

**UNCONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE TWENTY EIGHT MEETING OF THE  
UK NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR ANTARCTIC RESEARCH  
Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 09:00 -  
Online (Zoom) and at British Antarctic Survey, Cambridge**

**Present:**

Prof M. Bentley	Chair, University of Durham	MB
Prof J Francis		JF
John Smellie		JSm
Helen Peat		HP
Huw Griffiths		HG
Susie Grant		SG
Louise Ireland		LI
Eric Wolf		EW
Jessica Surma		JSu
Ellie Honan		EH
Julie Jones		JJ
George Clarkson		GC
Liz Thomas		LT
Sammie Buzzard		SB
Pilvi		PM
Sian Henley		SH
Kevin Hughes		KH
Claus-Dieter Hillebrand		CDH
Ruth Cooper		RC
Thomas Bracegirdle		TB
Lloyd Peck		LP
Dr John Lower		JLo
Henry Burgess		HB
Ms A. Reichardt	Secretary, British Antarctic Survey	AR

**Apologies:**

Prof Pete Convey	British Antarctic Survey	
Prof Kate Hendry	British Antarctic Survey	
Steve Colwell	British Antarctic Survey	
Prof Martin Siegert	Imperial College	
Dr Adrian Howkins	University of Bristol	
Dr Lizzie Garratt	Natural Environmental Research Council	
Prof Rob Bingham	University of Edinburgh	
Dr Nadine Johnston	British Antarctic Survey	
Dr Anne Jungblut	National History Museum	
Dr Chandrika Nath	SCAR	

**1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, APOLOGIES and AGENDA (P)**

Introductions, welcome to JJ, SH, BASMU people joining this year now giving us a welcome and contextually important insight into medical research

**2 MINUTES OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH MEETING, 2022 (P)**

The minutes of the 27<sup>th</sup> meeting were confirmed as accurate and accepted without amendments.

**3 MATTERS ARISING INCLUDING ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING (P)**

UKPN now represented on committee, members asked to please keep suggesting more people:

Kath Waller, Claire Waluda: PlasticsAG to be included → **Action MB/AR**

Sammie Buzzard welcome as co-chair on DiPSI

**4 UKNCAR MEMBERSHIP AND CO-OPTED MEMBERS (P)**

Standing down: John Smellie, Martin Siegert (our thanks to Martin for nearly 20 years of Committee service),

**5 UKNCAR CHAIR AND SECRETARY UPDATE**

Expression of interest for Chair, due to pandemic interruption Mike's term will be extended with new call for new chair in mid-2024. → **Action MB**

Secretary: AR standing down to take up new role as Rothera Base Leader. JF will reach into BAS community, as ToR state it has to be a BAS person, due to covering the admin costs. HG offered to give support until a new secretary has been found → **Action JF/MB**

**6 Report from the Director of BAS**

- Last season: ship supported trials of new science equipment in funded science projects, very successful.
- Discovery building at Rothera has been clad. Next season: Disco building external parts will be finished and internal ready for handover the season after
- Coming season: runway at Rothera will be resurfaced leading to closure during the season
- Construction activity still ongoing and impacting science support. Future planning is ongoing
- Next season: BIOPOLE, PICCOLO (2 major science cruises on SDA)
- Summer 2024 SDA in Arctic (Greenland) for science cruise
- Launch of new BAS science strategy.
- Safety Together campaign at BAS
- InSyNC: same observations at same time across Antarctica, identify where the data gaps are and fill them, all Antarctic nations getting together to plan big campaign with ships, field science, in planning stage now, take place in 2030s for IPY, UK as Co-Lead
- Meeting with George Freeman, UK Science Minister, interest in Polar Science
- HG: German program assessed which geographical areas would be interesting, on what time scale and which measurements to be comparable (link to paper: <https://bg.copernicus.org/articles/19/5313/2022/bg-19-5313-2022.html>)
- JF: this is the next step in BAS and with other nations, funding has to be secured

- MB: the timeline will lead into when new SCAR SRP will start so have to think ahead for this
- Brief discussion of the international impact of UK in polar science. MB suggested BAS could compile a report on the impact, bibliographic analysis, KH is already compiling a report on policy making
- SH: some funding opportunities in the philanthropic and potentially private sector, which has been used for SOOS and ICED

## **7 Report from Royal Society**

- Membership fee to SCAR: half of this provided by the Royal Society and will continue
- MB: SCAR have increased membership fees for the first time in 10 years and Royal Society have been notified that next request will be larger.

