

Common Concern for the Arctic

An Arctic Conference Organised by the Nordic Council of Ministers

9-10 September 2008 – Ilulissat, Greenland

**Conclusions by the Chairman of the Conference
Ambassador Hans Corell
Former Legal Counsel of the United Nations**

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
A. Opening Session	2
B. Setting the Scene	3
Environmental and Climate Change in the Arctic	3
Globalisation, Social Issues and Arctic Livelihood	5
The European Union and the Arctic – Policies and Actions	6
The Law of the Sea	7
C. The Panels – Chairman’s Conclusions	9
Panel 1. Terrestrial Living Resources	9
Panel 2. Marine Living Resources	10
Panel 3. Non-Renewable Resources – New Opportunities and Concerns	12
Panel 4. Local Development – Capacity Building in the Arctic	13
Panel 5. Arctic Research – Science and Traditional Knowledge	15
D. Concluding Discussion	16
Chairman’s General Conclusions	17

Introduction

I have been asked to present Conclusions. These Conclusions are based on material presented to the Conference and the discussions during the five Panel sessions.

Needless to say, the Conclusions represent my perception of the results of the Conference. They should also be seen in the context of the objectives of the Conference: to increase awareness of how European Union policies and actions affect conditions in the Arctic and to raise awareness of the new challenges and opportunities that are a result of changing environmental, economic and social conditions in the Arctic region.

The purpose of the Conference was not to adopt common positions. Even if it would have been an advantage to present such positions, this would not have been possible among other things because of the short time at our disposal. As a matter of fact, it represented a challenge for the Chairman to present Conclusions immediately following a sequence of five Panels in one and the same day.

In order to assist those whose task it is to follow up on our work, I have attempted to highlight matters that have emerged in the discussions and such that must be addressed in the near future by individual states, regional organisations and the European Union. In other words: I have attempted to produce a document that can be used as a practical working tool.

The focus of the Conference has been on the Arctic and the European Union and how to best assist the different components of the EU to address Arctic issues more effectively and in a more coherent manner. This raises the question of the competence of the Union. It may be that some of the elements that are highlighted in these Conclusions do not fall within this competence. However, it is not for the Chairman of the Conference to attempt to make a judgement here. I believe that it is more important to list the elements identified (many, or perhaps most of which may not come as a surprise) and then leave it to the Union, its members, the Arctic states and others concerned to decide who should do what.

At first sight, the lists below may appear lengthy, raising matters of great significance as well as issues of more limited importance. It could be argued that by reducing the lists one would bring the most important matters to the forefront. However, again, I do not believe that it is for the Chairman to set priorities. There are many actors – scientists, experts, politicians, Arctic residents, etc. – who are involved, or should be involved in addressing the matters that were discussed during the Conference. Any priorities should be set by them and ultimately by those responsible at the highest political level.

Against this background, I believe that the Conclusions should be presented as they appear in the lists. Eventually, these lists might be transformed into action plans that can be monitored by the Secretariat of the Nordic Council of Ministers and others. I intend to make a more detailed proposal in this respect to Secretary General Ásgrímsson for his consideration, partly in response to the plea that he made in his Opening Remarks: It is crucial that we not just talk and read reports – we must act!

A very important contribution to the Conference is the review of existing EU policies and actions that are related to and affect developments in the Arctic. This review appears in *The European Union and the Arctic – Policies and actions* (ANP 2008:729 Nordic Council of Ministers).

With these provisos, the following is the report on my Conclusions.

A. Opening Session

The conference was opened with Welcome Remarks by **Ms Aleqa Hammond**, Greenland's Minister for Nordic Co-operation, and Opening Remarks by State

Secretary **Mr Johan Tiedemann**, representing **Ms Cristina Husmark Pehrsson**, Sweden's Minister for Nordic Co-operation.

The Chairman was invited to conduct the proceedings and delivered Opening Remarks (see below).

Thereafter, the Conference heard Opening Remarks by **Mr Halldór Ásgrímsson**, Secretary General to the Nordic Council of Ministers, and Key Note Addresses by **Dr Joe Borg**, EU Commissioner for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, **Ambassador Laurent Stefanini**, French Presidency of the EU, and **Ms Diana Wallis**, Vice-President of the European Parliament. This material will appear in the Conference Proceedings.

B. Setting the Scene

After the Opening Session, the Conference heard presentations by **Dr David Carlson**, Director of the International Polar Year Programme Office, **Dr Rasmus Ole Rasmussen**, Senior Research Fellow, Nordic Centre for Spatial Development, NordRegio, and **Ms Adele Airoidi**, Consultant at Milieu Ltd. Their presentations will appear in the Conference Proceedings. However, to assist the readers of the present report, summaries are included here.

