

**Report of the
Arctic Council Focal Point (FP) for
ACIA Follow-up Activities**

**Presented to Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs)
of the Arctic Council**

23 October 2006

**Salekhard, Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug
Russian Federation**

Table of Contents

i.	Introduction – mandate	3
I.	Recommendations	4
II.	Summary of Focal Point Activity Since April 2005	6
III.	Analysis of Working Group Reports and International Activities	7
	1. Deliverables	7
	2. International Activities	8
	3. Adaptation	
	4. Mitigation	8
IV.	Reorganization of work for ACIA Follow-up under the Arctic Council	9
	1. Review of the establishment of the Focal Point	9
	2. Focal Point work until now	9
	3. Organizing AC work on ACIA Follow-up from this point forward	10
Annex 1:	Report from Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP)	12
Annex 2:	Report from Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF)	14
Annex 3:	Report from Environmental Protection, Prevention and Response (EPPR)	17
Annex 4:	Report from Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME)	17
Annex 5:	Report from Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG)	19
Annex 6:	Report from International Arctic Science Committee (IASC)	22
Annex 7:	Report from Adaptation Workshop – Oslo, 26-27 June, 2006	24
	Executive summary and recommendations	
Annex 8:	Norwegian proposal for reorganizing the work of the Focal Point	27

i. INTRODUCTION – Mandate

At the Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in November 2004, the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA) was formally presented to Ministers. In response, the AC Ministers endorsed the following:

- *Direct* relevant technical working groups of the Arctic Council to review the scientific chapters of the ACIA in the context of their ongoing and future work programmes and to report on the progress made at the 2006 Ministerial Meeting.
- *Decide* to keep under review the need for an updated assessment of climate change in the Arctic, drawing *inter alia* on the IPCC fourth assessment report and the results of the International Polar Year 2007-2009.
- *Direct* SAOs to nominate a **focal point**, to be responsible for an ACIA follow up, including an assessment of gaps in knowledge.
- *Communicate* as appropriate, any Arctic Council ACIA follow-up actions to the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC.

Further to this, the Ministers endorsed four areas to focus efforts for ACIA follow- up:

- Mitigation
- Adaptation
- Research, Observations, Monitoring and Modelling
- Outreach

Ministers resolved that the Arctic Council should respond to the recommendations in the ACIA report as well as to more policy-oriented recommendations developed and presented by the Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs). The Ministers instructed the SAOs to appoint a “focal point” (henceforth referred to as “FP”) to plan for the Arctic Council’s ACIA Follow-up activities. At its meeting in April 2005, the SAOs agreed on the composition and tasks of the FP. As mandated, the following is the Focal Point Report to SAOs in advance of the Ministerial Meeting of October 2006.

I. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are presented to the SAOs with the strong encouragement that they should be forwarded to Ministers for formal adoption.

- 1. Acknowledge that the FP has completed the task assigned by the SAO directive of April 2005. The FP recommends that continuing responsibility for coordination of ACIA Follow-up activities be assigned to a single Working Group. Based on discussions within the FP, the recommendation at this time is for AMAP to assume this role.**

AMAP has agreed to take on the responsibilities formerly assigned to the FP and will be expected to involve all other Working Groups and external organizations such as IASC in fulfilling its responsibility. In fulfilling its co-ordinating and leadership responsibility, AMAP will convene periodic meetings of all WG Chairs and Executive Secretaries to ensure communication and coordination of ACIA Follow-up activities. This approach requires no new groups and ensures that the interests of all Member States and Permanent Participants are considered and that the relevant activities and results of the broad science community are recognized and utilized as appropriate. The primary objective is to ensure that the Arctic Council maintains an effective program focused on climate change in the Arctic. The existing AMAP Climate Expert Group will be expanded to assure proper coverage and balance among the various disciplines needed to cover the broad set of issues. This will be done in collaboration with the other AC WGs and IASC. To ensure proper communication, interested WGs will be expected to participate in all meetings of the Climate Expert Group. The other Working Groups should continue their present ACIA Follow-up tasks as described in their individual reports to the SAOs. The situation could be reviewed as needed.

AMAP should be directed to undertake the following activities as part of its co-ordinating and leadership responsibility.

- 1.1 Identify needs for amending mandates of relevant Arctic Council Working Groups to ensure that issues related to vulnerability and adaptation to, and mitigation of climate change in the Arctic are properly and effectively considered.**

Adopt the most recent definition of “adaptation” put forth by the IPCC¹ and require that, as part of its leadership role, AMAP develop the capability to deal with adaptation, vulnerability and mitigation within the Arctic Council structure.

- 1.2 Prepare for follow-up assessment activities.**

¹ The IPCC AR-4 draft report defines “adaptation” as the adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities.

Charge AMAP to establish an ad-hoc Assessment Planning Group (based on nominations and participation by all interested AC WGs and IASC) to prepare a Prospectus and Implementation Plan for this follow-up activity.

1.3 Promote the availability of data derived from major international initiatives to support future Arctic Council assessments.

Charge AMAP to liaise with relevant major international initiatives (e.g. IPY) to promote awareness and availability of all new information relevant to future assessments.

2. Accept the recommendations from the “adaptation workshop” and establish an approach for implementing them.

AMAP, in collaboration with relevant partner organizations, should be charged with developing a prioritized list of “adaptation” activities, and working to implement them as resources permit. *Refer to Annex 7 for a complete summary of recommendations from this workshop.*

3. As was done with the topic of adaptation, the Arctic Council should convene a special workshop on scientific and technical aspects of mitigation to identify activities that the Arctic Council could consider for future implementation.

AMAP, in collaboration with relevant partner organizations, should prepare a prospectus for this workshop for SAO review and then hold the workshop as soon as practicable. Results and recommendations from the workshop will be presented to SAOs for their consideration.

4. The AC should plan and implement ACIA follow-up assessments as soon as possible. As the initial step, AMAP should be charged to establish an ad-hoc team to prepare a prospectus for review by the AC. The structure and scope of future assessments would be defined by this team.

Related to any efforts the AC takes toward follow-up assessments, the AC must recognize the international initiatives that are of interest for ACIA Follow-up. It is important that:

4.1 The AC establish close cooperation to those initiatives (IPY, ISAC, ICARP II, etc.) to secure cost efficient use of resources and avoid duplication of work.

Regarding IPY specifically, it is important for the AC to:

- Identify key unfunded projects and advocate that a means be found to close the funding gap.
- Work collectively and through national processes to ensure sustained funding after the IPY period for key observation, data management, and outreach activities.
- Work to ensure availability of IPY data to support future climate-related assessments.
- Maintain awareness of the relevant data collected and its location.
- Work to ensure that scientists and governments do not restrict the free flow of information, consistent with accepted intellectual property right protection.

II. SUMMARY OF FOCAL POINT ACTIVITY SINCE APRIL 2005

Following the SAO decision of April 2005 that established the Focal Point, the group has met formally 6 (and possibly 7) times and organized 2 open fora to gather external opinion.

