

**SAON Governance Review**  
**Workshop #2 – CON Workshop**  
**November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

**Background and Context**

As SAON moves forward, there are an increasing number of global and regional efforts that could have an impact on how SAON will evolve over the coming years. It was determined by the SAON Board that it would be valuable to organize a series of virtual workshops to discuss various options and recommendations surrounding SAON governance.

This second workshop on SAON governance focused on the SAON Committee on Observations and Networks (CON) and was organized under three broad objectives. The first objective was to review the mandate of the CON ( i.e. terms of reference and objectives) and to examine other similar mandated committees and working groups for complementarity and possible overlap. The second objective was to review the membership of the CON and to understand individual and organizational backgrounds and expectations. A discussion of areas of strengths amongst members was encouraged, seeking any gaps in membership. The third and final objective of the workshop was to review the structure of the CON, in particular seeking a discussion of the Chair (and Co-chair) position and to determine what changes and amendments might be needed in the CON structure to best support SAON CON objectives. These objectives were incorporated into the three-hour workshop (see Annex 1 Agenda). This virtual workshop had excellent engagement from 20 participants from across the breadth of SAON (see Annex 2 Participant Listing).

**Part 1 – Mandate of the Committee on Observations and Networks**

**Background:** Jan Rene Larsen, SAON AMAP Secretariat provided a brief overview of the mandate of the CON. He stated that in 2014, the SAON Board finalized its first implementation plan, which established two committees: the Arctic Data Committee (ADC) and the CON. The CON updated a Terms of Reference for the committee in 2017 (see Annex 3, 2014 CON Terms of Reference) as well as an initial CON work plan. The 2017 Terms of Reference identify four Tasks for the CON. These are as follows:

- 1) Support to SAON;
- 2) Policy support and inter-organizational collaboration;
- 3) Building capacity for observing networks and observations; and
- 4) Knowledge exchange across scales of observations.

The Terms of Reference also provided additional details on aspects relating to: Work Planning for these tasks; Membership; Chairs and responsibilities; Frequency and types of meetings; as well as Work Plan, Reporting and Review.

Jan Rene Larsen continued to explain that in 2018, SAON developed their Strategic Plan<sup>1</sup> that describes the CON as aiming to promote and facilitate international collaboration towards a pan-Arctic Observing System, which is defined as a sustained, integrated and multi-disciplinary system for observing this region of rapid change. The Strategic Plan also outlines three goals, with the CON being associated with Goal 1: Create a roadmap to a well-integrated Arctic Observing System.

Also in 2018, the SAON Board approved an Implementation Plan<sup>2</sup> that provided details on Goal 1. The Plan states that SAON will engage and facilitate connections among the producers and end-users of Arctic observations in order to create and sustain an Arctic Observing System. In order to achieve this goal, SAON believes that it is essential for participating parties to adopt a community-endorsed framework. The International Arctic Observations Assessment Framework<sup>3</sup>, developed in partnership with SAON, provides such a starting point. SAON will collaborate closely with its partners and other prominent Arctic and international organisations as well as with the Arctic Council Permanent Participants to find synergies and joint activities to avoid overlapping efforts to achieve Goal 1.

Goal 1 - Creating a roadmap to a well-integrated Arctic observing system, has the following five objectives:

- 1) Conduct an inventory of national observational capacities;
- 2) Complete an assessment of the adequacy of Arctic observational capacity in support of Arctic Societal Benefit Areas (SBAs);
- 3) Provide recommendations for a roadmap for future Arctic observational capacities;
- 4) Create opportunities to develop and implement observations in support of Arctic Societal Benefit Areas (SBAs); and
- 5) Develop a long-term repository for relevant project deliverables.

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<sup>1</sup> SAON Strategic Plan, [https://www.arcticobserving.org/images/pdf/Strategy\\_and\\_Implementation/SAON\\_Strategy\\_version\\_2018-2028.pdf](https://www.arcticobserving.org/images/pdf/Strategy_and_Implementation/SAON_Strategy_version_2018-2028.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> SAON Implementation Plan, [https://www.arcticobserving.org/images/pdf/Strategy\\_and\\_Implementation/SAON\\_Implementation\\_Plan\\_version\\_17JUL2018\\_Status\\_approved.pdf](https://www.arcticobserving.org/images/pdf/Strategy_and_Implementation/SAON_Implementation_Plan_version_17JUL2018_Status_approved.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> International Arctic Observations Assessment Framework, <https://www.arcticobserving.org/images/pdf/misc/STPI-SAON-International-Arctic-Observations-Framework-Report-2017.pdf>

Lisa Loseto reminded participants that last year, Jan Rene Larsen took a leadership role in the conduct of a survey by the national members on the SAON Board on their respective state-of-readiness to implement SAON Goal 1 outlined above. An analysis was conducted on the survey results and a manuscript describing the analysis was submitted as a White Paper to the Arctic Observing Summit 2020 and more recently submitted to the journal *Arctic*<sup>4</sup> (in review)

**Workshop Discussion:** Following the presentation by Jan Rene Larsen that highlighted the above background and context of the SAON CON, discussion by the workshop participants examined the mandate for the Committee.

