

IASC Council and Regional Board Members

c.c. **Observers at IASC Council Meeting**
Secretariats

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Council Meeting Report 1999

Dear Council and Regional Board Members

Please find enclosed the draft Council Meeting Report.
If you have any comments to this text, please send them to us **within one month**.

With regard to a general follow-up, we request all members to particularly read and consider item **2.1.8 Collaborating Projects**.

Do you have any major bi-lateral project which has a potential for being expanded into a multi-national project?

If so, please respond back to the Secretariat.

As to the **next Arctic Science Summit Week**, the time seems to be 2-7 April (Easter holiday starts in the middle of April), and the place: Cambridge, UK.

National Expenditure Levels for Polar Research

We also wish to draw your attention to item 2.7.2. and its appendix.

No comments were given to this proposal at the meeting.

However, we encourage those having such data to report back to the IASC Secretariat, and/or to comment on the proposal as such. The Executive Committee would have to discuss this proposal further, and they would need more input with regard to the usefulness of this proposal.

Your comments to the enclosed report or otherwise are always welcome.

Yours sincerely



Odd Rogne

Executive Secretary

Encl.

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Council Meeting Report

1. OPENING AND REPORTING SESSION

1.1 ATTENDANCE

The President, Dr David J Drewry, welcomed members and observers to the meeting, noting that new Council members had been appointed by our member organisations in Denmark, France and Iceland. A special welcome was extended to the observers from the European Polar Board, the International Arctic Social Science Association and the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research.

./. A list of participants is enclosed as **Appendix I**.

1.2 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The following late papers were distributed prior to the meeting:

- LOIRA: Draft Implementation Plan
- International Workshop on Sustainable Development in the Arctic: Impressions of the Chair
- Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA). A proposal and concept paper for the Senior Arctic Officials of the Arctic Council.

The provisional agenda was adopted with the inclusion of late papers as mentioned above.

1.3 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The President began his report by expressing gratitude and thanks to the Norwegian Polar Institute for hosting the Arctic Science Summit Week in their new facilities, of which the Council Meeting was a part.

Most of the issues he had been engaged in were either on the agenda for this meeting, or in the reports from the Executive Committee, which had been sent to all Council members.

However, he noted the development in our relationship to the Arctic Council (see item 2.3) and underlined both the importance and the opportunities stemming from this development.

The President, accompanied by the Executive Secretary, had continued promoting IASC to Arctic Officials. The most recent visit had been to Stockholm, Sweden, about a month ago.

Finally, the President noted good development and progress within IASC, with most of our projects and the IASC Secretariat. He thanked the Executive Secretary and noted the successful move of the offices earlier in the year.

2 MAIN ISSUES

2.1 PROJECT PROGRESS AND PLANS

Our projects are monitored by the Executive Committee as follows:

Project leaders are asked to report on **progress** made in late autumn. The Executive Committee reviews the reports at their late autumn meeting and provides feedback. Council and Regional Board members are informed through the report from this meeting (see report from the December 1998 Executive Committee meeting).

In early January each year, project leaders are asked for their **plans** and **funding** needed from the General Fund. The Executive Committee examines the plans, considering earlier progress and advice (as reported above) at their February meeting. The report from this meeting gives Council and Regional Board members a good overview of the "health" of each project.

For more details about each project, the annual **IASC Project Catalogue** gives an overview. This catalogue is available on the IASC web site (<http://www.iasc.no>), and also in paper copy - usually in early April.

Most of the projects reaching the implementation phase have also established their own web site, which gives more details.

Based on the process summarised above, and considering the limited time at Council meetings, it was agreed that Council should focus the discussions of projects on:

- **Projects with progress problems, or having special circumstances;** and
- **New project ideas.**

With regard to the first category, the following projects were reviewed:

- 2.1.3 Effects of Increased UV-Radiation
- 2.1.6 LOIRA
- 2.1.9 Environmental and Social Impacts of Industrialisation
- 2.1.11 Rapid Cultural and Social Changes in the Circumpolar North
- 2.1.12 Contaminants and Human Health
- 2.1.13 COASP: Cooperative Arctic Seismological Project

(The numbers refer to those used in the recent report from the Executive Committee)

2.1.1 EFFECTS OF INCREASED UV-RADIATION

This project had a very good planning phase, whereas achieving funding for implementation has been slow. A Finnish UVIRC is being established and they had organised a workshop in March. A Nordic UVIRC network has been proposed, but not yet funded.

