

# **SCAR *ad hoc* Group on Transition**

## **19th - 21st 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](#)

The Report of the Meeting of the SCAR *ad hoc* Group on Transition held in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 19th - 21st August 2001, is reproduced below. Please note that the practical implementation of the report may involve some changes and refinements to the practices and procedures proposed.

### **SCAR *ad hoc* Group on Transition**

#### **Amsterdam, The Netherlands**

#### **19th - 21st August 2001**

#### **Report of the Meeting**

Present: R H Rutford, A C Rocha-Campos, J Valencia, A D M Walker, C G Rapley, R Schlich, A L Clarke, S H Lee, Y LeMaho, P D Clarkson.

A Meloni and P E O'Brien were unable to attend but submitted written statements.

## **1. Introduction**

The President welcomed everyone to the meeting. He reviewed the situation at XXVI SCAR and the progress that had been made since then to implement the recommendations of the *ad hoc* Group on SCAR Organization and Strategy.

## **2. Recommendations of the *ad hoc* Group on SCAR Organization and Strategy**

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### ***2.1 Recommendation 1: SCAR's mission***

SCAR'S mission remains valid and SCAR continues to play an important role in fostering and coordinating science in Antarctica and in advising the Antarctic Treaty System and other organizations concerned with the Antarctic and Southern Ocean, but SCAR must take a more active and assertive leadership position in all matters related to science in Antarctica.

The *ad hoc* Group on Transition agreed that the mission of SCAR remains the same and may still be encapsulated as "to initiate, promote and coordinate scientific research in Antarctic and to provide scientific advice to the Antarctic Treaty System". The responses to subsequent recommendations fulfil the requirements to take a more active and assertive leadership position.

## **2.2 Recommendation 2: Up-dating SCAR's mission**

SCAR should update its mission in four areas by:

- Increasing emphasis on the scientific capacity of all national groups working in Antarctica and on outreach to younger scientists;
- Taking a more proactive stance with the Antarctic Treaty System in providing the highest level independent advice on scientific aspects of issues affecting the governance and management of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean;
- Taking a more proactive position in the analysis of the impact of global change on the Antarctic region and in the contribution of science in Antarctica to the overall understanding of global change; and,
- Increasing the dissemination of knowledge about Antarctica and about SCAR and its activities to scientists, national leaders, and the public.

The "first area" is reported at 2.9.

For the "second area", the *ad hoc* Group on Transition recognized that there was a need to have a group that would be responsible for coordinating the preparation of papers for submission to the Antarctic Treaty System, in both reactive and proactive modes (Antarctic Treaty Standing Group, see 2.9). It was noted that the procedure for such activity may change when the Antarctic Treaty Secretariat becomes operational in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The key issues that SCAR may be expected to present to an ATCM will include, *inter alia*, international scientific cooperation, global change research and environmental matters.

The *ad hoc* Group on Transition considered that the situation concerning the "third area" of the recommendation would be improved with the restructuring of the SCAR subsidiary groups (see 2.9).

The "fourth area" was more fully considered elsewhere and is reported at 2.10 and 2.15.

## **2.3 Recommendation 3: Activity of SCAR Delegates**

SCAR delegates—at the Delegate level—must become more actively engaged in the management of SCAR at SCAR meetings and also intersessionally

This recommendation was discussed under 2.4

## **2.4 Recommendation 4: SCAR Delegate Committees**

Four delegate-level committees should be established, each chaired by a SCAR vice president, with the following portfolios: Scientific Affairs, Outreach and Education, Scientific Liaison, and Internal Affairs

At XXVI SCAR Delegates agreed that there should be two Delegate Committees. Whereas the principle was agreed, there was some discussion about the actual tasks for each Delegate Committee. The *ad hoc* Group on Transition agreed that these Committees should not have precise terms of reference but that the two Committees should be allocated agenda items by the Executive Committee at least 30 days in advance of the Delegates Meeting.

## **2.5 Recommendation 5: Roles of the SCAR Vice-Presidents**

SCAR vice presidents should have titles corresponding to their portfolios, e.g., Vice President for Scientific Affairs.

The *ad hoc* Group on Transition addressed the matter of whether or not the SCAR Vice-Presidents should be assigned portfolios of responsibilities, how many there should be and what elements should comprise each portfolio. The question was also considered as to whether or not Vice-Presidential elections should be predicated on the portfolios. There was extensive discussion around these matters and the following points were agreed.

