COMMUN X

GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE

ANTARCTIC TREATY SYSTEM

Background Guide

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Letter from the Chair

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to COMMUN XI! My name is Caro Taylor, and it is an absolute honor to be your chair for this year's General Assembly Committee on the Antarctic Treaty System. I am a junior, and I am an active member of the Commonwealth's Model UN and Model Congress, with this being my first year writing for COMMUN.

Over the course of this conference, it will be each delegate's job to represent diverse, sometimes conflicting viewpoints, debate complex ideas and pass legislation to address the global climate situation. I hope you will gain a greater understanding of how the Antarctic Territory is governed by exploring how the major powers of the world balance their competing interests with a desire to ensure a preserved Antarctica. I also hope this experience helps you gain a deeper understanding of the delicate diplomacy that is necessary when discussing any topic that implicates the entire world. I look forward to seeing you refine your writing, communication, research, and public speaking skills throughout the conference.

I want to ensure that every delegate understands the role they are assigned in order for conference debate to run smoothly and effectively and for every delegate to get the most out of this conference. For this reason, **we will be requiring all delegates to write a position paper for their role** in order to be eligible for awards. For examples of previous position papers and other resources to aid your research, please visit COMMUN's Resources Page.

Lastly, I can't wait to meet all of you and read more about your positions! If you have any questions, or if you want help getting started with your research, please feel free to email me!

Sincerely,

Caro Taylor,

Chair, The Antarctic Treaty System

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History

For most of human existence on Earth, Antarctica has been an untouchable, uninhabitable stronghold. Antarctica's freezing temperatures are just the tip of the iceberg. Extreme winds, turbulent storms, and geographical isolation drive away everything but the hardiest of life forms. The inhospitable continent is 5.5 million square miles of cold, dry, desert. The life that does manage to survive in Antarctica includes whales, seals, emperor penguins, and many, many krill. Plants are extremely scarce, not only due to the temperature, but also because the South Pole is in 24-hour darkness for most of the year. The state of Antarctica is instrumental to the stability of Earth's climate, oceans, and weather. The unique environment is not accustomed to human involvement, but for most of its existence, that has not been a problem.

Only in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have humans developed the technology to traverse Antarctica at all. As human knowledge expands, more and more scientific outposts have been created in Antarctica. But Antarctica has no human population to be governed by.[1] Instead, Antarctica is governed by the **Antarctic Treaty System (ATS)**, primarily made up of the Antarctic Treaty and the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty (Environmental Protocol).

The Antarctic Treaty was created in 1957-58 during the International Geophysical Year (IGY), a time for scientific collaboration across the world. Scientists around the world thought that Antarctica had a wealth of potential for scientific development. However, it was unclear

[1] Unless the penguins are feeling particularly talkative.

what rules they should operate by. Different countries made overlapping claims for slices of Antarctic land, creating tensions and even violent conflicts.[2] To prevent conflict and prioritize science, the Antarctic Treaty was created to govern the international use of Antarctica. The treaty was created by twelve countries (seven of which claimed Antarctic territory) active in Antarctica during the IGY. Its provisions were based on the belief that "it is in the interest of all mankind that Antarctica shall continue for ever to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and shall not become the scene or object of international discord," according to the preamble. The Antarctic Treaty, which covered all of the area south of latitude 60°, outlined the continent as a purely scientific preserve, establishing freedom of scientific exploration and cooperation. It prohibited military activity in its very first article: "Antarctica shall be used for peaceful purposes only." The treaty also protected the territorial status quo: no countries could make new claims on territorial sovereignty, and the current ones could not be developed. The overlapping claims that already existed were effectively frozen in place: not resolved, but also not to be acted on. This suspended territorial claims (such as the overlapping claims of Argentina, Chile, and the UK) for the duration of the treaty. As a result, most Antarctic territorial claims are not widely recognized by the international community.