Environmental and Climate Change in the Arctic

(Based on a presentation on environmental and climate change in the Arctic by **Dr David Carlson**, Director of the International Polar Year Programme Office)

A report prepared for the Conference, entitled "Ice in the Arctic – Sea Ice as an Indicator and Integrator", occurs just near the end of the 2008 melting season for the Arctic, at a time of rapid changes in sea ice. The report highlights factors that will determine the final 2008 sea ice extent and draws attention to the other two large ice masses of the Arctic, the Greenland ice sheet and the circum-Arctic permafrost. The point is made that although sea ice extent represents a compelling indicator, the Arctic functions as an integrated and connected system.

From the report we learn that the sea ice in 2007 reached a minimum of 4.2 million square kilometers on 21 September in 2007, an extent 40 per cent below the average for the past 28 years and so low that it surprised all observers and called into question many of the assumptions we might use to estimate 2008 conditions. It appears that the 2008 extent will be very close to the 2007 figure.

The development of ice-free Arctic transportation routes, occasions of ice-free conditions at the highly-symbolic North Pole, and the eventual complete sea ice disappearance in the summer season provide the general public with compelling and potent indicators of climate change. For long term planning, however, we should not get distracted by any single year. For annual Arctic (and hemispheric) heating and cooling, ice volume matters as much as ice extent. Therefore, we need to monitor changes in thickness (and age) as well as changes in the extent of the ice. Arctic sea ice has shown annual and spatial variability in the past and we must expect that it will do so in the future even during rapid decline; annual and seasonal predictability will

remain a substantial challenge. Most important, sea ice plays a substantial role in Arctic marine ecosystems and has strong correlations with permafrost and with the Greenland ice sheet; its annual decline and seasonal disappearance portends and indicates changes in the entire Arctic system.

Real and urgent threats to ice-dependent animals such as seals and bears convey important messages to the public and to decision makers. Again, however, long-range planning requires attention to the entire Arctic marine system. Depending on season and snow cover, useful amounts of light can penetrate through several meters of sea ice. The underside of ice becomes habitat for an interesting and unique array of microorganisms. These microorganisms can grow abundant enough to give the underside of sea ice a brownish green colour; they attract other organisms adapted to the ice environment. Animals and materials sinking from under-ice communities stimulate biological activity on the sea floor; in shallow environments, animals move back and forth from ocean bottom to overlying ice.

The sea ice sea floor connections represent substantial components of local ecosystem productivity over large coastal areas of the Arctic. In summer, under-ice and ice-edge environments provide favourable conditions for many fish, birds, seals and whales. The presence of sea ice thus has a protective effect on the Arctic sea floor and a stimulatory effect on Arctic marine ecosystems. The absence of sea ice will disrupt the ecological connections and expose large areas of undisturbed sea floor to exploitation, and particularly to bottom trawling.

On geologic (glacial – interglacial) time scales, the northern ice masses – sea ice, permafrost, and land-based ice sheets – grow or retreat together. On shorter time scales, decades, we can expect that permafrost degradation and the Greenland ice sheet ablation will also react to and replicate the disappearance of sea ice. We should anticipate similar patterns of decline: faster-than-expected changes, periods of high variability followed by periods of rapid decline, one or more irreversible tipping points.

It is suggested that we are only beginning to understand the Arctic as an integrated marine and terrestrial system. We see caribou become coastal species during summer months, often dependent on sea ice for migration to and from off-shore islands. We get a sense of Arctic vegetation greening and growing in synchrony with the seasonal cycles of sea ice, and of extreme northern plants and animals at risk along with the ice. We get a sense of atmosphere and ocean interacting with ice to encourage its winter growth and then force and arrange its summer disappearance.

The drift of the research vessel Tara during the first months of the International Polar Year provides a reminder of how these Arctic changes interact and accelerate. Starting in the same season and following virtually the same route as Fridtjof Nansen's Arctic expedition ship the Fram more than 100 years earlier, the Tara took approximately one third the time (14 months compared to 34 months) for a complete crossing at the mercy of wind, ocean and ice. The Arctic gives restless signals in all seasons; we have much less time than we think to understand and protect it.

