

Consideration for Transparency in Antarctica: Spurring the 2nd Renewal of the ATS

JSPS Core-to-Core Program on
Antarctic Governance Research

Thursday, July 31, 2025

William Muntean

CSIS Senior Associate (non-resident)

*U.S. Senior Advisor for Antarctica, 2018-
2023*

Antarctica



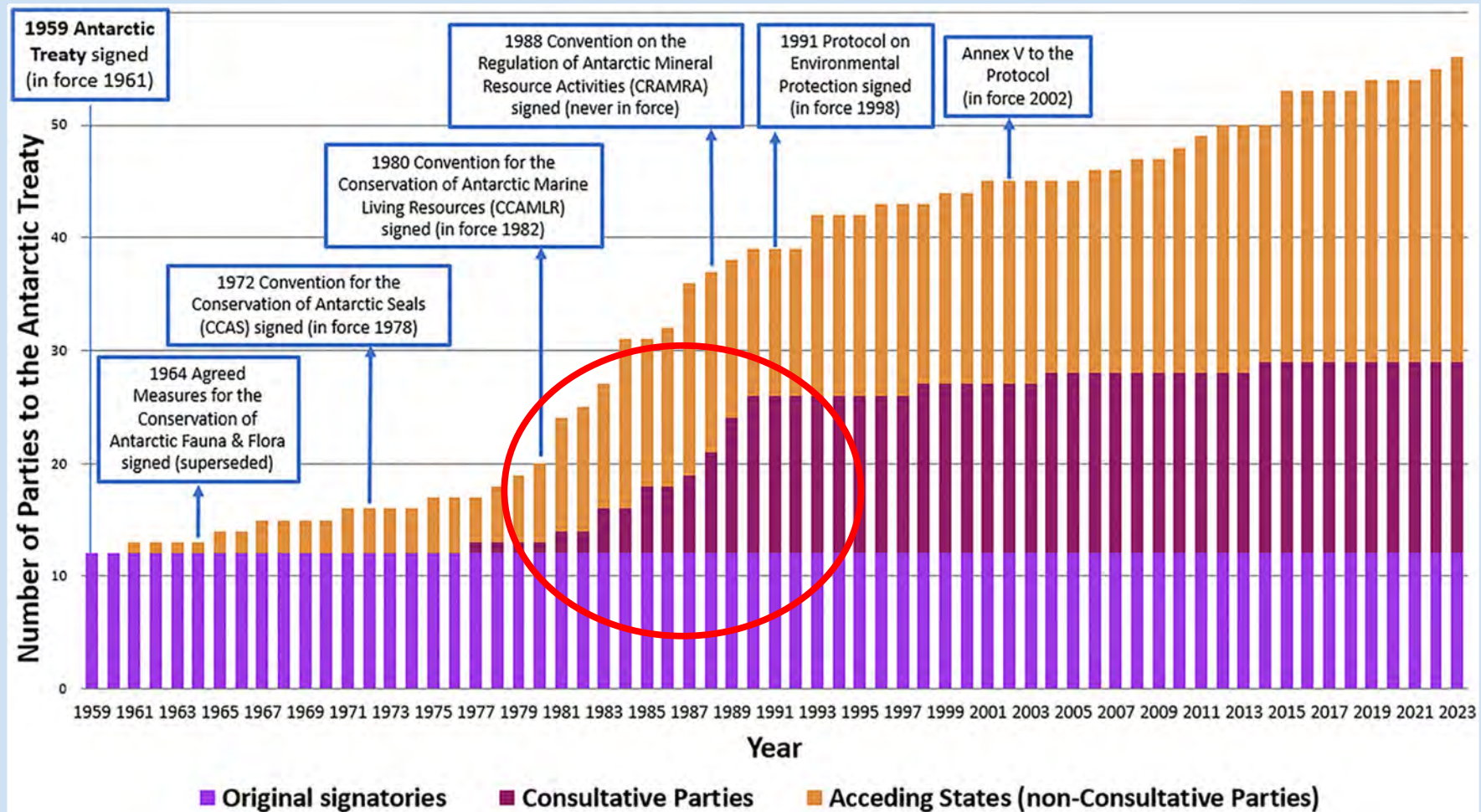
Antarctic Treaty & Environmental Protocol Overview

- 1961 Antarctic Treaty (AT)
 - Article I: Peaceful purposes with limits on military activity
 - Article II and III: Scientific research and dissemination
 - Article IV: Sovereignty claims frozen
 - Article VII: Advance notification and unannounced inspections
- 1998 Protocol on Environmental Protection (EP)
 - Article 3: Environmental Principles
 - Article 6: Cooperation
 - Article 7: Prohibit commercial mining
 - Article 8: Environmental Impact Assessment
 - Annexes: Environmental Impact Assessments, Fauna and Flora, Waste Disposal, Marine Pollution, and Area Protection and Management

Key Considerations: Actors, Venues, Legalities

- Actors
 - 29 Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties who make decisions
 - 29 Antarctic Treaty Non-Consultative Parties that do not make decisions
 - 3 Observers - non-government officials who can make proposals - SCAR, COMNAP, CCAMLR
 - Experts - non-government officials who cannot make proposals
 - Secretariat - Assist ATCM and CEP
- Venues
 - ATCM, CEP, Intersessional Contract Groups, Unofficial venues
- Legalities
 - Mandated by Treaty or Environmental Protocol
 - Agreed to at an ATCM
 - Unofficial or Unregulated practice

First Renewal: Inclusion for Legitimacy



Second Renewal: Transparency for Understanding

Increase the transparency of the Antarctic Treaty system (ATS) by purposely sharing relevant and timely information with entities to influence actions inside and outside Antarctica and the ATS.

Ambassador Kazuhiko NAKAMURA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan,
January 2025: “Back to the Basics”

- Reaffirming the significance of the use of Antarctica for peaceful purposes only
- (Re)activating science-based cooperation
- Contributing to global environmental issues by sharing and disseminating scientific expertise

Peace: Monitoring Tools

Key Provisions

Inspections: AT Articles III, VII(1-4), IX(3). EP Article 14.

Advance Notifications: AT Article VII(5), Several in EP and Annexes

Key Measures

Inspections: None

Advance Notifications: Decision 4 (2012) created the Electronic Information Exchange System (EIES), which is regularly updated

Unofficial/Unregulated

Inspections: CPs release reports

Advance Notifications: Many countries and entities release significant information outside the EIES

Science: Cooperation and Dissemination

Key Provisions

AT Article II and III. EP Article 6 and 17.

Key Measures

Many resolutions that encourage cooperation with other international organizations (particularly the International Maritime Organization) and provide codes of conduct about how to conduct research.

Unofficial/Unregulated

Each Party has its own process to decide what science to pursue and how to share research results. Most collaboration about scientific research is done between scientists/operations level, such as at SCAR or COMNAP venues.

Second Renewal: Transparency for Understanding REVISED

Increasing the transparency of key ATS venues (such as CEP) and entities (such as SCAR, all parties) by purposely sharing understandable information about science and environmental topics to non-decision makers (such as the public, United Nations) will facilitate informed actions by entities (media, public) and venues (UNFCCC/IPCC) outside the ATS while maintaining the primacy of some ATS venues (such as ATCM, Consultative Parties) over sensitive governance topics (such as peace).

THANK YOU!

Bill Muntean, WMuntean@gmail.com

