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2018

Observer regular reporting

According to the “Arctic Council Rules of Procedure” (annex 2), 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 not later than 120 days before a Ministerial meeting.

In 2018, 21 Observers and the EU were required to report, and in total 19 Observers and the EU submitted the report. Received reports have been combined into one document in the following order:

- Germany
- The Netherlands
- Poland
- Switzerland
- The United Kingdom
- International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)
- International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM)
- OSPAR Commission
- Standing Committee of the Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region (SCPAR)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN-ECE)
- United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)
- World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
- West Nordic Council (WNC)
- International Arctic Science Committee (IASC)
- International Union for Circumpolar Health (IUCH)
- Northern Forum (NF)
- Oceana
- World Wild Fund for Nature – Global Arctic Program (WWF)

Instructions for submitting Observer reports

Introduction

This document provides the template for Observer reports and instructions for submission of reports for Observers.

The deadline for submission is **1 December 2018**.

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 22 Observers are asked to submit a report by 1 December 2018:

- Germany
- The Netherlands
- Poland
- Switzerland
- The United Kingdom
- International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)
- International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM)
- OSPAR Commission
- Standing Committee of the Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region (SCPAR)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN-ECE)
- United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)
- World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
- West Nordic Council (WNC)
- The EU
- Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea (ACOPS)
- International Arctic Science Committee (IASC)
- International Union for Circumpolar Health (IUCH)
- National Geographic Society (NGS)
- Northern Forum (NF)
- Oceana
- World Wide Fund for Nature - Global Arctic Program (WWF)

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.
- (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 2018**. Please bear in mind while preparing your report that all Observer reports will be published on the official Arctic Council website (arctic-council.org).

If an Observer does not submit a report, the Arctic Council will consider this 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:

Federal Republic of Germany

Date of submission:

30 November 2018

Observer's website, if appropriate:

<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/themen/internatrecht/einzelfragen/arktis>

Information for appropriate contact person

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10117 Berlin
Germany

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.

Germany, an Observer state on the Arctic Council (AC) since 1996, has contributed continuously and substantially to the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies for more than 20 years. A partner in and for the Arctic region and its local communities and indigenous peoples, Germany has openly shared its expertise in the domains of research, science and technology as a contribution towards implementing the objectives of the AC. As a leading research nation, Germany is highly committed to preserving the Arctic environment and promoting sustainable development. Research and technology in combination with a rules-based governance system are key to supporting our common goal of peaceful, environmentally safe and sustainable development of the Arctic.

As a proponent of multilateral cooperation on Arctic issues, Germany views the AC as the preeminent Arctic regional forum and high-ranking intergovernmental decision-making body. As an Observer, Germany fully respects the exclusive rights of the members of this regional body to take decisions with respect to the Council. Nonetheless, while the AC decides regionally, its decisions are increasingly having a global impact. Similarly, the processes that drive Arctic change originate to a large degree from south of the Arctic Circle. Bearing this in mind, Germany participates regularly in the meetings of the Senior Arctic Officials (SAO), actively engages in Observer Sessions and provides Observer Statements. Germany actively and regularly participates as an Observer in all Working Groups, Expert Groups and Task Forces of the AC. German experts have repeatedly emphasized the significance of, and their appreciation for, the free exchange of opinions and information with experts from AC member states and indigenous peoples' organisations.

A vital pillar of Germany's contributions to, and activities in, the Arctic region is Arctic research through institutional base funding and additional project funding in strategic fields of international cooperation. The Alfred Wegener Institute Helmholtz Centre for Polar and Marine Research (AWI) coordinates German polar research. AWI also provides necessary infrastructure – such as the research icebreaker “Polarstern”, the research aircraft “Polar 5” and “Polar 6”, and the German-French Arctic research base AWIPEV on Spitsbergen (Svalbard) – to national and international scientific efforts and collaboration. Other major German research institutes that actively contribute to the AC include the German Aerospace Center (DLR), the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS), and the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR).

German Contributions to Subsidiary Bodies of the Arctic Council (selected excerpt):

The German government supports multilateral cooperation on Arctic issues – primarily in the Arctic Council. Germany strives to continually enhance its input to this forum, in particular through increased and intensified participation in all working groups.

ACAP: Dr. Heike Herata (German Environment Agency, UBA) has participated in the ACAP Working Group since 2017. The task of ACAP is to initiate and support projects to reduce or prevent the input of pollutants by certain substances (such as Black Carbon, POPs, Mercury and short-lived climate pollutants) and waste in the Arctic region. She participated in working group meetings and provided expertise by UBA, in particular with regard to black carbon, waste, and microplastics. The Arctic Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter developed within the project established under PAME and the proposals and work of the EGBCM (where UBA experts are involved) could form the basis for ACAP to initiate further concrete projects and will strengthen the collaboration within the various initiatives.

AMAP: Germany's national polar institute, the Alfred Wegener Institute, Helmholtz Centre for Polar and Marine Research (AWI) concentrates on observational and modelling studies of all elements of the Polar Earth System. Main research foci in the Arctic include climate change and its impact on global climate processes. Many of AWI's research activities are highly relevant for AMAP. Dr. Björn Rost is participating in the activities of AMAP's Expert Group on Ocean Acidification. He is a contributing author of the AMAP Assessment 2018: Arctic Ocean Acidification. Dr. Andreas Herber contributed to the work of AMAP's Expert Group on Short-Lived Climate Forcers. Prof. Hugues Lantuit was newly appointed as a permafrost expert to contribute to the follow-up of the 2017 Snow, Water, Ice and Permafrost in the Arctic (SWIPA) assessment. To identify additional contributions and to further strengthen the German participation, Germany appointed Dr. Volker Rachold (Head of AWI's German Arctic Office) as the national delegate to AMAP.

EPPR: Hans-Peter Damian (German Environment Agency, UBA) has participated in EPPR meetings as well as in the meetings of the TFOPP (Arctic Council Task Force on Arctic Marine Oil Pollution Prevention) since 2013 and provided comments and remarks to all relevant topics. Germany will also provide information about the OSPAR Offshore Industry Committee, especially about the major challenges arising from the current decommissioning of many oil platforms in the North Sea.

PAME: Prof. Dieter Piepenburg (Alfred Wegener Institute, AWI) and Dr. Janos Hennicke (Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, BfN) contribute with their expertise on issues concerning the identification and designation of marine protected areas (PAME Expert Group “Pan-Arctic network of MPAs”) as well as to the “Ecosystem-Based Management Expert Group”.

PAME Project on Marine Litter in the Arctic: Rita Fabris (German Environment Agency, UBA) and Dr. Melanie Bergmann (Alfred Wegener Institute, AWI) have participated in the project on Marine Litter in the Arctic since 2017 when it was established within the PAME Working Group. Currently, Phase I of the project – the preparation of a Desktop Study on Marine litter and Microplastics in the Arctic – is about to come to an end. The German experts have made various contributions within the preparation of this study and took part in the Arctic Marine Litter workshop in Akureyri, Iceland in June 2018.

Marine litter has been a major topic on Germany's environmental agenda during its G7 and G20 Presidencies as well as in OSPAR and HELCOM. Suitable measures include eco-design, waste avoidance, optimal recycling, and environmentally sound storage of waste.

Underwater Noise in the Arctic State of Knowledge Report (CAN/WWF): Mirjam Müller (German Environment Agency, UBA) and Dr. Janos Hennicke (Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, BfN) are participating in the work of PAME to develop a state of knowledge report (literature review) on impacts of underwater noise on the Arctic marine ecosystem, including the identification knowledge gaps. In a first step, the relevant literature on this topic was collected. Currently, the second version of the draft report is circulated for commenting. Based on her extensive experience in underwater noise and its impact on the polar marine environment, Mirjam Müller in cooperation with the BfN will provide the German input to the revised draft.

CAFF: Prof. Dieter Piepenburg (Alfred Wegener Institute, AWI) has been involved (e.g., as a reviewer) in the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA), and as the German member of the Benthos Marine Expert Network (MEN) of the Marine Ecosystem group of CAFF's Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program (CBMP) since 2016. He contributed to the State of the Arctic Marine Biodiversity Report (SAMBR) published in 2017. Currently, his home institution (AWI) will lend support to the ongoing pan-Arctic benthic sample survey of the CBMP-marine's MEN group by offering the use of PANABIO, a Pan-Arctic Information System on Benthic Biota, which is being developed by the working group he is leading at AWI.

SDWG: Dr. Kathrin Stephen (Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies, IASS) contributes to SDWG and to the Social, Economic, and Cultural Expert Group (SECEG) and, in cooperation with the German Arctic Office, establishes contacts between German experts and SDWG project leaders where appropriate. During the Finnish Chairmanship of the AC, Dr. Stephen was actively involved in the design and commenting of the SECEG concept paper, which discusses the mandate of the expert group with a focus on SDGs. Regular meetings and exchanges with permanent participants and other Observer states and organisations have resulted in numerous opportunities for cooperation within IASS's international Arctic projects, such as the inclusion of representatives of the Association of World Reindeer Herders in the EU's Horizon 2020 "Blue Action" project. Consultations are currently underway on possible cooperation in new research projects.

Prof. Otto Habeck (University of Hamburg) was appointed Deputy for the SDWG. He liaises with the Social and Human Sciences Working Group of International Arctic Science Committee, IASC, with International Arctic Social Sciences Association, IASSA, and International Permafrost Association, IPA.

CAFF/AMBI: The Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative (WSFI), coordinated by the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS), Wilhelmshaven, Germany, actively supports and cooperates with CAFF's Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative (AMBI) with regard to its priority conservation issues and actions (Gerold Lüerßen, CWSS).

At the 13th Trilateral Governmental Conference on the protection of the Wadden Sea in Leeuwarden in May 2018, Germany together with Denmark and the Netherlands declared to extend their cooperation in the context of the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative, especially towards the Arctic. Germany as the current Presidency of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation (TWSC) very much welcomes the cooperation with CAFF and supports the hosting of the new AMBI African Eurasian Flyway Coordinator at the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat in Wilhelmshaven/Germany.

EGBCM: Michael Strogies (German Environment Agency, UBA) has participated in the Expert Group of Black Carbon and Methane since 2017, an expert group which is laying the foundations for the formulation of ambitious reduction targets for its member states. He especially provided expertise in the field of monitoring Methane and Black Carbon emissions. Specific attention was given to fulfilling the reporting requirements set by the Arctic Council. As consequence, Germany provided the first National Report on Black Carbon and Methane by the end of 2017. The report will be updated by end of 2018 and will then, for the first time, contain data on Black Carbon projections.

TFAMC: Tim Packeiser (acting on behalf of the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, BfN, and the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, BMU), participated in selected meetings of the TFAMC, followed the discussions and deliberations of TFAMC I and TFAMC II and informally exchanged views with representatives of AC Members States as well as other Observers concerning options for regional cooperation on marine nature conservation.

TFTIA: Dr. Simon Plass (German Aerospace Center, DLR) provided expertise in the field of terrestrial and satellite communications for the areas of maritime, land-based, and aeronautical Arctic users and therefore supported the final report of the TF.

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.

Germany will continue its active work via its experts in all working groups, task forces and expert groups as outlined above. Many projects will be continued in the following years.

The following is not meant to be a complete list of intended future contributions.

ACAP: The Arctic Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter developed within the project established under PAME and the proposals and work of the EGBCM (where UBA experts are involved) could form the basis for ACAP to initiate further concrete projects and will strengthen the collaboration within the various initiatives.

PAME Project on Marine Litter in the Arctic: The German Environment Agency, UBA's experience will be drawn upon for the second phase (2019-21) on reviewing the need for and establishing a Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and a respective monitoring plan, for which Rita Fabris could provide her expertise from the environmental perspective. UBA is already aiming to sensitize the general public in Germany to litter issues in the Arctic within education and outreach projects. Based on the recommendations in the upcoming action plan, further projects will be developed.

TFICA 2017-2019: The DLR-Institute of Communications and Navigation (Dr. Simon Plass) continues its work in the successor TF of TFTIA. Main focus of this work and the TF is to deepen the analyses of the different user needs versus the available technologies and services to achieve improved connectivity in the Arctic.

CAFF: The Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative (WSFI) will continue to contribute to the implementation of the update of CAFF's workplan for the African-Eurasian flyway under AMBI 2.0 (2019-2023). The WSFI is continuously supporting Guinea Bissau in the fields of capacity building, monitoring, research, and particularly in the planned re-nomination of the Bijagós Archipelago as a World Heritage site, which is one of the most critical refuges for wintering Arctic and Wadden Sea birds along the East Atlantic Flyway.

SDWG: Dr. Kathrin Stephen (IASS) will continue to provide German expertise on the future mandate and work of the Social, Economic, and Cultural Expert Group (SECEG) of the SDWG also during the Icelandic Chairmanship (2019-2021).

Germany is updating its "German Arctic Policy Guidelines" (first published in 2013) and plans to publish a revision in 2019.

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.

Germany, together with Finland and the European Commission, organized the 2nd Arctic Science Ministerial in Berlin in October 2018 (<https://www.arcticsscienceministerial.org>). The Ministerial was not an Arctic Council event, but coordination with the AC was ensured by Finland, current Chair of the Council. As in the AC, indigenous organizations (AC permanent participants) were invited to participate in the Ministerial and to give presentations in each session of the preceding Arctic Science Forum.

Germany also actively supported the adoption of the Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation in 2017.

The German Arctic Office organized a Polar Science and Policy Mini-Symposium at the POLAR 2018 Conference in Davos, Switzerland in June 2018, involving Finnish AC Chair Aleksi Härkönen (<https://www.arctic-office.de/en/information-platform/news/polar-2018/>).

In view of the handover of the Chairmanship of the Arctic Council from the US to Finland, the Federal Foreign Office and the German Arctic Office in cooperation with the Finnish Embassy organized a special seminar on the priorities of the Finnish AC Programme "Exploring Common Solutions" in Berlin in May 2017 (<https://www.arctic-office.de/en/forums-and-events/exploring-common-solutions/>).

As a follow-up, in October 2017 a seminar in Helsinki brought together Finnish, German, and French experts to present and discuss activities in the field of environmental research and environmental protection during the Finnish Chairmanship of the AC. The seminar was organized by the German Arctic Office and the German Embassy in Helsinki, the Finnish Environment Institute and Finnish Ministry of the Environment, and the French Embassy in Helsinki (<https://www.arctic-office.de/en/forums-and-events/german-french-finnish-arctic-seminar/>).

DLR, together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark and the Technical University of Denmark, organized a Breakout Session on Telecommunications in the Arctic at the Arctic Circle Assembly 2016 in Reykjavik, Iceland.

As an Observer, Germany (Director for European Policy Dr. Eva Kracht at the Federal Ministry for the Environment) participated in the Arctic Environment Ministers' Meeting in October 2018 and provided an Observer Statement.

Dr. Janos Henniscke (Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, BfN) is the German delegate of the OSPAR working groups on the protection of species and habitats (ICG-POSH) and MPAs (ICG-MPA), German Delegate of the OSPAR Biodiversity Committee (BDC) as well as technical secretary of ICG-MPA. He serves as link between the AC and OSPAR, whose maritime area also encompasses Arctic waters up to the North Pole, and facilitates the exchange of thoughts on those issues between the two organisations. Dr. Henniscke also supervises several projects on Arctic marine nature conservation, e.g. on Arctic MPAs and the protection of Arctic natural resources, which are funded by BMU and BfN.

Within the framework of their work, Dr. Janos Henniscke and Tim Packeiser attended other meetings and events on Arctic issues, e.g. Side Events during the BBNJ negotiations at the UN in New York, CBD COP 14, to bring forward German positions, learn about the views of others, and exchange ideas on Arctic issues in general.

Germany is actively supporting polar research and is cooperating with Arctic as well as non-Arctic countries in a variety of programs and projects in order to support the aims of the AC. In addition to bilateral scientific cooperation, Germany supports international cooperation in all fields of Arctic research through the AWI as the coordinating institution and cooperates with all Arctic Council Member States.

Cover sheet

Kingdom of the Netherlands

1 November 2018

www.government.nl

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Inclusive Green Growth Department

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2515 XP The Hague

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

Yes No

Observer Report

The Netherlands started active participation in AMAP in 1993 and has contributed actively to the work of the Arctic Council since its establishment in 1996. The Netherlands regards the Arctic Council as the primary circumpolar policy forum for sustainable Arctic developments and management of the area. Experienced Dutch Arctic scientists are involved in three working groups (AMAP, CAFF and SDWG), and government officials attend meetings of the Council (SAO, ministerial) and Observer meetings organised by the Arctic Council. As such they promote and support Dutch scientific research in the Arctic.

Dutch polar researchers are active in a variety of fields, but have especially good reputations in glaciology, oceanography, biology, international law and human and social sciences. The Netherlands Polar Research Programme enables the experts to make a substantive contribution to the work of the Arctic Council. The Netherlands stimulates participation by experts – policy makers, researchers and representatives from industry and NGOs – in seminars/workshops/expert groups, for example Arctic Frontiers and the Arctic Circle.

AMAP

The Netherlands participated in AMAP since it became an observer to the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS). Frits Steenhuisen (Arctic Centre, University of Groningen) has represented the Netherlands as an observer in the AMAP working group meetings. He participates in the Mercury Expert Group and in the Radioactivity Expert Group, contributing to work on the spatial distribution of global emissions inventories (SO₂, lead, mercury) that have been compiled for AMAP since 1995, including global mercury emissions to air, in the framework of the AMAP/UN Environment Global Mercury Assessment (GMA2013 and GMA2018). Several peer reviewed papers have been published in relation to this work. Steenhuisen also works with the AMAP secretariat on spatial analysis and map production of AMAP-reports and collaborates with the Norwegian Radiation Protection Agency in hosting of the AMAP Radioactivity Thematic Data Center. Steenhuisen is co-author of the AMAP Assessment 2015, Radioactivity in the Arctic and several other AMAP reports.

