

LETTER OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PACIFIC ARCTIC GROUP (PAG) AND THE INTERNATIONAL ARCTIC SCIENCE COMMITTEE (IASC)

General Introduction

The IASC was founded in 1990 in the context of post-perestroika renewal of international Arctic cooperation. Initial members included the eight Arctic states - Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia (at that time Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Sweden and the United States of America - USSR and several European and North American nations. Over time membership evolved and grew to accommodate the changing status of original member nations and the growing interests in Arctic science in many other nations, including several from Asia, who joined the IASC. To provide a focal point for discussion of science of particular interest to the new Asian members, and also to enhance discussion of Arctic science issues from a Pacific perspective, IASC agreed in 1999 to create the Pacific Arctic Group (PAG) as a subset of the IASC, with its own leadership and secretariat. In 2008, the IASC acknowledged that the PAG had developed sufficient strength that it could stand on its own as a separate organization, and the PAG members agreed. Yet the scientific interests of PAG and IASC retain much in common, and it is in the interests of both groups to maintain strong coordination and collaboration. A Letter of Agreement that set forth the rationale and objectives for continued strong interaction between the two groups was signed in 2009.

With the present Letter of Agreement, PAG and IASC agree to continue their partnership, taking into account the development of the two organizations during the last five years.

PAG

Introduction

The Arctic marine environment is of significant scientific concern to the nations on the Pacific side of the Arctic. PAG is currently focused on sea ice, atmosphere, ocean and Arctic observing topics, with overall themes ranging from climate, contaminants, human dimensions and structure and function of Arctic ecosystems.

Definition of the Pacific Arctic Region

The Pacific Arctic Region is loosely defined as the area lying between Russia and Alaska (Bering Strait) and extending northward including the Beaufort Gyre and Arctic Ocean and southward including the Bering Sea. The area also includes seasonally ice-covered seas. PAG activities may extend beyond these boundaries based on project objectives.

PAG Objectives

The PAG has four basic objectives: 1) To facilitate and coordinate science operations among PAG member countries; 2) To promote and facilitate data accessibility and integrated data bases for the region; 3) To serve as a forum for information exchange on Pacific Arctic Region (PAR) science programs; and 4) To establish and maintain a direct link between PAG and other relevant science organizations.

PAG General Membership

The PAG general membership consists of at least one member from each country or institution represented by the PAG area of interest. The membership consists of both Scientists and Program Managers and should reflect an appropriate balance between the principal PAG science themes.

PAG Chair and Executive Committee

The PAG Executive Committee consists of a Chair, 2 Vice Chairs, and the leads of the core science projects within the organization that serve as a resource to provide scientific support for consensus and assist in promoting approved PAG projects. As members rotate off the committee, nominations for membership to the Executive Committee are evaluated by the Committee and PAG general membership. In addition, the Executive Committee may, from time to time, strike an "ad hoc" committee to deal with a specific issue.

PAG Secretariat

The functions of the PAG are supported by a small Secretariat, the location of which will rotate among member countries. The Secretariat will be directed by the Executive Committee and work closely with the leads of the project groups as appropriate.

IASC

IASC was established in 1990, began operations in 1991 and today comprises 21 member countries. The IASC member organizations are national science organizations covering all fields of Arctic research. Each national member organization has a mechanism to provide ongoing contact between its IASC council member and its Arctic science community.

IASC draws on its structure to identify scientific priorities, members of working groups, etc. An international science program planned or recommended by IASC should be of high priority to Arctic or global science. The organizational needs of IASC are served by the IASC Secretariat currently located in Potsdam, Germany. IASC is an international associate of the International Council for Science (ICSU) and an observer in the Arctic Council. IASC also has connections to numerous international Arctic organizations. Representatives of national scientific organizations from all 21 member countries form the IASC Council. Council usually meets once a year during the Arctic Science Summit Week (ASSW). The President of IASC is elected by Council, who also elects 4 Vice-Presidents to serve on the Executive Committee, which operates as a board of directors and manages the activities of IASC between Council meetings. The Chair is the President of IASC.

IASC is engaged in all fields of Arctic research. Its main scientific working bodies are five Working Groups (WGs): Atmosphere, Cryosphere, Marine, Social & Human and Terrestrial. The main function of the WGs is to encourage and support science-led international programs by offering opportunities for planning and coordination, and by facilitating communication and access to facilities. Each WG is composed of up to two scientists from each IASC member country, appointed by the national adhering bodies.

The members are experts in their field, with an international reputation and from different scientific disciplines so that the full range of Arctic research is represented in the WGs. Though the WGs are disciplinary, they also work together to address cross-cutting and broadly interdisciplinary research activities.

Common Interests

During its brief history, the PAG has demonstrated a strong interest in science related to the Arctic Ocean and its peripheral seas, including physics of the ocean and sea ice, ecology and biogeochemistry, geology, and environmental modeling. The IASC has demonstrated its strong interest in these areas by establishing a Marine Working Group which inherited the function of the former Arctic Ocean Sciences Board (AOSB) after the merger with IASC.

Declaration of Intent

Recognizing the large area of common interests, the PAG and the IASC intend to work together to advance scientific knowledge in mutually agreed areas, to jointly support education and outreach efforts, and to jointly provide advice to policy- and decision-makers who require scientific information as the basis for their actions. By working closely together, the IASC and the PAG can avoid costly duplication of efforts, and identify opportunities for sharing to reduce costs on each individually.

This Letter of Agreement does not alter the terms of reference or organizational structure of either group and carries no financial implication.

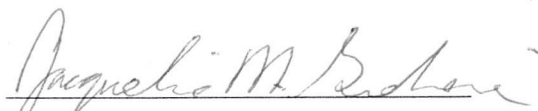
To facilitate coordination and collaboration, the PAG and the IASC agree in particular:

- To consult each other regularly regarding science interests and priorities and to develop collaborative or synergistic efforts whenever appropriate;
- To involve the PAG in the preparation and participation of the annual ASSW;
- To invite each other to meetings, including the IASC Marine Working Group; and
- To link each other's web sites.

This Letter of Agreement remains in force for 5 years, at which time it will be reviewed for possible extension. It may be revised at any time by mutual agreement between the Parties. Any of the parties may propose alterations to the Letter of Agreement.

Signed, 7 April 2014

Jacqueline M. Grebmeier



Chair of PAG

David S. Hik



President of IASC