

Meeting of Senior Arctic Officials
FINAL Report
19-20 November 2008
Kautokeino, Norway

In Attendance:

Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs)

Chair: Karsten Klepšvik

Canada: Adèle Dion

Denmark/Greenland/Faroe Islands: Mikaela Engell, Inuuteq Olsen (Greenland)

Finland: Jyrki Kallio

Iceland: Ragnar Baldursson

Norway: Robert Kvile

Russian Federation: Anton Vasiliev

Sweden: Helena Ödmark

United States: Julia L. Gourley

Permanent Participant (PP) Heads of Delegation (HoD)

Arctic Athabaskan Council (ACC): Chief Bill Erasmus

Aleut International Association (AIA): Victoria Gofman

Gwich'in Council International (GCI): Chief Joe Linklater

Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC): Patricia Cochrane

Russian Arctic Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON): Larisa Abryutina

Saami Council (SC): Stefan Mikaelsson

1 Introduction

1.1. Welcoming Remarks

Participants were greeted with a performance from a Saami children's choir and welcomed by Olav Mattis Eira, Vice President, Saami Parliament and Klemet Erland Hætta, Kautokeino mayor.

Karsten Klepšvik, SAO Chair, welcomed delegations and noted that key focus of the meeting was deliverables for the 2009 Ministerial meeting.

1.2. Introduction to Kautokeino and Social Events

Conclusion: For information only.

1.3. Introduction of new SAOs, PP HoDs and Working Group Chairs

Conclusion: Mr. Inuuteq Olsen was introduced as the new representative for Greenland. Andrei Peshkov, the new ACAP Chair, and members of the new ACAP Secretariat were welcomed. Canada noted that its delegation include two indigenous youth.

1.4. Approval of the Agenda

Discussion: The SAO Chair noted two proposals submitted by the USA for consideration, one on black carbon to be taken up under agenda item 2.2 and one on search and rescue to be taken up

under 3.4. An update on the PSI from NEFCO was added under agenda item 13. The SDWG Chair asked for items under section 4 to be removed as presenters were not able to attend.

Decision: The agenda for the 19-20 November 2008 Meeting of Senior Arctic Officials was approved with the specified amendments.

1.5. Report from the 21-22 April 2008 SAO Meeting

Decision: The SAO Chair reminded that there is a new procedure for approval of Reports from SAO Meetings intersessionally. The Report of the SAO Meeting 21-22 April 2008, Svolvær, Norway (AC-SAO-Apr08-Final Report) was approved on 25 August.

1.6. Approval of Ad-hoc Observers

Decision: An application to obtain Arctic Council Observer State status was received from the Republic of Korea by the Arctic Council on 20 May 2008. SAOs have granted the Republic of Korea *Ad hoc* Observer status pending Ministerial consideration of the application in April 2009, as per the Rules and Procedures. The Republic of Korea, participating in an Arctic Council meeting for the first time, delivered a brief statement. The European Commission was approved as an Ad-hoc Observer for the 19-20 November 2008 Meeting of Senior Arctic Officials.

2. Climate Change

2.1. Climate Change and the Cryosphere: Snow, Water, Ice and Permafrost in the Arctic – SWIPA

Background: SWIPA integration team leader, Morten Olsen/Denmark presented a progress report of the SWIPA Project and an update on key issues for the integration team. On behalf of Dorthe Dahl-Jensen, science leader of the Greenland Ice Sheet (GRIS) component of SWIPA, he informed that all GRIS modules are on time and the 1st draft will be ready by March 2009. The review will take place in January and February and all comments will be incorporated during a final workshop 10-12 March. The final scientific report will be available by the 2009 Ministerial and ready for AC presentation at CoP15. The report will include a 30 page summary of the science and a layman's summary. The NCM and AMAP are discussing outreach products for CoP15, including a film based on the GRIS report.

Discussion: AMAP was commended for its work to date on SWIPA. The project is expected to be a major deliverable under the Danish Chair. Given the importance of the Greenland Ice Sheet to considerations of global climate change, there was strong support for presenting the GRIS report to the UNFCCC CoP15 in December 2009, including a film production based on GRIS, with appropriate AC reviews.

