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| Meeting of the SAON RMTF |
| When | 17th June 2019, 15-16 CET / 9-11 am EST |
| Venue | Teleconference |
| Participants |

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| Jan Rene Larsen | jan.rene.larsen@amap.no | SAON Secretariat |
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| Nicole Biebow  | info@eu-polarnet.eu | AWI, Germany, EU-PolarNet |
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| Roberto Delgado | NSF, USA | robdelga@nsf.gov |

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| Meeting notes | Jan Rene Larsen |

**Agenda:**

Drafting the roadmap – next step

**Meeting notes:**

Participants had been asked to submit comments to two questions that would guide the drafting process: 1) Where do we need to go? and 2) How are we going to get there? An additional question 0 was “An underpinning set of assumptions should also be established”. Input had been received from Eva Kruemmel, Roberto Delgado and Sandy Starkweather.

Sandy Starkweather asked the contributors to present their input with a focus on the things that were either straight forward and that a road map needs to include or those that are not straight forward and will require further deliberations.

**1. Roberto Delgado ‘homework’**

Roberto Delgado highlighted *societal benefits* as a valuable approach with particular focus on human health and well-being, environmental conservation, social development, economic growth, resource management, vessel traffic and tourism and believed that long-term sustained observations should feed into these objectives. With regards to specifics, important questions to answer would be who actually does the implementation? How is it financed? The roadmap should identify individuals and organisations that are willing to take a leadership role as well as having a financial plan. Timelines and milestones and a process for evaluation should also be included. With regards to the framework, then he had noted the discussion if to go for a topical or thematic approach but would prefer an integrated approach. He believed that collaboration, cooperation and communication would be key in defining Essential Variables (EV) that should be sustained over the long term. He introduced the concept of regional “Arctic Observing Hubs”, which would bring together stakeholders; in these, core research groups would focus on implementation and capacity building. A network of hubs could for instance meet annually to share information about best practises and challenges and making sure that the different groups were communicating with each other.

His main question was about identifying the target audience for the document and how to go from defining the roadmap and to the actual implementation.

Sandy Starkweather answered that she believed that funding could be viewed as funding 1) the roadmap development, and 2) the broader roadmap implementation.

**2. Eva Kruemmel ‘homework’**

Jan Rene Larsen introduced the document which had emphasis on Arctic Indigenous Peoples to be recognized as rights holders in the Arctic and that observations need to be conducted in partnership with them. Underlying this should be guidelines on ethical research. In addition, the roadmap should point out that currently monitoring and research activities in the Arctic are fragmented and inefficient. The document lists a series of questions that the roadmap should address, like priorities, purpose, relevance, actors, etc.

Sandy Starkweather added what she had seen across the contributions, namely the need for an evaluation mechanism for measuring progress. With regards to the importance of SBAs, the document highlighted the role of research to create social equity. What was less clear was, what was meant by “the dimensions of Arctic observing”; this could be a matter of terminology.

**3. Sandy Starkweather ‘homework’**

Sandy Starkweather had organised the text as a preliminary ‘strawman work’.

With regards to question 0 (‘Assumptions’) and the audience question, then her first thoughts had been 1) Funding organisations, 2) Arctic Council Working Groups, and 3) The existing component networks. Another assumption would be that the document will not redefine or interfere with what existing groups are already doing, but that we are seeking to add a metastructure to advance integration. The SAON guiding principles are well thought out, but certain points could be amplified in the context of defining a roadmap. A point raised earlier by David Arthurs is the need to span research, operations and community needs consistent with the SBAs. She asked the group if the roadmap should contain a definition of thematic structures? Or let the community continue to self-organise around thematic or regional structures? The balance would be about ‘getting into the weeds’ versus supporting self-organising bodies that are limited in their ability to drive integration from the ground and up.

With regards to question 1 (‘Where do we need to go’), several contributors had supported the idea that the International Arctic Observing Assessment Framework (IAOAF) should be used to provide structure around the use of societal benefits.

Many existing frameworks are organised around EVs, which creates a structure for integration and collaboration, and she believed that the roadmap should be organised around an EV approach. This should be accompanied by a standard for what makes it important to adopt and redefine these in a SAON pan-arctic context. Contributors had also wanted that an optimisation/prioritisation strategy should be developed and used; EVs should not simply be a matter of compiling a ‘master list’.

Some inputs discussed governance aspects, including for instance the regional “Arctic Observing Hubs” mentioned earlier. This discussion could intersect with the discussion if high-level thematics should be defined. While SAON can provide an over-arching governance structure, the definition of sub-bodies will be a critical success factor. Other inputs were focused on improving the relationships with global structures. European inputs had focused on strengthening the relationship between the roadmap and the research infrastructures.

With regards to Question 2 (‘How to get there’), then the principle would be to use a combination of IAOAF and the EVs to provide prioritisation. On the organisation of the community, SAON networks would be engaged in the review process as would Arctic Council Working Groups and IASC. She believed that the SAON Secretariat would need additional capacity in order to support a process where groups would start elaborating upon and filling out a roadmap definition. An evaluation process should be defined.

**4. Next steps**

David Arthurs raised a question about the objectives of the work and the document. One question was about the audience, another would be about what the document should achieve. He believed that the Task Force should write the Roadmap and was uncertain about what a short structure document could do.

Sandy Starkweather made reference to the mandate for the RMTF: She believed that the Task Force is not meant to write the SAON roadmap itself. Other groups, especially some working under the Arctic Observing Summit, were willing to develop broader contributions to the SAON Roadmap; these had asked for guidance and a clearer definition. The Task Force should develop a definition that is helpful and supportive but not interfere with already proceeding work. The Task Force should not itself draft the Roadmap, but should anticipate that groups will come forward to contribute to and fill out the roadmap.

As an example of the audience for the document, she mentioned the document *Collaborative Research: Research Networking Activities in Support of Sustained Coordinated Observations of Arctic Change* by Hajo Eicken et al. She also mentioned the upcoming H2020 call (‘Supporting the implementation of GEOSS in the Arctic in collaboration with Copernicus’). In both cases, the document could guide SAON in defining its relationship and engagement in such projects.

She mentioned specifically the GOOS ‘Framework for Arctic Observing’ where she believed that the scope for the Task Force would be comparable to the first pages of the document. It covers what should be included in the Framework, which includes a governance structure, recommendations that expert panels should be established, the use of Essential Variables and text about the impact of societal benefit definitions. Details beyond this are left to subject matter experts. The Steering Committee did however layout a detailed plan about how expert panels should proceed.

Nicole Biebow added that the H2020 call on the implementation of an Arctic observing system seems to be aligned with the Task Force mandate, which includes a roadmap, establishing expert groups, etc. The heavy task of developing the roadmap (‘implementation’) could be given to such a project. The fact that there are US and European projects means that SAON should serve in a coordinating role, making sure that there is cooperation between initiatives and also give guidance so that the projects work along the SAON strategic lines.

It was agreed that

* Task Force members could submit homework by 24th June:
	+ This could either [follow the guidance here](https://www.arcticobserving.org/images/pdf/RMTF/20190603/Homework_assignment_version_1st_June_2019.docx) with this structure: 0) Assumptions, 1) Where do we need to go?, 2) How are we going to get there?
	+ You may alternatively in your own format provide you synthesis of the subjects/structure that that the document should contain.
* By 1st July, a small drafting group (Eva, Jan, Sandy) will put together the first draft of the document (‘strawman’)
* The next teleconference will be held 8th July 15-16:30 CEDT / 9-10:30 am EDT.