

MASC **Business Meeting 2007 Final Meeting Minutes**

(Post-2010 Planning meeting minutes will be in separate document)

18th International Conference on Arabidopsis Research, Beijing China

Saturday, June 23, 2007 (Business: 5:05-6:00 pm; Planning: 6:15-9:30 pm) Room 92, Second Floor

Contact information: MASC Coordinator: Joanna Friesner (jdfriesner@ucdavis.edu)

MASC Chair: Ian Small (iansmall@cyllene.uwa.edu.au) (note: Chair for 2007-2008= X.W. Deng)

MASC Co-chair: Xing Wang Deng (xingwang.deng@yale.edu) (note: Co-chair for 2007-2008= Joe Kieber, jkieber@bio.unc.edu)

Blue notes in text= action item

Red notes in text= post-meeting action taken

The first time a participant speaks, the name is highlighted.

(I) MASC Business Meeting (40 minutes) 5:20-6:00 pm

(1) Welcome/Introduction of Chair, Co-Chair and Coordinator: Chair: Ian Small, Co-chair: Xing Wang Deng, Coordinator: Joanna Friesner

(2) Discussion on Usefulness of MASC Annual Report and MASC Webpages at TAIR: Are the reports needed? Are the MASC webpages useful? Are the webpages sufficient to replace reports? Is TAIR alone (not including MASC pages) enough?

Ian Small (chair): In this year's report there are: country and SC reports, Arabidopsis highlights, translational research from Arabidopsis basic research efforts, progress thermometers etc.

Question to MASC: is this report worth the effort extended by the Coordinator? Do people read them? Are there things we're missing and/or things in there not needed?

██████████ - The reports are important for researchers in Israel who will be trying to get national funding and could use the information for grant-writing and publicity; the statistics are needed.

██████████ - Believes they are useful and has helped ██████████ obtain funding. Asked if anyone had a contrary opinion and felt the reports were unnecessary. (Nobody spoke up in response.) Is anything missing?

██████████ In past meetings MASC discussed if it is still worthwhile to have individual country reports. The country reports may be redundant if no major new projects have been initiated.

██████████ Likes the country highlights section, because much else is repetitive in reports.

██████████ Thinks that the translational examples are exceptionally useful to point to Arabidopsis as useful for future funding and research efforts.

██████████ Another issue is the MASC webpages at TAIR which take work to prepare and update and duplicate much of the printed report. Are the pages a good use of resources, should we put more effort in, or let them expire? Has anyone looked at the webpages recently? (Many hands went up ██████████.)

██████████ Is there a count of # of MASC webpages hits? Can a counter be added to track hits?

██████████ This information can soon be provided. TAIR recently added this capability through Google analytics to track hits on every TAIR page. Within a month or two we can have results.

Action item: evaluate count of MASC webpage hits to gauge use of the webpages.

██████████ The MASC websites and report are very good for their small genome community and being on the website is more important than the written report, to inform new colleagues.

██████████ One proposal: we could put full country reports on the web and just put new exciting initiatives and news into the printed report. Are there things that should be on the website that aren't there now?

██████████ We started to develop a homepage for Proteomics SC tools, standards, databases, etc. Would recommend to extend this webpage to the MASC pages.

██████████ Suggests that other SC's do the same, and create webpages to link to MASC pages

██████████ Especially in light of post-2010 discussion, it might be useful to have a site for comments from the community, where comments and remarks could be sent.

██████████ Sys. Bio. SC has a wiki for that information and to sort out resources. This is at NASC, not on MASC pages.

Post-meeting: Joanna added a link from Sys. Bio. SC MASC page to NASC Sys Bio wiki.

it's easy to make links from Andrew to MASC. Would also be easy and good to have reverse links as well, put them into wikis. Could set up as an automated job, might need to work with Eva to set up mirroring rather than just linking.

clarification- do we want to continue country reports? Do we want to just do new stuff in printed material, and have the rest on the MASC webpages?

it seems to be a consensus to only have new stuff in report.

There could be country highlights, and the contact information listed still for each country.

