



WWF

MAGAZINE

No. 1

2013

# THE CIRCLE

Heeding Indigenous voices	11
Singapore: arctic newcomer	13
Global science	17

## THE ARCTIC COUNCIL – A NEW ERA OF ACTION?



## THE ARCTIC COUNCIL – A NEW ERA OF ACTION?

### Contents

EDITORIAL Coming full circle 3

IN BRIEF 4

INTERVIEW CARL BILDT Staying the course 6

LEONA AGLUKKAO An important milestone for Canada – and the Arctic 8

RODION SULYANDZIGA Full participation requires full support 10

ØYVIND RAVNA Heeding their voices 11

STEWART WATTERS, AKI TONAMI Singapore: The arctic newcomer 13

MARTIN BREUM Leaving the public out 16

DAVID HIK Arctic science is global science 17

MIKAEL ANZEN Sustainable development 18

ERICA ROSENTHAL, MARTIN WILLIAMS Time for leadership on black carbon 21

SARA OLSVIG Arctic development by the Peoples of the Arctic 23

ADELE AIROLDI Time to boldly go 25

BILL EICHBAUM Transparent stewards 26

THE PICTURE 28

The Circle is published quarterly by the WWF Global Arctic Programme. Reproduction and quotation with appropriate credit are encouraged. Articles by non-affiliated sources do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of WWF. Send change of address and subscription queries to the address on the right. We reserve the right to edit letters for publication, and assume no responsibility for unsolicited material.

Publisher:  
WWF Global Arctic Programme  
30 Metcalfe Street  
Suite 400  
Ottawa ON K1P 5L4  
Canada  
Tel: +1 613-232-8706  
Fax: +1 613-232-4181

Internet: [www.panda.org/arctic](http://www.panda.org/arctic)

ISSN 2073-980X = The Circle

Date of publication:  
April, 2013.

Editor in Chief: Clive Tesar,  
[CTesar@WWFCanada.org](mailto:CTesar@WWFCanada.org)  
Editor: Becky Rynor, [brynor@uniserve.com](mailto:brynor@uniserve.com)

Design and production:  
Film & Form/Ketill Berger,  
[ketill.berger@filmform.no](mailto:ketill.berger@filmform.no)

Printed by St. Joseph Communications

*COVER: Sweden's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Carl Bildt will hand over the Chair to Canada's Minister for the Arctic Leona Aglukkaq in May, 2013.*

*ABOVE: Kiruna will host the Arctic Council Ministerial in May 2013.*

Thank you  
for your interest in The  
Circle. Did you know many of our  
subscribers have moved to an e-ver-  
sion? To receive an electronic copy in your  
email instead of a paper copy, please write to us  
at [snovotny@wwfcanada.org](mailto:snovotny@wwfcanada.org) and help us reduce  
our costs and footprint.

# Coming full circle

**THE ARCTIC COUNCIL MINISTERIAL** meeting in May 2013 marks the completion of the first full circle of chairmanship since the Council was established in 1996. This next cycle will be a time to look at this regional process, the new challenges and new realities the Arctic faces. This issue of *The Circle* explores some of these issues. Authors touch on the readiness of Arctic nations to use the Council to provide environmental stewardship for this polar region, for the benefit of the people both locally and globally who will be affected by the council's successes or failures.

The Arctic Council enters its second cycle strengthened through the establishment of a permanent Secretariat and the new initiative of brokering legally binding decisions. This may help clear the backlog of policy recommendations flowing from the Council's excellent scientific assessments and reports from recent years. This strengthening has also raised public expectations for better transparency and accountability of Council processes and decisions.

The outgoing Swedish chairmanship took the lead in developing a Council vision for the next 10-20 years. The changing climate, protection of the environment, sustainable conditions for residents and commercial development as well as a strengthened Arctic Council are all vital issues for the future of the Arctic. The incoming Canadian chair stresses human dimensions, strengthening northern communities and balancing development with respect for fragile Arctic ecosystems and ecosystem services will be a priority for the coming two years.

The Arctic Council continues to be a unique process which incorporates Indigenous Peoples. Their role should be strengthened through the full engagement of Permanent Participants in decision-making processes and activities of the Arctic. This requires not just opening the doors, but ensuring Permanent Participant organizations representing Indigenous Peoples have the capacity and independence to operate as full partners.

Enhanced decision-making capacity relies on a robust knowledge base for risk management and policy-making. The global nature of the challenges the Arctic faces requires global science. A number of non-Arctic nations

with existing or pending Observer status at the Council have strong Arctic science programs and should contribute to the Arctic Council agenda. Informed decisions will require integration of knowledge from different scientific disciplines with full inclusion of traditional knowledge.

Several non-Arctic states and the EU are seeking Observer status at the Arctic Council. The council has long deliberated over some of these applications. Now it is time for decisions to include these applicants, or explain how the Arctic could be better stewarded without them.

Climate change continues to be the major driving force of changes in the Arctic and the main threat. Scientific reports show black carbon is the second largest human emission after carbon dioxide forcing climate change.

While Arctic nations can point the finger at global drivers of climate change, they must also act to mitigate the coming

change by developing black carbon emissions inventories, tracking regional trends and identifying mitigation opportunities.

The Swedish chairmanship led processes to make

the Arctic Council a platform for international cooperation on Arctic best business practices and to promote corporate social responsibility. This initiative requires **more engagement of all relevant stakeholders** among the Arctic business community with businesses displaying leadership instead of waiting for government to convene the process.

WWF's vision for the future of the Arctic Council, as articulated in the final article in this edition, highlights the role of Arctic governments collaborating to implement Council decisions. A Council that informs, brokers and assists governments to act on issues of common priority and concern would be a valuable contribution in helping governments fulfill their stewardship responsibilities for this rapidly changing part of our planet. ○



**ALEXANDER SHESTAKOV** is the director of the WWF Global Arctic Programme, based in Ottawa, Canada. His background includes working for a number of NGOs, government and industry, giving him a broad understanding of conservation issues. He has a law degree and a PhD focused on environmental management and conservation.

**THIS NEXT CYCLE WILL BE A TIME TO LOOK AT THIS REGIONAL PROCESS, THE NEW CHALLENGES AND NEW REALITIES THE ARCTIC FACES**

*The Kulluk grounded on Sitkalidak Island, Alaska.*

Photo: DoD, Petty Officer 2nd Class Zachary Painter, U.S. Coast Guard/Released



## Kulluk grounding shows Shell isn't ready for Arctic

**FEDERAL AND STATE** agency officials and Shell Oil representatives hastily convened in Anchorage in the new year to examine the series of events surrounding the latest incident plaguing the oil company's Arctic drilling efforts.

On Dec. 31, Shell's drill rig Kulluk grounded on Sitkalidak Island after repeated failures to tow it in rough seas from Dutch Harbor to Seattle. The Kulluk was one of two drilling vessels deployed for a short fall season of drilling in Alaska's Chukchi and Beaufort seas.

"This drama at sea shows how even so-called routine operations such as moving drilling rigs can threaten the lives and livelihoods of

industry personnel, rescue crews, coastal residents, rich wildlife populations and productive fisheries that feed millions of people around the world," says Margaret Williams, managing director of WWF's U.S. Arctic field program.

The response effort – the largest ever launched in Alaska, according to the state's Department of Environmental Conservation – was stymied by stormy seas and gale force winds.

The inability to quickly and adequately respond to emergencies because of extreme environmental conditions is called the "response gap," something WWF has highlighted as the barrier to safe offshore oil development in the Arctic.

Last year U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior David Hayes said "any approved (offshore oil development) activities will be held to the highest environmental protection standards."

"In our book, high standards include having failsafe towing and handling vessels, and a drill ship that has not been fined for violations, as Shell's equipment has been," Williams says. "The administration's green light to allow Shell to conduct initial exploratory activities last year sets a poor precedent in the administration's so-called commitment to the 'highest standards'." ○



*Participants in polar bear workshop, Tromsø, Norway.*

## Safer bears, safer communities

**AS TEMPERATURES** warm and sea ice melts, polar bears will spend more time on land and in closer proximity to humans, according to experts from Russia, Norway, Greenland, Canada and Alaska who met in Tromsø in February. WWF polar bear expert Geoff York was one of the organizers of a workshop on how to lessen polar bear/human conflict. He says educating humans going into bear country is key.

"Bears in general are predictable in their behaviour and they give cues to us. It's whether we know how to read those cues," he told BBC News. "That being said, there's always the one in 1,000 animals that is less predictable or is in a situation that becomes unpredictable with bears, but there are things that we can clearly teach about bear behaviour and proper human response."