SAOs and PPs requested more information about how the socio-economic and impacts components of SWIPA was being addressed and asked for enhanced participation of PPs and inclusion of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) in the SWIPA process. AMAP pointed to a recent workshop engaging ECONOR and ArcticStat experts and that new IPY projects on human dimension would also be valuable contributions. The SDWG was encouraged to contribute to the socio-economic analysis and the SDWG noted that experts participating in SDWG projects were involved. Canada announced that it will fund ICC Canada to participate in this part of the project. ICC asked that the GRIS also involve people from Greenland. The Saami Council noted the Saami TEK on snow and asked Sweden, as lead of the changing snow cover component of SWIPA, to ensure inclusion of EALAT project.

SAOs noted the need to integrate SWIPA findings with other AC projects and encouraged close cooperation between AMAP and other working groups, underlining, for example, that SWIPA and the CAFF ABA can complement each other and the need to ensure consistencies with the AMSA. ICC asked that the report be translated into Danish, English, and Greenlandic, and RAIPON for Russian translation. AMAP intends to do a Russian translation later next year and other translations may follow.

Decision: SAOs agreed to an Arctic Council presentation of the GRIS component of SWIPA at the UNFCCC CoP15. Therefore, the GRIS report needs to be finalized at the 2009 Ministerial in April.

2.2. Non-CO₂ drivers of Climate Change

Background: At the request of AMAP, Pam Pearson, Climate Policy Center-Europe, presented the recommendations from the workshop held on 15-16 September in Oslo to discuss non-CO₂ drivers of Arctic climate change, underlining that there are significant sources of non-CO₂ drivers of climate change north of 40° North. The initial recommendations from the workshop include for nations to consider unmet observation needs, expand monitoring and research, commit to methane reductions, take measures to limit agricultural crop residue burning and mandate AMAP to further evaluate black carbon emission reduction options. AMAP requested SAO approval to take a number of immediate outreach actions, including to take a common Arctic Council approach to: 1) initiating a discussion within UNECE LRTAP Convention, 2) requesting an IMO agenda item to discuss BC, 3) hosting a AC side-event at UNFCCC CoP14 and CoP15, and 4) engagement of UNEP.

The US SAO introduced that it is also working on a concrete proposal for AC action on BC and informed of the willingness of the USA EPA to assist in the AC work, in particular to compile list of sources and mitigation options.

Discussion: SAOs recognized that reduction of emissions of short-lived climate forcers could slow Arctic warming in the near-term and that while reductions of CO₂ remain paramount, short-lived climate forcers also need to be dealt with. They welcomed AMAP's work on non-CO₂ drivers of climate change that highlights the link between climate change, air pollution and health.

Member States' experts are reviewing the recommendations to determine their practical feasibility and implications for national agencies and processes. Some Member States supported that the science is sufficient to warrant governments to take immediate action, with priority on expanding monitoring and research and taking measures to further evaluate BC emission reduction options. The US noted that methane is covered in the Kyoto Protocol and that participation in the existing Methane to Markets program is also a vehicle for methane reductions. Member States agreed to further study the US proposal with a view to develop it further, including with relevant WGs, such as ACAP.

SAOs and PPs supported that the eight AC Member States can benefit from coordinated AC outreach. However, on the issue of non-CO₂ drivers, specific Arctic Council action requires further consideration. Although it was noted that the AMAP work on non-CO₂ drivers of climate change can complement the UNECE LRTAP Convention process, SAOs agreed that it was too early to consider presentation of an agreed AC text to other bodies. Recommendations to the IMO will also be a major outcome of the AMSA and SAOs supported that AC engagement in IMO should follow discussion of AMSA and its findings.

Decision: The SAOs noted with appreciation AMAP's work on non-CO₂ forcers, that the work is on the right track, and requested AMAP to continue to develop this work in coordination with Arctic Council governments and relevant experts.

SAOs noted with appreciation the recommendations of the 15-16 September 2008 AMAP workshop and will continue to consider these recommendations and the US proposal, including via email, in preparation for further discussion at the February SAO meeting.

2.3. Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Arctic (VACCA)

Background: The SDWG Chair informed SAOs that the SDWG required more time for further development and consideration of draft recommendations based on the VACCA scoping study and workshop held in Tromsø, Norway on 22-23 October 2008.

The WRH association presented an update on recent developments under the EALAT project, noting that the project is the voice of reindeer herders to the AC.

Action: SAOs took note and welcomed a detailed report on VACCA and its recommendations at the next SAO meeting.

3. Energy

3.1. Energy Report to Ministers

Background: The SDWG Executive Secretary gave a brief overview of the draft report prepared by the SDWG to examine current cooperation on Arctic energy and suggests possible areas for future AC cooperation. The SDWG requires more time to finalize the draft recommendations and these will be available 8 January 2009.