Globalisation, Social Issues and Arctic Livelihood

(Based on a presentation on globalisation, social issues and Arctic livelihood by **Dr Rasmus Ole Rasmussen**, Senior Research Fellow, NordRegio)

Both the economic and the social life in the Arctic have been – and in the future will be – exposed to marked economic and social impact. The increased interests in the Arctic, intensified by the economic prospects opened up by the melting of ice that previously limited the accessibility, have called for further attention

Responses to environmental changes. Northern communities have always been challenged by environmental changes, but have adjusted to the changes. The situation in Greenland during the last century serves as a good illustration. A dramatic increase in sea temperature along West Greenland during the 1910s-1920s caused an increase in the cod stock becoming the dominating species and fundamental for the economy. Another shift occurred during the 1980s where a cooling causing cod to decline and resulted in a move of the economy from cod to shrimp fisheries. In both cases the changes have had profound impacts, in the first case with the establishment of a more permanent settlement structure, and in the second through an increased urbanisation of the population.

Impact of new activities. Attention is drawn toward exploitation of the mineral and energy resources in the north, as well as the opening of new transport routes. Benefits, however, rarely remain in the region, and permanent jobs are rare. And when jobs are retained, the result may be adverse effects such as social stratification and inequity in wealth distribution. Long-lasting consequences often persist through industrial waste, tailings, and environmental contaminations, so the opening up of new opportunities is a challenge to the northern communities. “The Law of the Sea” already exists as a legal framework for resolving potential conflicts in the Arctic, but the situation is not that simple, according to many northerners. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is based on the recognition of rights of states. But it is not recognising the rights of people. Adding the principle of subsidiarity, however, may provide a conceptual tool to mediate polarity of pluralism and the common good in a globalised world, granting the peoples in the Arctic a voice by treating the Arctic as a distinct region in international society.

Complex economies. Fishing and hunting has been the economic basis for most northern communities, still perceived by many as the main economic basis for communities in the North. The reality, however, is that the third sector – the service sector with wage work in administration, education, social service, etc. – is the main income source for most families, creating jobs for 80 per cent or more of the employed persons. Especially for women, who seem to be more open to the new activities, not only accepting jobs outside the traditional primary sector, but also ready to accomplish the training and educational requirements needed. Still, however, the informal economy and subsistence activities are ensuring basic supply, sharing with family and neighbours, and informal sale on local markets. It is especially important for the continuation of small scale hunting and fishing in villages, providing the basic sustenance and a small cash income.

Responses to globalisation. The changes in the overall economic structure are affecting the household structures as well as the settlement pattern. An increase in the out-migration of both males and females, looking for education and work opportunities outside the villages and smaller towns, are contributing to an increased urbanisation in the Arctic. And the process has been accelerated by a higher rate of out-migrating females, eventually leading to a substantial increase in the number of households consisting of single men in the villages. The general pattern shows that 55 to 70 per cent of persons with tertiary education are women, while men tend to finish their educational careers with primary or secondary education, or vocational training. The question of opportunities has very much to do with availability of educational options, first of all through national programmes, but increasingly through new initiatives regarding circumpolar cooperation in education such as University of the Arctic, providing a new world of possibilities.

The new demographic challenges. The different responses to changes affect the options of staying or leaving, as young persons simply have to leave in order to pursue a future. And when they have left, many of them never come back to stay, especially women in the age group from sixteen to thirty-five, the youngest seeking education and the older seeking jobs. Many northern communities are therefore experiencing a situation where in the younger group are only six or seven females to ten males. And this gender imbalance has a marked impact, affecting both social life and the economy, with a divide between village life and large scale extractive industries, both dominated by males, while towns and cities increasingly are characterised by third sector activities, actively chosen by females through a “step-stone” process of migration, from villages to towns, to regional centres and the capital regions, and eventually out of the country.

Conclusion. It is important to react to changes in the Arctic. But it is also important to realise that the ongoing changes are multi-dimensional. Changes in climate and the environment are important factors, but in relation to the future of settlements, communities and cultures, in the end it is the people in the Arctic that are decisive.

The European Union and the Arctic – Policies and Actions

(Based on a presentation of a consultancy report “The European Union and the Arctic – Policies and actions” by **Ms Adele Airoidi**, Consultant at Milieu Ltd.)

The report to the Nordic Council of Ministers reviews the main European Union policies and actions of relevance for the Arctic. It highlights the place of research and environment as the EU policies having the most direct impact on the Arctic, and of the recently launched Integrated Maritime Policy as having a strong potential for impact. A number of other EU policies, while not targeting the Arctic as such, impact on it. The Northern Dimension is the only EU policy with a declared Arctic component, but its main emphasis has been so far on different elements.

In the last few months, there has been an unprecedented surge of interest in the Arctic within the EU. Climate change has been the main catalyst for such new awareness and interest. As climate change is moving higher and higher up the EU list of priorities, attention to the Arctic has increased in parallel in a number of EU sectoral policies.

