

24 November 2025

Subject: Joint Letter from the EU Polar Cluster regarding FP10

Dear Honourable Members of the European Parliament; President of the European Commission (EC); President of the European Council; Directors-General of the EC's Directorate-General Budget, Regional and Urban Policy, Research and Innovation, Agriculture and Rural Development, Environment, Defence Industry and Space,

As members and partners of the EU Polar Cluster, we write to stress the essential role of polar science in advancing European preparedness, sustainability, and security goals, and to urge the European Union and European Commission to ensure a strong polar science component in the 10th EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (FP10) and the 2028–2034 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). Polar change has global consequences, making this a critical moment for Europe to lead with science-based knowledge that informs mitigation, adaptation, and resilience. In a rapidly changing world, the Arctic and Antarctic are also subject to growing geopolitical interest, where access to reliable scientific information is vital for ensuring stability. European polar science provides the foundation for evidence-based climate policy and action, reinforcing Europe's role as a reliable partner in global scientific cooperation and diplomacy.

The poles play a critical role in regulating global climate. Major uncertainties remain that science must address, particularly because understanding the rate of climate change at the poles is essential for understanding global climate change. Polar regions are warming faster than the global average, with profound consequences for Indigenous peoples, Arctic residents, Europe, and the world, such as:

- Rising sea levels, directly threatening European coastlines, infrastructure, and societies
- More frequent and intense extreme weather events, such as winter storms and heat waves, in Europe and across the globe
- Shifts in biodiversity, disrupting ecosystems, food webs, and food availability for society
- Climate tipping points, including ice-sheet loss and changes in ocean circulation, posing irreversible global risks
- Permafrost thaw, releasing greenhouse gases, destabilizing infrastructure, and amplifying climate change through cascading impacts on ecosystems and human communities

The funding provided by the EU under previous Framework Programmes has allowed the EU Polar Cluster to identify and provide scientific evidence for these consequences. This provides a foundational understanding of their impact on European society now and in the future. Our work feeds directly into the EU's contribution to knowledge within the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) assessments. The EU Polar Cluster projects and partners also strengthen national research capacities, ensuring that Europe's voice and evidence are indispensable for global negotiations, for example, at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COPs).

Continued and expanded EU investment in polar science is not optional but essential. FP10 provides a unique opportunity to:

- Safeguard Europe's role as a global leader in polar research and innovation, which has only been possible through sustained investments under FP7, Horizon 2020, and Horizon Europe
- Maintain and expand research infrastructures and long-term observation networks that serve essential needs such as weather forecasting and navigation safety
- Enable cross-disciplinary collaboration that connects polar science to broader EU priorities (climate action, biodiversity, energy, resilience)
- Deliver science-based knowledge essential to European and international decision-making

The EU Polar Cluster integrates projects and partners that deliver advanced knowledge, technologies, forecasts, climate projections, and policy-relevant insights. Observations and models are indispensable for predicting polar change and its global impacts, as well as for developing Digital Twins of the Earth system. EU-funded polar science strengthens Europe's capacity to anticipate and respond to climate challenges and strengthens Europe's support for Arctic communities in their response to the rapid climate change. It informs policies and strategic objectives including the EU Arctic Policy, Green Deal, and Blue Economy, and it is of high importance for meeting the objectives and priorities of the Ocean Pact.

We align with the European Polar Board's recent letters calling for strong support of polar science in FP10. As the collective voice of EU-funded projects, the EU Polar Cluster represents the scientific, technical, and operational backbone of Europe's polar research community.

We therefore respectfully call on the European Commission to make polar research a visible and integral part of FP10, supported by dedicated funding that builds on the success of previous framework programmes including Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe to position Europe for a leading role in major global initiatives, including the next International Polar Year 2032–2033. Sustained prioritisation of polar science is crucial to maintaining the EU's role as a global provider of knowledge and insight and to ensure that it is prepared, secure and competitive in future.

Yours sincerely,

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