



TROMSØ DECLARATION

On the occasion of the Sixth Ministerial Meeting of

The Arctic Council

The 29th of April, 2009, Tromsø, Norway

Ministers representing the eight Arctic States, convening in Tromsø, Norway, for the Sixth Ministerial meeting of the Arctic Council, joined by the representatives of the six Permanent Participant organizations of the Arctic Council,

Welcoming the close and growing cooperation among the Arctic States in the Arctic,

Acknowledging the leadership of the Arctic Council on Arctic challenges and opportunities, and the increasing international interest in the work of the Council,

Confirming that in international relations the rule of law is a prerequisite for peaceful regional development,

Recognizing the rights of indigenous peoples and the interests of all Arctic residents, and emphasizing the engagement of indigenous peoples as being fundamental to addressing circumpolar challenges and opportunities,

Regarding human induced global climate change as one of the greatest challenges facing the Arctic,

Deeply concerned by the escalating rate of warming of the Arctic climate, which will likely also affect the rest of the world,

Reconfirming the commitment of the Arctic Council to promote environmental protection and sustainable use of Arctic land and marine resources,

Recalling that an extensive legal framework applies to the Arctic Ocean including, notably, the law of the sea, and that this framework provides a solid foundation for responsible management of this ocean,

Noting the extensive reduction of sea ice coverage and thickness resulting in increased marine access to the Arctic, and acknowledging the stress being placed upon sea-ice dependent and other species,

Recognizing that sustainable development in the Arctic requires the conservation of Arctic ecosystems and sustainable use of Arctic flora and fauna,

Recognizing the new opportunities for and challenges of economic development in the Arctic,

Noting that transboundary pollutants, including air pollutant emissions, heavy metals and persistent organic pollutants continue to be a major concern,

Hereby:

CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE ARCTIC

Bear in mind the findings of the 2009 Update on Selected Climate Issues of Concern report,

Note that preserving the unique Arctic environment and protecting the Arctic against potentially irreversible impacts of anthropogenic climate change depends mainly on substantially reducing global emissions of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases,

Note the role that shorter-lived climate forcings such as black carbon, methane and tropospheric ozone precursors may play in Arctic climate change, and **recognize** that reductions of emissions have the potential to slow the rate of Arctic snow, sea ice and sheet ice melting in the near-term,

Note that several indicators show further and extensive climate change at rates faster than previously projected,

Recognize the urgent need for an effective global response that will address the challenge of climate change, and **confirm** the commitment of all Arctic States to actively contribute to reaching an adequate agreed outcome at the UNFCCC 15th Conference of the Parties (CoP15) in Copenhagen in December 2009,

Accept with appreciation the summary of the report “The Greenland Ice Sheet in a Changing Climate” highlighting process and dynamics and recent developments in the mass loss from the Greenland Ice Sheet, **decide** to report on it to the UN CoP15, and **look forward to** the delivery of the full results of the Arctic Cryosphere: Snow, Water, Ice, and Permafrost in the Arctic (SWIPA) project in 2011,

Urge implementation of early actions where possible on methane and other short-lived climate forcings, and **encourage** collaboration with the Methane to

Markets Partnership and other relevant international bodies taking action to reduce methane and other short-lived forcers,

Decide to establish a task force on short-lived climate forcers to identify existing and new measures to reduce emissions of these forcers and recommend further immediate actions that can be taken and to report on progress at the next Ministerial meeting,

Recognize the need to reduce vulnerability and implement adaptation actions,

Urge the Arctic Council members to strengthen their work on adaptation to climate change, including by pursuing community-level actions, and continue to share information on best practices,

Acknowledge that indigenous peoples in the Arctic are taking a leading role to use best available traditional and scientific knowledge to help understand and adapt to challenges related to climate change and other challenges in their societies, and **welcome** initiatives to build the capacity of indigenous peoples,

Request regular updates on the impacts of climate change in the Arctic, and **note** that vulnerability and adaptation need to be strengthened in future reports on climate change,

