

Memorandum 2/11/2018

MB6: Proteus Partnership: mainstreaming biodiversity information in the extractives sector

This memo provides a summary of reports submitted on the session MB6 organized at the Arctic Biodiversity Session in Rovaniemi, Finland, October 9-12 organized by UN Environment WCMC.

Attendance: 20

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

- Mainstreaming biodiversity
- Improving knowledge and public awareness

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

- Existing partnerships such as Proteus (www.proteuspartners.org) are supporting the mainstreaming of biodiversity into the extractive sector. This partnership of 13 extractive industries is working together with UNEP WCMC to strengthen data and make it public, as well as improve World Database on Protected Areas. Information collated has been put to use by companies who in several cases have modified or even stopped planned operations/development.
- Sharing of data from companies in the Arctic can be challenging, and lack of transparency can cause problems.
 - Companies want to share data, but there are also challenges such as high costs for high-quality data, clarity over sharing purposes and data ownership.
 - Although data gathered within Proteus is shared, discussions during the session touched on the data sharing service not being fully user friendly and could be improved.
 - Another question was about how to further improve the relations with companies to ease legal discussions about data sharing.
 - The huge amount of data could be used for feeding into EIA's if collaboration with governments would increase.
 - Partnerships and collaboration to improve data can be efficient and effective, particularly in areas where parties have common aims and objectives.
 - Companies need data to support the application of the mitigation hierarchy throughout the project lifecycle.
 - Companies generate and use data in highly sophisticated ways and working with scientific institutions is a key way to ensure this use is fit for purpose.
 - Modelled results increasingly sophisticated, but rely on quality raw data, and need to be well scrutinized
- Emphasis on the preventative measures is crucial in the Arctic to reduce residual impacts to a minimum. Companies such as ENI have developed policies for safeguarding biodiversity and ecosystems, by using a risk-based approach to possible effects by operations on biodiversity. This includes preventive measures, as well as exploring possibilities for also positively affect biodiversity and/or ecosystem services.

- There are examples of excellent partnership with companies, including the scientific community and indigenous people, these work best when they are open and collaborative

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

- Global initiatives like Proteus can provide a mechanism to bring together data-interested parties to facilitate sharing
- Organisations like the Global Biodiversity Information Facility are well placed to facilitate data sharing, but the avenues for data from the private sector into these global databases are not yet fully utilised
- Addressing challenges of liability, licensing, ownership and quality are key to improving data sharing

Take home message from the session:

- There are many good examples of when the huge amount of biodiversity data gathered by companies is put to use, and by increasing efforts on partnering where there is a mutual benefit of doing so, this could even further increase the mitigation effects.
- This ongoing conversation needs to be taken up within CAFF and other fora to address shortfalls in data sharing.
- Companies are keen to be engaged and work with other data-interested parties to make sure that data collected are well utilised.
- Extractive companies (including those operating in the Arctic) do not see the environment as a competitive issue.