1. Vice-Presidents should not be elected to a particular portfolio but should be prepared to be assigned a portfolio.
2. Vice-Presidents will not be assigned titles.
3. Candidates for Vice-President should be asked to confirm that they will have sufficient support from their home institutions and National Committees and that they will commit the time and effort to ensure that they will be able to carry out the duties of their assignments

### ***2.6 Recommendation 6: Role of the SCAR Executive Committee***

The SCAR Executive Committee should be retained. In addition to processing business that comes before it presently, the Executive Committee should act intersessionally on advice or recommendations of the Delegate Committees or refer such recommendations to SCAR's next plenary session.

This recommendation was agreed at XXVI SCAR. The *ad hoc* Group on Transition agreed that there should be no substantial change from the present role of the Executive Committee

### ***2.7 Recommendation 7: Support for SCAR officers***

All SCAR officers are encouraged to seek a greater level of support at their home institutions through a greater level of in-kind and other administrative assistance but SCAR should also increase its budget for these purposes.

This Recommendation was agreed at XXVI SCAR. The *ad hoc* Group on Transition agreed that a letter should be sent to National Committees urging them to provide appropriate support for any of their nationals elected as a SCAR officer. In exceptional circumstances it is recognized that SCAR may assist SCAR officers to attend formal SCAR meetings.

### ***2.8 Recommendation 8: Office of the Past-President of SCAR***

The past president of SCAR should serve ex-officio for one but no more than two years instead of serving a four-year term ex-officio.

The *ad hoc* Group on Transition agreed that the term of office for the Past-President would be for two years in future.

### ***2.9 Recommendation 9: Structure of SCAR sub-groups***

While the scientific-level structure of working groups and groups of specialists has served SCAR effectively in the past, this structure should be replaced by a system of operating groups that can respond quickly and flexibly to emerging scientific opportunities in Antarctica and to changing demands on SCAR.

In future SCAR will operate with the following subsidiary groups (see Appendix 1):

1. Standing Scientific Groups (Geosciences; Life Sciences; Physical Sciences);
2. a small number of Scientific Programme Groups;
3. Standing Committees (Antarctic Treaty; Data; Finance);
4. other special groups to be advised.

The Standing Scientific Groups are disciplinary and report to the SCAR Delegates. They may create Action Groups to undertake disciplinary projects (cf programmes of former Working Groups) or to monitor specific subjects (cf subcommittees of former Working Groups). Action Groups report to their parent Standing Scientific Group. Standing Scientific Groups may also, either singly or jointly with either or both of the other Standing Scientific Groups, propose a Scientific Programme Planning Group to develop a programme for presentation to the SCAR Executive Committee.

The Executive will review the proposals and make recommendations to the SCAR Delegates. If a programme is approved the SCAR Delegates will establish a Scientific Programme Groups with a small membership drawn from the members of the Scientific Programme Planning Groups..

The Executive Committee will determine the work programme of the Standing Committee on the Antarctic Treaty, the Standing Committee on Data, and the Standing Committee on Finance.

Other special groups may be created by the Executive Committee on an *ad hoc* basis as required.

The existing SCAR groups and their associated activities will be initially incorporated into the new group structure. The new Standing Scientific Groups will be required to formulate on-going activities which may or may not incorporate elements of the existing structures.

## ***2.10 Recommendation 10: Circulation of SCAR documents and meeting schedules***

SCAR must adopt practices that create a timely circulation of documents and reports and must plan a meeting schedule that improves its ability to make informed decisions.

A new structure of SCAR meetings will be implemented. The SCAR Delegates Meeting will take place approximately three months after the SCAR Science Meeting that will be held in conjunction/parallel with COMNAP and SCALOP. The objectives of this structure will be:

- To create an open forum to which SCAR scientists will be attracted in order to participate in cooperative scientific activities, such as workshops and symposia, in the fields of interest of the Standing Scientific Groups and the Scientific Programme Groups.
- To focus on one aspect of Antarctic science by organizing a one-day multi-disciplinary Symposium on a topic of special interest. This Symposium will be a flagship activity of the SCAR meeting and is expected to be a vehicle through which scientists can present papers which define the current state of knowledge in a chosen field of multidisciplinary activity, and through which the activities of SCAR can be publicized and brought to the attention of politicians, the media and the public.
- To provide a set of keynote addresses in which scientific matters of strong current interest will be described and reviewed by invited speakers, so that the community can be informed about progress in a wide variety of SCAR scientific activities.
- To provide an opportunity for Standing Scientific Groups and Scientific Programme Groups to hold

business sessions and plan future activities.