Several Dutch Research Institutes provide input to AMAP assessments, for example the Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Research, Utrecht University, (Greenland Ice sheet Report and SWIPA), the Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research (Ocean Acidification) and Wageningen University and Wageningen Marine Research (Mercury, POP's and micro-plastics). The Dutch researchers Ko van Huisteden and Jorien Vonk (VU Amsterdam) participate in the SWIPA Expert Group.

CAFF

The Dutch Wadden Sea is a very important hub during migration of Arctic breeding waders and geese. Conservation, protection and management of these bird populations is a major task which is carried out with the Arctic countries. That is why The Netherlands has been an active member in CAFF since 1992, with scientific ornithological programmes in Russia (Taymir and Pechora delta), Svalbard and east-Greenland. Recently the project lead by Thomas Lameris on barnacle geese in Pechora ended, but he started a new project on red knots in northern Russia and became IASC-fellow with special interest in the Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative (AMBI). Jeroen Reneerkens goes on with his project on sanderlings in Iceland and east Greenland and Maarten Loonen and Jouke Prop are still working on their more than thirty year data collection on barnacle geese on Svalbard. On the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, Theunis Piersma's team is very active in supporting conservation with scientific data.

As official CAFF representative, Maarten Loonen is active in the CIBIRD working group and contributing with data on arctic tern migration and breeding biology. As a result of the AMBI meeting in Texel in 2016, Wilmar Rimmelts (as government representative) has taken the initiative to appoint an AMBI African Eurasian Flyway coordinator at the Common Wadden Sea Secretariate (Sergio Rejado Albaina). The monitoring efforts and research in the Wadden Sea are very relevant as assessments of breeding success and population size in arctic nesting birds, which feeds directly into management.

The Arctic Biodiversity Congress 2018 in Rovaniemi, was attended by Wimmar Rimmelts and Thomas Lameris. The Icewhale Foundation (a Dutch initiative for research on bowhead whales) organized a workshop in close collaboration with the World Wildlife Fund. The Netherlands has financed research projects on arctic vegetation in several arctic countries. At the Netherlands Arctic station on Svalbard have set up monitoring projects on vegetation productivity, insects and limnology, collecting data that are shared with other researchers in CAFF.

SDWG

Annette Scheepstra and Sean Desjardins (both of the Arctic Centre, Groningen) have represented The Netherlands in the SDWG over the past two years. Scheepstra has been participating in the Adaptation Action for a Changing Arctic project for the Barents Area. She is an active participant in the SDWG's Social, Economic and Cultural Expert Group (SECEG). She is also much involved in EU-PolarNet and tries in that capacity to include the voice of SDWG in setting up a new integrated polar research agenda for the EU.

Desjardins, an anthropologist and archaeologist carrying out ethno-archaeological research among Inuit in Arctic Canada, has served as the Dutch SDWG observer since late 2017. He has facilitated cooperation between Dutch experts in the field of sustainable energy and micro-grids and the Arctic Council Permanent Participant organisation Gwich'in Council International (GCI) on the Sustainable Energy Futures Toolkit project, for which the Netherlands is a co-lead. He is also an active participant in the SDWG's Social, Economic and Cultural Expert Group (SECEG).

Future plans for contributing to the work of the Arctic Council's Working Groups, Task Forces and/or Expert Groups.

In the 'Netherlands Polar Strategy 2016-2020' The Netherlands reaffirms its commitment to contribute to sustainable development of the Arctic region. It does so primarily through contributing to scientific Arctic research, promoting international cooperation and supporting the development of sustainable guidelines for Arctic operations. The Arctic Council remains the most important forum for The Netherlands to realize its policy goals. To continue the contribution to the work of the Arctic Council and to intensify the participation of highly qualified experts in AMAP, CAFF and SDWG, The Netherlands increased its budget for polar research. In addition a separate budget has been created to fund meetings or co-finance studies of the Arctic Council working groups or expert groups. It can also be used to finance specific small-scale projects and outreach initiatives.

An important part of the current Netherlands polar policy was the appointment of an Arctic Ambassador. The Ambassador attends Arctic Council meetings, conferences and engages in talks with Arctic and Dutch stakeholders with three objectives: increase international research cooperation, enhance cooperation between different stakeholders and raise sustainability standards. All these objectives are in the interest of the Arctic Council.

As a maritime nation with experience in offshore energy technologies, infrastructure development and marine protection and monitoring, and with a strong endeavor to contribute to cleaner, safer and sustainable shipping, the Netherlands has a growing interest to contribute to PAME. While a Dutch representative (Erik J. Molenaar, Utrecht University) attended several PAME meetings, The Netherlands is currently investigating the possibility of a more consistent participation in PAME. Furthermore, The Netherlands intends to submit its national report on black carbon in 2016, as requested by the Arctic Council.

Contributions to other aspects of the Arctic Council and its goals not covered by the previous sections.

The Netherlands industry – gathered in the Dutch Arctic Circle (DAC) - has a strong interest in contributing to the sustainable development of the Arctic. In 2019 the DAC and NL MFA are planning a series of events relating to circular economy in the Arctic. The ‘kick-off’ will be the side-event on circular economy in the margin of the Arctic Frontiers Conference in January 2019. A conference in The Netherlands on circular economy in the Arctic is foreseen in course of 2019.

In 2015, the largest ever Dutch polar research expedition visited the island of Edgeøya, Svalbard. On board were 55 scientists, a member of Parliament, four journalists and some VIPs. The overarching goal of the expedition was to study climate change in the Arctic by reexamining an area that has remained untouched for 40 years. The multidisciplinary research team has mapped the consequences of climate change for the area by comparing the data that were gathered during the expedition with scientific data from 40 years ago. The results were shared with the members of the Arctic Council and the Arctic research community.

There are serious plans to organize a 2nd polar expedition of similar proportions in 2020.

Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

Republic of Poland

Date of submission:

5.12.2018

Observer's website, if appropriate:

n/a

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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.

As a general remark it has to be stated that Poland's contribution to Arctic Council work is still modest and far from being comprehensive. However, the state attempts to develop its engagement in the future, comparing with the previous years. And to provide a stronger and in-depth link between rich Polish history of Arctic research and international political contribution.

In the last two years, Poland's overall engagement into Arctic Council's work in last 2 years may be divided into two applicable categories:

1. expert one
2. political one.

Regarding the first category, Poland continued its Observer activity with selected Working Groups and monitored activities of other subsidiary bodies to identify potential initiatives and projects that could be supported by the Polish institutions and experts. In the reporting period, Poland again concentrated on two WGs and sent its representatives to Arctic Marine Environment Working Group PAME on relatively regular basis. Especially it applies to PAME Shipping Expert Group. However, besides a standard contribution to WG work (participation in the meetings, providing expert opinions, etc), it has also engaged in recent initiative to strengthen the role of the Observers. Poland is one of the sponsors of the initiative to organize a specific workshops alongside aforementioned Shipping Expert Group to be devoted to specific Arctic shipping environment. One of the forms of support is providing a venue for the workshop. The initiative started in 2018 and the recent meeting where the proposal was discussed was PAME meeting in Vladivostok between 1 and 4 October 2018. The proposal and Poland's engagement will continue further.

Polish representative holds the position of the co-leader in the Benthos group that was established under the auspices of the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna Working Group CAFF. The expert was participating in majority of the meetings, contributing to the group's work and providing overall support. This activity shall be continued in the future.

Occasionally, Polish representatives participated in the SDWG meetings in 2017 and 2018.

Poland also continued its participation in the system of exchanging data established by the Expert Group on Black Carbon and Methane EGBCM regarding national black carbon emissions in last 2 years, in particular providing the input to the overall report in 2018.

On regular basis comments and replies were provided within the system of consultations of different documents distributed by Arctic Council WGs secretaries.

Additionally, it has to be stated that Poland always tried to respond positively to different individual initiatives of the Arctic Council chairmanship. For instance, Polish expert from the Environmental Protection Institute presented an address during Arctic Council Ministers of Environment Meeting in Rovaniemi in 2018.

Regarding the political category, Polish representatives participated in all Senior Arctic Officials meetings in 2017 and 2018 i.e. during US and Finnish Chairmanship.

Additionally, Poland participated actively in the recent Arctic Science Ministerial Forum in Berlin in October 2018 that was organized by Finland, Germany and the EU.

In May 2018, in the margins of Warsaw Forum Meeting, the meeting between Polish Foreign Minister and the SAO Chair was organized for the first time since the initiative was established.

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.

Polish Polar Policy, a national strategy to cover both Arctic and Antarctic, is at the final stage of adoption by the Government. It provides a sets of goals in relation to both polar regions including strenghtening of the engagement into different levels of cooperation, above all with the Arctic Council. Therefore it is foreseen that the level of participation of Polish experts in other WGs and Task Forces may be extended and result in more active engagement.

Regarding already existing forms of active participation in the Arctic Council working structures, Poland will definetely continue its engagement with PAME (in particular via Shipping Expert Group) and CAFF (via Benthos group) WGs in 2019 and onwards as well as it will monitor further activitiesin view to providing more expertise and support.

There is foreseen that once the Arctic Council Scientific Agreement will be fully operational, Poland will be interested in pursuing possible forms of research and scientific collaboration with different partners, in accordance with the aforementioned agreement.

Permanent Participants were participating in some of the previous Warsaw Format Meetings and its future engagement with the initiative will be considered. Nevertheless, one of the key principles of the Polish Polar Policy (applicable to Arctic) and its future implementation is respect towards Indigenous Peoples' rights, interests, culture and traditions. This approach was upheld so far and will be continued.

As indicated in previous reports, Poland's main scientific and research assets in the Arctic are the polar stations: Hornsund Station in Svalbard (operating annually) and 4 seasonal stations operated by Polish universities. The Hornsund Station remains the part of the global research programmes and initiatives: Global Change Programme, European Biodiversity Flagship Site, Svalbard Integrated Arctic Earth Observing System and PolarPOL. All of the resesrchers cooperate actively with their external partners and collaborators.

As stated previously, Poland confirms its readiness to host meetings of the Arctic Council subsidiary bodies and/or seminars and worksjops to be organized under the auspices of 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.

In 2010 Poland launched an initiative called "Warsaw Format Meeting". It is a specific platform that allows the representatives of the Arctic Council Observer States, the EU and current chairmanship of the Arctic Council to engage into direct dialogue and exchange of views on relevant topics related to Arctic Council's activities and specific projects related to the Arctic.

The meetings were organized in Warsaw since its establishment and planned as biannual ones. However, during the last meeting of WFM it was agreed that once all the participants agree, the meetings may be organized on annual basis. The next one is foreseen in June 2019. One of the proposals is to consider direct dialogue and exchange of views with the representatives of the Arctic Economic Council. Potentially, it may also include the representative(s) of the Permanent Participants' organizations.

The WFM working meetings were also organized in the margins of SAO meetings during Finnish chairmanship.

Additionally, the expert working group established by the Minister of Foreign Affairs i.e. Polar Task Force that comprises the polar reserachers and scientists as well as representatives of various ministries and central bodies shall continue its works and concentrate firmly on the future of the Arctic and the cooperation with the Arctic Council.

Polar Task Force, through its Twitter account that was established in 2018, also supports the activities of the Arctic Council and its chairmanship.

Poland also initiated the project called Edu-Arctic which is an e-learning and training platform engaging both the teachers and the pupils from the different schools in many countries on various aspects of the Arctic. The project will be continued in forthcoming years and is supported i.a. by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Finally, Poland also supported Finnish chairmanship with the event in the margins of COP'24 in Katowice in 2018 on black carbon emmissions.

Representatives of Polish relevant institutions engage and participate in various initiatives and platforms concerning the Arctic and its future e.g. annual Arctic Circle Assemblies, Arctic Frontiers or Arctic Futures as well as collaborate and continue dialogue on bilateral basis with the Arctic states and other stakeholders.

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.

Switzerland is known for its long-standing and reliable commitment to peaceful international cooperation with Arctic nations, ranging from a large number of joint research projects with Arctic partners to a strong engagement in sustainable development in the region through multilateral bodies.

The principles of promoting shared well-being, sustainable development, internal cohesion and cultural diversity, which are enshrined in the Swiss Federal Constitution, converge with the Arctic Council's overall objective of inclusiveness. As a country with outstanding research facilities, and as one of the most innovative countries worldwide, Switzerland is willing and able to provide valuable scientific contributions that could enhance the work of the Council.

Switzerland's high degree of involvement in the Arctic finds its motivation in the characteristics of Swiss landscape which has been shaped – like the Arctic – by the ice ages, and is composed of mountain ranges accommodating many glaciers, among them the largest ice flow of the Alps. Scientific exploration of the Arctic has consequently always been of particular importance to Switzerland. In the near future scientific collaboration with Arctic partners will receive a boost through new research endeavors.

Swiss research in the Arctic has a long tradition dating back to the 19th century. The very diverse array of research fields include geology, geo-ecology and geophysics, glaciology, climatic history, botany, archeology and anthropology. It is worth to mention that Switzerland's glaciology research in the Arctic is providing a substantial contribution to climate change research.

Swiss partnerships include a long track record of initiatives with partners from all Arctic Council Member States. Over the past decade, Swiss researchers have participated in several international Arctic projects involving multiple Arctic Council Member States. Switzerland's strong commitment to international polar research cooperation has led to fruitful scientific exchanges. The Swiss Committee on Polar and High Altitude Research (SKPH), of the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences acts as an exchange and coordination platform for Swiss scientists at various international research institutions, and coordinates participation in the scientific work of the Arctic Council and of the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC).

Swiss solidarity has led to a strong advocacy for indigenous issues in international fora. The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is crucial for indigenous peoples and local communities. As stewards of natural resources over time, they know best how to strike the balance between economic development and environmental protection.

Both in the Arctic and in the Alps, the temperature will continue to increase more rapidly than the global average. Swiss research is focused on what this means for our societies, our economies and our environment. These activities need international scientific and logistic collaboration across all disciplines. This in an effort to better predict future local and global change.

At the 10th Arctic Council ministerial meeting, held in Fairbanks (Alaska) on 11 May 2017, the Arctic Council granted Switzerland the observer status. Since then, Switzerland has been represented at every Senior Arctic Officials Meeting of the Arctic Council and has presented its activities during the Observer special sessions.

Even before obtaining the observer status, Swiss experts and scientists were already involved in some of the Council's Working Groups and have monitored activities of other Subsidiary Bodies. The observer status has made it possible to increase the participation of Swiss contributions to the work and the objectives of the Arctic Council's Working Groups and Experts Groups (please find below a non-exhaustive list):

Working Groups:

AMAP:

Switzerland operates several regionally representative monitoring stations whose data can be used to validate the models employed for the AMAP scientific work. The data are freely available. Prof. Konrad Steffen, WSL/Swiss Polar Institute, contributes to AMAP, in particular through the project Snow, Water, Ice, Permafrost in the Arctic (SWIPA) assessment coordinated by AMAP.

Dr. Julia Schmale, Paul Scherrer Institute, regularly participates in the AMAP Expert Group (EG) Meeting on Short-Lived Climate Forcers. One of her specific contributions in this EG is to establish the link between the EG and PACES, the international initiative on "Arctic air pollution: Climate Environment and Society" hosted by IASC and the International Global Atmosphere Chemistry Community.

CAFF:

Dr. Gabriela Schaepman-Strub, University of Zürich, joined in March 2018 the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF)'s Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program (CBMP) Terrestrial group and is representing Switzerland in this group. Dr. Schaepman-Strub is acting as an effective link between CAFF and IASC Terrestrial Working Group for biodiversity aspects. She participated in October 2018 in Rovaniemi at the Arctic Biodiversity Congress where she chaired a session on Pan-arctic assessment and data management of plant diversity and community.

SDWG:

Since October 2017, Switzerland, through the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, is covering this group with the aim of identifying areas/topics in which Switzerland could contribute.

Expert Groups:

Expert Group on Black Carbon and Methane (EGBCM): Switzerland welcomes and supports the Arctic Council's initiatives on black carbon and methane emissions reduction. In July 2018, Switzerland submitted to the EGBCM its national report on policies and success to abate emissions of black carbon and methane. This report contains the actual data on emissions and emission estimates for the future, which are consistent with the data submitted to the Economic Commission for Europe of the United Nations Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (UNECE CLRTAP) and to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

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.

The Arctic Council is for Switzerland the leading intergovernmental forum to realize its policy goals. Observer status allows Switzerland to support the work of the Arctic Council and to put its expertise at the service of the various Working Groups, particularly in the field of interdisciplinary research related to the environment, especially on climate change and biodiversity. Switzerland will continue to promote international collaboration and synergies in Arctic research within the framework of international scientific projects related to the Arctic (predominantly from the eight Member States, Permanent Participants, Organizations and Observers of the Arctic Council).

Switzerland plans, fosters and supports the participation of Swiss delegates in Working Groups in which expertise can be provided. Furthermore, Switzerland is committed to continuing the support in the future of the work of the following particular Working Groups: Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP), Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) and Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG). A Swiss Polar Policy is in progress and is expected to be released in 2019.

As a new observer to the Arctic Council, Switzerland is still exploring the ways to better strengthen its presence and engagement in the Council's different initiatives. Switzerland's future plans for contributing to the work of the Arctic Council include:

- In partnership with relevant Swiss institutions, Switzerland is ready to host meetings of the Arctic Council subsidiary bodies.
- Switzerland will continue to work with the Swiss scientific community to provide information to the Working Groups.
- Switzerland intends to nominate new scientist/experts in the Arctic Council's Working Groups, Task Forces and Experts Groups.
- Switzerland will continue to support the Arctic Council's initiatives on black carbon and methane emissions reduction.

