

Joint Meeting of the SCAR and COMNAP Executive Committees

Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 22 August 2001

- [SCAR Executive Committee Meeting Report 22nd - 24th August 2001](#)
- [Report of the Joint Meeting of the SCAR and COMNAP Executive Committees](#)
- [SCAR ad hoc Group on Transition](#)

Report

Present for SCAR: R H Rutford, A C Rocha-Campos, J Valencia, A D M Walker, C G Rapley, R Schlich, P D Clarkson.

Present for COMNAP: G S Wratt, K Erb, P Eberhard, G Jugie, J A C Sayers

1. Chair's Introduction

The President of SCAR, Dr R H Rutford, as host of the meeting, welcomed everyone and then passed the Chair to the Chair of COMNAP, Ms G S Wratt.

2. Antarctic Data Management

2.1 Progress Reports

The Executive Secretary of SCAR reported that two reports had been received from the Global Change Master Directory (GCMD) for the first two quarters of the contract to develop the Antarctic Master Directory (AMD) on behalf of SCAR and COMNAP. These were accompanied by covering statements from L Belbin, as manager for the project, and M R Thorley, as Chairman of the Joint Committee on Antarctic Data Management (JCADM). The SCAR Executive Committee was disappointed with the reports from JCADM in that they did not address outputs in terms of user requirements but believed, on the basis of M R Thorley's statement, that progress had been made according to the schedule.

2.2 Contract/Payments Status

The Executive Secretary of SCAR reported that the SCAR Executive Committee had decided that the first two instalments should be paid subject to the receipt of a formal invoice. However, he emphasized that, as this was a joint contract on behalf of both SCAR and COMNAP, that no payments would be made without the agreement of COMNAP. He also said that SCAR would stipulate that further payments would be conditional on the receipt of more meaningful reports. It was noted that the reports should describe outputs rather than inputs and that an account of the number of "visits" to the AMD would be a valuable guide to the current usefulness of the Directory.

Both the SCAR and COMNAP Executives agreed that the first two quarters should be paid according to the conditions described above.

2.3 Steering Committee

COMNAP noted the agreement from Tokyo to continue with a steering committee for the contract with two members from each of SCAR and COMNAP with the Chairman of JCADM as an ex-

officio. COMNAP has seen this as a project to be lead by SCAR as it is targeted at delivering a service to the science community, and has been awaiting SCAR appointment of its members to the committee before identifying COMNAP members. A steering committee is necessary because JCADM is a network of NADC managers, and a group including user representation is needed for oversight of the contract. Both SCAR and COMNAP agreed to appoint two members to the Steering Committee under the chairmanship of SCAR.

3. Joint COMNAP/SCAR ATCM/CEP Tasks

3.1 Liability Accident Scenarios

Ms Wratt, reported on the request from the XXIV Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) for COMNAP, in consultation with SCAR, to provide examples of "worst case" and other scenarios of environmental accidents in Antarctica.

Extract from the Draft Final Report of XXIV ATCM

(73) The meeting thanked COMNAP and SCAR for their work and welcomed their offer to continue to provide input to the liability discussions. The Meeting requested COMNAP in consultation with SCAR to provide the following information in respect of national programme operations, for the purpose of establishing limits on financial liability, compensation and insurability:

- (a) "Worst case scenarios" for land-based and sea-based environmental emergencies in the Antarctic Treaty Area including the probability of occurrence and estimated cost for response action;
- (b) For the purposes of illustration, a range of scenarios less than worst case that might result in environmental impacts, including probability of occurrence and estimated cost of the response actions;
- (c) Scenarios similar to those in (a) and (b) for which response action would not be possible.

In considering "worst case scenarios" COMNAP asked SCAR to provide scientific advice in a hypothetical case where rats might invade and breed on an island in the South Shetland Islands. SCAR agreed to do this.

4. SCAR/COMNAP Meetings in Shanghai

4.1 Status of Arrangements

R H Rutford reported that the XXVII SCAR Meeting would be held in the traditional format with one exception. During the first week the existing Working Groups will transform themselves into three Standing Science Groups as the first major step in the re-organization SCAR. The Groups of Specialists will be accommodated within the new Standing Science Groups as appropriate. COMNAP will meet during the first week of the meeting and the two Executive Committees will arrange a joint meeting during that week..

