

EPPR Progress report to Senior Arctic Officials

For the SAO meeting number (1) in (*Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada*) (*October 22-23, 2013*)

1. Introduction. Response to Arctic Council priorities and potential new projects under consideration.

During the first half of 2013, EPPR focused on two projects which were delivered to the 2013 Ministerial meeting. In response to the request from SAOs EPPR supported the Arctic Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response Task Force by developing Operational Guidelines that are appended to the Agreement on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response.

The second project EPPR heavily focused on is the “Recommended Practices Prevention Pollution Project” (RP3). EPPR was instructed in the Nuuk Declaration to conduct work on oil pollution prevention. The RP3 project addressed several recommendations. One of the recommendations from the RP3 summary report was to conduct a Circumpolar Marine Environment Risk Assessment (CMERA). In order to prepare a plan for the proposed CMERA, EPPR agreed in its meeting in June 2013 to arrange a workshop where the Arctic states, AC working groups, PPs and others inform about existing marine environmental risk assessments and other issues relevant for a CMERA. EPPR will examine the outcomes of the workshop to determine next steps. A draft project plan for a Circumpolar Marine Environment Risk Assessment (CMERA) and the way forward will be discussed by EPPR the WG meeting on November 8, 2013. The workshop will take place November 6-7 in Tromsø, Norway. The budget for the workshop is NOK 560.000 and it is expected about 50 participants.

In the June meeting EPPR adopted a Communication Plan and a new Strategic Plan for the working group.

2. Summary of progress on EPPR projects

Project: Updating the Operational Guidelines in support of the Agreement on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response

Paragraph 21 of the Agreement on Arctic Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response states that Operational Guidelines should be developed and maintained.

In the SAO meeting in Stockholm in March 2013 EPPR was given the responsibility of maintaining and updating the Operational Guidelines which are annexed to the Agreement on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response. At the June meeting in Oulu, Finland, EPPR drafted and approved the procedures for updating the Operational Guidelines. These procedures are submitted to this SAO meeting for SAO approval.

Project: IMO Manual in Ice and Snow Conditions

The International Maritime Organization, Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation, Hazardous Noxious Substances technical group (IMO OPRC HNS) has on its work plan the development a manual on oil spill response in ice and snow conditions. This task was planned to be drafted by industry, but for several reasons, they were not able to fulfill this task. EPPR was asked to consider completing this work. The request was discussed in the EPPR meeting in June and EPPR approved this as a new project. Norway will take the lead and prepare a project plan in close contact with the EPPR states. Canada will co-lead. The budget and the plan for this project is not finalized yet.

Project: Chapter about In Situ Burn (ISB) of Oil Spills on Water and Broken and Solid Ice Conditions

This project was a joint effort with the IMO. The project is completed. It has been a successful cooperation between IMO and EPPR.

Project: Radiation Projects

Radiation Training and Exercises will continue. An emergency response exercise is planned for June 2014. All other projects focusing on radiation are or will be completed within the end of 2013.

The following ongoing EPPR projects are progressing;

- Arctic Region Oil Spill Response Resource and Logistic Guide (Arctic Guide) which EPPR agreed on the new name "*Arctic Environmental Hazards and National Programs*".
- Arctic ERMA (Environmental response Management Application) – a mapping tool to aid emergency response and is still being expanded
- Development of Safety Systems in the Implementation of Economic and Infrastructural projects
- Arctic Rescue Project - Russia held a conference in Naryan-Mar city 20-23 August 2013. A report from the conference will be discussed at EPPR's meeting in November.
- Occupational safety and health in Arctic oil spill response workers – *the project leads of this project requested the EPPR member states to further contribute with data.*

3. Deliverables for the next Ministerial

- Pending the outcome of the CMERA workshop and decisions by EPPR, EPPR will present a status report on follow up actions of the RP 3 report. Should EPPR decide to conduct a Risk Assessment, an interim report on an Arctic CMERA will also be presented. The development of an Arctic CMERA is dependent on funding and active participation from the Arctic states and Arctic Council working groups.
- It is expected that EPPR can present the Manual on oil spill response in ice and snow conditions. The delivery will also be dependent on the progress on this project within IMO.

4. Working Group administration and next meeting(s)

Mr. Ole Kristian Bjerkemo (Norway) was reelected as chair and Ms. Ann Heinrich (USA) was re-elected as vice- chair of the working group. Ms. Synnøve Lunde (Norway) is the executive secretary. EPPR has received support from the AC Secretariat to maintain EPPR's web site. The next EPPR meeting will be in Tromsø, Norway in November 8, 2013. The meeting will be back-to-back with two EPPR workshops. The EPPR I 2014 meeting will be in Canada.

5. Collaboration with other working groups / other organizations

AMAP, PAME and CAFF WG will all attend the EPPR workshop in Tromsø to contribute to the development of a draft project plan for the CMERA. EPPR cooperated with PAME on the RP3 and HSE projects. EPPR also attended the PAME meeting in Rovaniemi and EPPR contributes to follow up activities related to the AMSA report. EPPR is involved in the Adaptation Actions for a Changing Arctic (AACA) project.

EPPR is also collaborating with IMO.