

Keeping the Sustainability Ball Rolling

- National digitization effort
- TCNs
- iDigBio – search portals

This discussion will build on the previous day's session, "Embarking on the Path to Sustainability," by examining how each strategy for sustainability can be developed. Which constituencies, including providers and users of data, business specialists, sustainability experts, representatives of funding agencies, technologists, information scientists, and futurologists, need to be involved?

Embarking on the Path to Sustainability

- **National digitization effort: NIBA**
(Network Integrated Biocollections Alliance)
- **TCNs – established groups**
- **iDigBio – search portals**
- **Tools**

Embarking on the Path to Sustainability

- National digitization effort: NIBA
(Network Integrated Biocollections Alliance)
- TCNs – established groups **NETWORKS**
- iDigBio – search portals **DATA**
- Tools **PROCESS**

Embarking on the Path to Sustainability

- **Agreed that demonstrating the value of the collections is fundamental**
- **Digitization is (should be) part of normal curatorial process**
- **ADBC established this; analogous to a startup company**
- **How do we sustain the data, networks and the process?**

Embarking on the Path to Sustainability

1. What effective economic models might be useful?
2. Which funding agencies promote and support ongoing digitization activities, directly and indirectly, and how can these be leveraged?
3. What are the most effective methods to secure institutional support for digitization and the staff and infrastructure required to underpin this work?
4. What is the long-term technological vision for the next generation of digitization activities?
5. Who and what organizations haven't we considered that might support our efforts?

Embarking on the Path to Sustainability

- What we want....
- Some ideas for how...
- **Who?**

Embarking on the Path to Sustainability

- One initiative in place: AIBS, SPNHC and NSC Alliance has submitted a proposal to NSF/AIBC to implement goals of the NIBA Implementation plan
- - one of which is Sustainability (Goal 5)

elements are:

From NIBA Implementation Plan:

1. Identify and assess alternative economic models for sustaining NIBA.

- Convene a panel representing cross-cutting disciplines to develop and assess economic models for sustaining NIBA, including strategies for both revenue enhancement and expense reduction and including relevant information from analogous national-level resources in other countries. Any viable model should ensure ongoing support for relevant collections infrastructure and operations, including specimen acquisition, digitization, data and specimen curation, and data preservation. Intellectual property and other legal considerations that pertain to data sharing and use should be evaluated, especially regarding the possible use of data products as a source of revenue.

From NIBA Implementation Plan:

2. Institute changes in federal grant policies to support NIBA objectives.

- Work with federal agencies that fund specimen-based biological research to develop an agreement or policy that would require researchers to provide in each grant proposal a data management plan that includes the digitization of collections data as well as safe-guarding of physical specimens; to digitize such data in accordance with community-wide standards; and to share such data with NIBA.

From NIBA Implementation Plan:

3. Secure enduring institutional support for collections digitization through access to staffing (collections) and technical (informatics) support.

- Demonstrate the value of physical and digital collections to the institutions that maintain them.
- Encourage collections institutions to establish long-term (perpetual), robust, and cost-effective plans for data archives.

From NIBA Implementation Plan:

4. Create a technology vision plan for the next-generation digitization of NIBA.

- Commission a forward-looking report that addresses the next generation of digitization, as well as related long-term maintenance, archiving, and stewardship issues. At a minimum, the report should address future efforts, funding, and the status of collections digitization.

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- Other ideas?

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- Suggest: we zero in on what are the elements of sustainability.
- Or what kind of expertise do we want on the team?

Who leads this effort?

- JOIN NSC Alliance! (societies and institutions)
- JOIN SPNHC (individuals)
- JOIN AIBS (societies and individuals)

- *Some institutions will continue as part of normal curation activities; as new specimens are brought in – the methods are in place and databasing, georeferencing and imaging can be done as part of the normal process. Colo State Univ. Insect Collection.
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- Others will need funding – for new and legacy collections.
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- Others will find new ways to get the work done. Crowd-sourcing – gaining traction, great potential to accelerate the work.
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- We heard this morning that getting info online increases use of collections – very important verification that our activities are increasing awareness – certainly the more people involved, the more likely we are to successful in become sustainability.
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- Video-based tutorials will be available to keep things going.
- Symbiota and Specify are making modifications to facilitate some of the activities necessary to keep digitization.

From NIBA Implementation Plan:

- Factors that will ensure that NIBA endures include the following:
- Fostering the widest possible participation. Many players should have a stake in NIBA's long-term success.
- Highlighting the importance of and need to digitize biological collections across the country.
- Configuring NIBA as an essential resource that attracts an ongoing revenue stream because its products are highly valued and widely used.