

Newsletter – November 2016

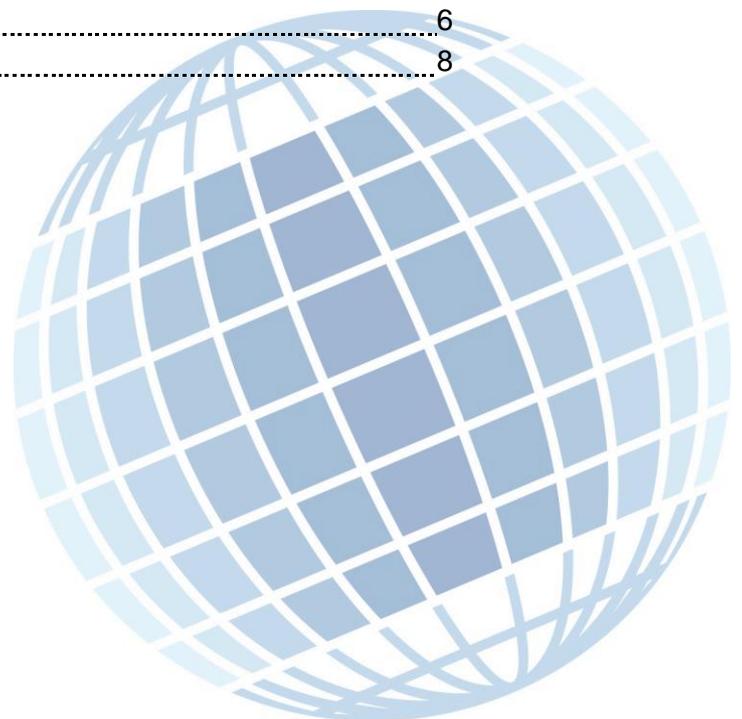
Welcome to EU-PolarNet's fourth newsletter!

It has been an eventful fall with one highlight chasing the next: the second AMAP/EU-PolarNet Stakeholder Workshop, our major Town Hall Event in Brussels and a joint session at the Arctic Circle. Also we have submitted our first periodic reporting - good timing to have a look at our [public deliverables](#). Time for a rest? By no means! We are gearing up for two more exciting events in November and December...

The EU-PolarNet newsletter is issued quarterly to inform you about news from the consortium and affiliated projects, to reflect on developments in European polar research and to give a glimpse on conferences and events coming up in near future. If you have any news, or would like to publicise an event, conference or course, or give us feedback please get in touch by emailing info@eu-polarnet.eu.

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Our first milestone: EU-PolarNet's Town Hall Event

How can Arctic and Antarctic research contribute to mitigation efforts, which are set out to limiting the global temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels? To find possible answers EU-PolarNet hosted a Town Hall Event themed "Towards the 1.5°C climate goal - Perspectives from the Polar Regions" in Brussels on 27th September 2016. The objective of the event was to explore how future polar research projects could deliver tangible benefits for the European society - especially in regard to the 1.5°C climate goal. The Town Hall, however, also marked the first milestone in EU-PolarNet's stakeholder engagement efforts and was a chance to deepen the project's ambition to connecting science with society by stimulating a dialogue between polar scientists, policy makers, industries, NGOs, media, as well as local and indigenous communities.



EU-PolarNet Town Hall Event in Brussels. ((c) RBINS Th. Hubin)

In total 110 scientists and stakeholders from a wide range of backgrounds attended the Town Hall in the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, with an additional 150 people watching the event as livestream and video on demand on the EU-PolarNet YouTube channel.

Morning session: What does the European society need from polar research?

The whole day event was kicked-off by two keynote addresses, which were given by João Aguiar Machado, Director-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, and Paolo Ruti, Chief of the World Weather Research Division at the World Meteorological Organisation. Both speakers emphasized the Polar Region's role within the global climate system and their importance for the European society at large, thus setting the scene for the subsequent panel on "The 1.5°C climate target - What does the European society need from polar research?".



The morning panel. ((c) RBINS Th. Hubin)

The main discussion points of this panel focussed on the need to establish trust-based relationships with indigenous communities and to include their traditional knowledge in research and decision-making processes. Furthermore, increased communication activities for the European public was stated to be essential in order to make people aware of the importance of the Polar Regions – especially Antarctica is lacking public awareness.

Morning panellists: Jannie Staffansson (Saami Council), Peter Gibbs (BBC), Valérie Masson-Delmotte (IPCC WG1), Peter Sköld (IASSA), Tero Vauraste (Arctia Shipping) and Tom Armstrong (Madison River Group); Chair: Björn Dahlbäck (SPRS).

