

FOURTH MEETING OF THE CAFF INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

Moscow, Russia

September 18-22, 1995

Prepared by CAFF International Secretariat

REPORT OF THE PLENARY SESSION

The fourth meeting of the CAFF International Working Group was held from September 18-22, 1995 in Moscow, Russia. It was preceded by a day of informal specialist workshops on Arctic flora, indigenous peoples knowledge, protected areas and seabirds. The meeting was structured around country overviews, observers presentations, reports on the 1994-95 CAFF Work Plan, special theme sessions, a session to draft the 1995-96 CAFF Work Plan and preparation for the CAFF presentations to the Senior Arctic Affairs Officials (SAAO) and the Ministerial meetings and was followed by an excursion to Losinyi Ostrov park. A highlight of the meeting was the address given by Viktor Danilov-Danilyan, the Minister of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources of the Russian Federation.

The Chair of CAFF, Amirkhan Amirkhanov, greeted the participants and provided an overview of the importance of the Arctic to the planet and of the role of CAFF in its preservation. Esko Jaakkola, Vice-Chair then spoke of the importance of this particular meeting in preparing for the upcoming Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy Ministerial Meeting and, as an order of business, established a CAFF Work Plan Drafting Committee consisting of three countries, WWF and an indigenous organization representative. The role of the committee would be to develop a proposed 1995-96 Work Plan for review by the Working Group.

Mr. Viktor Danilov-Danilyan, Minister of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources of the Russian Federation

Mr. Danilov-Danilyan pointed out that over the past two weeks, Moscow had become the centre of Arctic environmental protection activity, hosting meetings of the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP), the Arctic Database Directory Group (ADD) and CAFF. This was no coincidence since half of all Arctic territory belongs to Russia and, furthermore, in national consciousness the Russian Federation is a northern country and its territories play an important role in Russian culture.

He noted that environmental conservation in the North is of primary importance to Russia, and to Russia's Arctic indigenous peoples whose population and variety exceed those of all other Arctic countries. Russia needs to preserve resource use for future generations, and to conserve the overall resource balance of the Russian Federation. Attention to environmental problems is growing, and concrete decisions and actions show that Russians are increasingly taking responsibility for these issues.

The Minister pointed out that Arctic ecosystems and flora and fauna are most difficult to restore after negative anthropogenic influences. One need only go to industrial waste zones in the Arctic to see this with one's own eyes.

Russia, he said, attaches great importance to CAFF activities because there can be no Arctic, no culture and no ecology without flora and fauna. Thus, preservation and conservation of Arctic flora and fauna is a very important aim and enormous work has to be done to achieve it. Conservation problems cannot be solved by any single country. They can be solved only in close cooperation with the world community, with the Arctic community represented by AMAP, ADD, CAFF and all the other organizations trying to protect the Arctic environment.

The Minister cited two areas of achievement by Russia. The first was the creation of specially protected natural areas, each forming a pearl in Russias Arctic necklace of preserves. The second was the achievements of Russian science, especially Arctic botany, which is among the best in the world, is highly respected and through the CAFF framework, is now focused on Polar flora protection problems.

The Minister concluded by welcoming the participants and wishing the meeting good luck.

NATIONAL OVERVIEWS

Russia

The Russian overview was presented by Valery Orlov who described the vastness of the Russian Arctic and explained that negative anthropogenic influences have been increasing since the early 1980s. He explained that Russia now has three pieces of Federal legislation on protection of the Arctic covering protected areas, the Biodiversity Convention and fauna. He spoke of the several initiatives underway to create parks and natural reserves and of Russias work on developing Red Data Books for flora and fauna. He stressed the need to provide Ministers and SAAOs with practical recommendations to resolve conservation issues and not only the results of scientific research.

Canada

Doug Pollock spoke for Canada. He reviewed some of the legislative changes in that country including the Wild Animal and Plant Trade Act, the Migratory Bird Protocol, the proposed Federal Endangered Species legislation, the Canada Oceans Act, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act and the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA). He noted that Canada has been undergoing severe reductions in staff and program funding in its federal government and that this has limited involvement in CAFF. Further reductions will follow. Mr Pollock pointed to the potentially very negative impact of the proposed European Union (EU) ban on fur imports to Canada's northern peoples. He ended his talk by encouraging the presence of the NGO community and Canada's continued commitment to CAFF.

Finland

Esko Jaakkola began by thanking Russia, the host country, and the CAFF Secretariat for arranging the meeting. He stated that Finland's main contribution to CAFF for the past year had been to chair the Task Force on the Biodiversity Convention and extra resources had been allocated for that purpose. On other fronts, Finland became a member of the EU and has been active in implementing the Habitat Directive. Finland has also developed a national implementation strategy for the Biodiversity Convention and is now revising its Nature Conservation Act. On a negative note, the Lesser White Fronted goose continues to decline, despite the efforts of, especially, WWF-Finland.

Greenland

Peter Nielsen opened by thanking the Russian Ministry of Environment for hosting CAFF IV and announcing a recent agreement between Denmark and Greenland whereby Greenland will be responsible for CAFF and Denmark for AMAP. He was pleased to announce the opening of the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources. He went on to explain that Greenland's involvement in CAFF had been problematic due to the need for decisions of the Greenland Home Rule Government. Many CAFF initiatives were now on hold pending these decisions. Nevertheless, some work had progressed, including monitoring of murre and hunting regimes. He spoke of the upcoming partial ban on beluga hunting as a clear signal to the people of Greenland and the world that resource exploitation has to be based on sustainable use.

Iceland

Evar Petersen pointed out that Iceland has accepted the Biodiversity Convention and that the Icelandic Institute of Natural History will have responsibility for that Convention, the Berne Convention and for CAFF. Iceland is amending its Nature Conservation Act and also has new legislation on wild animals. It is factoring nature conservation into general planning for highland areas and recently enacted an Environmental Impact Assessment law. Within CAFF, Iceland has been particularly strong on seabird work and is gradually expanding efforts to work on general databases for flora and fauna and on invertebrates. There is also work underway on Red Data Lists of flora and fauna. Dr. Petersen ended by acknowledging that while there is a need to focus activities towards the AEPS Ministerial meeting, CAFF should also work at determining which areas it needs to move ahead in and the gaps that need to be filled.

Norway

Berit Lein opened her presentation by stating that CAFF needs to concentrate on presenting proposals to Ministers that result in important real-life conservation decisions in the countries. To get its points across, CAFF must provide information which is not only authoritative but timely and suited to CAFF's principles. In 1994-95 Norway has focused its CAFF efforts on the Circumpolar Protected Area Network (CPAN) and encouraged the participants at CAFF IV to devote their attention to the CPAN Strategy and Action Plan. Ms. Lein provided details on Norway's Arctic-related activities, among them conservation efforts in Svalbard and protection of key habitat including transboundary areas shared with Finland, Russia and Sweden. On the species front, Norway is carrying out an evaluation of the Polar Bear Agreement, is cooperating on seabird work primarily with Russia and has conservation management plans for reindeer, deer and geese. Internationally, Norway is active in many conservation Conventions as well as regional agreements. Regarding indigenous peoples, Norway is participating in the development of a Nordic Convention on Saami issues. Ms. Lein ended by pointing to the significant resources Norway had invested in CAFF and its interest in focusing on the commitments CAFF already has, as well as advising that CAFF should focus on choosing a few important items for future work. She also reminded the group of the need to have the participation of all eight Arctic countries in CAFF.

