



Tuesday, August 23 @ 8:30 am EDT

SIL International Committee Meeting Minutes

Participants: SIL board members: Thomas Mehner, Tamar Zohary, Martin Kainz, Jay Piggott, Ines O'Farrell, Marieke Frassl, Barbara Barta, Cecilia Barouillet, María de los Ángeles González Sagrario, Juan David Gonzales. National Representatives (NRs): Andras Abonyi (Hungary), Rita Adrian (Germany), Luciana Gomes Barbosa (Brazil), Michele Burford (Australia), Antonio Camacho (Spain), Werner Eckert (Israel), Mark Gessner (Germany), Iwona Jasser (Poland), Richard Johnson (Sweden), Gea-Jae Joo (S. Korea), Shin-ichi Nakano (Japan), Rey Donne Papa (Philippines), S. S. Sarma (Mexico), Piet Spaak (Switzerland), Frieda Taub (USA), Additional participants: Ali Ger (Brazil)

Thomas introduction:

- We are asking support and engagement in the change from National Representative (NR) to National Ambassador (NA) role.
- There is a concern over the declining value of SIL with respect to the international partnerships. There is a loss of contact at the member level but also at the NR level. The role was undefined so today we wish to clearly define the role of international networking within national countries.
- Partnerships beyond science. Europeans and Americans can learn from Koreans who seem to have strong relationships around limnology beyond academics.
- We have to merge societies. Societies have to know and support each other, to become major players on the Global Stage.
- Strongest recommendation from Governance Review: engage the NRs, make them an active part of SIL.

Thomas introduces Andras Abonyi:

Tell us a little bit how the Governance Review went. What is the motivation in creating the NA role and why is it better than NRs.

Andras:

- The role of NRs was recommended because the NRs **do not collect fees anymore** and **they no longer vote on congress host country**. As their formal responsibilities have shrunk and their role has become undefined, their engagement has declined. This is evident from the fact that only 15 NRs have joined this meeting. There is much more potential for NRs to be dynamic and engage members.
- Major changes needed:
 - o **increase inclusiveness**. This will generate more ideas and more youth to boost the engagement. Connect SIL to other societies (national, NGO, authorities)
 - o **Enhance networking**. Increase communication with NGOs and national associations. Three typical responses of limnologists asked about SIL: never heard of SIL, have heard but never were contacted by SIL, country did not have a representative. Some countries that do not have representatives, SIL has the potential to play a major role, by acting as both an international and a national society for those countries.
 - Local: Need to **invite** new members such as new PhD students within their own universities or their networks.
 - Regional: NRs can help organize workshops, courses and conferences that are supported and partially funded by SIL.
 - Global: impact of the working groups, etc.

Thomas: Agrees role of NR to actively attract new members to SIL can be a new central role.

Open discussion in regards to new roles:

Piet Spaak: Since other roles became obsolete, he was unsure what his roles were aside from running elections, but nobody was running. NRs need better structure and clear duties.

Richard Johnson: Very interested in the changes. Agrees with no longer paying for their national countries. And is all for the congress switching to bi-annual meetings instead of every 3 years. Believes that this will make us more competitive on a global scale with all organizations.

S.S. Sarma: Regional representation from one NA that can take over the members from a neighbouring country where there is no NA. Common in SE Asia and South America, that small neighbouring countries do not have representation.

Martin Kainz: Have we asked the younger community how they think they are most likely to get involved and what kinds of duties would be most appealing to them?

- Andras: these questions have not been asked. But there is speculation that within universities and providing specifics on how to have their role within SIL would be helpful.
- Thomas: SIL needs to be more attractive, he believes that NAs are the way to do this.

Mark Gessner: Supportive of the change. *Critical remark:* was very surprised by email from Genevieve (SIL Business) that changes were to come. Who will be coordinating the National Ambassadors?? It is potentially a LARGE network (if there are multiple ambassadors per country *66). Logistically needs to be as streamlined as possible.

- Thomas: we will come back to this. 3 people per country is the max, but could be as little as 1.

Cecilia Barouillet: best to coordinate with other societies, not to be competitive with societies.

Antonio Camacho: (1) suggests that he has a discussion with the national [?] societies regarding a SIL Congress in South America (2) try to include some of the leaders from national societies into the national global network.

Ines O'Farrell: The old role of SIL NRs is obsolete. What is the relationship between the Ambassadors and the National Societies? What is their role within SIL. Will the President of the national society be the NA, how will it work?

More from Andras: What are the gaps that need to be filled?

Should we elect new ambassadors? Do they need to apply to be an ambassador?

NRs at the moment, we can already start undertaking these new roles while the changes begin. Promoting the SIL within your country, informing about the both national and SIL events.

Thomas: New Google doc where you will be able to ask and answer your most pressing questions.

Michelle will circulate this. How would you like to be involved and what role do you wish to play in the organization of this new group. Until next year, we need an active core group to start shaping the first concepts and answer your questions.

Any other questions?

Shin-ichi Nakano: 3 ambassadors per country – one is myself, how do you select someone else?

Tamar: Currently NRs have one more important role not mentioned so far: being in charge of the national stage of the SIL student competition in their country. This role should be continued by the NA.

Thomas wants to form a committee of NRs to help the transition: Andras, Piet Spaak have volunteered

Ali Ger: part of the education committee would be willing to not join above committee, but coordinate with education committee.

- Andras also suggests involving communications committee

Genevieve: Share google form for engagement: fill it out yourselves, and encourage others to fill out within their country.

Luciana Barbosa: volunteer to search ambassadors in Latin America. We have a meeting next August 31

Joo: Needs a very CLEAR list of duties of the NA to be fully on board. Also receives a lot of questions from young limnologist what the benefits are for being a part of SIL. Suggest we add short courses, or add more benefits for students specifically and career development (e.g. eminent scholar). Almost 200 students joined short courses during this congress and it was expensive but very successful. Therefore, should invest in lectures more regularly (2-4hrs) for students.

Thomas closes meeting.