

Instructions for submitting Observer reports

Introduction

This document provides the reporting template and instructions for Observers required to report during the **Icelandic Chairmanship (2019-2021)**.

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

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

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

¹ These include Observers admitted at the 2019 Rovaniemi Ministerial meeting, who will be reviewed for the first time during the Russian Federation's Chairmanship (2021-2023).

Role of Observers

The role and responsibilities of Observers, as well as criteria for admission to the Arctic Council, can be found in the “Arctic Council Rules of Procedure” (Annex 2) and the “[Observer Manual for Subsidiary Bodies](#).”

The primary role of Observers is to observe the work of the Arctic Council. Observers contribute to the Arctic Council primarily through engagement at the level of Working Groups, Task Forces, and/or Expert Groups. Observers are invited to the meetings and other activities of the Arctic Council unless the Senior Arctic Officials decide otherwise. Observers may also propose projects through an Arctic State or a Permanent Participant.

Report submission

Observer reports should include the relevant information described below and in the template.

- (a) A description of the Observer’s contributions to the work of the Arctic Council since the time of the Observer’s most recent submission, or in the previous two years, with special focus on contributions to the subsidiary bodies through project participation and support, as well as collaboration with Permanent Participants;
- (b) If applicable, a description of the Observer’s future plans to contribute to the work of the Arctic Council, with special focus on contributions to the subsidiary bodies through project participation and support, as well as collaboration with Permanent Participants; and,
- (c) If applicable, a description of the Observer’s contributions to other aspects of the Arctic Council and its goals not covered in the previous sections since the time of the Observer’s most recent submission, or in the previous two years.

Observer reports should be submitted electronically to the **Arctic Council Secretariat** via email: acs@arctic-council.org not later than **1 December 2020**. Please bear in mind while preparing your report that all Observer reports will be published online in the *Observer* section of the [Arctic Council online Library](#).

If an Observer fails to submit a report, the Arctic Council will consider this to mean that the Observer **is no longer interested in maintaining its status** as an accredited Observer to the Arctic Council.

Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

The People's Republic of China

Date of submission:

30 November 2020

Observer's website, if appropriate:

Information for appropriate contact person

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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.

China highly values the positive role of the Arctic Council ("Council") in Arctic affairs and recognizes it as the main inter-governmental forum on issues regarding the environment and sustainable development of the Arctic. Since becoming an accredited observer to the Council in 2013, China has participated in Arctic affairs in accordance with the principles of "respect, cooperation, win-win result and sustainability". China stands by the commitments it made when applying to become observer and fully supports the work of the Council. China has participated in all inter-governmental meetings open to the observers under the framework of the Council and dispatches experts to participate in the work of the Council including its Working Groups and Task Forces.

In June 2018, China submitted its first Observer Review Report, providing a description of its relevant activities since its accretion as an observer to the Council, and successfully passed the review on the 11th Ministerial Meeting of the Council. In reference to the Rules of Procedure of the Council, this report will mainly describe China's activities and contributions to the work of the Council, including its Working Groups, Task Forces and Expert Groups since June 2018. In the past more than two years, China has continuously taken part in the relevant work including but not limited to the following aspects:

1.ACAP: Mr. Meng Fan, Researcher of the Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences participated in the work of ACAP, mainly on the work of black carbon and methane related projects and research reports. In March 2020, China recommended two engineers from Polar Research Institute of China to the projects related to solid waste management in Arctic.

2.AMAP: In April 2019, Ms. Wang Xiaoping, Researcher of Chinese Academy of Sciences and two experts participated in the Workshop on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and Climate Change in Stockholm, Sweden. In the discussion of the assessment report on POPs and climate change, Chinese experts made the proposal to include the reference of POPs emission in Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and the Antarctica, which was accepted in the Workshop. In March 2020, China recommended two experts to join the comprehensive monitoring program on plastics in marine environment.

3.CAFF: China actively participates in the drafting, review and implementation of the Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative Work Plan 2019-2023 (AMBI 2.0). In October 2018, Chinese expert attended the Second Arctic Biodiversity Congress and the Workshop on AMBI 2.0 Planning and introduced the distributions and protection of the Arctic migratory birds in China. In December 2018, the National Forestry and Grassland Administration of China and CAFF jointly held the AMBI East Asian-Australian Flyway Workshop in Hainan China. In March 2020, China recommended two experts to join the program on the impacts from plastics on sea birds. In June and September 2020, Chinese experts participated in the online meeting on the mid-term evaluation and update the work plan for East Asian-Australian Flyway.

4.EPPR: In October 2020, Prof. Lu Zhibo from Tongji University participated the first online meeting on the project of New Low Sulphur Fuels-Fate and Behaviour in Cold Water Conditions jointly organized by EPPR and PAME.

5.PAME: Since June 2018, Prof. Lu Zhibo from Tongji University and other Chinese experts have participated several PAME plenary meetings and seminars on marine pollution and microplastics. Chinese experts joined the discussions on marine protected areas, Arctic invasive species, Arctic shipping, Arctic offshore resource exploration as well as ecosystem-based management and shared the relevant outcome of Chinese Arctic expeditions. In March 2020, China recommended two experts to join the project on the Regional Action Plan for Marine Litter and Microplastics.

6. SDWG: In June 2020, Dr. Su Ping from Tongji University participated the SDWG plenary session and joined the discussion on its 2019-2021 work plan. Dr. Su also provided inputs on the projects of Arctic Hydrogen Energy Application and Demonstration and “Zero Arctic”.

7. The SAO based Marine Mechanism (SMM) is a new platform to coordinate the cooperation on marine issues in the Arctic Council. China fully supports the efforts under the chairmanship of Iceland to advance the work of SMM. In September and October 2020, Mr. Gao Feng, Special Representative for Arctic Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs participated the first SMM webinar series.

