

## VIEW FROM THE TOP OF THE WORLD



## ARCTIC SEAS AND COASTAL AREAS

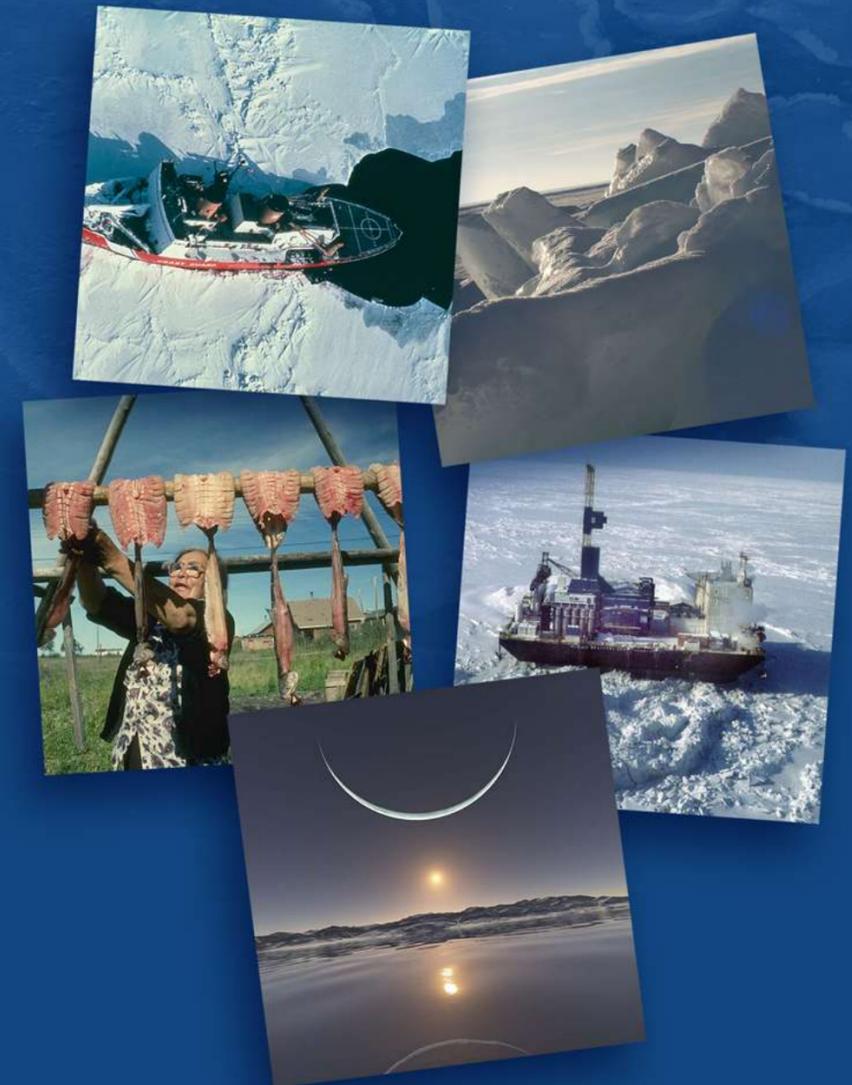
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Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment

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Design: Still, Akureyri  
Printing: Stell, Akureyri

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## COMMUNICATIONS PLAN



## FOR THE ARCTIC COUNCIL ARCTIC MARINE STRATEGIC PLAN

## 1. Background

The 2004 Arctic Marine Strategic Plan (AMSP) calls for the development of a communications plan to support understanding and involvement in the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

## 2. Goal

*To provide clear, thorough information to residents of the Arctic, other regions of Arctic countries and the world in general about the AMSP.*

## 3. Objectives

*explain the origins and implementation activities associated with the AMSP*

*provide a "big picture" view that places the AMSP into the context of observed changes and emerging issues of the Arctic marine environment*

*provide plain language information about the AMSP*

*effectively manage communication associated with the AMSP*

*ensure that Arctic residents have access to all relevant information and analysis supporting the AMSP*

## 4. Audience Environment

From a public perspective, great attention has been paid to the following:

- 1) *Reduction of sea ice and its impacts on the health of ecosystems and livelihoods of Arctic residents.*
- 2) *Increase in concentration of contaminants (in particular persistent pollutants and mercury) in marine wildlife with associated changes in traditional food availability and safety.*
- 3) *Coastal development, population growth and associated health concerns, which are challenging the survival of some indigenous traditional cultures.*
- 4) *Opportunities for natural resource development as a result of new technologies, global market forces and climate change.*

There are several distinct stakeholders in the Arctic who are interested in information relating to the Arctic Ocean. These include national governments, international organizations, local governments and Arctic residents. The different stakeholders have varying knowledge about the current status of Arctic Council efforts to protect the marine environment. Among different levels of government,

there is a high level of interest in advancing the implementation of the AMSP, in particular the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment. The shipping assessment is viewed as a good example of transparent, all-inclusive stakeholder involvement, addressing cross-cutting themes of sustainable development in the context of climate change.

