

# 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:

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Arctic Programme

Date of submission:

June 1, 2020 – 9 am AKST

Observer's website, if appropriate:

arcticwwf.org

### Information for appropriate contact person

Full name:

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Organization or department:

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Arctic Programme

Job Title:

Director

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Canada

**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.

## 1. Climate change adaptation and resilience

Following a period of intensive, substantive, and in-kind contributions to AMAP's AACA and ARR, in the form of several WWF Arctic Programme staff co-leading whole chapters, contributing to chapters, and serving on the projects' steering committees, WWF did not directly engage with AMAP on the climate theme over the reporting period. However, in his capacity as Coordinating Lead Author for the Polar Regions Chapter of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate (SROCC), WWF's Martin Sommerkorn initiated and carried out a series of interactions with AMAP secretariat and AMAP experts with the aim to inform the IPCC SROCC with the approaches, knowledge gained, and assessment results of AMAP's climate-related assessments, such as the SWIPA, AACA, ARR, and ongoing follow-up initiatives. The latest interaction in this regard was an invited presentation of the SROCC at the AMAP WG in fall 2019 to stimulate and inform WG discussions on future AMAP climate-related activities. All these substantial contributions to the work of the Arctic Council, and its global visibility, were given in-kind by WWF.

## 2. Stewardship of the Arctic marine environment

WWF is carrying out a project called ArcNet – An Arctic Ocean Network of Priority Areas for Conservation (formerly known as PAMPAN) with the overall goal of identifying and mapping an ecologically representative and well-connected pan-Arctic network of marine areas that require special management for the conservation and protection of biodiversity, ecological processes, and associated ecosystem services and cultural values. This project builds on the Arctic Council Framework for a Pan-Arctic Network of Marine Protected Areas (2015) and PAME's MPA-network toolbox (2015-2017), facilitating concrete next steps identified there that the Arctic Council WGs or Task Forces are not carrying forward at this time. WWF continues to share the project's proceedings, results, and outputs with the Arctic Council and its Subsidiary Bodies, particularly PAME and CAFF. The ArcNet project is also informed by, and informs, the ongoing work of PAME's MPA and EA Expert Groups, to both of which WWF contributed continuously throughout the reporting period. These substantive, in-kind contributions occur in the form of oral and written inputs to the EAs' meetings and documents, as well as serving on steering groups for, and participating and co-leading sessions in, the EA's meetings, workshops and conferences including: the EA-EG's workshop on Guidelines and Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (2018, Seattle, Washington, USA); the conference on Implementing Across Scales (2019, Bergen, Norway); the MPA-EG's workshops Indigenous and Local Involvement Workshop (2019, Cambridge Bay, Nunavut, Canada); and on Value and Valuation (planned for 2020).

The outcomes of the Arctic Council's 2019 Ministerial Meeting included a decision "to establish a SAO based mechanism to coordinate marine issues in the Arctic Council." In December 2019, WWF sent the Arctic Council the document, *Creating an effective SAO-based mechanism for coordinating work on marine issues in the Arctic Council*. The document calls on the Council to strengthen its' effectiveness in addressing marine issues by promptly implementing an effective SAO-based mechanism and, to the maximum extent possible, implement all the recommendations of the TFAMC. WWF proposed substantive areas of focus for, and principles to guide the SAO-based mechanism.

At PAME, we co-lead a project on underwater noise pollution (see section three below), contribute research alternatives to heavy fuel oil, build awareness about wastewater discharges from ships (grey water) and contribute to the understanding of low impact shipping corridors. We also contributed to Polar Code harmonisation and linking Polar Code II to work of the IMO.

## 3. Conservation of Arctic biodiversity

WWF, together with Canada and OSPAR, co-led a work item in the PAME working group that produced the report, *Underwater noise in the Arctic: a State of Knowledge Review*. This report was finalised in May 2019. Building on this foundational work, WWF and Canada are developing and co-funding, with support from experts, global Arctic shipping underwater noise pollution intensity maps for PAME. These maps will be overlaid with culturally and ecologically significant areas.

WWF sits on the steering committee for the Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Arctic Mining project and co-leads the Inspiring Arctic Voices Through Youth project. WWF provided input to the CBMP marine meeting in Nuuk in 2019 and sits on the marine expert group for the CBMP.

WWF supported Norway's, assessment of alternative ship fuels in the Arctic with a final report to PAME members in 2019.

WWF has actively participated in PAME's Arctic Shipping Best Practices Information Forum since its inception in 2017. WWF is due to present research and recommendations on voyage planning at the forum later this year.

WWF financially contributes, uses and collaborates with the PAME secretariat on the Arctic Shipping Traffic Database.

WWF raised awareness at PAME about the need for a project on grey water discharges from ships in the Arctic through presentations from experts and submission of research materials. A formal decision on a PAME project about this issue is likely in the coming months.

WWF actively participates in PAME's SEG (shipping experts' group) throughout the year and at PAME in-person meetings.

WWF submitted a white paper on operationalizing low impact shipping corridors in 2018 to inform ongoing discussions and research by PAME states.

#### 4. Sustainable Development

In November 2018, WWF presented its report *Getting it right in a new ocean* - the first study of its kind to outline how the Arctic's biodiverse ocean resources and economies can be developed to ensure long-term, economic and ecosystem health for the region and the planet. The report offers guidance to governments and business on how sustainability can be achieved at this pivotal moment of economic development in the Arctic. This is a direct contribution to addressing the priorities of the Icelandic chairmanship on Arctic ocean issues and blue bioeconomy.

#### 5. Youth engagement

WWF supported youth-led organizations such as the Arctic Youth Network to intervene at the November 2019, SAO plenary, which in turn helped the Arctic Council move towards more effective youth engagement. This includes contributions to Arctic Council [social media content on Youth Engagement](#).

