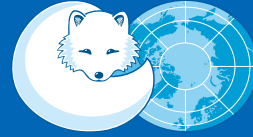




Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna



ARCTIC COUNCIL

Ilulissat, Greenland April 2010

## **CAFF PROGRESS REPORT SENIOR ARCTIC OFFICIALS MEETING**



# Acknowledgements

The Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) is a Working Group of the Arctic Council.

## **CAFF Designated Agencies:**

- Directorate for Nature Management, Trondheim, Norway
- Environment Canada, Ottawa, Canada
- Faroese Museum of Natural History, Tórshavn, Faroe Islands (Kingdom of Denmark)
- Finnish Ministry of the Environment, Helsinki, Finland
- Icelandic Institute of Natural History, Reykjavik, Iceland
- The Ministry of Domestic Affairs, Nature and Environment, Greenland
- Russian Federation Ministry of Natural Resources, Moscow, Russia
- Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, Stockholm, Sweden
- United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Anchorage, Alaska

## **CAFF Permanent Participant Organisations:**

- Aleut International Association (AIA)
- Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC)
- Gwich'in Council International (GCI)
- Inuit Circumpolar Conference - (ICC) Greenland, Alaska and Canada
- Russian Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON)
- Saami Council

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For more information please contact:

*CAFF International Secretariat*

*Borgir, Nordurslod*

*600 Akureyri, Iceland*

*Phone: +354 462-3350*

*Fax: +354 462-3390*

*Email: [caff@caff.is](mailto:caff@caff.is)*

*Internet: <http://www.caff.is>*

Editing, design & layout: Tom Barry



CAFF Designated Area

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# Response to Arctic Council Priorities

The Conservation of Arctic Flora & Fauna Working Group (CAFF) is the Biodiversity Working group of the Arctic Council. It is guided by the CAFF Strategic Plan for the Conservation of Arctic Biological Diversity and biennial Work Plans. CAFF's mandate is to address the conservation of Arctic biodiversity, and to communicate the findings to the governments and residents of the Arctic, helping to promote practices which ensure the sustainability of the Arctic's living resources. This document summarizes the current status of CAFF projects and activities since the last SAO meeting held in Copenhagen in November 2009.

In order to successfully conserve the natural environment and allow for economic development baseline data and status and trend analyses of Arctic biodiversity, habitats and ecosystem health are required. CAFF's projects provide data for informed decision making in resolving conflicts which are now arising in trying to both conserve the natural environment and permit regional growth.

The common priorities agreed upon for the Norwegian, Danish and Swedish Chairmanship period of the Arctic Council are concerned with climate change, integrated resource management, the International Polar Year, Indigenous peoples, local living conditions

and management issues. The Danish/Greenlandic/Faroe Chairmanship has added biodiversity to this list.

CAFF's work reflects the emphasis placed on these priorities e.g. with a focus on outreach/communication, Arctic Council efficiency, data integration, spatial information, circumpolar datasets and analysis and Working group co-operation.

CAFF's Arctic Biodiversity Assessment and the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program, the Bering Sea Sub Network, ECORA and the work of CAFF's expert groups on Seabirds and Flora are important contributions towards understanding:

- The impacts of climate change on nature and biodiversity (management issues).
- Adaption to climate change and consequences thereof for sustainable use of living resources in the Arctic.

CAFF has also placed a strong focus on the International Polar Year (IPY) both through benefiting from IPY generated research and contributing to IPY legacy. As requested by the Senior Arctic Officials CAFF is actively cooperating with other Working Groups to help to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Arctic Council.



## 1.1 Arctic Climate and Impact Assessment (ACIA) - follow-up

CAFF's 2009 – 2011 Work Plan places a strong focus on climate change and building upon the recommendations contained in the *Arctic Climate and Impact Assessment (ACIA)*. The ACIA and CAFF's *Flora & Fauna: Status and Conservation* reports both indicated that it was necessary to consider the status and trends of biodiversity in the Arctic. ACIA called for improved capacity to monitor and understand changes in the Arctic and to improve and enhance long-term Arctic biodiversity monitoring. The Arctic Biodiversity Assessment ([www.caff.is/aba](http://www.caff.is/aba)) and the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program ([www.cbmp.is](http://www.cbmp.is)) are two of the primary vehicles via which CAFF is responding to these calls.

