

2023 SCAR Ant-Icon/SC-ATS Fellowship Report

Dr. Kirsten Steinke
2023 SCAR Science-Policy Fellow
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Fellow's Affiliation: College of Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences,
Oregon State University, United States of America

Fellow's Contact: steinkki@oregonstate.edu

Introduction

As a recent Ph.D. graduate who spent almost a year in Antarctica studying how climate and environmental variability impact Antarctic krill populations at the Antarctic Peninsula, I was very excited about the opportunity to work with SCAR and share my research to inform CCAMLR policy, especially in relation to the krill fishery and climate change. I am moving into a career in marine policy and this fellowship offered me insight into how science is made actionable and what that looks like on an international stage. Applying my work on krill reproduction and the implications of early maturation to the development of a Krill Stock Hypothesis has allowed me to see how my research can be used for better conservation and management of the Southern Ocean.

Fellowship Outcomes

The SCAR Ant-ICON/SC-ATS science policy fellowship has expanded my understanding of what the nexus of science and policy looks like, and specifically, what it looks like in CCAMLR. The first week of the meeting where the Scientific Committee came together to discuss research was fascinating to me because I was able to see how the Members came together to decide on recommendations for the Commission based on the best available science that was shared during the week. I was able to introduce the background paper that I wrote regarding the applicability of my research with the Scientific Committee. After presenting to SC-CAMLR, there was very positive feedback on the existence of the SCAR fellowship, and I personally received some great comments on my work and its use in helping to develop a Krill Stock Hypothesis.

While I originally planned on staying only for the week of the Scientific Committee, I decided to stay through the week of the Commission meeting as well. The focus of the Commission meeting was not specifically about the science; therefore, I did not present any of my research, however, staying and witnessing the CCAMLR process was enlightening. I enjoyed and was thoroughly impressed by the way that delegates and observers approached and explained proposals, citing the scientific evidence. I was inspired by the delegates and observers and how they diplomatically approached the issues at hand. For me, this experience was so much more than just the ability to present my research findings. I learned the intricacies of what it takes to reach a consensus on an international playing field where every Member is motivated by different priorities.

Capacity Building, Education and Outreach Activities

I plan on sharing my experience and telling others about this amazing fellowship opportunity through two primary outlets. I hope to share my story at the SCAR Open Science Conference in August 2024 in Pucón, Chile. If I cannot attend in person, I plan on recording a video or being available for a virtual chat to relay my experience to new potential fellows. I plan to not only share my story, but to underscore how impactful it was for me—witnessing for the first time how science and policy come together under an international governing body.

I am also planning on reaching out to the lead science writer and editor of *The Antarctic Sun*, a journal funded by NSF that focuses on Antarctic research, to write a feature on my experience as the SCAR Ant-ICON/SC-ATS science policy fellow. In addition to this journal, I have spoken with my SCAR mentors who were interested in putting together a feature story on the fellowship and sharing it with their members. I hope that this capacity building helps to get people interested in the fellowship and gives early career researchers the opportunity to present their work and join in on conversations at CCAMLR 43 and future meetings thereafter.

Future plans and Follow-ups

I plan on transitioning from a graduate student career as a biological oceanographer to a professional career working in marine policy. I have a one-year fellowship position with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's Strategic Planning and International Affairs office and will be working domestically and internationally on renewable offshore energy and carbon capture initiatives. The SCAR Ant-ICON/SC-ATS fellowship has been an incredible experience that has allowed me to see what a multilateral meeting for ocean policy looks like, and in that sense, has helped prepare me for my future career.

I plan on staying in contact with my mentors and support team from this fellowship, as they are all brilliant researchers and amazing women. Additionally, I cannot underscore how much they helped me understand the process of CCAMLR and were a fantastic source of information during the meeting. I sincerely hope to keep in touch with them and that we cross paths, possibly at a CCAMLR meeting, in the future.

Personal Impact

This fellowship was an invaluable experience that introduced me to the world of international marine policy. In addition to my amazing SCAR support team and my mentors from the German and Argentinian delegation, I was able to share my research and participate in conversations with delegates from all around the world. It helped to fuel my passion for marine policy and showed me the importance of trying to understand various perspectives. It also highlighted the importance of diplomacy and ensuring that policy is well-founded in science.

Acknowledgements

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