
IPS Update



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Winter 2002

Timing is Everything

by John Crump
Executive Secretary, Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat

It was supposed to be cold in Ottawa at the end of January. That's the time of year when the Rideau Canal, which Canada's capital bills as the world's longest skating rink, is supposed to be frozen solid. Every day, thousands of commuters and pleasure skaters take to the ice in a warm up to an annual winter carnival called Winterlude.

So the timing seemed perfect to hold a conference on climate change and sovereignty and security in the Canadian Arctic. The conference planners – the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee (CARC), the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary and the Canadian Polar Commission – expected the canal to provide a frozen backdrop to two days of discussion that focussed on climate change in the North. While residents of the southern capital were enjoying winter activities, northern Indigenous Peoples, scientists and others would discuss the effects of warming in the North, and what steps need to be taken for Canadian policy to adequately address the climate induced changes and impacts that are now underway.

But the weather didn't co-operate. In fact southern Canadians were calling it the winter that never came. The media was full of discussion about the unusually warm weather, the effects a lack of snow cover might have on agriculture, water systems and other things. Coming after a summer of searing national drought, the worst in recorded history, many southern Canadians are starting to "get" climate change.

But the Indigenous Peoples of the Canadian north – and especially the Inuit – have been observing climate induced changes for years. They have long understood that global climate change will affect the entire planet and that northern Indigenous Peoples will feel those changes first and most dramatically.

Sheila Watt-Cloutier, President of ICC Canada, pointed to the late freeze up in the Nunavut capital of Iqaluit and the

unfrozen Rideau Canal, saying that climate change was not something that is going to happen in the future.

"It's happening now in our communities and it's a concern to us today," she said. "Here [in Ottawa] it's recreation; for us it's life."

Thinning ice cover makes it harder for Inuit to travel out to hunt and reduces the amount of country food they can take, she explained. This has a direct effect on people's nutrition and health. Climate change will have a dramatic effect on the Inuit way of life and require enormous adaptability.

In Canada, Inuit and other Indigenous Peoples are calling on their federal government to ensure that they play a meaningful role in the development of strategies to deal with climate change. Ms Watt-Cloutier cited the role northern Indigenous Peoples played in the signing of the Stockholm Convention to ban several persistent organic pollutants last year as a model that should be followed.

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"We may be few in number but we are stewards of a vast, vast territory."

The conference also heard from Dr. Robert Correl, co-chair of the Arctic Council climate impact assessment (ACIA) steering committee. Dr. Correl said the ACIA will incorporate the knowledge of northern Indigenous Peoples in a way that contributes to the analysis in a meaningful way. The human component of the assessment is key, he said, and makes it unique. At its heart, the ACIA is looking for the concrete actions that can be taken to create conditions of sustainability in the Arctic.

"It is not a utopian exercise."

"We need a new way of understanding the consequences of change in order to be able to develop new policy," he said, and Indigenous Peoples are key to that policy development.

The dialogue on climate change is also taking place in the preparatory meetings leading to the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg this fall. In those meetings, the Indigenous Peoples of the north and south are calling on governments to ensure that adaptation to climate change meets their needs, and respects the links between their cultures and their environments.

Climate change has been identified as one of the top priorities for the six Permanent Participants at the Arctic Council. Over the coming months, the IPS will be working with the Permanent Participants to ensure that the knowledge of Indigenous Peoples guides both the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment research and, perhaps more important, the policy recommendations that will emerge from it.



Finnish SAO and IPS Board Member Kai Granholm at the "On Thinning Ice Conference" in Ottawa, Canada, Jan. 2002.
(Clive Tesar, photo).

Arctic Council Meetings in Finland

Capacity Building Workshop

Capacity-building is the process and means through which national Governments and local communities develop the necessary skills and expertise to manage their environment and natural resources in a sustainable manner within their daily activities.

UN Economic and Social Council
Commission on Sustainable Development

How do we build capacity at the Arctic Council?

That was the key question at a recent workshop in Espoo, Finland, attended by about 70 people from all over the Arctic. The goal of the meeting, which was attended by government representatives, Indigenous Peoples' organisations, Arctic Council Working Groups, and other observers looked at ways to develop a capacity building strategy for the Arctic Council activities.

