

Canada - Europe
Parliamentary Association



Association parlementaire
Canada - Europe

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the Meeting of the Standing
Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region**

Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association

**Stockholm, Sweden
14 February, 2012**

Report

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Ted Opitz led a Canadian delegation of two, including Mr. Dennis Bevington, to the meeting of the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region (the Standing Committee) held in Stockholm, Sweden, 14 February 2012. Accompanying the delegation was Mr. Tim Williams from the Parliamentary Information and Research Service of the Library of Parliament as advisor to the delegation.

The Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region (CPAR) is a parliamentary body comprising delegations appointed by the national parliaments of the Arctic states (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, the United States of America) and the European Parliament. The conference also includes Permanent Participants representing Indigenous peoples, as well as observers. The conference meets every two years. The Ninth Conference was held in Brussels, Belgium, 13-15 September 2010.¹

The Conference adopts a statement with recommendations to the Arctic Council (AC) and to the governments of the eight Arctic states and the European Commission. The Standing Committee closely monitors how the governments implement the Conference Statement, and take new initiatives to further Arctic cooperation.

Between conferences, Arctic parliamentary cooperation is facilitated by the Standing Committee, which began its activities in 1994. The Conference and Standing Committee take initiatives to further Arctic cooperation, and act, in particular, as a parliamentary forum for issues relevant to the work of the AC. The Standing Committee takes part in the work of the Council as an observer.²

MEETING SUMMARY

The agenda for the meeting and the draft minutes of the previous meeting held 27 September 2011, Syktyvkar, Russian Federation, were adopted.

A. ECOSYSTEM – BASED MANAGEMENT IN THE ARCTIC REGION

Mr. Alf Håkon Hoel, Regional Director, Institute of Marine Research, Norway discussed the concept of ecosystem based management, how it is defined and how it is being addressed in the AC.

Ecosystem-based management (EBM) is regional holistic management as defined by scientifically defined ecosystem boundaries as opposed to those defined by political boundaries. It is an attempt to identify and monitor ecosystem components and impacts such as climate change, economic activities, pollution and alien species. While EBM is a work in progress, it is being built upon existing institutions and activities already taking

¹ The Conference report is available at:
[http://www.arcticparl.org/files/Conference%20statement,%20Final%20draft\(1\).pdf#](http://www.arcticparl.org/files/Conference%20statement,%20Final%20draft(1).pdf#)

² Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, <http://www.arcticparl.org/>

place as an effort to reconcile multiple concerns. In the Arctic, 17 Large Marine Ecosystems have been identified.³

Fundamentally EBM is a major information gathering exercise. Without ecosystem science there can be no ecosystem based management. Total impacts are assessed followed by identification of areas of concern which then must be subject to decision making. Though EBM concepts have been identified, implementation remains a challenge.

The AC has identified EBM as a priority, particularly since the 2004 Arctic Marine Strategic Plan.⁴ Best practices in EBM for marine ecosystems have been identified.⁵ At the latest AC Ministerial meeting held May 2011 in Nuuk, Greenland, a decision was taken to form an expert group on EBM to advise on its application for the next Ministerial meeting in 2013.⁶ Advice is being developed for marine, terrestrial coastal and near coastal environments. Canada is working on definitions/principles and identification of gaps and lessons learned.

Following questions from the Canadian delegation it was remarked that international cooperation for ecosystems that cross political boundaries was a challenge but that there were success stories such as the cooperation between Russia and Norway in the Barents Sea. More could be done on bilateral cooperation but there was a lack of funding. In addition, implementation at the AC was being coordinated across many of its working groups (for example Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme and Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response) as it touches on many areas.

B. SWEDISH CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE ARCTIC COUNCIL – PROGRESS REPORT

Mr. Carl Bildt, Foreign Minister of Sweden and Chair of the AC updated the Committee on the work of the Swedish chairmanship.

In addition to the points raised in the minutes to the meeting (see Appendix), Mr. Bildt noted that the AC has been a success because it is characterised by pragmatic and low-level cooperation that avoids rhetoric and tensions. The inclusion of permanent participants was noted as extremely important to its success. Looking forward to accomplishments expected by the end of the chairmanship in 2013 (at which point Canada takes over as chair) he noted the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment,⁷ the Arctic Ocean Acidification project and a potential legal framework for protecting the marine environment.

A Canadian delegate noted the AC's presence at the United Nations Climate Change Conference, Durban, South Africa 2011. He noted that it was important for countries with knowledge of the Arctic to give the issue of climate change a higher profile,

³ United States National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, [Large Marine Ecosystems of the World](#).

⁴ Arctic Council, Protection of the Marine Environment Working Group, [Arctic Marine Strategic Plan](#).

⁵ Norsk Polarinstitut, [Best Practices in Ecosystem-based Oceans Management in the Arctic](#), April 2009.

