

**Trip Report**  
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**Gwich'in Council International**  
**Cambridge, England**  
**September 6-9, 2005**

**Purpose of Trip**

To attend the CAFF Board and Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program Release meeting.

**Background Information**

**Tuesday Meetings, September 6<sup>th</sup>**

**Introduction**

*Kaveh Zahedi, the Director (acting) of the UNEP-WCMC*, A major supporter of this meeting, spoke on the potential importance of the CBMP

*Esko Jaakola, the Chairman of CAFF*, gave a follow-up welcoming message to all participants. He spoke of the importance of linking all projects of the CBMP to the Convention on Bio-diversity.

*Martin Raillard, the Chairman of the CBMP group*, introduced the workshop agenda and set the tone for the meeting. He stated several objectives of the CBMP;

1. What we are doing
  - a. Monitoring changes in the arctic
    - i. What is happening
    - ii. Why is it happening
    - iii. What is the impact
    - iv. What's being done about it
    - v. What can be done about it
  - b. What is the vision
    - i. Create an Arctic Portal
    - ii. Show trends (connections between indicators)
    - iii. Report on status and trends
    - iv. Create international attention
    - v. Develop educational tools (to make this multi-generational in scope)
    - vi. Identify follow-up

*Steven Emmott, Group Director, External Research, Microsoft*, Is working to create computational software tools to assist researchers in addressing bio-diversity. The goal is to reduce the loss of bio-diversity. This decade will bring software advances that will

allow for quicker, better, more analytical research that will allow for broader and more accelerated scientific advances.

### **CAFF Management Board & Permanent Participant Meeting**

PP's & heads of delegations met each day to prepare for the meetings and to iron out meeting & process issues.

### **Arctic Portal**

Iceland is the lead country for developing the Arctic Portal. The idea sprang forth from the need to update the CAFF website (still a priority) and has grown in size, breadth, depth, necessity, and support. It may be housed at the university in Akureyri, Iceland. The proposal has many vague references; it is not defined in detail, on purpose, because it is still in the conceptual stage. It will be presented to the S.A.O.'s in October. If approved it may be presented in Tunisia in November at the Summit on Information Society.

### **Specialist Group Workplan Reviews**

An update was given on the status of ECORA, CFG, CBird, CPAN, and RAIPON provided information on their Sacred Sites work. It was discussed that no one really knew the status of the CPAN and that they had numerous goals but little had been done and reported regarding accomplishments and deliverables.

RAIPON presented their wishes to conduct a sacred sites workshop in Russia in November, however the cost is approximately \$95,000 and they are about \$30,000 short. If funds can not be identified they may push the meeting into April 2006. GCI commented that we are still very interested in learning more about and supporting their sacred sites work especially since the Gwich'in are very keen on documenting and protecting their own sacred sites.

### **CAFF Website**

This is independent of the Arctic Portal project. It is to make the CAFF site more user friendly and accessible to the members of CAFF, other working groups, and the public. Depending on the level of detail agreed upon, the cost of updating the website will cost between \$8,000-\$11,000 U.S. dollars. This cost seems high, but it includes some innovative technical updates that will allow for searching a database of CAFF's scientific documents and a unique portal to other Arctic Council working group sites and information.

### **ACIA Focal Point**

This was a review of the scientific report to solicit recommendations. Also, there was discussion about how to incorporate recommendations into the CBMP. So far two working groups have provided recommendations in written form. The CAFF Board and

Secretariat will review the other reports, so as not to duplicate effort, and prepare a report for the October S.A.O. meeting.

### **Wednesday Meetings, September 7th**

*CAFF Management Board and PP Meeting Continued...*

#### **Budget**

*Maria Victoria Gunnarsdóttir, CAFF Secretariat*, presented the CAFF budget. She stated that since 2001 the budget has decreased by about 21% due to the drop in value of the US dollar. This has made participating in all appropriate venues difficult, and in some cases impossible. She also stated that the CAFF board should pursue discretionary funds from their nations so they can identify low cost projects and fund them without having to seek outside funding. *Victoria Gofman, AIA*, also stated that the Indigenous Peoples' are struggling with similar financial problems. And, that these problems are exacerbated by the fact that the US funds are managed in Denmark and that we have to follow Danish law in expending these resources.

