
IPS Update



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From Stockholm to Johannesburg

One positive development in the Arctic in recent years has been the increasing presence and influence of Indigenous Peoples on a variety of issues. From contaminants such as persistent organic pollutants, to climate change and sustainable development, the voices of the Arctic's Indigenous Peoples are being heard and are helping to guide policy at the international, national and regional level.

Perhaps the best example is the leading role Indigenous Peoples played in the international negotiations that led to the Stockholm POPs Convention, which was signed a year ago. These negotiations showed that the Arctic has become an indicator region for global health, and that the Arctic voice is being listened to.

At the recent Arctic Council Senior Arctic Officials meeting in Oulu, Finland, the Permanent Participants wrote to the representatives of the Arctic States to urge them to sign and/or ratify the LRTAP Heavy Metals and POPs Protocols and the Stockholm POPs Convention. They pointed out that these agreements single out the Arctic and its Indigenous Peoples, and are key to the long-term environmental and cultural health of the peoples of the region.

The Indigenous Peoples' organizations noted that, as of mid-May, only Canada had signed and ratified the Stockholm POPs Convention. The Russian Federation was the only Arctic state that had yet to sign.* The Indigenous Peoples' letter requested that the Arctic States do the following:

- Sign and/or Ratify the LRTAP heavy metals and POPs Protocols.
- Sign and/or ratify the Stockholm POPs Convention prior to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg.

- Prepare an Arctic Council POPs Statement for the Stockholm Convention INC-6 in Geneva, in June 2002, to be delivered by Finland as the Arctic Council Chair.
- Continue to encourage other countries to ratify the LRTAP Protocols and the Stockholm POPs Convention.

Another important item on the Oulu agenda was the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the role the Arctic Council should play. The Permanent Participants drew the meeting's attention to the current weak Arctic wording in the text of the draft Johannesburg Action Program, the main outcome of the World Summit.

The Indigenous representatives were concerned that the current text lumps the Arctic together in a short, very general paragraph. They were also concerned that wording on the Stockholm POPs Convention had been deleted. Permanent Participants lobbied Arctic States and Observer countries to push for strong, clear language on the Arctic, and to ensure that the document refers to the POPs Convention. The purpose of this effort was to ensure that the Action Program could be used in future international negotiations that pertain to the Arctic.

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* The letter was delivered on May 17th. On May 19th, the Russian Federation became the eighth and final Arctic State to sign the Convention.

Following the meeting, the Finnish Chair of the Arctic Council, Peter Stenlund, circulated wording drafted by the IPS to the Arctic States and Observer countries requesting that it be adopted and used by delegations at the fourth Preparatory Conference for the World Summit which took place a week later in Bali. We will soon see how successful this initiative has been.

The big test is still to come. Indigenous Peoples' organizations were very clear that they see the World Summit as a test of the efficacy of the Arctic Council. Much effort has been made to illustrate to other countries participating in the Johannesburg process that the Arctic Council is a new and unique forum which allows for a direct dialogue between Indigenous Peoples and States. The Council is indeed a new model of international governance. But there needs to be a concrete demonstration of what it can achieve on the international scene. The Johannesburg Action Program will be an important litmus test.

jpc



Report from the Senior Arctic Officials meeting

Two events dominate the Arctic Council landscape this year – the World Summit in Johannesburg and the October Ministerial meeting to take place in Inari, Finland. So it's no surprise that they formed the core of the discussions at the recent meeting of Senior Arctic Officials (SAO) in the northern Finnish city of Oulu.

Preparing for the World Summit on Sustainable Development

The 2000 Barrow Declaration, which has guided the program of the Arctic Council for the last two years, called on Arctic States to take part in the World Summit which runs from August 26 – September 4. Under the leadership of the Finnish Chair, the Council has attempted to make its presence felt in the Summit preparatory meetings. The Arctic Council held a "side event" at one such meeting in New York earlier this year in which the council was featured as a unique model of international cooperation dedicated to realizing, among other things, the sustainable development of the Arctic. The role of Indigenous Peoples' organizations who sit with state representatives at the same table, as well as the council's consensus form of decision-making, have been held up as models of a new style of international relations.

There is a lot of competition for attention in the Summit process, and that competition will be intense in Johannesburg where 70,000 people are expected to attend. There will be

many "side events" – opportunities outside the main venue for countries, peoples and organizations to provide information related to the Summit themes.

The SAOs decided to take up Canada's offer to coordinate an Arctic Council side event and asked all countries and the Permanent Participants to participate. The Permanent Participants invited the Council to cooperate in a side event to take place at an Indigenous Peoples' Pre-Summit, scheduled for Kimberley, the week before the Johannesburg Summit. The Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat has been asked to coordinate these activities.