CAFF remains prepared to contribute to the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programmes (AMAP) monitoring strategy and to the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) on adaptation efforts in the Arctic. CAFF will work on additional aspects of ACIA follow-up through IPY endorsed projects, and projects by CAFF's expert groups, the Seabird Group (CBird) and the Flora Group (CFG). CAFF is also actively participating in the Steering Committee for the Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (SAON) process.

## 1.2 The Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA)

The purpose of the ABA is to:

*Synthesize and assess the status and trends of biological diversity in the Arctic.*

It will provide a much needed description of the current state of the Arctic's ecosystems and biodiversity, create

a baseline for use in global and regional assessments of Arctic biodiversity and a basis to inform and guide future Arctic Council work. It will provide up to date scientific and traditional ecological knowledge, identify gaps in the data record, identify key mechanisms driving change and produce recommendations.

### *Administration*

The ABA is led by Finland, Greenland and the United States. Greenland/Denmark is the current Chair of the ABA Steering Committee. The Chair rotates and next in line to take the Chair will be Finland in 2011. Members include Greenland/Denmark, Canada, Sweden, UNEP GRID Arendal and UNEP WCMC, the Gwich'in Council International, the Arctic Athabaskan Council and the CAFF Secretariat. Its Chief Scientist is provided by Greenland/Denmark.

The CAFF Secretariat functions as the secretariat for the ABA. Sixteen Steering Committee meetings have been held. The ABA has received direct funding from Greenland/Denmark, Finland, Canada, the USA, Sweden, The Nordic Council of Ministers and UNEP GRID Arendal. In-kind support is being received from all CAFF Countries, Permanent Participants and Observers.

### *Activities*

The report is being produced in two phases. Phase 1 is the *Arctic biodiversity trends – 2010: selected indicators of change* report. The report currently undergoing SAO review presents twenty-two indicators of trends in Arctic biodiversity based on the suite of indicators developed by CAFF's Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme ([www.cbmp.is](http://www.cbmp.is)). The report is aimed at a broad audience including governments and residents of the Arctic. UNEP GRID



Arendal are the editors of the Report. The report will be released in May 2010 in conjunction with the meeting of the Deputy Ministers of the Arctic Council and also in June at the IPY Science Conference in Oslo.

This report is the Arctic Council's contribution to:

- The United Nations 2010 Biodiversity Target
- The International Biodiversity Year in 2010
- Towards measuring the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) target to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010.
- The CBDs upcoming third Global Biodiversity Outlook report.

Phase 2 is a full scientific Arctic Biodiversity Assessment scheduled to be completed in 2013. Phase 3 will consist of a policy recommendations document to be completed in 2013.

Greenland/Denmark has provided the Chief Scientist for the assessment. Its team of lead and co-lead authors are drawn from all the Arctic Council countries. One meeting for lead and co-lead authors has been held since the last SAO meeting in Denmark. The next authors meeting is scheduled for February 2011 in Iceland

### 1.3 The Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme (CBMP)



The CBMP is an international network of scientists and local resource users working together to enhance Arctic biodiversity monitoring to improve detection, understanding and reporting of important trends in biodiversity and to inform management decisions.

The CBMP has over 60 global partners, 33 of which are Arctic biodiversity monitoring

networks operating and linked to the CBMP. Many of these networks have received substantial support from the International Polar Year.

The program takes an ecosystem-based management approach, operating as a network of networks, coordinating existing species, habitat and site-based networks. The CBMP is in the process of convening four Expert Monitoring Groups tasked with developing long-term integrated monitoring plans for all the Arctic's major systems (Marine, Coastal, Freshwater, Terrestrial). Also convened is a focus group which is developing a protected areas monitoring framework and a community monitoring guidance group. The CBMP is also developing coordinated reporting and outreach tools including a suite of arctic biodiversity indicators and indices as well as a web-based data management and depiction tool (data portal) for biodiversity data.

