



Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the European Polar Board, the International Arctic Science Committee and the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research

1. The Parties

The Parties to this MoU are the European Polar Board (EPB), the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC), and the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR).

1.1 European Polar Board

The European Polar Board (EPB) is an international Organization of 24 Members from national operators and research institutes in 17 countries. EPB has a mission to coordinate European Arctic and Antarctic research, optimize the use of European research infrastructures, foster multilateral collaboration between European national funding agencies, national polar institutes and research organizations and to represent polar issues within European research framework programmes. Over 40 Polar Stations in the Arctic and Antarctica are managed by the EPB members. EPB creates and maintains strong links to European and international decision makers and funding agencies, in order to provide timely and relevant information on strategic scientific issues and forward-looking perspectives on polar research in a multitude of environmental domains. Furthermore, the EPB is actively liaising with major polar programmes outside Europe including those in the USA, Russia and Canada.

1.2 International Arctic Science Committee

The International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) is an International Scientific Associate of ICSU, and was established in 1990. IASC's mission is to initiate, develop and co-ordinate leading edge scientific research in the Arctic region, and on the role of the Arctic region in the Earth system. It also provides objective and independent scientific advice to the Arctic Council and other organizations on issues of science affecting the management of the Arctic region. IASC's geographical remit covers the Arctic Ocean and the surrounding landmasses.

1.3 Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research

The Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) is an Interdisciplinary Body of ICSU. It was established in 1958 during the International Geophysical Year of 1957 -58. Its mission is to initiate, develop, and coordinate high quality international scientific research in the Antarctic region and on the role of the Antarctic region in the Earth system. In addition, it provides objective and independent scientific advice to the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings and other organizations on issues of science and conservation affecting the management of Antarctica, such as the UNFCCC and IPCC. SCAR's remit covers Antarctica and the surrounding Southern Ocean including the Antarctic Circumpolar Current and subantarctic Islands.

2 Rationale for the MoU

The Parties to the MoU share the common goal of working internationally on polar science and technology to increase our understanding of Earth's Polar Regions and their connections to the global system.

The purpose of the present MoU is to foster cooperation between IASC, SCAR and the EPB members, and to define the corresponding terms and conditions for a joint effort in developing international programmes and initiatives based on scientific priorities, scientific excellence and use of European Antarctic and Arctic infrastructures for scientific and technological purposes.

The Parties recognize their common interest to increase cooperation between IASC, SCAR and the entities managing the European polar infrastructures, taking advantage of the complementarities of the three signatory organizations. EPB, through its member organizations, provides the "European dimension" with a bi-polar approach, with a remit that covers terrestrial and marine infrastructure and the capacity to involve national scientific or funding agencies in Europe. Through their network of scientists and groups, IASC and SCAR provide scientific priorities, facilitate international cooperation, initiate, develop, and coordinate high quality international scientific research in the Arctic and Antarctic regions and on their role of in the Earth system.

This MoU is without prejudice to the application of rights and obligations pursuant to the Antarctic Treaty System and Arctic Council and to former agreements, arrangements or letters of intent which may bind the Signatories.

3 Terms of Agreement

This MoU identifies the following commitments:

- a. The signatory parties recognize each other as key organisations for European (EPB), Arctic (IASC) and Antarctic (SCAR) Polar research.
- b. The EPB will contribute to the identification and facilitate the implementation at the European level of those priority scientific topics identified by SCAR (in the South) and IASC (in the North) that are particularly relevant at the European level.
- c. The EPB will support the priorities identified by SCAR and IASC by development of joint scientific programmes, by optimized use of European research infrastructures and by representation of polar issues within European research framework programmes.

In particular:

- i. Developing a transatlantic alliance with USA and Canada, including the settlement of distributed marine and terrestrial observatories
- ii. Improving cooperation with relevant non-European countries involved in Polar research

- iii. Coordinating the European partnership to SOOS, SAON and other observing networks.
- d. The signatory Parties will cooperate and mutually support the development and implementation of concepts and best practices for joint use of polar infrastructure, of relevant interest for IASC and SCAR activities, as well help in the access and use of some infrastructures of the EPB Members, recognising the key roles of COMNAP (in the south) and FARO (in the north) in matters of operation.
- e. The signatory Parties will discuss initiating joint projects of mutual benefit, including cooperation in the management and mutual accessibility of databases and other IT facilities.
- f. The signatory Parties will reciprocally communicate updates, newsletters, and other information of interest. They will cooperate as well on relevant outreach and polar science communication activities.
- g. The signatory Parties will provide mutual assistance in identifying experts for scientific evaluations of proposals.

A task group made by one member plus the Executive Directors/Secretaries of each Party will meet on a regular basis to review joint initiatives. Representatives of the Parties are invited to attend meetings and activities of the other Parties.

4 Financial implications of the Agreement

Parties to this Agreement will continue to be responsible for the costs of their own activities, but this does not preclude one party meeting or contributing to the occasional or on-going costs of another if they so wish.

5 Duration, Revision and Termination of this MoU

This MoU remains in force for 5 years, at which time it will be reviewed for possible extension. The MoU may be revised at any time by mutual agreement between the Parties. Any of the parties may propose alterations to the MoU. Parties wishing to withdraw from this agreement should do so by a formal letter signed by the President and head organizational manager (i.e. Executive Secretary or Director) of their respective organization.

Signed in Helsinki on 7th of April 2014 by:

Harald Loeng
EPB Chairman


David Hik
IASC Chairman


Jeronimo Lopez-Martinez
SCAR Chairman
