



4th meeting of BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES

25th January 2008

Carvoeiro, Portugal

I- Welcome by Bertrand Pierre Galey 4th formal meeting

Thank you all for attending – reviewers stressed implication of directors.

II- General Report on activities of EDIT & 3rd JPA

In SAC were presented the activities by objectives, in BoD presented by WP however doesn't show involvement of institutions.

1. Strategy of EDIT

- Progress towards integration of taxonomy based upon
 - **fora** and **projects** to design common work
 - **tools** to perform integrated research, with new distributed **infrastructures**
 - Administrative tools (MoUs etc) and a platform where directors take common **decisions.** for each topic, implementation through an MOU (in accordance with statutes of institutions, geometry of partnership may not be the same for all, and the degree of implication may differ). MOUs will serve as link for activities at the end of the contract in particular if no legal status for EDIT is agreed upon.
 - Inter- Network activities / participation in **international initiatives** (ie Lifewatch)
 - **Communication**
 - **Training**

- making tools to engage taxonomists → change in culture is needed. Strategy to provide them with tools to improve their own work through collaboration.

Remarks from SAC & reviewers → NSC had to modify JPA which is not a problem for NOEs because they are meant to progress towards integration and are therefore not set in stone.

Main reproach was the lack of a vision for the future in terms of science which led to the setting up of the FSG, and the lack of vision for EDIT after the end of the contract, which also led to the setting up of a working group on institutional vision.

- Looking to the future
 - vision for the future of taxonomy (Future Scoping Group, Carvoeiro Science symposium)
 - vision for EDIT after the present contract (BoD working group)
 - common objectives for EDIT partners (BoD);
 - sustainable progress towards these objectives (EDIT roadmap);
 - improve interaction and convergence of WPs towards these objectives while maintaining tool development

Besides, interaction of WPs were not visible enough.

Questions open to the BoD:

- further development of workshop(s) with stakeholders, improvement of relationship to users and amateurs (WP1,2&4)
- coordination of research (WP4) with the question of the adhesion of a new partner who could take on this task
- organization of the 3d EDIT general meeting, proposed by the NSC to be held in June 2009

Management activities suggestions

- meeting of the NSC ca every 3 months (with meeting of the managers group);
- meeting of the SAC once a year;
- meeting of the BoD once a year, complemented by ad hoc directors working groups, as with the Institutional vision in 2007-2008.

New directions

- Pursuing and maintaining the EDIT roadmap
- Implementation of a sustainability strategy approved by the BoD, based on the FSG report, the BoD Institutional vision working group report and the Director's workshop in Carvoeiro (2d JPA);

Questions & comments: nil

2.1 Reduction of fragmentation

2.1.1 Report of the FSG (annex 1)

Richard Lane reported in the general meeting the work of the FSG.

World of diversity has especially expanded in micro world.

Taxonomy is evolving towards a very disciplinary science. It is being increasingly driven as an information science. The way taxonomists work will change. Lack of cohesion. Not only computerizing and digitizing data, but analysis and science on the web. New ways of storing specimens. Kinds of people who will need training (next generation), individuals that can handle different data sets.

Global enterprises will be the driving force (GBIF...) much wider coordination which brings together all groups of people and facilities.

Need to find more rational methods to measure impacts.

Questions / comments:

Leo Kriegsman: Is the FSG report the document basis for work within the next JPA ?

Simon Tillier: Present activities of the JPA are fully compatible with the objective set forth in report. But it goes much further.

Bertrand Pierre Galey: orientation towards new concepts or ideas. Key question is are we only integrating to do what we used to do faster, bigger etc... or are we integrating to change our methods?

The concepts set forth in the FSG are new to taxonomy. If everybody agrees, we could adopt the FSG report as a sort of declaration of scientific principle.

Christophe Hauser: this document should be more than a paper for internal discussion. Taxonomy driven by leading international organisation, we are lacking an international support structure, except on a case by case or bilateral basis. There is a challenge in going towards sustainability. For more visibility, this paper should be widely diffused.

Franck Bisby: agrees with the lack of global support structure. But taxonomy not deeply ingrained in all parts of the world. The centre of the activity is within the EU and North America. It is our responsibility to maintain the structure.

Besides, taxonomy is now going towards a two speed process: the old process is continuing and a new one being developed.

