

WG-GGI Newsletter No. 1

August 2000

Dear GGI & GIANT Listserv members

Welcome to the first WG-GGI Newsletter.

As a result of our discussions at the WG-GGI meeting held in Tokyo, the Outreach Program has been tasked with providing a newsletter to publicise and distribute results of WG-GGI activities to the wider Antarctic community. This information will also be made available on the WG-GGI web site.

This newsletter summarises feedback on:

- the outcomes from the Delegates meeting at XXVI SCAR in Tokyo;
- the preliminary funding allocations for GGI projects;
- details of all SCAR WG recommendations; and
- the proposed International Polar Decade

SCAR/COMNAP Joint Meeting on Science Initiatives.

Following the SCAR and COMNAP Working Group meetings (from 10-14 July), a joint meeting between SCAR and COMNAP on 15 July heard presentations on major international programs that have influenced the logistic support provided by national Antarctic programs in the past. It also was briefed on proposed programs that will affect operational requirements in the future.

SCAR Delegates Meeting

The SCAR Delegates meeting was held 18-22 July and the following is a precis of the activities.

Presentation of WG reports

The meeting of the delegates started with brief presentations by working groups and groups of specialists which highlighted items from their reports.

Election of new SCAR executive members

Roland Schlich (France) and Chris Rapley (UK) were the only nominees for two vacant Vice-President positions and were appointed by acclamation.

Review of SCAR

The Monday afternoon and all day Tuesday were devoted to responding to the review. Phil Smith (Chair of the Review Group) outlined the process and conclusions of the review.

A combined response was then presented by Julian Priddle on behalf of the Chief Officers. This welcomed the review in principle, especially:

- the suggested increased role and support for the SCAR Secretariat;
- the strategy to improve communications within SCAR;
- the suggested provision for improving outreach and education; and

- the emphasis on periodic review to ensure that the best science receives SCAR support.

The Chief Officers' response also

- highlighted the need for an evolutionary approach to change;
- placed an emphasis on interdisciplinary science;
- proposed a move towards a multidisciplinary science meeting at the core of future WG biennial meetings; and
- highlighted the requirement for a competent science review body to assess new proposals and monitor progress on existing activities.

During Tuesday, four breakout groups of delegates considered the review recommendations and submissions from the WGs and reported back to plenary. The majority of the review recommendations were subsequently accepted with only minor change.

There was consensus on a decrease in the number of delegate committees from four to two, one covering Science Issues, and the second all other matters. There was also support for the continuation of a decreased number of disciplinary working groups. Most of the detail of the transformation of WGs and GoS into the new science operational structure was left to an *ad hoc Group on Transition*. This group will work intersessionally and comprise:

- the SCAR Executive (President, four Vice-President, immediate past-President)
- representatives of 2 Working Groups
- representatives of one large and one small-program delegate
- representative of the SCAR Review group.

Drew Clarke will be the representative of the SCAR Review group and Phil O'Brien the representative of Geology / Geophysics Working Group).

Other important review issues discussed were the separation of the science (WG) meetings from Delegates meetings and the upgrading of the SCAR Secretariat. There was no clear decision on how and when the meetings would be separated, other than that major changes will not be made for SCAR XXVII. Details of future meeting organisation were again left to the Executive and Transition Group.

There was considerable debate about the way in which the SCAR secretariat would be upgraded. It was decided that National Committees would be invited to tender detailed and comprehensive proposals for the provision of accommodation, facilities and staffing for a restructured Executive Office.

SCAR finances

Delegates accepted the recommendation of the finance committee to run a balanced budget in 2001 and 2002 rather than to continue to eat into accumulated reserves. A decision to jointly fund with COMNAP the operation of the Antarctic Master Directory, as well as costs for the SCAR restructure mean that there are considerably less SCAR funds to support science activities in 2001 and 2002 than in the 3 previous years. Science activity funding for 2001 will be US\$139 000 plus \$24 000 carryover, and in 2002 it will be US\$144 000. This funding is broadly distributed evenly between biological, earth science

and climate science projects. In 1998, 1999, and 2000 the science support funding amounts were US\$176 000, US\$236 000, and US\$198 000 respectively.

There was general agreement from delegates that an increase in national contribution, which have not increased for 8 years, will need to be considered at the 2002 SCAR meeting.

