

The I Latin Polar Workshop: Strengthening Southern Voices in Polar Research

*Ana Belén López Tárraga, Céline Rodrigues and Ana Flávia Barros-Platiau**

Abstract

The I Latin Polar Workshop, held in Lisbon on October 1 and 2, 2025, represented an unprecedented initiative to strengthen collaboration between Latin American and Southern European countries in polar research and governance. Organized by *Latin Polar Science* in partnership with Portuguese and international institutions, the workshop provided a multidisciplinary forum to discuss scientific cooperation, policy dialogue, and the role of non-Arctic actors in polar affairs. This article offers a descriptive overview of the event's structure, themes, and outcomes, including a review of the poster session, which highlighted innovative research by experienced and early-career scholars. Finally, the event reflected the growing engagement of southern states in polar science and diplomacy.

1. Introduction

Over the past two decades, polar regions have become central to global debates on environmental change, science, and

geopolitics (Dodds & Nuttall, 2019; Berkman & Young, 2009). As melting ice, new maritime routes, and resource accessibility reshape international attention, non-Arctic and non-Antarctic states are increasingly contributing to polar research and governance. This trend reflects what Brady (2017) terms *the globalization of the poles*, in which the governance and science of the Arctic and Antarctica involve actors from all continents.

In this context, the I Latin Polar Workshop, organized by *Latin Polar Science* and hosted at the Military University Institute (IUM) in Lisbon, was a pioneering initiative aimed at connecting researchers, institutions, and policymakers from Latin America and Southern Europe. The event sought to promote dialogue and collaboration among actors from the Global South who share an interest in the polar regions as spaces of scientific and diplomatic engagement.

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2. Organization and Participation

The workshop was co-organized by *Latin Polar Science* (co-founders Céline Rodrigues, Ana Belén López Tárraga, and Ana Flávia Barros-Plataiu) with the Portuguese National Defence Institute (IDN), the Atlantic Centre, and the Portuguese Institute of International Relations (IPRI-NOVA). Supporting partners included the Núcleo de Estudos Polares da Escola Superior de Defesa (NEPESD, Brazil), the Polar Research & Policy Initiative (UK), the Osservatorio Artico (Italy), and the TEIDE Research Group (University of Salamanca).

Approximately one hundred participants attended, both in person and online, from countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and the United States. The opening session featured remarks by Professor Isabel Nunes (IDN), Rear Admiral Nuno de Noronha Bragança (Atlantic Centre), and Céline Rodrigues (NOVA FCSH-UNL and IPRI-NOVA). Rear Admiral Bragança's keynote address, "*All Atlantic Community – From North to South*", emphasized Portugal's strategic position as a bridge between the North Atlantic and the polar regions.

The workshop's hybrid format allowed the participation of a wide network of researchers unable to attend in person, reflecting the inclusive and collaborative ethos of *Latin Polar Science*.

3. Structure and Thematic Panels

The two-day [program](#) was organized around six thematic panels that combined scientific, diplomatic, and institutional perspectives on polar affairs.

3.1. *International Cooperation in Antarctica*

Moderated by Céline Rodrigues, this panel featured Daniela Sampaio (HIMFB), Paula Matos (University of Lisbon), and Antonio Quesada (Spanish Polar Committee). Speakers highlighted ongoing scientific cooperation and policy frameworks within the Antarctic Treaty System, emphasizing how Latin and Southern European countries contribute to global governance through research diplomacy (Berkman et al., 2011).

3.2. *Fieldwork in the Arctic*

Ana Belén López Tárraga (University of Salamanca) moderated this session, in which Professor Paulo Câmara (University of Brasília, and Núcleo de Estudos Polares da Escola Superior de Defesa (NEPESD) discussed the human and logistical challenges of Arctic fieldwork. Drawing on direct experience, he reflected on the need for multidisciplinary preparation and ethical engagement with local communities—concerns echoed in recent studies of polar field practices (Powell, 2020).