Richard Lane: identify which groups of organisms work on what level of detail. There is a rapid approach and a more detailed approach.

Bertrand Pierre Galey: New tools being developed to go faster in different ways. But this doesn't exclude the more traditional way.

Mark Costello: must stage how EDIT will implement and address these issues. A section in this report is missing on "how we are going to do it".

Bertrand Pierre Galey: WPs should address that point.

Dirk Houtgraaf: make a statement at the BoD that the document is accepted= positive consensus

Simon Tillier: It is easy to show that WPs are working in this perspective. The change is not for tomorrow but maybe in a few years time.

Jackie van Goethem: WP8 this document is very useful, all issues are within WP8's scheme. But didn't find the present codes of nomenclature.

Richard Lane: this part was holding us back. Broad scale work, present codes of nomenclature not adapted.

Leo Kriegsman: A strategy document is needed.

Eimear Nic Lughadha: Perhaps the wording should be change, What is it the BoD is endorsing?

Simon Tillier: the FSG report is not a strategy document but a vision.

Bertrand Pierre Galey: an action plan / strategy is needed. It could be done on the basis of this document.

Camille Pisani: Can be adopted as a vision document to be debated among us and at a much larger scale. Could raise a reaction and visibility. The way we think this field should be thought again.

John Jackson: agrees this could be a vision document.

- Document adopted as a shared vision unanimously

This document should inspire the work of the WPs. Agree to try to communicate this vision and use it for discussions.

Leo Kriegsman: Jessie Ausubel suggested the doc could be condensed.

2.1.2 Biodiversity Informatics technology (annex 2)

Requested by the SAC (reproach being the lack of a vision about where EDIT was going). NSC established this document. No negative comments from the SAC.

2.1.2.1. WP6 report

Exemplar groups

- ✓ Formal requirements document for web interface.
- ✓ Developing expert communities.
- ✓ Data entered into the Berlin database (being ported to the new Common Data Model).
- ✓ Portal development underway.

Scratchpads

Since March 07:

- ✓ > 230 users, > 28 countries, >40 sites, >100k pages, ~170 unique visitors per day.
- ✓ Formal collaboration with GBIF and ZooTaxa, detailed discussions with EoL.
- ✓ Second level of development launched at Faro (Panels module).
- ✓ NHM commitment to support environment beyond the project-life.

One deliverable → launch of scratchpads. The SAC asked why this was not more advertised. The answer being it was first necessary to follow technically.

Planned work:

- Web-based collaborative tools
 - Workshop on IPR & Credit (20 Feb 08, Kew)
 - Rationalise the work-plan into 3 elements:

Content building
Community building
Content delivery

Questions / comments:

Why not more PR on Scratchpads?

Dave Roberts: currently 53 sites on the scratchpads, too rapid growth may cause performance problems. Planning on upgrading the hardware. Also a way for directors to engage in the project.

2.1.2.2. WP5 report Cybertaxonomy

- ✓ Descriptive software tested & reviewed
- ✓ Plans for a common security infrastructure and Single Sign-On
- ✓ BDTracker 2nd version almost ready (now using standard Drupal components)
- ✓ ViTaL: Metalib-Software, hardware in place, harvester development started
- ✓ Geo-Tools: Online GIS available with fixed dataset & layers and online data import for users
- ✓ ISTC meeting; MoU template developed
- ✓ International developer group uses common tools for code versioning, repository and project management
- ✓ Common Data Model (CDM) v. 1 including programmer code library agreed and implemented
- ✓ CDM-based Taxon-Editor proof of concept (text parsing!)
- ✓ Dataportal prototype in PHP running on BerlinModel
- ✓ Dataportal development in Drupal using CDM store webservice commenced

Further **planned work in cybertaxonomy – concepts and tools**

- CDM Editor functionality for descriptive data specified.
- Development of CDM-based interfaces for institutional databases
- Software for taxonomic core interfacing (e.g. import modules, conversion tools).
- Specification of advanced concept-related workflows and assessment of their efficiency.
- Continuous collaborative refinement of the Common Data Model (CDM) towards 2nd version
- Geo-Webservices for online and print quality maps and converter web services incl. user manual. Organisation of geospatial training.
- Taxonomic core editing software for CDM v.1
- Taxonomist's specimen access interface implemented and interfaced with the CDM store.

