

TTI meeting Helsinki 5-7 November 2004

Place: Department of Geology, University of Helsinki, at the invitation of Professor Matti Eronen.

Present: Bjartmar Sveinbjörnsson (chairman), Annika Hofgaard (secretary), Matti Eronen, Serge Payette, Gareth Rees, Oddvar Skre, Tatiana Vlassova.

Apologies: Robert Crawford, Terry Callaghan.

1. Start of meeting

Meeting started 11.30 on 5.11.04

Break at 18.30 on 5.11.04

Reconvened 09.00 on 6.11.04

Break at 19.10 on 6.11.04

Reconvened at 09.30 on 7.11.04

Finished 12.00 on 7.11.04

2. Election of note-takers for the meeting

Gareth Rees was elected to take notes from the meeting. Serge Payette and Annika Hofgaard will verify them. (Minutes to be sent from GR to SP and AH within 3 weeks of the meeting).

3. ACIA meeting

Bjartmar Sveinbjörnsson has prepared a poster for the ACIA meeting in Reykjavik, based on the existing TTI science plan. A low-resolution copy of this poster is **attached**. See item 6 below.

4. Revision of Science Plan and development of implementation strategy.

A draft science plan and implementation strategy had been prepared by Bjartmar Sveinbjörnsson, in consultation with other members of the steering committee, in the months preceding the meeting. The bulk of the meeting was devoted to a detailed revision of the TTI Science Plan and the associated implementation strategy. The final documents are **attached**. Since the steering committee considered that it had completed the task of constructing the Science Plan and Implementation Strategy, it agreed to forward these to IASC with a suitable covering letter to Odd Rogne, to be signed by Bjartmar Sveinbjörnsson on behalf of the entire committee.

A number of general issues emerged during the discussion of the Implementation Strategy:

4.1 The steering committee was unclear of the role to be played by IASC in the process by which the Science Plan, if accepted, would eventually bear fruit in the form of funded projects.

4.2 Although a number of sources of potential funding were identified in the Implementation Strategy, it was thought to be premature to attempt to develop a draft proposal for funding. After some discussion, it was agreed that funding of the full range of activities envisaged by the Science Plan as a single 'mega-project' was highly unlikely to be obtained, and that it would therefore be necessary to maintain the TTI as a structure or framework capable of directing funding applications from the international scientific community. It was thus clear that there would continue to be a need for a steering committee of some kind to oversee the structure of the TTI, and to decide whether existing and proposed projects fell within its terms of reference or could be modified to do so, but it was apparent that the present committee could not take it on itself to exercise such a role without further authorisation (presumably from IASC) without the question of conflict of interest arising, since it was also apparent that most if not all members of the steering committee would be very likely to make applications for funding.

4.3 Bearing in mind the issues raised in 4.2, the steering committee agreed that it would be useful to prepare in addition to the Implementation Plan a list of potential study sites around the circumpolar tundra-taiga interface zone, characterised according to the climatic conditions, predominant tree species, availability of infrastructure and general ease of access. This list, which is not exhaustive, is now incorporated into the Implementation Strategy.

4.4 The steering committee noted and endorsed the wish of IASC that the Science Plan should be published, and agreed that the most suitable method would be through the IASC web site, although a printed version would also be desirable.

5. Election of officers.

Bjartmar Sveinbjörnsson tendered his resignation as chairman of the steering committee, which was accepted with regret by the other members of the committee. Annika Hofgaard accepted nomination as chairman in his place, although she drew attention to the constraints imposed by her conditions of employment. The committee undertook to provide her with every possible assistance in this task. If she assumes this responsibility she will necessarily resign as secretary of the steering committee, and Oddvar Skre has agreed to take her place in this role. The views of the absent members of the committee will be sought, and if they are in agreement these changes will be transmitted to the executive secretary of IASC.

6. Tasks for the immediate future, with timelines

Presentation at the ACIA meeting in Reykjavik 9-12 November. Bjartmar will try to make the following points:

- Earth's greatest vegetation transition zone – responds to climate and disturbance – indicator of global change and major feedback component on climate and hydrology.
- Science plan has been finalised and submitted – time expected for a response by IASC (if known from discussion with Odd)
- Strategy for implementation (to be finalised contingent on advice from Odd on management)
- Either an international project or a cluster of intelinked projects.
- Four internal working groups (spatial aspects; tree performance & interface processes; human impacts and response; modelling.
- Synergies with other programmes.
- Education, training and exchange of knowledge.
- Finish with contact details.

Exchange revised science plan documents between Gareth and Bjartmar (today) and reconcile them (by 14.11.04).

Replace figures as necessary (will require data from Terry Callaghan) in the science plan (28.11.04)

Distribute the reconciled science plan (29.11.04)

Edit science plan (6.12.04)

Submit science plan and request an indication of the time when a response from IASC can be expected (20.12.04)

Response from IASC: If positive, we need to deal with the question of conflict of interest. If critical or negative, we need to decide how (or whether) to proceed further.