Although the treaty was created by only 12 countries, members of the United Nations could join the treaty and become consultative parties by initiating major scientific investments such as research bases. In 1991, 33 countries took part in renegotiations when the second major part of the ATS, the Protocol on Environmental Protection, entered into force. The Protocol worked to protect the Antarctic environment from disruptive human affairs; specifically, it prohibited mining and oil exploration for the next 50 years. Around the same time came the

[2] For example, conflicting territorial claims by Argentina and the UK led to a brief military conflict in 1952 at Hope Bay.

Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (the CAMLR), which regulated human activities with regards to the environment, wildlife, and climate change.

By 2025, six additional Annexes had been added to the treaty, covering topics such as waste management, pollution, and environmental emergencies. In addition, the number of ATS signatories had expanded to 58 states. Starting from the year 2048, any consultative party of the treaty can request the revision of the treaty system.[3]

Antarctic Science

Of all human activities in Antarctica, research is the most consistent. Antarctica is home to a wide range of explorations of the natural sciences. Researchers study everything from earth sciences like geology, meteorology, the impact of climate change, and the natural history told through the layers of ice; to biological foci like wildlife, microorganisms, and effects of humans in Antarctica. Another important area of research is the Southern ocean and sea ice.

Antarctic research is expensive and sometimes extraneous, but it is a worthwhile investment for many countries both scientifically and geopolitically. To become a consultative member of the ATS, a country must make a major scientific investment in Antarctica, such as building a base. Countries establish bases, whether year-round, seasonal, or temporary, to be used for a wealth of purposes, but especially as research stations. Furthermore, because the ATS ensures international scientific cooperation and emphasizes transparency between countries,

[3] For the purposes of this conference, the entire ATS will become malleable to allow for increased creativity and fun. However, in real life, the ATS will not simply "expire." Instead, the parts of the Environmental Protocol regarding mining and oil will be opened for revision by Consultative parties. You can read about the specifics in the Protocol document, or this explanation on the ATS website: https://www.ats.aq/e/protocol.html.
In addition, the ATS is widely regarded as a very strong treaty, despite recent concerns. Most experts are not concerned that the ATS will dissolve in real life.

Antarctic science is in the national interest of nearly all invested parties. In Antarctica, science is not as much of a competition as it is a unifying force.

Antarctic Resources

Antarctica is believed to contain significant and potentially vast mineral deposits and oil reserves. Currently, very few of these resources have been located, especially because commercial mining is banned by the Environmental Protocol, and few samples have been taken. Even if mining was allowed, Antarctica would be a difficult place to operate in due to dangerous terrain, high transportation costs, and the distance from industrially developed areas. But for some, the reward may be greater than the risk.

In 2025, Russia reportedly discovered an Antarctic oil reserve that contained over 500 billion barrels worth of oil. This reserve is located within the overlapping territorial claims of Argentina, Chile and the UK. Although no country can legally exploit the reserve due to the regulations of the Environmental Protocol, the discovery has opened international eyes to a new facet of Antarctica's potential.

Environmental Threats

As impenetrable as Antarctica seems to most people, it faces environmental threats from overfishing, tourism, and the advance of climate change.

Krill are extremely abundant in Antarctic waters. One estimate says that the combined mass of Antarctic krill is greater than that of all humans on Earth! They are the keystone species of Antarctica's ecosystem, essential to the survival of animals such as whales, seals, ice fish, and

penguins. But krill are threatened by industrial krill fishing.[4] Most fishing is concentrated in specific locations, depriving some areas of krill but not others, and possibly causing problems for the stability of the ecosystem. A subgroup of the Antarctic Treaty System, the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, is meant to regulate the use of marine resources such as krill. However, in 2025, the Commission failed to come to a consensus, and as a result, fishing increased significantly. So many krill were caught that they hit the Commission's established catch limit for the first time—620,000 tons—and the season ended early. This is bad for the krill, but it could be good for humans who use krill products, and krill fishing companies that can tap into a bountiful resource. This is another avenue where economic and environmental concerns are at odds.

