

**10<sup>th</sup> UK Arctic and Antarctic Partnership (UKAAP) Steering Committee Meeting**

Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019, 1045 to 1600

Room: Room G07, Pearson Building, Gower Street, University College London

## **Participants**

Professor Philip Wookey, University of Stirling (Chair) (PW)  
Professor Sheldon Bacon, NOC  
Henry Burgess, Head, NERC Arctic Office  
Professor Finlo Cottier, SAMS  
Chris Aldridge, BAS Polar Operations  
Stuart Doubleday, Polar Regions Department  
Professor Mary Edwards, University of Southampton  
Dr Stephen Elsby, NERC International  
Vicky Fowler, BAS (UKPN Representative)  
Professor Jane Francis, BAS  
Dr Richard Hodgkins, Loughborough University  
Professor Vivienne Jones, University College London (Deputy Chair) (VJ)  
Nicola Munro, NERC Arctic Office (UKAAP SC Secretary)  
Professor Gareth Phoenix, University of Sheffield  
Dr Jeff Ridley, Met Office  
Dr Clare Robinson, University of Manchester  
Professor Martin Siegert, Grantham Institute, Imperial College London  
Jessica Surma, NERC  
Professor Geraint Tarling, BAS  
Professor David Vaughan, BAS (DGV)

## **Apologies:**

Professor Mike Bentley, Durham University  
Professor Andrew Brierley, University of St Andrews  
Professor Ian Brooks, Leeds University  
Dr Helen Beadman, NERC Representative  
Professor Siwan Davies, Swansea University  
Dr Duncan Depledge, Loughborough University  
Dr Richard Essery, Edinburgh University  
Dr Anne Jungblut, Natural History Museum  
Dr Melanie Leng, BGS  
Dr Erin McClymont, Durham University  
Professor David Pearce, University of Northumbria  
Dr Jennifer Pike, University of Cardiff  
Dr Richard Powell, Scott Polar Research Institute  
Claire Spooner, ESRC  
Professor David Thomas, Bangor University

## **1. Welcome and Introductions (PW)**

PW opened the meeting and welcomed all members to the tenth UKAAP Steering Committee (SC) meeting. PW noted the apologies sent from members unable to attend. Participants were then asked to introduce themselves.

## **2. Review of Minutes and Actions from SC9 meeting in January 2019 (Papers: UKAAP 10/01 and 02)**

### Review of Minutes from UKAAP 9 (UKAAP 10/01):

PW presented the minutes from the last meeting and the following was noted:

- PW thanked VJ who had managed to find some funds for a UKPN representative to attend this meeting but made the point that there is a continued issue of funding for UKPN representatives to attend these meetings.
- The science and diplomacy event hosted by the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2019 at the House of Commons was very well attended. Both SCAR and the Arctic Office had stands at the event and the Arctic Office will look to do a similar event with POST in the future.

No further comments were made and the minutes were accepted as a true record of the ninth meeting on January 17th 2019. These will be posted on the UKAAP website.

### Review of Actions from UKAAP 9 (UKAAP 10/02):

PW reviewed the actions from UKAAP 9 and noted the following:

- *UKAAP article for Planet Earth*: this is still in progress.
- *Request for members to continue to send news items/events for the UKAAP website*: this is an ongoing action. The Chair also requested that members send photos and links to their profiles to add to the UKAAP website.
- *To draft a mission statement for UKAAP*: VJ will coordinate this with a draft to be circulated to the Committee by the end of July.
- *UKAAP SC Terms of Reference (ToR)*: The Committee reviewed these and accepted the changes put forward by PW. The revised ToR will be uploaded to the website with the recommendation to review these as the Committee evolves. Following this there was a discussion regarding membership and the importance of having key stakeholders at UKAAP SC meetings. It was agreed that all members should identify key stakeholders and submit to the Chair to collate a list. Stakeholders should be invited to the annual polar conferences and UKAAP SC meetings when expertise is required. **ACTION: VJ to collate list of key stakeholders.**
- *Questionnaire to identify critical issues researchers might be faced with in the next 10 to 15 years*: PW commented that there has been some discussion on this since the last meeting, however no action taken yet. This should remain on the agenda and reviewed at the next meeting after the UK Arctic Conference. During the discussion JF made the point that the RRS *Sir David Attenborough (SDA)* should be operational in the Arctic by 2022 and that it is for the UK polar community to put forward ideas to NERC on use of the SDA in the Arctic. It was noted that the upcoming Conference in Loughborough would be a good opportunity to address this.
- *Actions relating to the UKAAP Conference*: These will be reviewed later in the meeting, under Agenda item 5.

