Executive Summary

Authors: Jerónimo López-Martínez, Huw Griffiths, Julian Gutt, Daniela Liggett, Yan Ropert-Coudert, Aleks Terauds, Anton Van de Putte, Karin Lochte, Bryan Storey, Azizan Samah, Terry Wilson, Berry Lyons, Jesus Galindo, Graham Hosie, Dave Bromwich, Adrian Fox, John Storey, Nancy Bertler, Carlota Escutia, and Jenny Baeseman.

Important Issues or Factors:
At the SCAR Executive Committee Meeting in Tromsø, Norway (26-28 August 2015), discussing the new 2017-2022 SCAR Strategic Plan was one of the most important topics in the agenda. A process was approved and followed to assure wide community input into the new plan. The plan follows in this paper as does the latest draft.

Recommendations/Actions and Justification:
Delegates are asked to approve the text of the strategic plan and allow the team to move forward on the final publication of the document

Budget Implications:
Unfortunately, no budget line has been included for the publication of the strategic plan or layout design. Additional funds will need to be allocated from the 2016 budget to cover these costs.
SCAR Strategic Plan 2017-2022 Process

Approved by the SCAR Executive Committee, Tromso, 26-28 August 2015
Amended on 25 June 2016 to reflect corrected timeline

At the SCAR Executive Committee Meeting in Tromso, Norway (26-28 August 2015), discussing the new 2017-2022 SCAR Strategic Plan was one of the most important topics in the agenda. Significant time was dedicated to discussing the paper introducing this agenda item (WP 5) and to advancing the preparation of the new Strategic Plan. The SCAR Executive Committee and most of the Chief Officers of the various SCAR groups attended the meeting in person, and others online.

Discussions about the next phase for SCAR revolved around the need to maintain and develop high science outputs and solid policy advice as much as possible. The 1st SCAR Antarctic & Southern Ocean Science Horizon Scan will help to guide the scientific advances for the organization. The review of the SCAR structure will also help toward enhancing the aims of the strategic plan. One main conclusion was that more efforts should be put on developing the involvement and participation of SCAR members in subsidiary bodies and SCAR activities. Discussions also included the need to improve interactions with members, increasing national membership, the involvement of new scientists in SCAR activities and internal and external communications.

The target audiences for the new Strategic Plan were agreed to be the SCAR community, policy makers and other partners with interests in Antarctica. The agreement of the group assembled was to keep the plan short, concise, and direct, limiting the amount of text in the document.

The Strategic Plan Team will continue being composed of the participants in the meeting and the COs that were represented or participated online (see list below). A small writing team was assembled to help the Secretariat address the various comments and drafts for the next steps of the development of the SCAR 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. The writing team consists of: Huw Griffiths, Julian Gutt, Daniela Liggett, Yan Ropert-Coudert, Aleks Terauds and Anton Van de Putte.

Timeline for Completing the Strategic Plan following the ExCom meeting in Tromso

4 Sept 2015: The secretariat, assisted by the writing team, will adapt the draft document prepared during the EXCOM meeting and will circulate a Draft-1 of the Strategic Plan to all members of the Strategic Plan Team (meeting participants as well as COs not attending).

21 Sept 2015: Comments from the Strategic Plan Team members due to Secretariat.

5 Oct 2015: Draft-2, prepared by the Secretariat and writing team, sent to Strategic Plan Team members for quick review.

15 Oct 2015: Draft-3, modified by any additional comments from Strategic Plan Team members, will be sent to the National Delegates, Subsidiary Body Chairs and ICSU Union members asking for review, input, and suggestions, to achieve a consensus document. National Delegates are asked to discuss with their national committee and provide feedback by 20 November.

7 Dec 2015: Draft-4, incorporating received inputs will be prepared by the Secretariat and writing team and will be sent to the Strategic Plan Team members for review.

14 Dec 2015 23 Mar 2016: Draft-5, modified by any additional comments from the Strategic Plan Team members, will be sent to the National Delegates and ICSU Union members, as well as partner organizations (COMNAP, CCAMLR, IASC, APECS and others as necessary) for comments due by 20 January 6 Jun.

