



Forum of Arctic Research Operators

History of FARO

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20
YEARS
ANNIVERSARY

Celebrating
20 years of
FARO

Forum of Arctic
Research Operators
FARO

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ASSW, Davos, Switzerland
18 June 2018

The Forum of Arctic Research Operators (FARO)
is an international forum for information exchange,
cooperation and development of new ideas among
national operators of ships, stations and aircrafts in
countries with Arctic research activities.



Our mission is achieved by:

- Networking of national operators.
- Exchange of best practices in operations, including environmental and safety concerns.
- Encouraging science-led international programmes by facilitating access to facilities.
- Supporting coordination of logistics and sharing of operational resources.
- Encouraging exchange and dissemination of scientific data and information on the marine, terrestrial and human environment of the Arctic.
- Encouraging long-term Arctic observational programmes
- Promoting interaction between the Arctic science community and those concerned with Arctic policy.
- Providing expert advice regarding operations and logistics in the Arctic.



The original proposal to establish a forum for Arctic logistics and research planning group was initiated by Bonni Hrycyk from Canada (Director Polar, Continental Shelf Project) during the International Symposium *“Polar Aspects on Global Change”* 24-28 August 1998 in Tromsø (Norway).

On the last day of this conference 24 operators from 11 countries attended an informal meeting which aimed to create a system of information about planned expeditions, scientific programs, places in polar stations and other research platforms.

They agreed to initiate the forum, appointed a small group to draft terms of reference, and had an initial discussion about tasks.



One year later in April during Arctic Science Summit Week in Tromsø was elected first ARO Executive. In this meeting also decided that very comfortable will be organizing FARO annual meetings together with the Arctic Science Summit Week. Participants they started discussions on the terms of reference, membership and tasks.

In summer 1999 was established the FARO secretariat and connected to the International Arctic Science Committee secretariat in Oslo.

Also the FARO website was also established as a part of the IASC website.



For better visibility, three years later, was decided on an independent FARO website.

Erkki Heino and Paula Kankaanpää from Finland proposed FARO logos.

Logo symbolizing a lighthouse - inspired by Spanish word for lighthouse is “faro”.



The FARO position grew rapidly.

After 2003 more 48 people from 18 countries attended to FARO annual meeting.

In 2005 FARO members accepted the establishment of a new separated secretariat in the Danish Polar Center which had offered to host the FARO Secretariat for an initial period on the condition that some additional funding could be provided for staff.

Many thanks to US National Science Foundation which agreed to fund the secretariat on three-year basis.



FARO was restructured to new tasks:

- Exchanging information between operators.
- Coordination of logistics in IPY.
- Responding to requests from the science community.
- Sharing information and experience with Antarctic colleagues (technology).
- Advice to policy makers (Arctic Council).
- A proposal to transform FARO into COMNAP was also proposed. For this, two working groups have been set up:
 - One for the preparation of questionnaires for the FARO database.
 - Second for selecting areas which FARO would have to offer to consortium members preparing the IPY program.



In period 2008-2011 after IPY was many changes:

By the end of 2008 the Danish Polar Center was closed and the logistics department was moved to National Environmental Research Institute (NERI) at University of Aarhus.

For clarification of some issues before FARO can convert into a member organization US National Science Foundation continued to finance the FARO secretariat until ASSW 2010. Finally NSF supported FARO secretariat to the end 2014.



The biggest discussion was caused by the future of FARO as an organization where two concepts were presented:

- An independent organization financed from membership fees (from 2-4 thousand USD per member per year depending on the number of Member States).
- An association associated with the IASC, e.g. in the working group's formula and organizational support by this organization.



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- Since 2015 FARO is supported by not expensive fee members (1 500 USD), which covered salary for the academic secretary, maintenance of the website, travel costs and information material.



For this time some important question was:
“How to bring FARO to the next level ?”

What FARO should

- Be a clearing house for issues affecting Arctic operations across national boundaries.
- Be a point of contact for trans-national planning.
- Be a promoter of “best practices” in Arctic research.
- Be aware of current and future large national and trans-national initiatives.
- Help nations and large groups negotiate the many overlapping Arctic organizations, operations, projects and initiatives.



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What FARO could

- Take a role in co-ordination of trans-national projects and programs.
- Identify and promote areas where nations could benefit from more collaboration.
- Initiate studies of relevance to Arctic operations e.g. identify gaps in monitoring.
- Determine optimal sampling regimes.
- Promote Arctic technology – building on the “best practices” for the Arctic.
- Take an active role in advising the IASC working groups on the practicalities of Arctic observations and the opportunities that exist.



For this 20 years activity we had 5 chairs:



Bonni Hrycyk from Canada



Simon Stephenson from US



Martin Bergman from Canada



Magnus Tannerfeldt from Sweden



James Drummond from Canada



For this 20 years activity in ExCom and Scientific Secretary
we had also 19 members form 11 countries:

From China (Zhanhai Zhang & Huigen Yang)

From Denmark (Morten Rasch & Elmer Topp-Jørgensen)

From Germany (Uwe Nixdorf)

From Japan (Kazuyuki Shiraishi)

From Norway (Olav Orheim & Jan-Gunnar Winther)

From Korea (Dongmin Jin & Hyoung Chul Shin)

From Poland (Piotr Glowacki)

From Russia (Sergey Priamikov & Alexandr Makarov)

From Sweden (Anders Karlqvist)

From UK (John Dudeney; Cynan Ellis-Evans & Nix Cox)

From USA (Tom Pyle & Jennifer Mercer)



For this 20 years secretariat FARO was located:

- in IASC in Oslo (1999 - 2005)
 - lead by Odd Rogne
- in Danish Polar Center in Copenhagen (2005 -2009)
 - lead by Morten Rush
- in University of Aarhus (2009 til now)
 - lead by Lillian Magelund Jensen & Kristine Skov



Looking Forward : (to our third decade of operations)

FARO has become a central point for the interchange of information among research operators.

Over the last decade, perhaps with some encouragement from the FARO model, other groups of operators at a national and transnational level that promote closer collaboration between different organizations.

These include:

- the European-led International Network for Terrestrial Research and Monitoring in the Arctic (INTERACT);
- the Arctic Research Icebreaker Consortium (ARICE);
- the Canadian Network of Northern Research Operators (CNNRO).

These organizations promise an even higher level of collaboration in the future.





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Arctic research has always necessarily been a highly collaborative effort and FARO is looking forward to playing its part in the future.

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