### **3. Update on access to polar logistics (David Vaughan)**

DGV gave a presentation on BAS logistic support in Antarctica. A copy of the presentation has been circulated to the Committee with the Minutes. A short discussion followed the presentation and the following points made:

- BAS are keen to engage with the academic community and currently do this through visits to universities to highlight how BAS can support and deliver science in the Antarctic and Arctic. BAS also ensure that there is one external member invited to the NERC Polar Resource Allocation Meetings (NPRAM) that are held once a year. Anna Hogg is the current external member.
- It is important to note that access to the ships is via a NERC led process. Key contact is Natalie Powney (NERC).
- Full details on how to access BAS logistics and support can be found on the BAS website here: <https://www.bas.ac.uk/science/opportunities-for-polar-fieldwork/>

### **4. UKRI Strategic Programme Fund – UK involvement in a future marine programme (H. Burgess/S. Elsbj)**

Central Arctic Ocean – future opportunities. Presentation given by Henry Burgess

H. Burgess gave a presentation focussed on how the Central Arctic Ocean can provide opportunities as a future research focus for UKRI strategic investment. Key points from the presentation and the short discussion that followed include:

- There is an agreement in place to prevent unregulated high seas fisheries in the central Arctic ocean which has been signed by the 5 Arctic coastal states (Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia and the US, plus China, EU, Iceland, Japan and South Korea). All signing parties are expected to ratify the agreement, to date only EU, Russia and China have done so.
- The agreement, which will come into force once all 10 parties have ratified it, will ban unregulated commercial fishing in the high seas of the Central Arctic Ocean for 16 years or until scientists confirm that fishing can be done sustainably and a management plan is in place.
- A provisional science group (consisting of representatives from the nine countries and the EU), was formed in May 2019 to coordinate work to develop the Joint Program of Scientific Research and Monitoring.
- This group is due to meet in February 2020 and will be convened by the European Commission. All countries that sign the agreement will be involved in setting the priorities and writing the science plan. Currently the UK sits as an observer; however post Brexit the UK will look to join this group as a party in its own right. This is still under discussion.

UKRI Collective funds – Presentation given by Stephen Elsbj

Stephen Elsbj, Interim Head of NERC International, gave a presentation on UKRI Collective funds. A copy of the presentation has been circulated to Committee members with the minutes. Key points include:

- UK Research and Innovation (UKRI): NERC is now a part of UKRI (as of 1 April 2018). However, each council and Innovate UK are still own bodies within this.

- £4.7 bn additional funding for R&D was announced as part of the Autumn Statement in 2016 over the period 2017/18 to 2020/2021 with a rising profile. The planned increase represents the largest ever increase in public funding of R&D over a five year period.
- The National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) is the governmentally run overarching budget under which the various other funds are managed. UKRI is a major delivery agent for these funds which include the Strategic Priorities Fund, Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, and Fund for International Collaboration) £1.5 - £2bn; Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) ~ £300m/year; Newton Fund ~ £150m/year and NERC Core Funds ~ £240m/year.
  - Strategic Priorities Fund: this responds to the Nurse Review recommendations and will support multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary programmes, supporting Government activities and priorities. (~£20m)
  - Fund for International Collaboration: this was launched in 2018 with £110m being allocated to UKRI. The focus is initially on countries where the UK has Science, Technology and Innovation agreements. The successful UK/Canada bid was submitted by NERC on behalf of ESRC, AHRC and ESRC to this fund.
  - Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund: this was launched in 2017 and is part of the government's Industrial Strategy. This is Industry led with focus on Clean Growth, AI & Data Economy, Ageing Society and Future Mobility.
  - Global Challenges Research Fund: Launched in 2016 with £1.5 bn allocated over 5 years. This looks to fund ODA activities.
  - Newton Fund: launched in 2014. This fund aims to develop science and innovation partnerships.

Following the presentation, the point was made that in order to access these funding schemes the community needs to work together not only with their respective UKRI Research Councils, but across councils as well. It was noted that the polar conferences would provide good opportunities for community input to then submit through the appropriate funding streams.