⁶ Arctic Council, [Nuuk Declaration](#), 2011.

⁷ See Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna, [Arctic Biodiversity Assessment](#).

particularly since he felt that communications diminishing the importance of climate change has had a negative impact on accomplishments and government policy. Mr. Bildt responded by agreeing that the changes in the Arctic need to be highlighted.

It was noted by another Canadian delegate that Arctic cooperation has a cascade effect into many areas. It was noted that a requirement for double hulled ships should be established. Mr. Bildt agreed that cooperation was important, and noted the search and rescue exercises occurring in the Barents region, that could be expanded to greater areas, as well as to other possibilities such as environmental cooperation.

C. OIL GAS DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARCTIC

Mr. Lars-Otto Reiersen, Executive secretary of Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP, one of the AC working groups) discussed some of the past findings of the AMAP assessments, in particular the Oil and Gas Assessment⁸ as well as some of the future assessments that AMAP will complete for the AC. The key findings discussed are outlined in the minutes to the meeting (see Appendix).

Future assessments that AMAP will deliver in the 2013-2017 timeframe, the first two years of which Canada will be the chair of the AC, include:

- ArcRisk - Arctic Health Risks: Impacts on health in the Arctic and Europe owing to climate induced changes in contaminant cycling (European Union funded);
- Arctic Ocean Acidification;
- Short Lived Climate Forcers reports – black carbon, ozone & methane;
- Climate assessments – several reports;
- Oil and Gas, Persistent Organic Pollutants and Mercury follow up; and
- Arctic Change Assessment.

The last of these was noted as being an integrated assessment that will be particularly pertinent to decision makers.

Mr. Ole Kristian Bjerkemo, Chair of Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR) then related the work of this AC working group. The EPPR working group examines and provides recommendations on oil spills, radionuclides and natural disasters. Considerable effort has been placed on oil spill prevention and response. Some products mentioned include the Arctic Shoreline Clean-up Assessment Technique (SCAT) Manual⁹ and the Field Guide for Oil Spill Response in Arctic Waters¹⁰ as well as the report on the Behaviour of Oil and Other Hazardous Substances in Arctic Waters.¹¹

⁸ Arctic Council, Oil and Gas Assessment.

⁹ Arctic Council, Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response, Arctic Shoreline Clean-up Assessment Technique (SCAT) Manual, 2004.

¹⁰ Arctic Council, Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response, Field Guide for Oil Spill Response in Arctic Waters, 1998.

¹¹ Arctic Council, Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response, Behaviour of Oil and Other Hazardous Substances in Arctic Waters, 2011.

The Nuuk Declaration had an important commitment regarding oil spills including the establishment of a task force to develop an international instrument on Arctic marine oil pollution prevention preparedness and response as well as requiring the EPPR to develop recommendations and/or best practices in the prevention of marine oil pollution. The direction taken by EPPR regarding these efforts is outlined in the appended minutes of the meeting.

D. CLIMATE CHANGE AND HCLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN HEALTH

Ms. Birgitta Evengård, Professor of Infectious Diseases and Co-Chair of the Arctic Human Health Expert Group 2011-20 discussed the linkages between human health and climate change. Climate change may impact the health of humans through physical changes to the environment causing accidents, challenges to mental health as culture and lifestyles are impacted as well as changes to infectious diseases as the distribution of vectors change. Details of her discussion, with emphasis on disease, are outlined in the appended minutes of the meeting.

E. 10th CONFERENCE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

Ms. Gudfridur Lilja Gretarsdottir, M.P. from Iceland, informed the Committee of the preparations for the next Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region (CPAR) which is to take place 5-7 September, 2012 in Akureyri, Iceland.

The Secretariat noted that rapporteurs for the three topics had yet to be firmly identified with Canada still discussing the possibility. Input into speakers for the conference would be sought. The chair noted that, with so many young people in the Arctic, it would be important to give a voice to young people in Iceland, and so encouraged committee members to have youth as part of their delegations.

F. ARCTIC GOVERNANCE IN AN EVOLVING ARCTIC REGION

This is a subject that was introduced to the Committee by Mr. Clifford Lincoln at Ottawa, Canada in 2010. A position paper has been developed by the Committee and discussed at length, particularly at the Iceland, SCPAR meeting in 2011. This will be the subject of discussion at the next CPAR in Iceland. The Committee was invited to comment further on the latest draft. Greenland noted that the paper lacked a mention of people, particularly in the opening paragraphs, and suggested that there should be more focus on the human dimension of the Arctic in the paper.

G. STATUS OF THE WORK OF SCPAR

Each delegation provided an overview of developments in their respective countries in relation to the Arctic. A detailed summary of these presentations is provided in the minutes of the meeting appended to this report.

