

Minutes of the LTER Executive Board Meeting  
September 19, 2011; 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. EDT via conference call

Meeting called to order at 11am EDT by Chair Scott Collins; Members attending: Dan Childers, John Blair, Emory Boose, Nick Brokaw, Karen McGlathery, Emily Stanley, Hugh Ducklow, David Foster, John Moore, Steve Hamilton, Bob Waide  
Unavailable: Phil Robertson  
Also attending from NSF: Saran Twombly for Agenda Item #3, and Nancy Grimm for Item #2

1. Approval of the minutes from the 1 August 2011 EB meetings – amended and approved

2. National Climate Assessment (Grimm): The NCA is due every 4 years. This is a sustained process for assessing and communicating knowledge of climate change risks and probabilities. The last report was issued in 2009, and the next is due in 2013. The 2009 assessment is available at the USGCRP website: <http://www.globalchange.gov/publications/reports/scientific-assessments/us-impacts>. The National Advisory Committee is appointed, the co-chair is Jerry Melillo, and Terry Chapin is also involved with the assessment. USGCRP issued a request for information for groups/individuals/orgs to respond to requests for information via technical input. Must submit an expression of interest by 1 Oct. Technical input is due 1 March 2012. This input (reprints, data, etc) will be used by the author teams to produce the report. Need to put this in place so that input will continue into future reports. What can LTER do: organize a technical input on ecosystem responses to be submitted by 1 March. However, input could be easier – submitting pdfs of pubs (2009 and later) and explaining their relevance. Get involved in workshops being planned to generate technical input. Refer interested individuals to Nancy Grimm at ([ngrimm@usgcrp.gov](mailto:ngrimm@usgcrp.gov)). Nancy will provide a powerpoint that will itemize the structure and help with guidance on input, and form to indicate intent to submit material. Collins will distribute the ppt. LTER will develop a hierarchical approach to our response – site based point-person, aggregate into one LTER report, asking Bruce Hayden, Climate Committee Chair, to organize and aggregate responses.

3. Report from NSF (Saran): OG Office insisted that LTER have a formal solicitation. Issuing this solicitation is taking a while because multiple directorates must sign off and agree on policy issues. Substantive changes: due 6 Feb 2012 (date chosen by Fastlane). The project description is limited to 25 pages with up to 5 additional pages for figures. Section I is Results of Prior Support including a list of the 10 most significant publications from the last 6 years of funding. This section should help develop the context for the project description. List themes of prior proposals (LTERI emphasis, etc). Broader impacts and supplement support should be included in this section. In a supplementary document list all electronically available data sets. Indicate which have been used by investigators, including researchers outside the site. Section II is the Project Description limited to 18 pages text. Clearly

describe conceptual framework and motivational questions. These are questions that cannot be addressed with data in hand but need new data. New activities should be described here. There will be emphasis on cross-site research. Close this section with a synthesis that ties together proposed activities and explain how they address long-term research. Sect III Education and Outreach limited to 2 pages. Section IV addresses site visit report. Budget justification should be explained in detail. Supplementary documents: Prepare an alphabetical list of all collaborators. Five pages on information management for site, including milestones and deliverables in compliance to LTER network goals. Site management plan. 3 pages. How are funding and research decisions made? How do you involve NON-LTER scientist, recruitment of new scientists, leadership change. Again, prepare a table listing databases available on line. Include a Postdoc mentoring plan, when appropriate. Include protocols for safety and security, animal care, when appropriate. Expect budgets to go up to 940K plus supplements (SLTER, REU). \$980K total per year.

NSF budget activities re: moving money from research to infrastructure. The lease on the NSF building is up in 2012. Bids are out for a new building that will cost NSF \$50 million. This money doesn't exit in related equipment category. So, this flexibility will come out of research programs to build the new building. Some are worried that this \$50 million will come from core programs, not from special solicitations and competitions.

Saran's priorities. The solicitation. Secondly, BIO Has received 30-year review report. This cannot be shared with LTER until the BIO AC reads and releases it. Trying to get this moving so we can take advice and apply it to the next round of renewals. A subset of the BIO AC has been asked to review the report and discuss by phone to approve and release the report. NSF likes some of the recommendations and is concerned about others.

Duck: Expressed concerns about limitations on submissions in DEB and IOS. Response: Data show that few submit more than 2 anyway. This is just DEB core program limitation. You can be senior personnel on as many proposals as you want. Lots of new solicitations coming out which offer lots of possibilities for funding. This is an experiment. Deadlines are selected to be most effective for timing, writing, processing, etc. How reliable is the pre-proposal evaluation phase? Will the same panels do pre and full proposals? Some repeat panelists is clearly desirable, but many more panelists on preproposal panels than full proposal panels. NSF will be keeping an eye on young investigators.