FP Meeting Dates	FP Meeting Locations
April 2005	Yakutsk
June 2005	Oslo
September 2005	Copenhagen
February 2006	Copenhagen
April 2006	Syktyvkar
September 2006	Copenhagen
October 2006 (tentative)	Salekhard
FP Open Fora	Fora Locations
November 2005	ICARP-2, Copenhagen
March 2006	ASSW, Potsdam

In its earlier meetings, the FP identified two initiatives that it believed would strengthen the Arctic Council's ACIA Follow-up activities.

FP Open Fora

- The FP recognized that it needed to work harder to reach out to others to gain additional insight on the best course for the Arctic Council regarding climate activities. The FP agreed to organize an "open forum" at the ICARP-2 conference and at the Arctic Science Summit Week in April 2006. Through these fora, the FP heard from several individuals, mostly external to the Arctic Council, who felt that the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment is an excellent report and who expected the Arctic Council to continue its work on climate change in the Arctic. Several groups offered to work with the Arctic Council on issues of mutual interest. It was noted several times that both natural and social sciences should be emphasized in ACIA Follow-up activities, and that issues raised in the ACIA "policy" document should be considered as well.

Adaptation Workshop

- An initial review of plans by the Working Groups and by IASC indicated that issues from the "policy" document were not being considered in any substantive way in those plans. Therefore the FP discussed a second initiative, the organization of an Arctic Council workshop on adaptation. Norway offered to organize and host the workshop and it was held in June 2006. A summary report from the workshop is included in Annex 7.

III. Analysis of Working Group Reports and International Activities

All Working Group reports, in addition to a submission from IASC and the Adaptation Workshop are annexed in this report (*refer to Annexes 1-7*). Through its meetings and subsequent review of documents prepared by the WGs and IASC, the FP has fulfilled its mandate in coordinating Arctic Council plans for ACIA Follow-up. The FP cooperated closely with IASC and others to ensure that ACIA follow-up by the Arctic Council Working Groups are coordinated and harmonized with activities outside of the Arctic Council.

All WGs are addressing education and outreach through modifications to the websites, town hall meetings, and publishing of reports. These activities are ongoing, and will continue to contribute to ACIA Follow-up.

All WGs directly or indirectly have expressed the lack of sufficient mechanisms currently in place within the Working Groups to address adaptation and mitigation, leading the FP to make specific recommendations in these areas.

A review of reports from the Working Groups and other organizations has identified the following four items that the FP wishes to highlight.

1. The projects proposed by the Working Groups are generally well bounded and have definite **deliverables**. They represent key activities that must be completed to support future Arctic climate assessment work.
2. There are several **international initiatives** related to climate change in the Arctic under way and these would be relevant for ACIA follow-up work done under the AC, e.g. International Polar Year (IPY), ISAC and ICARP II (*for details, refer to Annex 6*).
3. The FP is pleased by the report from the **adaptation workshop** organized by Norway, (*refer to Annex 7*). This report fills the gap identified from an earlier review of potential projects being considered by the various Working Groups.
4. None of the WGs have proposed any activity that relates to **mitigation**, leaving a significant gap in the overall ACIA Follow-up program of the AC.

A further explanation of these four items follows:

1. Deliverables

There are planned several deliverables from the Working Groups concerning research, observations, monitoring and modeling as well as projects and specific assessments related to adaptation. Although none of the individual WG reports included plans for a second Arctic climate assessment, the FP believes that follow-up to ACIA through additional climate change assessments is an essential activity for the AC. These assessments should capture the new information derived from the IPY and should be done in a way that continues the interaction with the IPCC assessment process.

2. International activities

IPY is a snapshot of research activities, and will produce a vast amount of new information and data. The International Polar Year will provide the opportunity to gain significant new knowledge about the Arctic and to put in place observations, outreach, and other tasks that

should be continued well beyond the IPY period. There are several IPY projects proposed that are of great interest for the AC work related to ACIA Follow-up. Obviously, not all of the proposed IPY projects will be funded. Yet there may be instances when a decision by one country to not fund a project inadvertently diminishes the value of a project funded by another country.

The data derived from IPY activities will form a critical underpinning for future work of the Arctic Council.

To achieve its aims for ACIA Follow-up, the AC will need many of the IPY activities to be sustained for a much longer period. These activities include observations, data management, and outreach. The AC should therefore work with IPY to achieve these aims by undertaking the tasks presented on page 5.

The two other long-term international initiatives are the 2nd International Conference on Arctic Research Planning (ICARP II) and the International Study of Arctic Change (ISAC) (*refer to Annex 6 for details*). Both initiatives are addressing scientific gaps and research needs identified in the ACIA report and should be considered in the planning of ACIA Follow-up within the AC.

3. Adaptation and 4. Mitigation

At the Ministerial meeting in Reykjavik, the Ministers endorsed, among other things, the following statements: *The Arctic Council member states should take two sets of actions: mitigation and adaptation.*

The Ministers noted that special attention needs to be paid to strengthening the adaptive capacities of Arctic residents, and specifically listed a number of issues of concern. The **adaptation workshop** organized by Norway (*see Annex 7*), identifies a few specific actions that the AC could take to improve knowledge of adaptation actions and possibilities, and provides the AC with a path toward greater emphasis on adaptation to climate change in the Arctic.

The Ministers furthermore noted that to address the risks associated with climate change in the Arctic of the magnitude projected by the ACIA and other relevant studies, timely, measured and concerted action is needed to address global emissions. Even though overall emissions of greenhouse gases within the Arctic region are limited, there are important mitigation opportunities in the region that would contribute to sustainable development in the Arctic and globally, and global emission reduction efforts.

The Ministers endorsed a number of specific recommendations related to **mitigation** in the Arctic countries.

The FP finds that it may be that the WGs were considering mitigation from the regulatory standpoint, and concluded that there was no role for them. However mitigation also has technical and scientific aspects that are appropriate for AC consideration. For example, the AC could undertake an assessment of knowledge of alternative energy sources or an assessment of technologies for improving energy efficiency. Such assessments that gather and evaluate existing information could provide recommendations that could be implemented by the Arctic countries and contribute to reduction in the level of impacts from

climate change in the Arctic, and elsewhere. As with the topic of “adaptation”, the AC would need new “machinery” to handle these types of assessments.

IV. Reorganization of work for ACIA Follow-up under the Arctic Council

1. Review of the establishment of the Focal Point

The following text was agreed to for the establishment of the Focal Point, at the SAO meeting in Yakutsk, adopted 07.04.05.

A ‘focal point’ is established to develop the plans for ACIA follow-up activities under the Arctic Council. This ‘focal point’ is comprised of the Chairs (or their designated representatives) of the Arctic Council Working Groups. The Senior Arctic Officials are represented in the ‘focal point’ by the Chairman of SAOs. The Permanent Participants are invited to nominate one representative to the ‘focal point’ to represent them all.

The ‘focal point’ will coordinate the ACIA follow-up activities within the WGs and prepare proposals for the Arctic Council in relation to all ACIA follow-up issues mentioned in the Reykjavik Declaration and the Report of Senior Arctic Officials to Ministers at the Fourth Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting. The ‘focal point’ will report the progress made to the upcoming SAO meetings, leading to the 2006 Ministerial Meeting.

The ‘focal point’ will cooperate closely with IASC and other relevant actors to ensure that proposals for ACIA follow-up by the Arctic Council Working Groups are coordinated and harmonized with activities outside of the Arctic Council.

