General overview regarding

the “XXXII Meeting of Managers of Latin American Antarctic Programs” (RAPAL)

English version provided by the authors

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Information Paper submitted by Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay, Colombia and Venezuela

Summary

The Meeting of Managers of Latin American Antarctic Programs, RAPAL, is the main forum for coordination at the Latin American level on scientific, logistical and environmental issues, as well as for the exchange of points of view and, as appropriate, collaboration at the educational, socio-cultural and communicational levels of relevance in the Antarctic area. This paper presents a general report of the XXXII Meeting of Managers of Latin American Antarctic Programs (XXXII RAPAL) to the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting.

Overall, the 2021 meeting was a positive space thanks to the participation of all its members. In that edition Uruguay was the host country, which was responsible for holding the meeting between September 28 and 30, in virtual format, at which two Recommendations were adopted.

The next meeting will be held in Ecuador, representing in this sense the effort of the Managers of Latin American Antarctic Programs (APALs) to continuously share and exchange their experiences, efforts and knowledge about the Antarctic continent.

Background

RAPAL was the result of different meetings between the directors of the Antarctic Institutes of Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, held in Buenos Aires (1987), Santiago (1988) and Montevideo (1989). In 1990, the operators of the Antarctic Programs of Brazil, Peru and Ecuador joined the group, and over the years Colombia and Venezuela were incorporated as Observer Members.

Each meeting promotes cooperation and mutual support in scientific, technical, logistic and environmental aspects among Latin American countries with Antarctic activities, in order to join and coordinate efforts, optimizing the use of resources, in accordance with the principles and objectives established in the Antarctic Treaty System.

We advanced our collective understanding of Antarctic issues through the work of the Plenary and the two working committees focused on: (a) issues such as infrastructure, international cooperation on logistics and operational actions (Operative and Logistic Affairs Committee CAOL); and (b) issues related to the environmental impact of Antarctic research, scientific cooperation, new scientific projects (Committee on Scientific, Environmental and Technical Affairs, CACAT***).***

RAPAL XXXII, presentations and discussions

The RAPAL Plenary started established the meetings authorities, in this edition they were:

* Chair, Brigadier General (Av), Fernando Colina, President of Uruguayan Antartic Institute;
* Vice chair, Ms. Patricia Ortúzar, Director of National Directorate for Antarctic;
* Moderator, Ms, Ángela Quartarolo, Secretariat Director from Uruguayan Antarctic Institute;
* CAOL: Coordinator Mr. Ernesto Danzov, Logistic Director from Uruguayan Antarctic Institute;
* CACAT: Coordinator Ms. Susana Pecoy, Infrastructure and Technology Director from Uruguayan Antarctic Institute.

RAPAL worked on a broad agenda that covered topics related to the 2020 and 2021 Antarctic campaign, the covid-19 control and management experience, educational, cultural and outreach issues, as well as Antarctic training practices for manning support.

Aspects related to SCAR, COMNAP, ATCM and CPE activities were also exchanged.

In total, more than 70 participants attended (virtually) RAPAL XXXII, each APAL member presented their information, vision and proposals according to the agenda item. 67 documents were presented to the meeting, including 3 working papers that were discussed in the plenary meetings.

This information can be found on the official RAPAL website, where the final reports are available <http://www.rapal.org.ar/INFFIN.HTM> .

***Recommendations***

Within the framework of the exchange, two recommendations were adopted:

**RECOMENDATION XXXII-1:**

1) Accept the RAPAL virtual dissemination activity proposal on December 1st

2021, Anniversary of the signing of the Antarctic Treaty.

2) Urge APALs to publicize the event.

3) Include as a topic on the agenda of the next RAPAL a brief report of the

virtual meeting.

The recommendation is a proposal for a virtual activity for December 1, 2021 on the occasion of commemorating a new Anniversary of the signing of the Antarctic Treaty. It was a successful event for APAL members and their promoters Argentina and Colombia. The ATCM can find more information in the IP Nº034 where the event is detailed.

**RECOMENDATION XXXII-2:**

1) Within the framework of the Latin American Antarctic Communication, Education and Culture Network, considering the different dissertations of the APAL members

and by virtue of the values, ideas and realities inherent in each community,

urges the APALs to generate a first space for joint dialogue, to build

in common agreement, the Education Forum.

2) Encourage coordination towards a first contact in February 2022.

3) Urge APALs to identify a focal point within each of their

programs.

The recommendation is a proposal to generate a space for joint dialogue, which build by common agreement, an “Education Forum”, in order to share, Antarctic education practices among the countries. This forum is already working with representatives from each of the APALs.

In conclusion

RAPAL continues to prove to be a space for exchange and promotion of each Antarctic knowledge areas among the countries of the region. In this sense, each meeting means an opportunity to deepen the work together, and to enhance, throughout its 32 meetings, the work and commitment of the Managers of Latin American Antarctic Programs to the principles of the Antarctic Treaty.