- Switzerland wants to increase the monitoring activities on the Greenland ice sheet as a contribution to the Sustaining Arctic Observing Network (SAON), an initiative by the Arctic Council. The current Greenland Climate Network (GC-Net) automatic monitoring stations will be enhanced with additional sensors to measure all components of the mass balance to resolve mass change in climate sensitive regions on the ice sheet.
- While the Department of Foreign Affairs currently covers the SDWG, the possibility of being represented in the SDWG more consistently with an expert is currently investigated.
- Switzerland will continue to respect the values, interests, traditions and culture of Arctic indigenous peoples and other inhabitants of the Arctic and contributes to the advancement of Arctic concerns in global decision-making bodies, including the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the International Whaling Commission, as well as conventions on chemical compounds such as persistent organic pollutants and mercury.

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.

Switzerland's strong commitment to international Arctic research cooperation has led to numerous scientific and political exchanges and initiatives.

In addition to the SAO meetings and ministerial meetings, Switzerland covers some other meetings and initiatives that take place in the context of the Chairmanship of the Arctic Council. Swiss delegates, officials and guests attended the following meetings:

- Warsaw Format Meeting (WFM) in Warsaw, a platform to exchange views between the Arctic Council Observer States and the EU as well as to allow discussion with current AC Chairmanship.
- Environment Ministers' Meeting, October 2018 in Rovaniemi
- Arctic Biodiversity Congress 2018
- Model Arctic Council, October 2018 in Rovaniemi

Switzerland has recently organized and contributed to the international conference POLAR2018, a joint activity of SCAR and IASC that took place in Davos, Switzerland in June 2018. At this occasion, the Arctic Science Summit Week (ASSW), the Arctic Observing Summit and the Open Science Conference have been hosted by the Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research (WSL) under the patronage of the Swiss Committee on Polar and High Altitude Research (SKPH). On this occasion, the SAO Chair Aleksi Härkönen participated in a mini-symposium on Polar Science and Policy.

The Embassy of Finland, the Embassy of Sweden and the Norwegian Embassy, together with foraus - a Swiss Forum on Foreign Policy - and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, invited in March 2018 in Bern the SAOs of Finland, Sweden and Norway to the event: "The Arctic: Closer Than You Think". A visit to the High Altitude Research Stations at Jungfrauoch - the highest research station in Europe that is accessible all year round - followed this event.

In 2016, the Swiss Polar Institute (SPI) was launched by a consortium of Swiss universities. This new institute coordinates and promotes research in both Polar Regions, as well as in the "Third Pole" (remote high altitude regions). The SPI has launched a series of small funding instruments and support measures to help Swiss researchers bridge funding gaps and bring their activities into a broader context. These instruments are open to all researchers based in Switzerland without thematic limitations. The SPI will launch a new expedition in summer 2019: the GreenLAnd Circumnavigation Expedition (GLACE) will offer an unprecedented complete circumnavigation of Greenland in a single expedition lasting for an over 2-month period from August to September. The expedition will provide access to the remote – and as yet critically understudied – of Northern Greenland and provide a unique opportunity to investigate the marine, terrestrial, atmospheric, and cryospheric environments of the Arctic.

Swiss researchers will also contribute actively to the Multidisciplinary drifting Observatory for the Study of Arctic Climate (MOSAIC) initiative, leading two projects (one on snow and the other on atmospheric measurements) which will be implemented in 2019-2020. This unique year-long expedition will provide invaluable information about oceanic, ecological and atmospheric fluxes in the Arctic Ocean.

In order to promote exchanges and cooperation among all the stakeholders, Switzerland participates regularly to meetings, platforms, conferences and fora such as "Arctic Circle", "Arctic Frontiers", "Arctic Science Ministerial Meeting" and "The Arctic: Territory of Dialogue".

Through the promotion of Arctic art and culture, Switzerland contributes to the conservation of aspects of culture and creativity, tangible and intangible heritage and the diversity of cultural expressions in the Arctic. The Swiss Arctic Collections Network was initiated in 2017 by the following institutions: NONAM Nordamerika Native Museum Zurich, Historisches Museum Bern, Historisches und Völkerkundemuseum St.Gallen and Cerny Inuit Collection Bern. The aim of the network is a comprehensive exchange for people involved in Arctic collections in Switzerland.

Switzerland facilitated, through its Commissioner, at the 67th Meeting of the International Whaling Commission IWC the renewal of aboriginal subsistence hunting quotas for Denmark (Greenland), Russia (Chukotka), and the United States (Alaska).

Switzerland intends to continue its commitment to peaceful international cooperation and to research excellence. To find solutions to common challenges, Switzerland is willing to collaborate and work with all the Member States, Permanent Participants and other Observers of the Arctic Council.

Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Date of submission:

27 November 2018

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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.

The United Kingdom has a long historical association with the Arctic and our interests in the region remains just as strong today. Through our world-leading science, our commitment to environmental protection, international cooperation and the rules-based international system we want to help understand, protect and improve the Arctic to ensure a sustainable future for generations to come.

The UK's long-standing ties, continued interests and engagement with the Arctic is reflected in our being one of the original Observers to the Arctic Council in 1996, having previously been accredited at the first Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy meeting in 1991. Officials from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office have represented the UK at each of the Senior Arctic Officials and Ministerial meetings of the Council since 1996, and continue to provide constructive engagement with the Council's work.

In April 2018, the UK Government published *Beyond the Ice: UK policy towards the Arctic*, the second iteration of our policy approach. We recognise that the Arctic States and the indigenous people of the Arctic region are its rightful stewards, and our approach is based upon the three principles of respect, cooperation and appropriate leadership. *Beyond the Ice* summarises UK policy in one place. Key commitments include: helping to understand a changing Arctic through world-class science; protecting the Arctic's fragile environment and the people who live, work and visit there; and promoting prosperity across the region.

In the two years since the last full review of the UK's role as an Observer state we have continued to be an active and engaged participant in the work and objectives of the Arctic Council's Working Groups, Task Forces and Expert Groups. For example:

- The UK is a strong proponent for safe passage for ships in Arctic waters and were active participants in discussions at the IMO and at PAME on the development of the polar code. Consequently UK industry played host to the inaugural and subsequent Arctic Shipping Best Practice Information Forum in 2017 and 2018. Participants from UK government agencies, the UK maritime industry and business services sector all contributed to the advancement of understand of the polar code and the best practice portal launched in London in May 2018.
- As a strong supporter for action to reduce global emissions of black carbon and methane the UK has submitted a national report on black carbon and methane emissions for inclusion in the next iteration of the framework on Enhanced Black Carbon and Methane Emissions Reductions. Safeguarding the environment from unnecessary pollutants and chemicals is essential if we are to ensure a healthy, safe and productive Arctic. The UK ratified the UN Minamata Convention on Mercury on 6 April 2018.

- The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) has contributed technical input to the work of the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna through the Seabird Working Group and the Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative. The Circumpolar Seabird Group had a mutually beneficial visit to the British Antarctic Survey earlier this year, while JNCC and many other UK based researchers and interest groups shared their valuable work at the recent Arctic Biodiversity Congress.
- In February, at the invitation of the PAME Secretariat, Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs officials took part in the PAME I-2018 meeting in Quebec City and joined expert groups on marine protected areas and marine litter to share widely UK policy making experience.
- Through the participation of the National Environmental Research Council (NERC) Arctic Office the UK has contributed to the Arctic Council sponsored "Sustaining Arctic Observing Network", which aims to provide an international setting for coordinating Arctic observation networks.
- As momentum for reducing marine plastic pollution is growing, the UK is committed to working internationally and domestically to combat marine litter that causes harm to our global oceans and seas. Through OSPAR, the UK and Contracting Parties have developed and are implementing a Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter.
- The UK Met Office has contributed to the understanding of changes in the region's weather patterns and climate systems. By attending the Arctic Meteorological Summit held in March 2018 in Kittilia, Finland, the Met Office built on existing partnerships and developed new connections with institutions that will deepen knowledge and further enhance meteorological cooperation.

The UK welcomes the involvement of the Permanent Participants at the Arctic Council and the unique and essential contribution they make to Council discussions. UK based researchers are committed to listening to, and working with, indigenous and local communities, to ensure the best outcomes for communities and for science. It is increasingly recognised that only by learning about the use of traditional and local knowledge from the indigenous and local communities themselves can changes be properly understood.

At the end of 2017, researchers from across the UK took part in the latest in a series of multi-day events involving local community and indigenous representatives from the Yamal-Nenets region in Northern Siberia with the aim of building capacity to monitor, understand and predict extreme weather events in the Arctic. At the same time, UK parliamentarians heard directly from people from Sami, Gwich'in and Inuit communities about the impact of changes in the Arctic and the need to support sustainable development in the region. We will continue to find ways that we can have constructive discussions with indigenous and local communities to ensure that we are benefiting from the full range of information available.

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.

Cooperation and collaboration, whether sharing research capability such as icebreakers and infrastructure or collaborating on research projects, helps to deliver better solutions and build confidence between nations. The UK is committed to continuing to support the work of the Arctic Council, its Working Groups, Task Forces and Expert Groups and is keen to find ways to improve coordination and data sharing. We would welcome the opportunity to identify common issues and goals that would make it easier to more directly and substantively contribute to Working Groups.

Beyond the Ice sets out what expertise the UK can offer to help meet some of the long term challenges facing the region and to ensure a sustainable future for generations to come, including through the Arctic Council and its Working Groups.

The UK was pleased to note the overarching objectives of the forthcoming Icelandic Chairmanship of the Council, in particular we are keen to engage in work related to plastic pollution in the Arctic Ocean; Arctic marine tourism; Innovation and efficient utilisation of marine biological resources. We were also pleased to see a commitment to increased observer engagement. A selection of the UK's continuing and future contributions to specific projects are highlighted below:

- The JNCC through the Wetland Bird Survey has collected 70 years worth of data and information about the breeding arctic waterbird populations in the non-breeding seasons. JNCC intends to remain engaged with CAFF through the Seabird Working Group and Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative Steering Group.
- The UK considers that it is in the interest of the international community to establish a strong and coherent set of regulatory requirements for ships operating in the Arctic region. We therefore intend to continue to work with PAME and through the IMO in its work to ensure effective pan-Arctic implementation of the Polar Code and proposals to extend the Polar Code for non-SOLAS vessels; measures to mitigate the use and carriage of heavy fuel oils in Arctic waters, including acting as chair for the PPR sub-committee.
- Through its commitment to create a Blue Belt around the UK Overseas Territories and Antarctica, the UK has a growing body of information relating to management and enforcement capability in marine protected areas. As individual Arctic States and the Arctic Council consider a pan-Arctic network of marine protected areas, we will share our knowledge and experience to help support effective project implementation.
- Following the success of its four year Arctic Research programme, the NERC is investing £16m in the 5-year (2017 - 2022) research programme known as the Changing Arctic Ocean: Implications for marine biology and biochemistry. The aim of the programme is to understand changes in the Arctic Ocean in a quantifiable way. This will allow numerical models to better predict the consequences of these changes on, for example surface ocean productivity, species distributions, food webs and ecosystems, and the ecosystem services they provide. The findings will help refine decision making and will be applicable to projects undertaken by AMAP and PAME. Over the next two-years we will seek ways to strengthen engagement and cooperation with these groups.

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As strong advocates of the international rules-based system, we recognise the importance of negotiated and consensus driven agreements through multilateral organisations, treaties and conventions such as the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR). Such arrangements continue to provide an additional platform for cooperation and collaboration between Arctic States and the wider international community.

From reducing our greenhouse gas emissions, to addressing our impact on the global climate; from leading international action to develop an ambitious post-2020 international biodiversity strategy and taking an active role in securing a new international agreement for the conservation and sustainable use of marine areas beyond jurisdiction, our 25 year Environmental Plan and plans for a separate Maritime strategy and an International Oceans Strategy will collectively demonstrate the UK commitment to be at the forefront of international efforts to protect and improve the natural world.

The UK is a committed member of the International Arctic Science Committee, and has a large body of Arctic scientists at a range of institutions across the UK, including five that are members of the UArctic. UK based researchers have a strong record of producing high quality and high impact Arctic research. We are fourth after the US, Russia and Canada in terms of volume of publications and are more likely to have international partners than any other country in the top group of research publishers. The UK Government and Research Councils have jointly funded six teams of UK-based researchers to join the German, US and Russian-led MOSAiC Arctic expedition beginning in 2019. Together, this is a true reflection of the increasing international collaboration that will be required to make sense of a complex interconnected region.

Our bilateral relationships with individual Arctic States brings greater depth to our Arctic engagement. There is a strong mutual interest in ensuring that collective decisions about the future of the Arctic are made in light of the best science available. Our Memoranda of Understanding with Canada and Norway are excellent examples of UK bilateral cooperation. These agreements facilitate the exchange of scientific knowledge, expertise and facilities. UK and Norwegian researchers jointly produced The State of the Polar Oceans 2018 report to help understand the impacts of climate and environmental change on the crucial Polar Oceans.

Early career links are a vital component in the development of science collaboration. Currently in its second year, the UK Government has funded over 30 bursaries to support UK-based researchers in the Canadian Arctic. Throughout 2018, the NERC Arctic Office and UK Science and Innovation Network have established close partnerships between the UK and Russian national APECS committees that have developed closer and more productive links to expand collaborations.

Earlier this year, the eight Arctic States ratified the legally binding Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Science Cooperation. Our hope and expectation is that we can begin to see, and will share in, the practical benefits of that Agreement in the near future.

The UK considers that raising awareness, education and outreach will ensure a new generation of Arctic researchers and champions. Supported by multiple UK agencies, including the FCO, the education resource www.discoveringthearctic.org.uk provides education tools and learning materials for schools and teachers. We have also promoted the valuable work of the Arctic Council and the UK's position as an observer in several parliamentary debates and inquiries into the Arctic, and have taken part in Model Arctic Council initiatives in the UK, Greenland and Italy.

In all the work that has been outlined in this document, we want to ensure that the UK is working with partners who have the support and engagement of indigenous peoples and northern communities, and that we work in ways that fully respect and involve their views and skills of all Arctic people and communities.

Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

Interational Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)

Date of submission:

29/11/2018

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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.

ICES is an intergovernmental organization whose main objective is to increase the scientific knowledge of the marine environment and its living resources and to use this knowledge to provide unbiased, non-political advice. ICES supports its member countries and international governmental institutions like the EU Commission, NEAFC, NASCO, NAFO, NAMMCO, OSPAR and HELCOM by providing scientific data, knowledge, and advice.

Recognizing the important global contribution of ICES to the UN ocean agenda, ICES was recently awarded observer status in UN General Assembly.

ICES has prioritized Arctic research to help improve understanding of ecological processes and human impact. A number of ICES expert groups focus on subarctic fish stocks in the Barents Sea, Iceland, and East Greenland, as well as widely distributed and straddling stocks.

ICES has a network of Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) Groups, providing opportunity to share methods and guidance between ecoregions.

Of specific Arctic relevance are three IEA groups:

- Working Group on the Integrated Assessments of the Norwegian Sea (WGINOR)

- Working Group on the Integrated Assessments of the Barents Sea (WGIBAR)

Both of these groups provide knowledge about the state of ecosystems, overviews of available data, monitoring strategies, and adaptive management.

- the Working Group on Integrated Ecosystem Assessment for the Central Arctic Ocean (WGICA; joint group with the North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES) and the Arctic Council Working Group Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME)) works on IEA for the Central Arctic Ocean, with a specific focus on a description of the current status of this ecosystem and the influence of existing and potential human activities including climate change, shipping, and fisheries.

In January 2018, a joint ICES and PAME workshop Ecosystem Approach guidelines and Integrated Ecosystem Assessment in the Arctic dealt with the inclusion of indigenous knowledge in IEAs in the changing Arctic region. This is crucial not only to avoid risks to human life and to secure resources important for indigenous peoples and their cultures, but also to support the scientific basis for management in rapidly changing Arctic ecosystems.

ICES IEA Groups have compiled Ecosystem overviews for the Barents Sea, Icelandic waters, and Norwegian Sea, providing a description of the ecosystems, identifying the main human pressures, and explaining how these affect key ecosystem components.

ICES serves as the AMAP (marine) Thematic Data Centre in relation to data collected in the Arctic area for its thematic assessments – and in support of this in 2018 concluded an agreement to ensure the inclusion of time-series data from Greenlandic monitoring to the ICES data portal and to keep this updated, for use in the AMAP assessments.

For more than a decade ICES has produced an annual report of the North Atlantic and Nordic seas describing the state and trends in ocean climate. The report is available as an operational data tool; <https://ocean.ices.dk/iroc/>

ICES has been participating in the Meetings of Scientific Experts on Fish Stocks in the Central Arctic Ocean (FISCAO), supporting the December 2017 concluded Agreement to prevent unregulated high seas fisheries in the central Arctic Ocean

The FISCAO meetings have focused on potential fisheries resources in the Central Arctic Ocean, including the design of a 1-3 year long mapping program for fisheries resources and a potential monitoring program, as well as the identification of resources needed for mapping and monitoring, and the development of data collection, sharing, and hosting protocols.

The recent meeting of FISCAO concluded that the development of a data sharing protocol will require negotiation and legal review among the parties, and recommended that a data management/sharing pilot study be undertaken. USA, ICES, and PICES in cooperation offered to undertake the pilot study.

Examples of events, scientific symposia, and themes sessions with Arctic focus:

- 2017 ICES Scientific advice on distributional changes in fish stocks linked to environmental conditions (mostly through sea temperature) and fishing

- Joint ICES/PICES working group on climate change and biologically driven ocean carbon sequestration

- 2017 Symposium: Ecosystem Studies of Subarctic and Arctic Seas Program International Open Science Meeting

- 2017 Workshop on global ecological and economic connections in Arctic and sub-Arctic crab fisheries

- 2017 Joint ICES/PICES strategic initiative on climate change impacts on marine ecosystem, covering among other issues vulnerability assessments on fish and shellfish and on the human communities depending on them

- 2018 joint ICES/PICES Workshop on Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental scenarios to be used in climate projection

- 2018 symposium: Fourth International ICES/PICES/IOC/FAO Symposium, The effects of climate change on the world's oceans, Washington D.C., USA – addressing both consequences and impacts of climate change in the world oceans, gaps and insufficiencies in the evidence-base as the basis for proposals for priorities for future research, as well as to derive appropriate climate-ready policies that can help society adapt and protect the marine environment and living resources in the future

- ICES Annual Science Conference, 24-27 September 2018, Theme Session: The Nordic seas and the Arctic – climatic variability and its impact on marine ecosystems, fisheries and policymaking

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.

