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Agenda Item: 7.1

Person Responsible: M Reinke

XXXIV SCAR Delegates Meeting

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 29-30 August 2016

Secretariat of the Antarctic Treaty Report to SCAR on the XXXIX Antarctic Treaty Meeting in Santiago, Chile

Executive Summary

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Important Issues:

The XXXIX Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) was held in Santiago, Chile, from 23 May to 1 June 2016. It focused on promoting scientific research and international collaboration; safety and operations in Antarctica; Antarctic inspections; tourism and non-governmental activities in the Antarctic Treaty area; information exchange; management and protection of historic sites; and general matters concerning the operation of the Antarctic Treaty System. The Meeting adopted a set of Measures, Decisions and Resolutions, including the revision of 8 of the 75 Antarctic Specially Protected Areas (ASPAs) and a revised List of Antarctic Historic Sites and Monuments. It commemorated the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty on Environmental Protection and adopted the 'Santiago Declaration' reaffirming the commitment of the Consultative Parties to the protection of the Antarctic environment. China will host ATCM XL in Beijing, tentatively from 15 May 2017.

Report on ATCM XXXIX in Santiago, Chile

The XXXIX Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) was held in Santiago, Chile, from 23 May to 1 June 2016. The Meeting was chaired by Ambassador Alfredo Labbé (Chile).

Over 340 participants from the Antarctic Treaty Parties and international Observers and Experts, attended the Meeting for the purpose of exchanging information, holding consultations and considering and recommending to their Governments measures in furtherance of the principles and objectives of the Treaty.

Discussions in the ATCM focused on the following issues: promoting scientific research and consolidating the culture of international collaboration; safety and operations in Antarctica; Antarctic inspections; tourism and non-governmental activities in the Antarctic Treaty area; information exchange between competent authorities; management and protection of historic sites; and general matters concerning the operation of the Antarctic Treaty System. Education and outreach issues were also discussed.

The Meeting held a Special Working Group to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty on Environmental Protection. This working group had the structure of a symposium, with the participation of 11 panellists, and was aimed at celebrating and discussing achievements in relation to the Environment Protocol's role as the framework for advancing environmental protection in Antarctica and to focus on ensuring that the Protocol was future-proof. Dr Aleks Terauds presented a paper entitled 'Effectiveness of the Protocol - a scientist's perspective' on behalf of SCAR.

The XIX Meeting of the Committee on Environmental Protection (CEP) was held from 23 – 27 May.

The Meeting adopted a set of Measures, Decisions and Resolutions, including the revision of 8 of the 75 Antarctic Specially Protected Areas (ASPAs) and a revised List of Antarctic Historic Sites and Monuments.

The six Decisions were related to: the exchange of information; the Multi-Year Strategic Work Plan; the revised Rules of Procedure for the ATCM; and the situation of the Antarctic Treaty Secretariat, including the procedure for the selection and appointment of the Executive Secretary.

The six Resolutions pertained to: Guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessment in Antarctica; the Code of Conduct for Activity within Terrestrial Geothermal Environments in Antarctica; Site Guidelines for Visitors; the Guide to the Presentation of Working Papers Containing Proposals for Antarctic Specially Protected Areas, Antarctic Specially Managed Areas or Historic Sites and Monuments; the Non-native Species Manual; and, in the context of the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Protocol, the confirmation of the "ongoing commitment to the prohibition on Antarctic mineral resource activities, other than for scientific research; support for the Antarctic Mining Ban".

The ATCM adopted the Santiago Declaration on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty. The declaration reaffirms the commitment of the Consultative Parties to the protection of the Antarctic environment and its associated and dependent ecosystems.

The Meeting took note of the SCAR Report. SCAR highlighted its activities, including participation in the COMNAP Antarctic Roadmap Challenges project in 2015. It presented the development of the SCAR *Code of Conduct for Activity in Terrestrial Geothermal Areas in Antarctica*; the awarding of several fellowships, including the 2015 Tinker-Muse Prize to Dr Valérie Masson-Delmotte of France; and the update of the Antarctic Climate Change and the Environment Report. SCAR provided a progress report regarding geoconservation in advance of a full report on this issue to be presented to the CEP in 2018. It also noted that Dr Jenny Baeseman had been appointed as the new SCAR Executive Director.