It was noted that there is a challenge in the sequence of the mandate and terms of reference, given that the current Terms of Reference (ToR) date back to 2017 and since that time the SAON Strategic Plan and Implementation Plan have been developed. It was also observed that the Tasks identified in 2017 are no longer current. Vito Vitale stated that the 2018 Goal 1 - Tasks 2 and 3 may be considered as complete as there is an Implementation Plan and the ROADS process moving these forward. He thought that Goal 1 - Tasks 1 and 4 are still valid. Peter Pulsifer stated that there seems to be two levels within the Terms of Reference – some aspects are high-level and motherhood statements – and other are more focussed on specific actions. Sandy Starkweather commented that two levels of thinking might be valuable as one is at a policy level and the other is at a technical level. There was discussion that the TOR should be updated and revised to reflect the 2018 SAON Strategic and Implementation Plans.

Hajo Eicken said that Goal 1 – Task 1 from the 2018 Implementation Plan that reads “Conduct an inventory of national observational capacities” is a critical action for the CON to be successful. He stated that this Task requires strong engagement at the national level (e.g. the national representatives to the CON and SAON Board), and that there must be some national authority or government agency level involvement to ensure a reasonably comprehensive scope of observations represented in the national observational inventories. Furthermore, he added that given the current state of the national inventories that it is not possible to know what is going on in terms of observing. Hajo Eicken concluded that a requirement for a robust mechanism for such inventories is very important. Bill Manley agreed to this point, stating that a comprehensive inventory of observing networks is the foundation for both CON and SAON.

Heikki Lihavainen stated that the Terms of Reference are very specific and that a more generally worded mandate might be more appropriate. Peter Pulsifer in his role as Chair of the Arctic Data Committee (ADC), reinforced that it might be valuable to keep two levels of wording in the TOR. One level would contain high-level (e.g. motherhood type) language that is broad in its terminology and that there could be a second level of language that describes more specific

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<sup>4</sup> Summary Report on State of Readiness on Arctic Observations, H. Joseph, L. Loseto, J. Larsen, *Journal Arctic*, In Review.

actions and initiatives. He suggested that the two types of language in the TOR might be appropriate to fit the different actions needed.

It was pointed out by Sandy Starkweather that the national observing inventories need to be developed for a purpose. She referenced that inventories have been very valuable in the work of the EU PolarNet roadmap and the INTAROS project's gap analysis. She asked that CON should consider the question "what does CON make possible?" and reinforced the value of the national observation inventories, as well as asking the second question "what more could they be used for"? She stated that she considered CON's link to the observing assets and inventories as a key component to CON and that CON should consider what could be possible with those inventories. She further noted that the development of the national observational inventories is burdensome and therefore the inventories must be recognized as providing excellent value and to have it clearly understood how that information is being used – CON is really in a position to make some strategic choices and perhaps the ROADS process should fit into these choices.

Kjetil Torseth stated that with his experience in SAON, regional stakeholders need to be more aware of the work of CON, to encourage their support. He also supported the comments that the inventories should be considered assets for CON and that they could be used more. Bill Manley also suggested that while the inventories were of high quality, that there could be a more comprehensive perspective – that the inventories were not "an end" to themselves but that they could lead to further work. He stated that higher quality and equality is needed in the inventories and that might also mean a higher, more comprehensive perspective of knowing who's doing what, where, when, and how. In addition, he asked whether the national observation inventories were a goal just on their own merit, or if they could be used to identify synergies, gaps or duplication which may be an unstated goal of CON.

Bill Manley referenced the work of the Polar Observing Assets Working Group (POAWG). He explained that the POAWG has been meeting for about 6 months with a core group of 5-6 individuals but that the membership will soon be opened up to broader representation. The POAWG recognized the need to have an inventory of different observational assets which are currently spread across a fragmented landscape. He was clear that the POAWG's focus is on observing assets, rather than scientific datasets. The POAWG will also be drawing from some of the lessons learned from the SAON ADC in terms of data interoperability of metadata.

Larry Hinzman, ISAC Chair, stated that the CON ToR might be very focused on implementation but that he felt that these are needed activities and that they are indeed "on track". He stated that the CON Terms of Reference had been useful in the development of the SAON Strategy. He added that the ToR mesh well with those from the Arctic Observing Summit, as well as aligning with the endorsements of the Arctic Science Ministerial. Larry Hinzman also stated that the

Terms of Reference might be considered as ambitious and that they have not been achieved yet but that they could be broken down into more achievable actions.

Bill Manley spoke that the CON is in a unique position and that it can really make a difference; that it could help in interdisciplinary collaboration by creating awareness and facilitating interactions between several different initiatives. He thought that one such opportunity for CON could be to help inform and establish a basis for collaborations and information exchange.

