

Report of the 2023 meeting of SCAR-SCAGI

Online using Zoom – Thursday 17th August 2023

Attendees

- Antonie Haas - Germany
- Abí Espinoza Ramírez - Ecuador
- Alexey Trifonov - Russia
- Andrew Fleming - UK
- Andrey Mukhin - Russia
- Antonina Grishenina - Russia
- Asparuh Kamburov - Bulgaria
- Ayşe Giz Gülnerman Gengeç - Turkey
- Catherine Ritz - France
- Cole Kelleher - USA
- Dolores Puente - Argentina
- Li Fei – China (Co-Chair)
- Feng Xiao - China
- Graeme Blick – New Zealand
- Gregorio Diaz - Argentina
- Juan Pablo
- Lianwei Zhang
- Liezel Rudolph – South Africa
- Louise Ireland – UK (Co-Chair)
- Lyubomir Ivanov – Bulgaria
- Jorge Cortes Ramos - Mexico
- Miagros Hansen
- Miguel Rubio - Mexico
- Pablo Fontana - Argentina
- Silva Vargas Villca
- Silvina Torres
- Songtao Ai - China
- Ursula Harris - Australia
- Usuario de Zoom
- Victor Ayala - Argentina
- Wendy Shaw – New Zealand
- Yngve Melvær - Norway
- Yuichi Aoyama – Japan

The Meeting was chaired by Li Fei and Louise Ireland as Co-Chairs of SCAGI and included 15 items as follows:

1) Welcome and Introductions

Li Fei opened the meeting, introduced the meeting participants and gave an overview of the agenda.

2) Review of minutes of last meeting, October 2022

The minutes of the last meeting were approved. Li Fei outlined the main activities of SCAGI since October 2022.

1. 24 members from 22 countries attended the 2022 SCAGI meeting. 10 National reports were presented at the 2022 SCAGI meeting, and discussions around SCAGI's products were raised.
2. In May 2023, Cole Kelleher attended the 3rd session of UNGEGN (United National Group of Experts on Geographic Names) on behalf of SCAGI and SCAR, and the International Principles and Procedures for Antarctic Place Naming was presented.
3. The Antarctic Digital Database coastline has been updated twice.
4. Up to July 2023, the number of place name in the Composite Gazetteer of Antarctica is 39142, with 5 new names from the UK, and 1 name removed by Bulgaria.
5. A report has been drafted for submission to the SCAR Executive Committee in September 2023.

The action grid from the last meeting was reviewed, and Louise Ireland advised that the actions listed would be covered within the remaining agenda items. Please refer to the progress on actions grid attached.

3) SCAGI membership

Li Fei reported that SCAGI now has 49 members from 31 countries. There had been 5 members leaving SCAGI, and 6 new members. New members were as follows:

- Victor Manual Ayala (Argentina)
- Abí Espinoza Ramírez (Ecuador)
- David de Sousa (France)
- Laetitia Therond (France)
- Miguel Rubio (Mexico)
- Antonina Grishenina (Russia)

Action: All to review the membership list on the SCAGI website and inform Louise Ireland of any changes.

4) SCAGI Budget

Li Fei presenting the paper outlining details of the SCAGI budget. He advised that SCAGI always request a budget of \$10,000 (USD). The proposed use of these funds for 2021-2024, reported to SCAR in 2022 was to provide support to early career researchers, support of researchers from countries with developing Antarctic programmes, and conference expense.

The budget for 2023 was \$6893, consisting of \$4000 budget allocation, and \$2893 carried over from 2022. Total expenditure to date was \$2843.89, used by Cole Kelleher for attendance at the UNGEGN meeting in May 2023.

Li Fei suggested that next year's budget could be used to support attendance at an in-person SCAGI meeting to take place at the SCAR Open Science Conference in Chile, 2024.

Members were invited to give their suggestions for any use of SCAGI funds for the remainder of this year, and in the future.

5) National Reports

Li Fei thanks members for circulated their National Reports prior to the meeting and invited attendees to present their reports to the group should they wish.

The following members presented their reports. Only discussion and action points have been recorded as part of the minutes.

