

**PROGRAM FOR THE
CONSERVATION OF ARCTIC FLORA AND FAUNA
FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT**

I INTRODUCTION

During the development of the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS), the eight Arctic countries confirmed that their shared ecosystem with its unique flora and fauna is fragile and threatened from a number of causes. They agreed to *"cooperate for the conservation of Arctic flora and fauna, their diversity and their habitats"* and, to that end, established the Program for the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) as a *"distinct forum for scientists, indigenous peoples and conservation managers ...to exchange data and information on issues such as shared species and habitats and to collaborate, as appropriate for more effective research, sustainable utilization and conservation"*.

II GOALS AND MANDATE

Section 9 of the AEPS which outlines the main functions of CAFF, received Ministerial approval at Rovaniemi, Finland, in 1991 and again at the second Ministerial Conference in Nuuk, Greenland, in 1993. A summary of the broad objectives and actions assigned to the eight countries for CAFF, including the above rationale, are as follows:

- 1) to collaborate for more effective research, sustainable utilization and conservation
- 2) to cooperate to conserve Arctic flora and fauna, their diversity and their habitats
- 3) to protect the Arctic ecosystem from human-caused threats
- 4) to seek to develop more effective laws, regulations and practices for flora, fauna and habitat management, utilization and conservation
- 5) to work in cooperation with the Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic
- 6) to consult and cooperate with appropriate international organizations and seek to develop other forms of cooperation
- 7) to regularly compile and disseminate information on Arctic conservation

- 8) to contribute to environmental impact assessments of proposed activities

The CAFF program was officially inaugurated in April 1992, in Ottawa, Canada, when the eight Arctic Countries and observer groups met as the CAFF International Working Group to discuss Arctic conservation issues and to establish the first CAFF Work Plan. Since then, it has met annually.

III FUNCTIONS

As requested by the Ministers, the countries have established CAFF as a distinct interdisciplinary forum for governments, indigenous peoples organizations, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to address scientific, management and political conservation needs and interests. This forum

brings together specialists from a wide range of disciplines to provide a solid scientific basis for decisions on Arctic conservation and utilization issues

serves as a vehicle to cooperate on species and habitat management and utilization, to share information on management techniques and regulatory regimes, and to facilitate more knowledgeable decision-making

provides a means for indigenous peoples to communicate and participate with scientists and resource managers for Arctic conservation

offers other government and non-government organizations with an opportunity to promote and discuss new ideas and initiatives on Arctic conservation and to develop partnerships.

provides a mechanism to develop common responses on issues of importance for the Arctic ecosystem such as development and economic pressures, conservation opportunities and political commitments (e.g. to international Conventions, the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21, the World Charter for Nature).

IV OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Because CAFF's mandate is broad and the scope for action wide, CAFF meets its commitments by striving to maximize its efficiency, to set realistic targets and to use its limited resources wisely to achieve the goals set for it by the Ministers. The following principles serve to guide CAFF in its work.

- i CAFF is a science-based program that focuses primarily on ecosystem, habitat and species conservation, utilization and management*
- ii Indigenous Peoples and their knowledge are integral to CAFF*
- iii CAFF employs an ecosystem approach¹ and its activities are linked to clearly identified ecosystem units where feasible*
- iv Program activities are integrated and interrelated to provide a consistent and comprehensive response to Arctic conservation and sustainable use issues*
- v Projects, activities and proposals are prioritized and ranked on the basis of scientific merit, ecological importance, urgency, feasibility, economic, cultural, public and political significance² and the scientific and professional objectives are clearly laid out*
- vi Cooperation and linkages with other conservation organizations and initiatives are promoted to benefit from shared expertise and knowledge and to minimize duplication*
- vii Activities that are considered feasible within the available resource base and time frame are selected*
- viii Initiatives aim to be culturally and politically acceptable and as far as possible, not to contradict the political or economic interests of participating nations or Indigenous and local populations*
- ix Activities that have a high probability of achieving the stated scientific and professional objectives are selected*

V MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

CAFF has a Management Board, International Working Group and sub-groups to manage and implement the program.

