

UK Arctic and Antarctic Partnership Steering Committee Meeting 19

Friday 22nd March 1030 to 1230

Holyrood Room, John McIntyre Conference Centre, Edinburgh and online

Participants

Professor Martin Siegert, University of Exeter, Chair

Professor Kate Hendry, BAS, Deputy Chair

Professor Sheldon Bacon, NOC

Dr Liz Bagshaw, University of Bristol

Professor Robert Baxter, Durham University

Professor Mike Bentley, Durham University

Dr James Bradley, Mediterranean Institute of Oceanography, Marseille/Queen Mary University of London

Henry Burgess, Head, NERC Arctic Office

James Jansen, Senior Arctic Lead, Polar Regions Department, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Professor Richard Essery, Edinburgh University

Professor Jane Francis, BAS

Dr Lizzie Garratt, NERC

Eleanor Honan, Durham University (UKPN Representative)

Marc Macias-Fauria, Scott Polar Research Institute

Professor Erin McClymont, Durham University

Dr Paola Moffa-Sanchez, Durham University

Nicola Munro, NERC Arctic Office (UKAAP SC Secretary)

Pilvi Saarikoski, BAS

Professor David Pearce, University of Northumbria

Professor Gareth Phoenix, University of Sheffield

Olivia Rees, BAS

Jane Rumble, Polar Regions Department, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Apologies:

Jamie Anderson, APPG

Professor Ian Brooks, Leeds University

Rod Downie, WWF

Dr Caroline Clason, Durham University

Dr Duncan Depledge, Loughborough University

Professor John Howe, SAMS

Dr Laura Hobbs, SAMS

Dr James Lea, Liverpool University

Dr Ingrid Medby, Newcastle University

Professor Clare Robinson, Manchester University

Minutes:

1. Welcome and Introductions – Martin Siegert

MS welcomed all participants to the 19th UKAAP Steering Committee hybrid meeting and noted the apologies received.

The Steering Committee also paid tribute to Professor Andrew Brierley from St Andrews University who passed away in early March 2024. Andrew was an extremely well-regarded scientist and a valued member of the UKAAP Steering Committee.

MS also noted that SB would be retiring after this meeting and thanked him for all his contributions to polar science over the years.

2. Review of Minutes and Actions from the SC 18 meeting on 12th June 2023 – Martin Siegert **(Paper: UKAAP 19/01)**

Review of Minutes and actions:

MS presented the minutes and actions from the last meeting. No further comments were made, and the minutes were accepted as a true record of the 18th meeting of the UKAAP SC meeting.

One action relating to SIOS was for HB to seek input from the Community on SIOS. SIOS AGM will be in the Autumn in 2024. There is time to get the application in and HB will aim to make the deadline for this autumn.

3. IPY 2032-2033 update – Henry Burgess (Paper: UKAAP 19/02)

An IPY Concept Note has been produced and this was circulated to Committee Members as part of the meeting papers. The work on this has been led by SCAR and IASC along with many other partners over the last 18 months. The listed partners make up an initial planning group, but this list is not exclusive and there will be opportunities for other partners to engage in the process. The concept note also includes a timeline which highlights a 'ramping up' of efforts between now and the IPY, peaking in 2032-2033 and legacy activities to continue afterwards. The next step is to develop the concept note into a more detailed planning note and learn from the lessons from IPY 2007-2008. There will be a Programme Office to support the activities but where this will sit is still to be determined. HB noted that it is expected that each country that wants to engage in the IPY will have their own national committee, and this is something that UKAAP SC should consider for the UK.

There was a brief discussion about the legacy from the last IPY and what was hoped for IPY 2032-33. It was noted that APECS and UKPN as well as the Polar Educators Initiative are examples of legacy activities from the IPY 2007-8. For IPY 2032-33, and leading up to this, having EDI included as a strong message with an international legacy will be important. There was also a discussion about the need to include Russia and how this should be handled in ways that are consistent with our values and those of other partners. HB noted this is something that is being discussed within the planning group. There was also a brief discussion about a UK National Committee and Office and JF confirmed that BAS would be happy to host this.