20 Feb 2016 20 Apr 2016: Draft-6, prepared by the Secretariat and writing team, will be sent to the Strategic Plan Team members for final review. An online meeting will be held to consolidate comments if needed – not needed.

15 Mar 2016: Secretariat to begin work with professional graphic designer on a preliminary draft layout.

20 Apr 2016: Preliminary draft layout sent to the Strategic Plan Team members for comments due by 5 May.
15 May 2016 25 Jun 2016: The revised Draft-7 with the preliminary draft layout will be submitted to Delegates for meeting in Kuala Lumpur (29-30 August 2016). A conditional approval of the plan by the Delegates Meeting is expected.

15 Sept 2016: Draft-8, prepared by the Secretariat and writing team based on comments from Delegates Meeting, will be sent to ExCom for comments by 25 September.

30 Sept 2016: Final draft posted to website and sent to SCAR members for final comments due before 20 October 2016.

15 Nov 2016: Final Strategic Plan approved by ExCom and posted to website and printed.

1 Jan 2017: SCAR Strategic Plan 2017-2022 will go into force.

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Strategic Plan Team

SCAR Executive Committee

Jerónimo López-Martínez, SCAR President
Karin Lochte, Vice-President for Capacity Building
Bryan Storey, Vice-President for Finance
Azizan Samah, Vice-President for Science
Terry Wilson, Vice-President for Administration

Chief Officers and SRPs Chairs:

Berry Lyons, SSG-GS
Jesus Galindo, SSG-GS
Graham Hosie, SSG-LS
Yan Ropert-Coudert, SSG-LS
Dave Bromwich, SSG-PS
Aleks Terauds, SCATS
Anton Van de Putte, SCADM
Adrian Fox, SCAGI
John Storey, AAA
Huw Griffiths, AntEco
Julian Gutt, AnT-ERA
Nancy Bertler, AntClim21
Carlota Escutia, PAIS
Daniela Liggett, HASSEG

Secretariat:

Jenny Baeseman, Executive Director
Eoghan Griffin, Executive Officer
Rosemary Nash, Administrative Assistant
SCAR Strategic Plan 2017-2022

Connecting and Building Antarctic Research

Preface

(Preliminary draft preface, to be reviewed and completed)

Interest in Antarctic scientific research is rising with a growing recognition of its importance in understanding processes with global implications, in particular in the current context of climate change. Environmental changes have become more relevant than ever before for the global community and their governments. Antarctica and the Southern Ocean have a fundamental role in regulating processes such as climate and carbon uptake, and research in the Antarctic is crucial to understanding processes of global significance and to advancing science. Additionally, rapid changes are occurring in parts of Antarctica that could open the continent to a new level of activities in the coming decades.

Antarctic governance, administration and environmental protection must be based on scientific data. Therefore, SCAR is more in demand than ever to deliver scientific input to international discussions and provide a platform for the growing international and interdisciplinary collaborations that are required. Since 1958, SCAR has been central in defining the vision and goals of science in Antarctica and has facilitated the implementation of Antarctic science by promoting international and transdisciplinary collaborations. The provision of scientific advice, identification of opportunities, and the facilitation of collaboration are the core elements of SCAR’s essential mission.

An important restructuring of SCAR was approved in 2002, and the first SCAR Open Science Conference under the new structure was held in Germany in 2004. The new structure helped to make SCAR more effective and to increase its presence and influence in the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings (ATCM). The change of structure also helped to increase collaborations with other international organizations and committees with interests in Antarctica, including the Committee on Environmental Protection (CEP), the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs (COMNAP) and the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), among others. A substantial number of inputs and submissions are presented every year to the ATCM and the CEP, often jointly with partner organizations, and a SCAR Science Lecture is now given at each ATCM.

SCAR has become an observer to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and is increasing its collaboration with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). SCAR’s endeavour to further develop these roles are
exemplified through recent SCAR activities at the COP21 event in Paris in November 2015, and the provision of advice to the IPCC Working Group 1.

