26th IPA Council Meeting

Thursday, June 23, 2016, 16:30 – 18:15
Place: Kongresshotel Potsdam am Templiner See
meeting room 0.214, Potsdam, Germany

Minutes

PARTICIPANTS

IPA Executive Committee (EC) members: Hanne Christiansen (President), Vladimir Romanovsky (Vice-President), Chris Burn (Vice-President), Isabelle Gärtner-Roer (EC member), Dmitry Sergeev (EC member), Huijun Jin (proxy for Ma Wei, EC member), Karina Schollän (Executive Director), Sarah Strand (incoming Executive Director)

Council members:
Argentina: Dario Trombotto
Austria: Andreas Kellerer-Pirklbauer
Canada: Sharon Smith
China: Fujun Niu (alternate for Huijun Jin)
Denmark: Thomas Ingeman-Nielsen
France: François Costard
Germany: Michael Krautblatter and Hans-Wolfgang Hubberten (alternate)
Italy: Mauro Guglielmin (alternate for Adriano Ribolini)
Japan: Mamoru Ishikawa
Netherlands: Ko van Huissteden
New Zealand: Megan Balks
Norway: Arne Instanes
Poland: Rajmund Przybylak
Portugal: Gonçalo Vieira
Romania: Petru Urdea
Russia: Dmitry Drozdov (alternate for Anna Kurchatova)
South Korea: Yoo Kyung Lee
Spain: Enrique Serrano
Sweden: Peter Kuhry (alternate for Gustaf Hugelius)
Switzerland: Reynald Delaloye
United Kingdom: Julian Murton
USA: Tom Krzewinski and Fritz Nelson (alternate)

South Africa (non-voting adhering body): Ian Meiklejohn
Council members were not present from Finland, Iceland, Kyrgyzstan, or Mongolia when the meeting commenced.

1. Opening

1.1. Welcome and practical information
Hanne Christiansen opened the meeting, gave practical information and pointed out the meeting’s limited time-frame.

1.2. Acceptance of agenda
The agenda was accepted unanimously; no comments or objections.

2. Report from the new Executive Committee

2.1. New EC named and presented
Hanne Christiansen presented the new EC members who were voted upon at the previous council meeting. The organization of the new EC was also explained, with Vladimir Romanovsky and Chris Burn being unanimously appointed as new Vice Presidents.

2.2. The EC’s view on additional EC members
The IPA EC will review within 6 months to 1 year if another member is needed on the EC, if an operational gap is noticed.

3. Location of the Secretariat and Nomination of the Executive Director

3.1. Description of the search for Secretariat funding and the resulting Executive Director position funded by The Research Council of Norway
Since 2015, Hanne Christiansen explored funding options in Norway and was successful in obtaining funding from The Research Council of Norway in May 2016. This funding covers a 40% position through 2019 for Sarah Strand to serve as Executive Director of the IPA, based at The University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS). This position is planned to be combined with a permafrost-focused PhD starting in 2017, funded by UNIS, which supports the IPA by allowing Sarah to have a full-time position. The transition between Karina Schollännen and Sarah Strand was outlined. Sarah will lead the IPA Secretariat following ICOP 2016, with Karina also working as Executive Director until 1 December 2016, when Sarah will fully assume the Executive Director position.

3.2. Approval of the Executive Director position and location of the Secretariat
The motion to approve the location of the IPA Secretariat at UNIS and the staffing of the Executive Director position was made by Andreas Kellerer-Pirklbauer (Rep. Austria) and seconded by Rajmund Przybylak (Rep. Poland). The approval was unanimous.

4. Nomination of the International Advisory Committee for ICOP

4.1. IPA EC suggestions
The IPA EC suggested Antoni Lewkowicz, Anne Morgenstern, Karina Schollännen, and Tingjun Zhang as the new International Advisory Committee for ICOP. Assuming the Council approves Antoni Lewkowicz’s place on the committee, it is suggested he serves as the chair. The floor was opened for questions and comments, but proceeds immediately to the vote.

4.2. Approval of the new International Advisory Committee for ICOP
The committee members proposed by the IPA EC were accepted, following a motion by Sharon Smith (Rep. Canada), which was seconded by Mauro Guglielmin (Rep. Italy). The decision was unanimous.

