

# Michał Łuszczuk

---

## International Polar Year 2012 Conference : From Knowledge to Action

---

Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska. Sectio K, Politologia 19/2,  
125-127

---

2012

Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej [bazhum.muzhp.pl](http://bazhum.muzhp.pl), gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach  
dozwolonego użytku.

rights, cooperation in the area of migrations). As part of the round table was discussed the question of local border traffic, with the participation of Russian and Polish scientists.

Special contribution to the organization of the conference brought representatives of the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University: Dr. Vladimir Valentinovich Voinikov, Dr. Anna Vladimirovna Barsukova and Anna Valerevna Belova, representatives of Veliky Novgorod local authorities and participants from the Yaroslav-the-Wise Novgorod State University: Dr. Valentina Vladimirovna Grokhotova, Dr. Anatoly Viktorovich Gusev and other representatives of the Faculty of Law of the Novgorod university.

*Krzysztof Żęgota (University of Warmia and Mazuria in Olsztyn)*

### **International Polar Year 2012 Conference: “From Knowledge to Action” – Report**

Under the auspices of the International Polar Year, co-sponsored by the International Council for Science and the World Meteorological Organization, more than 3,000 participants came together to Montreal, Canada, during the International Polar Year 2012 “From Knowledge to Action” Conference (22–27 April 2012). Participants included Arctic and Antarctic researchers from all over the world and various fields of expertise such as policy and decision making, law, academia, industry and environment, representatives of non-governmental and non-profit organizations and circumpolar communities, including indigenous peoples from Russia and Northern Canada.

The Conference was the final event of International Polar Year 2007–2008, the largest international program of interdisciplinary polar research ever undertaken<sup>13</sup>. The conference

---

<sup>13</sup> International Polar Year (IPY) was initiated as international cooperation and for the first time was introduced in 1882–1883. Its main objective was and still is, to provide scientific information about the fundamentals of meteorology and geophysics as well as to enhance all people’s knowledge and awareness about Polar Regions and associated, ongoing changes in both, opposite poles. Many of the earth’s unique phenomena, such as circulatory systems for air and water and the Earth’s magnetic field lines reach the surface in the polar areas. In addition, thick glaciers have trapped air and water from ancient times, which makes it easiest to observe these phenomena near the poles. The initial idea of international cooperative polar research came from an Austro–Hungarian explorer and naval officer Lt. Karl Weyprecht who was a scientist and co-commander of the Austro-Hungarian Polar Expedition of 1872–1874. Weyprecht, realized that a comprehensive polar research could not be a task of one nation only, but should involve a coordinated international effort. He recognized that a time of mere geographical discovery had passed and a series of coordinated expeditions dedicated to scientific research should be undertaken to further people’s understanding of fundamentals of meteorology and geophysics. Unfortunately, he died before the international research became a reality, but his inspiration led to an establishment of the largest coordinated series of scientific expeditions ever undertaken in the Arctic during the 19th century, or to what is now known as the First International Polar Year. The first IPY was announced between the years of 1881–1883, when eleven nations came together to establish fourteen principal research stations across the Polar Regions. The Second IPY, which took place in 1932–1933, was both proposed and promoted by the International Meteorological Committee. The main objective

and provided an opportunity to apply and disseminate the knowledge and scientific results from IPY from around the world<sup>14</sup> and focus on the next steps. Focus was on ongoing challenges of globalization and climate change plus environmental, social and economical issues in the polar areas. And the title of the conference “From Knowledge to Action”, captured a desire for research to lead to concrete action. Participants were encouraged to consider ways to translate those new understandings into policy that will guide activities in and enhance stewardship of the polar regions.

This approach was especially evident in a case of the session I had a pleasure to co-organize (since June 2011) and co-chaired (as the APECS convener) together with Prof. Suzanne Lalonde (Canada), Prof. Lassi Heininen (Finland), and Dr. Geny Cobra (Brazil/Finland). Its title was: “Polar governance, policy, and management in the face of the change”. This session focused on syntheses and overviews that addressed governance, policy and management issues in polar regions at different scales. Comparative studies contrasting governance models, and strategies and policies, to deal with polar issues among countries and regions were above all invited. Regional, international or bi-polar syntheses of policies that identify best approaches and practices were particularly welcome. Finally we gathered more than 50 papers and posters from all over the world and chose only the best 25. The session was divided into three panels. At one of them I presented my paper on *Arctic Regionality According to Strategies and Policies. Comparative Analysis*. The aim of this presentation was to offer for the debate some conclusions from the comparative study of the strategies and policies in terms of the demonstrated understandings of the notion ‘the Arctic region’. In order to make this comparison more operational the concept of *regionness* by Hettne, Söderbaum was used. It should be stressed that the cooperation set up among the chairs of the session during the preparation process has already brought some new ideas and scientific initiatives, e.g Prof. Lalonde agreed to come to Poland for the conference about geopolitics in the Arctic region, which is co-organized by the International Relations Department of the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in autumn 2012.

