



WP 23a

Agenda Item: 7.2

Person Responsible: A Terauds

XXXIV SCAR Delegates Meeting

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 29-30 August 2016

Standing Committee on the Antarctic Treaty System (SCATS)

Annual Report

Executive Summary

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Important Issues or Factors:

Since the last Delegates Meeting, the SCAR Standing Committee on the Antarctic Treaty System (SC-ATS) continued to engage in a diverse range of international activities that enhanced SCAR's reputation as a provider of independent and scientific advice to the Antarctic Treaty System and as a leader in Antarctic science. These activities have included active participation in two CEP/ATCM meetings, the development and participation in the Monaco Assessment meeting and associated outputs, the development of the Antarctic Conservation Strategy for the 21st Century, maintaining a key role in the Antarctic Environments Portal, and direct involvement in a diverse range of research projects.

Recommendations and Justification:

SC-ATS continues to be a dynamic and productive Standing Committee that plays a fundamental role in SCAR's mission to promote, facilitate, and deliver scientific excellence and evidence-based policy advice on globally significant issues that are relevant to Antarctica. On this basis we recommend that the Delegates note and approve of the actions to date, and support future initiatives.

Budget Implications:

We ask that SC-ATS continues to be funded at \$20K per annum + support for CEP/ATCM Travel

Introduction

The Standing Committee on the Antarctic Treaty System (SC-ATS) is the body tasked with developing SCAR's scientific advice to the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) and its Committee on Environmental Protection (CEP), the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), and the Advisory Committee to the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP).

SC-ATS has a diverse membership that includes a representative of each Standing Scientific Group. The most recent addition to the group was Dr. Tom Bracegirdle, who not only represents the Standing Scientific Group on Physical Sciences (SSG-PS), but also provides a strong link to the SCAR Scientific Research Programme (AntClim²¹) through his leadership role in that group. Other new members since the last SCAR Delegates Meeting include Dr. Daniella Liggett (Humanities and Social Sciences Expert Group), Prof. Akinori Takahashi (Ant-ERA), and Dr. Yan Ropert-Coudert (SSG-Life Sciences, Expert Group on Birds and Marine Mammals). The term of the current representative of SSG,- Geosciences Dr. Phil O'Brien will come to an end at this Delegates Meeting, and discussions are currently underway on potential candidates to take his place.

Key Activities

The Monaco Assessment

In June 2015, SCAR, in partnership with the government of the Principality of Monaco, and several other supporters, held a meeting of biodiversity, legal and policy experts to assess Antarctic and Southern Ocean biodiversity and its conservation status in the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity's Strategic Plan on Biodiversity 2011 to 2020. To date, Antarctica and the Southern Ocean have not been adequately represented in these types of global biodiversity assessments. The meeting considered the current status of biodiversity conservation in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, available evidence for this status, and both their trajectory and evidence for this trajectory, in the context of each of the 20 Aichi Targets of the Strategic Plan on Biodiversity 2011 to 2020. The meeting recognized that for some areas of conservation, in the context of these Aichi Targets, Antarctica and the Southern Ocean are in a leading position globally. The meeting also recognized that some of the Aichi Targets provide no applicable context for conservation in the Antarctic region. The meeting concluded that it is essential to ensure that Antarctica and the Southern Ocean are fully represented when a report on the state of global biodiversity is presented at the end of the decade.

XXXVIII ATCM and CEP XVIII, Sofia, Bulgaria 1-10 June 2015

SCAR submitted two Working Paper (WPs), six Information Papers (IPs) and three Background Papers (BPs) to CEP XVIII, some of which were also presented to the ATCM. Two of these papers were submitted jointly with Treaty Parties. The SCAR Lecture, given by Richard Bellerby was on "Southern Ocean Acidification". Leading up to the ATCM, SCAR also provided input to intersessional groups such as the contact group on climate change. SCAR scientists also provided feedback into the drafting of guidelines for activities in terrestrial geothermal areas. SCAR also agreed to review the draft code of conduct for activities in geothermal areas and submit a final version to CEP XIX (2016) for consideration. SCAR also agreed to assist with the review of the Non-native Species Manual. SCAR (through the Action Group on Geological Heritage and Geoconservation) will consider matters relating to the scientific understanding of fossils as part of the groups broader work and SCAR will provide advice to CEP XXI (2018).