- Gregorio Diaz: Argentina
 - Ursula Harris: Australia
 - Asparuh Kamburov: Bulgaria
 - Songtao Ai: China
 - Abí Espinoza Ramírez: Ecuador
- Ursula Harris asked if an English version of the Object Catalogue could be shared, so she could see how they had implemented the ISO 19110:2005 and 19126:2009.

Action: Abí Espinoza Ramírez to share object catalogue schema in English with Ursula Harris.

- **Antonie Haas: Germany**
Andrew Fleming asked if any statistics were available on use of the Sea Ice Portal. Antonie did not have these available, but said she could send these to Andrew after the meeting.

Action: Antonie Haas to forward usage statistics of the Sea Ice Portal to Andrew Fleming.

- **Wendy Shaw: New Zealand**
Louise Ireland asked if the base mapping that New Zealand were working on would be available as web services for others to use. Wendy advised that they are all available through the LINZ Data Service, but to note that the projection they use is not likely to be suitable for everyone. Graeme Blick offered to send the details of the projection to Louise.

Action: Graeme Blick to send details of New Zealand basemap datum to Louise Ireland.

- **Ayşe Giz Gülnerman Gengeç: Turkey**
Louise Ireland asked whether initial results were available for the project outlined in the report, which looked at automated detection of sea ice and land ice from remote sensing imagery. Giz advised the project had only just started and results would likely be available in about a years time.
- **Andrew Fleming: UK**
Wendy Shaw asked whether the UK might be able to provide QGIS training for New Zealand. Andrew responded positively.

Action: Andrew Fleming and Louise Ireland to follow up with Wendy Shaw after the meeting.

- **Cole Kelleher: USA**
Based on the great progress the USA had made to improve place names data, and their plans to align this with the SCAR CGA, Andrew Fleming asked Cole for an update on the current situation was regarding the update of place names in Google. Cole noted he had spoken with Google, and reported that they were aware of the limitations with the CGA. Ursula Harris was keen to ensure names from all Nations were used to update the Google place names, and SCAGI should reach agreement where possible on which names to use.
- **Alexey Trigonov: Russia**
Ursula Harris asked if it would be possible for Russian place names to be translated in to English following UNGEGN guidance, and put forward for

inclusion in the SCAR CGA. She noted that Australia had adopted some Russian names in East Antarctica, and she was keen they got the translations correct. Alexey advised that the inclusion of their names in the CGA was planned.

- Liezel Rudolph: South Africa

6) SCAGI Products

a) Map Catalogue: Ursula Harris

Ursula updated the group on the progress with the redevelopment of the Map Catalogue. She noted that this work had been delayed, but would soon begin. She also urged members to submit their maps for inclusion in the catalogue, noting the range of new maps highlighted in the National Reports that had not yet been submitted. She stressed that the catalogue simply provides a link to the source repository of a map.

Action: ALL to submit their maps for inclusion in the SCAR Map Catalogue

b) Feature Catalogue: Ursula Harris

Ursula noted the feature catalogue would also soon be redeveloped, and that there had been discussions with Louise Ireland about using the Feature Catalogue for the Antarctic Digital Database data. She proposed those in SCAGI interested in the feature catalogue and it's application should meet as a working group in the near future. She suggested Ecuador, UK and others might be interested in this. Wendy Shaw (New Zealand) also indicated she would be keen to join this too.

Action:

- Ursula Harris to arrange a meeting to discuss the redevelopment and implementation of the SCAR Feature Catalogue,
- ALL to contact Ursula Harris to indicate their interested in joining discussions.

c) Composite Gazetteer of Antarctica (CGA): Ursula Harris

As Italy was not represented at the meeting, Ursula Harris gave a brief update on the CGA from the Australian perspective, of hosting the database.

- She noted that whilst the official geometry definition for a place name is a point, there had been some work to support the use of polygons within the CGA, which is useful for searching for example.
- Ursula also noted the new CGA would include the functionality to search by theme, and as such asked Andrew Fleming for further details on the theme information the UK had presented in their National Report.