The Canadian delegation noted that the North is fundamental to the psyche of Canadians. The four pillars of Canada's Northern Strategy were reiterated. Emphasis is being placed on health issues and sovereignty. It was thought that work is progressing towards Canada's submission on extending its polar continental shelf and the small

disputes still existing with the United States in the Beaufort and with Denmark were being amicably resolved.

The National Energy Board Report on the Arctic Offshore Drilling Review¹² was noted particularly in that it upholds the difficult to achieve requirement of same-season relief well drilling capability (or suitable alternative). There have been a large number of leases that will be able to go ahead but need a risk assessment. The Beaufort Regional Environmental Assessment was mentioned.¹³ As a response to oil and gas development it was perhaps not as broad as ecosystem based management but it could be seen to be one of the activities that could be built upon by EBM.

Climate change is obvious. A presentation by Dr. David Barber to parliamentarians¹⁴ made it clear that the extent, thickness and durability of multiyear ice were all being drastically affected. This year has been one of the warmest winters in the North with very intense storms that have affected communication and transport systems. The changes are not simply to temperature.

With respect to human health, the caribou herds upon which people depend are being affected by climate which has affected feeding as well as their energetics, the result of increased insect harassment. The ban on Caribou hunting in the North West Territories was very difficult and shows that climate change is causing governments to make very complicated and difficult decisions in areas as important as food stocks.

A visit to the United Kingdom by the delegate enabled him to be given a presentation by the UK Environmental Audit Committee on their work on the Arctic. The results of this study may be of interest from a third party "disinterested" point of view. International interest is increasing in the Arctic, particularly as manifest in comments by the Chinese embassy in Canada that China may seek Canadian support for China's application for observer status at the AC.

It was concluded that parliamentary cooperation in the Arctic was necessary to ensure that things were done right, in the interest of the Arctic.

H. SWEDISH POLAR RESEARCH

In advance of the Committee's visit to the Swedish Polar Research Secretariat the day after the meeting, Mr. Björn Dahlbäck, Director-General, of the Secretariat introduced the members to Swedish Polar research.

Research takes place at both poles on such diverse areas as marine geology and the sea bottom, permafrost and the carbon cycle, marine chemistry and oceanography, meteorology and atmosphere, space and glaciology as well as on the human dimensions of the Arctic. There are two Arctic research stations, one at Abisko and the other at Tarfala. Though they are Swedish, there is a great deal of international

¹² National Energy Board, Review of offshore drilling in the Canadian Arctic, December 2011.

¹³ Government of Canada, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, Backgrounder -Beaufort Regional Environmental Assessment.

¹⁴ Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, Bacon and Eggheads Breakfast with David G. Barber, Director, Centre for Earth Observation Science, University of Manitoba Climate Change and Arctic Sea Ice: So what is all the fuss about?, October 2009.

cooperation that occurs with over 500 international visits and 10 000 guest nights at the stations.

I. NEXT MEETINGS OF SCPAR IN 2012

The intention is to have an informal meeting of SCPAR at the International Polar Year Conference in Montreal (From Knowledge to Action), 22-27 April, 2012.¹⁵ This will give the opportunity to present the Committee's work on Arctic Governance. In addition three other meetings of the Committee will occur in 2012 as outlined in the appended minutes.

SITE VISIT SWEDISH POLAR RESEARCH SECRETARIAT

The Swedish Polar Research Secretariat¹⁶ facilitates polar research at its stations in the Arctic and Antarctic as well as on its icebreaker Oden. The Secretariat is located in the same building as the Swedish Academy of Sciences, where the Nobel Prizes in the sciences are decided. The Committee visited the secretariat where two scientists presented work, one on modelling ice sheet dynamics under the influence of global warming and the other on ancient genetic changes to animals during the ice ages. It was noted that ice sheet dynamics are exceedingly complicated, making it impossible to make detailed predictions with any confidence regarding what may happen on large scales. Regarding animal diversity in the ice ages it was noted that, in the cases studied, the animals did not move with the ice sheets, but different geographical and genetic populations of the same species dominated as the conditions favoured them. This may have implications for species management as climate changes, particularly regarding wildlife corridors versus the protection of geographically marginal but genetically distinct populations of a species.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Ted Opitz, M.P.
Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association

¹⁵ IPY 2012 Conference Montréal, From Knowledge to Action.

¹⁶ Swedish Polar Research Secretariat.

Appendix 1



CONFERENCE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION
THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

MEETING IN STOCKHOLM

14 February 2012

Venue: Riksdagen (the Swedish parliament)
Skandiasalen (Entrance: Mynttorget 1)

Draft minutes

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND THE PROPOSED ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS

Decision:

The Committee adopted the agenda and the proposed order of agenda items.

