IADISC meeting
Friday-Saturday, April 29-30, 2005
Location: Melbourne, Australia

Sue Dubois (AZA), Kevin Johnson (ARAZPA), John Inkson (ARAZPA), Syed Hassan (ISIS), Robert Erhardt (AZA), Frands Carlsen (EAZA), Duncan Bolton (EAZA), Bart Hiddinga (EAZA), Sally Walker (SAZARC), Brij Kishore Gupta (CZA), Dave Morgan (PAAZAB), Dr. Ken Nagase (JAZA)

Nate Flesness (ISIS) and Hans Keller (National Aquarium of Baltimore) also attended for a short period.

Welcome and Introductions

Sue welcomed everyone to the meeting, and thanked everyone for coming. Noted that Dr. Ken Nagase would be joining us on Saturday, representing JAZA.

Regional updates

ARAZPA
No ADSIC meetings in the past six months , but lots of work from SMEs in:
- Participation in JADs
- Business use case and data standards review
- Established ZIMS Discussion Forum
- A lot of hands-on work with studbook keepers and registrars to work on data cleanup process in preparation for data migration into ZIMS.
- Two representatives on IADISC

AZA
- Review of use cases and understanding system use cases
- Coordination and training of SMEs
- Data standards drafting and review
- A small number of people doing a lot of work
- Centre of excellence preparation
- Grant submitted to AZA to host the next IADISC workshop
- About to host the second Mega data standards workshop

EAZA
- Participation in JADs
- Business use case and data standards review
- Four representatives on IADISC
- Noted that it is easier to get people involved in smaller packets of work rather than large tasks.
- EAZA office have agreed to fund a three-month staff position based at Bristol Zoo to work on the ZIMS project.

SAZARC

This is the first IADISC meeting for Sally, and she's very happy to be here. Provided an overview of the South Asian region - seven countries (plus Afghanistan) make up the SAZARC membership.

Seven countries have zoos. SAZARC, the South Asian Zoo Association for Regional Cooperation was formed in 2000 and includes all countries that have zoos in the region of South Asia. There are two national zoo associations that are starting to become further established in Pakistan and Bangladesh. India has had an Indian Zoo Association for many years and a Central Zoo Authority (CZA) since 1991. CZA sponsors five national studbooks. Two institutions in South Asia, Central Zoo in Nepal and National Zoo in Sri Lanka are ISIS members. One person from SAZARC and two people from SAZARC and CZA attended the Rotterdam data standards meeting, and one person will be attending the Orlando meeting. Most of the larger zoos have one or more computers.

Training help is very much required, and any help with training in the region would be very much appreciated. Asked people to think about how ISIS and IADISC could become more involved in the South Asian region, and maybe join the SAZARC meeting in the first week in December. Syed will be going to meeting, and will help to start an official ADISC in the region.

CZA
It is also Brij's first IADISC meeting. The Central Zoo Authority (CZA) is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India tasked with monitoring and assisting all zoos and most other captive animal facilities. CZA monitors the 180 animal facilities within India consisting of about 60 traditional zoos and 120 deer parks and mini zoos. A large number of zoos receive financial assistance and training from CZA. There is an inspection and recognition process which CZA runs. CZA is also involved in the rehabilitation of confiscated and circus animals into zoos. Coordinating a number of animal health, training and education programs.

Brij gave a presentation about the work that CZA has been undertaking lately.

PAAZAB
This is also Dave's first IADSIC meeting, although PAZAAB and Dave have been involved for a number of years. They have a wide range of institutions in the region, from very well resourced to quite poorly resourced. There are 180 facilities in 48 countries including zoos and zoo-like facilities, predominantly in south, north and west Africa, and many of these are quite old. There are ten ISIS members in the region, and most of them are submitting quite good quality data.

PAAZAB will be encouraging Ian Espie to continue to represent the region on IADISC.

SEAZA
Syed gave a quick update from SEAZA on behalf of Loretta Ho and Eric Tsao. There was in internationalization workshop in Osaka earlier in the year. Syed had long discussions during this meeting on developing ADSICs in SEAZA and in China, and Eric is going to continue to enlist more involvement from members in the region.

Syed reported that Dr. Ken Nagase from JAZA will be here on Saturday afternoon, and that he was very helpful in setting up the internationalization meeting in Osaka. Suzanne Gendron from Hong Kong Aquarium may be able to attend some of this meeting on Saturday.

JAZA

Dr. Nagase presented an update from JAZA. He has recently been appointed as a member of the ISIS Board of Trustees. JAZA is very keen to be involved in the ZIMS Project, and eventually have all JAZA members participate in ZIMS. A ZIMS internationalization meeting was recently held in Osaka. They would like to continue to send representatives to ZIMS meetings, despite having a very limited budget.

During the meeting in Osaka, JAZA decided to discontinue development of their own national animal records system, in favor of investing their resources into the ZIMS Project.

