

**Report for
Arctic Science Summit Week (ASSW)
(assw2017.eu)
March 31 – April 7, 2017**

By Erlend Moster Knudsen

The 19th annual Arctic Science Summit Week was organized March 31 – April 7, 2017 in Prague, Czech Republic. The conference is an initiative by the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) in order to provide opportunities for coordination, cooperation and collaboration between various scientific organizations involved in Arctic research and to economize on travel and time. This year's program comprised of a business part March 30th – April 3rd and a scientific part April 4th–7th, including an [Association of Polar Early Career Scientists \(APECS\) workshop April 2nd](#), social scientific program April 3rd and a [Multidisciplinary drifting Observatory for the Study of Arctic Climate \(MOSAIC\)](#) workshop April 4th–5th).



View of Prague Castle from the Charles Bridge.

I arrived Saturday April 1st to take part in the APECS workshop on career development early in the following morning (not an April Fools' joke). Travelling alone from our university, this offered a good chance to already getting to know several other young scientists that I would meet again and again over the coming days.

The social factor of the conference increased even more than next day – the social program day. I chose to take part in the organized hike through [the Prakop valley](#), a natural reserve just outside of Prague. I was amazed to see how many of my fellow Norwegians that joined me! We were easily distinguishable from the Russians in the group: while the former were dressed for a strenuous hike in the mountains, the latter were dressed for shopping in the mall. In the end, the hike turned out to be a rather easy one, meaning that the dressing code should have been somewhere in the middle.

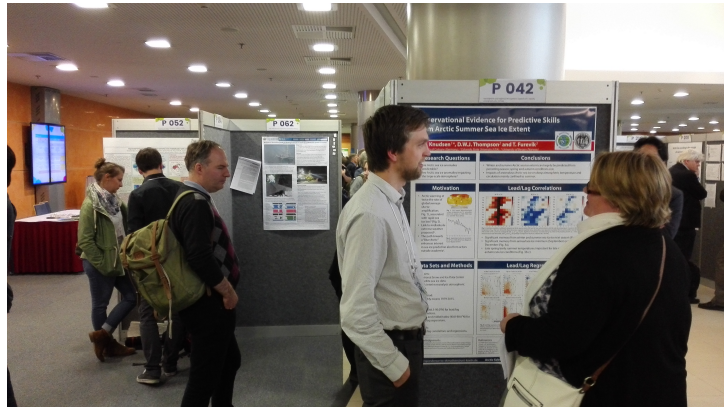
Eventually, the hard-core science program started with two wide and sobering talks by Hans Joachim Schellnhuber and Terry Callaghan on Tuesday morning. I spent the rest of the day following the program of session 4, *Hemispheric and regional atmospheric impacts of a rapidly changing Arctic climate*, where I also held a [teaser](#) and a [poster presentation on persistence in Arctic sea ice](#).



No conference dinner is complete without local music.

The following days were more diverse, covering topics like science communication and perception, sustainability, security and governance, infrastructure and transportation, and connecting indigenous knowledge to science. Together with a conference reception and dinner, they offered great opportunities to both catch up with and expand networks within Arctic-related topics. I was particularly happy about the organizers' facilitation of interdisciplinary collaboration. Numerous and sufficiently long coffee breaks between the parallel sessions allowed this. With 712 delegates from 28 countries, there was always a chance of making another good connection.

The final day (Friday) ended with session 23, *Communicating Arctic Change - Successes and Challenges of Effective Science Communication from Multiple Perspectives*, where I gave another [talk on science communication through accessible terms](#). I here made use of my experiences from the climate outreach NGO [Pole to Paris](#) as an example of how science can be made easier available – with regards to language, format and forum. The talk was joined in a session on other outreach initiatives, where also an artist gave her perspective on the changing Arctic through her paintings. It offered a good ending point of the conference, where I was able to mention [a similar artistic idea within the then upcoming ALOUD campaign](#) of the [Arctic Amplification: Climate Relevant Atmospheric and Surface Processes and Feedback Mechanisms \(AC\)³ project](#).



Presenting my poster for Gerlis Fugmann, Executive Director of APECS. Fellow Germans Svenja Helen and Andreas Ullisson in the background.

Next year, the conference goes even bigger as the Arctic and the Antarctic then will be united during the [POLAR2018 conference June 15-26, 2018](#) in Davos, Switzerland. Based on my great experiences from this year (and with a poster award covering the registration costs), I will certainly go, and I hope that my colleagues will join me in that.