4.2 Is there a need for a Joint Science Workshop?

G S Wratt posed this question. R H Rutford suggested that the restructuring of the current Working Groups at XXVII SCAR would make the scheduling of a joint workshop very difficult. He noted that a half-day symposium on climate change was already planned and that some groups were already planning other small symposia. It was suggested that Exec Secretaries co-ordinate the timing of the climate change workshop and the COMNAP programme for the week to enable COMNAP members to attend the workshop.

5. Subglacial Lakes Exploration

5.1 Amsterdam Workshop

The meeting noted that there would be a half-day workshop on subglacial lakes on 25 August 2001 immediately prior to the SCAR Biology Symposium in Amsterdam, 27—31 August 2001.

5.2 Future Workshops

The meeting noted that the SCAR Group of Specialists on Subglacial Antarctic Lake Exploration (SALE) will hold a formal meeting in Bologna, Italy, 16—18 September 2001. No further workshops were currently planned although there would undoubtedly be more as more data were collected and the science and implementation plans develop.

5.3 COMNAP Role

G S Wratt reported that subglacial lake exploration will continue to be an item for discussion on the COMNAP plenary agenda.

6. SCAR

6.1 Status of Re-structure

R H Rutford reported on the plans for implementing the Operating Group structure at XXVII SCAR. He noted that this would not affect the standard arrangements for the joint meeting of the SCAR and COMNAP Executive Committees.

6.2 Future SCAR—COMNAP Interaction

The meeting agreed that the SCAR Executive Committee would continue to meet in conjunction with the COMNAP Meeting during odd-numbered (non-SCAR) years.

6.3 2004 SCAR and COMNAP Meetings

R H Rutford explained that the XXVIII SCAR Meeting in Germany during 2004 would be separated into a one-week SCAR Science Meeting during June/July followed about 3 months later by the Delegates Meeting at a venue still to be determined. G S Wratt suggested that COMNAP would wish to meet in conjunction with the SCAR Science Meeting. Consideration could be given to having the COMNAP EXCOM at the same time/venue as the SCAR Delegates Meeting.

7. Medical Standards

K Erb noted that it would be helpful if, when an individual from one national programme is accepted into another national programme, the extent of the medical screening that the individual had received could be made available to the host programme.

He explained that the aim was not to standardize medical screening procedures but to circulate details of the medical screening procedures that had been performed. The host programme would then be able to undertake only those additional screening procedures to meet the requirements for screening of its own personnel. There was no intention to compromise medical confidentiality. R H Rutford suggested that the SCAR Working Group on Human Biology and Medicine may have information and experience that would assist COMNAP in this field.

8. Interaction between SCAR, COMNAP & ATCM Secretariat

The meeting agreed that when the ATCM Secretariat is operational it will considerably facilitate interaction for SCAR and COMNAP with the Antarctic Treaty. The meeting agreed that it would be appropriate for both SCAR and COMNAP to write to Argentina offering congratulations on hosting the Secretariat.

R H Rutford reported that the CEP is planning to undertake a rolling review of the Annexes to the Protocol, beginning with Annex II on Conservation of Antarctic Fauna and Flora. He suggested that SCAR and COMNAP should both be involved in this process but that it was not yet clear how and when this would begin.

9. Any other business

There was some discussion on what activities might be promoted to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the International Geophysical Year in 2007—08. It was agreed to investigate what plans ICSU may have. The meeting heard that there is widespread public interest in all matters pertaining to the Antarctic, particularly amongst children.

G S Wratt informed the meeting that the COMNAP TRAINET workshop of national programme training officers held prior to the COMNAP meeting was a useful exercise in comparing training activities between programme. COMNAP is also considering holding an INFONET workshop of national programme information and publicity officers in conjunction with the Shanghai meeting. The possibility of preparing joint SCAR—COMNAP publicity materials was suggested but no decision was made.

10. Close

G S Wratt thanked the members for attending and declared the meeting closed.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AMD	Antarctic Master Directory
ATCM	Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting
CEP	Committee for Environmental Protection
COMNAP	Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programmes
GCMD	Global Change Master Directory
ICSU	International Council for Science
IGY	International Geophysical Year
INFONET	Information and Publicity Officers Network
JCADM	Joint Committee on Antarctic Data Management
SALE	Group of Specialists on Subglacial Antarctic Lake Exploration
SCAR	Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research
TRAINET	Training Officers Network