#### *Administration*

Canada has reaffirmed its commitment to lead the CBMP and fund the programme office located in Whitehorse, Canada - until 2011 at the end of the next Ministerial, at which point Canada's commitment will be reviewed. The program has received funding from multiple sources in Canada, the United States, Norway, Sweden, Finland, the European Commission and UNEP. In-kind support is currently received from all CAFF Countries, Permanent Participants and Observers (e.g. UNEP WCMC).

#### *Activities*

The period since the last SAO meeting in Copenhagen in November 2009 has been an active and productive time for the CBMP. It has accomplished many important tasks and embarked upon a number of exciting projects which will be of critical importance in enhancing our understanding of the status and trends



of Arctic Biodiversity (e.g. the Seabird Information Network and the Arctic Species Trend Index).

*Recent activities:*

- The CBMP has continued strategic partnership engagement to expand program capacity in key areas, as identified in the Five Year Implementation Plan. This has involved targeting key organizations in Europe, Russia and North America with the aim of further developing a broad-based consortium for improved Arctic biodiversity monitoring and conservation.
- The CBMPs Marine Expert Monitoring Group (EMG) has had a productive period. A background paper on Marine Monitoring in the Arctic has been published. A Marine Monitoring Plan is currently under development. The Marine EMG is led by Norway and the US with members from Russia, Greenland/Greenland, Iceland, Canada, the Aleut International Association, PAME (Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment) and AMAP. A workshop to begin implementation of the Marine Monitoring Plan is scheduled for September 2010 (location not yet decided).
- The Freshwater EMG has been activated and is co-led by Sweden & Canada with members from Norway, Iceland, Russia, the Gwich'in Council International, the Arctic Athabaskan Council, and Wetlands International as an expert observer. A background Paper is being developed. A Canadian workshop was held in December 2009 and the first International Workshop is planned to be held in Sweden in September 2010.
- Pan-Arctic Protected Areas Monitoring Plan: A focus group has been organised with members from each CAFF country as well as Gwich'in Council International and UNEP-WCMC as an observer. The group is currently developing a background paper and a workshop, hosted by the US, is scheduled to be held in Anchorage, September 2010.
- The Arctic Species Trend Index (ASTI) was released at the State of the Arctic Conference in Miami in March 2010. Press releases were issued in London, Iceland, Miami and Nairobi. It was a successful launch and attracted much interest. A number of media products were developed to support the launch including a dedicated ASTI website along with an ASTI promotional video and postcards.
- A Community-based Monitoring Handbook has been drafted. The Handbook will facilitate the development and promotion of community-based monitoring techniques for arctic biodiversity monitoring programs. It is currently undergoing review.
- A prototype web-based data portal has been developed (The Seabird Information Network) for managing and depicting a diversity of arctic biodiversity data. The portal serves as a focal point for current information on biological resources and trends throughout the Arctic. The Seabird Information network is undergoing further development with new analytical tools being developed and further national seabird datasets being incorporated. As well, the portal is being expanded to include wild caribou/reindeer population trend data as well as shorebird trend data.
- The US Marine Mammal Commission has granted 82,000 USD to the CBMP to develop a Polar Bear Research and Monitoring Framework Funds in cooperation with the IUCN Polar Bear Specialist Group.
- The CBMPs Five-Year Implementation Plan, Indicators Strategy, Community-based Monitoring Strategy and brochure have been translated into Russian to assist in increasing outreach activities in the Russian Federation.



- The CBMP, as the biodiversity component of SAON, is serving on the SAON Steering Group.