In order to achieve its mission, SCAR regularly develops Strategic Plans. The regular review of the Strategic Plan allows SCAR aims and actions to be aligned to the contemporary demands of science and society and enables SCAR to remain an influential scientific advisor on Antarctic issues.

Prior Strategic Plans have helped SCAR to achieve important outputs and outcomes. Some examples are highlighted below:

- Consolidation of the biannual SCAR Open Science Conferences and the SCAR meetings as a productive occasion for interaction of the international and multidisciplinary Antarctic community;
- Development of the 1st Antarctic and Southern Ocean Science Horizon Scan and identification of research priorities for the next two decades and beyond;
- Cooperation with COMNAP to identify technological and logistic needs for Antarctic research in the future;
- Increased support for early career scientists, including the development of a fellowships programme and the establishment of processes supporting capacity building in countries that have only recently begun undertaking Antarctic research;
- Promotion of international field campaigns and coordinated initiatives such as the Southern Ocean Observing System (SOOS) and the Integrating Climate and Ecosystem Dynamics (ICED); and
- Preparation of different products and outputs of broad interest, such as the Biogeographic Atlas of the Southern Ocean, BEDMAP-2, the Southern Ocean Acidification Report and others.

SCAR is moving into its sixth decade and has grown substantially in membership – from 12 original members in 1958 to 39+x in 2016. It is now well-established as an internationally recognized and influential organization. This has only been possible through the engagement and support of thousands of researchers from around the world that comprise the SCAR Antarctic scholarly community, together with the support of the SCAR national committees. SCAR’s successful functioning also relies on the efforts of many volunteers who have generously contributed their time in a range of roles. SCAR looks forward to continuing its contribution to the advancement of knowledge and to assisting international cooperation in Antarctic scientific research.

Jerónimo López-Martínez
President of SCAR 2012-2016
Executive summary

SCAR’s vision is to create a legacy of Antarctic research as a foundation for a better future. In line with this vision, through scientific research and international cooperation SCAR will establish a thorough understanding of the nature of Antarctica, the role of Antarctica in the global system, and the character and effects of environmental change and human activities on Antarctica. SCAR’s work in the next five years will focus on five key objectives:

a) To amplify its leadership in Antarctic research by further strengthening and expanding high-quality collaborative and visionary Antarctic research;

b) To offer independent scientific advice to Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings and other bodies dealing with Antarctic and Southern Ocean matters;

c) To enhance and grow research capacity in SCAR member countries;

d) To enhance public awareness and understanding of Antarctic issues through communication of Antarctic research results in a timely and accessible manner; and
e) To facilitate unrestricted and free access to Antarctic research data.

The actions required in the next six years to achieve the above objectives are highlighted in blue boxes contained within each section of this strategic plan. Underlining all objectives is SCAR’s aim to enhance the information flow to all interested researchers and policy makers and stimulate cross- and trans-disciplinary exchange.

**What is SCAR**

Formed in 1958, SCAR is an interdisciplinary body of the International Council for Science (ICSU), and currently includes 39+ member countries and 9 ICSU unions. SCAR strives to include new members, as countries not yet engaged develop an increasing interest in Antarctic science. At regular intervals SCAR evaluates its achievements and adjusts its structure and strategy to improve its functioning and accommodate emerging issues. Involvement in SCAR science is open to all.

The mission of the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) is to advance Antarctic research, and to promote scientific knowledge, understanding and education on any aspect of the Antarctic region. To this end, SCAR is charged with the initiation and international co-ordination of Antarctic and Southern Ocean research that is relevant to science and beneficial to global society. SCAR provides independent and objective scientific advice and information to the Antarctic Treaty System and other bodies and acts as the main international exchange of Antarctic information within the scientific community.

SCAR is currently composed of three science groups, six research programmes, and several specialized subsidiary groups serving to address various scientific needs over a limited time frame. These groups are periodically reviewed to help focus SCAR outcomes on the most important priorities and products needed. For more information, please visit [http://www.scar.org](http://www.scar.org).

