EUROPEAN DISTRIBUTED INSTITUTE OF TAXONOMY (EDIT)

WP5: Internet Platform for Cybertaxonomy

INFORMATION SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY COMMISSION (ISTC)

Minutes

January 19th 2011, 09:00 – 13:00

Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, France

INFORMATION SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY COMMISSION (ISTC)

Side event of the EDIT year 5 event 2011

ISTC-Members present: FUB-BGBM, Berlin: Anton Güntsch; IBSAS, Bratislava: Matúš Kempa (for Karol Marhold); MNCN-CSIC, Madrid: Esteban Manrique (for Mary Luz Peñacoba, Javier Moralo); MNHN, Paris: Simon Chagnoux, Henri Michiels; RBG Edinburgh: Martin Pullan; RBG Kew: Mark Jackson, Abigail Barker; RBINS, Brussels: Cathy Emery, Eric Danon; RMCA, Tervuren: Patricia Mergen, and James Davy, (for André de Mûelenaere) Loui-Joan Lemmer, SMNS: Andreas Zwick; **CETAF-Members:** Zoologisches Forschungsmuseum Alexander Koenig, Bonn: Klaus Riede; Museum für Naturkunde Wien: Heimo Rainer; Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle, Geneve: Jean Mariaux

Chair: Walter Berendsohn; **Minutes:** Agnes Kirchhoff.

1. **Welcome, introduction of participants**

2. **Agenda**

    No additions to the agenda

3. **ISTC subgroups, setup, and communication**

    3.1. Collection management systems

    Simon Chagnoux presented scope and objectives of the subgroup: The group will focus on specimen centred management systems, modelling collection management processes. The group will not discuss name relations, DNA sequencing and copyright problems. Up to now 17 members subscribed to the collection management mailing list.

    Discussion:

    Workshop: The workgroup leaders, Henri Michiels and Simon Chagnoux, will organise a workshop about collection management systems. They suggested circulate a questionnaire as a first step. It was recommended to find strong objectives for the workshop: What is the situation in the institutions? What are the obstacles? What are the drivers for change?

    Date: before summer

    Further points and recommendations for consideration by the group: <u>Data capture</u>: mechanisms for duplicate recognition should be identified. Field collection processes should be considered (e.g. ATBI data basing processes and developments of the Botanische Staatssammlung, Munich), but embedded application for field entry is not in the scope. GBIF and others released recommendations for geo referencing supporting services. Links to other information systems could support harvesting data for data entry. Digitisation of specimen should be taken into consideration. <u>Work processes</u>: Workflows in collections should be examined to define system requirements particularly cataloguing in institutions.

<u>Scope of natural history museums collections</u>: Should geo-science collections be included? How is DNA sample information related? How can laboratory information management systems (LIMS) be integrated into the collection management systems? What kind of collections (e.g. seed banks) are integrated? <u>Unique management system</u>: Each institution should aim to use a central data base management system in-house. This often fails due to lack of IT personnel. The BD Tracker could be utilized as an entry point for collection management tools.

3.2. EDIT Platform subgroup

Walter Berendsohn outlined recent Platform activities such as an EU proposal of the e-floras initiative, contributions to VIBRANT and i4life.

Discussion: It was decided to establish a forum for the CDM library. In a first step the open source community needs to be organised in a way assuring the influence of participating institutions. The developer group will be integrated and extended, strategies need to be specified. RBGK and RBGE showed their interest in taking part in the group. Further interested persons should get in contact with Walter Berendsohn.

3.3. Physical infrastructures subgroup

This issue will not form a subgroup but stay within the entire ISTC. NHM London and RMCA Tervuren are currently negotiating an agreement for provision of back-ups of RMCA's IT services. Physical options for backups should be found especially for small institutions.

4. Virtualisation

Anton Güntsch introduced the subject of virtualising server environments. There is a need of resources and redundancy. Strategies for disaster recovery are required.

Discussion: As virtualisation and VM ware is already used in many institutions, the mutual mirroring would cause only few additional costs. The costs depend on needed features: backup, replacement, immediate switching, load balancing.
As a first step in testing joint virtual environments, RMCA Tervuren will cooperate with BGBM in VM ware. The Geoserver will be mirrored and tested. RBG Edinburgh and RBG Kew are also interested in cooperation.
The aim in establishing a joint infrastructure is to keep the data within the community of the institutions, but alternatives (cloud services) are also under consideration. Development of joint virtualisation structures will foster cohesion of IT departments. Legacy systems can be preserved in their original state (at least for some time).
Political aspects of virtualisation should be discussed at the next CETAF meeting.
Interested institutions in virtualisation cooperation should contact Anton Güntsch.

5. MoU ISTC

8 institutions signed the MoU on ISTC so far (UKBH, SCIC, NHN, RBINS, HNHM, IBSAS, RBGE, Forschungsmuseum Alexander Koenig Bonn). BGBM will sign the MoU within the next days.

6. Best practises manual

Result of the discussion: the ISTC will not edit a best practises manual for IT departments.

7. Communication structures

The ISTC mailing list will be maintained and hosted on the BGBM exchange server. ISTC minutes, reports and other documents will be published as supplied before on the ISTC blog. Informal information about TDWG and GBIF will be posted on the ISTC blog. The ISTC can also suggest topics to TDWG.

8. Future role of the ISTC

Identifying trends in technologies, maintain communication structures, no formal procedures will be implemented.

9. Next meeting

Agenda: reports of the subgroups, overview over projects
Date: September (except first week) 2011, 2 days (noon to noon), Agnes Kirchhoff will setup a doodle poll
Place: RBG Kew
CETAF institutions will be involved (announcement on CETAF mailing list)