

**LETTER OF AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
THE INTERNATIONAL ARCTIC SOCIAL SCIENCES ASSOCIATION
(IASSA)
AND
THE INTERNATIONAL ARCTIC SCIENCE COMMITTEE (IASC)**

Background

IASSA and IASC were both founded in 1990, and they originate from the same context of post-perestroika renewal of international Arctic cooperation. Similarities in aspects of the mission of each organization make it natural for them to cooperate. A first agreement was signed in 1995. As pointed out in the *International Review and Strategy for the IASC Council* (2006), the relationship remained less intense than it could have. However, it started to intensify as IASSA was invited by IASC to be among the sponsors of the Second International Conference on Arctic Research Planning (ICARP II) and to participate in the conference itself. In the meantime, both IASSA and IASC have become observers at the Arctic Council, and both are represented on the Joint Committee for the International Polar Year (IPY).

This letter recognises that there are many common interests between IASSA and IASC in international and multi-disciplinary scientific cooperation in the Arctic, and that increased cooperation between the two organizations will be of mutual benefit.

1. IASSA

IASSA is a professional association based on voluntary membership. For the purposes of the association, both the Arctic and the social sciences are defined in a broad and inclusive manner, encompassing all Arctic and Subarctic regions, and all disciplines pertaining to the humanities and the social sciences. IASSA membership fluctuates between 400 and 600, residing in more than 20 different countries. The IASSA community is tightly knit by active communication channels such as its electronic list, its website and its newsletter. IASSA organizes triannual International Congresses of Arctic Social Sciences (ICASS) where cutting edge research is presented and discussed. The General Assembly, highest-level governing body of IASSA, is convened at the occasion of these congresses. In between congresses, the association is led by a Council of eight members elected by the General Assembly, and its daily business is carried out by a president and secretariat. The secretariat moves from country to country every three years. Thus the association is widely acknowledged by stakeholders as a legitimate and democratic representative of the international community of Arctic social scientists.

The objectives of IASSA are:

- To promote and stimulate international cooperation and to increase the participation of social scientists in national and international arctic research;
- To promote communication and coordination with other related organizations;

- To promote the active collection, exchange, dissemination, and archiving of scientific information in the Arctic social sciences. This may include the compilation of registers of Arctic social scientists and research projects, and the organization of workshops, symposia, and congresses;
- To increase public awareness of circumpolar issues and research results;
- To promote mutual respect, communication, and collaboration between social scientists and the peoples of the north, while recognizing these are not mutually exclusive groups;
- To promote the development of research and educational partnerships with the peoples of the north;
- To facilitate culturally, developmentally, and linguistically appropriate education in the north, including training in social sciences;
- To adopt and promote a statement of ethical principles for the conduct of research in the Arctic.

In order to accomplish its objectives of stimulating the participation of social scientists in national and international arctic research, and of promoting communication and coordination with other related organizations, IASSA has been very active in the circles of international Arctic research policy and research planning, such as the Arctic Council and some of its working groups, contributing to the reports prepared under mandate from these working groups (Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA), Arctic Human Development Report (AHDR), and now Arctic Social Indicators). IASSA initiated the inclusion of the social sciences in the scientific program of the IPY. It is represented by two members on the IPY Joint Committee and in its Subcommittees (Data Management, Outreach), as well as on several national IPY committees, and in the SAON (Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks) process. IASSA also encourages the participation of Arctic social scientists as full partners in multi-disciplinary projects.

As stated in its objectives, the mission of IASSA goes beyond international scientific cooperation, and encompasses data management and dissemination, education, outreach, relations with Arctic residents, and research ethics. IASSA advocates responsible research, to be carried out in partnership with Arctic residents, following up-to-date ethical principles.

2. IASC

IASC is a non-governmental organization whose aim is to encourage and facilitate cooperation in all aspects of Arctic research, in all countries engaged in Arctic research and in all areas of the Arctic region. IASC was established in 1990, began operations in 1991 and today comprises 18 member countries. The IASC member organizations are national science organizations covering all fields of Arctic research. Representatives of the national scientific organizations from all 18 member countries form the IASC Council. Each national member organization has a mechanism to provide ongoing contact between its IASC Council Member and its Arctic science community. IASC draws on this structure to identify scientific priorities. An

international science program planned or recommended by IASC should be of high priority to Arctic or global science.