8. The University of Arctic (“UARctic”) is an important partner with the Council. In February 2020, the Assembly of UARctic accepted China’s Liaocheng University, Southern University of Science and Technology and Wuhan University as members. As of October 2020, 13 Chinese universities and scientific institutes have joined the network of UARctic, among which Harbin Institute of Technology also hosted the Thematic Network on POPs and Chemicals of Emerging in the Asian Arctic, contributing to strengthen the education and scientific research in Arctic.

9. Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (SAON) is an important initiative on Arctic scientific observing and data sharing supported by the Council. Several experts from the Aerospace Information Research Institute and Northwest Institute of Eco-Environment and Resources of Chinese Academy of Sciences participated in the Arctic Observing Summits 2018 and 2020 as well as 2019 Polar Data Forum, sharing the updated outcome of the cold region observing in China and exchanging views on international cooperation on Arctic observing with experts from other countries.

10. China respects the traditions and cultures of the Arctic residents including indigenous peoples, and is committed to preserving their unique lifestyles and values. China encourages research institutes like Chinese Academy of Social Sciences to enhance research on the Arctic indigenous peoples and supports the exchanges and cooperation with permanent participants of the Council through platforms such as the Association of World Reindeer Herders.

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.

China is willing to continuously adhere to its commitments made when applying to become an observer to the Council, fully support the work of the Council and participate in the international governance on the Arctic as well as to enhance exchange and communication with Arctic indigenous peoples, contributing to the environmental protection and sustainable development in the Arctic. For these purposes, China plans to carry out the following work:

- 1.To continue its participation in the ministerial and Senior Arctic Official (SAO) meetings under the framework of the Council.
- 2.To continuously dispatch more experts to participate in the work of the Council, including its Working Groups, Task Forces and Expert Groups.
- 3.To continuously and actively join the discussion on platforms like SMM and support the work of the Special Coordinator on Plastic Pollution and Marine Litter through recommending experts and other means, advancing the protection and sustainable use of the Arctic Ocean.
- 4.To support the National Forestry and Grassland Administration of China and CAFF to develop a Record of Observer Contributions on AMBI and explore the possibility to jointly organize a side event during the COP 15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- 5.To continuously support the multidisciplinary Arctic scientific expedition and the observation and evaluation of the climate and ecological change in Arctic, to strengthen the research on Arctic climate change and ecological environment and encourage more cooperation and exchanges among universities and scientific research institutes from China and other countries through the platforms within the framework of the Council.
- 6.To support the work of the Council under the Chairmanship of Iceland and Russia (2021-2023) and intensify policy exchanges and cooperation with Member States and other observers of the Council.
- 7.To continuously respect the traditions and cultures of the Arctic residents including indigenous peoples and strengthen the exchanges and cooperation with the Council's Permanent Participants on the occasion of the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Council in 2021.

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.

China is an active participants, builder and contributor in Arctic affairs. China carries out pragmatic work on understanding and protecting in the Arctic and actively conducts communications and cooperation on Arctic affairs, contributing to other aspects of the Council and its goals. The relevant work since June 2018 includes but not limited to the following aspects:

1. Continuously carrying out scientific research in the Arctic: Since 2018, China organized the 9th, 10th and 11th Arctic Expeditions and conducted research on the Arctic marine biodiversity, ocean acidification, new-type pollutants, ocean-sea-atmosphere interaction and etc. Chinese scientists also took part in the MOSAiC Expedition and other international scientific cooperation programs under the frameworks of the International Arctic Science Committee and World Meteorological Organization.

2. Actively addressing climate change: In September 2020, in the statement at the general debate of the 75th session of the UN General Assembly, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced that China would scale up its Intended Nationally Determined Contributions by adopting more vigorous policies and measures and aim to have CO₂ emissions peak before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060. China's emission reduction measure will definitely have a positive affect on the climate and ecological environment in the Arctic.

3. Pushing forward environmental protection and resources conservation in the Arctic: China values the protection of the unique natural environment and ecosystems in the Arctic and have taken continuous efforts to protect the sanctuaries of Arctic migratory birds in China. In July 2019, the Migratory Bird Sanctuaries along the Coast of Yellow Sea-Bohai Gulf of China (Phase I) was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List, which is of vital importance to the protection of the sanctuaries of spoon-billed sandpiper and other Arctic migratory birds. China has actively participated in the negotiations on the Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean and relevant rules and jointly promote the conservation of fishery resources in the Arctic Ocean with other signatories.

4. Actively carrying out communications on Arctic affairs: China has carried out bilateral consultations on Arctic affairs with all Arctic countries. Since June 2018, China has bilateral dialogues on Arctic affairs with Russia, USA, Norway, Denmark, UK and France, through which exchanging ideas on Arctic policies and Arctic cooperation. In June 2018 and June 2019, China, Japan and Republic of Korea conducted the third and fourth round of high-level trilateral dialogues on Arctic affairs in Shanghai, China and Busan, ROK and jointly decided to set up a trilateral Arctic expert group to strengthen the cooperation on scientific and research on the Arctic.

5. Hosting or actively participating in international meetings relating to the Arctic: Two sessions of China-Nordic Arctic Cooperation Symposium were held respectively in Tromso, Norway in June 2018 and Shanghai, China in May 2019. Experts from China and Nordic countries had in-depth discussions on the Arctic scientific cooperation and other emerging issues on Arctic affairs. In October 2018, Chinese delegates participated in the second Arctic Science Ministerial Meeting held in Berlin, Germany and proposed to enhance scientific cooperation in the Arctic.