



IMOS is supported by the Australian Government through the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy and the Super Science Initiative

IMOS EIF UPDATE #1

Hi all.

We've been thinking for a while that it would be useful to provide regular updates to the IMOS community on progress with IMOS EIF planning. Here is the first attempt.

It's addressed to:

- Node and Deputy Node Leaders
- nominated Regional Representatives (for NT, SEQ and Tas)
- expanded interests in the Bluewater and Climate Node
- Facility and Sub-Facility Leaders, and
- others who have (to date) expressed some interest in new Facilities/Sub-Facilities.

The address list is not meant to be exclusive, so if you want to distribute this more widely, feel free. It will be posted on the IMOS web site.

Draft IMOS Five Year Strategy

Comments are due by Monday 24th August. Based on feedback to date, a couple of points of clarification are provided:

- A Final Draft will be prepared by the end of August, taking into account all comments received. There won't be any Interim Drafts. Every attempt was made to avoid errors of fact (noting that there will be differences of opinion), but inevitably some errors have been pointed out. These will be corrected in the Final Draft.
- Some have interpreted the order of the ten strategic priorities (i.e. 1 to 10) as implying relative importance. This is not the case. The logic behind the order is that it starts with Bluewater and Climate, moves through the national backbone into the Regional Nodes, onto the Facilities, and into uptake, use and partnering. All will be important.

Node Planning

There has been a lot of activity in the Nodes. The IMOS Office is aware of the following developments:

- Bluewater and Climate held a meeting in Melbourne on 11th August. There is significant interest beyond the current Node membership, and the Node has a big challenge in reviewing its Science and Implementation Plan. Both of the new imperatives associated with EIF Funding (i.e. "enhanced monitoring capability in the Southern Ocean and extended coverage in northern Australian

waters") will be relevant to this Node. A smallish working group (nine people or so) will be formed to progress the Node planning.

- GBR is expanding into a Queensland Node (QMOS) in response to strong interest from SEQ. The plan is to have two centres of activity, in Townsville and Brisbane. This was agreed at a meeting in Brisbane on 17th June, and there is a follow-up meeting in Brisbane on 25th August.
- NSW IMOS held a planning meeting on 30th April, and further discussions are planned in the coming weeks.
- SAIMOS have had local discussions and some new facility ideas are being suggested (see below). SAIMOS is meeting with representatives from Victoria on 13th August to explore possibilities for enhancement in the context of the SARDI/MAFRI collaboration.
- With planning for the new UTAS Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) now well-advanced, a meeting was held on 10th August to discuss a Tasmania regional focus. There was sufficient interest to progress this further. Engagement with NSW IMOS from an EAC perspective, and with SA/Vic from Leeuwin Current and Bass Strait perspectives is being encouraged.
- In response to the EIF Funding requirement for "extended coverage in northern Australian waters", a 'Northern region' meeting was held in Perth on 29th July, facilitated by WAIMOS and involving NT and (far north) Queensland, as well as Bluewater and Climate interests. A Science and Implementation Plan for Northern Australia will be jointly-developed, underpinned by Node plans in the three jurisdictions. WAIMOS has formed a steering committee to progress its Node planning.

The Draft Five Year Strategy is designed to provide a clear framework for guiding these Node-level discussions. However Node activity is currently ahead of the Strategy development. This is perhaps inevitable given the EIF Funding timeframes we are all having to work within. The mismatch in timing will be resolved within the next few weeks.

Notwithstanding all of the above, three fundamental principles are clear at this point:

1. Nodes are the construct that has enabled IMOS to move Australian ocean observing away from a fragmented research proposal or institutional driven basis, to a national strategic approach. This trend must continue under EIF Funding.
2. Coherence across the Nodes has been managed by having a strategic research focus on the impact of major boundary currents on continental shelf environments, ecosystems and biodiversity. IMOS will need to ensure that there is a coherent national strategy for monitoring the major ocean currents on our eastern, western, northern and southern boundaries.
3. Node Science and Implementation Plans were prepared in 2008, as part of the mid-term review. These plans, as amended for feedback provided during the review, will provide the starting point for Node planning to enhance and extend IMOS out to mid-2013.

A template for a Node Science and Implementation Plan has been developed so that everyone has a clear idea of what will be required by the end of October. It can be found at <http://imos.org.au/eif.html>

Given the significant intersections and overlaps emerging from various Node discussions, support is developing for a meeting of Node Leaders and Regional Representatives.

Facility Planning

A number of Facility and Sub- Facility Leaders have been engaged in the Node planning activities outlined above. This is vital. The importance of early engagement of Facilities in Node planning cannot be under-estimated. We know from experience that the time it takes to convert a 'good idea' into high quality data, discoverable and usable through the IMOS Portal, is considerable. Capacity to deliver between July 2010 and June 2013 will be a key criterion in IMOS EIF decision making.

The AUV Facility is holding a workshop in Sydney on 24th August, to discuss the next round of deployments but also to consider forward planning under NCRIS EIF. The IMOS Office is not currently aware of any other Facility-based planning events.

The IMOS Office has been made aware of new Facility interest in the following areas:

- Deep Ocean Moorings - CSIRO, contact Bernadette Sloyan
- Microbial Ecology - AIMS, SIMS, CSIRO, contact Stan Robert
- Marine Molecular Facility - SARDI/Flinders, contact Laurent Seuront
- Marine Processes Facility - SARDI/Flinders, contact Laurent Seuront
- National Coastal Time Series (NCOTS) i.e. sediment traps, PAR sensors and fluorometers (and motion cameras) on NRS moorings - Macquarie/SIMS, contact Leanne Armand
- Surface Drifters - Northern Australian waters, contact Chari Pattiaratchi (UWA) and Craig Steinberg (AIMS) + Bluewater and Climate, contact Gary Brassington (BOM)
- Real time Biological and Oceanographic Observations from Instrumented Fishing Gear - CSIRO, contact Chris Wilcox

Other new Facility ideas are emerging. There is also significant interest in enhancing a number of existing Facilities e.g. Moorings.

A wiki has been established to facilitate discussion of new ideas - see [http://imos.org.au/newsitem.html?&no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=243&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=1&cHash=026e2c1641](http://imos.org.au/newsitem.html?&no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=243&tx_ttnews[backPid]=1&cHash=026e2c1641)

Again, some fundamental principles are clear at this point:

1. Facilities are the construct that has enabled IMOS to leverage fragmented ocean observing capability existing across Australia, and build it into a suite of national facilities with critical mass, playing to institutional strengths, and providing the sustained observations to address big science questions posed via the Nodes.
2. Facilities will be funded to deliver specific data-streams, guided by Node Science and Implementation Plans.
3. Ongoing investment required to sustain and develop already agreed data-streams will be clearly identified as an input to forward planning. Subject to the validity of assumptions made about a range of factors, and our success in securing further co-investment, the potential to fund new and enhanced activities is likely to be in the range of 25-35% above the baseline for sustaining what we've begun.
4. Project Plans are in place for all existing Facilities out to mid-2011, in line with requirements of the NCRIS Funding Agreement. These plans, as amended

through regular reporting and review, will provide the starting point for Node planning to enhance and extend IMOS out to mid-2013.

A template for a Facility Project Plan has been developed so that everyone has a clear idea of what will be required by the end of October. It can be found at <http://imos.org.au/eif.html>

I hope this Update is helpful. Let me know if you have any feedback or suggestions for improvement.

Regards, Tim

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