

**LTER Network Information System Advisory Committee (NISAC)
Report to the Coordinating Committee (CC)**

10 May 2006

Prepared by NISAC

1. **NISAC Membership.** The Committee welcomes Chuck Hopkinson (PIE) and Alan Knapp (KNZ, SGS) as new PI members and Wade Sheldon (GCE) as the new IM member. The Committee would also like to recognize the valuable contribution of former members Stuart Gage (KBS), Mark Harmon (AND), and Peter McCartney (CAP, now NSF). Current membership includes PI representatives: Hopkinson, Knapp, Tim Kratz (NTL), Deb Peters (JRN), and Robin Ross (PAL); IM representatives: Barbara Benson (NTL), Emery Boose (HFR), Don Henshaw (AND, Chair), and Sheldon; and LNO representatives: James Brunt, Bill Michener, Mark Servilla, John Vande Castle, and Bob Waide. Opportunities for other PI's and IM's to serve on NISAC are forthcoming as several Committee members have served since 2003 and will be rotating off.

2. **NISAC Meeting.** NISAC will be meeting at the University of Minnesota immediately prior to the Coordinating Committee Meeting on 15-16 May, 2006. This meeting will mark the first meeting since June 2005 in Santa Fe. Key topics include a review of the Cyberinfrastructure (CI) Strategic Plan, and review and consideration of the Trends book and NIS module, NIS-related activities at the Network Office, and an IM Committee document regarding recommendations for LTER web site design and content.

The **Cyberinfrastructure (CI) Strategic Plan** is being developed as part of the LTER Network Planning Grant and an early draft will be reviewed by NISAC. This draft includes contributions from the CI-Core Team (Barbara Benson, James Brunt (lead editor), John Porter, and John Vande Castle), as well as Don Henshaw, Mark Servilla, and Deanna Pennington. The Committee will consider the overall vision, scope, and direction for CI development for the LTER Network and the appropriateness of the CI planning for supporting the new science agenda.

3. **VCR CC Meeting.** The **Network Information System (NIS) Strategic Plan** was approved by the CC at the Virginia Coast meeting in September 2005. The strategic plan presents a mission statement, goals and a diverse set of strategies for implementation of the NIS. The primary mission includes providing a "portal" to LTER data products for the broader scientific community and balancing development of short-term, priority products with development of long-term, generic solutions and improved network-wide infrastructure. Strategies include increasing the quality of LTER data and metadata, increasing the availability of data for synthetic activities, and supporting the creation of Network-based synthetic information products.

The CC also approved the development of a **Trends NIS data module** based on the data collected for the Trends book. The NIS module will enable book graphics to be dynamically created on a web page and allow continual updates and display of these graphics into the future. The module will rely upon online site data sets that are richly documented in EML and registered in the LTER Data Catalog (Metacat). Module development will test the use of EML to dynamically drive the loading and transformation of site data into global frameworks, and allow the testing of different models for performing data transformation and integration.