



SAON Board meeting 9th January 2019
Teleconference 16-17 (CET) /10-11 AM (EST)
Minutes

1. Introductions and adoption of agenda

Mikko Strahlendorff (Finland) had been asked by the chairmanship to lead the meeting. He welcomed the participants. The agenda was adopted (Appendix 1). The list of participants is found in Appendix 2, the list of documents is found in Appendix 3, and the list of actions is found in Appendix 4.

2. ArcticGEOSS

Mikko Strahlendorff made reference to the Board meeting 3rd December 2018 and the decision to make a response to the review that the GEO Programme Board (PB) had made to the ArcticGEOSS application. The purpose of the meeting would be to go through the draft response provided and to obtain the Board members' comments and additions to this.

Jan Rene Larsen (SAON Secretary) explained that the current draft had focus on questions raised by the PB, but also provided additional information. Sections 1-3 in the response address PB questions, while sections 4-9 offer additional information.

2.1 GEOCRI

Mikko Strahlendorff summarised this part of the response by noting that GEOCRI and ArcticGEOSS complement each other in the sense that GEOCRI is more research oriented while ArcticGEOSS has focus on end-users.

Attilio Gambardella (European Commission) recommended that with a focus on end-users, and that a link to WMO's initiative on Arctic oriented climate services¹ should be added to the response, since this is a project well known in the GEO community.

2.2 ArcticGEOSS

Jan Rene Larsen explained that this part of the response focuses on the work of ADC and their current work to establish federated search capabilities and semantics, making reference to the latest Committee meeting

¹ <https://public.wmo.int/en/projects/establish-climate-services-arctic-polar-region>

in Geneva. It was noted that this effort is not manifest as a concrete system but that a status as ArcticGEOSS would give a push in this direction. Mikko Strahlendorff added that a reference to GEOSS *knowledge hubs* had been introduced and that in his view, a regional GEOSS node could such a hub.

Craig Larlee (GEO Secretariat) said that the discussion within the Programme Board in GEO was to try to understand what the intent was around this data system. Recognizing that there are likely still many questions to be resolved, this is not unusual for an initiative at this stage. The GEO *knowledge hubs* is a relatively new idea, and it is a different idea than having nodes in that it is conceived as a single knowledge hub for GEO, as a single window into the resources that are in particular being generated through the GEO *Flagships* and *Initiatives*. It would be a way for users to access not only the products and services that are being developed by these initiatives, but as well the data that were used to generate those products and services as well as the methods that were being used to produce them. It is with the intent of making the entire system open to be able to being reproduced by other users and other regions. This is at an early stage, it is going to be continued to be developed through the GEO Expert Advisory Group process. GEO is not looking at a multi-nodal system for GEOSS, and Craig Larlee would not encourage to go too far down that line as it may not be a future direction within GEO.

Larry D. Hinzman (USA) was interested to know in the reading of the question from the PB if GEO felt that there were redundancies, conflicts, or overlaps that are not apparent? He stressed that SAON would not be interested in creating such issues.

Craig Larlee responded that it is always a concern when initiatives are coming up that have plans that are very similar to existing initiatives. The question would be if there is another way to work together within the framework of a single initiative and in what way is the new initiative clearly distinct from the existing initiative. On this particular section dealing with the data system, there has been a more recent concern within GEO generally that there is a risk of proliferation of separate data systems whereas the concept of GEOSS was intended as a single system of systems so that the information would be readily available throughout. It is federated in the sense that the data does not reside in a central repository but that there should be an open sharing throughout; there is not a wish to see a regionalisation where regions develop their own systems where data is not sharable throughout the global system of systems.

Mikko Strahlendorff responded that this was intended with the current text, and wanted to update the text to reflect that what ArcticGEOSS wants to achieve is to make sure that in a GEO *knowledge hub*, associated with the key word Arctic, there would be solutions and examples that others could replicate somewhere else.

2.3. ArcticGEOSS: SAON Objective 1.5 and 3.3

Jan Rene Larsen explained that this section in the response addresses a very specific question raised by the the PB. Through Objective 1.5 the SAON Secretariat offers to be the repository for products (reports, data sets, etc.) that have come out of various programmes but which loses their 'home' once the programmes are terminated. The current formulation of the objective implies that this was meant to be the only activity under an ArcticGEOSS, and the response seeks to clarify this.

