

Defining success and a shared vision for improving Arctic observing systems for societal benefits of Arctic Indigenous communities

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Poster abstract:

“What does success look like in improving Arctic observing?” was the question prompt for homogenous focus groups on developing success metrics for creating a sustained, coordinated Arctic observing system. Research Networking Activity for Sustained Coordinated Observations of Arctic Change (RNA CoObs) is in partnership with the Indigenous-led Food Sovereignty Working Group (FSWG) as a pilot project for Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks (SAON) Roadmap for Arctic Observing and Data Systems (ROADS). The shared initiative is to establish societal benefits for Arctic Indigenous communities from Arctic observing, which requires many perspectives on processes, methods, outcomes, and impacts. The focus group research followed the Rapid Assessment Approach with a four-person research team that represented the different insider perspectives of the thirty participants. The research team conducted the nine focus groups and iteratively analyzed the data. A set of twenty “Themes of Success” was developed on the dimensions of an observing system, processes needed in improving, and values of the process of improving. Each theme is defined from the perspective of the scientists of RNA CoObs, the perspective of the Indigenous-led FSWG members, and what they did and did not have in common to show misalignments. Several points raised within the focus groups did not fit the themes of success framing, and the four-person research team identified a set of seven tensions between RNA CoObs and FSWG. The goal of recognizing misalignments and tensions was not to create division between the two groups but to allow space for each to express themselves so that a shared understanding and vision could merge. Coproduction of knowledge literature emphasizes the need to address these misalignments and tensions to support better collaboration and actionable outcomes