

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna Working Group (CAFF) and the Association of Early Polar Career Scientists (APECS)

1. The Parties

The Parties of this MoU are the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna Working Group (CAFF) and the Association of Early Polar Career Scientists (APECS).

1.1 Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF)

The Arctic Council (AC) is an international, intergovernmental circumpolar forum with eight member states (Canada, Denmark (including Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden, and the United States) and six Indigenous Peoples' organizations, which are known as Permanent Participants (The Aleut International Association (AIA), The Athabaskan Arctic Council (AAC), the Gwich'in Council International (GCI), the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC), the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON), and the Saami Council (SC)).

The Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) program is the biodiversity working group of the Arctic Council. Its mandate is to address the conservation of Arctic biodiversity, and communicate its findings to the governments and residents of the Arctic, helping to promote practices while ensuring the sustainability of the Arctic's living resources. In order to successfully conserve the natural environment and allow for economic development, baseline data on long-term status and trends of Arctic biodiversity, habitats and ecosystem health is required. CAFF's projects provide data for informed decision making on Arctic biodiversity issues.

The core objectives of CAFF are:

- To monitor Arctic biodiversity;
- To conserve Arctic species and their habitats;
- To consider the role and effectiveness of protected areas;
- To conserve nature outside of protected areas; and
- To recommend conservation objectives and measures into economic sectors of society.

1.2 The Association of Early Polar Career Scientists (APECS)

APECS is an international and interdisciplinary organization for undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, early faculty members, educators and others with interests in Polar Regions and the wider cryosphere. Our aims are to stimulate interdisciplinary and international research collaborations, and develop effective future leaders in polar research, education and outreach. We seek to achieve these aims by:

- Facilitating international and interdisciplinary networking to share ideas and experiences and to develop new research directions and collaborations;
- Providing opportunities for professional career development; and
- Promoting education and outreach as an integral component of polar research and to stimulate future generations of polar researchers.

By providing networking and career development opportunities, APECS' activities aim to raise the profile of polar research, develop effective leaders in education and outreach, and stimulate interdisciplinary and international research collaborations. APECS builds on extensive national and disciplinary networks to

develop integrated research directions, meet career development needs, and communicate the urgencies of polar science to a worldwide audience. APECS decisions are made by an open Council, and an elected Executive Committee. An Advisory Committee of senior polar researchers provides guidance to APECS. Day to day operations of APECS are currently supported through an international directorate lead by the Director.

2. Rationale for the MoU

The objectives and activities of both APECS and CAFF complement one another in that CAFF as a Working Group of the Arctic Council provides a vehicle for knowledge and action in the Arctic region while APECS seeks opportunities for early career researchers to learn from and become engaged in international science and policy projects and programmes. Both parties will benefit from the participation of APECS members in CAFF policy and expert meetings on Arctic biodiversity. APECS members will gain valuable experience while also contributing scientific, innovative, and fresh perspectives to CAFF initiatives.

3. Terms of the Agreement

The aim is to create a means via which early career scientists can have the opportunity to participate in and gain experience in the circumpolar initiatives undertaken by CAFF as it works towards a more comprehensive understanding of Arctic biodiversity and its status and trends. Within CAFF activities, emphasis is placed upon regional cooperation that is based upon cooperation between all the Arctic countries and indigenous organizations as well as with international conventions and organizations. CAFF will at the same time benefit from the input of new ideas and participation by young scientists and help to attract and stimulate interest in Arctic biodiversity and help stimulate outreach/communication with the education sector.

APECS will help to inform its members and partner organizations about the activities of CAFF and its associated partners to help broaden the understanding, representation, and input into CAFF activities through participation of APECS members in CAFF projects including policy and expert meetings.

Future objectives and terms of collaboration may also include other areas of cooperation as may be mutually determined by both parties.

4. Financial Implications of the Agreement

Whenever possible, CAFF and APECS will help to fund and arrange the participation of an APECS representative in or near the geographic region where meetings are taking place.

5. Duration, Revision and Termination of this MoU

This MoU remains in force for five years, at which time it will be reviewed. The MoU may be revised at any time by mutual agreement between the Parties. Any of the parties may propose alterations to the MoU. Parties wishing to withdraw from this agreement should do so by a formal letter signed by the President or Head Organizational Manager (i.e., Executive Secretary or Director) of their respective organization.