The Indigenous Peoples' organisations were well represented at the introductory panel discussion that examined the concept of capacity building -- and how it could work at the Arctic Council. The panel included Evon Peter (Gwich'in), Tamara Semenova (RAIPON), Nils Ole Gaup (Saami) and Karla Jessen Williamson (Inuit). They focused on sustainability in language, culture, health and spirituality, poverty reduction and the importance of Indigenous Peoples' involvement from the beginning in projects and research.

Following introductions by keynote speakers dealing with capacity building from a theoretical perspective, the participants broke out to several working sessions where various perspectives of capacity building were discussed. The discussions lead to a number of recommendations ensuring that a capacity building component be added to the 'Arctic voice' at the World Summit on Sustainable Development this year in Johannesburg. Canada will draft a capacity building strategy ready for the Arctic Council Ministerial meeting in October of this year.

IPS Board Meeting

Indigenous Peoples Secretariat (IPS) held its board meeting at the same time as other Arctic Council meetings in Finland. The IPS Board adopted a revised Terms of Reference and Procedural Guidelines. The Arctic Athabaskan Council's representative, Cindy Dickson, was selected as vice-chair for the Board.

The Board also identified four key priorities that will guide the work of the IPS over the next year. These are:

- Climate change
- Contaminants
- Access to natural resources, and
- Capacity building



The Permanent Participant delegation at the November meetings in Finland.

SDWG Meeting

All the Permanent Participant (PP) organisations were represented at the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) meeting in Espoo, November 5, 2001. The most significant issue concerning the PPs at this meeting was the selection of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference's (ICC) Sheila Watt-Cloutier as a second vice-chair for the SDWG.

Saami Council's President Anne Nuorgam presented a proposal that will see the development of guidelines to ensure that the PPs are involved at the beginning of SDWG activities. The proposal was approved. The Chair and the vice-chairs will draft guidelines to be brought to the next SDWG meeting.

Ms Nuorgam also mentioned that the Saami Council is preparing a camp for youth between ages 15 and 21 for this summer as part of the Canadian Children and Youth project. Participants from all member states and PPs will be invited.

The meeting provided an opportunity to review all eight projects initiated by the SDWG, many of which involve Indigenous Peoples. Click the link below to visit the Arctic Council homepage for more details about the projects: <http://www.arctic-council.org/sdwg.asp>

Senior Arctic Officials (SAO) Meeting

The series of meetings in Finland was completed when the Senior Arctic Officials got together in Espoo, November 6-7.

All six Permanent Participants attended as well. The meeting discussed the preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, and supported the desire of the working groups to prepare an Arctic Information package with fact sheets to be distributed during the preparation process and at the WSSD. The Chair, Peter Stenlund concluded by noting that the Summit will be a huge event where it might be difficult for the Arctic to get much attention. For that reason, he said the Indigenous Peoples' perspective in sustainable development might raise the profile of the entire Arctic Council.

The SAOs accepted the five Working Groups' reports, and both PPs and the states expressed their gratitude for the projects now underway, especially those in Russia which are raising awareness and providing essential baseline information that will lead to further work on sustainable development issues in the remote areas in the Russian Federation. This work is important for the Russian Indigenous Peoples.

Further legal status of the Arctic Council Action Plan to Eliminate Pollution in the Arctic (ACAP) was necessary to discuss, because ACAP will open for co-operation with United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Chemicals on projects dealing with persistent organic pollutants and mercury. ACAP's operating guidelines were approved.

Ways to improve Arctic Council structures were discussed. Both the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC) and the

Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) wanted the Indigenous Peoples to get involved in the Arctic Council activities at an earlier stage. They said that Indigenous Peoples need to be involved from the earliest stages of planning. The Gwich'in Council International emphasised the need to look at the use of the natural resources in a holistic way in the Arctic Council discussions.

During the discussion on Arctic Transportation and Infrastructure, the ICC, which works in four different countries, pointed out the need to re-establish the east-west aviation routes.

There was also a discussion about a coming conference planned for August in Finland called 'Taking Wing - Gender Equality and Women in the Arctic'. The Gwich'in presented a proposal on behalf of the PPs dealing with conference themes that would increase the focus on Indigenous Peoples' issues such as self-determination, traditional knowledge, and social and cultural change.