2. APPROVAL OF DRAFT MINUTES FROM THE SCPAR-MEETING IN SYKTYVKAR 27 SEPTEMBER 2011

Decision:

The Committee approved the minutes from the SCPAR-meeting in Syktyvkar 27 September 2011.

3. ECOSYSTEM - BASED MANAGEMENT IN THE ARCTIC REGION

Mr. Alf Håkon Hoel, Regional Director, Institute of Marine Research, Norway introduced the Committee to Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM). Mr. Hoel focused his intervention in two parts: What is EBM and what is the role of the Arctic Council in EBM.

EBM is a work in progress. There are increasing pressures on the Arctic environment and EBM is about how to reconcile the different uses and concerns.

17 Large Marine Ecosystems have been identified in the Arctic. In EBM we have to identify and monitor important components, both small (plankton) and big things (marine mammals).

We need to understand and monitor the impact of climate change, economic activities, various pollutants, and new species entering the waters and the effect of all these factors on ecosystems. EBM is about to calculate the total impact of the total load on the environment from all the different drivers. One should take into account and define areas of special concern, such as spawning grounds. Emerging

from this process should be decisions such as marine protected areas or a spatial management plan – EBM.

As for Arctic Council and EBM, activities are increasing. The rationales for the Arctic Council to work with EBM are inter alia, climate change, growing economic activities, integrated approaches, international obligations (such as from the World Summit for Sustainable Development), and to learn from each other.

In the Arctic Council the "Arctic Marine Strategic Plan" (2004) was an important point of departure. This is in the process in revised for the Ministerial meeting in 2013. An Ecosystem Expert Group is drawing up the map of LME in the Arctic as a part of this process.

In 2009 a report on best practices of EBM in the Arctic was presented by the Arctic Council. An expert group establish shall within 2013 find a common understanding and principles for marine and terrestrial EBM and develop guidelines for EBM in the Arctic.

Mr. Hoels final message was that we need to have EBM science to be able to have EBM decisions.

On questions from the Committee Mr. Hoel noted that the Arctic Council should continue to identify best practices and help each other. He further reiterated that the basis for EBM is the whole ecosystem not its single components. A good example is Norwegian management plan for the Barents Sea which provides a stable and predictable framework for developing the ocean; it is flexible and will be regularly revised.

As an example of international cooperation on EBM Mr. Hoel mentioned that Norway and Russia have cooperation on EBM. The Arctic is not one ecosystem and the cooperation between the countries should be strengthened.

Finally Mr. Hoel informed that local and traditional knowledge is and should be a part of EBM and that he was confident the Arctic climate is warming.

Decision:

The Committee took note of the information.

4. SWEDISH CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE ARCTIC COUNCIL – PROGRESS REPORT

Mr. Carl Bildt, Foreign Minister of Sweden and Chair of the Arctic Council updated the Committee on the work of the Arctic Council chairmanship. Sweden took over the chairmanship in May 2011. The Arctic covers 1/6 of the globe but has only 4 million people.

Mr. Bildt underlined the good and important cooperation scientists, indigenous peoples and politicians in the Arctic Council.

Through the Search and Rescue agreement the Arctic Council has shown that it can deliver results. A new task force on oil spill preparedness and response is expected deliver a new agreement between the Arctic states.

Sweden is working on the establishment of a permanent Arctic Council secretariat in Tromsø. A leader is to be recruited and to contribute to the further process.

A permanent budget for the secretariat will be established. The legal framework for the secretariat should be in place as soon as possible.

The interest in the Arctic from the business community is increasing. Sweden wants to develop sustainable businesses through drafting guidelines for responsible entrepreneurship in the Arctic and guidelines for corporate social responsibility in the Arctic. In this connection an Arctic trade ministers meeting is planned for next year.

EPPR – WG is aiming at recommendations and response measures to oil spill in the Arctic.

Global warming and the role of Short Lived Climate Forcers will be important to explore further and also highlight in other global fora.

In a time with increased international interest in the Arctic and the Arctic Council, improved communication is important. The Arctic Council website has been revised and more personnel will work on updating the website.

On questions from the Committee, Mr. Bildt noted that the different ways of making agreements in the Arctic Council should be explored in a pragmatic manner by using both binding agreements and more traditional ways of assessments.

On the observer issue Mr. Bildt noted that it is positive with interest from other countries in the Arctic but that the criteria from Nuuk should be followed. There also needs to be a balance between members and observers in the Arctic Council. Mr. Bildt hoped to find an agreement to avoid spending more time on this matter.

On the question of the EU ban on seal products, Mr. Bildt was informed about a hearing on the matter in the European parliament and asked about the role of the Arctic Council in promoting traditional sealing.

Mr. Bildt said he believed in continued dialogue between parliamentarians and especially with the European Parliament where we must change the attitudes of the MEPs.

Since the Inuit exemption in the EU legislation is not working, the EU must also improve its communication on the content of this legislation.

