

The Arctic

The Arctic Ocean and its biota are generally clean in relation to other oceans and marginal seas. However, low temperatures, short growing season and the fact that there are fewer species to undertake degradation make the Arctic more vulnerable to long-range air and sea transport of contaminants and certain human impacts. Low temperatures slow down the chemical and biological processes of contaminant degradation.

Increased economic activity and significant changes due to climatic processes are resulting in increased use, opportunities and threats to the Arctic marine and coastal environments. These predicted changes require more integrated approaches to address both existing and emerging challenges of the Arctic marine and coastal environments.

PAME

The programme on Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME) cooperates with the other working groups and a special initiative of the Arctic Council as follows:

Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP) - Identification and assessment of pollution problems.

Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) - conservation of biodiversity and the sustainable use of living resources.

Emergency, Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR) - Pollution prevention and control measures responding to environmental emergencies.

Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) - Assessment of the relationship between pollution and health.

Arctic Council Action Plan to Eliminate Pollution of the Arctic (ACAP) - Project preparations on pollution prevention and control measures.

PAME

Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment



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Working Group of the Arctic Council
2011-2013

For information on Arctic Council programmes:
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PAME
Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment



PAME Structure

The majority of PAME's activities are directed towards pollution prevention and control measures of the Arctic marine environment. PAME members include National Representatives of the 8 Arctic Council States (Canada, Denmark (including Faroe Islands and Greenland), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russian Federation, Sweden and United States). Indigenous groups' organizations, termed "Permanent Participants" also participate in PAME, as well as representatives from several observer countries and organizations. Thus PAME provides a unique forum for collaboration on a wide range of Arctic pollution preventive issues.

The PAME Working Group meets twice a year to assess progress and develop work plans. PAME is headed by a chair and vice-chair and is supported by the PAME International Secretariat.

PAME Goals

PAME reports to the Senior Arctic Officials that meet twice a year and, through them, to the Ministers of the Arctic Council that meet every two years.

The PAME working group addresses policy and non-emergency pollution prevention and control measures with the long term goal of protecting the Arctic marine environment from land and sea-based activities through coordinated action programmes and guidelines complementing existing legal arrangements.

PAME Objectives

PAME's objectives for 2011-2013 were developed according to its mandate and agreed priorities and are in line with the goals and objectives as outlined in the Arctic Marine Strategic Plan. The PAME Work Plan 2011-2013 identifies the following three objectives followed by a set of specific actions that outline the overall direction of the programme:

Improve knowledge and respond to emerging knowledge of the Arctic Marine Environment.

Determine the adequacy of applicable international / regional commitments and promote their implementation and compliance.

Facilitate partnerships, programmes and technical cooperation and support communication, reporting and outreach both within and outside the Arctic Council.

PAME Activities

PAME will focus on the following main activities to accomplish its objectives:

Continue to follow-up on the recommendations from the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA 2009) to include:

- *Start the Phase II of the Heavy Fuel Oil (HFO) in the Arctic project to include recommendation(s) regarding possible additional or supplemental international actions or regulations for the purpose of mitigating or minimizing the risks associated with the use or carriage of HFO in the Arctic Ocean.*
- *Take actions to encourage the Arctic cruise tourism industry to adopt new, or update existing best practices for operations in the Arctic.*
- *Monitor and support initiatives by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to strengthen passenger vessel safety.*
- *Develop proposal(s) for internationally designated areas, for the purpose of environmental protection from shipping in the Arctic as a follow-up to the work on the identification of areas of heightened ecological and cultural significance.*
- *Update the status on the implementation of the 17 AMSA recommendations which are divided into the following three themes: promoting the safety and environmental awareness of current and future Arctic shipping activity, for submission to Arctic Council Ministers in 2013.*

Initiate Phase II of the Arctic Ocean Review (AOR) project which will analyze information gathered in Phase I, taking into account major new developments. Outline options to address potential opportunities to strengthen the conservation and sustainable use of the Arctic marine environment, and deliver a final AOR Report including recommendations to Arctic Council Ministers in 2013.

Develop projects as a follow-up to the Arctic Council Oil and Gas Assessment and the Arctic Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines.

Continue the work on ecosystem based approach to ocean management to include the updating of the Arctic Marine Strategic Plan (AMSP 2004). This work will be organized through a PAME-led expert group in cooperation with all Arctic Council working groups working on marine-related issues. The aim is to maximize environmental protection and sustainable use of the marine environment, related to shipping, oil and gas development, fisheries, coastal zone development, and other ocean-related activities.

Information outreach to increase cooperation and collaboration with international/regional organizations, continue to strengthen collaboration with other Arctic Council Working groups, and build capacity and engagement of indigenous communities and other Arctic inhabitants.