Sweden

Christer Borgh reiterated Swedens position that its Arctic territory is relatively small and is not currently an area of special environmental focus since much has already been done for Swedish Arctic conservation. In 1994-95 Sweden has concentrated on implementation of the Biodiversity Convention and on its new commitments under the EU's Habitat Directive. Sweden has also presented the plan for its Arctic World

Heritage Site to its government and has worked out a system of compensation for reindeer killed by carnivores. On the issue of overgrazing, several Saami villages have been reducing the size of their herds. He ended by cautioning CAFF to prioritize and focus its activities and to concentrate on what is most important.

United States of America

Janet Hohn began by describing the USA's contribution to the CPAN reports, to the Circumpolar Arctic Vegetation Mapping Project, to the work on rare, endemic vascular plants, as lead of the Circumpolar Seabird Working Group and lead on many of its projects including an eider conservation strategy, and to the integration of indigenous peoples and their knowledge, especially through its lead on developing ethical principles for Arctic research. On issues of special concern to CAFF, Ms. Hohn updated the group on the coordinated ecosystem study of the Bering Sea, its evaluation of the Polar Bear Agreement in conjunction with the other contracting parties, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty with Canada and its work under endangered and threatened species. She was pleased to note progress on recovery of the Aleutian Canada goose and the Spectacled eider but regretted that the Stellar's eider continues to decline in numbers for unknown reasons. Ms. Hohn concluded her presentation by outlining the US move to ecosystem management and by thanking Russia for hosting this important forum for CAFF.

STATEMENTS OF AEPS OBSERVERS

Saami Council

Ms. Ritva Torikka first greeted the meeting in the Saami language then thanked the meeting for the opportunity which indigenous peoples have to be involved with the AEPS. Within the Saami Council, there have been questions about involvement in the AEPS because of the Council's small human and financial resources and even more economic difficulties were expected in future. Ms. Torikka said she was glad to hear the national delegations speaking about how to really involve the indigenous peoples in AEPS work beyond going to meetings and concluded by briefly outlining some of the problems the Saami people face including overgrazing, the new and increasing interest shown by multinational mining companies in exploration and development in Saami territories, and increasing tourists' recreational hunting and fishing.

Inuit Circumpolar Conference

Speaking for the ICC, Nikolai Mymrin remarked that having an ICC member from Chukotka at a CAFF meeting was very important. He noted that protection of Arctic flora and fauna also meant the protection of natural surroundings inhabited by indigenous peoples pursuing their traditional way of life and traditional patterns of resource utilization. He noted the ICC had broadened its participation in the AEPS with the Inuit of Finland and northern Russia now involved and informed the meeting that he had been elected to the ICC Executive Body at the Seventh General Assembly recently. He informed the meeting of Resolution 9506 from that Assembly which affirmed the protection of Inuit rights and their traditional way of life. He explained that the 7th ICC General Assembly had made a series of recommendations including commissioning its representatives in every country to defend Inuit rights against extremists. It also wished to establish a Polar Commission on whales under the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission and to apply to the Russian government to support the Chukotka Inuits' way of life.

Russian Association of Peoples of North Siberia and the Far East

Ms. Vinokurova spoke on the Russian Federal Law on State Regulation of Social and Economic Development in the Russian North now being debated in the State Duma. The law divides Russia into regions of traditional natural resource utilization by the indigenous peoples of the Russian north. The indigenous people would like the laws working for them to be adopted more quickly so they could better use them in protecting their rights and their traditional way of life. She concluded by referring to the Beringia international park proposed by the US and Russia, which also included the indigenous region of Provedevsky, saying that they were worried in future about how the park would affect their traditional way of life and their traditional pattern of nature utilization.

United Kingdom

The First Secretary of the British Embassy in Russia, Tony Brenton affirmed that while the UK did not fall within the Arctic circle, its geographic proximity means that the Arctic is of key importance in the context of global change, especially since the influence of the Arctic extends well beyond its geographical boundaries. As a result the UK values its observer status in the policy-making process of the AEPS and is grateful to be invited to this meeting.

The UK was pleased to be able to help the work on CPAN being done by WCMC and Russia from its Know How Fund. Mr. Brenton concluded by stating that the UK attended recent discussions on the formation of an Arctic Council and welcomes this initiative. It also welcomed the opportunity within the draft Council declaration for non-Arctic states to be involved as observers.

CMS/Bonn Convention on Migratory Species

Eugene Nowak from the UNEP Secretariat to the Bonn Convention introduced himself and thanked CAFF for the invitation to attend the meeting for the first time. He remarked that both CMS and CAFF were dealing with migratory species and as a result the Bonn Convention Secretariat was very interested in closer contact with CAFF. He noted that over the course of the summer, at a large intergovernmental conference in the Hague, a new regional agreement for the protection of African and Palearctic Waterbirds had been negotiated. The CMS Secretariat's question to Arctic ornithologists is: would it be useful to conclude a similar type of formal agreement under the Bonn Convention for the smaller group of circumpolar migrating birds among the eight CAFF countries? While this was a preliminary idea presented here to the whole CAFF group, he proposed that the issue be further discussed within the Circumpolar Seabird Working Group.

United Nations Environment Program

Speaking for UNEP, Ivan Zrajevski informed the meeting that UNEP is turning with increasing interest toward the Arctic and is hoping to have an Arctic program within its organization. At present, UNEP is mainly active in information assessment through GRID-Arendal, but believes there is much more room for cooperation in the biodiversity field. He confirmed that UNEP was directly supporting this CAFF meeting and hoped to continue to provide support to the greatest possible extent. Mr. Zrajevski explained that UNEP was in a bit of difficulty on CAFF cooperation because in order to get UNEP support some sort of formal relationship with CAFF would be necessary. He explained that in UNEP's view, CAFF has a lot of knowledge and great capability to implement the biodiversity convention in the Arctic which is very important from a global environmental standpoint. It was his opinion that we should try to get a formal, legal instrument for the Arctic region despite the political difficulties involved.

In response, the Chair accepted the idea of working in co-operation with UNEP, and with the sanction of its governments. The CAFF Secretariat will prepare a document exploring closer cooperation as soon as it could. He also noted he could see no problem with this from the side of the Russian government, but he advised all delegates to consult with their governments and he instructed the CAFF Secretariat to draft a document for the heads of delegations.

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF-International)

Speaking for WWF, Peter Prokosch gave his evaluation of the Arctic environmental process. He spoke of his strong relationship with the Russians with whom WWF had been cooperating since 1989, commenting that Arctic co-operation was made possible by the political changes which had occurred in Russia. He reiterated the Russian vision of the Arctic as a region of peace and protection which had received a positive and enthusiastic echo from the rest of the northern countries.

Mr. Prokosch noted that the opportunities to protect nature and people in the Arctic are unique. However, if there is no success in the Arctic, the chances for other areas of the world are worsened, and failure in the Arctic may lead to increased environmental pessimism just as Arctic achievements will serve as a model to stimulate enthusiasm elsewhere. The decision on whether to establish an Arctic Council will be another historical landmark. It represents a unique chance to strengthen the AEPS process and put it on a more long-lasting and stable co-operative framework. However, he warned, there is also a danger of changing the path away from environmental protection, to neglect the Rovaniemi process and to move toward unsustainable development.

He observed that CAFF IV was another milestone in the AEPS process and he signalled out the CAFF program as proof of each nation's commitment to take responsibility for the Arctic. He noted that the investment in the CAFF Secretariat is of crucial importance in the further development of the core AEPS program to protect Arctic nature. And, this investment continues to pay off as the achievements of this meeting show. He noted that CAFF had moved from quite technical issues on plant and animal species to taking real conservation action. He singled out the CPAN Plan and its focus on marine areas as being of the greatest value at present and noted that it is vital to get it accepted by Ministers. From WWF's point of view, the next step is to address the wider management of Arctic nature outside protected areas.