The next SAO meeting is scheduled for Oulu, Finland on May 15-16, 2002. The Third Arctic Council Ministerial meeting is scheduled for Saariselkä, in the north of Finland, on October 9-10, 2002.

For more information about the Arctic Council work, visit their web-site at:

<http://www.arctic-council.org>

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Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME)

Working Group Meeting

Moscow, Russian Federation, 9-11 October 2001

...addresses policy and non-emergency pollution prevention and control measures with the long term goal to protect the Arctic marine environment from land and sea-based activities through co-ordinated action programmes and guidelines, complementing existing legal arrangements.

Tom Laughlin from the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) chaired the meeting which was attended by representatives of the Arctic Council states, Indigenous Peoples' organisations, NGOs, and others.

The Chair gave a short summary of the main recommendations pertaining to PAME from the Senior Arctic Officials meeting held 12-13 June, 2001 in Rovaniemi,

Finland. These centred on increasing efforts towards greater co-operation and co-ordination between the Arctic Council Action Plan (ACAP) and PAME. He also thanked the Russian Federation, the PAME Secretariat and ACOPS for their work in arranging the meeting.

The Executive Secretary of the PAME International Secretariat gave a presentation of the activities and budget of the Secretariat for the year 2000.

Highlights of the meeting included:

- A session on the PAME review and report to the Arctic Council Ministerial meeting in October 2002, in co-operation with other working groups of the Arctic Council.
- Boris Morgunov, representing the Russian Federation, reported on the National Plan of Action for the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment from Anthropogenic Pollution in the Russian Federation (the Russian NPA-Arctic).

The NPA Arctic has been adopted by the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, in agreement with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Roshydromet, the Russian environmental agency. It means that the NPA Arctic has now been formally adopted.

Canada noted the importance of the Russian NPA-Arctic to the overall work of the Arctic Council and expressed its continued support to both its technical and organisational aspects.

The Russian Association of the Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) noted its interest in the objectives of the NPA-Arctic and hoped to be invited to participate in all its activities which effect the Indigenous Peoples of the North.

- The meeting reviewed reports from each of the other Arctic Council Working Groups.
- At a session on shipping activities, Canada informed the meeting about the development of Arctic Waters Oil Transfer Guidelines. These guidelines are designed to ensure the safe navigation of ships and the prevention of pollution in Arctic waters. Canada said the guidelines are important because ships operating in the Arctic environment are exposed to a number of unique risks. Poor weather conditions and the relative lack of good charts, communications systems, and other navigational aids pose challenges for mariners. The remoteness of the area makes rescue or clean-up operations difficult and costly.

For information, see

<http://www.grida.no/pame/FRintroduction.htm>

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AMAP Conference and Workshop:

Impacts of POPs and Mercury on Arctic Environments and Humans, Tromsø, Norway, 22-24 January 2002

In recent years, the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP) has focused on studies on the effects of Arctic pollutants such as radioactivity, heavy metals, acidification, oil and persistent organic pollutants. The Tromsø conference, organised by AMAP and the local organising committee at the Norwegian Polar Environmental Center, was the first which exclusively summarised the current knowledge on possible effects of POPs and mercury, which are the pollutants of major concern in the Arctic environment.

Scientists presented and discussed the latest results regarding biological effects of POPs and mercury on Arctic wildlife and humans. A concluding workshop was held to address important questions about future research and monitoring needs. The workshop will also assist AMAP to draft its 2002 assessment regarding biological effects of these contaminants. This assessment will be presented to the Ministerial meeting of the Arctic Council in Finland, September 2002.

The AMAP scientific assessments for heavy metals like mercury that are currently being prepared provide the 'accessible scientific basis' for 'Conclusions and Recommendations for Actions'. These are included in the more political AMAP assessment report (the 2002 State of the Arctic Environment Report, or SOAER) that will be delivered to the Ministers at the next Arctic Council meeting in October. In its Interim Report to the Arctic Council Ministerial meeting in Barrow, AMAP identified mercury as an issue that might warrant global attention. Shortly after that, the UNEP Governing Council announced that a 'preparatory global assessment of mercury' was being initiated. The AMAP assessments are also being used as the basis for other international assessments (the OSPAR assessments of the Arctic marine environment in the OSPAR area, the UNEP-Chemicals regional assessments on POPs, the UNEP GEO assessments, etc.).

