



ELOKA: The Exchange for Local Observations and Knowledge of the Arctic



eloka-arctic.org

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ELOKA Mission

ELOKA works to provide data management and user support to facilitate the collection, preservation, exchange, and use of local observations and knowledge of the Arctic.

ELOKA seeks to help make local and traditional knowledge (LTK) and community observations discoverable, so more information is available for research and community planning.

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ELOKA Partners*

- **Nunavuummi Tasiujarjuamiuguqatigiit Katutjiqatigiingit (NTK): Nunavut Hudson Bay Inter-Agency Working Group [Canada]**
 - Communities: Inuit and Cree
 - LTK and community-based monitoring data
- **Abisko Naturvetenskapliga Station and Nordic Sami Institute [Sweden]**
 - Communities: Sami
 - Sami culture, language, ecology, remote sensing, snow physics, and reindeer herding
- **Alaska Native Science Commission (ANSC) [U.S.]**
 - Communities: All Native Alaskans
 - contaminants, harvest data, consumption data
- **ABR Inc. Environmental Research Services [U.S.]**
 - Communities: Iñupiat
 - Soil Organic Carbon (OC); ground ice; coastal erosion
 - Village-based monitoring

Why do we need ELOKA ?

Over the last decade, Arctic residents and indigenous peoples have been increasingly involved in, and taking control of, research. Arctic communities have made significant contributions to understanding recent environmental change, and community-based research, including traditional knowledge research and community-based monitoring, will be an important part of IPY activities and any Arctic Observing Network (AON).

One of the greatest challenges of local and traditional knowledge (LTK) research and community-based monitoring to date has been effective and appropriate means of recording, storing, and managing data and information. It has been a challenge to find effective means of making community-based data and information available to Arctic residents and researchers, as well as other interested groups such as teachers, students, and decision makers. Without a network and data management to support LTK and community-based research, a number of problems have arisen such as: misplacement or loss of extremely precious data (e.g. information from Elders who have passed away); lack of awareness of previous studies, and repetition of research in the same communities resulting in research fatigue and waste of resources; a reluctance or inability to initiate or maintain community-based research or monitoring without a data management system available. There is an urgent need for effective and appropriate means of recording, preserving, and sharing data and information being collected in Arctic communities. ELOKA seeks to fill this gap.

ELOKA Scope

Data Management

- Service oriented and collaborative;
 - Work with partners and their communities to develop protocols
 - Direct storage and management or links to sources of data
 - Collaboration to develop best practices in data stewardship for community-based observations.
- Protocols and systems for non-numerical formats;
 - Video and audio
 - Maps (interactive)
 - Artwork and photographs
 - Interview transcripts and recorded oral histories.

Access and Discovery

- Multi-level access; communities/data-providers work with ELOKA to define levels of access according to their needs;
- Web-based system to facilitate the comparison of information across data and sources;
- Data management tools that will allow for comparison and analysis of non-numerical data and the comparison of LTK and scientific information;
- Development of online communication and networking tools to link researchers, students, and Arctic communities and promote better data discovery.

The development of a circumpolar network and data management service for Arctic LTK and community-based observations will take time, collaboration, and input from many sources. ELOKA is being launched during IPY through partnerships with four community-based projects that represent different regions, cultures, and data management needs (*). ELOKA is also working with other projects, such as the Bering Sea Sub-Network (Aleut International Association) as time, opportunity, and resources permit. Building on our experience, and directed by the needs of the communities and projects we serve, ELOKA will continue to grow. For more information on ELOKA, please keep an eye on our website, www.eloka-arctic.org.