A second international conference on implementation of the ecosystem approach in the Arctic is planned for 2019, in Bergen, Norway. This is an activity planned by the Arctic Council/PAME Ecosystem Approach Expert group, with ICES and PICES involvement.

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.

Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

Date of submission:

29.01.2019

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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.

IUCN's activity on polar issues has been quite limited in recent years as our polar coordination position remains vacant. However, we have engaged in some activities that are of relevance to the region notably on the issue of marine plastic.

IUCN worked with academic institutions in Canada and Scandinavia to conduct research on the interaction between discarded plastics (particularly microplastics) and the sub-Arctic and Arctic environment. This research was particularly focused on the extent to which marine microplastics influence ice formation and melting. The results of this research are still being compiled and should be released by the end of April 2019. We would be pleased to share this with the Arctic community at that time. The hypothesis underscoring the research is explained in an IUCN short film (from 2:10): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YZb1YER1_sk

I am not sure if this was mentioned in any previous reporting to you, however in 2017, IUCN co-released a report with IOC-UNESCO and NRDC on Natural Marine World Heritage in the Arctic Ocean (see <https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2017-006.pdf>). This report presents the results of a scientific assessment of globally-significant ecosystems in the Arctic Ocean that may be of Outstanding Universal Value with respect to the natural criteria for World Heritage status. Seven areas were identified through this process: The Bering Strait Ecoregion; Remnant Arctic Multi-Year sea ice and the Northeast Water Polynya Ecoregion; The Northern Baffin Bay Ecoregion; Disko Bay and Store Hellefiskebanke Ecoregion; The Scoresby Sound Polynya Ecoregion; High Arctic Archipelagos and the Great Siberian Polynya.

In January 2018, a Russian-language version of the above-mentioned Arctic Marine World Heritage report was produced and distributed. See <https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2017-006-Ru.pdf>

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.

In 2019, IUCN's Global Marine and Polar Programme will move forward under new leadership. This will probably lead to a review of all activities and thematic areas under the Programme, including our polar work, and will lead to identification of new strategies and focal areas. Currently, polar issues are handled by individual team members on an ad hoc basis as there is insufficient funding to have a full-time polar coordinator.

The Programme will continue to work on issues and threats that are of relevance to the polar regions including ocean acidification and deoxygenation, marine plastics and high seas governance. We will be happy to share the outputs of these efforts.

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.

Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

Nordic Council of Ministers

Date of submission:

December 4th, 2018

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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.

In the last observer report that the Nordic Council of Minister (NCM) delivered to the Arctic Council the NCM highlighted its financial contribution to the Arctic Council and its working group projects. In sum, the amount directly allocated to the Arctic Councils projects and programs in the previous reporting period 2012 - 2016 amounted to 729.463- USD.

Since the last report the NCM has continued to support Arctic Council projects. The NCM Arctic Cooperation Program, Nordic Partnership for the Arctic 2018-2021, is the main instrument for the NCM to support projects and research in this regard.

In 2017 the NCM funded four Arctic Council projects by 700.000 DKK from its open application round of around six million Danish Crowns. A total of 20 projects were supported from the open application round. The amount is approximately 107 thousand USD to these four projects. These projects are: Arctic Marine Protected Areas phase III, Arctic Ship Data Project, Assessing Marine Litter in the Arctic and Arctic Marine Best Practices Information. In addition, other AC WG projects have received supported projects that the WG's participate in but do not lead for example in the SDWG Working Group.

In 2018 a new four year Arctic Cooperation program was launched, the name of the program is Nordic Partnership for the Arctic 2018-2021. In this program period the aim is to align the program and the four categories in it with UN Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals. In June 2018 total of 6,52 million DKK were allocated to total 22 projects in four categories. Four of those were projects lead by the Arctic Council WG and they received total amount of 917.000 DKK or approximately 139.000 USD. These projects are: Arctic Pedagogy in Teacher Education, Desktop Study on Marine Litter, Arctic Marine Best Practices Forum and ECONOR IV Analysis of Arctic Economies.

The total amount from NCM Arctic Program to Arctic Council Projects from open application round in 2017 and 2018 is 246.000 USD.

In addition, the Arctic Council Working Group and subsidiary bodies, including task forces received funds directly from the Arctic Programs political priorities fund. In that regard it is worth highlighting the following projects:

Arctic Business Analysis - a report in four parts focusing on opportunities for people, businesses and investments in the Arctic, this was a collaborative effort with the Arctic Economic Council and launched at Arctic Frontiers in January 2018. Total allocated amount 500.000 DKK.

Arctic Biodiversity Congress - support to the CAFF Working Group to hold the 2nd Arctic Biodiversity Congress in Rovaniemi, 9-12th October 2018. Total amount 500.000 DKK.

Top of the World Broadband Summit - Organized by the Arctic Economic Council for the third time in Sapporo, Japan, June 27-28th, 2018. Total amount 400.000 DKK

Environmental Impact Assessment Workshop - An SDWG sponsored project, support provided to hold a workshop in Rovaniemi, 11-12 December 2017. Total amount 200.000 DKK.

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.

The main instrument for the Nordic Council of Ministers to contribute to the Arctic Council is its annual budget of about 9,5 million DKK that is administered through the NCM Arctic Program.

The program is a funding mechanism to support projects that are related to the Arctic. The program is now divided up in four categories: People, Planet, Prosperity and Partnership.

The People category focuses on the human dimension and the population in the Arctic, including the indigenous population.

The Planet category focuses on the environment and flora and fauna of the region.

The Prosperity category focuses on the economic aspect of the region and sustainable economic development in the Arctic.

The Partnership category focuses on creating partnerships both within the region and outside of the region to increase understanding and promote cooperation on Arctic issues.

This program will run until the end of 2021. These four categories allow the NCM to support large range of projects related to the Arctic. It is worth noting that during the development of the new program the then newly adopted Sustainable Developments Goals were aligned with the categories and outcome of the program.

It is therefore highly likely that the NCM will, as in the past, continue to support projects sponsored and run by the Working Groups. The program is now over 20 years old, well known to institutions and organizations and the AC working groups have frequently applied for funds from the program for their projects with good results.

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.

Since 1996 when the NCM Arctic Cooperation Program was established there has always been a strong Arctic Council element when it comes to supporting projects from the NCM Arctic Cooperation Program.

The Nordic Council of Ministers Arctic Cooperation Program is an important instrument for the NCM and its members to demonstrate the importance of the region and its development for its members. The program is primarily an instrument for project support that achieves its aims through supporting projects that are found to be important for enhancing knowledge about the Arctic and contribute in a positive way for the indigenous and local populations in the region.

The Nordic Council of Ministers mission is to facilitate intergovernmental cooperation that adds value and raises the profile of the region, both in the region itself and abroad. The focus on the Arctic for the NCM and its members is in line with this mission.

It not only puts focus on the Arctic and cooperation between institutions, organizations and other stakeholders in the Nordic region but also allows for actors and stakeholders outside of the region to take part, including Canadian, Russian and US since the program is open to them as well.

It also supports and underpins international efforts such as the implementation of the Paris agreement and the UN Agenda 2030 by putting special focus on environmental protection and sustainable development in the Arctic Cooperation Program.

Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

OSPAR Commission

Date of submission:

1 December 2018

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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. Introduction

The 1992 Convention for The Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (the OSPAR Convention) provides the mechanism by which fifteen Governments and the European Union cooperate to protect the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic (the OSPAR Maritime Area).

The Governments are Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom. OSPAR started out in 1972 with the Oslo Convention against dumping and was broadened to cover land-based sources of marine pollution and the offshore industry by the Paris Convention of 1974. These two conventions were unified, up-dated and extended by the 1992 OSPAR Convention. OSPAR, aims to take all possible steps to prevent and eliminate pollution and to take the necessary measures to protect the maritime area against adverse effects of human activities while restoring marine areas which have been adversely affected so as to safeguard human health and to conserve marine ecosystems. Five of our Contracting Parties are Member States to the Arctic Council. This report from OSPAR covers relevant activities that OSPAR has contributed to the Arctic Council. OSPAR is doing considerable work that complements the activities of the Arctic Council's activities. New activities within OSPAR will also contribute to the future work of the Arctic Council.

OSPAR has been an observer to the Arctic Council since May 2017. OSPAR highly appreciates the opportunity being an organisation to the Arctic Council have given OSPAR to complement and contribute to the agenda of the Arctic Council.

2. Arctic Council Task Force on Arctic Marine Cooperation (TFAMC)

OSPAR participated in the work of the TFAMC, and contributed with information on how the OSPAR Coordination Group (CoG) functions, to ensure integration of OSPAR work and delivery of the Ecosystem Approach in line with the OSPAR Strategy. CoG is a high-level subsidiary body of OSPAR comprising representatives of all Contracting Parties supported by their technical experts as appropriate, Observers, and the Chairs of all main Committees.

3. Desktop Study on Marine Litter, including Microplastics, in the Arctic

OSPAR is co-lead to the desktop study on marine litter within PAME, and has contributed with our knowledge on measures to substantially reduce marine litter in the OSPAR Maritime Area, to levels where properties and quantities of marine litter do not cause harm to the coastal and marine environment. OSPAR adopted a Regional Action Plan (RAP) for the Prevention and Management of Marine Litter in the North-East Atlantic, in 2014, and has shared information on possible solutions to combat marine litter with PAME. The key actions of the RAP addressed issues relevant for the Arctic Council, such as Port Reception Facilities, Strengthening Fishing for Litter activities, Reduction of abandoned, lost and otherwise discarded fishing gear, Identifying litter hotspots and developing risk assessment for accumulation areas, Improved waste management by identifying gaps where litter escapes into the marine environment and compiling best practice examples, Removal of micro plastics from products/processes & zero pellet loss, and Education and outreach.

OSPAR have shared information with AMAP on monitoring of marine litter and microplastics, for which OSPAR is pioneering work on the development of a new indicator on microplastics in sediments.

4. Arctic Offshore Resource Exploration and Development

OSPAR has presented work of the OSPAR Offshore Industry Committee (OIC), which collects and assesses data on the number of offshore installations, the use and discharge of drilling fluids and cuttings, discharges of oil in produced water, chemicals used and discharged offshore, accidental spills of oil and chemicals and emissions to air and the disposal of disused offshore installations.

5. Addressing Impacts on Marine Mammals

OSPAR has contributed to the draft report on Underwater Noise in the Arctic State of Knowledge, and will continue to co-lead on the project.

6. Ecosystem Approach to Management

OSPAR has shared our work on ecosystem approach to management to highlight our mandate within the convention of the OSPAR Commission, and the applicability of an ecosystem approach to management implemented within the work of OSPAR's five committees. OSPAR has learned from the PAME EA work, which will be a part of the upcoming quality status report.

7. Oil Prevention and Response

EPPR and the Bonn Agreement have shared valuable information on the prevention and response for oil spills, and information to quantitatively identify the risk and magnitude of mineral oils spills, and undertake a qualitative risk assessment for hazardous and noxious substances.

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.

8. Other future plans

OSPAR Commission expects to be able to contribute to the protection of the Arctic marine

environment, including the conservation of Arctic biodiversity. OSPAR believes that its work in the North East Atlantic may provide important complement to the work of the Arctic Council and its Working Groups. In that regard OSPAR is eager to actively engage with AMAP on ocean acidification, and transport of chemicals, assisting in any way to combat pollution from maritime disasters and chronic pollution from ships and offshore installations that can impact the Arctic from the North East Atlantic, in cooperation with EPPR. OSPAR welcome the opportunity to contribute to the important work of PAME on protecting the marine environment, and to continue as co-lead on phase II of the desk-top study on marine litter in the Arctic.

OSPAR works to harmonise policies and strategies, including the drawing up of programmes and measures, for the protection of the marine environment. OSPAR undertakes joint assessments which are published at regular intervals, the latest one - Intermediate Assessment - was published in June 2017. In 2023 OSPAR will publish a full QSR (quality status report) of the North-East Atlantic marine environment, which will take into account the effectiveness of OSPAR measures. With that in mind, OSPAR expects that relevant information coming from the Arctic Working Groups will be reflected in this Report and give us all the opportunity to identify priorities for action for the protection of the marine environment.

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.

Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

Standing Committee of the Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region

Date of submission:

30.11.2018

Observer's website, if appropriate:

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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.

To promote the cooperation between the Arctic nations, the Arctic Council and the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region have important roles, separately and together. Elected by and representing the people of the Arctic countries, the Arctic parliamentarians have as their main focus the people living in the Arctic. This includes indigenous peoples. A strong political dialogue between the parliaments and the governments of the Arctic region is key to promote a sustainable development with prosperous Arctic societies, in which people can secure their livelihoods and live their lives.

The members of the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region (SCPAR) work in their national parliaments to promote Arctic issues and raise awareness of what is happening in the Arctic and in the Arctic cooperation. The parliamentarians work to make the results of the Arctic cooperation known at a national level. Most members of SCPAR are elected from the Northern regions in their country, all of them share a passion and concern for the development in the Arctic.

Since 2016, the Arctic Parliamentarians have arranged six Standing Committee meetings gathering the heads of Arctic delegations from all the Arctic national parliaments. During these meetings, parliamentarians have shared their experiences on their Arctic policies and best practices. This has been valued as important work also in a sense that meetings between the parliamentarians helps to convey the messages of the Arctic Council and keeps the parliaments informed. The committee has met with ministers responsible for Arctic Affairs and the Senior Arctic Officials to keep themselves up to date on the current Affairs of the Arctic Council. Committee meetings have been used also to convey the MP's messages to the Council.

As the Conference of the Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region is the main decision making body of the organization, we are happy to report that all the parliamentarians gave their strong support to the work done by the Arctic Council at the 13th Parliamentary Conference. It is also the view of the Arctic MP's that the work of the Council should be further strengthened.

The 13th Arctic Parliamentary Conference took place in Inari, Finland, from 16th to 19th September in Sajos Center. Following four themes; digitalization of the Arctic, climate change and its effects to the Arctic, the Corporate Social Responsibility for the companies operating in the Arctic and the Social Well-Being of the people living in the Arctic were seen as the most timely and pressing issues that affect the region. As this was already the 13th time the Arctic parliamentarians convene, a special session reflected the work done by the parliamentarians.

With regards to the climate change and the environmental cooperation, the Arctic Parliamentarians outlined many of the same goals the AC has. Among these goals for the next two year period are following goals:

12. Continue efforts to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and short-lived climate pollutants, such as methane and black carbon;

13. Disseminate knowledge about climate change and its consequences in the Arctic at both the global and local levels, and work with local stakeholders to enhance the adaptation and resilience of Arctic communities to climate change;

14. Develop energy efficiency solutions in Arctic architecture and construction technology, including the use of renewable energy in new building projects and energy refurbishment of existing buildings in the Arctic Region;
15. Facilitate the exchange of information on innovations, strategies, and adaptation tools to handle the effects of climate change, as well as results of the Arctic Council's Adaptation Actions for a Changing Arctic (AACCA) project, throughout the Arctic Region at the local, regional and national levels;
16. Continue to support the working group Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) to co-ordinate and publish its collection of current data on the migration, extinction, and adaptations of species of flora and fauna, on land and in the seas of the Arctic Region;
17. Address the impacts of climate change on Arctic marine biodiversity and marine conservation solutions as part of the October 2018 Arctic Environment Ministers Meeting in Rovaniemi, Finland;
18. Facilitate the improvement of commercial navigation maps and systems in Arctic waters;
19. Address the need to prevent oil spills and other pollutants in the arctic region;
20. Implement the UN resolution to eliminate plastic pollution in the oceans, including by encouraging the Arctic nations and the Arctic Council's observer countries to adopt reduction targets;
21. Urge the full implementation of the International Maritime Organization's Polar Code;
22. Discuss and carry out, in partnership with the Indigenous peoples of the Arctic, a feasibility study of a school or an annual seminar where Indigenous peoples of the Arctic disseminate their traditional knowledge of natural resource management. The curriculum would contain information and education tied to Indigenous ways of life, ethics and the understanding of circular economy;
23. Hold an Arctic Summit, involving heads of state and governments of the Arctic Council member states, as well as the heads of the Permanent Participants to agree upon on arctic cooperation and the sustainable development of the Arctic Region;

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.

SCPAR focuses its work on Arctic Parliamentary cooperation, its aim being the promotion of exchange of information and best practices between the national parliaments on Arctic Affairs. In this role, the MP's work both nationally and internationally on Arctic questions.

As the MP's have an important role in budgetary affairs and in forming the national policies, it has been seen important that they have enough information of subjects at hand. Regarding the Arctic cooperation, the secretariat at SCPAR tries to support the knowledge base of the MP's with the meetings the MP's have at the standing committee. MP's have met some of the members of the working groups to gain better understanding of the special topics dealt at the AC. Especially active they have been in their relations with the representatives of the Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous peoples (PP's) have the same position at the SCPAR and at the Arctic Parliamentary Conference as they have in the AC. The PP's were requested to give their own input to the conference statement and they were the only observers of the conference that have the right to participate also to the drafting committee meetings, where the policies of the parliamentary organization are being drafted.

At the same time the MP's require information on the work done by the Arctic Council and its different working groups, they have a role in setting some of the goals for the Arctic Council itself. This work is evident in the Conference Statements, as the MP's form the goals for the conference.

The current chair of the SCPAR, Mr. Eirik Sivertsen has been active in different Arctic Forums where he has been highlighting the Arctic and the work done by the AC. He also aims to participate to different high level conferences to convey the messages of the MP's and also of the working group reports from the AC. This work has been seen important because as MP, the chair has access to many multinational forums where Arctic issues can be discussed and where people can be informed on special arctic topics.