2. Focal Point work until now

Over the past 18 months, the members of the Focal Point (FP) have been preparing material to satisfy the task given by the SAOs. The results of this work appear in this report of the FP to SAOs.

The current Focal Point has achieved much, but has not been as effective as some have wished. For example, it has struggled to define its mission, and there is no clear responsibility for organization of practical issues or for preparing documents or indeed for any activity at all. As a consequence, much of the time at meetings is spent on preliminary discussions rather than on substance and the product of the meetings is sometimes based more on spontaneity than on serious analysis. Further, many parts of the Arctic Council have objected to their limited access to the FP meetings. Some countries have expressed concern that they are not represented. The Permanent Participants have successfully petitioned for stronger representation. The FP has given considerable thought to how the Arctic Council should organize to implement ACIA Follow-up activities in the period following the Ministerial meeting of 2006. It seems clear that the current structure is not a useful one for the implementation phase of the ACIA Follow-up period that begins after the Ministerial meeting in October 2006.

Based on these discussions, the FP has agreed on Recommendation 1, presented earlier.

3. Organizing AC work on ACIA Follow-up from this point forward

The current mandate from the SAOs for the FP allows the interpretation that the FP's work is finished after reporting to the SAOs in advance of the 2006 Ministerial meeting. If the SAOs want to continue to have a "focal point for ACIA follow-up" beyond the Ministerial meeting in October 2006, then the FP recommends that the SAOs reconsider the composition, structure, and tasks of the FP.

The current Focal Point has completed what it was instructed to do. However, it is clear that the current structure is not a useful one for the implementation phase of the ACIA Follow-up period that begins after the Ministerial meeting in October 2006.

The current composition and structure of the FP was designed to coordinate among WGs and prepare proposals to SAOs on all aspects of ACIA Follow-up referenced in Ministerial and SAO documents. Now that this set of tasks is completed, another approach is needed during the implementation phase of ACIA Follow-up. The FP has recommended that both adaptation to climate change and mitigation of climate change should be highlighted in future efforts within the AC. In addition, the FP recommends that activities begin immediately on further assessment work as part of ACIA Follow-up. A revised FP or coordinating body should be prepared to accommodate these Arctic Council activities.

The FP itself has recognized some of the shortcomings of the current structure and has had significant discussion of how to improve the situation. The SAO-representative from Norway, present at the FP meeting in Copenhagen September 2006, on behalf of Norway in its capacity as incoming AC-chair, presented a paper (*see Annex 8*) that offers two options for leading ACIA Follow-up implementation.

- a) ***Create a new climate WG with the main responsibility for climate change follow-up, including implementation. This working group would obtain the knowledge and advice needed by creating expert groups as appropriate to cover the full range of expertise. Countries would nominate experts to cover all relevant areas. Experts from IASC (and possibly other organisations) should be invited to participate. Possible gaps in the Arctic Council program may be filled by involving external organisations. Recommendations from this working group would be referred to the SAOs for possible action.***

Formation of a climate working group does clarify responsibilities, takes care of the national representation and simplifies the implementation of climate-related activities and provides good overview of activities and a holistic way of assessing ACIA issues. However, creation of a new working group will involve a significant number of members and experts, has cost requirements, adds complexity to the AC structure, and may diminish the importance of some of the other working groups.

- b) ***Make one of the existing WGs the "lead" group for climate and involve other WGs as appropriate. This working group would obtain the necessary knowledge and advice by creating expert groups as appropriate to cover the full range of expertise. Countries would nominate experts to cover all relevant areas. Experts from IASC (and possibly other organisations) should be invited to participate. Possible gaps in the Arctic Council program may be filled by involving external organisations. Recommendations from this working group would be referred to***

the SAOs for possible action

This option seems to be a low-cost and simple option. It clarifies responsibilities, takes care of the national representation and provides a good overview of activities and a holistic way of assessing ACIA issues. This option requires no new groups and allows working groups to choose for themselves if they wish to take on significant ACIA follow-up activities. Adding such a large and highly prioritized task to the mandate of a WG could result in the need to revise its priorities on other issues.

Norway's preference is to adopt Option b). The FP does not favor Option a), and is generally supportive of Option b).

The prospect of adding a new focus on adaptation and perhaps also on mitigation leads to the conclusion that a new working group structure might be needed. But at present, the FP considers that AMAP with its expertise in monitoring and assessments is the logical choice to serve as the co-ordinating and lead group for ACIA Follow-up. The other Working Groups should continue their ACIA Follow-up tasks as described earlier. This situation can be reviewed as needed.

Annex 1. Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP)

From the time of its formation, AMAP has had the responsibility to work on monitoring and assessing climate in the Arctic. In its earliest years, climate issues were deferred to allow a focus on contaminant issues, which were judged of greater importance at the time. In 1998 AMAP presented the first assessment regarding climate and UV in the Arctic and since then AMAP has developed a climate and UV monitoring program that has been implemented in some of the Arctic countries. Based on the ACIA results this program has been updated and for the future work it is important that the implementation is improved.

AMAP elevated its interest in Arctic climate change during the preparation of the ACIA report, and has prepared to initiate several projects related to ACIA Follow-up. A major project on combined effects of changes in climate and UV and contaminants on ecosystems and humans has been initiated. A Russian initiated project on the effect of climate change on runoff from Siberian rivers has been developed in close cooperation with AMAP, WMO and Arctic Hycos. A circumpolar implementation of a hydrological project is now under preparation. CAFF and AMAP have initiated a joint work on a joint biological monitoring that will serve among other things the ACIA follow up.

AMAP organized a climate workshop in June 2005 to develop specific recommendations flowing from the conclusions of the ACIA science and policy reports. In February 2006, AMAP convened the first meeting of its newly formed Climate Expert Group (CEG), which reviewed results from the 2005 workshop and prepared a set of task statements for AMAP to consider. At its meeting in June 2006, AMAP agreed to undertake several of the tasks recommended by the CEG. Following is a summary of these tasks:

1) An Arctic Carbon Cycle Synthesis Workshop (ACS) to be arranged during the winter 2006/2007 with USA and Sweden as co-leads. A review paper will be prepared for publication both in the international scientific literature and as an AMAP report. The list of experts to be invited will be updated and invitations sent out as soon as possible. The AMAP Secretariat will assist in the preparation of the workshop.

2) A workshop on Pan Arctic Downscaling of Climate Model Output (PAD) will be arranged, with Norway as the lead. The workshop will consider technical details, comparable methods, and implementation arrangements. The AMAP Secretariat will assist in the preparation of the workshop.

3) State of Arctic (Climate) Annual Report (SAAR). A draft of a 'State of the Arctic Climate' report prepared by the USA was circulated prior to the WG meeting. The report was prepared by a limited group of experts and focussed on physical parameters. It was proposed that this report could serve as a model for an annually-updated report to be prepared by relevant AMAP CEG experts, with the entire CEG serving as the review group for such a product. The WG was generally positive to the proposal to prepare such reports, although the need to produce updates on an annual basis was questioned.