Approximately 170 people attended the conference, and more than 50 stayed until the end of the workshop. The Permanent Participants were represented by Anastasia Tretyakova, (RAIPON), Adrian Ryan and Terry Fenge (ICC). Alona Yefimenko of IPS also attended.

Representative from the Saami Parliament, Johan Mikkel Sara welcomed participants as the sun reappeared over the horizon in the Saami land.

Contaminants such as POPs and Mercury have been identified by the Permanent Participants as a top priority. Indigenous Peoples' organisations will continue to play a major role in ridding the Arctic of these toxic substances.

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Mark your calendar

The 'Second AMAP International Symposium on Environmental Pollution of the Arctic' will take place in Rovaniemi, Finland, 1-4 October. The Updated AMAP assessments, including the conclusions and recommendations, are to be discussed just prior to the October Ministerial meeting. For more information, or to register: <http://www.amap.no/news/symp2-1an-nopics.pdf>

Other 2002 AMAP meetings:

- 1 SOAER Assessment Steering Group Meeting, Oslo, Norway, April 2-5, 2002
- 2 AMAP Working Group Meeting, Faeroe Islands, Denmark, April 30 - May 3, 2002.



Arctic Council Permanent Participants: The Saami Council

The Arctic Council is the only high level international forum in which Indigenous Peoples' representatives sit at the same table as governments. Called Permanent Participants (PPs), each of these organisations has its own history, concerns and unique voice. Working together as Permanent Participants at the Arctic Council gives northern Indigenous Peoples the opportunity to speak directly to the governments of the circumpolar states. Each issue of IPS Update will provide a brief sketch of one of the six PPs.

The Saami Council:

An Interview with the Executive Secretary Nils Ole Gaup

The Saami are Indigenous Peoples living on the Kola Peninsula in Russia and in the north of Finland, Sweden and Norway (Fenno-Scandinavia). There are between 50,000 to 100,000 Saami in these four countries. The Saami have a common language and culture that unite them as one nation. They have traditionally lived of fishing, hunting, small-scale

farming, and reindeer herding, the latter considered the way of living being most related to the traditional Saami culture.

What is the Saami Council?

The Saami Council was established in 1956. It is a Non-Governmental Organisation and represents all Saami, no matter which country they live in. The council has "Roster Consultative Status" at the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and at the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and a membership in the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP). There are eight member organisations in the Saami Council.



The Executive Secretary for the Saami Council,
Nils Ole Gaup.

How is the Saami Council organised?

The paramount decision body of the Saami Council organisation is the Saami Conference, which convenes every four years. The delegates to the conference are selected among the eight independent Saami Council member organisations in the four countries. The Saami Council priorities and policy are decided upon and mandated at the conference.

The member organisations appoint 15 representatives to the Saami Council -- five from Norway, four from Sweden and Finland and two from Russia, proportion based on the calculated Saami population in the countries. The Saami Council normally meets twice a year.

The executive board is selected among these 15 council members, with with one representative from each of the four countries. The executive appoints a president, and the other three members act as vice-presidents. The role of president rotates among the four countries.

The Saami Council is divided into five units: Culture, Human Rights, Arctic, Projects and Indigenous Co-operation, each

responsible for a program, and with a leader appointed for each of the units. This structure is part of a recent and continuing organisational renewal at the Saami Council.

What are the Saami Council's main priorities?

The main objective of Saami Council is to promote the Saami cause in general, thus efforts are made to strengthen the Saami feeling of identity, maintain and develop the Saami language and culture, and to unite the Saami peoples as one nation across state borders. The Saami Council supports, to the extent human and economic resources permit, Indigenous Peoples in other regions of the world, channelling this co-operation through its programs.

Who is the President of the Saami Council, and what is his/her mandate?

Ms Anne Nuorgam from Finland is president until the end of 2002. She directs the work of the Council's Secretariat in Ohcejohka/Utsjoki, the northernmost municipality in Finland. The President makes decisions on behalf of the board between meetings, and calls board meetings when necessary. The Saami Council secretariat has a staff of four. In addition, outside assistance is brought in when needed.