Climate change and increasing economic activity are the two key drivers of environmental, economic and socio-cultural change in the Arctic today. This is reflected in a number of news media, scientific research and reports (e.g. *The New York Times*: [www.nytimes.com/pages/science/sciencereport/](http://www.nytimes.com/pages/science/sciencereport/); *Project Syndicates - An Association of Newspapers Around the World*: [www.project-syndicate.org/](http://www.project-syndicate.org/); *The Centre for International Law*: [www.ciel.org/](http://www.ciel.org/); *The US Global Change Research Programme*: [www.usgcrp.gov/usgcrp/new.htm](http://www.usgcrp.gov/usgcrp/new.htm); *National Science Foundation (NSF)*: [www.nsf.gov/](http://www.nsf.gov/); *The Wood Hole Oceanographic Institution - Arctic Group*: <http://www.whoi.edu/science/PO/arcticgroup/>).

Scientific research on climate change is consistent with indigenous and local knowledge about the changing Arctic environment. Rising temperatures, melting of sea ice and glaciers and thawing permafrost are dramatically changing the landscape and wildlife of the Arctic, as well as its people's way of life.

There are many reports that melting sea ice is affecting the health, migration and distribution patterns of marine mammals, caribou and polar bears. Many indigenous coastal communities depend on the harvesting of marine wildlife.

It is also reported that the infrastructures of coastal communities are threatened by climate change. Sea ice provides a barrier against storms and erosion; less ice means increasing vulnerability of the Arctic coastline. Thawing permafrost is damaging buildings, roads, airports and pipelines, and causing erosion, landslides and slope instability.

Climate change may also contribute to an increase in economic activities in the Arctic with further accessibility to undersea oil and gas resources, opening of shipping routes, new cruise ship destinations and commercial fisheries. Northern people have identified the need for caution in developing resources if we are to maintain ecosystem integrity and protect human health.

## 5. Timing of Communications

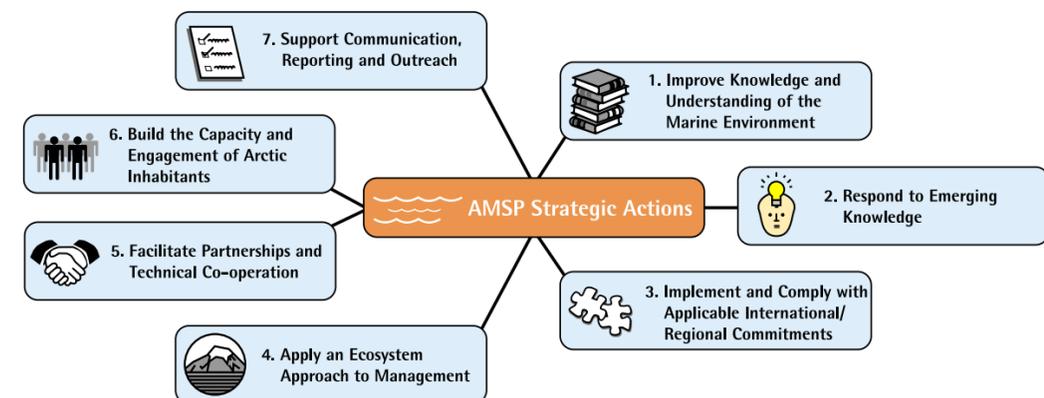
The public was previously informed, through the media, that the AMSP was approved by the Arctic Council in November, 2004. Further communication of the AMSP should be undertaken in the short term to take advantage of the current high level of regional and international

interest in the Arctic Ocean. This should be done by national governments as well as working groups and other bodies of the Arctic Council.

There are a number of upcoming events of relevance to the AMSP such as the 2nd Intergovernmental Review of the GPA, 16–20 October 2006 Beijing, China; International Polar Year (IPY) 2007–2008; venues related to the communication of the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment; and related activities of other Arctic Council working groups.

## 6. Plain Language

PAME and other Arctic Council studies have shown that Arctic residents have deeply concerned about the sustainability of the Arctic Ocean. If the AMSP is to succeed, top priority should be placed on informing Arctic residents about key issues and actions being taken to address them. Therefore, the AMSP will be communicated in a way that is accessible to Arctic residents and others with an interest in the marine environment. Communication tools should be developed with attention to the various



## 8. Products and Activities:

The following products and activities will assist in the communication of the AMSP.

**AMSP Brochure** – a key communication product, available on the PAME website: [www.pame.is](http://www.pame.is)

**Fact sheets** – on shipping, Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs), the Regional Programme of Action for the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (RPA), and offshore oil and gas development.

**Website** – communication will take place through the PAME website, including updates on the AMSP implementation status and other related Arctic community outreach activities.

languages, literacy and cultural profiles of target audiences. The use of multimedia forms is encouraged.

## 7. Key Messages

Communication of the AMSP will highlight the vision, goals and strategic measures set out in the AMSP as follows:

### i) Vision:

**"A healthy and productive Arctic Ocean and coasts that support environmental, economic and socio-cultural values for current and future generations."**

### ii) Goals:

- Reduce and prevent pollution in the Arctic marine environment*
- Conserve Arctic marine biodiversity and ecosystem functions*
- Promote the health and prosperity of all Arctic inhabitants*

### iii) Strategic Measures:

**Outreach activities** – will be conducted by national governments as well as lead countries on Arctic Council initiatives related to Arctic seas.

## 9. Evaluation and Media Analysis

Media coverage and other reports that result from the AMSP will be monitored and analyzed by the PAME secretariat to assist in evaluating the effectiveness of communications efforts. Media analysis reports will be provided to Senior Arctic Officials of the Arctic Council by PAME in collaboration with other working groups. This will contribute to future review and update of the AMSP.

This Communications Plan will be periodically reviewed and updated by PAME in collaboration with other Arctic Council working groups.