

Global Invasive Alien Species Information Partnership- Steering Committee, 2nd Meeting [Teleconference, 10 March 2014]

Meeting Notes

List of Participants

Co-chairs: Dr. Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias (Executive Secretary CBD), Mr. Donald Hobern (Executive Director GBIF -Coordinator of GIASIPartnership)

Members: Mr. Hesiquio Benitez Dias and Dr. Patricia Koleff (CONABIO, Mexico) ; Ms. Melodie McGeoch (Monash University, Australia); Mr. Piero Genovesi (Chair IUCN SSC Invasive Species Specialist Group & Senior Scientist ISPRA Institute for Environmental Protection and Research, Italy); Dr. Christopher Lyal (*ex-officio* Chair, Interim Steering Committee for the GIASI Partnership); Ms Shyama Pagad (*ex-officio* Information synthesis and assessment working group); Mr. Martin Parr (*ex-officio* interim Non-web based information and communication working group – at this meeting he represents CABI) and Dr. Junko Shimura (*ex-officio* Programme Officer for invasive alien species, SCBD)

Participation by e-mail submission: Dr. Sankaran Kavileveettil (Asia Pacific Forest Invasive Species Network) ; Mr. Sabino Meri Francis Ogwal (Uganda)

Apologies

Dr Andy Sheppard, Australia; Dr. David Moverly (SPREP); Dr. Saw Leng Guan (Malaysia)

1. Opening of the meeting

The conference call started at 15:00 Eastern Standard Time on 10 March 2014.

Dr Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, the Executive Secretary of the CBD (ES) welcomed participants and invited the GIASI Partnership to demonstrate its deliverables at COP12. He thanked generous financial support from EU. He thanked Mr Donald Hobern of GBIF for coordinating the partnership and organized a workshop held in Copenhagen in December 2013.

2. Organizational matters

ES proposed a 2 hour meeting and indicated the following key topics of discussion as outlined in the proposed annotated agenda

- Partnerships
- Information architecture
- Finance and expenditure
- Global Register of Introduced and Invasive Species (GRIIS)
- New partners
- Other matters

ES reiterated that the purpose of this conference call was to guide the work of the GIASI Partnership aiming to demonstrate GIASIP products to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 at the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 12) in October 2014.

COP12 will review the progress made by the Parties in achieving the Strategic Plan of Biodiversity 2011-2020 and Aichi Biodiversity Targets. As an expected output of the COP, a 'Pyongchang Road Map' will be produced to assist in enhancing efforts of the Parties. The tools that GIASIP is expected to make available for Parties should contribute the manifestation of this 'Pyonchang Road Map'

ES thanked the GIASIPartnership for the progress made towards development of the information architecture and plans on enabling interoperability of data and information held by major information providers.

Mr. Donald Hobern (DH) – Executive Director of GBIF acknowledged the effort and support of the ES and Dr. Junko Shimura (JS). He noted that progress had been limited after the meeting leading to the First meeting of the Steering Committee and assured that GBIF would accelerate progress in supporting and coordinating the work of the GIASI Partnership.

The meeting selected Ms. Shyama Pagad (SP) as a rapporteur for this meeting with assistance of JS.

The proposed provisional agenda was adopted by all participants

3. Organization of the GIASI Partnership

3.1 Status of SC Terms of Reference

The ToR, revised after the first meeting of Steering Committee (SC1) with clarification of the role of the ex-officio members, was circulated among the members.

ES asked SC members if they agreed that the role of the *ex-officio* members would be similar to that of elected members. There had also been two requests for amendments: 1) to indicate the term for members and 2) to adding 'regional and global fora' at the end of sub paragraph (d). The revised Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee for the GIASI Partnership was adopted with amendments above.

The suggestion was made to invite an additional member .

Hesiquio Benitez Dias (HB) and Sankaran Kavileveettil (SK) suggested that a geographical balance of members and having members from all UN regions would be important. JS noted that the missing region was Central and Eastern Europe. ES suggested reviewing membership so there is representation from all regions. Chris Lyal (CL) informed SC that this could be a gradual process.