Vito Vitale noted that the ADC mandate and work plans are facilitated by a common agenda and that the CON mandate is more complex. He suggested that the ROADS process may be key in determining the future of both of these SAON committees. Sandy Starkweather spoke that there is going to need to be overlap between the ROADS Advisory Panel and the CON. She also noted that the ROADS process will be a shared process between SAON and the AOS, and that there is a lot of opportunities to harness these joint activities towards the ROADS process. As the ROADS governance process is being formalized, she noted that everyone needs to be working together. She also noted that there are a lot of “moving pieces” in the governance development at this time, and that the communities need to continue to work closely together. Engagement has already occurred with the Senior Arctic Officials on the ROADS process but that there is a long path and ongoing communication needed.

#### **Possible Follow-Up Actions on the Mandate of CON:**

- The ***CON Terms of Reference should be updated*** (from 2017) and revised so as to reflect the 2018 SAON Strategy and Implementation Plan.
- The ***value and relevancy of the national observation inventories needs to be reinforced*** with SAON Board members; in addition the ASM3 Ministerial Statement could present an opportunity.
- ***Further discussion on the relationship between SAON CON and POAWG should be encouraged*** – to capture synergies between the scientific focus on Arctic observing networks (SAON CON) and the focus on an inventory of polar observing assets (POAWG).

## **Part 2 - Membership of the Committee on Observations and Networks**

**Background:** Lisa Loseto provided highlights on the membership of the CON. She explained that pursuant to the current Terms of Reference (2014), the SAON CON is comprised of a Chair position, Secretariat, and appointed representatives of SAON member countries, organizations, AC Permanent Participants and networks.

The CON National/Organizational Representatives are appointed by the SAON Board. The National Representatives should be appointed according to the following criteria; and, they should:

- a) be in a position to reflect national Arctic observational interests and activities;
- b) be highly motivated to be able to network both at the national level (within and among agencies, universities, networks) and internationally within CON; and
- c) ideally be a member of a National SAON committee/team (or inventory).

Lisa Loseto explained that while there is the official national appointments via the SAON Board, to ensure broad engagement from all interested individuals and organizations, additional experts can be invited to join CON through an open nomination process, pending approval by the SAON Board. She stated that CON representatives, through either avenue of appointment, speak on behalf of their depth of knowledge on Arctic observing network either through representing their country or the organization.

The ToR details on the CON chair position were also outlined by Lisa Loseto. The ToR state that the oversight positions can consist of Co-chairs, or a Chair and a number of Vice-chairs; and that the cycles of chairs and deliverables should follow the two-year cycle of the Arctic Council. She emphasized that members on the CON, as well as the Chair position, are all volunteer positions and that at times it can be the same people working on various files. The work load can be substantial and at times overwhelming. It was described as “having common people in common places” too frequently. This is one reason why there needs to be a discussion on the CON chair position. She also asked the participants to consider the question “where can we leverage existing groups and work together so as to reduce these burdens”?

**Workshop Discussion:** The discussion opened with Jan Rene Larsen speaking to aspects of the CON membership from the ToR. He reinforced that the CON members needed strong links to the SAON National Committees. One reason for this is for the CON members to have a good understanding of the national observing resources. There is currently about twenty members on the CON with lots of interest in the work but that membership on the CON has been up and down over the years.

In terms of membership on the CON, Peter Pulsifer stated that steady membership can be very challenging. He described a “mixed model” of membership on the ADC, where there are some

representatives from the National SAON Committees as well as volunteer members who have asked to join the ADC. He acknowledged that both types of members bring different strengths and that the mixed model has worked well for the ADC. He also noted that the ADC has had to deal with members of the ADC asking to write funding proposals associated with the ADC and that the Committee has had to determine how to deal with this. They have taken a high level approach with these requests as they have felt that such proposals are useful to Arctic data management.

Bill Manley asked if there was any specific language used in the ADC Terms of Reference that could be relevant and useful for the CON review. Peter Pulsifer responded that the ADC will be reviewing the mixed model and mandate aspects at the upcoming annual meeting early in 2021.

Sandy Starkweather spoke about the CON membership in light of the ongoing ROADS development process. She suggested that there would likely be a strong link between the ROADS Advisory Panel and the CON; and in fact, there should probably be some overlap in their membership. She continued on to speak of the ROADS process, acknowledging that it is still being defined so that these are preliminary thoughts but that the CON could have a cross-cutting role with regards to the ROADS Advisory Panel. She added that within the CON there is a lot of best practice work that gets discussed in network settings and that this would be valuable in developing the steps within the ROADS process. She described those individuals who are conducting observing activities as often having a readymade understanding of where their observations are adding value and having impact towards societal benefit – this would be valuable in the ROADS steps and in understanding observing practices and needs. It was noted again that this work would be very challenging without the observing inventories as a starting point.

