

Workshop / Conference summarizing the results of the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program's Human Health Assessment Group (AMAP HHAG Research Program (2002 – 2008))

Proposal Number: FP 145

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Abstract:

The Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP) is an assessment program of Arctic Council which has a 14 year track record on environmental assessment in the circumpolar arctic. AMAP has released two major reports on arctic environmental contaminants in 1997 and 2002. Research to date has shown that levels of many contaminants are building up in traditional / country foods (polar bears, seals, beluga whales) of many aboriginal northerners to levels that would be unacceptable in southern areas of the same countries. Levels of contaminants are rising to levels of concern in human tissues and early epidemiological studies have found subtle health effects in Inuit infants. Research studies are ongoing to see if the effects seen in infants can be validated among older children. The aboriginal peoples of the arctic are concerned about the possibility of health effects due to contaminants in their traditional / country foods. AMAP will be undertaking an assessment of the research completed in the eight circumpolar countries from 2002-2008 and there will be major interest from circumpolar peoples. This meeting will allow AMAP to present the findings from six years of research to all eight circumpolar countries and the rest of the world. Each country will need to contribute to this AMAP meeting but Canada and the AMAP secretariate will be able to contribute funds early in the process to help guide the direction of the meeting and guide the assessment which will have direct relevance to Arctic Canadians and all circumpolar residents. The AMAP HHAG has recently extended the focus to human health and environmental issues in the southern hemisphere, and the first conference to introduce the southern dimension to the program will take place in Johannesburg in September 2005.

Project Status: Active

Project Progress:

The IPY project / meeting has been rescheduled for June 8-12, 2009. Plans have been moving ahead over the last few weeks.