WWF provided support to CAFF and the SDWG to increase youth engagement, in the following ways:

- Support for the CAFF youth exchange program.
- Support for youth-led organizations such as the Arctic Youth Network to collaborate with CAFF and SDWG, including an intervention at the SDWG plenary meeting in September 2019.
- Support for CAFF youth-engagement events at venues like the Arctic Circle Assembly, and the September 2019 SDWG plenary side event: Strengths, well-being and engagement of youth in the Arctic.
- Support to the SDWG Social, economic and cultural expert group's Gender Equality Report on the structure and formation of youth positions within its' steering committee and a youth advisory board.

#### 6. Arctic governance

In May 2019, WWF published the second *Arctic Council Conservation Scorecard* to shed light on the Council's ability to deliver good governance, greater environmental protection and sustainable development in the Arctic. The 2019 Scorecard showed that Arctic states are not fulfilling their roles as the prime stewards of the region. WWF hosted an informal side event for key Arctic Council stakeholders to discuss the results of the Scorecard in Rovaniemi, Finland, in 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.

#### 1. Climate change adaptation and resilience

WWF's Arctic Programme will continue to support the Arctic Council and contribute to the adaptation actions for a changing Arctic and Arctic resilience.

WWF has embarked on a project that aims to identify how information generated by the latest generation of climate models (CMIP6) can be used to inform planning and action on Arctic biodiversity, conservation, and marine and terrestrial ecosystem-based management. WWF will pursue knowledge exchanges, identify synergies, and where feasible, engage with AMAP and CAFF experts on their ongoing and cooperative project to forecast and assess climate impacts on Arctic ecosystems.

#### 2. Stewardship of the Arctic marine environment

WWF will remain engaged and pursue partnerships with PAME and its EA and MPA expert groups to further engagement, refinement of knowledge and implementation of a pan-Arctic MPA network. In the coming years such interactions will be driven by our work on ArcNet (see above). Future opportunities for cooperation on ecological connectivity and the consideration of Indigenous knowledge to refine WWF's ArcNet will be based on the Arctic Council's MPA network framework (2015) and PAME's toolbox project (2015-ongoing).

WWF plans to remain as a co-lead for subsequent work items on underwater noise taken up by the Arctic Council in 2019-2021. This participation will depend on one of the Arctic states taking the lead to continue this work. Ideally, future work on underwater noise will be cross-cutting across multiple working groups and include substantial involvement by Permanent Participants.

WWF plans to participate and provide expertise for a robust SAO-based marine mechanism to coordinate Arctic marine issues. For example, help to consider the potential role of the Arctic Council in implementing the BBNJ Agreement in the Arctic and establishing an Arctic marine network of priority areas for conservation.

#### 3. Conservation of Arctic biodiversity

WWF will continue to be a member of the Marine working group of CAFF and continue contributing and co-leading on underwater noise work (see above). WWF will engage in further implementing the project on mainstreaming biodiversity in mining, as per the definition of the next stages and deliverables by the steering committee under CAFF. We look forward to outputs from projects by the marine mammal expert group of the CBMP on marine mammal hotspots to see how they can be integrated into cross-cutting work such as shipping.

WWF plans to establish a project, with potential involvement of CAFF, about flyways of Arctic migratory birds. Every year, millions of birds move to the Arctic for nesting. In recent years, the number of Arctic bird species has declined at an alarming rate. The main goal of the project is to find out why that happens, which migration routes the birds take, and where the main rest and wintering areas are located, to ensure that the right actions take place where they are needed most. In addition, several Arctic drained wetlands are suggested to be restored and a climate change scenario analyses will indicate what kind of mitigation actions can be taken to decrease and prevent negative future impacts on climate change on Arctic wetland.

#### 4. Youth engagement

WWF supports further scoping of youth-engagement within the Arctic Council and its subsidiaries, including support for youth-led organizations to engage with the Arctic Council.

#### 5. Sustainable development

WWF plans to contribute to the work of the Sustainable Development Working Group, both under the Icelandic chairmanship and with the Russian chairmanship. We are considering direct engagement in potential AC (SDWG) projects on sustainable finance and sustainable shipping, in cooperation with the upcoming Russian chairmanship. We are committed to the overall implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Arctic and projects promoting increased use of renewable energy sources in Arctic communities.

#### End statement

WWF's Arctic Programme has been working in the Arctic for over 23 years, and as a long-serving observer will continue to offer support, expert advice and provide substantial input into the various working groups of the Arctic Council, including assisting with securing tools to implement the SAO-based mechanism with a focus on ecosystem-based management of the Arctic Ocean. We look forward to continued collaboration with 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.

WWF supports channeling resources from the post-COVID19 economic recovery into promoting sustainable development in the Arctic. We made an appeal to the Arctic Council members in April 2020 and will assess member state's recovery programmes and provide recommendations in line with the best available international practices. This approach relates to a long-term objective to promote sustainable economic development in the Arctic, through Arctic Council and other suitable initiatives. We also support a workstream to promote green jobs in the Arctic.

WWF supports transitioning away from the production of fossil fuels in the Arctic towards the use of renewable energy. WWF supports limiting the expansion of oil and gas exploration and production - given the environmental sensitivity, high risk of oil spills, avoidance of stranded assets/legacies and the contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions.

WWF will engage in global forums - particularly IMO structures - to promote sustainable shipping in the Arctic through a transition away from fossil fuel propulsion, the prevention of oil spills and accidents, and the reduction of ship pollution on biodiversity, including underwater noise. We will liaise and work together with the representatives of Arctic Indigenous Peoples in these international fora whenever possible.