

# IASC Cryosphere Working Group (CWG) Meeting summary report

**26 March 2026 (Åarhus University and online)**

The UK is represented on the Cryosphere Working Group (CWG) by members Kelly Hogan (BAS and CWG Chair), Karen Cameron (University of Glasgow) and 2024 Fellow Beatriz Recinos-Rivas (University of Edinburgh). All attended the meeting (KH only online).

## 1. Working Group Overview

The CWG Chair reported that five new WG members joined the CWG, including representation from Turkey for the first time. In 2025 the CWG supported nine proposals, leaving some resources to be carried over into the 2026 budget. An open discussion on Arctic geopolitics was had with many perspectives offered. It was suggested that these views should be presented to IASC to aid coordinated efforts to navigate some of the challenges faced.

A new IASC Action Group has been formed “Towards Ethical Recommendations for Climate Interventions Research and Evidence-based Information (ERCI)”. The output of this group is likely to be a white paper focused on geoengineering in the Arctic, following publications such as the AGU white paper on Climate Intervention (2022; <https://www.agu.org/learn-about-agu/about-agu/ethics/ethical-framework-for-climate-intervention>).

Discussions were had on a new IASC Strategic Plan (2027-2036) and what the CWG would want to feed into this. Examples of ideas offered included long-term measurements (>10 year datasets), Indigenous involvement (how best to incorporate this into ice-focussed projects), how to improve sea-ice forecast (for Arctic shipping), infrastructure sharing, and use of digital/AI/ML.

Some discussions were had on improving CWG member engagement, increasing CWG meeting frequency and generating clearer CWG member Terms of Reference. It was agreed that the CWG would host 2 x interim meetings in autumn 2026, and January 2027.

## 2. Country updates

All attendees were given the opportunity to report on notable activities, infrastructures, awarded grants and funding opportunities that are central to their countries’ Arctic operations and that may be of relevance to other countries. These included:

- Sweden:

- Research school starting in Sweden, 6 PhD students and courses and summer schools in the coming year
  - Government has set polar research is one of 8 research foci
  - New Icebreaker coming, IB Oden being out-phased and looking for replacement
- China:
  - China preparing national program for IPY
    - focus on Arctic Ocean, South Ocean and Antarctic Ice Sheet through three programs (bio monitoring, buoy & polar ice stations, Chinese vessels as close to Russian slope as permitted)
- Finland
  - IGS Symposium Sea Ice: Helsinki Finland 14-18 June 2027 (venue TBD), and will involve a special issue of Annals of Glaciology
- Netherlands
  - 4.5M funding including ECR projects
  - Large call for planetary crisis in the NLDs 9.6M euro – large interdisciplinary research project (only one funded – 8 years)
  - New research vessel finished, named after first Dutch female scientist
- UK
  - UK to Greenland bursaries for seed funding, student projects or proof-of-concept (from NERC Arctic Office)
  - UK funding stream: ARIA forecasting tipping points from GrIS. Second funding call will be announced in September, ~25M GBP (amount TBC) and can involve international partners
- Norway
  - Polhavet 2050: Collaboration of 18 Norwegian institutions and cruises in Arctic Ocean over 10 years
  - IPY: national committee has been formed and coordinated by NPI
  - Upcoming SCAR meeting in mid-August in Oslo
- Germany
  - Launch of new website for global terrestrial network on permafrost <https://www.gtn-p.org/>
  - WMO has published vol 2 of measurement of cryospheric variables with dedicated chapter on permafrost, authored by people in Germany, including permafrost temperatures, rock glacier velocity, etc. <https://wmo.int/guide-instruments-and-methods-of-observation-wmo-no-8-0>

### 3. CWG Proposal funding

There was broad agreement to continue a second, cryosphere-specific funding call in autumn 2026. This was agreed in previous CWG meetings but had not yet been enacted. Current proposals were discussed and ranked for funding recommendation.

## 4. CWG Elections and Leadership

The CWG acknowledged the end of the current steering committee's two-year term. Due to limited country representation at the meeting, a full election was postponed. However, Helena Bergstedt was elected as Co-Chair without objection, with remaining leadership roles to be resolved following broader consultation.