

Mountain Research Initiative (MRI)

3rd Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB)

Date: 2-3 April 2002

Location: MRI Co-ordination Office, Bern, Switzerland

Participants: Harald Bugmann (Chair and representing GCTE)
Mel Reasoner (MRI Science Officer)
Alfred Becker (BAHC)
Keith Alverson (Executive Director, PAGES)
P.S. Ramakrishnan (IHDP)
Debra Meyer Wefering (IHDP)
Norbert Kraeuchi (GTOS Mountain Module)
Andreas Gruenig (GMBA)
Urs Wiesmann (Uni Bern, UNU)
Ingrid Kissling (General Secretary, Swiss Academy of Sciences)
Ruth Egger (ProClim, MRI Secretary)

Missing: Lisa Graumlich (LUCC, participated via teleconference on April 2)
Bruno Messerli (Uni Bern)
Thomas Hofer (FAO)
Anne-Christine Clottu Vogel (SANW)
Harald Pauli (Gloria EU Project)
Wilfried Haeberli (GTOS)

This was the 3rd meeting of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) of the Mountain Research Initiative, but the first meeting in which representatives of IHDP were present in full force. Lisa Graumlich also represents IHDP through LUCC, and now Krishnan and I have been added to the IHDP team.

The meeting was held over a 2-day period. On April 2, five SAB members met (Harald, Krishnan, Alfred, Mel, and Lisa via telephone) for a half-day discussion on administrative issues. On April 3, the SAB members were joined by official observers and invited guests to go over MRI activities and links to other programmes.

Links to Other Programmes:

Since its start in 2001, the MRI has established links to FAO Rome, the UNESCO-MAB Programme, the Royal Geographical Society, the Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment, and the International Hydrological Programme. Plans are already in the works or being made to collaborate on workshops, etc.

The MRI is collaborating with the UNESCO-MAB (Man and the Biosphere) Programme to study the impact of global change on mountain environments and mountain communities using biosphere reserves in mountains. Before Christmas, the MRI submitted a 'participation program' proposal for co-operation to UNESCO that outlined the rationale and details of a workshop to develop a work plan for implementing MRI activities in mountain biosphere reserves. The work plan will explicitly include means of integrating human and physical dimensions. The MRI sent the proposal to contacts in Bulgaria and Sweden for external review (reasons: Bulgaria has 14+ biosphere reserves in mountain areas and the MRI is developing ties with the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences.). A preparatory workshop has been set for June 6-7, 2002 in Bern at the MRI Co-ordination Office. Representatives of the MRI, UNESCO-MAB, IGBP, IHDP, GTOS (2-3 representatives from each agency), and additional mountain biosphere reserve experts will attend. A larger workshop will be scheduled for 2003. The ultimate goal is to come up with a work plan/implementation plan applicable to all types of reserves/regions. This will serve as a 'kick-off' to future workshops. Krishnan, Alfred, Harald and Mel will work together to continue planning for both workshops to ensure the integration of human and biophysical dimensions. Endorsing agencies are asked to support their own representatives to attend (IHDP – Krishnan and Debra; IGBP – Lisa).

The MRI is also involved in the Millennium Assessment (MA). Harald spoke with Walt Reed, who is chairing the MA, about having the MA directly address mountains within the document. From this discussion, a chapter specifically on mountains was developed into the MA. The MRI and the Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment (GMBA in Basel) joined forces and submitted a proposal that the two Chairs (Harald and Christian Koerner) could serve as lead authors in developing the mountain chapter to the MA. No response yet from the MA, but once acceptance comes, Harald will involve all SAB members as contributing authors. The MA could be as important to terrestrial ecosystems as the IPCC is to climate.

The MRI is also collaborating with the GTOS Mountain Module, which is being led by Norbert Kraeuchi. Since September 2001, Norbert has been involved in getting 'level 2' forest sites to become part of the GTOS-TEMS database. There are currently 870 sites on the database, of which 170 are mountainous. Norbert is now in the process of setting up a mountain module to be put on the web page/server of GTOS in Rome. Input is needed on what specific key issues should be promoted on this web site of the mountain module (from the perspective of the MRI). How can it best be used by the MRI community? IHDP has been asked to offer a human dimensions perspective on how useful a mountain module would be, and how it should be constructed. Lisa, Krishnan and I will write a short summary on how such a module could best be used by our community.