#### *Current Projects:*

- The Seabird Information Network (pilot CBMP web-portal)
- The Arctic Species Trend Index
- The Arctic Report Cards. This is a collaboration between CAFF, AMAP and The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). They are a means of presenting clear, reliable and concise information on recent observations of environmental conditions in the Arctic, relative to historical time series records.
- Integrated Arctic Marine Biodiversity Monitoring Plan
- Integrated Arctic Freshwater Biodiversity Monitoring Plan
- Community-based Monitoring handbook
- Pan-Arctic Protected Areas Monitoring Plan
- Integrated Arctic Terrestrial Monitoring Plan
- Arctic Breeding Birds Conditions Survey

#### *Upcoming Workshops and meetings*

- In order to finalize the integrated, pan-Arctic marine monitoring plan and begin implementation a workshop is being scheduled for September 2010 (location to be confirmed).
- A Freshwater Expert Monitoring Group Workshop is being held in Sweden in September 2010.
- A workshop to consider a Pan-Arctic Protected Areas Monitoring plan is scheduled to be held in September 2010 in the US.

#### *Communication and Outreach*

The CBMP will continue to focus upon strategic partnership engagement, further biodiversity indicator development, further development of its web-based data portal and activation of its Expert Monitoring Groups. The Marine Expert Monitoring Group and Freshwater Expert Monitoring Groups have been activated and the remaining two Expert Monitoring Groups will be activated once AC country sponsorship is secured. The technical framework for the CBMP will be further enhanced through the creation of data management platforms (CBMP web-based data portal and Polar Data Catalogue), pan-arctic biodiversity



indicator datasets (e.g. Arctic Species Trend Index) and implementation of the CBMP's integrated monitoring plans and frameworks.

The CBMP has partnered with the GEO-Biodiversity Observation Network group and is now recognized as a regional Biodiversity Observation Network ('Arctic-BON'). Agreement has been made with the Arctic Breeding Birds Conditions Survey (ABBSCS) and the CircumArctic Rangifer Monitoring and Assessment Network to cooperate and integrate their data into the CBMP's web-based data portal.

#### *Recent and upcoming Publications*

- Arctic Marine Monitoring Background paper, CAFF CBMP Report No. 16 (*December 2009*).
- Arctic Species Trend Index, CAFF CBMP Report No. 20 (*March 2010*).
- Community Monitoring handbook (*due for publication in June 2010*).
- Arctic Marine Monitoring Plan, CAFF CBMP Report (*in development*).

The activities of the CBMP have resulted in a wide range of publications. A full list of which can be accessed on the CAFF website - [www.caff.is](http://www.caff.is) and/or CBMP website [www.cbmp.is](http://www.cbmp.is).

#### **1.4 Climate Change ACIA follow-up**

An analysis is being conducted to assess how CAFF has responded to the biodiversity relevant recommendations from ACIA. Iceland is leading this project and a report will be published later this year outlining the results of the project.



# Foundation Work and Ongoing Activities

The following sections outline the progress made in CAFF's various expert groups and projects, each of which contributes to the foundation upon which cornerstone projects such as the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment and the Circumpolar Biodiversity Programme are built.

## 2. CAFF Expert Groups

CAFF currently has two expert groups: which ensure that scientists, conservationists, and managers interested in arctic flora and fauna have a forum to promote, facilitate, and coordinate conservation, management, and research activities of mutual concern. These groups have been invaluable in synthesising, coordinating and publishing research.

### 2.1 CAFF Flora Group (CFG)

With botanical expertise drawn from Arctic Council countries the CFG promotes, encourages and coordinates internationally the conservation of biodiversity of arctic flora and vegetation, habitats and research activities in these fields. It also works to enhance the exchange of information relating to arctic flora and vegetation and factors affecting status and trends in arctic flora.

#### *Activities*

The period since the last SAO meeting has been an active and productive time for the CFG and it has embarked upon many of the important tasks outlined in CAFF's 2009 – 2011 Work Plan. It has embarked upon a number of exciting projects which will be of critical importance in enhancing our understanding of status and trends of arctic flora. One of its most important challenges is in working towards the development of the Circumboreal Vegetation Map ([www.cbvm.org](http://www.cbvm.org)), the creation of which will mark a

significant contribution towards monitoring, research and policy making on the Arctic environment.