Afternoon Session: European priorities for polar research

The afternoon session took a closer look at European priorities for polar research, with a keynote presentation given by Thomas Stocker (Co-Chair of Working Group I of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 5th Assessment Report) and a second discussion panel. In this session three main points were highlighted: Firstly, new funding opportunities are needed, which facilitate international research programmes. Secondly, cooperation synergies with public private partnerships

should be explored in order to enable a sustainable development of the Arctic. And thirdly, the 1.5°C target requires a trifold strategy, which includes mitigation, adaptation and intervention strategies.

Afternoon panellists: Jane Francis (British Antarctic Survey), Marcus Carson (Stockholm Environment Institute), Christine Valentin (World Ocean Council), Attilio Gambardella (European Commission, DG RTD), Maaïke Vancauvenberghe (European Polar Board) and Carlo Barbante (National Research Council Italy, EU-PolarNet); Chair: Tom Armstrong (Madison River Group).



Jane Francis giving her input presentation during the afternoon panel. ((c) RBINS - Th. Hubin)

The evening reception: Antarctic Art

The event was rounded off with an evening reception, exhibiting Julia Schnittger's Antarctic art installation "in between". The German artist visited the Neumayer Station III in Antarctica earlier this year and was inspired by the idea of ice holding a climate memory. Julia was an Artist in Residence at the Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg in Delmenhorst in spring/summer 2016. During this time, she realized that arts and science are more closely related than one may think and she is now looking forward to further science-art collaborations.



Antarctic art installation. (Julia Schnittger)

The EU-PolarNet Town Hall Event re-visited

- Watch the entire event online on the [EU-PolarNet YouTube Chanel](#)
- [Read the conference statement](#), outlining the main discussion outcomes (coming soon)
- Get the entire Twitter feed on our [Town Hall Storify](#)

Arctic Circle 2016: The Future of Arctic Shipping

For the second year in a row, EU-PolarNet convened a breakout session at the Arctic Circle Assembly. This time the consortium partnered up with the EU project ICE-ARC to host an expert round on "The Future of Arctic Shipping Under IPCC Climate Scenarios" - fittingly taking place on board the Sæbjörg S&R Vessel, laying just outside the conference venue Harpa.

The session was set out to address the environmental, social and economic impacts of increased shipping in Arctic waters in relation to different IPCC scenarios and to propose necessary actions for developing sustainable Arctic shipping. Six speakers gave their specific perspectives on the issue:



Full "ship" at the EU-PolarNet and ICE-ARC breakout session (Kristina Bär)

- **Andrea Tilche** (European Commission): Sustainable development in the Arctic -the new Arctic Policy.
- **Paolo Ruti** (World Meteorological Organisation): WMO and international collaboration in Polar Regions
- **Kathrin Riemann-Campe** (Alfred Wegener Institute): IPCC AR5: Projections of Arctic Sea Ice Change.
- **Johan Gille** (ECORYS): Current business restrictions and future opportunities for Arctic shipping.
- **Kathy Law** (Observations Spatiales (LATMOS)): Current and future impacts of pollution from Arctic shipping.
- **Lawson Brigham** (University of Alaska Fairbanks): The IMO Polar Code and Future Arctic Marine Operations

The session was rounded up by Jeremy Wilkinson (British Antarctic Survey) and Björn Dahlbäck (Swedish Polar Research Secretariat), each respectively giving topic specific recommendations for the ICE-ARC project and EU-PolarNet. The take-home messages Björn left EU-PolarNet with were: Best practice examples need to be developed and nurtured; the Arctic needs to be observed in a much more systematic way; Russia needs to be involved as a key Arctic player; and European resources and competencies need to be synergized.

2nd Stakeholder Workshop: Research Needs on Arctic Ecosystems and Ecosystem Services

The second AMAP/EU-PolarNet stakeholder workshop „Research Needs on Arctic Ecosystems and Ecosystem Services“ took place on 20th September 2016 at this year’s ICES Annual Science Conference in Riga, Latvia. The central theme of the workshop was research needs for a better understanding of Arctic marine ecosystems and ecosystem services, and as such it looked at a wide range of processes: from oceanographic and biogeochemical processes, to the many human uses of this area, including fisheries and shipping.

