

Arctic Cooperation and Partnership



The Arctic is an enormous area, sprawling over one sixth of the earth's landmass; more than 30 million km² and twenty-four time zones. It has a population of about four million, including over thirty different indigenous peoples and dozens of languages. The Arctic is a region of vast natural resources and a very clean environment compared with most areas of the world.

The Ottawa Declaration of 1996 formally established the Arctic Council as a high level intergovernmental forum to provide a means for promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States, with the involvement of the Arctic Indigenous communities and other Arctic inhabitants on common Arctic issues, in particular issues of sustainable development and environmental protection in the Arctic.

Member States

Member States of the Arctic Council are Canada, The Kingdom of Denmark (including Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russian Federation, Sweden, and the United States of America.

Permanent Participants

In addition to the Member States, the Arctic Council has the category of Permanent Participants which is created to provide for active participation of, and full consultation with, the Arctic Indigenous representatives within the Arctic Council. This principle applies to all meetings and activities of the Arctic Council.

The following organizations are Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council:

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

Meetings

The Arctic Council Ministerial Meetings are held biannually in the country holding the chairmanship. The host country serves as chair of the Arctic Council from the conclusion of one Ministerial Meeting to the conclusion of the next biennial Ministerial Meeting, and thus coordinates arrangements for the Ministerial Meeting and meetings of the Senior Arctic Officials.

Meetings of Senior Arctic Officials are held every six months in the host country.

The Working Groups

Working Groups of the Arctic Council and their supporting scientific and technical Expert Groups hold meetings at regular intervals throughout the year, ahead of the meetings of Senior Arctic Officials and Arctic Council Ministers. Each Working Group has a different meeting schedule, which can be obtained by contacting the respective Secretariats of the Working Groups. Each Working Group has a specific mandate under which it operates.

There are six Working Groups of the Arctic Council:

- Arctic Contaminants Action Program (ACAP)
- Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP)
- Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF)
- Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR)
- Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME)
- Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG)

Observers

Observer status in the Arctic Council is open to:

- Non-arctic states
- inter-governmental and inter-parliamentary organizations, global and regional
- non-governmental organizations.

The Chairmanship

The Chairmanship of the Arctic Council rotates every second year. From 2009 - 2011 the Chairmanship is held by The Kingdom of Denmark.

Further Information

Further information can be found on: www.arctic-council.org.



ARCTIC COUNCIL