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Dr. Peter D Clarkson
Executive Secretary
SCAR Secretariat
Scott Polar Research Institute
Cambridge CB2 1ER
UNITED KINGDOM

Dear Peter,

It is the conclusion of SALEGOS members that the Group's discussions and deliberations are sufficiently advanced to begin formulation of a series of recommendations for consideration by SCAR. Within the context of the Group's Terms of Reference we will develop a series of recommendations that will place SCAR in a leadership position in development of an international subglacial lake exploration program. SCAR is well-positioned to establish the framework and guiding principles for such a program and build international consensus. On behalf of the members of SALEGOS, I submit our first set of recommendations. I should be grateful if you would circulate these recommendations to the SCAR Executive.

Thank you for assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

John C. Priscu

John C. Priscu
Professor of Ecology and Convener of SCAR SALEGOS

Whereas, SCAR convened a Group of Specialists (SALEGOS) to consider a range of issues related to the exploration of subglacial lakes,

Recognizing, that SALEGOS has conducted several meetings and conferred with experts as needed,

Therefore, in this first set of what will be a series of recommendations, SALEGOS recommends that:

SALEGOS Recommendation 1 - SCAR adopt the guiding principles for subglacial lake exploration as enunciated in the SCAR/COMNAP workshop in Cambridge, UK, 1999:

- the program be internationally coordinated;
- the program be interdisciplinary in scope;
- minimum disturbance and contamination must be fundamental considerations in program design and execution;
- the ultimate goal should be lake entry and sample return; and
- the ultimate target for study must be large lakes such as Lake Vostok.

SALEGOS Recommendation 2 - SCAR adopt the goals for subglacial lake exploration as enunciated in the SCAR/COMNAP workshop in Cambridge, UK 1999:

- determine the form, distribution, and activity of life in the lake water, the sediments below, and the ice above;
- recover climatic information contained in ice overlying the lake and in sediments underlying the lakes; and
- understand the origins of subglacial lakes and their impact on the evolution of life under the ice.

SALEGOS Recommendation 3 – SCAR coordinate and consult with COMNAP in providing guidance on the technological needs and requirements for safe and clean lake entry and sample retrieval.

SALEGOS Recommendation 4 - SCAR coordinate and consult with COMNAP in considering ways to promote the use of shared logistics to implement a subglacial lake exploration program, and to establish an effective management structure and cost-sharing mechanism.

SALEGOS Recommendation 5 – SCAR encourage National Antarctic Committees in countries with an interest in subglacial lake exploration to form an International Science Steering Committee (ISSC) to promote and organize an international subglacial exploration program.

SALEGOS Recommendation 6 – SCAR encourage National Antarctic Committees in countries with an interest in subglacial lake exploration to form National Science Steering Committees (NSSC) to promote and organize subglacial lake exploration interests within their countries.

SALEGOS Recommendation 7 – SCAR explore a partnership with COSPAR (ICSU) to share expertise and experiences in addressing environmental issues related to “forward’ and “backward” contamination during subglacial lake exploration.

SALEGOS Recommendation 8 – SCAR encourage parties interested in subglacial lake exploration to consult with and engage independent and objective scientific bodies to provide guidance on contamination issues in a way analogous to the Space Studies Board and COSPAR.

SALEGOS Recommendation 9 – SCAR explore ways to promote subglacial lake exploration including funding of targeted workshops, news releases, articles, symposia, and planning activities to address key issues.