XXXIX ATCM and CEP XXIX, Santiago, Chile, 23 June – 1 July 2016 (see WP 24 for full report)

SCAR submitted two Working Papers (WPs), six Information Papers (IPs) and two Background Papers (BPs) to CEP XIX, some of which were also presented to the ATCM. One of these WPs was

the SCAR Code of Conduct for Activity in Terrestrial Geothermal Environments in Antarctica, which was endorsed by means of Resolution by the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties. The SCAR Lecture, given by SCAR President Jerónimo López-Martínez, was on 'Exploring the future of scientific research in Antarctica', and was very well received by the Delegates. SCAR also provided input to intersessional groups, including the review of the Non-native Species Manual and the Climate Change Response Works Program. SCAR was represented at the joint CEP/SC-CAMLR Workshop on Climate Change and Monitoring in Punta Arenas (see IP 17 for more detail) and participated in the 25th Anniversary of the Protocol Symposium through a presentation by Aleks Terauds on 'The impact of the Protocol from a scientist perspective'.

SCAR-CCAMLR Engagement

SCAR, through the Standing Committee on the Antarctic Treaty System (SC-ATS), has been actively engaging with a range of CCAMLR stakeholders over the last 18 months. This has taken the form of discussion with the CCAMLR Science Manager (Keith Reid) and key SC-CAMLR participants. These discussions focussed on existing and potential SCAR- CCAMLR engagement, and in particular how relevant SCAR science could be effectively transmitted into appropriate CCAMLR fora. They highlighted that in some areas SCAR is already communicating effectively with CCAMLR, through co-sponsored programmes such as the Integrated Climate and Ecosystem Dynamic in the Southern Ocean (ICED) and the Southern Ocean Observing System (SOOS). It also became clear that SCAR could improve its engagement with respect to other scientific areas. SCARs role in the provision of climate related science to both CCAMLR and the CEP was addressed in detail at the joint CEP/SC-CAMLR workshop that was held in Punta Arenas on the 19-20 May 2016 (see also IP 17).

Antarctic Environments Portal

SCAR is committed to assisting the Antarctic Environments Portal maintain its primary aim of providing objective and independent policy-ready science to the CEP Members and other interested parties. The SC-ATS Chief Officer's role in this process has recently been formalized within the Portal structure, and is reflected by the title of Deputy Editor. In this role, Dr. Aleks Terauds liaises closely with Editor David Walton, and the rest of the Editorial Board, to ensure that the editorial processes are maintained at the highest standards. SC-ATS will also continue to assist with content development.

Future Plans

Over the next 12 months SC-ATS will have a focus on fulfilling the commitments and agreements that are currently in place with regard to the XXXX ATCM and XXX CEP in 2017 (See WP 24).

SC-ATS is also currently in discussion with interested stakeholders regarding the potential for a follow up workshop based on the results of the Monaco Assessment Workshop, with a focus on implementation of some of the key findings from this workshop and the subsequent analysis.

SC-ATS maintains a strong focus on informing the evidence-base for area protection in Antarctica, and to this end will support a workshop in the margins of the SCAR Biology Symposium in Brussels, 2017. This workshop will bring together scientists, managers and policy makers from all over the world, to assess and prioritize threat management options in terrestrial Antarctica. Our aim is to significantly progress efforts to clarify conservation and management actions in the region and to ensure that resources are directed in the most efficient manner. A prioritisation exercise of this nature has not yet been conducted for Antarctica, and in this context the outcomes of this workshop will likely be viewed with significant interest by both managers and policy makers.

SC-ATS will continue to work with the CCAMLR Science Manager and key SC-CAMLR participants to maintain and develop strong and effective engagement between the two organisations, particularly with regard to the provision of relevant SCAR science.

Recommendations

SC-ATS continues to be a dynamic and productive Standing Committee that plays a fundamental role in SCAR's mission to promote, facilitate, and deliver scientific excellence and evidence-based policy advice on globally significant issues that are relevant to Antarctica. On this basis we recommend that the Delegates note and approve of the actions to date, and support future initiatives.