2.4. Political mandate for SAON

Jan Rene Larsen explained that the section makes reference to Arctic Council declarations that lead up to the establishment of SAON. He explained that it is somewhat detailed, but he had noted that the PB is interested in the political mandate of the applicants.

Attilio Gambardella proposed that in the paragraph making reference to the joint statement from the 2nd Arctic Science ministerial, it should be emphasized that SAON was considered a reference organisation when it comes to Arctic observations both in the 1st and 2nd Arctic Science Ministerial. It should also be added that the declaration has been signed by a significant number of government representatives. It was 25 in Washington and 26 in Berlin, meaning that there is an interest that goes beyond the eight Arctic states to endorse that statement about SAON.

Vito Vitale (Italy) proposed to add text that SAON is an organisation that enables also non-AC countries to contribute to the pan-Arctic observing system. SAON provides a platform for building this common effort, and SAON is unique from this point of view.

Larry D. Hinzman (USA) believed that the concern from GEO on redundancy and overlap would deserve more attention. If text was added in the earlier on how GEO approaches certain topics and how SAON is going to do it, this could provide some clarification.

Craig Larlee responded that one of the things that sometimes reads a bit strangely in the proposal for ArcticGEOSS is that there is reference to SAON as an organisation, and it is recognized that SAON is the lead organisation in ArcticGEOSS. It would help the application if it was clear that ArcticGEOSS is more than just SAON, that there are other organisations that are involved, and that it is reflecting a broader community.

Eva Kruemmel said that one aspect of the distinctions between ArcticGEOSS and SAON is the contribution by Arctic indigenous people's organisation in SAON, which is something that is not necessarily the case with other platforms.

Mikko Strahlendorff argued that the text should probably be changed so that in chapter 4 and 5 where SAON is in the heading, ArcticGEOSS should be put in the heading. Text should also be added on how to bring actions from SAON into the GEOSS arena, and how to use the GEOSS arena to advance topics from the Arctic. Bringing for instance indigenous peoples' perception of how a data system works forward to the GEO world globally would be meaningful.

2.5. Indigenous engagement for SAON

Eva Kruemmel wanted to add a clarification that PPs are not only invited to be on the Board but that they are also engaged in the Executive Committee. The formulation could read something like 'PPs are invited to be part of SAON, are engaged in the Board and the Executive Committee, and in ADC and CON'.

Mikko Strahlendorff wanted in both chapters the text to describe what ArcticGEOSS can add to the current state. What could it improve? As a follow up to the comment from Eva Kruemmel, one aspect could be to bring data better to the indigenous peoples, but also how the knowledge from indigenous peoples could be

brought into a modern data system. It would be relevant for GEO as a whole to bring in other knowledge into a data system.

Eva Kruemmel added that this goes beyond data systems and into general observing systems overall.

Current or coming products or services.

2.6: A roadmap to a well-integrated Arctic Observing System

2.7: Free and ethically open access to all Arctic observational data

Jan Rene Larsen summarised the contents of the sections noting that one of the comments that had come from the GEO PB was if SAON is already offering products or services or if there was something in the pipeline. Chapter 6 and 7 lists already existing or upcoming products and services from CON and ADC, respectively.

Attilio Gambardella asked for a reference to the IMOBAR work to be added to the section on the *International Arctic Observations Assessment Framework*. He also believed that 'was' should be changed to 'is' in the text 'SAON was the co-organiser of the...'

✓ Action: ADC and CON chairs to check that these sections are accurate and complete.

2.8. Potential new areas to be developed

Jan Rene Larsen explained that this section was a simple list of topics that had been raised during the Board meeting 3rd December 2018.

Vito Vitale raised the comment on the topic *Numerical Weather Prediction* that WMO at the moment is launching an initiative about regional climate centres, and he was uncertain how SAON could contribute within this topic, also in the light of YOPP and PPP.

Mikko Strahlendorff responded that the discussion now is about what an ArcticGEOSS could be in terms of extending the activities of SAON. ArcticGEOSS could be the vehicle for combining several initiatives.

Sandy Starkweather (USA) believed that instead of listing topics, it would be more relevant to describe the processes in which such topics could emerge. This could point back to the Arctic Observing Summit and also to the *value tree assessment* and should say that SAON is going to play a role through ArcticGEOSS to foster and draw out the most pressing topics. She preferred this approach instead of listing specific topics.

