



U.S. Proposed Chairmanship Program



The Chairmanship Brand

“One Arctic: Shared Opportunities, Challenges and Responsibilities”

- Borrowed “One Arctic” from ICC 2014 General Assembly – shows unity among the Arctic States and peoples
- “Shared Opportunities, Challenges and Responsibilities” shows that that all of us, not just the Arctic States and peoples, share in responsibly managing the region



U.S. Chairmanship Structure

Chair of the Council: *Secretary of State John F. Kerry*

Coordinator of the Chairmanship: *Special Representative for the Arctic Region Robert J. Papp*

Special Advisor on Arctic Science and Policy: *U.S. Arctic Research Commission Chair Fran Ulmer*

Senior Arctic Official: *Julia L. Gourley*

Chair of the Senior Arctic Officials: *TBD*



Three Overarching Goals

1. Continue strengthening the Arctic Council as an intergovernmental forum
2. Introduce new long-term priorities into the Arctic Council
3. Raise Arctic and climate change awareness within the United States and across the world



Organizational Thematic Areas

Arctic Ocean Safety, Security and Stewardship

Improving Economic and Living Conditions

Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change



Thematic Area 1: Arctic Ocean Safety, Security and Stewardship

Search and Rescue (SAR) Exercises

- Enhance SAR capability by conducting a full scale live exercise, if feasible.
- A tabletop exercise (TTX) will be conducted using a mass rescue scenario to test multi-country interoperability in the context of the Arctic SAR Agreement. Lessons learned from the TTX will be applied for scenario development in any full scale exercise that might follow.
- Target dates are October 2015 for the tabletop and summer 2016 for a possible live exercise. An after-action report with recommendations improving SAR coordination in the region would be submitted to the SAOs.

Under the auspices of the Arctic SAR Agreement



Thematic Area 1: Arctic Ocean Safety, Security and Stewardship

Marine Environmental Protection

- Expand information sharing on the environmental impacts of hazardous substances, mechanical recovery efficacy, and in-situ burning in open water, broken ice, and hard packed ice.
- Increase sharing of oil spill preparedness and response capabilities and continue the development of specialized pollution response resources and operational guidelines for responses in broken ice and ice covered areas.

Working Group: ***EPPR***



Thematic Area 1: Arctic Ocean Safety, Security and Stewardship

Marine Protected Areas Network

- Enhance on-going work to evaluate the prospects for developing a Pan-Arctic Network of Marine Protected Areas. Set an Arctic-wide target for protecting marine areas for the Arctic Ocean and adjacent seas.
- Examine various models of marine protected areas, taking into account ecosystem-based management of marine activities such as subsistence fishing, commercial fishing, shipping, oil and gas development, mining, tourism and other activities.

Working Group: **PAME**



Thematic Area 1: Arctic Ocean Safety, Security and Stewardship

Regional Seas Program (RSP) for the Arctic Ocean

- Consider whether a Regional Seas Program might be a useful vehicle to improve Arctic Ocean management.
- An RSP could serve as a mechanism to coordinate and enhance scientific research and potentially to manage increasing human activity in the Arctic Ocean, including by promoting safe and secure maritime operations.
- An RSP could also serve to rationalize and organize the growing body of hard and soft law applicable to the Arctic Ocean.

Working Group: ***PAME***



Thematic Area 1: Arctic Ocean Safety, Security and Stewardship *Arctic Ocean Acidification*

- Enhance monitoring of Arctic Ocean Acidification, as per the Council's 2013 Arctic Ocean Acidification Assessment recommendations.
- Educate the media and the public about ocean acidification, its marine ecosystem impacts, its economic impacts for fisheries and local economies that depend on income and jobs from shell fisheries in particular, its ties to climate change, and why it is happening more dramatically in the Arctic Ocean than any other ocean in the world.

