

Minutes
International Affairs Committee
February 9, 2014
Orlando, FL

Ricardo Mata-Gonzalez called the meeting to order at 1:10 pm. Leonard Jolley is our current board representative.

Attendees:

Ricardo Mata-Gonzalez
Layne Coppock
Maria Fernandez-Gimenez
Lou Hagener
Leonard Jolley
Jim O'Rourke
Mohamed Sawalbah
John A. Taylor
Alan Iwaasa
Edmundo Garcia Moya
Walter Schacht
Urs Kreuter
Kevin Kirkman
Mounir Louhoichi
Pieded Mayagoitia
Poncho Ortega

Chairs for upcoming years

2014-2015 Committee Chairman: Layne Coppock

2015-2016 Committee Chairman: TBD

International Travel Fellowship: Ricardo reported that the \$1,000 ITF award was given to Dr. Kevin Kirkman from the University of Kwazulu-Natal in South Africa. Dr. Kirkman was in attendance at our meeting.

Rangelands Special Issue. Layne reported that in December, 2013, a special issue of *Rangelands* was published on the topic of "Women as Change Agents in the World's Rangelands." This special issue of *Rangelands* included papers from presentations of the 2013 symposium of the same title that was sponsored by the IAC at Oklahoma City. The symposium as well as the special edition of *Rangelands* was coordinated by Layne with the support of the International Affairs Committee. The cost of the special issue has been covered by USAID. This is the first SRM symposium dealing with gender issues. Distribution of the special issue included several thousand SRM subscribers and 150 complementary hard copies for other interested persons. Another 600 people had online access to an electronic version for one month, from January 7 to February 7. This was also the first time that Allen Press ventured into a form of "open access" with SRM as evidenced by the online access exercise.

Symposium 2014. Ricardo informed the participants that at this Orlando meeting, the IAC is not sponsoring a symposium. The symposium planned for this event, which was related to tropical rangelands of the world, was cancelled because of lack of funding. The planning committee for the tropical rangelands symposium solicited financial support from Dow Agrosiences, but it was not granted.

Symposium 2015. The IAC agreed to organize a symposium for the 2015 SRM Sacramento meeting. The tentative topic of the symposium is “Wildlands, Rangelands and Energy Development: Considerations for Ecosystem Management.” One of the purposes of this symposium is to promote the 2016 International Rangeland Congress (IRC) that will take place in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada (see below for the venue change). The idea is to invite speakers from North America (Canada, USA, and Mexico) that have a high probability of funding their travel to Sacramento. This will improve the odds of success if external funding is hard to locate. However, funding will be solicited from Dow Agrosiences, the traditional source of funding for the IAC, as well as from energy development companies or agencies that are involved in the interface between rangeland/wildland management and energy development. Any external funding requests should be coordinated with the SRM leadership to avoid duplication of efforts and confusing donors. A short symposium proposal would need to be submitted by early May to the Sacramento Organizing Committee. Examples of prior proposals will be sent out soon to the provisional organizers of the symposium, Urs Kreuter and Alan Iwaasa.

Symposium 2016. The IAC is also considering starting the organization of a symposium for the 2016 SRM meeting in Corpus Christi, TX. While a topic for this symposium was not clarified during this meeting, it was suggested that the IAC should move forward to try to define the content and open funding channels as soon as possible. Getting more than a year’s head start is desirable in this funding climate.

New ITF. The IAC discussed a plan to advertise and award \$1,000 to at least one International Travel Fellow for the 2015 SRM annual meeting. These funds need to be requested from the Sacramento Organizing Committee as soon as possible by the IAC Chair.

IAC Archives. Jim O’Rourke informed the group that he has continued to accumulate all known documents produced by the committee since its inception. Jim plans to complete the scanning of these documents in the next few months. They will then be posted on the IAC website. The IAC is concerned about preserving “institutional memory” and having evidence of past outputs for future donors.

New Venue for IRC 2016. Jim O’Rourke provided information about the new venue for the IRC in 2016. The IRC retracted its offer of support to India for 2016 IRC because of the lack of timely preparation. The new venue will be Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada. The IRC will take place on July 17-22, 2016. The IRC planning committee is on a good schedule at this time.

IAC Handbook and Strategic Plan. People responsible to update the IAC on these items (Leslie Stewart-Phelps and Andres Cibils) were not present at our meeting. The handbook contains details as to IAC process and procedures. The strategic plan has goals and objectives. Neither has been updated for some time. Maria Fernandez-Gimenez offered to find the most recent versions of the handbook and strategic plan and send them on to Leslie and Andres to update this year with input from other IAC members as needed.

IAC Website Coordinator. Leslie Stewart-Phelps is stepping down as the web page coordinator for the IAC. Mohammed Sawalbah agreed to take her place for the coming year. In this role Mohammed will serve as the liaison between the IAC and the SRM webmaster. The goal is to keep the IAC web page at the SRM website updated and relevant.

Glossary. Lou Hagener visited the IAC meeting and talked about the need to update the SRM Glossary. Lou appealed to the IAC members to provide new rangeland terms that need to be included in an updated glossary, especially in relation to international rangeland activities. Lou will coordinate with Jim O'Rourke to provide more specifics on due dates to provide this information. When we polled IAC members from countries other than the USA, we discovered that while some have the beginnings of a rangelands glossary, most are behind what the SRM has compiled.

Funding and Membership Issues. Jenny Pluhar—incoming SRM president—visited the IAC meeting to discuss funding matters for the IAC. She advised us to be more aware about the need for SRM donors to be recognized and to see the value of their contributions. Jenny also recommended that the IAC help take the lead in promoting recruitment of more international members. One way we can do this is to emphasize that international members get online access to both REM and Rangelands as part of their \$35 annual membership fee. Sandy Wyman, from the Membership Committee, also visited us and asked for ongoing input to promote SRM membership.

Database of International Projects from SRM members. Mounir Louhoichi expressed his interest for a database containing information about the international projects that are conducted by SRM members. Because such a database does not exist and it could have importance to promote international collaboration, the IAC agreed to start a general consult among SRM members on the matter. Mounir will initiate this effort with Mohamed Sawalbah.

International Membership Donation Fund. The IAC agreed on the need to know the current balance that exists for the funds that have been donated by SRM members to defray membership costs for international applicants who lack sufficient income to join. We will also ask the SRM Board of Directors to clarify how such funds are solicited, managed, and spent. This will help us think about how best to approach the issue of growing the international SRM membership.

The meeting was adjourned at 5 PM.