2013 and Beyond: North America and the Arctic Council

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Upcoming Events (International)

- 2012 - IPY wrap-up meeting in Montreal
- Ongoing work of Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS)
- Ongoing discussions with the US
- 2013 – Start of North American Chairmanship of the Arctic Council
- 2014 – NORAD quadrennial review and ongoing talks with the US
- IMO Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Equipment continuing push for a mandatory code for ships operating in polar waters
Upcoming Events (Domestic)

- Budget cuts
- Canada’s submission to the CLCS
- Operationalizing Arctic Council SAR agreement, mandatory NORDREG, continuing progress with land claims agreements, devolution, patrol vessel procurement, next phase of RADARSAT, pipeline projects
- 2013 Chair of the Arctic Council followed by US in 2015
Ottawa Declaration (1996)

to provide a means for promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among Arctic States with the involvement of the Arctic indigenous communities and other Arctic inhabitants on common arctic issues, in particular issues of sustainable development and environmental protection in the Arctic (emphasis added).
Preamble of Arctic Council Declaration:

1. Commitment to the well-being of the inhabitants of the Arctic;
2. Commitment to sustainable development; and
3. Commitment to protection of the Arctic environment.

6 C’s: Communities, Concurrency, Consultation, Coordination, Cooperation and Commitment
The Arctic Council

Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, USA and 6 International Indigenous Peoples’ Organizations
New Observers – Asia and the EU?

Current Observers
- UK
- NL
- Spain
- Poland
- Germany
- France

Ad-hoc observers
- Italy
- China
- Japan
- Korea
- EU
Recommendations in 2000s

1. The Arctic Council should focus on region-wide issues, leaving a wide range of northern concerns to be handled by other, more appropriate bodies;
2. The Arctic Council should concentrate on playing roles with respect to which it has a distinct comparative advantage, leaving other roles to be performed by other bodies;
3. The Arctic Council should strive to devise a well-defined and appropriate division of labour both internally among its own program activities and externally in its relations with other bodies endeavouring to promote co-operation in the circumpolar north; and
4. The Arctic Council should make a concerted effort to avoid being perceived as a top-down enterprise controlled by policymakers and officials located in the national capitals.
Perennial Challenges

1. Arctic Council is a well-kept secret.
2. Little institutional memory.
3. Establishing secretariat services – implement task force recommendations.
4. Participation of different state ministries (foreign vs. environment vs. health vs. state).
5. The role of observers and ad hoc states is not defined.
6. Co-operation with other Arctic actors is not structured. (eg. IMO not an observer)
8. Bottom-up or top-down process?
9. Translating recommendations into state action and policy
10. Ownership of sustainable development by all working groups not just SDWG.
11. Financial constraints/working groups after same funding.
Canada’s contribution for 2013-2015?
-issues of process

1. Review, structure, demarcation and relationship between the working groups and drivers of change in the Arctic
2. Ensure that activities in one working group inform debate and activities in all working groups
3. DM meetings prior to Ministerial meetings
4. Design ministerial meetings to include all stakeholders
5. Fund permanent participants and the Indigenous Peoples’ Secretariat
6. Outreach and communications to northerners and their governments (eg. by promoting an International Polar Decade)
Canada’s contribution con’t
- action issues

7. Outreach and communication to agencies of the UN and other Arctic-related groups (eg. UNEP and mercury);

8. Increase the role and participation of observer states in activities of the Council, and open dialogue with China, Japan, India and Brazil about their potential involvement in the Council;

9. Continue the focus on “from knowledge to action” especially in area of economic development and continued research

10. Establish a process for tracking and responding to emerging issues (eg. food and water safety in the Arctic, internet access)

11. Raise the profile of the Arctic Council and encourage members to accede to all existing legal instruments that aim to protect the Arctic environment and its ecosystems and to establish new ones in fields where this is not yet the case, such as fisheries.
Hypothetical Maritime Arctic
(After UNCLOS Article 76)