The workshop was part of a full-day event, which started off with a scientific session titled “AMAP/EU-PolarNet/ICES Session on Arctic Ecosystem Services: Challenges and Opportunities”, those presentations’ later fed into the afternoon stakeholder workshop. Presentations in the afternoon were given by:

- **Candace Nachman** (NOAA National Marine Fisheries Services): Summary of research needs from morning session
- **Paul Wassmann** (University of Tromsø): Research needs on climate-related changes in the Arctic Ocean and cryosphere
- **Victor Smetacek** (Alfred Wegener Institute): Research needs for Arctic ecosystems and biodiversity
- **Lars-Otto Reiersen** (AMAP): Need for monitoring in Arctic Ocean: contaminants, climate, acidification
- **Richard Rivkin** (Memorial University of Newfoundland): Needs for interdisciplinary Arctic state and process studies
- **Tina Schoolmeester** (GRID Arendal): New research challenge: Litter/plastics in the Arctic Marine Environment

SCAR Town Hall

EU-PolarNet has a strong connection to the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR), which brings together all scientific communities involved in Antarctic research and supports the goals of EU-PolarNet by giving the consortium access to the whole international research community (from 39 nations and 5 ICSU unions). Recently, SCAR organized its first Antarctic and Southern Ocean Science Horizon Scan, which assembled the world's leading Antarctic scientists, policy makers, leaders and visionaries in order to identify the most important scientific questions that should be addressed by research in the southern Polar Regions over the next two decades. The output of this exercise naturally presents an essential tool for EU-PolarNet (just as ICARP III does for the Arctic).

This summer it was time for SCAR's biennial SCAR Open Science Conferences (OSC), which took place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The OSC is an important meeting for the Antarctic science community as it does not only offer the opportunity to present recent scientific results, but it also enables scientists from different disciplines and a range of stakeholders to share information amongst each other. A great chance for EU-PolarNet therefore to organise a Town Hall Event during the conference.

The main objective of the consortium's event was to inform the Antarctic community about EU-PolarNet and to discuss research priorities of societal relevance. The session included four overview presentations, which presented the different EU-PolarNet objectives, and was followed by a lively discussion along pre-prepared and pre-distributed questions, which are listed here:

- One of the missions of EU-PolarNet is to co-create a Polar European Research Strategy. How would this be of interest to your organization? Do you think that such a strategy would improve the scientific activity in Polar Regions? Do you think that such a strategy is needed?
- Would you (or your organization) be interested in participating in the creation process? If so, at which level? Although EU-PolarNet is a European initiative, scientific progress at both poles depends completely on international collaboration. How do you think an extra-European global collaboration could represent an advantage for you (or your organization) to do polar research?
- Would you be interested in participating with other stakeholders from different disciplines or even different sectors in meetings about scientific research in Polar Regions?
- Do you think that scientific research in the Polar Regions needs to be oriented to 'main-stream' topics, or societal challenges? Or, exceptionally, do polar sciences need to be creative and completely unrestricted?
- From your (or your organization's) point of view, how do we need to improve polar sciences? If so, what should be changed to improve it? (areas of potential change include, investment, collaboration, relationships with society, international perspective)

A total of 68 people from 20 countries attended the Town Hall. Most of them were scientists involved in research in Antarctica, but notably a dozen participants came from international organizations, non-Governmental Associations or the private sector.

Stakeholder Questionnaire

EU-PolarNet's ambition is to establish an ongoing dialogue between policymakers, business and industry leaders, local and indigenous communities, as well as scientists from different disciplines to increase mutual understanding and identify new ways of working that will deliver economic and societal benefits. Yet bringing researchers and stakeholders to one table, to identify interested individuals and to facilitate a fruitful discussion is not an easy task. EU-PolarNet has therefore set up a stakeholder questionnaire – as one way to identify stakeholders, but also to find out what motivates stakeholders to engage in polar projects and to what extent they would like to get involved.

Further the questionnaire aims at determining, which potential barriers stakeholders have experienced or are expecting to encounter when engaging in polar research projects. The idea is that the results of this questionnaire will facilitate initial science-stakeholder dialogues, as well as to manage expectations and identify needs from the onset of a partnership.

So far the questionnaire has been distributed on two occasions: The Town Hall Event in Brussels and the Arctic Circle Session in Reykjavik. The [questionnaire is now also available online](#) and we invite anyone interested to fill in and to submit the form.

A glimpse on: Dutch Polar Research

– given by Annette Scheepstra and Maarten Loonen

How has polar research in the Netherlands developed in the past decade(s)?