York says the range states are compiling a new database on polar bear/human

## New national park will protect Onega Peninsula ecosystems, traditional lifestyles

IN FEBRUARY, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev signed a decree to create a new national park encompassing over 201,668 hectares on the Onega Peninsula

Jutting into the White Sea, the peninsula is unique for its biodiversity and preserved indigenous boreal forest rich in flora, fauna and many rare species. The area also plays an important role in regional climate regulation while preserving a distinct, traditional way of life for coast-dwellers. Locals believe environmental and historical tourism development is the only way to sustain their traditions into the future.



*Pine trees on dunes in the Onezhskoye Pomorye National Park, Russia.*

Photos: Alexey Ovchinnikov.

Andrey Shchegolev, WWF Russia, says industrial logging caused massive destruction of Onega Peninsula's natural ecosystems. "Local people have used forests for centuries, but have done so carefully, without

environmental damage. Over the last few decades of industrial development, 60 per cent of the area was logged. A national park will save those ecosystems which haven't been reached by harvesters yet." ○

conflicts to better track trends, identify hotspots, and address common prevent-

able causes. "We hope by this fall (2013) we will have an Arctic-wide mostly populated

data system that can start to tell us a little bit about that – what's the history, do we see any trends in numbers, similarities in conflict causes?" ○

Cold water prawns (*Pandalus borealis*) harvested by this fishery are now eligible to bear the blue MSC ecolabel – assuring buyers and shoppers that the product originates from a certified source. In international markets, Greenland prawn is known for its outstanding quality.

"Respect for nature has been a fundamental prerequisite for survival in Greenland for centuries," Fisheries Minister Ane Hansen said. ○

## Thinning sea ice lures, traps killer whales in Canada's Hudson Bay

A POD of trapped killer whales spent two days frantically bobbing for air around a breathing hole in sea ice near Inukjuak in January. WWF Canada's Pete Ewins says climate change has reduced sea-ice cover in Hudson Bay, opening the door to predators like orcas to spend more time there feeding in summer. But sometimes they don't make it out, he said. ○

## First Greenland fishery gains MSC certification

THE WEST GREENLAND cold water prawn trawl fishery has become the first Greenland fishery to achieve certification to the MSC standards.

# Staying the course

The Arctic Council has now completed a full rotation of Member States holding the Chairmanship. Sweden's Minister for Foreign Affairs, **CARL BILDT** will hand over the Chair to Canada in May, 2013. In doing so, he urges the circumpolar countries to focus on stability, collaboration and maintaining momentum in protecting the Arctic.



Swedish foreign minister Carl Bildt takes over as Chair of the Arctic Council at the Council's meeting in 2011. Here together with Danish Foreign Minister Lene Espersen (left) and US Foreign Minister Hillary Clinton.

Photo: Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs

**The Arctic Council has now been through its first cycle of member countries chairing the organization – what do you believe is its biggest achievement in this cycle?**

The Arctic Council has since its birth in 1996 matured from a policy shaping entity to a policy making forum with great institutional stability. It has put the Arctic region and the perspectives of the Arctic states and peoples on the global agenda through groundbreaking reports such as the *Arctic Climate Impact Assessment*.

**As we approach the next cycle of chairmanships, Sweden is leading a document to help set a path for that next cycle. What would you like to see in that document?**

It is important that the Arctic States and Permanent Participants work together in all areas sharing a joint vision about what we want to achieve with the Arctic Council and a common set of goals for the Arctic region for the next 10-20 years. The changing climate, protection of the environment, sustainable conditions for the people living there and commercial development as well as a strengthened Arctic Council are all vital issues for the future work of the Arctic Council.

**What is the Council's biggest challenge right now?**

It is important that all members keep up the momentum and preserve the focus on the changing climate, protection of environment and sustainable economic development as well as questions concerning the Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic.

**What do you think of the Arctic Council's capacity to evolve as a regional organization?**

The Arctic Council is a unique high level forum that incorporates all the

## **"THE ARCTIC COUNCIL IS NOT ONLY A REGIONAL FORUM, BUT A GLOBAL ONE."**

Arctic states and Indigenous Peoples organizations of the Arctic. We are taking incremental steps to strengthen the cooperation. Unlike other regional organizations, the Council has observers from the entire world and from different sectors – WWF being one of them. In this sense the Arctic Council is not only a regional forum, but a global one.

**The question of who should be admitted as Observers to the council is still under debate, particularly when it comes to State Observers. In your opinion, who should be Observers at the Council, and why?**

I believe we should have an open mindset when we review applications

for Observer status to the Arctic Council. The criteria that Ministers adopted in Nuuk in 2011 must be the basis for the review of all applications. As chair of the Council, the role of Sweden is as "honest broker" tasked to prepare the decision that will take place in Kiruna in May 2013.

**Given the membership of some Arctic Council members in the EU also, how does that constrain their positions at the council?**

The Arctic Council is a democratic forum and states' membership does not constrain their positions. On the contrary, it widens perspectives and benefits the work of the Council. Both the Arctic Council and the EU share similar views on many of the challenges in the Arctic: fighting climate change, conducting research on the Arctic environment and investing in sustainable development to mention a few common objectives. We should always strive for as much cooperation as possible as it will help ensure sustainable development in the Arctic region. ○

### **WWF CEO Vision Statements**

## **SWEDEN**

Ecosystem based management (EBM) is a very important management concept within the Arctic Council which can address both human and environmental issues in a changeable world. During the Canadian chairmanship over the next two years, EBM should go from theory into practice with real field projects. One example could be from the Abisko area in the Swedish province of Lapland where stakeholders are already discussing the future and their future cumulative effects on the environment. The EBM concept is a very promising way to resolve issues for reindeer herders, the tourist industry, county boards, hunters, mining companies and scientific researchers who all want access to the same area. WWF urges the Swedish Government to fulfill ideas and decisions of the Arctic Council into concrete projects in northern Sweden. The results and experiences from these projects should then be fed back into the Arctic Council and its work on an international level.



**Hakan Wirten,  
Secretary  
General WWF  
Sweden.**

# An important milestone for Canada – and the Arctic

**In 1996, Canada was the first of the eight member states to chair the newly-created Arctic Council. Canada takes the chair again in May 2013 under the leadership of LEONA AGLUKKAQ, Canada's Minister for the Arctic. Here the Minister lays out her priorities for Canada's upcoming two year term at the helm of the Arctic Council.**

CANADA AND SEVEN other circumpolar countries formed the Arctic Council 16 years ago, as a high-level intergovernmental forum to promote cooperation, coordination and interaction among Arctic States. The council was established with the Ottawa Declaration in 1996 and Canada was the first country to chair it, with participation from states around the Arctic Circle and Aboriginal groups from across the region. Canada starts its second chairmanship at a time of far-reaching change in the region. The Council faces critical questions about how best to take advantage of the region's tremendous resource potential and manage the opening up of new shipping routes while preserving the North's vital ecosystems.

My first priority as Canada's Minister for the Arctic Council was to have a conversation with northern Canadians about what our chairmanship priorities should be. Last autumn, I met with premiers, elected officials, Aboriginal leaders, Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council, environmental groups, business people, and researchers in Canada's three northern territories—

Nunavut, the Northwest Territories and Yukon. Earlier this year, I met with Canada's Nordic Arctic Council partners. These discussions underlined the challenges and opportunities ahead, as well as how much we all have in common.

In its first 16 years, the Council has done important scientific work and shaped global policy on key issues like mercury levels. We have established world-class programs such as the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program, which is an international network of scientists, government agencies, Indigenous organizations and conservation groups working together to harmonize and integrate monitoring efforts and data collection. We will continue this work, ensuring research findings

## CANADA STARTS ITS SECOND CHAIRMANSHIP AT A TIME OF FAR-REACHING CHANGE IN THE REGION



*Leona Aglukkaq, Minister for the Arctic Council (right), meets with Carl Bildt, Sweden's Minister of Foreign Affairs (center), and Torgeir Larsen, Norwegian State Secretary (Deputy Minister) to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (left).*

Photo: DFAIT | MAECI

are applied in a practical way. This will help improve the well-being and prosperity of people living in the Arctic.

Canada's chairmanship of the Arctic Council will put northerners first, with initiatives that reflect the views and expertise of the people on the ground and benefit those across the circumpolar region. The overarching theme of Canada's chairmanship will be *Development for the People of the North*. We will focus on creating economic growth,



strong northern communities and healthy ecosystems. The circumpolar region is home to many thousands of men, women and children; their views, traditions and cultures will be central to our chairmanship.

