



The 2015-2017 Arctic Council workplan during the U.S. Chairmanship contains initiatives aimed at promoting Arctic Ocean safety, security, and stewardship, improving economic and living conditions throughout the Arctic and addressing the impacts of climate change.

Projects are undertaken through the Arctic Council's six working groups, three temporary task forces and one expert group: the Arctic Contaminants Action Program (ACAP); Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP); Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF); Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR); Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME); Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG); Task Force on Arctic Marine Cooperation (TFAMC); Task Force on Telecommunications Infrastructure in the Arctic (TFTIA); the Scientific Cooperation Task Force (SCTF); and the Black Carbon and Methane Expert Group (BCMEG).

For additional details on the projects listed below, please contact the chairs or executive secretariats of the relevant working group, task force or expert group. Contact information is listed at the bottom of the document.

- **Search and Rescue:** The United States will lead a search and rescue exercise (SAREX) comprised of Arctic States, regional, tribal and industry stakeholders, and Arctic Council Observers. The U.S. Government will generate an after-action report, including recommendations for further steps, for delivery by the end of the U.S. Chairmanship. We will encourage the tradition of Arctic Council chair countries holding SAREXs in accordance with the Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic and sharing the results with EPPR and other relevant Arctic groups. (EPPR)
- **Marine Environmental Protection:** The Arctic Council will build upon existing preparedness and response programs by placing greater emphasis on research and information sharing regarding: effects of spills and effectiveness of countermeasures; the identification and mobilization of the resources necessary to mitigate the effects of a pollution incident; and the development of international guidelines for preparedness and response in this logistically challenging region. We will strive for increased sharing of scientific information related to oil and hazardous substance spill response, identify spill response resources for the creation of a specialized equipment inventory and implement the Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic and related operational guidelines. (EPPR)
- **Marine Protected Areas:** The Arctic Council will enhance PAME's work on a Pan-Arctic Network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). During the U.S. Chairmanship, PAME will: create an inventory and map of existing Arctic MPAs; perform a "desktop study" of area-based conservation measures and their linkages with categories of Arctic biodiversity to create a toolbox in support of MPAs and MPA networks; and identify examples and best practices for stakeholder engagement and communication as a part of the project on Meaningful Engagement of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in Marine Activities. (PAME)



- **Ocean Acidification:** The Arctic Council’s initiative on ocean acidification seeks to achieve more comprehensive monitoring of ocean acidification throughout the Arctic Ocean. There are three main efforts to this initiative: expand the reach of the Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network (GOA-ON); increase the number of stakeholders trained to use and understand monitoring techniques, including from indigenous communities; and raise public awareness of the issue. This effort also is intended to contribute to and enhance the efforts to develop a second AMAP Arctic Ocean Acidification Assessment. (AMAP)
- **Clean Energy Access:** Energy security and improved economic development for residents in remote Arctic communities can be strengthened through increasing the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency. The SDWG will work on exploring and developing projects which enhance energy security through these measures over the course of the U.S. Chairmanship and beyond. This work will include a project aimed at developing a modular system pairing renewable energy technology with diesel generators and energy-storage devices to power micro-grid systems in small Arctic communities. This project cluster may be expanded into a mechanism for clean energy practitioners to share knowledge and promote capacity building in rural communities. Other projects that address energy security in Arctic communities may also be added to this project cluster. (SDWG)
- **Water and Sanitation:** Capitalizing on the results of the Alaska Water and Sewer Challenge, this project will focus on decentralized water and wastewater treatment, recycling and usage efficiency. A workshop will be convened to facilitate collaboration between researchers, engineers, manufacturers, vendors and health experts on measures to increase access to, and reduce the operating costs of, in-home running water and sewer in remote communities, attract investment, improve public health, and spur public-private partnerships. The workshop will also serve as a platform to report on a circumpolar health assessment of existing community systems, water quality and quantity, utilization of traditional water sources and related health indicators. (SDWG)
- **Mental Wellness:** The RISING SUN project (Reducing the Incidence of Suicide in Indigenous Groups – Strengths United through Networks) aims to create common metrics for evaluating suicide prevention efforts in the Arctic as a key component of scaling up and evaluating interventions across the circumpolar region. Complementing the mental health work completed under the Canadian Chairmanship, the common metrics, developed through engagement with Permanent Participants and community leaders, will aid health workers and policy-makers in measuring progress and identifying challenges by facilitating data sharing and pooling, evaluation, and interpretation across service systems. (SDWG)
- **Climate Resilience and Adaptation:** The Arctic Council will advance our understanding of changes and vulnerabilities in the Arctic and support best practices for community and ecosystem resilience by completing the Arctic Resilience Report and Adaptation Actions for a Changing Arctic Part C assessment. In addition to supporting action on the ground, these two assessments will produce recommendations for the Arctic Council and national and sub-national governments. The Arctic Council will improve community-based environmental monitoring efforts through the circumpolar expansion of the Local Environmental Observers