A determining element for such attention appears to have been the realisation of the opportunities offered by a future, largely ice-free, Arctic Ocean – the exploitation of new or increased energy, mineral and fishery resources and the opening of new navigation routes.

The new geopolitical importance gained by the Arctic region because of climate change – the anticipation of new opportunities but also the emergence of new problems, including relating to international security – has been recognised by the EU institutions. The Arctic has a place on the agenda of the Commission and of the Council, and remains on the agenda of the European Parliament.

On the basis of present circumstances, which may be in some aspects in rapid evolution, the main conclusions of the report are that *the EU already impacts on the Arctic in many ways* and that *the increasing environmental, economic and political importance of the Arctic, its proximity to and historical links with Europe, warrant a conscious effort by the EU to develop as a minimum a more systematic and proactive approach*. Two main challenges need to be addressed to this end.

The first is to ensure better consistency of EU attitude and action, through a clearer and as far as possible concrete definition of ends and means, guided by the concept of sustainable development. More active interaction with Arctic countries and cooperation with the Arctic regional bodies and within broader international contexts dealing with issues of importance to the Arctic would be part of this approach.

The second, closely related, challenge is the development in the EU of a corresponding internal organisation, a central function in the European Commission supported by an efficient network reflecting the multiple Arctic-relevant aspects of EU policies and actions, to act as coordinator internally and as contact point both internally within the EU and towards the exterior.

If the idea of a full-fledged EU Arctic policy, evoked as a possibility in the EU political context, were to be pursued, it might be worth considering two questions which have emerged during the preparation of this report: whether the EU would be able to back its interest in the Arctic with enough substance, and how an EU Arctic policy could be developed in the absence of a sufficiently strong Arctic constituency able to express the interests of Arctic residents.

The Law of the Sea

(Excerpt from the Opening Remarks by the Chairman, **Ambassador Hans Corell**)

In the debate there have been suggestions that the Arctic is up for grabs in some way. There is a rush to lay hands on the resources that undoubtedly exist in this vast region.

If we focus on the Arctic Ocean alone, it is a sea of some 14 million square kilometres surrounded by continents. This represents almost one and a half times the size of the United States of America. By comparison, the size of the Russian Federation is some 17 million square kilometres. This should give us some idea of the size of the area – the ocean and the surrounding land areas – that we will be discussing.

It should also be understood that our discussion does not take place in a legal vacuum. On the contrary, there is a legal regime that applies to the Arctic Ocean, namely the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. This means for example that the rules on the Territorial Sea, the Exclusive Economic Zone and the Continental Shelf are applicable in the Arctic.

Of course, there can be disputes about how these rules should be applied. But this does not differ from what applies in other parts of the world. And having a dispute with a neighbouring state is perfectly legitimate; one can always differ on how to construe the provisions of a treaty. What matters is how such disputes are resolved.

There have been suggestions that disputes relating to control over areas in the Arctic could develop into armed conflict. References have been made to the planting of the Russian flag on the sea floor close to the North Pole. But that flag planting can be seen as a symbolic act at most. It certainly does not have any legal relevance. The question of the extension of the Russian Continental Shelf was brought before the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf already in 2001.

There are also other issues relating to territorial claims and maritime delimitation. But, as I said, the Law of the Sea Convention should provide sufficient guidance for the states concerned and in particular for the five Arctic coastal states to settle these matters in a peaceful and dignified manner.

However, it is important to point out that the Convention on the Law of the Sea certainly does not solve all issues related in the Arctic Ocean. The Convention foresees that additional measures may have to be taken for various reasons, in particular, for the protection of the environment. New sea lanes may require rules relating to both the ships that will ply the Arctic Ocean within a not too distant future and the lanes themselves since they may have to be identified and subjected to traffic separation schemes. It may also be necessary for states to agree upon additional rules relating to fisheries and extraction of non-renewable resources in the Arctic.

In our discussions we should also bear in mind that, depending on the subject matter, different constituencies in the world community may have an interest. That this applies to the Arctic states goes without saying. But also neighbouring states and the European Union have an interest in the Arctic. As a matter of fact, I would suggest that they have an obligation to engage in matters relating to the Arctic.

We should also not forget that if the Arctic Ocean becomes navigable the rules on the freedom of the high seas will apply. And the freedom of the high seas is a matter of concern to all states.

The argument could also be made that the geography of the Arctic Ocean is such that the provisions of Articles 122 and 123 of the Law of the Sea Convention on enclosed or semi-enclosed seas are applicable. If so, the states bordering the Arctic Ocean have an express obligation to cooperate with each other in the exercise of their rights and in the performance of their duties under the Convention.

