



WP 25

Agenda Item: 7.2

Person Responsible: E Griffin

XXXIV SCAR Delegates Meeting

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Policy Relevant Climate Change Communications Report

Executive Summary

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Important Issues or Factors:

Following the publication of the Antarctic Climate Change and the Environment (ACCE) report in 2009, SCAR has participated in several United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) meetings to present its climate change science, including the major update to the ACCE report published in 2013 and at the recent Conference of the Parties (COP) 21 meeting in Paris. Annual updates from the ACCE group are presented as papers to the ATCM. Members and ATCM Treaty parties have expressed interest in more policy focussed output to be generated. Closer engagement with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) process has been evident recently and SCAR should build on the momentum generated. In particular, the 2 upcoming IPCC Special Reports will have key Antarctic input. This paper will outline a strategy to combine both internal SCAR annual reports and the context of longer term reports and meetings from external bodies to maximise the impact of SCAR Climate Change science.

Recommendations/Actions and Justification:

Delegates are asked to authorise the Secretariat to plan and support a more coordinated approach to policy relevant climate change communications through production of policy relevant summaries of specific outputs (particularly the ACCE annual update) and active management of the relevant budget lines to support participation at meetings. The intention would be to target the most effective promotion of Antarctic Climate Change science over the known timeline to the publication of the next IPCC Assessment Report.

Budget Implications:

Annual budget line of \$1,000 to support production of policy relevant "one-pager" from the ACCE update. Default carry forwards to be agreed on ACCE and IPCC observer budget lines. Carry forwards would be limited to a set termination at a targeted post-Assessment Report 6 release meeting, which would likely be following UNFCCC COP meeting.

Introduction and Background

The Antarctic Treaty Meeting of Experts (ATME) on Implications of Climate Change for Antarctic Management and Governance was held in Norway in April 2010 (http://www.ats.aq/documents/ATCM33/wp/ATCM33_wp063_e.doc). One of the major recommendations was that the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) develop an Antarctic climate change communication plan to bring the findings of the SCAR's Antarctic Climate Change and Environment (ACCE) report from 2009 to the attention of decision makers, the general public and the media.

Following on from this recommendation, and underpinned by funding from Norway, the UK, and Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition (ASOC) it was agreed that it would be appropriate for SCAR to lead with this initiative since it had organized the review of the science supporting current understanding of climate change in the Antarctic and Southern Ocean region.

Note that as a non-governmental international organisation SCAR provides independent, authoritative scientific advice based on the best available scientific evidence. With regard to communicating the science of climate change SCAR strives to remain independent and objective avoiding speculation or personal opinions.

Based on this, SCAR developed a Climate Change Communications Plan and one of the recommendations was for SCAR to target opportunities to present its climate science at key meetings that combine the policy and academic communities and audiences.

As the SCAR ACCE group produces an annual Information Paper for the ATCM, reviewing the most important developments in climate related research over the previous year, this was identified as a key document to use to highlight the role SCAR can play in promoting the importance of Antarctic Climate Change research.

In June 2013 SCAR attended the UNFCCC Bonn Climate Change Meeting. This highlighted in particular the Antarctic Climate Change and the Environment (ACCE) Executive Summary update, which had been published in April 2013 (Turner et al., 2013, *Polar Record*, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0032247413000296>). This was the most significant SCAR publication in the area of Climate Change since 2009 and was the subject of a press briefing, webcast live by the UNFCCC and archived on their website. A talk on "Antarctica and Global Climate" was also given at a UNFCCC side event on "Rapid Climate Change in Polar and Mountain Regions" by the SCAR Executive Director. In addition, SCAR had an exhibit booth for the first week of the Meeting and attended relevant sessions of the UNFCCC Standing Bodies.

Following the events in Bonn, SCAR was asked to host a session on the Antarctic at an event during the November 2013 UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP19) in Warsaw, entitled the "Day of the Cryosphere", which was organised by the International Cryosphere Climate Initiative (ICCI). Additionally, SCAR promoted its climate science on as part of both a press briefing and an official side event at the main COP19 venue highlighting the "On Thin Ice" report by ICCL in cooperation with the World Bank.

The "Day of the Cryosphere" event highlighted the importance of the Cryosphere within the recently released IPCC Physical Science Case of Assessment Report 5 (AR5). SCAR took the opportunity to highlight recent work relating to climate change from two of its cornerstone Scientific Research Programmes (SRPs): Past Antarctic Ice Sheet Dynamics (PAIS, <http://www.scar.org/srp/pais>), represented by its co-chair Dr. Carlota Escutia, and Antarctic Climate Change in the 21st Century (AntClim21, <http://www.scar.org/srp/antclim21>), represented by Dr. Tom Bracegirdle. The Antarctic panel was completed by a presentation from the EU ice2sea project, represented by Dr. Hartmut Hellmer, on the Antarctic drivers of sea level rise.

Coordination support and SCAR participation at both the Bonn and Warsaw meetings was facilitated by support from the Norwegian Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

In 2014 the ACCE group launched a "wiki" version of their report, intended to become a living document with regular updates, which will be a key part of the future of SCAR climate change

communications (web address is http://acce.scar.org/wiki/Antarctic_Climate_Change_and_the_Environment).