4) Establishment of an Arctic Observing Network (AON) is an important part of the AMAP work, aimed at securing a long-term record of information on climate parameters, contaminants, biological effects, and human health, etc. Establishing such a network and securing the financial resources to operate stations/platforms within their own territories and also international waters is a major task for all Arctic and other interested countries. AMAP will organize a workshop, in association with others, to bring together scientists and fund managers to prepare a strategy for implementation of the AON.

5) Synthesis of Post-ACIA Model Projections for the Arctic and related Arctic Information from the IPCC 4th Assessment. The ACIA 2004 report was based on models developed and used for the 3rd IPCC Assessment (2001). Since that time, substantial improvements have been made regarding the models, and there will be a lot of new Arctic information in several chapters of the 4th IPCC Assessment.

A core group of experts based on lead authors from ACIA and experts involved in the 4th IPCC Assessment will be identified to take on the role to draft a report synthesising Arctic information in the 4th IPCC assessment and recent model predictions for the Arctic. As part of this process, a workshop will be arranged during winter 2007/2008. The AMAP Secretariat will assist in the preparation and implementation of the workshop, consulting with other relevant international organizations.

6) Climate Change and Human Health is an area that AMAP has already started working on, with a project currently under development. This work involves close cooperation between the AMAP CEG and the AMAP expert groups on POPs, Mercury, and Human Health.

7) Coupled UV/biological monitoring has been part of the AMAP's programme since 1998. Proposals for updating the programme have been received and will be followed-up.

For more information on reports and ongoing AMAP activities and projects implemented by the Arctic countries, please visit our web site www.amap.no

Annex 2. Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF)

Under the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna Working Group, the following groups and projects are in place to implement ACIA follow-up:

1. **Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program (CBMP)** – *refer to Annex 2 for details on CBMP relationship to specific ACIA recommendations*
2. **2010 Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA)** – major deliverable for the CBMP
3. **CAFF Seabird Expert Group (CBird)** - *The following projects directly relate to ACIA recommendations outlined in Annex I for example through research and monitoring, establishment of conservation strategies, population status and trend studies, and education and outreach related to rare and endangered species in the Arctic.*
 - a. Implement conservation strategies on Murres, Eiders, and Ivory Gulls (3 projects). *Lead: Canada, Norway*
 - b. Update the “Technical Report on Seabird Harvest in the Arctic” (one project). *Lead: Greenland*
 - c. Begin work on writing a “Technical Report on Seabird Gillnet Bycatch” (one project). *Lead: US*
 - d. Complete a circumpolar seabird monitoring plan (one project). *Lead: US*
 - e. Conduct analyses for papers on “The Status and Trends of Black-legged Kittiwakes” and “The Decline of Glaucous Gulls in the Arctic” (two projects). *Lead: Norway, Iceland and US*
 - f. Begin work on creating a web-based “Seabird Information Network” and a “Circumpolar Seabird Colony Database” (two projects). *Lead: Norway, Canada, US*
4. **CAFF Flora Expert Group (CFG)** – *also serves as the IUCN SSN Arctic Plant Specialist Group. The following projects directly relate to ACIA recommendations outlined in Annex I for example through research and monitoring, establishment of conservation strategies, population status and trend studies, and education and outreach related to rare and endangered species in the Arctic.*
 - a. Submit documentation to the IUCN in support of a proposed Red List of arctic plant species. *Lead: US*
 - b. Create links on the CAFF website to country Red Lists and rare plant lists. *Lead: Iceland and Canada*
 - c. Complete an evaluation of monitoring of local flora in Russia, and determine its application in a circumpolar context. *Lead: Russia and US*
 - d. Development of the circumpolar boreal forest map
 - e. Complete checklists of Arctic lichens and bryophytes. *Lead: Iceland and Canada*

- f. Develop collaboration within CAFF to delimit floristic regions in the circumpolar Arctic responsive to environmental variables such as climate using some of the principles developed by the CFG. *Lead: US, Canada and Russia*
 - g. Encourage the use of GLORIA, a worldwide monitoring network for climate change impacts on the ecology of high mountain systems. *Lead: US and Canada*
5. **Circumpolar Protected Areas Network (CPAN)**
 6. **ECORA Project** - Integrated Ecosystem Approach to Conserve Biodiversity and Minimise Habitat Fragmentation in Three Selected Model Areas in the Russian Arctic – in cooperation with UNEP GA and funded by GEF.
 7. **CAFF Website Upgrade for education and outreach** - CAFF is moving ahead with a complete website upgrade to better serve the expert groups and research programs of CAFF; as well as providing better information to the Arctic Council, general public, research and academic communities. The new website will feature interactive mapping of circumpolar biodiversity data.
 8. **PAME-CAFF cooperation** on implementation of the Arctic Marine Strategic Plan, establishment of Large Marine Ecosystems, and applying the ecosystem approach to management of Arctic marine and coastal biodiversity.
 9. **AMAP-CAFF cooperation** on development and implementation of joint monitoring pilot projects.
 10. **CAFF-endorsed IPY projects** - *No direct CAFF involvement and CAFF is not responsible for implementation, however findings from these projects may assist CAFF efforts in future.*
 - a. **CAVIAR** - Community Adaptation and Vulnerability In Arctic Regions - an international consortium of research teams assessing the vulnerability of communities (including the environmental resources on which they depend) to changing conditions in each of the Arctic countries, in a consistent way (common conceptual framework and consistent methodologies) to facilitate substantive comparisons and integration in order to identify and promote ways of improving the adaptive capacities of those communities. This project was endorsed by CAFF, and is being lead by CICERO and the University of Guelph.
 - b. **BIRDHEALTH** – This project is designed to 1) Study geographic variation in infections, parasites, immune system functioning and pollution levels in birds; 2) Effect study on individual marked birds; 3) Modelling future scenario's of geographic variation and relating the findings to climate change, nature management and human health. This project was endorsed by CAFF, and is being lead by the Arctic Centre, University of Groningen, the Netherlands as an observer country to the AC.
 - c. **EALAT** - Reindeer Herders' Vulnerability Study focuses on adaptive capacity of reindeer pastoralism to climate change and variability and, in particular, on the integration of reindeer herders' traditional knowledge in the study and analysis of their ability to adapt to environmental variability and change. This project was endorsed by CAFF, and is being led by the Saami University College/Nordic Saami Institute; International Centre for Reindeer

Husbandry; Association of World Reindeer Herders (WRH); and the Norwegian School of Veterinary Science and University of Tromsø.

Mitigation and Adaptation

Though CAFF does not currently have the mechanisms in place to execute projects that directly address mitigation and adaptation, the CAFF Management Board will be addressing these issues in future. Two of the IPY CAFF-endorsed projects listed above, CAVIAR and EALAT, directly address vulnerability and adaptive capacity, and though these are not CAFF projects, and CAFF does not have responsibility for implementation of these projects, it is hoped there will be strong collaboration where the results of these projects will be incorporated into CAFF's work.

Research, Observations, Monitoring, and Modeling

Within CAFF, this is the category most strongly being addressed. Through the projects listed on the 2006-2008 Work Plan, the projects outlined under the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program, and the joint pilot projects to be developed and implemented with AMAP, most biodiversity-related recommendations put forth in ACIA, have been incorporated in CAFF's ongoing and future work.