I am fully aware that there are also many questions related to the land surrounding the Arctic Ocean that must be addressed with equal precision. But because of the

discussion that has taken place relating to the law of the sea I thought it was important to clarify that there is a regime that will take us a long way to resolve many of the issues that we are facing at present.

C. The Panels

In the second day, the Conference was addressed by and engaged in discussions with five Panels moderated by **Ms Annika Ström Melin**:

PANEL 1. TERRESTRIAL LIVING RESOURCES

This Panel had been asked to focus on the effects of climate change and consequences of melting permafrost and glaciers on the protection and sustainable use of terrestrial living resources. Specifically, the panelists were asked to address direct and indirect impacts of current agricultural and forestry policies (economic, social and environmental); maintenance of biological diversity and use of genetic resources; land use and management of natural resources, and impacts of industrial and radiological pollution.

After an introduction by Mr **Jan Vapaavuori**, Finland's Minister for Nordic Co-operation, the Conference heard presentations by four panelists: **Ms Malin Brännström**, Legal Advisor, National Union of the Swedish Sámi People, **Mr Jesper Madsen**, Director of Department, National Environmental Research Institute NERI, Denmark, **Mr Yrjö Eljas Norokorpi**, Area Manager, Natural Heritage Services of Metsähallitus, Finland, and **Mr David Stanners**, Head of Programme, European Environment Agency (EEA). This material will appear in the Conference Proceedings.

Chairman's Conclusion

Having followed the discussion in Panel 1 my conclusion is that the following matters need to be addressed:

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1.1 | The implementation of existing international agreements relevant to the Arctic should be the first priority in protecting Arctic terrestrial living resources. |
| 1.2 | Proper research requires standardised, integrated programs for examining the Arctic terrestrial ecosystems. Long term monitoring, including community-based monitoring, is also needed together with scientific research to assist the peoples in the Arctic to set proper hunting and harvesting quotas. The "Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks" (SAON) process deserves strong support. |
| 1.3 | All forest land use planning should be carried out in strict accordance with participatory planning best practices. |
| 1.4 | The role of northern forests as carbon sinks and source of bioenergy |

must be examined and given broader recognition in the new international climate agreement that will succeed the Kyoto Protocol.

- 1.5 More nature-oriented forest management practices are needed that mimic the natural processes and dynamics of the forest ecosystem. The core objective should be to increase the amount of uneven-aged and mixed species forests that are kept continuously well stocked and productive and, in so doing, improve felling potential.
- 1.6 An extensive conservation area network should be established and maintained throughout the Arctic to foster high ecosystem biodiversity.
- 1.7 There is a need to examine how EU policies and rules on slaughter and meat control relate to the specific needs of reindeer husbandry.
- 1.8 To design effective and efficient responses and adaptation strategies, it is important to assess the impact of climate change together with other pressures, and also to clearly identify the sources of the pressures causing the problems so that action can be taken in the right place.

PANEL 2. MARINE LIVING RESOURCES

This Panel had been asked to focus on the effects of current policies on the protection and sustainable use of fish stocks and other marine living resources, such as seals and whales. Specifically, the panelists were asked to address the adequacy of regional and global conventions on fisheries management and biodiversity; effects of management regimes, trade and fisheries policies; implications of climate change for future policies on sustainable management of living marine resources; pollution from persistent organic pollutants and heavy metals in Arctic waters; and bioprospecting, i.e. commercial use of genetic biological material.

After an introduction by **Ms Diana Wallis**, Vice-President of the European Parliament, the Conference heard presentations by four panelists: **Mr Poul Degenbol**, Scientific Advisor on Fisheries, EU Commission, DG MARE, **Mr Aqqaluk Lyngø**, President, Inuit Circumpolar Council, Greenland, **Ms Jacqueline McGlade**, Executive Director, European Environment Agency (EEA), and **Mr Jóhann Sigurjónsson**, Director General, Marine Research Institute, Iceland. This material will appear in the Conference Proceedings.