Mr. Prokosch closed by looking forward to CAFF V in Rovaniemi and wished the CAFF program all further success.

Russian Institute of Cultural and Natural Heritage

Yuri Mazarov, from one of the newest Russian institutes, described its policy focus on conservation of the cultural and natural heritage in the Arctic and stated that several of its themes relate directly to CAFF. In particular, research by the Institute in Novaya Zemlya has led to a detailed proposal on the formation of the network of protected and historical-cultural areas in that region.

Mr. Mazarov spoke of a European initiative dating from 1990 called "Ecological Bricks for our Common House of Europe". The result of the approach was a proposal for a network of protected areas for the whole region including two "ecological bricks". Its essential element is the formation of "Laplandic Forest" international park from parks on both sides of the border to prevent the forest from falling under industry exploitation. One method to improve the management of natural heritage is to realize that the ecological values of this region belong not only to national heritage but to world natural heritage and he asked if it should perhaps be a World Heritage Site?

Report from CAFF Chair

Amirkhan Amirkhanov observed that for more effectiveness, CAFF should work toward closer co-operation with international and national organizations and singled out UNEP and IUCN. He attached great importance to the visit of the president of WWF, Prince Philip, to the Russian North and that the Prince had outlined that WWF must and will support CAFF.

Mr. Amirkhanov then turned to Biodiversity Convention implementation, the focus of which should be on local implementation. CAFF's position on Biodiversity Convention implementation must be formulated very exactly. CAFF should also cooperate with the CITES Convention which has great international legal experience and the other conventions including the International Whaling Commission, as was mentioned by the indigenous people. While the whale problem is not in CAFF's program per se, CAFF cannot ignore aboriginal rights and interests and it must take a position. He concluded that CAFF had to find a more acceptable organizational structure for co-operation between its countries and that the most important thing was to support the Secretariat's activities as a link between the countries.

Report from CAFF Vice-Chair

Esko Jaakkola explained that he had seen his role as Vice-Chair to help the Chair and the Secretariat and to represent CAFF when necessary. He noted that Ministerial Meetings are extremely important for the continuation of CAFF's work as are SAAO meetings because SAAOs act on behalf of Ministers and give advice and direction to the working groups. At the last SAAO meeting he explained the CAFF Work Plan structure, the activities of the expert groups and the reports being produced for the Ministers. He spoke of the lack of resources which many countries are having, the problems with the long-term structure of the program, and the possible overlap with the Sustainable Development Task Force. While each has its own mandate, some of the items on the Task Force Agenda are things CAFF could just as easily deal with if it had the resources. Mr. Jaakkola's lesson from the SAAO meeting is that it is absolutely essential and important to keep the SAAOs very well informed and that this can be done by participation in the SAAO meetings by the Chair or Vice-Chair and the Secretariat. He concluded, it is equally important that CAFF national representatives brief their own SAAO.

Report from the Executive-Secretary

Jeanne Pagnan provided a written report from the Secretariat outlining the past years activities. CAFF has secured observer status to the Biodiversity (where it is also a member of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice), Ramsar and Bonn Conventions and has applied for IUCN membership. It is registered as a specialist Arctic conservation agency with Infoterra (UNEP) and CAFF documents have been supplied to the CBD's Clearing House Mechanism. CAFF representatives attended meetings of the Northern Seas Forum, the Africa-Eurasia

Waterfowl Agreement negotiation (Bonn), Conference of the Parties of the CBD, the Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (CBD), Barents Euro-Arctic Environment Task Force, MAB V, AMAP, PAME and SAAO and the Secretariat also attended several of the CAFF specialist sub-group meetings such as CPAN, CSWG and the CAFF Biodiversity Task Force. The Secretariat has published the proceedings from CAFF III, begun a Newsletter and has established an INTERNET World Wide Web Home Page out of GRID-Arendal where CAFF documents will be available. Six of the eight CAFF countries contributed to funding the Secretariat but the amount fell considerably short of budget requirements and the Secretariat's work load has increased steadily over the past year but additional staff has made this manageable. In April, Canada's commitment to host the Secretariat on an interim basis will have been met and some new arrangements will have to be made at that time.

CAFF Framework Document

Presenter: Fredrik Theisen - Norway

After a brief introduction outlining the background and rationale for the Framework Document, Fredrik Theisen explained its content and substance. The document is divided into five sections; an introduction, CAFF's eight goals, its functions, its operating principles, management structure and program implementation, reporting relationships and resources. There are two appendices. One appendix is a sample decision-matrix to rank the priority of CAFF activities according to their ecological, societal, political and scientific significance. The other is a detailed description of CAFF's program management structure, plus the terms of reference for national representatives, and the CAFF Chair, Vice-Chairs and Executive-Secretary. Guidelines are also provided for observers.

The CAFF program is implemented through annual CAFF Work Plans and specialist sub-group action plans. For most activities it employs a lead country approach with one country (or more in the case of shared leads) taking responsibility for coordinating and developing a work item. The reporting relationships of CAFF to SAAOs and AEPS Ministers as well as the role of the Chair, Vice-Chairs, National Representatives, the Secretariat, the International Working Group and lead countries on CAFF Work Plan items are also outlined.

REPORTS ON THE 1994-95 CAFF WORK PLAN

1. Habitat Conservation

Circumpolar Protected Area Network (CPAN): Item 1.1: Presenter - V. Pitsheliiov - Russia

Vladimir Pitsheliiov introduced the CPAN project as a core component of CAFF's overall habitat conservation strategy designed to assure the continuing vitality of key parts of the Arctic ecosystem, to integrate conservation and sustainable development needs with the needs of indigenous peoples and to provide a common framework for Arctic countries to ensure the necessary level of habitat protection. It is designed to establish an adequate and well managed network of protected areas that has a high probability of maintaining the full spectrum of the biodiversity of the Arctic region in perpetuity. Both a CPAN Steering Group and an Ad Hoc Experts Advisory Group were established to oversee the project. The project relied on questionnaire information from member countries on proposed protected areas and their national principles, mechanisms and criteria for managing protected areas. The CPAN project is organized around five axes of activity.

- 1) a directory of proposed protected areas in the Arctic
 - 2) an evaluation of national principles and mechanisms for establishing and managing protected areas.
- 3) guidelines and principles for CPAN
- 4) gap analysis of circumpolar protected areas.
 - 5) the CPAN Strategy and Action Plan which draws on the other four axes and proposes concrete national and AEPS wide actions. It is this plan which will be presented to SAAOs and Ministers for approval.

Dr. Pitsheliiov ended his report by reviewing what CPAN is intended to be. It is envisaged as a mechanism to:

- provide a common process among Arctic Countries to promote the creation of protected areas.
- foster cooperation in national efforts to use protected areas as a tool for biodiversity and landscape conservation.
- ensure representation of the full range of Arctic ecosystems and their successional stages.

- promote international cooperation and coordination in site selection and management.
- sustain traditional uses of landscapes and species.
- develop and adopt general guidelines and criteria for site selection and gap analysis based on general principles of conservation biology and CAFF objectives.
- share processes, criteria and strategy as a basis for enhancing and improving national efforts.

