

Instructions for submitting Observer reports

Introduction

This document provides the template for **Observer reports** and instructions for their submission to the Arctic Council during the **Icelandic Chairmanship (2019-2021)**.

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

According to the “[Arctic Council Rules of Procedure](#)” (Annex 2), every **two years** Observers are asked to submit to the Chairmanship up-to-date information about relevant activities and their contributions to the work of the Arctic Council. The following **19 Observers** are asked to submit a report by 1 December 2020:¹

- France;
- Italian Republic;
- Japan;
- People’s Republic of China;
- Republic of India;
- Republic of Korea;
- Republic of Singapore;
- Spain;
- International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC);
- Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO);
- North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMCO);
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP);
- Arctic Institute of North American (AINA);
- Association of World Reindeer Herders (AWRH);
- Circumpolar Conservation Union (CCU);
- International Arctic Social Sciences Association (IASSA);
- International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA);
- University of the Arctic (UArctic), and;
- International Maritime Organization (IMO).

¹ These include the Observers who will not be subjected to be reviewed before the Reykjavik Ministerial meeting in 2021.

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 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 reports should be submitted electronically to the **Arctic Council Secretariat** via email: acs@arctic-council.org.

The reports should be submitted to the Arctic Council Secretariat not later than **1 December 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 Library](#).

If an Observer does not submit a report, the Arctic Council will consider this as an indication that the Observer is no longer interested in maintaining status as an accredited Observer to the Arctic Council.

Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

Republic of Singapore

Date of submission:

1 December 2020

Observer's website, if appropriate:

<http://mfa.gov.sg>

Information for appropriate contact person

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

Yes No

Observer 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.

1 Singapore was granted Arctic Council (AC) Observership at the Kiruna AC Ministerial Meeting in May 2013, which was reaffirmed in May 2019 at the 11th Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Rovaniemi. Following our last Observer report submitted in June 2018, this report details Singapore's contributions as an AC observer in support of the AC's agenda from July 2018 to November 2020. We continue to take guidance from the Nuuk Criteria.

Attendance of AC meetings

2 Singapore has continued to participate actively in various key AC and AC-related meetings in the past two years. Singapore was represented by then-Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Social and Family Development Sam Tan at the 11th AC Ministerial Meeting in Rovaniemi, Finland in May 2019. Singapore also attended SAO Meetings in Rovaniemi, Finland in November 2018 and in Ruka, Finland in March 2019. Singapore's National Environment Agency (NEA) attended the inaugural AC Environmental Ministers' Meeting in Rovaniemi, Finland in October 2018 and engaged the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of PAME, ACAP and SDWG on marine plastics and improving waste management capacity. We continue to participate actively in various AC Working Groups, and other events that support the AC's work. We also organised fora in Singapore to raise awareness and discuss Arctic issues in Southeast Asia. (A full list of Singapore's participation in AC related meetings is at Annex).

Participation in Working Groups

3 **Emergency Preparedness, Prevention and Response (EPPR).** The Maritime & Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) attends EPPR meetings regularly. In line with the EPPR 2017-2019 and 2019-2021 Workplans, Singapore contributed to discussions on preventing, preparing for and responding to accidents, including participating in the Arctic Oil Pollution Research and Development Workshop at the 23rd EPPR in June 2019. Most recently, MPA attended the virtual 25th EPPR conference in September 2020. MPA also participates in the EPPR Marine Environmental Response Expert Group (MER EG), EPPR Search and Rescue Experts Group (SAR EG) and EPPR Radiation Expert Group (RAD EG).

4 **Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF).** Singapore's National Parks Board (NParks) works with CAFF to conserve and monitor Arctic migratory shorebird populations threatened by overharvest and habitat alteration outside the Arctic. NParks tracks Arctic migratory birds stopping over in the Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve and provides input to CAFF's Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative (AMBI). In line with AMBI's 2015-2019 and 2019-2023 Workplans, NParks hosted a CAFF coordinator, Mr Doug Watkins, at Sungei Buloh Wetlands Reserve for a period of one year in 2018-2019. [Note: As of 7 October 2019, Mr Doug Watkins is the Chief Executive of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) Secretariat.] NParks' actions under the AMBI Workplan 2019-2023 are to mainstream AMBI priorities through the ASEAN Flyway Network and cooperate on a satellite tracking programme for key migratory waterbird species within the EAAFP.

