



PROCEEDINGS OF THE 'ARCTIC INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DIALOGUE'

22 JANUARY 2016, BRUSSELS

1. Introduction

As part of the EU's Arctic policy, reflected in the Communication on "Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region" (JOIN(2012) 19 final), the European Commission and the European External Action Service are committed to ensuring that the views of Arctic inhabitants are taken into account in EU policy actions touching upon the Arctic. It specifically stated that "the Commission and the EEAS would step up their efforts to hold regular dialogues with indigenous peoples." The meeting organised on 22 January aimed to build on the experiences of previous meetings to give further impetus to the dialogue between the EU and Arctic indigenous peoples, the third regular meeting since 2013.

2. Summary of proceedings

The meeting was attended by representatives of the Arctic indigenous peoples, representatives from various relevant Commission departments, representatives of Arctic states as well as representatives of other regional organisations. A list of participants is attached to this document.

Following a tour de table and a short welcome statement by the chair and a member of the Cabinet of Commissioner Vella, the representatives of the indigenous peoples were given the opportunity to make introductory statements. They welcomed the initiative, particularly on how the dialogue has evolved from information sharing to focusing on more action-oriented results. They also mentioned the importance of climate change adaptation, access to funding instruments and adequate forms of consultation and representation in the EU decision-making process and in international organisations. The unique relationship between Greenland and the EU, recently strengthened through the joint declaration, should be used to the fullest extent possible. The situation of reindeer herders in the Arctic, challenged by loss in biodiversity, was emphasized.

Participants were then updated on the EU's review of its Indigenous People's policy. A policy document is to be issued by the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Commission in the second half of 2016.

The Commission and EEAs also informed participants on the latest state of play on the upcoming Arctic policy document, which is to be issued early spring. The focus will be on climate change and environmental protection, sustainable development (focusing on the EU part of the Arctic and international cooperation. Research is to underpin all of these elements.

On Arctic research, a number of Arctic-specific calls are to ask for project applications to make use of traditional knowledge, both in terms of formulating the research questions as well as in data collection. Arctic indigenous peoples also indicated the difficulty in participating due to the conditions that are considered too strict. As regards access to EU funding instruments, the EU's Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme is to lead on a pilot activity that is to bring together a network of managing authorities and stakeholders from various regional development programmes in the European part of the Arctic. It is to facilitate the exchange of information, plan and coordinate calls for proposals and monitor the impact of programmes on the region. A first meeting of this network is to be held in September, place to be confirmed, with representatives of Arctic indigenous peoples being most welcome to attend.

Climate change

Following this update, participants were briefed by the European Commission's Climate Action DG on the outcome of the climate change agreement struck at the COP21 in Paris last December. Apart from the mitigation measures agreed to limit global warming to 1.5°C, adaptation measures will be equally important. The EU has committed to support developing countries to take measures, as well as ensuring technology transfer. The COP21 shows that multilateralism works. The link to all the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions can be found here:

<http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/indc/Submission%20Pages/submissions.aspx>

The Nordic Council then outlined its Arctic cooperation programme (8 million EUR) for 2015-2017, which focuses on sustainable development in the Arctic. A call is open every year between November and January. The priority for 2016 focuses on economic development and investment, with a focus on a) indigenous peoples b) international processes such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the COP21 and c) international cooperation, including with the EU, as well as communication/outreach. Particular support has been given to cooperation with the Saami, including support for exchange and visualisation of the Sami culture (500.000 EUR) and the Saami University College (225.000 EUR). The Nordic Council also plans to open an office in Brussels this year to strengthen ties with the European institutions.

On climate change in particular, the Nordic Council spent more than 4.5 million EUR since 2012, with a focus on short-lived climate pollutants, the optimization of monitoring systems of SLCP and protection of mires within the RAMSAR Convention. For the future, the Nordic Council will support climate adaption platforms for the Nordic countries, which will be crucial in implementing the NIDCs.

The floor was then given to Aleut International Association who gave an illustration of living and working conditions on the Aleutian Islands that are already heavily impacted by climate change and their further work in the Arctic Council. Participants thanked the Nordic Council and the European Commission for their extensive presentations and recalled the extensive support the Nordic Council has given to the Saami Council and the Reindeer Herding Association.

Sustainable Development

The European Commission's Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Department outlined in a presentation the different funding programmes under the European Regional Development Fund that are available in the European part of the Arctic. The presentation presented the results of the consultation that the Commission undertook end of 2014 on streamlining Arctic funding¹. There, respondents highlighted in particular the need that was identified to improve more structured regional cooperation between funding programmes, for example through a better exchange of best practices, a shared planning and analysis structure or long-term joint financial programming.

The Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme announced that its 2016 call for proposals take place between May and October. Preparatory projects, seed money, would also be available to support projects, including for indigenous peoples.

The region of Lapland then presented its Smart Specialisation Strategy, where the region taps into different EU funding sources for the benefit of the region's development, focusing on areas such as mining and the metal industry, the bio economy and tourism.

The presentations were then followed by a Q&A session. There was a discussion on the involvement of indigenous peoples in these programmes. Both in terms of access to funding programmes as well as on involvement of indigenous peoples in determining research questions, for example. The indigenous peoples organisations remarked that they often find it difficult to participate in EU funded projects due to the need to seek co-financing. Grant programmes may be more interesting, in some cases.

Action points

- Arctic indigenous peoples would inform themselves on the [NIDCs](#) of their respective country and to see where they can contribute themselves as organisations on climate change adaptation and mitigation measures. For the European Union, 20% of the European Regional Development Funds has been earmarked to support Member States in their efforts.
- While the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme, as well as the Nordic Council and the North Programme offer opportunities for Arctic indigenous peoples organisations, it was also indicated that accessing this funding is difficult for them. The Regional and Urban Policy DG informed participants that they are in a process of simplification of its programmes. Contact details for input are to be distributed.
- The Commission will look into opportunities for Arctic indigenous peoples to better access EU research funding (for example micro grants) as well as on how they can better tap into local and traditional knowledge.
- The Commission will come back to the indigenous peoples representatives on the issue of predator policies and how it is applied in Finland and Sweden, as well as

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/maritimeaffairs_fisheries/consultations/arctic-eu-funding/index_en.htm

on the issue of directly selling reindeer meat by reindeer herders under EU health and safety food rules.²

- The next Arctic dialogue will be organised by the Commission in 2017.

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² A question has been posed on this by the Member of the European Parliament, Mr Väyrynen: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+P-2016-000338+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>

ANNEX 1: List of participants

Indigenous peoples representatives	Organisation
Mr Mads Faegteborg Advisor	Inuit Circumpolar Council Greenland
Ms Aile Jaavo President	Saami Council
Ms Gunn Britt Retter Head of Unit (Environment Section)	Saami Council
Ms Elle Merete Omma Executive Secretary	Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat
Mr Mikhail A. Pogodaev Acting Chair	Association of World Reindeer Herders
Ms Nadine Kochuten Representative	Aleut International Association

Other participants	Organisation
Ms Meghan Lau Second Secretary	Mission of Canada to the European Union
Ms Eli Jonsvik Counsellor Foreign Affairs	Mission of Norway to the European Union
Mr Mark Robinson Environment, Energy, Science & Technology Officer	Mission of the United States of America to the European Union
Mr Antti Helanterä First Secretary	Permanent Representation of Finland to the European Union
Ms Tanne Krogh Bertelsen Secretary of Embassy (deputy Antici)	Permanent Representation of Denmark to the European Union
Ms Lida Skifte Lennert Head of Representation/ Minister Counsellor	Greenland Representation to the European Union
Mr Mikael Janson Managing Director	North Sweden European Office
Mr Kari Alto Managing Director	East and North Finland European Office
Mr Tront Haukenes Managing Director	North Norway Office
Ms Nauja Bianco Senior Adviser	Nordic Council of Ministers
Ms Kristiina Jokelainen Advisor	Regional Council of Lapland
Mr Ole Damsgaard Head of Secretariat	Northern Periphery and Arctic Secretariat

Representation from EU Institutions

Mr Bernhard Friess	DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
Ms Antonina Rousseva	Cabinet of Commissioner Vella
Mr Ramon van Barneveld	DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
Mr Stijn Billiet	DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
Ms Anne Bergenfelt	DG Climate Action
Mr Terkel Petersen	European External Action Service
Ms Tove Søvndahl Gant	European External Action Service
Ms Maroula Sfondyla	European External Action Service
Mr Matthew Brooke	DG International Cooperation and Development
Ms Bettina Schmidbauer Mogensen	DG Move
Ms Joanne Kiryllo	DG Regional and Urban Policy
Ms Dorota Witoldson	DG Regional and Urban Policy
Mr Jounila Pekka	DG Regional and Urban Policy
Mr Nikolaj Bock	European Environmental Agency
Mr Attilio Gambardella	DG Research