#### *Recent activities :*

- A successful leadership workshop was held in March 2010 in Finland to organize work on the next stage of the CBVM. The workshop was funded by the Canadian Forestry Service and the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC).
- The CBVM has been recognized as a working group under the International Association for vegetation science (IAVS)
- The proceedings of the CBVM workshop held in November 2008 have been completed. The workshop and report development was funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers and Canada (in press).
- A checklist of Arctic lichens has been finalized (in press).
- The Panarctic Flora annotated checklist is in the final stages of editing.
- The Panarctic Moss Checklist is in the final stages of development and is scheduled for completion in 2010.

#### *New projects in development include:*

- A Red list for Arctic Vascular Plants led by Sweden.
- A Circum-Arctic Plant portal led by Norway
- Encourage monitoring of Red list species using standard protocols led by Canada

#### *Recent and upcoming publications*

- A checklist of Arctic lichens. CAFF Technical Report No. 20 (*in press*).
- Proceedings of the 5th International CAFF Flora Group Workshop, 2008 (*in press*).



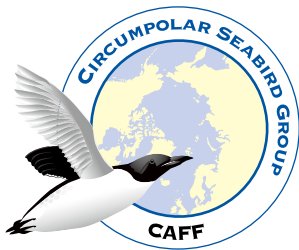
- Proceedings of the Workshop to develop a Strategy to Create the Circumpolar Vegetation Map, CAFF Technical Report, October 2008 (*in press*).
- Proceedings of the Workshop to develop a Strategy to Create the Circumpolar Vegetation Map. October 2008, CAFF Technical Report (*in press*).

The activities of CFG have resulted in a wide range of publications a full list of which can be accessed on the CAFF website - [www.caff.is/cfg](http://www.caff.is/cfg).

#### *Upcoming Workshops and meetings*

- The next meeting is scheduled for February 2011 in Iceland

## 2.2 CAFF Seabird Group (CBird)



CBird facilitates seabird conservation, management and research activities between circumpolar countries, and works to improve communication between seabird scientists

and managers both within and outside the Arctic. Conservation issues include alien predators, habitat alteration, oil pollution and contaminants, seabird bycatch, subsistence harvesting, unregulated harvesting and climate change. CBird also promotes the conservation of migratory seabirds outside of the arctic, coordinates the circumpolar seabird monitoring network in addition to developing various seabird initiatives

The period since the last SAO meeting in November 2009 has been an active and productive time for CBird and it has accomplished many important tasks. It has also embarked upon a number of exciting projects which will be of critical importance in enhancing our understanding of the status and trends of both arctic seabirds and the changing arctic environment.

Recent activities have focused on the development of:

- Seabird Information Network
- Circumpolar Seabird Colony Database



- Seabird Chapter for the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment
- A Status and trends of Arctic seabirds report
- A paper on the decline of the Glaucous Gull
- Murre population model for the Atlantic Report
- The creation of an Arctic Report Card on murrens and climate change

The Seabird Information Network is making good progress and the US has committed \$40,000 to finish the SIN productivity index and the Circumpolar Seabird Colony Database. A successful Arctic Tern paper was produced and has attracted a lot of interest. CBird has also completed texts on Murres, Seabird Harvest and Eiders for the Arctic Biodiversity Trends 2010 report. CBird is a member of the International Steering Committee for the 1st World Seabird Conference being held in Canada in September 2010. The Chair of CBird is also the Chair of the Steering Committee for the World Seabird Conference.

#### *Meetings:*

CBird held a very successful meeting in Iceland in September 2009. The record attendance at this meeting reflects the growing interest and concern with Arctic seabirds. The report from this meeting will be made available on the CBird website ([www.caff.is/cbird](http://www.caff.is/cbird)). A further meeting has been scheduled for September 2010 in British Columbia.

#### *Recent and upcoming publications*

- Tracking of Arctic terns *Sterna paradisaea* reveals longest animal migration - Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (*January 2010*).