- To provide a one month period in which the proposals of Standing Scientific Groups and Scientific Programme Groups can be properly prepared for distribution to National Committees prior to presentation to the SCAR Delegates Meeting.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
Possible extension	Standing Scientific Groups				Standing Scientific Groups	Possible extension
	Scientific and Poster Sessions		Symposium on a Selected Theme	Keynote Address	Business Sessions	
	Workshops					
	Science Planning Sessions				Report Preparation	

Figure 1 Proposed structure of SCAR science meeting

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The SCAR Science Meeting will take place every two years during a one-week period in June or July at a place to be determined by the invitation of the host countries. The SCAR Delegates Meeting will take place approximately three months later in late September or in early October. Chief Officers of Standing Scientific Groups and Scientific Programme Groups will be invited to attend to present their proposals. It will take place over a short time, possibly including a weekend, at a place chosen to minimize the overall cost of attendance. It is expected that Delegates, who will have received the papers in advance, will be well prepared to make decisions over a shorter period of time than is currently needed.

The proposed structure of the week's activities in the SCAR Science Meeting is shown in Figure 1. If Standing Scientific Groups and Scientific Programme Groups need a longer planning period, the sessions may start in the previous week and extend through Monday and Tuesday of the following week.

The increase in size of the SCAR Science Meeting implies that it will need to be funded through registration fees for participants not holding official SCAR positions and by other fund-raising activities.

### ***2.11 Recommendation 11: Efficiency and effectiveness of internal communications***

The Delegate Committee on Internal Affairs must give immediate attention and high priority to the increased efficiency and effectiveness of internal communications in SCAR.

This recommendation was agreed at XXVI SCAR. Most correspondence within SCAR now takes place by e-mail that is undoubtedly the fastest and most efficient means of communication. However, where responses are required, its effectiveness is not necessarily any better than the more traditional means of communication. It was noted that more use is being made of the SCAR website but there

was still considerable scope for expanding this facility. In particular, the Executive Secretary was encouraged to ensure that the current sporadic monthly reports should be regularized as these had been noted to be very helpful to keep readers abreast of developments.

### ***2.12 Recommendation 12: Improvement of external communications***

SCAR must greatly improve its external communications with other scientific organizations, ATS, national committees or other adhering bodies and the public so that science in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean and the activities of SCAR are more widely known.

This recommendation was also agreed at XXVI SCAR and the comments at 2.11 are also applicable here. However, it was also agreed that SCAR should be doing more in terms of publicity. At present no action has been taken on this but the Executive will look further at this.

### ***2.13 Recommendation 13: ad hoc group on the effective use of English***

SCAR should appoint an *ad hoc* group of SCAR Delegates who do not have English as a first language to make recommendations to SCAR to maximise the effective use of English as the SCAR language of record and communication.

The *ad hoc* Group on Transition welcomed a report from J López-Martínez who had offered to organize an e-mail group to address this matter. The report is given in Appendix 2. All participants at SCAR meetings are urged to follow the proposals given in the report and chairmen of SCAR meetings are requested to remind all speakers of these obligations.

### ***2.14 Recommendation 14: Up-grading to a SCAR Executive Office***

The SCAR Secretariat should be upgraded to an Executive Office headed by an Executive Director with duties comparable to Executive Directors of similar international scientific organizations.

The appointment of an Executive Director for SCAR was discussed at length. The draft advertisement for the Executive Director was considered and some suggestions made for minor changes in the text. It was agreed that the position should be advertised as soon as possible so that an appointment might be made early in 2002. However, it was stressed that it was more important to find the right candidate than to make an early appointment and it was accepted that this process might take longer than planned.

### ***2.15 Recommendation 15: Using information technology for better communication***

SCAR must improve its infrastructure and capability to use information technology for internal and external communication.

The SCAR Secretariat will continue to improve its use of appropriate communications technology and will take advice. The President emphasized the practical advantage of continuing to operate the Secretariat e-mail addresses and the SCAR website on separate servers.

### ***2.16 Recommendation 16: Up-grading facilities for the Executive Office***

A more proactive SCAR Executive Office will require larger facilities and upgraded support services.

