



The Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (SAON): The National Reporting and Survey

Background

In the early phase of the preparatory work for SAON, the SAON Steering Group organized a survey which was presented to a group of countries and networks. The objective of the survey was to get an overview of existing arctic observation activities and networks. Several countries used the survey to structure their National Reporting to SAON, while some reports were structured differently. The full inventory of the SAON National Reporting can be found at <http://www.arcticobserving.org/national-reports>.

The headings in the survey questionnaire were:

- Name/acronym/contact person/web site
- Main objective of network
- Member of or connected to a global network
- Type of activity
 - Theme
 - Location
 - Community based
 - Coordination
- Main variables
- When operational (year)
- Geographical coverage (countries)
- Data archive/centre, including Web site
- Data availability: Metadata only/All data/Charge or no charge for data

In 2012, the SAON National Reports were digitized into a database. 20 national reports from 13 countries (Canada, Denmark, Greenland, Finland, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Norway, Poland, Russia, Spain, Sweden, and USA) for the period 2008-2012 were processed, as were three international organisation reports (Hausgarten, ICES, WMO). The database and the questionnaire can be found at <http://www.arcticobserving.org/networks>.

Some statistics

The database holds information from 20 countries and 127 organisations. A total of 267 activities/projects from 196 networks, covering 603 positions/sites/stations were identified and recorded. 40 different

themes were covered (Aerosols, Air-sea interaction, Atmosphere, Climate, Coastal, Conservation..., see figure 1) and the activities were divided by human inspection into these scales: Local, national, regional, arctic, and global, see figure 2.