MRI Products:

To-date (since July 2001), MRI products include contributions in various newsletters (PAGES, IGBP, LUCC, IHDP, Hotspots, APN); the ongoing State of Knowledge Overview ("Who is Doing What Where in Mountains"); Rocky Mountain Futures Book; and Mountain Research and Development Newsletter.

The State of Knowledge Overview is planned to be a 'key players compilation' publication with an overview of various research fields (10-20 from each MRI activity, a few pages on state-of-science, and visions for future research directions). The publication will be web-based, included in a peer-reviewed journal, and possibly be linked to an FAO publication. The MRI hired a post-doc to compile a database from the last 10 years, "A Decadal Compilation of Mountain Research – from Rio to Johannesburg" with the view of summarising the state-of-science in different disciplines with a vision for future research and to see how different disciplines can be integrated better. Quite a few people have already offered to contribute to this document, others have not responded or have not yet been contacted. This will serve as a research tool to cross-disciplinary boundaries. The SAB criticised this database idea, since the GTOS-TEMS database is already serving this function. The question is whether it is necessary to create a new one. The suggestion was made to identify what databases are already established to ensure there is no overlap. Need to also keep in mind that it might be easy to secure funding to establish a database, but we will also need funding to maintain it well into the future.

The Rocky Mountains Futures Book will be on global change in this mountain region. It will be an integrated study to include human and paleo dimensions, and fits nicely with MRI objectives. The SAB will review this publication and it will carry the MRI logo. Mel is a contributing author, and Colorado State has the lead.

MRI sent in a proposal for International Mountain Society (IMS) membership and to have 4 pages per issue in the Journal of Mountain Research and Development be reserved for MRI activities. MRI will pay US \$5000 for membership and costs of production. The cost also goes towards supporting mountain research communities in developing countries. This is THE only peer-reviewed journal addressing mountain research in an interdisciplinary way.

The Near Future of MRI – Funding, Endorsement, Sponsors:

Future links to IGBP, IHDP, WCRP and DIVERSITAS were also discussed. Since BAHC and GCTE will be ending soon (BAHC by the end of 2002 and GCTE by 2003) and LUCC in 2005, the MRI will need to give thought to who its future sponsors/endorsing projects are. The

future of IGBP, particularly the LAND component, is where MRI will most likely fit in. Otherwise, other options are needed. Lisa will be key to making this happen, since she is on the Scoping Team for the new LAND component. Will the new LAND component have its own newsletter (or a Terrestrial Futures newsletter)? If so, this could be an outlet for MRI news.

The MRI will need to approach the Chairs & Directors, at their annual meeting in 2003, to see if MRI would be considered as a future 'joint' project of the Global Environmental Change Programmes. The MRI would like to offer a representative of the SAB come to the next Chairs & Directors meeting to give a full overview on the Initiative, including products and funding issues.

IHDP is being asked to offer a summary on what our expectations are from the MRI (as a contribution to IHDP).

What is missing is a solid link to the WCRP/CLIVAR. GCEP (US) mountain component of US national project will take strong hold, but need to develop contacts and approach WCRP – perhaps through the establishment of future workshops in 2003. Perhaps also aim at new WCRP project 'CLICK' on the cryosphere with strong mountain link. Keith Alverson offered to take initiative in bringing the WCRP and MRI closer.