Wildlife Habitat Mapping: Item 1.2: Presenter: M. Mirutenko - Russia

Following up on her report in Reykjavik, Marina Mirutenko presented her report on the state of wildlife habitat mapping in all eight CAFF countries and, she explained, detailed data was received from all except Greenland and Sweden. The report consists of two parts, the first a theoretical and methodological consideration of the basis of wildlife habitat mapping, and the second part, the analysis of the situation of wildlife habitat mapping in each CAFF country. A problem she encountered was that various countries' definition of habitat are different. Most countries provided maps and data on species distribution rather than on the **peculiarities** of animal habitats. Most range maps were not sufficient to meet the report's definition of habitat.

With the support of the US and the WCMC, the map of the tundra and forest tundra habitats of Russia has been converted to digital form at WCMC. The map now awaits the development of a legend. The value of this map, she pointed out, is that not only does it allow the answer to traditional questions of zoogeography, but also why species are distributed in certain areas differently than others. It is also a powerful tool for the complex analysis of the state of the environment when planning protected areas (cf. CPAN) and conducting ecological analyses. With the help of a circumpolar map, it is possible to study patterns of wildlife distribution, estimates of populations and the roles of particular species, to reveal the most productive and valuable areas and to determine boundaries for protected areas. The main basis for compiling such maps is vegetation maps (see Item 1.3 below). Ms. Mirutenko concluded the report by suggesting that CAFF could become a pioneer in the support of mapping projects, not only directed at the inventory of animal and plant diversity in the Arctic but also to its ecological assessment and that this could furnish a special CAFF contribution to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Circumpolar Arctic Vegetation Mapping: Item 1.3: Presenter - S. Talbot - USA

Steve Talbot reported on progress in completing the new circumpolar Arctic vegetation map (CAVM). Four scientific papers/reports have been published or are now in press. In addition funding has been secured for a new workshop in early 1996 to develop the legend for the new circumpolar map, to analyse the baseline, GIS and remote sensing products and to develop a strategy for further funding the mapping project.

The legend will be a three-level zoning one based on approaches developed by Russia at the Komarov Botanical Institute and Dr. Yurtsev's work. Two base maps are expected to be ready by the end of 1995.

The next critical steps in the completion of a composite vegetation map are the selection of agencies in each CAFF country to do the mapping, also to be discussed at the workshop. It is also crucial to secure funding to continue the project and for this the endorsement of the International Arctic Science Committee had been secured and here CAFF's endorsement was being sought, not for money but endorsement of the value of the project.

2. SPECIES CONSERVATION

Rare, Endemic Vascular Plants: Item 2.1: Presenter - S. Talbot - USA

This item called for the preparation of a list of rare endemic vascular plants and mapping their distribution within the Arctic (each country to give geographic data on taxa within their jurisdiction). This list would then be used to form the core of the Arctic list of plant species of special conservation concern.

The list of taxa presented to CAFF III in Reykjavik by Canada has been streamlined to 93 species, by restricting the list to endemic vascular plants or species. With the assistance of GRID-Arendal, prototype maps have been produced showing all these species and their locations in relation to existing protected areas in the Arctic. In future, maps will be produced for each species. The data available now show that, in general, the majority of species listed occur outside of existing protected areas. In closing, Mr. Talbot advised that rare plant mapping was a fruitful area for conservation work and could be used as a valuable tool in protecting Arctic areas. He also recommended publishing the report as a CAFF report similar in format to CAFF Habitat Conservation Report No. 1.

Pan-Arctic Flora Initiative: Item 2.2: Presenter: - B. Yurtsev - Russia

Dr. Yurtsev began his presentation by pointing out that endemic species are the core of Arctic flora and that the Pan-Arctic flora project is, at present, a bi-national but prospectively an international project and the groundwork has been done on a common database and software. The Pan-Arctic flora project aims to provide the taxonomic and phytogeographic ground for other activities in the study of conservation and sustainable use of Arctic plants. When complete, the products of the Pan-Arctic Flora initiative will provide a comprehensive basis for planning Arctic flora conservation measures on a circumpolar basis and not for selected species only. It will allow the identification of a systematic list of plant species in need of protection.

The project is currently in need of wider participation from botanists from Scandinavia and Canada and its main problem is a lack of funding. It needs support from the CAFF-AEPS organizations when addressing funding agencies for assistance and further development of the initiative would be an important component in the creation of a circumpolar Red Data Book.

Rare, Vulnerable and Endangered Fauna: Item 2.3: Presenter - K. McCormick - Canada

The revised CAFF List of Rare, Vulnerable and Endangered Fauna by Country (CAFF List 1) includes all species that were at least seasonally present in the Arctic with the IUCN category for each species and population unit. As of 1995, 107 species and sub-species are listed (30 already on the IUCN list and 43 also listed in CITES appendices). As IUCN criteria have been recently amended, the list now merits further review. Mr. McCormick reported that 21 bird and 18 mammal species are listed by more than two countries and four bird and five mammal species are listed at risk by four or more.

CAFF List 2 (species of common conservation concern) has been expanded from seven to 20 species. He noted that murre and eiders are receiving attention in the Seabird Working Group and that List 2 also needs some review.

Circumpolar Seabird Working Group: Item 2.4: Presenter - K. Wohl - USA

The Seabird Working Group presented a detailed report and action plan on its activities since Reykjavik. The second meeting of the Group was hosted by Norway in March 1995, with seven of eight CAFF countries and several observer organizations in attendance. This meeting saw country by country discussions of key issues such as the murre conservation strategy and the seabird colony catalog database. New issues

which were tackled are a seabird harvest project, incidental mortality of seabirds in commercial fisheries, human disturbance guidelines for seabird colonies and a circumpolar eider conservation strategy. A circumpolar murre banding and murre monitoring project were also discussed. Reports on several of these items will be completed in 1996. For the next Seabird Group meeting in Greenland in April 1996 a draft outline for an eider conservation strategy will be prepared along with a discussion paper on each country's eider management concerns and research needs. Mr. Wohl announced that a second edition of the *Circumpolar Seabird Bulletin* would be published this year and he pointed to the Bulletin as a good example of exchanging information and developing the public outreach information products which is part of the CAFF Mandate.

Murre Conservation Strategy and Action Plan: Presenter: - R. Elliot - Canada

Dr. Elliot spoke on the status of the strategy, stating that the Group is now finalizing it so that it is ready for Ministers at their upcoming March 1996 meeting. All the scientific input had been completed and all members were comfortable with the information and intent contained in the plan. He noted that one objective of the group was to ensure that senior members of the national delegations would take time to review the strategy with their people on the Seabird Group, so as to make sure it is acceptable to each country for recommendation for approval by the SAAOs and by Ministers. Dr. Elliot congratulated the members of the Group on their contributions and felt everyone was pleased with the result.

3. REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BIODIVERSITY CONVENTION IN THE ARCTIC REGION: Item 3: Presenter - E. Jaakkola - Finland

Esko Jaakkola explained that the purpose of the draft strategy for implementation of the CBD was to propose how regional cooperation through CAFF could facilitate the collective implementation of the Convention by the Arctic countries and how the Arctic countries could fulfil their mandate of ensuring conservation and sustainable use of Arctic flora and fauna. The strategy aims to identify areas where CAFF is already fulfilling elements of the CBD, to identify gaps and to recommend ways to further meet the Convention's requirements.

This work was done by a CAFF Task Force chaired by Mr. Jaakkola. He described the strategy

as having four goals, principles, strategic directions, objectives and recommendations.

The four goals are the:

- conservation of Arctic biodiversity and sustainable use of biological resources.

- participation of indigenous and local people.