The CAFF Management Board consists of representatives from each country (termed CAFF National Representatives) and is headed up by a Chair* and two Vice-Chairs*, who are also National Representatives and who assume the duties on a rotational basis with the host country of the annual meeting of the International

¹ *Ecosystem is understood as "an interconnected community of living things, including humans and the physical environment with which they interact"*

² *CAFF uses a system of matrices as a convenient management instrument to guide in its priority setting and activity-selection exercise. Samples of the matrices are contained in Appendix I*

Working Group assuming the position of Chair and Incoming and Outgoing chairs assuming positions of Vice-chair. The Management Board is supported by the CAFF Executive Secretary* who reports to the Chair. The CAFF Management Board meets at least twice annually. Appendix 2 provides Terms of Reference for the positions. (*comprise CAFF Executive Board for ongoing program management)

The CAFF International Working Group includes the eight countries, whose delegations are headed by the respective National Representative or alternate, Indigenous Peoples organizations, other AEPS observers, permanent CAFF observers³ and invited *ad hoc* observers. The roles of observers are included in Appendix 2. The CAFF International Working Group meets at least annually. The Chair of CAFF assumes the responsibility for hosting the annual meeting. The schedule of meetings for the International Working Group is:

	Canada:	1992	Finland:	1996
	USA:	1993	Greenland:	1997
	Iceland:	1994	Canada:	1998
Russia:	1995			

Specialist and *Ad Hoc* groups and Task Forces are established when necessary and meet on an as-needed, but at least annual, basis

The program is implemented through Annual CAFF Work Plans and sub-group Action Plans, as described below.

Annual CAFF Work Plans are drafted by the CAFF International Working Group to respond to scientific, management, political and Ministerial requirements

Specialist and Ad hoc groups and Task Forces also produce Action Plans

Work Plans are implemented using a Lead-country system whereby the Lead country assumes the responsibility for delivering Work Plan Items on behalf of CAFF

The use of Co- or Shared Lead is encouraged to provide countries with less money and staff time to share responsibility for the design and implementation of the Work Plan Item

Annual Work Plans are built on the basic themes of habitat conservation, species conservation, integrating indigenous peoples and their knowledge, and program

³ Permanent CAFF Observers are: Regional and Global Conservation Conventions (Berne, Bonn, Biodiversity, CITES, Ramsar), Regional Intergovernmental Bodies (Nordic and Barents Councils), International Non-governmental and Intergovernmental organizations (UNESCO, GRID, IUCN, WCMC, WWF, BirdLife International, International Waterfowl Research Bureau)

management

Additional types of activities are incorporated into the Work Plans on an as-needed basis

VI REPORTING

The following reporting system is in place.

CAFF reports to the Ministers, through the Senior Arctic Affairs Officials (SAAOs), every two years at the AEPS Ministerial Conference.

At least annually, CAFF reports its progress to the SAAOs and seeks ongoing endorsement of its activities and direction

The Chair, Vice-Chairs and Executive Secretary present reports to the International Working Group annually and to the other National Representatives at least twice a year.

Lead countries provide status reports and completed project reports to the International Working Group at the annual meetings. At those meetings, the sub-groups of CAFF also present their findings and recommendations.

VII RESOURCES

CAFF funds its Secretariat on a voluntary cost-sharing basis

Program activities are funded on a shared or individual country basis or through other means

Projects are financed and the information provided to appropriate agencies and officials

Financial support for CAFF work is sought from a variety of sources

APPENDIX 2

**PROGRAM FOR THE
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STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS**

The CAFF Program Management Structure and Terms of Reference of National Representatives, Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Executive Secretary adopted by the CAFF National Representative are as follows:

CAFF National Representatives/Management Board

CAFF has operated using this system since its inception. In cohort, the National Representatives function as the CAFF Management Board. The responsibilities of National Representatives are to:

- constitute a member of the CAFF Management Board
- develop and propose program strategic directions
- approve annual CAFF program and budget
- co-ordinate implementation of CAFF within respective countries
- secure resources within country
- represent national interests in CAFF
- attend CAFF meetings on behalf of country
- represent CAFF in other fora, if required
- co-ordinate country input to CAFF Work Plans and activities
- act as contact point with Chair, Vice-Chair, Executive Secretary
- promote and publicize CAFF within country and ensure distribution of CAFF documentation
- take on functions of Chair/Vice-Chair when required

CAFF Chair*

The CAFF Chairperson is selected from among the National Representatives and the position rotates among the countries.