Additional Links to Projects, Programmes and/or Future Meetings:

- ▶ The MRI is interested in organising a future workshop on integrated modelling of environmental change in mountain regions.
- ▶ The Second International Symposium on Sustainable Ecosystem Management, "Planetary Garden 2002 - Mountain Future", originally scheduled for 3-7 November 2002 in Chambery, France (in connection to the IYM) will most likely be postponed. All leading mountain research agencies and personnel are involved, including SAB members of the MRI (although the MRI itself is not mentioned directly).
- ▶ The ICSU has a new research initiative on traditional ecological knowledge, which is applicable to the MRI, since 90% of traditional ecological knowledge derives from within mountain regions. This would enable the MRI to establish a direct link to the ICSU.
- ▶ Krishnan is coordinating a workshop for December 2002 in Malaysia on integrating natural and social sciences in biodiversity management. This workshop carries the MRI label, and the MRI SAB has agreed to support 2-3 scientists from the region as a symbolic gesture.
- ▶ Mel is writing a proposal to the EU Framework 6 (originally for Framework 5) to meet the deadline of June 5.
- ▶ Proposals should also be written to RESCO and other organisations, since many other funds are available. It was agreed that Mel should spend the majority of his time on this.
- ▶ The MRI would like to host a Mountain Open Science Conference for 200_ (4?) to be a major event.
- ▶ The MRI would like to hold a session or two at the AGU/EGS Conference (AGU 2003 Spring Meeting, April), a meeting, which hosts 10,000+ people. Since the AGU has already begun to hold sessions with a more biogeophysical focus, it would be best to request two mountain sessions – one with a biophysical focus and another with a more biogeophysical/human dimensions focus. Mel and Debra will speak with Kathy Hibbard (GAIM, GCP) who organises biogeophysical sessions for AGU meetings.

Next SAB Meeting:

The next SAB Meeting will be held 11-12 September 2002 in Grindelwald, Switzerland. A Swiss Centre for Competence and Climate Research Summer School will already be taking place, to include many mountain researchers (including Ray Bradley and Martin Greuagent). Lisa Graumlich is also on the Board of the NCCR (Swiss National Centre for Competence in Research), so this would make it easier for her to participate in both.

Action Items for IHDP:

- ▶ Begin arranging for travel plans for Krishnan and Debra to attend the preparatory set for June 6-7, 2002 in Bern at the MRI Co-ordination Office. Make sure Lisa's costs will be covered by IGBP.
- ▶ Krishnan, Lisa and Debra will write a summary to the MRI on what the IHDP expectations are for the Initiative. Also, IHDP has been asked to offer a human dimensions perspective on how useful a mountain module would be.
- ▶ Debra will come up with list of ~20 human dimension researchers to contribute to the State of Knowledge Overview and have Lisa review list.
- ▶ Mel and Debra will speak with Kathy Hibbard about possibility of organising a mountain focused session (or two) at the AGU Spring 2003 Meeting.

Side Meeting at PAGES IPO:

After the MRI meeting, I met for a while with Keith Alverson, Executive Director of PAGES. PAGES has their IPO in Bern and shares space with ProClim. They have about 4 rooms with 6 people total (including Keith) working there, some full time and some part time. The PAGES IPO has a full time Science Officer, a Graphics/Scientific Coordinator, and Information Systems Coordinator, an Office Manager and a Visiting Scientist.

Keith (PAGES) is interested in becoming more linked to IHDP activities, especially through GECHS. He believes the best areas for collaboration would be on impacts or integrated assessments. Keith and I went over the PAGES website, which has recently been completely renewed. They have a nice new addition, under site map, where people can easily register to join the program, suggest a new initiative, propose a workshop, and even nominate an SSC member. This might be a nice addition to our new IHDP website, as well. Keith insists it is one the best way to collect new ideas, and he has had many suggestions offered to him electronically from all over the globe. He suggested we inform our project IPOs about this feature on their site, tell them that PAGES is interested in working closer with IHDP core projects, and encourage them to make suggestions to PAGES on ideas for future collaboration between projects.

I have a copy of the latest edition of PAGES "Quaternary Science Reviews, Past Global Changes and Their Significance for the Future" in which Bruno Messerli and others contributed an article entitled, "From nature-dominated to human-dominated environmental changes." I also have copies of PAGES newsletters and the IGBP Science Report No. 3, "Environmental Variability and Climate Change."

** If you would like further details or more information on MRI activities, please let me know. I also have hand-outs and publications in my office.

- DMW, 8 April 2002