

Full Proposals for International Polar Year 2007-2008 Activities

Proposed IPY Activity Details

1.0 PROPOSER INFORMATION

(Activity ID No: 166)

1.1 Title of Activity

Sea Ice Knowledge and Use: Assessing Arctic Environmental and Social Change

1.2 Short Form Title of Proposed Activity

SIKU

1.3 Activity Leader Details

Igor Krupnik
Arctic Studies Center, Smithsonian Institution
USA

1.4 Lead International Organisation(s) (if applicable)

1.5 Other Countries involved in the activity

Canada
Greenland
Russia
Denmark
UK
France

1.6 Expression of Intent ID #'s brought together in this proposed activity

332, 715, 358

1.7 Location of Field Activities

Arctic

1.8 Which IPY themes are addressed

1. Current state of the environment
2. Change in the polar regions
4. Exploring new frontiers
5. The polar regions as vantage points
6. The human dimension in polar regions

1.9 What is the main IPY target addressed by this activity

1. Natural or social science
-

2.0 SUMMARY OF THE ACTIVITY

Sea ice is a fundamental feature of the polar environment; it is also one of its most tangible indicators of change. During the last two decades, and in the past several years in particular, both polar scientists and local indigenous residents have detected dramatic shifts in the extent, timing, and other key parameters of Arctic sea ice. Whereas earlier IPY ventures contributed greatly to the progress in the scientific knowledge and understanding of polar sea ice, IPY 2007-2008 will become a milestone in the documentation of indigenous knowledge of sea ice environment. It will also set new standards for efforts and methods to bridge scientific and local observations of change in the ice-dominated northern ecosystems.

To achieve this we propose a coordinated international study of local knowledge and use of sea ice in several indigenous communities across the Arctic region. The acronym for our project's title, SIKU – Sea Ice Knowledge and Use – is also the most general word for sea ice ('siku') in all Inuit (Eskimo) languages from Bering Strait to Greenland. For many Arctic indigenous peoples, despite rapid and pronounced changes in lifestyles and local cultures the ice-covered sea continues to be an integral component of daily life. It remains the most productive and widely used habitat for six to nine months every year. It is also the main platform for traveling; for observing weather systems, tidal and current cycles, marine mammals and other biota; as well as for training and education in navigational and subsistence skills passed from elders to younger hunters. Further, the status of local use and knowledge of sea ice is also an indicator of social change, a function of new technologies, economic and dietary trends, and of shifts in educational practices and cultural values. For many polar communities the use and knowledge of the ice-covered sea remains the key pillar of identity and resilience. It is their most prized intellectual treasure, the best of their scholarship based upon generations of experience and achievements. For scientists it offers an invaluable vision on how changes in polar ecosystems can be thoroughly documented and internalized through “another form” of knowledge and observations. Our effort will include seasonal (long-term) monitoring and extensive documentation of the current status of local sea ice expertise and daily use; knowledge of ice features, hunting and traveling methods; safety rules; patterns of knowledge transmission and hunters' training in several (15 to 20) northern communities. Special focus will be placed upon the documentation of indigenous interpretations of current sea ice characteristics and environmental variability, cultural and ecological responses to increase resilience and community sustainability in times of change. Data will be collected via participant observations, interviews, and recording by local experts to illustrate: i) a seasonal sea ice topology; ii) the extent and areas of use by local people; iii) sea ice hazards; iv) key harvesting areas; v) traditional and current ice routes; vi) place names associated with ice features; vii) shifts in patterns of ice use due to social and/or environmental change; viii) recent and historical changes in subsistence and other societal strategies, due to environmental and socio-economic dynamics.

