

Short Report from the 72nd meeting of the EISCAT Council Held 3 – 4 June 2009, Wissenschaftsforum Berlin, Germany

Present: Dr. T. Andersson, Sweden (Vice-Chairperson), Dr. H. Boos, Germany, Prof. A. Brekke, Norway, Prof. R. Fujii, Japan, Dr. B. Jacobsen, Norway, Dr. K. Kauristie, Finland (Chairperson), Dr. T. Lehtiniemi, Finland, Dr. L. Lønnum, Norway, Dr. I. W. McCrea, UK, Dr. H. Miyaoka, Japan, Prof. D. Murtagh, Sweden, Prof. T. Nygrén, Finland, Prof. J. Röttger, Germany, Prof. J. Wu, P. R. of China, Mrs. R. Young, UK

Invited and in Attendance: Mr. H. Andersson, HQ, Mr. P. Bergqvist (Staff Representative), Dr. M. Kosch (SOC Chairperson), Dr. E. Turunen, HQ

Introduction by new Council Chairperson

This is my first meeting as Chairperson. Thank you Asgeir (Prof. Brekke) for your work during some times difficult meetings. There will be challenges ahead too.

Status Report from the Director

The Executive gave a comprehensive status report.

EISCAT Management Committee

The EISCAT Management Committee (EMC) met early May to discuss how the EMC should work in the future.

EMC proposed that the committee should be reformed into an advisory group to Council. It could be called Council Advisory Group (CAG) and would normally meet some time before each Council meeting to consider and prepare matters to be brought to Council. EMC proposed to continue with the present composition of four persons plus the Executives (Director and Administrative Deputy/Head of Administration).

After discussion, Council felt that it was too early to decide upon such drastic changes at this meeting. Council asked EMC to make a complete proposal of changes, including possibly the Statutes for consideration at the next meeting.

Council approved the current composition of persons up to end of the year. For 2010, Council will consider the members at the next meeting.

EISCAT_3D and steps thereafter

Council agreed with the proposed hiring of a certain individual as a temporary project leader to HQ whose task will be to consider and prepare the next EU call: ESFRI preparatory phase projects. It is envisaged that the person will need to spend about 6 months on this. The employment will be through secondment against refunding.

Council applauded the achievements made by the Design Study project team.

SIOS project

(Svalbard Integrated Arctic Earth Observing System)

Council discussed the suggested EISCAT involvement in the SIOS project and accepted the proposed support letter to be sent from EISCAT to the SIOS project leader.

3rd antenna for the EISCAT Svalbard Radar to be supplied by the Chinese

The proposal involves a dual purpose, radar and communication, system consisting of a fully steerable 40-50 m antenna, transmitter on at least S, X and P frequency bands, connection to the current EISCAT 500 MHz transmitter, receivers and a support building including probably a control room. The system will be used by the Chinese for communicating with the planned 2012 lunar mission, which will involve a surface robot vehicle. During idle times, the antenna can be used as a 3rd dish for the EISCAT Svalbard Radar. The Chinese will need help with logistics, acquiring building and transmit permits and EISCAT will need to expand its land to harbour the new installation and adapt the existing systems with a third feed, etc.

Council was generally favouring the offer but foresaw some difficulties, such as the very short time schedule imposed to meet the required completion in 2012. The Executives noted that the manpower within the organisation is lacking to undertake such a big project. A fast initialisation of the work can really only be done if hiring a local environmental and building consultant.

The most urgent issue would be to acquire the needed communication permits. After discussions, Council asked the Executives to open a dialogue with the Norwegian authorities regarding this. It is expected that some sort of response can be available in time for the next Council meeting. Depending on the response, Council can continue the planning then.

Closing the Annual Report of the Accounts 2008

The 2008 outcome resulted in a deficit of about 1.3 MSEK. The shortage was covered by own reserves. Council closed the Annual Report of the Accounts 2008.

2009 Financial development update

The forecast for 2009 indicates a positive result in the order of 2.6 MSEK. The main contributing factor will be exchange rates where the decline of SEK against most other currencies will generate additional funds from the Associates since they have committed their annual contribution in local currency.

Draft 2010 Budget and five-years plan

The budget plan for 2010 was presented. No immediate financial problems are expected. The 2010 budget volume will be similar to the 2009 one with the exception of the external projects which both end in 2009. The five-years plan is currently unbalanced 2012 onwards due to envisaged changes in the Associates after 2011. Actions will need to be started to rectify this latest in 2010.

Staff Representative matters

No matters were brought to Council's attention.

Restricted Session

Closed part

Resulting Statements:

1) The writing practice of EISCAT Council meeting minutes was discussed. Currently the Administrative Deputy takes care of the writing of the minutes and their public short version. However, the work load of the Administrative Deputy is very high and delivering minutes in a timely manner is an on-going challenge. The option of returning back to the old practice where the Associates carry the responsibility of minutes making was discussed. It was noticed, however, that adopting again the old practice would unavoidably lead to a break in the homogenous and skilfully written record of minutes which we now have for more than eight years. The Council thus assumes that the Director will make the necessary re-allocations in the Headquarters (HQ) tasks in order to ensure that HQ can also in the future take care of the minutes delivery in timely manner and within normal working hours.

2) The Council decided to give the next Beynon medal to Dr. Gudmund Wannberg. The Council chair promised to contact Dr. Wannberg and ask his availability for the next Council meeting in October 27-28, Lillehammer, where the medal will be presented to him.

Open part

3) The Swedish delegation reported that the suggested Vice-Chairperson should be Dr. T. Andersson, at least for one year.

Scientific Oversight Committee work

The term for one of the external members will end during the year and a new external member was suggested to Council. Council agreed with the proposal.

3rd party applications

The already given 2009 allocation can not be used due to ancillary system late delivery and will have to be postponed into 2010. Since that left space for another application(s), Council agreed with the proposed two 3rd party runs suggested by the Scientific Oversight Committee.

Short, medium and long term science strategies

The short tem (1-5 years) scientific strategy and the 5-10 years look ahead have been finalised by the Scientific Oversight Committee and Council took note of these. The long-term science case will undergo a final editing within the coming weeks and will be circulated to Council for final consideration before it is published.

Scientific Presentation

Dr. Irina Strelnikova at the Leibniz-Institute of Atmospheric Physics e.V. at University of Rostock (IAP) presented some recent findings about ISR measurements of PMSEs and their generation mechanisms.

Coming Council meetings

The 73rd meeting will be held in autumn, 27 - 28 October 2009 in Lillehammer, Norway.

The 74th meeting will be held 3 – 4 June 2010, at NIPR, Tokyo, Japan.

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