



Forum of Arctic Research Operators

FARO Overview POLARIN Kick-off Meeting 2024 Bremerhaven, Germany

Jennifer Mercer, Former FARO Chair



FARO is a platform for aligning access and infrastructure

- Country member organization formed in 1998 serving as a forum for logistics and operational support for scientific research in the Arctic
- Approximately 20 member nations
- Each nation has national representative entity. A representative from the national entity serves as national Point of Contact to FARO (NPOC)
- Operated by an Executive Committee (ExCom), Chair, and Secretariat.

FARO Members

- Canada
- China
- Denmark (Greenland*)
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Iceland
- Italy
- Japan
- Korea
- Netherland
- Norway
- Poland
- Portugal
- Russia*
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- UK
- USA



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FARO Objectives/Mission

- Networking, promoting dialogue on logistics and operations
- Information exchange, such as best practices
- Establishing cooperation and development of new ideas
- Optimizing logistics and operational support
- Encouraging exchange and dissemination of data and information on the marine, terrestrial and human environments
- Encouraging means of initiating, coordinating and maintaining long-term Arctic observational programs;
- Promoting interaction between the Arctic science community and those concerned with Arctic policy;
- Providing expert advice to scientists, policy makers, and other organizations



Photo: Erwan Amice



Photo: Stefan Hendricks



FARO 5-Year Strategic Plan



Priority Area 1

PRIORITY 1

Knowledge Sharing Between Infrastructure Operators

Since its inception, knowledge sharing between member nations has been a top priority for FARO. Understanding the international landscape of Arctic infrastructure and national priorities for Arctic research is the first step to potential future collaborations.

FACILITATING EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

GOAL 1

Knowledge of existing and future research platforms and their resources is foundational to understanding what is logistically possible for Arctic researchers when they are formulating polar science programs. FARO will enhance its ability to keep the Arctic research community up-to-date on national investments in existing Arctic infrastructure and future developments. FARO will also serve as a forum for international input on planned development and allow for discussion about how future facilities could better meet researcher needs.

SHARING BEST PRACTICES ON INFRASTRUCTURE OPERATIONS

GOAL 2

Arctic operators of infrastructure often encounter similar obstacles when trying to maintain programs in such a harsh and ever-changing environment. FARO will act as a clearinghouse for the sharing and development of best practices related to infrastructure operation, risk management and safety, and environmental or climate impacts. This may help define common operating parameters across infrastructures and begin to standardize expectations for researchers.

DISCUSSING NEW TECHNOLOGY FOR USE IN POLAR OPERATIONS

GOAL 3

New technologies are constantly being developed for science and infrastructure operations. Research infrastructure operators strive to minimize environmental and climate impacts and the infrastructure itself often serves a testbed for new technology. FARO will be a platform for sharing experiences with new technological solutions that can improve polar operations and help move the infrastructure community towards 0-emission facilities.

Priority Area 2

Key Actions under consideration

- Invite polar infrastructure updates at Annual Meetings
- Arrange an annual infrastructure/science seminar at ASSW
- Continue involvement in ICARP (New 10-year MoU with IASC).

PRIORITY 2

NETWORKING BETWEEN ARCTIC AND ANTARCTIC ORGANIZATIONS

Networking with other Polar Organizations and Influencing Decision Making

Networking is a foundational piece of FARO's added value to member nations. This forum is unique in its focus on coordinating international research operators. In this respect, FARO has a unique viewpoint to offer in its interactions with other Polar organizations and national funding agencies. Under this strategic plan FARO will enhance its networking capabilities.

GOAL 1

FARO already has strong working relationships with several international science and infrastructure organizations but will aim to cultivate closer cooperation and engagement. The Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs (COMNAP) is a similar organization that brings together entities with the responsibility for delivering and supporting scientific research in the Antarctic Treaty Area on behalf of their respective governments. It would be beneficial for FARO to strengthen ties with COMNAP and learn from their efforts.

GOAL 2

FARO will aim to increase its influence in the international Arctic science policy space. As an initial effort, FARO is well-positioned to support the implementation of the Arctic Council Science Cooperation Agreement which was signed by the eight Arctic States in May 2017. We plan to prioritize FARO attendance at open sessions during agreement meetings and report any barriers or issues related to conducting research. We can also share any updates or new information about the agreement with the National Points of Contact of FARO member nations.