 - cooperative research and sharing of information, data and technology

- development and improvement of educational and awareness programs

The principles include the precautionary and wise use principles and public participation. A key part of the document is the strategic directions based on goals and principles. For each goal, issues from the Biodiversity Convention have been identified, and objectives and recommendations presented. Prioritizing will be necessary and an action plan developed. For this the Biodiversity Task Force should be kept in being. Annex I contains a table comparing CAFF and the CBD which shows where CAFF is already implementing several of the CBD provisions and where there are gaps.

He noted that it is very important to link the recommended actions to CAFF Work Plan items since resources will not be available for both if they diverge. The conclusion of the Task Force is that a two year period is probably necessary to modify the recommendations adequately, monitor their implementation and make the links to the CAFF Work Plan. The timetable should be geared to Ministerial Meetings as occasions when the strategy can be both updated and renewed if necessary.

Mr. Jaakkola advised that CAFF would not implement the Convention all by itself but in partnership with the AEPS, intergovernmental organizations and conventions as well as with NGO's, several of which were present at this meeting.

Upon receiving the report, the Chair advised the meeting that Russia is currently holding discussions with the Global Environmental Facility of the World Bank on a loan to assist in implementing Russia's national biodiversity strategy and that he was optimistic about the outcome.

4. INTEGRATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND THEIR KNOWLEDGE

Indigenous Knowledge Mapping Project: Item 4.1: Presenter - H. Huntington - ICC

Henry Huntington reported that the Pilot Mapping Project for Beluga Whales, conceived at the CAFF Fairbanks meeting in 1993 is well underway. It has been funded by the US and Canada and a private foundation. The field work stage is now roughly halfway completed in both Alaskan and Chukotkan indigenous communities and it is hoped that a final report on the project will be ready for presentation at the next CAFF meeting in 1996. The methodology and procedure of the project is based on open-ended group interviews with indigenous hunters and elders and which had yielded results beyond those which could be captured by a fixed survey instrument. The project involves close cooperation, consultation and participation of indigenous communities in all its stages. Another valuable feature of the project was the use of village research assistants which interpreted information which the researchers from outside the local area did not fully understand. Nikolai Mymrin gave a review of the progress of the project in the Chukotka communities. After completion of the field work, a seminar is being planned for 1996 to bring together researchers, elders, hunters and wildlife managers who have experience with other beluga projects in Greenland and Canada. They would prepare recommendations for CAFF and AEPS on the integration of indigenous ecological knowledge in their programs and how it can be used in wildlife management and conservation. It is also hoped that the pilot project will be useful for groups such as the Seabird Group, who are also seeking ways to gather and incorporate indigenous knowledge in their work.

Ethical Principles for Arctic Research: Item 4.2: Presenter - T. Brelsford - USA

Taylor Brelsford traced the history of the Research Ethics item, noting that at the March 1995 meeting of the SAAOs it was decided that the question applies to the whole of the AEPS and that the proper decision-level for a code of Arctic research ethics was the AEPS program as a whole rather than a particular working group and therefore resided with the Arctic Ministers. The CAFF Report presented here was given over to the IASC and the International Arctic Social Science Association (IASSA) which was pursuing work along the same lines, in order to produce a unified set of principles. The IASC was to draft a statement of ethical principles incorporating the results of an IASSA panel on the question and the input of indigenous peoples and organizations. Review of this would occur within the AEPS. As of September 1995, IASC had produced a draft (still out for review and comment) emphasizing informed consent, confidentiality, reporting of research results to indigenous communities, local participation and respect for indigenous languages and cultures. This was to be presented to both SAAOs and Ministers in the near future. Given the timing, it will not be possible for the AEPS Working Groups to review the proposals during their full meetings, so it was recommended that CAFF National Representatives and CAFF

observer organizations do the review and forward their comments to the SAAOs after December when the ethics research proposal will be circulated by IASC. It was also recommended that CAFF express its continuing endorsement for developing a set of ethical research principles for the AEPS as a whole.

Indigenous Knowledge Database Assessment: Item 4.3: Presenter - Frank Anderson - ICC

Frank Anderson explained that the original aim of the project, to prepare a summary report on indigenous knowledge databases and an assessment of them, proved to be impractical because of an insufficient number of databases to give such an assessment. This is because indigenous knowledge is dynamic and changing and is passed down through an oral tradition based on personal experience of those involved. It cannot be captured by the standardized formats and rigid structures of traditional databases. As a result, ICC and Canada determined it would be more appropriate to build a framework data directory. This would contain information on individual, community and organizational experts possessing indigenous knowledge and would allow anyone requiring knowledge on a specific topic to contact the necessary sources and to receive that information, largely tailored to their individual needs. The data directory exists but needs to be completed and will be put on the INTERNET if adequate safeguards can be developed to prevent abuse. It will also be necessary to investigate options for the long-term management of the directory and its upkeep.

Review of Co-Management Systems: Item 4.4: Presenter - F. McFarland - Canada

Fred McFarland described how this work item grew out of recommendations held at the Indigenous Knowledge Seminar in Reykjavik, in conjunction with CAFF III. The work item calls for a review of the structure, strengths, and weaknesses of co-managed natural resource regimes in Canada, USA and elsewhere. It is intended to directly involve indigenous and government parties in co-management case studies, to build on rather than duplicate a growing literature on the subject and to focus on a set of strategic case studies which exemplify important benefits to governments and indigenous organizations.

While resources to undertake the work item were lacking in the US, interest and involvement of American native groups in co-management discussions was building throughout the year and in May 1995, Alaskan indigenous groups had their own internal discussion to devise a position in their negotiations with the US government on marine mammal management as a result of amendments to the US Marine Mammal Act. For these reasons the US co-lead decided to postpone the review until the next CAFF meeting. The basis for the review will be a workshop on Circumpolar

Aboriginal People and Co-Management to be held in Inuvik, Canada at the end of November.

SPECIAL THEME SESSIONS

Human Caused Threats to the Arctic Ecosystem: Facilitator - Finland

In the Nuuk Ministerial Report, Ministers endorsed CAFF's decision to identify and evaluate the full spectrum of human caused threats to Arctic species and their habitats. Finland took on the task of proposing a methodology to do so and Esko Jaakkola presented a paper on the issue. He linked the work to the section on threats in the Biodiversity Implementation Strategy and noted that the CSWG has also identified threats in their work. Work is also underway on the issue in other organizations with which CAFF might form partnerships in the future. The possibility of contracting an analyst to prepare a more detailed paper on a set of selected threats was raised, but a short report and recommendations will be necessary for the Ministers. Michael Green (WCMC) pointed out that there was an initiative underway within IUCN to examine threats to protected areas, and that this might be a component of such an initiative within CAFF and that the two organizations might link up. The IUCN initiative will also have a monitoring component.

Attention then turned to the matrix drawn from CAFF Report 1 which listed threats identified by Arctic country. The proposal was made to select a few of these threats and to expand on what had been said in CAFF Report 1 and the Finnish paper. The issue of the relation of CAFF's work on threats and links with the other AEPS groups was raised. It was pointed out by WWF that AMAP was mapping oil and gas projects and pollution sources in the Arctic while CAFF concentrated more on threats to the actual natural values in the Arctic and that a way should be found to merge the work. The US proposed that Heads of Delegation talk with their delegates with a view to identifying their top three or four threats for further discussion.

Later in the meeting, Esko Jaakkola reported the results. Mineral and petroleum exploration, road infrastructure and habitat fragmentation, and motorized vehicles were combined and constituted the most serious direct threat. Tourist expansion came second in the ranking. Fisheries and hunting practices tied for third. It was decided that this list should be the list reported on to Ministers.