CAZA

Sue presented a quick update on behalf of CAZA. Bob Geibert from Calgary Zoo is keen to get more help from his institution. Sue has spoken with Bruce Dugan about enlisting additional help from CAZA.

Project timeline update

Syed gave an update on the project timeline. Business Use Case development has been completed. We are about to start a very challenging schedule of review of the system use cases. We had a limited amount of coordination from CGI's project management, and this was discussed earlier in the year. The problems were reviewed by CGI, and eventually, they have replaced the project manager with Georgina Atkinson. Georgina has done a lot of work to generate a lot of the documentation (Project Plan and regular project updates) that we have been waiting many months for. These documents will be developed by mid-May. The Project Management Office (PMO) (Syed Hassan, Paula Simon, Robert Erhardt and Hans Keller) are working with Georgina to get the deliverables completed.

There is a $500,000 shortage in the budget this year. This is challenging staff numbers at ISIS, and will cause problems in the near future with training and deployment. There are a number of options that are available if funding is not obtained. This includes possibly releasing the project on time, but it might be provided without training until funding is available. This may be an option, rather than stopping development of the project until the funding is available. The matter will be discussed later this week by the ISIS Board.

Nate provided a funding update. Current funding status: we have 146 pledges totaling US$4.3 million. $800,000 of this is in written pledges and has not yet been paid to ISIS. We currently have $3.5 million that can be used. We have spent about $1.3 million to date. $500,000 was received from a National Science Foundation grant, and $500,000 has been received from the US Congress. $100,000 was received from the Boeing Corporation. This all adds up to a total of $5.5 million in the capital campaign (or $4.6 million excluding the written pledges that have not yet been received).

ISIS have just signed a contract with two banks to borrow US$1 million. These loans have to be repaid next year.

In conjunction with the recent AZA director's retreat, 50+ AZA institutional directors approached the US government for an additional $4.5 million. The approach to the government this year was met with a more positive response than last year, and we are hopeful that this will result in some additional funding.

Project timetable

(Please note that some of these dates may not be accurate, and/or may change according to the current ZIMS project schedule).

- May 16-20 – 2nd mega data standards workshop
- May 27 – June 10 - Mega 2 participants review draft standards ex-Orlando
- May – sharing and privacy determined by ISIS Board.
- May - Prioritize data standards for conversion – standards that involve existing ARKS and MedARKS data should be done first.
- May 2-18 CGI posting questions for focus group leaders on the portal.
- May 9 – August 5 – System use case review, including Webex sessions
- May – reports focus group to review list of 200 reports from CGI
- TBD by CGI – list all tools to be used by CGI for development and testing
- June – August review all data standards, including business rules and voting process.
- May & June - prioritize data standards for conversion – existing ARKS and MedARKS (and shared) data (start this process during the Orlando workshop).
- June 8th beginning of public review of data standards on the forum.
- June 10 – system walk though, Orlando
- June 27th – public review on the discussion forum for the 1st two batches (1 core, 1 vet) of data standards closes
- June - Mapping data between ARKS / MedARKS and ZIMS
- June – identify testers (people involved in SUC development)
- July 25-27 - Logical Data Model review
- July 25-27 - 80% of physical data model completed
- ???? Logical Data Model sign off
- TBD by CGI - Start User Acceptance Testing tester training.
- TBD by CGI - development of User Acceptance Testing verification test scripts
- September – beta test sight training
- September testing of data migration
- November - First data migration starts
- March 2006 - final date for completion of data standards review

Standards workshop – Orlando

Preparations for the forthcoming second mega data standards workshop in Orlando, May 16-20 are almost complete. Approximately 65 participants have accepted invitations. 85 standards will be discussed. Discussions are continuing with CGI about the two System Use Case days that have now been built into the agenda.

Training

Syed noted that training will be very important when ZIMS is rolled out, especially for countries in developing regions. There are various ideas on the table about how some of this might be achieved. There will be large resources involved if this is managed at a global level, and it might be more appropriate for the training to be done by regional and/or national associations, so that it

can be better tailored for the specific local needs and resources. It will also allow training to become self-sufficient in the various regions.

Noted that CGI are providing 200 computers for institutions that might not be able to purchase them. We need another 300, and we also need internet access for these institutions.

Paula Simon from the PMO is responsible for the overall training plan. Noted that now is the time for each of the regions to be approached to see what their training needs are. There is no point leaving it until the product is ready for roll out. Discussed the Centre of Excellence (COE) idea, where ZIMS can be deployed in a small number of institutions initially, and these institutions could then undertake training in various countries and regions.

Possible options for training:
- Outsource a training company to do all the training – ruled out not possible
- Get help from the various regional association offices – some already have training programs that could be further developed. May charge a fee for training to cover costs.
- Centre of Excellence option
- ISIS – ruled out not possible

The best option would most likely be a combination of the COE and regional association office options.

SAZARC has allocated at least two hours per day during their meeting in December for training. They would like to have someone provide an update on the project, as well as some basic animal records training.

