
IPS Update



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ACIA Warms Up

In 2000 the Ministers of the Arctic Council states created the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA). The first regional study of its kind, the ACIA was to “address environmental, human health, social, cultural and economic impacts and consequences, including policy recommendations”.

The writing of the ACIA scientific report is now finished. It is a monumental piece of work covering everything from impacts on the land and the sea to effects on human health. Indigenous Peoples have been involved from the beginning. Several chapters give a big say to indigenous views and the effects on hunting, herding, trapping and gathering – the basis of many indigenous cultures and economies – and there has been an attempt to balance indigenous knowledge and western science.

An Overview document is also being prepared that will summarize the key findings and take a look at what they mean for different Arctic regions. This document will be finished in the next couple of months and will serve as a layperson’s guide to climate change in the Arctic.

Which brings us to the question of where all this is leading. The Ministers clearly told the Arctic Council to provide policy recommendations. Indeed, work began last year on a companion policy document. Eight nations and six Permanent Participants plus a few others developed two drafts of a policy document that was to be presented to the Ministers along with the Scientific report and Summary.

However, last fall the United States changed its position. It produced a letter criticising the policy process and concluded, “we believe that, as a matter of logic and principle, development of policy recommendations should be considered only after conclusion of the Scientific and Synthesis Document.”

At the October 2003 Arctic Council meeting, a decision was made to re-examine the policy development process in light of the new US position. Shortly after the meeting, the political leaders of all six Permanent Participants signed a

joint letter calling for work to continue on recommendations:

“The suggestion by the United States that the development of policy recommendations be delayed contradicts the political direction provided by the Ministers of the eight Arctic countries in the Barrow Declaration.... Given that the mandate for this work comes from the Ministers of the Arctic Council countries, we have no option but to continue until that mandate is formally altered.”

So where are we?

Senior Arctic Officials and Permanent Participants have been consulting and the result is that Denmark and Greenland have offered to host a workshop in Nuuk in April. The purpose of the meeting is to try to find a way for everyone to agree.

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What does it all mean?

First, the delay means that the process to which all parties had agreed has been changed, without an official change in the original mandate from Ministers. In their letter, the Permanent Participants stated their position: “We believe that once a decision is made, and all parties embark upon a process in good faith, then it is incumbent on all to see the process through.”

Second, no one knows what this change will mean for the Arctic Council in the long run. The council is a consensus-based organization. But what happens when one party no longer agrees to the consensus? Should the majority view prevail? What effect will this have on the council’s future activities and the way its mandate is defined? These are uncharted waters.

Third, and perhaps most important from the viewpoint of Arctic Indigenous Peoples, a failure to deal adequately with the policy implications of climate change – and respond in a timely fashion to the conclusions of this multi-million dollar study – will heighten concern that governments are not prepared to deal with the concrete, immediate threats to the long-term survival of indigenous cultures. As the Permanent Participants stated in their letter:

“It is important that this work continue expeditiously in light of the stark findings of the assessment that climate change in the circumpolar Arctic threatens the cultures, economies and ways of life of Indigenous Peoples. There is a compelling need for policy recommendations to address the problems this assessment has identified.”

Finally, the Arctic Council stands to lose a unique opportunity to raise its profile and to be seen to be in the lead on one of the most serious issues facing the world today. The release of the ACIA will be a media event of global interest. When they read the report journalists, policy makers and the people of the Arctic will ask: What now?

The answer to this question will go a long way to determining the future relevance of the Arctic Council.

Climate Change Science: Adapt, Mitigate, or Ignore?

The following is made up of parts of an article written by David A. King, chief scientific adviser to H. M. Government, Office of Science and Technology, London, England. It is reproduced here with the permission of the author, and ‘Science’ magazine, where the whole article first appeared.

Climate change is real, and the causal link to increased greenhouse emissions is now well established. Globally, the ten hottest years on record have occurred since 1991, and in the past century, temperatures have risen by about 0.6°C¹. In that same period, global sea level has risen by about 20 cm—partly from melting of land ice and partly from thermal expansion of the oceans. Ice caps are disappearing from many mountain peaks², and summer and autumn Arctic sea ice has thinned by up to 40% in recent decades, although there is some evidence for stabilization³.

Last year, Europe experienced an unprecedented heat wave, France alone bearing around 15,000 excess or premature fatalities as a consequence. Although this was clearly an extreme event, when average temperatures are rising, extreme temperature events become more frequent and more serious. In my view, climate change is the most severe problem that we are facing today — more serious even than the threat of terrorism.