The representative of the SCPAR secretariat aims to participate at least once a year in some of the working group meetings, where his/ hers experience might be of some value.

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.

Arctic Parliamentarians have supported the work of the Arctic Council since its establishment. I believe it is important for the MP's to gain information on the work the Council does so that each member parliament would have representatives that understand the value and the meaning of Arctic cooperation.

MP's can be valuable for the Arctic Council also because they have their own constituencies that they are responsible for. By distributing the information of the AC to larger audiences they can help the AC in its own work and in building wider support.

Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

Date of submission:

1 October 2018

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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.

In 2012, the Parties to the UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (Convention) unanimously adopted amendments to the Convention's 1999 Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (Gothenburg Protocol). The amended Protocol now also includes emission reduction commitments for fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) for the year 2020 and beyond. In implementing measures to achieve their national targets for PM_{2.5}, Parties should give priority to emission reduction measures that also significantly reduce black carbon (BC), in order to provide benefits for human health and the environment and to help mitigate near-term climate change.

In 2013, the Arctic Environment Ministers meeting in Sweden emphasized the importance of BC emission inventories in identifying emission trends and mitigation opportunities, and concurred that the Arctic Council States should periodically produce national emission inventories for BC, in line with guidelines to be agreed under the Convention. In December 2013, the Convention Parties adopted such emission reporting guidelines. The BC emission inventories should be submitted to the Convention and shared with the Arctic Council, with the ambition to have submissions from 15 February 2015.

In April 2015, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) participated in the Arctic Council Ministerial meeting in Iqaluit, Nunavut, Canada. UNECE welcomed the Framework for Enhanced Action to Reduce Black Carbon and Methane, which was endorsed during this meeting. UNECE participated in the Senior Arctic Officials Meeting in Oulu, Finland, in 2017 and gave a presentation on UNECE's work on reducing black carbon.

For the 2018 reporting cycle, 37 Parties submitted their BC inventories, including six Arctic Council Member States. The emission data for all air pollutants (including BC) submitted to the Convention undergo a review process, which helps Parties to further develop the national emission inventories in terms of their quality, consistency and completeness.

The potential for cooperation between the Convention and the Arctic Council extends beyond BC inventories and emission abatement measures, especially in the gas and oil sectors. The BC inventories can provide a unique input to atmospheric modelling of BC to and within the Arctic region and for estimation of related adverse health and environmental effects. Over the last 35 years, the Convention has developed effective methodologies, tools and measures to deal with transboundary air pollution on a regional scale that can be applied also to the Arctic region. On a longer time scale, the results of BC-related work may be used as input for the development of cost-benefit optimized emission reduction scenarios for the Arctic States by means of integrated assessment modelling and cost-benefit analysis.

Cooperation between the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP) and the Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP) under the Convention has already been established. In particular, the EMEP Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution (HTAP) investigates the air pollutant transport and its adverse effects for the entire Northern Hemisphere. In addition, several International Cooperative Programmes under the Convention's Working Group on Effects (WGE) have provided inputs to AMAP's work.

Cooperation between AMAP and EMEP on black carbon and on intercontinental transport of mercury and persistent organic pollutants is outlined in the 2018–2019 workplan for the implementation of the Convention provides (see further details below).

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.

As mentioned above, the activities envisaged in the 2018–2019 workplan (http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2018/Air/ece.eb.air.140.add.1-Final-Advance_copy.pdf) for the Convention will be pursued. Further cooperation opportunities for 2020 and beyond will be explored.

Activity:

1.1.4.2 Evaluation of intercontinental transport of Hg and POPs

Expected outcome/ deliverable:

- Contribution to UNEP global mercury assessment (2018)
- Evaluation of multi compartment intercontinental transport technical report (2019)
- Next steps workshop (2019)

Lead body(ies):

Meteorological Synthesizing Centre-East in cooperation with Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution (TFHTAP) and Task Force on Measurements and Modelling and other bodies (Minamata and Stockholm Conventions and AMAP)

Resources requirements and/or funding sources:

Supported by EMEP mandatory contributions and AMAP contribution (\$12,000), additional funding needed

Activity:

1.1.4.3 Sectoral opportunities to mitigate intercontinental transport

Expected outcome/ deliverable:

- Scoping workshop (2018)
- Sectors summary report (2019)

Lead body(ies):

TFHTAP, Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling, AMAP and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC)

Resources requirements and/or funding sources:

Covered by Parties, additional funding needed

Activity:

1.3.3 Cooperation with AMAP of the Arctic Council

Expected outcome/ deliverable:

Focus on black carbon in the framework of a European Union contract

Lead body(ies):

Centre on Emission Inventories and Projections, Chemical Coordinating Centre, Centre for Integrated Assessment Modelling, Meteorological Synthesizing Centre-West

Resources requirements and/or funding sources:

Budget provided by AMAP (under European Union contract)

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.

n/a

Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

United Nations Environment Programme

Date of submission:

25.11.2018

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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.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) has been active as an Observer to the Arctic Council since 1996, taking part in the Council's Ministerial, Senior Arctic Officials meetings and, together with its collaborating centre GRID-Arendal in Norway and the UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) in the UK, has engaged actively in the efforts of most of the Council's scientific and technical working groups. As the United Nation's organization setting the global environmental agenda and along with the Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA) it administers—including those on biological diversity, hazardous waste, chemicals and mercury—UN Environment has facilitated global outreach for some of the Council's work. Notably, UN Environment continues to provide technical support on a number of assessment and monitoring activities as described below. Since May 2016, UN Environment has engaged in the Council's work, as follows:

1. UN Environment will release its sixth edition of the Global Environment Outlook (GEO-6) at the fourth United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 4) in March 2019. Polar issues are cross cutting and are referred to as relevant throughout the report. GEO-6 is UN Environment's flagship assessment to keep the world environment under review, and combined with its negotiated and endorsed Summary for Policy Makers, is a critical knowledge product which bridges the science-policy interface at the ministerial level.
2. UN Environment's GEO-6 (Global Environment Outlook) for North America process identified Arctic issues (both rapid social and biophysical changes and impacts) as a key regional priority. GEO-6 author teams worked in collaboration with members of the AMAP, building upon their work, to deliver our assessment.
3. UN Environment participated in the Arctic Environment Ministers' Meeting (October 2018, Rovaniemi), where it provided a keynote presentation for the ministers on the Global Arctic - inter-related issues in the areas of pollution, climate change and biodiversity.
4. UN Environment regularly participates in the Senior Arctic Officials meeting, and provided a statement during the observer intervention session on pollution (October 2017) and on biodiversity (October 2018).
5. UN Environment shares the interest of the Arctic countries in the sphere of circular economy and its relevance for, and application in the Polar region. UN Environment has delivered a presentation on these matters called "Striving for low-carbon and resource-efficient circular economy in the Arctic" during the October 2018 SDWG meeting.
6. UN Environment is collaborating with the Social, Economic and Cultural Expert Group (SECEG). UN Environment has submitted its comments and recommendations concerning the report "Exploring the way (SECEG) could work better" (September 2018), in particular in relation to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
7. UN Environment's Chemicals and Waste Branch participated in the meeting of ACAP providing a presentation during its observer session (November 2018) on chemicals of global and Arctic concern.
8. UN Environment continues to outreach key environmental information on the Arctic to our wide range of stakeholders through our 'Environment Live' platform (<https://uneplive.unep.org/region/data/AR#>). Maps are provided, along with regional datasets and traditional knowledge.

9. UNEP-WCMC contributes to the Arctic Council work on Arctic Biodiversity indicators, Arctic peat lands, protected areas, sea birds and wilderness protection, and biodiversity gap analysis.

10. UN Environment actively participated in this year's Arctic Biodiversity Congress, presenting relevant information and chairing various sessions, including closing remarks from the Director of UNEP-WCMC (October 2018). More specifically, during the Arctic Biodiversity Congress:

a. GRID-Arendal facilitated, jointly with the Sámi Council, a joint CAFF/AMAP session on "Understanding cumulative effects on Arctic biodiversity and landscapes". It was organized as a facilitated conversation where the participants evaluated and added new information to a set of prepared maps, and explored ways to better include local and indigenous knowledge to conventional maps.

b. UNEP-WCMC convened a session on private sector engagement in Arctic biodiversity conservation and data use, which included a presentation by UNEP-WCMC on the Proteus Partnership on biodiversity data sharing, and a call for stronger sharing of biodiversity data from public and private sources in the Arctic.

c. UNEP-WCMC, in collaboration with the CAFF Secretariat also updated the information on the status of protected areas in the Arctic, and released new figures on the coverage of Arctic marine and terrestrial protected areas.

d. UNEP-WCMC also provided an overview of the potential for application of global biodiversity models in the Arctic, and their relevance to the future of Arctic conservation policy and practice.

11. Building on experiences through the Proteus Partnership, UNEP-WCMC is engaging with the CAFF project on mainstreaming Arctic biodiversity considerations within the mining/extractives sector.

12. UNEP-WCMC has engaged as an observer to the CAFF Board, including through participation at the CAFF Board meeting in Fairbanks in 2018.

13. GRID-Arendal has co-chaired two CAFF events: Nomadic herders lavvu dialogue and Nomadic herders: 'Enhancing the resilience of pastoral ecosystems and livelihoods of nomadic herders'.

14. UN Environment hosts the Secretariat of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC), of which seven of the eight the Arctic Council member states are partners. The CCAC has worked to shape the expertise and good practices needed to address black carbon and methane abatement measures. Many of the CCAC initiatives on black carbon and methane are relevant for the Arctic Council member states. The work of CCAC is closely linked with the work of ACAP.

15. UN Environment participated in the marine litter workshop led by PAME (Aukreyri, Iceland, June 2018); through its participation, it presented the global work on marine litter and provided comments and inputs to the Arctic Council marine litter assessment report under preparation. It will stand ready to provide further input to the Arctic Council marine litter action plan, as requested.

16. GRID-Arendal has led the production of the Desktop Study on Marine Litter commissioned by PAME. GRID-Arendal is also leading the University of the Arctic's Thematic Network on Marine litter and microplastics and is therefore closely cooperating with relevant scientists.

17. UN Environment participated in the Task Force for Arctic Marine Cooperation meetings and provided information on institutional and governance arrangements under various regional seas programmes. It also provided information on the current cross-sectoral cooperation on a regional seas scale.

18. UN Environment together with AMAP has been preparing the Global Mercury Assessment 2018. During the Minamata Convention COP2 (Geneva, November 2018) UN Environment and AMAP jointly presented the context, content and key findings of the upcoming final report.

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. Together with Finland's Ministry of Environment and implemented by GRID-Arendal, UN Environment is producing The Vital Arctic Graphics publication. The new report incorporates the Arctic Council as well as other research, is being peer reviewed by the Arctic Council Working Groups and Permanent Participants, and will be launched at UNEA 4 (March 2019) and presented to the Arctic Council meeting (May 2019). A series of graphics/ maps, short videos, powerpoints and posters will be used for outreach and communication purposes throughout 2019, including through social media, to raise awareness of Arctic issues and the interlinkages with global issues.
2. In the beginning of 2019, UN Environment is going to publish in the Global Mercury Assessment report targeting policy-makers and including a summary of key messages, undertaken in collaboration with AMAP.
3. As a result of the GEO-6 assessment process, UN Environment together with GRID-Arendal and Natural Resources Canada will to produce a specific Rapid Response Assessment, due in the 3rd quarter of 2019, examining coastal permafrost thaw in Canada. It is hoped that this effort will serve as a precursor to a more comprehensive AMAP assessment.
4. UN Environment intends to further engage in the SDWG and SECEG in the broader sustainability work, including on low carbon solutions, circular economy, sustainable management of resources, responsible mining, the Arctic dimension of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
5. Jointly with the World Reindeer Herders, GRID-Arendal, the International Centre for Reindeer Husbandry and UN Environment is preparing a global Medium-sized Proposal for the GEF focusing on sustainable reindeer husbandry and landscape conservation. The proposal is building on the Nomadic Herders project endorsed by CAFF.
6. UN Environment, through UNEP-WCMC will also continue to engage with the CAFF Governing Board and wider biodiversity work of the Arctic Council, including through maintaining an updated and common dataset on the protected areas of the Arctic.
7. UN Environment seeks to continue its work on the Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative (AMBI) and migratory bird issues with the CAFF.
8. UN Environment will submit information on the ecological quality objectives of different regional seas as it is being compiled, for the benefit of the PAME Working Group on Ecosystem Based Approach to Management.
9. UN Environment plans to continue supporting PAME on marine issues, including marine debris. GRID-Arendal is looking forward to continue working with the PAME working group on the topics of marine litter and micro plastics.
10. UN Environment plans to continue supporting the Task Force on Arctic Marine Cooperation by providing input relating to existing regional cooperative models.
11. UN Environment will seek to facilitate collaboration on black carbon and related issues, through the Climate and Clean Air Coalition.
12. UN Environment seeks to continue work with Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council and undertake a dedicated dialogue on matters of common concern and cooperation.

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. UN Environment has undertaken some internal restructuring to strengthen our capacity to support the Arctic Council's working groups, task forces and/or experts including the nomination of a Principal Adviser, Strategic Engagement for the Arctic and Antarctic as well as a reformed and more focused 'Polar Working Group' within the organization. This underscores the increased importance UN Environment is putting on Arctic issues.
2. UN Environment engages in the preparation of the September 2019 Climate Summit of the UN Secretary-General; within this engagement it will endeavor to accentuate the gravity of climate challenges and urgency of solutions for the Arctic and its inhabitants.
3. UN Environment has nominated Mr. Viacheslav Fetisov as the UN-Environment Patron for Polar Regions to enhance the visibility of Arctic issues and their interlinkages to the rest of the world.
4. UN Environment is preparing a special event on the North Pole called "the Last Game", to be conducted in April 2019. The event in its essence is a hockey game, performed by various sports personalities from all over the world. The aim of the game is to demonstrate that the Arctic environment is very fragile, and all the current and future development of the region must be conducted in a sustainable manner; and, to focus attention on the rapid speed of global warming. More information about the event can be found at:
<https://www.unenvironment.org/events/un-environment-event/last-game> .
5. UN Environment will further prospect potential of linking of Arctic governance with the "Third Pole" (Hindu-Kush Himalayas), and looking at how the good practice in the Arctic Council can be replicated.
6. As the UN's voice for the environment, one of UN Environment's strengths is its ability to convene representatives of UN Member States in support of Arctic Council priorities, as well as the business sector, NGO's, academia and the science community, and other stakeholders whose actions and work impact the Arctic.
7. UN Environment entered in partnership with the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators, which has become an active part of the UN Clean Seas Campaign targeting the marine litter challenge.
8. UN Environment's activities on Indigenous Peoples' issues in the Arctic are distributed globally through its annual reports to the UN Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues.
9. UN Environment has outlined some additional possible future actions within the Council's work within this report. The organization will be looking for possible future initiatives that might assist with other aspects of the Arctic Council's goals, and will bring them to the attention of Council members and the Council's working groups as appropriate, and in interaction with the Arctic Council members, permanent participants as well as other observer organizations (in particular with the UN family members).

Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

World Meteorological Organization

Date of submission:

1 December 2018

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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.

AMAP - Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme

WMO has attended and participated in several AMAP meetings. Most recently, the AMAP Meteorology and Climate Workshop (Copenhagen, 6-8 November 2018). Collaboration between AMAP and WMO was identified in several areas; for example it was noted that the impacts and gaps identified by AMAP could feed back to the Polar Regional Climate Centres and Climate Outlook Fora and that these fora should feed back to the AMAP process; that WMO activities, particularly around climate should feed into the AMAP Assessments in the next cycle (this has already been done via the WCRP in the past); that AMAP and WMO could work together to assess the current skill of meteorological and climate models to provide what is needed in the Arctic and identify gaps; that many activities that AMAP wish to do in the future such as the inclusion of social sciences and looking at extremes would benefit by connecting with relevant activities at WMO (e.g. the Weather and Climate Extremes Grand Challenge of WCRP and WWRP and the SRA activity of WWRP). Representatives of the Global Atmosphere Watch (GAW) participate in the AMAP Expert Group on Short Lived Climate Forcers (SLCF). Alexander is a member of this EG and participated as a lead author of the modelling chapter in the AMAP report on Black Carbon and Ozone as Arctic climate forcers (<https://www.amap.no/documents/doc/amap-assessment-2015-black-carbon-and-ozone-as-arctic-climate-forcers/1299>).

CAFF - Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna

Discussions have been held between members of the WMO and CAFF Secretariats in the margins of other meetings. There are possible future areas of collaboration, for example how changes in the physical system will affect ecosystems.

PAME - Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment

WMO has been working with PAME on a number of activities, including input to the Arctic Shipping Forum portal.

EPPR - Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response

The Polar Code has provided additional focus on the risks and challenges for protecting the marine and land environment in polar regions. The Code introduced more effective prevention controls of oil spills to minimize the risk of occurrence, whilst the existing provisions of MARPOL ensure that adequate response mechanisms are in place. The complexity of polar waters necessitates the need for greater sophistication and capability in predicting the movement and evolution of marine pollution substances to assist planning and response operations. The WMO and its Members have the capability to organize a specialist forecasting and service framework for Arctic waters to assist national meteorological services with providing relevant information to support their national agencies. This concept paper outlines the scientific challenges, and outlines the characteristics and benefits of a regional specialist framework.

A joint WMO-Finland proposal for a specialized framework/project supporting marine environmental response modelling capabilities in polar waters was submitted and supported by members of EPPR during their meeting in June 2018 in Helsinki. The framework/project will be supported by the relevant National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHS) of the members of the Arctic Council, WMO World Meteorological Centres (WMCs), Regional Specialized Meteorological Centres (RSMCs), Programmes and Expert Teams of related Technical Commissions to provide the marine environmental response monitoring, modelling and early warning capabilities in the Arctic region. A coordinated approach to developing capabilities within a region will yield additional risk resilience and sustainability for countries, and ensure common service requirements are able to be facilitated.

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.

