Report of the
SCAR Social Sciences AG
Executive Summary

Title: Report of the SCAR Social Sciences Action Group

Authors: D. Liggett, J.F Salazar, E. Leane, K. Bastmeijer, S. Chaturvedi, A.D. Hemmings, M. Lamers, J. O’Reilly, G. Steel, E. Stewart and other members of the steering group

Introduction/Background: Increasingly, Antarctic institutions and stakeholders acknowledge the costs and benefits of human activities in Antarctica not merely from an economic perspective but also from environmental, social and cultural points of view. The coverage (in the media and in policy discussions) of the many aspects of human endeavour in the Antarctic asks policy-makers, educators, scientists and the wider public to weigh multiple costs and benefits (that is to say, values) against one another. Understanding the extent and nature of the values that human beings place on the Antarctic has large-scale and very serious implications for human engagement with and activity in the region in the future and significant public-relations implications in relation to the wider social acceptability of even traditional forms of Antarctic activity.

Important Issues or Factors: Social scientists and humanities researchers have the expertise and tools to lead an academic assessment of Antarctic values and other questions linked to human presence in the Antarctic or its cultural, political, social and behavioural dimensions. The Social Sciences AG (hereon “the group”) was established to carry out research targeted at understanding the range of values underpinning human engagement with Antarctica. As shown in this report (including its appendices), this research effort has progressed considerably. At the same time, as a result of this research, it has become clear that continued research into Antarctic values needs to be cognisant of broader considerations around human presence in Antarctica. A concomitant broadening of the humanities and social sciences research agenda within SCAR promises considerable benefits in the long run, especially with regard to understanding human behaviour, impacts, influence and decision-making in an Antarctic context and developing alternative strategies for environmental management.

Recommendations/Actions and Justification: We request that the group be designated Expert Group status to maintain and expand the momentum established through the Antarctic values research project and to incorporate and coordinate a greater breadth of existing and new Antarctic social sciences and humanities projects, and potential collaborators, under its umbrella.

Expected Benefits/Outcomes: The group will continue to raise the profile of SCAR in the public realm and in social science and humanities research communities by demonstrating that SCAR supports multi-disciplinary research efforts outside the realm of the natural sciences. Social sciences and humanities enquiries and analyses through this group will also help SCAR to better ground its scientific advice in a thorough understanding of the drivers of human engagement with the Antarctic. Finally, a range of academic publications resulting from this research effort will bolster SCAR’s scholarly record in the social sciences and humanities.

Partners: The group collaborates with the SCAR History EG, as highlighted by a joint SCAR History and Social Sciences workshop (Cambridge, UK, 1-5 July 2013) and a joint session at the SCAR OSC 2014.

Budget Implications: The group requests the standard operating budget for SCAR Expert Groups ($5000 per year).
Report of the SCAR Social Sciences Action Group

1. Rationale for the Group

The fiftieth anniversary of the adoption and entry into force of the Antarctic Treaty, the fourth International Polar Year, and the centenaries of Heroic Era Antarctic expeditions have increased general awareness of the polar regions. Over the few years, declared interest in joining the Antarctic Treaty System by a number of states (most particularly Malaysia, Pakistan and Iran) has ensured regular media interest in the region. Furthermore, in the midst of these developments, the historic international activity in Antarctica – scientific cooperation between participants from now more than 60 countries – appears to be strengthening. Media coverage (now including popular books, films, television programs) and artistic representations and installations have brought information about the Antarctic continent to millions of people around the world and has prompted them to consider the benefits that humankind receives from the time, effort, and money invested in Antarctica, and to increasingly apply generic standards of public scrutiny to policies, processes and established norms of behaviour there. In other words, they have been given reasons to consider the value of Antarctica. In addition, the costs of human activities in Antarctica, not merely from an economic perspective but also from environmental, social and cultural points of view, are increasingly acknowledged. Consequently, and in light of the coverage of the many aspects of human endeavour in the Antarctic, policy-makers, educators, scientists and the wider public are asked to weigh multiple costs and benefits (that is to say, values) against one another.

The balancing of Antarctic values influences a wide range of decisions. Some of these decisions will be limited to a local impact, while others may affect entire global systems, primarily via their effects on climate, culture, and international policy. Thus, understanding the extent and nature of the values that human beings place on Antarctica has large-scale and very serious implications. It was this concern that gave rise to the recognition that an action group was needed to study and report on those values. Social scientists and humanities researchers have the expertise and tools to lead an academic assessment of Antarctic values. They can offer different perspectives to those of stakeholders more directly involved in Antarctic science and policy.

2. Report on Progress

The group’s aims include understanding the range of human values associated with Antarctica, discussing the ways in which these values may have an impact on human activity in the Antarctic, and developing an open network of social scientists and humanities researchers interested in the intersection of society and polar activities.

In pursuit of these aims, members of the group have organized, convened or contributed to a number of conference sessions, including the IPY Science Conferences and the SCAR Open Science Conferences in 2012 and 2014. Furthermore, individual group members have also given presentations about the group’s goals and work in general and about specific research questions pursued by the group in particular (see Appendix B for a list of sessions and presentations).

Under the title *Exploring Antarctic Values*, the proceedings of the group’s first workshop are now freely available from the group’s website (http://antarctica-ssag.org/). A bound volume (published under the auspices of the Gateway Antarctica Centre of the University of Canterbury, NZ) is available on request. Further publications by core members of the group or those affiliated with the work of the group that are direct outcomes of the group’s discussions are listed in Appendix C.

The relationship and linkages with the SCAR History EG have strengthened over the last couple of years. Individual members of the two groups have developed closer working relationships, and a joint Antarctic History and Social Sciences workshop in Cambridge last year was highly successful. A handbook of 43 extended abstracts of the presentations given at this workshop is available through the SCAR website (see http://www.scar.org/about/history/HumanitiesWorkshop2013_Abs.pdf). At the Cambridge meeting, the two groups have decided to continue working together and have tentatively agreed to organise another joint History/Humanities and Social Sciences workshop in the near future.
Both groups will have considerable presence at the upcoming 2014 SCAR Open Science Conference, where they are going to hold a joint conference session as well as their business meetings and a couple of roundtables. The Social Sciences Action Group’s co-chair Juan Francisco Salazar is organising an “Imagination and Science Roundtable” which will explore imaginations and representations of the future of the Antarctic region and will focus on how futures anticipated by science are related to those futures imagined or presumed by artists, social scientists, humanities researchers and policy-makers.

Recently, the group has been increasingly working with early-career researchers and the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists to develop future capacity in the field of Antarctic social sciences and humanities. Furthermore, some group members directly supervise or are associated with postgraduate students working on Antarctic value projects. These students have published on the topic of Antarctic values, and their publications are included in Appendix C as well.

Some of the group’s members have repeatedly collaborated on a number of research grant applications in areas related to Antarctic values (e.g. an Australian Research Council grant; a New Zealand Antarctic Research Institute grant), which can clearly be attributed to the close collaboration among members of the group’s steering committee. While working on these grant applications and values-related projects, the researchers commonly have to take into consideration a wide array of issues, research questions and existing studies that are not only related to Antarctic values but to cultural, social, environmental, economic and political aspects of human presence in the Antarctic in general. Many of these matters are intricately linked to how we see, understand, and make Antarctic future(s). Understanding possible future trajectories of human engagement with Antarctica and their global impacts is important for an effective and successful future governance of Antarctica. However, the group’s current mandate does not facilitate or coordinate any research that goes beyond the Antarctic values project and consequently does not sufficiently engage with the rich and diverse groups of Antarctic humanities and social sciences scholars who undertake high-quality work outside the group’s narrow values-focused directive. Expanding the group’s mandate by approving it as a SCAR Expert Group would capture and focus this additional research capacity under the SCAR umbrella, and would unite and grow currently small and scattered research efforts in the wider field of humanities and social sciences. However, most importantly, it would be a significant step towards enabling SCAR researchers to address in a concerted manner many of the human-presence related top science questions that came out of the 1st SCAR Antarctic and Southern Ocean Horizon Scan, which members of the group have been actively involved in.

