

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Forum of Arctic Research Operators (FARO), and the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC)

1 The Parties

The Parties to this MoU are the Forum of Arctic Research Operators (FARO), and the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC).

1.1 Forum of Arctic Research Operators

The Forum of Arctic Research Operators (FARO), founded in 1998, serves as an international platform for coordinating infrastructure to support science and logistics in the Arctic. FARO's mission is 1) to facilitate information exchange between national infrastructure operators, 2) to network with other Polar Organizations and influence decision making, and 3) to facilitate access to infrastructure. This mission is achieved by 1) networking of national operators to exchange information on best practices and new technological developments, 2) engaging in collaborations with government, science, early career and other infrastructure organizations, 3) facilitate access to infrastructure by linking infrastructure and science, and 4) support coordination of logistics and sharing of operational resources. The decision-making bodies of FARO are the annual plenary meetings and the Executive Committee, and decision making is by consensus. The day-to-day operations of FARO are supported by its Secretariat headed by the Executive Secretary.

1.2 International Arctic Science Committee

The International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) is non-governmental, international scientific organisation established in 1990, and an Affiliated Member of the International Science Council (ISC). IASC's main aim is to encourage and facilitate cooperation in all aspects of Arctic research, in all countries engaged in Arctic research and in all areas of the Arctic region. To fulfill its mission, IASC promotes and supports leading-edge multi-disciplinary research in order to foster a greater scientific understanding of the Arctic region and its roles in the Earth system. It also provides objective and independent scientific advice to the Arctic Council and other organisations on issues of science affecting the management of the Arctic region. The decision-making organs of IASC are the Council and the Executive Committee. The day-to-day operations of IASC are supported by its Secretariat headed by the Executive Secretary.

2 Rationale for the MoU

The Parties share common goals of working internationally and across disciplines to increase our understanding of Earth's polar regions and their connections to the global system. IASC is an umbrella organization for Arctic scientists in all disciplines, and FARO brings together the organisations responsible for research operations, logistics and infrastructure in the Arctic. By means of this MoU, we aim to expand the capacity for planning and supporting of major international research initiatives that go beyond the capacity of uni- or bilateral efforts.

3 Terms of Agreement

This MoU identifies a joint commitment to support international Arctic research. To facilitate the process, FARO and IASC agree:

- I. to invite each other to attend meetings of their major bodies (FARO Plenary meeting and IASC Council);
- II. to hold biennial meetings between organization Chairs and Secretariats, as well as occasional informal exchange between Executive Committees
- III. to encourage interaction of their relevant working groups and committees, including having members of each organization join the other organization's working groups or committees;
- IV. that FARO and IASC work together to promote observing systems, data sharing, freedom for scientific exploration and international access, environmental awareness, safety, and ethical conduct of science in the Arctic.
- V. That FARO and IASC will collaborate on joint international Arctic research planning initiatives including the 4th International Conference on Arctic Research Planning Process (ICARP IV) in 2025 and the 5th International Polar Year 2032-33.

4 Financial Implications of the Agreement

The parties to this Agreement will continue to be responsible for the costs of their own activities, but this does not preclude one party meeting or contributing to the occasional or on-going costs of another activity if they so wish. Actual financial contributions to the activities and other implications of this MoU will be considered and agreed to by representatives of the Parties as they arise, and may be changed in accordance with the Parties requirements without any effect on the substance of this Agreement.

5 Non-binding Implications of the Agreement

This agreement is between FARO and IASC. It does not preclude the Parties agreeing to other MoUs with other programs and organizations, or bilaterally between the Parties.

6 Duration, Revision and Termination of this MoU

This MoU remains in force for 10 years, at which time it will be reviewed for possible extension. No action by any of the parties will result in the cancellation of this MoU. The MoU may be revised at any time by mutual agreement between the Parties. Any of the parties may propose alterations to the MoU. Parties wishing to withdraw from this agreement should do so by a formal letter signed by the President/Chair and head organizational manager (i.e. Executive Secretary, Executive Director or Secretariat) of their respective organization.

Signed in Reykjavik, Iceland on 20 October 2023 by:

Jennifer Mercer
Chair, FARO

Henry Burgess
President, IASC