Arctic Green Shipping PSC, apart from the Norwegian and Russian experts.**



The Webinar on Black Carbon and Health is now planned as a series of short webinars hosted by different communities from different Arctic States to be held during the fall 2021.

IPCAP Expert Group

The *Community-Based Black Carbon and Public Health Assessment (Phase 2)* project was approved for PSI funding in December 2020, and the project leads are starting conversations with NEFCO on its implementation.

Upcoming work under the *Circumpolar LEO Initiative* will focus on the youth component, which includes activities in Sápmi and in the Far East of Russia. The latter were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The EG is in dialogue with the Norwegian Chairmanship on a possibility of making a video on the *Kola Waste Project* as a ministerial deliverable.

The *Solid Waste Management in Remote Arctic Communities* project is waiting for clarification of positions of some PSI members, which is expected by 13 February 2021. A decision of the PSI Committee is expected at its next meeting on 15 March 2021.

[Review of ACAP submission to the SAO Report to Ministers](#)

The ACAP HoD and Expert Group Chairs discussed and edited the draft ACAP Chapter of the SAO Report to Ministers 2021. As the draft has to be submitted for SAOs' review on February 5, **the deadline for additional comments and adjustments from ACAP is COB 3 February 2021.**

[Arctic Council Project Support Instrument \(PSI\)](#)

The ACAP WG welcomed the report by PSI Fund Manager on the progress of the PSI funded projects and the financial situation of the fund. While noting improvements in PSI's operations, **the Arctic States underlined the need to continue to improve efficiency and look into procedures of project proposal approval at the national level to avoid long delays in decision-making at the PSI Committee level.** Use of the Small Allocation Window was mentioned as important measure for EGs to develop project proposals and improve efficiency and progress. All WGs need to approve projects before application is sent to PSI to ensure that it is well anchored by Arctic states.

Sweden informed ACAP and PSI fund manager that **Ms. Maria Ullmann, Head of the Department for Sustainable Development at the Swedish EPA, would chair the PSI Committee in 2021.**

NEFCO was requested to circulate updated PSC composition lists after the meeting.

Renewal of PSI for a phase 2 was briefly discussed. All countries noted they were unable to take a position on phase II of the PSI at this time, and that further discussion would be taken up at the SAO level.

[Information from Observer States and Observer Organizations](#)

The ACAP WG welcomed Observers from Italy, Spain, and UNEP/GRID-Arendal, who expressed their interest in following ACAP's work.



Recent Policy Developments Relevant for ACAP

Canada provided an overview of its Arctic and Northern Policy Framework released in September 2019, which may help facilitate enhanced participation of the Permanent Participants from Canada in ACAP's work.

Norway presented two recent white papers, one of which sets a course and framework for Norway's High North policy for the upcoming decade (November 2020), and another provides an action plan for the country to fulfill its climate commitments (January 2021).

The Kingdom of Denmark and Finland updated ACAP on the development of their new national strategies.

The U.S. informed about the administration's decision to reenter the Paris Agreement, and ACAP welcomed the news.

An update on new and continued sources of funding available for Arctic cooperation brought about a suggestion to arrange a discussion within ACAP on using these funding possibilities.

Heads of Delegation Discussion

At the meeting, ACAP received an indication from the United States that they were considering the possibility of taking on ACAP Chairmanship from Norway, after the AC Ministerial meeting on 19-20 May 2021. Several Arctic States expressed their preliminary support.

On 29 January 2021, the United States confirmed in writing their readiness to assume the Chairmanship of ACAP for the period 2021-2023 (to be confirmed by ACAP HoD through a silence procedure by COB 12 February 2021).

It was agreed that discussion of **the nomination of a vice chair should be initiated at the earliest possible opportunity.**

The ACAP Secretariat was requested to circulate the EG membership lists among ACAP HoD after the meeting for verification.

Next ACAP Working Group Meetings

It was agreed that **the next ACAP HoD Meeting will be held online on 23 March 2021.**

The dates for the next ACAP Working Group will be determined as soon as the dates of the fall SAO meeting are announced. **The Kingdom of Denmark invited the delegations at the next meeting to indicate whether there is an interest in holding a physical ACAP WG meeting in Nuuk, Greenland, taking into account the necessary extra travel time and travel cost for such a meeting. If there is an interest, the Kingdom of Denmark will consider the matter when the COVID pandemic is over.**