3. Future Plans

The group’s future plans largely depend on whether the SCAR leadership agrees to elevate the group’s status to that of an Expert Group. If Expert Group status was designated to the group, it would expand its activities and focus to research topics addressing some of the high-priority questions identified by the 1st SCAR Antarctic and Southern Ocean Horizon Scan. At the same time, the group would aim at attracting new members undertaking Antarctic-related humanities and social sciences research and at growing capacity in this field by working with early-career researchers and supervising postgraduate research projects.

In any case, the group intends to focus on the following:

a) Further promotion of the growth of the nascent polar social sciences and humanities network established in the last four years through SCAR and the group’s presence at the SCAR Open Science Conference 2014; through the group’s own roundtable and business meeting at the SCAR OSC; and beyond that through workshops, symposia, the group’s website, and other channels (e.g. academic publications, media, education and outreach);

b) Strengthening collaboration with the SCAR History EG and planning of future joint events/workshops;

c) Increasing collaboration with the rejuvenated Antarctic Social Sciences and Humanities research group that is part of the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS);

d) Increasing trans-polar collaboration with networks and organizations of Arctic social scientists and humanities researchers;
e) Publication of further research on Antarctic humanities and social sciences research, with a current focus on values and Antarctic futures, in the polar and non-polar academic journals; and

f) Discussion regarding future research directions in response to the top Antarctic science questions determined through the 1st SCAR Antarctic and Southern Ocean Horizon Scan.

4. Budgetary Implications

The group requests the standard operating budget for SCAR Expert Groups ($5000 per year).
Appendices

A. Group membership

A core group of experts was formed in January 2010 and was then expanded over time to ensure a wide geographical and disciplinary representation. This core group assumes the role of a steering committee. The leadership of the group will change in February 2015, when Dr Juan Salazar will step back from his position as a co-chair. Dr Elizabeth Leane was elected by the steering group as Dr Salazar’s successor.

- Dr Kees Bastmeijer (NL): Law
- Dr Sanjay Chaturvedi (IN): Geopolitics
- Dr Alan Hemmings (AU/NZ/UK): Polar Governance and Policy
- Dr Bernard Herber (US): Economics
- Dr Machiel Lamers (NL): Environmental Policy/Tourism
- Dr Daniela Liggett (NZ/DE) (co-chair): Environmental Management/Tourism
- Dr Elizabeth Leane (AU) (new co-chair): Literature (Arts and Humanities)
- Dr Jessica O’Reilly (US): Anthropology
- Dr Juan Francisco Salazar (AU/CL) (exiting co-chair): Anthropology/Media Studies
- Dr Gary Steel (NZ/CA): Psychology
- Dr Emma Stewart (NZ/UK): Human Geography
- Dr Veronica del Valle (AR): Anthropology

Note:
Country codes in parentheses indicate the country of residence followed by, where different, the country of origin.
B. List of conference sessions or workshops (since 2010)

Conference sessions

**IPTRN International Polar Tourism Research Network Conference IV**
(Christchurch, NZ, 29 August – 4 September 2014)
“Polar Tourism Gateways”
Co-convenors: D. Liggett, E. Stewart

**SCAR Open Science Conference**
(Auckland, NZ, 25-28 August 2014)
“Imagination and Science” Roundtable
Convenor: Juan Francisco Salazar

**SCAR Open Science Conference**
(Auckland, NZ, 25-28 August 2014)
“The Presence of the Past and Methods and Innovations in Polar Social Sciences”
Co-convenors: D. Liggett, C. Lüdecke, G. Steel, E. Stewart, A. Elzinga

**SCAR Open Science Conference**
(Portland, OR, July 2012)
“Human Connections to the Antarctic and Antarctic Values”.
Co-convenors: D. Liggett, G. Steel and S. Engelbert

**SCAR Open Science Conference**
(Portland, OR, July 2012)
“Changing Poles: Challenges to the Antarctic and Arctic Communities and Institutions”
Co-convenors: D. Liggett and P. Schweitzer

**International Polar Year (IPY) Open Science Conference 2012**
(Montréal, Canada, April 2012)
“Polar Values and Ethics: Perspectives From Across the Social Sciences”.
Co-convenors: D. Liggett, G. Steel and E. Neufeld

**International Polar Year (IPY) Open Science Conference 2010**
(Oslo, Norway: 8-12 June 2010)
(a) Roundtable: “The History of Polar Social Sciences: Arctic and Antarctic Connections”.
(b) Panel discussion by the SCAR Social Sciences Action Group: “The meaning of value”.

