

Minutes of 7th European Marine Biological Resource Centre (EMBRC) UK Node meeting – 5th October 2015 – telephone conference call

Present:

Ian Johnston – University of St Andrews
Mark James - MASTS
Gavin Grewar - Marine Scotland
Martyn Cox - Marine Scotland
Colin Brownlee – Marine Biological Association

Alistair Main – University of St Andrews
Axel Miller – SAMS
Beatrix Schlarb-Ridley – British Antarctic Survey
Melody Clark – British Antarctic Survey

Apologies:

Nick Pade - Marine Biological Association
Colin Moffat – Marine Scotland

Minutes and review actions of last meeting

1. Minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting subject to a small change at paragraph 7 'ACTION' to clarify that NP was in a support role: the meetings did not warrant two people attending. The Actions were all complete or were underway and would be covered as part of the agenda.

ACTION 7.1: MC to upload minutes of 6th meeting to web site.

Details of next Implementation Board meeting – 14th October (Paris)

2. Ian reported that neither the agenda nor papers had been received for the meeting in Paris although a budget for the Paris HQ operation was received at the end of last week. This had been passed around the UK Node. Ian had raised a few points with the EMBRC Director by e-mail and some clarification had been received. The figures had increased since the initial budget had been drawn up but this was recognised as necessary to provide the resources required to undertake work. The draft budget and initial replies from the Director raised a number of points worth considering at this stage:
 - a. Was the HQ (admin) budget proposed a reasonable (i.e. not too high) proportion of the expected operational turnover of EMBRC as a whole? At this stage there wasn't clarity on the size of Trans National Access (TNA), JRA (Joint Research Activities) or ASSEMBLE+ budgets for example.
 - b. Were the EMBRC priorities being correctly articulated at this stage? For example, the EMBRC infrastructure hadn't been finalised with respect to what's included and stakeholder access, yet the budget identified expenditure on the Nagoya protocol –was this necessary? The HQ budget needed to reflect the EMBRC priorities.
 - c. If it was true that the Commission was not to support TNA after 2020 (i.e. post ASSEMBLE+) then the fundamental EMBRC model was thrown into question. Researchers would need to find grants to support their Full Economic Costs (FEC) and EMBRC would rely on industry to cover FEC too. It was recognised that the FEC model concept was one that was not currently supported across all EMBRC partners.

3. There was general support that Ian asks the necessary probing questions at the EIB meeting to clarify the EMBRC strategic delivery priorities so that the budget clearly reflects these. It was important, if EMBRC was to work, that these were clarified and consensus reached. The UK Node saw EMBRC as being about big science, key questions and the use of large scale specialised equipment / assets across Europe, so EMBRC needed to think strategically about these. It was recognised that other partners might have slightly different aspirations for the direction of EMBRC. It was thought that the Commission needed to continue ASSEMBLE+ type calls to allow the EMBRC business model to work.

ACTION 7.2: Ian and Colin attend next EIB meeting

4. It was agreed that Ian and Colin should seek to add relevant items to the EIB meeting agenda when appropriate.

ERIC / ASSEMBLE+ Application

5. The ASSEMBLE + call (possibly the last 5 year funding from the Commission to support access) to support marine stations was expected during October. A draft call text had been seen and it was not expected to change. The submission date was expected in March 2016 and a successful application was seen as key for EMBRC's future. A few options were discussed including the possibility of commissioning writers to draft the bid. However it was recognised for a robust bid then work needed to start early with a small and focussed group. Ian was attending an initial meeting in Paris in October and will keep the UK Node updated.

ACTION 7.3: Ian to keep Node updated

EMBRC Statutes and UK Node MoU

6. Gavin reported that a further version of the statutes had been circulated in mid-August, which had prompted minor legal comments from most countries. He understood (but hadn't seen) that most had been incorporated into a further version for the Board meeting next week.
7. Gavin had sent around a draft of the proposed UK MoU and received comments from most partners. There are a few matters to resolve around liability, and in particular for IPR and financial contributions which can't be resolved until the main statute is finalised.
8. How the UK will make its financial contribution to the Paris HQ was discussed. MAST-S agreed to explore the possibility of acting as a central point for issuing invoices to UK partners and making the payment to Paris.

ACTION 7.4: Mark J to check.

MSCC Feedback

9. It was noted that a short update had been submitted to the MSCC meeting on 30th September. There hadn't been any discussion / feedback. The Node agreed that it was important to keep making updates to MSCC.

EMBRC UK Node MASTS workshop (2nd October)

10. There was a small audience who were addressed by Ilaria Nardello (the EMBRC Exec Director), Colin Moffat and Ian Johnston. There was a good discussion that involved a few universities not yet directly involved in the EMBRC process.

AOB

11. A couple of points were discussed:

- a. MASTS had received T&S claims from Ian, and MS. Mark understood these were being processed but would revert if there were any queries. There will be another reconciliation in December. Mark will identify a date and advise.

ACTION 7.5: Mark to advise on next date for T&S claims.

- b. STFC 4th September UK ERIC workshop. It was understood that this workshop had been postponed.

- c. Alistair enquired of the Node about the position of 'Technology Transfer Officers' within organisations.

ACTION 7.6: Alistair to circulate request by e-mail.

- d. Next meeting

ACTION: MC arrange Doodle Poll for a meeting pre EMBRC EIB meeting 16/17th November.

Martyn Cox
Marine Scotland
October 2015

EMBRC Web page available on the Marine Scotland web site
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/science/EMBRC> includes a flyer that could be used to promote EMBRC.