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Open Polar: a new freely search service of publications and research data of Polar Regions

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Research data plays a key role in monitoring and predicting any natural phenomena, including changes in the Polar Regions. The limited access to data restricts the ability of researchers to monitor, predict and model environmental changes and their socio-economic repercussions. In a recent survey of 113 major polar research institutions, we found out that an estimated 60% of the existing polar research data is unfindable through common search engines and can only be accessed through institutional webpages. In social science and indigenous knowledge, this findability gap is even higher, approximately 84% of the total existing data. This raises an awareness sign and the call for the need of the scientific community to collect information on the global output of research data and publications related to the Polar Regions and present it in a homogenous, seamless database.

In this contribution, we present a new, open access discovery service, Open Polar, with the purpose of rendering polar research more visible and retrievable to the research community as well as to the interested public, teachers, students and decision-makers. The new service is currently under construction and will be hosted by UiT The Arctic University of Norway in close collaboration with the Norwegian Polar Institute and other international partners. The beta version of the Open Polar was made available in February 2021. We welcome comments and suggestions from the scientific community to the beta version, while we plan to launch the stable production version of the service by summer 2021. The beta version of the service can already be tested at the URL: www.openpolar.no