



SCAR Visiting Professor Scheme



Report

Punta Arenas is a significant international Antarctic gateway.



Chilean and Korean officials discuss logistic cooperation in an impromptu meeting.

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Host Institute:

Instituto Antártico Chileno

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Dates of Visit

4 November 2014 – 5 December 2014 (Santiago and Punta Arenas - with additional meetings in Chile and Argentina to 14 January 2015)

Summary of Visit

The primary purpose of the visit to the Chilean Antarctic Institute (INACH) was to 'compare notes' on the Antarctic science/policy interface in Chile and Australia. A secondary purpose was to understand the importance of Punta Arenas as an Antarctic Gateway.

I spent the first week of my visit to Chile in the capital, Santiago, talking to Chilean government officials and academics. I also met with the Australian ambassador to Chile.

While I was in Santiago, I presented a seminar at the *Academia Diplomática* on my recently completed "20 Year Australian Antarctic Strategic Plan"¹.

In my three weeks in Punta Arenas I met with officials from INACH to discuss the Chilean Antarctic science program; environmental management; logistics; and, the importance of Punta Arenas as an Antarctic gateway, and its significance to the regional economy.

Discussions were broad ranging, and covered the sometimes-sensitive relationships between regional and central governments, but most importantly the intergovernmental arrangements involved in the Chilean Antarctic program.

Detailed discussions were had on the structure of the Chilean science program and the government programs involved, as well as the integration of the broad range of participating research institutions.

I also presented a formal seminar on the "20 Year Australian Antarctic Strategic Plan" and Dr Retamales presented a detailed seminar on the Chilean Antarctic science program including metrics on its performance and output.

After leaving Punta Arenas I visited the renowned CCAMLR scientists Prof Carlos Moreno at the Universidad Austral de Chile in Valdivia; and in January 2015 I visited Buenos Aires (Argentina) and held meetings with officials from the Antarctic Treaty Secretariat and Argentine government Antarctic officials. I also met with the Australian Ambassador to Argentina.

Arrangements for the visit were quite satisfactory, and I thank especially my Chilean host Dr José Retamales for sponsoring my visit to Punta Arenas; and his colleague from the Chilean Ministry Foreign Affairs, Mr Francisco Berguño for hosting me in Santiago.

¹ http://www.antarctica.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/178595/20-Year-Plan_Press-Report.pdf

Capacity Building, Education and Outreach Activities

As stated above, I gave two seminars, one in Santiago and one in Punta Arenas. I also discussed my visit with Australian and Chilean officials.

I participated in a long media interview in Punta Arenas.

On return to Australia I held discussions with the Australian Antarctic Division about the Chilean Science Program and Punta Arenas as an Antarctic gateway.

Future Plans

I will continue my engagement with my Chilean colleagues as the opportunity arises. I have briefed by Australian colleagues on Chile's Antarctic program.

Highlights of the visit

I was very impressed by the strength of the Chilean Antarctic science program, its administration and the extent of collaboration across a broad range of Chilean institutions.

How did the SCAR Visiting Professor Award impact your research? your career objectives? you personally?

I found the program to be an excellent way to engage with international colleagues about their Antarctic science programs. I was able to take this newly acquired knowledge and pass it on to others in the Australian Antarctic program.