Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee
Staff Meeting
15:00 – 17:00
12 December 2011

Herbert C Hoover Building
14th and Constitution
Room 5215

Dial-in Number: 877-694-2972
Participant Access Code: 7272320

Agenda

1. Introductions – Kelly (5 min)

Brendan (NSF)
John Farrell (USARC)
Martin Jeffries (ONR)
Shella Biallas (DOI)
Adrianna Muir (DOS)
Nikoosh Carlo (NSF)
Igor Krupnik (SI)
Lindsey Williams (NOAA)
Charles Vorosmarty (USARC)

By Phone:
John Calder (NOAA)
Wanda Farrell (DOE)
John Hobbie (USARC)
Marya Levintova (NIH)
Tom Wagner (NASA)
Chuck Byvik (DOD)
Louis Tupas (USDA)
Doug DeMaster (NOAA)
Ashley Chappell (NOAA)
John Berkson (DHS)

2. Introduction of USARC "Arctic Policy" as called for in the ARPA - Farrell

John Farrell informed the staff group that one of the duties of the USARC is to develop and recommend an Arctic Research Policy. NSF has the principal responsibility for the conduct of research, but the Commission is tasked with recommending an Arctic research policy. The Commission has completed a draft of this policy. John distributed the draft policy and asked for feedback before the Commission moves forward in vetting it in the community.

ACTION: Sara will distribute the draft Arctic research policy (attached) and the Staff group should review the draft and get comments back to John in early January.

3. USARC Scaling Report – Vorosmarty

The USARC Scaling Report is a report of the USARC published in 2010. The aim of the Scaling Report is to articulate the importance of scale in understanding arctic system process and

contributing to strategic application issues and--in so doing--identify gaps and opportunities to motivate scaling research.

Dr. Vorosmarty explained that there are various types of information sets: remote sensing for data assimilation, *in situ* networks and interpolations, process field studies, high resolution earth system simulations, remote sensing for change detection, agent-based models. There is great diversity in observations and each has a tradition of being cast in different time and space scales.

The Scaling Report represents the product of more than 20 researchers and practitioners who participated in a 2008 workshop in Seattle. There, they divided the dialogue into three science pillars: physical science, biology, and human systems but also included discussions on system science and societal applications.

The main end product is the Scaling Report (handed out and on the Commission website). Dr. Vorosmarty noted that the target audience for the report is IARPC. Summarized at the end of the document are key findings, including:

- Scaling issues and even the definitions of scale are so varied across individual disciplines that they hinder interdisciplinary research. (Scale means different things to different disciplines).
- Scale incongruities among components of the Arctic system give rise to opportunities to study intermediate scales.
- Thresholds are scale-sensitive and important, yet prove difficult to detect, study, and/or predict.
- Scales of human perception are much different than those associated with the study of natural systems.
- Information has not been well structured to facilitate cross-scale studies.
- Science conclusions and uncertainties require better translation into information for policymakers.

Dr. Vorosmarty noted that the report is being used. For example, one of the recommendations is to "Create forums for an interchange among scientists, policymakers, and managers on the issue of uncertainty and how to interpret and use these estimates in a proactive and positive manner." The Alaska science and decision-making workshop hosted by Deputy Secretary Hayes (Department of Interior) responds to this recommendation. Dr. Vorosmarty also pointed to the USGS Beaufort Sea gap analysis which also made use of the scaling report findings.

4. Agency 2012 budgets – All (10 mins)

Brendan asked agency representatives to provide information about their likely 2012 budgets. Doug DeMaster noted that the NOAA budget is not yet approved but that the NMFS is expecting between a 6-8 percent cut across the board. This will lead, he said, to a lot of process studies likely being eliminated in 2012. He noted that they still intend to do a Bering Sea Bottom Trawl Survey and they are working with BOEM to perform some process studies in the Beaufort and Chukchi in 2012 and 13.

John Calder noted that the NOAA Climate Program Office, Arctic Research Division cut will be around 14 percent. They are going to try and complete their ocean-related field work in 2012 but probably not much longer after that. This would allow NOAA to complete its 5-year RUSACLA plan in 2012, but the future of RUSALCA after that is unclear.

Shella Biallas noted that DOI has not seen its 2012 budget yet, but BOEM and environmental studies have strong support from management.

Martin Jeffries informed the group that there is no information yet for ONR.

Tom Wagner noted that the budget for NASA is looking good. ICESAT II is on track. The future of the IceBridge and CRYO programs look fine.

Brendan informed the group that NSF overall is up 2.5%, but OPP does not know how that increase will affect their budget in 2012.

Wanda Ferrell said that DOE's Arctic budget is okay, but travel funds are severely restricted.

Marya Levintova noted that DHHS will probably have a cut of around 12 percent. Not clear yet how that will affect each individual institute.

John Berkson said that the DHS budget is not yet known.

Igor Krupnik also noted that SI is still in continuing resolution and the 2012 budget is unknown.

5. Review of Arctic Ocean Study Plans: BOEM, NOAA, ONR – Biallas, Calder, Jeffries

Brendan stated that the reason for this agenda item is to help inform the developing plans in industry and planned partnership between industry, NSF and NPRB.

Shella stated that during the Deputy Secretary's meeting on December 1, DOI confirmed that putting the study plans on the table is useful and necessary. Deputy Secretary Hayes validated the need for the sharing information. She also noted that the FWS are also doing research that could feed into this activity, but BOEM is the right starting place within DOI. The BOEM Environmental Studies Program is focused on large scale circulation, ice regime, habitats of key species, local and traditional knowledge, biological hotspots, and storm prediction.

