

**The Monaco Assessment
Media Brief**

(Voir ci-dessous pour la version française)

On 10th June, HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco closed a historic meeting of biodiversity and Antarctic experts, convened for three days in the Principality.

The central purpose of the meeting was to examine the extent to which conservation of the biodiversity of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean is realizing a set of ambitions agreed for the world as part of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. This plan was previously approved by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. The meeting also aimed to provide guidance for action that can effectively help deliver further conservation successes for Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. An additional goal was to identify key areas for work and indicators to help guide that work.

In providing HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco, members of the Monaco government, and other dignitaries with a synopsis of the outcome of the meeting, Professor Steven Chown of Monash University, co-organizer of the meeting, said: *'the initial expert assessment indicates a biodiversity outlook for Antarctica and the Southern Ocean which is no better than that for the rest of the globe.'*

While such an outlook is disappointing for a region so remote, apparently pristine, and theoretically well-protected, the prospects for effective action over the next five years to improve the situation dramatically are exceptional. Under the broader Antarctic Treaty System an excellent set of governance arrangements exist that could give swift effect to improvements.

HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco emphasized in his concluding speech that *'...activity in the Antarctic region has increased substantially. This growth includes not only fishing and tourism, but also some scientific activities.'* Thus, an assessment of progress against the global goals and targets is timely and much-needed.

In concluding, HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco noted *'I am convinced that common action from all countries and parties, can improve the situation for the better.'* *'I can assure you that my Government and my Foundation will make every effort possible to ensure that science continues to prevail in this land with international cooperation.'*

The outcomes and products of *Antarctica and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020: The Monaco Assessment* will be made available over the next several months. These outcomes will be conveyed to, among others, the Antarctic Treaty Parties, the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the broader public. Moreover, they will form the basis of a plan for further improving conservation in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.



Photo credit: Eric Mahon / Palais Princier

Notes

The meeting was co-organized by the Government of the Principality of Monaco; The Centre Scientifique de Monaco; the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research; and Monash University.

The experts produced a formal *The Monaco Assessment Declaration* which is appended to this brief.

Further information

English-language media

Steven Chown, Monash University (+61 499 780 433), steven.chown@monash.edu

Melodie McGeoch, Monash University (+61 499 954 180), melodie.mcgeoch@monash.edu

French-language media

Céline Le Bohec, CNRS-Strasbourg University, France (+33 3 88 10 69 11) & Centre Scientifique de Monaco (+377 97 77 44 56), celine.lebohec@iphc.cnrs.fr

Céline Van Klaveren-Impagliazzo, Government of Monaco, (+377 98 98 44 70),

cevanklaveren@gouv.mc

Spanish-language media

Professor Jerónimo López-Martínez, Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (+34 654 085 425)

jeronimo.lopez@uam.es

The Monaco Assessment

Antarctica and the Southern Ocean are home to a rich and unique biodiversity. They remain the only region where humans are not known to have caused the extinction of any species, and are virtually untouched by biological invasions.

The need to protect and conserve the region's biodiversity is broadly recognized, notably through the 1991 Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty. The Protocol sets aside Antarctica as a Natural Reserve, devoted to Peace and Science.

Over the past several decades, however, human activity, such as fishing, tourism and science, in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean has been increasing substantially. In the face of such an increase in activity, along with regionally significant, major global impacts, such as climate change, it is imperative to establish the outlook for biodiversity in the Antarctic.

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, its five strategic goals, and 20 Aichi Targets provide a universally accepted set of biodiversity conservation ambitions which can inform such an outlook, and by which progress in conserving the Antarctic's biodiversity can be measured globally.

The Monaco Assessment brought us together as a group of biodiversity and Antarctic experts, with the support of the government of Monaco and several partners, to assess the outlook for the region's biodiversity and its conservation.

Overall, the biodiversity outlook for Antarctica and the Southern Ocean appears to be no better than that for the rest of the globe.