Education and Outreach

Through CAFF's website upgrade and the development of the Arctic Portal, CAFF is addressing the necessity for improved education and outreach as it relates to biodiversity conservation and climate change.

Annex 3. Environmental Protection, Prevention, and Response (EPPR)

The EPPR Working Group did not submit a report during the FP meeting in Copenhagen. Should a report be available prior to the SAO meeting in Salkhard, it will be inserted here.

Annex 4. Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME)

Ties that indicate follow-up by PAME on climate change issues are composed of the following three main topics:

- The Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA)
- Update of the Regional Programme of Action for the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (RPA)
- Large Marine Ecosystems (LME)

The Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA)

PAME, in implementing the strategic actions as identified in the Arctic Marine Strategic Plan (AMSP) and in particular, the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA) represents a direct follow up to ACIA Policy Actions “Adaptation”: *Recognize that opportunities related to climate change, such as increased navigability of sea routes and access to resources, should be developed and managed in a sustainable manner, including through the consideration of environmental and social impacts and taking appropriate measures to protect the environment, local residents and communities.*

The AMSA activities have included and contributed to ACIA as follows:

AMSA is a **direct response** to the ACIA Key Finding #6: *Reduced sea ice is very likely to increase marine transport and access to resources*

AMSA is using the ACIA Arctic sea ice simulations (from Global Climate Models based on greenhouse gas scenarios) for basin-wide evidence of sea ice retreat for 2020 and 2050; 2050 was chosen as a year of plausible ice-free conditions based on one model simulation presented in ACIA.

Changes in indigenous marine use identified by ACIA will be used to evaluate new Arctic marine areas that may potentially experience multiple uses with expanded shipping.

AMSA is taking into account the impacts of climate change on the Arctic's Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) which are the key geographic regions AMSA will use for environmental impacts of increased marine activity;

The Arctic marine ecosystems are changing in response to climate change and potentially moving northward, and AMSA will review the implications of these changes with changing ship routing patterns.

The assessment is in the processing of collecting data 2004 for scenarios of future Arctic marine activity in 2020 and 2050 for the purpose of assessing environmental and socio/economic impacts from increased shipping. This work will take into account the latest climate change information/trends in addition to ACIA, especially for new evidence and observations of regional sea ice retreat thus creating the link from climate change to reduced sea-ice, increased shipping and the need for adaptation measures to the changed situations. AMSA provides a good coverage in outreach through involvement on local communities and national/international organizations as well as government institutions. Town Hall

Meetings with Arctic residents have already yielded key observations on how sea ice changes will influence ship access, future costs of shipping and impacts on local hunting & fishing. All of these meetings focusing on input from the Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council will address ACIA findings and climate change impacts.

Surveys & facilitated discussions at ICETECH 2006 (Banff, Canada July 2006) yielded the views of over 120 technical professionals on how future Arctic climate change can impact Arctic transit shipping, offshore development, and Arctic tourism.

ACIA results and future climate changes during winter and summer have important implications for AMSA's work. Plausible levels of Arctic marine activity will be studied in all seasons especially reviewing the implications of the possible disappearance of multi-year ice in the Arctic Ocean (noted by ACIA).

AMSA is working with the ice centers of the Arctic states (International Ice Charting Working Group) to review the necessary future monitoring of Arctic sea ice to enhance climatic change information, marine safety and environmental protection.

All AMSA presentations provide continued exposure of audiences to the findings of ACIA; there is no doubt ACIA will continue to be a foundation for the conduct of this assessment.

The Regional Programme of Action (RPA)

PAME has decided to review and update the RPA and expand where necessary, taking into account new information since 1997. The RPA addresses actions within the Arctic region as well as relevant international actions. The RPA will be updated over the next two years taking stock of international developments and will take account of actions and activities on climate change as mentioned in the Reykjavik Declaration.

Arctic Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs)

PAME has agreed on a working map of Arctic LME meant for descriptive use. The LMEs are at the appropriate scale and can provide a proper framework for tracking the effects of climate change on the oceans.

PAME has initiated the establishing of an LME Experts Group with the aim to consider information requirements for LME assessments to guide effective decision-making.

One of the tasks of the Expert Group is to consider the application of LME approach for pilot assessment and management projects for the Arctic. The projects that have been discussed for this purpose are the West Bering Sea, the Barents Sea and the Beaufort Sea. The PAME LME Experts Group will include experts from the AMAP and CAFF working groups.

Annex 5. Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG)

The SDWG is a working group that carries out its mandate based on specific projects approved by Ministers, rather than in accordance with a broad program mandate. Consequently, any projects directly related to ACIA follow-up in the period 2004-2006 had to be approved by Ministers in Reykjavik in November 2004 simultaneous with the Ministers' receipt of the ACIA Report. A number of existing and upcoming SDWG projects and activities are relevant because they contribute to an understanding of the changing human dimension of the Arctic as the impacts of Arctic climate change are felt. One of these is specifically developed in anticipation of the ACIA findings, ECONOR (The economy of the north: Impacts and effects of climate change).

SDWG Activities in Relation to ACIA follow-up

Relevant projects for 2004-2006 include:

- **ECONOR (The economy of the north: Impacts and effects of climate change) (Lead: Norway)**

The ECONOR project will discuss how climate change will change the economy of the Arctic. The project will provide a quantitative and systematic understanding of the economic activities in the Arctic and its linkages to the world economy today and in the future under a changing climate. Moreover, the project will contribute to a first draft of an economic-statistical database for the Arctic. In concurrence with the "Arctic accounts" it will establish an overview of the economic resource base of the Arctic covering human resources (human capital), various non-renewable natural resources like petroleum and minerals, and renewable resources like marine fisheries and forestry.

- **Arctic Infrastructure: Aviation (Lead: USA)**

Climate change can have significant impacts on infrastructure in Arctic settlements, for example: melting permafrost which affects roads and airstrips; changing weather conditions such as fog and other weather patterns which affect aviation and maritime safety. This project has developed an aviation data base and pilot projects using weather cameras which contribute to adaptation to climate change.

Relevant project proposals for 2006-2008, still to be approved, include:

- **Arctic Energy Summit (Lead: USA)**

It is proposed that the US Arctic Energy Office of the Department of Energy sponsor and lead a Summit on energy development and rural power as it relates to the Arctic region. At the core of the Summit will be a technology conference to be held in the fall of 2007. The conference will focus on extractive energy development, renewable power and sustainability impacts.

- **Arctic Social Indicators (Lead: Iceland)**

The Arctic Human Development Report (2004) provides a baseline or a starting point from which to measure changes over time in the state of human development in the circumpolar world. The objective of ASI is to devise a limited set of indicators that reflect key aspects of human development in the Arctic, that are tractable in terms of measurement, and that can be monitored over time at a reasonable cost in terms of labor and material resources. The pursuit of this goal will encompass several distinct steps,

starting with a workshop focusing on the design of indicators suitable for use in the Arctic and moving on to the development of procedures needed to measure and monitor these indicators on a regular basis.

- **ArcticStat (Lead: Canada)**

It involves creation of a database, accessible through the Internet, to help Arctic researchers quickly and easily access important data from national statistics bureaus. The purpose of the database is to facilitate research on a broad range of matters relating to demographics and the human dimension of the Arctic. This could be a useful tool in relation to research on adaptation to climate change in the Arctic.

