



ARCTIC COUNCIL

United States Chairmanship
2015 - 2017

*One Arctic: Shared Opportunities,
Challenges and Responsibilities*



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The Chairmanship Brand

“One Arctic: Shared Opportunities, Challenges and Responsibilities”

- Borrowed “One Arctic” from ICC 2014 General Assembly – shows unity among the Arctic States and peoples
- “Shared Opportunities, Challenges and Responsibilities” shows that that all of us, not just the Arctic States, share in responsibly managing the region



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U.S. Chairmanship Structure

Chair of the Council: *Secretary of State John F. Kerry*

Coordinator of the Chairmanship: *Special Representative for the Arctic Region Robert J. Papp*

Special Advisor on Arctic Science and Policy: *Fran Ulmer*

Senior Arctic Official: *Julia L. Gourley*

Chair of the Senior Arctic Officials: *TBD*



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Three Overarching Goals

1. Continue strengthening the Council as an intergovernmental forum
2. Introduce new long-term priorities into the Council
3. Raise Arctic and climate change awareness within the United States and across the world



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Organizational Thematic Areas

Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change in the Arctic

Stewardship of the Arctic Ocean

Improving Economic and Living Conditions



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Thematic Area 1: Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change

Short-lived Climate Pollutants

- Promote full implementation in all Arctic States of the recommendations from the Black Carbon and Methane Task Force and the Short-lived Climate Forcers Task Force. Encourage Arctic Council Observer States whose emissions affect the Arctic to do likewise.
- All Arctic States develop domestic black carbon inventories identifying contributing sectors and tracking progress in reducing emission, with an initial focus on gas flaring. Regular reporting at SAO meetings on progress in reducing emissions.
- Increase data collection and monitoring of black carbon emissions affecting the Arctic , through SAON and additional physical monitoring stations, and improve the ability to monitor releases of methane in the Arctic.

Working Groups: ACAP, AMAP



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Thematic Area 1: Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change

Arctic Climate Adaptation and Resilience

- Sweden and the United States co-lead an effort to complete the *Arctic Resilience Report*, ensuring that any recommendations are policy-relevant, clear and specific as to implementation by the Arctic States.
- Under AACA-C, produce a series of easily understandable reports and fact sheets, targeted at laypeople, on high-priority climate risks and vulnerabilities in the Arctic region
- Create new decision-making tools to support local adaptation and address priority climate risks and vulnerabilities. Undertake a “call-to-action.”

Working Group(s): Collaborative effort among multiple working groups



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Thematic Area 1: Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change

Enhance Arctic Climate Science:

a). Pan-Arctic Digital Elevation Map

- Develop a high-resolution pan-Arctic digital elevation model to improve the quality of topographic information available for the Arctic. Understanding topography assists with climate modeling as well as understanding the impacts of climate change in terrestrial areas such as freshwater movement patterns.
- This could tie in with the Arctic Spatial Data Infrastructure (ASDI), an initiative led by the mapping agencies of the Arctic States. An MOU among the mapping agencies was signed earlier this year.

Working Group: CAFF



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Thematic Area 1: Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change

Enhancing Arctic Climate Science:

b) Arctic Indicators Network, and Early Warning Indicator System for the Arctic

- Encourage the development an early warning indicator system in each Arctic State that could be linked into a single pan-Arctic network. These systems would contain the changes in key physical, biological, social and economic elements related to climate impacts and their effects in the region.
- The network could serve as a source of current information for policy makers, scientists, students, the media, etc.

Working Group: AMAP, with support of SAON



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Thematic Area 2: Stewardship of the Arctic Ocean ***Marine Protected Areas Network***

- Enhance PAME's work to evaluate the prospects for developing a Pan-Arctic Network of Marine Protected Areas. Set an Arctic-wide target for protecting marine areas for the Arctic Ocean and adjacent seas.
- Examine various models of marine protected areas, taking into account ecosystem-based management of marine activities such as subsistence fishing, commercial fishing, shipping, oil and gas development, mining, tourism and other activities.

Working Group: PAME



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Thematic Area 2: Stewardship of the Arctic Ocean ***Regional Seas Program (RSP) for the Arctic Ocean***

- Consider whether a Regional Seas Program might be a useful vehicle to improve Arctic Ocean management.
- An RSP could serve as a mechanism to coordinate and enhance scientific research and potentially to manage increasing human activity in the Arctic Ocean, including by promoting safe and secure maritime operations.
- An RSP could also serve to rationalize and organize the growing body of hard and soft law applicable to the Arctic Ocean.

Working Group: PAME



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Thematic Area 2: Stewardship of the Arctic Ocean ***Marine Environmental Protection***

- Expand information sharing on the environmental impacts of hazardous substances, mechanical recovery efficacy, and in-situ burning in open water, broken ice, and hard packed ice.
- Increase sharing of oil spill preparedness and response capabilities and continue the development of specialized pollution response resources and operational guidelines for responses in broken ice and ice covered areas.

Working Group: EPPR



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Thematic Area 2: Stewardship of the Arctic Ocean ***Search and Rescue (SAR) Exercises***

- Enhance SAR capability by conducting a full scale live exercise, if feasible.
- A tabletop exercise beforehand would identify available SAR resources and specific actions to include in the live exercise.
- Target dates are May 2015 for the tabletop and summer 2016 for the live exercise. An after-action report with recommendations improving SAR coordination in the region would be submitted to the SAOs.