INTERNATIONAL POLAR YEAR (IPY) AND ITS LEGACY

Welcome the Washington Ministerial Declaration¹ highlighting the International Polar Year (IPY) 2007-2008, an internationally coordinated scientific research and observation campaign in polar regions that for the first time considered the human dimension and concerns of local and indigenous peoples and engaged Arctic residents,

Welcome commitments to deliver a lasting legacy from the IPY, and **decide** to consider the proposal to arrange an international polar decade,

Acknowledge the contribution of the IPY to improved understanding of climate change in the Polar Regions, and its particular relevance to future Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) assessments,

Support continued international coordination to maximize the legacy of IPY within the following areas: observations, data access and management, access to study areas and infrastructure, education, recruitment and funding, outreach, communication and assessment for societal benefits, and benefits to local and indigenous peoples,

¹ Washington Ministerial Declaration on the International Polar Year and Polar Science adopted at the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting-Arctic Council Joint Meeting, 6 April 2009

Recognize the valuable contribution of the Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (SAON) process as an IPY legacy to enhance coordination of multidisciplinary Arctic data acquisition, management, access and dissemination, **encourage** the continuation of this work with emphasis on improving sustained long term observation, and **welcome** the participation of indigenous organizations in future work,

Acknowledge the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme (CBMP) as a major Arctic Council contribution to the IPY and its legacy,

Decide to take the lead in cooperation with IASC and other relevant partners in the continuation of the SAON process, including to consider ways to develop an institutional framework to support circum-Arctic observing, and the preparation and implementation of a workplan for the next two years to initiate work on priority issues including sustained funding and data management,

Call for consultations involving national funding and operational agencies to create a basis for internationally coordinated funding and shared infrastructure and enhance the recruitment of young scientists into polar science,

Encourage the exploration of ways to continue the innovative forms for IPY outreach and the presentation of outcomes of the IPY, including the use of scientific data and traditional knowledge in future assessments,

ARCTIC MARINE ENVIRONMENT

Approve the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA) 2009 Report including its recommendations on enhancing Arctic marine safety, protecting Arctic people and environment and building Arctic marine infrastructure and **request** Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs) to develop appropriate follow up actions,

Note that increased marine access and navigation in the Arctic Ocean calls for development and implementation of suitable national and international regulations, where appropriate, to advance the safety of Arctic marine shipping, including marine pollution prevention, reduce accident risk, and facilitate effective emergency response,

Encourage active cooperation within the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on development of relevant measures to reduce the environmental impacts of shipping in Arctic waters,

Urge that the ongoing work in the IMO to update the Guidelines for Ships Operating in Arctic Ice-Covered Waters be completed, application of its relevant parts be made mandatory, and global IMO ship safety and pollution prevention conventions be augmented with specific mandatory requirements or other provisions for ship construction, design, equipment, crewing, training, and operations, aimed at safety and protection of the Arctic environment,

Note that increasing levels of atmospheric CO₂ may accelerate ocean acidification and **decide** to monitor these changes,

Note that climate change may lead to changes in the migration, distribution and accessibility of important fish stocks,

Welcome the new Arctic Council project on “Development of safety systems in implementation of economic and infrastructural projects in the Arctic”, noting its comprehensive character and importance in minimizing the risks of increased human activity,

Approve the establishment of a task force to develop and complete negotiation by the next Ministerial meeting in 2011 of an international instrument on cooperation on search and rescue operations in the Arctic,

Approve the revised Arctic Council Offshore Oil and Gas Guidelines and **urge** all States to apply these Guidelines throughout the Arctic as minimum standards in national regulations,

Approve the revised Arctic Council Regional Programme of Action for the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (RPA), and **encourage** the continued implementation of the RPA,

Welcome the report of the Best Practices in Ecosystems Based Oceans Management in the Arctic Project, and **endorse** the summary of Observed Best Practices for ecosystems-based oceans management,

