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Meeting Summary
Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG)
Kemi, Finland, 04-06 February 2019

Overview:

The fourth regular meeting of the SDWG under the Finnish Chairmanship took place at Kemi, Finland, on 04-06 February 2019. Approximately 65 participants attended this meeting, including representatives of eight (8) Observer states and nine (9) other Observer organizations. Please see the attached participants list for more detailed information¹.

1. The SDWG Chair, Pekka Shemeikka, welcomed new Heads of Delegation and reiterated that the main objective of this meeting was to finalize project reports and other achievements for submission to SAOs on 12 February 2019. On Day 3 the SDWG received a welcome from the Finnish SAO, René Söderman. He recognized Saami National Day and provided some comments about preparations for the Ministerial meeting in May 2019.

Decisions of Note:

2. At the meeting and in the days that followed the SDWG endorsed a number of final project reports and achievements for submission to SAOs for consideration at their meeting in Ruka, Finland on 13-14 March 2019, including:
 - **Teacher Education for Diversity and Equality in the Arctic**
 - Book: *Including the North: A comparative study of the policies on inclusion and equity in the circumpolar north*
 - Conclusions: *SDWG Conclusions – Teacher Education for Diversity and Equality in the Arctic*
 - **Arctic Sustainable Energy Futures Toolkit**
 - Report: *Arctic Sustainable Energy Futures Final Report*
 - Toolkit: *Arctic Community Energy Planning and Implementation Toolkit*
 - **Gender Equality in the Arctic II**
 - Information Sheet: *Gender Equality in the Arctic II*
 - Website: <https://arcticgenderequality.network/>
 - **Arctic Resilience Action Framework**
 - Report: *ARAF Progress Report 2017-2019*
 - Report: *Report of Arctic Resilience Forum* (for information only)
 - **Arctic Remote Energy Networks Academy (ARENA)**
 - Report: *ARENA Final Report*
 - Website: <http://arena.alaska.edu/>

¹ Representatives from all Arctic States and Permanent Participants participated in this SDWG meeting. Seventeen Observers participated.

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- Webinars: <http://arena.alaska.edu/2017-webinars/>
 - Video: <https://youtu.be/L0hTVEB6RYM>
 - **Arctic Energy Summit 2017**
 - Report: *2017 Arctic Energy Summit, Finland, Final Report* (for information only)
 - **Solid Waste Management in Arctic Communities**
 - Report: *Best Waste Management Practices Small and Rural Arctic Communities*
 - **EALLU Report**
 - Report: *EALLU - Arctic Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems: Youth, Knowledge & Change 2015-2019*
 - **Arctic Environment Impact Assessment**
 - Report: *Good Practices For Environmental Impact Assessment and Meaningful Engagement in the Arctic including recommendations* (final version submitted 20 Feb 2019)
 - **Arctic as a Food Producing Region**
 - Report: *The Arctic as a Food Producing Region Final Project Report* (final version submitted 19 Feb 2019)
 - **Suicide Prevention**
 - Report: *Project CREATEs: Circumpolar Resilience, Engagement and Action Through Story* (final version submitted 22 Feb 2019)
 - **Arctic Human Health**
 - Report: *One Arctic – One Health Final Report* (submitted 19 Feb 2019)
3. At the Kemi Meeting, the SDWG endorsed two (2) new projects:
- a) **Gender Equality in the Arctic III** [Leads: Iceland, Finland, Canada]
 - b) **Arctic Food Innovation Cluster** [Leads: Canada, Finland, GCI, AIA].
4. The Russian Federation, RAIPON and the Northern Forum requested that the current project entitled **Arctic Children – Preschool Education and Smooth Transition to School** be extended into the Icelandic Chairmanship and that a new component relating to an **International School** be added to it. The SDWG Chair concluded that there was general consensus in principle to extend the project, but further information would be required from the proponents before formal endorsement could be given to the new component of the project.
5. There were updates from four (4) current projects that indicated an intention to conduct follow-on work in the Icelandic Chairmanship. These projects will require updated project proposal templates to describe the new work and the intended timelines:
- a) **CREATEs II** [update: ICC]
 - b) **Arctic Sustainable Energy Futures Toolkit Pilot Project** [update: GCI]
 - c) **ARENA follow-on project** [update: Canada]