#### **Vice Chair**

*Maria*, also pointed out that CAFF has no Vice-chair. Greenland was scheduled to be the Vice-chair, which would lead to chairmanship after the next ministerial meeting, however, the Greenland representative has fallen ill and can not participate. Russia is slated to be next after Greenland. So, the Russian representative will take the question of his becoming Vice-chair back to Russia and provide an answer later.

#### **IUCN**

*Dr. Janet Hohn US National Representative*, noted that the IUCN does not have a specialist group for arctic plants. The CAFF Flora specialist group would like to participate on an individual basis. The CAFF Board has pointed out that the Flora Group is comprised of some of the Arctic's foremost specialists and that it would be a natural match. The CAFF Board agreed that it is a good idea as long as it did not detract from the CAFF requirements or add cost. There were three meeting participants who have experience with IUCN Species Survival Committee Specialist Groups. Each reported that the requirements are not onerous.

#### **CAFF Boundary Change**

*Anna Maria F, Faeroe Islands Representative*, initiated a discussion to change the CAFF map to include the Faeroe Islands. The CAFF Board agreed that the Faeroe Islands should be included. However, discussions turned to CAFF completing an assessment of the entire area to determine if the entire map needs to be amended. Some thought that the map should mirror the AMAP map.

### **Community Based Monitoring**

*Victoria Gofman, Aleut International Association*, discussed Community-based Monitoring. She stated that she was submitting an IPY proposal to the NSF for funding, and that the deadline for submittals is 30 November. The board asked questions about how the AIA proposal will be organized and what the objectives are. She stated that an umbrella organization, such as GRID Arendal should organize community-based monitoring efforts and could serve as the storehouse of information and assist in portal development to make the community-based monitoring a part of the Arctic Portal project.

### **Convention on Biological Diversity**

*Mikhail Todishev, RAIPON, and Aevor Petersen, Icelandic Representative to CAFF* discussed section 8J of the convention and that permanent participants and the CAFF Board should look at the construct of this section. Some discussion was on why most of the Arctic peoples' do not participate in the CBD functions. The CBD Secretariat has asked the CAFF to participate. Aevor recommended that this is a good idea, as a means of good public relations for CAFF. We have not done a good job of P.R.. The U.S. representative mentioned that the US has not ratified the Convention on Bio-diversity, and that CAFF, if it participates should be careful in how it represents their position.

### **CAFF & AMAP Joint Monitoring**

*John Calder, AMAP Chair*, gave a presentation to the CAFF Board stating that CAFF & AMAP have developed a strategy for cooperation. He commented that the CAFF component will be the new Circumpolar Bio-diversity Monitoring Program that is being officially launched at this meeting. He also commented that the AMAP working group has begun identifying follow-up activities to the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment. The results of those activities will be presented to the ministers in 2006.

### **Thursday Meetings, September 8th**

#### **CBMP Specialist Group Presentations & CBMP Release**

*Mike Hill, Indicators Task Team*, presented the results of their work on identifying bio-diversity monitoring indicators. They are creating a mechanism for categorizing levels of information available and researcher involvement and availability.

*Christof Zokler, Data Management Task Team*, presented their teams results. He reiterated the importance of our new alliance with Microsoft, and how they will create powerful software tools that will help us model ecosystems to identify better scientific approaches to preventing the loss of biological diversity.

*Janet Hohn, Financial Management Task Team*, gave a presentation on their teams efforts at fundraising for this effort. She identified; NSF, NASA, IPY, ESF, NATO,

observer countries, GEOSS, and numerous NGO's as potential partners that they have been in contact with.

*Ambassador Vitaly Churkin, Russian S.A.O.*, congratulated the CAFF Board and task team members during the launch of the CBMP. He stated that the CAFF should be prepared to present its findings at the 2010 Ministerial meeting. He believes this will be another hallmark CAFF project.

### **Friday Meetings, September 9th**

*CAFF Management Board and PP Meeting Continued...*

*David Carlson, IPY Chair*, presented the openness and willingness of the IPY committee to accept the CBMP or components as IPY projects. He also discussed how the IPY is being organized. He stated that he wants the process to be open to allow a broad diversity of science. He also identified several components of arctic and Antarctic research that was lacking a presence in the IPY.

*CAFF Secretariat, Contract Renewal*. There were discussions relating to the continuation of Maria Victoria Gunnarsdóttir contract. Some editing was needed, so the final will be finalized via tele-conference.

Next CAFF Board meeting will be 13-15 February in Montreal, Canada.

Meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.