There is important partnership opportunities between the Arctic Council, in particular AMAP, and WMO. AMAP is defining a number of activities and assessments for example on impacts of climate change, links to extremes and to extend their activities in Arctic ecosystem assessment along with CAFF.

With regards to moving forward, WMO can:

1. provide advice with regards to the AMAP work plan
2. Identify 2-3 exemplars where WMO could have a relevant role, for example:
 - developing an ecosystem operational module that could be applied to sub-seasonal to seasonal prediction (Research to Operation in the context of the Arctic Regional Climate Center)
 - developing climate downscaling for the Arctic, strengthening the link between Arctic CORDEX and the Arctic Regional Climate Centres
 - strengthening the role of social science in the weather-climate production chain
3. Participating to next year SAO (high level segment) meeting (March in Finland) where WMO could discuss with all Arctic Council chairs the best way forward

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.

PEEX - Pan-Eurasian Experiment

The Global Atmosphere Watch (GAW) participates in the "Pan-Eurasian Experiment" (PEEX) international programme (<https://www.atm.helsinki.fi/peex/>), leading by Prof. M. Kulmala, GAW SSC member. PEEX study is a multidisciplinary climate change, air quality, environment and research infrastructure program focused on the Northern Eurasian particularly arctic and boreal regions. It is a bottom up initiative by several European, Russian and Chinese research organizations and institutes. PEEX is open for new institutes to join in. Read more on PEEX - PEEX Science Plan

Alexander participated in the PEEX science conference and board meeting (Helsinki, November 2018), co-leading the PEEX modelling platform; initiated the Northern Urbanization WG in collaboration with GURME, AMAP and PACES.

PACES - Air Pollution in the Arctic: Climate, Environment and Societies

GAW is involved into the PACES: Air Pollution in the Arctic: Climate, Environment and Societies (<http://www.igacproject.org/activities/PACES>). PACES is an emerging IGAC Activity that is being developed to develop collaborative research at the international level on Arctic air pollution. PACES aims to tackle key gaps in our knowledge on air pollution in the Arctic, including poor observational constraints and deficiencies in model representation of key chemical and physical processes. PACES is creating new collaborative efforts between observational (e.g. GAW) and modeling groups, social science researchers and local Arctic communities to address these issues. PACES is also co-operating with WWRP YOPP and PPP. One of its new studies, where GAW is participating, is focusing on Northern urbanization issues: urban anthropogenic impact and air pollution problems for Arctic cities.

Arctic Science Ministerial

The second Arctic Science Ministerial (ASM2) aimed to promote the results of the projects presented at the first ASM and to foster further scientific cooperation among a wide number of countries and representatives of Indigenous Peoples and international organizations with Arctic interests. The ASM2 focused on three themes where an improved and better-coordinated international scientific effort can provide clear opportunities to advance the understanding of the impact of rapid Arctic changes and to respond to major societal challenges in the Arctic and globally: (1) Strengthening, Integrating and Sustaining Arctic Observations, Facilitating Access to Arctic Data, and Sharing Arctic Research Infrastructure; (2) Understanding Regional and Global Dynamics of Arctic Change; and (3) Assessing Vulnerability and Building Resilience of Arctic Environments and Societies.

WMO Secretary-General has been invited to provide a key note speech at the session on "Assessing vulnerability and building resilience of Arctic environments and societies".

The Arctic Science Ministerial (several Ministers in the session) on 26th recognized the role of WMO in enhancing collaboration among Space Agencies, expressed the wish to enhance predictive capabilities in the Arctic and improve confidence in

Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

The West Nordic Council

Date of submission:

11 December 2018

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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.

The West Nordic Council was admitted as an observer to the Arctic Council in May 2017. The West Nordic Council has since then attended SAO-meetings. Furthermore, the West Nordic Council has, as intended, contributed its West Nordic expertise to the Arctic Council's Working Groups and focused mostly on the work of the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG). The West Nordic Council has attended the SDWG-meetings during the period.

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.

The West Nordic Council intends to cooperate closely with the Arctic Council's six Permanent Participants, to provide them with valuable knowledge and insight into the interests and viewpoints of the people of the West Nordic region, while at the same time providing West Nordic parliamentarians with a broader understanding of the challenges of the indigenous peoples in the Arctic.

The West Nordic Council is looking forward to Iceland's chairmanship in the Arctic Council and will collaborate with the chairmanship on introducing the work done in the West Nordic countries on preventing teen substance abuse. The introduction is planned to be held at SDWG's meeting in Isafjördur, Iceland, in September 2019.

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.

Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

International Arctic Science Committee (IASC)

Date of submission:

16 November 2018

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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.

IASC has been an accredited observer of the Arctic Council from its very beginning and is supporting the work of the Arctic Council, its Working Groups (WGs) and Permanent Participants (PPs) by providing scientific expertise from all its members, including the non-Arctic countries. IASC has participated in all SAO and Ministerial meetings, mostly through its Executive Secretary as well as national IASC Council members.

Sustaining Arctic Observing Network (SAON) is an ongoing joint activity. SAON was initiated by IASC and the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP) in 2007 and is now managed by a SAON Board, with the Arctic Council appointing the Chair and IASC appointing the Vice-Chair. Secretarial support is provided by AMAP and IASC. The biennial Arctic Observing Summit (AOS) is held in conjunction with the Arctic Science Summit Week (ASSW) and through SAON both IASC and the Arctic Council are contributing to the program. The most recent AOS was held in June 2018, and its outcomes were delivered to the Arctic Science Ministerial.

IASC has closely cooperated with AMAP for many years. Recent examples include co-organizing a workshop on "Scientific Assessments: Process, Dissemination and Impact" at the AMAP meeting in Reston, Virginia in April 2017, in cooperation with multiple PPs and the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS). This workshop also resulted in a publication in *The Polar Journal*. IASC also continues to send representatives to AMAP meetings, and the AMAP Chair addressed the IASC Council at its meeting in 2018. IASC also coordinated a rigorous review of the AMAP reports on the Adaptation Actions for a Changing Arctic, giving the reports a thorough examination, approval, and authoritative endorsement that accompanies legitimate peer review.

Cooperating with CAFF has grown much stronger since the IASC Secretariat moved to Akureyri two years ago. In addition to the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program (CBMP), to which several IASC scientists are contributing, the IASC Executive Secretary served on the Steering Committee for the Arctic Biodiversity Congress (October 2018), where he also co-chaired a session (with the AMAP Executive Secretary) on "Impact of reduced ice cover in the Arctic marine environment" and served as a rapporteur for multiple other session. When the IASC Executive Committee meets in Akureyri, the CAFF Executive Secretary is also invited to contribute to their meeting and discuss how IASC can better cooperate with CAFF and feed into CAFF's work.

In 2018, IASC and CAFF also co-sponsored a joint Fellowship Program (7,500 Euro from IASC; ~20,000 Euro supported by Sweden). Two fellows were selected, each identified a joint area of interest and expertise, participated in and contribute to CAFF's work, and will produce some culminating output. The inaugural Fellows focused on the Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative (AMBI) and CBMP's Terrestrial Working Group. Fellows participated in the CAFF Board Meeting, working group meetings, and the Arctic Biodiversity Congress as part of their fellowship.

IASC cooperation with PAME has also grown since the co-location of our Secretariats in Akureyri. Like CAFF, when the IASC Executive Committee meets in Akureyri, the PAME Executive Secretary is invited to contribute to their meeting and discuss how IASC can better cooperate with PAME and feed into PAME's work. In addition, IASC nominated three experts to participate in PAME's desktop study on marine litter and plastic pollution; an IASC expert attended a related workshop (in Akureyri, June 2018). IASC has also been represented at multiple workshops on Marine Protected Areas, both in Helsinki, Finland and Cambridge Bay, Canada.

The Arctic Science Summit Week (ASSW) was initiated by IASC in 1999 to provide opportunities for coordination, cooperation and collaboration between the various scientific organizations involved in Arctic research and to economize on travel and time. Since 2013 the Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples Secretariat (IPS) has been involved in the planning of the ASSW and IASC provides travel support up to 15,000 EUR per year to enable the participation of PP representatives in ASSW, in particular as session conveners and presenters.

IASC is also well connected to SDWG and was represented at recent meeting through Malgorzata Smieszek (Fellow of IASC's Social and Human Sciences Working Group (SHWG)) who is also involved in the Arctic Resilience Framework, and Arja Rautio (IASC Social & Human Working Group Member). There is significant overlap in participation and interests between IASC's Social & Human Working Group and the SDWG.

Links with ACAP have been maintained by IASC representation at the ACAP meeting in April 2018 in Toronto, Canada.

IASC also participated in the meetings of multiple other groups. In particular, IASC Vice-President Henry Burgess has participated in the meetings of the Arctic Shipping Best Practices Information Forum and IASC Fellow Manisha Ganeshan participated in the work of the Task Force on Telecommunications Infrastructure in the Arctic (TFTIA).

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.

Over its history, IASC has evolved into the leading international science organization of the North and its membership today includes national science organizations from 23 countries involved in Arctic research, including 15 non-Arctic countries (Austria, China, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland and the UK). IASC is in the position to provide scientific advice on all aspects of Arctic research and during the last years Arctic Council WGs were making use of IASC's broad expertise to ensure the scientific quality of their reports and assessments. IASC hopes to continue in this role in the future.

IASC maintains very good relationships with those Arctic Council WGs addressing scientific questions, in particular AMAP, and CAFF and SDWG. Several members of the IASC family are also involved in activities of these Arctic Council WGs in their national capacity, as experts from either Arctic Council member countries or Observer countries. IASC will continue the cooperation with the Arctic Council WGs and contribute to upcoming activities and assessments. Future engagement from IASC is also expected to align with the forthcoming Strategic Plan of the Arctic Council.

Having IASC's annual scientific summit back to back with an Arctic Council SAO at the ASSW 2016 in Fairbanks was very useful to facilitate the dialogue between science and policy. In spring 2020, IASC will schedule the Arctic Observing Summit and Arctic Science Summit Week to align with the Arctic Council Senior Arctic Officials (SAO) meeting in Akureyri. As was done in Fairbanks in 2016, an International Arctic Assembly Day will provide an excellent opportunity for a dialogue between scientists and policymakers to translate scientific research into specific plans and actions responding to a rapidly changing Arctic.

Supporting the work of the Arctic Council PPs, in particular with respect to Indigenous knowledge, is of high priority for IASC. IASC will continue to provide travel support for Indigenous participants to attend the ASSW 2019 in Arkhangelsk (Russia), ASSW 2020 in Akureyri (Iceland) and future ASSWs.

SAON is an important joint activity of IASC and the Arctic Council. IASC will strengthen SAON, along with its new Strategy and currently-in-progress Implementation Plan. Discussions are moving forward regarding expanded and sustained funding of SAON. IASC will also continue to host the AOS at the ASSW every second year, the 5th Arctic Observing Summit will be held in Akureyri, Iceland in 2020.

Representing all countries engaged in Arctic research, IASC will support the Arctic Council in the implementation of the Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation. Arctic research is international and non-Arctic countries are making invaluable contributions both in terms of scientific expertise and research infrastructure.

Based in Iceland, IASC is also excited to partner on and help support Arctic Council activities and initiatives during the upcoming Icelandic chairmanship, many of which have scientific interest.

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.

In 2017, IASC consulted with the Arctic science community, including the Arctic Council Working Groups and PPs, on the creation and content of a new IASC Strategic Plan. In 2018, IASC released this Strategic Plan for 2018-2023.

Building on the scientific priorities of the ICARP-III (i.e., The Role of the Arctic in the Global System; Observing and Predicting Future Climate Dynamics and Ecosystem Responses; and Understanding the Vulnerability and Resilience of Arctic Environments and Societies and Supporting Sustainable Development; all underpinned by capacity building in Arctic research), IASC will:

- Facilitate Arctic Research Cooperation by
 - ...stimulating and promoting cutting-edge interdisciplinary research
 - ...supporting sustained and coordinated observations
 - ...facilitating data and information management and sharing
- Promoting Arctic Science Engagement by
 - ...building Arctic research capacity
 - ...supporting participation by Indigenous and local residents
 - ...nurturing and expanding IASC partnerships
- Ensure Knowledge Exchange by
 - ...encouraging high-quality scientific output
 - ...transferring knowledge to policy and decision makers
 - ...increasing Arctic science education, outreach, and communication

Recognizing that most of these scientific and organizational priorities are also of great importance to the Arctic Council, IASC will continue to engage WGs and PPs in the implementation of its Strategic Plan.

Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

International Union for Circumpolar Health

Date of submission:

January 1, 2019

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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.

The International Union for Circumpolar Health (IUCH) is an international non-governmental organization, formally established in 1981, with members, adhering bodies and affiliates throughout the circumpolar regions. The IUCH is a multilateral scientific union, which strives to contribute to the growing body of scientific medical and public health research data for the circumpolar regions and globally.

The health and wellness of northern peoples are the focus of the IUCH.

The IUCH is the main organization of its kind dedicated to health in the Arctic and Antarctic and brings together several health organizations from the entire circumpolar region.

The objectives of the IUCH are to:

1. Promote international cooperation in circumpolar health.
2. Encourage and support research and exchange of scientific information in the circumpolar health sciences.
3. Promote education and public awareness of circumpolar health.
4. Provide a means of communication with other scientific organizations.
5. Promote and encourage the participation of indigenous peoples in circumpolar health affairs.

The five adhering bodies include the scientific societies for circumpolar health in the USA, Canada, Denmark/Greenland, the Nordic countries, and the Russian Federation.

In the period since the last report and prior to that, the IUCH has performed many functions that are relevant to the Arctic Council, Arctic Council member states, and the permanent participants. As the lead organization within circumpolar health, the IUCH works together with the SDWG, the AMAP and the Arctic Human Health Expert Group (AHHEG), a subsidiary of the SDWG, and their members. We have also worked closely with many of the other circumpolar organizations, mainly the International Network of Circumpolar Health Researchers (INCHR), the International Association of Circumpolar Health Publishers (IACHP) and the UArctic Thematic Network of Health and Well-being in the Arctic.

In the past period, a non-legally, non-binding Memory of Understanding (MoU) has been made between the IUCH and the University of the Arctic (UArctic) under the Arctic Council. One of the collaborative areas is teaching activities, such as PhD courses in relation to the ICCH congresses. Second, the IUCH has worked with the Arctic Human Health Initiative (AHHI) that advanced the joint research agenda of the Arctic Council, to plan, conduct, and disseminate results of human health studies under the International Polar Year (IPY) 2007-2008. Third, The IUCH has been involved in the Arctic Human Health Expert Group CircHSR proposal (Proposal for a Comparative Review of Circumpolar Health Systems). CircHSR is managed jointly by the Institute for Circumpolar Health Research [ICHR], in Yellowknife, Canada [www.ichr.ca] and the Greenland Institute for Health Research [GIHR] in Nuuk [www.gihr.gl].

A main task for the IUCH is to facilitate sharing of knowledge of circumpolar health and well-being through organizing the tri-annual International Congresses on Circumpolar Health (ICCH). These congresses are the main venue for such information sharing in the circumpolar world and attracts hundreds of researchers, health professionals and indigenous representatives from Canada, Greenland, Denmark, USA, Russia, Norway, Sweden, Iceland, Finland and other countries interested in circumpolar health. These persons come together to share health related research findings and program successes that will improve the quality of life for those living in circumpolar regions.

In recent years the 13th ICCH was held in 2006 in Novosibirsk, Russian Federation; the 14th ICCH in 2009 in Yellowknife, NWT, Canada; the 15th in 2012 in Fairbanks, Alaska, USA; and the 16th in 2015 in Oulu, Finland.

In the days August 12 - 15, 2018, the 17th ICCH conference was held in Copenhagen, Denmark [www.icch208.com]. Approximately 400 participants from all circumpolar and related areas and countries attended the conference. A wide range of health issues relevant to circumpolar populations were presented and discussed through keynote lectures, oral and poster sessions, in addition to a session of AHHEG and SDWG activities in the field of health and wellbeing.

Of particular relevance to the Arctic Council, the ICCH congresses in 2006, 2009 and 2012 were devoted to presentation, discussion and presentation of IPY projects and their results, respectively.

A very important element supported by the IUCH is the International Circumpolar Surveillance (ICS) collaboration, an international network with members from all Arctic countries whose purpose is to carry out circumpolar surveillance and research within infectious diseases. A similarly important element within the IUCH is the presence of a number of scientific working groups within the IUCH. Members of the IUCH are encouraged to sign up and participate in working groups. Examples of a few active IUCH working groups are: 1) The Infectious Disease Working Group with a membership of >100 individuals comprised of many topic-specific subgroups that meet regularly and are engaged in multi-center studies across the Arctic, 2) The Indigenous People's Working Group, 3) The Maternal and Child Health Working Group, 4) The Food Security Working Group, 5) The Birth Defects and Birth Outcomes Working Group, and 6) The Suicide Prevention Working Group. During the 17th ICCH conference a new Working group on Health and the Built Environment and a Network on Mother and Child were formed.

The Working Groups share the general goals and objectives of the IUCH. By focusing on specific fields of interest within circumpolar health, the Working Groups promote and encourage closer collaboration between individuals and institutions involved in improving the health of circumpolar populations. Thus, the work of the working groups is relevant to the Arctic Council.

Both the ICS collaboration and the scientific working groups are Arctic Council endorsed projects that are being reported to the Council through the AHHEG.

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.

The IUCH intends to continue its activities as described above in relation to the Arctic Council, mainly within collaboration, sharing and dissemination of health information through the ICCH congresses and the Working groups.

The IUCH supports the upcoming One Arctic - One Health conference that will be held in Oulu, Finland, February 07-09, 2019, as an integral part of Finland's Arctic Council chairmanship program.

The IUCH will work with the University of the Arctic (UArctic) under the Arctic Council to possibly develop teaching activities under the collaboration.

The IUCH supports the Arctic Council-endorsed project, "Improving Health through Safe and Affordable Access to Household Running Water and Sewer (WASH)" that is co-sponsored by the US and Greenland.