5 **Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME).** MPA has contributed to PAME discussions by providing input to projects under the PAME Work Plans 2017-2019 and 2019-2021. These projects include: (a) Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA) report recommendations; (b) Arctic Shipping Status Report (ASSR); (c) Black Carbon and Methane Mitigation Measures from Shipping in the Arctic; (d) Compendium of Arctic Ship Accidents (CASA); (e) Interpretation of IMO Polar Code; (f) Arctic Marine Tourism Shipping Analysis and Best Practices Guidelines; and (g) Modelling the Biological Connectivity for Optimum Design of Marine Protected Area Networks Within the Arctic. MPA attended the 3rd Arctic Shipping Best Practices Information Forum in London, United

Kingdom in June 2019 to contribute to PAME's aim of facilitating the exchange of information and best practices, and to raise awareness and promote effective implementation of the Polar Code. MPA also participated in the PAME Workshop on "Project to Develop a Framework for More Systematically Engaging with Observers on PAME's Shipping Network" in London, United Kingdom in June 2019 as well as PAME I-2020 and PAME II-2020 in February and September 2020, respectively.

6 **Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG).** The Energy Studies Institute of the National University of Singapore (NUS ESI) and Institute of the North, with support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, jointly conducted a Workshop on "Sustainable Energy Development in the Arctic: Collaboration on the Arctic Renewable Energy Atlas (AREA)", as well as an accompanying youth seminar (together with Global Compact Network Singapore) on "What a Changing Arctic Means for Singapore" from 29 to 31 August 2018 in Singapore, to facilitate the discussion of AREA Project topics by the Arctic participants; promote interaction between Arctic and Singaporean/Southeast Asian energy experts; and educate youth on the ongoing collaborations between Singapore and the Arctic. These activities were well attended by over 100 local students, the public, and the seven AC Member States.

Permanent Participants

7 Singapore recognises that the Arctic indigenous peoples are key stakeholders of the Arctic, as they are most profoundly affected by changes in the region. To this end, the **Singapore-AC Permanent Participants (PPs) Cooperation Package** is a customised technical cooperation package to enhance the human resource development and governance capacities of the PPs. During the period under review, a representative from the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) attended a two-year Masters in Public Policy course in NUS as the first recipient of the postgraduate scholarship. He graduated in July 2019. Then-Minister of State Sam Tan actively engaged representatives from the Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat (IPS) on the sidelines of various Arctic fora, e.g., 13th and 14th Arctic Frontiers Conferences in January 2019 and 2020 respectively, and at the 5th International Arctic Forum in April 2019.

Arctic Research

8 Arctic research is increasingly important to better understand the effects of climate change in the Arctic and beyond, and how this will affect the emergence of new Arctic shipping routes. Over the period of review, Singapore contributed to Arctic scientific discourse in the following areas:

- Study (2015 to 2018) titled "Viability of Trans-Arctic Shipping Routes and Their Impact Analysis on Maritime Transportation", which provides a cost-analysis of using Arctic shipping routes (NUS and sponsored by Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Singapore Maritime Institute).
- Study (2015 to 2018) titled "Automatic Identification System (AIS): Data Based Arctic Ship Traffic and Emission Analyses", which analyses ship traffic characteristics and estimate ship emissions in the Arctic area using the available AIS data. (NUS).
- Study (2016 to 2019) titled "Arctic Shipping Governance" to enhance legal debates on the Arctic, particularly dealing with Arctic Shipping Governance issues. An Arctic Guide for AC Observers was also prepared (NUS and sponsored by Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Singapore Maritime Institute).
- Study (2016 to 2021) titled "Linking Arctic ice mass loss to projected sea-level rise in Southeast Asia" to create awareness of the importance of Arctic environmental protection (Nanyang Technological University [NTU]).
- Study (2015 to 2020) titled "Impact of Climate Change on the Carbon Cycling of Permafrost Soils" to provide new insights into permafrost geochemistry dynamics and to better predict how the release of carbon could accelerate climate change in Arctic systems (NUS).
- Study (2019 to 2024) titled "Determining the Arctic deglaciation history and the 3D Earth structure beneath the Arctic" to reconstruct the Arctic deglaciation history since the Last Glacial Maximum and provide insight into climate change patterns in the Arctic (NTU).
- 2020: Arctic Review journal publication and participation in the Annual meeting of International Expert Council on Cooperation in the Arctic: "Past, present and future sea-level change in the Russian Arctic" (NTU).

