SAON Arctic ROADS Advisory Panel. Evaluation of Phase II Proposal. Permafrost Expert Panel

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Documents

- Phase II Proposal
- Evaluation Responses (excel file)
- Evaluation Responses (pdf file)

Evaluation approach

The SAON Arctic ROADS AP received six (6) responses to the Permafrost Expert Panel Phase II proposal submission. This is a very low response rate, and it should be noted that most text-based responses have three or few responses.

Question responses were either

- On a linear scale from 1 (=Strongly disagree) to 5 (=Strongly agree)
- Yes/no answers
- Simple text questions and answers.

The ROADS Advisory Panel divides their evaluation into the following:

- **What are 'immediate' issues that should be resolved before proceeding?** This could be about clarification, missing information or deficiencies in process execution, including inclusivity. The latter is not related to a highly regionalized approach, where this is acceptable given the intentionally narrow scope.
- **What are 'future work' issues?** These could be addressed in future Phases/Iterations. An example is networking and inclusivity opportunities for next steps, including broadening from regional to broader geographic extent.

- **The Advisory Panel evaluation.** This is not directed to the Expert Panel but could be considered a conclusion to the Advisory Panel on revision guidance.

Summary of evaluation

On **Phase II Methods**, most of the responses were 3 or above on the scale 1 (=Strongly disagree) to 5 (=Strongly agree), which is considered satisfactory.

Future work issues include that clarification that the SBAs were relevant but too abstract, with unclear connections to the candidate SAVs and limited clarity on participant engagement and deliberation processes.

On **Results of the Phase II Work**, most of the responses were 3 or above on the scale 1 (=Strongly disagree) to 5 (=Strongly agree), which is considered satisfactory.

Future work issues include

- There is an unclear connection between the societal benefit areas (SBAs) and candidate SAVs, particularly regarding how variables like permafrost temperature and active layer thickness will contribute beyond existing measurements.
- The well-being SAV is promising and should be a primary focus moving forward.
- Current efforts and global collaborations are relevant but need clearer linkage to the SBAs.

On **Next Steps**, the three questions on the scale 1 (=Strongly disagree) to 5 (=Strongly agree), gives different results:

- The median of 'The revised timeline is realistic given the readiness of this effort' is 3.
- The median of 'The funding support outlined for the next steps is realistic for the needs of Phase III under this effort' is 2.
- The median of 'The communications and engagement plans outlined for the next steps are well-developed and clear' is between 1 and 2.

Future work issues include

- Besides the planned meeting at the Arctic Circle Assembly, no other concrete plans are described. The meaning and urgency of "considering strengthening the panel during the on-site meeting" remain ambiguous but appear important.
- Funding for Phase IV is still needed.

On **Readiness for Phase III**, most of the responses were 3 or above on the scale 1 (=Strongly disagree) to 5 (=Strongly agree), which is considered satisfactory.

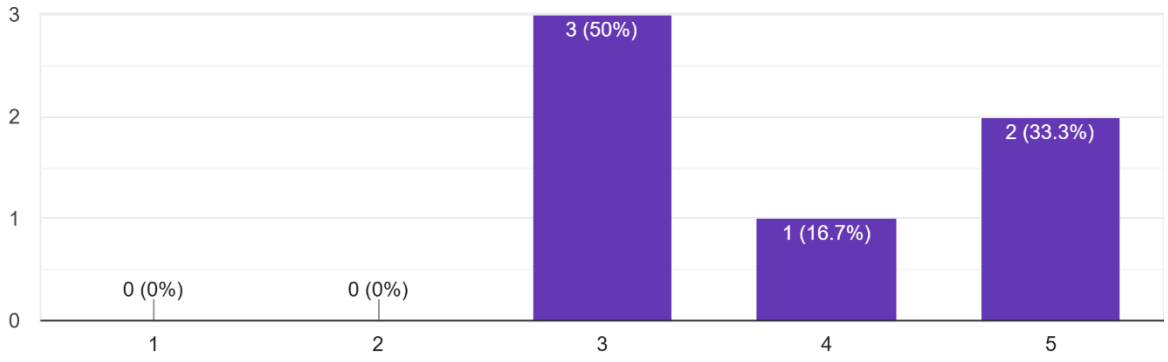
Future work issues include detailing the SBA-SAV linkage, a plan for Phase III, and securing Phase IV funding, with concerns about possible loss of Indigenous participation.