JS offered to prepare a notification in accordance with the Operational Plan and call for nominations from Parties in a five to six week period. <**Action Point 1**>

4. Activities of GIASI Partnership

Meeting of WG Chairs in Copenhagen in December 2013

DH drew attention to the Copenhagen meeting report that had been circulated. Key points included building on prior work and establishing processes and transparent means to access authoritative information. He observed that timelines were tight and there was a need to pull together information and manage communication.

ES thanked the participants of Copenhagen meeting for producing work plan till COP12. Martin Parr (MP) thanked GBIF for the coordinating role. SK suggested share WGs responsibility by SC members.

MP asked who could lead informatics work within the GIASI Partnership as Samy Gaiji (SG) had moved to another posting. DH responded that GBIF had advertised the position and the timeframe would be around two months or more. DH would be handling that role in the meantime.

Data-sharing Agreement

Integrating essential and critical data and information from partners was at the core of the GIASI Partnership Gateway. While the actual content that would be integrated to the Gateway The limited linkages back to the source information may provide increased and richer knowledge. To maximize the access to primary data source a data-sharing agreement would give full confidence to data providers who committed to share their intellectual property. DH clarified that no Data-sharing agreement had been signed so far and there was a need to link it back to the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) that had been signed. ES suggested that once the data-sharing agreement is finalised it may be attached to the MoC as an addendum.

DH offered to develop such an agreement text in the following two weeks and circulate among SC members for comments **<Action Point 2>**.

Communication

A communication plan was discussed to raise awareness on the GIASI Partnership and its activities. An information document was suggested as well as a brochure type output with key messages of the role of the GIASI Partnership and its products. The information document on the Partnership had to describe how it could be of assistance to Parties. MP added that it was important to have some communication on the Partnership

CL offered writing a brief summary of the key communication to be circulated SC **<Action Point 3>**.

An information documents to be submitted to SBSTTA18 on management of pathways of introduction of alien and invasive species was discussed. Piero Genovesi (PG) gave a brief update on the work of the ISSG and several partners on mapping of pathway terminology

between a framework developed by the ISSG and those used by other key information providers such as European DAISIE (Delivering Alien Invasive Species Inventories for Europe), CABI, and the framework developed by the National Invasive Species Council (NISC) of the United States. PG suggested that it might be a good idea to promote a classification of pathway terms so Parties could compare and conduct analysis to manage critical pathways in line with Target 9. It was acknowledged that different sectors such as fisheries, forestry and others may have sector relevant approaches to classifying pathways which might be different from environment sector.

JS informed that the preparation of a pathways information document needed to be completed in urgency as there was a March deadline to complete pre-session documents for SBSTTA 18 in June.

There was a brief discussion on publication of the pathway categorization, which is underway with leadership of the Centre of Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) in the UK. It was acknowledged that the manuscript can be published later than March 2014. If appropriate and publication is in time it can be taken as INF document for SBSTTA18.

JS suggested that relevant partners work with her in close collaboration over the next few weeks to produce this document in appropriate way **<Action Point 4>**.

Another option suggested was to develop a peer reviewed scientific note. ES agreed that this might be a good option and that it could be noted that the information document maybe finalised later. ES also informed SC that the pre-session documents for SBSTTA18 may include recommendations to the COP.

ES highlighted that the assessment on invasive species will be included in GBO4. Parties will be encouraged further to enhance their implementation at various levels.

PG also made a reference to the European Legislation on Invasive species which might be enacted in the near future and if that approach could be advocated.

SC members expressed their gratitude for sharing such updates in Europe, and pointed that European practice may not be applicable to other regions and that GIASI Partnership should ensure relevance for all regions.

MM informed about an initiative within GEO BON – to developing guidelines for prioritisation using evidence based information. The timeline for completion was mid-year to September 2014

SK highlighted that establishing a helpline/help desk to provide all available information on IAS (upon request - by e-mail or other communication channels) would be very helpful. There could be a central point which receives all such queries and these could be passed on to regional representatives to provide the information. APFISN has successfully done this in the Asia-Pacific region with FAO Regional Office in Bangkok as the Central point. This would be especially helpful for non-web countries.

Schema for data integration

DH committed to developing a schema for data integration working with the WG members in the next few weeks for review by the SC members **<Action Point 5>**

Complete GIASIP stakeholder needs assessment

DH observed that the Partnership can get a picture of gaps once some basic communication material is developed on which data components are being mobilized under GIASIPartnership.