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.

Working Groups

1 **EPPR.** Singapore will continue attending EPPR meetings and participate in discussions of the MER EG, SAR EG and RAD EG. We will continue to share Singapore's experiences in relevant topics and learn from other countries' best practices.

2 **CAFF.** Singapore will continue to attend CAFF and AMBI meetings. In addition, Singapore (NParks) will continue to work closely with the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) to encourage ASEAN Member States to promote utilization of the ASEAN Flyway Network (AFN) and lead projects to promote conservation of wetlands and migratory waterbirds, especially in the "Improving Biodiversity Conservation of Wetlands and Migratory Waterbirds in the ASEAN Region" project, which provides critical information to support the objectives of CAFF's Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative (AMBI) in Southeast Asia..

3 **PAME.** Singapore will continue contributing to the PAME Work Plans, facilitate exchanges of information and best practices, and raise awareness and promote effective implementation of the Polar Code. Singapore will also share our experiences in managing waste to keep our regional waters free of marine litter. This is in line with the efforts undertaken by Arctic States and demonstrates our common efforts in conserving the marine environment in the Arctic and beyond.

4 **SDWG.** In addition to our publicity work on renewable energy in the Arctic, Singapore will continue to identify areas of synergies with SDWG's work, particularly projects that examine sustainable energy access issues. To this end, MFA, NUS and NTU represented Singapore at the SDWG Plenary Meeting in June and October 2020.

Permanent Participants

5 **Singapore – AC Permanent Participants Cooperation Package (PP CP).** Singapore is updating the contents of the PP CP to better cater the package to the PPs' schedules and interests, which could include short-term programmes as well as internships/work attachments. Singapore has also extended an invitation to the Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat (IPS) to undertake a 4th Singapore Study Visit (SSV). [Note: The 3rd SSV was held in July 2017 for the Presidents of the Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish Saami Parliaments.]

Arctic Research

6 Singapore aims to continue contributing to Arctic scientific discourse, including, but not limited to, the following projects:

- Study (2020 to 2023) titled "Understanding the Sensitivities and Feedback between Arctic Change and the Vulnerable Region of Southeast Asia" to improve our understanding of sea-level change dynamics and assess the vulnerability of Southeast Asia (Centre for Climate Research Singapore, Meteorological Service Singapore).
- Study (2020 to undefined) titled "Oil pollution in the Arctic – detection and modelling" to develop drone-based imaging for detection of oil spills on both open waters and ice-covered conditions in the Arctic, in order to support oil spill recovery in the Arctic region (NTU).
- Study (2021 to 2024): Relative sea-level changes along the Northern Sea Route: from patterns and rates to drivers and mechanisms.

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.