- Following up on the National Report of China which highlighted new sub-glacial feature naming, Ursula was keen to discuss further sub-glacial features and their inclusion in the CGA.
- New members were encouraged to study the International Principles and Procedures for Antarctic Place Names.

Action: Andrew Fleming to forward UK name theme information and web map to Ursula.

d) Antarctic Digital Database (ADD): Louise Ireland

Louise Ireland presented a short report on the past year of progress concerning the ADD.

- There had been two data updates since the last SCAGI meeting, v7.6 in November 2022, and v7.7 in May 2023. These updates had focussed on the coastline dataset, with the aim to capture major changes to ice coastlines
- Other datasets (rock, moraine, lakes) had not been updated for some years and will require input from SCAGI members.
- Discussed have begun with Australia regarding use of the feature catalogue
- Work is ongoing to develop automated change detection algorithm to provide alerts to significant changes to the ice coastline, to ensure these are not missed at the bi-yearly data update.
- Release of REMA v2.0 will allow update of the contour dataset. There are discussions in SCAGI relating to the creation of contours from REMA v2.0 for the Air Operations Planning Maps (see item 6e), and this could be done in parallel with an update to contours in metres for the ADD.
- Work was ongoing to publish all previous versions of the ADD coastline and provide data downloads.
- SCAGI members were encouraged to send their data for inclusion in the ADD. A few members came forward at the meeting. Wendy Shaw noted New Zealand could contribute rock data, and Ayşe Giz Gülnerman advised Turkey may be able to provide data from Lidar surveys.

Action: Louise Ireland to follow up with members directly to encourage data submissions to the Antarctic Digital Database.

e) Air Operation Planning Maps series: Louise Ireland

Louise outlined details and the background to the Air Operations Planning Maps Series, for the benefit of new members. The main point noted was the action from the previous SCAGI meeting, to hold a workshop for those involved in the

map series to discuss a range of matters relating to the continuation, and development of the map series. These were:

- Discussion on whether the map series should be added to AFIM
- Planning to ensure sustainability of map series
- Review of cartographic specification to ensure it is fit for purpose
- Update of the maps to incorporate new elevation data from REMA v2.0
- Discussion whether to include derived map series contours in feet in the Antarctic Digital Database.

Louise then invited others involved in the map series for comment or any additional points of note.

- Cole Kelleher advised the CONMAP facilities data included aircraft facilities but not helicopter ones. He asked if it was worth liaising with CONMAP to determine if these could be included.
- Ursula Harris wanted to add another point for discussion at the workshop, which was to look at the distribution of maps, and the inconsistency that some were grid north, whilst others were true north.

Action:

- Cole Kelleher to liaise with CONMAP over inclusion of helicopter facilities in their dataset.
- Louise Ireland to organise a Map Series workshop for early 2024, to include all discussion items noted above.

7) Working Group on Place Names

a) UNGEGN endorsement of SCAR International Principles and Procedures on Antarctic Place Names

Cole Kelleher updated the group on his recent work to present the International Principles and Procedures for Antarctic Place Naming at the 3rd Session of UNGEGN. He reported that UNGEGN were invited to refer to the principles and procedures, which was well received. Cole highlighted the great work conducted by current and previous members of SCAGI, in leading the report.

The report can be accessed here: <https://www.scar.org/scar-library/reports-and-bulletins/scar-reports/5729-scar-report-41/>

b) Designation of official SCAR-SCAGI liaison to UNGEGN.

Cole Kelleher noted that there was a call for an official SCAR liaison to UNGEGN. Ursula Harris expressed her desire to take on the role, but as she was unable to travel, it may not be optimal feasible for her to do so. Cole Kelleher therefore

offered. The group felt Cole would be a great person to undertake the duties and Wendy Shaw advised Cole to notify UNGEGN directly.

Action: Cole Kelleher to provide official notification to UNGEGN of his role as SCAR liaison.