Overall, the Advisory Panel concludes that the Expert Panel is ready to move into Phase III but should consider the 'future work' issues mentioned above.

Phase II Methods

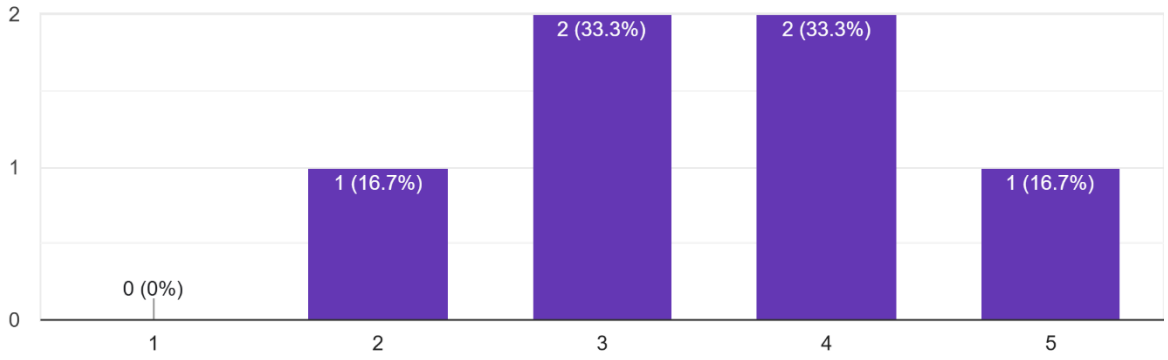
The approach taken to assess societal benefit in Phase II of the Expert Panels work is clear

6 responses



The approach taken to assess societal benefit in Phase II of the Expert Panels work reflects the ROADS Guiding Principals

6 responses



Specific comments on the approach (Summary, n=3)

The SBAs (Societal Benefit Areas) used were relevant but too abstract; more specific, context-relevant examples for the Expert Panel members would improve clarity. The logic from IAOAF SBAs to SAVs lacked clear justification. The group used a 1–100 rating system to assess the relevance of benefit sub-areas to permafrost, but it's unclear how many participants were involved.

Engagement with Guiding Principles (GPs) was uneven—Indigenous engagement (GP1) appeared limited, while alignment with global organizations and ECVs (GP3) was strong. The process aimed at broad benefits (GP2), but it's unclear how the principles were applied or discussed.

The link, if one was provided, led me to an accessible and useful overview of the societal benefit framework used

Two answered ‘Yes’, and two answered ‘No’

Please comment on any improvements you feel are needed in this linked description (Summary, n=3)

There was no link.

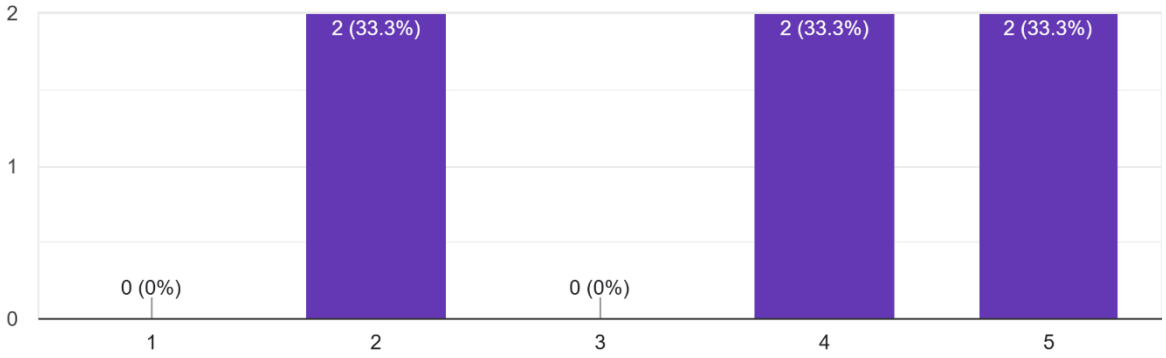
If an approach other than the IAOAF was used, the Expert Panel has adequately demonstrated where the chose framework ties or augment's the IAOAF

(No responses)

Results of the Phase II Work

The main findings from the societal benefit assessment are clear and well supported by the information provided