Monitoring: Facilitator - Norway

Dr. Jan Petter Huberth Hansen began the session by advising that its purpose was to review monitoring activities related to CAFF work within the countries and to define monitoring needs and how they can be met. The session would also consider a

Russian proposal for a biodiversity monitoring network. He also wished to connect the session to Article 7 of the CBD and the CAFF Regional Biodiversity Strategy. He then invited the countries to give a short overview of their monitoring activities.

Speaking for Canada, Richard Elliot began by pointing out that there are two offices of Environment Canada involved in monitoring which were developing approaches to be adopted by all Canada's jurisdictions to implement Canada's biodiversity strategy. A national program for a unified approach to ecosystem and biodiversity monitoring was in development. Work is at an early stage and is aimed at developing protocols for monitoring specific types of ecosystems.

Esko Jaakkola reported on the Finnish situation by noting that for the CBD, a general biodiversity monitoring system is called for and Finland is at the stage of making proposals for it. He noted the Nordic Council of Ministers has a similar project underway.

Peter Nielsen stated that Greenland has concentrated on species and community level monitoring, mainly those which are used for subsistence and commercial purposes. He described several monitoring projects including the living resources of the sea, murre, caribou and hunting pressures. Species monitoring is used to set hunting quotas

Evar Petersen noted that, as a fishing nation, Iceland has been particularly active on marine habitat with monitoring of fish stocks and plankton going back many years. There is good information on large whales but less on the smaller cetaceans. Amateurs have monitored birds for a long time but only for a handful of species. As a result of CAFF, work has begun on seabird monitoring. The information on larger land mammals is quite good and there has been some vegetation monitoring. Up to now, not much has been done on the ecosystem level but monitoring for the CBD will be at this level.

Christer Borgh referred to the University of Uppsala's data bank on threatened species as the major repository of information in Sweden. Migratory birds have been counted and banded for many years, mainly by amateurs. Sweden also has inventories of old growth and broad-leafed forests. Research work is also done on certain species such as bear, lynx, wolverine and Arctic fox.

Valery Orlov briefly described Russian monitoring activities noting that species are monitored regularly to set quotas or confer protected status on them and there is a Chronicle of Nature monitoring program in protected areas. The main current task is to organize a state monitoring system which will include biodiversity monitoring and a unified system has been discussed at an intergovernmental meeting of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

At this point, Dr. Yurtsev outlined his proposal for a Biodiversity Monitoring Network which conforms to the Draft Strategy for Cooperative Implementation of the CBD and can be considered a concrete step in implementing the strategy. Based on

monitoring local floras, this activity would permit monitoring species diversity of flora and other forms of biodiversity and it would display long term trends and changes in flora and vegetation which themselves reflect global changes in climate and human impacts on the biosphere. The sites in the network should be representative of the bio-ecological and landscape diversity of Arctic biota. Priority in the network should be given to protected areas and long term research stations related to CPAN. The priority species should be indicator species having at least one Arctic climate zone boundary, those most sensitive to global changes. If the network is approved the following has to be done, recruiting national experts and botanists on Arctic flora and the selection of monitoring sites. A draft version of the monitoring plan would be developed in the first year and a draft network map prepared and then prospects for funding the network's field investigations and creation of a database need to be addressed.

Janet Hohn, speaking for the USA, sketched the overall protected area and monitoring situation in Alaska, noting that while much has been done there is much more to do to develop and implement an effective monitoring strategy among the numerous agencies and organizations with a stake in these issues. An eco-region mapping of Alaska has been carried out and is being evaluated as a tool for identifying monitoring sites. The relationship between climate, loss of snow cover and species distribution and productivity are being monitored in Alaska. Studies are underway to examine the relationship between oceanography, plankton and fish populations and the productivity of marine birds and mammals. Overall, what is still needed in Alaska is a proactive conservation strategy emphasizing comprehensive biological inventories, monitoring of indicator species, habitats and ecosystems and better coordination among agencies.

Jan-Petter Huberth Hansen described the situation in Norway, concentrating on the follow-up to the CBD. Responding to Article 7, a biodiversity monitoring strategy is being prepared in Norway in order to evaluate threats within various types of ecosystems. It will also look at cause-effect relationships giving priority to changing land use including fragmentation and habitat destruction, pollution and the introduction of species. For freshwater systems priority will be given to acidification and encroachment. Harvesting of biological resources and pollution will be the focus in marine areas. Vulnerable species and special groups of indicator species will also be a focus of attention.

Summarizing the session Dr. Huberth Hansen noted that, judging from the overviews, most activities have thus far been concentrated on species and less has been done at the ecosystem level which is the target of CBD monitoring. Most countries were in a preliminary stage and he cautioned CAFF should be cautious about initiating any new monitoring programs. It was decided that the CAFF Secretariat should pull the overviews together in a summary paper and that the Yurtsev proposal be considered under New Proposals.

REVIEW OF NEW PROPOSALS

Proposals were made to form several new specialist groups for CAFF in the coming year. Russia proposed an *invertebrate specialist group* noting the very high biodiversity of invertebrates (over 2500 Arctic species) and the fact that CAFF is paying little attention to them. The group could be responsible for making a register of these species, mapping their distribution and identifying places of high biodiversity in need of conservation action. Iceland, who agreed to head the group, also spoke in support and described ongoing work in Iceland on marine invertebrates and a new project being organized on terrestrial invertebrates. Greenland raised the difficult taxonomic problems in identifying invertebrate species and that until the basic classification work is done, it is too early to form a specialist group. There was no consensus on forming an invertebrate group. Iceland was asked to make a proposal and countries were asked to give their ideas on the question to Iceland.

Canada proposed that CAFF form a specialist group on *terrestrial species* since no group was examining issues like predator/prey relationships at a circumpolar level. This was prompted from experience in sitting in on the other specialist groups who have often remarked that someone needs to look at the terrestrial issues. Greenland argued that a terrestrial species group would not have the same transboundary dimension as the Seabird group. Russia wondered whether this would not overlap with the habitat conservation group Decision on the issue was deferred.

A proposal for a marine mammal specialist group was also considered to deal with beluga and narwhals in particular. Greenland, Iceland and Norway pointed out that whale issues were politically controversial in their countries and it would be difficult for them to support such a group. Greenland also pointed out that work on marine mammals is underway in a number of other international fora and they could not support another group. WWF suggested that, at least for the polar bear, the CAFF Working Group should ask the AEPS Task Force on Sustainable Development to report to it on work on the issue and cooperation be pursued with the Task Force, a proposal which was backed by Iceland and Norway and adopted. The Chair also noted the work being done by indigenous peoples on beluga whales should be integrated under this item as well.

The USA proposed formalizing the *flora group*, since it was, in fact, already in existence and working and Ms. Hohn requested that more countries nominate botanical experts to participate in the work of the group which was currently at work on rare plants and mapping vascular plants and Canada for one said it would soon nominate an expert. The proposal to formalize the flora group with the US recommendation for wider participation was adopted.

Russia proposed that the CPAN Group be strengthened to tackle not only protected areas but as a *habitat conservation group* to also work on conservation outside

protected areas. Norway, co-lead of the CPAN group, advised that much remains to be done on the protected area network and that while it would support the work until the Ministerial, it could not promise to remain co-leader of a group with a larger mandate after that. A decision on broadening the CPAN group was deferred

The USA proposed a pilot ice-edge mapping project to begin in the Bering Sea. It would be a cooperative venture among the Arctic nations, conservation NGOs, the university, native groups and marine scientists. The project, which would seek independent funding, would map an area of very high biological diversity and productivity. It would also be important for traditional cultural and subsistence purposes by indigenous peoples. The ultimate aim of the project would be to design an ecologically sound management regime for the areas selected for protection. Its goals would be the protection of habitat and species diversity, to provide for traditional sustainable use and to prohibit outside activities from interfering with these goals. The proposal for the Ice-Edge Mapping project was adopted.