1 Singapore has actively contributed to the AC's work of disseminating information, encouraging education and promoting interest in Arctic-related issues through organising various outreach events. First, Singapore hosted the **Arctic Frontiers Abroad Conference** in collaboration with the Royal Norwegian Embassy, NUS, Innovation Norway, with support from Eco-Business in Singapore in October 2019, where Arctic experts, Singapore policymakers, business representatives and academic researchers were brought together to discuss Arctic issues and opportunities. Second, Singapore partnered Sweden to co-organise the "**Sweden, Singapore and the Arctic**" seminar in Singapore in November 2018, where Swedish MFA officials overseeing Arctic issues engaged with the Singaporean public on Arctic cooperation and awareness building. Third, NParks (Singapore), as the lead country for the AFN and the ASEAN project on Improving Biodiversity Conservation of Wetlands and Migratory Waterbirds in the ASEAN region (Phase I), actively utilised the AFN as a platform to engage ASEAN Member States to mainstream AMBI priorities to promote conservation of wetlands and migratory waterbirds. Fourth, NUS ESI and the Institute of the North organised a workshop titled "**Sustainable Energy Development in the Arctic: Collaboration on the Arctic Renewable Energy Atlas (AREA)**" in Singapore in August 2018, in support of the SDWG-endorsed AREA project. This was followed up with a panel session by NUS ESI at the 6th Arctic Circle Assembly in Reykjavik, Iceland in October 2018.

2 In addition, Singapore's tertiary research institutes have contributed to the activities of Arctic institutions. NUS ESI's Dr Christopher Len was on the Organisational Committee of the (cancelled) Arctic Energy Summit (AES) 2021, an endorsed project of the SDWG Workplan 2019-2021 under the Icelandic Chairmanship's Thematic Priority: Sustainable Energy.

3 The AC has emphasised the importance of engaging the youth in Arctic issues to raise awareness of the impact of climate change and create a sense of shared community and leadership. Eco-Business with support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organised the multimedia exhibition "**Changing Course 2019: An exploration of our climate crisis**" to engage the population on the links between the Arctic and the Southeast Asian region.

4 At the invitation of then-Chair of the AC Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) Pekka Shemeikka, Singapore's Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment (previously Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources) Albert Chua also delivered a keynote address at the Arctic side-event on Sustainable Development on the sidelines of the 2018 High-Level Political Forum in New York, USA in July 2018.

5 We have also participated in the following at Ministerial level:

- 13th Conference of Arctic Parliamentarians, September 2018 in Inari, Finland
- 6th Arctic Circle Assembly, October 2018 in Reykjavik, Iceland
- 2nd Arctic Science Ministerial, October 2018 in Berlin, Germany
- 13th Arctic Frontiers Conference, January 2019 in Tromso, Norway
- 5th International Arctic Forum, April 2019 in St Petersburg, Russia
- 8th International Meeting of AC Representatives, September/October 2019 in St Petersburg, Russia
- 7th Arctic Circle Assembly, October 2019 in Reykjavik, Iceland
- 14th Arctic Frontiers Conference, January 2020 in Tromso, Norway

6 Singapore will continue to explore other avenues to increase awareness of Arctic issues, particularly in the Southeast Asia region, in line with the goals of the AC.

ANNEX

Table of Activities & Engagement with Arctic Council and Working Groups

AC/Working Group	Event
<p>Arctic Council (AC)</p>	<p><u>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13th Conference of Arctic Parliamentarians in Inari, Finland, September 2018 • 6th Arctic Circle Assembly in Reykjavik, Iceland, October 2018 • 2nd Arctic Science Ministerial in Berlin, Germany, October 2018 • SAO Meeting in Rovaniemi, Finland, November 2018 • Arctic: “Today and the Future” Forum in St Petersburg, Russia, December 2018 • 13th Arctic Frontiers Conference in Tromsø, Norway, January 2019 • SAO Meeting in Ruka, Finland, March 2019 • 5th International Arctic Forum in St Petersburg, Russia, April 2019 • 11th ACMM in Rovaniemi, Finland, May 2019 • 8th International Meeting of AC Representatives in St Petersburg, Russia, October 2019 • 7th Arctic Circle Assembly in Reykjavik, Iceland, October 2019 • 14th Arctic Frontiers Conference in Tromsø, Norway, January 2020 • SAO Plenary Meeting (virtual), November 2020 <p><u>Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment (MSE)</u></p> <p>MSE attended “Arctic side-event on Sustainable Development” on the sidelines of the 2018 High Level Political Forum in New York, July 2018</p> <p>National Environment Agency (NEA) attended the inaugural AC Environmental Ministers Meeting in Finland, October 2018.</p>
<p>Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF)</p>	<p><u>NParks</u></p> <p>NParks attended CAFF’s Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative Implementation Workshop in Hainan, China, January 2019</p> <p>NParks is leading an initiative on a satellite tracking programme for key migratory waterbird species within the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP).</p> <p>Singapore (NParks) is the lead country for the ASEAN Flyway Network (AFN) and the ASEAN project on Improving Biodiversity Conservation of Wetlands and Migratory Waterbirds in the ASEAN Region – Phase 1, a two-year project that concluded in June 2020. The project focused on improving knowledge of wetlands and migratory birds primarily through surveys of existing and potential flyway network sites, as well as priority coastal sites to identify wetlands of international importance for migratory waterbirds. NParks is utilising the AFN as a platform to engage ASEAN Member States to mainstream AMBI priorities to promote conservation of wetlands and migratory waterbirds, and to explore the possibility of collaborating with the AFN on a key wetland site conservation programme.</p>