Antarctic tourism, while very minor compared to other destinations, has been growing steadily.[5] Tourism only happens during the limited window of the Austral summer. Tourism can be disruptive to wildlife and cause damage at tourist sites. Conservationists are concerned that if tourism continues to grow without regulation, it may cause permanent damage to the ecosystem. However, tourism can be important for fostering public awareness and support of the value of Antarctica.

Introduction to this committee

The year 2048 has arrived, and with it, the 2048 Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting—perhaps the last of its kind. The delegates attending this conference have the duty of

[4] Krill are primarily processed to make krill oil, used as a health supplement for humans.
[5] What's not to love about a -50 F° vacation destination?

reimagining the Antarctic Treaty System with a focus on international cooperation for the betterment of humankind, whatever that may look like.

The conference is not concerned with any global crises, pandemic, nascent conflicts, or other catastrophes, and is instead focused only on the continent of Antarctica. The economic, developmental and political state of the involved countries have undergone no significant (read: relevant) changes. However, climate change has advanced significantly. The global temperature has increased, and natural disasters have risen in frequency. Rising sea levels, as well as frequent natural disasters, are a matter of immediate concern for many island nations (e.g. Tuvalu, Fiji, and other small island states across the globe) as well as coastal areas. Antarctic ice caps, while not in danger of destruction necessarily, are a contributor to rising sea levels. People everywhere are concerned with the future of the Earth. It is your job, as the delegates, to consider how to balance the protection of the Antarctic environment with the usefulness of Antarctica to mankind.

Recently, Antarctica has entered the global spotlight due to the revision and reworking of the ATS. Everyone seems to have an opinion about what to do with the continent. There are arguments for everything from focusing on the protection of the environment, to allowing more ubiquitous tourism and non-governmental activities, to encouraging mining and waste disposal in the barren continent. Some people believe that the revised Antarctic Treaty should focus on the prevention of climate change with respect to the Antarctic—that is, preventing the ice caps from melting, protecting the ecosystem, and limiting human involvement. Some people encourage tourism, settlement, and other non-governmental activities in the Antarctic—although there are still concerns about establishing a permanent human non-governmental settlement: the extreme conditions, inhospitable land, lack of prospects, and depressing lack of sun all make Antarctica

an unattractive living space. Another group believes that Antarctica's resources are of greater value to mankind than its scientific and environmental worth. They argue that Antarctica's mineral and oil reserves, as well as the abundant krill population, can be well utilized by the human population. Above all, people are concerned with the future government of Antarctica.

In this conference, delegates will consider how to respond to a number of issues revolving around Antarctica and the future of the Antarctic Treaty. The most prominent issues include:

- **Territorial claims**: Consider the current territorial claims on Antarctica and the tension they cause. Should countries be allowed to claim Antarctic territory?
- **Antarctic resources:** Under Antarctica's ice are untapped and potentially significant stores of under-ice minerals and oil, as well as an abundance of krill. Currently, mining and resource exploitation, as well as fishing, is heavily limited by the Environmental Protocol. Should these resources be harvested, and if so, by whom?
- **Climate change:** Climate change is an even more pressing problem in 2048 than 2026, and Antarctica is a considerable factor for Austral weather patterns and the ocean in general. How can Antarctica be preserved for a better Earth?
- **Wildlife:** Antarctica's unique ecosystem is currently protected by the Environmental Protocol, but increasingly, the affairs of humans and wildlife clash. How can wildlife be effectively protected?
- **Science:** To this point, the majority of human involvement in Antarctica has been scientific. International scientific cooperation is a strong motivator for keeping relations peaceful. *Does* anything need to change about the current ATS standards? If so, what?

