

Welcome to the March edition of the monthly Arctic Office Bulletin. Lots to share this month, with news on the UK-Canada Arctic Bursaries; interesting potential with the AWI-led MOSAiC programme; a new Parliamentary inquiry into Arctic sustainability; and the announcement of the science coordination role for the NERC Changing Arctic Ocean Programme.

Please visit www.arctic.ac.uk and follow us on Twitter via @Arctic_Office for all the latest news and information. Your feedback and suggestions are always welcome.

Parliament: Environmental Audit Committee Inquiry on Arctic Sustainability

A new Inquiry has been launched into how the UK Government is promoting environmental protections in the Arctic. The Commons' Environmental Audit Committee, chaired by Mary Creagh MP, will be taking evidence over the spring and summer, before producing their report and recommendations. The [terms of reference](#) for the Inquiry focus on governance, scientific research and commercial activities.

The Arctic Office will be helping to coordinate the overall RCUK response to the call for written evidence. If there are specific and important elements that you feel we should include in the RCUK response, please do let us know. In addition, we encourage universities and research centres, as well as individual researchers, to look at the terms of reference and consider submitting their own written evidence to the Committee. The Committee is also [inviting Expressions of interest](#) from individuals interested in being a specialist adviser to the Committee's inquiry. The deadline for submissions is **5pm Wednesday 26 April**.

Arctic Science Summit Week: 31 March to 7 April

The Arctic Office will be joined by researchers from across the UK for this year's ASSW in Prague, from this Friday. The programme and further details are available [here](#).

The early days of the conference are the business meetings of IASC, the European Polar Board and EU-PolarNet and the Forum of Arctic Research Operators. The middle and end is devoted to science findings and collaboration opportunities. There is an important opportunity to engage in the science planning for the [MOSAIC](#) international Arctic drift expedition on 4-5 April (programme). Further details on MOSAiC below.

Please let us know if you will be attending the conference so that we can connect and wherever possible include you in our plans. We will be providing updates via Twitter, in addition to producing a special Arctic Office Briefing Note after the event.

New UK representatives for the International Arctic Science Committee Working Groups

Thank you to everyone who submitted nominations to represent the UK on the five IASC Working Groups. Welcome to all the new representatives and we look forward to working closely and successfully with you in the years ahead. The UK representatives in the Working Groups are now:

Marine

Prof Andrew Brierley, St Andrews University

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Dr Jeremy Wilkinson, British Antarctic Survey

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Terrestrial

Prof Philip Wookey, Heriot Watt University (WG

Vice-Chair) P.A.Wookey@hw.ac.uk

Prof Mary Edwards, Southampton University

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Atmosphere

Dr Jo Browse, Exeter University

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Dr Stephen Arnold, Leeds University

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Social and Human

Dr Michael Bravo, Cambridge University

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Cryosphere

Dr Richard Essery, Edinburgh University

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Dr Poul Christoffersen, Cambridge University

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As well as representing the UK's interests in the development of research strategies across these five theme areas, the representatives will be looking to strengthen inter-disciplinary connections, and to build networks across research communities here in the UK.

We will be sharing the results of as many as possible of the next meetings of the Working Groups at the ASSW this year. We will also be appointing a 2nd representative to the Social and Human Working Group shortly.

We will provide regular updates on activities through the Bulletin and the Arctic Office website.

UK Arctic Conference: 19-21 September, Oban

The 2017 Arctic Conference will be hosted this year by SAMS in Oban. Conference registration is free and there are good opportunities to sort out great value travel. A list of hotels with special conference rates will be posted on the website soon.

In the meantime, please visit the conference webpage [here](#) to register and submit your abstracts (deadline 31 July). Abstracts are welcome under any of the five IASC science theme areas. Submissions highlighting inter-disciplinary connections will be particularly welcome, as will the participation of early career researchers.