The Meeting received the SCAR lecture 'Exploring the future of scientific research in Antarctica' presented by Jerónimo López-Martínez, President of SCAR, explaining the results of the SCAR

Antarctic and Southern Ocean Science Horizon Scan and the COMNAP Antarctic Roadmap Challenges Project, and highlighting the importance of the SCAR-COMNAP relationship.

Specific reference to SCAR in the Final Report

ATCM Item 5: Report of the Committee for Environmental Protection

Operation of the CEP (CEP Agenda Item 4)

The Chair of the CEP reported that the Committee had considered a paper by Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, SCAR, Spain and the United States, which reported on the operation of the Antarctic Environments Portal. The Committee reaffirmed the importance of the development of the Portal as a reliable, unbiased information source, to be used on a voluntary basis, to support its discussions. Reflecting on the importance of science based policy in the Antarctic area, the Meeting expressed support for the development of the Antarctic Environments Portal, and hoped the Portal would be a vehicle to enhance cooperation between the CEP and ATCM. The Meeting welcomed the growing contributions from scientists and the CEP, and the role of the Antarctic Environments Portal in supporting the CEP to perform its key function to provide advice on the implementation of the Environment Protocol.

Cooperation with other Organisations (CEP Agenda Item 5)

The CEP recognised the importance of monitoring progress on implementation of the Joint CEP/SC-CAMLR workshop on Climate Change and Monitoring workshop recommendations, and welcomed SCAR's advice that work was already underway or planned in the near future consistent with the priorities in the Climate Change Response Work Programme (CCRWP). Noting that the ATCM Multi-Year Strategic Work Plan prioritised consideration of the workshop's outcomes, the Committee had agreed to advise the ATCM that it had welcomed the report of the Joint CEP/SC-CAMLR Workshop on Climate Change and Monitoring and had endorsed its recommendations. Some Parties stressed the importance of climate change research and monitoring through SCAR, Integrating Climate and Ecosystem Dynamics (ICED) and Southern Ocean Observing System (SOOS) as reflected in the CEP Report, and noted that it would be useful to provide resources to these programmes to support the shared objectives of the CEP and SC-CAMLR. The Meeting noted that it was a good example of the value of cooperation between different components of the Antarctic Treaty System, and highlighted the utility of integrating the significant and valuable scientific monitoring work of SCAR and other specialist bodies into the work of the Antarctic Treaty System.

Climate Change Implications for the Environment: Strategic approach (CEP Agenda Item 7) Implementation and Review of the Climate Change Response Work Programme (CCWRP)

The Chair of the CEP reported that the Committee had updated the CCRWP. It had welcomed the offers by SCAR and WMO to provide reports to CEP XX on their research and monitoring activities relevant to the CCRWP, and agreed to request relevant external programmes including the SOOS and ICED to provide similar information about how their activities could contribute.

Noting the ATCM's request in Resolution 4 (2015) to receive annual updates on implementation of the CCRWP, the Committee had agreed to advise the ATCM that steps were already being taken to address several tasks/actions identified in the CCRWP for 2016, and that it had agreed to encourage national Antarctic programmes, SCAR, WMO, and relevant external expert organisations to support and facilitate the research and monitoring activities identified in the CCRWP. The Meeting commended the CEP's focus on the CCRWP, and encouraged the CEP to continue its work on innovative mechanisms to implement the work programme. The Meeting agreed to consider the progress against the CCRWP annually and to add this item to its Multi-Year Strategic Work Plan. The Meeting supported the CEP's efforts to encourage national Antarctic programmes, the WMO and other experts to support and facilitate monitoring activities identified in the CCRWP.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) (CEP Agenda Item 8)

Draft Comprehensive Environmental Evaluations

The Chair of the CEP reported that the Committee had considered several papers containing information relevant to understanding and managing the environmental aspects of the use of

unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in Antarctica. The Committee looked forward to receiving a summary of the state of knowledge regarding the impacts of UAVs on wildlife from SCAR at CEP XX. The Committee had also recognised the need to develop guidance on the environmental aspects of UAVs, and would initiate at CEP XX work to develop such guidance. The Meeting thanked the CEP for its advice on UAVs, welcomed COMNAP's guidelines and looked forward to SCAR's advice to help the Parties take advantage of a useful technology in a safe and environmentally sound manner.