This body of data, supplied by maps, video, photographs, diaries of local observers, dictionaries of sea ice terms and place-names in local languages, along with other forms of records, such as narratives, elders' memoirs, and oral histories, will create the first-ever broad dataset on indigenous knowledge and use of Arctic sea ice as of 2007-2008. Based upon cumulative observations by scientists and indigenous experts, this dataset will offer insight into both the past as well as the current conditions. The 2007-2008 dataset will thus be an invaluable baseline to any prospective comparison to detect future evidence of change, both environmental and social, for years to come—and up to IPY-5 in 2057-2058. Another crucial task is to track sea ice changes over the last fifty years, and possibly longer, so that the scope and direction of change can be analyzed over a broader period of time. To achieve this the SIKU project teams will incorporate several senior researchers (“science elders”) and/or their field data of some 35-50 years ago, including those who had conducted their research in the years of IGY in 1957-1958, and after. This is aimed at matching past observations with the data of today's scholars working in the same communities. In a similar way, indigenous elders and experts are to work closely with hunters and community researchers of younger generations. Historical photographs, researchers' field notes, archival documents, and oral histories will be used extensively, to test the scope of change in ice, knowledge, and subsistence against observations of indigenous and scholarly experts from several generations.

The study will be undertaken as a network of regional projects led by teams from seven nations and focused on selected sites (communities) or areas (see 2.3). Each team will be multi-generational and will include a senior researcher (“elder”) and younger scholars or students

as well as local collaborators from various age groups. The project will be organized as a multidisciplinary study, in order to test ice records against the data on terrestrial and marine environments, hunting statistics, and weather patterns. Project personnel will include geographers, anthropologists, ice scholars, marine and terrestrial biologists, hunters, village elders, and subsistence specialists from local agencies.

The project will be conducted in partnership with indigenous institutions and communities. Participation and data sharing agreements will be sought with local village councils and hunters' associations as well as regional umbrella organizations (like Inuit Circumpolar Conference-Greenland, Alaskan Eskimo Walrus Commission, and others). Data will be collected, processed, and copied for prospective storage at regional archives, data-centers, and educational institutions. Photographs and records will be shared with local communities and families. The project's scientific products will be presented in team reports, co-authored papers, datasets deposited to the IPY data-management centers (see 3.6), individual/team monographs, and a final project volume of several chapters, organized by major geographic regions.

2.1 What is the evidence of inter-disciplinarity in this activity?

By definition, most issues of societal concern related to environmental and social change in a complex environment, such as the Arctic, demands an interdisciplinary approach because of the interconnectivity between biology and culture, between human communities and their ecological setting. In the context of SIKU, interdisciplinary engagement will be achieved at four levels and will go beyond collaboration between natural and social scientists. The first level of inter-disciplinarity relates to the complex nature of indigenous knowledge; it is to link actors that are as diverse as subsistence hunters and scientists, academic institutions and local agencies and bodies built by indigenous communities (such as village councils, hunters-trappers associations, elders groups, etc.). The second level of inter-disciplinarity will be achieved at the level of integrated analysis that includes many interconnected avenues and seeks to map human ecological relations with terrestrial and marine mammals, birds, and fish involving sea ice and sea ice knowledge as key indicators of environmental and social change. The third level of inter-disciplinarity is involved in translating local anticipatory capacity into the context of specific models of current social and environmental change, and in building such a capacity by using or applying the work of modelers. The ethnographic and ecological data collected through the SIKU studies will assist modelers to develop comprehensive scenarios revealing the interconnectivity of physical, cultural, and biological factors; it is to inform community members, scientists and policy makers about the complexity of issues related to environmental and social change. The fourth level of inter-disciplinarity will be in the SIKU communicative capacity. By matching indigenous knowledge and observations with the data developed by social and natural sciences, SIKU research will help establish a common vocabulary across several disciplines and languages. Furthermore by integrating context specific empirical data from varied geographical regions of the circumpolar Arctic, the SIKU project will contribute to a more general understanding of Arctic systems, thereby playing a role in policy making.

2.2 What will be the significant advances/developments from this activity? What will be the major deliverables? What are the outputs for your peers?

