



Arctic Shipborne Tourism Initiative (ASTI) Draft Work Plan (2013-2015)¹

The Arctic Shipborne Tourism Initiative (ASTI) represents the first project in a potential suite of renewed efforts by the Arctic Council to analyze and promote sustainable tourism across the circumpolar Arctic. Organized through the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME) Working Group, the ASTI will focus on aspects of shipborne tourism that fall outside the responsibility of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and will result in the convening of two dedicated workshops, ongoing intercessional work, and the creation of a final report for endorsement by Arctic Council Ministers.

1. Introduction

Recognizing the unique and wide-ranging management challenges associated with the growth of tourism across the circumpolar Arctic, the Arctic Council, at the 2013 Kiruna Ministerial Meeting, indicated its support for the development of a cross-cutting initiative centered on strengthening sustainability within the industry.²

Accordingly, the *Arctic Shipborne Tourism Initiative (ASTI)* is a project being undertaken by the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME) Working Group with the aim of addressing the subset of topics related to sustainable Arctic tourism that fall within the mandate of PAME, and that are based upon needs and priorities identified within:

- *The 2009 Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment*
- *The 2013 Arctic Ocean Review*
- *The 2013-2015 Canadian Chairmanship of the Arctic Council (sub-theme of 'safe Arctic shipping')*

Acknowledging the efforts previously undertaken by the Arctic Council (particularly by the Sustainable Development Working Group in the advancement of the SMART project)³, and prompted by a concept paper submitted to PAME I 2013⁴, the ASTI

¹ This is draft that may be adjusted as work progresses.

² *Kiruna Senior Arctic Official Report*, Arctic Council, May 2013, pg. 46.

³ *Sustainable Model for Arctic Regional Tourism (SMART) Report*, Arctic Council, 2006.

represents the first of a potential suite of *renewed* efforts organized across the Arctic Council to address elements of sustainable Arctic tourism through stand-alone initiatives.

2. Background

The emergence of Arctic shipborne tourism is a relatively new phenomenon - one accompanied by an ever-expanding field of literature dedicated to exploring various aspects of this growing industry.⁵

The ASTI will therefore be informed by relevant and related material from organizations and actors engaged with Arctic shipborne tourism including, *inter alia*:

- [Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators](#) (AECO)
- [International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators](#) (IAATO)
- [Cruise Line International Association](#) (CLIA)
- [World Wildlife Fund](#) (WWF)
- [Secretariat of the Antarctic Treaty](#)
- [International Maritime Organization](#) (IMO)
- [International Arctic Social Sciences Association](#) (IASSA)
- [International Polar Tourism Research Network](#) (IPTRN)
- Arctic Council [Working Groups](#)
- Arctic Coastal States
- Academia

Principles, precepts, best practices and other guidance developed or adopted by these organizations and others should therefore be closely studied to not only minimize duplication, but also to identify possibilities for partnership and collaboration.

Note: To date, informal discussions concerning the ASTI have indicated possible partnership opportunities with AECO, individual ministries and agencies from select Arctic Council member governments, and individuals from within the academic community.

3. Project Objectives & Principles

Objectives

The overall objective of the ASTI is to provide guidance to a range of Arctic stakeholders (including Arctic Council Ministers) on means to strengthen and promote sustainable Arctic shipborne tourism, defined here as “tourism that minimizes negative impacts and

⁴ PAME I 2013 Agenda Item 4.12 - Sustainable Arctic Tourism Initiative Concept Paper (Submitted by the United States).

⁵ *Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment 2009 Report*. Arctic Council, April 2009. pg. 73.

maximizes socio-cultural, environmental and economic benefits for residents of the Arctic”.⁶

Given the broad nature of the subject matter, the ASTI will aim to isolate, to the extent possible, only those elements of Arctic shipborne tourism that fall within the mandate of the PAME Working Group.⁷

Principles

Complementing this primary objective is a set of three underlying principles that provide a framework for determining relevant content for inclusion within the ASTI.

- i. Content must address an activity that is in some way facilitated by or related to vessel operation in Arctic waters (note: certain activities may not necessarily be *exclusive* to shipborne tourism);
- ii. Content must acknowledge the role of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) as the global body responsible for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine pollution from ships - responsibilities that are applicable to shipborne tourism; and
- iii. Content must pay careful attention to existing work on sustainable Arctic tourism including industry best practices and academic recommendations, and take into account relevant Arctic State domestic laws and policies. Content must therefore be complementary and not duplicative, generate added-value rather than simply repackage exiting information, and makes a positive contribution to the canon, rather than dwell on high-level statements or general platitudes.

4. Project Scope

Note: the Project Scope is presented here for consideration and for further debate amongst PAME Arctic member governments and Permanent Participants.