Only the forcing from increasing greenhouse gas and aerosol concentrations could explain the general upward trend in temperature over the past 150 years.⁴ Owing to the inertia of the climate system, it is already too late to stop any further warming from occurring.⁵ However, if we could stabilize the atmosphere’s carbon dioxide concentration at some realistically achievable and relatively low level, there is still a good chance of mitigating the worst effects of climate change.

As a consequence of continued warming, millions more people around the world may in future be exposed to the risk of hunger, drought, flooding, and debilitating diseases such as malaria.⁶ Poor people in developing countries are likely to be most vulnerable.

¹ C. K. Folland et al., in *Climate Change 2001: The Scientific Basis*, J. T. Houghton et al., Eds. (Contribution of Working Group I to the IPCC Third Assessment Report, Cambridge Univ. Press, Cambridge, 2001), pp. 99–181.

² L. G. Thompson, et al., *Science* 298, 589 (2003).

³ P. Wadhams, *Ice in the Ocean* [Gordon & Breach (now Taylor & Francis), London, 1997]

⁴ “The environment in your pocket 2002” DEFRA, London, 2002.

⁵ K. Caldeira, A. K. Jain, M. I. Hoffert, *Science* 299, 2052 (2003)

⁶ M. L. Parry et al., *Global Environ. Change* 9, 51 (1999).

The United Kingdom is now seeking international commitment to reduce carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions worldwide under the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Our ambition is for the world's developed economies to cut emissions of greenhouse gases by 60% from 1990 levels by around 2050. The British government has already committed to reducing the country's emissions by this figure over this time scale. Delaying action for decades, or even just years, is not a serious option. I am firmly convinced that if we do not begin now, more substantial, more disruptive, and more expensive change will be needed later on.

Though our target for emissions reduction sounds ambitious, we have calculated that it will not have a serious impact on the U.K. economy. It's a myth that reducing carbon emissions necessarily makes us poorer. Taking action to tackle climate change can create economic opportunities and higher living standards. Between 1990 and 2000, Great Britain's economy grew by 30%, employment increased by 4.8%, and our greenhouse gas emissions intensity⁷ fell by 30%; our overall emissions fell by 12%.⁸ And this example does not simply apply to industrialized nations. Between 1990 and 2000, the Chinese economy grew by over 60% yet their emissions intensity fell. Europe, Japan, and the United States contain the vast majority of the world's scientific and technological capacity, and it is in our own interest to help developing countries leapfrog into non-carbon emissions technologies by creating new products and services. As the world's only remaining superpower, the United States is accustomed to leading internationally coordinated action. But at present, the U.S. government is failing to take up the challenge of global warming.

Climate change is no respecter of national boundaries. We in Great Britain are attempting to show leadership, and many other countries, including some of our European partners, are also in the vanguard. But we cannot solve the problem in isolation. The United Kingdom is responsible for only around 2% of world's emissions, the United States for more than 20% (although it contains only 4% of world's population). The United States is already in the forefront of the science and technology of global change, and the next step is surely to tackle emissions control too. We can only overcome this challenge by facing it together, shoulder to shoulder. We in the rest of the world are now looking to the U.S.A. to play its leading part.

Capacity Building Starts at Home

An indigenous person from Canada has joined our team at the Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat. Paula Anderson will be with us until the end of June and comes to us through a program arranged by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) in Canada. As stated on its website, "IISD's goal in this program is to provide young professionals with the substantive knowledge, communication skills, resources and practical experience necessary to develop international sustainable development policies and to become effective agents of change. This program will give young Canadian leaders the skills and opportunities to shape their world." (www.iisd.org)

Originally from Gordon First Nation in Saskatchewan, Canada, Paula has been living in Canada's Northwest Territories since 2000. During that time she has worked with the NWT Cree Language Program. The program is to preserve and increase use of the Cree Language and Culture in the Northwest Territories. Paula has played a leading role in the development of many materials to help in the use of the Cree Language, and organized many cultural events.

During Paula's time with IPS, she will work on three main projects, two of which deal with Traditional Knowledge. The first is a guidebook for Traditional Knowledge. The guide will include ideas on how to collect Traditional Knowledge, property and copyright issues, a list of resources, an overview of the various cultures, and contact information for various resource centers within the Arctic. There will also be outline of how Traditional Knowledge can be used when working with the topics within the Arctic Council.