Workshops

**SCAR History and Social Sciences Workshop**
(Cambridge, UK, 1-5 July 2013)
“Past, present and future of human connections to the Antarctic”.

**SCAR Social Sciences Action Group Workshop**
(Christchurch, New Zealand, 5 Dec 2011)
“Exploring linkages between environmental management and value systems – the case of Antarctica”.

**International Workshop**
(University of Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 15-17 November 2010)
“Northern and Southern Circumpolarities (Socioeconomic and Sociocultural approaches)”

**Workshop: The Antarctic Problem in the 21st Century: Nationalism, Geopolitics, Cultural Futures**
(University of Western Sydney, Australia, 25-26 October 2012)
Presentations

The Polar Regions in the Asian Century: The 7th Polar Law Conference
(University of Tasmania, Hobart, 29-31 October 2014)

SCAR Standing Scientific Groups – Joint Session
(Auckland, NZ, 25-28 August 2014)
Liggett D., Salazar, J.F., Leane, E. (2014). “Interactions between the Social Sciences/Humanities and the SSGs” (title to be confirmed)

European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) International Conference
(Tallinn, Estonia, July 31-August 4, 2014)

Antarctic Sovereignty: A Certain Uncertainty – An Expert Conversation
(Sydney Democracy Network, University of Sydney, 10 June 2014)

Aurora Expedition Centenary Symposium
(University of Adelaide, Adelaide, Australia, 26 Feb. 2014)

Southern Screens Symposium
(Curtin University of Technology, Perth, Australia, November 2013)

Antarctica: A Continent for the Humanities Workshop
(Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden, 5-8 Sept. 2013)

SCAR History and Social Sciences Workshop: Past, Present and Future of Human Connections to the Antarctic
(British Antarctic Survey, Cambridge, UK, July 1-4)
(a) Barticevic, E. and Salazar, J.F (2013). “Citizens’ engagements with science and the shaping of an Antarctic imaginary in Chile”
(b) Philpott, C. and Leane, E. (2013). “‘Scott of the Antarctic’ at the Opera: Interpreting Winfried Zillig’s Das Opfer (1937).”

Seminar: Digital Interventions
(Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Australia, 15 May 2013)

NZARI Antarctic Futures Workshop 2013
(Auckland, New Zealand, March 2013)

SCAR Open Science Conference 2012
(Portland, Oregon, USA, July 2012)
(b) Salazar, J.F. (2012). “Perceptions and Attitudes of Antarctic cultural and environmental values in Chile”.

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(e) Steel, G.D and Neufeld, E. (July, 2012). ” ‘We leave it as we found it’: value motivations and pro-environmental behaviour in the Ross Sea region”. (Poster)

Australasian Association for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies (ADSA) conference
(Queensland University of Technology and University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia, 3-6 July 2012)
Leane, E. (2012). “Icescape Theatre: Staging the Far South.” (Keynote)

International Polar Year (IPY) Open Science Conference 2012
(Montréal, Canada, April 2012)


3rd International Polar Tourism Research Network Conference
(Nain, Canada, 16-20 April 2012)


SAGAA International Conference on Science and Geopolitics of the Arctic and Antarctica
(New Delhi, India, 9 March 2012)

Legal Forum
(Akureyri University, Akureyri, Iceland, 14 February 2012)

International Conference on The Arctic Council: Its Place in the Future of Arctic Governance
(Toronto, Canada, 17 January 2012)

SCAR Social Sciences Action Group Workshop – Exploring Linkages between Environmental Management and Value Systems: The Case of Antarctica
(University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand, 5 December 2011)