Chairman's Conclusion

Having followed the discussion in Panel 2 my conclusion is that the following matters need to be addressed:

- 2.1 Mechanisms must be developed which can provide for regulated access to new fisheries, whether in new areas that become accessible, or because new fish stocks appear in new areas due to climate change. These mechanisms must respect the interest of Arctic residents.
- 2.2 When new fish stocks appear in new areas and other stocks disappear, it is important that international management authorities try to avoid disputes on management and utilisation. Therefore, strengthened methodologies and tools are needed for allocating utilisation rights when changes occur in the habitats of living marine resources.
- 2.3 Methods and tools also need to be developed to effectively enforce such management regimes. In particular, since there is a risk that non-regulated fisheries develop in the Arctic, instruments are urgently needed to effectively prevent illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing (IUU fishing).
- 2.4 Specific instruments, such as those decided and implemented through regional fisheries management organisations, need to be upgraded (e.g. the Convention on Future Multilateral Co-operation in North-East Atlantic Fisheries) or elaborated to effectively regulate the activities of specific economic sectors in support of an integrated framework for maritime management. The North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) could provide a setting to discuss how to implement such a framework. It could also be asked to examine the extensions of its geographic coverage and membership in order to cover Arctic fish stocks.
- 2.5 The EU ecosystem approach in marine management must be strengthened, extended and made operational through a legal basis for international cooperation in the Arctic Ocean as a whole.
- 2.6 Europe has a clear and direct role and responsibility helping to reduce the release of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and heavy metals and thereby their impact on the Arctic.
- 2.7 The EU should enter into an open dialogue with Inuit so that the total import ban on seal products does not hurt the Inuit dependency on seals. It is important that EU policies on the exploitation of Arctic marine living resources reflect the interests of those depending on those resources as much as the interests of specific EU constituencies.
- 2.8 There is a need to develop a regional observation and monitoring system for the Arctic Ocean to support scientific research and policymaking. (Cf. 5.8)
- 2.9 Mechanisms must be established to ensure regular provision of and access to environmental data and information. Governments need to act consistently and refrain from being selective by taking into account some scientific advice while disregarding other such advice. If not, the result will be policy-based evidence instead of evidence-based policy. (Cf. 5.8)

PANEL 3. NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCES – NEW OPPORTUNITIES AND CONCERNS

This Panel had been asked to focus on challenges and opportunities due to effects of climate change. Specifically, the panelists were asked to address expanded exploitation of non-living resources, e.g. oil, gas and minerals; new maritime transportation routes; increased commercial shipping; need for improved regulation to enhance maritime safety and environmental protection at sea; effects of increasing tourism on the environment, local development and traditional living conditions; policies to reduce risk and prevent physical damage to infrastructure and environmental disasters on land; emergency and rescue capabilities; and best practices, improved methods and new technologies.

After an introduction by **Ms Heidi Grande Røys**, Norway's Minister for Nordic Cooperation, the Conference heard presentations by five panelists: **Ms Mette Agerup**, Assistant Director, Ministry of Oil and Energy, Norway, **Mr Claude Rouam**, Head of Unit, EU Commission, DG ENV, **Mr Martin Sommerkorn**, Senior Climate Change Advisor, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), **Mr Dimitrios Theologitis**, Head of Unit, EU Commission, DG TREN, and **Mr Joseph Westwood-Booth**, Head of Section, International Maritime Organization (IMO). This material will appear in the Conference Proceedings.

Chairman's Conclusion

Having followed the discussion in Panel 3 my conclusion is that the following matters need to be addressed:

- 3.1 Activities related to oil and gas in the Arctic Ocean must be prudent which requires high environmental standards adapted to the sensitivity of the Arctic; ecosystem based management; rigorous environmental and strategic impact assessment; effective prevention, preparedness and response to accidents, including clean-up of pollution incidents; and advanced monitoring and research.
- 3.2 Production and transport of oil and gas in and through ice-affected waters should be carefully regulated. The safety issues, including environmental protection, must be further analysed.
- 3.3 Cooperation among the Arctic states to obtain good resource management and sustainability is necessary.
- 3.4 Possible options should be considered for enhancing environmental governance of the Arctic. Such options might include a United Nations Convention on the Law the Sea (UNCLOS) implementing agreement for environmental issues; a regional sea agreement (along the lines of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-

East Atlantic (OSPAR)); further development of multilateral environmental agreements at the global or regional level; strengthening and broadening the role of the Arctic Council; ensuring participation by a broader range of stakeholders; and more engagement by the EU and use of the tools it has to offer (research, European Environment Agency, funding via e.g. Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership, participation in the Arctic Council, etc.), or a combination of these solutions.

- 3.5 Consideration should be given to the provisions in UNCLOS on enclosed or semi-enclosed seas (Articles 122 and 123) and their application to the Arctic. States bordering such a sea have an obligation to cooperate with each other in the exercise of their rights and in the performance of their duties under the Convention. In particular they shall endeavour, directly or through an appropriate regional organisation, to coordinate the implementation of their rights and duties with respect to the protection and preservation of the marine environment.
- 3.6 Tourism shipping appears to be the biggest short to medium-term challenge within the maritime transport sector in the Arctic and should be addressed with urgency. Dialog and partnership with Arctic tour operator organisations can prove useful and helpful.
- 3.7 It is necessary to establish a proper identification system for maritime surveillance and vessel traffic management in the Arctic.
- 3.8 With regard to the maritime safety in Arctic waters, governments should bring their concerns to the attention of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) so that Member States can consider them with a view towards finding internationally agreed solutions. Unilateral regional action should be avoided.

