



CONSERVATION OF ARCTIC FLORA AND FAUNA

CAFF



Progress Report

**Presented to the Senior Arctic Officials
Yakutsk, Russian Federation
6-7 April 2005**



CAFF Management Board Meeting

The first CAFF Management Board Meeting (MBM) of 2005 was held in Helsinki 1-3 February.

IPY Projects

Topics of discussion included several IPY initiatives submitted for consideration of CAFF endorsement. The CAFF MB fully endorsed cooperation on the COMAAR IPY project; an IPY project with the University of Guelph (Canada) on vulnerability assessment and adaptive capacity of Arctic communities; among a few others including one on seabirds, two on Arctic vegetation and one on Alaska National Wildlife Refuges in cooperation with US Fish and Wildlife Service. CAFF encouraged the PPs to submit IPY proposals and received an IPY expression of intent from AIA, which was presented in Paris.

CAFF Financial Situation

The National Reps reviewed the CAFF finances for 2004, and the 2005 budget. Due to the drop in the dollar against the Icelandic Kronur, and the fact that country contributions have not increased since the initial negotiations back in 1996, the CAFF budget has had to be cut by more than 50,000 USD to match current revenue. The CAFF National Reps agreed that the SAOs need to review the situation. A packet was prepared and submitted to the SAOs for discussion in Yakutsk.

Modification of CAFF Website – Interactive mapping project

A project to upgrade the CAFF website to make it more dynamic and usable – including interactive mapping, providing for better communication of CAFF data, providing a portal for Indigenous Peoples Organizations, providing better professional support for the expert groups of CAFF, and increasing public outreach and education - was presented at the CAFF MBM. This proposal received full support from the CAFF MB to proceed with project development, with the understanding that no money would be committed to further development at this time.

This project was then presented at the AMAP HoD mtg in Helsinki, and presented to the PAME annual meeting in Copenhagen in February with similar expressions of support for further development, without the commitment of funds. A representative of EPPR at the PAME meeting also expressed EPPR's interest in seeing further development of this idea. This project was also discussed by phone with the SDWG ES.

In February, this project was also presented to Harro Pitkanen of NEFCO, who recommended presentation at the SAO meeting in Yakutsk, and indicated that such a project might lend itself to funding under the project support instrument.

Finally, this project was presented at the IPY Open Forum in Paris in March. The international nature of this project, that it strongly supports Indigenous Peoples, and the strong public outreach and educational components appealed to the IPY Joint Committee. They asked if this project could be submitted as an IPY project.

Microsoft has approached Bob Corell for the development of an Arctic Portal. Microsoft has also expressed interest in working with WCMC and CAFF on a pilot project, focusing on bringing Arctic data onto the web in a more interactive fashion. With these big initiatives in the works, it makes sense for the Arctic Council Working Groups to consider joint development of this Arctic Portal.

Cooperation with other Working Groups

AMAP Oil and Gas Assessment – with AMAP

The CAFF ES and CAFF Chair attended the AMAP Oil and Gas Assessment meeting in Helsinki (16-18 February). CAFF is lending author support for the biodiversity section of this Assessment.

CAFF-AMAP Cooperation

CAFF-AMAP strategy for cooperation was discussed at the AMAP HoD meeting, and a workshop will be planned soon, possibly in connection with the COMAAR meeting in Abisko to work out the next steps.

Large Marine Ecosystems and Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment - with PAME

The CAFF ES attended the PAME annual meeting 22-23 February to represent CAFF on two projects – the Large Marine Ecosystems initiative listed on both work plans, and the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA). In addition, the CAFF ES and PAME ES jointly presented the interactive website mapping project.

ACIA Follow-Up Document

While at the Oil and Gas Assessment, the CAFF ES and CAFF Chair were invited to attend the AMAP Heads of Delegation (HoD) meeting. During this meeting, after lengthy discussions, John Calder asked the CAFF ES to coordinate comments and formulate an initial draft of an ACIA follow-up proposal. This document was further refined in cooperation with the AMAP ES, the IASC ES, Bob Corell and Pal Prestrud, and presented at the PAME meeting for comments. Another jointly written draft subsequently followed, and was sent to Working Groups for comments. A final draft is being submitted to the SAOs for review.

