



IMOS is supported by the Australian Government through the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy and the Super Science Initiative

IMOS EIF UPDATE #4

14 October 2009

Hi all,

Here is the 4th IMOS EIF Update. It's addressed to:

- Node and Deputy Node Leaders
- nominated Regional Representatives
- expanded interests in the Bluewater and Climate Node
- Facility and Sub-Facility Leaders
- Operator representatives
- others who have (to date) expressed some interest in new Facilities/Sub-Facilities
- other stakeholder representatives, and
- members of the Advisory Board who aren't in one of the categories above.

It is expected that Nodes and Facilities will distribute this information more widely, as they see fit. If you feel we have omitted anyone from the distribution list, please forward to them and let the IMOS Office know for future reference.

Timetable

Just a reminder of the key dates between now and the end of the year. The full timetable can be found at http://imos.org.au/eif_timetable.html

30 Oct 2009	Close of Call for Proposals
26 Nov 2009	National meeting of representatives of parties who have submitted Proposals, to reach consensus on items best responding to the IMOS Five Year Strategy and best addressing IMOS EIF funding requirements.
Mid Dec 2009	IMOS Office to develop a Draft Final IMOS EIF Project Plan.
18 Dec 2009	IMOS Advisory Board teleconference to consider the Draft Final IMOS EIF Project Plan.

Proposal Development

A tremendous amount of thought and effort is going into the development of Node and Facility proposals at the moment, and it's very exciting to see the national marine and climate science community so fully engaged.

There is obviously a strong commitment to sustaining what we've started, and also many interesting ideas about how to enhance and extend our observing system. Clearly we won't be able to support all of these new ideas, and through the IMOS Office and the

Nodes we having many discussions about priorities. Some of these discussions aren't easy, but I believe they are being held constructively, and would like to thank all concerned for being willing to put forward ideas and have them debated.

To re-iterate, the key factors that will inform decision making by the IMOS Office and the Advisory Board are as follows:

1. IMOS is a research infrastructure program, focused on sustained ocean observing to provide critical data streams for widespread use by the Australian marine and climate research community in addressing national challenges.
2. The Nodes provide the scientific rationale for IMOS, and are the mechanism for establishing a national, multi-institutional approach. The quality of the Nodes Science and Implementation Plans is therefore very important. Feedback on Node planning has been provided through the Mid-Term Review and via the IMOS Steering Committee, and all Nodes plans will be subject to international peer review on a periodic basis.
3. The new EIF funding has been provided with a requirement for enhanced monitoring capability in the Southern Ocean, and extended coverage in northern Australian waters. This doesn't mean all new funding must be directed towards these priorities, but IMOS will be expected to present a strong and coherent response in these areas.
4. The approved IMOS Five Year Strategy also identifies priorities in improving model output, strengthening the national backbone, exploring the potential for whole-of-system approaches, and driving down the cost per observation.
5. Co-investment is fundamental, with 45% of IMOS 'phase 1' resources provided through cash and in-kind contributions by partners. Co-investment will need to be enhanced and extended under IMOS EIF.
6. Track record of delivery by Facilities is also important. Discoverability and accessibility of data via the IMOS Ocean Portal is the point of delivery, and demonstrated ability to achieve this will be taken into account in deciding on the balance between sustaining what we've started, and the feasibility of enhancing and extending into new areas.

It is recognised that simultaneous Node and Facility planning is inherently difficult, and the process will need to be iterative. We don't expect the set of Node and Facility plans submitted by 30th October to be completely in balance and matched to available funding, but this is the ultimate goal and we do need to be well on track to achieve it by Xmas 2009. Good communication between Nodes and Facilities is therefore essential, and the IMOS Office is more than willing to assist. Let us know if you think we can help.

We have received a number of queries about the Facility Budget worksheet. It has deliberately been split into two components - one for the cost of sustaining what's already been approved, and a second for the cost of enhancements and new activities. Given that we've already had to make decisions about the first \$8M of EIF funding, the first component is a mix of NCRIS and EIF funding, which has caused a bit of confusion. However it only affects a subset of the Facilities, and we believe they are now clear about this point. If there is any residual confusion, please contact Marian McGowen to discuss.

Other Developments

We are holding two workshops at Melbourne Airport next week - Satellite Remote Sensing on Monday 19th and , Model Data Synthesis on Tuesday 20th. These workshops are designed to progress IMOS strategic priorities on improving model output, strengthening the national backbone, and exploring the potential for whole-of-system approaches. Katy Hill is organising these workshops if you require further information. We'll report back in the next Update.

Christine Hanson and Martina Doblin have been leading a discussion about forming a national working group on Bio-Optical Instrumentation and Observing (Bio-optics). This is an emerging issue that crosses Nodes and Facilities, and the IMOS Office has agreed to support the establishment of this working group. Please contact Christine if you'd like to know more.

If you feel there are other issues that require some attention from an IMOS-wide perspective, please let me know.

OceanObs'09

I attended the OceanObs'09 conference in Venice in late September, which was a fantastic opportunity to review achievements in global ocean observing over the last decade, and discuss priorities for the next decade. IMOS was well-represented, with three Node Leaders (Ridgway, Seuront and Pattiaratchi), eight Facility Leaders (Wijffels, Ridgway, Schluz, Lynch, Pattiaratchi, Bainbridge, Williams and Proctor) and four Board members (Smith, d'Adamo, Gunn and Moltmann) in attendance. The conference website is an excellent resource, and includes the conference statement, all the plenary talks and all the community white papers - see <http://www.oceanobs09.net/>.

In summary, the fact that IMOS has been established as a nationally coordinated system

- covering physical, biogeochemical and biological parameters,
- covering blue-water and regional/coastal systems, and
- providing free open and timely access to data

means that we are very well-positioned to guide Australia's contribution to the global ocean observing effort required over the next decade. This is becoming well-recognised within the international community. Overall there was much optimism about the contribution ocean observing can make, and the Australian community should be very bullish about the important role we can play.

In closing, thanks again for all the effort being put into development of Node and Facility proposals. I'm sure it will pay off in the new year when we present a strong Project Plan to DIISR for approval.

Regards, Tim

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