SEARCH Science Steering Committee (SSC)-Agency Meeting
13–15 February 2012 • Washington, D.C.

Brief Summary

A Study of Environmental Arctic Change (SEARCH) joint SSC–Agency meeting was held in Washington, D.C. to agree on next steps for SEARCH implementation. Fifty participants attended the meeting, with diverse agency representation (see box below).

Over the last several months, the SEARCH SSC has developed a new SEARCH vision and draft 5-year science goals with input from SEARCH panels and agency representatives. Meeting discussions resulted in four important outcomes:

1. Agreement on 5-year science goals that align with agency missions and meet pressing scientific priorities. The draft goals include:
   - Improve Understanding and Prediction of Sea Ice Changes and the Consequences for Ecosystems, Human Activities, and Climate
   - Understand the Consequences of Shallow Permafrost Degradation on Arctic and Global Systems
   - Improve Predictions of Future Land-ice Loss and Impacts on Sea Level
   - Analyze Societal and Policy Implications of Arctic Environmental Change

2. Agreement on core elements of an implementation strategy for SEARCH, including mechanisms for interagency collaboration. A full implementation plan will be developed this spring and summer.

3. Agreement on a set of "showcase" projects that implement portions of the 5-year goals and demonstrate ways to crosscut disciplines, types of activities, existing efforts, and agency interests.

4. Recommendations for improved coordination of arctic observing activities, to be discussed at a March workshop (see: http://www.arcus.org/search/meetings/2012/coordination-workshop).

Agencies Represented at the SEARCH Meeting

- Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
- Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- National Park Service
- National Science Foundation
- North Slope Science Initiative
- Office of Naval Research
- Office of Science and Technology Policy
- Smithsonian Institution
- U.S. Department of Energy
- U.S. Department of State
- U.S. Arctic Research Commission
- U.S. Coast Guard

The immediate next step is to circulate the draft goals and objectives to the broader science community for input (in March via ArcticInfo and other lists). Then a draft implementation plan will be developed in collaboration with SEARCH agencies and the science community.

The final meeting agenda, participant list, and other materials can be found at: http://www.arcus.org/search/meetings/2012/ssc-february.

We sincerely thank all the meeting participants and look forward to the exciting work ahead.