## **8 NERC Updates (P)**

- Too early to say whether Antarctic Access issues are reflected in grant funding
- Number of funded projects has decreased but funding amount has stayed similar across the years
- HG: could future Leader Fellowships be included in the funding success, substantial funding and success for UK polar science

## **9 FCDO update**

- Recent Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting in Helsinki
- Special meeting on climate change, agreed Helsinki declaration on Climate Change, clarification that Antarctic Treaty doesn't end in 2028, despite some erroneous and long-standing reports of this
- Annex on Antarctic Tourism, sustainable in the future
- Work with UK Antarctic Heritage trust to preserve the Endurance wreck
- CCAMLR meeting: proposal of new marine protected areas, reluctance from Russia and China to make progress
- HMS protector planning meeting: ship will be deployed in Antarctica, hydrographic surveys, support of BAS and UKAHT, drone surveys, clean-up of waste from past exploration
- Resignation of Lord Goldsmith, Minister for Overseas Territories, Commonwealth, Energy, Climate and Environment at the FCDO
- JF: evident in Antarctic Treaty meetings since 2019 no consensus in the community, no closure on subjects and declarations, politics are becoming more difficult in Antarctica
- LP: issue with MPA: no evidence whether these are working, as no follow up monitoring funded
- HG: monitoring recently has been funded through National Capability, krill and comprehensive survey through BAS, funding of monitoring from government needed
- SG: issue is being increasingly recognised with CCAMLR, US and NZ are investing money in monitoring the Ross MPA, SCAR groups contribution to this is being more widely recognised

## **10 Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research i Standing Scientific Groups Reports (P)**

## **Geosciences**

### **Life Sciences**

LP:

- no specific Life Sciences report since UKNCAR met last year
- Major Life Sciences event this year is the SCAR Biology Symposium, to be SCAR's first in-person meeting since the pandemic, in Christchurch, New Zealand, from 31 July to 4 Aug 2023. At present around 300 registered, 200 oral presentations plus posters. UK well represented in the International Science Committee, with Peter Convey as ISC Chair, and Jasmine Lee and Simon Morley as members. Huw Griffiths has been invited by the conference organisers to give one of the main keynotes.
- the ANTOS action group is holding a one day workshop in advance of the Biology Symposium
- ii - there is also significant UK involvement in the leadership of the Ant-ICON programme, with Kevin Hughes and Jasmine Lee as leaders in one of the work packages. There was a social-sciences led Antarctic conservation workshop held at SPRI in Sept 2022 which had good UK and international involvement, and has produced a paper currently submitted to *Nature Communications*.
- There is a paper that came out of a meeting in Bielefeld (October 2022), now in second review in *Nature Communications*. *Topic*: Polar Genomics and its future perspectives and uses led by Melody Clark in BAS

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### **Physical Sciences**

- Change in leadership: Takuji Nakamura (National Institute for Polar Research, Japan) as new lead, Steve Colwell stepped aside as secretary, Prof Wojciech Miloch (University of Oslo) as new secretary
- Report will be provided

### **SC-ATS**

- SCATS: Science advice that gets funnelled into policy making
- Large number of papers delivered by SC-ATS into the ATCM
- Collaboration with IAATO and COMNAP
- Next CCAMLR meeting in October and will present there
- First SCATs and Ant-ICON fellowship awarded to an ECR in Uruguay, very successful

### **SCAGI**

- Take as read

### **SCADM**

- Updated data policy: applies to all research and Expert Group in SCAR, focus on data being open access and fair

### **SC-HASS**

- International workshop, very active (trying to get a report from Klaus Dodds)

## **Update on Scientific Research Programmes (P)**

Written reports provided.

