



EDIT 3rd Meeting of the BoD

Draft Executive Summary

25th January 2008

Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, France

Present:

-MNHN:	Bertrand-Pierre GALEY (Chair)	-RBINS:	Camille PISANI Jackie VAN GOETHEM (WP8 Leader)
	Simon TILLIER (Project Leader – WP1 Leader)	-RMCA:	Michel LOUETTE
-CDC:	Frédéric VOLLE	-NBGB:	Jérôme DEGREEF
-CSIC:	Marian RAMOS (WP4 Leader)	-HNHM:	Istvan MATSKASI
-UKBH	Henrik ENGHOFF (WP 2 Leader)	-CUB :	Eduard STLOUKAL
-UvA:	Yde DE YONG	-IBSAS:	Karol MARHOLD
-NHN:	Eric F. SMETS	-SMEBD :	Mark COSTELLO
-NNM:	Leo KRIEGSMAN (WP 3 Leader)	-SP2000:	Frank BISBY
	Dirk Houtgraaf	-BINRAS:	Dmitry GELTMAN Vasily YARISHKO
-CBS	Pedro CROUS	-MO:	Chuck MILLER
-FU – BGBM:	Walter BERENDSOHN (WP5 Leader)	-USNM:	David SCHINDEL
-NHML:	Richard LANE Dave ROBERTS (WP6 Leader)	-SAC:	Sybille VAN DEN HOVE (SAC Chair)
-RBGK:	Eimear NIC LUGHADHA	- CETAF:	Stefan CLAESSION
-SMNS:	Johanna EDER Christoph HÄUSER (WP7 Leader)	Absent:	
		-INRA:	Delegation to represent (B-P. GALEY, MNHN)
		-ZINRAS:	Delegation to represent (D. GELTMAN, BINRAS)

I. Welcome by Bertrand-Pierre Galey (Chair)

Bertrand-Pierre Galey stressed the importance of the implication of the Directors.

II. General report on the activities by Simon Tillier¹ (Project Leader)

The general report on the activities is a catalogue of actions, summarizing the progress made in different EDIT activities in relation to 2nd JPA and to the comments made by the previous SAC meetings and the first EC review.

¹ Please also see S. Tillier's presentation.

1. Strategy of EDIT

The Project Leader's presentation presenting the activities of EDIT summarised how the comments made by the Reviewers and the SAC were taken into account and what strategy and new directions have been proposed for EDIT.

2.1 Reduction of fragmentation

One of the main points presented and discussed was the report of the Future Scoping Group (annex 1) chaired by Richard Lane, and how it should be endorsed by the BoD.

The document was adopted unanimously as a shared vision for the future of EDIT.

Concerning Biodiversity informatics technologies and the development of tools and new practices (annex 2):

- Report was made on the exemplar groups and the success of scratchpads for WP6 & on WP5.
- It was suggested that the scratchpads could be used as a mean to involve even more in the project.
- A workshop on IPR is to be held in Kew on February 20th.

The template MoU (prepared by the ISTC [Information Science and Technology Group organised by WP5) and Rules of Procedure for the ISTC were presented to the Board (annexes 12 & 13).

The first MoU soon to be proposed to the directors will be based on the template. A similar approach can be taken for gender issues,

Vote was taken on the Rules of Participation for ISTC, which were adopted unanimously.

Report was made on WP2 on the expert database which has been developed and tested. It was proposed to extend the data of experts beyond people working directly for EDIT.

2.2. Progress toward a transnational entity

There was discussion of the report of the BoD institutional working group (annex 3 & 4) on what a permanent structure for EDIT could be. It was proposed to constitute a smaller working group to produce directions or topics to the NSC and BoD on which to progress, notably on determining the object of this structure and its composition.

2.3. Strengthening the scientific, technological and information capacities

Report from WP3: concerning physical taxonomic infrastructure, a report on existing national consortia and other bi- and multilateral agreements between member institutions of EDIT will be delivered. At least one working group for a specific sector of EDIT has been constituted.

Regarding taxonomic information infrastructure: communication mechanisms and liaison with international infrastructures should be improved, as well as establishing MoUs with other networks & infrastructures.

Report from WP7: EDIT funding is not enough for ATBI+M, however the Mercantour operation was successful in raising a total 500,000€ for three years with the help of EDIT. It has shown that support by EDIT is important and is a window.

It was restated that EDIT aims at creating standards, protocols etc. to be able to operate.

2.4. Collaborative research

Report from WP4: Guidelines for WP4 activities And Agreement on next actions was presented (annex 14).

One of the objectives is to reach a stage where researchers work together and to help them write proposals and get funded. A bibliometric analysis was suggested; however, the SAC recommended not to implement it. The analysis of research plans from all EDIT partners was stressed in order to identify collaborations in the activities of taxonomy.

2.5. Creation of a forum for stakeholders and end-users : WP1 / WP4 / WP7/ WP8 report

Engaging and involving stakeholders: the first report on modalities for liaison (by Daphne Duin, annex 5) was presented. One outcome of the November 2007 report Stakeholder engagement in Biodiversity and environmental projects was that no clear model exists in any other EU project.

2.6. Spreading of excellence WP8 / WP1 report and plan on PR/PA (communication strategy) (annex 6)

The PR and communication plan drafted upon recommendation of the SAC was discussed. PA & PR officers are invited to work together but must be identified in each institution.

