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## **SCAR Executive Committee Meeting 2023**

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# **UN Decade and Decade Collaborative Centre (DCC)**

### **Report Author(s)**

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### **Summary**

Following the publication of the Southern Ocean Action Plan in April 2022, SCAR has been approved to coordinate the Decade Collaborative Centre for the Southern Ocean Region (DCC-SOR), with the Southern Ocean Task Force acting as the Advisory Board. The DCC-SOR will endeavour to connect Southern Ocean science with global ocean science, reinforcing cooperation and collaborations by Parties and NGO stakeholders between the Antarctic region and adjacent regions, and complementing Article III of the Antarctic Treaty.

### **Recommendations**

Note that while the DCC-SOR aims to be eventually resourced with 1.5 full time equivalent staff (one manager full time and a 50 % time administrative assistant), in the interim it will be supported by the Secretariat along with external support at 20% time. Additional support to achieve the full staffing ambition will need to be secured externally.

## Background and Recent Progress

The initial stage of the Southern Ocean contribution to the [UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development](#) culminated in the publication in April 2022 of the [Southern Ocean Action Plan](#) by the [Southern Ocean Task Force](#), a committee coordinated by SCAR. The Plan aimed to mobilise the Southern Ocean community and inspire all stakeholders to seek engagement and leverage opportunities to deliver innovative solutions that address the Decade goals for the Southern Ocean. This framework provides a roadmap to strengthen links between science, industry and policy, as well as to encourage internationally collaborative activities in order to address existing gaps in our knowledge and data coverage.

SCAR and the Task Force maintained engagement with the UN Decade Coordination Unit (DCU) to establish the best way to promote the aims of the Action Plan within the Decade structure. Following an initial application to become a regional Decade programme, the DCU advised that the formation of a Decade Collaborative Centre (DCC) would be the most appropriate way forward. The DCU provided guidance on the application process and they expedited approval from the Decade Advisory Board.

The main driver behind the decision to become a DCC was that, there were already four UN Ocean Decade endorsed projects that pertain to the Southern Ocean, and other relevant projects being planned, but which were not yet formalised within the UN Ocean Decade context. More widely, at least 29 endorsed actions of the UN Ocean Decade had some connection to the Southern Ocean. However, an overall coordination of these activities was lacking. Through the DCC, SCAR would be able to create an international network for these groups to communicate and collaborate and to integrate with future large-scale projects.

The process of preparing a DCC application included coordinating a webinar, in partnership with the DCU to engage those existing Decade Actions with relevance to the Southern Ocean. During the webinar the DCU provided details on the work of a DCC and SCAR explained why we were well-placed to take on the DCC role for the Southern Ocean.

The DCC application was approved by the UN Decade Advisory Board in June 2023 and announced as the Decade Collaborative Centre for the Southern Ocean Region (DCC-SOR) on World Oceans Day, June 8<sup>th</sup>. The stated goals for the DCC-SOR are to enhance collaboration, promote the effective co-design of science, and optimize the use of resources among the diverse stakeholders. It will also facilitate the creation of synergies and links between existing Southern Ocean Decade Actions, catalyse new actions, and enhance technical and scientific capacity related to the Southern Ocean. The Southern Ocean Task Force will continue as an advisory body for the DCC-SOR.

## Future Work

The DCC-SOR will support future endorsed Decade Actions relating to the Southern Ocean with capacity development, communications, tracking of progress and resource mobilisation. It will also act as a hub for catalysing new partnerships and initiatives as part of the Decade and build on the existing solid foundation of the SO community. In the short term, the next steps for the DCC-SOR involve establishing links with the existing Decade Actions of relevance to the Southern Ocean, and other DCCs and networks within the Decade that can provide synergistic opportunities for the Southern Ocean community (e.g., those focussed on observations and data).

The Decade is planning a major dedicated conference in Barcelona in April 2024 and the DCC-SOR has been invited to participate in one side event based on regional engagement with the Decade. There is also interest in hosting or partnering on other on site or satellite events. These plans will be progressed in the coming months.

In the longer term, expanding the operational reach of the DCC-SOR may include thematic collaboration with the IPY, with the goal of amplifying science outcomes and public awareness about the importance and impact of Southern Ocean science. The IPY will provide an opportunity to ensure that the progress achieved by the UN Ocean Decade is maintained and enhanced further.