The IUCH will contribute to the work of the Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response Working Group (EPPR). Members of IUCH have expertise in the fields of telehealth and rural and remote medicine. Telehealth and rural/remote medicine themes are included in the triennial ICCH conferences. We have members who are experts in the field of contaminants in the Arctic who can contribute to the Arctic Contaminants Action Program (ACAP) and the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP).

Finally, the IUCH will continue to support the Arctic Council by having its members serve the Arctic Council as SDWG/AHHEG and AMAP/HHAG representatives. Many of the AHHEG country and permanent participant representatives are IUCH members. Essentially, members of the entire group are IUCH members. This provides important cross-linkages between the larger community of Arctic health providers and researchers and the Arctic Council. Thereby the Arctic Council is served by making sure that recognized regional health leaders are engaged in advising AC activities.

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.

The IUCH is interested in remaining an observer to the Arctic Council. The IUCH is the only organization of its kind with elected representatives from across the Arctic and because of this, we work from a "bottom up" perspective. Members of the adhering bodies participate in Work Groups of their choosing (created by them) on issues important to them in the circumpolar world. Through IUCH's observer status, important findings from these Working Groups can then be brought to the attention of the SDWG, the Senior Arctic Officials and the Arctic Council (AC). Observer status on the AC is a very important mechanism for moving information from the grassroots IUCH working groups to higher levels in order to convert research into action and policy. We realize that institutions such as the AHHEG report to the SDWG; however, the mandate of IUCH is broader than that of the AHHEG, and we feel that our two organizations complement each other. We at the IUCH work with the AHHEG at every opportunity to promote improved health throughout the Arctic.

We have and will continue to contribute expertise to the Arctic Council through the findings of our working groups. Groundbreaking work of the IUCH Infectious Disease Working Group has resulted in circumpolar surveillance of infectious disease across all the Arctic countries (except Russia), introduction of Hepatitis B vaccine in Greenland, the formation of a Tuberculosis Surveillance Network across the Arctic that has created reports and papers on circumpolar tuberculosis epidemiology and surveillance systems, and a set of recommendations for treatment of *Helicobacter pylori* infection in circumpolar populations.

The IUCH works with all of the permanent participants of the AC (the Aleut International Association, Arctic Athabaskan Council, Gwich'in Council International, Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC), Sami Council and the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON)) in preparation for sessions at the International Congress on Circumpolar Health which occurs every 3 years. The permanent participants are well represented in scientific sessions and also sessions at the Congress specific to Indigenous peoples. In addition, one of the IUCH Working Groups is the Indigenous People's Working Group which works with and closely interacts with permanent participants on the AC.

Cover sheet

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Date of submission:

30.11.18

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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.

The Northern Forum is an international organization for regional subnational governments in the circumpolar North and a platform for collaboration, sharing experiences and best practices across the North in improving the quality of life and promote sustainable development of northern regions. Representatives of regional governments need to be involved in shaping the international agenda and Arctic policies. Therefore, the Northern Forum has to do a lot of work to develop an effective mechanism for regional government involvement in international Arctic cooperation and strengthening the role of regions in the Arctic Council.

During 2017-2018 the Northern Forum was represented at following Arctic Council events:

Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting, May 8-14, 2017

The Northern Forum was represented in InterChange program by the Executive Director of the Northern Forum, Mikhail Pogodaev and Executive Director of the Institute of the North Nils Andreassen. Yegor Makarov, a NF business partner/director of Clean Water LLC and Nikolai Gabyshev, Muus Khaia Restaurant Chief from Yakutsk joined them during the North by North program. The Northern Forum made a contribution in the following events:

- Seminar on Arctic Council EALLU: Arctic Indigenous Youth, Arctic Change and Food Culture

The Northern Forum is one of the project participants.

- Arctic Mayors Roundtable, May 11

A member of the Northern Forum, Mayor of Akureyri Eirkur Björn Björgvinsson and Regional Coordinator Katrín Ríkarsdóttir participated in the Roundtable.

- Northern Local Food Tasting, May 13

Head Chef of Muus Khaia restaurant Nikolai Gabyshev took part in the festival on behalf of the Northern Forum.

- Arctic Film Festival, May 14

A film called 24 Snows by the Northern Forum business partner, Director of Clean Water LLC Egor Makarov, Siien Ekeréby Sergei Yermolaev, and When Gods Come Closer by Eduard Novikov were presented with great success.

- The panel discussion on US-Russia cooperation in the Arctic, May 14

Discussion mostly focused on the history of interaction within the Northern Forum, as well as the new opportunities to strengthen the cooperation in light of Alaska's return to the Northern Forum.

- CAFF meeting in Kautokeino, February 1-2, 2017

Executive Director of the Northern Forum, Mikhail Pogodaev and NF Environment and Conservation of Biodiversity working group Chair, the Minister of Nature Protection of Sakha Republic (Yakutia) Sakhamin Afanasev presented the Northern

Feodosiya Gabysheva presented the International Arctic School project initiated by the Head of Sakha Republic (Yakutia) Yegor Borisov. Mikhail Pogodaev presented the current actions on the EALLU: Arctic Indigenous Youth, Arctic Change and Food Culture. The Northern Forum's Human in the Arctic a project initiated by Sakha Republic (Yakutia), promotional work was continued and it was agreed to perform a more detailed study with participation of Sweden, Norway, Canada and the United States

ÄAC SAO meeting in Oulu, October 25-26, 2017

The Northern Forum was represented by the Governor of Lapland Mika Riipi and NF Executive Director, Mikhail Pogodaev.

A special session devoted to the current and potential future contributions of Arctic Council's Observers in Arctic pollution prevention took place. The Northern Forum was represented by the Governor of Lapland Mika Riipi, who presented information on NF member-regions' activities, and on main achievements and challenges faced by regional governments on pollution prevention in the Arctic. Upon NF Secretariat's request, the following regions have sent their proposals on this matter: Alaska, Akureyri, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug, Sakha Republic (Yakutia), Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug and Magadan Oblast. All these proposals were submitted to the Arctic Council also in writing.

Another item broadly discussed by Senior Arctic Officials and Permanent Participants was the education. The discussion noted the experience of Russian regions (Sakha Republic (Yakutia) and Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug) in a development of the Nomadic Schools System and an implementation of the project Arctic Children: Preschool Education

2018

ÄMeeting of the Arctic Council's Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME) Working Group, Quebec, Canada, 12-14 February

The Northern Forum was represented by Jim Gamble, Senior Researcher at the Institute of the North, presenting the proposals of the Northern Forum member regions on agenda items, as well as on issues that are part of the work of the Working Group, such as the implementation of the provisions of the International Polar Code, traditions and culture indigenous peoples in the use of sea spaces for navigation, fishing and sea hunting, the use of fuel in the delivery of goods to the Arctic communities, etc.

ÄThe Arctic Council's SDWG Meeting, Levi, Finland, March 19-20

International seminar "Atlas of renewable energy in the Arctic " August 29-31, 2018 Executive Director of the Northern Forum Mikhail Pogodaev gave a presentation, where he he talked about international cooperation between the Northern regions and told about its main projects, including the development of renewable energy in an isolated and remote northern settlements.

ÄArctic Biodiversity Congress 2018, Rovaniemi, Finland, October 9-12

The Executive Director of the Northern Forum, Mikhail Pogodaev, and the Chairman of the Working Group on Environment and Biodiversity, Minister of Ecology, Nature Management and Forestry of the Sakha Republic (Russia) Sakhamin Afanasev, participated in the work sessions of the Congress.

ÄThe Arctic Council's SDWG Meeting, Rovaniemi, Finland, October 29

A delegation from the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) took part in this meeting on behalf of the Northern Forum. The delegation was composed of Feodosia Gabysheva Ö Chair of NF WG on Education and Research, Mikhail Pogodaev - Executive Director of the Northern Forum Secretariat, Natalia Sitnikova - Director of

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Actions to develop the Northern Forum's policy for participation in the Arctic Council:

ÄTo create a regular data collection mechanism on the NF member regions proposals and information on topical issues, which are discussed in the Arctic Council. Thus we will be able to create a communication channel and gradually synchronize our activities with the activities of the Arctic Council, as well as to show the participants of the Arctic Council that we can contribute to the debate on Sustainable Development of the High North

ÄTo implement Northern Forum's and Arctic Portal's joint project entitled "Arctic Business Directory". The Arctic Business Directory will develop a web-based, interoperable, state-of-the-art data service and communication system supporting sustainable development in the Arctic region. It will provide information services on themes initially focusing on the economy and businesses in the Arctic region, (could later be expanded to include tourism, culture and environment), in intelligent formats through maps, diagrams and charts, with analytical and support features such as queries, search, communication, scenarios and download functions in an easy-to-use open source format

ÄTo create an effective mechanism of regional government participation in the international Arctic cooperation and strengthening the regions role in the Arctic Council.

ÄTo continue the promotion of human in the Arctic and International Arctic School project initiatives for endorsement as the Arctic Council projects under the SDWG working group.

ÄTo start a cooperative work between Northern Forum and Youth Ecological Forum and CAFF/WWF Arctic Youth Summit

ÄTo strengthen the Northern Forum member regions current involvement in the Arctic Council projects and to urge the Northern Forum member regions to take part, if possible, in the following projects of the Arctic Council:

- Arctic Adaptation Exchange Portal
- Arctic Energy Summit
- Arctic Remote Energy Networks Academy (ARENA)
- Assessing, Monitoring and Promoting Arctic Indigenous Languages
- The Arctic as a Food Producing Region
- Arctic Renewable Energy Atlas (AREA)
- Arctic Children ÖPreschool Education
- Arctic Children ÖSchool Education (International Arctic School)
- Improving Health in Arctic Communities through Safe and Affordable Access to Household Running Water and Sewer: Water, Sanitation and Health (WASH)
- Circumpolar Local Environmental Observer Network (CLEO) and Local Environmental Observer Network (LEO)
- A new report on the Arctic Freshwater System in a Changing Climate
- The Arctic Invasive Alien Species (ARIAS) Strategy and Action Plan
- Enhanced interaction on Search and Rescue (SAR) in the Arctic
- Efforts to support a pan-Arctic network of marine protected areas (MPAs)

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XIII General Assembly of the Northern Forum took place on 11-12 April 2018 in Krasnoyarsk, Russia, and was organized by joint efforts of the Government of Krasnoyarsk Krai, Agency for Development of Northern Territories and Indigenous Support of Krasnoyarsk Krai, Northern Forum Secretariat. The General Assembly coincided with 15th Krasnoyarsk Economic Forum that was held from April 12 to April 14, 2018. The General Assembly included 2 roundtables devoted to project activities and NF strategy, open and executive meetings of the Regional Coordinators Committee, meeting of the Board of Governors. The overarching theme of the General Assembly was *The Northern Forum: Present and Future*

The Northern Forum's project *Youth Eco Forum (YEF)* was created to support comprehensive and balanced environmental education in order to realize the creative and leadership potential of Northern Youth. On April 13-16, 2017, Salekhard, Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, hosted the 2017 Northern Forum's Youth Eco-Forum on the theme of *The Arctic is Our Home*. On October 6-10, 2018, Rovaniemi, Lapland, Finland, hosted the 2018 Northern Forum's Youth Eco-Forum on the theme of *Voice of Northern Regions Youth for biodiversity conservation*. During the YEF-2018 participants, as observers, were involved in events of the International Congress on the Conservation of Arctic Biodiversity. The Northern Forum considers the opportunity to start a cooperative work between Northern Forum's Youth Ecological Forum and Arctic Youth Summit.

On October 21 in Reykjavik, Iceland, the Northern Forum organized a breakout session as a part of the 2018 Arctic Circle Assembly. Agenda of the breakout session: "The Strategy of the Northern Forum - Strengthening the Voice of Northern Regions Governments". Participants of the meeting discussed prepared by the regional experts' amendments to the draft of the Northern Forum strategy written by Lapland, strategic cooperation issues and future cooperation plans.

Northern Forum's Regional Coordinators Committee (RCC) meeting took place at Naryan-Mar, Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Russia, on November 21-23, 2018. The RCC Meeting was held hand in hand with the international conference Arctic Telemedicine, organized by the Government of Nenets AO. During the Regional Coordinators Committee's meeting it was decided to approve the Northern Forum's Strategy at a meeting of the Northern Forum's Board of Governors, which will be held within the framework of International forum *The Arctic: Territory of Dialogues* in Arkhangelsk on April, 2019.

Cover sheet

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Oceana

Date of submission:

11/29/2018

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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.

Oceana was granted observer status in May of 2017 at the 10th Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Fairbanks, Alaska. That meeting served as our re-introduction to the Arctic Council and its members, and has allowed us the opportunity to share our ideas, expertise and approaches to ocean conservation in the Arctic.

The past 18 months have been a process of discovery, as we explored the best avenues for Oceana to contribute to the Council's work, including participating in working groups and observing and engaging in a number of Ministerial and Scientific meetings.

For example, in September of 2017 at the Protecting Arctic Marine Environment PAME-II meeting in Helsinki we presented our Ecological Atlas of the Bering, Beaufort and Chukchi Seas. The atlas integrates indigenous knowledge with academic science to provide as clear a picture as possible of the diversity and distribution of fish, birds, marine mammals, invertebrates and other elements that compose the marine ecosystem of the United States Arctic region.

The atlas was well received both during the presentation and throughout the meeting, where we shared hard copies and digital versions with interested participants.

In our domestic work in the United States tools like our atlas have proven invaluable as a way to share the best available science with policymakers, stakeholders and the public in an easy to understand format. Responsible ocean management practices must be based on as much good science and information as possible, and tools like the Ecological Atlas of the Bering, Beaufort and Chukchi Seas can play an essential role in those decisions.

It is our hope that as these atlases returned with Council members to their home countries they sparked conversations, broadened perspectives and deepened an understanding of not only the ecosystems of the U.S. Arctic, but of how Arctic nations and participants can create new tools to better understand the current state of Arctic marine ecosystems and further our shared goal of a sustainable Arctic for all.

The Ecological Atlas of the Bering, Beaufort and Chukchi Seas also provides an excellent example of Oceana's approach to ocean conservation, rooted in sound science and a precautionary approach to development, particularly in the face of rapid climate change and other stressors that are already impacting our oceans in ways we do not yet understand.

Over the past 18 months Oceana worked to share that approach and our perspectives and expertise at the Arctic Council and the Protecting Arctic Marine Environments (PAME) working group, particularly within the Sustainable Development, Marine Protected Areas, and Ecosystem Approaches discussions. Each of these goals overlap well with Oceana's overall mission and years of campaign work for healthy oceans. As we became more familiar with the Arctic Council process we found more ways to contribute, whether bringing new scientific ideas to the table or helping to explore collaborative and productive policy solutions for protecting ocean ecosystems.

Oceana has a long and successful history of identifying and protecting Important Ecological Areas in the United States, while still providing for opportunities for responsible, sustainable fishing and other economic activity in the ocean. Oceana scientists brought that unique history and expertise to PAME workgroup meetings focused on Marine Protected Areas, assisting in the development of specific language and advising on existing projects and products created by the workgroup, as well as bringing new ideas to the table based on our domestic work.

To that same end, at the Arctic Biodiversity Congress in October in Rovaniemi, Finland, Oceana scientist Jon Warrenchuk gave a presentation entitled "A Methodology for Identifying Important Ecological Areas in the Arctic" at the Status, Challenges and Opportunities for Arctic Ocean Protection and Governance session. The presentation and subsequent panel discussion was well received and provided another opportunity to share our national work on Important Ecological Areas and the potential opportunities for the principles and practices of that work to be expanded within the Arctic Council and across Arctic nations.

Oceana also submitted a statement for consideration at the concurrent Arctic Environment Ministers Meeting, highlighting our support and offering assistance as Arctic countries look to act on the adoption and implementation of United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14.5, which calls for the world to conserve at least 10 percent of coastal and marine areas by 2020.

In November of 2018 at the Senior Arctic Officials Meeting in Rovaniemi, Oceana Deputy Vice President Susan Murray presented observer comments focused on Oceana's ongoing work to protect biodiversity in the world's oceans, and how that approach could be expanded into international forums, especially the Arctic Council. This included referencing much of the contributions mentioned above, including our atlases and Important Ecological Areas work, as well as highlighting Global Fishing Watch, a free, globally available online tool developed by Oceana that tracks fishing vessel activity around the world.

We continue to appreciate the chance to add value to the Arctic Council, its working groups and projects focused on best practices for environmental assessments, ecosystem-based approaches to ocean management, and how Marine Protected Areas contribute to the health of ocean ecosystems.

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.

Oceana appreciates the work of the Arctic Council to encourage collaboration and the sharing of information and ideas amongst all Arctic peoples and stakeholders. This work is key in advancing a global Arctic vision based on sustainable development and environmental protection for the region's remarkable ecosystems and vibrant communities.

Our scientists and policy experts anticipate continuing to engage within the Protecting Arctic Marine Environments (PAME) working group, including at the MPA, Ecosystem Approaches and Sustainable Development discussions and gatherings. Our ongoing work in the U.S. Arctic will also continue to intersect with the work of the Arctic Council, as new industries look to the north and the world races to keep up with the impacts of climate change, which is already happening at an accelerated and frightening rate in the Arctic.

We look forward to sharing our Arctic expertise and continuing to add value to Arctic Council discussions and products, both at Arctic Council meetings as well as outside of those gatherings where appropriate. To that end, we anticipate working with members of the Arctic Council to help achieve United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14.5, which calls for the world to conserve at least 10 percent of coastal and marine areas by 2020. The Arctic Council affirmed that goal at the Fairbanks meeting in 2017, and Oceana is uniquely positioned to assist in evaluating and advising on progress towards that goal, based on the best available science and in the context of representativeness and connectivity across the Large Marine Ecosystems of the Arctic.