Mainstreaming biodiversity across science and society will require significantly greater efforts for the region, especially to reduce incentives harmful to biodiversity and to incorporate Antarctic biodiversity values better into both national and regional planning and reporting.

Although the outlook for minimising the impacts of invasive alien species and pollution are much better for the region than globally, other direct pressures on biodiversity remain significant and in need of further attention. Ensuring sustainable use of marine stocks and addressing habitat degradation are falling short of global objectives. The knowledge base for understanding the effects of multiple drivers of biodiversity loss, including ocean acidification, is inadequate.

Safeguards for ecosystems, species and genetic diversity also require greater effort. Protected area extent, coverage of important sites for biodiversity, representation of regionally differentiated ecosystems, and effective management are substantially lagging behind global progress. Remarkably, extinction risk assessments have not been undertaken for species in most groups, and knowledge of genetic diversity remains sparse.

Although much biodiversity knowledge is being shared, participatory planning and reporting across the region remains fragmented and under-resourced. No Antarctic Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan exists that would provide an effective guide for prioritising activities and investment.

Despite this disappointing outlook for a region so remote, apparently pristine, and theoretically well-protected, the prospects for effective action over the next five years to improve the outlook dramatically are exceptional.

The Antarctic and Southern Ocean are governed under a set of well-established arrangements which lend themselves to swift and effective action. The Protocol on Environmental Protection has been ratified by 37 Antarctic Treaty Parties, a significant appetite exists for improving conservation measures and actions, and there is much support from governments, the tourist industry and the public for conservation in the region.

A Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, adopted and implemented by the Antarctic Treaty Parties, and broadly accepted by all, would provide an effective means to improve the outlook for the region. Much potential exists also for improving the protected area network in both terrestrial and marine systems, and for assessing the extinction risk of the region's species.

These actions, along with those required to achieve a set of Antarctic Biodiversity Targets, in keeping with the ambitions of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, will ensure that the biodiversity of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean is conserved for the benefit of all humankind.

Appendix of Participants

The Monaco Assessment represents the view of the individuals who participated in the meeting and does not necessarily represent the views of the organizations with which they are affiliated. The Assessment was supported by the Government of Monaco, the Centre Scientifique de Monaco, the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research, and Monash University.

Steven L. Chown, Monash University, Australia

Melodie A. McGeoch, Monash University, Australia

Céline Le Bohec, CNRS-Strasbourg University, France & Centre Scientifique de Monaco, Monaco

Céline Van Klaveren-Impagliazzo, Government of the Principality of Monaco

Aleks Terauds, Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research, Cambridge, U.K.

Jason D. Whittington, Centre Scientifique de Monaco, Monaco

Cassandra Brooks, Stanford University, U.S.A.

Stuart Butchart, BirdLife International

Bernard W.T. Coetzee, Monash University, Australia

Ben Collen, University College London, U.K.

Peter Convey, British Antarctic Survey, U.K.

Kevin J. Gaston, University of Exeter, U.K.

Neil Gilbert, Environmental Consultant, Antarctica New Zealand

Mike Gill, Group on Earth Observations, Biodiversity Observation Network

Robert Höft, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Sam Johnston, United Nations University, Japan

Mahlon C. Kennicutt II, Emeritus Professor, Texas A & M University, U.S.A.

Hannah J. Kriesell, Centre Scientifique de Monaco, Monaco & Strasbourg University, France

Yvon Le Maho, CNRS-Strasbourg University, France

Jerónimo López-Martínez, Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research, Cambridge, U.K.

Heather Lynch, Stony Brook University, U.S.A.

Deng Palomares, Sea Around Us, University of British Columbia, Canada

Roser Puig-Marcó, University of Barcelona, Spain

Peter Stoett, Concordia University, Canada

L'Évaluation de Monaco

Communiqué de presse

Le 10 juin, SAS le Prince Albert II de Monaco a conclu une réunion historique en Principauté à laquelle ont participé pendant trois jours des experts de la biodiversité et de l'Antarctique.