Noted that it would be a good idea to develop a presentation that can be given at annual regional meetings to provide general updates on ZIMS – what is it? How is it going? Etc. etc.

Implementation roll-out

Robert gave a presentation on how San Diego Zoo is planning the implementation and the roll-out of ZIMS at their institution. This included details about the Centres of Excellence (now known as Early Adopters), and the some of the internal processes that each institution will be required to undertake prior to, and during the deployment of ZIMS.

Communication

We will probably continue with the Yahoo listserve as the main means of communication for the group. We may use ZIMS Discussion Forum for some discussions at a later stage. Minutes from IADISC meetings will be made available on the IADISC website (www.iadisc.org). We will continue to increase the availability of general ZIMS documents on the IADISC web site.

CGI should be starting to provide more regular updates on their deliverables and timelines. This will be converted to an Outlook calendar and posted on the home page of the development portal so everyone knows about upcoming issues.

Core team meetings

A number of people have been asking what are the objectives of the core team meetings? Syed advised that they are for checking in about where people are with various tasks that are being undertaken, status reports, update on hot topics. Suggested remove the regional updates, to provide an additional 10-15 minutes.

The group discussed opportunities within the core team meetings for various groups (TAC, IADISC, PMO etc.) to communicate about their activities and progress. Minutes from the meeting are not always as explanatory about the issues that are discussed as they could be. The objectives of the team and the meeting should be reviewed and discussed.

We discussed the possibility of having a regular fortnightly email-type update from each of the various groups, instead of these being discussed at the core meeting. This could possibly be formatted along the lines of the current ISIS newsletter, but be distributed only amongst the members of the various project teams. Each group leader should be responsible for getting in their regular updates on time.

We need a review of the distribution list for the ISIS newsletter. The list is quite out of date and requires updating. ISIS will discus this with some of the regional organizations to see how this could be more regularly updated. It was generally felt that the communications that go out to the general ISIS membership is sufficient.

Disproportionate representation of users

We discussed the fact that there has been more input from large institutions than from smaller institutions. Smaller institutions are not sufficiently resourced to contribute to the process. This is a risk, but not considered to be a major risk.

Disparity between project budget and stakeholder expectations

Felt that many off the users of the current software are expecting far less from ZIMS than it will be. This is better than us delivering an application that does not been the users' expectations. This is not considered to be a major risk.

Timeline

The timeline for the system use case development is a very high risk. The risk of volunteer burnout is also a very high risk. A new project schedule is being discussed with CGI and this will be distributed once it has been approved.

Meeting Location/Dates

We normally hold the IADISC meeting in conjunction with the WAZA/CBSG meeting. The next WAZA meeting is being held in New York City/Syracuse this year in October. It was noted that this is a very expensive place to get to and to hold a meeting. It was suggested that Seattle might be a good venue, possibly in November.

IADISC officers update

Sue (the current IADISC Chair) has been requested by her institution to cut back her hours of involvement in IADISC, and she feels uncomfortable continuing as Chair of IADISC. It was suggested that Sue approach Disney to see if they will allow an extension to her time availability, to continue in the role of Co-Chair.

Kevin was nominated as an additional Co-Chair. This was voted on and accepted. Kevin also raised the point that he does not feel able to take on the Chair role in its entirety, but would be happy to be a Co-chair.

It was suggested that some administrative support would be very useful for the two Co-chairs. ADISC chairs to investigate possibilities for some administrative assistance.

Unlikely that administrative staff could be provided within the ISIS staff. There are no additional funds to hire support.

Strategic Planning

We need to think about how we might be able to encourage some influence at a higher (executive or senior biological staff) level from some institutions. Noted that there is often not institutional buy-in at a higher level. It is important for institutional and regional association directors to promote the importance of IADISC.

Fundraising is required, but noted that this requires some specific skills to achieve, and these are skills that are not necessarily present in the regional ADISCs. It was also noted however, that without funds, various meetings might not be able to occur. Potential sources of funds might be independent organizations, and regional associations.

It was recommended that all IADISC members to continue to be responsible for their own travel to IADISC meetings. Alternatively, we could be finding funds from elsewhere to promote the expansion of IADSIC and involve additional members' attendance at meetings.

There is the possibility of becoming a non-profit organization. We should consider looking for funding to hire a full-time IADISC officer. This would allow for the on-going viability of IADISC as a representative body of the user community, while maintaining its independence from ISIS. IADISC's role is to support ISIS. Areas that IADISC requires funds for:

- Outreach to extend the influence of the committee
- Recruiting new members
- Ongoing development of data standards
- Best practices
- Training

Training companies are potential sources of product sponsorship.

We should be surveying stakeholders on the future direction of IADISC. Should IADISC be a committee of WAZA?

To do list

Speak with Sally about contacts in South Asia for focus groups

Identify some key trainers within a variety of regions (Kevin to speak with Lorne Roberts). Sally is keen to assist here.

Find out from all IADISC members who is going to any of the main regional meetings, and if they could give an update presentation.