Aleut International Association and The Arctic Council

Jim Gamble
Executive Director
Aleut International Association
Alaska Arctic Policy Commission
August 28-29, 2013
Founded 1998

Formed by the Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association (APIA) and the Association of the Indigenous Peoples of the North of the Aleut District of the Kamchatka Region of the Russian Federation (AIPNADKR)

AIA is governed by a Board of Directors that has four Alaskan and four Russian Aleuts as members

AIA has two main purposes:
- Establish close ties between Russian and Alaskan Aleut Communities
- Engage in international activities through the Arctic Council that advocate for the interests of Indigenous Peoples and promote improvement of the Arctic environment

AIA works with governments, scientists and other organizations

AIA needs the involvement of the people of the region
Bering Sea Sub-Netwrok (BSSN)

- 2 phase project over 6 years
- Funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation
- Currently surveying about subsistence marine harvesting in 8 Bering Sea communities (Gambell, Sand Point, Savoonga, St. George, & Togiak in Alaska; Kanchalan, Nikolskoye & Tymlat in Russia)
- Surveying conducted by community members and communities have a stake in the project data.
- More than 6000 surveys have been collected to date.
Subsistence Harvest Areas for Bowhead Whale from March 2009 to February 2010 in Gambell, Alaska

This map was created by the Aleut International Association and the University of Alaska Anchorage RAM group as part of the research under the Bering Sea Sub-Network (ESSN) funded by the National Science Foundation ARC #0956774. ESSN gathers local observations of the environment and selected subsistence species in indigenous coastal communities around the Bering Sea. Directed sampling was used to identify and interview knowledgeable and active harvesters. This map includes input from 15 residents of Gambell, AK.

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Cultural Exchange
AIA Past Work

- Response and Intervention System for Climate Change Induced Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning in Aleut Communities (PSP)
- Testing for presence of contaminants in Aleut women on the Commander Islands, Russia
- Aleut/Unangax Ethnobotany: An Annotated Bibliography
- Improvement of Indigenous Peoples’ Participation in Governance of their Communities through Native NGOs
AIA in the Future

- BSSN Follow-Up Project
- PSSA Designation Under the IMO for Great Circle Route Traffic Areas
- Alaska/Russia Black Carbon Project
- Project on Arctic Council interaction at the community level
- Project on electrical power generation for off grid communities
The Arctic Council

- Founded 1996
- Premier high-level diplomatic forum for international cooperation in the Arctic
- Eight Member States
  > Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, United States
- Six Permanent Participants
  > Aleut International Association
  > Arctic Athabaskan Council
  > Gwich’in Council International
  > Inuit Circumpolar Council
  > Saami Council
  > Russian Association of Indigenous People of the North
- Six working groups, four task forces,
Arctic Council Structure
2013 to 2015 Chairmanship: Canada

Ministers

Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs)

- Task Force on Marine Oil Pollution Prevention
- Task Force to Establish a Circumpolar Business Forum
- Task Force on Enhanced Scientific Cooperation
- Task Force for Action on Black Carbon & Methane

Working Groups

- Arctic Monitoring & Assessment Program (AMAP)
  Chair: Denmark
  US Rep: USGCRP

- Arctic Contaminants Action Program (ACAP)
  Chair: Finland
  US Rep: EPA

- Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME)
  Chair: Iceland
  US Rep: NOAA/OIF

- Conservation of Arctic Flora & Fauna (CAFF)
  Chair: Canada
  US Rep: USFWS

- Emergency Prevention, Preparedness & Response (EPPR)
  Chair: Norway
  US Rep: DOE/NNSA

- Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG)
  Chair: Canada
  US Rep: State/OES/OPA
Arctic Council Structure
2013 to 2015 Chairmanship: Canada

Ministers

Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs)

Deputy Ministers

Permanent Participants (PPs)

Task Force on Marine Oil Pollution Prevention

Task Force to Establish a Circumpolar Business Forum

Task Force on Enhanced Scientific Cooperation

Task Force for Action on Black Carbon & Methane

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The work of the Arctic Council

- Traditionally the work of the Arctic Council has been assessment, monitoring and other research.

- Now the Council is shifting to more practical work; bringing the Arctic States together to strengthen governance and negotiate agreements which link all Arctic States.
Agreement on Cooperation in Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic

- First legally-binding agreement among the eight Arctic States (not AC)
- Canada hosted tabletop exercise in Whitehorse Oct. 2011
- Greenland to host live exercise Sept. 10-14 in Greenland Sea
SAR Agreement Highlights

- Binding on all Parties to provide appropriate assistance in the event of a SAR incident
- 2,801,911 sq. miles of aeronautical and maritime SAR coverage
- Signed at AC Ministerial Meeting
  Nuuk, Greenland, May 12, 2011

Sec. Clinton signs SAR Agreement at Arctic Council meeting in Nuuk, Greenland.
Oil Spill Task Force, co-chaired by U.S., Norway, Russia, negotiated the second binding agreement among the 8 Arctic States

Like SAR agreement, established a cooperative framework focusing on facilitating offers of foreign assistance

Signed by the Ministers of the Arctic States in Kiruna, Sweden in May of 2013
New Arctic Council Initiatives

- Task Force on Marine Oil Pollution Prevention
- Task Force to Establish a Circumpolar Business Forum
- Task Force on Enhanced Scientific Cooperation
- Task Force for Action on Black Carbon & Methane
Canada 2013-2015
United States 2015-2017
QUESTIONS?

- Contact aia@alaska.net