The documentation of indigenous knowledge and use of sea ice presents several challenges that cannot be fully solved with the traditional scientific methods developed by disciplines such as anthropology, geography, cartography, climatology, sea ice oceanography, marine biology, and others. First, indigenous environmental and geographic knowledge is transmitted primarily via careful observation, experiential learning, and oral mechanisms. Younger hunters learn while hunting and traveling on the ice with their more experienced peers, and through stories and knowledge shared by their elders. Secondly, the sea ice environment on which this study focuses is highly dynamic, and presents extreme seasonal and considerable annual variations. There are varied factors that influence sea ice formation depending on the specific geophysical context of each polar locale. In other words the ice is "alive" in different ways in different regions of the Arctic. Thirdly, the sea ice is one of the most susceptible environments to climate change, and there may be significant differences between past and present sea-ice use patterns. Finally, significant social and technological changes have affected polar communities, leading to shifts from semi-nomadic to sedentary modes of life, and changing travel patterns due to the replacement of dogsleds by snowmobiles. All of those have impacted the memory of the living

generations.

The SIKU team will address identified challenges by using multiple approaches and methods. Some will be based upon widely used research and documentation practices (like collection of oral histories and taped interviews; use of historical photographs and records, earlier weather-ice-climate data and field notes; video- and audio documentation, etc.). Others will advance various contributions by indigenous collaborators, such indigenous observational records and diaries, local dictionaries of sea ice and navigational terms in native languages, place-name lists, training and ice/weather forecast know-how. Those data and records will also become the project’s major deliverables and will be provided to communities in a useful format so that they may integrate it with the local school curricula as guidebooks, bilingual dictionaries, school textbooks, educational CD-ROMs, etc. (see 3.9). Also, the new technologies of mapping (Geographic Information Systems – GIS, Global Positioning Systems – GPS, remote sensing) coupled with the use of other computer-based representational techniques (Multimedia) offer new possibilities for documenting both oral-based knowledge and dynamic and changing environments. We will develop innovative and creative ways of mapping, of gathering and representing spatially referenced information. For example, cybercartography offers promising potential for solving the challenges facing this project regarding both the changing icescape and the nature of indigenous oral and experiential knowledge. Through this method, the documentation process consists of the production of several maps, recordings of interviews, videotaping and photographing of ice features, and the use of satellite imagery, all of which will be integrated into a database that will become the main source of project outputs (e.g. maps, GIS databases, educational interactive maps, etc.).

2.3 Outline the geographical location(s) for the proposed field work (approximate coordinates will be helpful if possible)

| Locations | Coordinates |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Barrow, USA 71°17’N, 156°47’W | Pangnirtung, Canada 66°7’N, 65°55’W |
| Gambell, USA 63°47’N, 171°45’W | Ivujivik, Canada 62°25’N, 77°55’W |
| Point Hope, USA 68°28’N, 167°27’W | Qaanaaq, Greenland, 77°29’N, 69°20’W |
| Toksook Bay, USA 60°53’N, 165°10’W | Ilulissat, Greenland 69°13’N, 51°06’W |
| Wainwright, USA 70°64’N, 160°04’W | Upernavik, Greenland 72°47’N, 56°10’W |
| Clyde River, Canada 70°28’N, 68°36’W | Tasiilaq, Greenland 65°36’N, 37°38’W |
| Grise Fjord, Canada 76°25’N, 83°10’W | Inchoun, Russia 66°15’N, 170°10’W |
| Igloolik, Canada 70°35’N, 84°54’W | Novo-Chaplino, Russia 64°40’N, 173°01’W |

2.4 Define the approximate timeframe(s) for proposed field activities?

| Arctic Fieldwork time frame(s) | Antarctic Fieldwork time frame(s) |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 10/06 - 12/06 | MM/YY - MM/YY |
| 01/07 - 12/07 | MM/YY - MM/YY |
| 01/08 - 07/08 | MM/YY - MM/YY |

2.5 What major logistic support/facilities will be required for this project?

Existing field stations

Further details – The project will be carried out as several independent small-team efforts in 15-20 rural communities across the Arctic. No special infrastructure or equipment is needed for the studies. Logistic support developed in each respective northern nation (i.e. USA-Alaska, Canada, Greenland-Denmark, Russia) will be used to facilitate researchers’ access to the field. Local facilities and support centers in regional hubs, such as the Igloolik Research Institute, Barrow Arctic Research Consortium, Bering Land Bridge National Preserve, and others will be approached for field, accommodation, computer, and transportation assistance.