International science and infrastructure communities see a need for improved coordination among international and national science strategies. FARO can be a voice in advocating for better coordinated science and logistics efforts, the need for long-term infrastructure funding, and open access to infrastructure and science data.

TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION

GOAL 3

Improved future coordination of operations and logistics will strongly benefit from working with early career scientists on how best to integrate science and logistics. FARO will aim to strengthen its ties to APECS for future recruitment and to help cultivate the next generation of Arctic researchers and infrastructure operators.

Priority Area 3

PRIORITY 3

Facilitating Access

Physical access to research infrastructure in the Arctic is essential for successful polar research. FARO will focus on this facet of its activities and serve as a connection point for facilitating transnational access to nationally owned Arctic research infrastructure.

IMPROVE FARO VISIBILITY WITHIN THE SCIENCE COMMUNITY

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LINK SCIENTIFIC NETWORKS AND POLAR INFRASTRUCTURE

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SUPPORT COORDINATION OF LOGISTICS AND OPTIMIZED USE OF INFRASTRUCTURE ACROSS NATIONAL BORDERS

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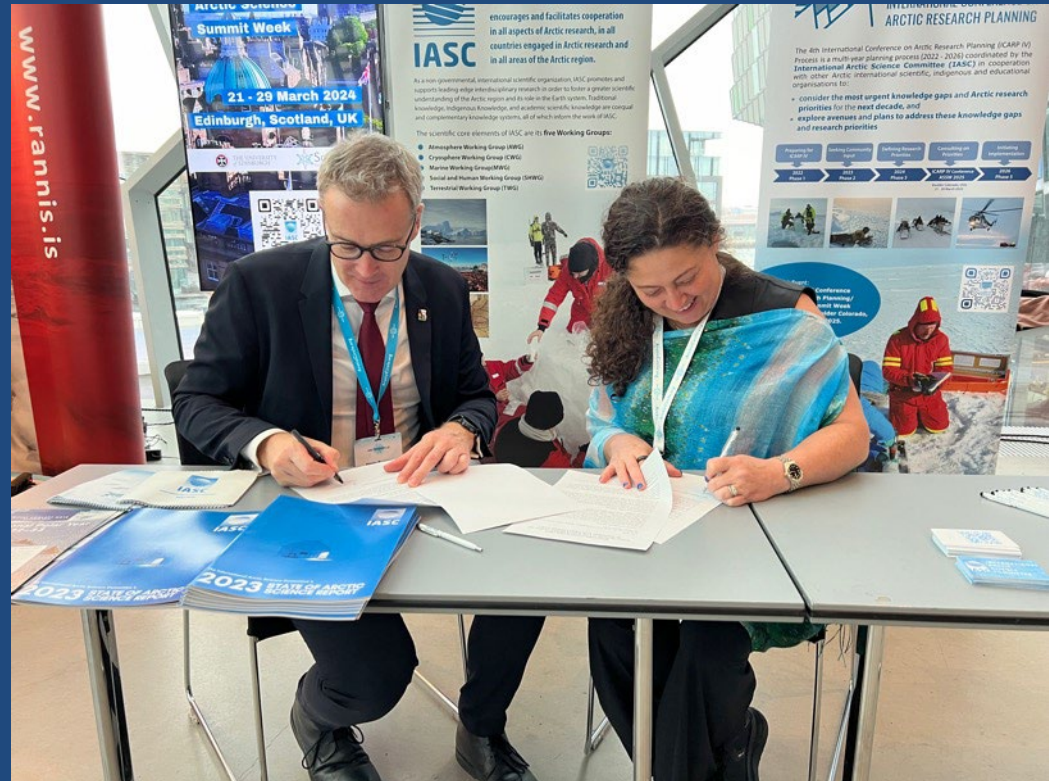


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Key partnerships and projects

IASC – newly signed MOU for 10 years

INTERACT
POLARIN
Others





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Elements of FARO's Recent Work

Added Value

- **Platform for full community input and dialogue**
 - Working with a smaller operational region for Arctic fieldwork
 - Developing fair and safe environments for field operations
 - Environmental impacts of fieldwork

- **Increasing Access**
 - Countries share availability/opportunities for international access

- **Connection Point**
 - In-person exchanges with IASC, COMNAP, EPB, AFoPs, PAG, ARICE, INTERACT, etc.



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New FARO Chair - Dirk Mengedoht





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Next FARO Annual meeting

ASSW 2025: Boulder, Colorado, USA

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