#### 4. Discussions with Nancy, Saran, Liz

- Synthesis data project – Encouragement to move forward
- SIP priorities – Produce subSIPs with immediate priorities to make this more useful
- Program announcement – working on it

## 5. Organizing Committees:

- Mini-symposium – Speakers have been invited. Long list of potential speakers, got down to 7 top choices with a back-up for each. Speakers are: Billie Turner, Russ Schmitt, Phil Robertson, Claire Welty, Jeannine Cavender-Bares, Tischa Munoz, Gary Kofinas.
- Science Council – Co-Chairs are Karen McGlathery and Evelyn Gaiser. The plan is to follow the same theme as the minisymposium and use all or some of the same speakers. Same meeting format as 2010. Seven plenary speakers. Themes for working groups, related to mini-symposium topics/themes still being developed
- ASM – Committee has been formed. Karen: suggestion of person for coastal perspective Matt Reidenbach. Need to get co-chair selected ASAP. Arrival will be Sunday and have a 4 day meeting.

6. Synthesis Data Pilot Project Update – Liz is in favor of it and has the funds. Next phase is to get the sites involved and start producing the documents that will be associated with the RFP activities. Text of the RFP is ready to go, but need addenda from sites. Bob Waide will talk with folks from test sites to determine how long it will take to produce the documents. The RFP will be out long-enough to get attention (at least 30 days), followed by a video conference to answer questions from potential bidders.

7. Status of survey results. Survey person has dropped off the face of the earth. She was to do subset analysis but may not happen. Find a new person in the future.

8. LINX and NIS. Steve: this initiative started via LTER ASM and was led by Pat Mulholland but Pat can no longer maintain the database. Why aren't LINX data on the web and available to one and all? The hope is to move in that direction with help from LTER. Steve has LINX II data in excel spreadsheets. 72 experiments total in 8 biomes across NA. Each has 13 worksheets per site. This could potentially become a NIS pilot project. These are very important data sets. LTER should make certain they are managed in perpetuity. This request is similar to the proposal from Liz Blood for the macroecosystems cooperation. The problem is the data are in challenging format (multipage excel spreadsheets). Metadata are in published protocols and publications, which makes it challenging to link data with metadata. This is a static data set, thus once on-line it is easy to manage. We need to decide how to make this happen and that will require input from LINX scientists for development of the metadata.

9. Data use agreement policy. The current data use agreement webpages hosted by most sites prevents general search engines from grabbing LTER data. NIS will allow this search to happen but still need to sign forms. Forms are there because we have to track users of the data. But these forms are preventing more general use of the data. Saran: This issue could be easily resolved within NSF. NSF wants easy access to

data, so might be willing to wave or alter tracking the use requirements. Emory will take this issue to IMExec

David Foster: All BioScience authors have received their reviews. All had favorable reviews with lots of comments to improve. Reviews were comprehensive. Exec Board ms is the most complex to deal with. Julia Jones has already revised and resubmitted. All revisions are due in November and the full issue will be out sometime in 2012.

#### Announcements

Bob Waide: ILTER Dues. It is unclear if we have the funds and a mechanism to pay our ILTER dues out into the future. This needs further discussion with NSF. Education committee exec met. They will provide input on public LTER webpage. Minutes of the meeting will be out soon. They developed a job announcement/description for an 1.0 FTE Education Coordinator. LNO will make VTC hardware available to exec members as needed.

#### A. US ILTER Committee Report: Plans for dues:

- ILTER will contribute to ICSU/ICSS “Earth System Science for Global Sustainability” (ESSGS) Initiative – see attached briefing note
- GEOBON wants to establish a network of biodiversity sites, for which ILTER is ideal. I volunteered to help with this project, which Terry Parr will lead.
- Dues accumulated over last three years will be used as seed money for ILTER initiatives
  - \$5K to Patrick Bourgeron for Ecosystem Services project
  - \$5K to Hideaki Shibata for Global biogeochemistry/Sustainability project
  - \$5K to ILTER Public Policy committee to develop ILTER brochures
  - \$4K to David Blankman to develop Sites database to encompass all ILTER sites, and also to develop an ILTER listserv
- Manuel Maass is ILTER chair-elect, and will take over from Terry Parry in 2012.
- LTER-Serbia and LTER\_Chile were confirmed as new members of ILTER.

Next ILTER meeting will be in Portugal September 17-21, 2012. The Portuguese LTER is interesting in that all LTER sites have ties to business, a different model than elsewhere.