There was discussion on the need for National SAON Committees, to which the respective national CON members could turn and draw upon for advice and knowledge within their countries. Jan Rene Larsen provided some historical context on the National Committees, stating that they are intended to be the building blocks of SAON; however, there has been varying successful amongst countries on how these Committees have worked. It was noted that these National SAON Committees are critical to the success of SAON and that there needs to be strong linkages between the CON members and these Committees. Maribeth Murray reinforced that CON needs to have strong National Committees as a foundation to the success of its work. Within Canada, she noted that there needs to be a strong national presence that can be inclusive of non-government work, as there are at least three academic-led initiatives with extensive Arctic observing activities. Tetsuo Sueyoshi stated that in Japan, the need for a Japanese National Committee was relatively straight forward as there is one national research institute that conducts much of the observing activity. However, he noted that they do include other groups who work outside of their projects and then they can cover most observation activity. He also

reminded participants of the opportunity that is presented with the upcoming Arctic Science Ministerial 3 (ASM3) meeting, at which time there will be a Joint Statement released by the Ministers. The Joint Statement could be used as a national focal point and that language on the need for strong National Committees could be incorporated - if this was deemed a priority. Jan Rene Larsen replied that this would be welcomed as it would also force the CON to sharpen its thinking on what kind of national structures would be envisioned, and to describe the task assignment to these structures. He accepted the invitation to work on this and to find some good formulations.

There was a discussion on the need to have increased Indigenous membership on the CON. Lisa Loseto, CON Chair, noted that the ICC has been a strong proponent of the work of CON and Eva Krummel has been very engaged. However, additional Indigenous organizations and committees should be engaged. Vito Vitale agreed that Indigenous participation has been challenging and that he saw two aspects as perhaps inhibiting this – funding and capacity/competencies to participate. He suggested that SAON should give consideration to developing a means to provide adequate funding to enable Indigenous participation. Nadezhda Kharlampieva spoke that Indigenous engagement is improving in Russia as more Indigenous youth are speaking English, the language of many international meetings.

Hajo Eicken stated that the CON should focus on the benefits that would be derived by Indigenous communities and organizations. He noted that the Societal Benefit Area analysis that was conducted within SAON has been primarily driven by non-Indigenous concerns. It is important to find a way to communicate with a few key Indigenous organizations as to where they see the greatest benefits in terms of sustained observations. Furthermore, he suggested that a broad invitation to Indigenous communities and organizations to participate in the CON may be less effective, rather a focused invitation to participate in a focused task might be more successful. The focused task approach could clearly establish what the benefits of joining CON might be and where SAON can adjust some of its scope to be of the greatest help to community driven observing. Lisa Loseto stated that there should be a means where the discussion of societal benefits could be thought of holistically, across several committees. Peter Pulsifer reported that Indigenous participation is a challenge within the ADC as well. He described that in the ADC's current work on terminology, the non-Indigenous members are seeking input from Indigenous communities but that there is limited capacity and that it would be better to work together to address this challenge.

The discussion then moved to the topic of the CON Chair and possible Vice-chair positions. Maribeth Murray suggested that the Chair position should have a term duration that does not directly overlap with the Chairmanship of Arctic Council. Rather, she suggested that it could rotate every two years but in alternate years to the Arctic Council Chair rotation – so as to not have both Chair positions changing in the same year. Alternatively, the CON Chair position could be held for a 3-



year term. This proposed alternation of the CON Chair would ensure institutional memory and also allow the individuals to feed information to the new Arctic council. It was agreed amongst participants that a Vice-Chair position for CON was a good idea. There was discussion that perhaps three leadership positions should be considered: a Chair, a Vice-Chair (who would become the future Chair), as well as a Past Chair. The Past Chair position could be one of a mentor and voice of experience to support the Chair. The Vice-Chair position could be one of learning for 2-3 years before assuming the Chair position. Peter Pulsifer, in his experience as the ADC Chair, spoke of the need for sustainability in the Chair positions and to consider succession planning as well – these concerns could be addressed with the Chair, Vice-Chair and Past-Chair positions. He suggested that the two year term as Chair goes by very quickly and that the incumbent is often just getting comfortable when it is time to move. He suggested that CON might want to consider a two year term plus two year (optional) term.

Vito Vitale asked for clarification of the CON's role in the ROADS process; he described the current situation as – we always need to start where we are coming from, before moving forward. Sandy Starkweather responded that CON will be able to provide the resource base as input to the ROADS process and that it can serve a cross-cutting purpose. She stated that the ROADS Advisory Panel and the CON should have some overlap in their membership to ensure complementarity. The CON will also be able to provide some “best practice” advice and this can be seen in the steps outlined within the ROADS process. In addition, she stated that the CON will be able to provide support to the ROADS process from end-to-end. Hajo Eicken stated that the CON has a lot of activity in development and that the Expert Panels of the ROADS process may share membership with the CON. He noted that we will need to determine how best to align activities between committees and initiatives so as to not overly tax individuals.

Heikki Lihavainen also asked whether the CON Membership or Terms of Reference should a quorum defined, or whether a minimum number of members must be in attendance at the CON meetings. Jan Rene Larsen added that the current ToR state that each nation gets one vote, even if there are more than one member present from said country. Eija Asmi asked if there had been consideration of there being industry participants in the CON and how the national representative was selected. Jan Rene Larsen clarified that several countries had “National SAON Committees” where academics, governments and industry could come together to discuss Arctic observing.