Network. It will also promote climate data sharing and will develop and promote decision-making tools and services, in part through the expansion of the Arctic Adaptation Exchange Portal. The Arctic Council will assess likely pathways for the introduction of invasive species as a result of climate change, and will develop a pan-Arctic action plan for preventing and managing these potential invasions. The Arctic Council will also draw upon efforts to institutionalize the “One Health” approach to enhance the underlying resilience of Arctic communities and ecosystems. (SDWG, AMAP, CAFF and PAME)

- **One Health:** One Health is an interdisciplinary approach to assess health issues at the interface between humans, animals and ecosystems. By the end of the U.S. Chairmanship, the SDWG will have taken steps to institutionalize the practice of One Health across the Arctic region, and will have contributed key findings to Arctic Council reports, as well as relevant meetings. Hubs will be designated to serve as Points of Contact (POCs) for the Arctic States and Permanent Participants. A circumpolar-agreed checklist will be developed to measure progress towards on-the-ground implementation of One Health, inform priority-setting and facilitate non-expert engagement with the initiative. (SDWG)
- **Circumpolar Local Environmental Observers (CLEO) Network:** The Arctic Council will expand the coverage of an existing Alaska-based monitoring tool, the Local Environmental Observer network (LEO) that links traditional knowledge and scientific analysis, across the Arctic. Trained traditional knowledge experts are able to record their observations in the LEO database. These observations are reviewed by the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), which serves as a secretariat. ANTHC is able to share observations of concern with regulators, academics and others who can in turn provide technical assistance to local communities when needed. During Phase I of the project, ACAP will create a North American CLEO “Hub”, including indigenous communities in the Alaskan and Canadian Arctic for delivery to the 2017 Ministerial. In addition, we will explore the development of a framework for expansion of the CLEO to the Nordic region. Phase II of the project is to establish a CLEO Hub in the Nordic region, as appropriate and explore options for linking with Russian indigenous communities. Phase III of the project will look at interoperability of the CLEO Hubs and/or related observational networks. The CLEO project is also captured in the Resilience project description. (ACAP)
- **Climate Change Indicator System:** The Arctic Council will build on the set of climate change indicators currently under development by the United States Global Climate Change Research Program (USGCRP) to indicate the status and trends of change in key physical, biological, social and economic parameters related to climate impacts and effects. This activity will involve all Arctic States and Permanent Participants to link a subset of indicators focused on climate change into a single pan-Arctic network, the Climate Change Indicator System for the Arctic (CCISA). Planned work includes contributing to the development of the framework for the CCISA and illustrating the potential for an Arctic Indicators Network by identifying a subset of Arctic-relevant indicators from the larger USGCRP effort. (AMAP)



- **Digital Elevation Model:** The Arctic Council will promote the extension of the high-resolution pan-Arctic digital elevation model being developed for Alaska to the broader Arctic, to improve the quality of topographic information and capitalize on the Arctic Spatial Data Infrastructure (ASDI), an initiative led by the mapping agencies of the Arctic States. (CAFF)
- **Freshwater Synthesis:** The Adaptation Actions for a Changing Arctic (AACA) will contain an Arctic Freshwater Synthesis (AFS). The AFS will examine issues such as: the role of freshwater in Arctic systems, historical changes to the Arctic freshwater system and key drivers of such changes and projected changes to the Arctic freshwater system and drivers of such changes. The AFS will be the first-ever examination of the freshwater picture in the Arctic and could serve as the basis for a broader, in-depth Arctic Freshwater Assessment in the future. (AMAP)
- **Arctic Water Resources Vulnerability Index:** This project will internationalize the University of Alaska-Fairbanks Arctic Water Resource Vulnerability Index (AWRVI) to provide Arctic communities with a valuable tool to assess the status of their freshwater resources. The expanded assessment will then feed into the Arctic Adaptation Exchange Portal, allowing local government officials, researchers and residents to evaluate their communities' freshwater resiliency and address vulnerabilities. (AMAP)
- **Telecommunications:** The Task Force on Telecommunications Infrastructure in the Arctic, consisting of representatives of the Arctic States, Permanent Participations, the telecommunications industry and end user groups, will provide the Council in 2017 with a circumpolar assessment of existing telecommunications infrastructure and networks potentially to include identification of unmet requirements and community needs (such as health services, broadband connectivity, scientific observations transmissions and support for emergency search and rescue and oil spill response). The Task Force will aim to include, among other things, recommendations for public-private partnerships to enhance telecommunications access and service in the Arctic. The results of this assessment would be presented at the appropriate international fora with a strong message from the Arctic States to make the Arctic a top priority for future telecommunications investment. (TFTIA)
- **Arctic Marine Cooperation:** Arctic Council Ministers established the Task Force on Arctic Marine Cooperation to “assess future needs for a regional seas program or other mechanism, as appropriate, for increased cooperation in Arctic marine areas.” Looking ahead to the future of the Arctic Ocean, the Task Force is assessing the needs for international cooperation to meet these future challenges and opportunities. Based on this needs assessment, the Task Force will make recommendations for new mechanisms for international cooperation, as appropriate, to meet these future needs. (TFAMC)
- **Scientific Cooperation Task Force (SCTF):** The Scientific Cooperation Task Force is working on arrangements to improve scientific research cooperation among the eight Arctic States in the Arctic region, through discussions of shared concerns including access to data,



access to scientific infrastructure and research areas and simplification of movement of scientists and their equipment and samples. The Task Force is currently drafting the text of a legally binding Agreement on Enhanced International Arctic Scientific Cooperation, with a view to completing its work during the U.S. Chairmanship. (SCTF)