2.6 How will the required logistics be supplied? Have operators been approached?

| Source of logistic support | Likely potential sources | Support agreed |
|--|--------------------------|----------------|
| Consortium of national polar operators | Y | |
| Own national polar operator | | |
| Another national polar operator | | |
| National agency | Y | |
| Military support | | |
| Commercial operator | | |
| Own support | Y | |
| Other | | |

2.7 If working in the Arctic regions, has there been contact with local indigenous groups or relevant authorities regarding access?

Yes. Most of the individual and local projects to be parts of the SIKU research network will be conducted as follow-up efforts or as a continuation of earlier collaborative programs in indigenous observations and knowledge documentation. Several local indigenous organizations have already expressed their interest in supporting and/or joining the SIKU effort, such as Inuit Circumpolar Conference-Greenland, Calista Elders Council, Eskimo Walrus Commission, Nunavut Research Institute, Igloolik Research Center, Inuit Heritage Trust Incorporated, and others. Individual investigators and team leaders will be responsible for contacting local indigenous communities and governing agencies to secure their collaboration in granting permission for research and access to the field.

3.0 STRUCTURE OF THE ACTIVITY

3.1 Origin of the activity

This is a new activity developed for the IPY period

3.2 How will the activity be organised and managed? Describe the proposed management structure and means for coordinating across the cluster

This project will be administered and coordinated by a special steering committee in cooperation with other team members; the steering committee of eight members from five nations (US, Canada, UK, Greenland, Denmark) is already in place. Local field surveys and observations will be conducted in collaboration with arctic communities through various forms of participatory management processes appropriate to each nation. The study will be undertaken as a network of regional projects led by teams from seven nations and focused on selected sites or areas. Each team will use its own budget; it will be multi-generational and will include a senior researcher (“elder”) and younger scholars or students as well as local collaborators from various age groups. In addition to individual project teams and their management process, specific tasks will be administered by a small SIKU ‘virtual’ office of one person and/or a few graduate students. Those people will be in charge of information gathering and sharing as well as planning and logistics for reports, conferences, and other project meetings. Data management process will most certainly rely upon specially contracted people in charge of data-digitization, GIS database structure maintenance and manipulation, and cartographic support. Special efforts will be in place to coordinate information pertaining to several local interpreters, guides, assistants, and experts to be engaged in participating northern communities.

3.3 Will the activity leave a legacy of infrastructure and if so in what form?

This project will leave a legacy of community infrastructure through several venues, such as, training, community and cross-regional/international contacts, research networks, and possibly equipment infrastructure (e.g. GPS equipment, GIS software, and/or computers). Materials and

documentation resulting from the project will be shared with the collaborating polar communities as well as with several local organizations across the Arctic (e.g. Inuit Heritage Trust, Nunavut Research Institute, Nunavut Government, Alaskan Eskimo Walrus Commission, Calista Elders Council, Avataq Cultural Institute, Makivik Research Centre, Aurora Research Institute), and local/territorial governments following data sharing practices and agreements of the regions involved.

3.4 Will the activity involve nations other than traditional polar nations? How will this be addressed?

Yes. Arctic indigenous residents and young researchers from non-traditional polar nations will be invited to participate in the project. Local partners will be sought in polar communities that agree to take part in the project, through respective regional indigenous organizations and from participants of earlier knowledge documentation projects. As in many current knowledge documentation efforts, local observations, data collection and processing will become possible only if the collaboration from local experts and community organisations is firmly secured.