Towards the Inari Declaration

Ministers of the eight Arctic states will meet in Inari, Finland, in October this year. The main object of that gathering will be to lay out the work of the Council during the two years that Iceland will be the chair. Work has already begun on the Inari Declaration – the Arctic Council blue print for 2002-2004.

During the Oulu discussions, the Indigenous Peoples' organizations were assured that they would be able to take part in the drafting of the declaration. The PPs want to make sure that the declaration reflects their needs and aspirations and will focus on concrete ways to improve the lives of Arctic peoples.

To Restructure or Not to Restructure

One of the Finnish Chair's mandates has been to review the structure and operations of the Arctic Council and to seek a consensus on any changes that might need to be made. This work has gone on for the better part of two years and resulted in a paper from the Chair that recommended few substantive changes in how the Council and its Working Groups are structured. It did, however, contain a number of recommendations about better coordination of activities to ensure efficiency.

Funding is to remain voluntary, but there is a recommendation that the Member States and other funding partners seek funding for the full period of time between Ministerial Meetings. The Council will also explore the possibility of raising funding in the private sector, including relevant foundations.

Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA)

The meeting approved in general a proposal to develop a policy paper as part of the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment, a major study of the effects of climate change on the environment and peoples of the Arctic. The Permanent Participants have been assured that they will have a place on the drafting team that will develop this document. Work will begin in the next few months and the policy recommendations will be ready for delivery, along with the Assessment itself, to the Ministerial meeting in Iceland in 2004.

Permanent Participants pushed for and got a third member on the ACIA Steering Committee. While efforts are being made to ensure that the perspectives of the Arctic's Indigenous Peoples are incorporated in the study – for example, through focus on land based activities the use of natural resources and the impact on human health – an additional Indigenous voice on the steering committee will help ensure that all report authors consider who they are writing for. As outlined in the Barrow Declaration, the main point of the climate impact assessment is to look at the effects of climate change on peoples and communities in the Arctic. It is not simply an exercise in predicting change; it is supposed to provide recommendations on how to adapt to the changes that are already taking place in many Arctic regions.

Just *how* adaptation will be described will be key to its acceptance by Indigenous Peoples, the representative of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference told the meeting. Carl Christian Olsen, who is from Greenland, said that the report writers and recommendation drafters must be mindful of the language they use. They must recognize that talking about policies that will assist Indigenous peoples to adapt to change can only be developed in close cooperation with, and must have the consent of, the residents of the Arctic.

Arctic Human Development Report (AHDR)

The meeting approved a proposal, led by Iceland, to conduct a comprehensive assessment of human conditions in the entire circumpolar region. The Arctic Human Development Report will contribute to the Sustainable Development Programme of the Arctic Council.

The report will help assess progress toward sustainable human development, and set a tool to educate the public, as well as a handbook for policymakers engaged in international co-operation in the Arctic. As a baseline, the AHDR will not only identify problems encountered in the North today, but also lift out success stories. These can be studied and adapted to enhance community viability across the region.

The bulk of the AHDR can be synthesized from already existing research results.

Taking Wing

Preparations are progressing well for *Taking Wing - Conference on Gender Equality and Women in the Arctic* to be held in Saariselkä, Finland in August. An international reference group with representatives from each of the member states, RAIPON, Saami Council and IPS have been working since last year to set a program, which has a wide range of interesting themes from an Indigenous perspective. There will be workshops and plenaries discussing issues such as:

- natural resources, use of land, land rights
- gender in the self-determination of Indigenous Peoples
- traditional knowledge
- women's health in the Arctic

The main outcome from the conference will be a report and recommendations for the Ministerial meeting in Inari. Two expected recommendations are that gender should be a permanent item on the Arctic Council agenda, and that a follow-up conference on gender equality should be held.

Jpc

Will they be ready for Johannesburg?

World Summit on Sustainable Development PrepComIV in Bali, Indonesia May 27 - June 7, 2002

After the final organizational meeting for the coming World Summit on Sustainable Development, key matters remain unresolved, including issues related to trade and finance. Negotiators at the fourth organizational meeting for the World Summit on Sustainable Development couldn't agree on a final text, but the chair of the process called the fact that 80 per cent of the document is finished "a victory." The chair said the remaining issues will be negotiated in Johannesburg.

Arctic Council states and Indigenous Peoples were disappointed in their efforts to raise the profile of the Arctic in the summit text. Representatives were looking for wording that would have identified the Arctic as: "an indicator region of global health." Unfortunately the only Arctic reference currently in the document is seen as very weak.

