



Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research

SCAR Medal for Excellence in Antarctic Research 2020

W. Berry Lyons

Over a long and distinguished career, Dr Berry Lyons has undertaken a range of research that is interdisciplinary and international in scope, based on strong collaborations and partnerships and demonstrating unsurpassed creativity and originality in design and execution. His major contributions were key to connecting Antarctica to global geochemical cycling, demonstrating that geochemical weathering in polar environments occurs at rates equivalent to or greater than those in temperate regions. Previously, this issue was largely ignored because Polar Regions were considered too cold to foster high chemical weathering rates.

His research interests are broad and have crossed scales from the geochemistry of dust particles to contributing to the state of Antarctic and Southern Ocean Climate systems and span the range from lake geochemistry and their environmental history to geochemical hydrogeology and organic carbon in snowfall. These interests are best exemplified by his 26 years of involvement and leadership (serving as lead scientist for 11 years) in the McMurdo Dry Valleys Long Term Ecological Research Program, his research having significantly advanced our understanding of how Antarctic terrestrial landscapes and ecosystems evolved and currently function.

Dr Lyons' impact on his field is exceptional as judged by his commitment to the success and development of colleagues, co-workers, and students, mentoring 20 student graduate theses on Antarctic science topics. He is an excellent public speaker and the knowledge and advancements in science produced by his research have had wide societal impact in terms of policy and public awareness, including serving on the US delegation to the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings. He has also contributed to SCAR's mission and objectives through a broad range of roles and activities including as Chief Officer of the Geosciences Group from 2012 to 2016, and helping to initiate Action Groups on Environmental Contamination in Antarctica and the Pan-Antarctic Observations Network. He served on the Steering Committee of the 2014 SCAR Horizon Scan and for nearly a decade on the SCAR Capacity Building, Education and Training Committee.

Steven L Chown
SCAR President

August 2020