



Letter to Arctic Science Ministerial in Berlin 25-26 October 2018

**Topic: Sustainability of Arctic observing systems**

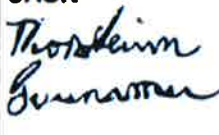
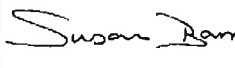



One of the main themes of the first Arctic Science Ministerial in Washington in 2016 was “Strengthening and Integrating Arctic Observations and Data-Sharing”. At that time, Ministers stated their commitment to “the shared development of a science-driven, integrated Arctic-observing system”, acknowledging that adaptation and risk management in response to climate change requires specialized and consistent monitoring programs and sustained observational networks to be able to document existing and emerging climate change issues.

There are significant efforts addressing this theme by many countries, organisations and projects in the Pan-Arctic region. The amount of data collected in the Arctic is growing and there are numerous initiatives to establish observing systems for collection of data in different disciplines. However, the funding of these systems is to a large extent dependent on time-limited research and observation projects. These systems are therefore not sustainable and there is a high risk that many will not be maintained in the future. Some satellite Earth Observation programmes, such as Copernicus, have long-term perspectives and funding plans for 5 – 10 years, but most of the observations from *in situ* systems on ground and in water have no long-term funding. It is therefore essential to develop and maintain long-term *in situ* observing systems to monitor trends, and to detect natural variations and human impacts on climate, environment, livelihoods and societies. This requires mechanisms for long-term funding to be established.

The Ministers of Science who will gather at the Arctic Ministerial meeting in Berlin in October 2018 play a key role in securing future Arctic science and the necessary observation platforms and programmes. These observations must cover the full range of Arctic priorities and be supported by an effective data and information system that will ensure optimal use of the data.

The organizations and Arctic science programmes signing this letter are deeply concerned that most of the present observing systems don’t have long-term funding. We are committed to working with governments to achieve the vision of a sustained observing system that meets a wide range of societal needs<sup>1</sup>. We therefore request the opportunity to make a short presentation at the Ministerial meeting in order give an overview of the current and projected situation of the Arctic observing systems and suggest joint actions from the Arctic ministers of science.

The letter is signed by the following organisations and projects:

<p><b>SAON</b>  </p>	<p><b>IASC</b>  </p>	<p><b>AMAP</b>  </p>	<p><b>Arctic Institute of North America</b>  </p>	<p><b>H2020 INTAROS</b>  </p>
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<sup>1</sup> The International Arctic Observations Assessment Framework has identified 12 Societal Benefit Areas for Arctic observations: Disaster Preparedness, Environmental Quality, Food Security, Fundamental Understanding of Arctic Systems, Human Health, Infrastructure and Operations, Marine and Coastal Ecosystems and Processes, Natural Resources, Resilient Communities, Sociocultural Services, Terrestrial and Freshwater Ecosystems and Processes and Weather and Climate (<https://www.arcticobserving.org/news/268-international-arctic-observations-assessment-framework-released>).