Discussion: SAOs welcomed the focus of the report on the Arctic as an energy consumer and how energy is used in the Arctic, noting that past assessments tended to look at the Arctic only as an energy provider. SAOs and PPs requested the report include renewable and alternative energy sources in the Arctic, energy efficiency and savings, the supply of energy to remote communities, and the impacts and costs of energy use decisions on Arctic communities.

Decision: For information only. The SDWG was requested to take into account SAO and PPs suggestions prior to submission to SAOs in January.

3.2. PAME Updated Arctic Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines

Background: The PAME Chair explained that the Arctic Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines were recommended in 1996, developed and adopted in 1997, revised in 2002, and that the 2009 Arctic Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines represent the 2nd revision. The non-binding Guidelines are targeted at state authorities and/or those that regulate the oil and gas industry and are intended to encourage a high level of standards in oil and gas development and protection of the Arctic. The Guidelines take into account the Arctic Oil and Gas Assessment and the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment.

Discussion: SAOs expressed their readiness to endorse the 2009 Arctic Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines. They welcomed the Guidelines as an important outcome of AC work and recommended that the public, national and international bodies should be made aware of them.

It was suggested that they be used as a baseline for setting national requirements and that, in the future, the Guidelines could be made more specific for Arctic conditions.

Decision: SAOs accepted the 2009 Arctic Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines for delivery to Arctic Council Ministers in 2009.

3.3. Oil and Gas Assessment

Background: The AMAP Chair reported that the Oil and Gas Assessment science chapters are becoming available as editing is completed, and that a hard copy should be available before the Ministerial. As requested, AMAP has prepared a first draft of text that could be included in the Ministerial Declaration in 2009.

Discussion: SAOs expressed general support for the content of the proposed text, but requested that the text be shortened. Denmark raised the important benefits of oil and gas development to small, self-governing areas of the Arctic.

Decision: The Norwegian Chairmanship will take comments into account in drafting the 1st draft Ministerial declaration. SAOs were invited to convey their views on the text prior to the February SAO editing session.

3.4. Development of safety systems in implementation of economic and infrastructural projects in the Arctic

Background: The EPPR Chair informed that the Russian proposal for an Arctic Council project "An accident prevention and safety systems development in economic and infrastructural projects in Arctic" was approved by EPPR at its August 2008 meeting. EPPR also concluded that the project covers several levels of decision making of which EPPR expertise covers only a part. Some Member States have explained that they do not have the mandate to provide funding for this project, but had readiness to attend the planned exercises. It was recommended that Russia should have a stepwise approach to make it easier for the EPPR representatives to support specific stepwise proposals. Russia noted that its proposal proceeds exactly from this understanding.

Igor Veselov, EMERCOM Russia, presented information about the seminar in Dudinka on cold climate working methods, procedures and techniques for rescue services in September 2008 and about the large-scale Varandy exercise held in October 2008 to simulate an oil spill on an off-shore platform and to test the response capacity of LUKOIL and local Russian authorities and services. All participants were very satisfied with the results of the seminar and the exercise. Russia has discussed with the World Bank possible establishment of a Trust Fund for the project. Russia noted that the Russian government and participating companies are prepared to provide further contributions to the project and that it is understood that contributions from others will depend on the scope of their involvement. Russia will, inter alia, have a seminar next August in Anadyr to identify steps and all Arctic Council members are invited.

Discussion: There was considerable interest in the results of the Varandy exercise. Russia was commended on the initiative and SAOs and PPs expressed their full support for efforts aimed at protecting the Arctic Ocean and ecosystems. It was noted that the proposal is very comprehensive and SAOs supported a step wise approach. Russia and EPPR were encouraged to identify top priority projects within the EPPR mandate and bring relevant aspects forward to SAOs.

Decision: SAOs approved the new AC project and requested EPPR to seek further mandates from SAOs for further aspects of the process when needed.

Note: under this agenda item the US also introduced a proposal for a search and rescue agreement

Background: The US SAO briefly introduced the US proposal for a MOU on search and rescue (SAR) in the Arctic Ocean, proposing that Arctic states need comprehensive approach because of increasing activity due to tourism, shipping and access to natural resources. The proposal requests AC Ministers to establish a subsidiary body for the negotiations of the instrument, noting that although the AC has no implementation role it is in a position to serve as a negotiating body for such a MOU.