5. Vote to approve ICOP 2020 venue – Lanzhou, China

5.1. Decision to vote by hands rather than secret ballot
Normally the ICOP location would be voted on by weighted secret ballot, but since there was only one option, HC asked if the Council still wanted to vote. Arne Instanes (Rep. Norway) asked about the potential difficulties in obtaining visas to China, but the ICOP 2020 organizing team promised they would address this issue. After this brief discussion, the Council informally decided (via voiced opinion) to proceed without secret ballot voting.

5.2. Approval of Lanzhou as ICOP 2020 venue
Megan Balks (Rep. New Zealand) made the motion to approve Lanzhou as the ICOP 2020 venue; this was seconded by Rajmund Przybylak (Rep. Poland). No Adhering Bodies were against the decision, thus the ICOP 2020 venue was formally assigned to Lanzhou, China.

6. Conference Resolutions

6.1. Review/discussion of Resolutions and Preamble
Hanne Christiansen presented the suggested Resolutions text prepared by the EC. There is interest in having the resolutions address how permafrost affects people, i.e. permafrost related hazards and impact to civil society. Discussion arises regarding how GTN-P is mentioned in regards to modelling. This leads to the idea that “GTN-P products” hold and disseminate the data that leads to better representation of permafrost in maps and models. There is some concern over the grammatical wording, and Chris Burn agrees to copy edit and read the resolutions and preamble to ensure the best possible English language. Volker Rachold (Council meeting observer and Executive Secretary, IASC) suggests permafrost should be put in context of the global system, and it is proposed to use the phrase “earth-system models.”

7. Reports from IPA partner organizations and IPA Interest and Action groups

7.1. GAPHAZ – an IPA Interest Group (presented by Michael Krautblatter)
The Glacier and Permafrost Hazards in Mountains (GAPHAZ) group is associated both with the IPA and IASC. The current scientific goals of the group are to strengthen international research & collaboration, and improving the present state-of-knowledge. GAPHAZ had sessions at ICOP and EGU in 2016, and was involved in producing the 2015 book “The High-Mountain Cyrosphere: Environmental Changes and Human Risks” (published by Cambridge University Press). GAPHAZ has also been invited to write sections for the Encyclopedia of Natural Hazard Science. GAPHAZ has a website and GoogleEarth-based database of glacier and permafrost disasters.

7.2. ANTPAS – an IPA Interest Group (presented by Gonçalo Vieira)
ANTPAS is currently developing a new strategic plan, and held a meeting at ICOP. Their main objective is promoting research on Antarctic permafrost, soils, and periglacial environments, and now this Interest Group wants to make these topics more visible to the research world. Ideally a report will be
prepared following the SCAR meeting in Kuala Lumpur (August 2016). ANTPAS’ current funding from SCAR is very limited, but they have managed to partially support 2 young researchers to attend SCAR meetings. ANTPAS’ research community is widespread, both with field areas on the Antarctic content and where people are based around the world.

7.3. SCAR (presented by Gonçalo Vieira)
SCAR is a non-governmental, interdisciplinary, scientific research-based organization. They are trying to promote both Antarctic and Southern Island research and advocate for excellency in this field; they are also involved with Antarctica policy and politics. Currently one of their main projects is ANTOS (which is concerned with ecological issues in ice free areas). They are interested in connecting GTN-P with the SCAR data products. The group is celebrating “the role of women in Antarctic research” at the Kuala Lumpur conference and will be “wikibombing” by developing almost 100 Wikipedia articles on the work and biographies of women in Antarctica.

7.4. IASC (presented by Volker Rachold)
IASC wants to make sure IASC, SCAR, and IPA activities are cooperative and do not duplicate; thus far the agreements between these associations have been successful. IASC has numerous events, some of which are directly associated with RCOPs and ICOPs. Many activities and groups have stemmed from IASC activity with the IPA (ex. the Education and Outreach Standing Committee). The Arctic Coastal Dynamics (ACD) project has had a website re-launch and will hopefully be carried forward by young researchers. The IASC secretariat has been based in Potsdam, but will move to Akureyri, Iceland for 5 years starting 1 January 2017.