There needs to be more than just contact info., there needs to be a paragraph to show how broad MASC is, something short and snappy that covers each country's interests and stays each year with just the highlights showing the new bit.

doesn't agree- each country should have a printed page, it's not too much to ask. There should be a strict 1 page limit for each country with what happened in the last year. Just a name and paragraph won't carry a lot of weight for using to convince agencies.

places like US might have more to report in a year than say Australia. If we're not removing anything from the report and adding things, the report gets bigger each year. The Coordinator has more to do and takes on a more important role.

(3) Coordinator funding beyond 2009: Last year it was decided a non-US country would obtain funding after spring 2009. Has there been any progress by potential countries?

I. Small: After early 2009, NSF (US) funding is over for Coordinator. MASC won't survive without Coordination. Last year there was discussion about funding for next Coordinator. Any efforts on this?

Has spoken to BBSRC and they'll consider it, but since they fund GARNet, if it were to happen at all through them, it would have to be put through the GARNet renewal in 2010.

I. Small- Has anyone asked EU? They seem more logical funding group than BBSRC

-The ERA-PG program may not fund this, she hasn't researched FP7 fully, but hasn't seen anything that would indicate a coordinator could be included in any current funding.

Thinks if current EU programs don't encompass possible Coordinator funding MASC should take a direct approach to the EU; thinks they would be pleased to fund this.

this was the approach for the MASC coordinator initially, a position created de novo by the US Arabidopsis community in response to need for help for conference and to coordinate multinational programs. The proposal wasn't submitted to any existing program at NSF.

I. Small- would you be willing to take this role on with the BBSRC and the EU? said yes.

Action item: Follow-up with Ruth and her efforts with the BBSRC and the EU re: coordinator funding.

Post-meeting: Discussions w/Ruth Bastow and Andrew Millar: possible to include request for coordinator funding in next GARNet renewal.

(4) Definitions of MASC members and affiliates and roles; procedures for MASC Subcommittee chair and Country nomination/representation

I. Small- It is a concern to some that MASC doesn't have rules and operates in an ad hoc manner- there's nothing written about who is in MASC or how they're chosen. When new people start, they want to know what they have to do, and we don't really know. It would be good to have basic notes on how MASC operates, how members are chosen, what representatives are supposed to do if part of MASC; some official record of who is on the MASC and who can choose new members. Traditionally MASC was chair, co-chair and country representatives. A few years ago Subcommittees were added (2002), and those who were SC chairs chose their own members. People like Eva Huala (TAIR), Randy Scholl (ABRC), Sean May (NASC) were also invited to meetings because they are essential to the community. Others also come to meetings by invitation- *Question- who are the MASC members?*

Proposes that official MASC members are: Chair, Co-chair, Country reps, SC chairs (are selected by MASC), and include ABRC, NASC, TAIR reps as official MASC members. If interested, Japanese stock center person. Would leave out the SC members since they are selected by the SC chairs, not MASC itself.

thinks it's unnecessary, if people want to take part, why prevent them?

This isn't meant to prevent people coming to meetings, it's about who can officially vote.

█ (1) thinks most of community don't know who MASC is or what it does (2) unlike NAASC who are elected, MASC is not elected. We should consider if it is really a good idea to have a self-perpetuating organization where we just appoint ourselves and our friends to represent the community.

█ Doesn't feel MASC is smooth-running. As a group we're way past the stage to form a formal organization, e.g. with dues and bank accounts. NAASC formalized only last year, prompted by organizing the 2008 ICAR where we had to sign a \$50,000 check and been personally liable if not an organization. So there are good reasons in becoming more formal.

█ earlier MASCs were hard to organize and very ineffectual because everyone was happy to be a member but not always willing to come to, or organize any meetings. Problem before was as people joined NAASC they were energetic but lost interest later on and wouldn't replace themselves due to lack of motivation. NAASC is successful now because there is a constant renewal mechanism. I would push for MASC to also find a renewing mechanism.

█ The same works for GARNet where we have a community vote for a 3 year term, and having some written rule for duties helps keep things fresh.

I. Small- Consensus is in favor of some low level of duties. Is this ok with everyone? People nodded.

I. Small- Any feeling on who is officially on the MASC? Do people mind of self-chosen SC members are left out? People agreed this was ok.

Next question: how are MASC members chosen? If we are to have a minimum set of rules- I suggest new MASC members (country members or SC chairs) need to be nominated by a current MASC member, and then there can be a majority vote if a vote is needed. If only 1 candidate a vote isn't needed.