**SCAR’s Vision for 2017-2022**

SCAR’s vision is to be an engaged, active, forward-looking organization that promotes, facilitates, and delivers scientific excellence and evidence-based policy advice on globally significant issues that are relevant to Antarctica.

SCAR will use the key questions arising from the 1st Antarctic and Southern Ocean Science Horizon Scan to guide research priorities and research direction over the next six years and beyond.
SCAR is dedicated to protect the environment. We will make every effort to minimise the carbon imprint of our meetings and to advocate means to reduce environmental impact of scientific activities.

Core strategies

(a) Science leadership

SCAR encourages excellence in all aspects of Antarctic research and its global significance. This includes research on the continent and in the surrounding Southern Ocean; in the physical, geological and life sciences, and in research related to human engagement with the Antarctic region. SCAR assumes leadership in delivering valuable research products, such as the SCAR Biogeographic Atlas of the Southern Ocean or the widely consulted report on Antarctic Climate Change and the Environment (ACCE), which are indicative of the quality of SCAR research as well as of SCAR’s interest in tangible outputs that will advance humankind’s understanding of the Antarctic and its global connections.

The key questions emerging from the 1st SCAR Antarctic and Southern Ocean Science Horizon Scan, carried out in 2014, provide a long-term vision for high-impact cross-cutting Antarctic research and will assist in guiding the scientific work of SCAR. This includes foci on impacts of climate and other anthropogenic changes as well as studies addressing fundamental research questions. SCAR will continue to promote and advance scientific excellence and will embrace emerging challenges through its scientific groups and international cooperation.

SCAR will:

• continue to promote the implementation of the findings of the 1st SCAR Antarctic and Southern Ocean Science Horizon Scan to help focus scientific efforts and resources on key research questions, and revisit the Horizon Scan at five-year intervals to identify new research directions;
• use the very popular biennial SCAR Open Science Conference and the SCAR international thematic symposia that take place every four years to grow interest in Antarctic and Southern Ocean science, to engage with related scientific communities and to promote collaboration between SCAR members, institutes and individuals;
• add value to the research programmes of SCAR member states and international programmes through the SCAR Scientific Research Programmes and specialized subsidiary groups;
• publicize and reward excellence in SCAR research, especially via administering the prestigious Tinker-Muse Prize for Science Policy in Antarctica;
• continue to foster interdisciplinary and cross-cutting research activities, particularly with regard to more effective integration of the social sciences and humanities;
• encourage international initiatives such as the Southern Ocean Observing System (SOOS) and the Integrating Climate and Ecosystem Dynamics (ICED);
• engage with National Antarctic Programs, the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs (COMNAP), satellite observation groups and other international programmes and organizations with a polar focus to identify common research priorities and encourage shared use of scientific resources; and
• reach out to groups who currently do not have a polar focus, but whose work may benefit from information on Antarctic science.

(b) Advice

SCAR provides independent, evidence-based, scientific advice to the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings and organisations, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). SCAR identifies issues resulting from greater scientific understanding of the Antarctic region and the Southern Ocean and brings them to the attention of policymakers.

SCAR is an official Observer to the Antarctic Treaty and provides scientific advice in a variety of fields, particularly on environmental and conservation matters, to the following bodies:

• Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) and its Committee on Environmental Protection (CEP),
• Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), and
• Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP).

SCAR’s advice typically takes the form of information on policy-relevant scientific issues, reviews of the state of knowledge and scientific advice and through the Antarctic Environments Portal. SCAR is open to community consultation and initiatives that bring together experts and groups to formulate new policy, advice and guidance for national programmes, marine protected areas, and stakeholders. SCAR also plays an important role in highlighting and advising on emerging scientific issues with potential future significance and impact.

