

# Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECM) in the Arctic (joint PAME-CAFF Project)

## Project Plan 2021-2023

### Project Summary

The project will provide an overview of the current range and understanding of international and national criteria used for identification of “Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures” (OECMs) in the Arctic. The project will also facilitate an exchange of information among the Arctic Council members on the range of information and application of OECMs. Related to the discussion on OECMs, Indigenous peoples also have an important role in advancing biodiversity conservation, sustainable marine management and the protection of cultural heritage. These outcomes may be achieved in a variety of ways, by using locally implemented sustainable management practices or approaches which result in the safeguarding of the environment and resources, or through more formal tools, such as the Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCA) concept. The role of Indigenous sustainable management practices, including IPCAs, and other Indigenous stewardship measures, and their contribution to effective marine stewardship will be explored in the Arctic context through this project, and could be expanded upon in future work by the Arctic Council.

### Overview

At the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) COP 14 (2018) the definition for "other effective area-based conservation measures" (OECMs) was adopted<sup>1</sup>. It is the intention that sites that are recognized as OECMs will contribute to the new proposed CBD post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework's global target 2: “By 2030, protect and conserve through well connected and effective system of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures at least 30% of the planet with the focus on areas particularly important for biodiversity.”

The Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) and Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME) Working Groups have addressed the topic of protected areas through a range of activities over the years: the 2015 PAME *Framework for a Pan-Arctic Network of Marine Protected Areas* (MPAs) sets out a common vision for international cooperation in MPA network development and management in the Arctic; the 2017 PAME MPA-network Toolbox for Area Based Measures and Ecological Connectivity further developed guidance to assist Arctic states in advancing their MPA networks by providing theory and tools that can be used to assess and protect biodiversity; and the 2017 CAFF/PAME Arctic Protected Areas - Indicator report, which is in the process of being

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<sup>1</sup> An “other effective area-based conservation measure” (OECM) is defined by the CBD in Decision 14/8 as: “A geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in situ conservation of biodiversity with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values (CBD 2018).

updated, also provided an overview of the status and trends of protected areas in the Arctic.

While the concept of OECMs has been referenced in some places in previous PAME/CAFF documents, the international discourse and advancement of OECMs as a tool for conservation of global biodiversity has evolved significantly in recent years, and the Arctic Council has not yet considered OECMs as a standalone concept. There are currently opportunities for the Arctic Council to consider how OECMs, as well as other applicable sustainable management practices identified by Indigenous peoples throughout the circumpolar Arctic, may contribute to functional and effective MPA networks in the Arctic and post-2020 CBD biodiversity targets. This project seeks to share information on how Arctic states are interpreting and applying the OECM definitions and criteria within their national jurisdictions and explore additional Indigenous sustainable management practices that contribute to marine stewardship.

Some concepts that may be explored in regard to OECMs for this project could include:

- How OECMs achieve long-term and effective contribution to in situ conservation of marine biodiversity.
- How OECMs achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for biodiversity associated with ecosystem functions and services, and uphold, where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic (e.g., sustainable use), and other locally relevant values.
- Potential for OECMs to contribute to conservation efforts in the Arctic.
- OECMs in the context of climate change and its impacts on the marine environment, and OECMs potential utility in conserving areas important for biodiversity (e.g., bottlenecks for migration), and enhance the representativeness and connectivity of fully protected areas.

Parallel to the discussion on OECMs, there is growing international interest in the concept of Indigenous sustainable management practices as well as IPCAs and the potential role they can play in biodiversity conservation and the protection of cultural heritage. With new ambitious global biodiversity targets on the horizon, opportunities are emerging for Indigenous-led marine conservation and stewardship to play a role in meeting those targets. There are also opportunities to build collaborative relationships among Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners to work together toward protection of global biodiversity. Indigenous sustainable management practices and IPCAs have yet to be considered in a coordinated way in the Arctic context although some Arctic States have begun to consider how these approaches may be applied within domestic contexts such as with the Canadian 2017 Indigenous Circle of Experts (ICE) process. The fourth PAME MPA Workshop -- *Exploring ways to support Indigenous/Local involvement in, and Indigenous/Local led, marine protection in the circumpolar Arctic Ocean*<sup>2</sup>-- also included some cases studies of Indigenous-led conservation efforts in the Arctic context, which could be profiled in this project.

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<sup>2</sup> We recognize and respect that Indigenous Knowledge and Local Knowledge are distinct from each other

This project will help promote a common understanding and terminology around OECMs and other non-MPA approaches to marine management. It will also aim to inform other Arctic Council products and considerations, such as the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program (CBMP) initiative. It will work with and support other Arctic Council projects, including the update to the *PAME/CAFF Status and Trends in Arctic Conservation Measures*, and two PAME projects -*Review of Ecosystem Status, Human Impacts and Management Measures in the Central Arctic Ocean*, and *Different Ways of Knowing: Applying Indigenous, Local and Scientific Knowledge to Arctic Conservation Planning*-both to be completed during the 2021-23 work plan

The outcomes of this project can provide a basis from which to advance additional contributions to the MPA toolbox on concepts related to marine management for conservation not limited to marine protected areas.