- **EALÁT: Reindeer herding, traditional knowledge and adaptation to climate change and loss of grazing land (Lead: Norway)**

Indigenous peoples in the Arctic face major challenges related to changes in their society and the northern climate. More than 20 indigenous peoples are reindeer herders. There is an urgent need to inform the Arctic nations both about the changes to which they are subjected and give some concrete examples how herders' traditional knowledge relates to adaptation to changing conditions, including traditional use of grazing land. Locally case study based workshops organized in the reindeer herding societies in the most important reindeer herding regions will focus on information how traditional knowledge are used and how traditional grazing land are lost.

Report on adaptation to climate change in the Arctic

At their meeting in Salekhard in March, 2006 the SDWG agreed to invite all Arctic States, Permanent Participants and Observers to provide information on their work on adaptation to Arctic climate change. Norway and Finland have undertaken to summarize this information and provide it for review before the next SDWG meeting September 7-8, 2006. The summary was intended to facilitate SDWG discussions on possible new co-operative actions that could contribute to follow on work to the ACIA report.

At the SAO Meeting in Syktyvkar on April 26-27, 2006, the SAOs agreed to that a workshop would be held in June 2006 to examine efforts in relation to adaptation to climate change. This workshop would be hosted by Norway and would include national experts, Permanent Participants and possibly other bodies (e.g. IASC).

A request for information about adaptation cases in the Arctic countries was circulated to SDWG National Leads, Permanent Participants, SAO and the Working Groups. The responses would serve as background for discussion at the ACIA workshop on adaptation to climate change in the Arctic, to be held in Oslo 26-27 June 2006.

By the Oslo workshop responses to the request for information were received from Finland, Iceland, Norway, The Russian Federation, Sweden, and the Saami Council.

The responses indicate that there has been some focus on the potential impacts to climate change in the Arctic, but less focus on how adapting to these changes could take place. Various activities in relation to Arctic adaptation to climate change have been undertaken, but for the majority of the countries, adaptation is a relatively new issue within policy and within research.

National governments are in the process of developing or have already developed relevant commissions and working groups to start promoting adaptation measures within different sectors and regions.

Some countries have developed a National Adaptation Strategy incorporated within the national Energy and Climate Strategy. The strategy was developed through discussions between various ministries; immediate adaptation activities as a preventive measure and as benefiting current sector activities are recommended.

Annex 6. Summary of International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) Plans for ACIA Follow-up Actions

Since the release of the ACIA report in 2004, IASC's activities have focused on major international science planning initiatives all of which are addressing scientific gaps and research needs identified in the ACIA report.

IASC is involved in the planning of the **International Polar Year (IPY)**; its Executive Secretary is an Ex officio representative on the IPY Joint Committee (JC). In particular, IASC strives for linking IPY activities to long-term planning initiatives such as the **2nd International Conference on Arctic Research Planning (ICARP II)** and the **International Study of Arctic Change (ISAC)** to ensure IPY legacies.

ICARP II is an IASC initiative and has been organized in cooperation with several partner organizations. ICARP II brought together over 450 scientists, policy makers, research managers, indigenous peoples and others interested in and concerned about the future of Arctic research. The conference was the culmination of a 24-month planning process involving over 140 scientists working to develop research plans around twelve critical research themes identified by the conference sponsors based upon input from the science and Arctic community at large. Conference participants were actively involved in modifying and improving these plans for future implementation. The research plans around the twelve themes were developed by the following Working Groups (WGs):

- WG 1 - Sustainable development and Arctic economies
- WG 2 - Indigenous peoples and change in the Arctic
- WG 3 - Arctic coastal processes
- WG 4 - Deep central basin of the Arctic Ocean
- WG 5 - Arctic Ocean margins and gateways
- WG 6 - Arctic shelf seas
- WG 7 - Terrestrial cryospheric and hydrologic systems
- WG 8 - Terrestrial biosphere and biodiversity
- WG 9 - Modeling and predicting Arctic climate and ecosystems
- WG 10 - Resilience, vulnerability and rapid change
- WG 11 - Science in the public interest
- Special Session - Contaminants in the Arctic region

The final ICARP II full report, which will be published in the fall of 2006, will include all 12 science plans, a comprehensive overview of the challenges for Arctic research in the decade or two ahead and special sections on data management, infrastructure, and education and outreach.

The success of ICARP II lies in the degree to which new knowledge is facilitated by the process and by fostering new and innovative cutting-edge and forward-looking national and international research projects that are attractive to funding agencies. IASC has invited all sponsor organizations that have been involved in the ICARP II process to participate in the implementation of ICARP II projects. An implementation workshop will be held in late fall 2006.

The **International Study of Arctic Change (ISAC)** is a science program launched by the IASC and the Arctic Ocean Sciences Board (AOSB). A Scientific Steering Group

(SSG) has recently been established, the ISAC secretariat will be co-located with the IASC secretariat at the Swedish Polar Research Secretariat in Stockholm.

ISAC is designed as a long-term, international, cross-disciplinary, pan-Arctic program that will document changes in the Arctic. The objectives of ISAC are to take a system approach to facilitate expansion and deepening of our knowledge base of the Arctic system and to document changes in the Arctic with respect to spatial and temporal patterns. One of the major products of ISAC will be contributions to scientific assessments that address present and future needs of impact assessments. Toward this end it will engage in multidisciplinary observational, synthesis, and modeling activities that respond to societal needs, science plans and priorities established by the ISAC SSG.

ISAC aims to facilitate a better understanding of how the Arctic evolves over time on a system scale and how it relates to the Earth system. More specifically, ISAC will:

- i)* collect, analyze and disseminate data from an integrated Arctic system observing network based on existing and new long-term observing sites as well as observing methods;
- ii)* clarify interconnections between various system components in the Arctic, including atmosphere, oceans, cryosphere, biosphere, land, and anthrosphere;
- iii)* study the nature and magnitude of positive or negative feedback processes which are characteristic of the Arctic system;
- iv)* study natural variability in the Arctic region;
- v)* quantify current environmental changes and predict future changes in the Arctic system;
- vi)* suggest ways for human living conditions to adapt to changes in the Arctic environment; and
- vii)* suggest ways for the sustainable use of Arctic natural resources in harmony with future scenarios for socio-economic development.

The overall objectives of ISAC should be reached through a closely coordinated, multi-national, pan-Arctic effort. ISAC will build upon the outcome of ACIA and the Arctic Human Development Report (AHDR) and requires close collaboration with other Arctic research programs and organizations. A number of international and national projects are addressing topics relevant to the ISAC objectives and the intention is not to duplicate any of these initiatives, but rather to cooperate and foster communication between ongoing activities, and to identify and address important gaps in research and monitoring.

