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[Home](#) > [IM Exec](#) > IM Exec VTC 2010-02-03

# IM Exec VTC 2010-02-03

Thu, 01/07/2010 - 3:55pm — [mobrien](#) <sup>[1]</sup>

**03 February 2010, 1200 -1400 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)

Guest: Inigo San Gil (LNO)

## Topics

1. EB Report
2. LNO Report
3. IM Training Schedule
4. Drupal Training
5. IM-Exec Winter Meeting

## 1. EB Report

The recent meeting with external reviewers of the LNO operational plan was very successful. Several presentations: Mark – introduction to Pasta, how to involve site IMs; Wade – NISAC perspective, Corinna – IM perspective. “Tiger teams” (NISAC’s term) will focus on particular aspects of the NIS.

As expected, the six reviewers gave different opinions. Bob Sandusky (UIUC) – library science perspective, standards for web accessibility. Randy Butler (NCSA) – concerns about risk management, contingency plans (not possible in NSF budget), better cybersecurity (since added to Pasta diagrams). Terry Benzel (San Diego) – management perspective, use cases, prototypes, testing, metrics. Chris Jones (UCSB) – open process to ecoinformatics community, open source, open repositories, code exchange. Michael Piasecki (Drexel) – very ambitious given resources. Bruce Wilson (ORNL) – plan is aggressive but possible, include time for documentation and training, inward focus on LTER, what is LTER role in greater ecoinformatics community. External review team created a document with recommendations. Final version is not yet available.

Phil, Bob, James, Mark S., Mark W., Wade, and Corinna spent an afternoon discussing next steps. Phil has a better sense of what the EB needs to do. LTER does not have the necessary governing bodies. Also a recurring issue for the IMC.

EB meeting last week. Included Todd and another program officer at NSF. Two climate change RFPs (oceans, water) are out, the other two (biodiversity, climate prediction) are not. Focus on

integration. Todd is waiting for an LTER budget before announcing supplements.

NSF administrators are advising LTER to develop a strategic plan. The ISSE is a research plan but an implementation plan is also needed. The 30-year review not yet begun but a committee has been assembled by NSF. Focus will be to look forward rather than review the last 10 years.

LTER legacy data committee created a prospectus for NSF.

LNO operational plan. Portions were approved by the EB. Still working on the NIS section (3rd version).

Science Council meeting (May). The earlier plan was to improve communications between IMs and scientists and invite all IMs to attend. Now the focus is on developing a strategic plan for LTER. The current plan is to invite IM-Exec, include a presentation on the status of CI-NIS planning, and make it clear that there are expectations of scientists as well as of IMs.

No indication from Todd on the focus of LTER supplements, but current plan is unlikely to change.

BioScience issue. Not clear how far planning has progressed. Karen is interested in leading an IM article.

The third draft of the LNO operational plan has been distributed only to the EB. Not asking for more feedback at this point. Changes are highlighted in the current version. There have been significant changes in the communications area.

The ISSE included a CI component written by the CI team. IM-Exec may be expected to contribute to the new plan. What will be NISAC's role? Wade will attend the SC meeting as NISAC chair. Not clear if all NISAC will attend.

PIE is hosting the SC meeting in a hotel in Peabody (halfway between MBL and the field site).

## **2. LNO Report**

The meeting with external reviewers went well. Good synergy between NISAC report and external reviews. NISAC idea of tiger teams will address engagement of critical people. These teams can be compensated.

A communication plan for the NIS was also suggested by NISAC and included in the communications section of the LNO operational plan. Involve communications experts (daily updates via twitter...?).

Security is now better documented in the Pasta diagram, etc.

The EB is reviewing the NIS component this week. James will circulate to us if OK with Bob. Communicate again with NSF to make sure this is what NSF wants and edit document as necessary.

LNO reverse site visit before the mini-symposium in March will be an opportunity to defend the document.

Two new hires at LNO. NIS programmer = James Moss. Information manager = Yang Xia (SEV), worked with Kristin in past. Meet at IM-Exec meeting later this month.

LNO assembling annual reports. Three cooperative agreement reports. EB has reviewed. NISAC

will review CI components. Pretty straight forward. Completion of operational plan is major milestone.

James and at least one other IM will be asked by the EB to join the prospectus WG effort. Ensure that IM is an integral part of these proposals as they move forward.

