

PAME I-2019: Annotation to Agenda 8.3

Guidelines for Implementing an Ecosystem Approach to Management of Arctic Marine Ecosystems

Background

The Arctic Council ministers have requested development of practical guidelines for implementing the Ecosystem Approach to management (EA) in the Arctic. This task was placed on the work plan (2017-2019) for the Joint EA Expert Group (PAME, AMAP, CAFF and SDWG).

The draft EA guidelines presented here are intended to be a deliverable through PAME to the 2019 Ministerial at the end of the Finnish chairmanship, following review and final approval at the PAME I-2019 meeting.

Preparation and review process

The work to prepare guidelines started at the 6th EA workshop in Seattle, 9-11 January 2018. Based on the outcome from the workshop, and previous work by the EA-EG, a first draft was prepared by the two co-leads (Libby Logerwell and Hein Rune Skjoldal) from the two lead countries, Norway and USA. The initial preparation was done in consultation with colleagues from the lead countries as well as some experts from the EA-EG.

A first draft version was submitted and presented at the PAME II-2018 meeting in Vladivostok, 1-4 October 2018. It was agreed that PAME delegations should provide comments to the draft text by 9 November. The draft was sent to AMAP, CAFF, and SDWG shortly after the PAME meeting, and the working groups were invited to provide comments by the 9 November deadline.

The draft guidelines were presented at a session (EBM 8) at the Arctic Biodiversity Congress in Rovaniemi, Finland, 12 October. Comments expressed there were generally positive and supportive. Participants were also invited to provide written comments by the 9 November deadline, but none were received.

Written comments to the first draft were received from the Kingdom of Denmark and USA. AMAP, CAFF and SDWG informed that they were not able to provide comments now but that they would do so to the next draft version.

A second draft was prepared by the co-leads and sent to PAME, AMAP, CAFF and SDWG on 29 November inviting any further comments by 19 December.

By 21 December, we had received comments from the Kingdom of Denmark, USA, ICC, AMAP, CAFF, SDWG, and the European Environment Agency. Sweden informed that they supported the guidelines and had no comments. Singapore likewise informed that they had no comments.

The current, third draft version, of the EA guidelines has been amended based on the comments received. It is presented in two versions: a clean version, and a version with 'track-changes' to show all amendments done relative to the 2nd draft and with some comments inserted.

Responding to comments

There were many comments of editorial nature to improve the language and make the text clearer. We have generally followed these suggested changes, except in some cases where we felt the intended meaning was slightly altered or the suggested change made the language more complicated and less direct.

There were also several comments and suggestions of more general nature. We have taken these into account as far as possible, but with the constraint that we did want to keep the document relatively short and general. There were also some comments of more technical nature (e.g. to consistency in terms and abbreviations), which will be attended to in the final editing of the document before it is released.

We point out a few of the more substantive comments below.

Denmark commented that there could be more focus on monitoring and research in relation to the EA framework, and that monitoring should be listed explicitly. CAFF and ICC made similar comments to the importance of monitoring. We have highlighted monitoring by showing it explicitly in the framework diagram in Fig. 1. In addition, there is text on monitoring in the paragraphs describing the EA framework, as well as in section 3.4 on Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA).

CAFF suggested to include reference to the recent State of the Arctic Marine Environment (SAMBR) report, as well as other assessment reports from AMAP and CAFF. Denmark made a similar comment and suggested to include a box with such information. We have followed this suggestion and included a new Box under section 3.4 (on IEA) with examples of some of the recent and major assessment reports by the Arctic Council working groups. The list is far from exhaustive (it would be very long if all reports were to be included), but it serves to draw attention to the fact that a large body of information exists that should be used as a basis in future IEAs for Arctic LMEs.

CAFF drew attention to a scoping study they had carried out (with UNEP and WWF) on Arctic ecosystem services and values using the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) approach and methodology. We have included information from this study in section 3.5 on valuation of ecosystem goods and services.

ICC suggested to use 'indigenous' in stead of 'traditional' with regard to description of knowledge, e.g. 'indigenous and local knowledge'. CAFF commented on this point of terminology, that there had been a process at SAO level, and they asked whether this matter had been solved. AMAP and SDWG also pointed to this issue of terminology. This is a point which requires clarification.