6 responses

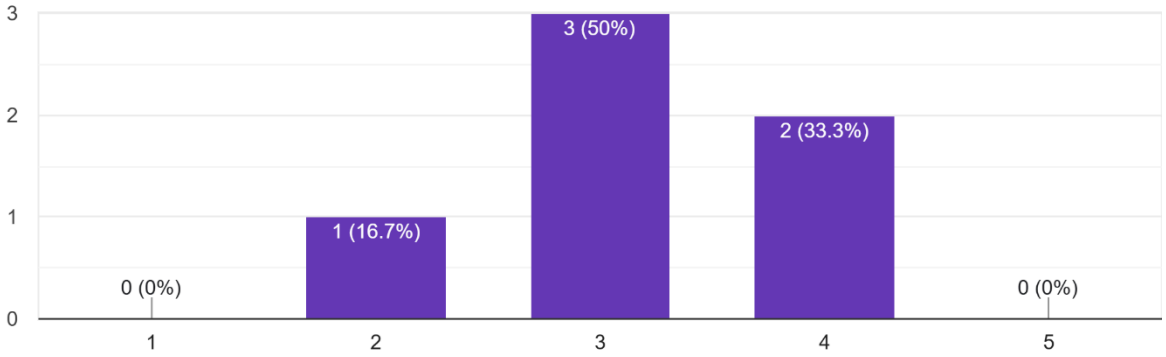


Further comments, questions or suggestions related to the result (Summary, n=3)

- The support for the analysis is weak—while there was discussion, it lacked strong arguments, explicit examples from Expert Panel members, or citations. The descriptions are clear but remain at a high level.
- It's unclear whether the Expert Panel aims to move beyond the region.

The candidate Shared Arctic Variables are clearly tied to the results of the societal benefit assessment

6 responses

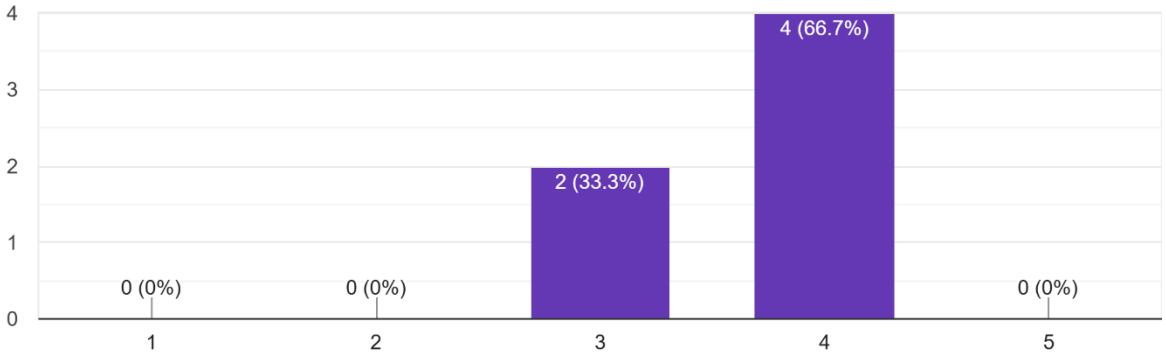


Further comments, questions or suggestions related to the results (Summary, n=3)

The inclusion of the well-being SAV is promising, but the connection between SBAs and SAV selection is unclear. It seems that the Expert Panel prioritized Essential Climate Variables (ECVs) for their clarity and existing data, rather than their direct societal benefit. This raises questions about how the Expert Panel will add value to well-monitored areas and how they plan to approach the broader, less-defined well-being SAV, which is more complex and abstract.

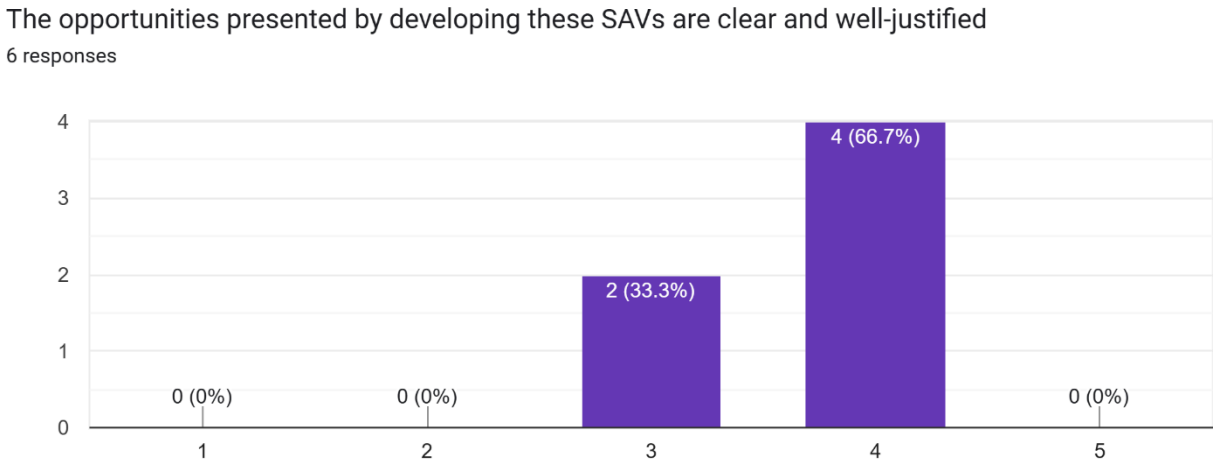
Where relevant, the Expert Panel has a clear understanding of how their proposed SAV's relate to existing work by other efforts, including other ROADS Expert Panels