Discussion: Many SAOs and PPs supported forming a task force to advance this work, and that it was a good follow-up to Ministers discussion in Ilullisat in May. Russia noted that a SAR agreement had been suggested in the BEAC in 2003 and EPPR WG in 2004 and that this could be a starting point in the work. Several countries requested more time for internal review and suggested an inter-sessional process to further consideration of the proposal.

Decision: SAOs agreed to accept the US proposal to request Ministers to establish a subsidiary body to negotiate a MOU, on the condition that the countries that have requested more time for internal review will indicate the status of their support by 20 December 2008 or as early as possible. (As of 28 January, the proposal has received only positive support.)

4. Human Development

Note: There were no agenda items discussed under this heading as project leads were not able to attend.

5. Oceans

5.1. The Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment

Background: The PAME Chair informed that AMSA findings and recommendations were not ready for SAO consideration and direction at this meeting. PAME national internal reviews are in progress and there will be a Special PAME meeting in Oslo on 21-22 Nov 2008 to continue work on the recommendations and final report. The PAME Chair outlined a timeline for completion of the AMSA. SAOs were asked to focus on the nature of the AMSA products, the process for completion of the AMSA, as well as any other issues.

The AMSA will consist of a 1000 page technical background document, a 100-page AMSA 2009 Report with findings and recommendations which will be negotiated for approval and adoption by Ministers. PAME is considering to host an “Arctic seas” focused event the day after the 2009 Ministerial and sought guidance if PAME should work with the Arctic Council Secretariat and others to also develop a communications strategy for an oceans theme for the Ministerial meeting.

Discussion: SAOs highlighted that the AMSA is an important deliverable for the 2009 Ministerial, and that the work will enable Arctic states to coordinate their regulations on shipping. SAOs took note of proposed timetable, looked forward to the completion of the AMSA and consideration of the draft recommendations. Russia indicated that it will be active in final stage of AMSA, and that a representative from the Transport ministry would attend the upcoming PAME meeting in Oslo.

SAOs and PPs stressed the importance of outreach and expressed support for an event to release AMSA upon its completion. AMAP, CAFF and SDWG suggested that a media event at the 2009 Ministerial could focus on several key deliverables and priorities of the Norwegian Chairmanship and the WG secretariats volunteered to prepare a draft plan for SAO review in February.

PPs commended PAME's engagement of indigenous people and the townhall meetings that were held in many communities. Several PPs indicated the importance of offshore resource development to their communities, the importance to communicate the findings back to communities and their wish to be involved in development of the communications plan.

Decision: SAOS took note of proposed timetable for completion of the AMSA.

5.2. Updated Regional Programs of Action for the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (RPA)

Background: The PAME Chair briefly introduced the 2009 Updated Regional Programs of Action for the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (RPA) and noted that the RPA positions the Arctic seas within the regional seas program of UNEP. New elements include a more modern approach to the ecosystem based approach, habitat, implications of climate change, more emphasis on mercury and on outreach.

Discussion: PAME was commended for its work. SAOs supported the updated RPA, subject to correction of inclusion of national information requested by Russia, and noted its relevance to the UNEP regional seas program.

Decision: SAOs accepted the Updated Regional Programs of Action for the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (RPA) for publishing and delivery to Ministers in 2009.

5.3. Best Practices in Ecosystems-based Oceans Management in the Arctic (BePOMAr)

Background: The PAME Chair introduced BePOMAr, a joint SDWG/PAME project and informed that the draft report had been approved by both WGs.

Alf Håkon Hoel, BePOMAr project lead, noted the WSSD 2002 sustainable development goals and the need for an integrated ecosystems-based approach to oceans management. He reminded that the project outcome will consist of 4 products: a technical report, a report on Observed Best Practices (OBP), a university course, and an international workshop to share and discuss experiences. Final revision of technical report is expected by 1 December.

Discussion: The SAO Chair highlighted that development of a university course is a benchmark for AC outreach and communication activities. SAOs thanked PAME and the lead authors and noted that the project will contribute to PAME's on-going work on large marine ecosystems. The US noted that widespread acceptance of ecosystems based approach to oceans management will provide a foundation for cooperation in the Arctic. Russia stressed the importance to harmonize best practices with national laws and regulations, and that the document presents good examples and is not aimed at establishment of a rule based regime.

Decision: SAOs accepted the report on Observed Best Practices (OBP) for delivery to Ministers in 2009.

6. Contaminants

6.1. Indigenous Peoples Community Action Initiative Overview

Background: SAOs were invited to support the initiative to form a new Project Steering Group for the implementation of the projects on safe handling, storage and treatment of local sources of contamination in Nenets Autonomous District, in Chukotka and on Franz Josef Land.

