



EISCAT Scientific Association

Short Report from the 101st meeting of the Council Hybrid Meeting on November 8-9, 2023, Qingdao Huanghai Hotel, China, and Video

Participants:

Council:

Chairperson: Prof. Jörg Gumbel
Finland: Dr. Kati Sulonen (Delegate), Prof. Pekka Verronen, Prof. Anita Aikio
Japan: Prof. Hiroshi Miyaoka (Delegate), Prof. Satonori Nozawa
Norway: Dr. Pål Sørgaard (Delegate), Prof. Patrick Espy, Prof. Ingrid Mann
P. R. of China: Prof. Jian Wu (Delegate), Dr. Zonghua Ding
Sweden: Dr. Maria Thuveson (Delegate), Dr. Olle Norberg, Dr. Tomas Andersson
UK: Prof. Mervyn Freeman, (Delegate), Prof. Ian McCrea

By Invitation:

SAC: Dr. Thomas Ulich (SAC Chairperson)
AFC: Ruth Chaplin (AFC Chairperson)

EISCAT Headquarters:

Dr. Axel Steuwer (Director), Mr. Henrik Andersson (Head of Administration),
Mr. Johan Svensson (Council meeting secretary)

Absent:

-

Time:

Hybrid Session 1: Wednesday 8 Nov. 13:00-20:00 Qingdao time (5:00-12:00 GMT)
Restricted session: Thursday 9 Nov. 13:00-14:00 Qingdao time (5:00-6:00 GMT)
Hybrid Session 2: Thursday 9 Nov. 14:00-18:00 Qingdao time (6:00-10:00 GMT)

Location:

Qingdao Huanghai Hotel and online



Chairperson Prof. Jörg Gumbel opened the meeting by verifying that all delegations are properly represented.

1 Adoption of the agenda

The proposed agenda was accepted.

2 Approval of the minutes of the 100th meetings

- 2.1 Council approved the minutes from the 100th meeting, with the closing of the actions 95 - 12.3 and 95 - 12.4.

3 Matters arising from the 100th meeting

- 3.1 Matters arising from the 100th meeting that need a follow-up.

95 - 7.3 Council noted and welcomed the confirmation by the Director/EISCAT that the software development team will develop an algorithm to ensure compliance with articles 2a (non-military purposes), e (white-listed objects), and f (host-country inspection rights) of the EISCAT Agreement. 96: Not ready yet. 97: Not ready yet. 98: BlueBook items 2a and 2f will be taken care of the newly established working group. Software development for 2e (white-listed objects) needs to be followed up. 99: Council needs to follow the work of the software development team, in specific regarding article 2e (white-listed objects). 100: Work in progress. 101: Suspended. Subsequent following up on the software development will be part of the Director's report.

99 - 7.1 Council recognizes that key performance indicators (KPIs) are important for monitoring the performance of the facility and for maintaining the landmark status of EISCAT_3D, which will be evaluated in 2025 by ESFRI. Therefore, Council asks the SAC to elaborate the KPIs further. 100: Work in progress. 101: Work in progress.

99 extra - 6.4 The Association will establish a security organization within the Association and perform other activities that can prepare for the future company to become operational as soon as possible 100: Work in progress. 101: Suspended. A security organization has been established and future updates will be part of the Director's report.

4 Report from the Director

The Director's report was focused on

- organization status
- outreach and communications
- support of projects and proposals
- sites status
- security measures
- planning of EISCAT_3D test and commissioning



- 4.1 Council notes the report from the Director, including an updated report about security measures.

5 Report of EISCAT_3D status

The Director presented the EISCAT_3D status with focus on site preparation status and the planning of testing and commissioning. Monostatic First Light measurements are expected to be carried out during the first half of 2024.

- 5.1 Council notes the report about the EISCAT_3D status.

6 Report from the Administrative and Finance Committee

The AFC chair presented the AFC report. Particular focus was on

- the financial situation
- personnel needs related to operation and system development
- commercial affiliates
- plans for 50-year anniversary and EISCAT_3D inauguration

- 6.1 Council notes the report from the AFC.

7 Report from the Scientific Advisory Committee

The SAC chair reports from the 84th SAC meeting. Particular focus was on

- upcoming meetings, including the 21st EISCAT Symposium, Radar School and EISCAT_3D User Meetings
- All Associate Time (AA, 100 h in 2024) and Peer-Review Programme (PRP, 200 h in 2024)
- Key Performance Indicators

- 7.1 Council notes the report from the SAC.
- 7.2 Council appoints Lasse Clausen (NO) as new SAC chairperson, and Stephan Buchert (SE) as new SAC vice chair. This is effective immediately.
- 7.3 Council approves the list of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) suggested by SAC as a basis for evaluating the performance of EISCAT in coming years. Council asks SAC to evaluate these KPIs for current EISCAT operations and to suggest preliminary KPI targets for future EISCAT operations.
- 7.4 Council welcomes plans to continue the Annual European Meetings on Atmospheric Studies by Optical Methods (“Optical Meetings”) as an annual series of meetings. Council supports the idea



of organizing Optical Meetings in conjunction with EISCAT Symposia in years when EISCAT Symposia are held.