3.5 Will this activity be linked with other IPY core activities? If yes please specify

While positioned as a uniquely focused study of Arctic indigenous people's sea ice knowledge, use, and change, SIKU is interdisciplinary by nature and would be complimentary to several other social and natural scientific IPY projects (proposals). We are formally linked to "Variability and Change in the Canadian Cryosphere" (Brown, IPY-EoI #644), "Exchange for Local Observations and Knowledge of the Arctic (ELOKA)" (Gearheard, IPY #358 – formerly "Arctic People's Observation Centre (APOC)"), and "A Spatial Data Infrastructure for Polar Science: A Framework for Organization and Outreach (Taylor, IPY #645). We also envision potential or evolving linkages with other IPY projects (either within the IPY timeframe, or resulting from IPY interaction as legacy initiatives or projects) such as: "International Sea Ice Summer School" (Haugan, IPY #164), "The State and Fate of the Polar Cryosphere" (Key, IPY #607), "Sea Ice Ecosystem in recent climate change in the Arctic" (Melnikov, IPY #769), "Arctic Spatial Data Infrastructure" (Gaylord, IPY #265), "Polar View: The Polar Information Centre" (Fleming, IPY #317), "Center for Learning and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (Barnhardt, IPY #32), "Community and Change: The Human World of the Arctic" (Pfeffer, IPY #361), "Transferring Technologies and Expertise to Arctic Indigenous Peoples" (Raitt, IPY #370), "The Economy of the North: Impacts and Effects of climate change in the Arctic" (Alfsen, IPY #177), and "Vulnerability of Human Communities to Environmental Change Across the Arctic" (Smit, IPY #454).

SIKU's collaboration with ELOKA (Gearheard, IPY #358) will be of particular importance. SIKU will take advantage of ELOKA's unique focus on managing local/traditional knowledge and observational records across the entire Arctic region during 2007-2008 and beyond. The SIKU program will have a link on ELOKA's portal and individual projects within SIKU will work with ELOKA on their data management needs and utilize ELOKA services as needed. By participating in ELOKA, SIKU will be able to link with other projects around the Arctic as ELOKA acts as a hub for community-based efforts. SIKU will also gain broader exposure since ELOKA will be partnering with even larger planned networks such as COMAAR (Coordination of Observation and Monitoring of the Arctic for Assessment and Research).

3.6 How will the activity manage its data? Is there a viable plan and which data management organisations/structures will be involved?

Most of the data generated by this project will be managed and stored through SIKU's collaborative network with ELOKA (see 3.5). In addition, all cartographic and other relevant electronic data will be processed, administered, and stored at the Geomatics and Cartographic Research Centre (GCRC) at Carleton University. One of the major goals of this project is to publish the resulting data organized by community and by region. The GIS data will be available to scientific organizations, national governments, archives, and territorial or local municipal governments, as well as to the participating community themselves to assist them in policy

making and policy development.

3.7 Data Policy Agreement

Will this activity sign up to the IPY draft Data Policy (see website)

No

3.8 How will the activity contribute to developing the next generation of polar scientists, logisticians, etc.?

The SIKU initiative, both generally and through its various local projects, will be focused on change as well as on knowledge transmitted among and between generations, in indigenous and academic communities alike. Hence, most of the SIKU field teams will include senior scholars 'passing on their knowledge' by working with younger researchers, associates, and students. Plans are underway to create a SIKU student network to address special needs of student participants in research training, field orientation, dissertational work, and publication. In a similar way, several local partners from participating northern communities will be trained in research, documentation, mapping, and analytical techniques, in data management, and heritage/curriculum work. Those indigenous participants, particularly of the younger generations, will be SIKU's strongest contribution to support of indigenous ecological knowledge, sustainable environmental practices, and to developing a new generation of community and scholarly leadership across the Arctic.

3.9 How will this activity address education, outreach and communication issues outlined in the Framework document?

Education and outreach will go hand in hand with SIKU research and observation efforts; both would necessarily be ongoing throughout the duration of the project due to the importance of participation and collaboration from northern community members. Historical photographs and other materials shared with communities will be used for local educational and heritage programs. Special efforts will be made to match SIKU historical records, imagery, and data with local language and cultural curricula. Maps, GIS-generated materials, and other mapping deliverables could form another valuable educational resource. Involving northern communities could be an important capacity building process (i.e. perhaps it could develop into future community-directed projects). In addition, the cartographic, and audio/visual material generated by the project will be helpful in communicating with scientists, local governments and agencies, and the general public. Communication would also entail the promotion of the IPY program within northern communities, and would ensure more northern participation in IPY activities during 2007-2009 and beyond. We also aim at incorporating SIKU-generated materials into university courses in polar geography, climate change, and indigenous ecological knowledge at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

