

Report on an Inter-agency Arctic Research Policy Committee (IARPC) Meeting:
Planning and Coordination for the Arctic Observing Network (AON)
and the Study of Environmental Arctic Change (SEARCH)

4 March 2010
Consortium for Ocean Leadership
1201 New York Avenue, NW, 4th Floor, Washington, DC 20005

1. Introduction

The goal of this 1-day meeting was to discuss strategies for enhancing inter-agency cooperation that will serve individual agency needs and obligations in the changing Arctic and contribute to the further development of AON and SEARCH.

The meeting was prompted by a number of activities and events that suggest that Arctic observing and research efforts, and institutional responses to Arctic environmental change, will benefit from improved cooperation in planning and coordination. Examples of relevant current activities and events include: (1) the NSF-sponsored SEARCH AON Design & Implementation Task Force; (2) the NOAA move towards Climate Services and increasing coordination with Department of Interior (DoI); (3) initiatives within DoI relevant to Arctic environmental observations; and (4) the 'State of the Arctic' conference in Miami on 16-19 March 2010.

The meeting was attended by 36 people, the majority from a broad range of federal agencies, plus a small number of representatives from the academic community. A complete list of participants, their affiliations and e-mail addresses is appended to this report.

2. Agenda

1. Introductory Remarks (Jeffries, NSF).
2. Description of SEARCH, AON and related activities.
 - a. Overview of SEARCH and status of AON (Jeffries).
 - b. AON Design & Implementation Task Force and SEARCH Understanding/Arctic System Science Task Force (Eicken & Schlosser, SEARCH Science Steering Committee).
 - c. International Study of Arctic Change (ISAC: Schlosser) and international partnerships, including Sustained Arctic Observing Network (SAON: Calder, SAON Steering Group & NOAA).
3. An Inter-agency Arctic Observing Network That Meets The Needs of Agency Managers and the Scientific Community (Calder, Murdoch [USGS])
 - a. Agencies: What major management decisions are anticipated in the next 10 years, and what science support (observations, research, data & information) will be needed to make those decisions, as Arctic environmental and socio-economic system change continues?
 - b. The scientific community: What do scientists in academe and government need from the agencies in order to assist agency managers and inform decision-making and policy?

4. Cooperation and Synergies Among Agencies and Between Academe and Government
(Uttal [NOAA], Schlosser)

- a. Are there high priority issues of common interest?
- b. Fostering cooperation and developing synergies to address these issues.

5. Institutional Framework/Vision for Sustaining and Enhancing an Inter-agency Arctic Observing Network (Eicken, Jeffries)

- a. What institutional framework is needed to achieve inter-agency implementation of a sustained AON & SEARCH?
- b. How is effective communication and cooperation to be maintained at a pace that is in step with rapid environmental and socio-economic change?

6. Concluding remarks (Jeffries, NSF)

3. Meeting Outcome

The meeting concluded with agreement that planning and coordination for the further implementation of AON and SEARCH will benefit from enhanced inter-agency and government-academe cooperation, and that these should proceed initially along two lines:

1. The annual NSF AON Principal Investigator workshops (there have been three to date) will become annual inter-agency/academe “AON Summits”. The summits will be a forum for promoting inter-agency and government-academe cooperation and coordination of the development of AON and SEARCH through exchange of information and development of partnerships based on common interests and goals. Further details on the dates, location and agenda for the first summit will be forthcoming.
2. Five initial working groups will be formed immediately to explore common interests and goals. The working groups are:
 - a. Permafrost, Hydrology and Carbon Cycle.
Initial organizer: Pete Murdoch, USGS
 - b. Atmospheric Constituents and Surface Radiation Balance.
Initial organizer: Taneil Uttal, NOAA
 - c. Safety of Maritime Operations and Environmental Security.
Initial organizer: Doug Marble, ONR
 - d. Ecosystem and Socio-Economic Change in the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas.
Initial organizer: Martin Jeffries, NSF
 - e. Data and Information Management.
Initial organizer: John Jensen, NOAA (to be confirmed)