AMAP has suggested cooperation, and a leaflet has been produced to increase broader awareness about the UV issue.

Comments by the Executive Committee:

The scientific communities should note the Arctic Council interest in the UV-issue, and work together with them as research and monitoring are closely linked.

However, the Project Group is encouraged to formulate a **clear research strategy** based on the UVIRC concept. This approach may require some re-focusing.

The USA is the lead country in the Arctic governmental co-operation on UV, and as they are re-thinking their UV-policy, prospects may be good for some progress.

Council agreed to the comments by the Executive Committee.

Action: Rogne, DeFabo

2.1.2 LOIRA: LAND-OCEAN INTERACTIONS IN THE RUSSIAN ARCTIC

An implementation workshop was held in January, 1998. The drafting of the implementation plan had been delayed due to the leaders' involvement in major scientific cruises. Parts of these cruises were linked to LOIRA.

The **draft** Implementation Plan was received a week prior to Council Meeting, and participants received a copy of this draft. According to the IASC rules, the draft will undergo an international review before being published.

Other achievements:

- The science plan had been presented to local/regional users at a conference in Naryan Mar. The proceedings from this international conference were now published (about 440 pp, text in Russian with English summary and in English with Russian summary).
- One sub-project had received INTAS funding.

Comments by the Executive Committee:

This project seems very comprehensive and challenging to implement (7 foci). A potentially better strategy could be to focus the implementation on fewer issues that are attractive to a wider international group of leading scientists (and with funding possibilities). When the draft Implementation Plan becomes available, it should be circulated to the Executive Committee and Council members for comments, and the LOICZ office should be consulted. An alternative to the suggested Steering Committee and International Advisory Board could be an international working group (serving as an IASC project group).

Council agreed to the suggested way forward, but pointed to the opportunities for combining parts of LOIRA with ongoing and/or planned bilateral projects.

Action: Rogne

**2.1.3 ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACTS OF INDUSTRIALISATION:
IMPLICATIONS OF LARGE-SCALE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARCTIC**

At their last meeting, the Executive Committee did not find significant progress in developing a specific science and implementation plan.

It was concluded that further funding support requires a clear progress plan with the elements mentioned above (address problems or concerns important to users/funders).

Their suggested plan for 1999 was:

- Search for funds and cooperation among governments and industry, etc.
- Consolidate network of partners. Co-chairs will meet in May for further planning and fund raising, and the Core Group should meet once to discuss schedule and outline of project, preferably in October 1999.
- Implementation of a communications plan to facilitate the exchange of ideas and information between participants, and to keep the larger Arctic community informed of progress. (Exploit Arctic Social Science PhD-network/University of the Arctic + website: <http://www.geo.ruc.dk/NORS/energy/>)

Comments by the Executive Committee:

Reference was made to rather strong comments given previously in relation to the progress of this project. Members of the Executive Committee agreed that the theme of this project was important, but that the suggested plan was too fluid.

Taking into account the very little progress made since ICARP 1995 (although change of leadership), the Executive Committee agreed to propose to Council that this project should be closed down.

Council agreed to close down this project.

Action: Rogne

2.1.4 RAPID CULTURAL AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN THE CIRCUMPOLAR NORTH

This project has the following priority areas:

- Construction of knowledge and world view
- Social viability, cultural continuity and demographic transitions
- Political dynamics, governance and collective rights

At the previous Executive Committee meeting, this project was advised to accelerate the planning process alongside some specific advice.

Thereafter, the Group proposed the following plan for 1999:

- February: deadline for suggestions for science and research priorities
- March: Circulation of these priorities
- Summer: Meeting of the project group. Selection of final suggestion for priorities.
- Autumn: Writing funding applications.

Comments by the Executive Committee:

This project has developed more slowly than anticipated. However, as they now have a plan for reaching the end of the planning process this autumn, they should be supported and encouraged to do so.

Council was informed that one reason for slow progress was stakeholder involvement, which had taken more time than expected.

Melnikov noted that there was no Russian in the project group, and suggested two candidates.