PANEL 4. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT – CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE ARCTIC

Panel 4 had been asked to focus on current local and regional development policies. Specifically, the panelists were asked to address migration trends in Arctic regions; the role of education and training to promote capacity building and reduce gender imbalances; the EU-Greenland Overseas Country and Territory Agreement as an example of external support for local development policies; impacts of new information technologies on local culture and traditional values; new economic activities; policies to retain income from natural resource extraction in Arctic communities; provision of education, health and social services in remote areas; policies to promote job opportunities and maintain the viability of traditional livelihoods.

After an introduction by **Mr Bertel Haarder**, Denmark's Minister for Nordic Co-operation, the Conference heard presentations by four panelists: **Ms Lida Skifte Lennert**, Head of Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Greenland, **Ms Linn Harkess**, Programme Manager, EU Commission, Europeaid, **Mr Russel Shearer**, Director, Northern Science and Contaminants Research, Indian and Northern Affairs, Canada, and **Mr Pavel Sulyandziga**, First Vice-president, Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON). This material will appear in the Conference Proceedings.

Chairman's Conclusion

Having followed the discussion in Panel 4 my conclusion is that the following matters need to be addressed:

- 4.1 There should be closer cooperation between the EU and the Arctic Council for the benefit of the peoples of the Arctic.
- 4.2 In the Greenland Overseas Country and Territory (OTC) Programme Document there is special focus on strategic areas that currently lack manpower or where there is a strong development potential: tourism, construction, raw materials, health, social welfare and education. By focusing on these areas the Greenlandic workforce should be better equipped to meet future demands.
- 4.3 Issues related to the Greenland ice cap, including climate change, should form the core of future Greenland-EU cooperation. Further, a broader cooperation between Greenland and the EU should be developed so that it contributes to the development of Greenland supporting sector policies within the areas of education, mineral resources, energy, tourism, research and culture.
- 4.4 Many Arctic communities are threatened. If we want to preserve these communities and sustain their development, it is of paramount importance to assist the indigenous peoples to adapt to the current changes; to increase access to education and quality healthcare; and to promote development and implementation of a strategy to accelerate growth of the local economy based on traditional livelihoods, tourism and production of processed goods.
- 4.5 Indigenous peoples should get further recognition and empowerment to be able to participate in decision-making with respect to natural, economic and social challenges.
- 4.6 It is of great importance to preserve and develop the use of indigenous peoples' languages in the future. This should be done through the use of modern technology and specially designed programs.

Reference is also made to the Conclusions relating to the other Panels.

PANEL 5. ARCTIC RESEARCH – SCIENCE AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Panel 5 had been asked to focus on policies to enhance the impact of Arctic research and access to data and dissemination of research results. Specifically, the panelists were asked to address local participation and the usefulness of scientific research to local communities; combinations with traditional knowledge; the International Polar Year and other major research activities in the Arctic; the need for enhanced circumpolar coordination and access to polar regions for scientific research; options for new forms of joint transnational research cooperation; and policies to ensure sustained funding and of expanded long-term observation and monitoring of Arctic change.

After an introduction by **Dr David Carlson**, Director of the International Polar Year Programme Office, the Conference heard presentations by four panelists: **Dr Paul Egerton**, Director, European Polar Board, **Ms Elisabeth Lipiatou**, Head of Unit, EU Commission, DG Research, **Mr Sven-Roald Nystø**, Special Adviser, Árran Lulesami Centre and The Sami Institutions Network on High North Affairs, Norway, and **Dr Simon Stephenson**, Director of Division, National Science Foundation of the United States. This material will appear in the Conference Proceedings.