HUMAN HEALTH AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Recognize the need for a better understanding of the major drivers of change and likely challenges and opportunities for Arctic communities in the coming decades,

Encourage strategic, focused and practical work in the area of sustainable development,

Acknowledge the increased focus on human health in the work of the Arctic Council, including the establishment of the new Arctic Human Health Experts Group under the Sustainable Development program, and welcome the continuation of activities into the Danish Chairmanship of the Arctic Council,

Note the human health impact from transboundary pollution and the need to promote, among Arctic populations, healthy diets and breast feeding through appropriate dietary advice and communication of risk,

Recognize the urgent need for action to support Arctic cultures and reduce the loss of Arctic indigenous languages and take into consideration recommendations developed at the Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium,

Recognize that education, outreach, scientific research, traditional knowledge and capacity building are major tools to address challenges in Arctic communities and **recommend** that, where relevant, Arctic Council projects include these elements,

Recognize that the University of the Arctic (UArctic), a network of higher education institutions in the Arctic, is an effective partner to promote the sustainable development of the region, and **welcome** its new mechanisms to further fund activities,

ENERGY

Approve the findings and recommendations of the assessment of Oil and Gas Activities in the Arctic: Effects and Potential Effects,

Emphasize that while there has been significant progress in technology, management, and regulations that have greatly reduced the impact of oil and gas activities, environmental risk cannot be eliminated,

Decide to strengthen cooperation on prevention of, and response to, accidental spills of oil and hazardous substances in the Arctic,

Urge Member States to apply the precautionary approach and polluter-pays principle as reflected in Principles 15 and 16 of the Rio Declaration, respectively, and conduct risk and environmental impact assessments for the exploration, development, transport and storage of oil, and enact and/or enforce appropriate laws and controls,

Recognize that environmentally sound oil and gas activities may contribute to sustainable development of the Arctic region,

Also recognize that the potential for energy efficiency and extended use of renewable energy sources offer unique development opportunities in the Arctic region on a sustainable basis,

Welcome the Report on Arctic Energy and its observations on activities that the Arctic states could consider for future implementation, in particular in relation to the Arctic as an energy consumer, and the importance of environmentally friendly economic activity in the energy sector to ongoing Arctic social and economic development,

CONTAMINANTS

Accept with appreciation the Arctic Pollution 2009 report highlighting that progress has been achieved through political actions to reduce the threats from some legacy persistent organic and radionuclide pollutants, but concerns remain regarding new chemicals occurring in the Arctic environment and their potential threat to people and wildlife,

Note with concern the presence in the Arctic of contaminants with persistent organic pollutant (POP) characteristics that are not subject to international controls and that may require consideration by international fora,

Note with appreciation publications aimed at communicating radiation information to the public,

Welcome the Integrated Hazardous Waste Management Strategy in the Northern Regions of the Russian Federation, **note** its potential importance for the other parts of the Arctic, and **support** its implementation with the aim to ensure environmentally sound management, destruction and storage of hazardous waste,

Welcome with appreciation the creation of a new Project Steering Group to address contaminants in indigenous peoples' communities in remote areas of the Arctic,

Recognize actions in Arctic countries to reduce contamination from POPs and heavy metals and support further work,

Note with appreciation the establishment of the Arctic Council Project Support Instrument (PSI), a circumpolar funding mechanism for projects and actions related to prevention, abatement and elimination of pollutants in the Arctic,

Appreciate actions in support for the implementation of the Stockholm Convention and the POPs and Heavy metals protocol of the UNECE Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP), and **encourage** countries to continue work to reduce emissions and sign, ratify and enhance the implementation of these Conventions and Protocols,

Welcome the recent UNEP Governing Council decision to develop a legally binding instrument on mercury to be ready in 2013 and **commit** to bring forward Arctic perspectives to these negotiations,

BIODIVERSITY

Note that climate change and its consequences, including the loss of sea ice, is a major stressor to the Arctic's biodiversity and **welcome** continued work to better understand these impacts during the Danish Chairmanship of the Arctic Council,