3.3. *Security in the Atlantic and Arctic*

In the panel “*Arctic and Atlantic: A Matter of Security in the North and South*”, Céline Rodrigues moderated a discussion featuring Captain Leonardo Mattos (Brazilian Navy, Brazilian Naval War College) and Professor Ana Manero Salvador (Universidad Carlos III, Madrid). The dialogue examined the interconnection between maritime security and environmental change in the Atlantic, Antarctica and Arctic, linking regional stability to global ocean governance (Rahbek-Clemmensen & Thomasen, 2018).

3.4. *Connecting Ocean, Poles, and Space*

Moderated by Colonel António Eugénio (IDN), this session brought together Jefferson Simões (Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul) and Miguel Miranda (AIR Centre). They discussed the integration of oceanographic and satellite data to understand polar processes—an approach aligned with the Earth system perspective advanced by the IPCC (Meredith et al., 2019).

3.5. *Science–Policy Communication*

Minister Fausto López Crozet (Argentina) moderated this panel, featuring Ana Flávia Barros-Platiau (University of Brasília, and NEPESD, Brazil), Licinia Simão (University of Coimbra, Portugal),

and Carlos Lopes Ortiz (Deputy Director-General for Multilateral Economic Relations and Maritime, Air and Terrestrial Cooperation, Spain). The speakers examined the challenges of bridging scientific evidence and policymaking, calling for institutionalized mechanisms of science diplomacy (Berkman & Kullerud, 2017).

3.6. *Polar Research Centres and Networks*

The final panel, chaired by Professor Carmen Fonseca (IPRI-NOVA), brought together Paulo Câmara (University of Brasília and NEPESD) and Antonio Quesada (Spanish Polar Committee). They discussed how research centres can strengthen cooperation and visibility for southern actors in global polar networks (Heininen et al., 2019).

4. *Poster Session and Emerging Research*

One of the highlights of the Lisbon workshop was the poster exhibition, which offered a platform for early-career researchers to present ongoing work. Accessible both on-site via QR codes (Appendix) and [online](#), the session reflected *Latin Polar Science's* commitment to promoting inclusivity and interdisciplinary dialogue.

The posters demonstrated an impressive thematic diversity, encompassing diplomacy, environmental governance, public policy, health, and science communication. They also reflected the

intellectual vitality of the Latin and Southern European polar research community.

Marco Volpe (University of Lapland) presented *“Uncovered Threads: The Subtle Power of China’s Science Diplomacy in the Poles”*, which examined the nuanced ways China exercises influence through scientific collaboration in the Arctic and Antarctic (Brady, 2017). His analysis connected institutional diplomacy with emerging forms of soft power in polar contexts.

Ana Flávia Barros-Platiau, Laura Urrejola Silveira (University of Brasília), and Israel de Oliveira Andrade (ISCSP/Universidade de Lisboa e IPEA) contributed *“Do Policy-Makers Listen to Polar Science?”*, a poster exploring how scientific knowledge informs Brazilian policy within the Antarctic Treaty System. Their work identified structural gaps in communication and proposed iterative dialogue models for better science-policy integration (Berkman et al., 2011).

Santiago Villalobos Dantas (University of Akureyri / Stefansson Arctic Institute) offered a historical-cultural approach with *“Polar thMediterranean Imaginary by Vilhjalmur Stefansson”*. By revisiting Stefansson’s notion of a “Polar Mediterranean”, Dantas analyzed how early 20th century

imaginaries continue to shape modern Arctic narratives (Dodds, 2021).

In *“Polar Research and the One Health Perspective”*, Colonel José Roberto Pinho de Andrade Lima and colleagues (Director of NEPESD) introduced a cross-sectoral framework linking human, animal, and environmental health. Their work connected polar research with the planetary health paradigm (Rockström et al., 2023), illustrating Brazil’s growing engagement in interdisciplinary approaches.

Diana Freitas (NOVA University Lisbon) presented *“The Global Connection: How the Poles Affect Latin America”*, which demonstrated the biophysical linkages between polar systems and South Atlantic climates. Her clear explanation of teleconnections underscored the global reach of polar processes (Meredith et al., 2019).

