

FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT

CIRCUMPOLAR
BIODIVERSITY MONITORING
PROGRAM



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The Little Auk breeds in large colonies in some of the most remote parts of the High-Arctic zone. Scoresbysund, Greenland. July 2004.

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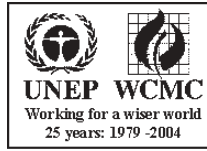
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CIRCUMPOLAR BIODIVERSITY MONITORING PROGRAM

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About CAFF

The program for the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) of the Arctic Council was established to address the special needs of Arctic ecosystems, species and their habitats in the rapidly developing Arctic region. It was initiated as one of four programs of the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS), which was adopted by Canada, Denmark/Greenland, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States through a Ministerial Declaration at Rovaniemi, Finland in 1991. Other programs initiated under the AEPS and overtaken by the Arctic Council are the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP), the program for Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR) and the program for Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME).

Since its inaugural meeting in Ottawa, Canada in 1992, the CAFF program has provided scientists, conservation managers and groups, and indigenous people of the north with a distinct forum in which to tackle a wide range of Arctic conservation issues at the circumpolar level.

CAFF's main goals, which are achieved in keeping with the concepts of sustainable development and utilization, are:

- To conserve Arctic flora and fauna, their diversity and their habitats;
- To protect the Arctic ecosystems from threats;
- To improve conservation management laws, regulations and practices for the Arctic;
- To integrate Arctic interests into global conservation fora.

CAFF operates through a system of Designated Agencies and National Representatives responsible for CAFF in their respective countries. CAFF also has an International Working Group, which meets regularly to assess progress. CAFF is headed up by a chair and vice-chair who rotate among the Arctic countries. The CAFF International Secretariat, located in Akureyri, North Iceland, supports the chair and vice-chair; coordinates implementation of the CAFF Work Plan; coordinates cooperation with other Arctic Council working groups; and communicates CAFF goals and activities to the public.

The majority of CAFF's activities are directed to conserving Arctic biodiversity—the abundance and diversity of Arctic flora, fauna, and habitats—and to integrating indigenous people and their knowledge into CAFF. In recognition of this, the Arctic Ministers in 1998 endorsed CAFF's Strategic Plan for Conservation of Arctic Biological Diversity as a framework for future program activities. The Strategic Plan is built around five objectives addressing biodiversity monitoring, conservation of genetic resources, species and habitats, establishment of protected areas, conservation outside protected areas, and integration of biodiversity conservation objectives into economic plans and policies. Examples of major projects CAFF is currently working on are: a status report on Arctic biodiversity; development of a program to monitor Arctic biodiversity; assessment of climate change impacts on Arctic ecosystems in collaboration with AMAP and other Arctic organizations; assistance with implementation of circumpolar conservation strategies for murre (guillemots) and eiders; development of a Circumpolar Protected Areas Network (CPAN); preparing a Circumpolar Arctic Vegetation Map; and listing and mapping rare Arctic vascular plants. Whenever possible, CAFF works in co-operation with other international organizations and associations to achieve common conservation goals in the Arctic.

SUPPORTING PUBLICATIONS TO THE CBMP FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT

- **Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program
Executive Summary and Recommendations**
- **Strategy for Coordination of Monitoring Activities between
CAFF and AMAP**
- **Expert Network Monitoring Plans**
Initial list includes:
 - I. Shorebirds
 - II. Reindeer/Caribou
 - III. ITEX
- **Discussion Papers**
Initial list includes:
 - I. Wetlands International and CAFF Cooperation Strategy:
Global and flyway-scale monitoring, and conservation
programs for migratory waterbirds of the Arctic
 - II. UNEP-WCMC and CAFF Cooperation Strategy:
Data Management and Communications for the CBMP
 - III. Community-based monitoring written by Permanent
Participants to CAFF, with introduction by IPS

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1. Executive Summary

The Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program (CBMP) has been developed by the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna Working Group of the Arctic Council (CAFF), in response to directives by the Arctic Council Ministers, and numerous international agreements and conventions that are promoting the vital importance of biodiversity conservation and preservation of ecosystems.



Children in Scoresbysund, East Greenland.
Photo courtesy of Carsten Egevang/ARC-PIC.COM

Conservation of biological diversity is inextricably linked to sustainable development. For effective policies to be developed by Arctic State Ministers that protect Arctic flora and fauna from extinction, but also allow for the sustainable use of the Arctic's living resources, socio-cultural stability, and successful regional and economic development, very thorough and comprehensive information must be provided on the status and trends of biological diversity in the Arctic.

The Arctic is experiencing stress from numerous sources including pollution, contaminant transport, habitat fragmentation, melting of the sea ice due to climate change, over-harvesting of Arctic marine and terrestrial species, invasive species, regional and economic development,

migratory routes is not fully known. Further, though there are numerous monitoring efforts currently being executed in the Arctic region, there is little coordination of efforts between them, or coordination of analyses.

The CBMP is being developed by CAFF to serve as a coordinating entity for currently existing biodiversity monitoring programs in the Arctic, for data gathering and data analyses, and for coordinating the communication of results. The CBMP will serve to assist in the harmonization of currently existing monitoring efforts, and cooperate with other research organizations to identify gaps and deficiencies in the current knowledge base. New monitoring initiatives will be designed and implemented in conjunction with AMAP and other organizations, to make the most efficient use of financial, scientific and logistical resources, and to provide comprehensive data on the state of Arctic biodiversity on a circumpolar scale.



Nenets reindeer herders from Kanin Peninsula in the forest of the Mezen Region in the "Kanin" community, Kuloy River Onset, Mezen Region, Archangelsk Oblast. Photo courtesy of Association of Nenets people of "Yasavey"

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