Other members underlined the importance of communicating to the rest of the world about climate change and its effect in the Arctic. Mr. Bildt agreed that we need to outreach on the effects of climate change.

On the matter of sustainable business in the Arctic, members of the Committee asked how we can secure that companies operate in the Arctic to the benefit of Arctic citizens and not destroy the environment. Mr. Bildt noted that the different nation states are not likely to give away too much authority on how to develop their respective parts of the Arctic. The local ownership is still strong. But we should learn from each other and exchange best practices within the different sectors of business development (fishing, oil and gas, mining etc.).

On question of following up the SAR agreement on also building SAR capacity, Mr. Bildt noted that this mainly should be dealt with by the different nation states. However we need to make sure that we can communicate and work together, across the nation states. Also satellites made for other purposes but may be used for Arctic matters as well.

The Arctic countries should work together in IMO to promote a binding polar code. And even though there are joint exercises in the Arctic between different nations, maybe we should have a pan-Arctic exercise, whether it on search and rescue or environmental issues.

Decision:

The Committee took note of the information.

5. OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARCTIC

Mr. Lars-Otto Reiersen, Executive secretary of AMAP introduced the Committee to the key findings of the Arctic Oil and Gas Assessment (OGA) from 2007. Initially Mr. Reiersen remarked that getting the data they had needed for the Assessment had been difficult.

- Key finding 1: Oil and gas activity has occurred in the Arctic since the 1920ies with Russia as the biggest producer in the Arctic.
- Key finding 2: Natural seeps are the major source of petroleum contamination.
- Key finding 3: Concentration of Petroleum hydrocarbon in the Arctic are generally low.
- Key finding 4: Main effects on land – physical disturbances (pipelines and roads). Use of ice roads to limit the consequences is no longer possible to the same extent because of thawing permafrost.
- Key finding 5: Marine pollution, oil spill biggest effect. Even small oil spill can have big impact, especially on animals.
- Key finding 9: Responding to major oil spills remains a challenge in remote and icy conditions. There are no efficient means to clean up oil from the ice.
- Key finding 11: Many risks remain - accidents cannot be entirely prevented.

OGA calls for strategies and technologies to prevent oil spills, reduce discharges, cleanup technologies for oil in ice covered waters, management of local and social economic impacts, real-time monitoring of operations, control of sensitive areas and vulnerable species, knowledge of interaction between climate change and oil and gas activities.

AMAP has also looked at the consequences of climate change. For the Arctic residents it means more insecure travels as the ice and tundra thaws and diminishing traditional food sources. For the global community it means rise in sea level and amplified warming, as well as better access to oil and gas resources and new shipping routes.

Who will be the winners and losers in this development?

In the Arctic Change Assessment the drivers and pressures of change in the Arctic will be analyzed.

Mercury pollution linked to the energy production and consumption – 95 % is manmade and the main source is coal burning.

What are the integrated results of climate change on persistent organic pollutants? New report will be released at COP 5 of Stockholm Convention in April 2012.

Mr. Ole Kristian Bjerkemo, Chair of the Arctic Council working group Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR), informed the Committee about the work of EPPR within oil and gas development in the Arctic. Within the mandate of EPPR lies oil spill response, accidental releases of radio nuclides and natural disasters.

Arctic shipping and oil and gas are interconnected when we talk about oil spill response. The risks for acute oil pollution in the Arctic comes from shipping, oil exploration and production, land based activities, and natural disasters.

In the Nuuk declaration the EPPR is called to develop recommendations and/or best practices in the prevention of marine oil pollution.

The Arctic risk level is dependent of: ice, remoteness, low temperature, new technology, darkness and vulnerable environment.

In the Arctic Council project EPPR will look at:

- What are the best practices – what can we learn from the industry?
- Identify different national regulatory framework and int. standards.
- Additional safety measures and barriers, new technology to deal with additional hazards.

Previous EPPR projects have looked at:

- In situ burn of oil spills on water and broken and solid ice.
- Arctic region oil spill response, resource and logistics.

New joint industry project “Oil in ice” launched fall of 2011.

Oil spill response is traditionally a national responsibility (see IMO OPRC Convention). However there are bilateral and multilateral agreements (Helcom for the Baltic Sea, USA – Canada), plus training and exercises. We need to have exercises and learn how to use the equipment in Arctic conditions.

In the Nuuk declaration the Arctic Council established a new Task Force which is to negotiate an International instrument on Arctic marine oil pollution preparedness and response.

Mr. Bjerkemo concluded that:

- The risk of oil spill in the Arctic is increasing

- Prevention must have the first priority
- R&D is important and necessary
- Improved infrastructure is needed
- The Arctic states must take responsibility regarding Prevention, Preparedness and Response.
- Spill response – international cooperation is important.