While working on this guidebook, Paula will also be updating the "Traditional Knowledge" report written by Philip Burgess in 1999. Paula's third job will be to put out a list of possible funding sources for PP's.

We welcome Paula and look forward to learning from her while she learns from us.



Paula Anderson

⁷ Emissions normalized to GDP, as defined by the U.S. government.

⁸ Global Atmosphere Research Programme, Bi-annual Report 2000–2002: Summary of Research Programme (DEFRA, London, 2003).

Language and Culture, Hand in Hand

The most recent major inquiry into the state of Indigenous Peoples in Canada said:

“Language is the principal instrument by which culture is transmitted from one generation to another, by which members of a culture communicate meaning and make sense of their shared experience. Because language defines the world and experiences in cultural terms, it literally shapes our way of perceiving - our world view.”

(Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Volume 3, “Gathering Strength”)

For a number of years I have been working with the Northwest Territories Cree Language Program in Canada. Cree is a language spoken by about 45,000 people, mostly in Canada. The Cree population in the Northwest Territories is approximately 700 people. The goal of the program is to help preserve and increase the use of the Cree language and culture in the Northwest Territories. This work has given me a greater understanding of what a language is. Language is not only a tool for communicating, there are many different uses for a language. Many elders say that the language and culture go hand in hand. Growing up, I was exposed to many cultural events. I never did understand the importance of the language within the culture until I started to work with languages.

Languages in the Northwest Territories are dying at an alarming rate. It is rare to hear some of the indigenous languages spoken outside the home, or spoken by a person under the age of 50. What does this say for the state of the culture? The children are not learning the language. They are the ones that should be taught. They need to hear it in the community, it needs to be seen. It is not enough for it to be taught in the schools. When a language is taught in the school but not heard in everyday life, a child will most likely not pick it up. I am a prime example of this. I was taught Cree for 6 years in school and out of those years I could count to ten and name a few animals. I feel this is because there was no Cree heard or used outside of the school.

There are many reasons the language is not being passed down through the generations, working with the Cree language I have come across two:

One is the historical effects of residential schools, where indigenous children were sent away from their homes. These schools almost killed some native languages. Children were told that their language was not as good as the English language, and that they should be ashamed to use their language. Some were beaten if they used their own language. These people now realize that their

languages are not worse than English, but it is hard for them to go back to their language.

Second, there is a myth that if children learn another language they will not do as well in school. There are many countries where children learn another language as part of their schooling and do just fine. Some children with a second language excel in school.

The process of bringing back a language is hard and sometimes frustrating. To begin, there has to be community support because without it there is little chance of success. When the language is not being taught it is time to look at preserving it. Moving to preserve a language is not giving up. At some point someone is going to want to learn the language and there is a need to document the language for this to happen.

It may take the death of some languages for people to realize what they have lost.

“Each community has its own cultural needs and priorities, and each must determine the programs and services that will respond to these priorities. The responsibility to make critical decisions about culture, heritage and language belongs to the people of the community – people from the cultures who speak the languages.”

http://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/archives/09_08%20oldMissionStatement/LANGUAG.HTM

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Vital Graphics for Polar Peoples

The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) GRID-Arendal in Norway is producing a series of what it calls ‘Vital Graphics’. The last one the “Vital Arctic Graphics” focuses on the Circumpolar Region. They will use pictures and maps to show Arctic information, with a focus on Indigenous Peoples and climate change.

GRID-Arendal plans a website, folders with postcards, poster and a press material. The themes are indigenous knowledge, adaptation, pollutants, health, living standards, and development issues. Permanent Participant representatives are sitting on an advisory board to guide the work.

The material will be launched at the UNEP 8th Special Session for the Governing Council on Jeju Island, Korea at the end of this month. It will also be presented at the Commission on Sustainable Development, and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples Issues in New York, and in November at the Arctic Council Ministerial meeting in Iceland.

Writing in Your Own Language – a Human Right or a Burden

- Information Technology and minority languages

An interview with Rune Fjellheim, the head of the Arctic and environmental unit of the Saami Council. Rune Fjellheim worked with information technology issues at the Saami Parliament in Norway in the 1990s. He was invited to the concluding roundtable at the Information and Communication Technology Conference organised by Iceland in October 2003.