#### **5. UK Arctic Science Conference update and discussion on UKAAP sessions (R. Hodgkins, VJ, All)** **(Paper: UKAAP 10/03)**

RH gave an update on the general planning for the UK Arctic Science Conference and reported that there will be a dedicated UKAAP session on the 12<sup>th</sup> September from 1100 to 1300. This will allow time for an introduction by the UKAAP Chair to UKAAP, followed by a series of breakout sessions, finishing with a plenary to collate the ideas from the breakout sessions. RH noted that there would be space to have five parallel breakout sessions. As suggested in the paper put forward to the Committee by VJ (UKAAP 10/03), the sessions should be organised by themes. The following five themes were recommended:

- I. Anthropocene (Communities and Geopolitics)
- II. Biogeochemical cycles/Ecology
- III. Arctic infrastructures
- IV. Climate and Ice
- V. The new polar ship – Sir David Attenborough

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- Delegates should be encouraged to choose a session to attend at the start of the conference.

- There should be a poster per theme in the reception area with space for people to add post-it notes identifying what they see as UK priorities in relation to the chosen theme.
- Those not able to attend should be provided with an opportunity to also submit comments (probably via email or an online post-it site).
- Two people, one being an Early Career Researcher, should chair each session.
- All responses to be collated and fed back during the plenary at the end.
- It should be made clear that this is a community driven exercise.

**ACTION: VJ to lead on planning of the sessions with RH.**

**6. UKRI Fund for International Collaboration – update on the UK/Canada multidisciplinary bid (H. Burgess)**

H. Burgess gave a quick update on the recent UK/ Canada cross-council bid led by NERC to the UKRI Fund for International Collaboration (FIC). UK funding has been confirmed; however, we are still waiting for the final announcement expected in the coming weeks.

A UKRI workshop will be held on 19 June in London, led by NERC on behalf of AHRC, ESRC and EPSRC together with Canadian partners. This will aim to bring together researchers from across disciplines to discuss future opportunities related to this bid.

*(A summary report from this workshop is now available on the NERC website:*

<https://nerc.ukri.org/latest/events/list/cca-workshop/summary-report/>)

**7. Science and Innovation Network (SIN) priorities (S. Doubleday, FCO)**

S. Doubleday gave a presentation focussed on the Science and Innovation Network (SIN). This included an introduction to the objectives of the SIN, the priorities and examples of some of the projects SIN has been involved in. Details are provided in the presentation that was circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting.

**8. EU-PolarNet White Papers (these can be downloaded from the EU-PolarNet website here: <https://www.eu-polarnet.eu/news-and-events/conferences-and-workshops/white-paper-workshop/>)**

EU-PolarNet is an EU H2020 funded European Consortium of expertise and infrastructure for polar research. The Alfred Wegener Institute coordinates it with 22 partners, UK included.

DGV gave a brief summary of the EU-PolarNet White Papers which focus on People; Climate and Cryosphere; Sustainable Management of Resources and Human Impacts; Polar Biology, Ecology and Biodiversity; and New Technology. The papers which form one of the deliverables for EU-PolarNet, were published earlier this year and aim to provide guidance to the EU on key areas in polar research. Further information about, and links to the White Papers can be found on the EU-PolarNet website here:

<https://www.eu-polarnet.eu/news-and-events/conferences-and-workshops/white-paper-workshop/>

**9. Stakeholder reports (Standing Agenda Item)**

Update from NERC (J. Surma)

J. Surma reported that 60 ideas, including some related to polar research, were submitted to the most recent NERC call for Highlight Topics (deadline of 15<sup>th</sup> May). The Science Committee will review these in September 2019 with the view to announce the next set of Highlight Topics in November 2019.

J. Surma also reported on the UKRI transformation - this transformation is driven by the need to increase efforts in administering funds; to provide uniformity across the research council structures; and to enable a single grant service across UKRI. NERC are also currently undergoing a change to the organisation's structure. NERC will have two Directorates; one overseeing Research and Skills and the other focussing on Strategic Partnerships. Two new Directors will be recruited to these roles, which will take time.

