

The ministers, government representatives and politicians present in Monaco, the representatives of the European institutions and international organisations:

Are aware of the key role played by the Arctic area within the planet’s climate system, as emphasised in the report produced by the Arctic Council and IASC (Arctic Climate Impact Assessment, ACIA) and by the reports of the Intergovernmental Expert Panel on Climate Change (IPCC);

Have listened with interest to the presentation of the findings of the scientific experts on major changes affecting the environment in the Northern high latitudes, a particularly vulnerable and unique area from an ecological point of view, and on the social, economic and cultural consequences of these changes;

Are aware of the legitimate interests of Arctic indigenous peoples and other Arctic residents, to be fully involved in issues and processes which are of importance to them;

Are concerned not only by the latest regional effects of the summer melting of the sea ice -as the sea ice extent has reached its lowest level in the Summer of 2007 and its disappearance in summer is feared in little more than a decade-, but also by the reducing mass of glaciers and ice sheets which has consequences on the rise of the sea level;

Are very concerned by the impact of these phenomena on global climate change;

Are also aware of the feedbacks on the Arctic ecosystem from climate change, living resources exploitation, chemical contamination from long range transport and invasion of alien species;

Have recognised the essential contribution of research, observation and monitoring for understanding and predicting the evolution of the Arctic environment and climate, including the impact on biodiversity and the effect of diffusion and contamination by chemicals, thus providing complete and useful information to inform political decision-making at national and international levels;

Have re-stated the need to act collectively to address these challenges through a global agreement on climate change in COP 15 Copenhagen;

Are pleased with the results of the collaborative international scientific work during the International Polar Year (2007-2008) (IPY) presented at the Conference and call for further development and intensification of this work.

In this respect, have taken note of the appeal of the scientists and qualified experts who have spoken during the Conference, on the need to:

- Uphold the impetus launched by the International Polar Year 2007-2008 (IPY) and capitalise on the momentum created by consolidating and sustaining the mobilisation of scientific research and monitoring initiatives;
- Have access to long term, reliable, unbroken data sets with pan-Arctic extent, that will enable efficient and effective analysis of Arctic changes for policy-making;
- Take into account an interdisciplinary approach making the link between the different observations : physical, biological, chemical, and including social sciences, with the participation of Arctic indigenous peoples and Arctic residents, in order to better understand and predict the changes under way and to accurately reflect the complexity of the Arctic system;
- Make an important European contribution to support the future of the international Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (SAON) process, which will deliver recommendations at the Ministerial Meeting of the Arctic Council in April 2009 and to a wider group of stake-holders;
- Invite the European countries to take full part in the ongoing Arctic Council monitoring and assessment networks and programmes (AMAP, CAFF and SDWG) and to provide scientific data to their thematic data centres, as a way to enhance the cooperation and integration among European and Arctic monitoring and research stations;
- Work towards the creation of a European coordination framework to harmonise and optimise the gathering and the use of scientific data in the Arctic and link these data with other data in the pan-Arctic SAON framework, based for example

on the process begun through the European Polar Consortium (ERA-NET) and the European Polar Board aiming at setting up a network to improve cooperation and interaction among European scientific monitoring stations;

- Encourage synergies among existing infrastructures for Arctic observation and promote exploration of new observation platforms;
- Underline the importance of facilitating access to research sites in the Arctic;
- Make full benefit of the strong existing networks of EU, UN and internationally-supported observation programmes such as the Global Terrestrial Observing System (GTOS), the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) and the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) and other observation programmes to work towards integration of observations in the Arctic Ocean and the surrounding terrestrial areas and to support related global efforts such as GEO/GEOSS and the EU Copernicus programme to improve Earth observation capabilities;
- Consider the opening up of the existing reporting and information network, EIONET (European information and observing network) to include all countries collecting relevant information in the Arctic;
- Have sufficient financial and human resources available.

The ministers, government representatives and politicians present in Monaco, the representatives of the European institutions and international organisations are ready to work towards fulfilling these ambitions and pushing them forward within the appropriate regional and international bodies.

The French Presidency of the Council of the European Union will ensure the promotion of this initiative and will hand it over to the Czech and Swedish presidencies within the framework of the work programme of the three presidencies of the Council of the European Union (second semester 2008 to end 2009).