Shella asked the group to think about what is the best format for presenting all the ongoing and planned studies. What would be the best mechanism for organizing the information? Shella suggested that perhaps we could focus on a level of study and put those all in a visual format. Alternatively, it could be presented in a Gantt chart with multiple layers for each plan.

Brendan noted that while a Gantt chart would work, it assumes that we are asking the right question at the right scale. Since we don't know this, it might make sense at this point to know what the permiters want and need for informed decisions.

Doug added that there is a February workshop on Chukchi/Beaufort leasing between BOEM and NOAA focusing on the research needs of end users. This was new information for many on the Staff Group, and it was agreed that it will be important to make sure that this group, the permiters group, and Hayes' group are all aware of each other's activities.

Brendan proposed a conversation with Shella, Doug, and others to ensure that all the right people stay connected. It is important that if David Hayes is asking IARPC to do this coordinating, that we make sure that the NOAA and BOEM workshop is coordinated.

Martin informed the staff group on the plans within ONR. He stated that the new Arctic research program is forging ahead. The ONR Arctic Program received a Department Research Initiative called Marginal Ice Zone Initiative (MIZ). Under the MIZ initiative, the ONR has made recommendations on 9 projects (15-18 awards). The MIZ is a $9M, 5-year program with the main field work in 2014. He also informed the group that another DRI had been awarded to the Arctic research program. The new program is another $9M, 5-year program dealing with basic observing of wave spectra and climatology in the emerging Arctic Ocean and, in particular, the consequences on boundary layer physics. The major field experiment will be in 2015.

In conclusion, Brendan suggested that Shella try and get a hold of what key decision points are in the permitting process and what BOEM and NOAA need to know at each decision point. Then the Gantt approach might work.

ACTION: Shella will try and get decision points within BOEM. She and Ashley will develop a possible Gantt chart to show how the information can be presented in a useful way for decision makers.

6. Discussion of the 5-year Plan – Kelly (30 min)

Brendan began the discussion by reviewing the attached timeline. He noted that the infrastructure section needs to be completed soon and iterated with OMB. He also noted that the Principals asked for a section on international linkages within the infrastructure section. Adrianna suggested that this would deal with resource sharing possibilities, and she will draft a paragraph for inclusion in the report.

ACTION: Adrianna will draft the link to international activities for the infrastructure section.

With regard to the infrastructure section, lead authors were asked to give Brendan ideas on what are the infrastructure needs of their section. Ideas were received from John Calder and Shella Biallas. Other leads were asked to provide a list as soon as possible so that Brendan can draft the section by the end of this year. He reminded the leads to be exhaustive in their lists and to include the full range of infrastructure needs. John Farrell offered to help with this section.

ACTION: List of infrastructure needs by section is needed by Friday, December 16.

ACTION: Brendan, with help from John Farrell, will draft the infrastructure section and discuss it with Joel Parriot at OMB.

The staff group felt that the timeline need to be revised to allow more time to complete work with the aim of the plan being finalized and released by June 1.

ACTION: Brendan will revise the timeline and recirculate it to the Staff Group for comment.

In discussing public review, the Staff Group agreed with the need to circulate the draft plan to stakeholders and community. The Alaska Climate Change Assessment program has agreed to host a webinar. Other Alaska-based meetings will be identified as potential places for a discussion with Alaskan stakeholders. A Federal Register Notice will be issued. Nikoosh offered to help with the review by using the same model used by the NPRB for a recent review.

ACTION: A review plan should be developed so that a March/April review period can take place.

Pursuant to the Principals' meeting, the USDA provided comments on sections 3.1 and 3.6. Igor stated that the lead authors on 3.6 are willing to discuss these comments, but in order for the comments to be useful, USDA needs to provide specific language changes to the text. Brendan will convey this to USDA.

ACTION: Brendan will contact Louis to get USDA to provide specific language changes to sections 3.1 and 3.6.

Brendan requested that the Staff group take a careful look at the overarching questions presented in the introduction and also at the reformulated section 3.3 to see if sea ice is highlighted better. Comments need to be sent to Brendan very soon on these sections.

ACTION: The Staff Group needs to look at the inclusion of overarching questions in the introduction and at the reformulated section 3.3 and provide comments by the end of the month.

7. IARPC and Interagency Arctic Committee Fact Sheet – Biallas (10)

Shella circulated a proposed draft. There was insufficient time to discuss the fact sheet by Shella

asked for comments by the time of the next staff group meeting.

ACTION: Get comments to Shella on the IARPC and Interagency Arctic Committee Fact Sheet.

8. Summary, assignments, and next meeting – Kelly (10 min)

The next meeting will be January 9 from 3:00-5:00, location TBD.

Action items are:

ACTION: Sara will distribute the draft Arctic research policy (attached) and the Staff group should review the draft and get comments back to John in early January.

ACTION: Shella will try and get decision points within BOEM. She and Ashley will develop a possible Gantt chart to show how the information can be presented in a useful way for decision makers.

ACTION: Adrianna will draft the link to international for the infrastructure section.

ACTION: List of infrastructure needs by section is needed by Friday, December 16.

ACTION: Brendan, with help from John Farrell, will draft the infrastructure section and discuss it with Joel Parriot at OMB.

ACTION: Brendan will revised the timeline and recirculate it to the Staff Group for comment.

ACTION: A review plan should be developed so that a March/April review period can take place.

ACTION: Brendan will contact Louis to get USDA to provide specific language changes to sections 3.1 and 3.6.

ACTION: The Staff Group needs to look at the inclusion of overarching questions in the introduction and at the reformulated section 3.3 and provide comments by the end of the month.

ACTION: Get comments to Shella on the IARPC and Interagency Arctic Committee Fact Sheet.