Three sub-themes guide our work. The first is *Responsible Arctic Resource Development*. The development of natural resources is important to the economic future of the Arctic and to the long-term prosperity of its inhabitants. The Council should play a strong role in ensuring that Arctic resource development takes place in a safe and sustainable manner that is beneficial to the people of the North. We will continue the work that began under the Swedish chairmanship to enhance the relationship between the business sector and the Arctic Council and to encourage

business opportunities in the North. We will also continue the Council's work on oil spill pollution in the Arctic.

*Safe Arctic Shipping* is our second sub-theme. We foresee the development of guidelines for Arctic tourism and cruise-ship operators. This will complement the new Arctic search and rescue agreement signed by Arctic Council ministers, including myself, in Greenland.

The final sub-theme is *Sustainable Circumpolar Communities*. My friends, my family and all northerners are facing new challenges as a result of climate change. The Council must help people adapt to these changes. We must also explore how best to advance work on short-lived climate pollutants, like black carbon. Addressing this issue will have benefits both for climate change and for the health of northerners.

The Arctic region faces not only a time of change and challenge, but also of great opportunity. If we combine the knowledge of the people who have lived in the North for generations with what we have learned through innovative research and technology, we can move forward successfully. Of this, I have no doubt. ○

## WWF CEO Vision Statements

### CANADA

The Arctic climate is changing at an unprecedented rate, bringing uncertainty to the people who have lived in the region for millennia while at the same time attracting interest in new development opportunities. Canada's upcoming term as Chair offers an invaluable opportunity to demonstrate leadership at a critical time for the Arctic, and the Honourable Leona Aglukkaq has charted a path that focuses on the theme of 'development for the people of the north.' We call on all Arctic Council States, Permanent Participants and Observers to work together over the coming years to realize this aspiration in a way that demonstrates truly sustainable Arctic development, including the protections that are needed to safeguard a unique environment. It will require circumpolar collaboration to support ecosystem and community resilience in a rapidly changing environment, and to develop and implement the tools needed to foster responsible Arctic stewardship.



**Roger Dickett, Chair-  
man, WWF-  
Canada**

Photo WWF-Canon/Richard Stonehouse

# Full participation requires full support

**As Canada assumes chairmanship of the Arctic Council in May, 2013, new opportunities will open up for Permanent Participants to influence the Council's work through their formal status. RODION SULYANDZIGA observes that the incoming Canadian chair says she believes in the importance of culture and the value of all forms of knowledge, including Indigenous Peoples' traditional knowledge. Consequently, he calls on the Arctic Council to prioritize efforts to fund, support, and acknowledge the expertise of the Permanent Participants.**

EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN the Arctic Council will continue. Institution-

ally, developing the newly established Arctic Council Secretariat (ACS) in Tromsø, Norway, remains key to this, although it has long been debated how the Permanent Participants should relate to this new institution and what will happen to the Indigenous People's Secretariat in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Permanent Participants are now reaching consensus on bringing the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat under the umbrella of the ACS, while still functioning as an autonomous entity. A relocation model is being crafted and will soon be

presented to and discussed with Senior Arctic Officials and the Arctic states.

## INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT IN THE ARCTIC COUNCIL HINGES ON BEING FINANCED

Private foundations in North America are facilitating this process as is the Nordic Council of Ministers; a clear indication of interest in Arctic issues from groups outside of the Arctic Council. This also indicates the importance of increasing the involvement of local and Indigenous People in the work of the Council.

Furthermore, a growing number of non-Arctic states, international organizations and NGOs are applying to become Observers in the Arctic Council. They argue that the rapid changes in the Arctic driven by climate change have global consequences and they are claiming a role in the opening of the Arctic.

The growing interest in observing and, eventually, beyond merely observing has raised concerns among the Permanent Participants about a potential undermining of their own role in the Arctic Council. This role is based on respect for Indigenous rights and

interests and sensitivity toward Arctic Indigenous realities, the delicate inter-relationships existing between language, traditional knowledge, food, health, the land, waters and pastures.

However the Permanent Participants as well as the Observers are aware of the need to engage with each other and develop structured relationships. Thus, recently, the Permanent Participants were invited to a meeting among state Observers and Observer applicants in Warsaw, Poland.

As it turned out, only one Permanent Participant organization accepted the invitation. This underscores how Indigenous engagement in the Arctic Council hinges on being financed as do all initiatives to build capacity and develop relations within and among all three main Arctic Council stakeholders – countries, Permanent Participants and Observers.

Recognition of the need to secure, financially and otherwise, Indigenous involvement in the Arctic Council appears to be growing on all sides. The process of strengthening the Arctic Council – institutionally and in terms of science and policy – will have to go in that direction. The strengthening process only makes sense in relation to the sustainable development and strength of the peoples, the cultures and societies of the Arctic. ○



RODION SULYANDZIGA

is the first vice-president of RAIPON, the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North. RAIPON represents 40 ethnic groups from the far north, Far East and Siberia, a total population of about 250,000 Indigenous Peoples. The organization was recently reinstated by the Russian government, after having been decertified for several months. Sulyandziga is Udege ("Forest People"), located in the Far East (Siberia) of the Russian Federation.



*Inuit leader Mary Simon spearheaded the creation of the Arctic Council in 1996 and was its first chairperson. She says she 'worked very hard' to establish Arctic Indigenous groups as Permanent Participants at the Council.*

## PERMANENT PARTICIPANTS

# Heeding their voices

**Until the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) was established in 1991, the Indigenous Peoples of the Circumpolar Arctic were some kind of Observers without much influence. Their position gradually increased with the creation of the Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples Secretariat (IPS) in 1994 as well as the category of *Permanent Participants* which included the three Indigenous Peoples' organizations, then observers on the AEPS: the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC), the Saami Council and the Association of Indigenous Minorities of the North, Siberia and Far East of the Russian Federation (RAIPON). ØYVIND RAVNA says this was quite an achievement, but heeding their voices is now more important than ever**



ØYVIND RAVNA, is a Professor of Law at the University of Tromsø. He is also a documentary producer and author of books on Indigenous Peoples, culture and societies, especially from the Russian and Scandinavian North.

WHEN THE ARCTIC COUNCIL was established in 1996, the status of the Permanent Participants was reaffirmed in the Ottawa Declaration. It allowed for other Arctic Indigenous Peoples organizations to be Permanent Participants although it is still somewhat limiting in that the declaration stipulates the numbers of Permanent Participants at any time should be less than the members of the council. Currently the Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC), Aleut International Association (AIA) and Gwich'in

Council International (GGI) are all Permanent Participants.

The PPs do not have the right to vote, but since decisions are generally made in consensus, this is not considered to be problematic.

Gunn-Britt Retter, the acting leader of the Arctic and Environmental Unit of the Saami Council, says the Arctic Council was established in a time when a lot was possible regarding Indigenous issues. "If the Arctic Council was established today I don't think the

Permanent Participants category would have been possible to establish. A great thanks to those who saw this window of opportunity during the establishment of the Arctic Council."

It is important to hear the Indigenous voices for several reasons. An obvious one is that the Indigenous Peoples of the circumpolar Arctic are the original possessors – one can well call them the original landowners – of icy tundra, mountains, plains and coastal islands including the fishing rights outside the

coast. It is very important that the voices of those peoples are heard because of the international treaties and customary traditions saying that they have the right to self-determination, participation and involvement in the governance of land and natural resources.

The Ottawa declaration also recognizes the valuable contribution Indigenous Peoples make through their traditional knowledge. This is knowledge that cannot be learned in schools or through academia and which is becoming more and more important for the management of the Circumpolar Arctic. There were, for example, Indigenous Peoples who raised the alarm about global warming, and functioned as climate witnesses.

Besides that, the Arctic Council covers Indigenous areas throughout the circumpolar north. These areas are in part governed by the most progressive states in terms of democracy and welfare. If Indigenous voices can't be heeded, and real participation can't take place here, one can ask where could it happen.

I would also like to emphasize the importance of the human dimension at the Arctic Council. As Gunn-Britt Retter says, the Arctic is not merely about polar bears, but also about people for whom the Arctic is their home. "The

## THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE CIRCUMPOLAR ARCTIC ARE THE ORIGINAL POSSESSORS - ONE CAN WELL CALL THEM THE ORIGINAL LANDOWNERS - OF ICY TUNDRA, MOUNTAINS, PLAINS AND COASTAL ISLANDS INCLUDING THE FISHING RIGHTS

Permanent Participants have managed to give the activities of the Arctic Council a human face. The outcomes of the Arctic Council are improved by involving the people living there".

