**Arctic Science Summit Week 2024**

“Fire in focus – How the Arctic Council addresses wildland fires”

Side event proposal

**Date and location:** Edinburgh, Scotland, 25 March 2024 | 1600-1730 GMT

**Event type:** Interactive session between Arctic Council WGs and external entities, 90min

**Event setup:** **Hybrid** / recorded for future use by Chairship / Arctic Council Secretariat

**Organizer:** Norwegian Chairship of the Arctic Council, ACS contact point is Kristina Bär, Head of Communications: [kristina@arctic-council.org](mailto:kristina@arctic-council.org)

**Session focus:**

Wildland fires have arisen as a critical environmental concern with far-reaching ecological, social, cultural, and economic implications, serving as a stark reminder on the urgency of addressing climate change and its immediate and long-term impacts in the North and globally. While fire is a natural part of Arctic ecosystems, wildland fires across the Northern hemisphere have notably increased in frequency, severity, and area across the Arctic and boreal forests over the past several years.

This session will provide an overview of the diverse wildland fire work conducted by Arctic Council’s Working Groups with the aim of providing an overview of projects that range from emission monitoring to fire ecology and international cooperation to effectively respond to wildland fires. In addition, it invites external researchers to present different wildland fire issue/challenges the Arctic Council should be aware of and consider committing resources to in the near future. The session invites active engagement in sharing experiences and knowledge with the WG speakers, Indigenous Peoples participants, external experts and ASSW participants.

The discussions will feed into the Norwegian Chairship’s Wildland Fires Initiative, which was launched in October 2023 and seeks to elevate Arctic wildland fires as an urgent climate change issue on the Arctic Council’s agenda, and beyond, to increase circumpolar collaboration, knowledge sharing, and partnership.

**Draft session outline**

**Moderator**: Fiona Danks, Executive Secretary of CAFF, Member of the Norwegian Chairship *Wildland Fires Initiative* Coordination Team

**Presentations by 18 March to** [**acs@arctic-council.org**](mailto:acs@arctic-council.org)

**Part 1: Arctic Council and wildland fires**

* **16:00-16:07** Opening remarks: introduction to the WFI.

Short presentation by Morten Høglund, Chair of the Senior Arctic Officials of the Arctic Council on WFI

* **16:07-16:35**      Update on Arctic Council work through three Working Groups: expertise,

ongoing and future plans. *Intro by Fiona Danks (incl. Sharing Circle) to work by Arctic Council projects. 7 min per speaker.*

* **Conservation of Arctic Fauna and Flora (CAFF)**: Fiona Danks, Executive Secretary, CAFF (potentially virtual, slide)
* **Emergency, Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR)**: Nina Ågren, Executive Secretary, EPPR (slide)
* **Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP)**: Rolf Rødven, Executive Secretary, AMAP, tbc (slide)

**Part 2: Speakers’ corner / listening session**

* **16:35-17:05**      External researchers present different wildland fire

issue/challenges the Arctic Council should be aware of and consider committing resources to in near future. *7 min per speaker.*

Please share short bio and project you are presenting

* **Adriana Ford**, Imperial College London – High-latitude Fires, Arctic Climate, Environment, and Health (slides)
* **Ville-Veikko Paunu**, Finnish Environment Institute, Finland (virtual) – Arctic Black Carbon Impacting Climate and Air Pollution (ABC-iCAP) (slides)
* **Bjørn Samset**, CICERO, Norway (virtual) – ACRoBEAR (slides)
* **Mikko Strahlendorff**, Finnish Meteorological Institute – Arctic PASSION and Finnish national project on Arctic wildfire preparedness (slides)

**Part 3: Open discussion on gaps, possibilities for cooperation**

Every speaker: share 1 question for open discussion

* **17:05-17:30** Interactive discussion / Q & A

Different wildland fire issue/challenges the Arctic Council should be aware of and consider committing resources to in the near future => policy guidance, identified gaps for future projects

Joining for the discussion: **Devlin Fernandes** (virtual) ([gci.executivedirector@gmail.com](mailto:gci.executivedirector@gmail.com))