- *Geographical Extent*

No universal definition of the Arctic area exists. Instead, the Arctic is often defined by a particular natural or environmental feature (i.e. vegetation extent, temperature threshold) or by political or cultural boundaries. For the purpose of the ASTI, establishing a boundary may assist in narrowing the focus to capture only the most relevant activities related to shipborne tourism. For example, by excluding the Alaskan Panhandle or the coast of continental Norway (two areas with high concentrations of open water cruise

⁶ *Sustainable Model for Arctic Regional Tourism (SMART) Report*, Arctic Council, 2006.

⁷ PAME’s mandate is to oversee the Arctic Council’s activities related to the protection and sustainable use of the Arctic marine environment. Specifically, PAME is charged with keeping under review the adequacy of global and regional legal, policy and other measures, and where necessary to make recommendations for improvements that would support the Arctic Council’s Arctic Marine Strategic Plan (2004).

ships) focus may be limited (but not exclusive to) shipborne tourism facilitated by smaller more “expedition style” vessels. On the other hand, it may be determined that setting a geographical limit on the Arctic for the purposes of the ASTI is unnecessary.

Proposal: Adopt the definition of Arctic waters as put forward by the Arctic Council in the “Current Marine Use” chapter of the AMSA Report.⁸

- *Vessel Type*

“Shipborne” tourism is an inclusive and deliberately open-ended term – applicable to the range of vessels engaged in tourism activities across the circumpolar Arctic. Because specific vessels have specific impacts or engage in specific types of activities, it will be important to clearly articulate the type of vessel (or vessels) being addressed in this initiative. Vessel types might include, for example: ‘open water’ cruise ships, ‘expedition style’ cruise ships, yachts, rigid hull inflatables (RIBs), human powered boats (i.e. canoes, kayaks, rowing shells) and other various pleasure craft.

Proposal: Address *all* categories of vessel. Develop a suite of deliverables or recommendations tailored to the nuances of specific vessel operations or activities.

- *‘Land-Ocean Interface’*

As a mode of Arctic tourism, ships and their passengers are susceptible to risks/generate impacts that extend far beyond the limits of the ship. Depending upon the stage of the voyage, Arctic shipborne tourism may be open-water, be within sight of the coast, be engaged in landing operations, or involve largely terrestrial activities. Establishing clear parameters on where a voyage “stops and starts” is therefore important.

Proposal: The ASTI will focus primarily on activities/risks that are present “once the anchor drops” though pay consideration to operational aspects of smaller vessels (i.e. zodiacs). ‘Common’ or ‘routine’ activities within coastal communities enabled by shipborne tourism should be captured, though more stand-alone activities like backcountry skiing or outfitting (i.e. hunting and fishing) should be excluded.

- *Target Audience*

The intended audience(s) for the ASTI will impact the overall nature of the deliverables, the degree to which deliverables are positively or negatively received, and whether the deliverables will be more practical (i.e. brochures or handbooks) or more academic (i.e. detailed reports). Potential target audiences could include: Arctic Council member governments and/or Ministers, the tourism industry and industry associations, passengers of shipborne tourism, residents of coastal Arctic communities and academia.

⁸ *Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment 2009 Report*. Arctic Council, April 2009. pg. 73.

Proposal: Place emphasis on promoting ASTI deliverables towards Arctic Council member governments and/or Ministers. Where appropriate, dedicate attention to deliverables aimed towards passengers and residents of coastal Arctic communities.

5. Deliverables

The ASTI is envisioned as a multi-pronged project, of which the primary outcome is expected to be the development of a document - to be put forward for adoption and support by the Arctic Council - addressing best practices or precepts associated with sustainable Arctic shipborne tourism.⁹

To accomplish this, a series of two workshops will be convened to gather relevant experts from government, industry, academia, the not-for-profit sector, and indigenous and Arctic communities. Workshops will be designed to include opportunities to formally present and share information on Arctic shipborne tourism, and will also consist of brainstorming and breakout sessions that – with the aid of a hired facilitator – will distill relevant information in order to support the creation of a stand-alone workshop report.

These two workshop reports will be compiled and provide the foundation for the development of a single ‘best practice’ document (to be supplemented with additional information as necessary) to be submitted to Arctic Council Ministers (and/or another targeted audience). In addition to these dedicated workshops, ongoing intercessional work organized through the PAME ‘expert group’ will contribute to advancing the ASTI.

Depending upon timing and availability of resources, material from within this final ‘best practice’ report could then be modified as appropriate into brochures, handbooks, or other guidance material for use by those directly involved in or affected by the Arctic shipborne tourism industry.

