

## **ANTARCTIC TREATY BACKGROUND**

### **TREATY MEETINGS**

Several meetings are held annually. These will gather together member nations of the Antarctic Treaty to discuss matters relating to Antarctica and the environment. Up to 45 nations attend the meetings.

### **ATCM (Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting)**

ATCM is the political decision-making body. It effectively provides the mechanisms for international governance of Antarctica. The meeting the Treaty Parties addressed a number of important issues in 2003 including:

- Establishing a permanent Secretariat for the Antarctic Treaty in Buenos Aires, Argentina;
- Mechanisms to improve regulation of tourism and non-governmental activities in Antarctica;
- Guidelines for shipping in Antarctic waters and;
- A liability regime for environmental damage.

### **CEP (Committee for Environmental Protection)**

The primary role of the CEP is to advise the ATCM on the effectiveness of the implementation of the Environmental Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty and to monitor and report on key environmental matters.

Key New Zealand initiatives for the CEP in 2003 included:

- Promoting (jointly with Australia) a system for regular reporting on the state of the Antarctic environment;
- Tabling new and revised management plans for protected areas in the Ross Sea Region;
- Proposing a new system for environmental zoning in Antarctica as a tool for environmental and area protection;
- Submitting (jointly with the US) a comprehensive management plan for the Dry Valleys region of Antarctica and;
- Circulating a comprehensive environmental impact assessment for the New Zealand-led scientific drilling programme ANDRILL.

In addition the CEP has also addressed:

- The consequences of biological prospecting in Antarctica (the use of biological material for commercial purposes such as pharmaceutical uses);
- Further development of the Antarctic protected areas system and;
- Development of special protection mechanisms for endangered Antarctic species.

## **COMNAP (Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs)**

COMNAP was established in 1988 to bring together those managers of national agencies responsible for the oversight of Antarctic operations supporting science. The Council includes representatives from twenty-nine countries.

The activities of COMNAP are wide and varied. They are addressed through:

- Annual meetings of the representatives;
- Biennial symposia on Antarctic logistics and operations;
- Technical workshops on topics of interest to member agencies;
- Working groups considering particular issues e.g. contingency planning, Antarctic tourism, environmental monitoring, air operations, etc;
- Close cooperation and joint activities with SCAR (Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research).

## **JCADM (Joint Committee on Antarctic Data Management)**

JCADM is a joint committee in that it is funded by SCAR (Scientific Committee for Antarctic Research) and COMNAP (Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programmes).

At their meetings all current National Antarctic Data Centre managers meet and discuss data management issues. In 2003 seven new countries joined the list of JCADM members. Twenty-five countries now represented on JCADM.

The topics for discussion in 2003 were:

- Use of the Antarctic Meta Directory (AMD)
- Reports on the National Antarctic Data Centre activities during the year
- Reports from each of the SCAR Standing Groups
- How the AMD and NADCs link into the Antarctic Treaty System.

## **SCALOP (Standing Committee on Antarctic Logistics and Operations)**

The objectives of SCALOP are:

- To provide COMNAP with technical advice on Antarctic logistics and operations
- To investigate and, where necessary, arrange for research on operational problems identified by COMNAP and its working groups
- To address technical and operational matters of mutual interest to national operators.

Membership of SCALOP is comprised of the director/manager of logistics and operations of each national program.