

negotiation of the Framework Convention on Climate Change, and its recently negotiated Kyoto Protocol. Effective measures on global climate change will contribute to Canada's northern foreign policy.

### **Reduction of Long-Range Transport of Air Pollution into the Arctic**

Over the past 20 years, Canadian scientists have developed evidence that the Arctic acts as a global "sink" for persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and heavy metals. Originating far from the north, these pollutants are transported there over long distances by air, sea and rivers; they enter the fatty tissues of Arctic species, eventually to be consumed by humans. Although few POPs have ever been used in the Arctic, several have reached high-enough levels in top-of-the-food-chain species that human consumption advisories have been issued. Canada is a signatory to the 1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), and it actively participated in the negotiations for, and signed, the Persistent Organic Pollutants and Heavy Metals Protocols in June 1998. Also, through AMAP Canada participates in gathering and exchanging data on the health impacts of contaminants. Achieving effective international measures to reduce transboundary contaminants will feature prominently in Canada's northern foreign policy.

### **Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment**

Since the 1970s, Canada has taken a variety of unilateral and co-operative steps to counter the threats posed to the Arctic marine environment by increased shipping; these reflect its determination to exercise control over waters within its Arctic archipelago. While the experimentation that spurred these steps has not yet led to extensive Arctic shipping, Canada shares concerns with its circumpolar neighbours about future shipping developments. For this reason, it has led talks on harmonization of Arctic ship rules with a special focus on environmental protection. Through the working group on Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME), it has participated in the development of offshore oil and gas guidelines, the development of a Regional Program of Action for the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, and the development of recommendations for action on current and future shipping activities. This work will continue under Canada's new northern foreign policy.

### **Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna**

Across the Arctic some 1 400 species of plants and 200 species of fauna are endangered, vulnerable or rare, while serious gaps exist in the protection of vulnerable habitats. In the Canadian Arctic alone, some 35 species of wildlife are at risk. Conservation of species such as the polar bear is central to the cultures of Arctic Indigenous peoples. The Arctic is also important for species from a global perspective: for instance, 15 percent of the world's birds breed there. These concerns have led Canada to help conclude several international agreements. In the Arctic, it worked with its circumpolar neighbours to establish the Program for the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) under the AEPS, now under the Arctic Council. Canada views CAFF's work as critical to the protection of Arctic species and habitats, and will continue to work through it and other forums.