- **Isolation**: The ATS has successfully secured Antarctica as a scientific area, isolated from the conflicts of the world, such as the Cold War—part of the original motivation of the treaty. But geopolitical conflicts *do* impact all parts of human government. The Russia-Ukraine war has thrown some things into question. In October 2022, Russia attacked the Ukrainian National Antarctic Scientific Center in Kyiv, which Ukraine and other consultative parties have condemned. The war has also led to a politics-based evaluation of the current countries applying for consultative status (Canada and Belarus), which should supposedly be dictated by a country's scientific investment, but is instead dictated by their political position. Is this a good thing? Can, and should, the governance of Antarctica be isolated from external affairs? How can demilitarization be ensured?
- **Future government:** Who does Antarctica belong to, anyway? The makers of the ATS would say that it should not belong to any one country, and instead be mutually governed. But what about territorial claims? What about countries that want to have a say in what goes on in Antarctica, but cannot or will not make enough scientific investment to become a consultative party? Should anyone get to control Antarctica, or should it be designated the common heritage of mankind (like parts of the oceans), available for all? Should it be treated as an international "national park"? An untapped resource? An environmental or scientific haven? *How* can human affairs in Antarctica be controlled, and *who* gets to control them?

Delegates, the floor is yours.

ROLES

Original Signatories with territorial claims

Australia

Australia is an original signatory of the Antarctic Treaty, and claims the largest portion of Antarctica of any nation, more than 40% of the continent. This claim is not widely recognized—although Australia is part of an agreement, with France, New Zealand, Norway, and the UK, to mutually recognize each others' territories—and Australia's claimed territory holds multiple foreign research stations, including four Russian ones. Australia is particularly interested in climate change and meteorology in Antarctica, in part because Antarctic weather patterns directly affect those of the Australian mainland. Australia also has one of the more robust scientific networks in Antarctica, with three permanent research stations on the continent Australia favors the maintenance of a strong and stable ATS, especially as a counter to ambitious countries like China.

Argentina

Argentina, the host of the Antarctic Treaty Secretariat, is an original signatory to the Antarctic Treaty. It claims territory and is one of the few countries with a permanent settlement, Esperanza Base, as well as the most combined all-year and temporary research stations. Argentina's territorial claims overlap with that of the UK and Chile, none of which have received widespread international recognition.[6] Part of the most disputed of Argentina's claim is of the South Atlantic Falkland Islands, which are currently an inhabited British territory. Argentina is

[6]https://www.sfa-oxford.com/lithox/critical-minerals-policy-legislation/all-countries/critical-minerals-in-antarctica-and-geopolitics/argentine-antarctic-sector-critical-minerals/

interested in developing Antarctic infrastructure and strengthening its influence in the Antarctic government.[7]

United Kingdom

The UK is an original signatory to the Antarctic Treaty, and casts a wide territorial claim that overlaps with the claims of Chile and Argentina, none of which have received widespread international recognition—although the UK is part of an agreement, with Australia, France, New Zealand, and Norway, to mutually recognize each others' territories. The UK also controls the South Atlantic territory of the Falklands Islands, a claim that is disputed by Argentina and has led to conflicts in the past—although Falklanders overwhelmingly prefer to remain British. The UK, securely positioned in the Antarctic government, is scientifically and culturally invested in Antarctica and is interested in keeping Antarctic governance stable for continued research and development.

Chile

Chile is an original signatory to the Antarctic Treaty, and claims territory. Chile's territorial claims overlap with that of the UK and Argentina, none of which have received widespread international recognition. Chile is scientifically invested in Antarctica as well as being one of the few countries to have a permanent settlement, Villa Las Estrellas.[8] Chile is interested in pursuing its territorial goals as well as strengthening its position in Antarctic governance.[9]

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[7] https://www.cancilleria.gob.ar/en/news/newsletter/antarctica-and-argentine-ministry-foreign-affairs
[8] Interesting factoid: In 2025, Chile announced plans for a new national park, Cape Froward National Park, which is at the sub-Antarctic southernmost point of South America.
[9] https://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/07/world/americas/chile-antarctica-villa-las-estrellas.html