ACTION: JF, JR and HB to have an initial discussion about whether the UKAAP SC should act as the UK National Committee for IPY 2032-2033. To report back at next UKAAP SC meeting.

4. SDA and the Arctic (Henry Burgess)

The SDA will be going to Greenland in the summer of 2024 as part of the KANG-GLAC cruise. This project is looking at marine terminating glaciers and their influence on the fjords and wider

ecosystems in SE Greenland. This will be the first Arctic cruise for the SDA, and it is being led by Kelly Hogan at BAS, who is also the IASC Cryosphere Working Group representative for the UK.

The SDA is also scheduled to call in Reykjavik on the return leg at the end of August and the plan is to have a science engagement event to coincide with this visit.

HB also talked about the potential for further strategic work in the Arctic and mentioned a new programme being funded by the Norwegians over the next 10 years. Mike Webb at NERC, HB and others have been looking at whether the UK could have a smaller programme aligned to this and discussions with the Norwegians are ongoing. Any further updates will be provided at the next meeting.

5. Upcoming Polar Conferences

UK Antarctic Science Conference 2024

BAS will host the next UK Antarctic Science Conference on 1 – 3 October in Cambridge. Further details available here: [UK Antarctic Science Conference 2024 - British Antarctic Survey \(bas.ac.uk\)](https://bas.ac.uk/uk-antarctic-science-conference-2024)

Durham, through MB, have also provisionally offered to host the next UK Antarctic Science Conference which will be in 2026.

UK Arctic Science Conference 2025 (Paper: UKAAP 19/03)

Louse Mercer presented the paper from Northumbria, detailing their proposal to host the next UK Arctic Science Conference in Northumbria in September 2025. Following the presentation and a short discussion, the Committee was pleased to accept the offer from Northumbria to host the next Arctic Conference.

Royal Society International meetings:

29 – 30 September 2025: Global impacts of extremes in the polar regions – is Antarctica reaching a climatic tipping point? This is being led by KH and will be in London at the Royal Society, with poster sessions and flash talks for ECRs.

6 – 7 May 2025: Next Generation icesheet bed data. This event is being led by Martin Siegert with Dorte Dahl Jensen, Richard Alley and Christine Dal.

Also to note that the IGS British Branch meeting will be held in Liverpool 2 – 3 October 2024. The 2025 meeting will likely be held in Oxford in September.

6. Introduction to InSync (JF)

JF introduced InSync. This is a big international coordinated effort that will aim to ‘synchronise research across Antarctic and the Southern Ocean, connecting ice, ocean, climate and life to protect this vital region’. This programme has been accepted under the ‘Decade of the Oceans’ and will run until 2030, led by AWI. This is in the early stages of planning, with several workshops over the next few months to determine the science, logistics and funding model and further information will be circulated in due course. Website: <https://www.antarctica-insync.org/>

7. Geoengineering discussion (ALL)

MS gave a brief introduction to this item which was followed by a discussion amongst the Committee. Points included:

There is a rise in attention on certain intervention ideas in both polar regions to halt effects of global heating. These have been discussed at major events such as COP, AGU and at WEF in Davos and have been recently reported on in the media (BBC, The Guardian etc).

An international working group, which includes several UK members, WMO, WWF, SCAR etc, are in the process of writing an academic paper to respond to some of the ideas. MS and MB are heavily involved in this work.

IASC has a cross cutting project underway on geoengineering to bring together some of the thinking and ideas and to describe the landscape of what is happening. This is part of an ongoing piece of work and this will very likely result in an IASC action group on this in the next year.

The University of the Arctic published a rapid response assessment in February 2024 of 61 climate intervention methods which is available on the University of the Arctic website. This paper will also be published in Climatic Change.