On question from the Committee Ole-Kristian Bjerkemo noted that the mandatory polar code within IMO also will be important for prevention and response. The standards for developing oil and gas in the Arctic must be improved and the governments must push the oil companies.

Mr. Lars-Otto Reiersen underlined that the albedo effect is different from different kinds of ice. The shooting of seismic and the breaking of the ice by ships does not have so much effect as the ice may freeze soon again.

However increased acidification increases the sound of seismic.

Both agreed that the reports and regulation always get better with the involvement of local and indigenous peoples.

Mr. Bjerkemo noted that the cooperation with the industry will be very important in oil spill preparedness and prevention.

Mr. Reiersen noted that the access to information is a continuous challenge - both from businesses sector, governments and from the scientists themselves. SAON – important exercise in information sharing.

As for a success story in the Arctic cooperation Mr. Reiersen mentioned some villages in Chukotka which received information about PCB in the traditional food harvested by the people. At a later stage the villages where the information had been distributed the levels of PCB had gone down compared to villages where they had not received the information.

Decision:

The Committee took note of the information.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN HEALTH

Ms. Birgitta Evengard professor of infectious diseases, informed the Committee about the possible effects of climate change on the health of the Arctic Population.

The climate has always changed but now things are changing much faster than earlier. The warming is highest in the higher latitudes. The climate has been unusually stable for the last 10 000 years leading to the rise and development of human civilisations.

The change in climate will infect our health.

“Climate change will have enormous implications for human health, especially for the burden of vector borne and waterborne diseases” The New England Journal of Medicine”.

The changes we see in the Arctic local communities can prepare the rest of the world of what is to come. Diseases will follow from new plants, trees, animals entering the Arctic and new areas of the Arctic.

There are limits to how much a system can be changed and still recover. Beyond those limits it functions differently, and the system changes to some other state. The Siberian tundra is shifting from shrub to grassland.

Acute effects:

- Malnutrition – established in Canada, change in season, water shortage, changing hunting seasons etc.
- Accidents: more victims of natural disasters. Disruption of infrastructure as a result of thawing permafrost.
- Diarrhoeal diseases – more Giardia problems with sewage in drinking water.
- Water security. Access to water is fundamental – thawing permafrost will lead to ponds drying. Less access to water leads to worse hygiene, and more skin diseases, more use of antibiotics and lead to resistance in the Arctic. Severe respiratory diseases with less water and blooming of algae.
- More victims of weather related events such as hurricanes, storms, flooding, wild fires, slides.

Eco systems change – contents and borders. The wild life move North and marine species change and a change in the world of microorganisms.

The ticks will follow the expansion of the other animals and may cause more diseases.

Chronic effects:

- Disruption of lifestyles may lead to disruption of health problems.
- Climate refugees.
- Less water will lead to poor hygiene which again may lead to skin infections and more resistance to antibiotics.
- Increase of CO₂ will cause some fauna to grow better which again will lead to more pollen in the air and more respiratory diseases.
- Change in diet from traditional to western – more obesity.

The Arctic Human Health Expert Group will continue to look at food and water security and the impact of climate change. They will also work together with AMAP on other effects of climate change on the human health.

On question from the Committee Ms. Evengaard informed that a gender perspective in the data should be more prominent as climate change will affect men and women differently. The gender perspective is often mentioned in policy documents but rarely followed up.

She also noted that a human dimension in the thinking of EBM would be very interesting.

Ms Evengaard further noted that there is a connection between mental health and climate change.

Decision:

The Committee took note of the information.

7. 10TH CONFERENCE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

Ms. Gudfridur Lilja Gretarsdottir informed that an information sheet containing information about hotel, flights etc will be circulated next week with an updated program and a prior announcement.

Mr. Morten Høglund suggested that each delegation should include young person (under the age of 35).

Decision:

The Committee took note of the updated information and the input to the preparations.

8. ARCTIC GOVERNANCE IN AN EVOLVING ARCTIC REGION

Mr. Høglund presented the updated draft paper on Arctic governance and referred to two seminars he has attended to present the proposals outlined in the paper. The first was an international legal forum in Salekhard, Russia in October 2011 and the second was a seminar in Toronto, Canada January 2012 on the role of the Arctic Council in the future governance of the Arctic.

Ms. Sara Olsvig noted that the paper lacks the word people in the first paragraph and would like to see that included in the draft paper.

Decision:

The Committee took note of the progress report and suggested changes.

9. STATUS OF THE WORK OF SCPAR

Mr. Helgi Hjörvar from the Nordic Council referred to the work with the Stoltenberg report on security and defence issues in the North, among them "Search of Rescue"

There is a proposal to tax the cruise ships entering the Arctic where the revenues could be used to strengthen SAR capacities in the Arctic.

