

To: SAON Board
From: Noor Johnson, Brown University; Eva Krümmel, Inuit Circumpolar Council-Canada
Date: March 20, 2014
Re: Update on SAON Task #9: An International Review of Community-Based Monitoring in the Context of Sustaining Arctic Observing

Background:

SAON Task #9 was officially accepted by the SAON board at its January 2011 meeting in Tromsø. Task leads include the Inuit Circumpolar Council-Canada (ICC), the Exchange for Local Knowledge and Observations of the Arctic (ELOKA), and the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami's Inuit Qaujisarvingat: The Inuit Knowledge Centre. In November of 2012, Noor Johnson, a postdoctoral researcher, secured a position at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, to coordinate the task implementation. She has worked closely with the task partners to implement the two components of the task: 1) to develop an online atlas of community-based monitoring (CBM) and traditional knowledge (TK) initiatives in the Arctic; and 2) to develop a review of the state of community-based monitoring in the Arctic.

Status update:

A pilot version of the online Atlas of Community-Based Monitoring in a Changing Arctic (www.arcticcbm.org) was launched in the spring of 2013. In March 2014, an updated atlas was launched that included enhanced atlas infrastructure, including a gazetteer function, as well as additional CBM and TK initiatives from Europe and Russia. The updated atlas also contains additional information and context about CBM and the project, as well as an ethics resource page. Technical development of the atlas was led by Peter Pulsifer of ELOKA.

A number of content partners are supporting the atlas by helping to identify CBM and TK initiatives. They include the European Commission, NORDECO, the Alaska Ocean Observing System (AOOS), Alaska Sea Grant, the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme (CBMP), and the Arctic Council Working group on the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF).

Atlas users can find CBM projects by region, community, theme, or keyword search. Information about CBM and TK initiatives is provided directly by project leaders or in some cases is drawn from publicly available information hosted on project websites. Whenever possible, the atlas provides metadata that directs visitors to data hosting sites. The atlas is a living tool that can be customized for different user needs, for example by providing specific local or regional views or developing new thematic visualizations. Target users include Arctic communities, researchers, funders, and other members of the Arctic observing community. We are continuing to recruit CBM and TK initiatives to join the atlas.

Next steps:

ICC is currently exploring how to best leverage the atlas platform beyond the scope of this project, including expanding its functions to include mapping of other kinds of monitoring and programmatic initiatives. Currently, ICC is developing a mental health and wellness map based on information from ICC-Canada's report: "Circumpolar Inuit Health Priorities: Best Health Practices and Research," released in 2012.

In the spring of 2014, a review of community-based monitoring in the circumpolar region will be developed, drawing on information from the atlas as well as from a number of international workshops held over the past year that have focused on community-based monitoring and traditional knowledge. This information is also being supplemented with practitioner interviews. We expect the review to be completed in the summer of 2014; it will be made available on the atlas website and through SAON.