



# Antarctic Treaty Secretariat Newsletter

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## From the Executive Secretary

Dear colleagues and friends from the Antarctic community and beyond,

The 29<sup>th</sup> Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) took place in Edinburgh, Scotland, from June 12 to 23. It was a productive meeting, which took decisions on protected areas and monuments, seals and petrels, site guidelines for visitors, ballast water exchange and other matters. The 29<sup>th</sup> ATCM was remarkable not only for the well organized meeting itself, which was held in the excellent facilities of the Edinburgh International Conference Centre, but for an extensive programme of activities including art and science exhibitions, lectures and shows to introduce Antarctica to the general public. The highlight of the meeting was a special day on the International Polar Year 2007-2008 and the adoption of the "Edinburgh Declaration", announcing to the world one of the largest international scientific cooperative endeavours ever.

Johannes Huber



Sir Michael Wood, KCMG was the Chairman of ATCM XXIX

## ATCM XXIX

To set the stage for the International Polar Year, one whole day of the 29<sup>th</sup> ATCM was devoted to the IPY. Under the chairmanship of Prof. Chris Rapley, former chair of the ICSU IPY Planning Group, the meeting heard informative and inspiring introductions on the scientific issues to be explored during IPY and the state of preparations, both for the Antarctic and for the Arctic. A lot of attention was also devoted to the publicity and outreach aspect of the Polar Year. To mark the political significance of the IPY the ATCM on June 19 adopted the "Edinburgh Antarctic Declaration on the International Polar Year 2007-2008".

The rest of the agenda of the 29<sup>th</sup> ATCM was dominated by environmental matters, about which you can read in the section on the Committee on Environmental Protection (CEP). Aside from the eight decisions coming out of the CEP, the ATCM approved the financial report and programme of the Antarctic Treaty Secretariat and a resolution on "CCAMLR in the Antarctic Treaty System" aimed at intensifying cooperation between the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources and the ATCM. The meeting also gave the go-ahead for the full development of the Electronic Information Exchange System, which will provide the Antarctic Treaty Parties with a more efficient method to carry out the various information exchange requirements of the Antarctic Treaty and the Protocol for Environmental Protection.

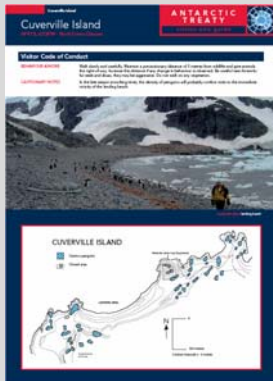
Intensive discussions on tourism especially focused on the issues of permanent infrastructure for tourism and access to Antarctic waters by large cruise ships; no specific measures came out of this meeting, so discussions will continue.



Picture: Katy Jensen

## Looking for aliens?

The final report of the workshop on Non-native species in the Antarctic convened by Gateway Antarctica, University of Auckland and Antarctica New Zealand is available at: [www.anta.canterbury.ac.nz](http://www.anta.canterbury.ac.nz), under the Antarctic Resources section.



A useful layout for the practical guidelines

## CEP IX

As usual, the meeting of the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP) was one of the busiest and most important parts of the (ATCM). CEP IX dealt with a heavy agenda and a very large number of documents: 37 working papers, 70 information papers and 3 papers from the Secretariat were considered during five days of intense discussions.

10 years after being adopted on a voluntary basis, the Committee approved and proposed to the ATCM the adoption of Antarctic Specially Managed Area (ASMA) No. 1 in Admiralty Bay, South Shetland Islands. This ASMA was the first to be proposed at the beginning of the 90's -after the adoption of Annex V to the Protocol- by Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, Poland, and the United States.

Three new Antarctic Specially Protected Areas were also tabled for adoption, increasing the number of ASPAs to 67. In addition, six revised Management Plans for existing ASPAs were also dealt with and *Rocher du Débarquement*, *Terre Adélie* was proposed to the ATCM as Historic Site and Monument 81.

Marine Protected Areas, a new set of 8 Site Guidelines for Visitors, Specially Protected Species and Guidelines for ballast waters to be used by ships in the Antarctic Treaty Area were other important matters discussed by the Meeting.

This year the CEP meeting was preceded by a productive Workshop on Antarctica's Future Environmental Challenges organized by the United Kingdom. The conclusions of this workshop were discussed at the meeting and an Intersessional Contact Group to discuss a five-year work plan was established.

Dr. Tony Press (Australia) ended his Chairmanship and received sincere thanks and appreciation for his excellent guidance of the Committee's work over the last four years.

Dr Neil Gilbert (New Zealand) was elected as new CEP Chair and Dr Tania Brito (Brazil) was elected to the position of Vice-chair.

### *A Base at the base (of the mountains)*

During CEP IX, a Comprehensive Environmental Evaluation on the Construction and operation of a new Belgian research station in Antarctica was considered. The new base will be built in Dronning Maud Land, at the foot of the Sør Rondane Mountains. It will be situated 173 km inland from the former Roi Baudouin base, Breid Bay (1958-1967) and 55 km from the former (1986-1992) Japanese Asuka station. The nearest stations will be the Japanese Syowa station (684 km) and the Russian Novolazarevskaya station (431 km).



