

## **Simon Stephenson, National Science Foundation (NSF), USA**

The US Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (IARPC) has existed since 1984 to help coordination among US research agencies. For the most part, it has done little, but activity is picking up as more agencies recognize the Arctic as an important part of their portfolio.

Examples of important areas of coordination are:

- Arctic Observing Network – internationally moving forward as SAON.
- Developments in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas
  - Internationally action on Distributed Biological Observations
  - Oil and Gas development
  - Impact of climate change, with the largest sea-ice signal being north of Alaska
  - Changes in the social system – cultural, economic and political
- The warming permafrost and implications to the carbon cycle
- Regional and global earth system modeling

IARPC is developing a 5-year plan. It may also serve as a good starting point for our international partners seeking to develop joint projects if a clear agency lead is not apparent. I would be happy to serve as a Point-of-contact for IARPC.

We are building a new research vessel with ice breaking capability, the *Sikuliaq*. It will be part of the US Academic Research Fleet (UNOLS), and be operated by the University of Alaska. It is scheduled to be launched this autumn, and support its first science cruises in 2014. For more details see:

<http://www.sfos.uaf.edu/arrv/>

Another facility that the US continues to operate is Summit, Greenland - as a contribution to a pan-Arctic atmospheric observing. However, a considerable part of the portfolio of projects is made up of international projects. If researchers you support need the unique capabilities of a high site in the middle of the ice sheet, they are very welcome to contact us (NSF)

An emerging area for research in the US is "sustainability science". This science concerns studies at the intersection of social science, environmental sciences, economics and engineering and technology. The goal is to explore solutions that value ecosystems and the services they provide now and in the future for sustaining and improving human well-being. There is no action for FARO at this point, but I very aware that some countries are very active in this area, even if they do not call it sustainability science. I'm sure US researchers will be looking for international partners and planning work outside of Alaska.