- **Black Carbon and Methane Expert Group (BCMEG):** In order to understand trends in emissions of black carbon and methane in or near the Arctic, and to promote enhanced action over time, the Arctic Council launched an Expert Group to periodically assess the progress made under the Framework for Action on Black Carbon and Methane. Arctic States and participating Observer States will submit national reports on their existing and planned actions to address black carbon and methane, including national inventories. The Expert Group will analyze the national reports to draw conclusions and make recommendations for further voluntary action, captured in a report to inform the Arctic Ministers in 2017. The work of the Expert Group will include identifying options for consideration in order to establish a collective baseline for black carbon emissions, as well as undertaking analysis and identifying options for quantitative goal(s) as described in “the common vision” of the Framework. The United States as the chair of the Expert Group also intends to convene a high-level policy forum to explore opportunities for further collaboration based on the above-referenced recommendations. (BCMEG)

### **Points of Contact**

**Arctic Council:** <http://www.arctic-council.org/index.php/en/>

**Arctic Contaminants Action Program (ACAP):** [www.acap.arctic-council.org](http://www.acap.arctic-council.org)

Chair Ulrik Westman, email: [Ulrik.Westman@naturvardsverket.se](mailto:Ulrik.Westman@naturvardsverket.se)

Executive Secretary Patti Bruns, email: [patti@arctic-council.org](mailto:patti@arctic-council.org)

**Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP):** <http://www.amap.no/>

Chair Martin Forsius, email: [martin.forsius@ymparisto.fi](mailto:martin.forsius@ymparisto.fi)

Executive Secretary Lars-Otto Reiersen, email: [lars-otto.reiersen@amap.no](mailto:lars-otto.reiersen@amap.no)

**Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF):** [www.caff.is](http://www.caff.is)

Chair Reidar Hindrum, email: [reidar.hindrum@miljodir.no](mailto:reidar.hindrum@miljodir.no)

Executive Secretary Tom Barry, email: [tom@caff.is](mailto:tom@caff.is)

**Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR):** [www.eppr.arctic-council.org](http://www.eppr.arctic-council.org)

Chair Amy Merten, email: [amy.merten@noaa.gov](mailto:amy.merten@noaa.gov)

Executive Secretary Patti Bruns, email: [patti@arctic-council.org](mailto:patti@arctic-council.org)

**Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME):** [www.pame.is](http://www.pame.is)

Chair Renée Sauve, email: [Renee.Sauve@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:Renee.Sauve@dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

Executive Secretary Soffia Gudmundsdottir, email: [pame@pame.is](mailto:pame@pame.is)



**Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG):** [www.sdwg.org](http://www.sdwg.org)

Chair Roberta Burns, email: [burnsrr@state.gov](mailto:burnsrr@state.gov)

Executive Secretary Bernard Funston, email: [bfunston@acsdwg.com](mailto:bfunston@acsdwg.com)

**Task Force on Arctic Marine Cooperation (TFAMC)**

Co-Chair Brian Israel, email: [IsraelBR@state.gov](mailto:IsraelBR@state.gov)

Co-Chair Kjell Kristian Egge, email: [kke@mfa.no](mailto:kke@mfa.no)

Co-Chair Jóhann Sigurjónsson, email: [johann@hafro.is](mailto:johann@hafro.is)

Secretariat support: Anne Meldgaard, email: [anne@arctic-council.org](mailto:anne@arctic-council.org) and Johanna Hämäläinen  
[johanna@arctic-council.org](mailto:johanna@arctic-council.org)

**Task Force on Telecommunications Infrastructure in the Arctic (TFTIA)**

Co-Chair Niels Andersen, email: [na@space.dtu.dk](mailto:na@space.dtu.dk)

Co-Chair Bo Andersen, email: [bo.andersen@spacecentre.no](mailto:bo.andersen@spacecentre.no)

Secretariat support: Tom Fries, email: [tom@arctic-council.org](mailto:tom@arctic-council.org)

**Scientific Cooperation Task Force (SCTF)**

Co-Chair Evan Bloom, email: [bloomet@state.gov](mailto:bloomet@state.gov)

Co-Chair Vladimir Barbin, email: [VBarbin@mid.ru](mailto:VBarbin@mid.ru)

Secretariat support: André Skrivervik, email: [andre@arctic-council.org](mailto:andre@arctic-council.org)

**Black Carbon and Methane Expert Group (BCMEG)**

Chair Karen Florini, email: [FloriniKL@state.gov](mailto:FloriniKL@state.gov)

Secretariat support: Anne Meldgaard, email: [anne@arctic-council.org](mailto:anne@arctic-council.org)