IPCAP EG Update to ACAP

September 2015

Circumpolar Local Environmental Observer Network (CLEO)

The Circumpolar Local Environmental Observer Network has been under development since being approved in the winter of 2015 at the ACAP meeting in Rovaniemi, Finland. Building on success with over 120 communities in Alaska, IPCAP partners have been working to establish a North American chapter of the LEO network by establishing a national hub in Canada. IPCAP experts have been engaging interested communities and organizations in the Canadian Arctic as well as officials with Health and Environment Canada. Budgetary resources to establish the Canadian hub are being allocated and will be utilized to establish technical and technological capacity in the expected hub. The first regional LEO workshop is being planned for Canada and should take place in early 2016 through funding from the CEC. The current project working group is bringing on new members and looking to expand to be more inclusive and to consider the contributions of other observation networks and similar regional activities.

Additionally, the originators of the LEO network have been developing a mobile application for the LEO network. Initial beta tests of the app in Alaska on the Apple iOS platform were successful and the app has been released through the Apple App store. Development of the application on the Android platform is underway and will be ready for testing in the coming months. This application enables the network to grow through additional field observations and provides a unique platform to bridge indigenous ecological knowledge held by elders to the technological savvy of native youth. Partners and experts have been further working to socialize the LEO, featuring it prominently at international events, including the Annual Ministerial Session of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) in Boston, the White House Native Youth event in Washington D.C., and most recently at the GLACIER Summit in Anchorage. Later this month, IPCAP experts will be

The next steps of the project include efforts to expand the existing LEO network under Phase II of the project, IPCAP EG has also been engaging interested communities and organizations in Finland and Scandinavia that could serve to expand the network beyond North America. The development of a framework to expand the LEO network in North America and beyond will require the current group to expand and broaden stakeholder engagement. It is expected that the North America network will be established and the framework for expansion will finalized by the Ministerial Meeting in 2017.

Community Based Black Carbon and Public Health Assessment Project

In the Far North, black carbon emissions are forcing climate change and contributing to Arctic melting. They are also endangering the health of local citizens. Black carbon is emitted from a number of sources, including the burning of diesel fuel, on which Northern communities are especially dependent, wild fires, agricultural and solid waste burning, and residential wood combustion. Because most of the black carbon deposited in the Arctic comes from Northern countries, opportunities exist to control pollution sources and deliver rapid benefits to the climate and public health.

This project, which is a collaboration of the Aleut International Association, Arctic Alliance, Alaska Native Science Commission, University of Alaska-Anchorage, and the University of Alaska-Fairbanks, with support from the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, will: assess, on a pilot basis, local sources of black carbon emissions from a representative sampling of Arctic Alaskan and Russian villages; provide a broad characterization of associated risks to public health; explore short and long-term mitigation options; assess and, where possible, strengthen local capacities to identify, mitigate and prevent black carbon pollution; draft a framework tool for community-based assessments of black carbon emissions and health risks; and educate local communities about black carbon emissions and risks.

In the period since the last ACAP meeting the following has occurred:

- Using project development support provided by the Swedish Environmental Protection agency, the project held a scoping workshop in Anchorage, Alaska which presented the project and sought feedback from a diverse audience of Alaskan stakeholders. This meeting resulted in the addition of a new project collaborator, the University of Alaska-Anchorage School of Public Health.
- A project proposal was submitted to the Arctic Council's Project Support Instrument (PSI) in spring of 2015 and based on this proposal received an Expression of Interest (EoI) from the PSI committed at their last meeting. Based on feedback from the EoI additional project development activities (also with support from the Swedish EPA) took place in Finland and Russia, including, attending and discussing the project at the International Congress on Circumpolar Health, meetings with various ministries and agencies in Helsinki, Moscow and St. Petersburg where work was done to identify a project collaborator at within the Russian Federation. This will result in refinements to the proposal with the goal of receiving a funding decision from the PSI committee at their next meeting.
- In summer of 2015 an application was made to for a J. M. Kaplan Fund Innovation Prize. To date the project is still under consideration having reached the second round of the application process.

International Conference exploring the impact of contaminant exposure on indigenous communities in the Arctic

A RAIPON and the Russian Federation project proposal to host an International Conference exploring the impact of contaminant exposure on indigenous communities in the Arctic. The conference should be a high-level event with broad participation in order to explore focused themes and exchange best practices from around the circumpolar region.

There is no update to the status of this project as of the date of this report.