What is the working language of the Saami Council?

The main working language is in principle Saami (more precisely North Saami, the most used dialect) but for practical and economic reasons English or one of the Nordic languages are often used. Sometimes four languages have to be used, and the translation can thus cause economic constraints.

Does the Saami Council organise any other kinds of meetings or activities?

The Saami Council arranges courses for other Indigenous Peoples around the world. These courses focus on human rights and how to establish viable indigenous political organisations. It also holds seminars on capacity building, self determination, sustaining traditional lifestyles, culture and communications.

How is the Saami Council funded?

The secretariat gets funding from the Nordic Council of Ministers in Copenhagen to support its administration. However, the Saami Council has to apply for other funding for its projects, seminars and activities, e.g. the human rights courses run in Africa and Asia, and a three-year project in Africa, financed by the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD), which is a directorate under the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

How would you describe the Saami Council's relationship with the Arctic Council?

Very good. The Saami Council has direct contact with the Arctic Council and its Working Groups, but it is hard to keep up with the vast amounts of information it produces. The Saami Council is more active in some working groups than in others, such as the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP), Conservation of Arctic Flora and

Fauna (CAFF) and the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG), where it in particular is concerned about traditional knowledge and capacity building.

Please remember that the Arctic is a vast region in which Indigenous Peoples have lived for thousands of years. It is our land. But we are willing to share it with you. Just don't forget for this sharing to happen in a most harmonious way, we need to be heard. I am truly optimistic that not only our words but also our ideas and our projects will be put to use in the next ten years of Arctic co-operation.

Anne Nuorgam
June 11, 2001
Rovaniemi, Finland
10th Anniversary of the AEPS

Does Saami Council co-operate with the other Permanent Participant organisations or other Indigenous Peoples' organisations?

The Saami Council feels very close first of all to RAIPON and the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC). These organisations have a long history of close relations and in most cases succeed in tabling a common view on many important matters. As an example, Mr Ole Henrik Magga, a prominent Saami from Norway has been appointed common candidate for the Inuit and Saami to the UN Permanent Forum. As mentioned above, the Saami Council has long had projects with Indigenous Peoples in Africa and Latin America.

For further information on the Saami Council visit:

<http://www.saamicouncil.org>

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The Logo of Saami Council

The WSSD and Indigenous Peoples - A Report from the IWGIA Workshop

Indigenous Peoples (IPs) have a major role to play at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), to be held in Johannesburg this fall.

That was the message at a special workshop held in Denmark and organised by the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA).

Indigenous Peoples are recognised as a major group under the Program of Action for Sustainable Development - Agenda 21. This gives them a role in the preparation process for the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, August 25 - September 4, 2002. Last November IWGIA invited Indigenous Peoples to a workshop in Copenhagen to discuss the opportunities that the World Summit presents to advance the indigenous agenda. The approximately 20 participants came from indigenous regions all over the world.

The main objective of the workshop was to review the achievements on Indigenous Peoples' issues since the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, as well as to identify obstacles to progress. Participants from Latin America, Asia, Africa, Russia and the Arctic presented their experiences, achievements and obstacles at the local, regional, national and international levels over the last decade. Based on these presentations, each region identified some key messages which were incorporated into background paper for the second World Summit preparatory meeting in New York in January 2002.

The workshop participants recognised several themes including:

- recognition of Indigenous Peoples' (IP) rights to land and resources
- IPs' participation in different fora concerning them
- international standards on the rights of Indigenous Peoples
- respect for cultures, traditions, and indigenous knowledge
- traditional production, trade and conservation.

Preparations of a more practical character were also discussed. The workshop agreed to organise a pre-summit for Indigenous Peoples in Johannesburg before the WSSD gets underway. The Arctic groups at the workshop were interested in taking advantage of the opportunity to make the voices of Arctic Indigenous Peoples heard during the summit preparations. They felt that Indigenous Peoples have a unique opportunity to influence the outcome of the most important international meeting in a decade.

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Indigenous Voices Heard on the World Stage: The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues*

By Lola García-Alix, who works with Human Rights for the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA).

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations made a historic decision in July 2000 when it adopted a resolution to establish a "Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues".