Source: Antarctic AVHRR satellite image mosaic, USGS, 1989

## Johann Gregor Mendel: from Brno to James Ross Island



J. G. Mendel: Official abbatial portrait

The Czech Antarctic Station Johann Gregor Mendel is located between Bibby Point and Cape Lachman, on the shore of the Prince Gustav Channel, James Ross Island. It is one of the small group of bases built on the east side of the Antarctic Peninsula.

J C Mendel is a small, summer-only research station comprised of several small structures with a main building of approximately 290 m<sup>2</sup>. It is meant to host between 15 and 20 people including logistic personnel.

James Ross Island was not the first place considered for the station. At first, Turret Point on the east coast of King George Island (South Shetlands) and later the place of the former British Base O (Danco Island) were also considered. Even a place on Signy Island (South Orkney islands) was a possibility.

In 2001, some Antarctic Treaty Parties discouraged construction on Turret point. Their main concern was the existence of a large number of stations on King George Island. British and Ukrainian experts offered help to the Czech Republic to find the most suitable location for the new base.

Eventually, when the northern coast of J. Ross Island was chosen, key data on its characteristics were contributed by Argentine geologists. Experts from Chile, Argentina, Poland and Ukraine provided valuable information on landing operations and shore transportation.

Eight windmills provide 50-60% of the electricity for the station during the whole summer season. Besides, solar energy is absorbed by cells and used for water and air heating. The back-up energy system consists of diesel generators.



On 28 February 2005 the construction site was visited by an Antarctic Treaty Inspection group including Dr. M. G. Richardson (Foreign and Commonwealth Office London), R. H. Downie (BAS, Cambridge), T. R. Maggs (Australian Antarctic Division, Kingston, Tasmania) and J. C. Rivera (Instituto Antártico Peruano, Lima). The members of the inspection group did not find any violations to the provisions of the Antarctic Treaty or the Madrid Protocol.

### *It's an island!*

Not until the beginning of the XX century was James Ross Island recognised as such. Before that, explorers thought it was part of the Antarctic Peninsula. In October 1903, a party from the Swedish expedition led by Otto Nordenskjöld, encircled the place, confirmed its insular nature and named the channel around the island after Prince Gustav from Sweden. Nordenskjöld named the island after Sir James Clark Ross, leader of a four-year long British expedition to this area



Construction of the Czech Station

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|  | <p>in 1842. The Ross expedition circumnavigated Antarctica aboard the HMS Erebus and HMS Terror. Ross sighted and roughly charted the east coast of the island. Although photographic apparatus was carried, it was not used in Antarctic regions.</p>   |
|  <p>Alison at the Archive</p> | <p><b>News from the Secretariat</b></p> <p><i>The first library trainee</i></p> <p>Alison Hicks joined us from the United Kingdom for two months in the middle of the Argentine winter to help set up the library. "I returned to Buenos Aires from the UK this winter, halfway through my Master in Information Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. During my time here I have concentrated on the new, but rather bare digital library. In consultation with other library staff, I have added over 120 digital records covering a wide range of legal topics to the library. These will soon be able to be browsed and downloaded from anywhere in the world. I have also been involved in testing and improving the new library catalogue, and implementing the library's new security system. It's been a challenge...but a highly enjoyable one, and the library is now well on its way to becoming an extremely valuable resource for research and information about the Antarctic Treaty System".</p>  |
|                             | <p><b>News from SCAR</b></p> <p><i>SCAR's 29th meeting a success in Hobart</i></p> <p>The organisers of the combined SCAR and COMNAP meetings in Hobart during the period July 8 to 19, 2006, were pleasantly surprised to attract some 850 registrants from 32 countries. Some 750 abstracts were submitted for the SCAR Open Science Conference (12-14 July). Most were accepted, though some were later withdrawn due to the inability of people to travel to the meeting. 53% of the papers presented were oral and 47% posters. There were 13 parallel sessions, and 39 separate themes. 120 students attended, from 15 countries. Ian Allison, Kate Kiefer, and the Australian Antarctic Division were congratulated on the excellent organisation of the meeting.</p> <p><i>New Research Fellowships (2006-7):</i></p> <p>Under the SCAR Fellowship awards for 2006-7, Stephanie Konfal will go from Ohio State University to the University of Modena, Italy. Nobue Kasamatsu will go from the National Institute of Polar Research in Japan to the Australian Antarctic Division in Hobart. Olaf Eisen will go from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology to the British Antarctic Survey in Cambridge. Victoria Metcalf will go from the University of Canterbury, NZ, to Northeastern University in Boston. Barbara Villoslada will go from Cordoba University in Argentina to the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil.</p> |



Prof. Chris Rapley

### *SCAR Elects New Officers*

During the 29th SCAR Delegates meeting (17-19 July, Hobart, Tasmania), SCAR elected as new President Dr. Chris Rapley, Director of the British Antarctic Survey and a former SCAR Vice-President. Chris has recently been much involved in developments surrounding the International Polar Year, having chaired the ICSU/WMO Planning Committee for the IPY, and now being a member of the ICSU/WMO Joint Committee for the IPY, which is charged with implementation. Chris will be joined on the Executive Committee by newcomers Dr. Sergio Marensi, Director of the Instituto Antartico Argentino, Dr. Antonio Meloni of the Instituto Nazionale di Geofisica, Roma, and Dr. Zhanhai Zhang, Director of the Polar Research Institute of China. Dr. Chuck Kennicutt of Texas A & M University remains as Vice President, and Dr. Jorn Thiede, of AWI, as Past President. Dr. Thiede was elected an Honorary Member of SCAR.

### *SCAR signs Letter of Agreement with IASC*

SCAR and the International Arctic Science Committee have signed a Letter of Agreement to strengthen the relationship between the two organisations over the next 5 years. SCAR and IASC intend to combine their efforts in selected fields and activities (to be decided by mutual agreement) so as to raise the level of impact of both organizations in terms of making scientific advances and of advising policy makers (for example of the likelihood and likely effects of climate change), as well as to avoid duplication.

### *New SCAR Members*

At the XXIX SCAR Delegates meeting in Hobart, Delegates welcomed Denmark and Portugal as new Associate Members of SCAR. Delegates also endorsed the move of Bulgaria and the Ukraine from Associate Membership to Full Membership. Finally, Delegates welcomed an additional ICSU Union Member, INQUA - the International Union for Quaternary Science. Membership now comprises 34 national Members (30 Full and 4 Associate) and 8 Union members. This widening of the SCAR family will bring with it an even wider engagement of the scientific community in SCAR's research activities.



### **News from COMNAP**

#### *COMNAP returns to Hobart for its 18th birthday*

COMNAP, The Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs, was formed in Hobart, Tasmania on 15 September 1988. It brought together for the first time the Managers of National Antarctic Programs, the national officials responsible for planning and conducting their nation's presence in the Antarctic.

In 18 years, COMNAP has grown from a small informal group



COMNAP Meeting in Hobart

of managers to an active international organisation uniting National Programs from 29 countries with two more in the process of joining. It was recognised as one of the components of the Antarctic Treaty System as early as 1991 and endeavours to provide the ATS with quality practical, technical and non-political advice. More information can be found at [www.comnap.aq](http://www.comnap.aq).

COMNAP held its 18th annual meeting in Hobart, Tasmania, the city in which it was formally created on 15 September 1988. The organisation celebrated this occasion by strengthening its focus on practical, pragmatic work to improve the effectiveness and safety of National Antarctic Programs.

COMNAP has built its success on focusing on a core mission: to serve as a forum in which the directors, logistics managers and other members of the National Programs develop practices to improve the effectiveness and safety of their activities. Importantly, it provides a forum for facilitating and promoting the development of partnerships. Overall this increases National Antarctic Programs' ability to manage and carry out their operations, together or individually, for the benefit of all.

COMNAP XVIII strengthened this focus on practical, pragmatic work. It included two productive workshops on waste management and joint training initiatives and a successful 12th Symposium on Antarctic Logistics and Operations, the theme this year being "Going Forward Together, Efficiently and Safely". Good progress was made in a range of domains including ship and air operations, joint facilities and logistics, safety, environmental protection and energy management. More details on COMNAP XVIII outcomes will be available in the next few months.

## Upcoming Meetings

### *International Workshop "Impacts of Seismic Survey Activities on Whales and Other Marine Biota"*

Organised by the German *Umweltbundesamt* (Federal Environment Agency), this workshop will take place in Dessau, Germany, from September 5 to 7, 2006. Scientists from Canada, Spain, United Kingdom, United States and Australia are among the participants. Further information and registration:

Dr. Heike Herata [heike.herata@uba.de](mailto:heike.herata@uba.de)

### *6th Hydrographic Committee on Antarctica Meeting,*

The 6th HCA meeting will take place at the Instituto Antártico Chileno on 6-8 November 2006 in Punta Arenas, Chile.

For additional information contact Hugo Gorziglia ([hgorziglia@ihb.mc](mailto:hgorziglia@ihb.mc)) or Patricia Vicuña ([pvicuna@inach.cl](mailto:pvicuna@inach.cl)).

*2nd SCAR Workshop on the History of Antarctic Research*

It will take place at the upper (17th) floor in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile, Edificio José Miguel Carrera, Teatinos 180, Santiago, Chile.

The overall theme of the second workshop is "Multidimensional exploration of Antarctica around the 1950s".

For more information contact: PD Dr. Cornelia Lüdecke:  
[C.Luedecke@lrz.uni-muenchen.de](mailto:C.Luedecke@lrz.uni-muenchen.de)

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