8) Designation of official SCAR-SCAGI liaison to ISO TC211

Cole Kelleher advised the group there was an opportunity to put forward a SCAR representative to ISO TC211. Louise Ireland asked if there had been a liaison previously. Andrew Fleming asked whether we could get a better idea of the level of commitment required for the role. Within no immediate volunteers, the group were advised to think about this and in the meantime, Cole would provide further details if possible.

Action:

- Cole Kelleher to find out more details on this role to feed back to the group
- All members to consider the opportunity to represent SCAR on the TC211 group

9) Communications

a) Website

Louise Ireland thanked members for notifying her of membership changes. All changes she had received have been reflected in the members page of the website. She encouraged members to review the product pages to see if any information needed updating. Finally, she highlighted the News page, which has not been very active over the previous few years. She said she would aim to provide news items for Antarctic Digital Database updates in the future, and asked for other news items to be shared as appropriate. It was suggested to post a news item about the presentation of the International Principles and Practise of Antarctic Place Naming at the UNGEGN session.

Action:

- Cole Kelleher to draft a news item for the website on UNGEGN meeting
- Wendy Shaw to forward her poster on the report to Cole to help with formulating the news item.

b) Instant messaging for SCAGI using Slack

Louise Ireland advised she had sent all members an invitation to join the SCAGI Slack group and the purpose for setting it up. The idea for setting this up came about as a way to ensure SCAGI could communicate more readily, outside the annual meetings schedule. She suggested members would be able to post recent updates of their work and talk to each other to explore ways to collaborate and help each other, and to generally improve communications for the group. She

stressed that communications for meeting arrangements would still take place over email, particularly whilst not everyone has joined Slack. The success of the Slack group would rely on members willingness to sign up and take part in conversation outside the meetings.

Cole Kelleher highlighted that he thought it was a great idea. Andrew Fleming noted that in other groups he was a part of they sometimes have an 'Outputs' or 'Results' channel where members posted recent pieces of work they wanted to highlight, which he suggested might be a good idea for SCAGI.

Action:

- Louise Ireland to resent email invites to all members to encourage sign up,
- Louise Ireland to set up a 'Outputs' channel.

10) Update on plans for International Polar Year (IPY) 2032-2033

Louise Ireland advised that SCAGI had been invited to input to the next International Polar Year (IPY) planning meetings. Therefore, she had attended the first of these meetings in June. She reported that the current focus was on authoring a concept note which would be released to the community later this year.

She asked for any SCAGI members to come forward if they wanted to be actively involved in the planning of the IPY, as there had been calls for more Antarctic representation on the committee.

It was also highlighted that there would soon be discussions around ideas for IPY projects, so it is a good time for SCAGI members to consider potential ideas the group could propose for projects.

Action:

- All members to consider if they wished to become more involved in the planning of the next IPY, and to contact Louise Ireland to be put forward.
- Louise Ireland to highlight the concept note when it is published and request SCAGI members to begin thinking of potential project ideas.

11) Horizon Scan

a) Continuation of discussion from SCAGI meeting October 2022.

Songtao Ai was invited to reopen the discussions from the previous meeting. He outlined the concept to bring together a range of datasets in a common web GIS portal, demonstrating the PolarGo platform to illustrate his points he noted that these platforms allow non-professional users to interact with the data. He emphasised the aspiration to include more near-real time datasets and automation.

Wendy Shaw agreed visualisation of the data was very important for wider engagement and the idea Songtao had proposed was good and ambitious. She added there would be many considerations if SCAGI were to progress with representing a lot of data in one platform, for example where it would be hosted, and who pays for it's development, and maintenance. She noted that New Zealand use a platform called Koordinates, which publishes geographic datasets as OGC standards, and allows users to download data in a range of formats. She advised that this requires a lot of effort and investment to set up and maintain.

Andrew Fleming agreed that automation was very important, and that offering web services in standard formats would be the basis for enabling integration and for any number of portals to use geographic data in map-based visualisations.

Given the aspiration to enable more sharing of geographic data through visualisation portals it was suggested that SCAGI could form a group to look at authoring guidelines on standards for publishing Antarctic geographic data. Many attendees agreed that this would be a good starting point and very beneficial.