Annex 7. Adaptation Workshop – Oslo, 26-27 June, 2006

Executive summary and recommendations

(This executive summary including recommendations should be considered the chairman's summary of the workshop. Time did not allow all the different views and comments which have been received to earlier drafts of the workshop report to be fully integrated. There were disagreements among workshop participants about the recommendations which were not possible to unite. Recommendations 1 and 2 is therefore drafted in two different versions which reflects this disagreement)

At the Senior Arctic Officials (SAO) meeting of the Arctic Council in Syktyvkar, the Russian Federation, April 2006, the SAOs identified a need to increase the knowledge about adaptation to climate change in the Arctic. It was decided to hold a Workshop to address adaptation efforts and activities in the Arctic, the challenges for future adaptation, as well as transferable knowledge from adaptation practice and research in other regions

Adaptation to climate change is an issue that increasingly is becoming more important in the Arctic, given the rapid changes and the irreversibility of these changes. The presentations and discussions during the workshop confirmed that adaptation to climate change in the Arctic is an important issue that requires more attention from local communities, researchers and decision makers alike.

The presentations gave examples of adaptation research and management/legislative initiatives that have already started within some of the Arctic Council Member States. The importance of adaptation was highlighted, as well as the need to understand the multiple stressors that affect vulnerability in Arctic communities. It was also noted that adaptation activities does not eliminate the need for mitigation.

The outcomes of the group discussions emphasized the strong need for knowledge on adaptation, both on adaptation generally and on adaptation specifically in the context of the Arctic. It was noted that there seems to be a general lack of competence and knowledge on impacts and vulnerability, and on the adaptive capabilities of Arctic ecosystems and human communities.

In this regard, combining local and indigenous knowledge with scientific knowledge is very important in order to develop adaptation strategies that can be implemented and that will lead to real results. The governments have an important role in disseminating and communicating examples of successful adaptation, facilitating effective participation of stakeholders at all levels and implementing legal instruments and measures, given the substantial ongoing and projected climate changes,

During the discussions about the recommendations differing views on how to best promote adaptation through the AC was debated. There was an agreement that the AC is in a unique position to make adaptation a priority in the Arctic region. Recognizing the roles of the current working groups in climate change vary substantially. There was agreement among some participants that another mechanism would be required to address the issues caused by the vulnerability of the Arctic region and the risks facing it, and to present to Ministers the options and avenues for effective and concrete adaptation actions. Participants that disagreed

with this recommendation suggested strengthening the existing working groups to incorporate adaptation to climate change in their work.

Building on the TAR and the ACIA report, and looking forward to the AR4, the workshop participants felt that the AC should take early and substantive action on adaptation to climate change in the Arctic and recommended the following:

1. The Arctic Council should establish a mechanism with appropriate expertise to undertake further scoping and present SAOs with concrete recommendations for priorities for work to advance adaptation in the circumpolar Arctic, including regular scientific assessments of vulnerability and risk. The mechanism should consider, inter alia, the ACIA science report, the ACIA policy document, the Focal Point report, projects run by the indigenous peoples' organizations, national and regional governments and institutions, and the issues and opportunities for collaboration identified at this workshop. The Focal Point report, with input from national representatives, could recommend to the SAOs different options for this mechanism.

1bis. The existing Working Group structure should be utilized and strengthened where needed to contribute within their mandate to work on vulnerability and adaptation. Some working groups have already carried out work related to impacts and vulnerability to climate change and this provides a basis to integrate adaptation into their work. WG input is needed to properly assess gaps. Working groups that have not already done so should report on current and planned relevant activities and their potential to contribute to advancing aspects of adaptation research in the future. Interaction with stakeholders and policy makers can enhance setting of relevant questions on adaptation in the working groups.

2. The Arctic Council should examine and share case studies as an initial step in addressing adaptation issues, and to facilitate continuous learning, knowledge sharing and capacity building and to gain experience with and further develop methodologies. The case study approach was recommended as it can clearly demonstrate the issues, the decision making processes and the results of adaptation measures.

The Arctic council could organize work that facilitates sharing of information of what is going on in different Arctic countries on adaptation. The AC could organize or facilitate a series of seminars or workshops that present domestic strategies, case studies, good practices, education approaches, risk assessment approaches and methods and experiences from stakeholder involvement. Local and indigenous knowledge should be utilized to the fullest. Relevant external expertise could be sought.

Case studies should be selected to enhance understanding of the different dimensions and dynamics of adaptation at the local level and include assessment of specific vulnerabilities and adaptive capacity (including maps and indicators), current adaptation practices, challenges, opportunities and options for adaptation (including the needs of specific sectors), decision-making, governance structures and examples of stakeholder involvement, education, outreach and information exchange processes, adaptation strategy development and how to integrate traditional and scientific knowledge in adaptation studies, measures and strategies. [The selection and presentation of concrete case studies could be further developed by the proposed mechanism, and undertaken as a precursor to, or in conjunction with, a comprehensive assessment (see below).]

2bis. The Arctic Council should undertake work on adaptation with a view to undertake assessments on Arctic vulnerability and adaptation to strengthen the basis for priority setting and action on adaptation. The Arctic Council has an opportunity to jointly develop indicators to monitor climate change and adaptation. The Arctic Council could conduct or facilitate assessments and exchanges on how to integrate traditional and scientific knowledge, on outreach and communication processes, on education of children and exchange information on the needs of specific sectors.

3. The Arctic Council could consider planning a major conference on “adaptation to climate change in the Arctic” at an early date to launch the Council’s interest in adaptation science and practice.

This conference could attract wide interest and one of its key aims would be to build partnership with relevant stakeholders. The objectives of the conference could be to strengthen policy-relevant research and to provide basis for enabling the AC to set priorities for possible further work on adaptation.

4. The Arctic Council should seek out opportunities to promote global, national and local awareness of the ACIA results and advance education, outreach and information on adaptation issues in the Arctic Region.

The University of the Arctic offers one such opportunity for education. Adaptation issues are also needed in relevant formal and vocational training, e.g. in transport and water management. Public awareness and perception on adaptation is important to motivate and inform action on adaptation. Local and indigenous knowledge should be an integral part of both education and public awareness efforts.

5. The Arctic Council should follow-through on other recommendations for research, observations, monitoring and modelling, such as those included in the ACIA science report and policy document and in the report of the AMAP Climate Workshop of June 2005.

Annex 8: Paper prepared by Norway on the topic of revising the Arctic Council Focal Point

Draft Text for a discussion paper on the future of the Focal Point for ACIA Follow-up at the upcoming Focal Point meeting

Prepared by Norway, August, 25 2006

I. Review of the establishment of the Focal Point (FP) on April 7, 2005.

At the Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in November 2004, the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA) was formally presented to Ministers. They resolved that the Arctic Council should respond to the recommendations in that report as well as to more policy-oriented recommendations for mitigation, adaptation, research, monitoring and outreach, developed and presented by the Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs). The Ministers instructed the SAOs to appoint a “focal point (FP)” to coordinate the Arctic Council’s ACIA follow-up, including an assessment of gaps in knowledge. At its meeting in April 2005, the SAOs agreed on the composition and task of the FP in the statement reproduced below.

Adopted 07.04.05

“ACIA Follow-up

A ‘focal point’ is established to develop the plans for ACIA follow-up activities under the Arctic Council. This ‘focal point’ is comprised of the Chairs (or their designated representatives) of the Arctic Council Working Groups. The Senior Arctic Officials are represented in the ‘focal point’ by the Chairman of SAOs. The Permanent Participants are invited to nominate one representative to the ‘focal point’ to represent them all.

