**A proposal for an enhanced Active Engagement role for SAON**

As discussed at the December 19th 2013 meeting of the SAON Executive, there is a perception among stakeholders that SAON may not yet have achieved its full potential in terms of delivering on its mandate to better serve societal needs through enhanced international observation, monitoring and assessment activities, and influence the application by decision makers of the enhanced knowledge of how the Arctic is changing. This apparent lack of progress may be having a deleterious effect on SAON’s ability to leverage in additional resources for vital observation, monitoring and assessment activities into the future.

In order to more actively address these concerns, one area where increased effort might be considered is the active engagement of decision makers. A possible initiative that could be undertaken by SAON is regular proactive “high-level” reporting on new monitoring and assessment results. Given the vast number and diversity of existing active networks, programs and projects that are under the SAON “umbrella”, and the plethora of important new findings that they are reporting through numerous channels, it is very challenging and time-consuming for decision makers to maintain awareness and understanding of all this new knowledge.

A possible tangible “deliverable” that could begin to address these perceptions of SAON, and meet the needs of decision-makers to remain current and make sense of new findings, is an informal “results bulletin” that could be distributed electronically. For maximum impact, each edition of this vehicle should be concise (1-2 pages?), broad in scope, explain the significance of new results in terms that are meaningful to non-specialist decision makers (elected officials, senior government managers, northern leaders, etc), and make reference to the source of the new information (ie the network or program that has produced it, with a link to their new publication, report, or data).

One mechanism to undertake the tracking of new results, analysis of their significance, and ongoing creation of the written content is to engage members of the APECS community who are eager to gain experience at the science - policy interface and have a positive impact on the application of new knowledge. By matching interested APECS members with experts from monitoring networks and programs, SAON could catalyse the creation of the necessary content for the “results bulletin”. Additional APECS members could coordinate the production of each edition of the newsletter and its electronic distribution to key decision makers.

Significant effort would be required to compile and maintain the electronic distribution list. SAON members could contribute individual lists of names and email address of their most important decision-making “clients”, from which a master list could be compiled and maintained as it grows over time. With appropriate content and frequent delivery, decision makers will grow to depend on the SAON results bulletin to keep them aware and current on the results of observation, monitoring and assessment activities, while increasing the value that they place on SAON. Increased perceived value is the first step in improving the likelihood of continued (and possibly enhanced) support for SAON.