

Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

Republic of Korea

Date of submission:

November 2016

Observer's website, if appropriate:

www.koreapolarportal.or.kr, www.arctic.or.kr

Information for appropriate contact person

Full name: Amb. KIM Chan-Woo

Email: cwkim84@mofa.go.kr

Telephone: +82 2 2100 7984

Organization or department: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Job Title: Ambassador for Arctic Affairs

Full mailing address:

60, Sajik-ro 8-gil, Jongno-gu, Seoul 03172 Republic of Korea

Is your state or organization still interested in continuing as an Observer of the Arctic Council?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Observer Report

Please describe in no more than 2 pages your state or organization's contributions to the work of the Arctic Council's Working Groups, Task Forces and/or Expert Groups since the time of your most recent report, or in the previous two years. Please highlight contributions to specific projects, such as through proposals, concept development, in-kind and financial support, and hosting of meetings. If applicable, please include mention of collaboration with Permanent Participants, such as project proposal endorsement and support.

Since joining the Arctic Council as an observer in May 2013, Korea has undertaken various activities to support and contribute to the work of the Arctic Council. To begin with, Korea recognizes the **vital role the Arctic Council** has played as the premier forum on Arctic issues in **promoting peace and cooperation throughout the region for the last twenty years**. Given the increasingly global nature of Arctic issues, Korea, as an observer state to the Arctic Council, will continue playing its part to address the challenges in the Arctic brought by climate change in particular. Firmly **committed to promoting sustainable development and protection of the Arctic environment**, Korea has actively participated in the activities of the Arctic Council working groups, task forces, and expert groups. Furthermore, in recognition of the unique and critical role of indigenous peoples, Korea has made efforts to support the Permanent Participants in the Arctic Council.

Korea has regularly attended the **Senior Arctic Officials' meetings** of the Arctic Council which are held twice a year. The SAO meetings serve as a useful opportunity to keep abreast of the current priorities and issues of the Arctic Council and introduce Korea's Arctic-related activities, which can thus help identify how Korea could contribute to the work of the Arctic Council. During the observer session introduced by the U.S chairmanship which the observers found particularly useful, Korea has shared its Arctic-related activities that have been undertaken to contribute to the work of the Arctic Council, and reaffirmed its continued support to the Council.

Korean experts have participated in the meetings of **the working groups (AMAP, CAFF, PAME, EPPR, SDWG), task forces (SCTF, TFAMC), and expert groups (EGBCM)**: they attended around 30 meetings for the past two years. Members of the **Korea Arctic Experts Network (KAEN)** with various areas of expertise related to the Arctic have been engaged in the relevant subsidiary bodies of Arctic Council. Among a wide range of activities in which Korea is engaged, some of the highlights include a **seminar organized with PAME SEG (Shipping Expert Group)**, the **"Arctic Indigenous Marine Use Mapping" project led by AIA and registered under PAME**, **collaboration with CAFF on the Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative (AMBI)**, and etc.

Korea Maritime Institute (KMI) held a **seminar with PAME SEG on December 9, 2016** to discuss issues and possible projects related to PAME shipping agenda. It was organized during the **2016 Arctic Partnership Week (APW)** in Busan, Korea on December 6-9. The seminar has helped increase Korean experts' understanding of PAME SEG and its activities, promote cooperation between PAME SEG and Korea at the expert, institutional and governmental levels as it allowed for exploring potential areas or projects for which

Korea and PAME SEG could collaborate. During the APW, a session entitled **“Cooperation with Future Generations”** was also held, inviting as participants the alumni of the **“Korea Arctic Academy”**, an exchange program between Korean and Arctic students including indigenous students.

KMI has been involved in a project registered with PAME, the **“Arctic Indigenous Marine Use Mapping (2015-16)”** which is led by AIA. The project aims to produce a tool based on established techniques and open source software that will allow coastal indigenous communities to produce their own scientifically justifiable maps of marine use. Korea provides both financial and in-kind support for this project. The project can serve as a useful model for **Permanent Participant-Observer partnership**.

