

Abisko Accord

(25 September 2000)

Further to discussion at the 10th ITEX meeting in Abisko, Swedish Lapland, between 2-25 September 2000, the meeting participants hereby reaffirm our commitment to the continuation and further development of the International Tundra Experiment (ITEX).

We agree that:

- The original ITEX Resolution drafted at the Kellogg Biological Station, Michigan State University, USA, on 4 December 1990 remains valid.
- This Accord therefore supplements and extends (but does not replace) the 1990 Resolution.
- ITEX is a working, viable, and dynamic international program.
- We will regularly re-evaluate the methods and goals of ITEX relative to current research developments and, where necessary, respond by modifying our activities accordingly.
- The scope of ITEX includes the tundra biome in general; it is not, therefore, restricted to arctic tundra but rightfully incorporates alpine and Antarctic tundras (inter alia the connection between ITEX and Regional sensitivity to Climate Change in Antarctic Terrestrial and Limnetic Ecosystems (RiSCC)).
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Key facets of ITEX after ten years include:

- the successful development and maintenance of an international network of research sites in the tundra biome;
- the continued use of common experiments and protocols to improve understanding of global change impacts upon biological processes in tundra ecosystems;
- the training and international exchange of young researchers (graduate and undergraduate);
- a continued focus upon biological responses to environment at the level of the species and the functional group;
- increasing emphasis upon population and community dynamics and medium- to longer-term system responses to change;
- increasing emphasis upon meta-analytical techniques, development of databases, and ecological modelling, and

- initiation of advisory activities in relation to international monitoring networks and scientific agencies (such as Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) of the Arctic Council and the Newsletter of the Global Change in Terrestrial Ecosystems Core Project of IGBP (International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme)).
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We are committed to:

- retaining a flexible approach that allows for development of new research initiatives, but with a core of manipulation and monitoring activities at individual sites;
- exploring the relationship between species-specific responses to environmental change, and how these are modulated by community and site characteristics, and feedbacks on further change;
- evaluating ITEX investigations within the context of broader spatial scales, longer temporal scales, and higher trophic levels;
- exploring pragmatic approaches to long-term monitoring and measurement, designed to quantify and distinguish between (i) inter-annual variability in system state, and (ii) longer-term directional changes;
- development and implementation of an appropriate protocol for the exchange of ITEX data among participants and the broader community;
- development of thematic groups focused upon specific aspects of climate change impacts;
- development of procedures for sample collection, sharing and/or common analysis;
- regular meetings (yearly or biennial) with specific themes and progress reports;
- dissemination of data and research results to the broader community;
- development of a strong and active Steering Committee that will provide leadership and continuity and that will conduct business according to a set of by-laws.