

## Press Statement

### US and Canadian Arctic Commissions Establish Collaborative Path Forward

**May 7, 2012** The US Arctic Research Commission (USARC) and Canadian Polar Commission (CPC) held their first joint meeting in over a decade in Montreal on April 27, 2012, at the conclusion of the International Polar Year (IPY) 2012 "From Knowledge to Action" conference, and began by applauding IPY conference organizers for an excellent program.

The commissions' primary goals were to explore common issues and to identify opportunities for enhanced cooperation and coordination. The two organizations discussed their mandates, and identified common ground within the broader context of Canadian and US national Arctic policy and strategy. The commissions reached consensus on the following:

- encourage closer collaboration among current scientific research and environmental assessment efforts across the Beaufort Sea region;
- support for activities conducted by Canada and the US, which will serve as the back-to-back chairs of the Arctic Council from 2013 to 2017;
- support for Arctic observing networks and, particularly, for sustainable funding, given the importance of long-endurance records;
- support for increased and easier scientific access to the Arctic region.

The meeting included presentations from four invited participants: Lt. Governor of Alaska, Mead Treadwell, spoke about the upcoming sequential chairmanship of the Arctic Council and underscored the importance of the Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (SAON) initiative; Robert Corell, Principal, Global Environment and Technology Foundation, spoke on "Adaptation Action for a Changing Arctic" an activity being considered for endorsement by the Arctic Council; Kate Moran, Director of NEPTUNE Canada, discussed an initiative for small-scale cabled marine observatories in the Arctic; and Matt Morrison, Executive Director of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER), introduced his organization and identified links with the USARC and CPC.

CPC Chairman Bernard Funston and USARC Chair Fran Ulmer provided introductory remarks outlining the mandates and responsibilities of their respective commissions. USARC Commissioners and CPC Board Members then discussed common interests in Arctic human health research, Canada's ArcticNet initiative, and research associated with water and sanitation issues in the North. The Chairs of each organization expressed strong interest in working together more closely.

The Canadian Polar Commission, created by Act of Parliament in 1991, is Canada's national institution for furthering polar knowledge and awareness ([www.polarcom.gc.ca](http://www.polarcom.gc.ca)). The CPC supports the sharing of information about the polar regions through enhanced connections among northerners, research communities, governments and the general public, and provides analysis of current and emerging polar issues.

The Arctic Research and Policy Act of 1984 established the USARC ([www.arctic.gov](http://www.arctic.gov)). Its principal duties are to develop and recommend an integrated national Arctic research policy and to assist in establishing a national Arctic research program plan to implement the policy. Commissioners also facilitate cooperation between the federal government, state and local governments, and other nations with respect to Arctic research, both basic and applied.

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