There was also considerable discussion about the long-term continuing funding provided to GOSEAC.

Proposed SCAR Funding Allocations to WG-GGI

2001 Projects	Requested	Proposed
• Physical Geodesy Database of Antarctica	10 000	3 000
• Antarctic Geodesy Symposium	13 000	5 000
• Updating the Antarctic Digital Database	10 000	0
• Geographical Information Workshop (July, Europe)	10 000	5 000
• Meeting on Place Names Database (Europe)	2 000	2 000
Total	45 000	15 000

2002 Projects	Requested	Proposed
• Physical Geodesy Database of Antarctica	10 000	3 000
• SCAR Spatial Data Model Project	10 000	0
• Meeting on Place Names Databases (publication)	2 000	2 000
Total	22 000	5 000

[Details of this budget are subject to decisions of the ad hoc Group on Transition regarding the new structure of SCAR]

Impact on WG-GGI

Feedback from the Delegates meeting has indicated there were no discussions on splitting up WG-GGI. This whole issue will be examined by the Transition Group along with the issue of the proposed format for the scientific assembly.

Both the ADD and Spatial Data Model projects were unsuccessful in their applications for funding. The Chief Officer is currently considering options for reallocating funds within the WG-GGI budget allocation as these two projects are important and represent half of the GGI projects that requested funding.

SCAR Scientific Activities

New activities that were initiated by working groups and endorsed by SCAR to the extent that some funding was allocated for them included:

- A new Group of Specialists on Antarctic sub-glacial lakes
- Operation of the Antarctic Master Directory (JCADM)
- RISCC program (Biology)
- EVOLANTA program (Biology)

- ISMASS program (Glaciology)
- 9th International Antarctic Earth Sciences Symposium (Geology / Geophysics)
- Symposium on polar conjugate studies of geospace (WG-STAR)
- AGEANT (Geology)
- Workshop on the environmental effects of marine acoustics

Some support was provided for a range of continuing projects including:

- GOSEAC
- GLOCHANT
- EASIZ (Biology)
- GoS Seals
- Bird Biology sub-committee
- ANTEC
- Off shore stratigraphy sub-committee (Geology / Geophysics)
- Place Names database (WG-GGI)

SCAR XXVIII meeting

The SCAR XXVIII in 2004 will be held in Bremen, Germany. However it was unclear, under a revised SCAR format, whether Germany was awarded the meeting of the operating groups (science), delegates meeting, or both.

Recommendations from Working Groups

A large number of recommendations from the WGs and GoS were considered en bloc and there was considerable overlap both between groups and with previous recommendations. Eventually all "internal" recommendations (those to SCAR itself or to National Committees) were referred back to the SCAR Executive. External SCAR Recommendations (to other organisations) were agreed in principle by delegates, but will be rewritten by the Executive.

International Polar Decade

Australian representatives raised the concept of an International Polar Decade, commencing in 2007, at several Working Group meetings. This received enthusiastic support by the Delegates and was raised at the plenary where it was also supported. The SCAR Executive will develop this proposal in parallel with an ICSU plan to celebrate the IGY.

Appendix

List of Acronyms used in the newsletter

AGEANT	Age, Growth and Evolution of Antarctica (SCAR WG-Geology)
ANTEC	GoS on Antarctic Neotectonics (SCAR)
COMNAP	Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programmes
EASIZ	Ecology of the Antarctic Sea Ice Zone program (SCAR WG-Biology)
EVOLANTA	Evolution in Antarctica program (SCAR WG-Biology)
GLOCHANT	GoS on Global Change and the Antarctic (SCAR)
GoS	Group of Specialists

GOSEAC	GoS on Environmental Affairs and Conservation (SCAR)
ICSU	International Council of Science
IGY	International Geophysical Year (1957-58)
ISMASS	Ice Sheet Mass Balance program (SCAR WG-Glaciology)
JCADM	Joint Committee on Antarctic Data Management (SCAR/COMNAP)
RISCC	Regional Sensitivity to Climate Change program (SCAR WG-Biology)
SCAR	Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (ICSU)
WG-GGI	Working Group on Geodesy and Geographic Information (SCAR)
WG-STAR	Working Group on Solar Terrestrial Astrophysical Research (SCAR)

That's it for now.....

If you have any queries about items in this newsletter please contact either the Chief Officer - John Manning or myself.

Regards

Glenn