Council agreed to encourage development as suggested, and expects a specific science plan by the end of this year.

Council also agreed that there should be a Russian member(s) in the Group.

Action: Rogne

2.1.5 CONTAMINANTS AND HUMAN HEALTH IN THE ARCTIC

The basic idea of this group was to strengthen human health research beyond what can be achieved through the AMAP Human Health Group. The Group was intended to work closely with the AMAP group, and to ensure this, the chairman of the AMAP group was appointed chairman of the IASC group.

However, this project has not been started and no meeting was held in 1998. After a dialogue with the chairman, he concluded that he was overloaded and recommended Dr Jon Øyvind Odland, Norway, as new chairman. Dr Odland was recommended by others as a good candidate for the job. He has confirmed his interest in taking on the leadership of the group, and in organising a meeting in early autumn.

The Executive Committee agreed to appoint Dr Jon Øyvind Odland as new chairman.

Council agreed to the conclusion of the Executive Committee.

Action: Rogne

2.1.6 COASP: COOPERATIVE ARCTIC SEISMOLOGICAL PROJECT

A monitoring network of arctic seismic stations is established. However, a circumarctic science plan is still lacking, although they have been repeatedly advised to develop one.

Their plan for 1999 is to organise a “Nordic Seminar on Detection Seismology” and on several operational issues. They also “encourage the production of science plans for all the suggested individual project ideas”.

The Executive Committee recommends to Council that COASP be deleted from IASC Projects, and that they may be welcomed back if and when they develop a circumarctic science plan.

Council agreed to the recommendation of the Executive Committee.

Action: Rogne

2.1.7 NEW PROJECT PROPOSALS

Two project ideas have earlier been reviewed by the Executive Committee and brought to Council for approval. Both project ideas have plans for 1999 and consequently a funding need.

A: PROBLEMS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN THE RUSSIAN ARCTIC

This idea was proposed to the ISIRA Group, and was approved in principle by the Executive Committee, i.e. scientists to take the idea forward to a user workshop. A suggestion for such a workshop was received at the last Executive Committee meeting, and the Executive Committee nominated Drs. Jens Dahl, Denmark and Gail Fondahl, Canada to provide advice from the international science community. On the Russian side, representatives of RAIPON (Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North), GOSCOMSEVER (the earlier State Committee of Northern Problems, now a part of the Ministry of Regional Policy), and the Academy of Sciences had been identified.

The Executive Committee was informed that:

- a workshop was in planning for 17-18 September 1999 (back-to-back with another meeting of indigenous peoples of the Russian North)
- this workshop would have a first part at which users would give input about their priority problems and a second day for discussion between scientists about potential projects.

As mentioned at the last Executive Committee meeting, the workshop would be focused around three themes:

- Natural Resources and Use of Land
- Living Conditions, and
- Alcoholism

Council noted the information, approved the support for the workshop, and tasked the Executive Committee to evaluate the report from the workshop.

Action: Rogne

B: TUNDRA-TAIGA INITIATIVE

The tundra-taiga boundary is showing signs of having contrary responses to climate change in different regions of the Arctic. The intention with this project idea is to document and investigate the extent of the variations between the Russian, European and North-American extremes of the tundra-taiga interface.

The objectives are:

1. To understand past and present change in the tundra/taiga boundary and to predict future changes at a range of geographical scales.
2. To assess the implications of current and predicted future changes for:
 - a) land use
 - b) biodiversity and conservation
 - c) ecosystem function and feedbacks to climate
3. To formalise the output in a GIS framework

Council approved this project idea, and agreed to support the suggested workshop.

Action: Rogne

C: ARCTIC GRAVITY PROJECT (AGP)

A group of scientists has initiated an Arctic Gravity Project, and has asked IASC for approval. They have also asked the International Association of Geodesy (IAG) to recognise the group as an IAG working group.

The initiative as such has been encouraged by the Executive Committee, including the release of gravity data. IAG has also approved the group. Some gravity data can be regarded as sensitive, so the project may take more time than estimated.

Council noted the information.

2.1.8 COLLABORATING PROJECTS

Dr Robert W Corell introduced the idea of “Collaborating Projects”, i.e. bi-lateral projects which could be expanded into multi-national projects. See copy of transparency enclosed as **Appendix II**.