New Zealand

New Zealand is an original signatory to the Antarctic Treaty, and claims territory, although their claimed area is mostly ocean. New Zealand is part of an agreement, with Australia, France, Norway, and the UK, to mutually recognize each others' territories, but its territory has not been widely recognized elsewhere. New Zealand is scientifically invested in Antarctica and is especially interested in environmental protection, climate change, and ocean research.[10]

Norway

Norway is an original signatory to the Antarctic Treaty and claims territory. Norway has been historically involved in Antarctic affairs, claiming the first explorer to reach the South Pole (likely due to the nautical expertise necessitated by having to navigate the Arctic Circle) and consistent exploration and whaling afterwards. Norway's territorial claim is not widely recognized, but it is part of an agreement, with Australia, France, New Zealand, and the UK, to mutually recognize each others' territories. Norway also participates in research, although it should be noted that it does not have the strongest scientific presence compared to other claimants. However, Norway is one of the major fishing influences of the Antarctic. Norway is interested in maintaining its territorial claim, pursuing research goals, and continuing to fish sustainably.[11]

France

[10] https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/environment/antarctica-and-the-southern-ocean
[11] https://www.regjeringen.no/en/documents/meld.-st.-32-20142015/id2415997/?ch=1

France is an original signatory to the Antarctic Treaty and claims territory. France's Antarctic territory consists of several areas, some of which are contested, but its claim within the actual Antarctic (as designated by the ATS), Adélie Land, is not a contested area. France is part of an agreement, with Australia, New Zealand, Norway, and the UK, to mutually recognize each others' territories. France, which has significant research investments in Antarctica (including a few research stations and a joint base with Italy), has a recently renewed interest and high investment in Antarctic research as well as conservation.

Original Signatories without territorial claims

United States

The United States is an original signatory to the Antarctic Treaty, though it did not lay claim to any land on the continent.[12] It operates a few research stations, and has the largest combined tourist and research presence on the continent.[13] The United States is interested in the research opportunities present in Antarctica, and also hopes to combat Russia and China's expanding influence.

Russia

Russia is an original signatory to the Antarctic Treaty that does not lay claim to any land. Russia is scientifically invested in the Antarctic and maintains a relatively large number of Antarctic bases. Russia is no doubt interested in the potential resources Antarctica has to offer, such as oil, gas, and minerals. In 2025, Russia reportedly discovered a huge (>500bn barrels) oil reserve—which is not extractable under the Environmental Protocol, which Russia currently

[12] https://www.state.gov/key-topics-office-of-ocean-and-polar-affairs#antarctic
[13] https://www.usap.gov/abouttheusap/

abides by. In the end, Russia's interest in science and the upkeep of the ATS may be overshadowed by its interest in Antarctica's resources, putting the de-regulation of mining and oil tanking at the top of its national interest.[14]

Japan

Japan is an original signatory to the Antarctic Treaty but does not lay claim to any land. Japan is scientifically invested in Antarctica with a few research stations, as well as a focus on preserving the ecosystem.[15] Japan has also been historically invested in Antarctic fishing. Japan is overall interested in keeping Antarctica a stable area in terms of research, resources and international cooperation.[16]

South Africa

South Africa is an original signatory to the Antarctic Treaty, although it does not claim territory. South Africa has research interests in Antarctica, currently fulfilled by a moderate science program and a research station on the Antarctic mainland. It may also be interested in pursuing economic goals by making Antarctic resources more available for use.[17]

Belgium

Belgium is an original signatory to the Antarctic Treaty that does not claim territory, although it is home to the first group to explore the Antarctic. Belgium's activity and interest in Antarctica is mainly scientific. Its recent focus on climate safety has resulted in more research in

[14] https://spectator.com/article/are-we-heading-for-a-new-cold-war-in-antarctica/?edition=us
[15] https://www.jstor.org/stable/24112965 (1989 article, certainly outdated but still relevant)
[16] https://www.japan.go.jp/tomodachi/2017/spring-summer2017/antarctic_observation.html
[17] https://www.dffe.gov.za/sites/default/files/legislations/ata_antarcticsouthernoceansstrategy_g44293gen234.pdf

that area, as well as investing in the first "green" Antarctic Base, the Princess Elisabeth. Belgium's interests with respect to Antarctica appear to be mainly climate- and research-focused.[18]

Consultative parties

China

China is a consultative party to the ATS with quickly expanding engagement in Antarctic affairs, having installed six research stations in the past thirty years. As well as scientific progression, China is interested in taking on a leadership role in the Antarctic, and has ambitions for obtaining increased decision-making power—especially for decisions that allow its economy to utilize Antarctic fisheries and mineral reserves.