The Permanent Participants role is more than just a symbolic presence. The Permanent Participants have full participation rights in connection with the Council's negotiations and decisions. The fact that they have the status of

Permanent Participants means that they actually have a kind of veto. Although decision-making is at the state level, it can easily be stopped or prolonged if the PPs disagree. Gunn-Britt Retter says they are listened to. "If the PPs stand together and speak strongly against something, I feel that the Member States would be careful taking decisions against our will."

There is a general impression that it was easier to get in strong Indigenous references in the declarations in the earlier days of Arctic Council, compared with today. Over the last decade, as more and more eyes look to the north and the states put more emphasis on the Arctic Council, it seems like it is increasingly difficult for the Indigenous arctic minorities to be heard. "It looks like it is more difficult to get strong Indigenous statements in the declarations, says Gunn-Britt Retter, "but on the other hand, member states have strongly expressed the PPs role shall not be sidelined now that more states and organizations want to become Observers to the Arctic Council. PPs have even been used as a shield to 'protect' the Arctic Council from all the Observers."

From the Saami Council's perspective, the organization is trying to engage Saami expertise broadly in the Arctic Council working groups' assessments and projects, to develop the strongest possible knowledge base for Arctic Council decisions. A knowledge base that includes Indigenous perspectives and traditional knowledge is the best way to ensure recommendations will also benefit Indigenous Peoples, although we already struggle to keep up with the Arctic Council workload and address all the requests for participation we receive.

The Permanent Participants will also have an increasingly important role in ensuring lands, watercourses and natural resources are not exploited, overused and destroyed in the growing competition for resources such as oil, gas and minerals in the Circumpolar Arctic, triggered by climate change and easier access to the resources. ○

### WWF CEO Vision Statements

## NORWAY

More so in the Arctic than anywhere else on the planet, climate change is an enormous ecological and economic threat. And nowhere do the potential negative feedback mechanisms of this change have such ominous global implications. Canada must, as a matter of urgency, ensure during its chairmanship of the Arctic Council that climate change mitigation is a strong priority of the Council. The coming chairmanship must seek to ensure that the member states take a cooperative global lead in concluding a binding global climate agreement no later than 2015. Arctic states as parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change need to take urgent action to meet the target of keeping global average temperature rise under 2 degrees. The Arctic can play a key role in piloting a global transition to renewable energy.



Nina Jensen,  
CEO WWF-  
Norway

# Singapore: The arctic newcomer

**As a city-state lying just over 100km north of the equator, Singapore may not strike you as an obvious participant at meetings of the Arctic Council. But at the Council's upcoming Ministerial Meeting in May, members will decide on precisely that: should Singapore become a Permanent Observer to the Arctic Council. STEWART WATTERS and AKI TONAMI weigh in on the discussion.**

SINGAPORE IS ONE of five applicants for Observer status from Asia along with China, Japan, Korea and India, indicating the growing awareness and perceived interests by Asian states in a rapidly changing Arctic. However, China, Japan, Korea and India all have long traditions of Polar science either in Antarctica or via research stations on Svalbard – by contrast, Singapore has little Polar heritage.

Nonetheless, Singapore has articulated an intention to play a role in Arctic governance, through government statements, its submission for Arctic Council Observer status in December 2011 and the creation of an Arctic Envoy role, raising the question of what is motivating these activities. In our research, we argue that this engagement stems from Singapore's significant interest in global maritime affairs and the strong role of the state in

managing the Singaporean economy and its strategic industries of port management and vessel construction.

## SINGAPORE'S INTEREST IN THE ARCTIC

Singapore has played an important role in the global governance regimes and institutions for ocean management and transportation as an island state and a major shipping hub, including as a long-standing member of the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Singapore asserts that freedom of navigation represents an issue of vital interest, that **the high seas are the common heritage of mankind** and that there must be improved cooperation between littoral and user states and that ocean governance must be open and inclusive.

Seen from this perspective, it is not surprising that Singapore seeks to follow the development of Arctic shipping and resource exploration more closely, and some Arctic Council member states have acknowledged that Singapore's role in global maritime governance is a legitimate factor in its application for Observer Status.

However, Singapore also has considerable economic and political interest in the development of the Arctic. This is directly related to the

development of key domestic industrial sectors, namely Singapore's role as a global hub port, as a strong base of offshore and marine engineering and as an international leader in port management.

Here it is important to remember Singapore's political context: Singapore has been ruled by a single party since 1959 and there is a significant degree of involvement by state institutions and government officials in the management of the Singaporean economy and its major commercial entities, with a long-term strategic approach to foreign economic policy. This means that the state, and not just private companies, is very alive to the challenges and opportunities of Arctic change.

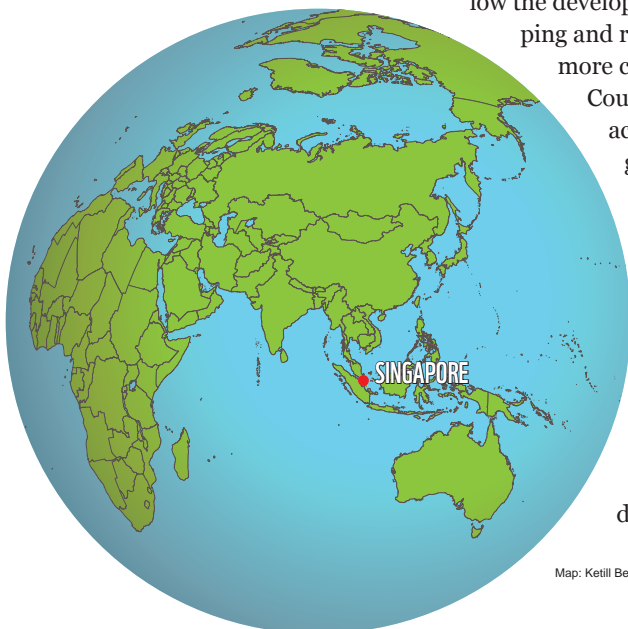
One of the most



**STEWART WATTERS** leads the 'Asia in a Changing Arctic' Program at the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, looking at the drivers behind the growing interest in the Arctic region by Asian countries.



**AKI TONAMI** is a researcher at the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS), University of Copenhagen. She has a Ph.D. in Environmental Studies (ecological economics) from Kyoto University (2008). Her main research areas include Japan's international relations and environmental governance, particularly environmental aid.



Map: Ketill Berger, Film & Form

common assumptions about Singapore's Arctic interest is that it is born of the Northern Sea Route's (NSR) potential challenge to Singapore's role as a global shipping hub. Some analysts assert that more northerly Asian ports could benefit from a reliable Arctic passage instead of transiting the heavily trafficked Malacca Straits, and so bypassing Singapore. Some also argue that projected energy resources in the Arctic may reduce NE Asia's energy imports from the Middle East, again reducing Singapore's significance. However, we argue that for the foreseeable future

## SINGAPORE SEEKS TO FOLLOW THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARCTIC SHIPPING AND RESOURCE EXPLORATION MORE CLOSELY

---

this 'threat' is overblown. Significant questions remain about the near-term potential of large-scale, highly regularized Arctic shipping, related to navigational safety, transit time, capacity restrictions, limited seasonal access, as well as an uncertain Russian bureaucracy and lack of existing infrastructure. The Malacca Straits may be crowded, but it is well managed and highly regularized, two factors that shipping brokers and importers are reluctant to gamble with.

Indeed, there may well be an upside to the development of the NSR: Singa-



*Singapore icebreakers Toboy and Varandey in Arctic waters.*

Photo: Keppel Singmarine

pore's broad expertise in the running of major port facilities may be an opportunity for one of Singapore's most important enterprises, PSA International, to deliver and manage the new northern port infrastructure required to facilitate Arctic shipping.

Furthermore, Singapore is home to global leaders in Offshore and Marine Engineering (OME), a critical sector for Singapore's economic strategy. For example, Singapore's OME sector accounts for 70 per cent of the world's jack-up rig-building market and 2/3 of the global Floating Production Storage

and Offloading (FPSO) platform conversion market, both important technologies for offshore drilling in hostile environments like the Arctic. One of Singapore's most important engineering companies, Keppel Corp., entered the Arctic ice-breaker market in 2008. In 2012, Keppel and ConocoPhillips announced their intention to jointly design a pioneering rig for offshore Arctic drilling.

In conclusion, Singapore's Arctic interest represents the logical extension of its more general interest in important developments in international maritime policy. However, for Singapore the

opening up of the Arctic for shipping and resource extraction represents an important new niche for industries critical to the Singapore economy and closely linked to the government.