Planned work in Cybertaxonomy – Integration

- Memoranda of Understanding (integration of IT processes at partners with platform)
- Exemplar group data in CDM and accessible through Platform Data Portal
- Virtual Library of Taxonomic Literature launched (incl. access to partner libraries, priority feedback)

Questions / comments:

Regarding MoUs

How is are the MoUs organised, what is the role of the ISTC?

Walter Berendsohn: These are two different documents, the rules of procedure for the ISTC and the MoU template for the agreements on information technology issues (*annexes 12 and 13*). A similar MOU template could be used for gender issues – with a differing introduction. Asks for approval of the RoP for the ISTC. A concrete MoU based on the template will be presented to the directors at a later stage.

Are the MoUs intended to be legally binding? The document has two version numbers?

Walter Berendsohn: MOU and RoP not legally binding. It is version 1.0

- Decision about the RoP → adopted unanimously

2.1.3. WP2 report (experts / amateurs / joint research)

Expert & Expertise

- ✓ Experts database developed and tested (WP2&5)
- ✓ Workshop on "Professionals and non-professionals as producers and users of taxonomic knowledge – synergies, conflicts, and the role of taxonomic societies" planned (WP2&4)
- Planned work:
 - release of the first version
 - inclusion of data on EDIT staff
 - inclusion of data on ATBI-M experts
 - inclusion of data on experts associated with demonstrator groups
 - inclusion of data from one or more "test countries"
 - gap analysis of taxonomic expertise within EDIT
 - support programme for exchange of researchers working on joint taxonomic projects

A suggestion is to extend data of experts beyond people working directly for EDIT.

Questions / comments:

Richard Lane: how many experts is their evaluation on?

Henrik Engboff: New activity and a small scale one. Would like to see more funds going into program for exchange of researchers.

Simon Tillier: linking, interacting more with society & amateurs (which depends on the outcome of the next workshop *Professionals and non-professionals as producers and users of taxonomic knowledge – synergies, conflicts, and the role of taxonomic societies*)

Henrik Enghoff: invite individual people such as professionals, non-professionals, taxonomists. It is important to take into account non professionals, consider them both as users of and contributors to.

Mark Costello: approximately 1000 experts. Maybe they also have colleagues' students who could feed the database.

Eimear Nic Lughadha: making registration an obligation to apply for.. ?

Walter Berendsohn: common security framework for EDIT members which could extend further. People in the database could be members of the common security framework.

Henrik Enghoff: additional base to register: link system with different sources of biodiversity. Mutual benefit for experts and users of their expertise.

2.2. Progress towards a transnational entity

2.2.1. Report on the BoD Institutional Working Group and BoD workshop (Bertrand Galey) (annexes 3 & 4)

Bertrand Pierre Galey: What should a permanent legal structure for EDIT be. What kind of governing bodies (BoD + smaller executive committee and specialised committees, advisory council composed of scientists and users, a secretariat for PR, lobbying, and relation with other programs, task forces).

Question of the legal status will be addressed next year when EU regulation more precise. Different options. CETAF is an EU association but EDIT has to be more operational.

Questions / comments:

Simon Tillier: at the NSC level will propose directions/topics on which will want to explore further progress. Propose to chair to constitute a smaller working group to produce something to NSC and BoD on which to progress.

Richard Lane: OK lets do it.

One of the directors: the Advisory Council should be different from the current one. Stakeholders should be more explicitly represented in this body.

Mark Costello: What type of membership for this institution, what members for the governing bodies. Legal structure other options than those discussed: directors should **think about the British/Anglo-Saxon structures**.

One of the directors: think of a board with people from outside the consortium

Simon Tillier: needs directors and people competent in their institution, people who can legally commit their institution.

Mark Costello: what kind of financial support, how to raise funds, what relation with people from outside the institution.

