

CAFF Report to Senior Arctic Officials Washington 18-19 November 1999

SECTION I: PROGRESS

1.1. Introduction

The first Arctic Council meeting in Iqaluit identified five priority tasks for CAFF:

- to prepare a report on status and trends in changes to Arctic ecosystems, habitats and species;
- to assess, in collaboration with AMAP, the impacts of climate change on Arctic ecosystems;
- to identify elements of a program to monitor circumpolar biodiversity;
- to continue developing and co-ordinating the implementation of the Circumpolar Protected Areas Network (CPAN) with focus on the marine environment;
- to continue co-ordinating implementation of the Murre and Eider conservation strategies and action plans;

1.2 CAFF Overview Report “Arctic Conservation Issues: Status and Trends of Arctic Flora and Fauna”

Rough drafts of chapters 1-7 and several graphics have been prepared. Progress can be monitored on website: “<http://ginkgo.pc.helsinki.fi/caff>”. The Editorial Team will meet in Helsinki, December 9-11, evaluate the project and prepare a status report for the CAFF Management Meeting in Trondheim, December 13-14.

CAFF aims to circulate a first draft of the report prior to the next SAO meeting in April, 2000.

1.3 Climate Impacts

CAFF, AMAP, IASC, IPCC and ICES have prepared a draft Implementation Plan for the joint Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA). This plan has been submitted to the SAOs for comments.

Several initiatives are being considered within CAFF in support of this assessment, including on caribou/reindeer, migratory birds and ice seals.

1.4 Biodiversity Monitoring Program

A Drafting Group is preparing a framework document on a circumpolar biodiversity monitoring program for key species and habitats. This framework will be discussed at a CAFF/AMAP Workshop in Reykjavik, Iceland, February 7-9, 2000. The program

envisaged will build on three layers: conventional biological (plot-based) monitoring, remote sensing (satellite imagery) technology and community based initiatives. The program will build, to the extent possible, on ongoing national and international biodiversity monitoring programs as well as on CAFF/AMAP climate change monitoring and research initiatives.

1.5 Circumpolar protected areas network (CPAN)

A CPAN Standing Committee led by the US is preparing recommendations for how to advance CPAN. These recommendations will be discussed at the next CAFF Management Meeting in Trondheim, Norway, December 13-14, 1999.

USA hosted a CAFF/CPAN workshop, Anchorage, October 18-22, dedicated to support Russian protected areas and provide tools for ensuring their future.

Canada has prepared a draft report summarizing national legal instruments and mechanisms for protecting the Arctic marine environment. A decision on its publication will be taken at the CAFF meeting in Norway.

A Circumpolar Marine Workshop, co-hosted by IUCN and PAME, will be held in Montreal, 28 November to 2 December. This workshop will take a broad, integrated view at marine protection in the Arctic. Its goal is to *advance practical measures to protect the Arctic marine environment and conserve its biological diversity and, to facilitate improved collaboration among Arctic countries, indigenous communities, and other stakeholders and organisations.*

An analysis of gaps in habitat protection in the Russian Arctic is being completed and printed as CAFF Habitat Conservation Report No 8 (HCR 8).

1.5. Seabirds and Migratory Birds.

The CAFF Circumpolar Seabird Working Group (CSWG) will meet in Ottawa, December 3-5, 1999, to assess status of national implementation plans pertaining to the International Murre Conservation Strategy and Action Plan and the Circumpolar Eider Conservation Strategy and Action Plan. The group will also discuss other projects of the CAFF/CSWG, and make recommendations to CAFF on further seabird activities. Preparations are underway on two workshops relevant to conservation of Arctic seabirds and migratory birds:

- CAFF Workshop on Incidental Take (Bycatch) of Seabirds in Fishing Gear in the Arctic, cosponsored by Canada and the US, to take place in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, April 26-28, 2000;
- CAFF Workshop on Arctic Migratory Birds, hosted by The Netherlands, to take place in the Wageningen Netherlands, mid-May 2000 (dates to be confirmed).