On the issue of stakeholder needs MM informed that she has been working on the Fourth National Reports of CBD Parties extracting information on needs identified by countries. ES informed that an assessment of the Fourth National reports had been completed by a consultant in 2010 (when 130 National Reports had been submitted). ES stated that around 180 Parties had submitted the Fourth National report and also that CBD Parties are working on the Fifth National reports; he said that the Secretariat is considering another assessment. He encouraged MM to share her findings with the SC.

SK offered that he can identify countries which are lack in IAS information and expertise subject to funding.

SK also pointed out known needs of : (i)authoritative data on introduction pathways; (ii) data review process by experts.

GIASI Partnership at SBSTTA 18, COP12 and World Parks Congress

ES mentioned the planned Secretariat's events during WGRI and SBSTTA including round table sessions at plenary; these informed sessions would be linked to side events and results of side events may be further discussed in plenary for some agenda items. There would be a possibility for GIASI Partnership having a slot during the second day of WGRI and SBSTTA.

A kiosk is suggested to be held during COP12

PG mentioned that ISSG planned to hold a session on invasive species management in protected areas during the World Parks Congress in November 2014; plans were to present the activities of the GIASI Partnership during the session

GIASIP Information Architecture

DH described the development of the GIASIP Information Architecture. The initial idea was having a Registry which would integrate partners datasets on: alien species; country; pathway; traits. NHM developed the mock-up of view(using scratchpad). The Gateway will be the central access point and take the users back to the source information.

DH suggested that there is a preference to lower the technological threshold. The preferred model will involve lesser work and in each case a simple structure (maybe a flat file /Excel file) will facilitate the data integration and the link back to the source information. At first information could focus at the country level and gradually data of invasive species at the

administrative level or county and district level could be provided. The essential vocabulary will be simple and easy encouraging multiple providers to export data.

The data record structure can be published including metadata. The mechanism will support providing the most current information. All resources will be available for all to use- this will be imported to scratchpad and users will be able to extract aggregated and integrated information. DH described it as a simple multilayered approach that would provide primary authoritative information to users and a link back to the source information where there is richer information available. This model also offered more flexibility.

Patricia Koleff (PK) said that the proposed architecture was very useful and allowed native/alien biological status and temporal issues to be addressed. She pointed that (i) a feedback mechanism; (ii) multi-language views; (iii) invasion map; (iv) temporal information as needed functionality of the presentation layer of the GIASI Partnership.

Francis Ogwal (FO) pointed to consider (i) if technical capacity exists to identify invasive alien species; (ii) economic importance of utilizing invasive alien species; and (iii) coordination of responsible institutions on management of invasive alien species.

SK suggested that an essential information required is Potential IAS that threats to each country. Information on IAS present in the neighboring countries but have not crossed the borders is needed. GIASIP should strive to warn these countries of the potential threat.

SK also pointed that Data on priority species which need immediate attention in each country is important to be added in the GIASIP view.

ES agreed the need for vocabulary in different languages. On the question of maps, the ES said maps at finer levels were complicated but maps at a coarser level were an option.

JS drew attention on UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/INF/11 that were prepared with the working groups and presented to SBSTTA as progress report of GIASI Partnership. She pointed that Figure 3 of this document was the view of the deliverable to be demonstrated at COP12.

MM said that she would send some technical additions to DH. ES encouraged SC members to send any suggestions to DH and for him to share a revised version with the SC.

DH said that he would incorporate all comments and within the next few weeks send a revised structure to SC members for consideration **<Action Point 6>**.

MP added that there was a need to keep the structure simple and deliver on time at SBSTTA 18 and COP12.

JS suggested a conference call for WG chairs and co-chairs to discuss details of implementation and activities. She also proposed to review the progress on architecture by SC at its 3rd meeting on the margins of SBSTTA18..

Planned expenditure

The Small Scale Fund Agreement to coordinate GIASIP in 2013-2014 between CBD and GBIF to administer and ensure delivery of prioritized core services by the partners. A small grant of 8.000 USD will be provided to key partners (NHM, ISSG, CABI and GBIF) for implementation costs in developing the transfer formats, generating initial data sets and implementing the new components of the Data Registry and Gateway. Further funding has to be secured for other planned activities.