Working Group: **AMAP**



Thematic Area 2: Improving Economic and Living Conditions

Renewable Energy Demonstrations

- Expand the U.S. Remote Communities Renewable Energy partnership across the Arctic to demonstrate the feasibility of village-level electrification through clean, renewable energy. The ideal technologies, such as hybrid wind-diesel modular systems, would be economically installed and maintained in Arctic communities.
- Seek synergies with each Arctic State's unique expertise in renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies, and collaborate with the private sector in the Arctic States to develop and implement technologies through public-private partnerships.

Working Group: ***SDWG***



Thematic Area 2: Improving Economic and Living Conditions

Community Sanitation and Public Health

- The “Alaska Water and Sewer Challenge” is a state-level research and development effort to find better and more affordable ways to deliver reliable drinking water and sewage disposal services to remote communities in cold climates, thereby contributing to improved human health and quality of life.
- When results become available in 2016, expand this effort to other Arctic States by hosting conferences of researchers, engineers, manufacturers, vendors, and health experts from around the world to attract investment in clean, safe, affordable and reliable water and sewer services in remote communities across the Arctic.

Working Group: **SDWG**



Thematic Area 2: Improving Economic and Living Conditions

Arctic Water Resources Vulnerability Index

- The Arctic Water Resource Vulnerability Index (AWRVI), developed by the University of Alaska-Fairbanks for use in Alaskan communities, will be adapted for Arctic-wide use.
- The AWRVI is an integrated assessment tool for addressing community resilience and vulnerability with respect to freshwater access. It is designed for use by local government officials, policymakers, researchers, and others. Training in how to use the tool could be part of this project.
- It could be used together with another tool, the Adaptive Capacity Indices, being developed in the SDWG. Used regularly, these tools should help improve the quality of life in remote Arctic communities.



Thematic Area 2: Improving Economic and Living Conditions

Freshwater Security

- As part of the AACA-C, de-couple the Arctic Freshwater Synthesis (AFS) as a stand-alone product to be promoted publicly as the first-of-its-kind look at the comprehensive freshwater picture in the Arctic.
- The AFS will examine issues such as: the role of freshwater in other Arctic systems, historic and projected changes to the Arctic freshwater system, and key drivers of such change (*e.g.* climate change, industrialization, etc.)
- The AFS could serve as the basis for a first-ever comprehensive Arctic Freshwater Assessment, that could begin during the 2015 – 2017 period, that would assess the state of the science and provide key findings and policy recommendations on how best to manage this precious natural resource.



Thematic Area 2: Improving Economic and Living Conditions

Telecommunications Infrastructure

- Telecommunications infrastructure in the Arctic is extremely rudimentary. This is unsustainable as human activity increases and support services become critical.
- We propose to establish a telecommunications infrastructure expert group within the SDWG, consisting of government and industry officials, to develop an Arctic-wide telecommunications infrastructure assessment.
- This assessment would be a compilation of existing national assessments in each Arctic State, and would be presented to the International Telecommunications Union and the private sector to promote the eventual build-out of commercial telecommunications infrastructure in the Arctic region.

Working Group: **SDWG**



Thematic Area 2: Improving Economic and Living Conditions

Suicide Prevention and Resilience

- Following Greenland's and Canada's past work on resilience and mental health, we propose to create a common, science-based system of metrics to track suicidal behaviors and key correlates, interventions, and outcomes across Arctic States.
- "RISING SUN" - Reducing the Incidence of Suicide in Indigenous Groups / Strengths United through Networks – is a new initiative designed by the U.S. National Institute of Mental Health, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), that could be adapted to the unique circumstances in Arctic communities.

Working Group: **SDWG**



Thematic Area 3: Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change

Short-lived Climate Pollutants

- Promote full implementation in all Arctic States of the recommendations from the Black Carbon and Methane Task Force and the Short-lived Climate Forcers Task Force. Encourage ***Arctic Council Observer States*** whose emissions affect the Arctic to join in.
- All Arctic States develop domestic black carbon inventories identifying contributing sectors and tracking progress in reducing emissions, with an initial focus on gas flaring. Regular reporting at SAO meetings on progress in reducing emissions.
- Increase data collection and monitoring of black carbon emissions affecting the Arctic, through the SAON and physical monitoring stations, and improve the ability to monitor releases of methane in the Arctic.