Working Group: EPPR



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Thematic Area 2: Stewardship of the Arctic Ocean

Arctic Ocean Acidification

- Enhance monitoring of Arctic Ocean Acidification, as per the AMAP AOA assessment recommendations.
- Educate the media and the public about ocean acidification, its marine ecosystem impacts, its economic impacts for fisheries and local economies that depend on income and jobs from shell fishers in particular, its ties to climate change, and why it is happening more dramatically in the Arctic Ocean than any other ocean in the world.

Working Group: AMAP



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Thematic Area 3: Improving Economic and Living Conditions

Renewable Energy Demonstrations

- Expand the U.S. Remote Communities Renewable Energy partnership across the Arctic to demonstrate the feasibility of village-level electrification through clean, renewable energy. The ideal technologies, such as hybrid wind-diesel modular systems, would be economically installed and maintained in Arctic communities.
- Seek assistance from other Arctic States to develop the technology, as well as look at ways to implement the technology once the proof of concept phase is complete, possibly through public-private partnerships. Seek synergies through each Arctic State's unique expertise in renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies.

Working Group: SDWG



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Thematic Area 3: Improving Economic and Living Conditions

Community Sanitation and Public Health

- The “Alaska Water and Sewer Challenge” is a research and development effort to find better and more affordable ways to deliver drinking water and sewage disposal services to remote communities in cold climates.
- When results become available in 2016, expand this effort to other Arctic States by hosting a conference of researchers, engineers, manufacturers, vendors, and health experts from around the world to attract investment in clean, safe, affordable and reliable water and sewer services in remote communities across the Arctic.

Working Group: SDWG



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Thematic Area 3: Improving Economic and Living Conditions

Arctic Water Resources Vulnerability Index

- The Arctic Water Resource Vulnerability Index (AWRVI), developed by the University of Alaska-Fairbanks for use in Alaskan communities, will be adapted for Arctic-wide use.
- The AWRVI is an integrated assessment tool for addressing community resilience and vulnerability with respect to freshwater. It is designed for use by local government officials, policymakers, researchers, and others
- It is yet another tool in the box that, with regular use, can help to improve living conditions in remote Arctic communities. It is similar to the Adaptive Capacity Indices being developed in the SDWG right now.

Working Groups: AMAP and SDWG



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Thematic Area 3: Improving Economic and Living Conditions

Freshwater Security

- As part of the AACA-C, de-couple the Arctic Freshwater Synthesis (AFS) as a stand-alone product to be promoted publicly as the first-of-its-kind look at the freshwater picture in the Arctic.
- The AFS will examine issues such as: the role of freshwater in other Arctic systems, historic and projected changes to the Arctic freshwater system and key drivers of such changes.
- The AFS could serve as the basis for a first-ever comprehensive Arctic Freshwater Assessment, perhaps during the Finnish chairmanship.

Working Group: AMAP



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Thematic Area 3: Improving Economic and Living Conditions

Suicide Prevention and Resilience

- Following Greenland's and Canada's past work on resilience and mental health, we propose to create a common, science-based system of metrics to track suicidal behaviors and key correlates, interventions, and outcomes across Arctic States.
- "RISING SUN" - Reducing the Incidence of Suicide in Indigenous Groups / Strengths United through Networks – is a new initiative designed by the U.S. National Institute of Mental Health, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Working Group: SDWG



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Thematic Area 3: Improving Economic and Living Conditions

Telecommunications Infrastructure

- Telecommunication infrastructure in the Arctic is extremely poor. This is unsustainable as human activity increases and support services become critical.
- We propose to establish a telecommunications infrastructure expert group within the SDWG, consisting of government and industry officials, to develop an Arctic-wide telecommunications infrastructure assessment.
- This assessment would be a compilation of existing national assessments in each Arctic State, and would be presented to the International Telecommunications Union and the private sector to promote the build-out of commercial telecommunications infrastructure in the Arctic region.

Working Group: SDWG



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PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Outside the Arctic Council, the U.S. will conduct a wide-spread, intensive public outreach campaign.
- Our goal is three-fold:
 - a) to educate the U.S. public about why the Arctic matters and its strategic importance to our country;
 - b) to educate the public about climate change impacts in the Arctic and how they are affecting our country; and
 - c) to educate the rest of the world about how the Arctic affects them.



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OTHER ACTIVITIES

- The U.S. will launch, sometime close to the Iqaluit Ministerial, a new ***Arctic Fulbright Initiative*** (AFI).
- The AFI will conclude in connection with the U.S. Ministerial meeting in 2017, and we hope other Arctic States will continue it so that it becomes an integral part of the Arctic educational world.
- The IMO Polar Code is expected to be finalized in 2015. The U.S. will propose that the Arctic States initiate the development of ***Phase II of the Polar Code***. Phase II is designed to consider regulations for non-SOLAS ships, currently not included in many chapters of the Polar Code, as well as additional recommendatory guidance for ships operating in polar waters.



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Strengthening the AC

- Archiving Project – the U.S. will take over leading this project and seeing it through to completion by the U.S. Ministerial meeting.
- Organizational matters – the SAO chair could lead SAO discussions on matters such as whether/how to use work products by non-AC entities (e.g. AHDR); how the Council should relate to outside bodies (e.g. Arctic Economic Council, Arctic Regulators Forum, Arctic Regional Hydrographic Commission, IMO, etc.); and an early SAO meeting with working group chairs (June 2015) to make sure projects are on track from the start.
- Internal structure – the SAO chair could lead a SAO review of the internal Council structure to see if it continues to meet our needs.



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QUESTIONS??