“Science Diplomacy and Antarctic Technospheres: Antarctic Data as a Common Good of Humankind”, by Laura Urrejola Silveira, Ana Flávia Granja e Barros, Mariano Ferro, and Ana Luísa Ribeiro—explored Antarctic data infrastructures as diplomatic and ethical commons, echoing current debates about open data and governance (Elvidge et al., 2022).

Ana Belén López Tárraga (University of Salamanca) presented *“The*

European Policies for the Arctic Region: A Multiscale Perspective Based on Convention Theory". Her work offered a sociological reading of EU Arctic policies, applying Convention Theory to explain how competing "orders of worth" shape decision-making (Koivurova et al., 2020).

Finally, Paulo Afonso Duarte (Lusófona University) and Flávio Bastos da Silva (University of Minho) examined "*China's Polar and Space Ambitions*". Their analysis compared China's "Polar Silk Road" with its "Space Silk Road", arguing that both domains reflect intertwined scientific and strategic ambitions (Zhang & Liu, 2022).

Collectively, the poster session illustrated three major trends: (1) the globalization of polar research through southern participation; (2) the consolidation of science diplomacy as a key theme; and (3) the interdisciplinarity linking health, governance, and environmental systems.

5. Discussion and Key Outcomes

Across the workshop, several cross-cutting conclusions emerged. First, the event reaffirmed the importance of southern perspectives in polar research. As Dodds (2021) argues, pluralizing polar knowledge strengthens global governance frameworks.

Second, participants emphasized the need to institutionalize cooperation beyond episodic meetings, through structured networks and data-sharing platforms. The proposed "Latin Polar Network" reflects this goal. Third, the integration of polar issues into global agendas—climate change, ocean governance, and sustainable development—was seen as vital to ensuring policy relevance and international visibility (Knecht & Keil, 2020).

The poster session reinforced these outcomes by showcasing how younger researchers are already operationalizing these principles through interdisciplinary methods and cross-regional partnerships.

6. Conclusion

The I Latin Polar Workshop marked a significant milestone in consolidating Latin American and Southern European engagement in polar affairs. By convening diverse voices from academia, defence, and policy sectors, the workshop fostered a transatlantic dialogue that extends beyond traditional northern frameworks. Its panels and poster session demonstrated that polar research is no longer geographically or politically confined: it is a global, interconnected field of inquiry and diplomacy. The success of the Lisbon event underscores the potential of initiatives like *Latin Polar*

Science to democratize access to polar knowledge and to promote new forms of South–South and South–North cooperation.

Future editions are expected to deepen this network and expand the analytical and institutional capacities of southern polar research communities.

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Appendixes

1. Program, National Defence Institute (IDN)



Programme

Day 1 - October 1st, 2025

- 14:00 - 14:05** **Opening Session**
- 14:05 - 14:35** **All Atlantic Community – From North to South**
Rear Admiral Nuno de Noronha Bragança, Director of the Atlantic Centre, Portugal
- 14:35 - 15:20** **International Cooperation in the Antarctic**
Moderator: Céline Rodrigues, PhD Candidate, NOVA FCSH-UNL, IPRI-NOVA, Portugal
Daniela Sampaio, Marie Curie Post Doctoral Fellow – HIMFB, Brazil
Paula Matos, Researcher IGOT, University of Lisbon, Portugal
Antonio Quesada, Executive Director of the Spanish Polar Committee, Spain
- 15:20 - 16:10** **Being in the Field in the Arctic: Easy Task for Natural Sciences?**
Moderator: Ana Belén, Researcher, Salamanca University, Spain
Paulo Câmara, Núcleo de Estudos Polares da Escola Superior de Defesa (NEPESD), Associate Professor, University of Brasília and ESD, Brazil
João Canário, Associate Professor, Instituto Superior Técnico, Portugal
Maria Santolaria-Otin, Researcher Post Doc, University of Barcelona, Spain
- Break 10 minutes**
- 16:20 - 17:15** **Arctic and Atlantic: A Matter of Security in the North and South**
Moderator: Céline Rodrigues, PhD Candidate, NOVA FCSH-UNL, IPRI-NOVA, Portugal
Captain (Navy) Leonardo Mattos, Professor of Geopolitics, Brazilian Naval War College, Brazil
Ana Manero Salvador, Full Professor of Public International Law, Universidad Carlos III, Madrid, Spain
- 17:25 - 18:15** **Portuguese Navy – A Mission in the Arctic**
Captain (Navy) Baptista Pereira, Commander of the Subsurface Squadron, Portuguese Navy, Portugal