1.6. New initiatives:

1.6.1 Sacred Sites in Arctic Russia

The Danish Environmental Protection Agency is positively considering to fund¹ a RAIPON led CAFF project “Sacred Sites and Sanctuaries: Protection of the Heritage of Indigenous People in Arctic Russia”. The objective is to enhance protection and management of such sites through linkage to biodiversity conservation efforts under CAFF/CPAN.

1.6.2 Request to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for funding a CAFF/UNEP GRID/Russia project on “Integrated Ecosystem Approach to Conserve Biodiversity and Minimise Habitat Fragmentation in the Russian Arctic”

The CAFF Chair and Secretariat, the Russian Federation State Committee For Environmental Protection and UNEP-GRID-Arendal have submitted a project proposal to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to enhance implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in the Russian Arctic. A project concept paper has been submitted, and a request is being finalised for funds for project preparations (PDF-A) to UNEP/GEF. This will be a forerunner for a more comprehensive project preparation proposal (PDF-B) to be submitted in early 2000 and eventually a full GEF project.

The goal of the full project, which will be running for 5 years, is to safeguard large tracts of undisturbed ecosystems and ensure conservation and sustainable use of globally significant biodiversity in the Russian Arctic. The project intends to accomplish this through the development and implementation of integrated ecosystem based management strategies in selected regions, which can serve as models for the remaining Russian and circumpolar Arctic region. The project will also provide baseline information for expanding the Russian Arctic protected areas network. The project will encourage and establish mechanisms for consultation and participation of indigenous and local communities, regional and federal authorities.

This initiative is in response to a window of opportunity, suggested by UNEP, in terms of gaps in GEF activities in relation to biodiversity conservation in the Russian Arctic. A three-month PDF-A phase will be used for: (1) in-depth

¹ The total budget (to be confirmed) is a round 100.000 USD.

consultations with relevant Russian authorities on federal and local level, as well as with indigenous groups' leaders and key stakeholders in the regions selected; (2) seeking co-financing opportunities of the PDF-B and main project and; (3) consulting additional expert agencies to assist with project implementation. The PDF-A phase will be summarised at a Project Stakeholder Workshop in Moscow in early February 2000. The application to UNEP/GEF amounts to \$25.000 for the project's PDF-A phase. CAFF aims to submit a PDF-B request (for \$310.000) to GEF by March 2000 for development of the full project.

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has the intention to contribute \$45.000 towards completion of the PDF-A phase. In addition, CAFF, UNEP GRID Arendal and the Russian Federation State Committee of Environmental Protection will provide *in kind* contributions.

1.7. Overview of upcoming CAFF meetings and workshops:

- CAFF Circumpolar Seabird Working Group, Ottawa, December 3-5, 1999
- CAFF Editorial Team meeting in Helsinki, December 9-11, 1999;
- CAFF Management Meeting in Trondheim, December 13-14, 1999;
- CAFF/AMAP Biodiversity Workshop in Reykjavik, 7-9 February, 2000;
- CAFF Bycatch Workshop in Halifax, April 26-28, 2000
- CAFF Migratory Bird Workshop in May 2000;
- CAFF Working Group (CAFF VIII) in Tromsø, late fall 2000.

SECTION II: PLANNED DELIVERABLES TO MINISTERS

CAFF aims to deliver the following products to the Ministerial meeting in October 2000:

- A. Complete draft of the CAFF overview report: "Arctic Conservation Issues: Status and Trends of Arctic Flora and Fauna";
- B. Status report on CAFF/UNEP/Russia's efforts on development of a GEF project for biodiversity conservation in Arctic Russia;
- C. Technical reports on Harvest of Seabirds in the Circumpolar Arctic and a Gap Analysis for the Russian Arctic, as well as several workshop reports;
- D. Progress reports on the CAFF strategies and action plans developed for CPAN, eiders and murres.

SECTION III: REQUESTS TO SAOS

CAFF requests that the SAOs:

- Comment and endorse as appropriate current and planned CAFF activities, cf. Section I above;
- Comment and endorse as appropriate the planned CAFF deliverables to Ministers at the Second Arctic Council Meeting, cf. Section II above;