#### Update from the NERC Arctic Office (H. Burgess)

- H. Burgess introduced this item by giving a quick overview of the four main roles of the Arctic Office: to support researchers in the Arctic and high north; to provide advice to policy and decision makers; to connect to new initiatives; and to help manage the process of the NERC Arctic Research Station. The Office does this by looking for new funding opportunities for the community; ensuring access to policy makers; and representing the community at both national and international events.
- The Office has recently been involved in supporting the UK/Canada FIC bid with NERC Head Office. The Office has also been providing support for the UK Arctic Conference, which will be held in Loughborough.
- The UK Arctic Station hosted a visit from the BBC Radio 4 Today Programme in March. This provided a good opportunity to promote the Station and UK Arctic Research. The Arctic Office and BAS also hosted an Arctic Station 'Open' day in February 2019 which was well attended and provided another opportunity to highlight some of the science carried out in Ny-Ålesund. The Arctic Office will look to continue to host more of these in future.
- MOSAiC: BEIS and NERC have funded seven teams to join MOSAiC. The seventh project from UEA was recently funded due to some BEIS underspend.
- UK-Canada bursaries: 13 projects have been funded through the third BEIS funded UK/Canada Arctic Bursaries Programme. Approximately £750k has been made available through BEIS in the last 3 years, funding 40 projects.
- UK/Russia: UKPN and APECS Russia ran a very well received field course in Murmansk, Russia in February 2019. The aim was to facilitate bilateral and interdisciplinary cooperation of early career researchers from the UK and Russia. This included 20 people from the UK, a mixture of staff and students. The course will run again in 2020.
- Arctic projects database: the Office is working on a database that will bring together UK Arctic projects in one place. The aim is to have this ready by the end of the summer 2019.
- Arctic map: The BAS mapping team have produced a map of Greenland and the European Arctic and the Arctic Office have produced the information sheet on the other side to complement this. This was done in collaboration with UK Polar Network researchers, Met Office, Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO), Scott Polar Research Institute (SPRI) and WWF.
- Events: H. Burgess attended the ASSW in Arkhangelsk, Russia in May and noted that IASC are taking a more active role within the international community. The Arctic Office is continuing the series of visits to UK universities and will be attending the Arctic Circle (Iceland) and ArcticNet (Canada) conferences later this year.

## Update from UK Polar Network (Vicky Fowler)

### Recent and upcoming activities include:

- UKPN Antarctic Flag initiative: 256 flags from 53 schools have been sent to Antarctica. This initiative continues to be very popular.
- Arctic Map: The UKPN have also contributed to the Arctic Map which is a project led by the BAS Mapping team and the NERC Arctic Office.
- Polar Pen Pal initiative: The UKPN receive many requests to visit schools, and unfortunately are unable to respond to all the requests. They have therefore developed a polar pen pal initiative where school children can write a letter to a polar scientist.
- UKPN attended the Southampton Science Festival and ASSW. The UKPN will also attend the World of Music, Arts and Dance (WOMAD) Festival, in July 2019, and will be talking about polar research and what it is like to work in Antarctica.
- UKPN will hold a joint workshop at the Svalbard Science Conference with APECS Russia and Norway.
- UKPN will host an informal networking session on the 10<sup>th</sup> of September before the UK Arctic Science Conference in Loughborough. This will be followed by a workshop on the morning of the 11<sup>th</sup> September. Details will be released shortly and promoted via the websites.

PW thanked the UKPN for the update and acknowledged the fantastic public engagement.

### **10. Next Meeting**

NM to send round a doodle poll for the next meeting. This will likely be held end of November/early December.

### **11. AOB**

Mary Edwards noted the DIMA Early career workshop – this will be held in September 2019 and keen to encourage more UK Early Career researchers to attend. The focus is from 50 N northward, on tundra and boreal forest ecosystems and permafrost-affected systems, and methods include a range of paleo-ecological, ecological and remote-sensing approaches.

Stuart Doubleday reported that 2020 would see the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the discovery of Antarctica and the South Sandwich Islands. Events are being planned to highlight the anniversaries coordinated by the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust (UKAHT).

Phil Wookey reported that he would be stepping down as Chair of the UKAAP Steering Committee and will be replaced in the interim by Viv Jones, current Deputy Chair of UKAAP. The new Chair will be announced at the next meeting following a vote. The Committee thanked Phil for his contribution to UKAAP.

PW concluded the meeting by thanking Viv and UCL for hosting the meeting, the Arctic Office for providing the Secretariat support and for all those who attended the meeting.

### **Summary of Actions**

Agenda Item	Task	Who's responsible	Deadline
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2. Review of Minutes and Actions from UKAAP 9 SC Meeting	UKAAP Article for Planet Earth	HB and DGV	Ongoing
	Draft Mission statement and circulate to the SC for review	VJ	End of July 2019
	Request to members to send photos and profiles for UKAAP website to N Munro – nalm@bas.ac.uk	All	Ongoing
	Upload UKAAP SC Revised ToR to UKAAP website  Members to send a list of key stakeholders to VJ to collate for future meetings.	NM  VJ	End of July 2019
	Questionnaire to identify critical issues researchers might be faced with in the next 10 to 15 years		To be reviewed after the next UK Arctic Science Conference
5. UK Arctic Science Conference	Planning of the UK Arctic Science Conference – UKAAP session	VJ and RH	