SCAR will:

• provide scientific advice and further strengthen its relationships within the Antarctic Treaty System, UNFCCC, IPCC and others such as the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES);
• bring to the attention of these policy bodies and national programmes, emerging scientific issues of regional and global significance;
- present high-quality, relevant research through the SCAR Science Lecture at ATCMs;
- continue to support the Antarctic Environments Portal and its efforts to deliver science summaries for policy-makers;
- increase engagement with policy related partners such as CCAMLR;
- create learning opportunities for all researchers on the science-policy interface; and
- maintain its cooperation with National Antarctic Programs, COMNAP and other international programmes and organizations with a polar focus.

(c) Capacity building, education and training

Training, support and development of the Antarctic community are fundamental to SCAR. The SCAR fellowships, which aim to facilitate collaboration and knowledge transfer between researchers and institutions, are good examples of SCAR’s capacity building programme for both early-career and more established researchers. SCAR also encourages and rewards excellence in Antarctic research, as well as outstanding service to the research community, through a performance recognition scheme in the form of biennially awarded SCAR medals. SCAR assists educators, students and early-career researchers and helps under-represented groups and emerging programmes to participate in SCAR’s activities and Antarctic research. SCAR promotes and facilitates the incorporation of Antarctic research into the educational landscape.

**SCAR will:**

- establish a mentoring programme for researchers in new SCAR member countries, particularly those with emerging Antarctic programmes;
- work with the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS) and similar organisations to provide career development and mentoring, and to promote involvement of early career researchers in SCAR groups;
- encourage groups and member countries to hold specialized training courses for early career scientists and others interested in developing Antarctic research activities;
- facilitate networking through use of social media and web-based communication tools;
- enable the participation of scientists new to the Antarctic community in the SCAR Open Science Conference, the SCAR international thematic symposia, and specific workshops;
- identify additional funding sources to grow and strengthen its fellowship and award schemes;
- engage in appropriate international educational activities; and
- promote the development and publication of educational products communicating Antarctic research to educators, students and the general public.
(d) Communication

Effective communication underpins all of SCAR’s activities. SCAR utilises a suite of communication tools and strategies to provide the information and products required by stakeholders, including the wider public, to ensure transparency and visibility. In addition communication platforms are provided to ensure easy exchange within the SCAR scientific community to facilitate networking.

**SCAR will:**

- use the most effective communication technologies, including social media, to enhance its visibility and further promote SCAR activities;
- continue to regularly update the SCAR website and produce an e-newsletter;
- expand participation in SCAR activities by providing virtual participation, especially in the SCAR Open Science Conferences and the SCAR international thematic symposia;
- regularly review the effectiveness of its communication strategy and mechanisms; and
- work closely with National SCAR Committees and partners to ensure effective communication.

(e) Grow and strengthen SCAR membership

SCAR is a well-established organisation that continues to grow, reflecting the rising recognition of the global importance of Antarctic research. SCAR depends on member contributions and welcomes the stimulating input from its members. SCAR encourages active participation of its members to achieve its mission and goals.

One of the major SCAR activities that strengthens SCAR’s membership is the biennial Open Science Conference. This meeting provides the opportunity to bring the entire SCAR international science community together with researchers from other networks, to discuss their science and facilitate international and interdisciplinary collaborations.

**SCAR will:**

- seek to broaden its membership;
- foster, through new and existing activities, the closer integration and participation of its members;
- sponsor activities at national and international meetings to promote SCAR’s aims;
- promote engagement with scientists and policy-makers from countries not traditionally involved in Antarctic research;
- organize webinars to promote Antarctic science in member countries; and
• build upon its relationship with ICSU bodies to proactively identify areas of common interest.

Figure 1. SCAR Member Countries as of 2015
(this will be updated according to the December 2016 membership)
[Red = Full members; Orange = Associate members]

(f) Data management and access

In the spirit of the Antarctic Treaty, SCAR promotes free and unrestricted access to Antarctic data and information. SCAR follows the ICSU data policies and has developed a data policy and promotes compliance with this policy amongst its members. SCAR recognises the important role of national Antarctic Data Centres and assists SCAR members in the process of establishing or expanding their data management and access.

