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**UArctic Thematic Networks Program Team Meeting
Kilpisjärvi Biological Station,
January 25-26, 2010**

Minutes

Lars Kullerud, update on recent activities in UArctic

The UArctic Board of Governors has decided that Thematic Networks will be the main activity of UArctic and thus try to help in finding more funding has to be allocated to its activities; to the TN office and its operation and to individual networks to support their activities. This also means the Thematic Networks leaders have a bigger role in UArctic and making UArctic more visible in North. The downside is that this will also mean more reporting. The endorsing of new Thematic Networks becomes even more important.

The national fundraising teams have been established and functioning and in Finland UArctic has become a legal entity according to Finnish law (ry, registered organisation), this means that UArctic is now a legal body in Finland. In Canada a similar process is going on.

Scandinavian Seminar has conducted a feasibility study with private consultant in US on UArctic to help it for fundraising in USA. The next step is to initiate the fundraising activities in US and thus a one page project proposals and ideas have been asked from the UArctic activities including Thematic Networks with US partner. The funding will be sought in US for selected proposal in summer 2010.

Co-operation with Nordic Council of Ministers will be strengthen as well and more funding should be allocated to the projects led by UArctic, such as the Thematic Network. The joint workshop in Tromsø is one outcome of discussion that has been going on between UArctic and NCM (workshop slides have been distributed earlier among TN leaders and can be found at <http://www.uarctic.org/singleNewsArticle.aspx?m=776&amid=8772>).

In future we will also work towards the EU and their funding instruments.

The government of Denmark has announced their support to UArctic which will be targeted also to Thematic Networks, especially to those working with partners/in Greenland, Denmark and Faroe Islands. The national Norwegian UArctic funding will be given as previously.

The new position of UArctic vice-president of Indigenous Affairs has been established, the call has been conducted and candidates have been evaluated by outside indigenous evaluators and by Ma-Mawi. The new UArctic vice-president of Indigenous Affairs is Jan-Henry Keskitalo from Sámi University College, Norway.

Last year published Shared Voices Thematic Networks edition has gained a lot of positive feedback, knowledge sharing on TN's meeting and conferences, activities, successful funding applications etc is an important way of showing that TN are working hard and have gained a lot, it is also an important to show members and to the Board of Governors that TNs are active and have achieve things. Thematic Networks are also the key interest point inside the UArctic.

Scott Forest is currently working as full-time information manager at UArctic secretariat.



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Presentations of the Thematic Networks

The ppt presentations (the ones presented) are available in the each networks UArctic website.

After the presentation in the discussion the following issues were raised:

- co-operation is a key issue, however it doesn't mean that everyone has to co-operate with everyone
- biggest challenge is to share the information
- thematic networks should identify all the courses that could be used in joint Master's programs. That would increase the co-operation between the networks and also between the organizations. And most importantly that would give students more possibilities in choosing the best available education.

Closing the networks and vulnerability

The closing of the Thematic Network should not be made too difficult if the decision comes from the network itself. It was decided that in these circumstances a letter addressed to Thematic Networks Chair Kari Laine should be written and sent to Thematic Networks leaders and also to Ma-Mawi (in order to keep them updated). If it becomes an issue then it can be taken to the further discussion and decision to the Ma-Mawi.

It was reported that Leo Pekkala, the leader of the Thematic Network on Arctic Learning Environment has informed that he would like to close down the network since no activities has been going on for several years (letter enclosed).

It was also reminded that if Thematic Network doesn't give the reports in two consecutive years it will be closed down if the leader doesn't respond to the requests and a) send the report, or b) rearrange the network leadership to the organization and leader that is committed and does the responsibilities.

It was noted that many thematic networks activities rely on the activity of the leader him/herself and if he/she retires or goes to long sick leave or leaves the job, the network is left without drifting. Therefore it is suggested that a *vice chair* will be selected to all thematic networks. It was discussed further that thematic networks should be encouraged to change their leader in for example every three year, this way partners would be kept better informed on happenings and activities in the network. This *rotation of leadership* will be added as a suggestion to the guidelines.

Program team discussed also the possibility that if network uses UArctic name, a brand, unwisely and even in very bad manner it should be possible to close it down (example giving a false view on indigenous issues under the name of UArctic).