### ***AntClimNow***

- Initiative to create Antarctic Climate indicators, showing evolution of Antarctic climate diagnostics, EDI internship

### ***ANT-ICON***

- Workshop at SPRI with Adrian Howkins: human dimension of conservation
- Workshops: what tools can be used for science to get to policy makers (website, GIS tool)
- SCAR Ant-ICON SC-ATS fellowship: very successful

### ***INSTANT***

- Very large program! (3 themes and 11 subcommittees) so some fragmentation within the program,
- Sub-committees such as SOACEP are drafting white papers. Writing groups formed but slow progress
- INSTANT in-person conference in September: likely to be important for different parts of this large program to re-connect effectively at an in-person meeting
- LT: big interest in in-person meeting, submission of 200 abstracts for first day alone, hope that conference will be a delayed 'kick-off' of momentum for the program.
- Suggestion: split INSTANT into its themes for reporting
- HG: learning point for future SCAR groups, might be too big to be manageable
- MB: management issues exist but producing great outputs and a good focus on policy-relevant science at its core

### **Update on SCAR Expert Groups, data products and advisory**

Written reports were provided.

### ***ACCE***

- SG: question of its formal status, plans to keep it going, collaboration with World Meteorological Organisation to submit report to Treaty System

### ***ICED***

- Contribution to SCAR session at COP in Egypt, Antarctic krill modelling, contribution to SOOS

### ***OpMET***

- Steve Colwell has stood down from UKNCAR and therefore ends UK involvement in OpMET

### ***AntVolc***

- Ends as Expert Group after 9 years
- Successful, achieved all its objectives
- 2 volumes on Antarctic volcanism, children's book, white paper on state of research in Antarctic volcanism
- Many thanks to John Smellie for all his work driving this group

### ***ANTOS***

- Upcoming Annual meeting at SCAR biology conference

### ***AntArchitecture***

- Successfully applied for 4-year extension as AG

### ***IPICS***

- September: UK ice core meeting, focus on use of archive ice cores

### ***SOOS***

- Joint initiative between SCAR and SCOR, covering the Southern Ocean
- SOOS data policy in line with SCAR data policy, making provisions for oceanographical data
- Web based platforms for provision of data (SOOS map), tool for upcoming cruises into Southern Ocean to increase involvement
- SOOS symposium in Hobart in August,
- COP26 and COP27 SOOS was strongly involved with ICED, Bepsi, Ant-ICON, build up to contribution at COP28 in Dubai
- Ecosystem assessment of Southern Ocean: summary for policy makers to be released in upcoming months

### ***Geological Heritage and Geo-conservation***

- Kevin Hughes no longer sits on this group so we do not have clear representation

### ***Joint Expert Group on Human Biology and Medicine***

- Technical issues prevented full report: MB briefly reported on behalf and that exciting to welcome the medical side back into the UKNCAR community
- No severe COVID disease in the BAT which was a major achievement
- Ongoing work on cold injury and involvement of AI in medicine in polar regions

### ***EDI***

- Difficult to get started, across many time zones and not knowing each other
- Working at different levels:
- looking at SCAR itself as an organisation and EDI's place within
- importance of collaboration with social sciences, looking to strengthen the link with Social Sciences
- EDI AG is used by Scar to bring EDI issues to conversation
- HG: language usage, cultural differences, and definition of socioeconomic groups is very different across the members of SCAR, difficult to define and communicate
- Define lowest common denominators in terms of barriers to set more achievable goals
- MB: how can UKNCAR and everyone get involved?
- Report on what works well, actively get in touch with EDI AG as they are still growing and networking
- SH: EDI group within SOOS to connect with EDI AG, make EDI more transversal rather than a side group, within MEASO: especially with the South American community inclusion barriers are speaking English well, trying to overcome this to translate key findings/summaries into 6 UN languages, especially successful with Peru and Chile

### ***Bedmap3***

- Widely anticipated and well-accessed data set to follow on from BEDMAP and BEDMAP2

