



Antarctic Treaty Secretariat Newsletter

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From the Executive Secretary

Dear colleagues and friends in the Antarctic community and beyond,

In November I was on the road for about a month to attend various Antarctic meetings - CCAMLR (Hobart), the Hydrographic Committee on Antarctica (Christchurch), an International Workshop on Antarctic Law (Rome), the IPY Joint Committee (Geneva) - and for consultations in India and the UK about our meetings in 2006 and 2007. One impression that has stayed with me is that I encountered IPY - the International Polar Year, 2007-9 - not only in Geneva, but everywhere I went. In our Newsletter too I think you will see more and more emphasis on IPY as it comes nearer. I returned to a Secretariat that is bigger (two new full time staff members joined the Secretariat, see below) and busier than ever before. We are making much progress with the conversion of the ATCM Recommendations, Measures, Decisions and Resolutions into electronic files, in preparation of their publication online on our website. Progress with the publication of the Final Report of the Stockholm ATCM has been somewhat slower, due to the enormous size and divergent formatting of the report, but we hope to start distributing at least the English version soon.

Best wishes from all of us at the Secretariat for restful holidays and a happy New Year!

Johannes Huber



Jan Huber's speech at the reception

Antarctic Treaty Day

To mark its "National Day" - in this case, the date of the signature of the Antarctic Treaty, December 1 - the Secretariat invited the Ambassadors of the Antarctic Treaty Parties and other members of the Diplomatic Corps in Buenos Aires as well as representatives of the Argentine Government and friends and relations of the Secretariat to a reception in the Plaza Hotel in downtown Buenos Aires on November 30. About 150 guests attended, and there was lively conversation on Antarctic topics. In his speech the Executive Secretary drew attention to the success of the Treaty in keeping Antarctica a zone of peace, international scientific cooperation and natural beauty.



Antonia Hjort

International Cooperation

In the past few months we have had two trainees working at the Secretariat, namely Diane Erceg from Australia and Antonia Hjort from Sweden. Diane, with experience in Antarctic Policy and Environmental Issues gained in the Australian Antarctic Division, was with us for four weeks and has in the mean time went on to Antarctica - we last received an email from Ushuaia - but Antonia liked her work here so much she is returning to spend some more time at the Secretariat.

Antonia: Through my work at the 28th ATCM in Stockholm, as a meeting assistant and rapporteur, I became interested in learning more about the everyday work of a Treaty Secretariat. As I had already decided to take a year off from my studies, having the chance of working at the Secretariat for a few months was a great opportunity. Once in Buenos Aires, my first task at the Secretariat was to establish a temporary archive and to make an inventory of the documents already owned by the Secretariat and those that were lacking. Having done this I was given some time to familiarize myself with the Antarctic Treaty and the system surrounding it, before starting on what has now become my full-time project - completing the English version of the Recommendation database, on the basis of this archive.

Working on this database is not always an easy task and it has really been a learning-as-you-go experience. In general terms I make sure that all the texts in the database, both recommendation texts and annexes/attachments, correspond to the original reports. I have received patient assistance from my colleagues at the Secretariat, and thus I am hoping that the end result will be of satisfaction to the Parties!

Throughout my three months (so far!) at the Secretariat I have also assisted in: proof-reading the final report of ATCM XXVIII, changing the layout of the Annex II review, reviewing the format of the handbook etc.

All in all, I am gaining invaluable knowledge and experience of the politics of Antarctica and the Treaty system, which gives greater substance to the political- and policy focus of my Environmental Science degree.



Diane Erceg

New Staff members

As announced in 2005 work programme, the Secretariat has added two positions: IT Officer and Editor. Diego Wydler and Pablo Wainschenker have been appointed for these positions and they are already working at the ATS as part of the Secretariat's professional staff.

Diego Wydler, IT Officer



Diego Wydler

Diego manages the Secretariat's computer facilities and data management systems. Together with ATS Information Officer Pepe Agraz, Diego oversees the design and development of data management systems by software development companies contracted by the Secretariat, and their implementation and maintenance at the Secretariat. He also designs, develops and maintains applications himself and, in liaison with the Secretariat's suppliers, he is responsible for the operation of the Secretariat's IT equipment, network and data management systems. During the ATCM Diego will coordinate the provision of IT services with the Host Country Secretariat's IT Officer.

Diego has a degree in System Analysis from the University of Buenos Aires. Before joining the ATS, he worked as project leader for several IT companies. His skills range from planning and administrating technological infrastructure to the supervision of databases and application development projects. Diego has recently finished postgraduate studies in Strategic Planning and Administration.