Chairman's Conclusion

Having followed the discussion in Panel 5 my conclusion is that the following matters need to be addressed:

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 5.1 | An integrated approach to financing and prioritisation of future research themes in the Arctic is required to maximise impact and added value to society. |
| 5.2 | There is a need for commitment to connected planning and identification of common research strategies between European states as between those states and non-European Arctic states. The development of European multi-lateral partnerships with common priorities and elements of shared investment should be encouraged. |
| 5.3 | A full understanding of the economic consequences and impacts on society from climate change will rely heavily on the most accurate research assessments and scientific evidence collected in the Arctic region. |
| 5.4 | The vulnerability and resilience to climate change not only depends on cultural aspects and ecosystem diversity but also on the policies, legal rules and institutional arrangements that govern social-economic systems and social-ecological systems. |
| 5.5 | With the expected increase in the industrialisation and transport in the |

- Arctic due to easier access to natural resources because of climate change, it is necessary to develop and implement common standards concerning indigenous peoples with respect to rights and participation in decision-making to apply to all economic activity in the High North.
- 5.6 Earth-system research (integrating across disciplines and multiple scales) is important since change in the Arctic can only be understood in a global context.
- 5.7 Funding across borders for research should be enhanced and new ways of collaboration in his field should be developed.
- 5.8 An assessment should be made on how data policies could be framed to enhance a free and open exchange of data necessary for environmental and climate research. (Cf. 2.8 and 2.9)
- 5.9 A re-assessment should be made of the timeliness, relevance and impact of research information on the development of policy.

D. Concluding Discussion

After the Panels, a Concluding Discussion was held during which the Conference was addressed by **Mr Janos Herman**, Principal Advisor, EU Commission, DG RELEX. Mr Herman's Summary will appear in the Conference Proceedings.

Among the most salient points in Mr Herman's address was his comments relating to the need for replacing outdated and mistaken perceptions about the Arctic in the EU – and about the EU in the Arctic. A key task would be to improve Arctic governance; gaps in environmental governance had been presented very convincingly during the Conference. A framework, preferably Arctic-wide, to regulate fisheries activities is necessary, and so is a regime for managing energy production and transport. Mr Herman also believed that the Conference had clarified the thinking on seals.

With respect to relevant rules, Mr Herman maintained that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is the cornerstone but that the legal regime can and should be developed further as should Arctic frameworks and organisations. In that context he suggested that one should look at the possibility of the European Commission applying for permanent observer status in the Arctic Council so that the Commission could play a bigger role and take part more actively in the work of the Council.

Mr. Herman also mentioned that a first step towards addressing all these matters would be a Communication that the Commission will present to the Member States of the European Union in November this year. This Communication will cover all issues related to Arctic cooperation, including an enhanced role for European Union in the Arctic. It will be built around three main tasks: protecting and preserving the Arctic; promoting sustainable exploitation of Arctic resources; and contributing to strengthening Arctic multilateral governance.

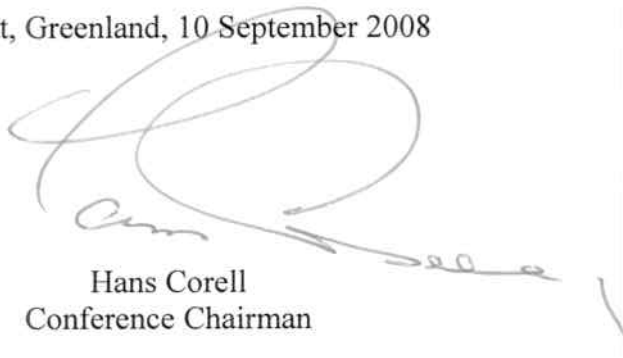
Thereafter **the Chairman** closed the Conference by outlining the Conclusions that appear in the present report. He also made reference to “The Arctic” and “Law of the Sea” under “Selected Material” at <http://www.havc.se> .

Chairman’s General Conclusions

The Opening Remarks and the Keynote Speeches at the Conference testify to the fact that matters relating to the Arctic and the High North must be addressed with determination and in a well structured manner. Even if they may seem self-evident, I nevertheless believe that it is appropriate to close the Conference by drawing the following General Conclusions.

- (a) In order to bring about necessary action, matters relating to the Arctic and the High North must be addressed at the highest political level.
- (b) The issues discussed at the Conference must be addressed through appropriate institutional arrangements and the adoption of precise legal rules or action plans. Such decision-making depends on well structured information, based on solid research.
- (c) Before new rules are contemplated states and international organisations should ensure that the existing legal regime is implemented and that states that have not yet acceded to or otherwise accepted elements of this regime do so.
- (d) There is a clear connection between the work to protect the Arctic and the work necessary to develop an effective post 2012 climate regime which is expected to be agreed upon at the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen in December 2009.
- (e) Against this background and in view of the active engagement that the European Union has demonstrated in the field of environment and climate change, it is of utmost importance that the European Union and other major actors get deeply involved in matters relating to the Arctic; because of its impact on the climate of the earth and human living conditions far outside the High North, the Arctic is of concern to the whole world.

Ilulissat, Greenland, 10 September 2008



Hans Corell
Conference Chairman