The meeting examined the draft Memorandum of Understanding between the Scott Polar Research Institute (SPRI) and SCAR. It was agreed that this would provide the enhanced facilities for the SCAR Secretariat necessary for its re-designation as a SCAR Executive Office as envisaged by the

*ad hoc* Group on SCAR Organization and Strategy. The Memorandum proposes to double the current office space.

### ***2.17 Recommendation 17: Expanding financial resources from philanthropic funds***

SCAR should expand its financial resources by actively seeking philanthropic funds for some activities.

There was some discussion on which charitable foundations might be approached for funding activities of SCAR. It was noted that several foundations, particularly in the United States, might support some SCAR meetings, workshops and symposia on specific topics as some had done in the past. It was agreed that this should be a specific task for the Executive Director and should be clearly identified in the job description.

### ***2.18 Recommendation 18: Qualifications of SCAR Delegates***

Recognizing that they must weigh many factors in the selection of SCAR delegates, national Antarctic committees and other bodies adhering to SCAR should appoint delegates with current scientific expertise in Antarctic research.

It was accepted that SCAR could have no control over the individual chosen by a national member to represent it at a SCAR Delegates Meeting. However, the Delegates at XXVI SCAR had endorsed this recommendation and the *ad hoc* Group on Transition suggested that the SCAR Executive should write to National Committees and encourage them to consider how best to implement the recommendation.

### ***2.19 Recommendation 19: Participation of younger scientists***

National Antarctic committees and other bodies adhering to SCAR should continue to give more attention to participation of younger scientists both in research in Antarctica and in SCAR's scientific operating groups.

The *ad hoc* Group on Transition noted that this recommendation had been endorsed by the Delegates at XXVI SCAR and considered ways in which this might be achieved. Apart from encouraging National Committees to send younger scientists to SCAR meetings, it was agreed that SCAR should provide additional incentives such as offering prizes at symposia for best paper and poster presentations by scientists under a certain age. The Executive Secretary was asked to draft some rules for consideration by the Executive.

### ***2.20 Recommendation 20: Amending SCAR Constitution and Rules of Procedure***

In order to proceed expeditiously with the implementation of the changes recommended in this report, SCAR should consider waiving appropriate parts of its present Constitution and Rules of Procedure for two years, during which time the new structure will be put in place. After the structure and procedures evolve, the Constitution and Rules of Procedure should be amended as necessary.

The President recalled that ICSU had agreed to the suspension of parts of the SCAR Constitution and Rules of Procedure during the transition period. He suggested that a draft Constitution could be prepared for consideration at XXVII SCAR. The new draft should, as far as possible, exclude any provisions that should more properly be included in the Rules of Procedure. This would avoid any unnecessary rewriting of the Constitution because that requires ICSU approval, whereas the Rules of Procedure may be altered without reference to ICSU. This would allow the Rules of Procedure to be changed over the next few years as reflected by the evolving practice of implementing the

recommendations of the review.

### 3. Recommendations to National Committees

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The *ad hoc* Group on Transition, noting the recommendations of the *ad hoc* Group on SCAR Organization and Strategy, recommends to the SCAR Executive Committee that a letter should be sent to all National Committees drawing their attention to the recommendations in general and, in particular, urging National Committees:

1. to facilitate the participation of young scientists in SCAR activities;
2. to provide adequate resources and support to enable their representatives to play an active part in SCAR activities, both by attending SCAR meetings and being active intersessionally by correspondence;
3. to be responsive to their nominated representatives' requests for resources and support;
4. to ensure that their representatives to SCAR have appropriate and relevant experience of Antarctic research.

The *ad hoc* Group on Transition, also recommends that the SCAR Executive Committee should prepare a document for circulation to all National Committees and Chief Officers well in advance of XXVII SCAR. This document will give:

1. details of the proposed changes to SCAR meetings;
2. details of the restructuring of the existing SCAR groups into Standing Scientific Groups, Standing Committees and Scientific Programme Groups; and
3. details for phasing in the changes at XXVII SCAR.

### 4. Report of the Meeting

The draft report of the meeting was approved. The final report will be circulated for comment.

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## Appendix 1. Structure of SCAR Groups

The following table and the text below show how the existing Working Groups and Groups of Specialists will be incorporated into the proposed new structure of Standing Scientific Groups, Standing Committees and Scientific Programme Groups.