Recognize that the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA) and the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme (CBMP) are important contributions towards understanding the impacts of climate change and other stressors on nature and biodiversity and the adaptability and sustainable use of all living resources in the Arctic,

Note that the ABA 2010 Arctic Highlights Report will be an Arctic Council contribution to the United Nations International Biodiversity Year in 2010 and

to the Convention on Biological Diversity as a tool to measure progress towards the United Nations 2010 biodiversity target,

Emphasize the important role of Arctic indigenous peoples and their traditional knowledge in conservation and sustainable use of Arctic biological resources,

Recognize community based monitoring as a valuable method of observation in the Arctic and **encourage** further development of projects with participation of local residents,

Welcome the results of the March 2009 meeting under the 1973 Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears and the commitment to continued co-operation under that Agreement, and **recognize** the need for adaptive management and conservation in response to climate change,

ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION OF THE ARCTIC COUNCIL

Decide to further strengthen the political role of the Arctic Council by having a meeting at deputy Minister level, with representatives of Permanent Participants, to discuss emerging issues between Ministerial meetings,

Welcome with appreciation the report of the Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs), **note** with appreciation the progress made by the Working Groups² **and thank** the Member States, Permanent Participants, Observers and all organizations that contribute to Arctic Council projects,

Adopt the recommendations in the SAO report and **instruct** SAOs to review and adjust, if needed, the working mandates of the Arctic Council working groups and their work plans for 2009-2011 in accordance with the guidance provided in this Declaration,

Welcome with appreciation the continuing offers of Russia to host the ACAP secretariat, of Norway to host the AMAP secretariat, of Iceland to host the CAFF and PAME secretariats, of Canada to host the SDWG secretariat and the offer of the United States to host the EPPR secretariat,

Welcome with appreciation the continuing offer of Denmark/Greenland to host the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat (IPS),

Welcome Norway's hosting of the Arctic Council Secretariat in Tromsø, Norway for the period of 2007-2013, in cooperation with Denmark and

² Arctic Contaminants Action Programme (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)

Sweden, and **appreciate** the Secretariat's contribution to the increased efficiency of the work of Arctic Council,

Decide to develop guidelines for engagement in outreach activities and an Arctic Council communication and outreach plan based on common priorities,

Decide to further consider how the Arctic Council should best be structured to fulfil its objectives,

Decide to continue discussing the role of observers in the Arctic Council,

Reaffirm the continued support of the Member States for the IPS,

Recognize the importance of providing adequate funding to Permanent Participants to support their preparations for, and participation in, the Arctic Council and its Working Groups,

Reiterate the need for reinforcing Arctic states efforts to finance circumpolar cooperation,

Request Member States to further explore ways and mean to enhance the participation of Permanent Participants in the activities of the Arctic Council,

Welcome the increased cooperation with regional bodies such as the Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM), the Barents-Euro Arctic Council, and the Council of the Baltic Sea States and acknowledge their contributions to circumpolar cooperation,

Appreciate the financial contribution of the NCM to the Arctic Council activities and Working Group projects,

Welcome continued cooperation with the Arctic Parliamentarians and take note of the Statement from their 8th Conference in Fairbanks, Alaska, in August 2008,

Appreciate the report from the Co-chairs of the Melting Ice Conference held in Tromsø April 28, 2009, and **welcome** the strong message to the UN Climate Change Summit in Copenhagen in December 2009. Also **instruct** the SAO's to consider, following contributions by relevant Working Groups, the outcome of the work by a task force of the Co-chairs of a state-of-the art report on the status of and future scenarios for the melting ice, ensuring complementarity of the task force and the Working Groups activities, with a view to a joint contribution to CoP15,

Thank the Kingdom of Norway for its Chairmanship of the Arctic Council during the period 2006-2009,

Welcome the offer of the Kingdom of Denmark to chair the Arctic Council during the period 2009-2011 and to host the Seventh Ministerial meeting in 2011.