

**STRATEGIC & IMPLEMENTATION
PLANNING for
THE LONG-TERM ECOLOGICAL
RESEARCH NETWORK**

WHAT IS STRATEGIC & IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING ?

Strategic and implementation planning (SIP) is a management tool used to optimize and ensure the successful outcomes of long-term organizational goals or initiatives.

SIP IS:

Focused---energies and resources are selected and dedicated to achieve goals.

Strategic---follows steps to achieve goals that are carefully crafted with required resources.

Integrated---all of the components of the plan fit together and work synergistically.

Feasible---goals are achievable and designed to produce practical results.

Adaptable---plan serves as a steady guide, with built-in flexibility to adjust to changing situations.

Measurable---process and outcomes of the plan are demonstrable and quantifiable.

WHY SIP?

- **SIP** is a highly useful management tool to:
- Guides simple or complex initiatives over long periods of time
- Minimizes risks in execution of the plan
- Optimizes successful outcomes
- Provides a solid basis for evaluation and accountability

HOW TO DEVELOP A SIP?

- First, form a group of concerned persons, including the organization's (or project's) leader and other stakeholders who will steer the development of the plan to completion.
- Stakeholders must then carefully consider and reach a consensus on, and document the following elements of a strategic plan:



VISION

A brief statement that describes the ultimate aim of the proposed initiative and how the world will be changed as a result of that initiative. It must be stated clearly and have a sense of urgency and excitement for stakeholders and potentially interested persons.



MISSION

Statement of the overall thrust of the initiative. It should be unambiguous and include the driving rationale for the initiative.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Describes the **strengths**, **weaknesses**, **opportunities** and **threats** (SWOT) that are involved in or may impact the initiative. This analysis is essential for the strategies and adaptability of the plan, and is critical to the overall success of the strategic and implementation plan.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- **Goals** are the guiding global aims of an initiative. The goals must be stated succinctly.
- **Objectives** are more specific statements that describe sub-goals or major goal-attainment steps in measurable terms and timeframes.

STRATEGIES

The approaches used to achieve the goals and objectives. Strategy statements must be feasible, and include contingency strategies. Also, the approaches used to achieve the goals should include how the opportunities found in the situational analysis will be utilized and challenges addressed.



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Describes the specific actions taken to achieve the plan, including the what, who, how, where and when for each of the goals and objectives.

SAMPLE IMPLEMENTATION CHART

Goal	Obj.#	Action	Who	Loc.	Time-frame	Status
1	1.1	Do first study	P.I.	Lab	June-Aug. 2010	

METRICS

Metrics are the quantitative and qualitative measures used to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the plan's implementation and the goal-related outcomes. Also included with the metric results is documentation of lessons learned from executing and making changes in the strategic and implementation plan.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

- Description of linkages between the financial (and in-kind resources) and the goal-related activities. The specific linkages provide a basis for monitoring and accounting for the allocation and expenditure of the plan's resources.

MANAGING THE SIP

- A description should be included in the plan of how and who will oversee and manage the plan's implementation. This should include a description of administrative controls, and a succession plan for possible termination of key personnel during the plan's execution.

SPECIAL SIP REQUIREMENTS

- ***A Code of Ethics*** and training program must be established to guide the behaviors and actions of the center's participants in keeping with professional ethics in regard to research, methodologies used, ownership of research and ideas, and intellectual property rights.
- ***A Data Management Plan*** must be established indicating how the research data will be managed and access granted for use by other researchers.
- ***An Intellectual Property Rights Agreement*** must be established as to who has ownership rights over discoveries or products that may result from a particular LTER site's research and development activities.

STRATEGIC & IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING RECAP

The 9 basic elements of a strategic and implementation plan are:

- Vision
- Mission
- Situational Analysis
- Goals/Objectives
- Strategies
- Implementation Plan
- Metrics
- Resources
- Management



A SUB-SIP IS DEVELOPED FOR EACH MAJOR COMPONENT OF THE LTER:

- Research
- Education
- Diversity
- Knowledge Transfer
- Management Information
- Public Engagement
- Observatory Collaborations

END