India

India is a consultative party to the ATS with a strong scientific program, as well as growing national interest, in the Antarctic. India's recent Antarctic policy reiterates its commitment to demilitarization and protecting the environment, which are conducive to its additional goal: continued research and development on the continent.[19]

Brazil

Brazil is a consultative party to the ATS. It has historical territorial interest in an area that overlaps with the claims of Argentina and the UK (although not Chile), and originally opposed

[18] https://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/policy/policy-areas/striving-global-solidarity/environment/antarctica
[19] https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1847047®=3&lang=2

the creation of the ATS. However, in the present, it has become a significant scientific actor in Antarctica and its current policy concerns are focused on research and the environment.[20]

Germany

Germany is a consultative party to the ATS. A few decades before the ATS was created, Nazi Germany explored Antarctica and wanted to claim territory, which would overlap with Norway's claim. However, this claim was never formally made.[21] In the present, Germany has a strong scientific program in Antarctica and also maintains concerns for the environment.

Spain

Spain is a consultative party to the ATS. As well as having hosted the Environmental Protocol (also known as the Madrid Protocol), it is scientifically interested in Antarctica, especially with regards to climate change. Because none of its bases are operational year-round, it sends a research campaign every austral summer, and it relies on international cooperation to achieve robust research.[22]

Uruguay

Uruguay is a consultative party to the ATS with two research stations. Uruguay is also one of the few countries to have reserved the right to make territorial claims in Antarctica, although it has not made any as of 2025. Uruguay's main priorities in Antarctica are international cooperation, scientific research, and environmental protection.

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[20]https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346816019_Brazil_in_Antarctica_the_scientific_and_geopolitical_importance_of_PROANTAR_in_the_Brazilian_Strategic_Surrounding_Area

[21] Although it did spawn some interesting conspiracy theories.

[22] https://www.ciencia.gob.es/en/Organismos-y-Centros/Comite-Polar-Espanol.html

South Korea

South Korea is a consultative party to the ATS with two research stations. As well as maintaining its research presence, South Korea is interested in Antarctic fishing, which it has consistently participated in.[23]

Italy

Italy is a consultative party to the ATS with one year-round and several seasonal bases, as well as a joint base with France. It hosted the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting in Milan in 2025, and is interested in continuing research and international cooperation.

Ukraine

Ukraine is a consultative party to the ATS with one research base. Ukraine's National Antarctic Scientific Center, in Kyiv, was subject to a Russian missile strike in October 2022. Even while its scientific activities have been hindered by the war, it has steadfastly continued to send research parties and fund expeditions. Ukraine is especially concerned with Antarctica's demilitarization of international cooperation, especially cooperation against Russia and for the future of peace.[24]

Poland

[23] https://www.mofa.go.kr/eng/wpge/m_5433/contents.do
[24]https://www.kmu.gov.ua/en/news/uriad-prodovzhyv-derzhavnu-prohramu-antarktychnykh-doslidzhen-do-2027-roku

Poland is a consultative party to the ATS, and the first non-original signatory to gain consultative status (in 1977). Poland operates one Antarctic research base, the Henryk Arctowski Station, which is one of the most popular bases for visits (probably due to its relatively convenient location). Poland is interested in general research and international scientific collaboration.