### 3. Projects

#### 3.1 ECORA

ECORA is a Global Environment Facility (GEF) sponsored project initiated by CAFF, UNEP/GRID-Arendal and the Russian Federation. It used an integrated ecosystem management approach to conserve biodiversity and minimize habitat fragmentation in three selected model areas in the Russian Arctic. ECORA developed integrated ecosystem management (IEM) strategies and action plans in three model areas representing different ecosystems and anthropogenic pressures in the Russian Arctic: Kolguev Island (Nenets), the Kolyma River Basin (Yakutia/Sakha Republic), and the Beringovsky District (Chukotka). The ECORA website can be found at - <http://www.grida.no/ecora>.

Russia and Norway are members of the Steering Committee, representatives from the USA and Sweden serve as Western Advisers in the Model Areas, and indigenous peoples have been directly engaged in the project implementation. In addition, six of the CAFF countries have provided financial support. ECORA has been completed and its major outcomes have involved:

- Strengthening the enabling environment for IEM. Strengthening knowledge base for IEM.
- Development of IEM plans and strategies in model areas.
- Pilot projects to test IEM implementation strategies.

ECORA has helped to train people to benefit from wildlife and contribute to biodiversity conservation. It helped to generate new scientific data and contributed to a revitalisation of science in the regions since the breakup of the USSR, including the start of community monitoring. The terminal evaluation of the project is being conducted (April – May 2010) and this will examine the extent and scale of the impacts of the projects. A book is being written on the project and is scheduled for release in 2011.

The ECORA project was completed on 31 December 2009. A concluding conference was held in Moscow in November 2009. The conference presented achievements from the project and discussed potential follow-up actions. A proposal for a follow-up project to ECORA that will build on the outcomes of the current

project is now being prepared. While the specifics of the new proposal are still under development, it will likely focus on enhancing adaptation to climate change in the management of biodiversity in the Russian Arctic and support traditional lifestyles of indigenous peoples of the North through protecting traditional nature use. It will help support CAFF's activities relating to the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme and the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment in Russia, as well as addressing recommendations from the ACIA.

#### Recent Publications

- Project to be published under the title: *Towards integrated ecosystem management in the arctic: lessons learned and the way forward*. (in development)
- ECORA CAFF Technical Report No. 19 has been published in Russian.
- ECORA publication - N.A.Ryzhova, 2009. A journey with a Small Little Child.
- ECORA publication - A.A.Kuz'mich, 2009. Birds of Chukotka. Manual for schools.

#### 3.2 The Bering Sea Sub Network (BSSN)



The BSSN International Community-Based Environmental Observation Alliance for the Arctic Observing Network is an IPY project implemented under CAFF by the Aleut International Association in collaboration with the University of Alaska, UNEP-GRID Arendal and the Alaska Native Science Commission. BSSN is funded by the US National Science Foundation (NSF). The goal of BSSN is to increase our understanding and knowledge of pan-Arctic processes, enhancing the ability of scientists, Arctic communities, and governments to predict, plan, and respond to environmental changes and their socio-economic effects. The project's pilot stage began in June 2007 and completed in May 2009.

BSSN provides the means for the systematic collection of information about the environment by six indigenous coastal communities: three in the Russian Federation and three in the United States. Semi-structured interviews are used to gather



observations on primary subsistence and commercial species of the Bering Sea. The network provides for the efficient management of the data gathered from community-based environmental observations. Thus far, emerging trends of interest include the difference in observations and perceptions of change in ice-dependent and non ice-dependent communities, as well as in health of species caught in Alaskan versus Russian communities.

The first phase of the BSSN was a pilot to see if such a network was feasible. The second phase has now begun and has received funding from the National Science Foundation. It has been funded for five years and will run from September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009 - August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014

### **3.3 A Distributed Human Sensor Array to Detect Arctic Environmental Change**

This second phase of the BSSN project focuses on understanding variations in environmental and socio-economic conditions that have a meaningful impact on everyday life in indigenous communities; the evolution of consequences of change; potential strategies to enhance communities capacity to adapt and interactions and feedbacks between biophysical and social systems, so as to assess how changes in each impact one another.