Day 2 - October 2nd, 2025

- 14:00 - 14:10** **Opening Session**
- 14:10 - 15:05** **Connecting Ocean, Poles and Space**
Moderator: Colonel António Eugénio, Researcher IDN, Portugal
Jefferson Simões, Glaciologist, Professor at the Geosciences Institute of the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS), Brazil
Miguel Miranda, Executive Director of Air Centre, Portugal
- 15:05 - 16:10** **Communication Between Science and Decision Making Regarding the Poles**
Moderator: Minister Fausto Lopez Crozet, Director da Dirección Nacional de Política Exterior Antártica (DNPEA), Argentina
Ana Flávia Barros-Platiau, NEPESD, Núcleo de Estudos Polares da Escola Superior de Defesa, Associate Professor International Relations, University of Brasília and Escola Superior de Defesa (ESD), Brazil
Liliana Simão, Associate Professor, University of Coimbra, Portugal
Carlos Lopes Ortiz, Deputy Director-General for Multilateral Economic Relations and Maritime, Air and Terrestrial Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Spain
- Break 10 minutes**
- 16:20 - 17:35** **Polar Research Centres**
Moderator: Carmen Fonseca, Director IPRI-NOVA, Portugal
Paulo Câmara, NEPESD, Núcleo de Estudos Polares da Escola Superior de Defesa, University of Brasília and Escola Superior de Defesa (ESD), Brazil
Antonio Quesada, Executive Director of the Spanish Polar Committee, Spain
- 17:40 - 17:50** **Closing Remarks**
- 17:50 - 18:30** **Poster Presentation, Polar Coffee: Creating Synergies**

Partners



Other institutions



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2. Posters, Portuguese Institute of International Relations (IPRI-NOVA)



Uncovered Threads: The Subtle Power of China's Science Diplomacy in the Poles

Marco Volpe (University of Lapland/Arctic Centre - Rovaniemi, Finland)



Do Policy-Makers Listen to Polar Science?

Ana Flávia Barros-Platiau (Pq/CNPq e PRODEFESA V, Universidade de Brasília e Escola Superior de Defesa), Laura C. Feindt Urrrejola Silveira (Universidade de Brasília e PRODEFESA V), Israel de Oliveira Andrade (Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada - IPEA)



Polar Mediterranean Imaginary by Vilhjalmur Stefansson

Santiago Villalobos Dantas (University of Akureyri/ Stefansson Arctic Institute - Akureyri, Iceland)



Polar research and the One Health perspective

José Roberto Pinho de Andrade Lima, Paulo Eduardo Aguiar Saraiva Câmara, Marcelo Henrique Soler Ramada, Amanda Caroline Marques Saúde (Escola Superior de Defesa (ESD) - Brasília, Brazil)



The Global Connection: How the Poles Affect Latin América

Diana Freitas (Universidade Nova de Lisboa - Lisbon, Portugal)



Science Diplomacy and Antartic Technospheres: Antarctic Data as a Common Good of Humankind

Laura Urrejola Silveira (Universidade de Brasília e PRODEFESA V - Brasília, Brazil), Ana Flávia Granja e Barros (Pq/CNPq e PRODEFESA V Universidade de Brasília e Escola Superior de Defesa - Brasília, Brazil), Mariano Damian Ferro (CONICET/UNLU - Buenos Aires, Argentina), Ana Luísa da S. S. Ribeiro (ECEME - Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)



The European Policies for the Arctic Region: A Multiscale Perspective Based on Convention Theory

Ana Belén López Tárraga (University of Salamanca - Salamanca, Spain)



China's Polar and Space Ambitions

Paulo Afonso B. Duarte (Centre of Advanced Studies in Law, Lusófona University - Porto, Portugal), Flávio Bastos da Silva (Research Centre in Political Science, University of Minho - Braga, Portugal)



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