Discussion: Although a number of delegations supported the proposal, some SAOs raised concern that the initiative had not been thoroughly discussed in the ACAP, and was therefore not at a stage for SAOs approval.

Decision: SAOs requested ACAP to further discuss and present an ACAP approved proposal for SAO consideration at their next meeting.

7. Biodiversity

7.1. Arctic Biodiversity Assessment

Background: Esko Jaakkola, Finland Vice-chair of the ABA, presented a progress report. Phase 1 of the ABA is a 2010 Arctic Highlights Report. This will present 20 indicators of trends (2 pages each) and is based on the CBMP indicators. Authors are currently being identified for each indicator and the report is anticipated to be ready 1 July 2009 for SAO review, then sent to the CBD as an Arctic Council contribution to the United Nations 2010 Biodiversity Target and International Biodiversity Year, and to be included in the Global Biodiversity Outlook report. Phase 2 is a full Arctic Biodiversity Assessment to be ready by 2013. A chief scientist has been appointed and lead and co-lead authors are currently being identified. CAFF is seeking both in-kind support for scientific inputs and authors and additional direct funding.

Discussion: SAOs stressed that securing funding for the ABA is vital, and also noted that to avoid similar situation in the future, funding should be ensured before launching big projects. Many Member States highlighted the contributions that they are making, and several indicated their intention to further contribute. Denmark is funding the chief scientist and looking into further contributions in the form of co-leads and inputs to the highlights report. The US contributes as co-lead of the ABA and will continue to contribute and participate. Canada has secured CAD 50k for 2009. Norway is looking into support and Russia will hold a meeting 27-28 November in Moscow to discuss participation of Russian authors. AAC noted that it works closely with CAFF on the ABA. The Saami Council is ready to nominate experts as co-authors to ABA and hopes for support from the country where author is based. One SAO noted the importance of implementation of the PSI, the first long-term funding arrangements in the Arctic Council, and that experience with this could provide a model for future similar arrangements. The point that each WG treats the limit of the Arctic differently was raised and it was suggested that SAOs might seek to revisit and harmonize geographic boundary of Arctic Council.

Decision: CAFF was commended for their progress. The SAO Chair stressed the importance of the ABA and urged support for fulfillment of ABA author and funding needs.

8. Data, Observations and Monitoring

8.1. Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program (CBMP)

Background: CAFF Chair, Inge Thaulow, presented an update on the CBMP. She noted that the CBMP is a unique AC undertaking, in that it is an on-going program. Work is accelerating and funding has increased 250%. Still, this represented only 60% of the budget required for full implementation of the approved 5-year Implementation Plan. The CBMP has a strong outreach focus and is a major input to the ABA, the SAON process, and the 2010 Global Biodiversity Outlook. SAOs were asked for assistance to ensure the CBMP's continued and full implementation, in particular to nominate and support experts to the CBMP Expert Groups, commit to be country leads for the Expert Groups that do not yet have leads.

Discussion: SAOs underlined that the 2010 Highlights Report (the 1st deliverable of the ABA) is based on CBMP indicators and therefore the importance of the CBMP to the ABA, as well as to SAON. Several Member States expressed their intention to make new or further contributions. Russia noted that it will be an active participant in the expert monitoring group on marine biodiversity. AIA highlighted the importance to involve PPs and indigenous people in community-based monitoring and reminded that the results of the BSSN pilot project will be available at the end of next year and that a 2008 progress report is available now.

Decision: CAFF was commended for the recent progress to implement the CBMP. The SAO Chair stressed the importance of the CBMP and urged nomination of and support for experts to participate in the CBMP.

8.2. SAON – Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks

Background: Odd Rogne, Senior Advisor AMAP & IPY IPO, provided an update on the SAON process, noting that the draft recommendations were not yet ready for delivery to SAOs. Nonetheless, the key recommendation is expected to be to establish an Arctic Observing Forum (AOF). The AOF would be committed to advancing Arctic observations, data and information management. Draft terms of reference will be ready by 15December. The AOF would welcome global partners. SAOs were asked to consider if the AOF should be embedded in the AC. If so, AMAP informed that no new secretariat resources would be needed in the short-term. AMAP offered to provide draft text recommending the AC role in the AOF for the 2009 Ministerial.