Working Groups: ***ACAP, AMAP***



Thematic Area 3: Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change

Arctic Climate Adaptation and Resilience

- Sweden and the United States to co-lead an effort to complete the *Arctic Resilience Report*, ensuring that any recommendations are policy-relevant, clear and specific as to implementation by the Arctic States.
- Under AACA-C, produce a series of easily understandable reports and fact sheets, targeted at lay audiences, on high-priority climate risks and vulnerabilities in the Arctic region.
- Strongly encourage remote Arctic communities to test the Adaptive Capacity Indices, and propose improvements that will make them more useful for decision-makers.

Collaborative effort among working groups



Thematic Area 3: Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change

Enhance Arctic Climate Science:

a). Pan-Arctic Digital Elevation Map

- Extend the high-resolution pan-Arctic digital elevation model being developed for Alaska to the broader Arctic, to improve the quality of topographic information. Understanding topography assists with climate modeling as well as understanding the impacts of climate change in terrestrial areas such as freshwater movement patterns.
- This could tie in with the Arctic Spatial Data Infrastructure (ASDI), an initiative led by the mapping agencies of the Arctic States. An MOU among the mapping agencies was signed earlier in 2014.



Thematic Area 3: Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change

Enhancing Arctic Climate Science:

b) Arctic Indicators Network, and Early Warning Indicator System for the Arctic

- Encourage development an early warning indicator system in each Arctic State that could be linked into a single pan-Arctic network. These systems would contain the changes in key physical, biological, social and economic elements related to climate impacts and their effects in the region.
- The network could serve as a source of current information for policy makers, scientists, students, the media, etc.

Working Group: **AMAP**, with support of **SAON**



Strengthening the AC

- Archiving Project – the U.S. will take over finalizing this project and ensuring the Council's archives are easily publicly accessible, useful, and kept up-to-date.
- Internal structure – the SAO chair could lead a SAO review of the internal Council structure to see if it continues to meet the needs of the Arctic States and PPs.
- Observers – the Council could discuss new ways of working with accredited observers so that they can contribute meaningfully to the Council's work.
- Collaboration with others – the Council could discuss ideas for how best to engage with other organizations and civil society. The Arctic Economic Council, the Arctic Coast Guard Forum, the Arctic Offshore Regulators Forum, and the Arctic Regional Hydrographic Commission could be entities to focus on for such discussions.



OTHER ACTIVITIES

- The U.S. will launch, sometime near the Iqaluit Ministerial, a new **Arctic Fulbright Initiative** (AFI). The AFI will conclude in connection with the U.S. Ministerial meeting in 2017, and we hope other Arctic States will continue it so that it becomes an integral part of the Arctic educational world.
- The University of Alaska-Fairbanks will host a **Model Arctic Council** for students from all eight Arctic States in connection with the March 2016 SAO meeting in Fairbanks.
- The U.S. will propose that the Arctic States initiate development of **Phase II of the IMO Polar Code**. Phase II is designed to consider regulations for non-SOLAS ships, currently from most of the Polar Code, as well as additional guidance for ships operating in polar waters.



PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Outside the Arctic Council, the U.S. will conduct a wide-spread, intensive public outreach campaign.
- Our goal is three-fold:
 - a) to educate the U.S. public about why the Arctic matters and its strategic importance to our country;
 - b) to educate the public about climate change impacts in the Arctic and how they are affecting our country; and
 - c) to educate the rest of the world about how the Arctic affects them.
- We will utilize many and varied opportunities to promote Arctic education, media attention, speaking engagements, cultural events, and other high visibility public affairs programming across the United States and around the world.