MINUTES FROM THE 1ST MEETING OF THE ASSESSMENT STEERING COMMITTEE

SILVER SPRING, MD, USA, MARCH 11, 1999

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1. Opening of the meeting.

1.1. The AMAP Executive Secretary, Lars-Otto Reiersen, opened the meeting and provided a brief background information on its purpose. The list of the participants is attached in Appendix 1. He invited the Head of the USA AMAP Delegation, Alan Thomas (NOAA) to chair the meeting.

1.2. Alan Thomas welcomed the meeting participants on behalf of NOAA and introduced

2. Adoption of the Agenda.

2.1. The CAFF Executive Secretary, Snorri Baldursson, suggested adding an item on potential funding sources to the draft agenda distributed prior to the meeting (Appendix 2).

2.2. Betsy Weatherhead suggested that an information on the state of monitoring in the Arctic should be considered within the existing agenda items.

2.3. The agenda was adopted with the above additions.

3. The objectives of the meeting and Terms of Reference (ToR) for this work.

3.1. Alan Thomas emphasized that the main objective of the meeting is to consider the climate and UV-B effects assessment products from the position of efficient participation of all the parties involved. This basic principle should be reflected in ToR.

3.2. Lars-Otto Reiersen cited the ministerial request to AMAP to assess effects of climate change and UV-B on Arctic ecosystems and humans and noted that the USA agreed to be the Lead Country of these issues within AMAP. He informed that the 12th AMAP WG Meeting (Helsinki, 7-9 December 1998) had agreed to accept the draft ASC ToR (Minutes from AMAP WG 12, Appendix 6) and to send these to CAFF for their consideration.

3.3. Snorri Baldursson added that the ToR had been adopted also by CAFF Management Board. He also pointed out that ToR, as written, place significant workload on CAFF and AMAP Secretariats, therefore he would like to see some indication of funding in the final version of the document.

3.4. Lars-Otto Reiersen informed the meeting participants that funds, from the position of secretariat support, have been allocated. He was supported by Alan Thomas, who stressed that operational activities should not be considered in this document.

3.5. The IASC representative, Robert Corell, stated that ToR is a good document that covers involvement of AMAP and CAFF. However, it should be expanded to include

all main organizations/programmes involved in studies of climate change and UV-B effects in the Arctic.

4. Assessment work to be performed the next five years to Arctic Council.

4.1. Alan Thomas reviewed AMAP position on assessment of climate change effects elaborated in the US discussion paper "Climate Change in the Arctic" presented to the 12th AMAP WG Meeting (AMAP WG 12/8/4). The AMAP Chair, Hanne Petersen, contributed this presentation with information on relevant activities during the 1st phase of AMAP.

4.2. Snorri Baldursson provided a brief introduction to CAFF new focus presented in the Strategic Plan, which *inter alia* requests work on climate change and UV-B. He emphasised that climate change presents one of main threats to biodiversity. It was stated that the CAFF Management Board and WG have not yet had a substantive discussion on the climate change issue. Hence CAFF would not be able to define its involvement in a joint assessment process at this meeting. In general, taking into account CAFF mandate and priorities, potential themes or case studies, which CAFF might suggest to include into a joint assessment, could be:

- impacts on protected areas;
- impacts on Arctic migratory birds and sea birds;
- impacts on key economic species or species of circumpolar concern, e.g. reindeer/caribou;
- impacts on species diversity (influx and outflux of species), etc.

Snorri Baldursson noted that a special agenda item was included into the draft agenda of the CAFF WG Meeting in Yellowknife at the last week of April to discuss CAFF's involvement in the joint AMAP/CAFF/IASC climate change and UV-B assessment and to identify themes/topics to be explored by CAFF.

4.3. Robert Corell presented IASC climate change studies and informed the meeting participants that the IASC Executive Committee discussed climate change issues in December 1998 in a broader context. He focused on modelling capabilities and stressed that Arctic assessment needs more high resolution of models.

He paid attention to importance of connection with IPCC, taking into account its strong regional perspective. It was suggested that Arctic could be one of IPCC pilot areas and, since assessment needs strong intergovernmental venue, the Arctic Council can give such an opportunity. In this context, Arctic Council, through AMAP and CAFF, IASC and IPCC could be main players in the Arctic climate change assessment.

