

Supplementary written evidence from Mike Bentley, Joanne Johnson, Inès Ootosaka, and Ian Willis**EAC inquiry supplementary comments**

Thanks for agreeing to receive a short supplementary note from us collectively. It is just to cover a few points that we felt we weren't quite able to cover fully from the questioning but which relate closely to the aims of the enquiry.

You have our permission to publish.

1. **A UK polar science community.** It is worth noting that the Antarctic and Arctic research communities are often the same people, and often working with similar infrastructure (satellites, models, ships etc). Some of the problems are closely related between the poles (sea ice, ice sheet decline, heat and carbon) but with some different detail. The funding of this community is an investment in securing the scientific information we will need in order to make adaptation decisions (e.g. for sea level) of many 10s of £billions.
2. **Readiness of UK to address international and national priorities.** The conversation here focussed on infrastructure and we felt it important to emphasise a point made earlier that we also need to ensure that for us to be truly ready to address the major research priorities at the poles, and to use the new infrastructure, we need to ensure that we are able to train the next generation of UK polar scientists and engineers. This priority was noted repeatedly in the [UK Antarctic science priorities document](#) produced by the community in 2021. This requires sustained investment in training – particularly important given a degree of hiatus related to COVID, introduction of SDA and reduced access to stations/aircraft due to the AIMP and associated restriction of the [Collaborative Antarctic Science Scheme \(CASS\)](#) - along with ensuring stability and duration of funding in order to ensure talented people make their 'professional home' in polar science. We also need to design a range of opportunities for early career researchers to access field infrastructure where appropriate. This also entails attracting some of the brightest data scientists and engineers who might not conventionally think of themselves as polar (or even environmental) scientists so as to ensure we maximise effective use of the new technologies and datasets becoming available.
3. **Reciprocal funding agreements with other nations.** This was touched on briefly during the discussion, and we noted particularly the importance of expanding the ability to develop multilateral funding arrangements. Allied to this we would very much welcome the expansion of existing bilateral UKRI-NERC agreements from the current set (US, Brazil, Luxembourg, Norway) to a wider range of countries, particularly those collaborative partners of choice in a Polar context, namely Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Sweden and South Korea. Such arrangements promote the international collaboration that underpins much of the excellent world-class science in Antarctica, would allow us to boost further UK leadership, and would give UK researchers access to key expertise to complement UK strengths and to additional logistic assets to undertake Polar research.

Best wishes,

Mike Bentley
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Ian Willis

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