ABOUT THE UNITED STATES CHAIRMANSHIP

The United States is honored to be chairing the Arctic Council for the second time since the forum's founding in 1996. The chairmanship theme, ***One Arctic: Shared Opportunities, Challenges, and Responsibilities***, reflects the U.S. commitment to a well-managed Arctic, marked by international cooperation. In partnership with the other Arctic States and Permanent Participants, the United States is proud to initiate wide-ranging work to protect the marine environment, conserve Arctic biodiversity, improve conditions in Arctic communities and address the rapidly changing climate in the Arctic.

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ABOUT THE ARCTIC COUNCIL

The Arctic Council is the preeminent international forum for promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States, indigenous communities and other interested parties on common Arctic issues, with particular emphasis on sustainable development and environmental protection. The work of the Council is primarily carried out through its working groups and task forces.

As the Arctic Council reaches its twentieth anniversary, it is vitally important that the Council **strengthen** its cooperation and engagement with accredited observers and outside entities and evaluate its internal structure. Enhancing the Arctic Council Secretariat, including through expansion of its public archive and recordkeeping practices in support of greater transparency, is also a priority for the 2015-2017 chairmanship period.

ARCTIC COUNCIL
arctic-council.org

@ArcticCouncil
@USArctic

state.gov/arctic

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ONE ARCTIC
ARCTIC COUNCIL
U.S. CHAIRMANSHIP
2015–2017

2015 – 2017 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

ARCTIC OCEAN

With the increase in human and maritime activity in the Arctic, Arctic Council members are working together to promote **Arctic Ocean safety, security and stewardship**, including by exercising Arctic State agreements on search and rescue cooperation and oil pollution preparedness and response.

To ensure that future maritime development avoids negative impacts, particularly in areas of ecological and cultural significance, the Arctic Council is continuing its work towards a network of marine protected areas and enhanced international cooperation in the Arctic Ocean.

Ocean acidification is one of the most urgent issues facing the world's ocean today and the Arctic Council is responding by supporting research to improve the capability to monitor and track acidification in the Arctic Ocean.

ARCTIC COMMUNITIES

A rapidly warming Arctic is threatening Arctic communities through coastal erosion, thawing permafrost and changing ecosystems. The Arctic Council's work on energy and water security seeks to **improve economic and living conditions** in the region by pursuing innovative technologies to mitigate the significant challenges faced by remote Arctic communities.

The Arctic Council continues to advance mental wellness research to address the tragically high suicide rates that disproportionately affect Arctic communities.

Community leaders, industry experts, researchers and policymakers brought together by the Arctic Council are assessing the region's future telecommunications infrastructure requirements for supporting regional connectivity, human services, scientific observations, maritime navigation and emergency response activities.

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ARCTIC CLIMATE

The impacts of climate change in the Arctic, a region where people, animals and plants have thrived for thousands of years, threaten communities and their ways of life, as well as the ecosystems upon which these communities depend.

The Arctic Council is **addressing the impacts of climate change** in the Arctic by targeting short-lived climate pollutants through reductions in black carbon and methane emissions.

Arctic Council activities to enhance access to adaptation and resilience tools, and promote the development of climate change indicators and high-resolution mapping, will increase scientists, communities, policymakers and the public's understanding of the impacts of climate change.

ARCTIC AWARENESS

The Arctic is a socially vibrant and biologically diverse region that requires resources for sustainable development and environmental protection. By **raising awareness** of the Arctic and its role in the global ocean and climate systems, the Arctic Council seeks to educate and inform the public worldwide that the Arctic should matter to everyone.