The numerous comments received were diverse in scope, and in some cases of directly opposing viewpoints. There was no formal designation of who the team should be to coordinate the drafting of this document - it just developed in response to the recognized need to act quickly to develop a fair approach to ACIA follow-up that took all views into account. This process needs better definition at the SAO level. The CAFF ES is willing to continue to work on a document that demonstrates balance, equitability, and non-bias between the AC and the scientists. However, the CAFF ES will only continue this effort if formally requested to do so.

IPY Open Forum – Paris

The CAFF ES prepared a powerpoint presentation for the IPY Open Forum in Paris, 10-11 March. This presentation included an introduction to the structure of the AC, the Working Groups and CAFF structure, followed by IPY projects that CAFF had strong interest in seeing move forward, including COMAAR. The CAFF presentation was very well received. There was much appreciation expressed for the information presented, to help clarify who/what the AC actually is, as more than half of the attendees at this meeting represented the Antarctic.

A discussion on having an AC representative sit in on the IPY Joint Committee meetings was held. The IPY Joint Committee does not know exactly how to implement this, and indicated hesitancy, so the recommendation would be for someone in the AC to take the initiative to request representation.

Sacred Sites Workshop as follow-up to Sacred Sites Report (2004)

While in Paris, the CAFF ES scheduled a meeting with UNESCO, World Heritage Center (WHC). In attendance was Dr. Mechtild Rossler, chief Europe and North America Unit; Alexandra zu Sayn-Wittgenstein, Nordic and Baltic region; and Marie Prchalova, program specialist based in Moscow. The meeting was to discuss the possible funding of the Sacred Sites workshop. It was learned that Russia as a state party, would need to put in a formal request. Currently, the estimated budget for this workshop is about 100,000 USD, but there has been limited success thus far in raising money.

There were many commonalities and areas for cooperation discussed. One of the more significant outcomes of this meeting was the suggestion that WHC come to the next SAO meeting in the fall to present information on world heritage sites, and see if the AC would be interested in

launching an IPY initiative to designate a World Heritage Site in the Arctic in recognition of the IPY and the Russian Chairmanship of the Arctic Council.

ECORA

ECORA is a GEF project that aims to sustain the biological and cultural diversity of the Russian Arctic, which will include integrated ecosystem management strategies and action plans in three Model Areas (Kolguev Island (Nenets Autonomous Okrug), Kolyma River Basin (Yakutia/Sahka Republic), and Beringovsky (Chukotka Autonomous Okrug)). CAFF is a member of the ECORA Steering Committee (SC), and the next meeting is scheduled 14 - 15 April. Significant field efforts are planned for 2005.

Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program (CBMP)

The Canadian National Rep has organized a workshop in Ottawa (27-28 April) to design the action plan for the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program and develop strategies for financing. The CAFF ES is actively pursuing sources of funding for this program including the National Science Foundation in the US, the European Science Foundation and the Nordic Council of Ministers.

CBird

CBird held its annual meeting 2-5 March in Scotland. A progress report from CBird will be posted on the CAFF Website shortly.

CFG

CFG will hold its annual meeting 10-12 May in Helsinki. A progress report from the Flora Group will be posted on the CAFF Website when available.

CPAN

CAFF is a contributor to a new publication titled Vital Arctic Graphics – a joint initiative between UNEP/Grid-Arendal, WWF and CAFF. This document was released in Nairobi. <http://www.vitalgraphics.net/arctic.cfm>
The CAFF ES has been made acting chair of CPAN, as there is currently no country chair. A CPAN meeting will most likely be held in Iceland in September/October.

COMAAR, In-Gear, ICARP II

The CAFF ES and CAFF Chair will be attending the COMAAR meeting in Abisko 19-20 May. There has been ongoing dialog with Terry Callaghan on various other initiatives he is involved in including In-Gear, and ICARP II. The CAFF ES will be working out how CAFF can become more actively recognized and involved in these initiatives, especially in regard to the CBMP.

Cooperation with other organizations

CAFF has several initiatives moving forward involving other organizations including an IPY initiative in development with AEWA and CMS; a pilot project with WCMC; and possible cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity and several other Conventions on the CBMP.