Standing Science Groups			Standing Committees
GEOSCIENCES	PHYSICAL SCIENCES	LIFE SCIENCES	INFRASTRUCTURE and OUTREACH



ANTEC ANTOSTRAT	Astronomy	Seals Bird Biology	
	Climate Change	Evolutionary Biology	ATS(GEOSEAC)
MAGMAP, BEDMAP	Oceanography	Human Biology	Data (JCADM)
ADD, Place names	AGONET	EVOLANTA	Finance (Finance)
GIANT, AGEANT	READER	EASIZ	
		RiSCC	

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### **Scientific Programme Planning Groups**

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The **Standing Science Groups** comprise the existing Working Groups as follows:

GEOSCIENCES Geodesy and Geographic Information, Geosciences (formerly Geology and Solid-Earth Geophysics)

PHYSICAL SCIENCES Glaciology, Physics and Chemistry of the Atmosphere, Solar-Terrestrial and Astrophysical Research

LIFE SCIENCES Biology, Human Biology and Medicine

The Working Groups will take with them their existing sub-committees and programmes. The current disciplinary Groups of Specialists are also included in the structure above. In addition, under Physical Sciences, three new "sub-committees" are listed as examples of new **Action Groups** that might be established to cater for specific needs.

The **Standing Committees** comprise the current Finance Committee, an equivalent of JCADM and an equivalent or successor to GOSEAC. The last group will advise SCAR on issues for the Antarctic Treaty and much of the time these will likely centre on environmental matters, specifically management plans for protected areas.

A **Scientific Programme Planning Group** will be a temporary group established by one or more **Standing Scientific Groups** to prepare and propose a new SCAR programme to the SCAR Delegates. If the proposal is accepted, the SCAR Executive Committee will appoint a small **Scientific Programme Group** to include members of the **Scientific Programme Planning Group**.

The **Scientific Programme Groups** include the programmes of the current Groups of Specialists although, at present, ANTEC and SALE do not have formal programmes.

The **Standing Scientific Groups** report to the SCAR Delegates. The **Standing Committees** and the **Scientific Programme Groups** report to the SCAR Executive Committee.

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## Appendix 2. Report of the *ad hoc* group on the effective use of English

### *Introduction*

It is accepted that English is the official language for communication within SCAR. However, SCAR is composed by 26 full members and 6 associated members and only 6 have English as a first language. Then, in order to foster better communications, that will result in more effective work and better accomplishment of the SCAR objectives, it is convenient to take measures that help to improve the possibilities of communication and facilitate the active participation of the members in the discussions, specially during the meetings.

The convenience of improving the language communication within SCAR is broadly recognised. The *ad hoc* Group on SCAR Organisation and Strategy recommended to study the ways to maximise the effective use of English as the SCAR language of record and communication (Recommendation 13). During the XXVI SCAR meeting in Tokyo an open-ended *ad hoc* group for this subject was established, working by e-mail and reporting to the SCAR Executive at its next meeting in Amsterdam, August 2001.

To improve the language communication within SCAR, the mentioned open-ended *ad hoc* group proposes the following recommendations:

### *Recognizing*

- that English is the official language for communication within SCAR and that it is important that delegates are relatively fluent in English;
- that 26 countries of the 32 members of SCAR have not English as first language and that those countries support a considerable part of the research currently carried out in Antarctica;
- that for the accomplishment of the SCAR objectives it is convenient to foster as much as possible the active participation in the discussions of the delegates that have not English as a first language, specially during the meetings;
- that the use of English in written documents is not a limitation for communication, nevertheless, it would be convenient to improve the way in which oral English is used during presentations and debates in the meetings.

### *The following measures are recommended*

- During presentations (e.g. reports of sub-committees, working groups, etc.) it is encouraged the distribution and use, as much as possible, of written documents or schemes, blackboard, transparencies and other visual devices as a support.

- Everybody, but specially the native English speakers, will endeavour as far as possible to pronounce clearly and use clear and complete sentences, speaking not too fast and avoiding the use of slang. It is important to bear in mind the characteristics of the audience and the convenience and advantage of being understood by all of them.
- A piece of paper containing a copy of the recommendations for language communication will be included jointly with the documents that are distributed at the start of the SCAR meetings.
- During the meetings chairmen are specially encouraged to adopt themselves the recommended procedures and to remind the speakers to follow the above mentioned measures. They will also endeavour to facilitate the participation in the debates of the delegates that have not English as a first language as well as to introduce the subjects and summarise the discussions and conclusions when necessary.
- The application of the mentioned recommendations must not be a reason for longer and tedious meetings but a way for a more effective and fruitful interaction between the participants.