6 responses



Further comments, questions or suggestions related to the relationships to other efforts (Summary, n=3)

The noted global and European initiatives are relevant to the ECVs, but with limited time left, the Expert Panel may have limited impact there. Focusing on the well-being SAV and presenting a clear vision for integrating it could be more impactful and compelling for future work. The first two variables are better defined than the third.



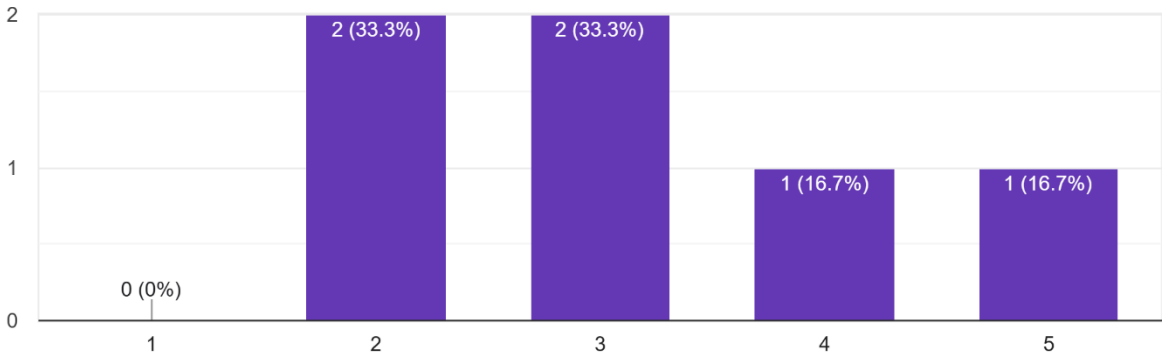
Further comments, questions or suggestions related to the opportunities for the proposed SAVs (Summary, n=3)

- Permafrost-related well-being is a promising, while permafrost temperature and active layer thickness are already well-monitored.
- Clarification is needed on gaps in current ECV data (e.g. resolution, accessibility, relevance).
- Engagement (especially with Indigenous Peoples) remains the Expert Panel's biggest challenge.

Next steps

The revised timeline is realistic given the readiness of this effort

6 responses

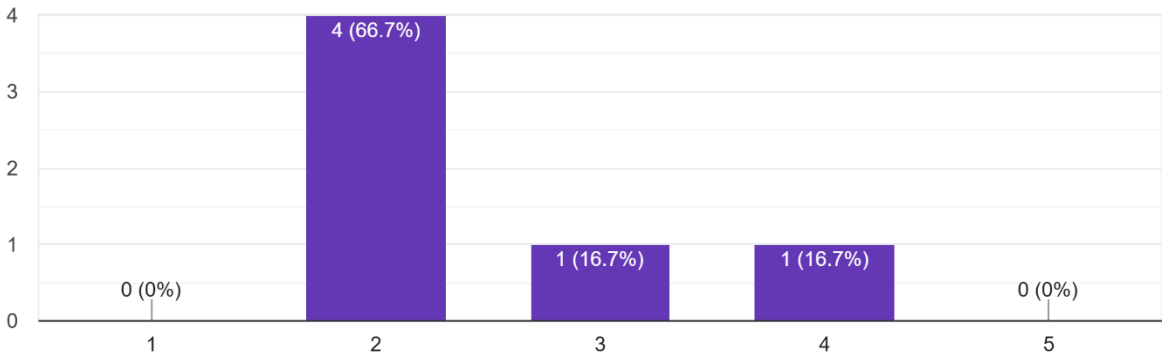


Comments on the Timeline (Summary, n=1)

With some EP members lost, it's unclear who will carry the work forward. The upcoming Arctic Circle Assembly (ACA) is a key opportunity to share the SBA work with a broader audience, gather feedback, and validate it through wider engagement.

