

Arctic Council Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna Working
Group
Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program

Coastal Expert Monitoring Group

DRAFT Terms of Reference

I. INTRODUCTION

Arctic biodiversity is under growing pressure from both climate change and resource development, requiring both managers and users to have access to more timely and complete biodiversity status and trend data. Yet existing monitoring programs remain largely uncoordinated, lacking the ability to effectively monitor, understand and respond to biodiversity trends at the circumpolar scale. The maintenance of healthy Arctic ecosystems is a global imperative as the Arctic plays a critical role in the Earth's physical, chemical and biological balance. Maintaining the health of Arctic ecosystems is also of fundamental economic, cultural and spiritual importance to Arctic Indigenous peoples and residents, many of whom maintain close ties to the land and sea.

To meet these challenges, the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program (CBMP) is working with partners to harmonize and enhance long-term Arctic biodiversity monitoring efforts in order to facilitate more rapid detection, communication and response to significant trends and pressures.

The Arctic's size and complexity represents a significant challenge towards detecting and attributing important biodiversity trends. This demands an integrated, pan-Arctic, ecosystem-based approach that not only identifies trends in biodiversity, but also identifies underlying causes. It is critical that this information be made available to generate effective strategies for adapting to changes now taking place in the Arctic - a process that ultimately depends on rigorous, integrated, and efficient monitoring programs that have the power to detect change within a 'management' time frame.

Towards this end, the CBMP is facilitating an integrated, ecosystem-based approach to monitoring through the development of four Expert Monitoring Groups (EMG) representing major Arctic themes (Marine, Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal). Each group endeavours to function as a forum for scientists, Traditional Knowledge (TK) holders and managers to promote, facilitate, share, and coordinate research and monitoring activities to facilitate improved and cost-effective monitoring that has a greater ability to detect and understand significant trends in Arctic biodiversity. The focus of each EMG is to develop an integrated, pan-Arctic biodiversity monitoring plan that coordinates

existing monitoring capacity to increase our power to detect and understand important biodiversity trends and report these trends using effective and timely formats. Such a coordinated effort will be more cost-effective than multiple, uncoordinated monitoring efforts.

II. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. GOAL

To promote, facilitate, coordinate and harmonize coastal biodiversity monitoring activities among circumpolar countries and Permanent Participants, and to improve ongoing communication amongst and between scientists, community experts, traditional knowledge holders, managers and disciplines both inside and outside the Arctic.

B. OBJECTIVES

The Coastal Expert Monitoring Group (EMG) will:

- Develop a multi-disciplinary, multi-knowledge base, integrated, pan-Arctic, long-term biodiversity monitoring plan that:
 - Responds to identified science, TK, and user questions and user needs;
 - Identifies and aligns with specific monitoring and management objectives as defined by scientists and TK holders;
 - Identifies a suite of focal ecosystem components to focus monitoring on and a suite of priority parameters for each focal ecosystem component;
 - Using both TK and science identifies a small suite of Coastal ecosystem indicators (derived from the parameters) that can be used to report on the state and quality of Coastal arctic ecosystems;
 - Using both TK and science identifies optimal sampling schemes for the chosen parameters;
 - Makes use of existing monitoring capacity and information (scientific, TK, and community-based,).
 - Identifies key abiotic parameters relevant to Coastal biodiversity that need continual monitoring; and,
 - Identifies and, where possible, addresses current gaps in coverage (both elemental, spatial and temporal).
- Develop an implementation plan for the monitoring plan that identifies timelines, costs, organizational structure and partners.

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Membership

Members of the Coastal Expert Monitoring Group (Coastal EMG) will develop, consult and work national teams of Coastal biodiversity experts representing existing, relevant Coastal research and monitoring networks (e.g. site-based networks such as INTERACT; Theme or species based networks such as CARMA, etc.) in their country. The membership will ensure strong and ongoing connections to existing national and international Coastal research and monitoring networks to ensure the development of the plan is well consulted on and is readily implemented upon completion.

The Coastal Expert Monitoring Group will be comprised of up to a maximum of 14 members representing the relevant Coastal Arctic countries and Arctic Council programs and Permanent Participants. Each member on this group will act as a focal point drawing from and consulting with a diversity of experts within their own nations.

The following countries have stated that as they have no Arctic coastline they will not be nominating a representative to the coastal group but will follow the process closely: Sweden and Finland.

Each CAFF National Representative and Permanent Participant can appoint one member. CAFF observer countries and observer organizations will be invited to take part in the EMG workshops. The two workshops will provide a key opportunity for experts to develop elements of the monitoring plan. The ongoing development of the plan will also involve many opportunities for expert input through consultations with the Coastal EMG members and through peer review of the draft monitoring plan.

The members will be expected to serve a term of two and a half years allowing for the completion of the Coastal Biodiversity Monitoring Plan. The membership can be modified to add new members if deemed appropriate by the existing Coastal Expert Monitoring Group and sanctioned by the CAFF Management Board.

Coastal EMG members are expected to attend the two planning workshops together with a range of experts representing organizations and geographic areas important to Arctic Coastal biodiversity research and monitoring. Also, a subset of non-member experts representing organizations responsible for the collection and management of relevant abiotic data and representing biodiversity themes will be invited to attend the workshops (e.g. climate, permafrost, etc.). The Coastal EMG members will also be expected to attend monthly conference calls and work between calls to solicit and gather required national information to facilitate the development of the monitoring plan.

Upon completion of the integrated monitoring plans, CBMP will work with the Coastal EMG to establish an 'implementation structure/ group' that will be responsible for facilitating and tracking the implementation of the long-term monitoring plan and for providing ongoing communication and coordination of monitoring activities. It is possible that some of the Coastal EMG members will be part of a future 'implementation structure/ group'.

B. Leadership

The Coastal EMG will be directed by a lead and, in cases where more than one country is sponsoring, may have a co-lead. The lead and/or co-leads will be selected by the sponsoring country or countries.

The lead will be responsible for:

- i. Overseeing the development of a background paper;
- ii. Organizing and facilitating the integrated monitoring planning workshops;
- iii. Organizing and participating in regular planning meetings and conference calls (with at least one week notice for such planned meetings and calls);
- iv. Ensuring at least one membership conference call per quarter;
- v. Communicating regularly with the CBMP office;
- vi. Preparing and distributing materials prior to meetings;
- vii. Completing appropriate records of meetings and results of workshops;
- viii. Leading the development of the integrated monitoring plan;
- ix. Ensuring that materials and records are provided to the CAFF Secretariat, CBMP office, and all attendees within 30 days of completed meetings;
- x. Ensuring that meeting agendas are developed in consultation with other members. The Lead and/or Co-lead also coordinates the work of the Coastal EMG between meetings.

C. Coordination

The CBMP office will be responsible for ensuring coordination (connectivity and compatibility) between the Coastal Expert Monitoring Group and the other Expert Monitoring Groups. This will be accomplished through participation on scheduled Coastal EMG conference calls and, as needed, conference calls or meetings between the CBMP Office and EMG leads.

Where possible, a designated member of each EMG will participate in the other EMG workshops to ensure consistency and integration and prevent overlap between the developing monitoring plans.

The CBMP Office and CAFF Secretariat will, in cooperation with the EMG's, provide state-of-the-art data management, assessment, outreach and communication services.

D. WORKPLAN

Years 1 and 2: Over the course of a two to two and half year period, the Coastal EMG will develop a background paper and hold two integrated monitoring planning workshops focusing on the development of a pan-arctic integrated Coastal biodiversity monitoring plan. Generally, these workshops will be held in the country or countries that are sponsoring the Coastal EMG. Representatives from the host countries will be responsible for coordinating logistical arrangements. Each nation will also be responsible for providing travel support, if necessary, for their own expert scientists and Traditional Knowledge holders to attend the workshops.

Years 3 onwards: Upon completion of the Coastal Biodiversity Monitoring Plan, a new organizational structure as suitable will track and promote implementation of the monitoring plans and provide an ongoing forum for promoting, facilitating and coordinating Coastal biodiversity research and monitoring.

E. DECISION MAKING

Decision-making within the Coastal EMG is by consensus of the designated official representatives (members).

F. EXPENSES

Unless there is prior agreement, Arctic States and Permanent Participant members are responsible for their work time and travel coordination and expenses as well as securing support for participation (including travel expenses) of their own national expert scientists and Traditional Knowledge holders to engage in the process of developing the monitoring plan.