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Joint Initiative Applauds New Cooperation between United States and Nordic Nations on Arctic Issues

May 13, 2016 (Washington, D.C.) — The Joint Ocean Commission Initiative applauds the recently announced cooperation between the United States and the nations of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden to better protect and manage a changing Arctic. The six nations pledged to consider the environmental dimensions of economic development and to advance the cause of science-based decision-making in the Arctic. This effort demonstrates the type of leadership necessary to effectively manage the Arctic’s ocean and coastal resources.

“The Arctic is experiencing rapidly changing conditions that create new challenges and opportunities for the United States,” said JOCI Co-Chair Christine Todd Whitman. The melting of Arctic sea ice will transform global shipping and transportation routes, energy production and markets, commercial fishing activities, and will significantly impact ecosystems and communities. “These changes are signs of things to come for the rest of the country and the first test of our capacity to respond to changes of this magnitude,” Ms. Whitman added.

The need for increased intentional cooperation was echoed by Arctic leaders at the Joint Initiative’s [Arctic Ocean Leadership Roundtables](#). They emphasized that there is both a need and opportunity to strengthen diplomatic efforts and relationships across the Arctic to improve economic and living conditions for Arctic communities, improve Arctic ocean safety and security, and address the impacts of climate change. Arctic leaders also called for the United States to establish partnerships with other Arctic nations to build capacity for research, oil spill response, search and rescue, and risk analysis and mitigation efforts.

Ms. Whitman praised the agreement for “broadening the scope of cooperation in the Arctic. Today’s announcement builds on the [recent bilateral agreement](#) with Canada and advances the cause of collaboration in the Arctic. The Joint Ocean Commission Initiative highly commends this example of leadership and action to secure the future of the Arctic and its ocean and coasts.” For more information on the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative and our work, please visit www.jointoceancommission.org or call Laura Cantral at 202-354-6444.

The Joint Ocean Commission Initiative is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and Pew Oceans Commission. The primary goal of the Joint Initiative is to accelerate the pace of change that results in meaningful ocean policy reform.