Non-consultative parties (pursuing consultative status)

Belarus

Belarus is a non-consultative party to the ATS which, as of 2025, was seeking consultative status. It maintains one seasonal research base and has been pushing to increase its presence in the Antarctic. However, its request to become a consultative party has been denied by Ukraine and other consultative parties, which condemn it for supporting Russia and the Russia-Ukraine war. This has also caused Canada to be prevented from entering, as a counter from Russia. Belarus, aside from continuing its current scientific goals, will be particularly interested in the accessibility of consultative status in the current system, and also how geopolitical conflicts impact Antarctic policy.

Canada

Canada is a non-consultative party to the ATS which, as of 2025, was seeking consultative status. Canada currently conducts research on the Antarctic without its own research base, through international collaboration and remote work. Currently, the Canadian government is increasing funding for Antarctic research, and intends to increase Canadian presence in the Antarctic. However, its request to become a consultative party has been denied, partially because

of its cited lack of investment in Antarctica, but also as a retort, from Russia and China in particular, to Belarus having been blocked from gaining consultative status. Canada, as well as being interested in international cooperation and science, may be particularly interested in the accessibility of consultative status in the current system, as well as how geopolitical conflicts impact Antarctic policy.

Venezuela

Venezuela is a non-consultative party to the ATS which was previously seeking consultative status, but has not tried since it was denied in 2018, nominally because it did not meet the investment requirements. However, it seems that it was mostly denied by South American consultative parties due to the deteriorating political situation within Venezuela. Venezuela, which has recently (as of the end of 2025) become the first nation to lose all of its glaciers to climate change, may not be so concerned about environmental protection…or perhaps it will serve as a wake-up call. Venezuela may also be concerned about the accessibility of participating in the ATS and how the ATS interacts with politics as a whole.

Malaysia

Malaysia is a non-consultative party to the ATS with a growing research program. While it has not made any formal bids to gain consultative status, it has expressed desire to become a consultative party. Before Malaysia joined the ATS as a non-consultative party in 2011, it was rather critical of the ATS. For example, Malaysia brought the issue of Antarctic governance to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea in 1982, arguing that the continent should be regarded as the common heritage of mankind (which could give smaller and less developed countries a

better stance in decision-making), to no avail. However, since then, Malaysia has acceded to the norms of the ATS.

Intergovernmental Organizations[25]

Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)

AOSIS is an intergovernmental association with 39 members made up of small-island and low-lying coastal states. AOSIS states are unified by their common vulnerability to climate change, especially the rise in ocean levels, which disproportionately affects low-lying areas. As of 2025, **no AOSIS state** is a member (consultative or non-consultative) of the ATS. (Consider who gets access to decision-making power in the Antarctic Treaty.) However, a representative from AOSIS will attend this conference to embody the common interests of AOSIS.

Non-governmental Organizations

Greenpeace

Greenpeace is an international environmental organization and the only non-governmental actor to have established an Antarctic Base, the World Park Base (1987-91), which gave Greenpeace the right to join Antarctic Treaty meetings during the negotiations of the Environmental Protocol, with a focus on mining. Greenpeace is predominantly climate-focused with the goal of preserving the Antarctic environment. In terms of policy, Greenpeace advocates for the "World Park" option, i.e. treating Antarctica like a worldwide version of a national park.

[25] All delegates beyond this point represent actors that are **not** part of the ATS. Their presence is intended to represent the real-life social and political pressure that their respective parties would exert on the governments involved. Delegates should prepare their roles in the same way that they usually would.

Association of Responsible Krill harvesting companies (ARK)

ARK, a group of fishing companies from Chile, Norway, China, and South Korea, are the main fishers of Antarctic krill, collectively making up 95% of the krill harvest in 2025. ARK's main policy concern is the sustainable fishing of Antarctic krill.

International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO)

IAATO is a large group of Antarctic tourism companies that is concerned with sustainable practice during tourism. Due to the government-resistant nature of the continent, Antarctic tourism is mostly self-regulated, and IAATO is a major influence. IAATO takes pride in preservation of the Antarctic continent, and is also interested in growing a robust and sustainable Antarctic tourism industry.

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