The Secretariat notified the meeting that the Bonn Convention has provided a paper recommending a formal agreement between CAFF and CMS to look at the migratory species of the Arctic.

Indigenous People

Indigenous People

Indigenous People's Participation in CAFF

s Participation in CAFF

Frank Anderson of the ICC presented a paper developed with the cooperation of Canada and the USA and other observer groups on the status and future directions of indigenous peoples' role in CAFF and the AEPS. It stressed the need for communications and community involvement. The four main issues addressed were participation, traditional environmental knowledge, disseminating information and local community involvement. The local and regional level is the heart of where ICC works in a facilitating and liaison role and it should continue on two levels. Indigenous peoples participate at the AEPS policy level by contributing to the various working group meetings and the SAAO meetings but continuation of this requires ongoing support which should be developed with all AEPS countries in accord with commitments made by their Ministers. At the actual program and project level, it remained for the indigenous groups themselves to decide on an approach to project work which would best meet the needs and capacities of their organizations and this too will require resources. The paper also affirmed that traditional ecological knowledge held by indigenous peoples and communities should be considered equally to that

held by the academic and professional research communities. The beluga mapping project and the proposed seminar on indigenous beluga knowledge show the commitment to integrating indigenous knowledge in the CAFF process. To assist in the dissemination of information, the paper proposes that indigenous organizations and their Secretariat (IPS) develop a strategy focusing on regional and local communications. Lastly the local indigenous communities need opportunities to participate in the CAFF process.

Statement by Russian Ministry of Nationalities

A spokesperson from the Ministry informed the meeting that Russia had declared territories of indigenous settlement areas of traditional economic utilization and sustainable development for the first time in Russia. These territories are to guarantee preservation of nature, culture and history of the indigenous people and ethnic groups of the Russian north. The lands are provided as permanent property to them and are federally protected areas meaning they cannot be exposed to industrial or exploitive uses which are not part of the traditional economy without the free approval of the indigenous communities. In these areas, the aim is the reconstruction of the Arctic natural economy along the lines of sustainable development as taught through ecological education institutions and through local, community organizations. The vehicle for this reconstruction is a system of local, regional and federal protected areas which will form a network from the community up to the federation level and these will eventually fulfil the CAFF protected area program.

The Polar Academy was also described where members of the northern indigenous communities study ecology, environmental management and traditional economic subsistence. The first twenty-two graduates finished this year and they will work in the protected indigenous territories, not just on CAFF items but on a variety of AEPS programs including AMAP and emergency response. The Academy is meant to teach indigenous peoples so they can transform community environmental knowledge and methods of environmental protection passed on from generation to generation into practical management decisions.

In the ensuing discussion, strong support was widespread for the ICC presentation and the meeting encouraged the indigenous organizations to come forward with some definite proposals on participation once they had worked these out. Henry Huntington advised that ICC would come up with some concrete mechanisms to take advantage of its role in CAFF and AEPS. He suggested that the rationale of the Work Plan section on Indigenous Knowledge reflect this and hoped that the indigenous peoples would be able to report on their progress on these fronts at the next CAFF meeting.

Habitat Conservation

This session, led by Fredrik Theisen of Norway, focused heavily but not exclusively on the CPAN Strategy and Action Plan to be presented to SAAOs and Ministers for endorsement in the coming months. Select items are presented here in this summary.

The action measures proposed were divided into two levels, national actions and international or AEPS level actions.

The National Actions items are for all CAFF countries to:

- *Review current plans and policies on Arctic protected areas against the CPAN Principles and Guidelines and make appropriate changes to facilitate complementarity.*
- *Identify the most significant gaps in the national networks of protected areas and select candidate sites for further action giving priority to biodiversity in places of poorest current representation or under threat.*
- *Identify needs and opportunities for expansion or buffering of existing protected areas and take appropriate action.*
- *Identify needs and opportunities to improve connectivity between reserves and take appropriate actions.*
- *Aim at protecting at least 10% of each representative ecozone within the Arctic part of their country and a minimum of (50%) of their total high Arctic territory with protection according to the various IUCN protected areas categories 1-6.*

This item provoked considerable discussion. It was agreed that there would be no time target, to amend the 10% to 15% of each representative ecozone and to have a qualitative statement on the need for more in the high Arctic without any number figure.

The list of international actions to be implemented under CPAN were then reviewed:

National actions must be coordinated and supported through international action. In the context of the AEPS, the most salient actions to be undertaken by CAFF are:

- *To oversee and coordinate the implementation of the plan:*
- *To evaluate the progress made by individual countries*
- *To develop the action plan further in accordance with CAFF objectives and principles*
- *To suggest further actions*
- *To report to SAAO and AEPS Ministerial Meetings on the status and progress of CPAN*
- *To establish, on the basis of circumpolar analysis and input from member countries, a Pan Arctic protected areas registry of terrestrial and marine candidate sites for further actions.*
- *To assess and evaluate marine protected areas as a part of an integral strategy for protection of the marine environment with special emphasis on marine areas which fall outside of national jurisdiction or where national jurisdictions are shared.*

A special drafting group was struck to deal with the wording of this item.

- *To find ways to better educate the public on the importance and values of the Arctic ecosystem, the threats posed to it and the role of protected areas to counter these threats.*

A measure to report to CAFF every two years was changed in favour of CPAN being a regular work item report at each yearly CAFF meeting.

After completing the CPAN Action Plan a brief presentation was made on CPAN Gap Analysis and the need for direction for future work in the area which is a key tool in identifying areas for future designation and in assessing the state of the network.

The links to habitat mapping were also pointed out and Marina Mirutenko proposed that mapping could be a separate item in the CAFF Work Plan without requiring a new group or additional efforts since it was already being done for protected areas and species work. Russia proposed that the wildlife habitat mapping work be combined into the CPAN gap analysis and suggested Ms. Mirutenko would join the CPAN group.

Lastly, the session turned to the Circumpolar Arctic Vegetation Mapping Project where Steve Talbot presented the recommended work plan for the coming year. Firstly, participants would complete the new circumpolar vegetation map. A report would be prepared summarizing the upcoming workshop to develop the legend for the new map and presented at the next CAFF meeting. Dr. Talbot

asked for CAFF's official endorsement of the project to assist in securing outside funding. The Chair advised that the Gore-Chernomydrin Commission has discussed joint American-Russian opening of formerly classified satellite data for the polar regions and this would be useful for mapping projects.

Species Conservation

The Species Conservation theme session first discussed Arctic endemic vascular plants and proposed actions for the coming year. The first aim of this item is to demonstrate the utility of correlating data on rare plants with data on existing protected areas as a contribution to CPAN. This will require complete listings of rare endemic vascular plants and other taxa of restricted range in countries where data is now lacking. The composite distribution of these species relative to protected areas would then be mapped and maps of individual species distribution would also be made. *An Atlas of Rare Vascular Plants of the Circumpolar Arctic* would be prepared for publication in the CAFF Reports Series. Lastly, criteria will be developed for including non-endemic vascular plants on the list of species of special conservation concern.