Peter Pulsifer stated that the ADC had turned to both SAON and IASC for guidance in membership and that as a result more members have come forward to the ADC.

#### **Possible Follow-Up Actions on the Membership of CON:**

- ***Strong National SAON Committees are needed*** as the foundation for the SAON CON, as well as for the SAON ADC. This requirement should be brought forward to the two oversight bodies of SAON, namely the Arctic Council and IASC.

- The upcoming **Arctic Science Ministerial 3 meeting represents an opportunity** to develop and deliver key messages into the Joint Statement that is released by the Ministers. The Joint Statement could be used to restate the need for strong National SAON Committees, if this was deemed a priority.
- The **leadership of the CON should consider having a Chair, a Vice-Chair and a Past-Chair positions**. The Vice-Chair would serve in a support capacity to the Chair and move forward to the Chair position at the end of their term. The Past-Chair position would serve as an advisor to the Chair passing along guidance based on their previous Chair experiences.

### Part C - Structure of the Committee on Observations and Networks

**Background:** Lisa Loseto, current CON Chair, presented background material on the structure and governance of the CON. Figure 1 was presented as it shows the relationship between the CON, the ADC and the SAON Board.

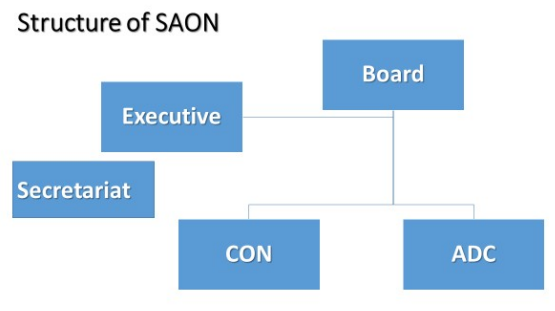
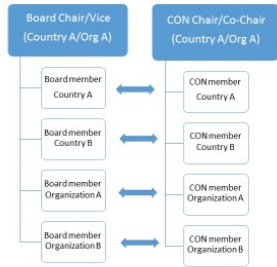


Figure 1 - Structure of SAON

Then Figures 2 and 3, below, were discussed by Lisa Loseto as it shows the two models of possible membership of the CON. One option is to have a partnered/paired architecture wherein the CON and SAON Board members have delegated authority from their member countries and organizations. The alternative model is a non-structured approach wherein self-motivated individuals would become members of the CON.

Partnered/Paired Architecture: CON & Board  
- delegated authority for Country/Org



Non-Structured: CON  
- Attract Self motivated  
- A component of ADC

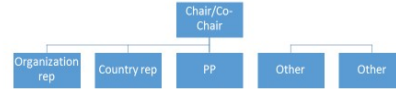


Figure 2: Partnered/Paired Architecture (CON and SAON Board members are delegated from Country/Organizations; Figure 3: Non-Structured CON where self-motivated individuals are attracted

Lisa Loseto went on to show a third option for the CON governance (Figure 4) that represents a combination of these two approaches (partnered/paired model combined with the non-structured model). This combined approach will require that the CON focus on attracting self-motivated people to join the Committee. She added that this combination model is similar to the ADC as described by Peter Pulsifer, ADC Chair earlier in the workshop. In addition, Lisa Loseto also highlighted the right hand side of Figure 4 that shows the need for linkages between the CON and the Arctic Observing Summit (AOS) Working Groups (WGs).

Combination, alternation & Working Group Structure  
(Flexibility to support multiple/changing focus)

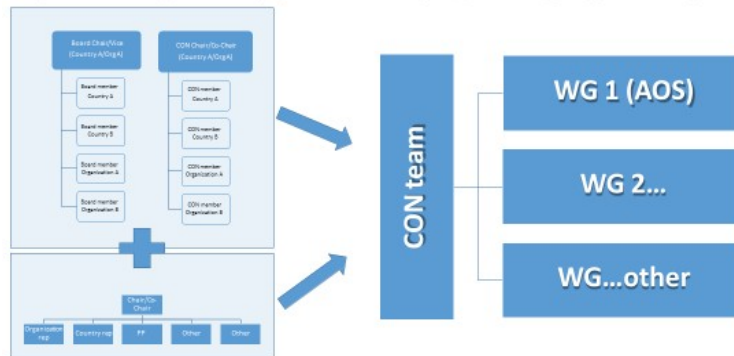


Figure 4: Combination Model (Structured and Non-structured Models)

**Workshop Discussion:** The relationship between the CON and the AOS WGs was discussed. Maribeth Murray provided some background on the AOS stating that it started in 2013 and that it is held annually in conjunction with the Arctic Science Summit Week. Over the years, various WGs have been launched and these now include WGs on data, observing systems, global observing networks, adaptation and mitigation, and food security. She also noted that the WGs tackle a different area each year, and meet at the Summit to focus discussions on these topics. Each of

the WGs produce a synthesis of relevant papers and a set of recommendations that go into the AOS final report – highlights of which are provided to the Arctic Science Ministerial. It was noted that the AOS WGs are transitioning to more sustained WGs rather than meeting only on the schedule of the AOS meeting.

