

AAC's Arctic Policy

December 20, 2016, Prime Minister Trudeau announced a new process for Arctic Policy Framework co-development. Since the announcement, senior federal officials have been working with the National Indigenous Organizations, territorial governments and applicable provincial governments to foster a common understanding of the overarching principles and objectives of the co-development process.

The Arctic Policy Framework will provide overarching direction to the Government of Canada's priorities, activities and investments in the Arctic until 2030. The intent is that the Framework will reflect the interests, priorities and desired outcomes of our partners; identify possible areas for joint action to achieve shared goals; and take into account the distinctive needs and opportunities of each region.

Proposed outcomes of the international dimensions of the Arctic Policy Framework includes the following:

1. Support international work to address common social and cultural concerns and promote opportunities to learn from each other.
2. Support international efforts to develop a diversified, sustainable and dynamic economy across the Arctic.
3. Exercise global leadership in the conservation of the Arctic environment.
4. Strengthen Canada's role as an Arctic knowledge leader and improve circumpolar scientific cooperation and understanding of Indigenous and local knowledge.
5. Ensure the safety and security of the Canadian and circumpolar Arctic.
6. Further clarify where Canada may exercise jurisdiction in the Arctic.

To guide discussion and to start the process on the new Arctic Policy Framework for Canada, federal officials developed an optional template to guide Territorial, Provincial and Indigenous input. The Arctic Policy Framework consists of six thematic areas:

- Comprehensive Arctic Infrastructure
- Strong Arctic People and Communities
- Strong, Sustainable and Diversified Arctic Economies
- The Arctic in a Global Context
- Arctic Science and Indigenous Knowledge
- Protecting the Environment and Conserving Arctic Biodiversity

The optional template seeking Territorial, Provincial and Indigenous input focuses on the Arctic Foreign Policy's chapter two: The Arctic in a Global Context. As indicated in the template as a part of the environmental scan this chapter will explore opportunities for expanded Canadian diplomacy and leadership in multilateral and bilateral forums in the following proposed theme areas, all of which contribute to demonstrating Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic:

1. Social and Cultural Cooperation
 - Traditional Ways of Life
 - Education
 - Health and Mental Wellness
 - Indigenous Languages
 - Arts and Culture
 - Indigenous/Youth Mobility

2. Economy and Trade
 - Trade and Investment
 - Northern Innovation
 - Cross-Border Infrastructure
 - Marine Transportation
 - Resource Development
 - Tourism

3. Environmental and Scientific Cooperation
 - Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation
 - Arctic Ocean Protection
 - Pollution Prevention
 - Conservation and Use of Arctic Flora and Fauna

4. Defence, Security and Boundaries
 - Collectively Addressing Challenges
 - Maintaining a Visible and Persistent Presence Through Sustainable Arctic Communities
 - Marine Safety
 - Clarify the geographical limits of Canada's sovereign rights in the Arctic

AAC used this template in collaboration with its mandate and strategic objectives a sit sought out guidance, advice and recommendations from its leadership and membership. AAC's participation ensured that Canada understands what practices need to be included in the proposed outcomes and that any developments are collectively addressed with Canada's Indigenous people.

AAC trusts that their contributions will bring about a closer correlation with Canada's foreign policy framework that works for the Indigenous and territorial Arctic governments.