The session next turned to the recommendations of the Circumpolar Seabird Working Group for 1995-96. The CSWG's action plan, presented by Kent Wohl, is oriented toward highly visible seabird management issues and some research activities. Projects to be completed in 1995-96 are:

- the international murre conservation strategy
- a final proposal for the circumpolar seabird colony catalogue database
- a CAFF Report and publication on *Harvest of Seabirds in the Arctic*
- a CAFF Report and publication on *Incidental Mortality of Seabirds in Commercial Fisheries*

in the Arctic

- a report on guidelines to reduce human disturbance at seabird colonies
- a second edition of *Circumpolar Seabird Bulletin*
- a final proposal for the circumpolar murre banding network
- a final proposal for circumpolar murre monitoring project

- a major issue paper and publication on Eider Conservation Concerns in the Arctic

- a third CSWG meeting in Nuuk, April 1996

Developing an Eider Conservation Strategy is the group's new project and will likely resemble the murre strategy and the project was unanimously endorsed at the last seabird group meeting. Mr. Wohl commended the group for their hard work and enthusiasm and noted that the CSWG's success was because the group's issues closely mirrored the actual conservation threats in the various CAFF countries and the group provides a forum to address these threats on a circumpolar level. In a brief presentation, Richard Elliot noted that a main objective of the CSWG was to secure the endorsement of SAAOs and Ministers for the Murre Conservation Plan and then to implement it, formal CAFF endorsement of the Murre Conservation Strategy and Action Plan was requested and was received.

On the CAFF Lists of Endangered Species it was decided that the CAFF Secretariat will approach the IUCN to determine interest in developing an Arctic Red Data book. CAFF countries will be

consulted to determine if there are species or populations of common concern which merit multilateral conservation measures. It was also proposed to invite the Sustainable Development Task Force to report to CAFF on their analysis of the Polar Bear Convention. The point was raised that it would be wise to ensure that all the species conservation work being undertaken also be made available to the CPAN group. The Secretariat suggested that all species groups, whenever they meet, automatically add an agenda item on linkages to CPAN.

CAFF COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

At the initiative of the CAFF Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretariat this issue was put on the agenda with an accompanying discussion paper from the Secretariat. After the Chair outlined some of Russia's multilateral and bilateral environmental agreements he invited each country to comment on how CAFF might approach this topic.

The Secretariat explained that CAFF has focused, in the past year, on the CBD, the Bonn Convention and Ramsar. CAFF has observer status with the CBD, is a member of its Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice

as an authoritative body on Arctic conservation. Ramsar is interested in an Arctic network of wetlands sites.

There was widespread agreement that CAFF needs to cooperate with the wider international conservation community, its organizations and conventions but the question arose about the intensity of cooperation with specific international instruments. Russia drew attention to the potential for cooperation with Ramsar and the CPAN sub-group given the preponderance of wetlands in Arctic habitat. The point was made that migratory species could not be safeguarded only in the Arctic where they spent only part of their time and for this reason cooperation with the other conventions was critical.

Iceland pointed out that under its Chairmanship, CAFF had been very active in reaching out to different organizations and establishing international linkages and reiterated how important these were. Speaking to UNEP's concern over the need for a formal relationship, Iceland also reminded the meeting that the original draft section of the AEPS dealing with CAFF was akin to a formal agreement. This was different from the other AEPS groups and as such it was close to a formal agreement on the Arctic which might have some international legal standing.

The Chair discussed the importance of bringing the Arctic conservation perspective and CAFF positions to other international conservation fora and stressed that CAFF, if it was to have its own identity, had to react more immediately and constructively to Arctic issues even if they fall under other conventions or are controversial like the whale issue. In particular he singled out bringing CAFF's position on the use of Arctic bioresources to the IUCN, especially if CAFF becomes an associate member. CAFF could bring its perspectives both to the IUCN Council and to the General Assembly. He suggested the way to activate linkages to other international conservation fora was through the CAFF National Representatives.

Proposal for the Arctic Council

Discussion next turned to the prospects of the Arctic Council being established, what implications this might have for CAFF and the AEPS and how CAFF should approach the issue. Margie Gibson of the US Arctic Network briefly informed the meeting of developments at the recent Washington meeting where Canada had come with a draft declaration on the Council which had been sent back to the countries for review. Questions remained on how the two proposed pillars, AEPS and the Sustainable Development Task Force would be integrated. She echoed WWF's concern that this might turn into an initiative focusing on developing rather than protecting the Arctic and that it should concern CAFF for this reason. There was also an outstanding issue over indigenous observers,

with the US asking for the inclusion of the Aleut and Athapaskan peoples as permanent observers along with the existing three AEPS indigenous groups. The Secretariat noted that CAFF had only seen a preliminary draft of the Council Resolution and that it contained no reference to nature conservation or any other CAFF issues. The question for CAFF is whether it was going to make some representation as an organization into the Council and what CAFF's role should be.

Preparation for SAAO and AEPS Ministerial Meetings

The Secretariat noted that the SAAOs, prior to their last meeting, had asked CAFF and the other groups to answer a number of questions on CAFF objectives, achievements, observer groups and cross-linkages with other organizations. CAFF submitted a document to them on CAFF's challenges and difficulties, the Secretariat's funding predicament, the perceived overlap with the Sustainable Development Task Force and asked how it should apply the Nuuk procedures for observers. A similar document would have to be prepared for the upcoming SAAO meeting but there were no specific instructions given as yet on the format of the document or how to report. The Chair asked the Secretariat to prepare the required SAAO documents and circulate them.

The Secretariat then went briefly through preparations for the AEPS Ministerial and presented a draft report outline for the CAFF Report to Ministers. CAFF would also be required to provide input to the Inuvik Ministerial Report. The Chair noted that if CAFF wanted clear answers from the Ministers it would have to present clear questions in the report. Norway remarked that there should be a description of threats to the Arctic and linkages drawn between these threats and the CAFF Work plan. There should also be a recommendation for each of CAFF's activities. Russia recommended that in its report CAFF consider any opportunities to involve other countries and international organizations.

CAFF COMMUNICATIONS

After apprising delegates that the CAFF Secretariat now has a Home Page on the INTERNET World Wide Web where documents will be available and information can be shared throughout web environmental sites, discussion turned to a CAFF communication strategy and to the discussion paper prepared by the Secretariat. CAFF is a forum for communication among conservation managers, scientists and indigenous peoples and others and its performance along these lines could be improved. It was generally acknowledged that CAFF is not well known in most places and the question was whether CAFF wanted to increase its profile and if so how and by how much? At present some basic materials were available for circulation including a CAFF exhibit, a brochure, a newsletter and various reports and publications. The questions are should CAFF promote itself as a major

intergovernmental forum? Should it focus on communicating on its issues? Or should it focus on both and in what proportions? As the issue is an ongoing one, further consideration was left to National Representatives.

The meeting then moved on to discussion of the 1995-96 CAFF Work Plan. The Work Plan Drafting Committee presented the draft 1995-96 CAFF Work Plan which was thoroughly reviewed by the participants. A copy of the final version is attached.

OTHER BUSINESS

After this the US repeated concern over the letter from Canada seeking to revise the AEPS, which on the face of it appeared that the SAAOs were attempting to revise a Ministerial document which is beyond their authority. The US wanted Ministers to reaffirm their commitment to conserve, protect and restore Arctic ecosystems as a priority item. Ms. Hohn proposed that, in response to the letter, CAFF provide recommendations for the Inuvik Ministerial Declaration. This proposal was accepted and the US provided a draft letter with their recommendations.

Close of Meeting

All business completed, Amirkhan Amirkhanov and Esko Jaakkola thanked each other, participants and the organizing teams for a successful meeting and looked forward to next year's meeting in Rovaniemi, Finland. Dr. Amirkhanov expressed the satisfaction of the Minister on the CAFF Meeting and reaffirmed Russia's support of CAFF and its Secretariat. He then closed the meeting at 5:45 pm.