The history of 50 years Dutch polar research was recently summarized in the Dutch book “50 jaar Nederlands onderzoek in de Poolgebieden”. It started in 1962 with the first PhD thesis about Leadership and Law among the Eskimos of the Keewatin District, Northwest Territories. Since then, almost 120 PhD theses defended at 11 different universities have followed, most of them at the University of Groningen and the University of Utrecht. There is an overview with a broad variety of titles¹ available on the internet.

Several polar research projects started from personal interest of a researcher, often funded via crowd funding or small expedition grants. An example is the ecological studies on Edgeøya on East-Svalbard. Four students wintered while studying polar bears in 1968-69 and the study continued as a more general ecological study until 1987.

In 1970, the University of Groningen initiated an Arctic Centre, a multidisciplinary research group studying human environment interaction relations in the past and present. Its first major research project was the excavation of a Dutch 17th century whaling town Smeerenburg on Svalbard. In 1980, an expedition ship was purchased to support the operations. Tourists were taken along and this developed into a private tourist company. The Arctic Centre is still active in polar research, focussing on long-term human-environment relations with disciplines like archaeology, ecology and history. It manages a small research facility in Ny-Ålesund, Svalbard and represents the Netherlands in working groups of the Arctic Council. It has established the Willem Barentsz Polar Network, which unites all polar researchers in the Netherlands.

With the first Arctic migratory bird expedition to Spitsbergen in 1979, a still continuing time series on goose studies started. The opening of the Russian Arctic gave a boost to Dutch Arctic ornithological research with expeditions to Taimyr and the Pechora Delta studying geese and waders. At the University of Utrecht, glaciology on the Greenland ice sheet and especially modelling the mass of glaciers, developed into a strong polar theme within IMAU. They installed a network of automated weather and mass balance stations on glaciers in both Arctic and Antarctic.

In 1990, the Dutch government installed an interdepartmental group to become full member of the Antarctic Treaty System. They financed a science program in Antarctica in cooperation with other countries as they did not want to start an independent station. Since 1996, part of their resources were used for Arctic research, too, when The Netherlands became observer to the Arctic Council and an active contributor to three working groups AMAP, CAFF and SDWG via researchers at the Arctic Centre of the University of Groningen.

¹ See: <http://www.rug.nl/research/arctisch-centrum/wbpi/50jaarpolaironderzoeknl/nederlandse-polaire-promoties>

The Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (2004) clearly defined the polar regions as the areas impacted first. With this report polar research gained political and public awareness.

During the International Polar Year (IPY), 2007–2008 a Dutch participation was supported by an additional budget of 7 million euros. The funding originated from various government ministries and the Dutch research council (NWO). The Dutch research council (NWO) became the manager of the Netherlands Polar Program and at the moment hosts the European Polar Board. A visit of the Crown Prince and Princess of the Netherlands and the Minister for Science to Antarctica in 2009, resulted in the opening of the Dutch Dirck Gerritsz Laboratory at the British Rothera Research Station at the start of 2013.

What is currently the main focus of Dutch polar research?

The commitment to Antarctic research is linked to the membership of the Antarctic Treaty System. For the Arctic, the government has published an Arctic strategy paper for the period 2016-2020 under the theme: Working together on sustainability. These governmental policies have led to the present Netherlands Polar Programme (NPP) which finances PhD and Post-doc projects in Polar Areas. The science must provide insights into the developments that are rapidly taking place in the Polar Regions and the possible consequences for the Netherlands. Ultimately this knowledge should contribute to solving problems and utilizing opportunities that arise as a result of these changes. Part of the science will focus on partnerships and consultations with Dutch industries and societal groups.

In the NPP research is organised along four themes representing the broad range of research topics. Geographically the focus is on the international setting of Rothera, Ny-Ålesund and Greenland. The four themes are:

1. Ice, climate and rising sea level
2. Polar ecosystems
3. Sustainable exploitation
4. Social, legal and economic landscape

How is the polar community in the Netherlands set up?

Nowadays many different research and knowledge institutes conduct Dutch polar research. Some are financed independently but the NPP plays an important role in polar research and (inter)national research cooperation. The universities of Groningen, Utrecht and Wageningen have developed special polar programmes.