4.4. Lars-Otto Reiersen, with reference to establishment of partnership in the assessment process as the main ASC objective, suggested presenting a brief progress report to the SAO Meeting in May. In this context, the meeting participants supported proposal of Robert Corell to convene a small working meeting of the AMAP, CAFF, IASC and, possibly, IPCC representatives 5-6 April 1999 in Oslo to draft the policy/scope paper for the SAO Meeting. He took an initiative to prepare preliminary draft of this document prior to the Oslo meeting.

4.5. Snorri Baldursson emphasized that AMAP and CAFF mandates are limited with environmental aspects of climate change effects. Taking into account these limitations, including of socio-economic consequences of climate change into the scope of the assessment can be made only by the decision of the Arctic Council. The meeting participants recommended AMAP and CAFF WGs to request SAOs for a corresponding decision on this matter.

4.6. The meeting participants stated that UV-B effect studies, in the contrary to climate change effects, have no international coordination mechanism, and have not got much attention of the governments by now. Attraction of their attention to UV-B issues should be one of the key tasks for the partners in ASC.

5. Organization and coordination of the climate change and UV work.

The meeting participants agreed that ASC should not be splitted up into two separate coordinating bodies, and should work as one group aimed on integrated assessment of climate change and UV-B effects. However, two core groups can be established under ASC to handle these two issues separately when necessary.

6. Monitoring and research needs and existing programmes.

6.1. The meeting decided to form two drafting groups to prepare outline papers on monitoring and research needs for the climate change and UV-B effects. The drafting group on UV-B will consist of Betsy Weatherhead, Edward De Fabo, Dag Hessen and Ulf Johanson. The drafting group on climate change will consist of Bill Heal, Harald Loeng and Terry Callaghan.

6.2. It was agreed that drafts should be circulated in two week before the Tromsø Workshop on the impacts of climate change in the Arctic at the last week of April. It was proposed that information should be presented in tables to the extent possible.

6.3 Work of the climate change drafting group should be finalized not later than April 27 and the draft should be submitted by fax or electronically to the 7th CAFF WG Meeting for consideration.

7. Assessment strategies and content.

The meeting participants agreed that assessment strategy should be developed after receiving a SAO response on policy/scope paper prepared during the Oslo working meeting 5-6 April, 1999.

8. Other parties/organizations to be involved.

8.1. John Waugh (IUCN) addressed the meeting and noted that IUCN is increasingly interested in both Arctic and climate change issues. He briefed on several IUCN initiatives that might be relevant for the proposed climate change assessment, *inter alia* a recent IUCN project on climate change impacts on boreal forests, IUCN work on invasive species and on protected areas.

8.2. Alan Thomas drew attention of the meeting participants to activities of a number of international programmes in Arctic climate change studies. In particular, he mentioned

CLIVAR and said that necessary links should be established with them to provide data and information needed for assessment.

8.3. In the discussion, the meeting participants expressed their opinion that ASC should be kept as small as possible, however organizations/programmes that can provide important contributions to the assessment process should be represented.

9. Flow of data.

9.1. The meeting participants were informed that there are two data centres, which gather data on ozone and UV (in Canada and Finland). It was agreed that it would be more efficient not to establish a new data centre, but to use one of the existing centres for the needs of UV-B effects assessment in the Arctic. Special attention was paid to the Canadian one as the WMO collaborating centre. However, it was stated that most of the existing data are related to atmospheric ozone data, including depletion of stratospheric ozone layer, and very few data are available on ground levels of UV-B and their effects.

9.2. It was agreed the establishing of Arctic climate change data centre should be considered after strategic issues of climate change effects assessment, including data needs, will be agreed upon.

10. Any other business.

10.1. Snorri Baldursson raised the issue of financing and suggested to use opportunities provided by the European Union's 5th Framework Research programme. The meeting participants noted that ASC as an intergovernmental body cannot apply for funding from such sources, however agreed that participating research institutions should prepare project proposals related to the overall strategy developed by ASC. At the same time, it was stressed that it is necessary to use the Arctic Council as a political instrument of pressure on relevant decision-makers of the European Union.

10.2. No additional other issues were raised.

11. Next meeting.

It was agreed that the next ASC meeting can be organized in Anchorage, USA in connection with SAO meeting (5-7 may, 1999).

12. End of the meeting.

The Chairman of the meeting, Alan Thomas, closed the meeting March 11 at 17:00.

Appendix 1: **List of Participants: Assessment Steering Committee Meeting, Washington D.C., 11 – 12 March, 1999**

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Appendix 2:

Agenda for the 1st Assessment Steering Committee (ASC) meeting Silver Spring, MD, 11 March 1999

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2. **Adoption of the Agenda.**
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