Every day of the conference began with a keynote session and the plenary panel discussion. Issues generally touched on current environmental and political changes and challenges in the polar regions. They were addressed and discussed by experienced polar officials mainly from eight Arctic states and led to promotion of science based decision making process as well as cooperation and partnership with international industries, particularly focused on oil and gas exploitation. In addition, many sessions succeeded on bringing indigenous matters to the public awareness with the main focus on environmental, health and social problems.

---

of the second research initiative was to investigate the global implications of the newly discovered “Jet Stream” and to conduct magnetic, aurora and meteorological observations at a network of research stations in the Arctic and Antarctic. It gathered researchers from more than forty different countries and came out as a great success in terms of scientific contribution. The third IPY was dedicated to the research on technology and science in the upper atmosphere and it was finally renamed to become the International Geophysical Year (IGY). The fourth IPY took place in 2007–2008 and happened to become the gigantic international scientific project with close to 10,000 scientists and 50,000 other participants from over 60 countries. The aim was to significantly increase the scientific knowledge and understanding of the polar areas and to conduct research projects beyond the resources of individual countries.. See more: *The History of the International Polar Years (IPYs)*, S. Barr, C. Lüdecke, (eds.), Springer 2010.

<sup>14</sup> About 40 people were from Poland.

The combining of scientific research with the indigenous knowledge was the important aspect of this IPY Montreal 2012 Conference. Representatives of the communities from Russia and Northern Canada shared the wide-ranging and sometimes personal knowledge about the Arctic ecosystems in which they have lived for centuries.

The IPY 2012 invited participants for indigenous knowledge exchange panels as well as offered a space for action forums which brought up interactive discussions on current issues facing the polar regions. Discussions covered the perspectives and knowledge from various disciplines and sectors including industry, policy, civil society, academics and indigenous representatives. Verity of workshops was open for all participants, concentrating on introducing science to policy makers and vice versa. Association of Polar Early Career Scientists held the workshop on career development during the first two days of IPY 2012. Conference delegates had a chance to balance their active participation in the sessions with a number of different tours, including technical and cultural tours, which were being offered through the whole week and were organized by local, polar-related facilities. Participants could visit the old port in Montreal, where CCGS “Amundsen” research icebreaker is currently based and opened for public visitors. The IPY 2012 “From Knowledge to Action” was definitely one of these years’ most important scientific gatherings for polar science and governance, climate change impacts and adaptation.

Additionally to participation in the IPY Conference I had a pleasure to give an invited lecture at the Marine & Environmental Law Institute (MELAW) at the Schulich School of Law, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada. The title of this presentation was: “Poland’s approach towards the Arctic region: an insignificant dream or a meaningful contribution?”. The lecture was attended mainly by a group of the researchers from the five Halifax universities. It was followed by a long and interesting discussion, also about prospects of the Polish and Canadian political and scientific cooperation in the Arctic. One of main outcomes of this study visit in Halifax is an article coming next year in the Ocean Yearbook which is one of the leading reference works of the Brill Publishing House edited by Prof. Aldo Chircop, Director of the MELAW.

I would like to express my acknowledgement to the Deans of the Faculty of Political Science of the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin and the Chair of the International Relations Department for supporting my participation in the presented events.

*Michał Luszczuk (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin)*

### **International Scientific Conference “Public Administration East and West: Twenty Years of Development”**

On 23–25 May 2012 I took part in the International Scientific Conference: “Public Administration East and West: Twenty Years of Development”. The purpose of the conference was to raise knowledge and expertise and exchange of experience in the operation of public administration issues, a variety of political and administration systems, and to establish cooperation with foreign universities and scientific institutions. The specific objectives: