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14 January 2010, 1100 -1300 MST

Participants

Members: Don Henshaw, Margaret O'Brien (co-chairs), Sven Bohm, Emery Boose, Hap Garritt, Corinna Gries, Suzanne Remillard
Ex officio: James Brunt (LNO)

Topics

1. IM-Exec Winter Meeting
2. Upcoming Water Coolers
3. IM Proposals for Network Workshops
4. 2011 IMC Meeting
5. 2010 IMC Meeting

1. IM-Exec Winter Meeting

Scheduled for 23-24 Feb in Albuquerque.

If possible invite Christine Laney to join second day of meeting. EcoTrends experience would inform discussion of EML metrics. Petition for more funds if necessary.

See posted draft agenda. How can IMC activities complement the LNO operational plan? Where are the knowledge gaps? Where do we need extra funds? Any way to compensate IMs for their time?

NSF conference call scheduled for Tuesday afternoon or Wednesday morning. Todd, maybe Peter.

Discussion of EML metrics. Build on working group initiated at ASM. Invite Duane, Dan, Wade, and other IMs who would like to participate via VTC.

How to structure the first discussion on strategic planning? Start with brainstorming session. Create a timeline for how the IMC relates to the LNO operational plan. Capture the information in a spreadsheet or table. What is IMC preparedness? NIS goal is fairly clear but how to reach it?

Robust EML with good metrics checking will go a long way. How to engage IMs in critical working groups (esp. prospectus working groups)? Good topic for discussion at winter meeting. These groups are not fully funded yet.

Some committees will take more time than others. Prospectus WGs could be comparable to decadal plan WGs. The four 2-page prospecti were prepared at the ASM and are available on the LTER Intranet.

NSF is using these documents in a new RFP. The focus will be climate change. LTER WGs will write proposals as soon as RFPs are available. Corinna has encouraged inclusion of funds for IM.

The current LNO operational plan includes a large unfunded mandate for IM at individual sites. A prospectus to NSF to use NEON funding for preparation of LTER legacy data is in development. Not clear what will happen. Another avenue for funding is the next LTER supplement. No response to date from Todd regarding our suggestions.

Please make travel arrangements for the winter meeting.

Suggest that we spend less time planning for the next IMC meeting. Use face time to focus on the other two items (operational plan, EML metrics). No need for extensive discussion of 2011 IMC meeting.

Think carefully about the types of reporting needed for EML metrics. Some may be easier, some harder, in terms of programming the Data Management Library. Christine could be helpful here. How about Kepler users? We might get feedback beforehand, perhaps a small survey by email. Margaret will write up ideas from VTCs earlier this week and circulate.

Turnaround time for supplements is unknown but may be short. IM-Exec might prepare ideas or text that sites could use. Is winter meeting too late?

See Taiwan paper posted by John Porter. Include John and/or Chin on VTC at winter meeting? The Taiwan software uses PHP and MySQL. Margaret has experimented a bit.

LNO operational plan. What will be the process for use case participation, etc? Is this a governance or communications issue? The lack of funding for site IM is acknowledged. How will this play with external reviewers? Some additional (but limited) funding for IM activities.

LNO tried to accommodate specific recommendations in its latest revision. Some conflicting suggestions (e.g., better communication, but not enough time). A suggestion from the last NISAC meeting was to pay a few people to do much of the work.

Compensation for IMs would help reinforce the importance of network activities to the sites. But unless significant it will not cover work at the site. Site IMs are hired to be site IMs (not network IMs). On the other hand, scientists are not paid to participate in committees. But they can use these opportunities to write proposals.

The IM review criteria encourage network-level activities. But there is no accompanying funding. The current criteria do not require much beyond participation in network databases. In the long run PI attitudes need to change. Our job descriptions need to be extended to include network activities.

LTER funding does not even cover cost of living over six years. Increments have not kept up. LTER funding has declined over its lifetime. Sites also differ in the amount of related or leveraged funding. Not all sites have Forest Service support, etc. Administrative and institutional cultures also differ among sites.

Margaret can write up suggestions for the LNO plan. Many of the same issues remain.

2. Upcoming Water Coolers

Short demos by individual sites were proposed by Sven. Show and tell for site IMs. Not sure how well it would work in VTC. Maybe use Dimdim or similar technology. Solicit requests. For example, Wade has a useful data model for exporting EML to SQL Server. Inigo also has a model in MySQL. Find commonalities that could be shared.

Creation of a common data model has been under discussion for at least 10 years. Margaret began a mini-survey on this topic. Inigo created site profiles but these are out of date.

How to use water coolers to promote cross-site projects? If enough sites combine efforts, there might be supplement funds to hire someone.

Another possibility would be recent developments in Project DB. This might be a good time to get site input. Wade has front end applications for the forms. And Inigo is working on Drupal. But we should be wary of getting a partial solution.

LTER supplements for EML metrics. Find out how sites create EML now. Not a simple answer in most cases. Emphasize importance, encourage sites to apply. What do sites need to do this better?

Sven might gather a few data models by way of introduction. Don could reinforce the importance of submitting a supplement. See IM profiles document assembled by Inigo in 2003 and available on our site under IM guide / site IM profiles.

March VTC on unit dictionary in response to Mason's request.

3. IM Proposals for Network Workshops

IM-Exec was not aware of all IM-related post-ASM proposals. How can we help without getting in the way? Karen requested a letter of support from IM-Exec. A process for making recommendations is needed.

Encourage formal IM-Exec support in the future? The EB wanted to be sure Karen's project was cross-site. Inigo submitted a proposal for the no-dead-ends website project. The EB asked for IMC endorsement since it would use IM training funds (not post-ASM funds).

Some confusion in the LNO operational plan regarding whether approval should come from IMC or IM-Exec. The IMC may need to authorize IM-Exec for this role.

Analogous to SC / EB relationship. Any site IM could submit a working group proposal. Or should they be coordinated by IM-Exec?

IM-Exec needs to let IMC know that IM-Exec is developing a 5-year framework. Funded post-ASM proposals will be posted online by JVC.

4. 2011 IMC Meeting

Corinna has discussed with Matt Jones. Matt is willing to help coordinate and would like to do this meeting more frequently. But LTER provided more than half of the attendees at last meeting. There may be other avenues to add larger meetings.

Matt prefers Santa Barbara. Data One project might support the meeting there, possibly some

office help. Fall 2011.

Corinna would prefer not to publish papers in Ecological Informatics. Organization of special issue last time was not worthwhile. Long delays in publication because of 1 or 2 papers. Maybe a proceedings issue (e.g. IEEE proceedings). Then papers would be citable and ready without the additional effort of a special issue. IEEE has a long lead time for publication (1 year?).

An alternative would be to meet every 18 months. But that may be too often. The other issue is conflict with the ISEI international meeting. Every other LTER meeting could join with ISEI. But combined meetings every 6 years may be too infrequent.

5. 2010 IMC Meeting

Week of 20 Sep 2010, tentatively 20-23 Sep including travel days. Reserve for three nights (Mon-Wed). Meet Mon evening through Wed all day. Sven will confirm dates with Kellogg station.

Different options for conference rooms. Terrace room holds 45 people and has windows and projectors. Auditorium holds 150 people with open seating, could be split in half. Need a couple of smaller rooms for break outs.

Need to get an estimate of the number of attendees. How many guests? Auditorium (split) is probably a better bet. Need to accommodate wireless and power.

According to George, 40-45 attendees in recent years for small meeting. Create Doodle to announce dates and poll numbers? Sven will set up. Reserve Auditorium for now, change to Terrace room later if appropriate.

Don & Margaret will discuss details of next water cooler.

Meeting Notes ^[2]

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