3.10 What are the proposed sources of funding for this activity?

Except for the overall project management, SIKU participants will be working in small local teams that have agreed to arrange their research funding through respective individual grants and/or other support from their national agencies. Most senior and mid-career participants are already wholly or partly funded for their basic salaries. Younger researchers are to be supported via student and dissertational grants. Therefore, efforts to secure funding would mainly focus on those which would support local participants and indigenous observers and experts; travel and fieldwork expenses for numerous visits to the participating arctic communities; communication and data management expenses. Several SIKU collaborators have already applied for small seed grants in summer-fall 2005; more applications are being developed for the grant cycle of 2005-2006. Funds are being sought to cover new field observations, processing of the old records, other research costs associated with using community experts and local researchers, as well as for data management, and project-generated publications.

A certain portion of field and other project expenses will be covered through fund-sharing among participating teams (particularly with regard to local team members in Arctic indigenous communities). In addition, project teams will apply for various grants to secure common funding for the editing and production of the final collection of papers (chapters) presenting the results of local SIKU projects. In a similar way, funds will be shared to cover costs for education and

outreach activities, data management, as well as for traveling to and organization of at least two special sessions of SIKU collaborators at major international Arctic science meetings in 2007 and 2008. Further discussions for coordinating and sharing of research funding will take place during 2005-2006.

3.11 Additional Comments

Changes in ice conditions always offered new opportunities as well as new limitations. This is reflected in societal strategies and historically Arctic communities have had remarkably different strategies to cope with crisis and environmental change. Since the sea ice is such an integral component of daily life in the Arctic, documenting ice change and human strategies for understanding and using sea ice will provide a powerful window to analyze arctic adaptations, both past and present. Also, connecting historical societal changes to sea ice dynamics, both indigenous experts and scientists may offer new ideas and warnings to the current generation of political leaders. This is why the project will have a very strong focus on interpretation and comparison, besides documentation and data gathering. Indigenous experts, science elders and other project participants will use those data for further discussion on how to link sea ice use and change to social and cultural changes.

Investigating both past and current conditions and strategies, the project will culminate in maps and other datasets depicting ice-covered water bodies as major community-used areas which are as elaborately known, utilized, and understood as land features and terrain. Building upon ongoing collaborative research with local communities will ensure that sea ice knowledge and use are represented according to current indigenous practices and oral history, in a way advocated by polar residents.

Also, Arctic-resident collaborators need to be invited to participate on their terms and we should determine what those motivations are acknowledged in advance. No two polar communities will necessarily join an IPY effort for the same reasons or rewards, nor with even similar expectations. We should avoid promising too much and should take into consideration that indigenous knowledge systems have certain 'defense mechanisms' and probably guard against trying to understand too much detail about the environment so they can concentrate on the important stuff.

Scaling, or selection of a mutually appropriate resolution should be also taken very seriously, since a group or community of sea ice users usually tries to visualize the ice dynamics only over a certain spatial distance surrounding its home base of operations. This restriction of a spatial range of expertise helps explain why indigenous experts do not try to visualize sea ice dynamics using more general models, like scientists do, but try to come to grips with specific ice, weather and water interactions on a certain manageable scale (usually about 100-150 km). Bridging those individual local scales would be a critical task at the final stage of the study.

4.0 CONSORTIUM INFORMATION

4.1 Contact Details

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4.2 Other significant consortium members and their affiliation

| Name | Organisation | Country |
|---------------------------------|--|----------------|
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| Dr. Karim-Aly Kassam | University of Calgary, Calgary | Canada |
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| Dr. Rolf Gilberg | Danish National Museum, Copenhagen | Denmark |
| Dr. Nicole Gombay | McGill University, Montréal | Canada |
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| Anna Motschenbacher | Anchorage, Alaska | USA |
| Dr. Richard Nelson | Sitka, Alaska | USA |
| Dr. David Norton | University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks | USA |
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