

**Category**

OC Outreach and Communications

**Session Number**

OC-2

**Session Title**

Polar Research and Citizen Science: Exploring New Platforms and Opportunities

**Session Description**

Citizen science (engaging volunteer participants in activities like community-based monitoring and field data collection) has proved to be an indispensable means of combining scientific research with education and public outreach. Citizen science can “push the envelope” of what scientists can achieve with limited funding, personnel, and access, provides a powerful tool for increasing scientific literacy and active citizenship, and is a mechanism for meeting specific conservation objectives. This session aims to bring together entities that have been or are currently engaged in citizen science programs in the Polar Regions, those who may have an idea for starting such a program, and those who represent possible groups of citizen science leaders or participants (e.g., educators, polar tour operators, directors of non-profit membership organizations). The session will start with short presentations about past and existing programs targeting polar citizen science, or that could be adapted to this theme. Afterwards, session leaders will convene breakout groups organized by program platform to share ideas, methods, challenges, and potential collaborations. Session leaders particularly wish to include participants representing community-based monitoring programs begun during IPY 2007-2008 and IAATO/AECO member tour operators who are currently involved with citizen science efforts, to foster a better understanding of the success and challenges these programs have experienced.

**Keywords:** polar, citizen science, IPY, tourism, research, conservation, education, cross-disciplinary

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