A theme session 23 March 2012 in Reykjavik will concentrate on the Arctic. At this meeting the Nordic Council will consider the possibilities of a common Nordic strategy for the Arctic region.

In the Finnish Presidency of the Nordic Council, a main item in the Chairmanship program is transportation in the Arctic region. A conference on that topic is expected to take place late 2012.

The representatives from Canada reminded the Committee of the 4 pillars in the Northern strategy of Canada.

Health issues of the North will be an important topic in the Canadian policy, together with SAR capacities in the North. The disputes regarding the limits of the continental shelf (Hans Island and the Beaufort Sea) are managed in a proper way.

National Energy Board has made a review of offshore drilling in the Canadian Arctic.

There is a real need for risk assessments when drilling in the Arctic.

Dr. David Barber is leading a new project the ice extension and thickness and the circulation of the Arctic Ocean.

This winter in Canada is the warmest winter for decades and with intense storms.

A very controversial issue is the banned hunt on caribou for natives as the decline of the caribou herds have continued. Caribou is an important basis for the subsistence lifestyles of the natives in Canada.

Finally it is important to talk with the observers in the Arctic cooperation about the development of the Arctic, to teach and promote knowledge about the Arctic, and to have Arctic side events on international meetings and conferences.

Denmark/Greenland

Greenland has two seats in Folketinget (the Danish parliament). The seat in SCPAR has traditionally been one of the Greenlandic representatives. Ms. Sara Olsvig is a new member of the Danish parliament from Greenland and the new representative in SCPAR. The election in Denmark also resulted in the formation of a new coalition government.

In August 2011 the Kingdom of Denmark presented a new Arctic strategy where the human dimension is important. To implement the strategy Denmark has inter alia appointed an Arctic ambassador and there will be a yearly Arctic debate on Arctic issues in the Danish parliament.

As regards Greenland offshore oil exploration no large discoveries were done in 2011. In 2012 there will be no licenses for drilling but continued seismic exploration.

There are also debates on opening new aluminium smelters and mines.

The seal market is important in efforts to build an own economy in Greenland. Seals are an important export product. The EU ban of seal products has led to a dramatic decrease in the export of seal products and the Inuit exemption does not work. An increasing number of seals will lead to seals eating more of the fish.

Also the issue of cruise ships and increased the safety are on the agenda. Finally Ms. Olsvig noted that increased presence of military forces in the Arctic does not mean that we have a militarisation of the Arctic.

The representative from Finland informed about important debates and developments of transport, logistics and mining in Northern Finland. Finland Chairs the Nordic Council this year and Arctic cooperation is central issue in that regard.

Finland will also continue the dialogue meetings with Russia and the next meeting will be in June.

It was further informed about the EU Arctic Information Centre which was endorsed by the CPAR in 2010. In 2014 there will be a permanent funding for the centre. It will be a network with a hub in Rovaniemi.

The representative from Iceland noted that the Arctic is one of the main priorities in Iceland and that the Arctic budget is increased in a time with cut of many budgets.

An Arctic professorship has been established in Akureyri and named after Nansen. The Arctic Council has also received positive media attention SAR agreement and the expected oil spill prevention and response agreement.

There is a new Senior Arctic Official from Iceland, Ambassador Hjalmar W. Hannesson.

The seals issue is a severe blow to the traditional living of Arctic peoples and Iceland support the views of the representative of Denmark/Greenland.

Finally Iceland supported the idea of including young people in the delegation for the CPAR 10 in Akureyri.

The representatives from Russia informed about the parliamentary election last December, and Mr. Kashin from Murmansk/Karelia was introduced to the Committee.

The President of the West-Nordic Council, Mr. Henrik Old expressed support for the protests against the ban of seal products in the EU. In the end of March the West-Nordic Council will host a conference in Ilulissat where the topic will be the West-Nordic Region in the international community, with a special focus on the Arctic.

Westnordic region in the international

The representative from Norway also expressed support for the protest against the EU ban of seal products. He further informed about the Norwegian relationship with China and the need of dialogue to move things forward, also on the observer issue in the Arctic Council.

A White Paper on Arctic policies was presented by the Norwegian government last fall and will be debated in the Norwegian parliament 17 April 2012.

The representative from Sweden informed about the Swedish Arctic strategy.

Decision:

The Committee took note of the information.

10. SWEDISH POLAR RESEARCH

Mr. Björn Dahlbäck, Director-General, Swedish Polar Research Secretariat introduce the Committee to Swedish Polar Research and the Swedish Polar Institute.

The polar research is very much international and that is also the situation for Swedish polar research. Sweden has two large research field stations, one in Abisko which is 100 years old and has 500 guest nights a year, and one in Terpala mainly doing glaciology.