To preserve marine biodiversity, it is essential to know what is in the ocean, what the threats are, and what we are at risk of losing. Oceana's ecological atlases and other tools and expertise can assist the Council and the PAME working group to answer those questions, and we remain excited to contribute to Council's efforts to preserve the health of the marine ecosystems of the Arctic for generations to come.

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.

Oceana is the world's largest conservation organization solely dedicated to protecting the world's oceans. Our campaign-based approach brings science, law and the public to work for policy victories that help protect ocean habitats, maintain biodiversity, combat climate change and pollution, and ensure the world's oceans are healthy to sustain marine life and feed the world for generations to come.

In large part due to our campaigns in the United States, large areas of the Beaufort, Chukchi and Bering seas now have precautionary measures in place to protect marine ecosystems from excessive industrial fishing, shipping, and oil and gas development. Oceana, in concert with our partners and working with local communities, was instrumental in the development and eventual enactment of policies that can serve as models for other potential conservation activities across the Arctic.

In addition, Oceana and partners developed Global Fishing Watch, which tracks all fishing vessels across the globe using Automatic Identification System (AIS) technology. This free and globally available tool has already been a valuable part of identifying and preventing illegal or unregulated fishing practices around the world, and will be an essential tool to gather information and enforce regulations in the Arctic as an increasingly ice-free world leads to an influx of new vessel traffic and new industries.

We remain committed to a science-based, precautionary approach to protect ocean ecosystems, and share the Arctic Council's vision to create "more integrated approaches to address both existing and emerging challenges of the Arctic marine and coastal environments," as highlighted by the Protecting Arctic Marine Ecosystems working group. Key to these efforts is integrating all aspects of the best available science, including indigenous knowledge, to present the clearest picture of what is happening in our oceans, when and where it is happening, and how it might affect the marine life, ocean ecosystems and people.

Our campaign work to protect U.S. and other national Arctic marine ecosystems naturally intersects with the ongoing work of the Arctic Council. Just as the fish, marine mammals, birds and invertebrates of Arctic marine ecosystems cross international boundaries, so do the benefits of sustainable practices developed and implemented within each Arctic nation.

Cover sheet

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Date of submission:

27 November 2018

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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. Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience

WWF has been active in the work of Arctic Resilience Forum.

For example, we have contributed to Arctic Resilience Action Framework and participated to the Arctic Resilience Forum in the 10-11 September 2018 in Rovaniemi, Finland.

2. Stewardship of the Arctic Marine Environment

WWF has initiated a project called the Pan-Arctic Marine Protected Areas Network (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. All final results as well as intermediate outputs will be shared with the Arctic Council and its bodies and submitted to other relevant bodies to inform planning and management decisions.

We are actively contributing the Arctic marine shipping at both PAME and EPPR. At PAME, we work on underwater noise disturbance, finding alternatives to heavy fuel, grey water issues and low impacts shipping corridors. We have also contributed to Polar Code harmonization and linking of Polar code II to work of the IMO.

At EPPR, WWF has presented our oil spill response capabilities and contributed to oil spill response in indigenous communities' work. We arranged workshop jointly with EPPR on a similar subject area at CAFF Arctic Biodiversity Congress in Rovaniemi in October 2018. We have contributed to ASMA refresh, ASTD discussion and CASA, opportunities to contribute to mapping and risk assessments via the provision of sensitivity data.

WWF also contributed material to and have taken part in every meeting of PAME's Arctic Shipping best practice forum.

3. Conservation of Arctic Biodiversity

WWF, together with Canada and OSPAR, co-led a work item in the PAME working group that produced a report titled: underwater noise in the Arctic: a State of Knowledge Review. This report is planned to be final by May 2019.

WWF became a member of the Marine working group of CAFF in 2018. WWF was also part of the advisory committee for the Arctic Biodiversity Congress in Rovaniemi, October 2018. At the congress, WWF chaired or co-chaired five sessions and participated in an additional seven sessions. WWF also published a special edition of our Arctic magazine, the Circle, to be released in conjunction with the CAFF Arctic Biodiversity Congress, and fully devoted to the congress.

Together with CAFF, we organized the Arctic Youth Summit, which was held in parallel with the Arctic Biodiversity Congress 2018, October 5-12, 2018 to facilitate engagement by youth representatives with various stakeholders present at the Congress regarding conservation and the sustainable use of Arctic biodiversity. The objective was to create spaces or opportunities for dialogue amongst youth and with the appropriate people around the world to share their perspectives.

We also published a special edition of our Arctic magazine the Circle fully devoted to Arctic Biodiversity, parallel with the CAFF Biodiversity Congress.

5. Sustainable Development

WWF participated in Arctic Environmental Impact Assessment workshop in Rovaniemi in December 2017.

We have participated in all Sustainable working group meetings since fall 2017 and provided a presentation on Arctic Blue Economy as an information item in the meeting held in March 2018.

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

Further contribute to the Adaptation Actions for a Changing Arctic and the Arctic Resilience

2. Stewardship of the Arctic Marine Environment

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 will of course depend on one of the Arctic states taking the lead to continue work on this topic, which ideally would be a cross-cutting initiative across multiple working groups and would include substantial involvement by Permanent Participants.

3. Conservation of Arctic Biodiversity

WWF will continue to be a member of the Marine Working Group of CAFF. See also above, which applies if a work item on underwater noise is taken up jointly by CAFF. WWF would also like to continue to facilitate Arctic Youth Engagement with the Arctic Council.

4. Oil and Gas Spills Prevention and Response

WWF plans to engage actively on the EPPR project: Guidelines and tools for marine risk assessments in the Arctic Region.

5. Sustainable development

WWF plans to develop a project under the concept of Arctic Blue Economy at the Sustainable Development working group.

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.

6. Other future plans

We plan to follow and contribute to the development of Arctic Council's working groups' work plans, where appropriate, and identify opportunities to engage with Arctic states, Permanent Participants and other Observers in emerging projects during the next chairmanship period.

We plan to continue to play a role in promoting the protection and conservation of the Arctic region as partners in the implementation of the Arctic Council's decisions and recommendations and translating its principles into practical actions at local, national, regional and global level.

We will also publish a second edition of Arctic Council Conservation Scorecards to support strong and transparent mechanisms to monitor national implementation of Arctic Council decisions and recommendations.

Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

The European Union

Date of submission:

3 December 2018

Observer's website, if appropriate:

External Action Service:	https://eeas.europa.eu/arctic-policy/eu-arctic-policy_en
Maritime Affairs and Fisheries:	http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/maritimeaffairs_fisheries/
Climate Action:	http://ec.europa.eu/clima/
Environment:	http://ec.europa.eu/environment/index_en.htm
Research & innovation:	http://ec.europa.eu/research/index.cfm
Joint Research Centre:	https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en
Mobility & transport:	http://ec.europa.eu/transport/home_en
Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs:	http://ec.europa.eu/growth/
European Environment Agency:	http://www.eea.europa.eu/

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Is the European Union still interested in obtaining status as an Observer of the Arctic Council?

Yes No

Observer Report

Please describe in no more than 2 pages your state 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. If applicable, please include mention of collaboration with Permanent Participants, such as project proposal endorsement and support.

The EU avails itself of this opportunity to update the Arctic Council on the EU's Arctic Policy and the EU's engagement in the work of the Arctic Council and subsidiary bodies. This report is submitted in line with the EU's application for observer status and the Arctic Council's decision to extend a standing invitation for the EU to attend its sessions at all levels.

Joint Communication on an integrated European Union policy for the Arctic

On 27 April 2016, the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy published the Joint Communication on an integrated EU policy for the Arctic. It has 3 main pillars: climate change/safeguarding the Arctic environment; promoting sustainable development in the region; and supporting international cooperation on Arctic issues. Science, research and innovation have a key role to play across these substantive areas. The EU is engaging with all Arctic partners including indigenous peoples.

While the Arctic states have primary responsibility for tackling issues within their territories, many of the issues affecting the Arctic region can be more effectively addressed through regional and multilateral cooperation. In many regional and multilateral fora the EU and its Member States are working together on data collection, setting objectives, negotiating agreements with international partners of relevance to the Arctic.

The EU's engagement in the Arctic Council

The EU is engaged in several Arctic Council Working Groups, Task Forces and Expert Groups. This work is being conducted by staff from several Directorate-Generals (DG) of the European Commission and EU agencies, currently including DG for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) and the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), DG for Climate Action (DG CLIMA), DG for Environment (DG ENV) and the European Environment Agency (EEA), DG for Research and Innovation (DG RTD), the Joint Research Centre (DG JRC), DG for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE), Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) and the European External Action Service (EEAS).

Working Groups

AMAP - Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme:

DG JRC attends the annual AMAP meetings; it provides expertise to the ongoing assessments of Short Lived Climate Pollutants and on Mercury with its modelling work and attends the meetings of the associated expert groups.

- The EU-PolarNet initiative supports 22 European research institutions to develop an integrated EU Polar research programme and facilitates the coordination of data and infrastructure between all partner organisations. AMAP sits on the steering committee of this initiative and is a beneficiary of EU-PolarNet.

- The EU finances a project, through its Partnership Instrument, to contribute to developing collective responses to reduce black carbon emissions in the Arctic region and regions with impact on the Arctic (transboundary air pollution) and to the reinforcement of international cooperation on Arctic environment. The project started at the end of 2017 and will run for 3 years. The Secretariat of AMAP is the implementing organisation.

CAFF - Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna:

- EEA provided input to the Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative on bird populations gathered under the EU Birds Directive to support the work of this Initiative, and in particularly the European Flyway.

PAME - Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment:

- EEA has been participating and engaging in PAME meetings, including sharing European experiences at the Marine Protected Areas Science Workshop arranged by PAME.
- DG MOVE has been engaging in the work of the Shipping Expert Group.
- In the EU's Joint Communication from 2016 on an International ocean governance agenda for the future of our oceans, the European Commission (lead: DG MARE) outlines key issues related to the protection of the marine environment, proposing concrete actions to be undertaken, such as a strategy on plastics, addressing marine litter.

SDWG - Sustainable Development Working Group:

- DG JRC attends SDWG meetings. Together with EEA they participated in the Drafting Committee of the Arctic Resilience Action Framework (ARAF) now under the SDWG and currently provide expertise to the ongoing activities of both ARAF and the Arctic sustainable energy futures toolkit.
- EU 2014-2020 Northern Periphery and Arctic (NPA) Programme provides support and funding for projects to develop competitive and sustainable communities in the Arctic region, examples of which have been presented to the SDWG. A number of projects involving Arctic Partners are included in the current programme.
- DG MARE set up an Arctic Stakeholder Forum (ASF) to identify joint investment priorities for the coming years and to better streamline EU funding programmes for the Arctic region. To discuss the results of the ASF, DG MARE organised an Arctic Stakeholder conference in September 2018. The EU would be pleased to share the final results of this consultation (12/2017) with the SDWG.
- DG MARE continues to work on boosting the blue economy through targeted activities in relevant maritime economic sectors and would be pleased to share information and knowledge with the SDWG.

Task Forces

TFAMC - Task Force on Arctic Marine Cooperation:

- DG MARE has participated in TFAMC since its initiation and contributes its experience to the discussion. In addition, the 2016 Joint Communication on Ocean Governance addresses some of the key issues dealt by the Task Force, such as marine stewardship.

SCTF - Scientific Cooperation Task Force:

- DG RTD represents the EU at meetings of the SCTF (which did not meet in 2017-18).

TFICA - Task Force on Improved Connectivity in the Arctic:

- DG Grow participates in TFICA.

Expert Groups

EGBCM - Expert Group on Black Carbon and Methane:

- At expert level, DG JRC has previously contributed to the Task Force on Methane and Black Carbon and continues to contribute to the EGBCM. The EEA has contributed through the annual updates of the EU MS GHG inventories, which includes methane.

If applicable, please describe in no more than 1 page your state 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.

Continuation of the aforementioned activity/contributions.

If applicable, please describe in no more than 1 page your state 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.

The EU's general engagement in Arctic-relevant issues (beyond the Arctic Council)

The EU also engages in other contexts focusing on Arctic matters, including the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) and the Northern Dimension framework (ND). Moreover, the EU is engaging in a number of contexts which address Arctic matters as a part of general activities. This relates to a number of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), e.g. UNFCCC, CBD, Montreal Protocol and OSPAR. The EU is also engaged in a number of forums which touch upon Arctic matters in parts of their work, e.g. IMO, OSPAR Commission and UNEP. The EU organizes its own Indigenous Dialogue to exchange views and agree on areas for further cooperation, particularly in relation to sustainable development and human rights. Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council are invited to participate in this dialogue. The EU continues to provide funding for various initiatives to support indigenous peoples in the Arctic region (e.g. the Saami) especially through the Interreg Nord programme.

The EU successfully negotiated concluded with nine other countries a binding multilateral agreement to prevent unregulated high seas fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean. The Agreement creates a moratorium on commercial fishing in the Central Arctic Ocean, initially for 16 years after entry into force.

Together with Germany and Finland, the EU (lead: DG RTD) prepared and co-hosted the Second Arctic Science Ministerial (ASM2; Berlin on 25-26 Oct. 2018 (www.arcticsscienceministerial.org)). 25 Governments and the EU participated. They were joined by the representatives of the Indigenous Peoples' organisations, which are PPs to the Arctic Council, and by representatives from ten international organisations engaged in Arctic science.

The European Commission (lead: DG RTD) and the European Environment Agency (EEA) both have a seat on the board of the Sustained Arctic Observer Network (SAON), and EEA has a representative in SAON's sub-committee on Arctic Data (ADC).

The EU is providing finance for research and activities and supporting trans-national access to terrestrial research infrastructures and research icebreakers, which are of general relevance to the Arctic. Several DGs (e.g. DG MARE, DG MOVE, DG ENV etc.), as well as the EEA, use and promote scientific findings in their assessment products where Arctic aspects are addressed.

The EU Research and Innovation Framework Programme 'Horizon 2020' funded a €40 million Arctic research package for 2016-17. Within this package, Arctic observations are a key element. By now, 4 projects have been selected: a project to extend, improve, and unify Arctic observation systems, creating an integrated data access platform (INTAROS); two exploring the predictability of Arctic climate and its impact at lower latitudes to improve models and contribute to the design of appropriate observing systems and better climate services (APPLICATE/Blue Action); one aiming at determining the impact of thawing land, coast and subsea permafrost on both the global climate and humans in the Arctic.

Moreover, a new phase of an existing project to provide scientists with access to a network of research and observation stations across the whole Arctic (INTERACT) has been recently funded under Horizon 2020; and EU Earth observation programmes are providing new, powerful observation coverage and operational services in the Arctic (Copernicus and Galileo).). The EEA, in its role as coordinator of the in situ data across Copernicus services, is currently looking into the Arctic and Copernicus' (Space and Services) requirements for observational data.

In the climate change context, DG CLIMA has contributed actively to the '1,5 degree' report (from IPCC/8 Oct 2019) which stresses that 0,5 celcius warming over the next century could make all the difference when it comes to the probability of future ice-free summers in the Arctic. The EU has set ambitious climate and energy goals for 2030. In 2018 the EU raised our targets on renewables and energy efficiency, which will also allow the EU to achieve higher greenhouse gas emission reductions than the 40% target agreed by EU Heads of State and Government in 2014. In 2017, the EU, its Member States and the European Investment Bank together contributed €20,4 billion in public climate finance towards developing countries (roughly half of total global public climate finance). At COP 24 in Dec 2018, the EU is determined to conclude the negotiations on the "Paris Work Programme" to enable the Paris Agreement on Climate Change to be fully implemented and achieving global progress on curbing emissions.

The EU (lead: DG REGIO) runs INTERREG programmes to support regional development and international operation in the Euro-Arctic Region (focus on innovation, entrepreneurship, energy efficiency, natural and cultural assets, transport and common labour market). Two programmes are cross-border (Finland/Sweden/Norway) and two cover larger areas; one involves 11 countries around the Baltic Sea, whilst the NPA programme stretches from Western Russia to Eastern Canada passing by Fenno-Scandia, Ireland, Scotland, Faroe Islands, Iceland and Greenland.

EU Cohesion Policy significantly supports investments in the Arctic region, in particular through a strong emphasis on research and innovation, SME competitiveness and supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy.

The EU is proposing a new Arctic research package for the years 2019-20. Future activities in this domain will address: Ice sheet/glacier dynamics and contributions to global sea-level change; changes in Arctic biodiversity and related impacts also on indigenous populations and local communities; sustainable opportunities in a changing Arctic, in a sustainable development perspective; development of Arctic Standards for technologies and services; Arctic observations; The role of Polar climate in the Earth System.

With regards to maritime aspects of the goals of the Arctic Council, since 2007 the EU's European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) has been delivering CleanSeaNet, a satellite-based oil spill detection service covering all European sea areas, as well as waters around Greenland (funded by Copernicus Maritime Surveillance Services). EMSA's other pollution response services (e.g. oil spill response vessels, dispersants, Equipment Assistance Service (EAS), information services in case of chemical incidents) can be requested by the EU and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) coastal Member States of the Arctic region. Also the lately developed RPAS services can be requested for extensive monitoring and surveillance.

The EU (lead: DG MARE) will develop a multi-resolution map of the entire seabed and overlying water column in seas and oceans around Europe by 2020 (will include Barents Sea from 2018).

The European Fisheries Control agency (EFCA) assists Member States in ensuring uniform and effective implementation of fisheries conservation and control measures. A specific framework for operational coordination of fisheries control activities has been developed for the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) and the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO), known as a joint deployment plan (JDP). The NAFO and NEAFC JDP are coordinated by EFCA (since 2007 for NAFO and 2008 for NEAFC). EFCA also contributes to studies that the European Space Agency (ESA) is conducting to determine user requirements for an Arctic satellite mission.

DG GROW is investigating the potential synergies between the various current (Galileo, EGNOS, Copernicus) and future (GOVSATCOM, Space Situational Awareness) space programmes for the Arctic. A breakout session was organised on this topic in the Arctic Circle Conference 2018 and a study by DG JRC is starting (to be completed mid-2019).