Assessing the risk of climate change impacts on Antarctic heritage values: an update on progress

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Summary

At CEP XXIV New Zealand, Argentina, Norway and the United Kingdom presented WP 26 *Assessing the risk of climate change impacts on Antarctic heritage values*, which proposed a two year work plan to progress the development of a climate change risk assessment tool for Antarctic heritage (to deliver the action on Antarctic heritage sites specified in the Climate Change Response Work Programme (CCRWP)). The Committee expressed full support for the proposed work. This paper provides an update on progress, as well as an updated work plan.

Context

The CCRWP issue ‘*Climate change impacts to the built (human) environment resulting in impacts on natural and heritage values*’ contains the following gap/needs and actions that are directly relevant to Antarctic heritage:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Gap/Need** | * Understanding how the abiotic terrestrial environment will change and how this might impact/ result in impacts on environmental or heritage values; * Understanding what conservation/remedial interventions might be applicable to counteract these impacts. |
| **Action** | * Assess the risk of changes in climate change to HSM/heritage ASPA. |

In order to progress the Action to ‘Assess the risk of changes in climate change to HSM/heritage ASPA’, ATCMXLIV/WP26 proposed the following work plan to work towards the development of a climate change risk assessment tool:

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| --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Steps** |
| Year 1 | * Review existing work * Connect with other relevant experts and work streams * Develop a draft climate change risk assessment tool for Antarctic heritage |
| Year 2 | * Consult and finalise the risk assessment tool |

The Committee expressed full support for the outlined work, and so Members have been making progress during the 2022-2023 intersessional period.

Summary of year 1 progress

Review existing work

A review of relevant previous work and resources has been started, and a summary of the resources identified so far are included at Annex I.

We would welcome further contributions to the database, which will remain an open resource during the development of the climate change risk assessment tool.

Connect with other relevant experts and work streams

At CEP XXIV Australia and SCAR indicated their interest in the work, and will join in contributing to the development of the climate change risk assessment tool.

We continue to welcome any other Members or Observers who would like to contribute to the work.

Develop a draft climate change risk assessment tool for Antarctic heritage

The UK, working closely with the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust, and together with Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, Norway and SCAR will lead the development of the draft climate change risk assessment tool for the consideration of the CEP in 2024. Consulting widely, the UK would welcome contributions from Members who would like to participate in the work.

Updated work plan

Following the work during the 2022-2023 intersessional period, we propose the following updated work plan for the next two years:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Steps** |
| 2023-2024 | * Continue the review of existing work * Develop a draft climate change risk assessment tool for Antarctic heritage, to be presented at CEP in 2024 |
| 2024-2025 | * Consult on, and finalise the climate change risk assessment tool, to be presented to CEP in 2025 |

We continue to encourage Members with an interest to add any additional resources to the database of previous work, and to contribute to the development of the draft climate change risk assessment tool.