2.3. Strengthening the scientific, technological and information capacities

2.3.1. WP3 report

Research infrastructures:

- ✓ report on Biological Resource Centers / Taxonomic Resource Centers
- ✓ successful FP7 proposal **Pan-European Species-directories Infrastructure (PESI)**, initiated by EDIT
- ✓ contributing to agenda for driving forward the establishment of a European "*e-Infrastructure for e-Science digital repositories*" (e-SciDR). Workshop 4-9-2007 in Lisbon and e-questionnaires
- ✓ report and design requirements for the bioinformatics toolbox
- ✓ meeting "DNA barcoding in Europe" held in Leiden, 3-5 Oct. 2007, with 143 participants
- ✓ Mycobank developed as data repository for DNA Barcoding data
- ✓ ECBOL website now lists most European research institutions, within and outside EDIT, actively involved in DNA barcoding
- ✓ data compiled on relevant biodiversity networks/infrastructure (CONABIO, Mexico; INBIO, Costa Rica; CSIRO, Australia; Australian Museum, Australia); directors contacted

Planned work

- physical taxonomic infrastructure
 - Report on existing national consortia and other bi- and multilateral agreements between member institutions of EDIT
 - Establish at least one working group for a specific sector of EDIT (e.g., collections management, lab facilities)
- taxonomic information infrastructure
 - Proposal for funding of Pan-European species directories infrastructures, extending the geographical scope
 - Linking Pan-European species directories infrastructure with structures outside Europe
 - Create funding opportunities to build EDIT phyloinformatics toolbox software based on preliminary analysis of possible designs
- Large-scale networked instrumental facilities (propose something to EuroBioFund (engineering public/private partnership).
- Liaisons with international infrastructures: improving communication mechanisms, establishing MoUs with other networks / infrastructures.

Karol Marhold: is it possible to include the "plant part" of biodiversity in the framework of relation with other networks

2.3.2. WP7 report

Biodiversity and monitoring

- ✓ In 2007, 45 scientists from 7 EDIT partner institutions visited the first European ATBI+M site (PNM/PNAM)
- ✓ Virtual international task force through ATBI+M forum established: www.atbi.eu/forum
- ✓ > 300 individual experts involved in ATBI+M activities, >100 taxonomists registered in forum, with capacities linked to needs
- ✓ Review of >40 proposals for ATBI+M pilot sites: basis for reaching out in non-EU countries & regions

Planned work

- Full-scale operation of 1 (+2) European ATBI+M pilot sites (>50 participants, all EDIT partners)
- Establishment of first extra-European ATBI+M pilot site
- Rapid integration of field data & records into ATBI+M databases, linked to GBIF (WP5&7)
- Testing new field recording tools and protocols (WP4,5&7)
- ATBI+M manual for biodiversity field recording techniques (WP4&7)

ATBI+M in Mercantour started. 2 Sites in Slovakia have been selected. Non EU sites to be selected.

Questions / comments:

Simon Tillier: EDIT funding is not enough for ATBI+M. The Mercantour operation was successful in raising a total 500,000€ for three years.

Bertrand Pierre Galey: support by EDIT is important and is a window.

Simon Tillier: reminder EDIT aims at creating standards, protocols etc.. to be able to operate.

Christopher Häuser: ATBI+M → perspective is to go on medium or long term. It is way beyond the resources we have.

2.4. Collaborative research

2.4.1. WP4 report

NSC: guidelines for WP4. The JPA update for WP4 has not been fully added.

Coordinating research

- ✓ Workshop on *Field recording techniques and protocols for ATBI+M* (WP4&7). June 2007.
- ✓ 2nd Workshop of European Network of Bioacoustic Collections for Taxonomy, Systematics and Conservation. September 2007 (WP4).

- ✓ Symposium and report on *Future trends of Taxonomy (Technical opportunities and Conceptual Challenges)*. January 2008 (WP4).

Planned work

- **Coordinated research**
 - Science Policy Group (WP4).
 - 2nd Workshop on *Field recording techniques and protocols for ATBI+M*. (WP4&7). June 2008.
 - Analyse research plans from all the EDIT partners. Identify commonalities and derive research targets. (WP4).
 - Explore the possibility of synergising existing research plans. (WP4).
 - Gather/Promote working groups to write research proposals as derived from Future Scoping Group and from Symposium on Future Trends of Taxonomy (WP4).
 - Proposals for additional funding (e.g., DNA barcoding in ATBI+M programmes (WP3&7))

Workshop in London with researchers from EDIT member institution having worked in Madagascar.

Objective: reach a stage where researchers work together and help them write proposals and get funded (mostly WP4).

Questions / comments:

David Schindel: analyse research plans from all EDIT partners in order to identify collaborations in the activities of taxonomy.

Simon Tillier: find commonalities.

David Schindel: Bibliometric analysis?

Eimear Nic Lughadha: Would be a good starting base. It is something (lists) we all maintain.

Daphne Duin: we are already exploring this.