### 3. IM Training Schedule

Water cooler on cross-site supplements was postponed. Units group in March. Possible future topics are listed on website. We might schedule out a bit further.

How to integrate ClimDB into the Pasta architecture? How to integrate ChemDB (which has a more involved data model)?

Request from Inigo to endorse Drupal training session. About six sites would be involved. How does this fit in with other training opportunities? We need procedure for processing and prioritizing requests.

Inigo's proposal was submitted as a post-ASM proposal. The EB considered it important but moved it to a separate funding track (IM training). Hence the request to IM-Exec.

IM-Exec did submit an endorsement for Karen's proposal. Bob interpreted IM-Exec endorsement to mean that funding would come from IM training funds. This was not our understanding (or James's).

We need to clarify the general process. And then determine where these requests fit in. We did not see Karen's proposal before it was submitted.

Corinna tried to dissuade the EB from bumping all IM-related proposals to IM training funding. Theresa was funded for the LTER maps project from post-ASM funds.

In ASM years, IM-related proposals that are not funded for post-ASM might be considered for IM training. IM-related proposals that feature integration with science may be more attractive to the EB.

We need a process for evaluating training ideas. The current wording on the website is that the EB will make decisions on funding and send recommendations to Bob. Our role is not clear. Analogous to guidelines for submission of NIS modules.

IM training budget. More smaller groups is a possibility. The LNO would like to see at least one session each year. A regular schedule is easier to manage and better for reviews. But three in a year is also a possibility.

The current budget includes two meetings of 21 (or 22) people per year. Limited by size of LNO training facility. James can get exact figures.

Ask individuals to submit 1-page proposals? But individuals who need the training may not be able to write the proposals.

Once the NIS development gets rolling, the training topics will be fairly obvious. A formal process may be less important then. Some sort of voting process with periodic reminders.

The Drupal project has involved time from Inigo and Marshal. Inigo sent a request to the EB on

his own. The expectation is that individuals will become fairly independent after some training. Provide a framework for entering data and metadata and extracting EML. But not yet demonstrated to produce EML.

Inigo has written the modules and sites will provide the content. Utilizes vocabulary, view, and form-building capabilities. Uses Perl to extract EML from the Drupal database. Plan to use XSLT in future.

Drupal is a front-end to a relational database. A relational data model can represent EML.

#### **4. Drupal Training**

The idea developed in response to requests from sites. So far several prototype sites with a demo at ASM. Other sites have showed interest. Submitted post-ASM proposal. EB deferred to IM-Exec and IM training funds.

Workshop would provide formal training for LUQ, SEV, PIE, and other (really) interested sites. Not a lot of resources. Train individuals on how to manage and use prepared Drupal systems.

The level of detail argues for a smaller number of sites. Go further with a few individuals.

The Drupal modules are now at production stage. Transfer of EML (level 5) is possible. The relational data model for Drupal does not match EML exactly.

A background Drupal database would be deployed at the site. Scaling will be tested by loading all EML into a single server to check performance. Databases will not be hosted at LNO but can be synchronized via web services.

Workshop would train individuals to use existing modules at their sites. A reasonable goal for three days. Each site has somewhat different needs and some local customization may be desirable.

Workshop might be located at LNO. Or Inigo might travel to individual sites if necessary.

Drupal 7 (a major release change and currently in alpha distribution) will break backwards compatibility for forms but not data. Does this present a timing problem?

The time required to build forms is trivial once one has some experience with Drupal. Drupal 6 will not go away immediately and Drupal 5 is still in use. Embrace changes in Drupal 7 gradually over time. Explore via early adopters.

Best time for training? As soon as possible. Possibly during Eda's visit in April.

#### **5. IM-Exec Winter Meeting**

See posted draft agenda. Revisit during the meeting. See also strategic planning grid prepared by Margaret. How best to devise a plan? The IMC is mentioned at many points in the LNO operational plan (use cases, advisors, testers, etc). We'll need the current version of the plan for the meeting. Margaret will assemble and post a PDF version of the EML 2.0 specification document.

Goal is to produce a product. Try to be as well prepared as possible for the meeting.

Waiting for Todd to confirm VTC time. Christine will participate by VTC only. Invite other interested

IMs? Or is this too difficult to manage? Training lab will be used for meeting (Rm 325).

### Meeting Notes <sup>[2]</sup>

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