

Task Force on Scientific Cooperation meets in Ottawa (/index.php/en/our-work2/8-news-and-events/408-sctf-ottawa-july-2016)

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News (/index.php/en/component/tags/tag/2-news)

Events (/index.php/en/component/tags/tag/13-events)

SCTF (/index.php/en/component/tags/tag/34-sctf)



Some of the delegates to the SCTF.

After three years of work, the Arctic Council's Task Force for Enhancing Scientific Cooperation in the Arctic (SCTF) reached *ad referendum* agreement on a new "Agreement on Enhancing Arctic Scientific Cooperation."

The Arctic Council's Task Force for Enhancing Scientific Cooperation in the Arctic (SCTF) held its 9th meeting on 6-8 July 2016 at the headquarters of Global Affairs Canada in Ottawa. At this meeting, after three years of work, the Task Force reached *ad referendum* agreement on a new "Agreement on Enhancing Arctic Scientific Cooperation," a legally-binding instrument that will be a treaty negotiated under the auspices of the Arctic Council.

The SCTF was established at the Kiruna Ministerial meeting in May 2013 "to work towards an arrangement on improved scientific research cooperation among the eight Arctic States". The Task Force has come a long way since its first meeting in December 2013 in Stockholm, Sweden, discussing priorities for future international scientific cooperation in the Arctic and potential obstacles to such cooperation; considering the nature of the arrangements required to enhance cooperation in the area of Arctic science; and then negotiating a legally-binding agreement.

The meeting in Ottawa brought together 57 delegates representing all the Arctic States, three out of six Permanent Participants (AIA, ICC, Saami Council), one of the Arctic Council's six Working Groups (AMAP), and eleven Observers (China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Poland, the United Kingdom, the EU, IASC, UArctic, and WWF).

The Task Force's Chairs, Vladimir Barbin (RF) and Evan Bloom (US) were unanimous in their assessment of the meeting: "A mood of cooperation dominated at the meeting and all the participants undertook their best efforts to achieve mutually acceptable results. The Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation was *ad referendum* agreed. Thus, participating countries are able to launch their needed inter-agency procedures so that this document can be approved for signature by foreign ministers at the upcoming Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in spring 2017".

Co-Chair Evan Bloom of the United States described the agreement as follows: "The new agreement, which will be the third legally-binding agreement under the auspices of the Arctic Council, will help facilitate cooperation on science in the Arctic, and remove obstacles to that cooperation".

Reflecting on the negotiation process, Co-Chair Vladimir Barbin of the Russian Federation added: "The uniqueness of the process of negotiating this document was that the Permanent Participants and the Observers were given an opportunity to take part in preparing concrete provisions of this Pan-Arctic intergovernmental document. This shows once again that all Arctic countries are committed to enhancing international cooperation in the Arctic and welcome the contributions from the other interested parties".

References and resources

Arctic Council backgrounder (/index.php/en/about-us)

Current and past Arctic Council Task Forces (/index.php/en/about-us/subsidiary-bodies/task-forces)

Agreements on search-and-rescue (2011) and oil pollution preparedness and response (2013) (/index.php/en/our-work/agreements)


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 (<https://twitter.com/arcticcouncil>)  (<https://vimeo.com/arcticcouncil>)

 (https://www.flickr.com/arctic_council)

 (<https://soundcloud.com/arcticcouncil>) 

23.08.2016 - 25.08.2016 EA Conference

(/index.php/en/events/calendar/g-3-ngqn5kq65tdjss228nlo3uunc_20160823)

31.08.2016 - 01.09.2016 ACAP Working Group

Meeting (/index.php/en/events/calendar/g-3-eo6hbmqn73c54hk5jcdstjerg_20160831)

06.09.2016 - 08.09.2016 CAFF Meeting

(/index.php/en/events/calendar/g-3-41hqu4ujd0meotkot1vet5q0ag_20160906)

18.09.2016 MEMA Workshop

(/index.php/en/events/calendar/g-3-d8nqdsch3vh14tt7jqso69uk0_20160918)