

Draft
Forum of Arctic Research Operators
Meeting minutes
ASSW 2010, Nuuk, Greenland
16 April 2010, 14:00-18:00
Katuaq, the Cultural House of Nuuk

1 Opening and reporting session

1.1 Welcome and introduction

The Forum of Arctic Research Operators (FARO) chair, Martin Bergmann, welcomed the attendees and briefly outlined the intention of the meeting and suggested a brief round of introduction.

The number of attendees/countries participating was reduced due to the Icelandic volcano eruption which prevented several members from reaching Greenland. Accordingly, there were no representatives from Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Iceland, Italy, Portugal, the Netherlands, UK and Spain.

1.2 Approval of last meeting's minutes in Bergen, Norway

The chair asked for changes to the minutes of the last FARO meeting in Bergen, Norway 2009. The minutes were approved without comments.

1.3 Adoption of the agenda

The chair asked for suggested changes to the agenda. The agenda was adopted without comments.

1.4 Report from FARO chair Martin Bergmann

Martin Bergmann briefly outlined the items of the agenda. The report of FARO's activities is covered in the reports from members in the Information session.

1.5 News from secretariat

Morten Rasch gave a brief overview of the secretariat's work since the last meeting. Over the course of the past year a couple of conference calls were held between the secretariat, the past chair and the current chair; the FARO website was updated and the office of the secretariat was moved due to changes at the Danish Polar Center.

By 31 December 2008 Danish Polar Center (DPC) was closed, and by 1 January the logistics department of DPC was moved to National Environmental Research Institute (NERI) at Aarhus University.

Besides running the regular business of FARO, the secretariat has also been involved in the SAON Initiation Group and participated in the ASSW 2010 planning committee.

The FARO Secretariat has now been fully staffed. The secretariat is run by Morten Rasch (executive secretary) and Lillian Magelund Jensen (academic secretary).

2 Information session

Short news from each country on items of relevance to other members

Each member gave a short presentation on logistical items of relevance to the other members.

2.1 China: Huigen Yang from the Polar Research Institute of China, informed about new developments at the Polar Research Institute of China (PRIC), capacity building of the Chinese Arctic Research Expedition (CHINARE), and the 4th Arctic cruise of CHINARE.

Huigen Yang's presentation (on website)

2.2 Norway: Harald Loeng from Institute of Marine Research and the Norwegian National Polar Committee informed that the Norwegian plan for construction of a 93 m long icebreaker has not progressed since the last meeting in FARO. However, it is expected that the planning will progress as soon as issues relating to future ownership is clarified.

2.3 Poland: Piotr Glowacki from the Polar Research Department, Institute of Geophysics, Polish Academy of Sciences informed about the two Polish research vessels, Horysont II and Oceania, and their capacity. 60 researchers had used the vessels during 2009, of which 17 were from outside Poland.

2.4 Korea: Yeadong Kim from Korea Polar Research Institute (KOPRI) informed about the launch of the icebreaker Araon in 2009 and her maiden season. Her maiden journey, which lasted 40 days, went from Christchurch in New Zealand to Antarctica. Araon will be in active duty 300 days per year. During the maiden journey Araon was found to be very efficient as a scientific platform in ice covered sea.

Yendong Kim's presentation

2.5 USA: Simon Stephenson from the National Science Foundation informed about the US-NSF activities during the last year. NSF supports two research stations in Northern Alaska and the Summit Station in Greenland (which is part of a network of high altitude stations). In 2009 they have further supported the development of unmanned aerial systems.

US-NSF has signed contract for a new icebreaker to be launched in 2014. It is the plan that the icebreaker shall be affiliated with the University of Alaska.

2.6 Denmark: Morten Rasch from the Department of Arctic Environment, National Research Institute, Aarhus University informed that in Denmark, IPY was closed by 1 May 2010. IPY resulted in a substantial increase of research activities in Greenland of which the major part has been accomplished as planned.

2.7 Sweden: Magnus Tannerfeldt from the Swedish Polar Research Secretariat informed briefly about the Swedish activities during 2009. Magnus Tannerfeldt also noted that institutions/scientists who want scientific cooperation with the Swedish scientists in 2011 - especially in relation to Oden - need to contact the appropriate Swedish contacts as soon as possible.