Cette réunion avait pour principal objectif d'examiner dans quelle mesure la conservation de la biodiversité en Antarctique et dans l'Océan Austral répond à la série d'ambitions adoptée pour la planète dans le cadre du Plan stratégique pour la biodiversité 2011-2020. Ce plan avait été approuvé au préalable par les Parties à la Convention sur la Diversité Biologique. La réunion avait également pour but d'apporter une orientation sur les actions qui pourraient effectivement favoriser d'autres succès en matière de conservation en Antarctique et dans l'Océan Austral. L'identification des domaines clés et des indicateurs qui serviront de guide à ce travail constituait un objectif supplémentaire.

Lors de la présentation des résultats de la réunion à SAS le Prince Albert II de Monaco, aux membres du Gouvernement Princier et à d'autres personnalités de Monaco, le professeur Steven Chown de l'Université Monash, co-organisateur, a déclaré que « *l'évaluation initiale des experts montre que les prévisions en matière de préservation de la biodiversité ne sont pas meilleures en Antarctique et dans l'Océan Austral que dans le reste du globe.* »

Bien que cette prévision soit décevante pour une région aussi reculée, apparemment intacte, et théoriquement bien protégée, les chances d'agir efficacement d'ici cinq ans pour améliorer sensiblement la situation sont exceptionnellement favorables. Sous l'égide plus large du Traité sur l'Antarctique, des systèmes de gouvernance existent qui permettraient d'obtenir des améliorations rapidement perceptibles.

SAS Le Prince Albert II de Monaco a souligné dans son discours de clôture que « *...l'activité dans la région de l'Antarctique s'est considérablement accrue. Cette évolution comprend non seulement les activités de pêche et le tourisme, mais également les activités scientifiques.* » Ainsi, l'évaluation des progrès réalisés au regard des buts et objectifs globaux arrive à point nommé et s'avère fort nécessaire.

En conclusion, SAS Le Prince Albert II de Monaco a fait remarquer : « *Je suis convaincu qu'une action commune venant de tous les pays et de toutes les Parties ne peut que conduire à une amélioration de la situation.* » « *Je peux vous garantir que mon Gouvernement et ma Fondation feront tous les efforts possibles pour faire en sorte que la science continue à prévaloir sur ce territoire grâce à la coopération internationale.* »

Les résultats et produits de « *L'Antarctique et le Plan stratégique pour la diversité biologique 2011-2020 : l'Évaluation de Monaco* » seront disponibles dans les prochains mois. Ces résultats seront communiqués, entre autres, aux Parties du Traité sur l'Antarctique, aux Parties de la Convention sur la Diversité Biologique et au grand public. Par ailleurs, ils formeront le socle d'une stratégie visant à poursuivre l'amélioration de la conservation en Antarctique et dans l'Océan Austral.

Remarques

La réunion a été organisée conjointement par le Gouvernement Princier, le Centre Scientifique de Monaco, le Comité Scientifique pour la Recherche (en) Antarctique et la Monash University.

Les experts ont rédigé un document officiel, intitulé *Déclaration de l'Évaluation de Monaco*, qui est joint à ce communiqué.

Pour plus d'information

English-language media

Steven Chown, Monash University (+61 499 780 433), steven.chown@monash.edu

Melodie McGeoch, Monash University (+61 499 954 180), melodie.mcgeoch@monash.edu

French-language media

Céline Le Bohec, CNRS-Strasbourg University, France (+33 3 88 10 69 11) & Centre Scientifique de Monaco (+377 97 77 44 56), celine.lebohec@iphc.cnrs.fr

Céline Van Klaveren-Impagliazzo, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Government of Monaco, (+377 98 98 44 70), cevanklaveren@gouv.mc

Spanish-language media

Professor Jerónimo López-Martínez, Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (+34 654 085 425) jeronimo.lopez@uam.es
