



*“Does the creation of the Arctic Council really offer multilateral opportunities for pan-arctic efforts, or is it more likely to bedevil Canada’s overwhelming important bilateral relationship with the U.S., and, albeit to a lesser extent, bilateral relations with other Council members?”*

## Arctic Council

### Policy Options

- 2.1 Participants were enthusiastic about the existence of the Arctic Council and recommended that its operations within Canada be located in the north, and emphasis put on northern participation to the greatest extent possible. (Whitehorse)
- 2.2 First Nations should be welcomed as voting members of the Arctic Council. (note: the Arctic Council operates by consensus not by votes) It is anticipated that positive experiences among Aboriginal groups such as the development of cooperation agreements, resource sharing accords and other consensus building mechanisms will strengthen the emerging good will among the members of the Arctic Council. (Whitehorse)
- 2.3 Canada’s role in the Arctic Council should be supported at home by mechanisms that ensure that northerners are involved in defining issues to be brought to the Council, as well as in the development of positions taken by Canada. In addition, it is recommended that Canada’s representatives on the Arctic Council should hold regular open meetings in the north to ensure that northern residents are kept aware of its deliberations, and that there be provisions of accountability set up for Canada’s presentations to the Council. (Whitehorse)
- 2.4 Although circumpolar peoples share common concerns and face similar challenges, many issues are extremely complex and defy easy resolution. Often the mere fact of national boundaries makes solutions difficult to resolve. It is recommended that Canada bring to the Arctic Council a resolution proposing the establishment of a conflict and dispute resolution committee (modeled on a similar mechanism found in the Yukon Umbrella Final Agreement) made up of the members and aimed at providing support for the orderly treatment of issues defying easy resolution. (Whitehorse)
- 2.5 It was recommended that the Arctic Council host a workshop to promote economic development (possibly every 2 years). (Yellowknife)
- 2.6 The Federal Government should make the Arctic Council the information and resource manager for all the Arctic research bodies (e.g. Arctic Institute, Inuit Circumpolar Conference, Canadian Circumpolar Institute) to provide an exchange with the Dene and other Polar nations. (Yellowknife)