

**LETTER OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ON
ANTARCTIC RESEARCH (SCAR), THE INTERNATIONAL ARCTIC SCIENCE
COMMITTEE (IASC), AND THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CRYOSPHERIC SCIENCES (IACS)**

1. Preamble

The Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR), the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC), and the International Association of Cryospheric Sciences (IACS) share a common interest in ice and snow on Earth (the cryosphere). Each are organizations affiliated with the International Council for Science (ICSU), which encourages the development of strong links between its subsidiary entities. There are strong grounds for a closer linkage between these three bodies to bring benefits to all parties, not least in an exchange of views and experience on important scientific topics. A link between them at this time is encouraged to ensure that all three communities together make an integrated and comprehensive contribution to meeting the goals of the International Polar Year (IPY 2007-2009) and developing the IPY legacy.

The three organisations have agreed that a tripartite link between them should be developed by means of this Letter of Agreement, which will be signed during the Plenary meeting of the SCAR/IASC Open Science Conference in St Petersburg, Russia, on July 8 2008.

2. Common Interests and Practices

The three organisations share a number of common interests and practices, which will make it relatively easy for them to work together, for example in arranging workshops, conferences, and reports on topics of mutual scientific interest, in developing integrated plans for cryospheric research, in communicating to the public on cryospheric issues, and in providing advice to policy makers.

3. Declaration of Intent

SCAR, IASC and IACS intend to combine their efforts in cryospheric activities (to be decided by mutual agreement) so as to raise the level of impact of all three organizations in terms of making scientific advances and of advising policy makers, as well as to avoid duplication.

Combining efforts in selected fields and activities requires no change to the terms of reference of any of the three organizations, and carries no financial implication.

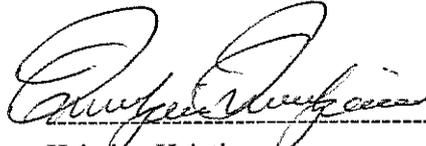
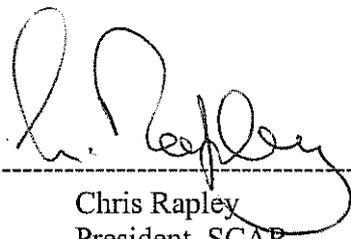
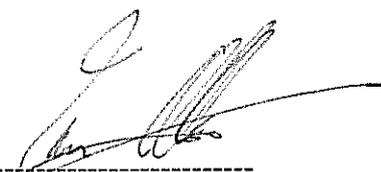
To facilitate the process, SCAR, IASC and IACS agree:

- (i) to invite each other to attend the meetings of their major bodies (SCAR Delegates' Meeting, IASC Council and IACS General Assembly);

- (ii) to encourage appropriate linkages between the relevant existing SCAR, IASC and IACS cryospheric science projects;
- (iii) to encourage their cryospheric science communities to develop joint bipolar projects and approaches in appropriate fields;
- (iv) to work together in arranging workshops, conferences, and reports on topics of cryospheric science interest;
- (v) to exchange ideas on best practices in data and information management;
- (vi) to exchange newsletters and advertise each other's newsletters and web sites on their own web sites; and
- (vii) to develop a combined approach to communicating the relevance of cryospheric research to societal issues with the wider community, including providing advice to political entities such as the Arctic Council and Antarctic Treaty bodies.

The agreement will remain in force for 5 years, thereafter to be reviewed and continued as appropriate.

Signed

		
Kristjan Kristjansson President, IASC	Chris Rapley President, SCAR	Ian Allison for President IACS

Date 8 July 2008

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Annex 1: Outline Description of SCAR, IASC and IACS

ANNEX 1. OUTLINE DESCRIPTION OF SCAR, IASC AND IACS

1. SCAR

SCAR is an Interdisciplinary Body of the International Council for Science (ICSU). Its geographical remit covers Antarctica and the surrounding Southern Ocean including the Antarctic Circumpolar Current south of the Subantarctic Front. SCAR's main aim is to initiate, develop, and co-ordinate leading edge scientific activity in the Antarctic region, and on the role of the Antarctic region in the Earth system. It also 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 and the Southern Ocean. And it aims to facilitate free and unrestricted access to Antarctic scientific data and information.

SCAR's coordination of scientific research takes place through its three Standing Scientific Groups on Life Sciences, Physical Sciences and Geosciences. They currently focus their efforts on five major international Scientific Research Programmes (SRPs) addressing major, priority scientific issues of global or fundamental importance requiring fieldwork and/or observations in the Antarctic. Most of these programmes are interdisciplinary in nature and will last 5 -10+ years. Three of them address the issue of climate change and its effects, on timescales ranging from the modern to the geological and extending into the next 100 years. In addition, a number of Expert Groups (EG) and Action Groups (AG) plan and effect cooperative research in areas of special interest requiring attention in the short term (AG; 2-4 years) to medium term (EG 2-8 years). Biodiversity is a major interest, along with human health (in the context of resident populations of scientists). Every two years, SCAR brings the scientific community together in a major international Antarctic Open Science Conference

SCAR's 5 SRPs are leading projects within the IPY. SCAR is an active member of the ICSU/WMO Joint Committee that is steering the IPY process.

2. IASC

IASC is affiliated to the International Council for Science (ICSU) as an International Scientific Associate. Its geographical remit covers the Arctic Ocean and the surrounding landmasses. IASC's main aim is to initiate, develop, and co-ordinate leading edge scientific activity 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 focuses its efforts on a limited number of international scientific research programmes or projects addressing priority scientific issues of global or fundamental importance requiring fieldwork and/or observations in the Arctic. Most of these programmes will be multidisciplinary in nature. The programmes and projects are organized and run by Project Groups. Several of IASC's research projects address the

issue of climate change and its effects. Biodiversity is a major interest, along with human health (in the context of indigenous peoples) and the impacts of environmental change on society. IASC brings the scientific community together in the annual Arctic Science Summit Week and in a decadal Arctic Science Conference.

Some of IASC's projects are leading projects within the IPY. IASC is an active member of the ICSU/WMO Joint Committee that is steering the IPY process.

3. IACS

On 4 July 2007, the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics replaced the International Commission for Snow and Ice (ICSI) and the Union Commission on Cryospheric Sciences (UCCS) by the International Association of Cryosphere Sciences (IACS). IACS is now on an equal footing to long-established Associations such as those for Hydrological Sciences (IAHS), Meteorology and Atmospheric Sciences (IAMAS) and Physical Sciences of the Oceans (IAPSO).

IACS strives:

- to promote studies of all aspects of, and physical processes related to, Earth's cryosphere and that of other bodies of the Solar System;
- to encourage research on these subjects by the cryospheric sciences community, through national and international institutions and programmes, and by individual countries as well as through collaboration and international co-ordination;
- to provide an international platform for discussions and publications of results arising from research activities as mentioned above;
- to promote education and public outreach on cryospheric processes and cryospheric research;
- to facilitate the collection of data on cryospheric systems through standardized measurements and to promote the analysis, publication and archiving of such data.

IACS comprises five Divisions that address:

- Snow and Avalanches
- Glaciers and Ice-sheets
- Marine and Freshwater Ice
- Cryosphere, Atmosphere and Climate
- Planetary and other Ices of the Solar System