DH mentioned that such grants needed to be provided to other partners but it needed to be done gradually and after this pilot effort was completed.

Proposal to merge WG 1 and WG 2

DH explained that there was a certain amount of overlap between the activities of the WGs and there was a need to consolidate activities under two major WG, one focused on informatics and the other on content and interoperability.

CL expressed the view that he did not think this was a good idea- he said this may result in focus being lost and mobilization of activity under the wider WGs would become difficult to manage.

PG said that there needed to be close working links between the Gateway and Interoperability WGs. SK supported to merge WG1 and WG2.

A decision was taken to leave the WGs in their present state and discuss this issue later in the year.

ES stressed the need for a WG focused on Taxonomic services.

ES suggested that each WG needs to project what needs to be done till COP12.

CL offered to write up the terms of reference for the present WGs to clarify the roles of chairs and co-chairs of each working group and circulate to the SC **<Action Point 7>**

Global Register of Introduced and Invasive Species

Shyama Pagad (SP) described the development of the concept of the Global Register of Introduced and Invasive Species (GRIIS) by the ISSG. It had developed into a resource that built annotated country inventories of introduced and invasive species. The plan was to nominate a country editor who would facilitate validation of the species records as well as their status and any evidence of impact on native species and natural areas. A SCBD's small scale fund had provided for the development of country inventories. In addition to developing inventory, annotations to records need to be filled in as well as 'the validation' process to be completed for each of the countries. SP had developed a work plan with budgets that included milestones for demonstrations at SBSSTA and COP 12. The activity is proposed to be handled in phases.

DH acknowledged that the development of GRIIS (a GIASIP product) and validated inventories was a high priority activity for the GIASIP Partnership offering high value data to the Parties. However, DH identified that funding for the development of this resource was a challenge

MM suggested that the process to populate GRIIS be documented including the validation process. MP added that the GRIIS was a valuable tool and a clear and transparent process of validation needed to be established.

SP agreed to formalise the GRIIS documentation and metadata that ISSG had prepared and circulate among SC members by the end of April **<Action Point 8>**

ES agreed that the GRIIS was a priority activity and suggested the development of a technical document describing GRIIS and including metadata to be circulated including clarifying the role of the country editor. ES also suggested the possible circulation of a CBD Notification encouraging Parties to nominate editors. MM cautioned against politicising the editors position and said that it may slow progress in activity.

DH said that the GRIIS invasive species curating exercise was a real investment that needed to be made.

New Partners

Three organisations have expressed interest in becoming members of the Partnership. They are : a) Barcode of Life Database System; b) Invasive Alien Species of Japan; and c) Encyclopedia of Life.

With regards to CONABIO membership- HB mentioned that some of the MoU terms were not acceptable by CONABIO and that discussions were on-going. ES and DH suggested that HB/ CONABIO share these concerns with the SCBD who would look into the issues and try and find a solution.

IPBES and assessment of invasive alien species and control

JS mentioned that IPBES has included within its initial work programme an activity to perform a "Thematic assessment of invasive alien species and their control". JS suggested that it was critical to work towards the inclusion of some of the members of the GIASIP Partnership in the panel which would discuss this topic/theme. ISSG mentioned that IUCN/ISSG it had offered a half time position for 4 years (2014 to 2018) to provide support on the development of this assessment. JS thanked PG and SP for their active involvement in the assessment process of IPBES.

Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

JS provided information on the planned workshop "Capacity Building workshop for Small Island Developing States to achieve Target 9 on invasive alien species" to be held before WGRI and SBSTTA 18. A CBD Notification for nomination of participants was circulated recently. The focus

was the development of projects in Small Island Developing States and also countries with islands.

ES drew attention to the 'Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States' that will be held from 1 to 4 September 2014 in Apia, Samoa. JS informed that there will be opportunities to participate in activities and develop an event on invasive alien species.

Other matters

Next meeting

The meeting ended with a decision to hold the next meeting which would be a face to face meeting on Sunday June 22nd 2014, just before SBSTTA 18 in Montreal, Canada.

Closure of Meeting

ES thanked all participants. DH closed the meeting at 17:15 in Eastern Standard Time on 10 March 2014.