Discussion: SAOs and PPs supported the importance of SAON and of connecting observations in the circumpolar context. SAOs had many questions about what the mandate and membership of the AOF would be and how it would interface with existing networks. SAOs requested more information and details on the recommendations. It was suggested that the “European Information and Observing Network”; EIONET, should be explored as one potential tool for implementing SAON. There was support that any AOF should build on existing structures, and for IASC and AMAP's continued involvement. CAFF committed to be involved if such a forum were established.

Decision: SAOs looked forward to reviewing the draft recommendations from the SAON process as soon as possible.

9. IPY Legacy

9.1. Maximizing the Legacy of IPY

Background: Bjørn Fossli Johansen, Norwegian Polar Institute, introduced Norway's revised project proposal “Maximizing the Legacy of IPY” which aims to undertake scoping work to help the Arctic Council identify where it should apply efforts to ensure that IPY provides maximum benefits for society at large. The proposed scoping work will focus on placing the scientific results

of IPY in the context of society and governance and what should be brought to attention of decision makers and Arctic residents. Norway proposes to convene an AC legacy workshop to discuss approaches needed to bring forward the relevant knowledge and enable societal use of IPY results, including the possibility of an IPY assessment report, with a view to reaching agreement at the 2009 Ministerial.

Discussion: SAOs expressed strong support for the importance to incorporate results of relevant IPY projects into all work of AC and for the AC to take an active role in fostering sustained IPY legacy. They welcomed the revised Norwegian proposal. The issues identified in the proposal were considered to be the highly relevant, both sustained scientific cooperation and also on ensuring that the relevant IPY findings are communicated to inform decision makers and Arctic residents. The timelines for completion of the scoping work were considered to be very short and it was recommended that the workshop on IPY legacy should be held as early as possible.

Norway was asked to clarify the role for the contact group. The annex of potential IPY legacy projects was considered incomplete and SAOs requested that it be removed from the proposal. SAOs questioned whether AC work on IPY should be tied to CoP15 (as per the proposal, to “inform processes in conjunction with CoP15”) and Norway was encouraged to focus the work on what IPY projects and legacy would be of benefit to the AC Member States and PPs.

On the issue of whether the AC IPY legacy work could include the Antarctic, the USA noted that the joint AC/ATCM meeting (of Foreign Ministers) to be held in April 2009 is intended to mark the completion of IPY and focus on attention on continued scientific cooperation at both poles. IASC suggested that members of the IPY joint committee working, ICSU and WMO, SCAR, should be involved.

Decision: SAOs approved the Maximizing the Legacy of IPY project, with the annex list removed.

10. Working Group Progress Reports

Background: Working Group Progress Reports contain information on project progress and outcomes intended for Ministerial, including special issues for SAO consideration. SAOs were asked to raise questions to the Working Groups if needed under this agenda item.

Discussion: No discussion took place under this agenda item.

11. Statements from Permanent Participants

11.1. Indigenous People’s Secretariat

Background: Patricia Cochrane, IPS Chair, reported on the work of the IPS Governing Board. She underlined the AC as model of cooperation between governments and indigenous people and noted that activities where PPs have taken the lead have had great success, i.e. the indigenous language symposium. The Indigenous Peoples Global Summit on Climate Change will take place 20-24 April 2009 in Anchorage, Alaska and, although not an AC project, is another example of PPs strengths to take the lead. Indigenous people are already sitting on many major international bodies and a recent ICC/FIELD published paper serves as a handbook on how indigenous people and communities can strengthen their engagement in these bodies. The IPS Board will provide revised Terms of Reference for the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat prior to the next SAO meeting.

Discussion: PPs expressed support for the statement, welcomed the participation of PPs in the AC, and stressed the importance of this partnership to the relevance of the AC.

Decision: For information only.

12. Statements from Observer States and Organizations

12.1. International Arctic Science Committee (IASC)

Background: Rachold Volker, IASC Executive Secretary, updated SAOs on the new structure of IASC which consists of five scientific standing committees. The Secretariat is expanding and will be moved to Potsdam, Germany at the beginning of 2009. The next Arctic science summit week will take place in Bergen in March 2009. He highlighted letters of agreement recently signed with IASSA, SCAR (MoU), IAECPS, WCRP/CliC, and ICSU. IASC and the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) jointly organized the first IPY Conference in St. Petersburg, Russia. Planning for the 2nd IPY science conference in Oslo in 2010 is underway, in cooperation with the IPY joint committee. IASC will continue to contribute to the IPY Legacy and SAON process.

Decision: For information purposes.