#### *Recent Activities:*

- The survey has been revised and now consists of three questionnaires focusing on harvest locations, harvest species, and environmental

observations. The surveys has begun in winter of 2010 in Alaska and in Russia.

- A data manager has been hired and a GIS systems is being developed.
- A final report is being prepared and will published as a CAFF technical report. The report will also be translated into Russian.

### **3.4 Ice Associated Species**

It was decided at the CAFF board meeting in Akureyri in October 2009 to explore this emerging issue through the development of a background paper which would address the whole suite of species and not just the top mega fauna. This paper has been completed and its development was led by the US. This issue will be further developed and a workshop arranged to explore the issue in further detail with the results being published as a CAFF Technical paper.

### **3.5 Arctic Spatial Data Infrastructure (ASDI'<sup>1</sup>)**

A workshop was held in Copenhagen in March 2010. The aim of the workshop was to consider how this project will operate with the Arctic Council Working Groups. Representatives from CAFF, EPPR and AMAP were present. All Arctic Council countries have now approved the project and the preparatory planning stage is underway. The project is being led by Denmark/Greenland/Faroes, Sweden and Norway. CAFF has a representative on the ASDI project steering group.

1. A spatial data infrastructure (SDI) is the relevant base collection of technologies, policies and institutional arrangements that facilitate the availability of and access to spatial data [Global Spatial Data Infrastructure (GSDI) Cookbook].

### 3.6 ArcticData.is

CAFF and PAME are cooperating in the development and management of a web portal /data management system whereby data collected through CAFF and PAME activities is being made available for download and access. The portal can be accessed through [www.arcticdata.is](http://www.arcticdata.is)

This is a project which touches upon many of the key themes of the Arctic Council at this time. It focuses on furthering cooperation between the working groups, and relates to the effectiveness and efficiency of the arctic council - by grappling with the issues of access to Arctic Council information and making it more available to the public and scientific communities. It relates to the Arctic Spatial data infrastructure e.g. by providing access to arctic wide spatial datasets which have been developed by the Arctic Council. It provides an active and accessible outreach and communication tool for Arctic Council data both spatial and otherwise.

Through the ArcticData portal CAFF is cooperating with PAME in fulfilling the AMSA recommendation to provide for the necessary AMSA database accessibility.

### 3.7 Protected areas in the Arctic

CAFF has updated the protected areas dataset for the Arctic. The first protected areas dataset for the Arctic was created by CAFF in 1994 and was last updated in 2004. This updated dataset will be submitted as an Arctic component to UNEP WCMCs World Protected Areas Database.

Iceland is leading a project focusing on those protected areas which have a marine/coastal component. This project will further develop the information on these areas and compile a dataset detailing the nature and extent of the protection afforded.

## 4. Cooperation with other Working Groups

In Salekhard 2006, Ministers requested Senior Arctic Officials to continue to examine the organization of the Arctic Council and their work to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Arctic Council. Bearing this in mind CAFF has been developing cooperation's with other Working Groups which would contribute towards increased efficiency. Activities have included the following:

### 4.1 The Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP)

CAFF is cooperating closely with AMAP in the development of the Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks Process (SAON) – *see item 5.5*. CAFF sits on the SAON Steering Committee and leads a sub-group focusing on community based monitoring.

### 4.2 Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME)

CAFF's present priority is to cooperate with PAME on the AMSA recommendations. The recommendations of relevance to CAFF include (1) Uniformity of Arctic Shipping Governance; (2) Survey of Arctic Indigenous Marine Use; (3) Areas of Heightened Ecological and Cultural Significance; (4) Specially Designated Arctic Marine Areas; (5) Protection from Invasive Species; (6) Addressing Impacts on Marine Mammals.

Of these recommendations the one of most pressing concern at present is recommendation II(C) which deals with --- Areas of Heightened Ecological and Cultural Significance. CAFF intends to conduct a scoping paper to address this issue and outline what needs to be done and what CAFF's role will be.

CAFF and PAME are also cooperating on the development of the ArcticData.is project - *see Agenda Item 3.5*

### 4.3 Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG)

CAFF is exploring the development of cooperation with the SDWG e.g. on the development of a human health index. CAFF also along with SDWG cooperates on the further development of the SAON process.

