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Title: *Added value through cooperation. The role of Svalbard Science Forum and the Research in Svalbard database*

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Thirteen nations have permanent research stations in Svalbard and in 2012 900 scientists from 33 different nations conducted research in the archipelago. There are occasions of research groups in Svalbard working separately on similar topics in the same locations without cooperating or even being aware of each other. It is clear that given the number of scientists from various nations and disciplines working in such a relative small region, effective mechanisms for research coordination can create benefits for all. Better coordination of logistics and fieldwork, increased data sharing and the use of new technology are all factors, which can contribute to releasing scientific results more efficiently and can also lead to decreasing the environmental impact of our research.

The Svalbard Science Forum (SSF) is a part of the Research Council of Norway (RCN) and promotes coordination and collaborative efforts in research activities in Svalbard. This includes managing the "Research in Svalbard" (RiS) database which contains information on more than 2000 Svalbard-based projects. RiS is established in cooperation with the Norwegian Polar Institute and is a valuable source for information on previous, current and future research activities in the region.

The SSF also organizes workshops and administers strategic funding schemes. These aim at increasing international and interdisciplinary cooperation in Svalbard. The funding also promotes coordination of activities to reduce the environmental footprint of the research activities. This funding scheme is open for applications from all scientists and students active in Svalbard provided the research is in active cooperation with Norwegian institutions.

A major challenge ahead is to ensure the accessibility and open sharing of data from research projects carried out in Svalbard. The planned SIOS (Svalbard Integrated Arctic Earth Observing Systems) infrastructure and data access network will be a crucial part of achieving this goal.