12.2. University of the Arctic

Background: Lars Kullerud, President UArctic, updated SAOs on the UArctic Strategic Plan 2008-2013 and drew attention to the recent letter from UArctic to SAOs requesting the SAOs to acknowledge the important education, training and capacity building role of the UArctic in the IPY legacy, to encourage more engagement of the UArctic in WG activities, and to strongly endorse the UArctic in the 2009 Ministerial declaration.

Decision: For information purposes.

12.3. Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region

Background: Bjørn Willy Robstad, SCPAR Secretary General, presented the Conference Statement from the last Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, which recommends that the political role of AC should be enhanced, that a Ministerial meeting take place at least once a year, continued support for UArctic, and support for a strong Arctic message at CoP15.

Decision: For information purposes.

12.4. Nordic Council of Ministers

Background: Nikolaj Bock, NCM Senior Advisor, gave a brief presentation on the outcomes of the NCM Common Concern for the Arctic Conference held in Ilulissat, Greenland, 9-10 September 2008 and the NCM Arctic Cooperation Programme 2009-2011 that begins January 15, 2009 and can provide funding for AC WG activities.

Discussion: ICC thanked the NCM for its support to IPS for organizing its climate change and adaptation workshop.

Decision: For information only.

12.5. European Commission (*Ad hoc* Observer)

Background: Fernando Garces de Los Fayos Tournan, European Commission, reported on the EC Communication on the EU and the Arctic region, which was presented in Brussels on the very same day, 20 November 2008. The EC expressed its intention to apply for the status of permanent AC observer in due time before the April 2009 Ministerial.

Decision: For information only.

12.6. Observer States

Background: Vincent Van Zeijst, Netherlands presented a joint statement on behalf of the participating Observer states. A wide range of international meetings are discussing Arctic issues, and also looking at ways to inform non-Arctic states and stakeholders of issues in Arctic region. He highlighted the useful meeting for Deputy Ministers hosted by Norway in Tromsø and noted that Observers wish to cooperate not only on science but also decision making. The possibility of Observers to co-fund AC projects is more likely if Observers are involved early at the project development phase. Observers would like to participate in AC discussions on the role and level of engagement for Observers.

Decision: For information only.

13. Administrative Issues

13.1. Update on the Project Support Instrument (PSI)

Background: The Russian Federation and NEFCO informed that they have worked with contributing countries and PPs to prepare amended Project Support Instrument (PSI) Rules and Procedures (R&P). SAOs were invited to approve the PSI Committee Rules and Procedures.

Discussion: The USA questioned that, given that all AC funding is voluntary and that project steering groups are subsidiary to the WGS, why the PSI committee should be limited only to those who financially contribute and suggested that no member of the AC should be prevented from participating in the PSI. Russia clarified that the R&P are not in conflict with the PSI Guidelines and recommended that SAOs take note of the revised R&P with the understanding that the agreement will come into force two weeks after US completed necessary internal reviews. The importance of operational launching of the PSI prior to the next AC Ministerial was also noted.

Decision: It was agreed to take note of the Rules and Procedures as it is an internal document of the PSI committee. The SAOs requested until 10 December to obtain clarifications and provide comment to ensure that the R&P are not in conflict with the PSI Guidelines as approved in 2005. All clarifications made to the US shall be distributed to all SAOs and PPs. (Note: Since the Kautokeino meeting, one small revision was requested, in §5.f of the R&P, the wording "Project Steering Group" has been replaced with "PSI Project Supervising Committees". SAO consideration of the PSI R&P is now completed.)

13.2. Effectiveness and Efficiency of the Arctic Council

Background: In April, 2007, SAOs requested that the effectiveness and efficiency of the Arctic Council should be regularly reviewed and should be a standing item on the agenda. The SAO Chair reported back on the outcome of the SAOs and PP HoDs meetings held to discuss some key elements of improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the Arctic Council on April 22 and November 18. The SAO Chair informed that SAOs and PP HoD agreed on the need to develop

guidelines for Arctic Council's engagement in outreach activities, including a communication/outreach plan. Discussions also focused on options to improve information exchange with Observers, how to engage Observers more actively in the work of the Council and its Working Groups and the possible need to clarify the criteria for admission of Observers. SAOs will continue their discussions in February.

Decision: For information only.