Note: Where it is determined that existing guidelines from other sources are deemed sufficient, PAME might consider lending support for, or incorporate by reference, this material rather than duplicate efforts.

Future Complimentary Deliverables

Subject to available time and resources, other possible deliverables related to Arctic shipborne tourism should be considered as complementary pieces to the ASTI. Examples include:

⁹ Each Arctic Council member government and Permanent Participant is likely to apply certain (if not unique) interpretation to terminology used within the context of the ASTI. The language used – particularly as applicable to deliverables – will therefore need to be agreed upon. Possibilities (for framing deliverable terminology) include: guidelines, voluntary guidelines, guidance, recommendations, best practices, and precepts.

- Developing a ‘single-entry’ online portal for information on Arctic shipborne tourism (including information on Arctic coastal State permitting processes);
- Preparing an Arctic Council compendium of relevant information (i.e. regulations, industry guidance, etc) on Arctic shipborne tourism;
- Developing an Arctic sustainable tourism logo or accreditation body (see SDWG’s SMART project); and
- Compiling a GIS map (possibly via ArkGIS) of Arctic cruise ship activity (AIS) and overlay in relation to features like known charted areas, ballast water exchange zones, EBSA’s, etc.

6. Project Management

The ASTI will be co-led by Canada and the United States operating under the guidance of the PAME Working Group.

As agreed during PAME II 2014, member governments have identified to the PAME Secretariat a point of contact for intercessional communications on Arctic cruise tourism. This ‘expert group’ will contribute to the organization of the workshops, nomination of any required contractors/facilitators, and the production of various documents.

In addition, ASTI material will be prepared and circulated during bi-annual PAME meetings and will be done respecting standard rules of procedure. As appropriate, the ASTI will be included on the agenda during monthly PAME intercessional shipping conference calls.

The aforementioned ‘expert group’ will play a particularly critical role advancing the ASTI in periods between the bi-annual PAME meetings and the two dedicated ASTI workshops.

All material prepared in support of the ASTI will be subject to the final review of PAME and the Senior Arctic Officials.

7. Project Funding

The ASTI will be supported through in-kind contributions from PAME member governments and their representative organizations.

To supplement this, select PAME member governments have earmarked 200 DKK (100 DKK per annum) in support of the ASTI for the period covering January 2014 to March 2015.

In addition, the PAME Secretariat has submitted a funding application to the Nordic Council of Minister’s Arctic Co-Operation Programme for the amount of 425,000 DKK to cover the remaining project costs.

Deliverable	Description
<p>Workshop I</p>	<p>Workshop I – Scoping/Issue Identification</p> <p><i>Proposed Location:</i> Ottawa <i>Proposed Date:</i> March 2014 <i>Duration:</i> 2 days <i>Number of Attendees:</i> 30 - 40 <i>Description/goal:</i> Advance ASTI process; articulate intent of initiative; narrow parameters; identify issues and challenges associated with pan-Arctic cruise tourism <i>Cost Estimates:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Room rental (\$1000 x 2) • Hospitality (\$500 x 2) • Audio/Visual (\$250 x 2) • Facilitator (\$1500 x 2) • Workshop Report (\$1500-\$3500) <p><i>Estimated Total (CAD): \$10000</i></p>
<p>Workshop II</p>	<p>Workshop II – Recommendations</p> <p><i>Proposed Location:</i> Northern Canada <i>Proposed Date:</i> Fall 2014 <i>Duration:</i> 2 days <i>Number of Attendees:</i> 20-30 <i>Description/goal:</i> Develop recommendations based on issues identified in previous workshop <i>Cost Estimates*:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Room rental (\$1000 x 2) • Hospitality (\$500 x 2) • Audio/Visual (\$250 x 2) • Facilitator (\$1500 x 2) • Workshop Report (\$1500-\$3500) <p><i>Estimated Total (CAD): \$10000-\$20000</i> *Anticipate higher costs if held in the north</p>
<p>Final Report</p>	<p>Final Report/Document (with Recommendations to Arctic Council Ministers)</p> <p><i>Description:</i> Hire/commission a contractor/academic to compile both workshop reports and supplement with additional material; prepare a final report with recommendations for possible adoption as an AC product.</p> <p><i>Estimated Cost (CAD)*:</i> \$50,000 – \$75,000 *Excludes design and printing</p>
<p>Estimated Total (CAD): \$70,000 – \$105,000</p>	

