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Prof. Larry Hinzman
President
International Arctic Science Committee (IASC)
Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research
University of Alaska Fairbanks
212 West Ridge Research Building
P.O. Box 757270
Fairbanks, AK 99775-7270

Dear Prof. Hinzman:

We are writing to inform you about activities of the Working Group on the Arctic Acoustic Environment of the International Quiet Ocean Experiment (IQOE). IQOE is an international research project designed to document the levels of sound in the ocean worldwide and any changes in sound in the ocean, as well as impacts of ocean sound on marine organisms (see <https://www.iqoe.org/>). IQOE developed a working group focused on the Arctic in recognition that the acoustic environment in the Arctic is still relatively unaffected by human activities, compared with many other parts of the world, yet the Arctic environment is changing quickly due to climate change; the acoustic environment is likely to be affected by increasing human activities made possible by decreases in ice thickness and cover.

The IQOE Working Group on the Arctic Acoustic Environment includes 10 members from countries involved in acoustic research and observations in the Arctic (see <https://www.iqoe.org/groups/arctic>). The terms of reference of the group are listed on the group's Webpage. To summarize, the initial focus of the IQOE working group is to attempt to compile historical passive acoustic data from the Arctic and identify existing and planned observing systems that will collect passive acoustic data. The working group will be assisted in its tasks by soon-to-be-hired acoustic data specialists at the Alfred Wegener Institute in Germany. The IQOE WG is also supported by activities of the Integrated Arctic Observation System (INTAROS) coordinated by the Nansen Environmental and Remote Sensing in Norway. INTAROS is working with Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (SAON) to formulate a roadmap for Arctic observing. It is important to get the new Ocean Sound Essential Ocean Variable included in the roadmap for Arctic observing.

Therefore, we would like to explore potential cooperation between the Working Group on the Arctic Acoustic Environment and IASC and/or its subgroups. For example, we could contact and perhaps brief the IASC Marine Working Group, and the Arctic Data Committee under SAON. If you think it would be worthwhile, we could plan a conference call to provide additional background and explore potential cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "P. Blondel".

Philippe Blondel
Co-chair, Working Group on the Arctic Acoustic Environment

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read "Hanne Sagen".

Hanne Sagen
Co-chair, Working Group on the Arctic Acoustic Environment

cc: Edward R. Urban, Jr.
IQOE Project Director