This decision is a significant milestone in the decades-long struggle of Indigenous Peoples to regain standing within the global community. The new UN body will formally integrate Indigenous Peoples and their representatives into the structure of the United Nations. It marks the first time that representatives of states and non-state actors have been accorded parity in a permanent representative body within the United Nations.

The Permanent Forum offers unique opportunities for enhancing the human rights, as well as the economic, cultural and social rights of Indigenous Peoples. However, to what extent its establishment will cut an edge and make a difference to the world's Indigenous Peoples still remains to be seen. It is IWGIA's firm opinion that a Permanent Forum *might* have the potential to become a catalyst for the improvement of the rights of Indigenous Peoples worldwide. Under the umbrella of the United Nations system the Permanent Forum is the most promising institutional mechanism to which Indigenous Peoples will have access in order to enhance their social, economic and human rights; its establishment will hopefully consolidate and make more fiscally efficient the work of the UN regarding Indigenous Peoples.

By establishing the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues the United Nations has come closer to fulfilling one of the goals of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. Another important but still outstanding goal is the adoption of a universal declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Historical Background

The discussion concerning the establishment of a Permanent Forum for Indigenous Peoples within the United Nations has been going on for nearly a decade. The idea of establishing a permanent forum dealing with indigenous issues was derived from a realisation that there was no permanent mechanism within the United Nations system to address the problems of the Indigenous Peoples of the world.

Though mention of the idea for a permanent forum can be found in several UN documents, it was not until the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993 that the concept was seriously considered on the United Nations agenda. The Vienna Declaration and Program of Action recommended the establishment of a Permanent Forum. The same year, when the General Assembly adopted the program of activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (1995-2004), it identified the establishment of the Forum as one of the main objectives for the Decade.

How the Permanent Forum will work

The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues will be a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It will consist of 16 members, half of which will be nominated by governments and elected by the Council. The other half will be appointed by the President of the Council following broad consultations with indigenous groups. The selection process is to take into account principles of representation and the diversity and geographical distribution of Indigenous Peoples.

All members of the Forum are to serve in their personal capacity as independent experts on indigenous issues for a period of three years with the possibility of re-election or reappointment for one further period.

The Forum will hold an annual session of ten working days at the United Nations Office at Geneva or at United Nations Headquarters in New York or another location of its choosing. The meetings will be open. Governments, intergovernmental organisations, NGOs as well as organisations of Indigenous Peoples may participate in the Forum as observers. The Permanent Forum will submit an annual report to the ECOSOC Council on its activities, including any recommendations for approval. This report will be distributed to the relevant United Nations funds, programmes and agencies.

- The financing of the Permanent Forum will be provided from within existing resources through the regular budget of the United Nations and its specialised agencies and through voluntary contributions.
- Five years after its establishment, an evaluation of the Permanent Forum will be carried out by ECOSOC.
- The eight indigenous representatives be selected from the following regions:

- 1 Arctic/Europe
- 2 Africa
- 3 Asia
- 4 North America
- 5 Central/South America and the Caribbean
- 6 Pacific
- 7 Former USSR and Eastern Europe
- 8 Rotating an additional seat between three regions – Asia, Africa and Central/South America and the Caribbean.

* Condensed from a longer article. Opinions are those of the author.

Immediate Challenges

Many challenges remain before the Permanent Forum is finally established and can start its work this year as planned.

One is the nomination of its eight indigenous members. Indigenous Peoples, unlike the member states of the United Nations, do not have approved organisational structures at regional level to enable them to nominate their representatives. While the resolution refers to broad consultations of the ECOSOC President with the indigenous organisations, there are no criteria to define what constitutes broad consultation.

The first nomination process of Indigenous Peoples will be important for a number of reasons. Indigenous Peoples have emphasised that regional consultations they are organising for the nomination of indigenous members is the best process to ensure the broadest possible consultation. If Indigenous Peoples are unable to hold their own consultations, there is a concern that many governments may nominate representatives for them. This is plainly unacceptable and would be contrary to the spirit for establishing the Permanent Forum.

IWGIA believes the Forum will only be able to play an important role if it is closely linked to Indigenous Peoples' organisations and communities. This means the consultation process must be broad and truly representative, otherwise the Forum will not represent indigenous concerns effectively.