<p>Emergency Preparedness, Prevention and Response (EPPR)</p>	<p><u>Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA)</u> MPA contributed to discussions on preventing, preparing for and responding to accidents, during the June 2019 23rd EPPR Meeting in Norway, June 2019, including the following pre-plenary meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine Environmental Response Experts Group (MER EG) • Arctic Oil Pollution Research and Development Workshop. <p>MPA also contributed to discussions during the 3rd Arctic Shipping Best Practices Information Forum in London, UK, June 2019.</p> <p>MPA attended the 25th EPPR via virtual conference from 7 to 10 September 2020.</p>
<p>Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME)</p>	<p><u>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</u> PAME Workshop on Project to Develop a Framework for More Systematically Engaging with Observers on PAME’s Shipping Network in London, UK, June 2019.</p> <p><u>Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment (MSE)</u> NEA attended the virtual PAME-II Working Group meeting in September 2020.</p> <p><u>Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA)</u> MPA attended the PAME-I 2020 in February 2020 and PAME-II 2020 on 23 to 25 September 2020 via virtual conference.</p> <p>MPA contributed to PAME discussions by providing inputs to projects under the PAME Work Plans 2017-2019.</p> <p>MPA participated in the 3rd Arctic Shipping Best Practices Information Forum in London, United Kingdom, June 2019, which aimed to raise awareness and promote effective implementation of the Polar Code.</p> <p>MPA participated in the PAME Workshop on “Project to Develop a Framework for More Systematically Engaging with Observers on PAME’s Shipping Network”, in London, United Kingdom, June 2019.</p> <p><u>Nanyang Technological University (NTU)</u> NTU faculty researchers attended the virtual PAME plenary meeting in September 2020.</p>
<p>Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG)</p>	<p><u>Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)</u> MFA jointly conducted with the National University of Singapore a workshop on “Sustainable Energy Development in the Arctic: Collaboration on the Arctic Renewable Energy Atlas (AREA)”, in August 2018. A youth seminar, “What a Changing Arctic means for Singapore”, was conducted in conjunction with the event in September 2018.</p> <p>MFA co-organised a Seminar with the Swedish Embassy in Singapore: “Sweden, Singapore and the Arctic” in November 2018.</p> <p><u>Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment (MSE)</u> Permanent Secretary in the MSE (previously Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources) Albert Chua delivered a keynote address at the “Arctic side-event on Sustainable Development” on the sidelines of the 2018 High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in New York, July 2018, at the invitation of the Chair of SDWG Pekka Shemeikka.</p>

SDWG (cont'd)	<p><u>National University of Singapore (NUS)</u> NUS Energy Studies Institute's Dr Christopher Len was on the Organisational Committee of the (cancelled) Arctic Energy Summit (AES) 2021, an endorsed project of the SDWG Workplan 2019-2021 under the Icelandic Chairmanship's <i>Thematic Priority: Sustainable Energy</i>.</p> <p><u>Nanyang Technological University (NTU)</u> NTU faculty researchers attended the virtual SDWG plenary meeting in June 2020 and October 2020.</p>
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