

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

In an effort to provide direction to the Arctic Council and subsidiary bodies, the AMSP outlines an initial list of strategic actions.

The AMSP relies on the existing structures and mechanisms of the Arctic Council and other bodies for its implementation. Each Working Group will implement those actions of relevance to their objectives and incorporate related efforts within their work plans.

Examples of key strategic actions include:

Conduct a comprehensive assessment of Arctic marine shipping at current and projected levels.

Improve capabilities for responding to marine emergency situations, including those resulting from climatic variability.

Promote WSSD actions related to the marine and coastal environment, including the application of an ecosystem approach and establishment of marine protected areas, including representative networks.

Identify elements that can serve as key environmental and socio-economic indicators of the state of the Arctic marine ecosystems and thus guide effective decision-making.

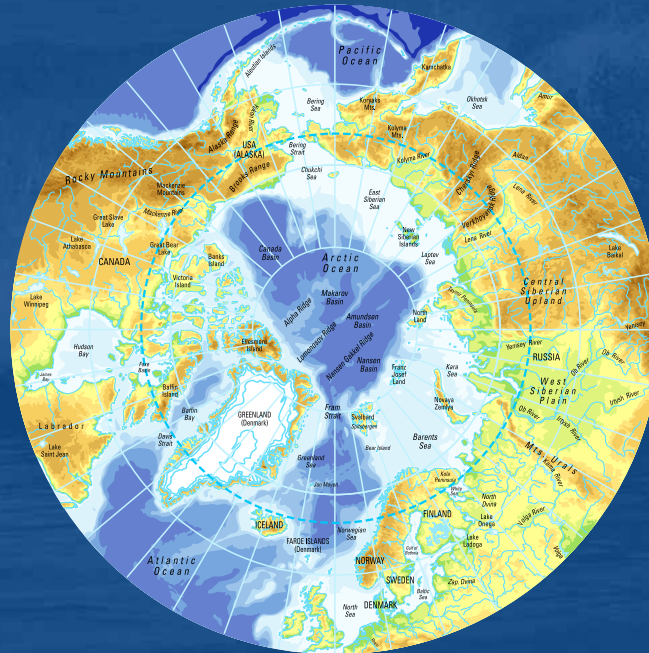
Foster partnerships among governments, indigenous peoples organizations (IPOs), communities, industry, international bodies, NGOs and academia to advance the goals of this Strategic Plan, employing such mechanisms as partnership conferences and workshops.

Promote oceans education through appropriate institutions and organizations such as the University of the Arctic; encourage training related to best operating practices

Promote a marine and coastal component in the International Polar Year (2007/2008) programme.



VIEW FROM THE TOP OF THE WORLD



Source: Digital chart of the world: Institut Géographique National français (IGN)
PHILIPPE REKACEWICZ - LINEP/GRID-ARENDAL - NOVEMBER 2004



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ARCTIC COUNCIL

ARCTIC MARINE STRATEGIC PLAN



VISION

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

ARCTIC MARINE STRATEGIC PLAN

Facilitated by Iceland and Canada, the Arctic Marine Strategic Plan (AMSP) was developed in consultation with Arctic Council member states, Permanent Participants, Working Groups, Observers and relevant experts.

The Strategic Plan addresses emerging issues, such as oil and gas and shipping activities, employing a risk assessment approach. It takes into account the special needs and requirements of indigenous communities, while maintaining the objective of sustainable development of the Arctic marine environment.

The Strategic Plan aims to improve how the Arctic coastal and marine environment is managed, particularly given the accelerated changes occurring in the north due to climate change and increasing economic activity.

Ministers at the 3rd Arctic Council Meeting in Finland (October, 2002) agreed in their Declaration that:

"...existing and emerging activities in the Arctic warrant a more coordinated and integrated strategic approach to address the challenges of the Arctic coastal and marine environment and agree to develop a strategic plan for the protection of the Arctic marine environment under leadership by PAME."

DRIVERS OF CHANGE

Climate change impacts and increasing economic activity are two key drivers of the rapid environmental, economic and socio-cultural changes occurring in the Arctic today.

Increased accessibility and marine transportation will require greater support and pose increased risks, but will also bring opportunities for social and economic development.

GOALS

The Arctic Council has four goals for the marine environment:

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

Advance sustainable Arctic marine resource use

FOLLOW UP

Regular progress reports to the Arctic Council on the implementation of the AMSP will be provided by PAME in collaboration with other Working Groups.

A full review of the AMSP, determining its adequacy in light of the results of on-going assessments, national and regional reporting, will be conducted by 2010, or other date that may be specified by the Council.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Marine pollution and the protection of human health:

Advance the implementation of regional and international pollution agreements.

Inadequate understanding of changes in the coastal and marine environment:

Participate in initiatives such as the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA) process and the International Polar Year.

Increased resource development and shipping:

Take advantage of potential new investment, infrastructure development, employment opportunities and reduced cost of goods and services due to increased accessibility.

Applying an ecosystem approach:

Demonstrate international leadership and help meet international commitments by applying an approach that supports development, while minimizing the environmental and socio-cultural impacts.