Singapore has expended a great deal of diplomatic efforts to prove its suitability for Arctic Council Observer status. But the question facing Arctic Council members may be less about Singapore's suitability and much more about the direction in which they want to see the Arctic Council develop in a period of unprecedented interest in a changing Arctic. ○



## WWF CEO Vision Statements

### USA

There are parts of the Arctic where it seems time has stood still – ancient cultures and traditions thrive; landscapes stretch endlessly, seemingly untouched. But the Arctic is facing many of the world's most modern problems. Important decisions about energy resources, food security and climate change impacts will be made here in the coming decade. The political prominence of the Arctic Council has grown significantly, and WWF anticipates it will become the primary forum for diplomacy and deliberation on these topics. As the geopolitical importance of the Arctic increases along with dramatic climate change-related impacts on Arctic ecosystems, new opportunities are emerging for economic development and environmental protection. In no other part of the world do we have such an opportunity to get it right in terms of planning, protection and precaution. WWF urges the Arctic nations to fully support the Arctic Council to ensure a healthy, sustainable future for the Arctic.



**Carter Roberts, CEO  
WWF US**

# Leaving the public out

**For journalists, covering the Arctic also means covering the Arctic Council which diplomats and politicians will tell you is a very important and significant body. But journalist MARTIN BREUM says for reporters, the challenge lies in finding results, achievements or concrete evidence to support this claim.**

**TO DATE**, the Arctic Council has relatively little to show by way of concrete results that would convince broader sections of the public that the Council is politically important and has a strong bearing on the future of the Arctic. Yes, a lot of important scientific work has

been carried out, but in its 16 years of existence the Council has made only one solid, political decision legally binding upon the eight governments in the Arctic – this happened in Nuuk in 2011, when the governments agreed to collaborate on search and rescue at sea. A second binding decision will be made in May this year forcing closer cooperation in case of an oil spill.

This is hardly an impressive track record when assessing whether the Council is up to the challenges ahead. Without

solid achievements recognized by the public, the Council stands little chance of becoming the political powerhouse of the Arctic that politicians and diplomats claim it already is. The question still is to what extent we should trust these

decision-makers when they claim that the Arctic Council will regulate oil exploration, promote development of Arctic communities, regulate shipping, tourism and industrial fishing and secure peaceful borders in the Arctic Ocean.

Trying to find an answer to this rather pivotal question one runs into serious flaws in the Council's dealings with the public. Let me give an example: the most controversial question on the Council's table at the moment threatens the Council itself – should China, the European Union, India and others asking be allowed seats as Permanent Observers? Among the members of the Council, Russia, Canada, the US and some of the representatives of the Arctic peoples are reluctant to allow China and the EU in particular a greater say. The Scandinavians are mainly in favor. The debate has been raging behind the scenes for more than four years, and at the time of writing there is no solution in sight. The Council met in Tromsø in January and according to the rumor mill, the fight is still on, even though a decision has been promised for May, 2013. Fear is growing that China and others will soon be so frustrated that they will ask the UN to start tackling some of the global issues in the Arctic – instead of the Arctic Council.

Meanwhile, the public is left in the dark. The media are not allowed to cover the actual meetings of the Arctic Council. Secondly, the Arctic Council works by consensus, so nobody will tell you up front where disagreements or nuances are to be found. These have to

be dug out through sources who do not speak on the record. The politicians, who are accustomed to talking to the media, only show up every second year for the ministerial meetings. The rest of the time journalists deal with diplomats, who have little to gain from talking. Finally, the real deals in the Arctic Council are no longer made at the actual meetings of the Council. There are already too many observers at the table to allow any meaningful discussion to take place, so important decisions are now negotiated between the key diplomats over lunches, dinners or at other discreet venues. After the formal meetings, press releases and briefings are organized, reflecting only a fraction of what actually transpired.

Then, in January 2013, promising news: The Arctic Council got a permanent secretariat in Tromsø, Norway. A fine ceremony was held, the eight Arctic flags were waved and dances performed in celebration, and with good reason. The new staff will help the Council work in a more concerted way and to communicate, hopefully, more efficiently. But will it? The new director, from Iceland, has been given limited powers to address the public, he is not to act as a spokesperson and he is not meant to take initiatives on his own, but to facilitate the ongoing work of the Council. Without a more solid mandate I fear the establishment of the secretariat will make the Council only marginally more transparent. It all depends on the quantity of political will in the Arctic capitals. ○



MARTIN BREUM is a journalist with the Danish Broadcasting Corporation and the author of 'When the Ice Disappears – Denmark as a great power in the Arctic, the riches of Greenland and the quest for the North Pole' (Danish only). He has previously written on the Arctic Council's communications in "The Arctic Council: Its place in the future of Arctic governance", [www.gordonfoundation.ca/publications/530](http://www.gordonfoundation.ca/publications/530)

# Arctic science is global science

**The national strategies of the eight Arctic countries all place significant importance on research and science as the basis for sound decision-making in Arctic affairs. Both science and public policy are built on a base of knowledge that should be reliable, timely, accessible, reflect a diversity of perspectives, be considerate of long-term changes, and yet be sufficiently flexible to address unexpected, short-term and local events. Consequently, improving the quality and relevance of Arctic research and ensuring timely access to this knowledge must remain a priority for all Arctic countries, says DAVID HIK.**

**SINCE ITS CREATION**, the Arctic Council has facilitated cooperation on common issues among the Arctic states, Indigenous Peoples' organizations and communities and other Arctic inhabitants. Under its auspices, Arctic Council Working Groups have completed numerous scientific assessments, providing an improved understanding of environmental, social and economic changes in the Arctic region. These reports and syntheses are comprehensive and have provided guidance for decision-making that can shape the policies of the Arctic Council members. The Arctic Council has also recognized that there is a need to integrate knowledge

from different scientific disciplines, and especially to ensure the inclusion of traditional knowledge. Many new projects underway or in development (for example, the Arctic Resilience Report, Adaptation Actions for a Changing Arctic, the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment, etc.) embrace interdisciplinarity, community and Indigenous perspectives, and circumpolar connections.

Nevertheless, from my perspective, the Arctic Council faces a very immediate challenge with respect to science: that of ensuring the engagement of global capacity in addressing Arctic issues. The Arctic Commons, our shared Arctic space, is increasingly subject to

the effects of external environmental, economic and social changes, and in turn the Arctic creates drivers that act on the Global Commons.

Several non-Arctic nations have strong Arctic science programs and could contribute greatly to the work of the Arctic Council. The value of international collaboration has been amply demonstrated during the recent International Polar Year (IPY). In preparing for IPY the world community deployed a great deal of effort and resources to build the capacity for collaboration and this momentum should not be lost. One legacy of IPY could be to formalize or institutionalize the means for international Arctic science collaboration, and the Arctic Council has a leading role to play in ensuring the future of international Arctic scientific cooperation.

A variety of options might be considered for engaging in broader inter-



DAVID HIK is a Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences at Canada's University of Alberta. He conducts research on the ecology of Arctic ecosystems and the interface between science and policy. He currently serves as President, International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) and Vice-Chair, Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (SAON).



*Greenland fishermen.*

Photo: Clive Tesar

national cooperation to support Arctic science. For example, at one end of the spectrum could be an inclusive and robust Arctic Science Treaty that would allow for participation beyond Arctic Council membership. A less formal alternative might be a limited Arctic Science Protocol focusing on a variety of activities required to support Arctic science cooperation. Or, it might be useful to establish a voluntary, multi-state Arctic Science Forum that could include representation from states, international arctic science organizations, Indigenous organizations, industry, and others.

Fortunately, this latter option already exists in most respects, although at arms-length from the Arctic Council. The International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) is a non-governmental, international scientific organization created by the eight Arctic states in 1990. The IASC mission is to encourage and facilitate cooperation in all aspects of Arctic research, in all countries engaged in Arctic research and in all areas of the Arctic region. IASC currently has 21 member countries and promotes and supports leading-edge multi-disciplinary research in order to foster a greater scientific understanding of the Arctic region and its role in the Earth system. IASC provides: mechanisms and instruments to support science development in the Arctic; independent scientific advice on issues of science; oversight to ensure that scientific data and informa-

tion from the Arctic are safeguarded, freely exchangeable and accessible; support for the next generation of Arctic scientists; and is engaged cooperatively with relevant science organizations around the world. As an observer of the Arctic Council, IASC can bring other partners into various Arctic science partnerships.

The recent IPY provided an opportunity to build linkages among various science communities in the Arctic and globally, and with the public, the private sector and governments to ensure that the impacts of scientific investments are lasting and substantive. There is presently an active discussion underway concerning the establishment of a longer-term International Polar Initiative, or IPI, that would serve as a coordinating platform for addressing emerging challenges in the Polar Regions ([www.internationalpolarinitiative.org](http://www.internationalpolarinitiative.org)). The proposed IPI concept employs an Earth System approach that embraces research, observations, modeling, prediction, and services.