Some major bi-lateral projects can have a potential for a broader scientific interest, and IASC can serve as a test arena for such an interest. Bi-lateral projects usually have governmental support, so at least some basic activity is already funded (often also logistics).

Council agreed to ask members to identify potential, bi-lateral candidate projects. The Executive Committee was requested to consider such a proposal, and to formulate terms of reference for collaborating projects.

Action: Rogne

2.2 IASC GENERAL FUND

2.2.1 ACCOUNTS FOR 1998

The accounts for 1998 were recommended by the Executive Committee, see
./ **Appendix III.**

Council approved the accounts for 1998.

2.2.2 BUDGET FOR 1999

A draft budget for 1999 was recommended by the Executive Committee, see
./ **Appendix IV.**

Council approved the draft budget.

Action: Rogne

2.3 ARCTIC COUNCIL

2.3.1 ARCTIC COUNCIL IN GENERAL

IASC had been the only circumarctic science organisation having permanent observer status to the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS). When the Arctic Council was established this status was confirmed.

The Chairman of the Regional Board is now the IASC representative at Arctic Council top level meetings, working in concert with the IASC Executive Committee.

Until some months ago, the Arctic Council was chaired by a Canadian and its secretariat based in Canada. The USA has taken over the chairmanship and the secretariat has been moved.

With regard to activities, the Arctic Council inherited the AEPS activities and working groups (of which AMAP and CAFF had a science component). In addition, they had a **Sustainable Development Initiative (SDI)**.

However, the SDI was not well defined and currently consists of some individual projects.

The Chairman of the Regional Board had given a presentation of IASC, its role and projects at the SAO meeting in September 1998, which had improved the relationship.

The Arctic Council has been focused on organisational issues, but they could soon be seeking assistance from IASC.

The next SAO meeting will be held in May 1999, and issues in which IASC has been involved (see below) will be on their agenda.

2.3.2 SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENT OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF CLIMATE VARIABILITY AND CHANGE IN THE ARCTIC REGION

Scientific assessments were considered last year as a potentially important role for IASC. This idea has been further discussed in the IASC Executive Committee leading to the agenda paper: *Scientific Assessment of the Consequences of Climate Variability and Change in the Arctic Region*.

A parallel process had been ongoing in the Arctic Council, where AMAP (and later CAFF) have been tasked to investigate impacts of climate change and UV. Their task, however, has been limited to impact on "ecosystems". During the last year there has been informal discussion with AMAP and CAFF as to a cooperation in this area, and broadening the scope to all impacts.

The agenda paper had been discussed with AMAP and CAFF in Washington DC, leading to a joint drafting meeting in Oslo earlier in April 1999 (a preliminary draft was available at the Council meeting) aimed at the next SAO meeting. It proposes a broadly based assessment of impacts of climate change. The proposal had an endorsement in principle by IPCC.

The Arctic Council would be asked to endorse this broad-based assessment in principle, as well as be informed that the IASC/AMAP/CAFF discussions would continue.

If accepted, this assessment will need a well qualified chairman supported by a dedicated secretariat and some funds.

This agenda item had been discussed by the IASC Regional Board prior to the Council meeting. The Regional Board had endorsed these assessments in principle, and recommended that the discussions with AMAP and CAFF should continue.

Council agreed to endorse the concept paper (enclosed to the agenda, Appendix V), and requested the Executive Committee to develop an implementation plan.

Action: Corell, Rogne

The concept paper as presented to the SAOs in early May, 1999 is enclosed as **Appendix V**.

2.3.3 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (SDI)

The SDI is the second leg of the Arctic Council.

The Arctic Council was lacking a strategy for this initiative, which at present consists of isolated projects which are not necessarily linked to a SDI philosophy.

Acting on the proposal of Dr Oran R Young (Vice President of IASC), IASC had supported a workshop in Akureyri, Iceland in early April, 1999 aimed at an informal discussion of strategic elements of an Arctic SDI.

The workshop had been attended by selected persons from both the policy and science community (including AMAP and CAFF).

A report in the form of "Impressions by the Chair" was available as a late paper, and introduced at the meeting by Dr Oran R Young.