Marian Ramos: this was proposed in previous JPAs but recommended by the SAC not to implement. Request the institutions to communicate their plans in taxonomy.

2.5. Creation of a forum for stakeholders and end-users : WP1 / WP4 / WP7/ WP8 report (annex 5)

1st report by Daphné Duin. There is no clear model on any other EU project.

- ✓ Presentation to the GTI Coordination Mechanism, CBD SBSTTA June 2007 (WP1)
- ✓ Meeting on *Users of Taxonomic Information*. November 2007 (WP4).
- ✓ Report on **Stakeholder engagement in biodiversity and environmental projects**. November 2007 (WP4).
- ✓ Workshop on **Knowledge gap? Taxonomic impediment for users of taxonomic information**. January 2008 (WP4).

Planned work

Engaging stakeholders

- Mapping of users (in progress) (WP4)
- Working on methodologies and possible options to assess the needs of the different groups of users of taxonomic information (on how to fill the gaps of users needs). (WP4)
- User requirements and exchange of information to identify synergy with the needs of trainees.(WP4&8)
- Symposium for taxonomic networks (WP2&6)
- Promotion and outreach of EDIT's ATBI+M approach to scientists, users and general public (WP7)
- Continued participation to the GTI coordination mechanism (WP1)

Involving stakeholders

- Report on the requirements for the physical infrastructure, stemming from research and stakeholder needs (WP3&4)
- User Integrate future research priorities in the training programme of the School of Taxonomy (WP4&8)
- Establish liaisons with industry; coordinate current and foreseen initiatives for barcoding proposals by groups focussing on user and stakeholder needs (WP3)
- Promotion and outreach of EDIT's ATBI+M approach to scientists, users and general public (WP7)

Frank Bisby: An EDIT representative is invited at the Stakeholders Meeting of Species 2000 in Montreal late 2008.

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

2.6.1. Decision item: WP8 / WP1 report and plan on PR/PA (communication strategy) (annex 6)

Outreach

- ✓ Identification of Public Awareness officers at the EDIT partner institutions and beyond
- ✓ Promotion and outreach of EDIT's ATBI+M approach to scientists, users and general public (WP7, all partners)
- ✓ Media events at ATBI+M pilot sites (June 2008, PN Mercantour / PN Alpi Marittime)

Planned Work

Outreach

- Workshop *The Biodiversity Year Special Events in 2010* (March 2008)
- Results of BYSE survey
- Work programme for designing integrated PA activities with best practices and success stories to support 2010 BYSE

- MoU and ‘Recommendations and guidelines’ for integrated approaches of PA activities

Questions / comments:

Recommendation of SAC & Reviewers → develop PR and communication (coordinated by Kew)

Daphné Duin: would like to start the communication plan ASAP

Approved by directors

Bertrand Pierre Galey: PA & PR officers are invited to work together (involve new people in EDIT). Where appropriate EDIT should be the basis for collaborative exhibitions, museum publications and contacts with general media. This is slightly different from what is said on page 4 of the PA topic of the communication plan.

Dirk Houtgraaf: document not enough to go to public awareness.

Simon Tillier: PA subject is much more detailed in WP8 plan (workshop soon with all PA people have been invited to participate).

Frank Bisby: non-taxonomist biologists are missing from the list of target audiences.

Daphné Duin: This was a choice due to the limitation of resources and we will make an effort to address it by way of the stakeholder activities.

Simon Tillier: we have to select our targets.

John Jackson: need to communicate with other areas of science...

David Schindel: PA & PR activities are sub activities of the project – help to WP on how to disseminate their work.

Daphné Duin: communication officers could advise WP on how to interact with the media and communicate to the outside. Might be able to do it more in the future.

Mark Costello: If the FSG document was published, would give a good idea on what the future EDIT is, and what it is about.

Simon Tillier: hope PA officers will discuss this at the workshop. You need to identify the PA officers in partner institutions.

2.6.2. WP8 report and plan on training (pilot programmes and School of Taxonomy)

Training

- ✓ Preparation of the EDIT summer school for taxonomy (WP7&8, August/September 2008)
- ✓ Interactive catalogue of existing training offer in Europe (and beyond)
- ✓ Report and gap analysis on training
- ✓ Call for training providers: > 100 respondents

Planned Work in training

- updateable on-line catalogue
- Identify needs of the Distributed European School of Taxonomy (WP2,4&8)
- concerted network of training providers
- meetings of committee of training providers to discuss curriculum, accreditation, etc.
- first Summer School at European ATBI+M site (WP7&8)
- operational expert-in-training programme

Questions / comments:

Bertrand Pierre Galey: meeting of officers in charge of training planned?

