# SAON [Strategic Framework] | [Strategy]

## Goals

*[Original formulation: “SAON’s goal is to enhance Arctic-wide observing activities by facilitating partnerships and synergies among existing observing and data networks (“building blocks”), and promoting sharing and synthesis of data and information”. From ‘Plan for the Implementation Phase of SAON’ (2011)]*

*[Input to the list in this section is ‘Expectations of SAON’ as formulated by countries, indigenous organisations, organisations, networks and others to the Board meeting in Prague 7. April 2017. Input is also from the external review of SAON in 2016.*

*In the survey conducted as part of the external review of SAON, respondents were asked to rank the importance of eight closed options for the current roles of SAON (1 is lowest, 5 is highest):*

1. *Information exchange: 4,3*
2. *Facilitating partnerships and synergies among existing observing and data networks: 4,2*
3. *Coordination: 4,1*
4. *Outreach: 3,7*
5. *Data management: 3,6*
6. *Data policy: 3,6*
7. *Funding: 3,5*
8. *Conferences: 3,3*

*(The sequence has been changed according to highest average score across respondents]*

### 1 Role, stakeholders and interaction with the surroundings

* Be the core organisation to network and support the polar community in developing of a science-driven, integrated Arctic-observing system.
* Be the international voice promoting the vision of an effective and sustained Arctic observing network towards policymakers and other stakeholders.
* Be a forum for circumpolar science to interact with government agencies.
* Providing a link between academia and (inter)national agencies at a very practical level
* Getting governments involved in the processes of creating and maintaining a strategic pan-Arctic observing systems
* Play a role in strengthening, coordinating and developing a stable foundation for relationship building and cooperation between different actors interested in the arctic and/or are conducting research in the Arctic, or other observations of relevance to the Arctic. Find and negotiate with various organization/countries on the international structure which can implement items.
* Promoting treaty -level agreements between Arctic countries on observing strategies and responsibilities
* Encourage continued cooperation in other international science organizations that contribute to Arctic observing and data-sharing
* Capitalize on its unique position to strengthen its added value to international/multinational efforts.
* Stress the importance of a sustainable development
* Promoter of certain research ethics, i.e. how research in the Arctic should be conducted.
* Defining "societal benefits" or at least communicate good examples of societal benefits.
* Coordinate the identification of joint priorities for an integrated Arctic-observing system

#### 1.1 Establishment of groups/fora

* Think tank with clear recommendations and conversations with others struggling with these issues, such as industry people. The recommendations from this think tank could later be turned into a business plan.
* Establishment of an annual technology forum, where atmospheric, ocean, and terrestrial working groups could come together to share information about the technologies they work with.
* Engagement and involvement to target each of the mission components: Working groups for Environment, Social Issues, Economic Issue and Cultural Issues.
* Building a network for community-based observations

#### 1.2 Relations to the Arctic Council

* Be the main discussant and promoter of observation issues in the Arctic Council.
* Represent the voice of the science community as a whole in the Arctic Council.
* Be the vehicle through which to simplify and at the same time increase relevance of non-Arctic countries’ contribution to Arctic Council, its strategy and strategic actions for Science.
* Play the leading role “in assisting the holistic coordinating of Arctic Council working groups through information exchange, data management and coordination.”

#### 1.3 Connecting to international initiatives and organizations

GEO recognition requires that the organisation:

* Has an interest, mandate in or use Earth observations or related activities
* Participating in the regional initiative exert the requisite leadership to address whatever is in focus in the region.
* Adheres to GEO’s overarching goals and objectives including the importance of broad, open data policies,
* Adheres to GEO’s overarching goals and objectives including integrated Earth observations (across domains, across space-based and in situ observations, and across organizations)
* Adheres to GEO’s overarching goals and objectives including advocacy for sustained Earth observations

### 2 Arctic observing system

* Coordinate the implementation of a pan-Arctic observing system with regional and global observing initiatives, and organize efforts in securing resources for its sustained operation through the leadership of the Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (SAON) initiative.
* Be the reference coordinating and facilitating body for the development of a sustained and integrated Arctic-observing system;
* Be a catalyst for the establishment of new observing activities where the identified needs are not yet covered by existing systems
* Look at both scientific and operational applications (e.g. Copernicus) of an integrated Arctic-observing system;

### 3 Data

* SAON will facilitate the orchestration of national and regional initiatives to build a pan-Arctic network for sharing of Arctic data.
* Work, through the IASC-SAON Arctic Data Committee, to develop a broad, globally connected Arctic observing data and information system of systems that is based on open access data and standards, in addition to recognizing and addressing ethical use and proprietary rights of Indigenous Knowledge and that delivers value to Arctic and global communities.
* Facilitate a concerted effort in cooperation with member countries and organizations to make Arctic scientific data more accessible to researchers worldwide. Build or facilitate mechanism so that worldwide researchers can access to all Arctic data and download them.
* Support the development of observation series and the access to free, open and high quality data from a network of selected observing systems that have been identified as providing key information in assessing and understanding the ongoing changes in the Arctic on an overarching level.
* Be the main hub for data sharing and the coordination of international Arctic research. The 'go-to' source for Arctic observing information and reference. The platform to learn about initiatives or to access programs or data.
* Approach data integration from a semantic level (knowledge level) downward (to information and data levels).
* Promote and provide common data standards and guidelines for sharing mechanisms between different databases and programs.
* Promote the increase of open-access data and its distribution.
* Facilitate the identification of needed policies to support the sharing of information from different knowledge systems.
* Create a framework for a heterogeneous but consistent system of observations.

### 4 Networks

* Facilitate the orchestration of national and regional initiatives to build a pan-Arctic network of observations.
* The concept of “network of networks” in referring to the desired roles and services of SAON to individual observing networks and programs.Leverage existing efforts and networks, contribute to reduce duplications and redundancies.
* Identifying the needs and issues of the various observing networks, and using the SAON committee structure to help respond to them.
* Build or facilitate archive of comprehensive information on the Arctic Observing Network.
* Show direction or systems of Comprehensive and Efficient Network of Observation, effective to the main Arctic Issues related to global change, such as strong warming, cryosphere degradation, GHG emissions, and so on.
* Managing, coordinating and maintaining an up-to-date database of national inventories of Arctic observing networks;
* Defining strategic observing networks for the purposes of sound and sustainable, international environmental governance;
* Define an updated strategy for sustained observations of the Arctic , making sure that the existing observation sites, infrastructures or time series are pursued and that current gaps in the arctic observation capacity in terms of infrastructures, technological developments and network design are identified.
* SAON connects a network of networks for monitoring the Arctic. It is facilitating partnerships, motivating multinational funding opportunities, and supporting multinational engagement among Arctic observing networks and with the global observing community.
* SAON will envision on how SAON network components will together achieve a comprehensive, integrated arctic observing system and how this system of systems connects to global scale observing activities.

### 5 Funding

* “Sustaining” is a verb – to sustain Arctic Council observer networks. There must be some funding mechanism, rather than just relying on the observing community.
* Provide the governments with the elements justifying a long-term financial commitment in Arctic observations
* More active lobbying in relation to the EU science policies and other transnational funding agencies

### 6 Committees

The overarching purpose of the ADC is to promote and facilitate international collaboration towards the goal of free, ethically open, sustained and timely access to Arctic data through useful, usable, and interoperable systems. Data should be made available fully, freely, and openly with minimal delay.

The overarching goal of SAON CON is to promote and facilitate international collaboration towards the goal of a pan-Arctic observational system for long term acquisition and proliferation of fundamental knowledge on global environmental change, with a holistic/Earth System Science perspective.