### **Key Objectives**

- Provide a general description of how OECMs have been or are being applied in the Arctic, and an overview of the criteria used internationally to define OECMs.
- Provide an overview of Indigenous peoples sustainable management practices and related material through review of literature that has been developed by Indigenous organizations and Peoples.
- Ensure consistent and updated references on OECMs within the updated *PAME/CAFF Status and Trends in Arctic Conservation Measures* report.
- Facilitate a dialogue about how Arctic Council members are interpreting and applying the CBD's OECM definition in the Arctic, as applicable.
- Explore opportunities for OECMs to contribute to effective conservation of biodiversity and associated values in Arctic-specific contexts, including as part of a pan-Arctic network of marine protected areas.
- Contribute a reference report on OECMs to the PAME MPA networks Toolbox.

### **Implementation**

A steering group supported by the CAFF and PAME Secretariats will be established comprising representatives from both the working groups to implement the project.

### **Activities to be undertaken**

- Gather existing sources on OECM criteria and Arctic Council member approaches to identifying OECMs;
- Develop relevant case studies;
- Provide relevant updated international information and references to OECMs to the *PAME/CAFF Status and Trends in Arctic Conservation Measures* report;
- Invite PAME/CAFF members, with a focus on the PPs, to provide information on current sources of information, status and application of Indigenous sustainable management practices and/or IPCAs, including Arctic examples of IPCAs, and their current and future recognition within Arctic States;

- Convene a webinar or in person meeting(if possible), of PP representatives, Indigenous management practitioners and knowledge holders to explore and discuss potential case studies and expanded understanding of Indigenous sustainable management practices and IPCAs in the Arctic context. The outcomes of that discussion could inform both the overview report and an IMPAC 5 workshop;
- Convene a workshop or session at the 5<sup>th</sup> International Marine Protected Area Congress (IMPAC5) in Vancouver in 2022, in partnership with the CBD Secretariat, to bring together Arctic marine conservation practitioners and managers to share information on OECMs and Indigenous sustainable management practices/IPCAs in the Arctic; and
- Develop a report, based on the information gathered, including an overview of OECM criteria, Indigenous sustainable management practices and/or IPCAs, their application in the Arctic context, and Arctic relevant case studies.

### ***Timeline and Major Milestones***

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Feb 2021	Approval of the project proposal in the CAFF and PAME 2021-23 Work Plans
Summer 2021	Work with the CAFF/PAME Secretariat to update references to OECMs in the <i>Status and Trends in Arctic Conservation Measures</i> report (Update to be approved at AC Ministerial May 2021)
May/June 2021	Steering Committee to be established by the co-leads, targeting first meeting to launch project in June 2021
Fall 2021	First draft report outline and project update presented to PAME II 2021 and CAFF board meeting
February 2022	First Draft OECM report for review by PAME/CAFF
March 2022 (TBD)	PP and Indigenous practitioner meeting and discussion (possibly aligned with SAO or SDWG meeting)
June 2022	Workshop or session at IMPAC5 in Vancouver
Fall 2022	Final Draft OECM Report at PAME II and CAFF meetings
February 2023	Approval of final Report PAME I and CAFF spring meetings in 2023

### ***Budget***

Estimated Budget: In-Kind.

### ***Main Outcomes***

- Inclusion of current terminology on and references to OECMs in the PAME/CAFF *Status and Trends in Arctic Conservation Measure*.

- Arctic OECM and related Indigenous management practices overview report.
- A session at IMPAC5 in Vancouver in 2022, in partnership with the CBD Secretariat, to bring together Arctic marine conservation practitioners and managers to share information on the application of OECMs in the Arctic.
- Synthesis of information, relevant examples and current understanding of Indigenous sustainable management practices and IPCAs potential contribution to conservation of biodiversity, and their application in the Arctic.
- Contribution to the PAME MPA Network Toolbox, which can be used to inform understanding of OECMs and other applicable Indigenous sustainable management practices, IPCAs and IPCAs in the Arctic region, which can inform international discussions on these topics at other fora.
- Increased awareness of the need to build an understanding of the sustainable management measures in use by Indigenous peoples and local communities to achieve marine stewardship and sustainable resource use in the circumpolar Arctic and recognition of these measures as contributing to marine conservation and management. Subsequent projects may arise to address this and contribute this knowledge to the MPA Networks Toolbox.

***Project Team Structure/Lead Countries***

Kingdom of Denmark, Canada, USA

***Inclusion/involvement/contribution by Permanent Participants.***

*Have Permanent Participants been engaged in the development of the project proposal?*

Yes, ICC provided comments on the project proposal and engaged in discussions with the project co-leads on the proposal. A component of the project will focus on the concept of the role of Indigenous sustainable management practices, as well as IPCA's, and other Indigenous stewardship measures, along with other OECMS.

***Will the use of Traditional Knowledge and Local Knowledge lead to better project outcomes?***

Unknown at this time.