

Ups and downs of APECS Poland

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APECS Poland was established in December 2009, and united in a short time almost 100 young researchers interested in various aspects of polar science. At some point we were the fastest growing APECS National Committee in the world! The first leadership team was: Małgorzata Korczak – President, Liliana Keslinka, Artur Adamek, Mateusz Moskalik and Mateusz Strzelecki, who had brought the idea of APECS to Poland and served as APECS (World) Vice-President (2008-2009).

Since the very beginning, APECS Poland members could count on support of mentors from the Committee on Polar Research, Polish Academy of Sciences. Cooperation between APECS Poland and scientific institutions and organizations has resulted in a significant progress in engagement of Early Career Scientists in „polar scientific life“ in Poland.

- We were co-organizers of several conferences at national level (“The International Cooperation and Competition in the Arctic Region at the Beginning of the 21st Century”, Lublin, October 2010, “Changes of the Abiotic and Biotic Environment of Polar Regions” Warsaw, June 2011, 34th Polish Polar Symposium, Sosnowiec, June 2012), 35th Polish Polar Symposium, Wrocław, June 2014.
- During the last Polar Symposium Early Career session co-chairs were invited for the first time.
- Also, we organized special APECS events during the Polish Polar Symposia: a session dedicated to the role of young scientists in the development of polar research in Poland in 2010, a workshop on writing scientific articles in 2012, and a social meeting in 2014.
- Since 2010, APECS Poland has had representatives in the Committee of Polar Research, Polish Academy of Sciences.
- A member of APECS Poland became one of the youngest leaders of Polish Polar Station Hornsund, Svalbard, in the history of the station.

Polish APECS members were deeply involved in the Arctic Science Summit Week 2013 in Kraków. We had ‘our people’ in the organizing team - the Secretariat and the Volunteer group - and a very strong representation in almost every thematic session, also among the conveners. We also contributed to the APECS Workshop held during the ASSW, both as co-organizers and participants.

In early 2013 we were given a very special opportunity. A delegation from APECS Poland, together with a delegate from the APECS International ExCom, was invited to join a Romanian national polar symposium ‘Criosfera 2013’ in Piatra Neamt where APECS Romania was launched. We were very happy to share our experience and ideas among young Romanian polar and mountain scientists, and to be witnesses of a very enthusiastic and promising start of a new APECS national committee.

Our members have been actively involved in education and outreach activities in schools, scientific outreach events and universities across the country. We would like to mention especially the EDUSCIENCE project, aimed to raise the interest in studying subjects of great importance for the management and economy through the use of an interactive e-learning platform. The project is directed to students and teachers from 250 schools in Poland.

In general, we can distinguish two main phases of APECS development in Poland. First phase – shortly after IPY (2008-2010) – characterised by rapid growth of organisation and filled with activities, second phase (since 2012) when the ‘enthusiasm’ has slightly waned and previously active members of APECS focused on their careers.

Currently, the Polish APECS team communicates mainly through our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/apecs.polska>.

We are looking forward to hearing about experience of other NCs, and we hope to learn new ideas to make our community more active and motivated!