The University of Groningen decided to strengthen polar cooperation by funding the Willem Barentsz Polar Network (WBPN). WBPN developed into a polar researchers network. WBPN works in good cooperation with the NPP, which led to a Dutch expedition to Edgeøya, Svalbard in August 2015. Under the name SEES.NL, WBPN and NWO worked together under the leadership of the Arctic Centre to conduct the largest Dutch polar expedition ever. A tourist vessel went on a 9-day expedition to Edgeøya. On board were tourists, policy makers, media, artists, a parliamentarian and a total of 55 Dutch scientists, from a wide variety of disciplines, ranging from archaeology and ecology through to social geographers and cultural anthropologists. After 9 days of intensive fieldwork the ship returned to Longyearbyen, Svalbard, where Netherlands Foreign Minister, Bert Koenders was welcoming the group. In total, the SEES.NL expedition resulted in over 300 articles appearing in newspapers, magazines, on websites and on television. A delegation of scientists was invited in the Dutch parliament. The expedition had a major impact on Dutch public awareness of Arctic issues and resulted in more intensive cooperation among scientists.

More information:

[Netherlands Polar Programme](#); [Arctic Centre, university of Groningen](#); [IMAU, university of Utrecht](#) [Arctic Programme](#), [Wageningen University and Research](#); [SEES.NL](#); [Facebook WBPN](#)

Upcoming conferences and events

COP22 – Side event

Date: 18th November 2016

Location: Marrakesh, Morocco

Together with the EU funded project ICE-ARC EU-PolarNet is organising a side event at the COP22 in Marrakesh on "Arctic change and its implications for global risk". Building upon the EU's investment in Arctic science the session will provide up-to-date information on the effects and risks associated with Arctic change globally, with a special focus on implications for the lower latitudes. To do this high-level experts, such as Petteri Taalas, Secretary General of the World Meteorological Organization, cover four interconnected themes, these are:

- Climate change in the Arctic
- Arctic connections with the rest of the world
- Global economic risk and the Arctic
- Societal and security impacts of Arctic change

Session at the WOC Sustainable Ocean Summit

Date: 1st December 2016, 15:30 – 17:00

Location: Rotterdam, Netherlands

More information: <https://www.ilago.ovh/sustainableoceansummit/>

EU-PolarNet is hosting a breakout session at this year's WOC Sustainable Ocean Summit. Themed "Polar Region Sustainable Development: Business and Science Collaboration in the Arctic and Antarctic" the session will be an important contributor to the EU-PolarNet dialogue with stakeholders. Within this session, the polar researchers and industry representatives are able to discuss possibilities of an intensified and mutually beneficial cooperation in research and infrastructure usage for a sustainable development of the Polar areas.

The session will start off with short introductory talks and continue with a longer panel discussion, chaired by Nicole Biebow, EU-PolarNet. The following thematic areas will be covered:

- Sea ice change and forecast – Jeremy Wilkinson, British Antarctic Survey; United Kingdom
- Collaboration: the social science perspective'– Annette Scheepstra, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen; The Netherlands
- Polar Code and Polar Marine Research infrastructure– Juanjo Dañobeitia, Agencia Estatal Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas, Spain
- Knowledge and innovative tools to promote safe, environmentally sound operations in the Arctic – Sveinung Loset, SAMCoT, Norway
- Arctic Shipping Infrastructure and Environmental Risk - Lars-Henrik Larsen, Head of Department, Marine Assessments and Monitoring, Akvaplan-niva AS
- Industry Perspectives on Business and Science Collaboration for Sustainable Development of the Polar Regions – Tero Vauraste, President and CEO Arctia, Chair Arctic Economic Council

Save the date: EU-PolarNet 3rd General Assembly

Date: 3rd April 2017

Location: Prague, Czech Republic

Coinciding with the ASSW 2017: <http://www.assw2017.eu/>

Early Bird: Opportunities and challenges in the polar regions**Date:** 22nd - 25th May 2017**Location:** Cambridge, UKMore information: <https://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/component/courses/?view=course&cid=21002>

Opportunities and Challenges in the Polar Regions is a short 3-day international course designed to give an intensive and expert insight into the polar regions and the challenges they face. The course will give the information and answers professionals need, and provide new perspectives and insights into what is happening today in the Arctic and Antarctica. It has been developed and organised by the Scott Polar Research Institute (SPRI), British Antarctic Survey (BAS), and the University of Cambridge's Institute of Continuing Education (ICE).

The cost to attend the course is £2,995 per person, with an early registration discount fee of £2,250 per person for bookings made before **1 December 2016**.

Get in touch with EU-PolarNetwww.eu-polarnet.euinfo@eu-polarnet.euFollow us on [Twitter](#), join our groups on [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).And don't forget to check out our video on [YouTube](#).