The icebreaker Oden has been 6 times to the Antarctic and 11 times to the Arctic with researcher. During the winter season it breaks ice in the Baltic Sea. Next summer Oden will take Danish/Swedish expedition to the Arctic.

Sweden also has a station in Antarctic, and right now a joint expedition with Finland. The Swedish Polar Research secretariat facilitates and coordinates the researchers in their research and cooperates with the Swedish Research Council.

There is a research projects on: Marine geology and the sea bottom, permafrost and the Carbon cycle (study methane release as permafrost melts), marine chemistry and oceanography, meteorology and atmosphere, space and glaciology.

“Mistra Arctic Futures” is an interdisciplinary and social-science-oriented research program on Arctic governance, sustainable tourism and more.

On question from the Committee Mr. Dalbäck noted that increased attention to polar research from big countries will force smaller countries to work better together. The big countries will bring qualified scientists who can contribute to a better understanding of the Arctic.

Decision:

The Committee took note of the information.

11. NEXT MEETINGS OF SCPAR IN 2012

- | | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| • 22-23 April | IPY-conference in Montreal | Side event and meetings |
| • 4-7 June | Nuuk, Greenland | SCPAR meeting |
| • 5-7 September | Akureyri, Iceland | CPAR 10 |
| • 12-14 November | Inari, Finland | SCPAR meeting |

Decision:

The Committee agreed upon the dates of the meetings in 2012.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Ann-Kristine Johansson celebrated her 50th birthday. The Chair of the Committee gave a short speech and gave her a present from the Committee. The Committee sang “Happy Birthday”.

Appendix 2



CONFERENCE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

MEETING IN STOCKHOLM

14 February 2012

List of participants

MEMBERS

Canada	Mr. Ted Opitz, MP Mr. Dennis F. Bevington, MP Mr. Tim Williams, Resources and Environment Section, Parliamentary Information and Research Service
Denmark/Greenland	Ms. Sara Olsvig, MP, Denmark/Greenland
Finland	Mr. Peder Pedersen, Head of Section Ms. Johanna Ojala-Niemelä, MP Mr. Guy Lindström, Deputy Director
Iceland	Ms. Gudfridur Lilja Gretarsdottir, MP Ms. Arna Bang, Adviser
Norway	Mr. Morten Høglund, MP Mr. Kjell Myhre-Jensen, Head of Section
Russia	Mr. Vladimir Torlopov, Senator, Council of Federation Mr. Kirill Mangush, Counsellor Mr. Nikolay Dankov, Counsellor Mr. Boris Kashin MP, State Duma Mrs. Irina Kuzmina, Secretary
Sweden	Ms. Ann-Kristin Johansson, MP Ms. Karin Åström, MP Ms. Cecilie Tenfjord-Toftby, MP

Mr. Bengt Ohlsson, International Senior Advisor
Ms. Eva Hjelm, Senior Officer
Mr. Ludwig Höghammar Mitkas, International Secretary
Ms. Jennie Lindqvist, Intern

OBSERVERS

Nordic Council

Mr. Helgi Hjörvar, MP
Mr. Torkil Sørensen, Senior Adviser

West-Nordic Council

Henrik Old, President of the West-Nordic Council
Mr. Thordur Thorarinsson, Secretary General

SECRETARIAT

Mr. Bjørn Willy Robstad, Secretary General

GUESTS

Mr. Carl Bildt, Foreign Minister of Sweden and Chair of the Arctic Council
Mr. Gustaf Lind, SAO – Chair, Sweden
Mr. Alf Håkon Hoel, Regional Director, Institute of Marine Research, Norway
Mr. Ole Kristian Bjerkemo, Chair of EPPR
Mr. Lars Otto Reiersen, Executive Secretary, AMAP
Ms. Birgitta Evengård, Professor of Infectious Diseases and Co-Chair of the Arctic Human Health Expert Group 2011-2013
Mr. Björn Dahlbäck, PhD, Director-General, Swedish Polar Research Secretariat
Mr. Patrick Hebert, Counsellor, Canadian Embassy
Ms. Kirsten Maling Biering, Ambassador, Danish Embassy
Mr. Juha Markkanen, Minister Counsellor, Finnish Embassy
Mr. Frode Solberg, Minister Counsellor, Norwegian Embassy
Mr. Nikolay Shpikalov, Third secretary, Russian Embassy

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association
ACTIVITY	Meeting of the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region
DESTINATION	Stockholm, Sweden
DATES	February 14, 2012
DELEGATION	
SENATE	N/A
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Ted Optiz, M.P. Mr. Dennis F. Bevington, M.P.
STAFF	Mr. Tim Williams, Advisor
TRANSPORTATION	\$16,643.95
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 2,230.52
HOSPITALITY	\$ 0.00
PER DIEMS	\$ 966.35
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 0.00
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 0.00
TOTAL	\$19,840.82