### **11 SCAR Strategic Plan 2023-2028 (P)**

- Social sciences and humanities now clearly included (SC-HASS), emphasis on capacity building and ECR/junior researchers
- Carbon reduction, SCAR is trying to reduce its own footprint, options to have hubs in regions rather than flying internationally and join in hybrid
- HG: hybrid is not only about carbon footprint but also about inclusion, EDI perspective, not an option for a lot of society that might face either persecution in certain countries due to their sexual orientation or identity as well as not being able to afford the cost of transport, this is important for SCAR to realise and address
- TB: balance has to be struck, some biological long term monitoring such as Signy will still require physical presence and should not be cut
- SH: hub approach to delegates meetings: is this going to become common practice? Criticism that European money is staying in Europe rather travelling and conferences in global South will therefore not be as well attended and successful as in global North
- MB: hub discussion: importance to meet with people and discuss Antarctic matters and be more focussed, but could be elsewhere that only requires short-haul travel rather than long-haul, direct funding could be prioritised to ECRs (for networking) rather than senior scientists who already have an existing network
- JS: suggestion to host more meetings in countries where members are less able to travel or have more financial constraints, but Western nations might be able to get there, recommendation to involve teachers in the Antarctic program, good investment

### **12 Diversity in UK Polar Science Initiative (DiPSI) (P)**

- Code of conduct for polar researchers published by FCDO
- Meeting at UK Antarctic Conference in Edinburgh, hopefully repeated at UK Arctic Conference
- EDI internships hosted by BAS
- International Polar Year: starting to think about potential partnerships
- Polar Horizons Program was very successful, not funded for future
- PM: created a How To guide for organising the Polar Horizons Program, could be translated and generalised for broader use

### **13 UK Antarctic Science Conference 2024**

- No firm offer for 2024 yet, is there an institution that would be interested in hosting the conference?
- Facilities in Woking WWF have been kindly offered with waiver on venue hire
- BAS has offered to host, already hosting Arctic Conference in 2023
- PM: potential for organising committee put together from different institutions
- MB: will follow up with community to declare interest on hosting future workshops

**14 UK Polar Network (UKPN)**

- Polar flags campaign: biggest year yet, might have reached capacity in what is supportable on a volunteer basis
- Restart polar pen pals and school visits, southern bias in where they are reaching, trying to expand network, expand into reaching home schooled children
- Submitted report to APECS on impact of Ukraine conflict on Early Career Researchers, mentioned in parliament
- Collaboration with Clean Planet Peninsula to deliver a practical field course first in Dartmoor, then looking to go to Arctic and Antarctic for Early Career Researchers
- Collaboration with APECS France, Norway, Nigeria
- Always looking for advice from the community

**15 UK Polar Data Centre (PDC) (P)**

- Recommissioned, funding for next 5 years by NERC
- Setup of user group for each of the data centres

**16 UKAAP**

- Martin Siegert standing down as chair of UKAAP. New Chair TBC.
- Arctic Summit Science Week in Edinburgh, March 2024 ([Home - assw.info](https://assw.info))
- Arctic Science Conference in BAS in September 2023
- Antarctic Extreme Events paper submitted: what do we know about extreme events? Originated in a request from FCDO
- All party parliament group to the polar regions: environmental audit committee, visited the arctic, planning to visit antarctica later in the year
- HB: canvassing for business and community meetings, fully hybrid event, deadline end of September

**17 International Polar Year (2032/33)**

- <https://iasc.info/cooperations/international-polar-year-2032-33>
- Joint statement in December to start preparation for the 5<sup>th</sup> International Polar Year in 2032-33

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- Joint World Meteorological Organization, International Science Council, University of the Arctic, International Arctic Social Sciences association, APECS, International Arctic Science Committee and SCAR
- Currently working on timeline, decisions on branding and concept note, will be developed over the summer
- HG: is there an intention to canvas the community and include their input rather than leading it through committees?
- HB: balance engagement with appropriate speed, IPY does not want to replicate efforts like SCAR Horizon Scan but rather lead to implementation

**AOB**

- Please continue to repeat and disseminate content of the meeting and reports to partners and collaborators

**The meeting concluded at 11:57**



**UK NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR ANTARCTIC RESEARCH**  
**28th Committee Meeting, 30th June, 2023**  
**ACTIONS**

<b>Action No.</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>BY</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1	3	Invite representatives of Plastic-AG to UKNCAR: Kath Waller, Claire Waluda	MB, AR	
2	4	Remove OpMet, AntVOLC, Geological Heritage group from list due to end of UK involvement	AR	
3	5	Circulate invitation for EoI for new UKNCAR Chair	MB	
4	5	New UKNCAR secretary	JF/MB	

MB: Mike Bentley (Chair)

AR: Aurelia Reichardt (Secretary)

JF: Jane Francis (SCAR Delegate and BAS Director)