7.5. CliC (presented by Dario Trombotto)
Dario Trombotto recently joined the CliC Scientific Steering Group, due to his area of expertise in mountain permafrost. He has kept CliC informed of advances and problems in South American permafrost research, and highlights the importance of periglacial hydrology. He is supportive of a permafrost meeting being hosted in New Zealand, since this would be a platform to draw attention to Southern Hemisphere permafrost research in general.

7.6. APECS (presented by Stefanie Weege)
APECS established a new mailing list that allows for membership counting. After establishment, approximately 4 new people were signing up per week. The organization is seeking more early career researchers from Asia and South American countries, although Brazil is already well represented. Non-early career researchers are welcome to join as well, and there is a special senior scientist mailing list. In general Southern Hemisphere countries are especially encouraged to engage with APECS.

7.7. IACS (presented by Michael Krautblatter)
IACS is having a 2017 Scientific Assembly in Wellington, New Zealand in February 2017 at the International Symposium on the Cryosphere in a Changing Climate. This meeting is a collaboration between IGS, IACS, and CliC. It is suggested that the IPA could be involved with/collaborate on this meeting.

7.8. Action Group report: Arctic Coastal Web Implementation (presented by Boris Radosavljevic)
This Action Group has accomplished all the objectives put forward in the proposal. They have created a circum-Arctic coastal classification map; there is a related web-GIS and the data is available in most common formats. A coastal image gallery (with Creative Commons license) also was created; images are geocoded and will ideally increase interest, as will their blog that
is aimed at a wider audience. This Action Group had a meeting preceding ICOP and has also hosted a session. The group will not seek Action Group funding again, as it can only be had twice, though they want to be endorsed as an official affiliated activity. Their database represents a “snapshot in time” so the next steps are to define the effects of environmental forcing on the coast on a circum-Arctic scale. They want advice from the IPA regarding securing future funding.


Having a circumpolar map of permafrost and ground ice content continues to be relevant, however, the permafrost field has changed since the original map’s creation in 1998. This Action Group looked into the purpose of a new map, and the needs this map would have to address. Based on responses/comments received by the Action Group, they make 3 suggestions regarding a new map: (1) The new map does not need to be made in GIS for detailed use, but rather can be purely for communication and outreach, accompanied by descriptive text. (2) Ideally there would be a service that could compile all the pre-existing maps and would then allow for comparison and download. (3) There should be a way to assess map quality, and to potentially add new science to pre-existing maps. The IPA should further consider the process, and think about what data and methods can be applied to the ever-increasing amount of maps. Hanne Christiansen points out that a Southern Hemisphere map is a current gap. There was a short discussion about using GTN-P to collect data applicable for model testing and forcing. It might be beneficial to develop “bench marks” for maps; this would allow for better quantification of error and uncertainty.

8. Other business

8.1. Items submitted after preparation of the agenda

8.1.1. White House Arctic Science Ministerial

Hanne Christiansen suggested the new ICOP resolutions are submitted to the Science Ministerial; there are no objections to this suggestion. The Ministerial is being coordinated on the highest national level (i.e. IPA and other organizations cannot choose to attend), and the outcome is hypothetically coordinated efforts addressing certain themes, with focus on observation systems.

8.1.2. EC’s plan regarding RCOP location rotation

Hanne Christiansen explains to Council the new EC’s plan of using the conference in Japan as a test-run to see how beneficial/successful more frequent regional meetings are. This will help the EC develop a more formal plan regarding RCOP locations that should be presented to council in Chamonix in 2018. The motion to accept these plans is made by Sharon Smith (Rep. Canada), and seconded by Thomas Ingeman-Nielsen (Rep. Denmark). Council is unanimous in favour of this plan.

8.1.3. Updated financial report

It is noted that the revenue from the conference in Évora, Portugal needs to be updated in the current financial report.

8.2. Location of the next Council meeting

The next Council meeting is suggested to take place 24 June 2018 in Chamonix as part of the next European Conference on Permafrost. The motion to accept this is made by Thomas Ingeman-Nielsen (Rep. Denmark),
and is seconded by Reynald Delaloye (Rep. Switzerland). Council is unanimous in favour.

9. Meeting adjournment

9.1. Meeting adjournment
The motion to adjourn the meeting is made by Thomas Ingeman-Nielsen (Rep. Denmark) and is seconded by Tom Krzewinski (Rep. USA).