Nadezhda Kharlampieva (Russia) added that if such a list is to be developed, she would like the topic *water resources* to be added.

Mikko Strahlendorff supported the view raised by Sandy Starkweather to write that ArcticGEOSS will identify new topics. This would be in line with current efforts within GEO to see how far GEO can go into making earth observations policy-relevant. The updated text should at an overall level describe how topics are identified in various arenas like the Arctic Observing Summit.

2.9 Funding streams

Attilio Gambardella did not want details about the upcoming H2020 call to be included in the document, since the information is confidential. Instead the call title could be included with a brief description of the contents.

David Arthurs (PolarView) explained that there now is a funding sub-committee under ADC; it is looking at a variety of funding opportunities and will formulate a strategy within this area. There is an initiative to bring together the different funding sources to provide some coordination and make some progress in this respect. He made reference to a statement coming out of the Arctic Science Ministerial in 2018 that there should be better coordination among funders.

2.10 Next steps

Craig Larlee pointed out that GEO has just launched the process for the development of the GEO Work Programme for 2020-2022. In this process, GEO asks all existing activities in the work programme to provide new implementation plans. The status of ArcticGEOSS, based on the previous application, is that ArcticGEOSS is a *GEO Community Activity*, and ArcticGEOSS is currently in the work programme for 2019 and is invited to start or continue to implement ArcticGEOSS under this framework. There is a question now how to best treat the application because the focus of the PB in 2019 will be to review the applications for the 2020-2022 work programme. GEO would be happy to consider ArcticGEOSS if there is a wish again to apply as a *GEO Initiative* as opposed to a *GEO Community Activity*. The information presented in the document is useful in that regard, but Craig Larlee encouraged to use the template found at the GEO web site, since this now has additional questions. Craig Larlee further encouraged to combine the current PB response process with an application for the 2020-2022 period. In practise this would mean that any new application would go to the same review team members, and it would be a continuation of the same process.

Jan Rene Larsen made reference to the decision from the 3rd December 2018 Board meeting that the Board would provide a response to the review by 23rd January. In addition, the Board would engage in submitting an application for 2020-22 by 15th February.

Craig Larlee agreed that if an application had been submitted for the period 2020-22 without answering the raised questions, then the PB would have come back. His concern was to ensure that the application goes forward as smoothly as possible.

Mikko Strahlendorff summarised the discussion, proposing that there is an answer by 23rd January, but at the same time start developing an application for the 2020-22 period.

The decision was to establish a drafting team with Mikko Strahlendorff, Attilio Gambardella and Jan Rene Larsen. Timelines:

- Board to provide written input to PB review response document by 16th January
- Drafting team to provide a new version by 18th January
- New version approved by Board by 22nd January
- Document submitted by 23rd January

3. Any other business

There were none.

4. Next telephone conference

The next teleconference is 13th February 16 CET / 10 am EST.

Appendix 1: Agenda

1. Introductions and adoption of agenda (5 min) [Mikko Strahlendorff]
2. ArcticGEOSS (50 min)
[A draft response to the GEO Programme Board is found as document 08. If agreed, the response should be submitted to the GEO Secretariat by 23rd January. Mikko Strahlendorff]
3. Any other business (5 min)
4. Next telephone conference: 13th February 16 CET / 10 AM EST

Appendix 2: List of Participants

Affiliation	Name	Institution and address	Phone	e-mail
Vice-Chair	Sandy Starkweather	NOAA Climate Program Office US Arctic Observing Network (US AON) Boulder, CO	+1 303.497.5247	sandy.starkweather@noaa.gov
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Appendix 3: List of meeting documents

Agenda item	Document no	Document Title	Document author
0	09	Draft agenda. Version 8th Januar 2019	Secretariat
0	02	GoToMeeting dial-in	Secretariat
2	08	Response to GEO Programme Board review. Version 7th January 2019	Secretariat
	(10th October Board meeting)	GEO Program Board review of ArcticGEOSS (from 17th September 2018)	GEO
	(link)	Development of the GEO Work Programme for 2020-2022	GEO

<https://www.arcticobserving.org/governance/board/board-meetings/12-board-meetings/343-meeting-documents-for-board-meeting-teleconference-9th-january-2019>

Appendix 4: Actions

	Agenda item	Action	Who	When
1	2	Board and drafting team to prepare an updated document to be submitted	Board	23rd January