█ For countries that already have a mechanism for putting forward members shouldn't we accept their nominees? If no organization exists, there should be some default manner by which people are chosen

█ We should respect organizations that already have elections and put forward official representatives, but I think only NAASC does this thing now. (Also GARNet).

█ each country should be required to organize a formal representation system.

█ this may not be easy to set up a system for voting for all countries, communities may be very small. It's not trivial if organization doesn't exist to do this.

█ We can certainly encourage people to make a system but don't think it's feasible in all cases.

█ You can use GARNet as an example, but it's not so easy without a formal body (like NAASC) and coordination, you need to get a roll of voters. Doesn't think there should be pressure to do this.

█ This would be nice to do for subcommittee chairs but that would be even more difficult- who is the constituency of a subcommittee?

█ we're talking about 2 things- we don't want to dissuade new members from joining MASC and there shouldn't be a vote necessary for new country member. By default, can a new member country be added, or are we questioning whether a new country can be part of the MASC?

█ I don't think anyone would object to adding new countries. Officially we could have an email discussion to formally ask MASC members if they agree or not to the new country addition.

█ if any country is interested in starting a formal voting system, TAIR can provide a list of names for that country to use as a member list. We use this for NAASC and our list is quite international.

I. Small- Last question is about how long can people stay as chair/co-chair, SC chair. Should we allow people to vote who didn't attend the annual MASC meeting, or is it only people at the meeting?

█ given schedules of people, think people should be allowed to send deputies.

I. Small- this sounds reasonable (to send deputies.)

Do people want fixed-terms implemented? E.g. no country rep beyond 1,3,5 years? I see nods yes and no. Anyone feel strongly?

█ This should be left to the countries. If they're happy, why should we kick people out?

how is the country ever canvassed to see if they support the current MASC rep? As long as the MASC rep retains enthusiasm there doesn't seem to be a problem. Problems arise when a long-time MASC member stops participating/coming, and there was no means to replace them, or way to poll the country.

This suggests a mechanism that if nobody comes and doesn't send a proxy, then a change might be needed for MASC representation for that country or subcommittee.

I. Small- Joanna and I have weeded out some people this year who weren't participating.

Joanna: What about new people who might want to get involved in MASC, but know there is a senior member who has been involved for a long time, how could they get involved? And getting new people involved. It's important for MASC to have members who participating. It doesn't help to have a MASC where people are members in name only.

I. Small: It's easy for people to contact MASC chair or anyone else if they're unhappy w/their rep.

thinks it's good for MASC to have more people in a country know what MASC does and rotation achieves that and allows for the community to be notified of the MASC.

I. Small- compromise- Let's say we encourage MASC country reps and SC chairs not to stay longer than 3 years, and then leave it up to the discretion of individuals.

I. Small- **Last part: To come up some guidelines for MASC member duties.** We come up with country rep and SC chair guidelines.

Primary duties in both cases: to act as liaison between MASC and their constituency- which is the Arabidopsis researchers in their country, or the researchers in their field of endeavor or working with a technology they are working on. This liaison should be a 2 way street- not just the person bringing information from the community to MASC but also MASC members communicating to community (including governments, educational entities, funding agencies, etc.)

Country reps just need to provide small report each year for the annual report and provide updates for the webpages on new things.

SC chairs need to be more proactive, and as MASC has developed the SCs have taken on more important role than country reps. SC chairs should act as 2 way liaison, provide report summaries and webpage summaries, and would like to encourage continued work on websites and workshops at ICARs.

I'm not sure this 2 way flow is in the front of MASC member's minds; it wasn't for me. Having been chair for a year I realize this 2 way relationship is important. Do any reps feel nervous about having these duties written down and sent to you? Nobody said this was a problem. A draft version will be circulated for comment, and you can make changes, additions and suggestions, followed by an official version.

Action item: Send draft of country rep and SC chair duties to all members for comment.

Post-meeting: Joanna sent out draft to all MASC country reps and SC chairs on 8/23. Asked for comments by 9/14/07. Final version completed 9/16/07.

(5) New Subcommittee Chairs replacement nominations: I. Small

(A) ORFeomics: Pierre Hilson has resigned. Nomination: Joe Ecker. Accepted by group.

(B) Metabolomics: Ian Graham has resigned. Nomination: Basil Nikolau. Accepted by group.

