



AEC Blue Economy Working Group: Mandate

Introduction

The Arctic Economic Council (AEC) aims to facilitate business activities and responsible resource development throughout the circumpolar Arctic. The AEC will do this through the sharing of best practices, technological solutions, standards and other information.

The overarching themes in the work of the AEC include:

- Fostering strong market connections within the Arctic as a vital part of the international value chains;
- Encouraging public-private partnerships for infrastructure investments;
- Promoting stable and predictable regulatory frameworks;
- Facilitating knowledge and data exchange between industry and academia; and,
- Embracing traditional indigenous knowledge, stewardship and small businesses

Background

The ocean is vital for human well-being. Covering two-thirds of the planet, it contains rich biodiverse habitats, provides invaluable ecosystem services, is central to global food security, and absorbs significant amounts of heat and carbon dioxide. The ocean also presents immense opportunities for economic growth, employment and development. The ocean economy spans multiple sectors—including oil and gas, fishing, aquaculture, shipping, marine technology, tourism, offshore wind energy, mining and marine biotechnology—and is growing rapidly. OECD projections show that it could double in size from 2010-2030, to reach USD \$3 trillion and employ 40 million people worldwide.¹

The Nordic Council of Ministers' NORA program has twice funded an initiative managed by Iceland's Ocean Cluster called the North Atlantic Ocean Cluster Alliance (NAOCA), a project that was to map marine cluster activities in the

¹ OECD: Work in Support of a Sustainable Ocean; <https://issuu.com/oecd.publishing/docs/oecd-work-in-support-of-a-sustainab>



North Atlantic, compare best practices, build relationships between countries around the North Atlantic and to start working on joint projects between the collaborating countries. In light of the work and successes of NAOCA, the approach of the UN's Decade of Ocean Science and Sustainable Development² and the emergence of initiatives such as Canada's Ocean Supercluster and Alaska and Norway's Alaskanor project to support bio-product and ocean technology development; the BEWG **aims to facilitate a pan-Arctic alliance of ocean clusters to leverage the knowledge, expertise and funding instruments throughout the region to fast track product development and economic growth in the sector.** At the core of this working group's activity will be commitment to balancing sustainability and business and demonstrating through its work that the two are not mutually exclusive.

Scope of Work

Phase I: Consult with Arctic Blue Business Innovation Networks and Identify Models of Success

The BEWG will consult with leading Arctic blue business innovation networks, such as Iceland's Ocean Cluster and Codland initiatives to identify best practices and models of success. BEWG will utilize this information to develop a *Blue Economy Blueprint*, to be shared with the Arctic Council and other AEC working groups and used practically, among economic development partners to foster collaboration and blue business development in the Arctic. The BEWG will coordinate activity with other AEC working groups, for example; the Maritime Transportation Working Group on matters related to shipping. Blue economy business development themes will include:

- **Marine biotechnology and bio-products**-- the application of scientific and engineering principles to the processing of materials by marine biological agents to provide goods and services
- **Ocean food systems**--value chains in fisheries, aquaculture, seafood trade

² The main motivation for the proposed UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) is to support efforts to reverse the cycle of decline in ocean health and create improved conditions for sustainable development of the ocean, seas and coasts. <https://en.unesco.org/ocean-decade>



- **Maritime Transportation**-- improving the sustainability of the shipping and cruise industries in terms of social, environmental and economic impacts
- **Marine Technology**-- technologies for the safe use, exploitation, protection of, and intervention in, the marine environment.

Phase II: Leverage International Networks to Fast Track Collaborative R&D and Commercialization

- Connect Arctic communities with the network resources to empower participation in the global, Blue Economy value chain
- Facilitate clear, science-based policy discussion that supports Arctic Blue Economy development
- Utilize BEWG network partners and AEC working groups to curate interactions towards collaborative Arctic Blue Economy development

Phase III: Connect Projects with Funding to Enable Commercialization and Business Growth

- The BEWG will host an Annual Arctic Investment event, coordinated in cooperation with an existing, Arctic conference that will match Blue Economy projects and small businesses with investors and Angels networks
- The BEWG will create a directory of Blue Business investors and soft-landing partners for collaborations and will distribute this through its Blue Economy network

Deliverables:

The BEWG will deliver a work product in writing at the end of the first and second phases of the project. Phase III will focus on metrics reporting based on successful network interactions and business development outcomes.

Membership, Timeline and Practicalities

Members

The BEWG's work is led by Ms. Dana Eidsness (AEC United States). The BEWG membership will consist of experts nominated by the members of the AEC and potentially also of invited Subject Matter Experts serving for a limited period. All



members are expected to be in possession of relevant expertise related to the scope of the Working Groups' work.

Timeline

The BEWG will commence its work during Q2/2019 and will deliver its first work product by Q2/2020. The work plan and timetable will be set by the Chair of the BEWG prior to the start of the work.

AOB:

BEWG will consider by which means and to which extent the finding of the Working Group can be presented to the Arctic Council. The BEWG's aim is to engage in dialogue with the relevant Arctic Council bodies already during the work process when feasible. While the AEC work products are not subject for revision at the Arctic Council, it is important to consider how the Arctic business community's views can be brought forward to the Arctic Council. This is in line with the AEC goal of providing advice and a business perspective to the work of the Arctic Council and with the spirit of the Memorandum of Understanding between the AEC and the Arctic Council.

Budget

There is no budget identified to the work of the Working Group. Each member will cover his/her own costs for participating in the Working Group. Due to the international character of the group, the meetings will primarily take place virtually.