

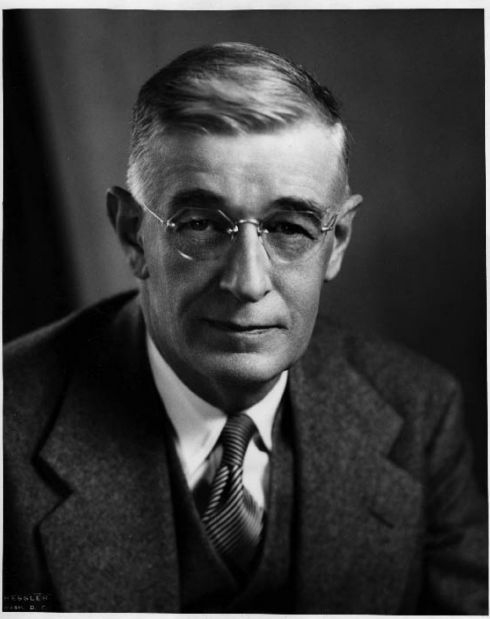


# Polar Region Geopolitics & Science Diplomacy: The Role of the National Science Foundation

*May 5, 2020*

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NSF was founded by Congress in 1950 to:

- *promote the progress of science;*
- *advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare;*
- *and secure the national defense.*

Science, the endless  
frontier

A report to the President

United States. Office of Scientific  
Research and Development.



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the University of California Libraries

Top image: Carnegie, bottom image: University of California Libraries





Credits: Polar Geospatial Center



# U.S. Arctic Interests



Credit: Polar Geospatial Center

- National security
- Transportation & shipping
- Natural resource discovery and management
- Energy security
- Environmental resilience
- Well-being of Arctic residents, including indigenous groups



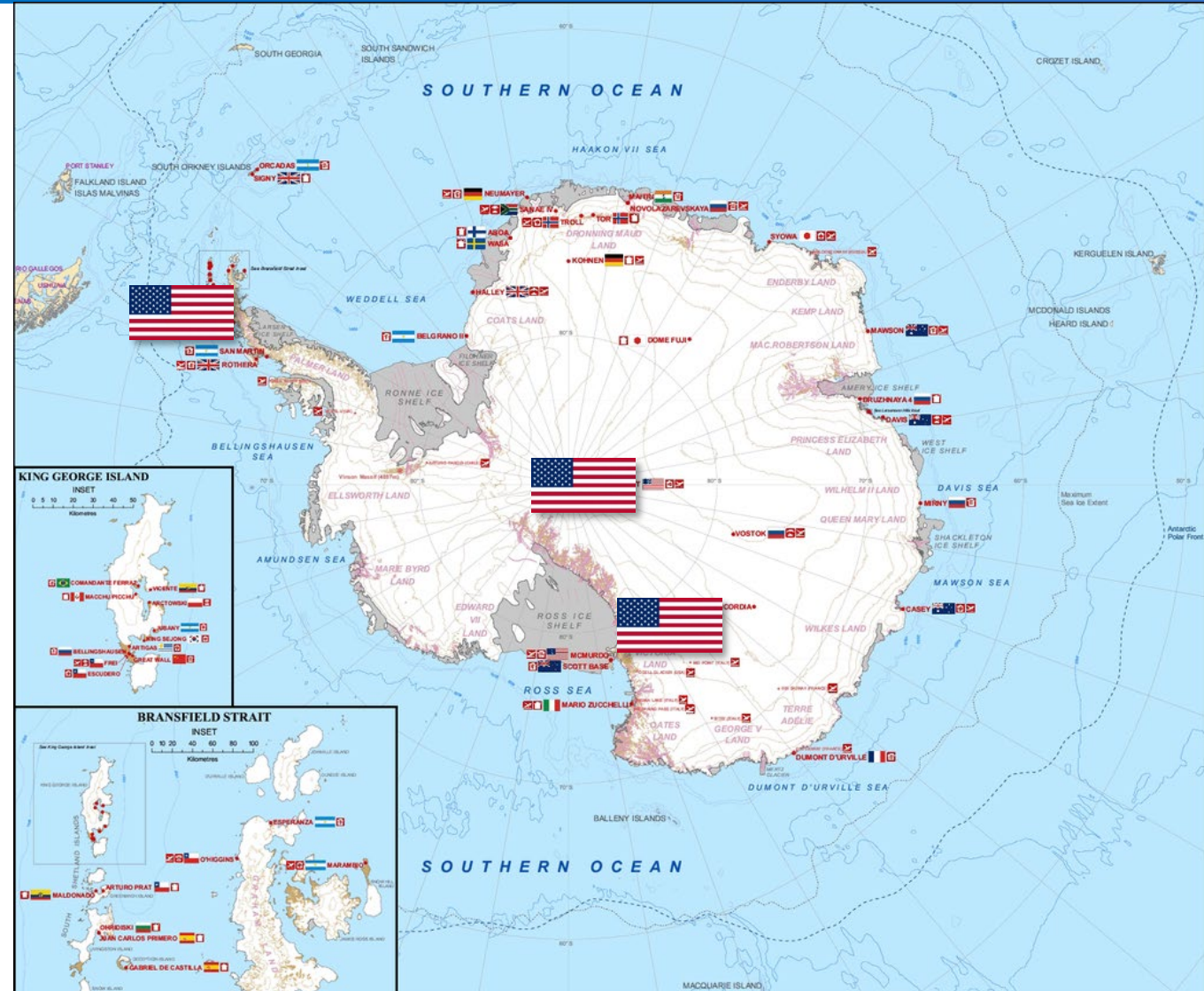
# U.S. Antarctic Interests



## *Active & Influential Science Presence:*

- Preserve for peaceful scientific purposes
- Protect the environment
- Sustainably manage marine living resources
- Improve predictability of global climate system

# Year-round for Science






# High-Impact Polar Science





# U.S. Arctic Policy



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graph TD; A[Arctic Research and Policy Act 1984 (ARPA)] --> B[Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (IARPC)]; A --> C[Arctic Research Commission (ARC)];
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Arctic Research  
and Policy Act  
1984 (ARPA)

Interagency Arctic  
Research Policy  
Committee  
(IARPC)

Arctic Research  
Commission (ARC)



# International Arctic Governance



Credit: U.S. Department of State

**Arctic Council: formed in 1996, consensus-based**

# International Arctic Engagement



Credit: Arctic Circle

**Arctic Circle: formed in 2013, public forum**



# NSF's Geopolitical Role in the Arctic



Credit: © BMBF/Thomas Rafalzyk

2018 Arctic Science Ministerial

# NSF's Geopolitical Role in the Arctic

Agreement on  
Enhancing  
International Arctic  
Science Cooperation  
(ratified 2018)



Credit: NSF



# International Geophysical Year



Credit: NSF





# Antarctic Treaty System



**Antarctic Treaty (1961)**  
**Protocol on Environmental Protection (1991)**

Left: Carleton College Archives, right: NSF.



# Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting

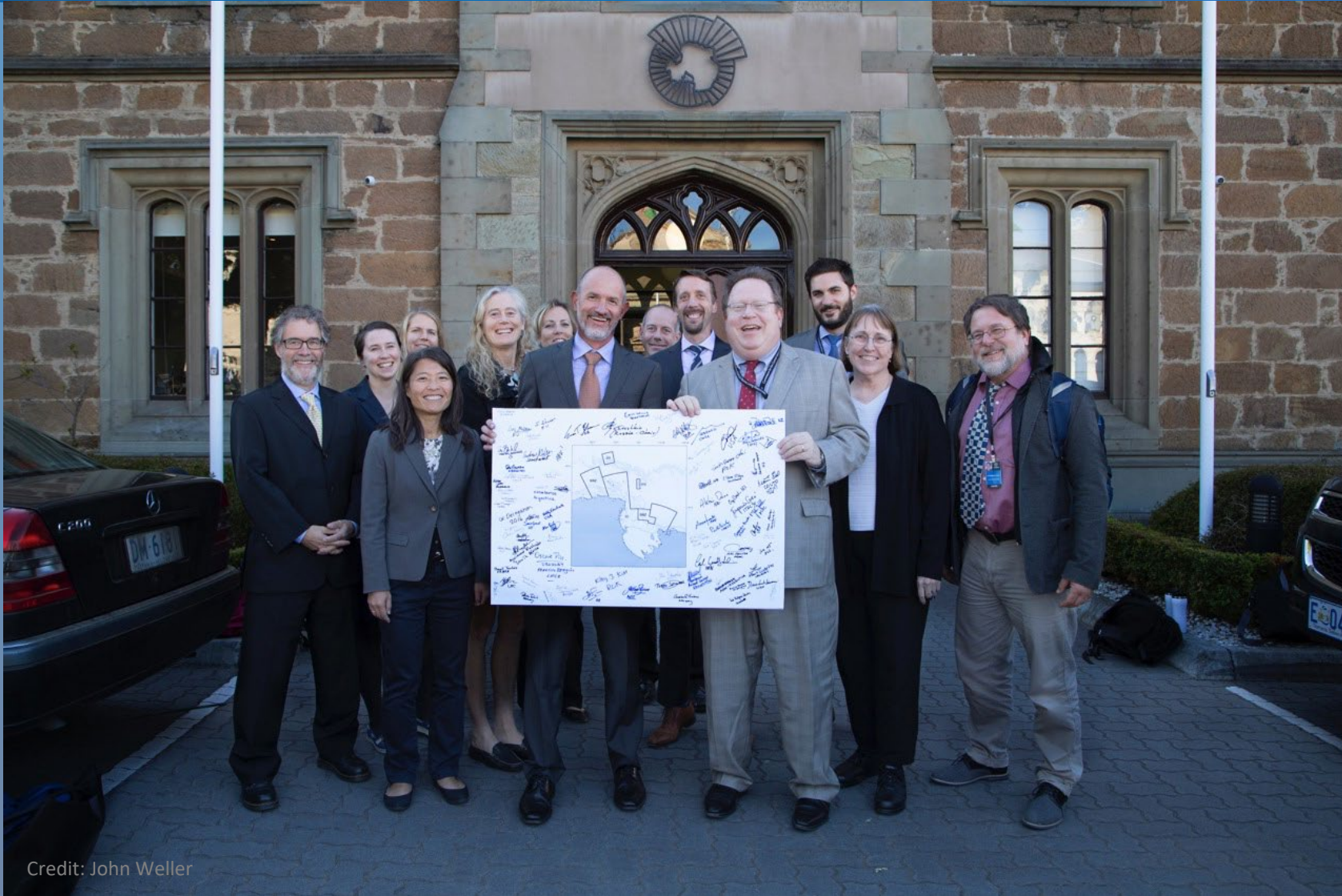


Credit: NSF

Bulgaria 2015



# The Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)



Credit: John Weller



# Presence: Operations for Science



## Presidential Memorandum 6646

- Directs NSF to manage the USAP
- Calls for year-round presence at 3 stations



# NSF's Geopolitical Role in the Antarctic



Credit: Bill Muntean

2020 Treaty Inspection Team



# NSF's Geopolitical Role in the Antarctic



**Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty site at the South Pole**



# NSF's Geopolitical Role in the Antarctic



Credit: <https://us.ponant.com>



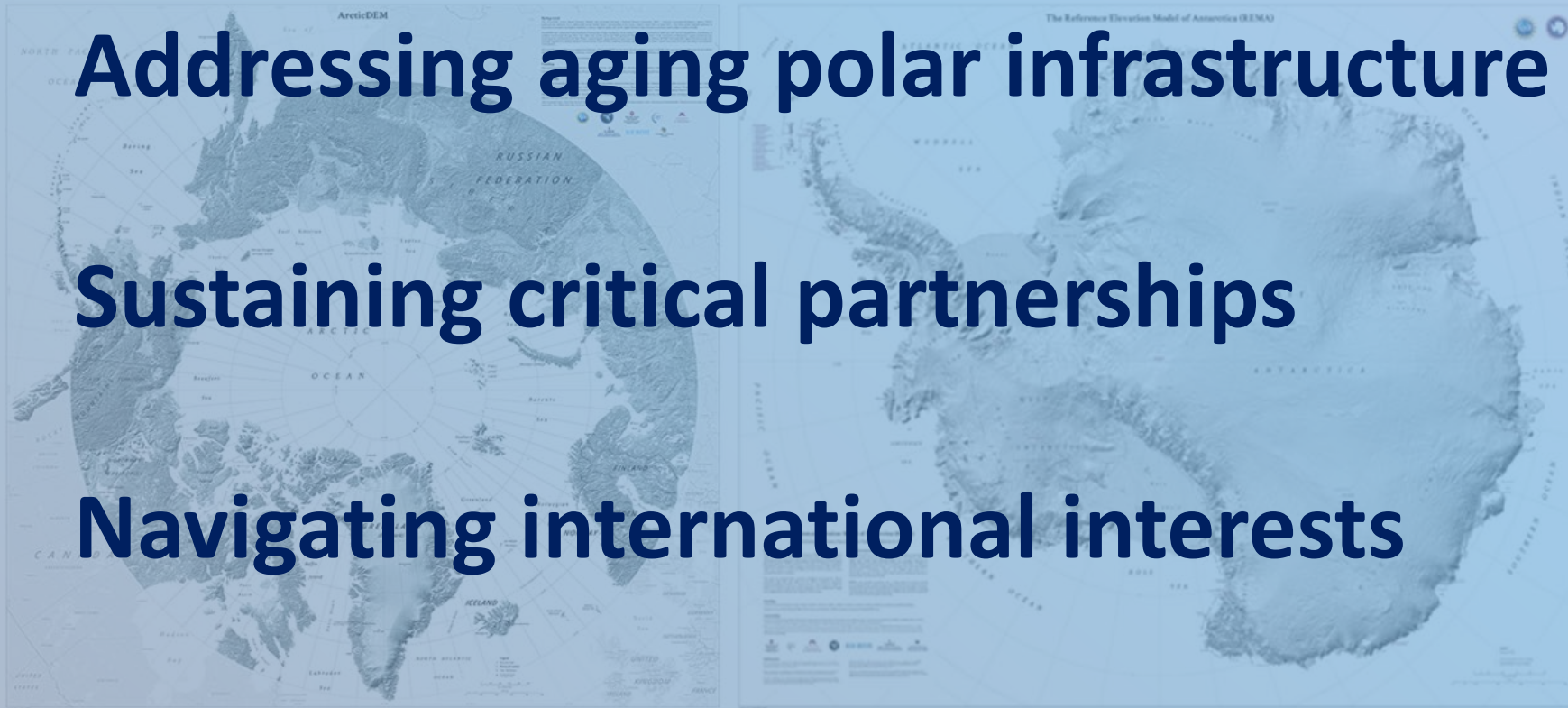
Credit: Michael Nolan/SplashdownDirect/Rex

## Annex VI/Measure 4: Liability and Emergency Preparedness



# Challenges & Opportunities

- Addressing aging polar infrastructure
- Sustaining critical partnerships
- Navigating international interests



*Thank you for listening!*