If the IPI is successful, it will deliver better, more reliable scientific information for risk management and policy-making, optimize and better coordinate existing resources and facilities, and develop mechanisms for concerted investments in areas where required activities are lacking. The Arctic Council can be an important partner in shaping the IPI, and ensuring that Arctic science is global science. ○

## ECONOMIC DRIVERS

# Sustainab



Photo: Clive Tesar

**AS THE CLIMATE CHANGES**, nature adapts to new realities. In a situation of great change, there will inevitably be potential winners and losers, and this is also true for the inhabitants of the Arctic. There are about four million people living in the Arctic, with Indigenous Peoples making up approximately 10 per cent of the population. To minimize the negative impacts of various economic activities, people living in the Arctic must be able to take part in the region's development. For development to be

## WWF CEO Vision Statements

### RUSSIA

An Arctic that is free from oil and gas drilling as well as from cruel hunting of marine mammals, demonstrating resilience towards climate change taking place.



**Igor Chestin,**  
CEO WWF  
Russia

# le development

**Climate change is the major driver in the Arctic today and much of the Arctic Council's work has focused on monitoring and assessing the pace and impact of its drastic effects. Paradoxically, new economic opportunities are the second major driver of change in the Arctic and are the result of climate change. As MIKAEL ANZÉN, chair of the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) of the Arctic Council, notes, little work has been undertaken to understand the economic drivers in the Arctic in that there is no clear picture of the scope, pace and impact of the range of economic activities in the Arctic on the environment and Northern societies.**

---



sustainable, regional business opportunities must also lead to the overall involvement of and contribution to the local communities. To achieve this objective, efforts must be made to strike a balance between the scope and pace of development activities, environmental considerations, traditional lifestyles and the active engagement of Indigenous and local communities. Sustainable development in the Arctic would mean achieving this delicate balance.

To this end, the Swedish Chairman-

ship of the Arctic Council has focused on two specific areas: corporate social responsibility (CSR) and establishing a

**PEOPLE LIVING IN THE ARCTIC MUST BE ABLE TO TAKE PART IN THE REGION'S DEVELOPMENT.**

---

dialogue with businesses operating in the Arctic.

The CSR initiative highlights the internationally agreed-upon guidelines, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (<http://www.oecd.org/daf/inv/mne/statistics.htm>) and the UN Global Compact's ten principles, and how businesses can use the Global Reporting Initiative standards. What people can reasonably expect from responsible

companies in the Arctic is to be found in these guidelines. For businesses, these guidelines are essentially voluntary but they are often used as a benchmark for quality and responsibility. If all Arctic businesses followed these guidelines, it would be of great benefit to everyone. To encourage a broader awareness of these guidelines, the SDWG is designing a separate CSR section on its website with appropriate links to individual organisations.

The second Swedish initiative has been to establish a dialogue with the Arctic business community. It is impor-

**tant to create an interface between members of the Arctic Council and businesses operating in the Arctic.** Given the common challenges, threats and opportunities, we believe there is merit in addressing these issues in tandem. Government officials, Indigenous Peoples and environmental organisations need to know more about the companies' engagement and views on economic development activities in this fragile environment. At the same time, companies need to understand governments' views on these activities in the Arctic.

The SDWG has also proposed the establishment of an expert group on cultural, economic and social issues in the Arctic Council. Its responsibilities will include deepening the understanding of the Arctic economy.

The next step in meeting these challenges will be to take a closer look at specific Arctic business sectors. Will activities in Arctic shipping, tourism, oil

## The UN Global Compact's Ten Principles

The UN Global Compact's ten principles in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption enjoy universal consensus and are derived from:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- The International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work
- The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development
- The United Nations Convention Against Corruption

The UN Global Compact asks companies to embrace, support and enact, within their sphere of influence, a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, the environment and anti-corruption:

### HUMAN RIGHTS

- Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and
- Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

### LABOUR

- Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
- Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
- Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour; and
- Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

### ENVIRONMENT

- Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
- Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
- Principle 9: encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

### ANTI-CORRUPTION

- Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.



**MIKAEL ANZÉN** was the chairman of the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) during the Swedish chairmanship of the Arctic Council. He is ministerial counselor at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Stockholm, where he has served for more than ten years. He has broad experience from multilateral work, mainly from the EU at the Permanent representation in Brussels and the World Trade Organization at the Permanent representation in Geneva.

and gas extraction and mining require special considerations? Are there lessons to be learned from an examination of best practices? Can industrial sectors establish high operational standards themselves or will more governmental regulations be required in the Arctic? Are there large discrepancies in laws and regulations among the Arctic countries? These are just a few of the questions Arctic countries and business

sectors will need to examine in the near future.

The Arctic Council can serve as a platform, a hub for further international cooperation on Arctic business practices. However, it is essential that all relevant stakeholders play an active role. A detailed assessment of best practices, national success stories and crisis management would give a clearer picture of future development in the Arctic. ○

# Time for leadership on black carbon

**As the Arctic Council matures and grows from its beginnings as an informal think tank into a governing body, many say the time has come for it to show more leadership.**

**ERICA ROSENTHAL and MARTIN WILLIAMS say a good start would be to focus on reducing toxic emissions.**

ARCTIC NATIONS have an extraordinary opportunity to show global leadership in slowing regional warming when the Arctic Council foreign ministers meet in Kiruna, Sweden in May. They could embrace a proposal to launch talks on a circumpolar instrument to reduce emissions of the climate pollutant black carbon.

Arctic nations took on a special commitment in the founding declaration of the Arctic Council for “...the protection of the Arctic environment, including the health of Arctic ecosystems, maintenance of biodiversity in the Arctic region and conservation and sustainable use of Arctic resources.” In recent years, the Arctic Council has begun an evolution from an informal science and policy body toward a more formal regional intergovernmental body that serves as a platform for the negotiation of regional agreements to help fulfill that pledge. Arctic ministers signed the first such regional agreement on Search and Rescue, at the Arctic Council’s 2011 ministerial meeting, and are poised to sign the second, on oil spill preparedness and response, in Kiruna this year. Ministers will also decide in Kiruna whether to launch talks on a circumpolar instrument on black carbon, addressing arguably the most critical issue of our times: mitigating climate change in a region of global importance.

The Arctic is warming twice as fast as the rest of the planet. 2012 was a record melt year for both summer sea ice and

land glaciers such as the Greenland Ice Sheet. This has grave implications for Arctic peoples and biodiversity and for low-lying nations and communities around the world. Scientists named 2012 the “Goliath melt year” observing melting on over 90 per cent of the mammoth Greenland Ice Sheet’s surface; sea ice retreated to half the size it was when measurements began in 1979.

Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) reductions remain the backbone of efforts to limit the long term consequences of climate change in the Arctic and globally. However, its 100-year atmospheric lifespan means CO<sub>2</sub> reductions alone cannot avert further potentially devastating warming and melting in the Arctic in the near term. Rapid reductions in emissions of short-lived climate forcers, including black carbon, a component of fine particle pollution, and methane have been identified as the most effective strategy to slow warming and melting in the Arctic over the near term, giving the cultures and biodiversity of the region more time to adapt and slowing the rise of sea levels by reducing continental ice melting.

**THE ARCTIC IS WARMING  
TWICE AS FAST AS THE  
REST OF THE PLANET**

Arctic states have a special responsibility since black carbon is a more potent climate forcing agent when emitted from within or near the Arctic.

Particles have a greater chance of settling on Arctic ice and snow, amplifying warming and melting. A seminal paper published recently by a multinational team of scientists, *Bounding the role of black carbon in the climate system*, states that black carbon has “twice the climate impact reported in previous assessments and ranks black carbon as the “second most important human emission ...; only carbon dioxide is estimated to have a greater forcing...”.

Black carbon reductions are important for health as well as climate. It is a component of fine particulate pollution that is emitted by diesel engines, residential wood heating and some industries.



MARTIN WILLIAMS is a professor at King's College London and serves as chair of the Executive Body of the Convention on Long-range Trans-boundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP). The article reflects his personal views only, not any policy of CLRTAP.



ERIKA ROSENTHAL is an attorney with the public interest environmental law firm, Earthjustice. Both participated in the UNEP Integrated Assessment of Black Carbon and Tropospheric Ozone.



*Icebergs Illulissat*

Photo: C. Tesar

It is associated with over a million premature deaths each year from respiratory and heart disease.

The Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP) has led the way. The May 2012 CLRTAP, of which all eight Arctic states are parties, became the first multilateral agreement to address black carbon. Amendments to the Convention's Gothenburg Protocol establish emissions standards for fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and urge Parties to "...seek reductions from those source categories known to emit high amounts of black carbon, to the

extent it considers appropriate." These measures were adopted based on the recognition that reduction of black carbon would protect the Arctic and glaciated mountainous regions from accelerated rates of melting of ice, snow and permafrost, as well as provide significant public health benefits.

While groundbreaking, CLRTAP's PM<sub>2.5</sub> emission ceiling doesn't apply until 2020 and the black carbon reductions goals are voluntary. Arctic nation leadership is urgently needed to complement and accelerate black carbon efforts under CLRTAP. The Arctic Council's own significant work

on SLCF and the UNEP Integrated Assessment have both shown that black carbon emissions reductions by the eight Arctic nations – using available technologies and known practices – can have a significant temperature impact in the region. Time is of the essence – the UNEP assessment showed that emissions reductions before 2030 will have the greatest impact – and Arctic Council nations are better positioned to lead having studied science-based mitigation opportunities in two working groups for more than four years.

An Arctic regional agreement on black carbon, under the auspices of the Arctic Council, would complement and advance implementation of commitments under CLRTAP. This would do more in the region where it is most critical, to protect the health and ecosystems in the Arctic, and to slow sea level rise. An Arctic nation instrument on black carbon could start with agreement to submit black carbon emissions inventories, based on soon-to-be finalized CLRTAP guidelines, to track regional trends and identify mitigation opportunities; and the establishment of a mechanism for reporting and joint consultation on national mitigation action through the Arctic Council. Additional measures for a regional black carbon instrument could include the adoption of a common, circumpolar vision for black carbon emissions reductions, and the development of national mitigation action plans for black carbon. A mechanism for technology transfer and finance to facilitate enhanced mitigation action may also be appropriate.

A decision by the Council to launch negotiations on black carbon reductions in the Arctic would be a welcome complement to the advances under CLRTAP, and an important step for nations of the region to move from analysis to action to fulfill **their commitment to protect the extraordinary peoples, biodiversity and ecosystems of the region.** The time for Arctic nations' leadership on black carbon is now. ○



Indigenous drummers

Photo: C. Tesar

## ARCTIC PARLIAMENTARIANS

# Arctic development by the Peoples of the Arctic

**Pictures of melting ice, polar bears and whales, and graphs charting changing temperatures are the most commonly shown images of the Arctic.**

**SARA OLSVIG (Inuit Ataqatigiit), MP for Greenland says the story too seldom told is that of the people living in the Arctic – the people affected by global changes who have had to adapt to these changes for centuries.**



MP SARA OLSVIG has a Masters Degree in Anthropology from the University of Copenhagen. She was elected to the Danish Parliament in September 2011, for the political party Inuit Ataqatigiit. She previously worked at the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) as Coordinator of Human Rights Issues, and as Executive Director.

**AS MODERN SOCIETIES**, Arctic peoples and nations develop their economies, cultures and societies by harvesting the living resources which have always been the source of sustenance in the high north. Sustainable management of these

resources is considered to be the highest priority across the Arctic. But we are also subjected to increasing attention from animal welfare activists and environmental protectionists, particularly in recent years as global debates on

climate change and access to resources focuses on potential sub-surface oil and gas exploitation. There is no doubt the Arctic is under scrutiny, and the societies and peoples of the Arctic are shouldering great responsibility. ➤

Arctic shipping routes and resource development are the core issues being discussed internationally. They are also the reason the Arctic is of increasing interest from non-Arctic states. Here, the Arctic Council plays a key role as the main governing body of the Arctic. All eight Arctic States are members, and six Arctic Indigenous Peoples' Organizations are permanent participants on the Council. This core structure is unique and goes all the way back to the establishment of the Arctic Council in 1996.

During the last two chairmanships, the Council has evolved from being a policy-making body to become more of a decision-making body. In 2011, the first legally binding legislation – the Arctic Search and Rescue Agreement – was signed in Nuuk, Greenland, with another binding agreement expected to be signed in 2013. Since 2011 the Council has also had a permanent secretariat, another indication of the Council's growing political clout.

But as the Arctic Council gains more decision-making power, and as attention on the Arctic increases, so does the desire by non-Arctic states to become Observers at the Council. At this point, a number of states and international organizations have applied for Observer status, which I think is generally a good thing. As activities in the Arctic increase, so does the need for common standards. Non-arctic states that want to operate in the far north must follow the accepted Arctic standards regarding marine and environmental safety as well as transparency and good governance. In order to be fully informed about existing standards, laws and practices in the Arctic, it is important to grant these non-arctic countries and non-governmental organizations Observer status.

This does not undermine the full participation of the Indigenous Peoples' organizations as Permanent Participants. These Indigenous organizations represent a large percentage of the people living in the Arctic, and it is of great importance that the peoples of the Arctic take part in all decision making processes and activities of the Arctic Council.

## NON-ARCTIC STATES THAT WANT TO OPERATE IN THE FAR NORTH MUST FOLLOW THE ACCEPTED ARCTIC STANDARDS REGARDING MARINE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY

The Arctic is a developing region and the peoples living here have the right to be the decision makers in this development. With the increased attention on resources and possible shipping routes, there is more and more emphasis on the need for Arctic cooperation regarding safety and environmental protection as well as security and defense policy as the interaction between Arctic and non-arctic States increases. For the peo-

ple living in the Arctic, there is no doubt peace and safety are the core values on which the Arctic should continue to be developed.

Therefore a strong consensus on international agreements is needed in the Arctic. The five Arctic coastal states have already signed the Ilulissat Declaration in 2008 stating that international agreements, such as the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the International Maritime Organization must be the basic tools for cooperation. More Arctic states should commit to these international agreements, and more practical cooperation must be developed in the years to come.

The Arctic as a region is vast. Common solutions for environmental and shipping surveillance, oil spill response, search and rescue and hydrographic data collection will result in safer development of this unique region.

We must continue to govern the Arctic with a human rights approach, with transparency and responsibility and an ultimate goal of cultural, social and economic development for the peoples and societies living here. ○

### WWF CEO Vision Statements

## DENMARK

WWF Denmark would like the Arctic Council to address four main issues in the upcoming term: climate change, Arctic fisheries, oil and gas exploration and the need for ecosystem-based management. For years now the consequences of climate change have been experienced throughout Greenland, changing and threatening traditional ways of life.

The lesser extent of sea ice has affected fisheries as well. Ice-free waters put some stocks under pressure as fishing now can take place throughout the year making management for sustainable fisheries more important than ever.

Ecosystem-based management should be the modus operandi in the Arctic future and the Arctic Council should work to support the management of the Last Ice Area.

Finally, we urge the Arctic Council to continue its focus on the risks and consequences associated with Arctic oil and gas exploration. Technologies for efficient clean-up must be developed and areas of ecological and biological significance conserved.



Gitte Seeberg,  
CEO WWF-  
Denmark

# Time to boldly go

**Just under half of the states in the Arctic Council are members of the European Union. Iceland has also applied to join the EU (although polls in that country consistently show that a majority of its citizens oppose this). The EU has regional power, and legitimate Arctic interests through its Arctic member states, but as ADELE AIROLDI argues, it is slow and soft on Arctic issues.**

THE EUROPEAN UNION seems to have difficulty formulating new Arctic policy. The Arctic is relatively far – conceptually and geographically – from the EU’s core interests. This explains why the EU has so far failed to make the critically urgent situation in the Arctic a priority.

EU institutions have instead made stately, cautious pronouncements on its approach to Arctic issues: a first policy paper by the European Commission in 2008; conclusions by the EU Council of Ministers in 2009; a European Parliament resolution in 2011 and most recently a policy paper in 2012 on “progress since 2008 and next steps for developing EU Arctic policy” jointly released by the Commission and the European External Action Service – a recently established EU body comparable to a foreign affairs department.

These over-cautious overtures are inadequate for a region that is rapidly evolving physically, socially and politically by an organization that should and could immediately play a significant role in the Arctic.

This timid approach reflects in great part the EU’s aspirations to be a Permanent Observer at the Arctic Council. The 2012 communiqué, for example, studiously avoids any controversial stance, and instead repeatedly stresses the EU’s respect for the Arctic States’ sphere of action and its readiness to cooperate. Irrespective of whether it becomes an Observer, the EU should exert its considerable expertise and influence on

evolving Arctic policies and practices.

In their territories and Exclusive Economic Zones – sea zones defined by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea – Arctic states have clear jurisdiction and responsibility for shipping, fisheries and exploitation of mineral resources. These are the main activities and areas in which climate change is already having an impact, or is projected to bring fundamental changes. The EU is a significant international economic and political power, and a major consumer of Arctic resources, and therefore it has legitimate interests and, to varying degrees, competence in those same areas.