The President of IASC is elected by Council, who also elects four Vice-Presidents to serve on the Executive Committee. Council usually meets once a year during the Arctic Science Summit Week (ASSW). IASC Executive Committee operates as a board of directors and manages the activities of IASC between Council meetings. The Chair is the President of IASC.

IASC Regional Board is comprised of representatives from governmental scientific organizations in the eight Arctic countries. It ensures that the activities of IASC are consistent with the interests of the Arctic countries. The Chair of the Regional Board is a member of the Executive Committee.

The organizational needs of IASC are served by the IASC Secretariat, currently located in Stockholm, Sweden.

IASC is affiliated to the International Council for Science (ICSU) as an International Scientific Associate and it is an active member of the ICSU/WMO Joint Committee that is steering the IPY process.

IASC also provides objective and independent scientific advice to the Arctic Council and other organizations on issues of science affecting the management of the Arctic region.

IASC's main accomplishments during the last years were the initiation of ACIA, which was implemented as a joint venture with the Arctic Council, and the development of the ICARP II process. IASC also established the Arctic Science Summit Week (ASSW) as a major crossdisciplinary venue. Additionally, IASC plays a prominent role in several other major international scientific programs and science planning initiatives, such as the International Study of Arctic Change (ISAC), which was launched by IASC and the Arctic Ocean Sciences Board (AOSB), and SAON and other IPY legacy issues.

3. Common Interests

IASSA and IASC share a number of common interests, which makes it relatively easy for them to work together, as they have already done to some extent in the recent past, in arranging workshops, conferences, and reports on topics of mutual scientific interest, in encouraging the development of integrated plans for scientific research, in communicating to the public, in entering research partnerships with Arctic residents, and in providing advice to policy makers.

4. Declaration of Intent

IASSA and IASC intend to combine their efforts in selected fields and activities (to be decided by mutual agreement) so as to raise the level of impact of both organizations in terms of making scientific advances and of advising policy makers, as well as to

avoid duplication. The focus of IASSA-IASC joint activities should be on interdisciplinary work.

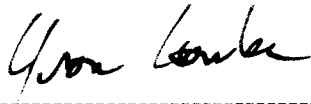
Combining efforts in selected fields and activities requires no change to the terms of reference of either organization, and carries no financial implication.

To facilitate the process, IASSA and IASC agree in particular (the list is not exhaustive):

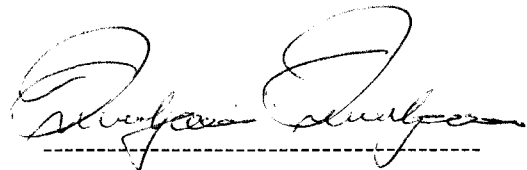
- 1) To consult each other regularly about Arctic Council issues (including its Working Groups), and to develop common standpoints and initiatives whenever appropriate;
- 2) To involve IASSA in the preparation and participation in the ASSW;
- 3) To invite each other to meetings, including the new IASC Scientific Standing Committees "Social System" and "Science and Policy";
- 4) To exchange newsletters and advertise each other's newsletters and web sites;
- 5) To jointly plan and encourage research activities.

The agreement will remain in force for 5 years, thereafter be reviewed and continued as appropriate.

Signed



Yvon Csonka
President, IASSA



Kristján Kristjánsson
President, IASC

Date 29.02 2008

Date 28.03 2008

Amendment

to the

LETTER OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE INTERNATIONAL ARCTIC SOCIAL SCIENCES ASSOCIATION (IASSA) AND THE INTERNATIONAL ARCTIC SCIENCE COMMITTEE (IASC)

(1) Page 3, 3rd paragraph:

“IASC Regional Board is comprised of representatives from governmental scientific organizations in the eight Arctic countries. It ensures that the activities of IASC are consistent with the interests of the Arctic countries. The Chair of the Regional Board is a member of the Executive Committee.”

The above paragraph is deleted.

(At its last meeting, held on 26 March 2008 during the Arctic Science Summit Week (ASSW) in Syktyvkar (Russia), the IASC Regional Board disbanded.)

(2) Page 4, bullet number 3:

“To invite each other to meetings, including the new IASC Scientific Standing Committees Social System and Science and Policy;”

The above sentence is changed to:

“To invite each other to meetings, including the relevant IASC Scientific Standing Committees;”