Building on the relationship with ICCI, SCAR played an active role at the historic UNFCCC COP21 meeting in Paris, November/December 2015, highlighting the role SCAR plays in promoting Antarctic science in climate change research. SCAR partnered with ICCI for two official events, a live webcast press briefing and side event, at COP21 on Antarctica Day (December 1st). Additionally, SCAR promotional materials were distributed from the ICCI booth throughout COP21, including the 2015 ACCE update (presented to ATCM XXXVIII in May 2015 as IP09, and available from:

<http://www.scar.org/treatypapers/atcm38>

SCAR was also represented at an International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) side event at COP21 on December 2nd. A report on these activities has been prepared by one of the attendees Dr Julian Gutt, CO of AntERA, and is available from the SCAR AntERA website:

<http://www.scar.org/srp/ant-era#COP21>

Current involvement and issues

The recent history of this engagement has been very short term and responsive with different internal and external budget lines utilised and so it would be preferable to have a predictable and realistic level of funding set to aid future efforts. The requests and opportunities have also frequently been at short notice so flexibility is important.

Within SCAR a number of relevant changes have also recently taken place.

The ACCE group has been subsumed within SSG-PS. While an additional contribution to PS has been budgeted, there is no ring-fencing of funds allocated within the SSG. The ACCE budget has previously been allocated on an ad hoc basis dependent on their annual plans and often supplemented by SSG or SRP funds.

There has also been significant variability in the budgets allocated for IPCC and UNFCCC engagement. This has reflected the lack of an overall plan for these interactions and the expectation that funds would be found from other sources if necessary to support specific events. UNFCCC has recently implemented charges for official side events at their meetings (\$1,000 each), although this did not prevent oversubscription for available slots at the recent Paris COP meeting.

As mentioned earlier there is significant momentum at present in terms of SCARs visibility and interaction with both IPCC and UNFCCC following the Paris meetings. Shortly before becoming the co-Chair of Working Group I of the next IPCC Assessment Report, AR6, Dr Valerie Masson-Delmotte was awarded the Martha T. Muse Prize in 2015, demonstrating her key role in explaining and promoting the importance of Antarctic Climate Change science.

In January 2016 IPCC Working Group I invited SCAR to provide feedback on the topics proposed by governments for IPCC Special Reports to be conducted before AR6. Since then two Special Reports of particular relevance to SCAR have been approved. The first, to be published in 2018 will examine the implications of strengthening commitments to a 1.5°C goal, which may carry great implications for the stability and future of Antarctic ice sheets. The second is on Oceans and Cryosphere and will be another opportunity to raise the profile and knowledge of Antarctic climate change for policy makers and the general public.

A scoping meeting for the first report is being organised in Geneva in August 2016 and of 17 participants suggested by ICSU to IPCC, 2 were accepted, both of whom have recently been or are co-Chairs of the SCAR PAIS SRP and are recent Tinker-Muse Prize winners.

While funding has been provided by national bodies and ICSU to support their participation for this specific meeting it would be helpful for SCAR to have the flexibility to support further potential involvement of SCAR scientists in both of the Special Reports, to take advantage of these high profile opportunities.

In the preparations for the most recent ATCM the need for a policy relevant “one-pager” document, based on the annual ACCE update, was highlighted. Such a document would have relevance beyond the ATCM itself and could be used as core promotional material to a wider audience than the annual

ACCE update currently reaches. Additional outreach materials could also be produced based on the ACCE report, such as a short and simple video that can be shared through various platforms and used in many communications activities.

Proposed solution

To address the opportunities and requests outlined above it is suggested that a number of changes are made to the way in which the relevant SCAR output is used and the planning overall in the medium term for ensuring the greatest and most effective impact.

In parallel the relevant internal SCAR budgets (ACCE, IPCC interaction etc.) should be rolled annually up to the publication of the next IPCC Assessment Report (AR6). This would provide support to allow response to opportunities related to the IPCC Special Reports, and any other relevant opportunities, and also allow longer term planning for specific events such as the UNFCCC meetings following the publication of AR6, expected in 2019 or 2020. This would be the end point for the rolling of these funds.

A drafting group for a policy friendly version of the ACCE could be formed to advise on the best way to package the formal ACCE report for policy-maker uptake. In a similar way to the manner in which voluntary contributions from science specialists are combined in the annual ACCE report, a coordination of a more policy relevant condensed one or two pager could be provided to compliment the update. Offers of assistance in helping to formulate content for this document have already been received but it would be helpful to have a modest budget of \$1,000 annually to support the production of this version of the ACCE update with understandable graphics, etc.

Recommendations/Expected Outcomes

A decision by Delegates to authorise the Secretariat and EXCOM to plan and support a more coordinated approach to Climate Change Communications for the longer term will help strengthen the efforts and outputs across the relevant SCAR groups. This would provide an opportunity to improve the impact at a time when there will be considerable focus on Antarctic relevant climate change science up to and after the next IPCC AR, and with known focus on Antarctic topics in 2 of the upcoming IPCC Special Reports. Therefore, relevant budget lines should be allowed to roll annually to provide flexibility in the medium term and to reflect the longer term goal of providing a platform for SCAR scientists once the AR6 is launched. At this point these budget lines would be reset and absorbed into contingency should there be surplus.