

Earth System Sustainability Initiative
Transition Team Working Group 2: Draft Terms of Reference
7 July 2011

Working Group 2 is charged with elaborating the Institutional Design of the Initiative. Given the ambition of this Initiative and the complexity of the problem it addresses, “second generation”, flexible research networks will be required. The success of the Initiative will rest on how effectively research coordinating organizations are integrated with other entities and what synergies they develop with them.

Terms of Reference

- 1. Find ways to build on existing capability and investments(TT ToR task 3)**
 - With the help of a network design specialist:
 - Examine existing structures to see how they could provide building blocks of a new institutional arrangement and specify what additional mechanisms would be needed;
 - For comparison, consider what institutional design(s) would be the most appropriate, if there were no pre-existing programmes/partnership/networks;
 - Summarize in a document the institutional design options for the Transition Team to consider.
- 2. Identify mechanisms for funding and models for delivery [of research] focussing on open, flexible approaches (TT ToR task 4)**
 - Include in the institution design document a procedure to identify possible regional ‘nodes’ and options for more effective knowledge management systems.
 - Request the research and funding community to provide input on mechanisms to allow for the delivery of faster and more effective research proposals and funding mechanisms to support the Initiative.
- 3. Identify gaps in the partnership, and then reach out to potential partners(TT ToR task 2)**
 - Consider how to secure the involvement of governments, business and civil society at the global and regional levels.
- 4. Facilitate the design of a research and implementation plan for the first three years of the Initiative, setting out the early phase priority areas (TT ToR task 5)**
 - Work with the other WGs and the Transition Team Executive Group to propose an implementation Institutional Design Plan for the first three years of the Initiative.
- 5. Define a work-plan for the Working Group 2.**

Expected outcome

[Deadline to be determined once an external consultant is on board]

Deadlines for the “Institution Design” document for the Initiative:

- Outline: 1 December 2011;
- Draft 1 for consultation at the Planet Under Pressure: 1 March 2012;
- Draft 2 for consultation at the Rio+20: 15 May 2012;
- Final: 1 September 2012.

Annex: Transition Team ToR and establishment of Working Groups

Transition Team ToR

The TT is charged with the following tasks, to be completed during its 18-month lifetime:

1. **Develop a research strategy for the initiative.** This will draw on the outputs of the ICSU visioning process, the Belmont forum White Paper and the strategies of the other main partners in the Alliance to set out the critical research challenges, the required thematic priorities and capabilities, desired outcomes, impacts and success measures, and how progress will be evaluated.
2. **Identify gaps in the partnership, and then reach out to potential partners** to encourage them to join the initiative and secure the necessary high-level commitment from governments, business and civil society.

3. **Find ways to build on existing capability and investments.**

Develop a plan for greater and more effective integration of GEC programmes. The TT will probably progressively replace the current Scientific Committee of the ESSP. Supported by the outcomes of a SWOT analysis, the TT will carry out discussion with GEC programmes and projects regarding the integration of programmes into the new structure, in a transition that would ensure continuity of existing commitments.

4. **Identify mechanisms for funding and models for delivery focussing on open, flexible approaches,** considering:

- Processes and mechanisms that would allow the scientific community to move forward faster and deliver more effective research need to be identified. Options for funding could include bilateral, multilateral, or coordinated actions.
- Implementation of preferred network design and development of a procedure to identify possible regional ‘nodes’ for the network, through dialogue with relevant players and taking into account strengths and weaknesses of existing regional activities.
- Options for knowledge management systems, that would enable cost-effective interaction and information exchange across the network and beyond to broad research user and provider stakeholder groups.

5. **Facilitate the design of a research and implementation plan for the first three years of the Initiative, setting out the early phase priority areas.** Based on the strategy for the initiative, develop a specific action plan. As a first step in this effort, a small number of priority areas/directions must be established. The implementation plan should also include a communication strategy.

6. **Make recommendations for the governance for the initiative.** The TT has a life time of 18 months, after which it will be replaced with a more permanent governance structure.

Establishment of Working Groups

At his first meeting, the Transition Team (TT) established three Working Groups (WGs) to take forward the operational work needed to address the TT ToR tasks during the transition phase:

- Working Group 1: Research strategy, data, knowledge system
- Working Group 2: Institutional Design
- Working Group 3: Education, Communication and Interaction with stakeholders

The WGs work on behalf of the TT. Each of the WGs will address specific tasks from the TT ToR, and their collective effort will cover the full TT ToR. The WGs will liaise with other entities of the transition process (Executive Group, other WGs, TT). Between meetings of the TT, the WG chair(s) will report to the EG, which will help coordinate their overall efforts. To ensure consistency and coordination across working groups, it is expected that WG co-chairs and TT co-chairs will be in communication, as needed.

Working methodology

The WGs are expected to work over email and teleconference and reconvene at the physical meetings of the TT. Representatives of the WG are also expected to meet physically as needed.

Membership

The working groups will mostly be composed of Transition Team members, and each Group has the option of adding additional members if needed. The WGs should allow for a greater outreach to and input from the larger community.

WG1

Co-Chairs: Karen O'Brien and Martin Visbeck

Members: Bertha Becker, Heide Hackmann, Isabelle Niang, Gretchen Kalonji, Jakob Reyner, Paul Rouse, Robert Watson

Staff: Roberta Quadrelli, Maria Uhle

WG2

Co-Chairs: Rik Leemans and Peter Liss

Members: Joseph Alcamo, Lidia Brito, Hal Mooney, Steven Wilson, Tandong Yao, Stephen Zebiak

Staff: Leah Goldfarb, Helen Beadman

WG3

Chair: Rohan D'Souza

Members: Tanya Abrahamse, Karl Jones, Hermann Requardt, Roberto Sanchez

Staff: Richard Meylan, David Allen, Vivien Lee