Pablo Wainschenker, Editor



Pablo Wainschenker

In October this year, Pablo began working as the Editor of the Secretariat. He is responsible for the editing of the Secretariat's publications and under the guidance of the Information Officer, Pablo writes texts for the Secretariat's public information materials and website.

Pablo has studied journalism and Social Communication both in Argentina and in Spain, and he has worked as a freelance journalist focused on Antarctic issues since 1998, when he published an article on Antarctica in the journal of the IV Session of the Conference of the United Nations Convention on Climate Change (COP4). Pablo has contributed as a photographer of the Antarctic landscape to the Norwegian newspaper Aftenposten and the book Heroes of the polar wastes, by Kåre Berg. He has also been a contributor to the Science section of the Argentinian newspaper Página 12 since 2002.

Between 2002 and 2004 he was involved in the making of a major documentary about the Nordenskjöld Expedition to Antarctica 1901-1903. The movie, called "Trapped in the end of the world", was filmed in Antarctica, Argentina, Sweden and Norway. During the ATCM in Stockholm Pablo was reporter for the Host Country Secretariat (Sweden).



The International Polar Foundation

The International Polar Foundation (IPF) was established in Brussels in 2002 as a foundation for the public good under Royal Statute. In 2004 H.R.H Prince Philippe of Belgium became the Honorary President.

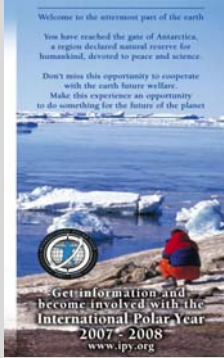
The IPF's mission is to communicate to and educate the public on the reality of climate change through the findings of Polar science and thereby convince society to act responsibly to ensure a sustainable world for future generations. To this end, a number of initiatives have been launched, aimed at providing an inspiring and positive image of the role of scientific activity, particularly in the Polar Regions. In 2004, the Belgian Government commissioned the IPF to design a new research station in East Antarctica. The previous station closed forty years ago in 1967, and the opening of the new station during the International Polar Year 2007 has become a source of national pride.

The IPF has a number of key projects to demonstrate the pivotal role of the Polar Regions in the Earth system and to encourage constructive responses to sustainable development issues. These include the Polaris Climate Change Observatory in Brussels, and the Domus in Terra facility which will inform visitors about potential paths towards a more sustainable relationship with the Earth.

Amongst the IPF's existing communication platforms are its scientific website, www.sciencepoles.org, which provides a concise and accessible overview of polar science and research findings as well as recent and forthcoming developments across a range of scientific disciplines. Similar in approach and representative of the IPF's other work in this domain is a recent special Polar Research edition of RTD Info, the European Commission's quarterly magazine on European research which the IPF was asked to produce and edit.

The IPF's Educational platform includes educational tools such as the recent 'Polar Regions and Climate Change' CD-ROM which was edited and distributed in six languages, and the www.educapoles.org website which aims to provide interesting information and activities for school age children in an attractive and stimulating format. The website is meant to educate children on important issues while demystifying science and encouraging more young people to adopt scientific careers.

The IPF is headquartered in Brussels and has local 'antennas' in France, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The development of Canadian and US antennae is currently in progress. More information on the IPF and all its projects is available on the IPF website, www.polarfoundation.org



Brochure about IPY for visitors

Tierra del Fuego and the International Polar Year

The Province of Tierra del Fuego, Argentina is organizing, through a group of Official Agencies, private companies as well as NGOs a series of activities to support the International Polar Year.

Since Ushuaia is the most important tourist gateway to Antarctica, several of those activities are aimed at alerting visitors to Antarctica as well as the whole community about the importance of IPY. The main activities scheduled for 2005 and 2006 are:

- A training program for tourist guides about the International Polar Year.
- Brochures about the IPY inviting tourists to take part in IPY activities.
- Assistance to guides and lectures on Antarctic tourist ships by distributing Power Point presentations on the IPY Official Program, copies of the IPY Framework for passengers, posters to be displayed in the ships and other material about IPY activities of various countries.
- From March 2006, one year before the beginning of the IPY, important personalities will be invited to participate in various activities. Tierra del Fuego will invite other circumpolar cities to promote a "Manifiesto for the Future", through which children will ask for answers on the future of the planet from authorities around the world.
- In 2006 a classical music festival will be organized by the Municipality of Ushuaia.
- The Convention "Eco Polar Ushuaia 2006" will take place in May 2006. It will consider political, social and technical issues associated with IPY.

Other activities will be announced later.