The EU’s 2012 communication touts “knowledge”, “responsibility” and “engagement” as the pillars for its approach to a meaningful Arctic policy. While no one would deny these to be necessary concepts, the EU needs to undertake concrete, targeted action where its strengths can have a positive impact.

**“OVER-CAUTIOUS OVERTURES ARE INADEQUATE FOR A REGION THAT IS RAPIDLY EVOLVING”**

Arctic research to the tune of roughly 200 M euros over the last decade is invariably proffered as the principal justification for granting the EU a place at the Arctic Council. However, EU research has mainly focused on furthering the understanding of natural processes affecting the Arctic, particularly climate change. While that remains the principal threat to the far north, today the EU has little to offer in combating climate change. Its emissions reduction target of 20% by 2020 has already been met, partly due to the economic crisis, plus its emissions trading system has lost any impact on emissions growth. Add to that the negative stance of important Arctic states, and it is clear that the EU cannot exert a leading role.

A more interdisciplinary approach, including socio-economic considerations, has been introduced in EU Arctic-related research in more recent years. The 2012 communication indicates that the social and economic dimen-



ADELE AIROLDI has a masters degree in Polar Studies from the Scott Polar Research Institute. From 1981 to 2004, she worked in the Secretariat of the EU Council of Ministers, principally on environmental policy issues. She is the author of a 2008 report on the European Union and the Arctic, updated in 2010, for the Nordic Council of Ministers.

## “THE EU NEEDS TO BE BOLDER”

sion will be given an important place in future research projects, which will seek “policy-relevant results” to inform “economic and political decision-making.” Again, that future horizon may be too distant. A mechanism allowing the systematic feeding of research results, including ongoing research, into the political process is needed now.

Also immediately needed is a clear expression of the EU’s current vision and the direction of its future commitment in the Arctic. The Council of Ministers representing EU Member States, and the European Parliament representing EU citizens should take a formal position that is politically if not legally binding. Signals given so far are increasingly vague.

The EU needs to give concrete meaning to its assertion that protecting the Arctic environment remains the cornerstone of its polar policy but that a broader approach, linked with the EU growth strategy to 2020, is required.

In a word, the EU needs to be bolder.

Assuming that the exploitation of Arctic resources is unstoppable, the EU should use its weight as a consumer of those resources, and the knowledge acquired through its research effort, to ensure exploitation occurs according to internationally agreed-upon high standards, and take the lead for their determination.

An obvious area is that of future Arctic fisheries, where changes are still relatively distant and uncertain. The EU could openly support proposals for a moratorium and initiate interna-

tional debate on the creation of a regulatory framework.

To act on oil and gas activities in the Arctic would be far more controversial and delicate. Important Arctic states and stakeholders have clearly expressed their opposition to any EU interference. But the EU could engage organizations such as the Nordic Council, which has expressed its concerns on this issue, and to those Arctic administrations, such as the United States, which appear more sensitive than others to the problems involved, to promote the determination of international standards for exploration and extraction in the Arctic, and contribute the results of its ongoing research on oil spills in Arctic waters.

Internal and external allies are needed for success. The EU has, unfortunately, so far failed to convince Arctic inhabitants – particularly Indigenous Peoples – of the merits of greater EU involvement in the Arctic largely due to its infamous ban on imports of seal products. The 2012 communication only offers the promise of looking at “appropriate ways” and “appropriate platforms” for consultation of Indigenous Peoples on EU policies affecting them. An early, targeted and sustained effort of communication and follow-up needs to accompany any EU initiative.

Non-governmental organizations such as WWF could be a useful go-between. Indeed, by addressing vigorously and relentlessly the EU administration and the EU citizens, they can help to spur the EU into action. ○

## “INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ALLIES ARE NEEDED FOR SUCCESS”

### WWF PERSPECTIVE

# Transparent

THE ARCTIC COUNCIL is at a critical juncture in its evolution. Until the 2011 Nuuk Ministerial meeting the Arctic Council, operating through government technicians and experts, analyzed particular problems of General Arctic interest and issued reports, and sometimes included recommendations for actions. Some of these reports did prompt action. For instance the reports of the Arctic Monitoring and



BILL EICHBAUM is the Vice President of Marine and Arctic Policy for WWF US

Assessment Programme on pollution in the Arctic were instrumental in prompting the Stockholm Convention of Persistent Organic Pollutants.

However,

other reports were less successful at prompting the recommended actions, such as the Arctic Climate Impact assessment.

At the Nuuk Ministerial there were some changes in this pattern, in that the Arctic states decided to act unanimously and multilaterally to tackle a common problem on a regional basis. A legally binding agreement on Search and Rescue in the Arctic was agreed to by the Ministers. A decision was made to negotiate a similar agreement on oil and gas spill response. Additionally, it was decided to explore common perspectives on ecosystem based management and reduction of black carbon.

These discussions have raised a critical issue that needs further elaboration if the Council is to evolve into a meaningful instrument for government stewardship of the Arctic. That issue is whether governments will

# stewards

give it ongoing responsibility to assure that action is taken when committed to by ministers meeting as the Arctic Council. For instance, good progress has recently been made on adoption of the principle of ecosystem based management. But beyond adopting the principle, what will the Council actually do to see whether Arctic governments embed the principle in national legislation? Thus, the Council faces the issue of whether yet again it will approve a set of ideas and recommendations but will not monitor or speak to their implementation by governments.

WWF believes the Council must go further. At the extreme, there appears to be an apprehension among some governments that this would mean that it would become an operational body and exercise power in a way that would begin to replace the authority of governments. This would neither be possible under the existing legal arrangements nor is it desirable or necessary.

Rather, it is clear that the responsibility lies with governments of the Arctic to first decide, through the Council, what substantive areas for cooperative action they wish to address. It is then the responsibility of governments through the processes of the Council and relying on government and Indigenous experts and others in civil society to conduct substantive analysis of those issues and proposed recommendations. It is then the role of the Ministers through the Council to determine whether to adopt such recommendations. And, finally, it is the role of governments in their sovereign capacity to implement recommendations.

But WWF believes that there is an

important set of functions for the Arctic Council to perform as governments implement recommendations of the Council. These functions are not meant to replace the sovereign responsibilities of national governments. But they are designed to assure that the Council serves as a common lens through which to examine the effectiveness of shared national actions for better stewardship of the Arctic. Among these functions are the following:

Governments should report back to the Arctic Council the steps they have taken to implement recommendations of the Council and how effective those steps have been.

The Arctic Council should report from time to time to the public, on the basis of these reports and other expert analysis, on the degree to which implementation actions by all governments have collectively contributed to improved stewardship of the Arctic.

The Arctic Council could take steps to facilitate the exchange among governments of data and information essential to the proper carrying out of analytical processes and implementation of recommendations.

The Arctic Council could facilitate cooperation among governments on specific issues where such cooperation would assure more effective implementation of recommended actions, such as bi-national action on ecosystem based management (as

## THE COUNCIL SERVES AS A COMMON LENS THROUGH WHICH TO EXAMINE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SHARED NATIONAL ACTIONS FOR BETTER STEWARDSHIP OF THE ARCTIC.

ecosystems often straddle national boundaries).

Where new institutions for intergovernmental cooperation on Arctic issues are agreed to by governments, the Arctic Council could serve as the neutral venue for such institutions.

Through a robust development of actions along the lines suggested by the foregoing the Arctic Council can be an effective process, rather than an institution, helping governments of the region cooperate not only to analyze issues but to act on them. Furthermore they can be seen by their own constituents and the global community to be taking effective action to meet their stewardship responsibilities for this rapidly changing part of the earth. ○

### WWF CEO Vision Statements

## FINLAND

In the coming years several mining projects are in progress in Finland as well as in other arctic countries. The rapidly increasing, energy-intensive extractive industry will have huge impacts on nature unless sustainably implemented. The Arctic Council should take a lead in creating high level sustainability standards for the industry. This includes protecting nature conservation areas from all industrial activities.



**Dr. Liisa Rohweder,**  
CEO WWF  
Finland

## THE PICTURE

# Inauguration in “place of many fish”



Photo: Peter Prokosch

**THE INAUGURATION** of the Arctic Council took place in 1998 in the northern Canadian city of Iqaluit, Inuktitut for “place of many fish.”

Canada has not chaired the Arctic Council since it was formed under the Ottawa Declaration, establishing the council as a high-level forum between Canada, Russia, the U.S., Sweden, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Denmark.



### Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

[www.panda.org/arctic](http://www.panda.org/arctic)