Jackie van Goethem: Invitation sent to those having responded positively to questions sent. Meeting of training officers and providers planned.

Richard Lane: someone had a view that training could take place in specialized institutes (museums) instead of Universities.

Jackie van Goethem: on bringing together providers: set up structure → EDIT school of taxonomy built on ongoing and existing courses. Publicise widely to existing training officers.

Dirk Houtgraaf: should consider professionals as well as amateurs.

Jackie van Goethem: training for academics more widespread than training for amateurs. Will try to remedy and fill in the gaps.

Eduard Stloukal: suggestion that EDIT should prepare training program which should be included in University Courses.

Camille Pisani: This is a new topic. Choice between training amateurs or academics. Within training for academics, should aim at, on the one hand training taxonomists, and on the other should include taxonomy in other training courses.

We should consider prioritising the effort. Increase courses for amateurs, and perhaps lobby universities to include more taxonomy in their courses in parallel to our own school of taxonomy.

Simon Tillier: cannot propose new activities without additional investment and effort from the members.

Karol Marhold: the idea of a common curriculum is very appealing. The idea of an EU school of taxonomy is vague. It is important to teach taxonomic methods. Not enough students attending

master in taxonomy → perhaps the remedy should be a training or cursus common to several universities. And EDIT could help form the curriculum of that course.

Bertrand Pierre Galey: wouldn't CETAF be best suited for this task? Would be the object of a whole project the size of EDIT.

Karol Marbold: CETAF is not accessible to some countries.

Eric Smets: In the FSG report, the last paragraph refers to training in Universities. Perhaps the matter should be stressed more in the document if it is to be published.

Jackie van Goethem: the need to train amateurs came on forefront during the symposium. We have to consider that need.

Karol Marbold: we also and foremost need to train students who are the next generation of taxonomists and who will in their turn train amateurs.

David Schindel: This could be addressed in the policy working group. But this is a very big effort and is part of the Bologna process of creating harmonized courses.

Bertrand Pierre Galey: EDIT has not been designed for that task. But members of the Board could meet to discuss how this question could be addressed.

Karol and Eduard 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

Simon Tillier: Reviewers and EC asked for explicit roadmap. This converges with the reviewer's remark that our activity is not readable beyond the difficult JPA. The information from WP leaders has to be combined and harmonised.

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

Cf. Sybille van den Hove's presentation to the BoD.

Discussion on the SAC recommendations

Sybille van den Hove: The SAC meeting took place yesterday afternoon and this morning. Praise for EDIT: 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.

Criticisms:

- 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 (including institutional vision and taking responsibility). It should be responded to

and deepened by grassroots community: post it on web and have wiki discussion; create a 40 under 40 group to produce a report on implementation. Discussions could be linked to specific events and include non-EDIT and non-European participants.

- 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 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. Start case studies with user involvement. 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. 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: 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. Don't forget the rest of the world. This 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 more available and earlier.

Questions / comments:

Simon Tillier: Some negative aspects are due to lack of manpower. On WP4, I find the proposed solution very interesting. Timely response would greatly improve with empowered young and active coordinators. The plan is putting a lot on the shoulders of young coordinators. The partners need to be ready to trigger response and involvement immediately as they are solicited, else the energy will be lost.

Bertrand Pierre Galey: We have to find people to constitute the science policy group.

Eimear Nic Lughadha: Kew willing to contribute to Science Policy group. Board members were asked to provide a list of names. But was confused with other requests for WP4, notably a WP4 contact person, and request from Daphné to have someone to contribute to stakeholders activities. One explicit email should be sent to the BoD with all that is needed and procedure for selection for the Science policy group.

Simon Tillier: We need to have suggestions for people. We thought that the NSC would select the 5 or 6 people to form a manageable group who would give leadership and suggestions.

Marian Ramos: nominating contact points for WPs is different from nominating someone to the science policy group.

Bertrand Pierre Galey: I suggest that the secretariat makes a bunch of all required nominations from directors and send them again in a single stroke. Then the directors can answer in the coming days.

