

IASC Statement

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Arctic Council Senior Arctic Officials
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Presented by Larry Hinzman, IASC President
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Ambassador Härkönen, Senior Arctic Officials, Distinguished Colleagues,

My name is Larry Hinzman and I am President of the International Arctic Science Committee. I should note that IASC is also represented here by our Executive Secretary Allen Pope. We appreciate the opportunity that meetings such as this provide to advance international and interdisciplinary scientific understanding and cooperation and thank the Arctic Council for inviting our participation.

The rapid changes in the Arctic and the role of the Arctic in influencing global climate dynamics are of interest to the 23 IASC member nations, most of which are represented here today. So, I am happy to use this opportunity to share how IASC is supporting activities to better understand Arctic biodiversity.

IASC's thematic scientific working groups drive our work. In particular, biodiversity is the remit of our Marine and Terrestrial Working Groups. For example:

- IASC supports the Distributed Biological Observatory, which facilitates marine biological surveys and data sharing in the North Pacific Arctic.
- The IASC Marine Working Group has also supported multiple International Polar Diatom Workshops, which provides training to early career scientists on polar diatom identification.
- The Herbivory Network was established in 2014 with support of the Terrestrial Working Group to facilitate collaborative research into the role of herbivory in Arctic and alpine ecosystems and to assist in understanding the complexity and variability of responses of tundra ecosystems to herbivory.
- IASC supports the NeAT project ('Network for Arthropods of the Tundra') in bringing together entomologists from research institutions around the world to align data collection, sharing, and knowledge on Arctic arthropods.

In addition to these disciplinary projects, IASC has facilitated interdisciplinary cooperation with our Cryosphere and Social & Human Working Groups. For example:

- The IASC Network on Arctic Glaciology included biological oceanographers at their meeting this year, to explore the importance of Arctic glaciers for Arctic marine ecosystems.
- IASC supports research into understanding long-term perspectives on Arctic Social-Ecological Systems, to better understand human interactions dependent on Arctic biodiversity past, present, and future.

Piloted this year in cooperation with CAFF, and co-sponsored by Sweden, the CAFF-IASC Fellows gave two early career scientists the chance to better understand the science to policy

translation process. With significant interest and impact, IASC hopes to continue and expand such a Fellowship in the future if funds can be identified.

Biodiversity maintains a future interest within IASC's scientific work. For example:

- A project called the Synoptic Arctic Survey will expand the work of the Distributed Biological Observatory to the whole Arctic, aligning marine observations and monitoring, including biodiversity monitoring.
- The Terrestrial Working Group is supporting the ARCTIC WILDLIFE project which concerns monitoring wildlife disease and developing new technologies for disease surveillance.
- A project called T-MOSAiC will complement MOSAiC, and contribute in areas such as species distribution monitoring and observations on the biota of specific ecosystems.
- IASC representatives will continue to contribute to a range of CAFF projects on biodiversity; we hope to expand coordination between CAFF and IASC groups.

IASC also supports biodiversity monitoring by co-leading SAON, Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks.

Projects that require further consideration and cooperation among international research programs include:

1. The need for multi-scale approach to integrate in situ permanent plot data of biodiversity with satellite-based assessments of diversity and ecosystem functioning.
2. We need increased attention given towards sites under infrastructure development to inform management plans for sustainable development of such areas.

In the future, I hope the Arctic Council continues to see IASC as a close scientific partner and as a network that you can tap for expertise.

We hope to see many of you at the Arctic Science Summit Week in Arkhangelsk, Russia in May 2019 and at the 2020 Arctic Observing Summit and Arctic Science Summit Week, which will immediately follow the SAO meeting in Akureyri.

Thank you again for this opportunity for the International Arctic Science Committee to contribute to the meeting.