

Memorandum 2/11/2018

Plenary Keynote

This memo provides a summary of reports submitted on the plenary keynote of Tiina Sanila-Aikio, President of the Sámi Parliament of Finland at the Arctic Biodiversity Congress

in Rovaniemi, Finland, October 9-12.

Recording of Panel:

Attendance: 500

Arctic Biodiversity Assessment recommendation themes most prominently addressed in the session:

- Climate change
- Identifying and safeguarding important areas
- Improving knowledge and public awareness

Key points raised in the session that were important to note:

- Need to coordinate national and subnational policy with the pan-Arctic science since many of the conservation policies are reliant on understanding large scale processes. Policy formulation needs to include direct engagement with the North.
- Need to engage directly in global processes and meetings such as CoP24 and need to link biodiversity issues in the Arctic to other stated goals such as climate change mitigation and sustainable development goals.
- Need to change the narrative around biodiversity conservation to show people how its not to be perceived as a loss of opportunity but a net gain. To do this, conservation policy needs to be developed, as much as possible, with direct involvement of the communities directly implicated by this.
- Protected area connectivity requires coordination between countries (particularly for MPAs).
- Need to consider geologic diversity - not just biodiversity.
- National and regional monitoring efforts underpin the CAFF assessments - these assessments are limited by the amount of national investments in monitoring.
- Need to invest in alternative futures and scenarios using existing methodologies used around the globe.
- Accelerating policy response to address urgent conservation issues requires strong science that is proactive, forward looking and involves localization and prioritization.
- There are already many tools, processes and good examples within the Arctic nations and the Arctic Council to utilize.
- However, accelerating policy should be done carefully to ensure its based on the best science and knowledge.
- The rights of Indigenous Peoples being respected will ensure effective policy formulation.

- The political tension between countries that is rising is a risk to our ability within the Arctic to effectively collaborate.
- Our knowledge gaps cannot be used as an excuse to take no action.

Recommendations/actions identified for how to deal with the issues raised in the session:

- Biodiversity conservation policy must be developed reflecting local partnerships and involvement in order to ensure they are well received and implemented effectively.
- CAFF and the Arctic Council and the science generated needs to better connect and align with global reporting processes and conventions like the CBD. The Post-2020 Framework for biodiversity provides an opportunity for the Arctic to position its needs and priorities within this global framework.
- Arctic countries need to invest more in monitoring to implement the CBMP and in tools that share the knowledge generated both with policy makers and the public. This includes better linkages between science, industry and communities.
- Full and meaningful participation of Indigenous People in conservation policy will ensure its effectively implemented.
- While we need to maintain outreach of the importance of Arctic biodiversity to the rest of the world, we need to prioritize our own actions and prioritize those actions for the people of the Arctic which includes better knowledge translation for the public and youth in particular.
- Need to prioritize knowledge gaps to focus on ones that prevent us from taking action.
- Need to maintain and build robust monitoring programs with accompanied baseline information and have this information translated to effectively reach all stakeholders.

Take home message from the session:

- Arctic biodiversity conservation policy actions fundamentally rely on coordination and meaningful partnerships not only between the Arctic Council nations and between Indigenous Peoples and even between Non-Arctic nations but also through meaningful local partnerships and involvement. By doing this, we ensure that conservation policy is effectively implemented through local ownership.