What challenges does a Saami user face when using the Saami language on the computer?

The first and most visible challenge Saami users meet, and also the main challenge, is when starting up the computer – and a foreign language comes up. There are no operative systems in the Saami language. It does not have to be like this, the standards could have been adjusted also for minority languages, like they are for national states.

The next step for a Saami user is to find, download and install the Saami fonts (six letters in the Saami alphabeth, which are not found in the Nordic languages nor in English), all this is even before starting to write. The national state languages have gradually got better services for word processing, like correction and thesaurus programs, which has become an essential support in daily work, a natural tool for most users. This is not at all available in a minority language such as Saami.

What has the Saami society done so far meet the challenges?

In the early and mid 90s, many local businesses started to develop “first-aid” solutions, which were so expensive, only professionals could afford to use them. For ordinary users it became far too costly. To write in your own language should be a human right. Based on this assumption, the Saami authorities began to discuss how to avoid the costs for users.

The Saami Parliament in Norway got in touch with the program producers to discuss what was required to develop Saami standards. To begin with, Saami fonts became available for free, first on floppy discs distributed by the Saami Parliament later Saami fonts could be downloaded from the Internet.

In the late 1990s, the Saami Parliament in Norway agreed with Microsoft that the Saami language choice should be included in their operative standards, which is normal for national state languages. It appeared, however, that Microsoft and the Saami Parliament did not interpret the agreement the same way.

Do you see any solutions to these challenges in the near future?

The Saami parliaments in Finland, Norway and Sweden now encourage the national states to bring the Saami language question up when negotiating their agreements with the suppliers like Microsoft. When the request comes from minister level, it will demonstrate that the Saami language, being an official language in three of the Nordic countries, has many users as well, and is not only for a couple of thousand individuals in the northern regions. The next Microsoft version to be released this spring will have all the Saami language dialects available as a choice for dates, sorting and keyboard.

Now there is a project running in the Saami Parliament to develop correction programs for the Saami language, so there is a hope that the Saami users will have access to the same services that users of English or Norwegian take for granted. I would say that the Saami authorities and language experts have dealt with the challenges in a very professional way. Their work has been driven with a clear objective in mind: not to accept that Saami users don't have equal access to the basic services in their daily work. The development of Saami solutions, also engage language experts, who are involved in the process of developing standards for dates, sorting and keyboard solutions.

A big challenge has been that the counterparts are huge commercial actors. The Saami authorities have been respectful and requested what is required to get the Saami language included, and followed up the demands. Keeping in mind that Microsoft, after having developed the national standards, maintains that there has to be at least 50 million users of the language before they develop a new standard. That means that none of the Nordic national languages would have been qualified today, so getting Saami standards is a big step forward.

Rune Fjellheim

How can information technology be used to strengthen the Saami language, education and culture?

This work is very important for minority languages. If the users of the minority languages don't have access to basic services, it will be easier to choose to work in a majority language that provides all the services. This is a question of the survival of the minority languages. Or rather, it is a condition for the minority languages' survival.

Take the mobile phones as an example; all official languages should be supported in mobile phones. Why should the Saami users accept to write in odd Saami in the Short Message System (SMS)? It must be possible to enable the phones to work in Saami. Many Saami users

choose not to use their mother tongue when writing SMS. For some this might be a step towards language shift.

When it comes to education, I think it is important to create demanding Saami users of Information Technology. A lot of resources should be put into getting technology that works in Saami in schools for the Saami classes. Using Saami would become a natural thing for the coming generations. As adults, these users will demand to get that service also in a work situation.

For the culture, seeing your mother tongue used in all fields of daily life, strengthens self-confidence and helps getting rid of the long time feeling of inferiority, it conveys an understanding that there is room for your culture in the world picture.

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

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IPS Update in Saami Version

A Saami version of the IPS Update has been made. The Update contains various articles taken from the last years IPS Update.

A Greenlandic version is on its way and will be launched soon.

The Saami version can be read at IPS Home page by using the following link:

<http://www.arcticpeoples.org/Newsletter/Start.html>

Briefing notes from Arctic Council Working Groups

Arctic Human Development Report - AHDR

The Arctic Human Development Report (AHDR) is to assess sustainable development in the Arctic region, using a variety of indicators including environment, economics, health, governance, and culture. The goal is to have a completed report by the autumn of 2004.

The second drafts of chapters of the AHDR are now being reviewed. They will be discussed at a meeting of lead

authors in Tromsø, Norway in early April. The Report Steering Committee is invited to this meeting, which will be the second time this committee will have met.

Permanent Participant (PP) organisations have nominated their representative to the AHDR Steering Committee, one of who was selected to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee has been leading the work so far.

The AHDR Steering Committee has only met once and has had limited influence so far. This does not mean that the voices of PPs have not been heard in preparing the report. Some have either been contributing authors themselves, or participated in the nomination of lead authors.

All the PPs will probably be represented at the meeting in Tromsø next month, and will get the chance to have a say in the process from there.

Sustainable Development Action Plan - SDAP

Russia is leading the development of a Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP). This plan aims to equip the Arctic Council, through the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG), to adopt projects that will fill gaps in the activities promoting Sustainable Development in the circumpolar region.

All the partners of the Arctic Council member states, Permanent Participant (PP) organizations, and observers, were invited to provide their recommendations for sustainable development in the Arctic. The development of this plan is a good opportunity for the Indigenous Peoples to put forward their views and recommendations for sustainable development, and get them onto the Arctic Council agenda.

The first version of the SDAP will be presented for the Arctic Council Ministers in Iceland in November 2004.

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Arctic Marine Strategic Plan - PAME

At the Arctic Council Ministerial meeting in October 2002, the Ministers:

“...recognize that existing and emerging activities in the Arctic warrant a more coordinated and integrated strategic approach to address the challenges of the Arctic coastal and marine environment and agree to develop a strategic plan for protection of the Arctic marine environment under leadership by PAME (Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment)”.

The PAME Working Group recently started work on an Arctic Marine Strategic Plan (AMSP). This is an important opportunity to improve the management of ocean and coastal resources. One of the guiding principles in this Strategic Plan is to involve Indigenous Peoples and incorporate traditional knowledge.

Canada and Iceland organised a workshop in October 2003 to make sure all issues were taken into account before a final plan is produced.

The Permanent Participants were prepared and committed to the work during the workshop. They emphasised that an Arctic Marine Strategic Plan should include the Indigenous Peoples and should reflect the interest of local peoples. A background paper was prepared by Aleut International Association and members of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference from Greenland, and was handed out during the workshop. A copy of this background paper is to be found at the PAME Web-site: <http://www.pame.is>

At the workshop the Permanent Participants pointed out that partnership is not only with industries but also the Indigenous Peoples. It was emphasised that the Indigenous Peoples were stakeholders as well. For example, when ice melts, big hunting areas will become accessible to a lot of people and this may have a negative influence on local hunters. There also needs to be a discussion about property rights and the use of traditional knowledge.

The first draft of the Arctic Marine Strategic Plan was put out in December 2003. At a meeting in February 2004, representatives from Arctic the states, the Permanent Participants and working groups under Arctic Council discussed this first draft. As a result of these discussions a second draft went out at the beginning of March. There will be an opportunity to comment on this draft, before it goes to the Arctic Council in May for further directions from the Senior Arctic Officials.

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS 2004	
March	
22 - 24	ACIA Assessment Integration Team , Copenhagen, Denmark
April	
3 - 4	AHDR Lead Author and Report Steering Committee Meeting , Tromsø, Norway
14 & 16	CAFF Working Group Meeting , Oslo, Norway
14 & 16	AMAP Working Group Meeting , Oslo, Norway
15 - 16	AMAP/CAFF Joint Meeting , Oslo, Norway
20 - 23	EPPR Meeting , Inuvik, Canada
20 - 21	ACIA Meeting , Nuuk, Greenland
21 - 27	ARCTIC SCIENCE SUMMIT WEEK , Reykjavik, Iceland
24 -25	ACAP Meeting , Washington D.C., USA
May	
2	IPS Board Meeting , Selfoss, Iceland Contact: IPS Secretariat Web-site: http://www.arcticpeoples.org
3	SDWG Meeting , Selfoss, Iceland
4 - 5	SAO Meeting , Selfoss, Iceland Contact: Arctic Council Secretariat Web-site: http://www.arctic-council.org/index.html
5 - 6	PAME / AMSP Meeting , Selfoss, Iceland
10 - 21	Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues , New York
19 - 23	5th INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ARCTIC SOCIAL SCIENCES (ICASS V) , Fairbanks, AK, USA
24 - 27	Human Health Assessment Group Meeting , Washington, USA