It was also reminded that all thematic networks should sign a MoU with UArctic.

Guidelines on endorsing the new thematic networks

Program Team decided the following changes to the endorsement policy:

- there will be no endorsement committee but all thematic networks leaders are asked to comment and evaluate the proposals
- the basic evaluation will work as a mechanism to filter the proposals that don't full fill the requirement and cannot go to council for
- the new proposals are also circulated to the Ma-Mawi members and they have right to give feedback as well



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-evaluation summary will be written by the thematic networks office and Thematic Networks chair makes the suggestions for the proposed thematic networks for the improvement if needed. Evaluation report will be added to the council documents.

Other issues

Program team decided that five years evaluation will not be started this year even if the first four networks were established five years ago. The reason is that in reality only one TN has been active all these years so it was decided that we will wait for two years until the evaluation when we will have more TNs to be evaluated. Secondly the funding for the external evaluation has to be in place.

Ideas for common conference and next program team meeting

The program team was very much in favor for combining the program team meeting with the scientific conference in such a way that every second year the meeting will be held in North America and every second year in Europe, possible at the Kilpisjärvi where the meeting has been held since the beginning. The Arctic Frontiers Conference in Tromsø, Norway (held in every January) has proposed a partnership with UArctic, if UArctic accepts that and pays a little fee every year we can propose sessions, the topics could change from year to year so that eventually all thematic networks have had a session on their field at the conference.

The scientific conference can be an existing conference arranged by some other organization but on the other hand it was clear that it would be good to have a joint conference organized by networks together, that could focus on one common broad topic that all networks could participate, give presentation, invite their partners and publish a proceedings afterwards for the use of the UArctic students. All these issues were seen very important by all members and particularly the need for publications and scientific conferences was high. All conference proceedings could be published in electronic form under UArctic website as an outcome of the project Arctic virtual learning tools.

Secondly thematic networks would like to have a joint meeting with the Board of Governors. The Board could be invited to the joint conference and have a meeting in the conjunction.

The time and place for next meeting was not yet decided if it will be Kilpisjärvi then it should not be at the same time as Arctic Frontiers but a week before leaving weekend free for emails and other work. It was also stated that the meeting should have two compulsory days because if half of the people leave after the first day the other day will not have the good representation and work atmosphere. It was suggested that now with bigger number of participants the meeting should be organized differently, maybe have group work in the middle etc.

Co-operation with Arctic Council

The co-operation with the UArctic and Arctic council was seen a bit difficult task, there are only two networks that have links and co-operation in the Arctic council working groups: Arctic Medicine (AMAP health group, SDWG health experts, Arja Rautio) and Global change (SDWG – EALÄT). However, it is very wise to keep on going to the meetings and gradually get people know UArctic better, let our voices be heard. UArctic could also make strategy on how to become visible in Arctic council.

We should also use all AC proceedings and material in our education and make it visible in for outsiders.



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Participants:

Thematic Networks Program Team:

- Kari Laine, Program chair, UArctic Thematic Network office
- Kirsi Latola, Program coordinator, UArctic Thematic Network Office/TN on Global Change in the Arctic
- Arja Rautio, Univ Oulu, TN on Arctic Medicine
- Tor Gjertsen, Finnmark University College, TN on Local and Regional Development in the North
- Marit Breie Henriksen, Vice rector, Sámi University College, Verdde & UArctic Indigenous TN on Community-based Natural Resource Co-management
- Björn Sagdahl, Bodø Univ College, TN on Northern Governance
- Hannele Zubeck (Skype), University of Anchorage Alaska, USA, TN on Arctic Engineering and Science
- Tomi Knuutila, University of Lapland, Finland, TN in Digital and Media Arts
- Anatoli Bourmistrov, Bodø University College, Norway/University of Alberta, Canada, TN Energy in a New Time (ENT)
- Lassi Heininen, University of Lapland, TN on Geopolitics and security

Board of Governors:

- Jan Henry Keskitalo, Sámi University College

Mamawi (Strategic Area Leads)

- Lars Kullerud, President, UArctic
- Outi Snellman, Services and Organisation
- Kari Laine/Kirsi Latola, Thematic Networks