Those identified as initial organizers will take the lead in the formation of the working groups, which will then choose a chairperson. Each working group will have in common the following objectives:

1. To identify the existing federal, academic and other (e.g., State of Alaska, community-based, international) observing assets, activities and data that are relevant to the working group title.
2. Examine how those assets and activities can be coordinated to realize a cooperative, inter-agency Arctic observing system, and address the need for joint planning for system optimization and augmentation, that will obtain the data required to:
 - a. improve the understanding of the causes of Arctic environmental system change and improve the prediction of future change and its consequences, and
 - b. provide data, information and derived products required by managers and stakeholders to make informed decisions as the Arctic environmental system changes, and also as they relate to, for example, Marine Safety, National Security, Environmental Stewardship, and Resource Management.

Appendix: List of Participants

Name	Affiliation	e-mail
Martin Jeffries	NSF Arctic Sciences	mjeffrie@nsf.gov
Simon Stephenson	NSF Arctic Sciences	sstephen@nsf.gov
John Calder	NOAA Climate Office	john.calder@noaa.gov
Kathy Crane	NOAA Climate Office	kathy.crane@noaa.gov
Laura Forgone	NOAA	laura.furgione@noaa.gov
Gillian Lichota	NOAA	gillian.lichota@noaa.gov
Jim Butler	NOAA ESRL	james.h.butler@noaa.gov
Taneil Uttal ³	NOAA ESRL	taneil.uttal@noaa.gov
John Jensen	NOAA/NESDIS/NCDC	john.a.jensen@noaa.gov
Denise Kruse	National Ice Center	denise.kruse@noaa.gov
Pablo Clemente-Colon	National Ice Center	Pablo.Clemente-Colon@noaa.gov
Doug Marble	ONR	douglas.marble@navy.mil
Linwood Vincent	ONR	linwood.vincent@navy.mil
Li Li	NRL	li.li@nrl.navy.mil
John Brozena	NRL	john.brozena@nrl.navy.mil
Eric Buch	NRL	eric.buch@nrl.navy.mil
Nick Vincent	CNMOC	nick.vincent@navy.mil
Tim Gallaudet	Navy	timothy.gallaudet@navy.mil
Carolyn Olson	USDA-NRCS	carolyn.olson@wdc.usda.gov
Loui Tupas	USDA-NIFA	ltupas@nifa.usda.gov
Jack Kaye	NASA HQ	jack.kaye@nasa.gov
Eric Lindstrom	NASA HQ	eric.j.lindstrom@nasa.gov
Fred Lipschultz	NASA HQ	fred.lipschultz@nasa.gov
Thorsten Markus	NASA GSFC	thorsten.markus@nasa.gov
Pete Murdoch	USGS/GCPO	pmurdoch@usgs.gov
Earl Greene	USGS/WRD	eagreene@usgs.gov
Jim Cimato	MMS HQ	james.cimato@mms.gov
Bert Frost	NPS	bert_frost@nps.gov
Shawn Carter	NPS	shawn_carter@nps.gov
Julie McNamee	NPS	julie_thomas_mcnamee@nps.gov
John Farrell	USARC	jfarrell@arctic.gov
Hajo Eicken ²	Univ. Alaska Fairbanks	hajo.eicken@gi.alaska.edu
Peter Schlosser ¹	Columbia University	schlosser@ldeo.columbia.edu
Craig Lee ³	Univ. of Washington	craig@apl.washington.edu
Marty Kress	VCSI	mkress@vcsi.org
Kate Moran	OSTP	Kathryn_Moran@ostp.eop.gov

¹ Chair, SEARCH Science Steering Committee

² Chair-elect, SEARCH Science Steering Committee

³ co-Chair, SEARCH Observing Change Panel