**SCAR will:**

• ensure visibility and access to data through the Antarctic Master Directory;
• encourage the community to contribute data to appropriate open-access repositories;
• require recipients of SCAR research funding to submit a data management plan and ensure its followed;
• work toward ensuring SCAR peer-reviewed literature is published as open-access;
• promote the development and implementation of standards and quality control procedures that support the exchange of data;
• create training opportunities for scientists on data management practices;
• promote coordination among the different National Antarctic Data Centres; and
• promote cooperation with international information platforms (e.g. Global Biodiversity Information Facility, GBIF).
Enabling strategies

(a) Coordination

SCAR facilitates coordination of the international scientific community through SCAR’s Scientific Groups and Research Programmes, biennial open science conferences, thematic symposia, workshops, as well as other international events. SCAR provides a virtual network through mailing lists, websites, social media and other communication mechanisms.

**SCAR will:**

- facilitate the exchange of ideas via the biennial SCAR Open Science Conference and the SCAR international thematic symposia;
- stimulate cross-disciplinary collaboration via the SCAR Scientific Research Programmes and groups;
- ensure wide participation by facilitating access to its activities, including providing technologies to support virtual participation;
- strengthen coordination of activities with COMNAP, IASC and ICSU Unions; and
- promote Antarctic sessions in international and national conferences.

(b) Partnerships

Partnerships support SCAR’s goals. SCAR’s diverse partnerships include bodies of the ICSU, advisory groups to the Antarctic Treaty System, organisations with a polar mission, observing networks and programmes with polar interests (Fig. 2). During the next phase of SCAR, we will put particular emphasis on those that can help to realize specific SCAR goals with respect to science issues and demands of society and politics towards Antarctic knowledge.

**SCAR will:**

- nurture and expand the partnerships that are of particular importance to SCARs mission;
- reinforce alliances with Arctic counterparts (e.g. IASC) to develop a polar perspective on climate change and other research issues;
- partner with IASC and other groups interested in polar research to identify themes of international priority;
- strengthen cooperation, seek common interests and exchange scientific expertise and educational knowledge with partners; and
- encourage communication and cooperation with particular emphasis on aspects of climate change, human impacts and the associated research
programmes.

Figure 2. Examples of important SCAR partners.
[Blue = Antarctic Treaty System bodies; Green = Organizations with a polar focus (light green) or a polar interest (darker green); Yellow = UN bodies; Red = ICSU bodies]
(See Appendix for acronym definitions and the SCAR website for a complete list of partners).
(DRAFT DIAGRAM, TO BE REVISED IN NEXT VERSION OF THIS DOCUMENT)

(c) Resourcing

SCAR is primarily funded by national contributions from its members and seeks support from other sources for specific activities. To continue to serve the community, and provide advice, SCAR endeavours to attract new funds especially for the fellowship programme and support for young scientists.

SCAR will:

- simplify the membership contribution structure;
- create a database for potential international Antarctic activity funding;
- work closely with National SCAR Committees and partners to leverage new funding;
- develop outreach activities to publicize the importance of Antarctic research;
- provide guidance on how members may contribute more actively to SCAR activities and governance; and
- explore opportunities to expand the SCAR fellowships and other award
(d) Products

SCAR develops and facilitates the creation of tangible and conceptual products, such as focused research outputs, databases, publications, maps and educational materials. These products benefit the wider community, enhance SCAR’s visibility and serve a practical purpose in the context of policy advice and research activities of SCAR members and beyond.

**SCAR will:**

- promote its products widely and provide up-to-date information on its website and through social media;
- regularly review existing products to ensure that they are up to date;
- seek opportunities to develop new and innovative products;
- promote the inclusion of the SCAR logo or name in the products made by the SCAR community; and
- develop outreach activities to publicize the importance of Antarctic research.

(e) Review processes

SCAR maximizes its effectiveness through regular streamlined review processes and ensures the flexibility of its activities through renewal and initiation of activities. Detailed information about the nature and timing of these review processes, which include internal and external reviews of SCAR’s organizational structure and goals, scientific groups, research programmes, award schemes and other projects and activities, is available on SCAR’s website. It is also envisioned that SCAR will internally review this strategic plan regularly to ensure it is a living document that reflects the organization’s needs and changes. To help achieve a broader perspective, SCAR will also take steps to include a wider group of reviewers, particularly those outside the Antarctic community.