It was observed that the AOS WG4, on data interoperability, aligned closely with the SAON ADC. Hajo Eiken suggested that the AOS WG3, Indigenous Food Security, might be an avenue to further engage with Indigenous participants; however, he noted that the AOS WG3 is really just getting started so it would be best to approach them in perhaps another year or two. Jan Rene Larsen added that he has been actively engaged in the AOS WG5, Global Observing Networks, and that it would be another good connection with the SAON CON. He added that as others have already stated, there are already good linkages with AOS WG 1 (Observing Systems) and WG 5 (Global Observing Networks) and that there is likely good overlap in the membership between these WGs and the CON. He stated that there is a need to reach out and to perhaps formalize the close working relationships between these groups. Hajo Eicken, as Co-Chair of AOS 2020, stated that he appreciated all the contributions that various CON members have made to the recent Summits. He also noted that there is a lot of development activity taking place now with the ROADS governance process and that once the ROADS Advisory Panel and Expert Groups have been formed, that it might be worthwhile to then consider how to best align these different activities, and not tax people's time too much. Lisa Loseto and Jan Rene Larsen suggested that it would be beneficial to harmonize relationships with the AOS WGs to ensure that people's efforts and capacity are used most effectively. It was suggested that perhaps inter-sessional discussions could be convened to further discuss this challenge. A concluding suggestion was that perhaps CON could host intersessional meetings with the AOS WGs and that there would be an annual meeting at the AOS itself.

Lisa Loseto stated that SAON CON has been engaged with the AOS and that the formal relationship could be strengthened. Peter Pulsifer, Chair of the SAON ADC, explained that good connections are being built between the ADC and AOS WG4 on Data Interoperability. He also noted that the parent oversight bodies of these various working groups were seen to be IASC, SAON and AOS but it is clear that any activity that is conducted within this community can feed into any or all of those bodies. Hajo Eicken observed that the AOS WGs are perhaps more grass-roots and bottom up driven versus the SAON ADC and CON. He stated that the Summit is a great venue to enhance the links amongst those working on observing activities and networks.

The discussion then turned to CON and the Arctic Council (AC) WGs. Jan Rene Larsen explained that SAON was to have had close linkages with these WGs, particularly with the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP) and that this relationship was written into the founding documents of SAON. However, representatives from the AC WGs rarely attend the SAON or sub-committee meetings with the exception of Sarah Kalhok Bourque, Canada AMAP Head of

Delegation. He added that SAON has perhaps not been very visible or attractive to the AC WGs and that more work could be done in this regard.

In regards to the AC WGs, it was generally felt that these communities were harder to link with, in part because the AC WGs have longer-term plans that may be less flexible to participate in. The AC WG, Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF), has been actively engaged with community based monitoring programs, the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program (CBMP), as well as the AOS WGs. Maribeth Murray noted that some of the AOS WGs have good intersections with the AC WGs of CAFF and PAME (Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment). Hajo Eicken suggested that it might be valuable to identify one or two AC WGs to start working and building bridges with, and that this might lead to more collaboration. Lisa Loseto suggested that perhaps a proof-of-concept could be tried with one of the AC WGs as an initial step. Hajo Eicken also suggested that perhaps the AC's Sustainable Development WG (SDWG) could also be of assistance in engaging with Indigenous participants. Maribeth Murray suggested that CAFF might be another AC WG to focus on, as they might be most familiar with the work of SAON given their involvement in the AOS meetings.

Returning to the presentation made by Lisa Loseto and the “Combination Model” for CON (Structured and Non-structured Models), Figure 4, Vito Vitale spoke in favour of this combined approach to the CON membership as it builds on the SAON national committees as well as interested individuals. He emphasized the need to broaden the base foundational membership of the CON, citing how he has invited some newcomers from the Italian Arctic community to today's workshop so as to broaden and build additional support within his country. Adam Houben described the need to have the National Committees supporting SAON as well as the sub-committees of ADC and CON. Nadezhda Kharlampieva spoke about the links they can see in Russia between the climate change teams and the CON SAON efforts. She also asked a question in the chat about what specialties the Indigenous people who will have to participate in SAON should have: hydrometrology or ecology and nature users?

