



SIL INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
SIL2022: BERLIN, GERMANY
AUGUST 10, 2022

Attendance : *SIL board members*: Angeles Gonzalez-Sagrario (Argentina), Ines O'Farrell (Argentina), Thomas Mehner (Germany), Tamar Zohary (Israel), Barbara Barta (Hungary), Lena Schallenberg (New Zealand), Cecilia Barouillet (France), Juan David Gonzalez Tujillo (Spain/Columbia). *National representatives/ Ambassadors*: Milos Ciric (Serbia), Igor Ogashawara (Brazil), Marc Gesner (Germany), **Maria** (Germany), Piet Spaak (Switzerland), Michele Burford (Australia), Richard Johnson (Sweden), Carlos Lopez (Ecuador & Venezuela), Cihelio Amorim (Brazil), **Gregorio** (Paraguay), Maxine Mowe (Signapore), Age Molversmyr (Norway), Antonio Camacho (Spain), Zeynep Ersoy (Turkey/Spain), Rey Donne Papa (Philippines), Luciana Barbosa (Brazil).

Observers: Genevieve Leclerc (Canada), Michelle Gros (Canada), Joyce Moss (England)

Introductions: Each country introduces itself, Zeynep (online), and Lena introduce themselves as the new chairs of this committee as part of their mandate as VP and ECR Global Outreach.

Thomas takes the floor to guide and introduce topics of discussion:

Many Old NRs are present today. Your previous roles were (among others):

Collect membership money,

Vote on SIL governance changes

Vote on host country for future congresses

Manage the selection of the national winner of student competition

Many of you here today have a national society, but very few of you have many members that are part of both the national society as well as the SIL. SIL's goal is to change this and strengthen the overlap between itself and national/regional societies. The biggest exception to this lack of contact is Austria, where you cannot be a member of SIL without first being a member of The Austrian national society of limnologists.

There are great benefits to being a part of both and having connected people within/among societies. For example: use SIL as a way to create and connect limnologists on a regional/continental scale beyond borders. Latin America does this via their network. There is also SEFS: The Society of European Freshwater Scientists where there are many members of SIL, but less in the national scales (understandably, some countries do not have a national society). Unfortunately, such an initiative to bring close countries together is not as present in Asia.

As SIL Ambassadors, you can connect much easier in your native language about SIL than we can, easily engage local SIL activities, and promote SIL communications to close colleagues/students with our members and assist them in forming strong connections better than we can at an international scale.

Why are we here today?

How do we structure the global network?

Ambassadors: Scale/reach? Who/How? Restrictions (e.g. no students)? How do we support the network via Lena and Zeynep? How do we link with the National Societies?

By next congress – Our goal would be to build a list of information about how to contact, how to manage and how to be a proper link between the SIL VP Global Outreach and national SIL members.

A few discussion points must be settled to get started.

Replacement of formal elections? Nominations?