The ‘focal point’ will coordinate the ACIA follow-up activities within the WGs and prepare proposals for the Arctic Council in relation to all ACIA follow-up issues mentioned in the Reykjavik Declaration and the Report of Senior Arctic Officials to Ministers at the Fourth Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting. The ‘focal point’ will report the progress made to the upcoming SAO meetings, leading to the 2006 Ministerial Meeting.

The ‘focal point’ will cooperate closely with IASC and other relevant actors to ensure that proposals for ACIA follow-up by the Arctic Council Working Groups are coordinated and harmonized with activities outside of the Arctic Council. “

II. Current situation

Over the past 18 months, the members of the Focal Point (FP) have been preparing material to satisfy the task given by the SAOs. The results of this work will appear in the report of the FP to SAOs in October, 2006.

The current mandate from the SAOs for the FP allows the interpretation that the FP’s work is finished after reporting to the SAOs in advance of the 2006 Ministerial meeting. If the SAOs want to continue to have a “focal point for ACIA follow-up” beyond the Ministerial meeting in October 2006, then the FP recommends that the SAOs reconsider the composition, structure, and task of the FP.

The current composition and structure of FP was designed to coordinate among WGs and prepare proposals to SAOs on all aspects of ACIA follow-up referenced in Ministerial and SAO documents.

Once that set of tasks is completed, another approach might be needed to continue during the implementation phase of the ACIA follow-up. The new mechanism (or structure) to follow up ACIA could be a group with implementation capability, or a group focused primarily on coordination, or it could have both functionalities. One of the existing recommendations of the FP is that the Arctic Council should determine how it wishes to deal with adaptation to climate change. Therefore a new mechanism should be prepared to accommodate adaptation as an Arctic Council issue.

III. Discussion of future organization of ACIA follow-up

The current Focal Point has achieved much, but has not been as effective as some have wished. For example, attendance at meetings has been variable, The FP has struggled to define its mission, and there is no clear responsibility for organization of practical issues or for preparing documents. In addition the FP as composed today has not had sufficient expertise on climate issues. Further, many parts of the Arctic Council have objected to their limited access to the FP meetings. Some countries have expressed concern that they are not represented. The Permanent Participants have successfully petitioned for stronger representation.

Thus the current structure does not seem adequate for the implementation phase of the ACIA follow-up period that begins after the Ministerial meeting in October 2006.

The FP itself has recognized some of the shortcomings of the current structure and some working groups have had significant discussions on how to improve the situation.

There are several possible approaches to organize the implementation of ACIA follow-up activities under the Arctic Council. When deciding future organization we should keep in mind the experience with the current FP, as well as experience from the operation of and cooperation between the Arctic Council WGs. Experience with the organization of the work on the ACIA-report should also be taken into account.

With this in mind, we suggest that the future organization should meet the following requirements:

- have national representatives
- have climate expertise
- have a clear role and a lead responsibility for the ACIA follow-up activities (incl. potential coordination of ACIA-follow-up activities in the WGs);
- have implementation capability;
- be organized to implement (carry out) new assessments.

We also suggest that considerations of efficiency, costs and the involvement of appropriate expertise should be taken into account when selecting option..

IV. Options that meet the requirements

To meet the proposed requirements it will be necessary to place the responsibility in one body. This body would have to deal with a broad range of natural and social sciences, and take up other activities mentioned in the ACIA policy document (e.g. adaptation). Placing the responsibility in one body would probably give the best oversight of the ACIA follow-up work in the Arctic Council and provide the best holistic perspective of the work. Implementation within the responsible body will most likely also give the most effective management of activities. A model like this would not exclude implementation of relevant projects in other WGs, where appropriate.

Two options have been identified to best meet the suggested requirements and considerations. Other options have been considered, but they do not seem to meet the requirements to the same extent. Examples of such options are various adjustments of today's FP. Some of these options are described at the end of the document.

The two identified options are the following:

1. **Create a new climate WG** with the main responsibility for climate change follow-up, including implementation. This working group would obtain the knowledge and advice needed by creating expert groups as appropriate to cover the full range of expertise. Countries would nominate experts to cover all relevant areas. Experts from IASC (and possibly other organizations) should be invited to participate. Possible gaps in the Arctic Council program may be filled by involving external organizations. Recommendations from this working group would be referred to the SAOs for possible action.

Formation of a climate working group does clarify responsibilities, takes care of the national representation and simplifies the implementation of climate-related activities and provides good overview of activities and a holistic way of assessing ACIA issues. However, creation of a new working group will involve a significant number of members and experts, has cost requirements, adds complexity to the AC structure, and may diminish the importance of some of the other working groups.

2. **Make one of the existing WGs the “lead” group for climate** and involve other WGs as appropriate. This working group would obtain the necessary knowledge and advice by creating expert groups as appropriate to cover the full range of expertise. Countries would nominate experts to cover all relevant areas. Experts from IASC (and possibly other organizations) should be invited to participate. Possible gaps in the Arctic Council program may be filled by involving external organizations. Recommendations from this working group would be referred to the SAOs for possible action.

This option seems to be a low-cost and simple option. It clarifies responsibilities, takes care of the national representation and provides a good overview of activities and a holistic way of assessing ACIA issues. This option requires no new groups and allows working groups to choose for themselves if they wish to take on significant ACIA follow-up activities.

Adding such a large and highly prioritized task to the mandate of a WG could result in the need to revise its priorities on other issues.

Both these options would operate much in the way in which the existing Oil and Gas Assessment is being handled through AMAP and the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment is being handled through PAME.

V. Other options considered

The following options have been discussed but may not fully meet the suggested requirements:

Direct cooperation of the two or three existing WGs which are most relevant to follow-up ACIA issues (AMAP, CAFF, and SDWG?). These groups could be asked to work together to continue the ACIA follow-up process as the Arctic Council “Focal Point” for climate. This would depend on CAFF and SDWG taking an active role in conducting climate-related activities.

This option requires no new groups and allows each working group to demonstrate its capacity for taking on significant ACIA Follow-up activities. However, experience has shown that spreading responsibility can be unfortunate (unclear responsibility) and not necessarily efficient, and it could be difficult to avoid duplication of work.

Enhance and formalize the current FP as a new “super-group” that would oversee the climate work being implemented by the existing WGs. The FP would employ expert groups to provide comprehensive guidance to climate activities and would be responsible for developing plans. The enhanced FP would track results and update guidance as needed.

This option could lead to a large group that would become in essence a mini-SAO meeting. The responsibility could in some instances be unclear. Creation of a “super group” adds complexity to the AC structure, will have increased cost implications, will increase the administrative burden of the SAOs, and will make implementation of climate-related tasks complicated through dual layers of management.)

Downgrade the role of today’s FP to deal only with information exchange among the WGs. In this option, the revised FP would consist only of the WG Chairs, with all discussion of actions held within the various WGs. WG chairs generally agree that more communication among them would be a good thing. This could be one specific objective of such increased communication. This could, however lead to a downgrading of the Arctic Council work on climate issues and will spread the responsibility for climate issues more than in the option described above (two or three WGs).