It was expressed that public awareness was not addressed enough in the report, and some target audiences such as non-taxonomic biologists were missing. This was a choice due to the limitation of resources, but an effort will be made to address it by way of the stakeholder activities.

Training plans were discussed & a meeting of training officers and providers is planned. It was noted that training for academics is more widespread than training for amateurs. Jackie Van Goethem expressed his will to try to remedy this and fill in the gaps.

A suggestion was made that EDIT should prepare training programs which should be included in University Courses. Although the idea of a common curriculum sounds very attractive, it must be stressed that new activities cannot be proposed without additional investment and effort from the members. It seems EDIT was designed for similar tasks. But members of the Board could meet to discuss how this question could be addressed. **The BoD proposed that Karol Marhold and Eduard Stloukal should invite their colleagues and perhaps make a proposal to the Board.** It would also be a good idea for CETAF to be associated.

3. Visibility of EDIT:

Gantt and Roadmap: reviewers and EC asked for an explicit roadmap. This converges with the reviewer's remark that our activity is not easily readable in available documentation. The information from WP leaders has to be combined and harmonised.

4. Report on recommendations made during the 3rd Scientific Advisory Council (by Sybille van den Hove (SAC Chair).

A lot of progress was made on many fronts: reactivity to BoD, reviewers and SAC recommendations; Integration and impact are becoming a reality; high BoD presence and involvement; Future Scoping Group; good progress on IT tools; ATBI+M has had very effective reaction to concerns and is now a good proof of concept for EDIT, with positive grassroots and fundraising; excellent communication plan; good progress on GAP; effective symposium+meeting+SAC, good start on integration with external groups.

4.1 General suggestions for improvement (slide 2)

- Vision and FSG should be used more to create a manifesto and vision for EDIT. It could be published but will need more work, and should include EDIT's work in addressing the issues. It should be responded to and deepened by grassroots community.
- Research (WP4): EDIT needs to appear more science-driven (less technology-driven). WP4 is crucial and needs more support. The FSG document should provide the vision for research as a strategic skeleton on which to attach activities. Then, the overarching research questions can be derived. Then how the research can be done is defined. Finally, demonstrations based on flagship projects (new or existing) supported by WP4. The WP needs vision, creativity and leadership, as well as ownership by the Board. One option would have the Science Policy Group (SPG) supervise Xavier Eekhout and Daphne Duin (redefined as task leaders). The SPG should meet very soon (2 months) and involve the key players. The SAC would like to be kept informed of progress on this.
- Users: Daphne Duin needs more support and commitment from Directors and partners. Goals can be clarified thanks to the FSG. Case studies (success and failure stories) with user involvement should be started. Users should be involved more systematically in all endeavours, including courses for users. The market for taxonomy should be developed.
- WP5&6: The communication can be improved. Story-board explanations, demonstration pages, slideshows should be available. Users' feedback without general release can be obtained in a (virtual) workshop. The exemplar groups need to show more tangible results (especially the animal one).
- Grassroots taxonomic integration suggestions: integrate younger scientists, through social events and redesigned web presence. Label activities as EDIT.
- Training: the vision for the European School is not yet strong enough. The rest of the world mustn't be forgotten. This effort will need some numerical targets for age balance, gender balance, job placement opportunities etc.
- International integration must continue and deliver results by next year with a clear mandate.
- ATBI+M: Cost/manpower estimates are needed.

The SAC will meet in a year, back-to-back with BoD and/or strategic working group. The report should be by objectives rather than WP (perhaps in common with BoD report), and documents should be available earlier and more easily.

Concerning the selection of the members of a Science Policy Group for WP4, a suggestion with names of people will be made to the NSC which could select 5 or 6 people to form a manageable group who would give leadership and vision.

A distinct list of names as contact points within participating institutions for WP4 should also be provided by the Directors.

5. Enlargement of the consortium

The integration of a new partner, Museum für Naturkunde der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, was discussed and **unanimously approved**. The new partner could play a key role in WP4 and remedy the concentration of WP4 activities within one single partner.

Besides, Steve Blackmore, the director of RBGE expressed his desire to become involved in WP5 and a member of EDIT. It was suggested to be proactive and inclusive, and send them the procedure of adhesion.

6. Reports and grants

The elaboration of the 3rd JPA started more than a month ago (annexes 9, 10 & 1A). The main point is that this is the right time to participate in a JPA. Workpackage Leaders have sent messages to directors asking for participation, with few answers. This is the time to be involved, when the NSC is building up the JPA, the budget and the person-month calculations.

Regarding the reports to be provided to the Commission, the partners were reminded to follow the agenda for the second reporting period in order to allow the NSC to prepare and provide the documents in time.

Closing by Simon Tillier and Bertrand Pierre Galey

Simon Tillier: We had to produce a big effort very quickly to follow the early SAC recommendations and EC review. The science symposium has been a reward for many EDIT researchers. This week has been very positive and I am particularly happy of the advice from the SAC. This would be meaningless if effort did not come from the members and researchers. Let's hope that next year we will have still more progress.

Bertrand Pierre Galey: I found this meeting very encouraging. I think 2008 will be an important year for EDIT. Concrete realisations are emerging in several WPs. We now have a scientific vision and are able to work on strategy. We are beginning to involve more and more people from more and more institutions. This is the year when EDIT becomes not only our common project as directors but a project in each institution. We will have even more work to do together and in each institution. Thank you for your involvement in this project.