

Statement on Joint Arctic Research

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS)

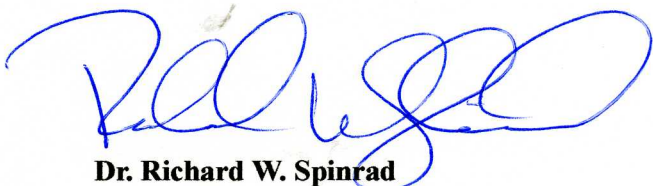
Recognizing critical emerging societal needs and challenges, along with significant collaborative opportunities associated with environmental changes occurring in the Arctic, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS) met on November 9, 2009 for their Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) meeting under the Memorandum of Understanding on World Oceans and Polar Regions.

Co-chaired by Dr. Richard Spinrad and Academician Nikolai Laverov, the JCC meeting comes at an opportune time in both countries' administrations. The Governments of the Russian Federation and the United States of America have acknowledged that there is an urgent need to address strategically critical issues in the Arctic such as climate change, prediction and projection (including carbon cycle monitoring, a priority specified under the Medvedev-Obama bilateral commission), resource exploration and management, and technical support for the future marine transportation sector. Scientists, managers, and decision-makers recognize that it is essential that we plan for projected effects of sea-level rise, coastal erosion, loss of biodiversity, and sea-ice retreat (among others) and that we are able to support specific mitigation and adaptation strategies for affected communities. The current and future challenges in the Arctic are shared by both our nations, and it is therefore mutually beneficial that we address them in a collective, cohesive, and coordinated manner.

NOAA and RAS, along with other US and Russian organizations and public/private partnerships, have a track record of joint successes in the Arctic, including the Russian American Long-term Census of the Arctic (RUSALCA), instrumentation/operation of the Tiksi Hydrometeorological Observatory, and the Lake El'gygytyn International Continental Drilling Program. Through this signed joint statement, our two organizations pledge to continue to build upon our collaborative work to address national, bilateral, and global-scale Arctic research challenges. We recognize the urgent need for action and resolve to act in an expeditious manner to enhance Arctic observations, models, and forecasts, and strengthen our data exchange activities that benefit our mutual needs. To further expand and strengthen this collaboration in the future, both sides agreed to develop proposed joint projects in the Arctic to include: work on black carbon, methane emissions, climate change impacts on biological productivity, atmospheric chemistry monitoring, the use of unmanned aircraft systems for environmental applications, ocean ecosystem exploration (along with mapping and bathymetry), and measurement of physical oceanographic parameters of the Arctic Ocean.

As a short-term (2-3 months) next step, each organization will identify respective key scientists and initiate conversations and/or actions for each focal topic. These respective organizational leads will be responsible for developing more definitive proposals on each of the projects listed in this document.

Signed this day on November 9, 2009 by NOAA-RAS JCC co-chairs in Moscow, Russia.



Dr. Richard W. Spinrad

NOAA Assistant Administrator for Research



Academician Nikolai Laverov

Vice President of RAS