



International Association of Cryospheric Sciences

News from IACS (Issue 2, February 2012)

This irregular update of activities will be posted on the IACS website about 3 times per year.

The most important and most visible activities of a Scientific Association like IACS are carried out by Working ([WG](#)) and Standing Groups ([SG](#)). There are two current IACS WGs, the WG on Mass balance terminology and methods of the Division on Continental Glaciers and Ice Sheets and the WG on Flow law for polycrystalline ice of the Division of Planetary and other Ices of the Solar System. IACS is always open for proposals of new WG. Usually this involves a group of scientists putting together a preliminary proposal, which is then discussed at an IACS bureau meeting. The next stage often involves inviting the advocates of a new WG to organise a brainstorming workshop, prior to formally initiating the WG. This ensures that the aim and deliverables of such WG are highly relevant to the cryospheric community.

The Standing Group ([SG](#)) on Glacier and Permafrost Hazards in Alpine Zones (GAPHAZ) has now also affiliated with the International Permafrost Association (IPA). IACS is looking forward to seeing this SG serve as representation of the Association in the Union Commission GeoRisk, and establishing links to the avalanche community. Vice President Olga Solomina is responsible for maintaining the contact between this SG and the Association Bureau. The Steering Committee for the Global Terrestrial Network for Glaciers GTN-G, which is also a Standing Group of IACS, is now chaired by Cecilie Rolstad Denby, Head of the Division on Continental Glaciers and Ice Sheets. Cecilie will formally meet with the GTN-G Executive Board during the 2012 EGU General Assembly in Vienna in April. The IAVCEI/IACS Joint commission on Volcano-Ice Interactions is still very active and the call for abstracts for the 2012 Volcano-Ice Interactions III Meeting to be held this June in Alaska just ended.

Another important way to promote cryospheric sciences is by sponsoring International Scientific Symposia and Workshops relevant to our field. A two day symposium, co-sponsored by IACS, the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) and the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC), was held in Siena, Italy in September 2011 to consider the legacy of the International Polar Year 2007-2008 and any unaddressed aspects of polar science within the context of the International Council for Science (ICSU) Grand Challenges. A statement from this meeting was presented to the ICSU General Assembly in Rome the following week. Through the Head of the Division on Planetary and other Ices of the Solar System Ralf Greve, IACS co-sponsored the Fifth International Conference on Mars Polar Sciences 2011. This year IACS will again sponsor various events and we will report on them in the next edition of "*News from IACS*".

As well as sponsoring and supporting relevant events organised by other bodies, IACS also runs major Scientific Assemblies every 2 years. Every 4 years these are part of the IUGG General Assembly, and the intervening assemblies are run either jointly with other IUGG Associations or as an IACS only meeting. Our preference is to have these focus on interdisciplinary links, and the next Assembly on "Ice, Air & Process Interactions" will be held jointly with the IUGG atmospheric scientists (IAMAS) in Davos, Switzerland, from 8-13 July 2013 (Davos Atmosphere and Cryosphere Assembly: DACA-13: www.daca-13.org). The Scientific Programme Committee of DACA-13 is now in the process of putting together an attractive programme based on over 40 session proposals. We hope to see you in Davos, Switzerland in July 2013.

IACS continues to strengthen its links to other cryospheric organizations. At the Siena symposium, the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS) and IACS was signed. The MoU identifies a joint commitment to the professional development of early career polar and other cryospheric researchers and the need for a continuum of leadership in polar research and cryospheric sciences as important mutual aims of all Parties. Yet another MoU between Organizations acting in the field of Cryospheric Sciences (state all partners here?) has been approved by all interested parties, and a first meeting will be held at the 2012 EGU General Assembly in Vienna. This MoU aims at a better co-ordination of mutual activities, and in particular the organization and planning of symposia, conferences and workshops so as to avoid conflict of those activities.

IACS Bureau Members are also active representing our Association at various meetings and workshops organized by other cryospheric bodies such as SCAR, IASC, or the polar initiatives of the World Meteorological Organization WMO. Bureau Members are also involved in the Fifth Assessment Report AR5 of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change IPCC, and President Ian Allison will provide representation for ICSU within a Steering Group of scientists from organisations with polar interests who will undertake initial concept planning for a possible new long-term polar science initiative. On other occasions we can count on our network of expert colleagues, for example to advise international political bodies: In May 2011, an IACS representative (G. Kaser) was invited to present an overview on "Ice Changes in Antarctica, the Himalayas and Other Mountain Glacier Regions" to policy-oriented negotiators at a workshop on research held in conjunction with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) climate negotiations meeting in Bonn, Germany.

Even though small, IACS is a very active Association within IUGG. Its slim and flexible structure allows for accommodating many ideas and ways to serve the community. Your suggestions and ideas are thus welcome. Although our budget is small, our structure of supporting working and standing groups allows groups of like-minded scientists to achieve specific tasks, which may not have been possible if they were working in isolation. Furthermore, because our working and standing groups are vetted by our Bureau, the resulting collaborations are international and of broad scientific interest. We can also provide a potential gateway to larger International funding sources. 2011, for example, IACS was successful helping two organizers of workshops to receive support from the IUGG granting system, a larger source of funding. We sponsor symposia addressing the latest cryospheric and cross-disciplinary challenges, particularly at our biennial Assemblies. Please let us know how we can help you.

IACS Bureau

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