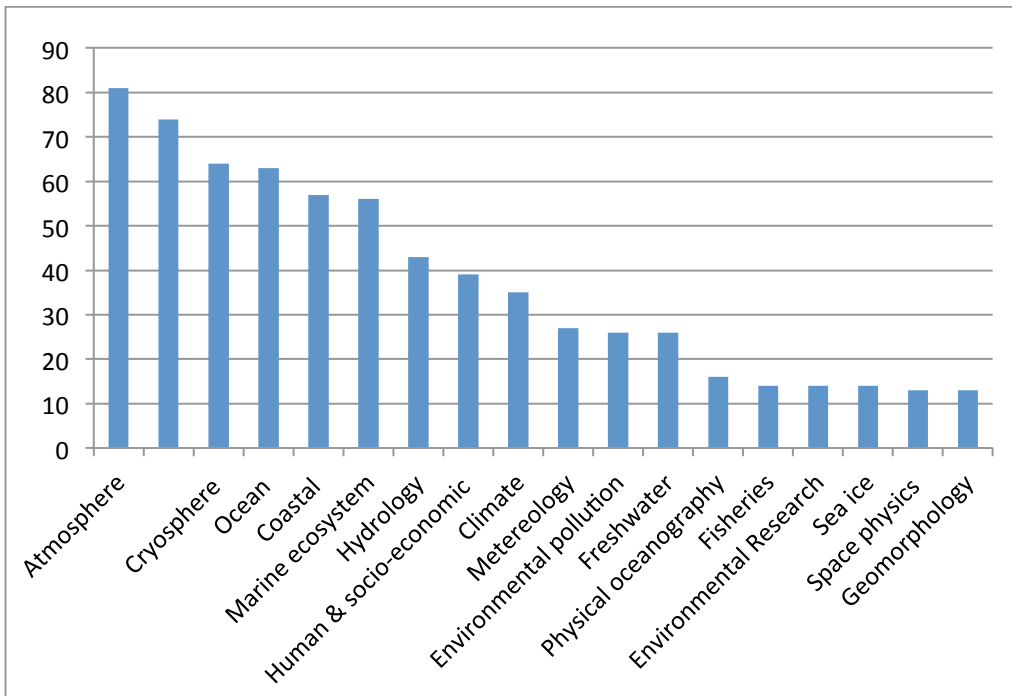


Figure 1: The SAON national reporting, broken down on themes

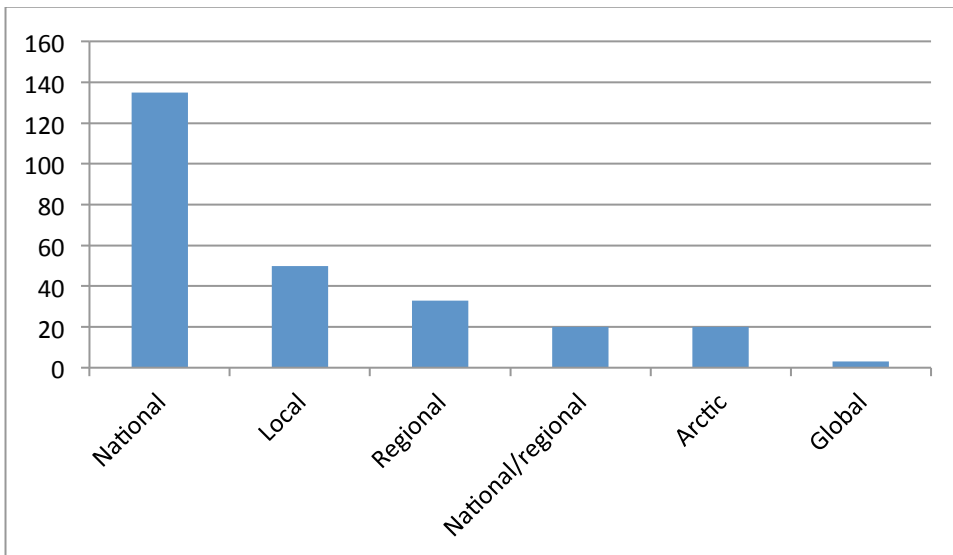


Figure 2: The SAON national reporting, broken down on scales

The questionnaire

The questionnaire also asked the respondents to consider these questions:

- How can the SAON Steering Group best assist you?
- What do you see as the role of the SAON SG?
- What are the critical issues facing your observing program or data and information management program?

The responses can be seen in figure 3, 4, and 5.

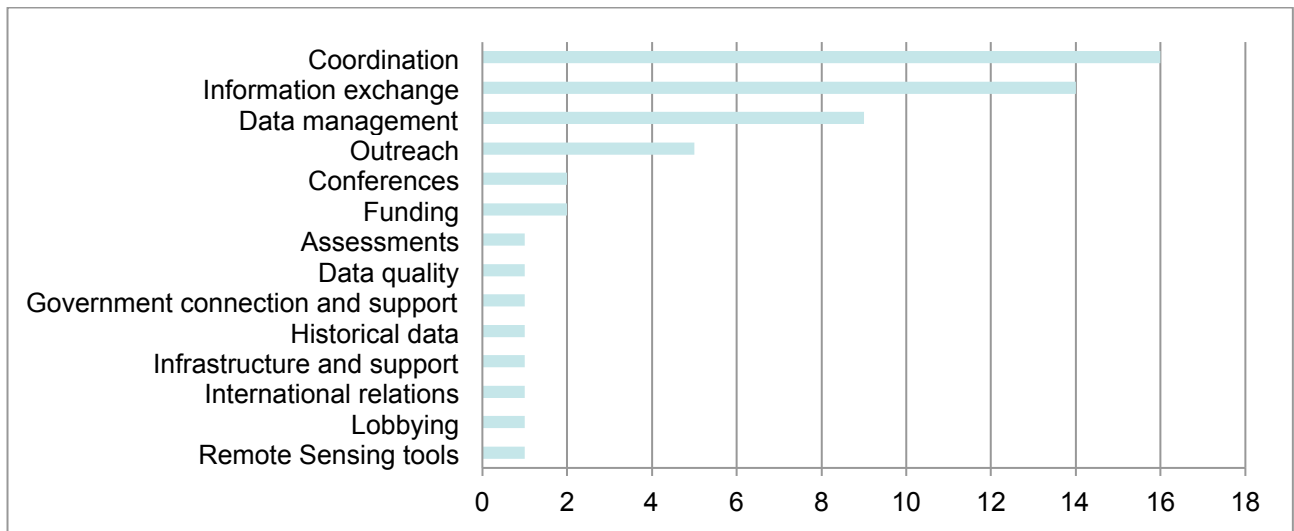


Figure 3: How can the SAON Steering Group best assist you?

