CEP strategic priorities and the 5-year work plan: Outcomes and recommendations from the intersessional discussions and workshop

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Summary

Informal intersessional discussions and an informal workshop have since CEP XXIV considered the CEP strategic priorities and the 5-year work plan. This paper presents an overview of the outcomes of these discussions, referring to details in IP 150 *Informal CEP Workshop on strategic priorities and 5-year work plan – convener’s preliminary report*. It is proposed that the CEP:

* Exchange views and reflections on the outcomes of the informal intersessional discussions, in particular the outcomes from the CEP workshop.
* Establish an Intersessional Contact Group tasked to further develop a final draft revised 5-year work plan for discussion and adoption at CEP XXVI in India; and further develop a draft checklist to guide the CEP in its efforts in initiating, pursuing, and monitoring progress on actions under the 5-year work plan.
* Encourage Members to consider the outcomes of the informal CEP workshop and continue to engage in developing a framework that could guide the CEP in its efforts in framing and monitoring knowledge needs in the future.

Background

At CEP XXIV the Committee agreed that it would revisit its priorities, the functioning of the Committee, and its Five-year Work Plan at CEP XXV.

The Committee agreed that this should be taken forward in the following manner:

* The Chair/CEP Bureau would be tasked with facilitating intersessional discussions to prepare for a workshop in Helsinki prior to CEP XXV, in collaboration with the host country, Finland.
* Discussions before and during the workshop would be open and inclusive of all Members and Observers.
* Members and Observers would be encouraged to facilitate participation in the intersessional discussions and workshop by early career researchers and policy makers/managers, as appropriate, and ensure diversity and inclusivity; and
* At CEP XXV in Helsinki, the Committee would consider the outcomes of the workshop and earlier intersessional discussions.

Through three rounds of discussions on the CEP Discussion Forum Members and Observers provided input on issues that contributed to shape the background material for the informal CEP Workshop on CEP strategic priorities and 5-year work plan. Eleven Members and one Observer contributed to the informal intersessional discussions on the CEP Discussion Forum. During the discussions participants also provided valuable input to the framing of the CEP workshop itself. The full discussion is documented and found on the CEP Discussion Forum.

The informal CEP Workshop on strategic priorities and the 5-year work plan took place in Little Finlandia, Helsinki on 25 and 26 May. 32 participants attended the workshop: from 16 Member countries, from 4 Observer organisations and the Antarctic Treaty Secretariat.

The workshop was generously supported by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Finnish Ministry of the Environment.

Outcomes

The informal CEP Workshop discussed and delivered outputs toward the following three aims:

1. Using the outcomes of the intersessional informal discussions that had taken place since CEP XXIV –identified and agreed to those elements that could be core in a revisited and revised 5-year work plan - specifically:
   1. issues and topics that the Committee should focus efforts on in the coming period;
   2. objectives for the Committee’s work on identified priority topics; and
   3. priority actions with concrete outcomes to pursue under each of the priority topics.

On basis of the discussions under this point, the workshop has put forward a draft revised 5-year work plan as basis for further discussion and development by the CEP (see IP 150). An at-a-glance overview of proposed Priority Topics and Objectives is provided in Appendix 1.

1. Identify mechanisms and procedures that can assist the Committee in moving priority action items forward and monitor progress on these actions.

On basis of the discussions under this point, the workshop has put forward reflections and suggestions relating to how to move actions forward – a potential starting point for a checklist for the CEP in initiating, pursuing, and monitoring progress on actions. See IP 150 for details.

1. Initiate discussions aiming to assist the Committee in formulating its information and knowledge needs in an efficient and functional manner.

On basis of these discussions the workshop has put forward reflections and suggestions relating to handling of knowledge needs – a potential starting point for a guidance document for the CEP’s framing and monitoring of knowledge needs in the future. See IP 150 for details.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the CEP:

* Exchange views and reflections on the outcomes of the informal CEP workshop, as presented in IP 150 *Informal CEP Workshop on strategic priorities and 5-year work plan – convener’s preliminary report*.
* Establish an Intersessional Contact Group tasked to - on basis of the outcomes of the informal CEP workshop (as reflected in IP 150) and with reference to relevant views, comments and agreements made at CEP XXV:
  + further develop a final draft revised 5-year work plan for discussion and adoption at CEP 26 in India; and
  + further develop a draft checklist to guide the CEP in its efforts in initiating, pursuing, and monitoring progress on actions under the 5-year work plan.

Draft Terms of Reference for an ICG is provide in Appendix 2.