Concern was expressed by several members on the ways in which ideas and projects are being conducted and what controls are in place, consideration of ethics, governance, unintended consequences etc.

8. DiPSi Update (Pilvi)

Based on recent feedback, PS noted DiPSi has been seen as being BAS centric, however PS wanted to emphasise that even though many of the activities have been led by BAS, DiPSi is there to serve the whole community. DiPSi are also interested in new members from across the universities to join the steering groups. Further to this, PS made the point that in the UK, there is not really much representation from the social sciences and humanities and that it is important to make these connections and to be seen working with these groups more.

In April, BAS will host the NERC EDI symposium which aims to bring people together from across the NERC funding landscape that have EDI links. The symposium will include a series of progress updates and round table discussions.

DiPSi are currently working on the report based on the socio-economic survey that has been run over the last two UK polar conferences to highlight some of the barriers faced and the findings will be shared broadly across the community.

DiPSi is a resource for the community – there is a lot of information and documentation on the website on how to run different EDI activities and lessons learned which is available to everyone.

DiPSi will have a session at ASSW and also at SCAR later in the year. DiPSi are keen to hear from the community on what is needed to make sure it continues to meet the needs of the community and provide the support needed. Also to note that both NERC and UKRI now have a strong EDI focus.

The point was made that although UKAAP SC has got a good gender balance, more work could be done to encourage further representation from under-represented groups. UKAAP to think about co-opting someone onto the UKAAP SC to support more active engagement and to keep DiPSi as a standing agenda item.

9. Stakeholder Reports

Each stakeholder was invited to give a verbal summary of their reports. Full details are available in the meeting papers.

Paper: UKAAP 19/02 – report from the Polar Regions Department, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (James Jansen)

Paper – noted and read by committee.

Paper: UKAAP 19/03 - report from the UK Polar Network (Eleanor Honan)

Paper – noted and read by committee.

Paper: UKAAP 19/04– report from NERC (Lizzie Garratt)

Paper – noted and read by committee.

Paper: UKAAP 19/05 – report from the NERC Arctic Office (Henry Burgess)

Paper – noted and read by committee.

UKNCAR verbal update: MB noted that SCAR is now working at pre-covid levels in all action and working groups. Almost all research programmes in SCAR now have a very heavy policy-facing science element and increased social sciences and humanities involvement. The SCAR Open Science Conference will be taking place in Chile in August which will be followed by the delegates meeting afterwards. MB also wanted to acknowledge Susie Grant and her contributions to the Standing Committee on the Antarctic Treaty System who is stepping down as Chair. UKNCAR are also looking for a new Chair as MB will be stepping down.

BAS verbal update (Olivia Rees)

Air Programme:

- 24 rotations of the Dash-7 to Rothera
- Twin Otter supported aerosurvey, deep field campaigns and instrument & depot servicing
- Successful deep field Air Drop in December

BAS supported science in 23/24 included:

- 29 grant funded science projects
- 2 SDA science cruises
- Continued support of 14 Long term Monitoring projects at BAS stations

Ships Programme:

- SDA in theatre from mid-November to late May.
- SDA undertook the first funded science cruises – BIOPOLE and PICCOLO
- Included the first Halley vessel relief call in 6 years in collaboration with AWI – took place over 9 days.
- Science team deployed to Zavodovski Island in South Sandwich Islands.
- The SDA will return to UK in June and will then carry out the Arctic Cruise in the Summer.

Antarctic Infrastructure Modernisation Programme:

- Rothera Discovery Building internal fitout – due to handover to BAS in March 2025 and will enhance the operational support of science.
- Rothera runway resurfaced, and new runway lighting installed.

NERC Station:

- Supported 4 projects in February/March this year.
- Will open again in summer with 11 projects and a potential media visit.

10. New Members

Due to time, this item was not discussed. This will be taken offline and reported back at the next meeting.

11. Appointment of new UKAAP SC Chair

Due to time, this item was not discussed. This will be taken offline and reported back at the next meeting.