Magnus Tannerfeldt presentation

2.8 Germany: Uwe Nixdorf from the Alfred Wegener Institute provided information about the institute's activity during 2009. Polarstern had carried out three cruises. The aircraft, Polar 5, had carried out extensive surveys in Greenland and in Northern Canada. The renovation of the station on Svalbard has been postponed for one year.

2.9 Japan: Yoshiyuki Fujii from the National Institute of Polar Research (NIPR) informed that NIPR commissioned a new Antarctic research vessel in November 2009, and that NIPR will be hosting ISAR-2 (Second International Symposium on

the Arctic Research) from 7 to 9 December 2010 at Hitotsubashi Memorial Hall, Tokyo

2.10 Canada: Marty Bergmann from Polar Continental Shelf Programme (NRCAN) informed about the activities during 2009. See 3.1.

3 Information items

Different initiatives to coordinate research and monitoring activities between arctic infrastructures from different nations were discussed. Two relatively new initiatives were highlighted in detail - SIOS and SCANNET/INTERACT. SCANNET in particular was considered an important initiative by the participants and was identified as an initiative to watch closely in the next year.

3.1a Resolute Bay and the High Arctic Research Station

Marty Bergmann gave a presentation of:

- The Canadian Arctic logistics in support of scientific initiatives
- The Resolute Bay facility of the Polar Continental Shelf Program is undergoing a major upgrade which will include greater capacity to host researchers including a new accommodation wing and a modest science lab. There is likelihood that the facility in Resolute may be further expanded as a result of increased space requirements by another Federal Government Department - Department of National Defence. He also noted the progress on the Canadian High Arctic Research Station initiative - with \$18M being invested by Federal Government to advance the plans for construction by 2017.

Marty Bergmann's presentation

3.1b Svalbard Integrated Arctic Earth Observing System (SIOS)

Harald Loeng gave, on behalf of Karin Refsnes, a short presentation concerning the network SIOS (Svalbard Integrated Arctic Earth Observing System).

Harald Loeng's presentation

3.2 Polish logistics potential at Svalbard - contribution to SIOS

Piotr Glowacki gave a presentation of the Polish logistics potential at Svalbard.

Piotr Glowacki's presentation

3.3 SCANNET/INTERACT - a terrestrial ecosystem component of SAON

Morten Rasch gave, on behalf of Terry Callaghan, a presentation of the SCANNET/INTERACT network.

Morten Rasch's presentation

3.4 Discussion: Presentations were considered useful information and the group noted that in a post-IPY environment there continues to be significant amounts of work being done to improve coordination between countries to provide a better logistics basis for research.

4 Other Business

4.1 Future role of FARO

Morten Rasch from the FARO Secretariat outlined the possibilities for the future role of FARO and raised some questions to be addressed by FARO during the next year.

1. Shall FARO merge into IASC (for example as a standing committee)?
2. Shall FARO be more active in coordination of arctic research planning and logistics (like for example COMNAP)?
3. Shall FARO take an active role in coordination of ship activities in the Polar Sea?
4. Shall FARO coordinate research logistics between terrestrial field sites in the arctic - establish a knowledge centre?
5. Shall FARO take an active role in relation to the expected future increased coordination of data collection and storage in the Arctic?
6. Shall FARO merge into a member organisation
7. Shall FARO remain an informal forum for logistics managers and relevant stakeholders to meet once every year for exchange of information and experiences?

Morten Rasch's presentation

The members of FARO are generally satisfied with the present more informal form with an annual meeting with presentations of future projects, exchange of information and informal discussions which are considered fruitful for planning purposes.

The future role of FARO was discussed. Shall FARO take a more active role or shall Faro remain an informal forum for logistics and research managers to meet once every year for exchange of information and experiences?

Discussion

Simon Stephenson opened the discussion by indicated that he prefers FARO to remain an informal forum for logistics managers and relevant stakeholders.

Volker Rachold prefers FARO to merge into IASC. Volker was not able to participate, but his opinion was put forward by another attendee.