* Encourage Members to consider the outcomes of the informal CEP workshop and continue to engage in developing a framework that could guide the CEP in its efforts in framing and monitoring knowledge needs in the future.

**Appendix 1: Overview of proposed Priority Topics and Objectives[[1]](#footnote-1)**

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| **1.** | **Environmental Pressure Priorities** |
| 1a. | **Management of non-native species & wildlife disease** |
| ***Draft Objective***: Facilitate monitoring of and surveillance for NNS and wildlife disease, particularly in high risk areas, and ensure that operators have enough tools to prevent and mitigate NNS and wildlife disease. |
| 1b. | **Impacts of Tourism and NGO activities** |
| ***Draft Objective***: Ensure a robust knowledge base, including monitoring, to understand the impacts of tourism and non-governmental activities, seen also in light of other environmental impacts and ongoing activities. Through CEP actions provide tools and guidance that limit environmental impacts. |
| 1c. | **Climate Change Implications for the Environment** |
| ***Draft Objective***: To support efforts within the Antarctic Treaty system to prepare for, and build resilience to, the environmental impacts of a changing climate and the associated implications for the governance and management of Antarctica through the implementation of the CCRWP. |
| 1d. | **Repair or Remediation of Environmental Damage** |
| ***Draft Objective:*** Through CEP actions facilitate actions to identify, respond to, repair and remediate environmental damage in Antarctica. Furthermore assess whether all actions that should have been taken with respect to repair and remediation have been taken and promote actions where it still may be required. |
| 1e. | **Response to Long-range and local Pollution** |
| ***Draft Objective***: Through CEP actions facilitate initiatives to track long-range pollution and enable Parties to respond appropriately, including communication to/with relevant global organizations. Furthermore, provide guidance and tools to monitor, reduce and respond to local pollution (primarely chemical and plastic pollution). |
| **2.** | **Management Response Priorities** |
| 2a. | **Facilitating monitoring and state of the environment reporting** |
| ***Draft Objective***: Encourage coordinated and systematic monitoring efforts. Enable reporting on state and trends for key environmental values in Antarctica. |
| 2b. | **Contributing to marine spatial protection and management** |
| ***Draft Objective***: Support monitoring, protection and management of [key] marine species and processes and areas within the framework of the provisions of the Environmental Protocol. |
| 2c. | **Systematic approach to the protected areas system** |
| ***Draft Objective***: Assess the effectiveness of the current series of ASPAs with regard to the provisions of Article 3.2 of Annex V and provide a framework for a systematic further development of the protected area system. |
| 2d. | **Implementing and improving the EIA provisions of Annex I** |
| ***Draft Objective***: Ensure clear guidance to all those responsible for activities in Antarctica on conducting appropriate assessments of the activities. Assist through guidance material Parties in assessing, authorizing and permitting activities on basis of EIAs. Allow for a continuous improvement of EIA process, including EIA follow-up. |
| 2e. | **Understanding and protecting Antarctic Biodiversity** |
| ***Draft Objective***: Keep up to date and take into account trends in biodiversity and threats and implement relevant management actions with respect to [unique] Antarctic Biodiversity [and/or biodiversity at risk]. |
| 2f. | **Designating and managing Historic Sites and Monuments** |
| ***Draft Objective***: Provide Parties with guidance and support in assessing and managing heritage. |
| **3.** | **Operational Priorities** |
| 3a. | **Effective Operation of the CEP and Strategic Planning** |
| ***Draft Objective***: Ensure that the CEP systematically, works to provide advice in implementing the objectives of the Protocol to the ATCM prioritized, strategic and efficient manner. Facilitate for a broader participation by Members in the work of the Committee. |

**Appendix 2: Draft Terms of Reference for ICG on revision of the CEP 5YWP**

* Review the outcomes of the CEP Workshop as recorded in WP 62 *CEP strategic priorities and the 5-year work plan: Outcomes and recommendations from the intersessional discussions and workshop* and IP 150 *Informal CEP Workshop on strategic priorities and 5-year work plan – convener’s preliminary report*, and on the basis of this:
  + Develop a draft revised five-year prioritised workplan for consideration at CEP XXVI;
  + Prepare advice on practical measures that the CEP might consider in initiating, pursuing and monitoring progress on workplan actions; and
  + Report back to CEP 26.
* The ICG is open to participation of CEP Members, Observers and Experts.

1. Gist of objectives discussed and provided through informal workshop. Wording will be finetuned through further process. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)