

SCAR Visiting Professor Scheme 2016
Professor Bryan Storey
Report of visit to Iran
12th to 18th May 2017

I have just returned from a very successful and enjoyable visit to Iran supported by the SCAR Visiting Professor Scheme. I was hosted by Dr Nasser Zaker, Director of the Iranian National Institute for Oceanography and Atmospheric Science (INIOAS) in Tehran from 12th to 18th May 2017. The aim of the fellowship was;

- To introduce Antarctic Research and SCAR to the relevant Institutions in Iran
- To broaden the knowledge base about Antarctica in Iran
- To help Iran make decisions about developing its own Antarctic research programme
- To create an Iranian road map for a new Antarctic research program

The main objective was to help Iran develop its own Antarctic research programme in Antarctica and to strengthen its Antarctic research capacity through the SCAR Visiting Professorial Scheme. The Fellowship helped promote the understanding of Iran's researchers and scientists about the importance of Antarctic science and studies. Iran is at the very first stage of developing its own programme and is seeking advice through the SCAR Visiting Professor Scheme to help develop a new national programme.

The visit was directly relevant to SCAR in that it fostered the closer integration and participation of Iran in SCAR, and provided an opportunity for me to inform Iranian researchers about SCAR. Iran became an associate member of SCAR in 2014.

Programme

Two all day workshops were held at INIOAS and attended by up to 40 people from different institutions including universities and government agencies. The workshops were broadcast live to three additional INIOAS research centres in other cities within Iran.

The first workshop focused on Antarctic research and included presentations on;

- Exploring the Future of Antarctic Research in Antarctica
- Antarctic governance and environmental protection
- The New Zealand Antarctic research program
- Undertaking research in Antarctica from a logistic perspective.

The second workshop focused on "The role of Antarctica in global climate change: past, present and future".

In addition I visited and gave presentations at Shahid Beheshti University, the University of Tehran and the Geological Survey of Iran. I also had formal meetings with faculty members of INIOAS more specifically linked to collaborative research.

Future of Iranian research in Antarctica

Iran is developing a 10 year plan for Antarctic research; it has set up a National Centre for Antarctic Research (NCAR) based at INIOAS and is currently awaiting confirmation of government funding. Iran plans to use the experiences of other countries that are active in Antarctica research including New Zealand, Malaysia and India. I was specifically approached by many Iranian researchers interested in developing links with New Zealand researchers. Iran's plan for signing the Antarctic Treaty and Environment Protocol as well as establishing a Research Station in Antarctica is under review.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank sincerely my host at INIOAS for a very enjoyable time in Tehran and particularly Ms Fahimeh Foroughi (Head of International Affairs Office) and Dr. Abolfazl Saleh who organised the trip, workshops and lecture programme and who gave up their time to make me feel welcome. It was also a great pleasure to visit two Universities in Tehran and the Geological Survey where again I was extremely well looked after. I will treasure the memories of my visit to Tehran and hope that I can return to help Iran build a credible Antarctic research programme in the future. I would also like to thank SCAR for support and funding through the Visiting Professorial Scheme.