#### **Possible Follow-Up Actions on the Structure of CON:**

- ***Synergies and further collaboration should be developed, between the SAON CON and:***
  - a. the Arctic Council WGs;***
  - b. the Arctic Observing Summit WGs; and***
  - c. the ROADS process.***
- ***The “combination model” for SAON CON membership should be formalized.***
- ***Develop a plan to begin taking steps toward the “combination model”.***

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## **ANNEX 1 - Agenda**

### **SAON Governance Review Workshop #2 – Governance of SAON’s Committee on Observations and Networks 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

#### ***Objectives of workshop:***

- 1) *To review the mandate of the Committee on Observations and Networks - CON - (e.g. terms of reference and objectives); examine other similar mandated Committees and Working Groups for complementarity/overlap; draft changes and amendments as appropriate*
- 2) *To review the membership of the CON, understand individual and organizational backgrounds and expectations; discussion of areas of strengths amongst members; identify any gaps in membership*
- 3) *To review the structure of CON; discussion of Chair (and co-chair) position; and determine draft changes and amendments to structure to best support SAON CON objectives*

#### ***Agenda (3 hours)***

10:00 Introductions

10:05 Reference to the Code of Conduct <https://www.assw2020.is/code-of-conduct>

10:10 Review and confirmation of above workshop objectives

#### ***Part A – Review the Mandate of the CON***

10:15 Presentation on the CON Mandate (Lisa Loseto/Jan Rene Larsen)

- Discussion of the CON terms of reference and objectives; short historical perspective
- Discuss current structure, concept on National Committees and alternative structures
- Discuss other committees or working groups that exist and that might complement or overlap? Consideration of how best to link, for example, Arctic Council Working Groups or AOS Working Groups with CON.

#### ***Part B – Existing CON Membership: Background and Expectations***

11:00 Opportunity for members to speak of their background and expertise – both as individuals and from an organizational perspective

- Discussion of strengths that are present amongst CON members
- Identification of any gaps; where additional representatives may need to be sought; discussion on how to reach out to any additional representatives

- (either in this workshop or a separate workshop) How to obtain greater Indigenous participation in the CON
- Discussion of capacity issues in leading and participating in the CON; recognition of the considerable level of effort required to do this; and associated time and resource commitment

***Short Break – 10 minutes***

***Part C – Reporting Structure of CON***

12:00 Presentation of Current Reporting Structure of the CON (Lisa Loseto)

- Review and discussion of current structure, reporting and chairmanship, consideration of possible co-chair position (see also discussion on capacity issues above)
- Relationship with other initiatives
- Advice and views on organizational structure. Can improvements be made? Is there more than one option to be considered (pros/cons of each)?
- How can a ‘new structure/governance’ better support the objectives of CON and SAON

12:45 Wrap Up and Next Steps; Reminder of future workshops

1:00 End of the Workshop

Pre-reads:

- [The SAON Strategy describes SAON Goals](#). Please read Goal 1, which defines the goal of CON
- [The SAON Work Plan](#). Please read the part on Goal 1 (Page 3-9).
- [CON Terms of Reference](#)
- The most recent [CON Work Plan](#) goes back to 2017.
- At earlier SAON Board and CON meetings, Lisa Loseto has presented different models for the SAON CON Architecture: [Presentation](#) and [Discussion Paper](#).



**ANNEX 2**

**SAON CON Workshop – List of Participants**

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**ANNEX 3**

**Terms of Reference for SAON CON  
(Agreed upon May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017)**

**1. Background**

*The Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (SAON) supports and strengthens the development of multinational engagement for sustained and coordinated pan-Arctic observing and data sharing systems that serve societal needs, particularly related to environmental, social, economic and cultural issues.*

*SAON promotes the Vision of well-defined observing networks that enable users to have access to high quality data that will realize pan-Arctic and global value-added services and provide societal benefits. Its Goal is to enhance Arctic-wide observing activities by facilitating partnerships and synergies among observing and data networks, and promoting sharing and synthesis of data and information. SAON is committed to facilitating the inclusion of Arctic Indigenous Peoples in observing activities. The SAON Leadership Team was established in 2011 at the request of the Arctic Council (AC) and IASC to provide governance for SAON activities. The Team, including a Board and an Executive Committee, is responsible for creating its own operating guidelines in order to maximize its capacity to encourage activities that enhance relevant Arctic observations and associated requirements for data-sharing and knowledge translation.*

In 2014 the SAON Board recognized the need for task-oriented committees to provide advice to the Board on securing and improving Arctic observations and networks and the accessibility of information and data. This resulted in the establishment of two SAON Committees: (1) Committee on Observations and Networks (CON), and (2) Arctic Data Committee (ADC).

**2. Tasks and aims**

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. The specific Tasks and related aims of SAON CON include the following:

***Task 1. Support to SAON***

- Through the use of inventories, advise the SAON Board on co-ordination and collaboration of Arctic observing activities and address questions regarding
  - o provision of information on the baseline arctic observational assets that are currently available
  - o improvement of the Arctic observing networks (i.e. identify synergies, gaps, duplication)

- o sustainability of observational platforms among nations and organizations (including indigenous peoples)
- o effective planning (including funding) of current and future observational systems
- Coordinate and support of the relationship between CON and national SAON committees in terms of
  - o providing coordination
  - o acting as a platform into which national committees can feed information
  - o facilitating sharing of information and inventories of Arctic Observing Systems managed nationally
  - o supporting, where needed, the development of National SAON committees
- Work with the partner SAON committee, Arctic Data Committee (ADC) on common strategies, meetings and products and (e.g. arrange workshops, develop visualization methods, link inventories and data etc.).