8 Report from the Working Group on the Future Relationships (WGFR)

The ongoing changes in organizational structure will affect relationships between the future EISCAT Company, funders, and researchers. The new arrangements need to work well and the EISCAT company needs to be attractive to existing and new investors. Recognizing this, Council tasked the Working Group on Future Relationships (WGFR) to identify factors that are important for future relationships and to suggest how these factors might be considered during the transition to a new company. The WGFR presented a report that summarizes the group's discussions, including a number of recommendations.

- 8.1 Council notes the report from the Working Group on Future Relationships (WGFR). Council thanks the WGFR for a thorough work that provides valuable guidance to the ongoing process of forming an EISCAT company in Sweden, Finland and Norway.
- 8.2 Council emphasizes the need for continued research and development (R&D) within EISCAT and in collaboration between EISCAT and the user community. Council expresses a concern that this R&D might become more difficult in the new security organization. Council emphasizes the need to take into account these R&D aspects in the process of forming an EISCAT company. As one way of enhancing collaboration with the user community, Council supports ideas to establish a research programme in collaboration between EISCAT, universities and other research institutes.
- 8.3 Council specifies the future mandate of the WGFR: (1) Monitor the ongoing process of forming an EISCAT company. (2) Provide input on the role of R&D in the future EISCAT organization. (3) Be available for discussions on the future relationships between researchers, funders and the EISCAT company with relevant authorities in Sweden, Finland and Norway, as well as the EISCAT company once it has been formed. Council asks Mervyn Freeman as the chairperson of WGFR to lead this communication process.

9 Status updates from Finland, Norway, and Sweden on the transition to a new organisational structure

At the 99th extraordinary Council meeting in March 2023, EISCAT Council committed to transfer all of the Association's assets, operations and commitments to a Swedish limited liability company owned by the Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish states. In June 2023, the Swedish Government commissioned the Swedish Research Council (VR) to prepare for the formation of a Swedish limited liability company owned by the Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish states and for the company to take over the operations from EISCAT.

At the Council meeting, updates were presented on the ongoing processes in Sweden, Finland and Norway.



- 9.1 Council notes the updates from Sweden, Finland and Norway concerning the transition to a new organizational structure.

10 EISCAT_3D construction project financial situation

Headquarters presented the EISCAT_3D financial situation.

- 10.1 Council notes the financial situation of the EISCAT_3D construction project. Council accepts the plan of EISCAT Headquarters to tap into current reserves (except reserves for decommissioning) to finalize the ongoing construction of EISCAT_3D. Council encourages Headquarters to seek supplementary funding, and Council encourages the funding agencies to consider requests for funding favorably.

11 Financial development 2023

The income will be less than budgeted. To compensate, the total transfer of funds from regular EISCAT to the EISCAT_3D construction project is reduced. Important factors contributing to a deficit are urgent repairs on Svalbard, required security investments and a declining exchange rate of the Swedish crown.

- 11.1 Council notes the financial situation in 2023.

12 Budget 2024

The budget for 2024 assumes that the EISCAT_3D construction project continues over 2024 on its own budget. Increased costs will be covered by own operating reserves. The planned change of the legal structure is not considered the budget of 2024.

Related to the question of staff financing, Council acknowledged that it is important for EISCAT staff to engage in scientific activities and scientific collaborations. It was suggested that the Working Group on Future Relationships discusses the role of scientific activities for the new EISCAT Company.

- 12.1 Council notes the budget for 2024.
- 12.2 Council points out that national rules concerning the funding of research infrastructures need to be obeyed if positions are to be supported through infrastructure funding.

13 EISCAT 50-year anniversary and EISCAT_3D inauguration

EISCAT Headquarters presented the idea of arranging a combined event in 2025 for the EISCAT 50-year anniversary and the inauguration of EISCAT_3D, as well as the transfer to the EISCAT company. A more detailed plan will be prepared for the 102nd Council meeting.



- 13.1 Council encourages the plan of EISCAT Headquarters to organize an event in 2025 combining the 50-year anniversary of EISCAT, the inauguration of EISCAT_3D, and the transfer to the new company. Council recognizes a need for extra funding for this event.

14 Commercial Affiliates and Associates

- 14.1 Council supports the idea of a commercial company becoming a time buyer or affiliate, in accordance with the Bluebook.

15 Restricted Session

The restricted session was held on November 9 from 13:00 until 14:00.

- 15.1 From the restricted session: Council asks VR and EISCAT Headquarters to jointly prepare a document providing information to the user community about the EISCAT_3D progress and the transition to the new organization, including information about the current status, the way forward and a timeline.
- 15.2 From the restricted session: Council intends to award the last Beynon medal in recognition of exceptional individual contributions to EISCAT. Council asks for suggestions (including motivation) concerning nominees in good time before the next Council meeting.

16 Any other business

- 16.1 Council wishes to express its appreciation of the hard work and excellent progress in the construction of EISCAT_3D by EISCAT.

17 Next meeting

- 17.1 The 102nd Council meeting will be hosted as an in-person meeting by Japan on June 4-5, 2024, at NIPR.
- 17.2 Headquarters will liaise with the Council chair concerning the need of an extra Council meeting in connection with First Light activities.
- 17.3 The 103rd Council meeting will be hosted by Sweden.