Another remaining problem is the location of the Forum Secretariat. Indigenous Peoples representatives have consistently demanded that the Permanent Forum should have its own secretariat staffed by indigenous persons. Since the Forum is established directly under ECOSOC and concerns itself with many other issues than human rights, Indigenous Peoples have strongly emphasised that it should be independent and not located under the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), which is located in Geneva. Indigenous Peoples have repeatedly expressed concern that the lack of a separate secretariat will hamper fulfilling the mandate of the Permanent Forum. They have also stressed the importance of giving "preference to equally qualified indigenous candidates" when hiring secretariat staff. At present it is still unclear whether the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum will be placed in the United Nations Headquarters in New York or in UN quarters in Geneva.

Final remarks

Now six years into the "International Decade of the World's Indigenous People" the establishment of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is the most significant and concrete step so far taken by the United Nations to address the unique issues faced by Indigenous Peoples. IWGIA sees this as the first indication of a political intent to put into practice the goals of the Decade, which the UN outlined as the strengthening of international co-operation for the

solution of the problems faced by the Indigenous Peoples of the world.

However, IWGIA is fully aware of some of the pitfalls of the Permanent Forum in its current form. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues as established does not meet all of the aspirations of Indigenous Peoples. Nevertheless, it is a good start. It is a compromise and is the first body within the UN where Indigenous Peoples are being represented. In the end, the effectiveness of the Permanent Forum will not only depend on its individual members but also on the competence, credibility and legitimacy of those who want to make an impact on its work. Therefore, one might consider the Permanent Forum as a work in progress.

IPS Update

The Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat (IPS) was established in 1994. The main task of IPS is to facilitate the involvement of Arctic Indigenous Peoples' organisations - the Permanent Participants - in the Arctic Council, particularly with regard to sustainable development, the environment and traditional knowledge.

The Indigenous Peoples' organisations approved as Permanent Participants in the Arctic Council are:

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

The board is presently made up of one representative from each of the Permanent Participants and from three member countries of the Arctic Council, among them a representative of the Danish Government in its capacity as the main funding agency.

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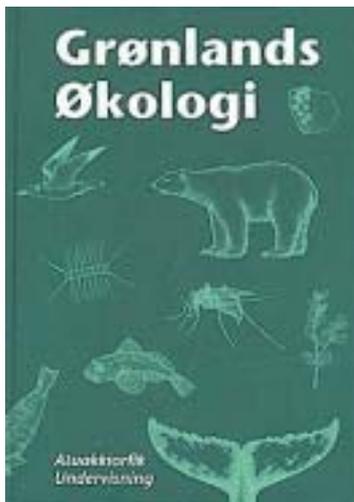
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Book Review: "Ecology of Greenland"

A new book has been released by Atuakkiortfik Education; this is "The Ecology of Greenland".



The Ecology of Greenland is very good as a reference book, for short and descriptive explanations on different subjects within Greenland's ecology.

Since Greenland extends from the Arctic Ocean in the north to the North Atlantic in the south, it is also a book about Arctic ecology in general and is for an audience wider than just those dealing with Greenland.

The Ecology of Greenland

Ilinniusiorfik, Nuuk 2001

ISBN: 87-558-1514-6

431 p.

Price: DKK 350, approximately US \$ 42

Can be ordered from:

DBK

Siljengade 2-8

2300 Copenhagen S

Denmark

Fax: +45 32 69 77 89

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The Ecology of Greenland was first published in Danish, later it was translated into Greenlandic, and now it is also available in English. The intention was to have a textbook on ecology for the education sector in Greenland. The book is primarily written for teachers at all levels in the Greenland educational system. One of its aims is to allow students to acquire a basic knowledge of the ecology of their country

It is well illustrated and filled with nice photos, tables and figures, which support the texts. This makes the book attractive and readable.

The book is divided into seven chapters and several sections.

- Chapter 1 is a presentation of some fundamental ecological concepts
- Chapter 2 provides an overview of how the living space of Greenland has evolved on a geological time scale
- Chapter 3 describes the present-day climatic and oceanographic conditions
- Chapter 4 is a description on how the flora and fauna adapted to Arctic conditions
- Chapter 5 deals with the ocean, ecosystems, birds, fish and sea mammals
- Chapter 6 deals with land and fresh water
- Chapter 7 describes the arrival of humans in Greenland and their impact on nature. There is also a section dealing with pollution, and its effects on the Arctic ecosystem.