13.3. Preparations for Ministerial 2009

Background: The SAO Chair summarized the timelines and work to be done in preparation for the 2009 Ministerial. Key dates and deadlines include:

8 January	Deadline for initial inputs to SAO Report to Ministers and Declaration, including deadline for Working Group Progress Reports and 2009-2011 Work plans (postponed to 20 January)
20 January	Distribution: first Draft SAO Report to Ministers and Ministerial Declaration (postponed to 26 January)
27 January	Distribution of the first draft agenda for Ministerial meeting
10-11 February	SAO Meeting and SAO Editing Meeting, Copenhagen
26-27 April 2009	SAO Editing Meeting, Tromsø
28 April 2009	(High Level Political Meeting: Melting Ice, Tromsø, afternoon+dinner)
29 April 2009	Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting, Tromsø (morning+lunch)

Decision: SAOs agreed that a half/one day SAO meeting is needed in February, prior to the SAO editing session, to focus on the outstanding items from this meeting.

14. Other business

14.1. Nordic Mapping Agencies Proposal for an Arctic Spatial Data Infrastructure

Background: In response to EPPR/CAFF and AMAP's consideration of the current and potential use of spatial information within the Arctic Council, the Nordic Mapping Agencies of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden and the National Spatial Planning of Greenland have proposed to enlarge the Barents Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) into an Arctic SDI, i.e. to also include Russia, Canada and the USA.

Decision: SAOs agreed to consider the Nordic Mapping Agencies proposal at their February meeting.

14.2. Update on the Arctic Portal

Background: Haldor Johanson, Iceland, presented a short update on the Arctic Portal (www.Arcticportal.org) and highlighted that the site receives over 1000 visits/day. Anders Oskal, WRH, noted that the launch of a new reindeer portal, hosted on the Arctic Portal.

Decision: For information only.

Other Business

The Saami Council raised the issue of funding to facilitate participation of PPs at AC meetings and in projects. Norway noted that every country should seek to secure funding for PPs, and announced that it will increase its contribution to the Saami Council in 2009. Other Member States were encouraged to do the same.

AMAP raised attention to the unmanned aircraft workshop outcomes and welcomed comments for discussion at its December meeting.

Russia informed of a recent Russian parliamentary hearing on preservation of rare culture (languages, pictures, music, etc.) in the north and that Russia is planning to create a national “electronic memory of the Arctic” which would digitize all sources of information related to culture and life in the Arctic and suggested the potential for it to become an SDWG project to encompass all Arctic Council member states. Iceland noted the relevance of the Arctic Portal to such a potential project.

The Local Organizers/Hosts presented copies of the award winning movie “Kautokeino Opprøret” to all delegates.

Conclusions: The SAO Chair thanked participants and adjourned the meeting.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAC	Arctic Athabaskan Council
ABA	Arctic Biodiversity Assessment
AC	Arctic Council
ACAP	Arctic Contaminants Action Program Working Group
AIA	Aleut International Association
AMAP	Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program Working Group
AOF	Arctic Observing Forum
AON	Arctic Observatories Network
BC	black carbon
BEAC	Barents Euro-Arctic Council
BePoMar	Best Practices in Oceans-Based Management
BSSN	Bering Sea Sub-network
CAFF	Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna Working Group
CBD	UN Convention on Biological Diversity
CBMP	Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program
EALAT	Reindeer Herders Vulnerability Network Study
EEA	European Environment Agency
EC	European Commission
ECORA	Integrated Ecosystem Approach to Conserve Biodiversity and Minimize Habitat Fragmentation in the Russian Arctic
EPPR	Emergency Prevention Preparedness and Response Working Group
GCI	Gwich'in Council International
GRIS	Greenland Ice Sheet (component of SWIPA project)
IASC	International Arctic Science Committee
ICC	Inuit Circumpolar Council
IPS	Indigenous Peoples Secretariat
IP	Indigenous Peoples
IHWMS	Integrated Hazardous Waste Management Strategy
IPY	International Polar Year
LME	Large Marine Ecosystems
NCM	Nordic Council of Ministers
PAntOS	Pan-AntArctic Observing System
PAME	Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment Working Group
PP	Permanent Participant
PSI	Project Support Instrument
RAIPON	Russian Arctic Indigenous Peoples of the North
RPA	Regional Programme of Action
SAON	Sustained Arctic Observing Networks
SCAR	Scientific Committee on AntArctic Research
SCPAR	Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region
SDWG	Sustainable Development Working Group

SWIPA	Climate Change and the Cryosphere - Snow, Water, Ice and Permafrost in the Arctic
SAO	Senior Arctic Official
SAON (IG)	Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (Initiating Group)
SC	Saami Council
SDAP	Sustainable Development Action Plan
TEK	Traditional Ecological Knowledge
UAS	Unmanned Aircraft Systems
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
VACCA	Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Arctic
WG	Working Group of the Arctic Council