Area Protection and Management Plans (CEP Agenda Item 9)

Other Annex V Matters

The Chair of the CEP noted that the Committee had considered a paper by SCAR presenting the SCAR *Code of Conduct for Activity within Terrestrial Geothermal Environments in Antarctica*, and recognised the value of the Code of Conduct for supporting the planning and conduct of activities in terrestrial geothermal areas to minimise risks to the high scientific and environmental values of such areas. Accepting the CEP's advice, the Meeting adopted Resolution 3 (2016) *Code of Conduct for Activity within Terrestrial Geothermal Environments in Antarctica*. The Meeting congratulated SCAR for its work on the Code of Conduct.

ATCM Item 12: Multi-Year Strategic Work Plan

The Meeting agreed to insert *inter alia* the following new priority items related to SCAR and COMNAP activities in the Multi-Year Strategic Work Plan:

- the implementation of the CEP's Climate Change Response Work Programme (CCRWP);
- modernisation of Antarctic stations in the context of climate change (with additional advice provided by COMNAP; and
- hydrographic surveying in Antarctica.

The Meeting also agreed to continue work on maritime and aviation safety.

ATCM Item 14: Inspections under the Antarctic Treaty and the Environment Protocol

The Meeting reaffirmed that inspections in Antarctica are a valuable aspect of the Antarctic Treaty System. Parties noted that inspections and their subsequent recommendations were worthwhile and useful in improving facilities and procedures as well as compliance with the Protocol's environmental provisions at Antarctic stations.

The Meeting agreed to establish an ICG to consider the practice of conducting inspections under the Antarctic Treaty and the Environment Protocol. It was agreed that Observers and Experts participating in the ATCM would be invited to provide input.

ATCM Item 15: Science Issues, Scientific Cooperation and Facilitation

The Meeting took note of the outcomes of COMNAP's Antarctic Roadmap Challenges (ARC) Project, which provided a summary of the critical technologies, infrastructure and access requirements in order to support future Antarctic research, such as that identified in the SCAR Horizon Scan project. SCAR congratulated COMNAP for undertaking and leading this very important initiative.

SCAR presented its "Report on the 2015-2016 activities of the Southern Ocean Observing System (SOOS)", which reported on the SOOS Five-Year Implementation Plan and provided some key milestones and activities conducted during the 2015/16 period. SCAR thanked Australia for its support in hosting the SOOS secretariat.

WMO presented "The Antarctic Observing Network (AntON)" to facilitate weather and climate information, with a paper prepared jointly with SCAR. The Meeting thanked WMO for its suite of papers and welcomed the contributions. Parties were reminded to supply weather and climate information to WMO collaborations wherever possible.

ATCM Item 16: Implications of Climate Change for Management of the Antarctic Treaty Area

SCAR presented its paper “Antarctic Climate Change and the Environment 2016 Update”. In addition to reporting on the physical effects of climate change on the environment, the update also detailed research on the biological and ecological impacts of these changes. The document built on the material in the Antarctic Climate Change and the Environment (ACCE) report, which was published by SCAR in 2009, with an update of the key points appearing in 2013 and annual updates provided to the ATCM. IPCC presented “Recent Findings of IPCC on Antarctic Climate Change and Relevant Upcoming Activities”. This paper reported on the Contribution of Working Group I to the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) of the IPCC. WMO presented its paper “WMO Climate-related Activities in the Antarctic Region”. Parties thanked SCAR, IPCC and WMO for their contributions, and noted the importance of scientific reporting to the Meeting. It was noted that scientific reporting should be tailored to policy makers.

ATCM Item 19: Preparation of the 40th Meeting

The Meeting welcomed the kind invitation of the Government of China to host ATCM XL in Beijing, tentatively from 15 May 2017. For future planning, the Meeting took note of the following likely timetable of upcoming ATCMs:

- 2018 Ecuador
- 2019 Czech Republic.

The Meeting decided to invite SCAR to give another lecture on scientific issues relevant to ATCM XL taking into account the valuable series of lectures presented by SCAR at former ATCMs.

Recommendations/Actions and Justification:

None.

Budget Implications:

None.