As for AMAP, experts from Korea’s leading agency for the national polar program, Korea Polar Research Institute (KOPRI), have been involved in relevant meetings and activities including SAON. For instance, a KOPRI expert **took part in the external assessment of SAON in June 2016 as an interviewee**. In addition, reported and **listed in the Arctic observational inventories on the SAON website** are Arctic observational programs conducted by KOPRI such as **Arctic expeditions (through the North Bering Sea, Chukchi sea, and East Siberian Sea) undertaken by the Korean research icebreaker, Araon, research on tele-connection between the Arctic and mid-latitude climate, and the circum-Arctic permafrost monitoring program**.

Korea has been actively involved in the **Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative (AMBI) under CAFF**. Korea’s National Institute of Ecology (NIE) has been conducting research to examine and **accumulate data on the habitat carrying capacity of migratory waterbirds along their migratory routes and wintering areas**, focusing on the East Asian-Australian Flyway, in collaboration with research institutions in Australia and the U.S., and the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) Secretariat based in Korea. Korean experts have **shared the research findings** at AMBI implementation workshops and CAFF board meetings.

Korea has contributed to the **EGBCM (Expert Group on Black Carbon and Methane)** as well. Korea **voluntarily submitted the national report on black carbon and methane** in November 2015. Since then, Korea’s **National Institute of Environmental Research (NIER) has participated in the EGBCM meetings**. Among the five working groups based on the sources of emissions, Korea took part in the working group on mobile sources, and provided expertise and input focusing on diesel. Worth noting is the fact that Korea’s pay-as-you-throw policy designed to reduce waste in households was recognized as one of the innovative practices and included in the paper of the working group on solid waste disposal.

In addition, Korea has **translated reports published by PAME and CAFF** such as **‘Actions for Biodiversity 2013-2021’, ‘Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative’, and ‘2015 Progress Report on Implementation of the 2009 Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment’** into Korean in cooperation with the PAME and CAFF Secretariats, and disseminated them in Korea as part of the efforts to raise public awareness of the work of the Arctic Council.

If applicable, please describe in no more than 1 page your state or organization's future plans for contributing to the work of the Arctic Council's Working Groups, Task Forces and/or Expert Groups. Please highlight intentions to contribute to specific projects and to collaborate with Permanent Participants.

Building on the work carried out so far, Korea would like to **further strengthen its engagement with the Arctic Council**, going beyond participation, to **make concrete contributions to achieving the objectives of the Council by utilizing Korea's Arctic-related expertise and infrastructure such as the research icebreaker and the Arctic research station.**

To begin with, Korea would like to **increase participation of Korean Arctic experts in the working groups, task forces, and expert groups.** Korea has a substantial pool of Korean scientists and experts, including members of the Korea Arctic Experts Network (KAEN) and the Korea Arctic Research Consortium (KoARC), that are willing and capable of contributing scientific and other expertise in shipping, oil spill response, and ecology.

In addition to qualified Arctic experts, Korea is equipped with Arctic research infrastructure such as **the Dasan research station in Ny-Alesund in Norway, the research icebreaker, "Araon",** which Korea can leverage to provide scientific expertise related to the Arctic to support the work of the Arctic Council.

Furthermore, Korea would like to **strengthen its support and engagement with Permanent Participants by exploring new projects and scaling up the "Korea Arctic Academy"** which is an exchange program between Korean and Arctic students including from the Arctic indigenous communities. And the annual **"Arctic Partnership Week"** will also be organized starting from 2016 to provide a unique platform for discussion and exchanges of views on current Arctic issues among the Arctic expert community in Korea, experts and officials from Arctic countries, the Arctic Council and its subsidiary bodies, and the Permanent Participants.

In relation to **EPPR**, Korea Research Institute of Ships and Ocean Engineering (KRISO) is interested in participating in projects on oil prevention and response in the Arctic, given its expertise in the field. KRISO **houses the Regional Activity Center under NOWPAP (Northwest Pacific Action Plan) specializing in oil spill prevention and response.** As Korea has the **technology to predict spilled oil trajectories in particular,** Korea **would like to discuss ways to apply the said technology to support oil spill prevention and response efforts in the Arctic.** Korea **would also seek ways to participate in the meetings of the Expert Group on Search and Rescue (SAR)** which was established as per the decision made at the **EPPR** meeting in October 2015.