## 5. Cooperation with International conventions, agreements and organizations

CAFF cooperates and communicates with a wide variety of international organisations and conventions. These include:

- The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar)
- Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic (OSPAR)
- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- The Arctic Parliamentarians (CPAR)

- Birdlife International
- The Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS)
- The International Arctic Science Committee (IASC)
- The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- The United Nations Environment Programme Global Resource Information Database (UNEP GRID – Arendal)
- The United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC)
- Wetlands International
- Working Group of the International Petroleum Environmental Conservation Association (IPIECA)
- The World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF)
- The Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA)
- The International Polar Year (IPY)

Find below a summary of some recent actions taken with regards to cooperation with international organisations, agreements and conventions.

### **5.1 The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**

CAFF has signed a Memorandum of Cooperation between CAFF and the CBD. CAFF has contributed to the development and the upcoming third Global Biodiversity Outlook report from the CBD. This synthesis of which contains a box text on Arctic sea-ice and biodiversity and a sub-section on Arctic indigenous languages.

### **5.2 The European Environment Agency (EEA)**

The EEA has expressed a desire to cooperate with CAFF on biodiversity issues in the Arctic. A series of meetings have been held with the Biodiversity unit of the EEA. CAFF is contributing box texts to the upcoming SEBI (Streamlining European 2010 Biodiversity Indicators) report from the EEA.

### **5.3 The International Polar Year (IPY)**

CAFF has in the previous years placed a strong focus on the International Polar Year (IPY). CAFF involvement in IPY included: endorsement of IPY projects; benefiting from Research generated by IPY projects and contributing to IPY legacy.

An example of how CAFF is benefiting from IPY will be through the role IPY generated research will play in the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment. The Arctic Biodiversity Assessment also will provide a vehicle for IPY researchers to insure that their research will reach a wider audience. CAFF's cornerstone project the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme is itself an IPY endorsed project and it will play a significant role in contributing to IPY legacies. This can be seen in how it is recognised as the Biodiversity component of SAON.

### **5.4 The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**

The CAFF Flora Group serves as the official Arctic Plants Specialist Group within the Species Survival Commission of the IUCN. CAFF is in the process



of formulating a joint project with the Polar Bear Specialist Group of the IUCN in connection with the CBMP.

### **5.5 The Sustaining Arctic Observing Network (SAON)**

CAFF is active in the SAON Process. In support of the coordinated action requested by the SAOs regarding an Arctic observing network as referred to in the 2006 Salekhard Declaration the CBMP is recognized as the biodiversity component of SAON. CAFF sits on the Steering Committee for the SAON process and also coordinates the community monitoring component of the SAON process.

### **5.6 UNEP-WCMC and UNEP/GRID-Arendal**

CAFF cooperates with UNEP-WCMC and UNEP/GRID-Arendal on the development and data management of the CBMP and a web-based portal. Both organisations are represented on the Steering Committees for the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment and the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme. UNEP Grid Arendal also act as the editor for the *Arctic biodiversity trends – 2010: selected indicators of change* report.

## **6. Management:**

### **6.1 Outreach and Communication**

A series of brochures and posters have been developed for CAFF projects. A range of communication tools have been developed for CBMP activities. Similarly a wide range of outreach/communication products are being developed in connection with the ABA and the upcoming release of the 2010 ABA report. Focus is also being placed on the continuing development of the CAFF web portals.

### **6.2. Administration**

The CAFF International Secretariat is located in Akureyri, Iceland. The Secretariat has a staff of three. The CAFF web system has been updated. Iceland stepped forward to take the Chair from Greenland at the 2009 Ministerial. Russia has also now taken the position of Vice-Chair of CAFF.

CAFF has held its two management board meeting under the Icelandic Chairmanship. The most recent being held in Copenhagen in March 2010, the meeting was very successful with participation from a broad cross section of Permanent Participants, organizations and countries active in Arctic issues.

