JSC Meeting Report January 2015 @ sDiv

Dear all,

this is a very late reminder in some issues we discussed at our last Joint Synthesis Centre Meeting here @sDiv.

This is not meant as summarized minutes. I just can't handle to summarize the he amount of helpful notes, being all available here: http://ijscm.aceastern.wikispaces.net/home (you should all have access to it).

I just want to recap the MAIN MAJOR OUTCOMES:

- We as consortium agreed to continue our association. We will join forces to work closer together and spread the word of the synthesis centres. We agreed (?) on an official title we should all try to use when talking about the consortium: **International Synthesis Consortium (ISC)**

  This is a short text piece we posted on our consortium webpage about this meeting:
  "With the formation of the International Synthesis Consortium (ISC) the centres took a step forward to work and collaborate more closely. The ISC is a global network of centres that collectively have decades of accumulated knowledge and demonstrated success in bringing synthesis to bear solving complex problems. We envision an expanding network that meets the growing need for synthesis research in all corners of the globe and facilitates the participation of stakeholders from the public, private and community sectors. The ISC will work in the upcoming years to foster global efforts to tackle grand challenges in science by collaborations across centres."

  - We have now an email address: contact@synthesis-consortium.org. Andrew, Frank, Alison and I should receive emails coming via this address.
  - Alison agreed to maintain the webpage. I can also edit the page but haven't done anything so far. We should keep this as main information & entry point for any consortium information.
- The following **common agenda items were listed with highest priority** [at least 4 priority dots see here]
  - sharing and integration of common tools
  - making a case for long-term funding for synthesis centres
  - help educate in cross-disciplinary skills
  - promotion and learning of team science across boundaries
  - to foster collaboration amongst centres
  - develop joint synthesis standards
  - capability building of the community
  - accelerate synthesis pedagogy for undergraduates and postgraduates
  - develop trans-disciplinarity

Where is the picture Todd? ☺
I'd like to have it.

Joint Products:

- **WHITE PAPER**
  - At the last day of the sDiv meeting we started specifically to work on some multi-purpose **text pieces which were meant to provide background for a policy paper and some informative text for stakeholders** etc
    - The ideas behind it were use it, for example, when talking to funding agencies and other initiatives (e.g. Future Earth), to have a brief overview what we are doing, why and what we offer in a policy-relevant language. [Please correct, if I'm wrong here]

- to be found here: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1G93iZQjzOWVTXsr8DTqrGE8pzf_bDekvc3Er8HGAd7I/edit?usp=sharing
- **PLEASE everyone should take a look**.
- **Thomas & Andrew are the main editors** – you both are responsible to push us ☺
- Each section has main authors responsible, but all welcome to contribute where you feel you can.
- I hope we can finish the 1st drafts before the summer break i.e. June). It would be good if we could use the draft e.g. for informal policy briefs to be distributed @ the conference (ESA, EEF etc).
- **Having the policy brief already for the conference 'Our common future under climate change' in July would be ideal, since many stakeholders will be attending.**

- **Collection of tools**
  - We all agreed that a collection of tools (e.g. for Citation analysis, video-conference tools, surveys, data management plans) would be a great advantage to share
    - I added a page on our Wiki: http://ijscm.aceastern.wikispaces.net/Tools (also in the right navigation bar)
    - Since it is and was already featured at the 1st meeting add everything related to evaluation here: http://ijscm.aceastern.wikispaces.net/evaluation
    - **Pam. Alison, Todd please start to add your experiences here**

- **Collection of Centre Motivation & Founding papers**
  - We added a page for those papers (Thomas' nice idea)- there are already few
  - http://ijscm.aceastern.wikispaces.net/white+papers+for+centres

- **Joint Activities**
  - see here: http://ijscm.aceastern.wikispaces.net/Joint+Activities
  - This page is meant as a discussion page for developing ideas for joint activities. I list what we talked about. Please feel free to brain-storm about your ideas and use if possible the headers or add new ones

- **Centre Activity Digest**
  - It was mentioned as useful tool but I personally have no possibility right now to create one. I like the idea and if there is a nice way of doing it, let's do it. **WHO CAN HELP HERE?**
  - Remember that we still have the webpage activity page: http://synthesis-consortium.org/events/ - We might use this page as kind-of-digest but someone has to maintain it

- **Synthesized Best Practice Document**
  - Again, a nice idea to synthesize our experiences how to have a successful synthesis meeting.
  - I added a page: http://ijscm.aceastern.wikispaces.net/Best+Practice+of+a+Synthesis+Meeting
  - Not sure how to start. Either copying all of the NESCents document text in the wiki and work with it as baseline or starting a totally new one. **It needs an Editor here. WHO VOLUNTEERS?**

- **Already Planned JOINT ACTIVITIES in 2015** (see wiki page)
  - Our common Future under Climate Change
    - The Conference organizers joint our session proposal with two others into one

- Alison and Ed Hackett will speak here in an joint session together with other colleagues, called: "*Synthesis centers: an essential tool in our complex, data-rich future*"
  - Alison collected already relevant climate change project examples from our centres
  - Marten is a co-convener aka co-session chair
- [Annual Meeting of the Ecological Society of America](#) (ESA)
- [European Ecological Federation](#) (EEF) in Rome which runs under the well-fitting title: *Ecology at the Interface*.
  - Jill and Marten will be there and present the Synthesis Centres. Thomas (EOS) also offered help from his centre (either him or Peter Kille might attend the conference too)
  - We proposed a discussion round and two talks but we don't know yet what exactly will happen there. We keep you updated its still time until September.

- **Ideas for joint activities**
  - We had several discussions about possible joint activitites. Here I just list them.
  - I added a page: http://ijscm.aceastern.wikispaces.net/Joint+Activities
    - Collaborative online courses/talks (like online seminars, TED talks etc)
    - Joint Conference Activities
    - Joint Postdoctrainings
    - Joint Call Activities

- **FUTURE EARTH discussion/status quo**
  - Future Earth is still very young and the Synthesis unit is not fully in place now. I got as additional suitable contact Sandrine.PAILLARD@cnrs-dir.fr. Sandrine was recruited on the Synthesis and Foresight function of the Future Earth Secretariat (in Paris?). We can hopefully either in Paris at the conference or maybe even before remotely talk further about it. I keep all of you informed about any news/dates (i.e. I'll ask everyone to participate in any meeting).

- **NEXT Meeting 2016:**
  - As discussed we'll hopefully have **our next meeting in 1.5. years (summer 2016) in the US**. We don't know yet where exactly. I hope that the US colleagues will sort this out. Thanks already!

- **JSC LOGO**: I think its time for a logo ☺
  - If someone of you has ideas or a person who can develop ideas, go for it, but let us know, that we don't do it more than once.
  - This might be used often and hopefully for a long time, so it has to be informative and good ☺ (no pressure! :O)