Action: Louise Ireland to invite SCAGI members to begin scoping a project to draw up recommendations for publishing geographic data.

b) Ant-ICON GIS

Louise Ireland updated the committee on news shared by the SCAR Ant-ICON group, which was aiming to publish a web GIS visualisation platform showcasing research studies and topics that feed in to Antarctic conservation policy. Louise noted that the group were in the early stages of planning this project, and she was waiting for further details, which she would forward to members in due course. The parallels with the previous discussion item were noted, as SCAGI could provide advice on publishing of data services, as well as the cartographic and visualisation side.

Action: Louise Ireland to forward details of the project and invite SCAGI members for input as required.

c) SCAGI endorsed datasets

Cole Kelleher suggested the idea of 'SCAGI endorsed datasets'; data that SCAGI could stamp as being authoritative and recommended for use. For example, REMA v2.0 was not a SCAGI product, but it is often endorsed unofficially by SCAGI as the best available elevation dataset for Antarctica. Thus, SCAGI could introduce an accreditation for such datasets and more actively promote their use. Cole suggested this could be addressed in parallel to the Geographic standards discussion noted previously.

Action: Draw up a proposal for SCAGI endorsement of datasets. Tackle this alongside the discussion around standards for geographic publishing.

12) SCAGI report to the SCAR Executive Committee

Louise Ireland highlighted the previously circulated draft SCAGI report to the SCAR Executive Committee, and asked for comments and additions.

Action: All to review the draft report and email Louise for comments and amendments.

13) AOB

There were no additional items for discussion.

14) Date and location of next meeting

It was decided to hold the next meeting at the SCAR Open Science Conference in Chile in 2024. It was agreed that an in-person meeting would be beneficial, particularly to discuss some of the topics put forward at this meeting, in more detail. Louise noted that she would endeavour to ensure there was a hybrid option for those to attend who were unable to travel to Chile.

15) Close

The meeting was closed. The Co-Chairs thanked all participants for their support and contributions.

Progress on actions from October 2022

No.	Action	Owner	Due by	Status
1.	Delegates to contact Ursula Harris a) to add their maps to the SCAR map catalogue, and b) to feedback any amendments and additions to the 'Obtaining maps' section of the Map Catalogue site, and c) ask to be added to the CGA new maps alert list, if desired.	ALL	Ongoing	Carry forward
2.	Polygon generation for place names – UK and US to liaise over shared polygons.	Louise Ireland and Cole Kelleher	Autumn 2023	Carry forward
3.	Review the membership list on the SCAGI website and advise Louise Ireland of any changes. The list is available to view here: https://www.scar.org/resources/scagi/members	All	Mid-2023	Completed. Updates will be ongoing.
4.	Any outstanding National Reports should be sent to Louise Ireland, who will arrange for their publication on the SCAGI website.	All	As soon as possible	Completed. Reports from 2022 are online
5.	Contact Louise Ireland if they are interested in contributing to the ADD datasets and to discuss dataset update priorities	All	Ongoing	Carry forward
6.	Investigate technical feasibility of adding sound files to the SCAR CGA	Carlo Baroni	Mid-2023	Carry forward
7.	Plan an Air Operations Planning Maps project workshop to cover, a) further discussion on whether the Air Operations Planning maps should be added to AFIM, b) planning to ensure sustainability of map series, c) review of the cartographic specification to ensure it is fit for purpose, d) update of maps series to incorporate new elevation data from REMA v2.0, e) discussion whether to include contours in feet in Antarctic Digital Database.	Louise Ireland	Early 2023	Carry forward. This workshop is now planned for early 2024
8.	Suggest and feedback website changes for SCAGI products and other information to Louise Ireland	All	Ongoing	No changes made since October 2022. Carry forward.
9.	Convene a meeting of SCAGI members involved in place naming to continue discussion around the topics highlighted by members as part of this meeting, including a) proposal of a single SCAGI approved map	Ursula Harris		Carry forward

	of placenames, b) updating placenames in Google, c) SCAR CGA support for polygon and line geometries and d) SCAR CGA support for sound files (see action 6 above).			
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