(b) Leane, E. (2011). “Does Antarctica need Snow? The ‘Two Cultures’ and Disciplinary Values in the Far South”

(c) Salazar, J.F (2011). “Perceptions and Attitudes of Antarctic cultural and environmental values in Chile”

4th Biennial Conference of the Australian Animal Studies Group: Animals, People: A Shared Environment
(Environmental Futures Centre, Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia, 10-13 July 2011)

Antarctica New Zealand Science Conference
(Hamilton, New Zealand, 4-6 July 2011)
(a) Neufeld, E. and Steel, G. (2011). “From Cape Evans to Kaiapoi: the stories, images and experiences that make New Zealand’s Antarctica” (Poster)

**Advancing the Social Science of Tourism**
(Guildford, University of Surrey, UK, 28th June – 1st July 2011)

**Antarctica: Music, Sound and Cultural Connections**
(Australian National University, Canberra, Australia, 27-29 June 2011)

**International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences (ICASS VII)**
(Akureyri, Iceland, 22-26 Jun 2011)
(a) del Acebo Ibáñez, E. (2011). Invited presentation on the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR)’s Social Sciences Action Group (SSAG) to the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) Social and Human Sciences Working Group
(b) del Acebo Ibáñez, E. (2011). “The Ship”. Documentary based on the 2010-11 Tierra del Fuego/Antarctic campaign of the Puerto Deseado Oceanographic vessel (Argentine Council for Scientific research), directed by Enrique del Acebo Ibáñez and screened at the conference
(c) Liggett, D. (2011). Invited contribution to a plenary discussion “Arctic Social Sciences beyond IPY”
(d) Liggett, D. and Steel, G. (2011). “Adding “value” to Antarctic research, management and policy: A project-driven approach towards creating a community of Antarctic social and human scientists”
(e) Liggett, D. (2011). Invited presentation on the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR)’s Social Sciences Action Group (SSAG) to the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) Social and Human Sciences Working Group

**Perspectives on Transboundary Environmental Governance in Australia and Beyond**
(Wollongong, Australia, 12 May 2011)

**Cooperation Regimes and Third Parties**
(Canberra, Australia, 22 November 2010)

**Arctic and Antarctic Continental Shelves: New Resource Frontiers?**
(British Library, London, UK, 21 September 2010)

**Polar Law Symposium**
(Akureyri, Iceland, 9 – 11 September 2010)

**Symposium on the Politics of Antarctica**
(University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand, 8-9 July 2010)
2nd IPTRN conference: *Tourism, People and Protected Areas in Polar Wilderness*  
(Abisko, Sweden, 12-15 June 2010)  
(a) Bastmeijer, K., Lamers, M. (2010). “Strategic Antarctic tourism policy-making: Calibrating the human-nature relationship?”

(b) Johnston, M.E., Dawson, J.D., Lemelin, R.H. and Stewart, E. (2010). Climate change and tourism change in Arctic communities: An exploration of interactions, experiences and strategies

18th Annual Australia and New Zealand Society of International Law (ANZSIL) Conference  
(Australian National University, Canberra, Australia, 24 June 2010)  

Antarctic Visions: Cultural Perspectives on the Southern Continent  
(University of Tasmania, Hobart, Australia, 21-23 June 2010)  


(c) Neufeld, E. and Steel, G. (2010). “Imagining in Ice: Antarctica in the imaginations of New Zealanders”

(d) Salazar, J.F (2010). “Rendering Antarctica in the Chilean Imaginary”

International Polar Year (IPY) Open Science Conference 2010  
(Oslo, Norway: 8-12 June 2010)  
(a) Lamers, M. (2010). “Strategic challenges of tourism development and governance in Antarctica”


Pirates of the Southern Ocean?  
(Australian National University, Canberra, Australia, 15 April 2010)  
C. List of publications (since 2010)

Forthcoming:


2014:


### 2013:


2012:


2011:


Hemnings, A.D. (2011). Why did we get an International Space Station before an International Antarctic


2010:


