

# **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the International Permafrost Association, the International Arctic Science Committee and the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research**

## ***1 The Parties***

The Parties to this MoU are the International Permafrost Association (IPA), the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC), and the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR).

### **1.1 International Permafrost Association**

The International Permafrost Association (IPA), founded in 1983, has as its objectives to foster the dissemination of knowledge concerning permafrost and to promote cooperation among persons and national or international organizations engaged in scientific investigation and engineering work related to permafrost and seasonally frozen ground. The Association's primary responsibilities are to convene International Permafrost Conferences, undertake special projects such as preparing databases, maps, bibliographies, and glossaries, and coordinate international field programs and networks. Membership is through adhering national or multinational organizations or as Associate Members in countries where no Adhering Body exists. The IPA is governed by an Executive Committee and a Council. The day-to-day operations of IPA are supported by its International Secretariat.

### **1.2 International Arctic Science Committee**

The International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) is an International Scientific Associate of ICSU, and was established in 1990. IASC's main aim is to initiate, develop, and co-ordinate leading edge scientific activity in the Arctic region, and on the role of the Arctic region in the Earth system. It also provides objective and independent scientific advice to the Arctic Council and other organizations on issues of science affecting the management of the Arctic region. The decision-making organs of IASC are the Council and the Executive Committee. The day-to-day operations of IASC are supported by its Secretariat headed by the Executive Secretary. IASC's geographical remit covers the Arctic Ocean and the surrounding landmasses.

### **1.3 Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research**

The Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) is an Interdisciplinary Body of ICSU. It was established in February 1958 to continue the international coordination of Antarctic scientific activities that had begun during the ICSU-led International Geophysical Year of 1957-58. Its main aim is to initiate, develop, and coordinate high quality international scientific research in the Antarctic region, and on the role of the Antarctic region in the Earth system. In addition it provides objective and independent scientific advice to the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings and other organizations on issues of science and conservation affecting the management of Antarctica. The decision-making organs of SCAR are the Meeting of Delegates and the Executive Committee. The day-to-day operations of SCAR are supported by its Secretariat headed by the Executive Director. SCAR's remit covers Antarctica and the surrounding Southern Ocean including the Antarctic Circumpolar Current south of the Subantarctic Front.

## ***2 Rationale for the MoU***

The Parties share common goals of working internationally and across disciplines to increase our understanding of permafrost and Earth's polar regions and their connections to the global system. There are strong grounds for a closer linkage between these three bodies to bring benefits to all parties, not least in an exchange of views and experience on important scientific topics. A link between them at this time is encouraged to ensure that all three communities

together make an integrated and comprehensive contribution to meeting the goals of the International Polar Year (IPY 2007-2009) and developing the IPY legacy.

The three organisations have agreed that a tripartite link between them should be developed by means of this Memorandum of Understanding, which will be signed during the IASC Council Meeting at the Arctic Science Summit Week in Bergen, Norway, on March 27 2009.

The three organisations share a number of common interests and practices, which will make it relatively easy for them to work together, for example in arranging workshops, conferences, and reports on topics of mutual scientific interest, in developing integrated plans for permafrost and polar research as well as the linkages between the inner aspects of polar research, and in providing advice to policy makers.

### ***3 Terms of Agreement***

This MoU identifies a joint commitment to the excellence in the field of permafrost and polar research, to the pursuit of scientific advances, public awareness and advice to policy makers as well as professional development of young researchers.

SCAR, IASC and IPA intend to combine their efforts in permafrost and/or polar activities (to be decided by mutual agreement) so as to raise the level of impact of all three organizations. To facilitate the process, SCAR, IASC and IPA agree:

- i. to invite each other to attend the meetings of their major bodies (SCAR Delegates' Meeting, IASC Council and IPA Council);
- ii. to encourage representation of each organization in their relevant working committees (SCAR Expert Groups, IASC Scientific Standing Committees, IPA Working Groups);
- iii. to encourage appropriate linkages between the relevant existing SCAR, IASC and IPA science projects and to develop joint projects and approaches in appropriate fields;
- iv. to work together in arranging workshops, conferences, and reports on topics of common scientific interest;
- v. to exchange ideas on best practices in data and information management; and to foster involvement of the parties in their respective data management committees;
- vi. to foster and promote integration of observing efforts lead by each organization (SCAR Pan-Antarctic Observing System, IASC Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks, IPA International Network of Permafrost Observatories) by ensuring adequate representation of each party in these entities;
- vii. to exchange members updates, newsletters, publications and advertise each other's newsletters, publications and web sites on their own web sites;
- viii. to develop a combined approach to communicating the relevance of permafrost and polar research to societal issues with the wider community, including providing advice to political entities such as the Arctic Council and Antarctic Treaty bodies; and
- ix. to work together through their respective young researcher organizations to encourage involvement of young researchers to participate in participating in business, strategy, planning, and other meetings and activities.

### ***4 Financial Implications of the Agreement***

Parties to this Agreement will continue to be responsible for the costs of their own activities, but this does not preclude one party meeting or contributing to the occasional or ongoing costs of another if they so wish. Actual financial contributions to the activities and other implications of this MoU will be considered and agreed to by representatives of the Parties as they arise, and may be changed in accordance with the Parties requirements without any effect on the substance of this Agreement.

### ***4 Non-binding Implications of the Agreement***

This agreement is between IPA, IASC, and SCAR. It does not preclude the Parties agreeing to other MoUs with other programs and organizations, or bilaterally between the Parties.

### ***5 Duration, Revision and Termination of this MoU***

This MoU remains in force for 5 years, at which time it will be reviewed for possible extension. No action by any of the parties will result in the cancellation of this MoU. The MoU may be revised at any time by mutual agreement between the Parties. Any of the parties may propose alterations to the MoU. Parties wishing to withdraw from this agreement should do so by a formal letter signed by the President and head organizational manager (i.e. Executive Secretary, Executive Director or Secretariat) of their respective organization.

Signed 27 March 2009

Hans-Wolfgang Hubberten

President, IPA

Kristján Kristjánsson

President, IASC

Mahlon C Kennicutt II

President, SCAR