As for the ABMI under CAFF, Korea's NIE would continue its ongoing research collaboration in regards to the East Asian-Australasian Flyway with CAFF. In addition, discussions are under way between **Korea and the CAFF secretariat on possible cooperation to build the capacities of developing countries in the monitoring of migratory waterbirds to support AMBI.**

With regard to the EGBCM, Korea **plans to submit data on black carbon emissions** to the Arctic Council Secretariat and the technical report team in January 2017. Also, as for **the data on methane** submitted in 2015, since the figures are of the year 2012, Korea plans to **update it with data on the year 2013.**

If applicable, please describe in no more than 1 page your state or organization's contributions to other aspects of the Arctic Council and its goals not covered by the previous sections since the time of your most recent report, or in the previous two years.

Korea has been carrying out many other activities in addition to those described in the previous sections to promote and contribute to the work of the Arctic Council including a series of outreach activities and cooperation with other observers.

As part of the outreach efforts, Korea organized a **seminar in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Arctic Council** in Korea on July 1, 2016. The seminar was successfully held with around 150 participants including policymakers and experts not only from Korea, but also from Iceland, Finland, and the U.S. Also, Korea organized **an event onboard the research icebreaker, 'Araon', to commemorate the 2nd anniversary of Korea joining the Arctic Council** in Korea on July 7, 2015 with Ambassadors and deputies from the embassies in Seoul representing member and observer states of the Arctic Council in attendance.

Korea has pursued cooperation with other observers through various activities. In view of the significant potential of observers to contribute to the Arctic, Korea took the initiative in convening the **First Trilateral High-Level Dialogue on the Arctic among Korea, Japan and China** on April 28, 2016. The three countries reaffirmed their commitment to contributing to the Arctic Council, and agreed to explore ways to cooperate in the field of scientific research in particular. In addition, Korea **attended the fourth Meeting of the Observer States in the Arctic Council in Warsaw, Poland** on April 8, 2016.

Korea has cooperated not only with observer states, but also with non-state observers such as **IASC, UArctic**, and etc. To begin with, KOPRI has had a close partnership with IASC since KOPRI joined it in 2002. Since 2013, Korea has been **supporting the Executive Secretariat of IASC**. In addition, from 2015 to 2016, **KOPRI served as the Chair of the Pacific Arctic Group (PAG)**. In May 2016, KOPRI hosted the **22nd International Symposium of Polar Sciences** under the theme, *"the Future of the Arctic: Science and Governance"*, which was attended by more than 150 participants from 12 different countries including the U.S, Norway, and Canada. In August 2016, four Korean high-school students joined an annual outreach program, **"the 21C Dasan Juniors"**, performing lab experiments as well as field expeditions in Svalbard. As for the UArctic, KMI and KOPRI joined the network in 2014 and 2016 respectively. In particular, KMI has been carrying out the **"Korea Arctic Academy" in partnership with UArctic** since 2015.

Another noteworthy activity is the **North Pacific Arctic Conference (NPAC)** which KMI has been holding annually **in collaboration with the East-West Center in Hawaii since 2011**. Bringing together Arctic experts and policymakers around the Pacific region, the NPAC provides a valuable opportunity to exchange views and ideas on Arctic issues, and to develop innovative solutions to critical issues on the Arctic.

As part of the efforts to **enhance public understanding of Arctic culture** in Korea, the Korea National Maritime Museum (KNMM) has annually held **Arctic exhibitions** in cooperation with partner organizations in the Arctic since 2015. The KNMM partnered **with the Fram Museum of Norway in 2015** under the theme, *'Meeting Arctic and Antarctic'*. In December **2016**, the KNMM invited **the Arctic Center of Lapland University in Finland** to organize an exhibition entitled *'Future into the Arctic'*.