

Report form the 1st Central European Polar Meeting
10th-13th November 2015, Vienna, Austria

Three PhD candidates (mgr Marta Bystrowska, mgr Daniel Kępski and mgr Oskar Lipiński) from Center for Polar Studies (Poland) participated in the “1st Central European Polar Meeting”, which was held in Vienna on 10 to 13 November 2015. This conference was to commemorate the Austrian Polar explorer and scientist Julius Payer (1841-1915) and strengthen and promote international cooperation in polar sciences. The meeting was organized by the Committee on Polar Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the Centre for Polar Ecology (Czech Republic), and the Austrian Polar Research Institute in cooperation with the National Committee for Global Change of the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

The conference consisted of plenary talks and poster session. The subject matter included mostly the issues related to:

- Climate Change and Impact on the Polar Cryosphere
- Polar Ecology
- Permafrost under Climate Change
- History of Polar Research
- Arctic Social and Human Sciences

On Tuesday morning, 10th November we started with Plenary Session 1 which covered few presentations about topics connected with Greenland, Alaska and Antarctica areas. The majority of topics was very interesting and standing on high substantive and organizational level. Issues discussed concerned the various research themes. Of particular interest to participants were presentations about extreme phenomena like Tsunami, whether Jökulhlaups in the Polar regions. Another Session (2) included activities relating to different research projects in the Arctic regions. The day ended with presentation entitled “Beyond Thule. Images of the Arctic in the Pre-Modern Era”, which for participants was a positive surprise. The author tried to show different approach, which could serve as the foundation for a discussion of the long-term development of European attitudes towards the North.

The sessions during 11th November were dedicated to the region of the Russian Arctic and Siberia. A significant part of the talks were the presentations and discussion in the field of humanities, including anthropological and related industry and infrastructure development in the Russian Arctic.

The prelude to further discussion was preliminary presentation of prof. Saxinger on various aspects related to mining in the Arctic in the context of social sciences. Subsequent presentations were a deeper insight into this issue. Participants discussed, among others, the impact of railway development and potential challenges associated with it for local communities and the role of mining in local development and local perceptions about the paradox between environmental protection and mining. Part of the presentation was devoted to the issues of permafrost, whose disappearance is visible in the Russian Arctic.

At the end of the day there was a panel of experts called "The Central and Eastern European perspective on current and future Polar Social Sciences & Humanities: networks on the EU, CEE and global level", with the participation of experts: Schweitzer, Scheepsra, Sazelova, Skold

and Łuszczuk. The aim of the discussion was to identify the main challenges for the development of polar social sciences and possible steps and tools to strengthen the role of social sciences and how to better promote interdisciplinary polar research bringing in social sciences.

During the third day of conference (12 November) took place the most important sessions from our point of view for the reason that it was dedicated for issues of Svalbard both with Franz Josef Land. Session started at 8:30 and lasted till the 17:40. Eight out of twenty presentations was given by the Polish scientists incorporated in Polish Polar Consortium units. Between the experienced researchers starred Marta Bystrowska from Interdisciplinary Polar Studies with the presentation entitled: *"Perspectives of Arctic cruise tourism development in the light of rapid environmental change"*, well received by the audience and provoked a lot of later discussions. Presentations that day covered wide spectrum of topics. It was the time either for social sciences and more glaciological or meteorological topics. In program of that day occurred some changes due to inability of Czech scientists for stay on the last day of conference. This is the reason why some presentations planned for Friday were given in Thursday.

The final day of the conference was dedicated to topics of strengthening international cooperation and opportunity to present the outline of Polish Snow Program which idea is to coordinate and promote snow research not only on national but also international level.

Link to the poster of 1stCEPM participant related with CPS:

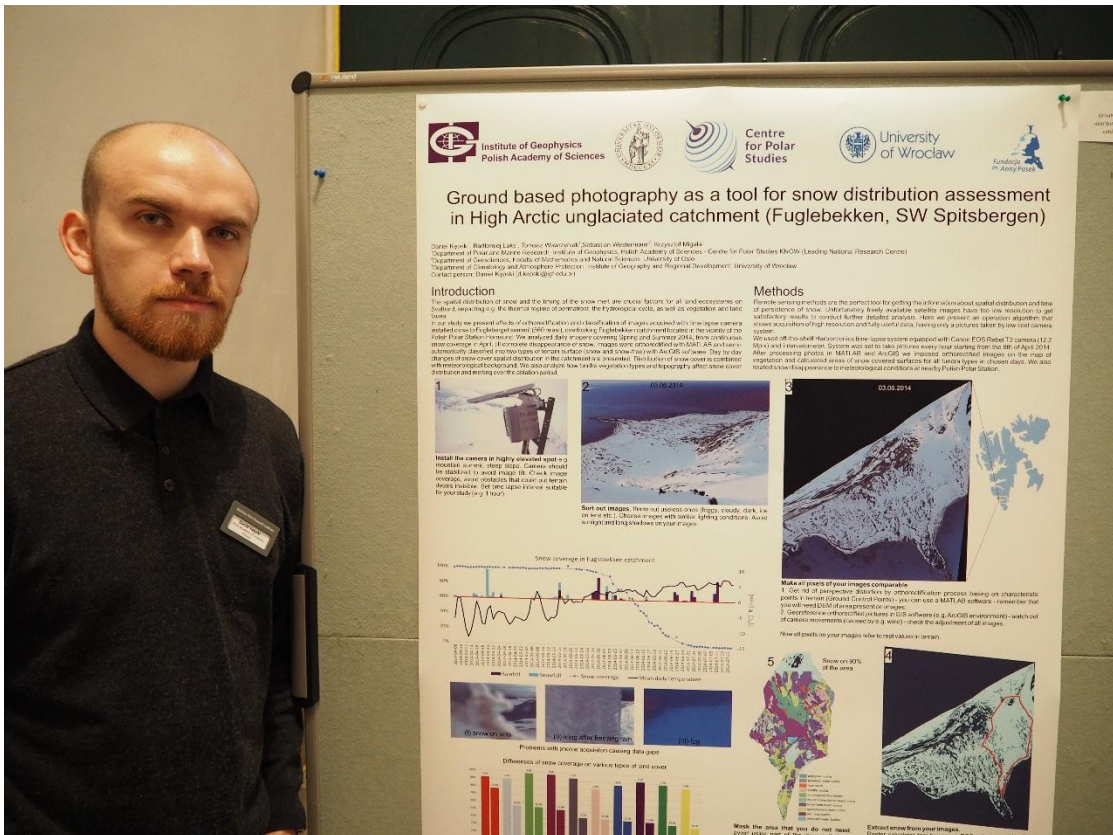
<http://www.eposters.net/poster/ground-based-photography-as-a-tool-for-snow-distribution-assessment-in-high-arctic-unglaciated>



Jacek Jania during the presentation entitled: *"Comparison of short term fluctuations of two Hornsund tidewater glaciers, Svalbard"* (fot. D. Kępski)



Marta Bystrowska during the presentation entitled: "Perspectives of Arctic Cruise Tourism Development in the Time of Rapid Environmental Change" (fot. D. Kępski)



Daniel Kępski during poster session (fot. O. Lipiński)



Oskar Lipiński during poster session (fot. D. Kępski)

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**Marta Bystrowska
Daniel Kępski
Oskar Lipiński**