The funding support outlined for the next steps is realistic for the needs of Phase III under this effort

6 responses

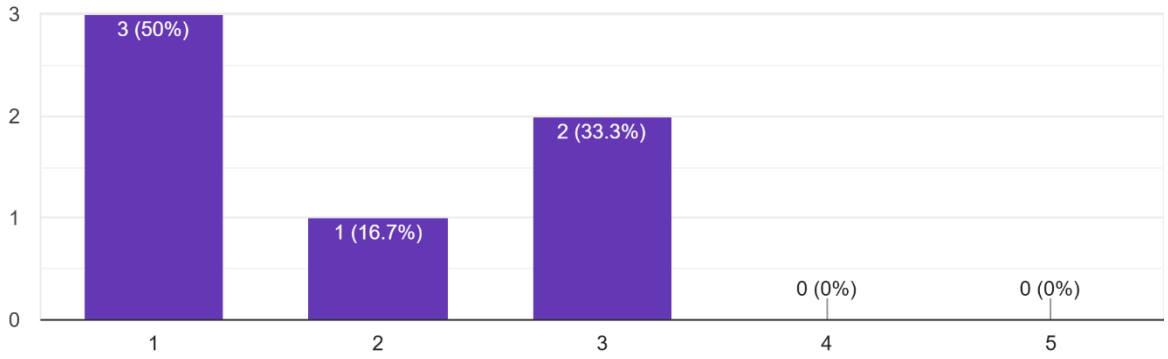


Comments on funding support (Summary, n=2)

Given the short timeframe and a smaller Expert Panel, it will be challenging to meaningfully advance the SBA and SAV work.

The communications and engagement plans outlined for the next steps are well-developed and clear.

6 responses



Comments on communications and engagement plans (Summary, n=3)

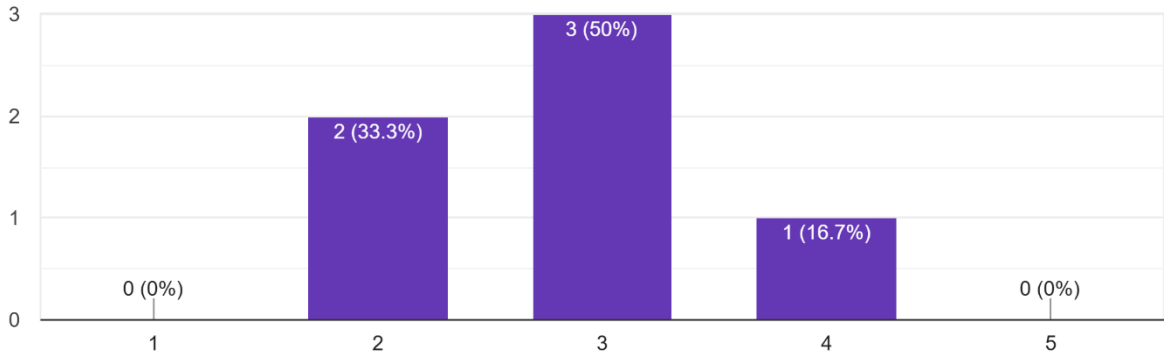
The document provides limited detail beyond a planned meeting. The reference to "strengthening the panel during the on-site meeting" is vague but appears important and time-sensitive.

While the plan emphasizes the need for better information exchange among stakeholders, it lacks a clear strategy for achieving this.

Readiness for Phase III

This Expert Panel demonstrates an overall maturity and readiness for Phase III work in accordance with the Guiding Principles.

6 responses



Further comments on readiness related to the timeline, funding, communications and engagement (Summary, n=4)

The SBA analysis lacks sufficient detail and clearer linkage to the SAVs. A plan for Phase III is needed, and Phase IV remains unfunded. There is concern that Indigenous members may have disengaged. With the Arctic Circle Assembly workshop funding in place, the group appears ready to proceed but should focus on developing a clear vision for a well-being SAV and propose how it could be advanced by a future, funded group. Onboarding new EP members and securing further funding are likely next steps.