***Task 2. Policy support and inter-organizational collaboration***

- Participate and support inventory requests/needs for Arctic Council -relevant themes. Ensure engagement and linkages with inventory activities carried out by the Arctic Council Working Groups (e.g. the monitoring programs of AMAP and the biodiversity programs with CAFF).
- Develop partnerships with other initiatives (e.g. WMO’s Global Cryosphere Watch (GCI), GEO Cold Regions Initiative (GEOCRI) and projects (e.g. EU-PolarNet, INTERACT, INTAROS) by membership, joint meetings and/or collaboration on joint activities or products like inventories
- Facilitate interactions at the science-policy interface by helping to translate and communicate observation-based knowledge to decision-making in the Arctic regions and beyond.

***Task 3. Building capacity for observing networks and observations***

- Support, via participatory engagement (e.g. inventories, meetings, events and workshops) and where possible with resources, Arctic observational assets (project, programs, platforms, networks) that span across the environmental/natural, social, economic, and health and sciences
- Build and support the community of observing networks across domains by facilitating the sharing of best practises and creation of common guidelines via participatory engagement and consultations

***Task 4. Knowledge exchange across scales of observations***

- Inclusion of all scales of observations to SAON and SAON CON, spanning from local and community-based and in-situ observing to remote sensing observations and promotion of integration and collaboration across scales of observations

- Strengthening the role of community-based monitoring within the arctic observing activities and within SAON
- Work, jointly with traditional knowledge holders and local communities, on best practices for the utilization of traditional and community-based knowledge in arctic observing
- Build capacity and develop connections between scientists, community members and holders of traditional knowledge

### **3. Work planning for Tasks/Deliverables**

Work plans will be developed to achieve identified tasks/deliverables. The work plan periods will follow the two-year AC chairmanship period. Tasks and deliverables must support the goals and objectives of the SAON and SAON CON and can be proposed by the committees, executive and board. Short and long term tasks must be agreed to at both the Board and Committee level. Once defined, the Committee will develop a work plan to achieve the tasks/deliverables that will be shared back with the executive and board.

Without dedicated funds to the SAON CON, the completion and work toward tasks is dependent on the participation level/ability of the CON membership, secretariat and external partnership support.

### **4. Membership, Chairs and Responsibilities**

SAON CON is comprised of a Chairmanship, Secretariat and appointed representatives of SAON member countries, organizations, AC Permanent Participants and networks. CON National/Organizational Representatives are appointed by the SAON Board. To ensure broad engagement from all interested individuals and organizations, additional experts can be invited to join CON through an open nomination process, pending approval by the SAON Board.

The chairmanship can consist of Co-chairs, or a Chair and a number of Vice-chairs.

The National Representatives should be appointed according to the following criteria: They should a) be in a position to reflect national arctic observational interests and activities, b) be highly motivated to be able to network both at the national level (within and among agencies, universities, networks) and internationally within CON and c) ideally be a member of a National SAON committee/team (or inventory).

The SAON CON Chairmanship should, ideally, consist of representatives of different countries and organizations, to broaden up the SAON CON partnerships. The chairmanship are nominated among and

by the SAON CON members. The nominations are confirmed by the SAON Board for a term of two years. Cycles of chairs and deliverables should follow the two-year cycle of the Arctic Council.

The SAON CON members will participate on the meetings and ongoing activities, contribute a national perspective, and report updates and work to the associated SAON Board member. and SAON Board

Where the CON decisions require voting, the National Representative(s) and the Organizational representative(s) cast the votes. The outcome of the voting is determined by a simple majority.

#### **5. Frequency and Types of meetings**

The Committee will meet bi-monthly with the exception of the summer field season (June-August). Meetings can occur more frequently to reflect the needs of specific tasks or deliverables at hand. Meetings are held via teleconference supported by the SAON Secretariat. Face to face meetings will occur during the Arctic Observing Summit (AOS), a meeting hosted by SAON and IASC. Additional face to face meetings may be proposed with opportunistic gatherings/conferences.

#### **6. Work Plan, Reporting and Review**

The SAON CON activities will be organised into a two-year work plan. The work plan development is led by the CON Chairmanship, and it's following the two-year chairmanship terms. The work plan includes short and long term tasks, milestones and deliverables that support the SAON and SAON CON goals and objectives. The SAON Board will accept the work plan and follow its execution. The SAON CON chairmanship will be responsible on reporting of the work plan, and the progress towards the tasks, milestones and deliverables at the Board meetings. The Chairs will report back to the Committee on Board updates, revisions and feedback on the work plan and its progress.

#### **7. Secretarial Support**

Secretarial Support for CON will be made available through the SAON Secretariat and includes, but is not limited to, assisting with:

- Preparing for, and reporting on all CON meetings;
- Maintaining the web site for the SAON CON;
- Organizing, facilitating and attending meetings of the CON;
- Developing and maintaining inventory work, lists of publications, workshops and other outputs for the Committee
- Responding to outside requests for information;
- Facilitating communication between the CON and other organisations