Eimear Nic Lughadha: The request should include role descriptions and time commitments.

To involve younger taxonomists, could suggest 40 under 40 groups and/or e-conferences.

Simon Tillier: The 40 under 40 group requires budget considerations: in terms of manpower, 1 conf requires 3pm. E-conferences were proposed from the start.

Richard Lane: BoD takes hold of how to translate FSG into reality. A group of directors have to get behind this and do it.

Bertrand Pierre Galey: some of us should work with Richard Lane for the follow up on the FSG report.

Simon Tillier: we could involve Xavier, Daphné and Gael in organising a 40 under 40.

Mariam Ramos: did the SAC discuss the symposium?

Sybille van den Hove: no because not all members of the SAC could attend. We could have the report from the symposium and make some comments.

Simon Tillier: considering the remark from the SAC that EDIT has to be more science driven, the question is what is science and what isn't.

Sybille Van den Hove: science driven means that you must keep in mind the vision behind EDIT. Providing new knowledge; new technology is only a mean.

Henrik Engboff: the FSG document is a strategic skeleton on which to attach WP activities and give an idea on how to proceed.

Simon Tillier: in terms of presentation and communication → locate where the WPs are addressed within the document.

Simon Tillier: Demonstration can be done by practical examples of the implementation of a few realistic projects. This is not so easy to set up.

David Schindel: perhaps ATBI+M could be a flagship project, a demonstration of a high goal being reached through integration.

Sybille van den Hove: EC doesn't want NOEs to do research but lead to reach sustainable integration and excellence to do ultimately excellent research. This doesn't need to projects, but integrate those running.

Bertrand Pierre Galey: the EC is interested by the fact that NOEs are able to generate such visions as well as the content of the vision, in other words, the question is "are we able to share a vision".

David Schindel: the flagship could also be small. For example a taxonomic review of a group to show integration if constructed using collaborative tools (such as scratchpads)

Leo Kriegsman: EDIT could be considered as a jump board to initiate FP7 projects.

Simon Tillier: the role of EDIT as a jumping board is already being proven.

Sybille van den Hove: involve users more systematically when any EDIT event is to be organised and if appropriate. Note that from the SAC point of view, EDIT is not ripe to link with policy stakeholders (biodiversity related policy). It is better at this point for EDIT to link with other networks to address that aspect.

Considering case studies, analyse cases for example where taxonomists work in relation with marine protected areas...

Simon Tillier: question of direct access from users.

Sybille van den Hove: there is a market for taxonomy

Bertrand Pierre Galey: who and how to make those case studies? Example in the conservation field...

Sybille van den Hove: given the initial work of Daphné on users, and given the fact that institutions deal with users, you could take specific cases where things are happening and use those as case studies.

Daphné Duin: address researchers on an individual basis (have they been contacted by potential users etc...)

Sybille Van Den Hove: see how the interaction happens, how it works or doesn't work. How would EDIT help the process and integrate mechanisms to help the users, or to improve an existing mechanism.

Simon Tillier: On WP5&6, this is a communication problem.

Walter Berendsobn: We produced a vision as requested.

Sybille van den Hove: Some SAC members felt it was a communication problem; others thought the presentation of WP5 was too abstract. I think they wanted to link this to the general EDIT vision and FSG. It feeds into the fear of EDIT being too technology-oriented.

Walter Berendsobn: The documentation of scratchpads on the web is very clear and public-oriented. But I am not ready to publicise something that isn't ready yet – the deadline for the basic design was 15th December, tools based on that cannot be demonstrated a month later. As for the exemplar groups, they are waiting for the additional tools. Development is the bottleneck here.

Dave Roberts: The exemplar groups have actually assembled large amounts of data that we have not been able to publicise yet. It is difficult to convince people to put data structure in their documents.

Eimear Nic Lughadha: Does “more tangible results” mean more content, or does it mean more integration?

Sybille van den Hove: More visible results. The members who listened to the session on cybertaxonomy in the GM were more positive on this.

Simon Tillier: The symposium has involved young researchers. For the GM, we had to make a choice between influential older researchers or younger ones. Since the kickoff meeting, we have decided to target potentially influential researchers and the applications came from few young researchers.

Richard Lane: We have to look closely at how we pay people to travel. We can pay only young researchers, or more proactively, Directors can bring a younger researcher to the BoD.

