

**AGENDA ITEM 4.4(a) A Circumpolar Inuit Response to the AMSA [SDWG/Canada]**  
***The Sea Ice Never Stops: Circumpolar Inuit Reflections on the Sea Ice Use and Shipping in Inuit Nuaat***

***Update December 16, 2015***

**BACKGROUND:**

Following the release of the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment 2009 Report, the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) decided to undertake activities to provide a response to the recommendations proposed in the Report. ICC committed to undertake two actions: 1) communicate AMSA findings to Inuit constituents and seek their guidance to inform efforts to move AMSA forward; and 2) undertake an expanded survey on Inuit use of the sea and sea ice. These actions would build on the work previously undertaken to inform ICC's – *The Sea Ice is Our Highway – An Inuit Perspective on Transportation in the Arctic*. Released in March 2008, the report focused on Canadian Inuit communities.

The ICC's goal is to contribute indigenous and community perspectives to the implementation of the AMSA recommendations by collecting and sharing knowledge of the Inuit as a largely marine indigenous group. Building on *The Sea Ice is Our Highway* report, the ICC plans to share the information collected from Inuit across four Arctic states with the Arctic Council member states and other Permanent Participants.

The project was approved by the SDWG in March 2011 and was approved by the Arctic Council Senior Arctic Officials (SAO) at a meeting in March 2012, held in Stockholm, Sweden. Canada, the United States, Kingdom of Denmark, and the ICC are co-leads.

**CURRENT STATUS & NEXT STEPS:**

All deliverables under action 1, the communication of AMSA findings, have been completed, including the coordination and hosting of A *Circumpolar Inuit Response to the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment Report (AMSA) Workshop*, held in March 2013 in Ottawa. The event convened Inuit from Russia, Alaska, Canada and Greenland to discuss how to effectively respond to AMSA and to develop a methodology on how to proceed with a study on the use of Arctic sea ice by Inuit across the circumpolar region. A Report on the findings of the workshop was produced.

Most deliverables under action 2, the undertaking of an expanded survey on Inuit use of the sea and sea ice, are completed. Completed tasks include the supplementary survey of Inuit communities in Greenland, Alaska and Chukotka along with an expanded survey of Inuit communities in Canada. The outstanding deliverable is the Report on the findings of the surveys of Inuit communities.

The ICC has completed a draft of the Report. Once internal reviews and consultations with the project co-leads and SDWG HOD's have been completed, the Report is expected to be submitted to SDWG for endorsement inter-sessionally and for SAO approval at their March 2015 meeting.