

Minutes of RCN Virtual Meeting June 30, 2015

Attending the meeting were: Mike Bourassa, Eric Delory, Paul DiGiacomo, Helen Glaves, Ed Gough, Eileen Hofmann, Bob Housman, Jay Pearlman, Hans-Peter Plag, Heidi Sosik, Maciej Telszewski, Sandy Williams, Dawn Wright, Jim Yoder

The agenda included:

Sea Change report (ocean decadal survey) - Jim Yoder

Biology EOVs, results of EOV discussions - Samantha Simmons (reported by Jay Pearlman)

Blue Planet meeting - Hans-Peter Plag

Reports and Plans.

Sea Change

Jim Yoder reported on the Sea Change effort in NSF. Under Clinton's \$500B/yr surplus, planning was done to double the funding for NSF in five years. Under Bush, with 911 and Afghanistan, this surplus became a \$500B/yr deficit so NSF fund doubling, which started with a 14% increase in 2003, stopped and the budget has been flat. However, Infrastructure spending continued with OOI Planning, new ships (Regional Class), Nereus, Alvin etc. A couple of years ago, David Conover recognized that there was a growing need for operations costs and these compete with research budgets. Should there be a rebalancing?

NSF supported an NAS review which identified high priority science themes based on community inputs. Ideas were sorted and balanced according to: readiness, societal impact and importance to research. The evaluation considered IODP, OOI, Fleet & Deep Submergence (not construction but research). The recommendation was to rebalance through a reduction in ops/maintenance funding and restoration of funding for basic science. As a target, infrastructure should be no more than 40-50% of the total budget. The goal is to reduce 10% of the infrastructure costs in the next budget and another 10% in the out years. The Seismic Ship is to be taken out of service. Money is being moved from Infrastructure to research with the following targets: most reduction would be to OOI, next IODP and smallest to the fleet; look at current ship design to see if balanced and also look for partners to offset costs (similar to IODP) and for the Fleet, reduce the number of vessels from 3 – 2. The seismic ship will be removed from service to reduce costs. Rick Murray's report is in process of being implemented at NSF in FY15&16.

There was a discussion on how to move toward more international partnering. For example, OOI will be out of the construction phase in Fall 2015 and there may be a call for operations proposals that could include international participation. However, nothing has been decided yet. Jay commented that the Galway Statement calls for International Partnerships GOOS, IOOS, (AtlantOS?). Ed Gough noted an apparent fragmentation in international collaboration. He asked whether the Galway agreement would be the framework for cooperation. Helen said the Bilateral Arctic program is providing coordination for the northern latitudes. Helen noted the upcoming meeting in Dalhousie for international scientific planning and sharing of information on the research agenda. She asked if anyone else has received an invitation. No one had. Please let Helen know who is going.

Eric spoke about AtlantOS, which is a new project focused on collaboration for Atlantic ocean observations. When the partnering is complete, there will be opportunities for Europe, Canada, US and southern hemisphere countries. Dawn asked what COL is doing? Might they be the leader? Ocean Leadership is advocating expanded support for NSF geosciences and climate research. Under the current plans, there is a cut 9% and the continuing resolution, which freezes the budget.

Biology EOV

Jay gave Samantha Simmons' Biology EOV report. It includes a survey from agencies in the US doing research and a Panel in November 2014 which addressed the expanded need for EOVs. The report has recommendations to add EOVs to the IOOS structure. The report is under review for release and, when it is available (this month), the RCN participants are encouraged review it and see how it can be adapted for application.

Blue Planet Symposium

Hans-Peter Plag talked about second Blue Planet Meeting May 27-20, 2015, which was held (190 attending) in Canberra. There were two days of plenary sessions. The last day was breakout sessions on each component (sustained ocean observation, ecosystems and food security, forecasting, coastal zone and outreach. There were lots of ideas (such as a mangrove service) and coastal zone observing systems. The schedule was quite full and there was a need for more time for discussions. Documenting what was done with a Telecon July 3 but there is an issue of sustained documentation. After a year the URL to Website disappears. Paul mentioned that SAR will be hosting a repository for Blue Planet materials. There was a suggestions that an article on the meeting be offered to EOS. Blue Planet is part of GEO. BP continues to be a broader initiative where nations come together and could be an incubator for flagships in areas such as water quality or sea level. There are Initiatives and Flagships but it isn't clear which Blue Planet is yet.

The third Blue Planet Symposium will be in Monterey 2016 on the Thursday September 22, 2016 during OCEANS'16 Monterey and continue to Saturday morning followed by an excursion.

Reports

Jim Yoder reported that there is now a DOI link on the In Situ vs. Remote Sensing for Coastal Studies working group report. It is now available through the Woods Hole Library and is citable.

Jay, Mark and Maciej reported that the Dec 2014 RCN meeting discussion on EOVS evolution has progressed and a discussion paper has been started. Bourassa said GOOS has had Panels to see how observation platforms can combine EOVS measurements. There is consideration of having a workshop in 2016/7 coordinated by Samantha Simmons, Mark, Maciej, and Jay. Mark said that infrastructure is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Helen reported that the Ocean Data Interoperability Project is ramping up and will continue for three years. Metadata standards, sensor web enablement, and cruise reports will be included. European and Australian partners are funded but they are awaiting funding from NSF; Marie Uhle at NSF said it is coming. Helen also mentioned that there will be a session at AGU dealing with international collaboration in data and invited participation.

The next RCN meeting will be in early fall (webex). The annual face-to-face meeting will be in San Francisco Sunday, December 13, the day before the AGU meeting.

Meeting adjourned