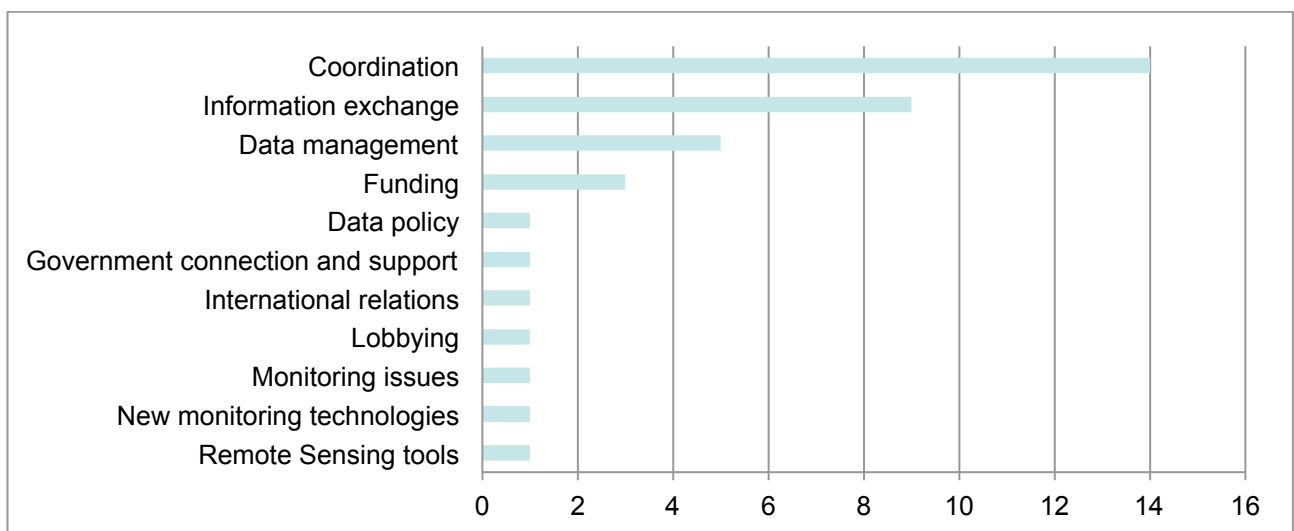


Figure 4: What do you see as the role of the SAON Steering Group?

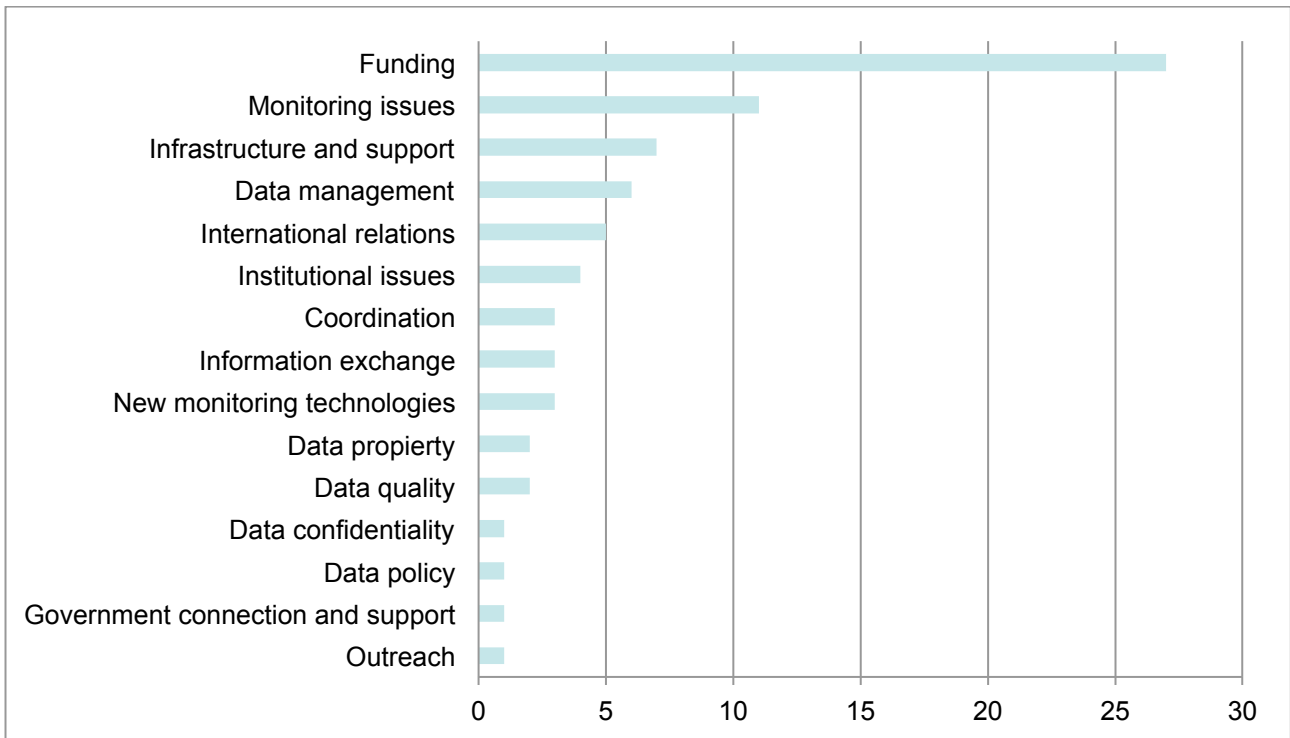


Figure 5: What are the critical issues facing your observing program or data and information management program?

Challenges and future work

The process of digitizing the National Reports revealed some problems that must be addressed. Among these are:

- Some countries have submitted several reports, which contain internal contradictions. There have been problems updating old reporting with newer reporting
- Additional classification may have to be introduced, for instance to cover: national monitoring networks, field stations, research plots
- Proposals for improvements have been suggested: Introduce periodicity/frequency: annual/monthly/continuous/seasonal etc.
- Sites' are not always one position, but may be plots (e.g. sampling plots) or study areas (e.g. a glacier)