The functions of the CAFF Chairperson are to:

- preside over Work Plan implementation and manage the CAFF program, in cooperation with the National Representatives
- represent the CAFF program (e.g. at SAAO and Ministerial Meetings and other fora, as required)
- provide overall program direction on behalf of the countries
- oversee preparation of CAFF reports to the SAAOs and Ministers and present, as required
- provide ongoing direction to the CAFF Executive Secretary

CAFF Vice-Chairs*

The CAFF program has up to two Vice-Chairs whose main functions are to:

- represent Chair, as called upon
- share program management responsibilities with Chair

CAFF Executive Secretary*

The CAFF Executive Secretary works under the supervision of the CAFF Chair and has the following general Terms of Reference and specific duties:

General Terms of Reference of the Executive Secretary are to:

- provide a conduit for exchange of CAFF information and communication among participating states and observers
- assist the Chair and Vice-Chairs with coordination of substantive CAFF activities
- provide support to the Chair in preparing for the annual CAFF meetings
- serve as a general contact point between CAFF, other programs of the AEPS and other organizations

Specific Duties of the Executive Secretary are to:

- develop and maintain administrative systems for CAFF
- provide overall co-ordination for and monitor CAFF Work Plan implementation
- draft and manage budget in consultation with Chair and seek resources as required
- draft guidelines, recommendations, discussion documents at request of National Representatives/Chair/Vice Chair
- co-ordinate meetings
- provide advice on program implementation, priorities, directions for CAFF
- liaise with other programs, institutions, organizations
- promote and publicize CAFF when required by Chair
- prepare information and public awareness packages
- co-ordinate and draft CAFF input to AEPS Ministerial, SAAO and other meetings
- manage the CAFF Secretariat
- other duties, as required

(* comprise CAFF Executive Board for ongoing program management)

The roles and responsibilities of the *CAFF International Working Group* are as follows:

- to serve as a broad forum for discussion of Arctic conservation issues among conservation managers, scientists, indigenous peoples and conservation organizations
- to review progress in CAFF, including Work Plan implementation
- to draft Annual CAFF Work Plans

- to receive and assess reports on a variety of issues
- to act as an advisory group to the eight countries on CAFF-related topics

The roles and responsibilities of *Observers* are as follows:

Indigenous Peoples Observer Organizations

The Indigenous Peoples Organizations have a special role to play in CAFF since they represent the repository of traditional indigenous ecological knowledge and skills of the Arctic. AEPS Indigenous Observer groups are invited to all meetings of the CAFF International Working Group, are allotted a segment of the meeting to discuss CAFF issues of particular interest to Indigenous peoples and have permanent membership on the Annual Work Plan Drafting Committee where they will have primary responsibility for drafting the Work Plan Item on the CAFF Theme "Integration of Indigenous Peoples and their Knowledge". The Indigenous Peoples Organizations are invited to all formally constituted meetings of CAFF sub-groups and task forces. Indigenous Peoples Observer Organizations will be requested to compile and provide the traditional knowledge input wherever such is required to meet CAFF's objectives.

Observer Countries and Intergovernmental Organizations (IGO)

Observer countries and intergovernmental organizations are important because they are able to contribute important knowledge, experience and expertise to CAFF initiatives and function as an important conduit between CAFF and Arctic conservation interests and the broader conservation community to share information and data. Observer countries and IGO's are invited to all meetings of the CAFF International Working Group meetings and to meetings of the sub-groups, as relevant. They are also called upon for consultation in their fields of expertise, to form partnerships and to contribute in a substantive way to CAFF's overall objectives.

Non-government Organizations (NGO)

NGO's with CAFF observer status are able to contribute important knowledge, experience and resources to various CAFF work items and their participation at CAFF meetings is encouraged. Several International NGO's have permanent CAFF observer status and are invited to all CAFF International Working Group meetings. Others are admitted on an ad hoc basis and apply to attend meetings. During meetings, the views and advice of the NGO community is sought and when practicable and appropriate, they are included in relevant ongoing work items and CAFF work plan implementation.