The workshop had developed a set of criteria for designing cooperative activities, and then discussed two groups of activities compatible with these criteria:

- An AMAP for the human dimensions of sustainable development
- Specific sustainable development initiatives:
 - Understanding human population dynamics in the Arctic
 - Promoting sustainable fisheries in the Arctic
 - Building human and social capital in the Arctic

Further, they recommended an Advisory Group on Sustainable Development (under the Arctic Council), as well as suggestions on informal processes and process principles.

As to the **next steps**, these would be determined by the reaction of the SAOs. IASC would continue its SD projects. However, **Council confirmed IASC's willingness to respond to the SAOs need for scientific response and a continuing dialogue, if asked.**
Action: Young, Rogne

2.4 ARCTIC SCIENCE MEETINGS

At the Executive Committee meeting in December 1998, two ideas emerged with regard to arctic science meetings:

1. **Scientific meetings** modelled on the Penrose and Gordon conferences, and
2. **Arctic Science Conference** as mentioned in the IASC Founding Articles

A discussion paper covering both types, and an abstract from the discussion in the Executive Committee were available.

It was agreed to combine the discussion with comments to the **Arctic Science Summit Week (ASSW)**

Selected comments from the discussion:

- A meeting should contribute to moving an idea significantly forward
- ASSW is a good idea, and the Joint Science Day should be included, but speakers should be more challenging, for instance, by provoking scientists about future directions (in science).
- Scientists should be instructed that they are speaking to an audience consisting of scientists from many disciplines and science managers. Reporting of specific findings using a terminology unfamiliar to scientists from other disciplines should be avoided.
The focus should be a contribution stimulating a discussion about future science needs or directions, and in a language understandable to everybody.
- Contents: See proposal under 2.1. Cooperating Projects, which could be one option. Some IASC projects could also be mature for a presentation.

Council agreed that the Arctic Science Summit Week should continue, and asked the Executive Committee to initiate it considering the comments given.

Action: Rogne

2.5 REPORT FROM THE REGIONAL BOARD

The IASC Regional Board held their meeting prior to the Council Meeting. The Chairman of the Regional Board, Dr Robert W Corell, reported from their meeting. Their agenda was close to that of Council, but they had longer discussions about Arctic Council issues. They also have a special agenda item called national reports, reporting on new events related to arctic research in their country.

The Regional Board was supportive of items on the Council agenda, such as items reported under Arctic Council and the Arctic Science Summit Week.

2.6 NEXT MEETING

The Netherlands prefer to delay its invitation to 2001. The United Kingdom was approached, but require a little time to confirm agreement to host the meeting.

As Easter falls in the second half of April, the Arctic Science Summit Week should be held before 15 April. Organisational meetings should be held back-to-back.

2.7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2.7.1 CHINA FIRST NATIONAL ARCTIC RESEARCH PROGRAM

Chinese scientists have made their Arctic projects in cooperation with scientists and institutes in several countries.

The Chinese government has now funded their First National Arctic Research program (CHINARP-01), whose objectives are:

- The role of the Arctic in relation to global change and its influence on climate in China;
- The water mass exchange between the Arctic Ocean and the northern Pacific Ocean and its influence on the circulation in the northwest Pacific;
- Ecosystem in the Arctic Ocean and its relation to Chinese fisheries.

2.7.2 CANADA

Dr Peter Johnson reported that the Canadian Polar Commission was in operation again, and several positive events had occurred, hence the situation for Canadian arctic research now showed a positive trend.

Canada proposed that IASC should collect information about national expenditure levels for polar research; see proposal enclosed as **Appendix VI**.

2.7.3 SURVEY OF LIVING CONDITIONS

Dr Mogens Holm reported that Greenland Statistics had initiated a major project to investigate living conditions for indigenous peoples in the Arctic (except from most of the Russian Arctic). The project had been suggested to the Arctic Council.

GRASP: Greenland Arctic Shelf Programme was also briefly mentioned. GRASP is conducted north of Greenland, and its main aim is to investigate the extent and geographical structure of this continental shelf.

2.7.4 ICSU

The question was raised about progress with regard to our relationship to ICSU.

Unfortunately there had been no progress to date with regard to establishing a scientific, associate relationship with ICSU.

2.8 CLOSURE

The President thanked the Norwegian Polar Institute and the Polar Environmental Centre for hosting both the Council Meeting and all the other meetings during the Arctic Science Summit Week.