Turkish Polar Science Workshops

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Information Paper submitted by Turkey

Summary

This paper presents information on the annual National Polar Science Workshops in Turkey carried out since 2017.

Background

The understanding of polar regions and their relationship with climate change has grown in Turkey, especially in the past decade, as reflected by the increase in the number of polar research publications. This also brought a common need for the Turkish polar science community to showcase the studies and extend networking and collaboration.

Within the scope of the National Polar Science Program of Turkey, the National Polar Sciences Workshops have been taken into place to create a platform to exchange information on conducted projects, to evaluate the result of the scientific expeditions, and to discuss the advances in polar research. The fifth annual National Polar Sciences Workshops was organized in 2021.

2017-2021 Activities

The very first National Polar Sciences Workshop has been organized on 12-13 April 2017 at Istanbul Technical University in Istanbul with 250 participants across Turkey. Organizing the first workshop increased the awareness of the polar research in Turkey and encouraged both early career researchers to pursue their studies in polar regions and also helped senior scientists to engage with a wider community. The National Polar Science Program of Turkey was created within the workshop with more than 100 stakeholders from 44 national institutions.

Since 2017, the National Polar Sciences workshops were held annually. In the first three workshops, the coordination was carried out by Istanbul Technical University (ITU) Polar Research Center (PolRec), while the 4th and 5th workshops were conducted by The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK) Marmara Research Center (MAM), Polar Research Institute (PRI). The fourth workshop was organized on an online platform due to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, which hosted over 800 participants.

The 5th National Polar Science Workshop was held on 30 November 2021. The event was organized at Gebze Technical University which hosted over 500 participants. More than 100 abstracts were submitted from approximately 80 institutions across Turkey. Along with the opening speeches of H.E. Mustafa Varank (the Minister of Industry and Technology) and Prof. Hasan Mandal (the President of TUBITAK), Dr. Josabel Belliure (University of Alcalá, Spain), Dr. Yeadong Kim (the President of SCAR), Dr Antonio Quesada (the Chair of COMNAP), Dr. Jakob Granit (CCAMLR chair) and Prof. Paul Arthur Berkman (Chair of Fulbright Arctic) contributed to the workshop with their valuable speeches in the special sessions. The sessions were also broadcasted online and viewed by more than 2000 people.

Conclusion

The National Polar Science Workshops play a significant role in not only creating a deeper insight between polar regions and climate change but also improving the capacity to work in those disciplines. The workshops are planned to be annually organized by TUBITAK MAM Polar Research Institute. It is observed that the impact and efficiency of these workshops grow as the number of participants increases each year. In this way, the growth of the polar research community is supported and the interest in the polar research is kept alive.