This will be a popular conference to attend and to speak at – please register and submit early to make sure you secure your place. The local organising committee have promised a strong social element to the conference programme and we're looking forward to an exciting Arctic conference in 2017.

UK-Canada Arctic Partnership: 2017 Bursaries Programme

With fantastic support from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), we were able to triple the number of Bursaries that we expected to be able to support this year. This means that 18 projects and teams from across the UK will now be joining Canadian-led projects this coming season, building excellent connections that will hopefully lead to longer-term collaborations, and support wider UK-Canada Arctic partnerships.

The spread of geographic areas, research topics and logistical assets is impressive, with strong representation from marine, terrestrial, cryosphere and atmosphere projects. UK researchers will be working across the Northwest Territories, the

Canadian Arctic Ocean, Nunavut, Baffin Island and beyond. CCGS *Amundsen* features extensively in a number of the projects, as do UAVs, helicopters, field camps, corers and benthic landers, laboratories, small boats and of course the new Cambridge Bay High Arctic Research Station.

We wish all the teams a successful season and we look forward to sharing their progress and results through the Bulletin and the website.

MOSAIC: international Arctic drift expedition – possible opportunities

Planned to be in the field in 2019-20, the [Multidisciplinary drifting Observatory for the Study of Arctic Climate](#) will be the first year-round expedition into the central Arctic exploring the Arctic climate system. Led by AWI in Germany, together with AARI (Russia) and the University of Colorado, the expedition is being planned under the umbrella of IASC as a major initiative for the Year of Polar Prediction (YOPP).

It is hoped that the results of MOSAIC will significantly enhance understanding of the regional and global consequences of Arctic climate change and sea-ice loss and improve weather and climate predictions. The ability to conduct a range of research in the depths of the Arctic winter and in the autumn and spring seasons will be a major advance.

UK researchers have been involved from the start of this concept and the Arctic Office is working very closely with BEIS and other colleagues across Government and NERC to facilitate access for UK researchers to the MOSAIC programme. We hope to be able to share the results of this work – and any next steps - shortly.

Arctic Circle Assembly, 13-15 October

The Arctic Circle Assembly in Reykjavik is an increasingly important opportunity to present research and to connect with a wide range of potential collaborators and funders beyond the usual groups. The broad remit and relatively easy access means that the profile is attractive. The Secretariat are inviting [breakout session proposals](#) with a deadline of 12 May. The Arctic Office will be represented at the Assembly and we look forward to being able to support and promote a range of UK-led breakout sessions. Please do get in contact if you would like to talk through your ideas.



NERC Changing Arctic Ocean Programme: Science Coordinator

Congratulations and a warm welcome to Dr Kirsty Crocket who has been appointed as the Science Coordinator for the new NERC Arctic programme. Kirsty is based at the Scottish Association of Marine Science (SAMS) in Oban. The four projects funded through the first phase of the programme were [announced in late January](#) and will share £10m across 16 research centres and universities in the UK, with the PIs based in SAMS, Leeds and Liverpool. There will be a second international call, jointly with Germany, shortly. We will be working closely with Kirsty to support her in the promotion and dissemination of the Programme and will be providing regular updates through the Bulletin.

Arctic Office website

We are in the process of reviewing the Arctic Office website, to ensure that it is easier to navigate, concentrates on the major activities and generally provides the kinds of information and links that best support the UK's Arctic research community. If you have ideas and suggestions for what you'd like to see and what the website should do more - or less - of, please do let us know (arctic@bas.ac.uk). We look forward to sharing the results of the refresh later in the year.

Events

- **Arctic Science Summit Week** – Prague, 31 March – 7 April
- **International Conference on Arctic Science: Bringing Knowledge to Action** - Reston, Virginia, USA, 24-27 April
- **Congress on Arctic Social Science** – Umeå, Sweden, 8-12 June
- **UK Arctic Science Conference** – Oban, 19-21 September (registration and abstract submission now open)
- **Arctic Circle Assembly** – Reykjavik, 13-15 October.

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