The small images that occur some places in this issue of the IPS Update are symbols from Saami Mythology and have traditionally been found on the Shaman's Drum. The images we have used are taken from the Swedish Saami Parliament's web-site: <http://www.sametinget.se>

- 27/5 – 7/6** **The World Summit on Sustainable Development, Preparatory Committee IV, Indonesia**
 Contact: Johannesburg Summit Secretariat, United Nations Major Group Relationships
 2 United Nations Plaza, 22nd Floor
 New York, NY, 10017
 Tel: +1-212-963-8811, or +1-212-963-7255, or +1-212-963-8429
 Web-site: 2002participation@un.org
- June**
- 16 – 20** **The 5th International Conference on Environmental Radioactivity in the Arctic and Antarctic, St. Petersburg, Russia**
 Contact: NRPA - Arctic Radioactive Conference 2002
 Fax: +47 67 14 54 44 E-mail: arctic@nrpa.no
- Date Unknown** **Partnership Conference for the Protection and Development of Marine and Coastal Environment of the Arctic Region of the Russian Federation**
 Contact: ACOPS Secretariat, London, UK
 Tel./Fax: +44 171 799 3033 / +44 171 799 2933
 E-mail: acopsorg@netcomuk.co.uk Web-site: <http://www.acops.org>
- August**
- 1 – 3** **13th Inuit Studies Conference, Anchorage, Alaska**
Voices From Indigenous Communities; Research, Reality & Reconciliation
 Contact: Gordon L. Pullar, Department of Alaska Native & Rural Development
 University of Alaska Fairbanks
 Tel.: +1-907-279-2700
 E-mail: g.pullar@uaf.edu
- 4 - 6** **Taking Wing – Conference on Gender Equality and Women in the Arctic, Saariselkä, Inari, Finland**
 Contact: Laura Tohka
 Department of Women's Studies
 FIN – 33014 University of Tampere
 Finland
 Tel./fax: +358 3215 8982 / +358 3215 8850
 E-mail: laura.tohka@uta.fi Web-site: <http://www.arctic-council.org>
- 10 - 17** **Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC) 9th General Assembly and 25th Anniversary**
 Kuujuaq, Nunavik, Canada
- Date Unknown** **Youth Conference, Nuuk, Greenland**
 Contact: Nature and Peoples of the North, Copenhagen, Denmark
 Tel./fax: +45 33 13 02 92 / +45 33 32 09 92
- 25/8 – 4/9** **World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD (Rio +10)) 2002, Johannesburg, South Africa**
 Web-site: <http://www.johannesburgsummit.org>
- September**
- CAFF IX Meeting, Abisko, Sweden**
 Contact: CAFF Secretariat, Akureyri, Iceland
 Tel./Fax.: +354 462 33 50 / +354 462 33 90
 E-mail: caff@ni.is Web-site: <http://www.grida.no/caff>
- October**
- 1 – 4** **2nd AMAP International Symposium on Environmental Pollution in the Arctic, Rovaniemi, Finland.**
 Presentation of the assessments for the 3rd Ministerial meeting of the Arctic Council
 Contact: AMAP Secretariat, Oslo, Norway
 Tel./Fax.: +47 23 24 1630 / +47 22 67 6706
 E-mail: lars-otto.reiersen@amap.telemax.no Web-site: <http://www.amap.no>
- 7 – 8** **Arctic Council Senior Arctic Officials (SAO) Meeting, Inari, Saariselkä, Finland**
 Contact: Arctic Council Secretariat, Helsinki, Finland
 Tel./Fax.: +358 9 1341 6187 / +358 9 1341 6120
 E-mail: johanna.lammi@formin.fi Web-site: <http://www.arctic-council.org>
- 9 – 10** **3rd Ministerial Meeting of the Arctic Council (+SAO meeting), Inari, Saariselkä, Finland**
 Contact: Arctic Council Secretariat, Helsinki, Finland
 Tel./Fax.: +358 9 1341 6187 / +358 9 1341 6120
 E-mail: johanna.lammi@formin.fi Web-site: <http://www.arctic-council.org>