(C) Bioinformatics: Chris Town has resigned. Nomination: Heiko Schoof (not present). Accepted by group.

(6) Brief ICAR discussion: Note next year's meeting in Montreal, Canada (July 23-27, 2008). NAASC-organized. Discussion re: 2007 MASC report recommendation (by I. Small) to switch to 3 year cycles in U.S./ Europe/Asia. Current expectation was to be back in Madison, WI, USA in 2009- should this be changed? If so, who/what country will spearhead the meeting organization for 2009? For 2010?

I. Small- Proposes that MASC should globalize the conference and move towards a system of 3 year cycles w/ N. America/Europe/Asia. This doesn't have to start immediately but would be a long-term goal.

have to consider problem of high costs if the meeting goes to expensive venues/far-away. Do we want communal or big meetings? In large areas it's difficult for people to talk to each other.

Numbers drop when meeting is at Madison and rebound when meeting is at destination locations.

'Destination locations' are ok, but can costs be kept down?

we all agree keeping costs down is a goal, which is being worked on by Joanna for next year.

Would like to see diversity with conferences w/variation rather than the same every year- either in size, location, or content, etc. Not have conferences look the same every year. If we move to this cycle, then 2009 would be in Europe. Madison is willing to do it if we don't have an alternative- anyone in Europe?

willing to pursue this for UK, need to look into budgets and if UK support can be obtained.

Madison staff have been waiting to hear our plans. I will have to tell them that we're planning to go elsewhere and we have to understand they won't hold our slot anymore. If the UK doesn't work out we'll have to go somewhere else, see what dates Madison might have open, or some other plan.

Asked by NAASC to approach Swiss community, but would need to know soon, this could be a fall-back plan for UK.

We should spread the word now so people in various countries could begin preparing and check w/funding agencies.

Post-meeting: July 30, 2007- Joanna sent email with new conference information via Arab-gen and Arab-UK listserves. The email message listed UK for 2009 and asked for community feedback. By Oct. 29, 2007 she had received two feedback messages that positively viewed the new 3 year cycle.

Post-meeting: Aug. 30, 2007- Joanna sent email w/conference information to all MASC Country chairs and Subcommittee chairs and asked them to forward to their constituencies.

it makes sense to have meetings planned out 3 years in advance due to venues and economies.

: Also, organization is needed in advance for big meetings. 2010 would be Asia, non-China, what do Japanese or Australian MASC members think for 2010?

was very impressed with Beijing meeting and there are lots of plant scientists in Asia. Japan could organize the 2010 meeting, perhaps near Yokohama, but cost is high. Would need to find funding source, perhaps from RIKEN.

we've also discussed 2010 venue in Australia/NZ as a possibility.

both countries should look into this and come up with a plan for 2010. Should make a decision at the 2008 ICAR, or earlier. If we could have a choice that would be great.

Post-meeting: emails sent to Coordinator from Kazuo Shinozaki and Barry Pogson describe interest for holding meetings in Japan (2010) and Australia (2013).

Action item: will need to follow up in 2008 (Montreal ICAR) to solidify plans for 2010 meeting.

(7) New MASC Chair and Co-Chair: Ian Small concludes 1 year of service at end of this meeting. Xing Wang Deng begins service as Chair. Proposal for new Co-Chair for 2007-2008. *Subsequent Co-Chair (2008-2009) should be non-North American and ideally the primary lead for the 2009 or 2010 ICAR, and work closely with next MASC Coordinator (whose funding needs to be obtained.)*

I. Small- Traditionally there's a strong link between MASC chair and running the ICAR at ending or beginning of chair reign. The choice for future conferences (if there continues to be this link which I think is a good idea), has some influence on who is picked for co-chair. The choice for next year should be someone who will help with 2008, or 2009 (since X. Deng is done w/conference organizing). Does someone from UK want to serve? Another possibility is Joe Kieber who has agreed to stand for nomination (and is co-organizing the 2008 ICAR.) Nomination of Joe Kieber occurred. Joe accepted, and rest of MASC agreed.

Xing Wang Deng- Current Opinion in Plant Biology will give poster awards: Session chairs chose: 293, 258, 715. Any objections from the group? No objections so they will announce those awards.

(end of MASC business meeting, post-2010 meeting minutes will be in separate document)