Uwe Nixdorf did not like the idea of FARO taking an active role in coordination of ship activities in the Polar Sea. He also stated that in relation to the need for coordinated international planning the Arctic cannot be compared to the planning in the Antarctica.

Michael Klages did not like FARO to be more active in coordination of arctic research planning and logistics, like for example COMNAP. He also stated that logistics planning in the Arctic cannot be compared to Antarctica.

Harald Loeng asks if the attendees want to maintain FARO and if so what the main tasks shall be? There is already an organization taking care of coordination of arctic research planning and logistics and of coordination of ship activities in the Polar Sea. Harald preferred FARO to merge into IASC as a working group.

Marty Bergmann preferred FARO to take a more active role in the future arctic logistics planning and to put more information on the website. Marty suggested that an ad hoc group be put together, and this group should arrange two to three telephone meetings during the next year to discuss pending issues and to give recommendations concerning the future structure of FARO.

Uwe Nixdorf saw FARO's future role as a forum for coordination, strategic scientific planning, sharing best practices and discussion of day today

practical issues. Uwe preferred FARO as a working group in IASC.

Robert Dickson saw FARO as place for coordination of projects other nations and a place to put together templates for international use.

Harald Loeng agreed with Robert Dickson and emphasised the importance of including Russia in the coordination. He further stressed the importance of having the right people from Russia attend the meetings. He stated that this is a great challenge and has been tried before without success, though it would be valuable if we succeeded.

Magnus Tannerfeldt put forward that FARO has an important role to play for research groups going to the Arctic. He also stated that FARO should keep its focus on logistical - not scientific - issues.

Piotr Glowacki thinks that FARO has an important role in information exchange between countries.

Morten Rasch prefers contact persons from each organization/country as information on the Internet tend to be outdated fairly soon.

Magnus Tannerfeldt thinks an ad hoc group is good initiative. He did not find it appropriate to include FARO in IASC.

Michael Klages stated that different countries have different ways to carry out their logistics, but scientists shall concentrate on science and logicians on logistics. FARO shall be tightly connected to IASC - integrated or incorporated. Concerning the possibilities outlined by Morten, FARO shall not take an active role in relation to the expected future increased coordination of data collection and storage in the Arctic; neither shall it merge into a member organisation. FARO shall remain an informal forum for logistics managers and relevant stakeholders to meet once every year for exchange of information and experiences.

Huigen Yang asked if FARO should be a forum of logistics managers or stakeholders.

Marty Bergmann asked if it is possible to separate between logicians and scientific managers.

Simon Stephenson did not think that it was possible to separate between logicians and scientific managers due to separate procedures in the different countries.

Bernard Coakley saw FARO's role as a forum where you can solve problems and share data - a forum where you can facilitate and coordinate your mutual interests.

An ad hoc group was put together to discuss these issues before the next meeting in FARO and to come up with recommendations to be approved on next meeting in FARO. The group consists of: Marty Bergmann (Canada, chair), Simon Stephenson (USA), Morten Rasch (Denmark, secretary), Magnus Tannerfeldt (Sweden), Piotr Glowacki (Poland), Uwe Nixdorf (Germany) and Huigen Yang (China). The group is planning to arrange several telephone conferences during the next year to discuss pending issues and to come of with recommendations concerning the future structure for FARO, including its relation to IASC.

4.2 IPY - success and failures

IPY was a great challenge seen from a logistics perspective due to the large activity, but all in all we have been able to provide logistics to the enhanced activities.

4.3 Future relationship to IASC - after the establishment of the new structure for IASC

Future relationship between FARO and IASC was discussed with 25+ participants (see above). The chair will discuss the outcome with IASC before the first meeting in the ad hoc group.

4.4 FARO website - comments and discussion

The members were asked to send comments and suggestions to the FARO Secretariat.

5 Closure

Martin Bergmann thanked the secretariat and the members for good cooperation during the last year. Martin Bergmann also thanked the ASSW 2010 Organising Committee.

Minutes including copies of presentations will be available on the FARO website - www.faro-arctic.org

The next meeting will be at ASSW 2011 in Korea.

Participants

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