Meanwhile, Indigenous Peoples represented at the Summit also met to prepare for an Indigenous Pre-Summit to be held the third week of August in Kimberly, South Africa. Caucus members are calling for recognition of Indigenous Peoples' rights among other things. They also refer to the Arctic Council as a model for Environmental and Sustainable Development Governance, incorporating partnerships between states and Indigenous Peoples.

The Indigenous Peoples' Caucus developed an Indigenous Peoples Political Declaration that reaffirms the Kari-Oca Declaration of Indigenous Peoples signed at the previous World Summit in 1992. Issues such as self-determination, recognition as Indigenous Peoples, and land rights are still pressing despite the ten years for action since the last summit.

Arctic Council Permanent Participants: The Arctic Athabaskan 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 Arctic 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 Permanent Participants.



Cindy Dickson AAC Executive Director (Canada)

The Arctic Athabaskan Council: An Interview with the Executive Director Cindy Dickson

The Athabaskan peoples live on lands ranging from the sub-Arctic regions of Canada and Alaska to the southern US states such as Arizona. Athabaskan peoples share language similarities, making it possible to recognise them as Athabaskan people. Athabaskans number in the thousands and have lived in North America since time immemorial. Some scientists say we have been here for only 12,000 years, yet there are indications of sites that are at least 40,000 years old. Western science does not yet have the tools to accurately date sites that old, so they are uncertain.

What is the Arctic Athabaskan Council?

The Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC), is just two years old, formed in June 2000, to begin working internationally on issues of common concern, focusing particularly on the environment. AAC members consist of Athabaskan peoples living in sub-Arctic Canada and Alaska. AAC members include 54 communities in Alaska, Yukon and the North West Territories (NWT).

The Arctic Athabaskan peoples mainly live inland, and our main sources of subsistence come from the land. We eat caribou, moose, salmon and different berries. We still have our knowledge and skills for making different tools and medicines. Many people still live a lifestyle that has been intact for thousands of years. We have a rich and varied culture.

The last two years have been very positive for the AAC. In my view, AAC has brought the Arctic Athabaskan peoples closer together across the borders of Alaska, Yukon and the North West Territories.

How is The Arctic Athabaskan Council organised?

The AAC organises 1-2 meetings a year for all members. These meetings help to set the agenda for the next six months to a year. It is a place to discuss concerns, formulate working relations, work plans, etc. Every three years six members are chosen for a term of three years, consisting of three representatives from Canada and three from Alaska. These members elect among themselves, the international chair and a vice-chair. If the chair is from Canada, the vice-chair will be from Alaska, and vice versa.

The members meet at least three times a year, and it sets the priorities for the AAC. Presently Ed Schultz is the International Chair of the AAC. He is also the Grand Chief of the Council of Yukon First Nations. The vice-chair is Julie Roberts from Alaska.

Does the Arctic Athabaskan Council have a permanent secretariat?

At the present, there is a permanent secretariat with a staff of three based in Whitehorse, Yukon. This is essential in order to house all the documents and to ensure an institutional memory. The secretariat co-ordinates the AAC work and organises the meetings, in order to provide input to all members.

As the organisation is quite young, the first years have been spent on structuring AAC. We also have secretariat members in NWT and Alaska, who are based within their home organizations. In the future, AAC will try to establish satellite offices in the regions. The idea is to have at least one secretariat staff member from the NWT, Yukon and Alaska.

How is the Arctic Athabaskan Council funded?

As Permanent Participants the AAC receives funding from the Canadian Government to participate in the Arctic Council process. The AAC also works to raise funds from other sources as well.

What are the Arctic Athabaskan Council's priorities and focus?

The past years the AAC has been focused on stabilising the organisation and to participate in the Arctic Council processes as well as to work closer with other Permanent Participant organisations and the IPS. The next step will be to focus on the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA), and to ensure that the AAC has representatives in some of the Arctic Council Working groups. Climate Change and Persistent Organic Pollutants are some of the issues that we are working on.

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

The AAC has organised a seminar about the Arctic Council in Fairbanks, where the Aleut Association International (AIA) and the Gwich'in Council International (GCI) were invited, in addition to guests from the Arctic Council. The aim of this seminar was to provide an overview on how the Arctic Council works, and how to get involved in the Arctic Council processes.

Does the Arctic Athabaskan Council co-operate with the other Permanent Participants?

AAC members have participated with the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC) on the POPs negotiations. We formed a coalition called "Canadian Arctic Indigenous Peoples against POPs". We also collaborate with the Gwich'in Council International as well as RAIPON and Saami Council on Arctic Council.

How would you describe your relationship to the Arctic Council?

I think our relationship with Arctic Council is very positive. The AAC has mainly attended the SAO meetings. We attend the Sustainable Development working group but have not yet participated in the other four working groups. As more AAC members become involved in the work of the Arctic Council we hope to strengthen our participation.