**Concluding Statement**

Barriers of access to Antarctica are diminishing while participation in Antarctic activities is increasing. Human activities are intensifying, both on land and at sea, and the number of countries seeking to enter the concert of nations that carry out scientific research on the Antarctic continent, the Southern Ocean islands and in the surrounding seas is expanding.

These environments form a remote but integral component of the Earth System, studies of which are essential to our understanding of the functioning of the Earth
System as an integrated whole, including its manifold ecosystems. The Antarctic, embracing the continent and its surrounding seas and islands, is influenced by global change and in turn influences the way global change develops. International collaboration is essential to expanding our understanding of these linkages, as well as to our use of Antarctica as a platform for observing Earth’s outer atmosphere, the behaviour of the magnetosphere, outer space, and sun-earth interactions.

If we are to preserve the uniqueness of Antarctica, to protect its ecosystems, and to sustainably manage its resources, the need for international communication and cooperation will be even more pronounced. To this end, scientific research should continue to be an international, collaborative and trans-disciplinary endeavour that, aside from expanding our knowledge about Antarctica and the Southern Ocean and effectively sharing this knowledge with the wider public, enables unbiased and independent advice to be provided to those governing the Antarctic. The provision of such independent and objective advice, based on high-quality and peer reviewed science, is fundamental to informed decision making about the management and conservation of Antarctica. Considering the increased need for international facilitation and coordination of Antarctic research resulting from a greater public and political interest in Antarctica, SCAR has a major role to play in the coming decades.

In the 59 years of its existence, SCAR has developed into an international organisation of high acceptance, both in the scientific community and the Antarctic Treaty System. The rising importance of polar research has made it more important than ever before to shape SCAR into a body that can respond with excellent scientific knowledge and on a broad international basis to emerging questions posed by global change and societal demands. The regular review of this Strategic Plan will be a help to keep SCAR on track and align its goals with the changing landscape of Antarctic challenges.

**Epilogue**

– if necessary, to be determined by new President and Executive Committee who will need to facilitate the actions proposed in this document.
Acronyms

ACAP  Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels
APECS  Association of Polar Early Career Scientists
ATCM  Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting
ATS  Antarctic Treaty System
CCAMLR  Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources
CCAS  Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Seals
CEP  Committee on Environmental Protection
COMNAP  Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs
GACS  Global Alliance of Continuous Plankton Recorder Surveys
GBIF  Global Biodiversity Information Family
GLOBEC  Global Ocean Ecosystem Dynamics
GOOS  Global Ocean Observing System
IACS  International Association of Cryospheric Sciences
IASC  International Arctic Science Committee
IAU  International Astronomical Union
ICED  Integrating Climate and Ecosystem Dynamics in the Southern Ocean
IGOS-P  Integrated Global Observing Strategy-Partnership
IGU  International Geographical Union
INQUA  International Union for Quaternary Research
IODE  International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange
IODP  Integrated Ocean Drilling Program
IPA  International Permafrost Association
IPBES  Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IPCC  Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPICS  International Partnerships in Ice Core Sciences
IUBS  International Union of Biological Sciences
IUSS  International Union of Geological Sciences
IUPAC  International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry
IUPS  International Union of Physiological Sciences
IWC  International Whaling Commission
PAGES  Past Global Changes
OBIS  Ocean Biogeographic Information System
POGO  Partnership for Observation of the Global Oceans
SCAR  Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research
SCR  Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research
SCOSTEP  Scientific Committee on Solar-Terrestrial Physics
SOGLOBEC  Southern Ocean Global Ocean Ecosystem Dynamics
SOOS  Southern Ocean Observing System
SRP  Scientific Research Program
UNFCCC  United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
URSI  Union Radio Scientifique International
WCRP  World Climate Research Programme
WMO  World Meteorological Organization