For more information visit: www.tierradelfuego.org.ar/ipy or contact Daniel Leguizamón or Lucía Pérez at ipy@tierradelfuego.org.ar



Magnetograph designed by the IAU

Antarctic MAGMA on King George Island

Electromagnetic condition data are being collected in the vicinity of Artigas Station in order to establish possible variations in the local magnetic field due to human activity. Measurements are made by a magnetograph designed by scientists from the Uruguayan Antarctic Institute (I.A.U.).

The name of the device is MAGMA, and low energy consumption, small size, automatic processes and low cost are among its distinct characteristics. This magnetograph was already used in two previous summer seasons and the information is being used for environmental monitoring. Uruguayan scientists have also planned to draw a magnetic map of Artigas Station with the data collected by the MAGMA.

For additional information contact: Aldo Felici, ambiente@iau.gub.uy

News from SCAR

SCAR Executive Director visits far-east polar institutes

Between October 10 and 27 the SCAR Executive Director visited the polar research institutes of Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur), China (Shanghai), Korean (Ansan) and Japan (Tokyo), for discussions with polar scientists about how the Asian scientific community could become more involved in SCAR activities. SCAR is keen to be fully inclusive and to engage all of its Members.

SCAR's Parent Body, ICSU, Sets a New Course

From October 18 to 20, 2005, the SCAR Executive Director attended the 28th General Assembly of SCAR's parent body, ICSU, the International Council for Science, in Suzhou, China. ICSU is currently undergoing a major overhaul of its organisation. It is using teams of experts to review all of its activities as the basis for streamlining what it does and becoming more focused on key objectives. A key end result will be the production of a strategic plan, a draft of which (for 2006-2011) was provided at the meeting. ICSU is increasing its attention on the polar regions, having accepted the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) as an Affiliate organisation in November 2004.

Canada contributes \$150 million to support International Polar Year

The Canadian International Polar year Secretariat announced on October 28th that the Deputy Prime Minister had announced that the federal government would contribute \$150 million dollars to support IPY. Details about Canada's involvement in the IPY can be found at www.ipy-api.ca

Southern Ocean likely to become more acid with global warming, affecting ecosystem

A June 2005 report from the UK's Royal Society, entitled "Ocean acidification due to increasing atmospheric carbon dioxide", shows that the dissolution of increasing amounts of carbon dioxide in the ocean causes it to become more acid. That means "that even at a modest future projection of CO₂ emissions, of about 900 Gt C, direct impact of ocean acidification is very likely to cause the Southern Ocean to become undersaturated with respect to aragonite. Southern Ocean food webs are of particular concern. Calcifying organisms in the Southern Ocean will be among the first to be affected from ocean acidification. Aragonite-producing pteropods are the dominant calcifiers in the Southern Ocean. These pelagic molluscs account for a significant proportion of the biological pump of the Antarctic polar front, and in the Ross Sea. In addition, they are an important food source for marine predators in the Antarctic food web, and sometimes replace krill as the dominant zooplankton group in parts of the Southern Ocean. Changes to the carbon cycle of the Southern Ocean will have large-scale ramifications for this and other interconnected ecosystems."

Upcoming Meetings

Workshop on marine acoustics in the Southern Ocean

24 - 26 January 2006 - Faculty of Marine Sciences, University of Cádiz, Spain.

All enquiries about the program should be sent to Professor David Walton at d.walton@bas.ac.uk

Enquiries about the local arrangements should be made to the local organiser Professor Manuel Catalán Pérez-Urquiola at manuel.catalan@uca.es



ATCM XXIX, Edinburgh, United Kingdom

12-23 June 2006

Contact: Mr. Paul Davies, Deputy Executive Secretary, paul.davies@fco.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.atcm2006.gov.uk>

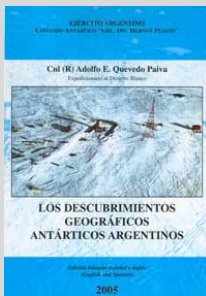


SCAR XXIX - COMNAP XVIII Meetings, Hobart, Tasmania, July 2006

- 9-11 July 2006 - Business meetings of SCAR subsidiary bodies
- 12-14 July 2006 - SCAR Open Science Conference
- 9-14 July 2006 - COMNAP and SCALOP meetings
- 13 July 2006 - SCALOP Symposium
- 17-19 July 2006 - SCAR Delegates Meeting

For registration and more information go to: www.scar2006.org

Deadline for abstract submissions: 31 December 2005



Received Publications

Los descubrimientos geográficos antárticos argentinos (The Argentine Antarctic geographical discoveries), by Adolfo Quevedo Paiva. Spanish-English bilingual edition, 2005, 159 pages. ISBN 987-43-9647-4.

Books and other publications are welcome

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