Does the Arctic Athabaskan Council co-operate with other Athabaskan organisations?

Yes, AAC cooperates with other Athabaskan organizations. One of our tasks is to network and coordinate our work.

gbr

“The Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC) is an international treaty organization established to represent the interests of United States and Canadian Athabaskan member First Nation governments in Arctic Council forums, and to foster a greater understanding of the common heritage of all Athabaskan peoples of Arctic North America.”

From:

<http://www.cyfn.ca/ourPartners/aac/index.html>



Indigenous Peoples and AMAP's State of the Arctic Environment Report

Indigenous peoples in the Arctic often mention contaminants as a major cause of concern. Pesticides, industrial chemicals, radioactive material, and heavy metals such as mercury have all been found in the Arctic. There are some local sources, but most of the pollution comes from distant places, carried north by water and wind. Eventually, some of the contaminants are taken up by plants and animals. People who get their food from the lands and waters of their home region are part of this cycle, too.

In 1997 and 1998, the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP) published its first assessment of what was known at that time about contaminants in the Arctic. The assessment described the sources of various substances, how they reached the Arctic, what their levels were in the environment and in animals, and what this meant for the health of the animals and the people who depend on them. In short, there were some reasons for concern, and much that was unknown.

To follow up the first assessment, which covered a wide range of topics, AMAP is producing updated assessments on persistent organic pollutants (POPs), heavy metals, radionuclides, human health, and changing pathways. As before, these scientific assessments are summarized in a plain-language publication that will be delivered to the Arctic Council at its meeting this October in Finland. This summary is known as AMAP's State of the Arctic Environment Report.

The specific findings of the updated assessments will not be made public until the AMAP Symposium, to be held October 1-4 in Rovaniemi, Finland (the week prior to the Arctic Council Ministerial meeting). The reports will, however, contain much new information, particularly about the effects of contaminants and about new contaminants and new mechanisms by which contaminants reach Arctic food webs. The recommendations for Indigenous peoples are likely to remain much the same: country foods have substantial health benefits, which must be taken into account when evaluating the risks associated with contaminants. For most foods and most areas, country foods are currently considered healthy and safe.

An important aspect of AMAP's work is the inclusion of Indigenous peoples in the assessment process. The Assessment Steering Group, which oversees the preparation of the reports, includes two representatives of the Arctic Council's Permanent Participants. The AMAP Working Group, like all Arctic Council working groups, is open to all the Permanent Participants. The Indigenous voice has been clear throughout, asking for sound information on which

people can make decisions and for concerted action to address the problem at its source.

One result was the influence that Arctic Indigenous peoples had on developing the Stockholm Convention on POPs, a global agreement to address many of the contaminants that cause concern in the Arctic. The partnership between AMAP and Arctic Indigenous peoples has brought international attention to the concern about long-range pollution, and has strengthened the ability of Arctic peoples to make themselves heard on the world stage. By doing so, they have combined to make the Arctic—and the world—a better place.

Henry Huntington

Arctic Acronym Angst ACIA? SDWG? SAOs? RAIPON?

The Arctic Council use a lot of acronyms – so many that newcomers could be forgiven for thinking everyone is speaking in code.

There are dozens of bodies affiliated with the Council – working groups, Indigenous Peoples organizations, NGOs and other observers. Each has reduced its name to a series of often incomprehensible letters. Add to that the hundreds of research institutes, local government agencies, regional authorities and other bodies with a role in the Arctic and the landscape starts to look pretty confusing.

It's hard enough in English, the Council's working language, but when you take into account the fact that only two of the eight Arctic states have English as a first language, the problem gets worse.

That's why readers of Update and others interested in Arctic affairs will be pleased to learn that relief is at hand. The IASC (sorry, the International Arctic Science Committee) web site has a link to a glossary of acronyms. It's called Polar Acronyms and can be found at <http://www.iasc.no>.

If you come across a new acronym, IASC would like to hear about it. And at the rate things are going, finding new Arctic acronyms is not going to be that difficult.

Tracking Toxics in Russia's North

A project to assess the impacts of persistent toxic compounds on Indigenous peoples in northern Russia is progressing well. The three-year project, "*Persistent Toxic Compounds (PTCs), Food Security and Indigenous Peoples of the North*" was launched in 2001 under the auspices of the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program, and the Global Environment Fund. The work is being carried out by the North-Western Scientific Centre for Hygiene and Public Health, Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation.

Worryingly high levels of persistent organic compounds such as PCBs, DDT, toxaphenes and chlordanes, have already been identified as a major concern for indigenous health in Greenland and northern Canada. Preliminary data indicates that a similar situation exists in the Russian North. The toxic compounds have been linked to a variety of potential health problems, including harm to nervous systems, and suppressing the body's ability to fight infection.

Project teams have taken blood samples and conducted questionnaires with people in four regions: Kola Peninsula; Nenetsky Okrug; Taimyr, and Chukotka. The samples include the general population, and pregnant women, who are considered to be more at risk from the effects of the toxic substances. More than 1500 Indigenous in 9 locations took part. The blood samples have been sent to St. Petersburg and the data entry for the questionnaires is almost complete.

When complete, the project is expected to determine:

- The levels of PTCs in the environments of 4 regions of the Russian North, accounting for global (via long-range pollution) and local pollution sources.
- The PTC migration routes along food chains and the levels of their concentration in foodstuffs.
- The concentration of PTC in the bodies of Indigenous residents of the four regions.
- Diet, life-style and health of Indigenous residents of the four regions.

Once the data collection and analyses are complete, the project team intends to use the information to raise international awareness of the connection between the toxic compounds and human health. It hopes this information will help reduce the production and emission of PTCs. The project is due to be completed next year.

Aleksei Dudarev

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A more extensive version of this article can be found both in English and Russian on our web-site: www.arcticpeoples.org or by contacting Alona Yefimenko: ay@ghsdk.dk

The World, According to UNEP

The United Nations Environment Programme's Global *Environment Outlook-3 (GEO-3)* report, released in May, takes stock of the global environment in the 30 years since UNEP was created, and outlines four possible policy approaches for the next three decades. The four scenarios range from a "markets first" approach driven by greed to a "sustainability first" approach that emphasizes cooperation and changing values.

The following excerpt deals with the Polar Regions:

"The major environmental issues in the polar regions include the depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer, the long-range transport of air pollutants, warming associated with global climate change, the decline of several bird, mammal and fish species, and pollution of major rivers. In the Arctic, average yearly ozone levels in the 1990s had declined by 10 per cent from the late 1970s, increasing the risk of snow blindness and sunburn. Climate change is expected to be more extreme in the polar regions than anywhere else. Human activities are major threats to biodiversity in the Arctic. The warming trend is reducing the ice habitat for species such as the polar bear and walrus. In the Antarctic, sealing and whaling have reduced populations in the Southern Ocean. Eutrophication* is a recent problem in several lakes in Scandinavia. One of the major developments in the Arctic is public opposition to dam construction, particularly in the Nordic countries. For example, in 2001 Iceland's National Planning Agency rejected plans for a hydroelectric power project that would have dammed two of the three main rivers flowing from Europe's largest glacier and destroyed an extensive wilderness."

**Eutrophication: unhealthy build up of nutrients in a water body, often caused by pollution.*

To read the whole report, visit www.unep.org/geo



Arctic Council Related Meetings This Spring

Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF)

The working group on Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna met in Akureyri, Iceland, April 9 - 10. The meeting was a good working session on the CAFF recommendations for needed actions for the Ministers. The working group approved the five overall goals and 11 recommendations identified in the CAFF overview report: *Arctic Flora and Fauna, Status and Conservation*, published last summer.

Canada presented a first draft of the *Arctic Council Capacity Building Strategy and Pilot Project* to get immediate comments and reactions prior to the Senior Arctic Officials (SAO) meeting in May. Canada emphasised that the idea is to move knowledge to action, and that the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA) and Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP) assessments can work as Pilot Projects for Capacity Building. The document recommends development of a communications strategy that focuses on ACIA and the AMAP second assessment as pilot projects. The strategy is a work still in progress.

The Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) presented a report on its Sacred Sites project. The material for this pilot project has been collected in the Yamal-Nenets and Koryak regions. A draft of the full report on the project is available, both in Russian and in English. RAIPON has started to plan the second phase of the project, an Arctic Circumpolar workshop on Sacred Sites.

A progress report on the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA) revealed that progress on all chapters is on track. The report is to be the basis for a policy document to be prepared by AMAP and CAFF.

The next CAFF meeting is set for August in Abisko, in the Swedish north. This is a broader working group meeting where the work of CAFF will be discussed.

Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME)

The PAME working group met from April 16 - 18 in Reykjavik, Iceland. The purpose of the meeting was to finalise the work plan for the next two years, decide on deliverables for the Senior Arctic Officials meeting in Oulu, hear updates on a number of projects, and revise the Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines.

The Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat suggested that, the work plan for 2002 - 2004 include specific wording covering the need for states to quickly sign and ratify international agreements aimed at the reduction and elimination of toxic materials. Those agreements include the Stockholm POPs Convention, and the LRTAP heavy metal and POPs protocols.

The meeting assembled a subgroup to revise PAME's Oil and Gas Guidelines, a task that is due to be completed by the end of August 2002. RAIPON and IPS supported the need for socio-economic analysis to be made part of these guidelines. The United States is considering the possibility of funding the publishing and translation of the guidelines into Russian.

A progress report on the Russian National Program of Action for the Arctic (NPA- Arctic) was presented at the meeting, and the role of PAME in this matter was thoroughly discussed. It is expected that the main negotiations on national and international co-financing will have been completed in July of this year, or by the time the Global Environment Fund (GEF) Project Document is submitted for approval. That being so, it will be possible to begin implementing the Project in September or October of this year.

The Ministerial Declaration of the Arctic Council (Iqaluit, 1998) supported the Russian NPA-Arctic and the efforts to "seek funds to remediate regional priority pollution sources and activities identified in the RPA and Russian NPA". The main objective of the GEF project is to ensure priorities for remediation are properly identified. RAIPON lent its support to the GEF Project and has been invited by the Russian government to take an active part in its implementation.

Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP)

The AMAP delegates gathered in Thorshavn, Faroe Islands 30 April – 2 May to discuss several issues.

The State of the Arctic Environment Report (SOAER) will summarise the much larger Arctic Assessment Report, which consists of five scientific reports: Persistent Organic Pollutants, Heavy Metals, Radioactivity, Human Health and Changing Pathways. Representatives of the Permanent Participants have been active in the development of these reports, and especially in the SOAER – the 'popular version' of the scientific reports. To make sure that Indigenous concerns and perspectives were included, the Indigenous point of view gets its own preface.

AMAP has identified a number of priorities, as part of its work plan for 2002-2004, all of which are of interest to Indigenous Peoples. The main priorities are:

- Arctic Climate Impact Assessment
- UNEP international negotiating process on mercury
- assessment of the effects of hydrocarbons in the Arctic
- integration with CAFF on Arctic Biodiversity Monitoring
- human health
- the influence of climate change on contaminant pathways in the Arctic

The 2nd International AMAP Symposium, to be held in October this year, will focus on the results of the scientific assessments referred to above. Its goal is to deliver an independent message to the Ministerial meeting later in

October that will reinforce the recommendations in the AMAP Assessment Report and the State of the Arctic Environment Report. RAIPON and ICC are participating by delivering papers and participating in the final discussion panel.

A short Update on the RAIPON/AMAP Project, "*Persistent Toxic Substances, Food Security and Indigenous Peoples of the North*" indicated that some of the data being gathered is being used in the assessment about to be published by AMAP. There was a great deal of support for this program. AMAP will include a section on the project in its report to Ministers.

The Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG)

The SDWG held its meeting prior to the Senior Arctic Official (SAO) meeting in Oulu, Finland May 14. Seven of the member states and five Permanent Participant (PP) organisations attended the meeting. Among the issues discussed at the meeting were the SDWG project guidelines, the further process towards the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), the Capacity Building Strategy and Action Plan, and the Arctic Human Development Report (AHDR).

Not all countries were satisfied with the draft fact sheet on the SDWG to be presented at the WSSD. A drafting group with volunteers from member states and Permanent Participants was tasked with improving the text by including more information on fisheries.

The SDWG project criteria or guidelines were not agreed to at the meeting, and the chair took them back to discuss them further with the vice-chairs based on the discussions at the meeting. Nobody wants to open a discussion on the Working Group Terms of Reference; the PPs welcome research in the north, but are concerned about the level of Indigenous Peoples' involvement at the planning level of projects.

The meeting agreed to support Canada's proposal to establish a permanent secretariat for the SDWG in Canada. Some of the national states were ready to support Canada financially. The PPs also support a permanent secretariat, but would like to see it located in the north.

Canada presented its Capacity Building Strategy. Canadian representatives emphasised that this is not a new project, but rather a focus to be a part of all Arctic Council activities. The meeting encouraged Canada to continue with this process.

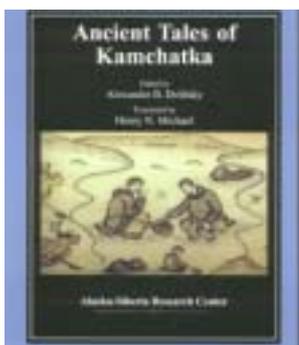
The meeting also welcomed Iceland's initiative on an Arctic Human Development Report which will turn the focus towards the people in the region. The report will be based on existing research and will be delivered to the Arctic Council Ministerial meeting in 2004. Iceland will also be the next chair of the SDWG, when it takes over the chairmanship of the Arctic Council after the Ministerial meeting this October.

gbr / jpc

Book Review: "Ancient Tales of Kamchatka"

"How Kutkh died" and other ancient tales

"Ancient Tales of Kamchatka," edited by Alexander B. Dolitsky and translated by Henry N. Michael (Alaska-Siberia Research Center, Juneau, 230 pp., large format paperback, Glossary, no price listed).



"Ancient Tales of Kamchatka" contains 12 Kerek, 36 Koryak and 47 Itelmen tales and legends, narrated in the beginning and middle of the past century by the peoples of Kamchatka in their own languages to Russian ethnographers whose Russian translations have now been translated into English, collected and published by the Alaska-Siberian Research Center. This way the tales and legends have become accessible to readers in Alaska and Canada who will recognise many common characteristics from their own oral tradition. Some of the stories are of interests to any reader who likes a good story.

A story about love

We meet Kutkh, his wife Miti and their family in several of the stories. Their son, Ememkutkh, has given name to the youth organisation of Indigenous peoples of Kamchatka. This way the mythological figures that we meet in the stories play a role for the new generations on Kamchatka. Some of the stories are brought to life in the dancing and singing of present-day Indigenous performing groups such as "Elvel" from the Itelmen community of Kovran. The landscape and the people of Kamchatka become alive as you read, and some stories display a touching humanity that speaks to us today.

Miti was not herself. She did not prepare good meals for Kutkh anymore when he came back from hunt every night. So he decided to tell her that God had called his soul home. Miti had to bury Kutkh and bring delicious food to his hut every night so that God would not torture him among the dead. Kutkh enjoyed the food, Miti thought she left for God, and he saw how she missed him and mourned for him. Then he went back to Miti and told her that God had changed his mind as he saw how Miti cared about him and missed him. Miti became so happy to have Kutkh back that she prepared a delicious meal for him every night after that.

Stories about war

Many of the stories describe the fights between the peoples, how they defeat each other or conclude peace. "The Child with the Bow and Arrow", recorded in 1954, tells about a child who defeats a strong enemy, a kind of *David and Goliath* from Kamchatka. It says that the story happened a long, long time ago when there were "as yet many Kereks". Knowing that the Kerek people have almost disappeared now, it is strange to read this sentence today, and it underscores the importance of preserving cultures and languages.

Passing on the oral tradition

"Ancient Tales of Kamchatka" includes an introduction categorizing the stories and legends, very helpful maps, and a glossary explaining names and expressions and their origin. Each story is equipped with information about where and when it was recorded.

This translation of the Ancient Tales has made them accessible to ethnographers and ordinary readers in the English-speaking part of the Arctic, but the English is quite complex for those reading in a second language. It would be nice to see some of the stories translated into some of the Nordic languages to expand the circle of readers.

There is a fantastic world hidden in here, some of which is difficult to understand without inside knowledge about the history and culture of the peoples of Kamchatka, but if you have the necessary curiosity and patience, most answers can be found if you study Dolitsky's and Michael's book in detail.

Thomas Kähler

The figures that occur in this issue are ancient rock drawings from the Pegtimel River in Chukotka, which reflect the scenes from the whale and reindeer hunting. "People-mushrooms" originated, perhaps, from the usage of the fly agaric-Muscaria amanita (lat.) by the ancient local people as intoxicant.

More information can be found in the book:

Dikov, N. N. **Mysteries in the Rocks of Ancient Chukotka (Petroglyphs of Pegtymel)**, translated by Richard L. Bland (Anchorage: National Park Service, Shared Beringian Heritage Program, 2000), 171 pp., paper, request from 2525 Gambell Street, Room 107, Anchorage, AK 99503-2892. Translation of a 1971 study of prehistoric arctic rock art in the Russian Far East.

Book Review: "Thunder on the Tundra"

Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit of the Bathurst Caribou, by Natasha Thorpe, Naikak Hakongak, Sandra Eyegetok, and the Kitikmeot Elders

The book *"Thunder on the Tundra"* is one of the outcomes of the Tuktu and Nogak project. The project brought Inuit elders, hunters, youth and researchers together to share their insights on caribou and explore the link between Qitirmiut, (people of the Kitikmeot region in the central Canadian Arctic) and caribou..

Traditional Knowledge is a living knowledge that develops and adapts to changes in peoples' lives. "Seeing, listening, experiencing, participating, and inquiring" is how Traditional Knowledge normally is passed on. The nature of Traditional Knowledge makes it challenge to capture in a book, because it then becomes 'static knowledge', giving a picture of the knowledge as it was at the particular point of time when it was told and written.

Whatever the limitations of trying to capture Traditional Knowledge, this book is still an important well of wisdom for present and future generations, and a source for scientists to balance their research.

The book is based on thirty-seven interviews of hunters and elders carried out from 1996 to 2000. What they have said speaks to their relationship with the caribou, and also reflects their beliefs, world-view and culture. Drawings, maps, pictures and glossary lists with words in the local language and English are used to support the text. The thirteen chapters cover all human activities related to the caribou, such as seasons, harvesting, preparing and cooking, cultural rules and so on. The book contains a lot of small stories told by the elders and the hunters. The quotes are connected with introductory, explanatory and concluding texts by the authors. This makes the book flow and provides the reader with a whole picture of the life around the caribou.

The early chapters give the reader an idea of different hunting techniques, the quality of the meat depending on season and age of the caribou, and how the Qitirmiut use their knowledge to choose their prey depending on how the caribou's fur is to be used. One of the contributors said:

"In August, people would start hunting caribou for clothing when [the caribou] are heading south... When the fur was not too thick, [the furs] would be used to make patterns with. Patterned trimmings.... The legs from the fall or summer caribou would be used for boots."

Further on in the book, the reader will get an idea of the culture of the Qitirmiut through the elders' interviews. There are quite a lot of cultural rules connected to the caribou, rules

of things you should do and not do, to be a good Qitirmiut. As one of the interviewees says:

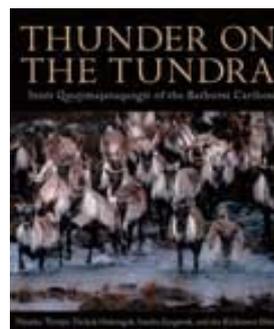
"[If somebody does not share their meat, people] would probably say, 'That person cannot even share his meat!' They would say that that person should not even go out hunting since he cannot share or whatever. 'Cause everybody shares. They share their meat."

Pitquhiit (beliefs, traditions, and customs) also indicate a great deal of respect for the caribou, because they are such an important part of Inuit life. The authors state:

"Pitquhiit have always guided Qitirmiut in their interactions with caribou so as to ensure respect for caribou and to give hope, provide luck, or explain natural events. These cultural rules encompass the beliefs, traditions, and customs that ought to be followed."

"Thunder on the Tundra" is one of the books you read, and then catch yourself thinking that you would like to have a similar piece of work done and written about your own community.

Gunn-Britt Retter
(Saami from Várjjat, Norway)



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info@yellowknifebooks.com
See also the press release at: <http://www3.telus.net/tuktu>

Schedule of Events 2002	
July	
7 - 13	<p>Gwich'in Gathering, Old Crow, Yukon, Canada Contact: Renee Frost Tel. / Fax: +1 867 966 3371 / +1 867 966 3087 E-mail: rfrost@vgfn.net or rfrost@yknet.ca Web-site: http://www.oldcrow.yk.net/gath1.htm</p>
August	
1 - 3	<p>13th Inuit Studies Conference, Voices From Indigenous Communities; Research, Reality & Reconciliation, Anchorage, Alaska 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</p>
4 - 6	<p>Taking Wing – Conference on Gender Equality and Women in the Arctic, Saariselkä, 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</p>
10 - 17	<p>Inuit Circumpolar Conference 9th General Assembly and 25th Anniversary Kuujjuaq, Nunavik Canada Web-site: http://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/General_Assembly/Assembly-Current_news/assembly-current_news.html or http://www.icc2002.ca/</p>
11 - 13	<p>5th Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Regions, Tromsø, Norway Contact: Mr. Kjell Myhre-Jensen The Storting (the Norwegian Parliament) N-0026 Oslo Norway Tel./Fax.: +47 23 32 36 01 / +47 23 31 38 62 E-mail: apc2002@stortinget.no Web site: http://www.grida.no/parl</p>
26/8 – 4/9	<p>World Summit 2002 (Rio +10), Johannesburg, South Africa 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: http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/</p>

28 - 31	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
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
November	
13 - 15	Murmansk International Geological Conference, "Oil and Gas of Arctic Shelf - 2002". Contact: ArcticShelf Association. Executive Director of the Association - V.Udaltsov. Tel./Fax: +7 8152 453 422 E-mail: arcticshelf@smng.murmansk.ru Web-site: www.arcticshelf.ru
Schedule of Events 2003	
January	
4 - 7	NAMMCO Conference on User Knowledge and Scientific Knowledge in Management Decision Making Contact: NAMMCO Secretariat Tel./Fax: +47 77 75 01 80 / +47 77 75 01 81 E-mail: nammco-sec@nammco.no Web-site: http://www.nammco.no/conference2003/
March	
28 - April 4	7th International Symposium on Mining in the Arctic, Iqaluit, Nunavut, Canada