1. Antonio (Spain): Elect anyone who wants. Use the most enthusiastic people and accept all that want to be involved as much as possible to maintain momentum. Very important to gain access and communication to the SIL governance, national societies, and members.
2. Luciana (Brazil): Questions: **Participation of limnologists where there are no national societies.**
 - a. How can we engage countries without anyone from SIL? They must be given a voice and perhaps grouped together and supported by other countries with larger SIL members. First step is to create a committee.
 - b. Are the ambassadors representatives of SIL in their country or are they representatives of their country for SIL? What is the principal direction and flow of information?
3. Juan David (Spain/Columbia): Do not limit it to just a few people: **build a committee** within the international network to provide guidelines to all on navigating how to create a small network and grow it on a national/regional scale.
4. Piet (Switzerland): We are not talking about how we select the ambassadors. Rather, how we keep turnover and elect them. Where do ambassadors fall within SIL? The Ambassadors feel they may want to **provide input to SIL governance via a bottom-up process.**
 - a. Thomas: This is key information that Zeynep and Lena will be able to provide as direct links between ambassadors and the SIL board.
5. Marc (Germany): Imagines SIL as a tree, with many branches, where ambassadors are the roots, and do have formal functions, but need defined roles. Marc would still want some **formalities to provide structure and some level of commitment.**
 - a. Piet (Switzerland): Some of these new guidelines were already drafted by Andras' committee over the last year. This process was started.
6. Ines (Argentina): **Some formalities** are necessary. For example, some ambassadors will be in charge of student competition, then it cannot be a student. Also, needs some network already – don't want an ambassador that knows nobody in the field.
 - a. Richard (Sweden): **Disagrees** with formal process and wants to know how many people we should be getting for each country
 - i. Thomas: difficult because we want to allow smaller countries to **blur international borders** and join other countries
7. Toni (Spain): Need to engage people. Anyone who wants to be engaged can be a SIL ambassador. If there are too many, then perhaps let Lena and Zeynep govern the process of selection.
8. Genevieve: the formalization of selection and duties should be in the form of a charter of engagement.
9. **Thomas would like a small portion to work with Z&L to establish an official charter of engagement of formal roles**
 - a. **Volunteers who proposed to help: Marc, Piet, Maria, JD, Rey, Ines(?), Maxine**

How do we like the idea of connecting with National Societies?

- b. Marc (Germany): Believes it must be very **fluid** because the societies function very differently, even in the ones who have them e.g. Austria.
- c. Gregorio (Paraguay): Paraguay does not have a national society, but there is a very strong freshwater society that is not strictly national, but mostly consists of Paraguayans. Same goes for other societies that combine freshwater and marine and other small countries.
- d. Genevieve: Currently, every time we want a **communication**, there is no channel for us to connect with national societies, no update on new leadership (i.e. points of contact) and we get very little response due to lack of connection and relationship.
 - i. Toni (Spain): via the national societies, it is very effective to contact and be up to date on their leaders and members. Making effective communications for advertising, sharing, and training would be beneficial for all (SIL AND Societies).

- e. Tamar (Israel): There are many national reps who did not attend the congress, many are here but not at the meeting as well. A lot of the NRs **involvement** has gone down. A change should come with a change in age. Each country should try to find a younger rep (ECR or student) to be involved, who are typically more engaged, more tech savvy, and good with comms and social media. Perhaps a pairing system with senior scientists.
 - i. Barbara (Hungary): **International Committee Meeting** should be hosted online as well for those unable to attend in person. For those onsite, they need more strict engagement and understanding of their **duties** in general.
- f. Rey (Philippines): asks permission to represent SIL at conferences, helping plan events. Would we be able to make **partnerships**, sponsorships, etc. during conferences?
 - i. SE Asia Network is independent of our efforts, but we think we really want to reach out. IWIC connection in SE Asia as well. Needs guidance in how to approach these places, how can SIL be involved? How do we get support for these partnerships and endeavours?
 - 1. Genevieve: this is exactly why you now have Zeynep and Lena so that we can assist you.
- g. Michele (Australia): old people are not as engaged, too busy, so younger people are more reliable, more open and not as entrenched in their established relationships. Also would like to point out that when **major meetings** happen, there is a missed opportunity and flux in memberships during those years. Difficult to pull people to be part of multiple societies, and convince longtime members of national associations to diversify.
 - i. Marc: SIL should be present at these major meetings.
 - ii. Toni (Spain): How is SIL represented at other meetings?
 - iii. Genevieve: Not very active on the ground, the hope is that the ambassador will provide local content and support on the ground, at these meetings, etc. SIL, Z&L, are there to offer distant support and content.
 - iv. Richard (Sweden): SIL has a strong reach and offers international connections where others don't, it should be extensively used.
 - v. Marc: The concept of competition is not a good one. The societies fund each other in these meetings regularly (such as ASLO supporting and partially funding SIL100). These connections must be strengthened.