Annex I – Important Dates/Milestones *

Date & Duration	Meeting/Event/Activity	Location	Action Items
2014			
Jan 28-29	Arctic Economic Council Introduction (formally Circumpolar Business Forum)	Ottawa (Northern Lights Conference)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible networking and outreach
Feb 10	ASTI Workshop (half day)	Anchorage (pre-PAME)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Work Plan and establish TOR • Discuss March workshop agenda • Populate/confirm forward timeline
Feb 11-13	PAME I 2014	Anchorage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASTI plenary presentation and review
Mar	Proposed ASTI Meeting I	Ottawa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoping meeting • Identify issues and challenges • Identify author/method for preparing final report
Mar 25-27	SAO Meeting	Yellowknife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide ASTI update to SAOs
April 29-May 2	IAATO 25 th Annual Meeting	Providence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible networking and outreach
May 22-26	ICASS VIII	Prince George, BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible networking and outreach
Aug 29-Sept 4	IPTRN Biennial Conference	Christchurch, NZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible networking and outreach
Sept 5-7	Arctic Circle Conference	Reykjavik	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible Networking and outreach
Sept/Oct	PAME II 2014	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASTI Progress update
Oct 14-15	AECO General Meeting	Oslo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible networking and outreach
Sept/Oct/Nov	Proposed ASTI Meeting II	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop recommendations
Dec			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft of flagship report (and recommendations) due
2015			
Feb/Mar	PAME I 2015	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formally review flagship report
Mar/April			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second draft of flagship report due
May	Ministerial Meeting	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present ASTI • Adopt report and recommendations

* Conference fees, travel costs and other associated expenditures required to attend identified meetings/events *are not* included within the estimated budget.

Annex II – Final Report Table of Contents (Draft)

Note: The contents below are identified here as possible items of inclusion within the ASTI final report (based on the identified objective and supporting principles), and are indicated for discussion purposes only and should not be interpreted in any way as being exhaustive or prescriptive in content and format.

Preamble
Introduction
Background
Goals
General Principles

Issues

Regulatory

- Customs & immigration procedures
- Security (i.e. drugs & alcohol)
- Permitting

Equipment/Operations

- Firearms (i.e. polar bear safety, trans-border issues)
- Appropriate (passenger) clothing (i.e. weather and activity dependent)
- Passenger embarkation/disembarkation procedures (i.e. ice, land)
- Tender operations/landings (i.e. RIB's)
- Boot and clothing decontamination
- Helicopter interaction (on ships)

Community Interaction

- Community specific contact points/liaisons (i.e. vessel-community coordination)
- Radio communication/protocol (i.e. ship to shore)
- Vessel coordination (i.e. timing of community arrivals)
- Passenger interactions with communities (i.e. photographs, respecting local traditions and subsistence, purchasing local goods (handicrafts & foodstuffs), trespassing, moving/touching stones)
- Future interactions (i.e. maintaining good relationships with communities, stimulating local economies, follow-up questionnaires)
- Infrastructure

Cultural

- Archaeological resources/guidelines

Environmental

- Wildlife monitoring (i.e. use of local guides)
- Wildlife interactions (i.e. dogs (sled & stray), marine mammals, polar bears, birds, etc)
- Passenger-ice interaction (i.e. walking on ice, distance from calving glaciers)

Other

- Site specific guidelines
- Contingency planning

Recommendations

Abbreviations and Definitions

References/Bibliography

Annexes

Annex III - ASTI Sample Literature

Note: Sample literature noted compiled from initial academic outreach and online searches. The majority of sources included below are publications cited within the International Polar Tourism Research Network [website](#).

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AECO GUIDELINES & RELATED MATERIAL

- Visitor, Site, Wildlife and Operational Guidelines
- Report: Environmental Impacts of Expedition Cruise Traffic around Svalbard
- Report: How Close Should Boats Come to the Fronts of Svalbard's Calving Glaciers?
- Pre-Study Cruise Guide Training in Svalbard
- Avoiding Collisions with Whales

IAATO & ATCM ANTARCTIC MATERIAL

- Marine Wildlife Watching Guidelines for Vessel & Zodiac Operations
- Guidelines for Tourist Operations in Antarctica
- General Guidelines for Visitors to the Antarctic
- Yachting Guidelines
- Guidelines on Contingency Planning, Insurance and Other Matters for Tourist and Other Non-Governmental Activities in the Antarctic Treaty Area

WWF MATERIAL

- Ten Principles for Arctic Tourism
- Code of Conduct for Tour Operators in the Arctic
- Report: Cruise Tourism in Svalbard – A Risky Business?

OTHER MATERIAL

- UNEP Report: Tourism in the Polar Regions – The Sustainability Challenge
- SDWG Report: Sustainable Model for Arctic Regional Tourism (SMART)
- AMSA Background Report: Arctic Marine Tourism – It's History, Prospects and Management
- Transport Canada: Guidelines for the Operation of Passenger Vessels in Canadian Arctic Waters