Bertrand Pierre Galey: I will personally keep an eye on that.

Wieslaw Bogdanowicz: I acknowledge Pieter Baas's happy hour suggestion.

Simon Tillier: Organising this many meetings is an enormous amount of work for the Network Office. Perhaps next time some work can be undertaken by a partner. As for labelling, I think we should put the EDIT label any time there is EDIT funding or staff in a project.

Bertrand Pierre Galey: This does not need budget support.

Walter Berendsohn: When will the SAC report be delivered?

Sybille van den Hove: Early March.

Negotiations on the deadline.

5. Enlargement of EDIT consortium

2.7. Decision item: Discussion and vote on adhesion of the Museum für Naturkunde der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Bertrand Pierre Galey: Can we discuss the application from the Humboldt museum Berlin?

Simon Tillier: The Humboldt was one of the largest NHMs in Europe before the WWII, but then was frozen because it was in East Berlin. Now it is back in our community with large and important collections. There is a high taxonomy research component. We think it has its place in EDIT. Reinhold Leinfelder wrote a formal application letter. The NSC believes it is important for the consortium to have them as a member. They are ready to accomplish some tasks which are not accomplished now.

Bertrand Pierre Galey: They will probably be very active in task performance and in the Board.

Marian Ramos: I support the integration and welcome its future action in WP4.

- Vote is taken. Vote is unanimously aye.

The application is approved.

2.8. Opinion development item: Discussion on adhesion of RBGE

Simon Tillier: Steve Blackmore, the director of RBGE sent me a message to become involved in WP5 and a member of EDIT. I suggested Walter Berendsohn as point of contact.

Walter Berendsohn: RBGE is an important institution in the botanical world. It has a long tradition of supporting biodiversity informatics as an institutional structure, and has been very productive in that area. They are already participating in the ISTC and other endeavours. I would like to be

able to incorporate them into WP5 tasks and work. I suggested that they become a member. I would suggest to be proactive and inclusive and send them the procedure of adhesion.

David Schindel: Peter Hollingsworth, prominent RBGE botanist, is also the chair of the CBOL plant working group and is very energetic. For the Smithsonian, I know that John Kress is very impressed as well.

Leo Kreigsmann: Having institutions who want to join in the second year is a sign that we are doing well.

Walter Berendsohn: The initial choice of members for the network was not only based on capability or efficiency. Since we are already excluding University-based taxonomy, we have to make sure, that the big institutions are sooner or later becoming partners in EDIT, especially if they have something to offer which we need.

Bertrand Pierre Galey: How do we weigh the potential applicants? Another few players and then close the gates.

Stefan Claesson: CETAF could help in this and provide an overview.

John Jackson: At some point, EDIT members need to think of what happens when EDIT ends. The actual integration of institutions requires flexibility.

Simon Tillier: We have started to address this. Not all current EDIT members have to join what will be EDIT's successor. At the end of 5 years, EDIT shouldn't be coterminous with the CETAF. We have to agree on the principle that we will progress with those who want to progress and not be held back by those who don't.

Walter Berendsohn: Instead of trying to bring everyone in, we should focus on those who show an interest.

Stefan Claesson: It is important to CETAF and to EDIT that we start thinking about the more long-term future of both bodies, which are not the same thing and don't have the same objectives. CETAF is also developing. We need to have an ongoing discussion about future objectives.

Bertrand Pierre Galey: We will explain to our Scottish colleagues how to join, and I suggest that members of the Board who have ideas of necessary other members inform me and we will discuss this with CETAF.

Simon Tillier: And let's not forget that every new member is approved by the EC on the basis of new capacities brought in the project, not to mention budget.

Johanna Eder: We must specify what RBGE can contribute to before it can be approved.

6. Annual report and grant

Simon Tillier: We've started elaborating the 3d JPA more than a month ago, and it is available to the Board. We prepared abstracts for ease of reading, with a reminder of the list of deliverables. The main point is that this is the right time to participate in a JPA. Team leaders have sent messages to directors asking for participation with few answers (6 for WP6). This is the time to be involved, when we are building up the JPA, the budget and the person-month calculations. The overall budget is in excess with regard to the planning, because we need to take into account

what has been spent in the previous years. We can only establish the next budget when all the data is entered in the IMT and validated.

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

Simon Tillier: This year has been difficult – I suspect every year in every NoE is. 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.