

CONSERVATION OF ARCTIC FLORA AND FAUNA

CIRCUMPOLAR SEABIRD EXPERT GROUP (CBIRD)

CHARTER

I. INTRODUCTION

Marine and coastal ecosystems are socio-economically and biologically important features in circumpolar regions. Populations of seabirds in the circumpolar region are large and diverse. About 16 species of seabirds have circumpolar distributions while several other species are shared between two or more countries. Arctic countries often share the same seabird populations. Consequently, there is a joint and equal responsibility for the conservation of seabirds in and outside the Arctic. Arctic countries also share common population and habitat threats in marine and coastal ecosystems that seabirds depend on for their survival.

Traditionally, conservation, management, and research activities for seabirds in the Arctic have been poorly coordinated in terms of common direction, concerns, field methods, reporting and information exchange. Existing governmental and non-governmental regional seabird groups are organized in a north-south or latitudinal manner and not in an east-west or longitudinal manner. Therefore, seabird activities have been poorly coordinated in a circumpolar context. Circumpolar Seabird Group (CBird) was a recognition that seabird conservation, management, and research activities could most effectively be achieved and harmonized by a multilateral approach of all Arctic countries. It was in this simple context that CBird was approved in 1993 within the organizational structure of the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna program, a component of the Arctic Council. CBird will ensure that scientists and managers interested in northern seabirds will have a common forum to promote, facilitate and coordinate conservation, management, and research activities of mutual concern.

II. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. GOAL

To promote, facilitate, coordinate, and harmonize seabird conservation, management and research activities among circumpolar countries, and to improve communication between seabird scientists and managers in and outside the Arctic.

B. OBJECTIVES

- To identify current and emerging seabird conservation, management, research, monitoring, and public outreach problems and opportunities in the Arctic and corresponding information and coordination needs.
- To facilitate exchanging and publishing seabird information of mutual interest to scientists and managers in the circumpolar countries.
- To facilitate harmonizing objectives, field methods and data analyses for similar studies of seabirds in the Arctic.

- To facilitate development and coordination of cooperative research and management projects and conservation plans for circumpolar seabirds of mutual concern in the Arctic.
- To promote and facilitate coordinating conservation initiatives for those Arctic seabirds that primarily winter outside the Arctic.
- To coordinate CBird initiatives with activities of other seabird groups as appropriate.
- To develop an integrated package of cooperative seabird activities or initiatives for the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna annual work plan.
- Coordinate the CAFF Circumpolar Seabird Monitoring Network project.

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Membership

The CBird complements other international seabird working groups of governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

The CBird is comprised of up to 16 National Representatives; i.e., up to two representatives from each of the eight member countries of the Arctic Council, and representatives from the Council's Permanent Participants and Arctic Council Official Observer countries and organizations. CBird National Representatives are appointed by their respective CAFF National Representatives. The representatives represent the range of organizations and geographic areas important to seabird research, management and conservation in the Arctic. Participation in CBird meetings, however, is open to seabird experts of all governmental and nongovernmental organizations interested in Arctic seabirds. Decision-making within the CBird is by consensus of the designated official representatives.

B. Leadership

The CBird is administered by a Chair or Co-chairs. The Chair or Co-chairs selected from the group of official Representatives. The Chair or Co-chairs are selected by the CBird and approved by CAFF National Representatives. They serve for two-year terms which can be renewed at the discretion of CBird representatives. The Chair or Co-chairs are responsible for scheduling and facilitating meetings, preparing and distributing materials prior to meetings, and completing appropriate records of meetings. Materials and records are provided to CAFF National Representatives, the Secretariat, and all attendees within 60 days of completed meetings. Meeting agendas are developed by the Chair or Co-chairs in consultation with other CBird representatives. The Chair or Co-chairs also coordinate the work of CBird between meetings.

C. Meetings

The CBird will conduct meetings as necessary and possible to fulfil its objectives and approved action items. The Chair or Co-chairs, in consultation with other CBird representatives will determine the timing and location of meetings. Generally, meetings will rotate among the eight member countries. The CBird representatives from the host country are responsible for meeting logistical arrangements.

D. Expenses

Unless there is prior agreement, CBird representatives and other meeting attendees are responsible for their travel and per diem expenses.