



Arctic Council
Task Force on Scientific Cooperation
VI meeting, Copenhagen
August 19-20, 2015
Summary submitted by the co-chairs

Evan Bloom (US), and Russian SAO Vladimir Barbin co-chaired the sixth meeting of the Task Force on Scientific Cooperation (SCTF). The meeting was held at the Scandic Copenhagen Hotel, in Denmark. 46 delegates participated in the meeting, including all the Arctic States, the Aleut International Association (AIA), the Saami Council (SC) and the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program Working Group (AMAP). 10 observers were in attendance: France, Germany, Italy, Japan, South Korea, United Kingdom, the European Union, the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC), the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO), the Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM) and the University of the Arctic (UArctic). The Arctic Council Secretariat (ACS) was also present.

The sixth meeting of the SCTF was the first meeting after the renewal of the SCTF mandate by Ministers. Prior to the meeting, the Kingdom of Denmark and the US had distributed a refined version of the draft agreement. Although, as expected, one delegation had not yet received a mandate to negotiate a legally binding agreement, the focus at this meeting was on further drafting the text for such an agreement.

During the two days of the meeting, the Task Force moved carefully through multiple rounds of revisions in order to find compromises and wording that could be accepted by all the participants. Central topics for discussion were;

- Geographic scope
- Definition of “participants”
- Laws, regulations, policies and procedures
- Traditional and local knowledge
- Use and content of appendices
- Access to data
- The relationship of the agreement to non-parties
- Review of the agreement

A small ad hoc drafting group was established to look closer at various issues during the meeting.

It was generally accepted that the agreement would not just focus on scientific research *in* the Arctic, but rather on scientific research *on* the Arctic, implying that research on Arctic issues could be done outside of the Arctic.

In regards to the geographical scope of the Agreement, it was decided that each Arctic State would provide further information as to how it would like to define the southern limit of this Agreement, if such a limit is to be defined at all.

When relationship of the Agreement to non-parties was discussed, some Observers gave statements and underlined the importance that non-Arctic states would somehow receive benefits under the agreement. The notion was supported by several Arctic States.

In general, many brackets were removed both from the preamble and from the main body of the text, and consensus was reached on such articles as: *Traditional and local knowledge, Resources, Settlement of Disputes, Amendments to this Agreement, etc.*

Though the whole article on traditional and local knowledge was un-bracketed by the delegates, the question of Appendices was raised in this regard. It was proposed that a more detailed description of integration of traditional and scientific knowledge will be presented in the form of a non-legally-binding Appendix. AIA offered to provide material that has already been developed by SDWG on this subject.

Russia suggested including a separate article on the intellectual property rights explaining that it is a very sensitive issue in academic circles today.

The co-chairs noted that the group had made great progress during the Copenhagen meeting, and expressed the group's appreciation to the Kingdom of Denmark for its outstanding efforts in hosting the sixth meeting of the task force and related hospitality.

Iceland is considering an offer to host the 7th meeting of the SCTF which would be held in Reykjavik sometime in December 2015. Practical and logistical information will be sent out in due time.