SDWG Chair's Summary

- d) **One Health** [update: Finland]
- 6. There were updates on two (2) potential new projects. Formal project proposals may be developed and presented for endorsement at a future SDWG meeting in relation to:
 - a) **Economy of the North IV (ECONOR IV)** [update: Canada]
 - b) **Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic II** [update: ICC]
- 7. Updates were received on two (2) current projects that are scheduled to be completed during the Icelandic Chairmanship:
 - a) **Zero Arctic: Concepts for carbon neutral Arctic construction based on tradition** [Leads: Finland, Canada] is on track for completion in 2020
 - b) **Arctic Energy Summit 2019** [Leads: Iceland, Finland] is being reconsidered.
- 8. SDWG Heads of Delegation also reached consensus on the following documents to be forwarded to the SAOs on or before 12 February 2019:
 - a) SDWG Input to the SAO Report: ***Draft Text on SDWG Achievements 2017-19 and Work Plan 2019-21***
 - b) SDWG Input to the Ministerial Declaration: ***Draft Text on key SDWG deliverables***
 - c) SDWG Input to SAOs on ARAF: ***SDWG Suggestions on ARAF for consideration by SAOs***
 - d) SDWG Work Plan: ***SDWG Work Plan 2019-2021.***

SDWG Expert Groups

- 9. The SDWG received progress reports from its Arctic Human Health Expert Group (AHHEG) and its the Social, Economic, and Cultural Expert Group (SECEG). A concept paper by SECEG entitled: ***Exploring the way Social, Economic and Cultural Expert Group (SECEG) could work better*** was presented and discussed at the SDWG meeting in Rovaniemi in October 2018. A revised version of this paper was received positively at the Kemi Meeting as an internal SDWG working document. The SECEG Chair advised that the aim of the SECEG would be to act as an intellectual resource for SDWG to prepare comprehensive reports on human development and “state of knowledge” reports in relation to the Arctic. However, in the first phase the SECEG would concentrate on more focused reports, such as renewable resource economies, possibly funded by Canada for completion during the Icelandic Chairmanship. During the SECEG agenda item WWF presented a brief analysis on the relevance of various Sustainable Development Goals for the Arctic. SDWG will continue to work with AHHEG and SECEG to enhance their roles within the SDWG.

SDWG Chair's Summary

Thematic Discussion:

10. At its meeting in Rovaniemi in October 2018, SDWG launched a thematic discussion on Sustainable Economic Development—low-carbon, resource-efficient circular economy in the era of climate change. At the Kemi meeting these discussions on sustainable economic development were continued in order to promote further circular economy solutions for the Arctic in coming years. Presentations were provided by:
 - Kari Poikela, Project Director at Kemi Digipolis: Towards a low-carbon and resource-efficient circular economy in the Arctic: case example of industrial circular economy flows in Kemi Arctic region
 - Santtu Palokangas, Project Officer at Netherlands Embassy in Helsinki: The Oceans - Sharing experiences on circular economy and marine litter: an update from Arctic Frontiers side-event on 23 January, 2019

The SDWG Chair also provided an update on the World Circular Economy Forum in 2019 in Finland and in 2020 in Canada. He raised the possibility of an Arctic side-session at the WCEF in June 2019 in Helsinki.

SDWG Work Plan:

11. The SDWG Heads of Delegation reached consensus on the SDWG Work Plan for 2019-2021 and a copy has been forwarded to SAOs for review at their meeting in Ruka, Finland in March 2019. A number of SDWG projects are still developing detailed work activities and timelines and the work plan will be updated accordingly as circumstances warrant.

Communications:

12. The SDWG briefly discussed communications leading up to, and including, the Ministerial Meeting in May 2019. Clarification will be sought on the appropriate time for release of SDWG final project reports to the public.

Observer Engagement

13. The SDWG continued to employ the new format for its agenda, first initiated at the Inari SDWG meeting, to allow greater Observer engagement in agenda items relating to project work and other SDWG activities where greater Observer involvement would be beneficial. Observers made valuable interventions and contributions to the agenda.

SDWG Chair's Summary

Selection of Co-Vice-Chairs

14. SDWG selects two (2) co-vice chairs for each chairmanship, one for Arctic states and one for Permanent Participants. Permanent Participants will have a caucus at the March SAO meeting in Ruka and will advise on their nomination thereafter. Arctic states will consider whether the next incoming chair or the current outgoing chair should act as their co-vice chair.

Upcoming SDWG Meetings

15. The SDWG meetings for the Icelandic Chairmanship are tentatively scheduled as follows:
 - 11-12 Sept 2019 Ísafjörður
 - 22-23 March 2020 Akureyri
 - 26-27 October 2020 Egilsstaðir
 - 03-04 February 2021 Reykjanes