

Minutes from the 2015 ICOM NATHIST Annual General Meeting

21 October, 2015 1330 – 1430

Chair: Eric Dorfman, President ICOM NATHIST

Board Members in Attendance: Isabel Landim (Vice President); Lynda Knowles (Secretary); Chi-Ming Chen (Member); Osamu Kamei (Member)

Apologies: Anna Omedes; Marcia Laurencao; Clare Mateke; Brigitta Schmid

The president welcomed everyone in attendance, and received apologies from the board members who were not able to attend this conference. The meeting continued the discussions from last year's meeting of which the report would be disseminated by early next year. The topics in the president's report this year center at the development of ICOM NATHIST as well as its survival.

The Website

NATHIST has to keep abreast of the members' constituent needs and professional fields, and therefore needs to be responsive to what the members require. To enhance the accessibility in communication, NATHIST launched its new website in 2013. The website works with the regular newsletter, and has the latest news, significant issues and relevant opportunities updated.

Comparing with the statistics from 2013 till now, the website is growing strong and has a steady increase in its hits (views) and visitors. Currently, it receives a thousand hits per month, giving a prospective target of 11-12 thousand hits from roughly 3000 visitors by the end of the year 2015. As for the global coverage of the website, North and South America topped the number of visitors in 2014 while Taiwan hit the highest 1680 visitors in 2015. Generally speaking, uptake of NATHIST messages via the website is growing.

Membership

The statistical analysis on membership with institutional and individual members included shows that the number of valid NATHIST members has been sit still under 300. It grows from 276 members in 2013 to 284 in 2015. This reveals some major issues including the reporting system and marketing strategies. The board received the numbers and figures from ICOM which were reported by the national committees, making the weak link nearly undetectable. Although counting in individuals in the registered institutions would make the members number a thousand, NATHIST should keep vigilant and proactive. In addition to some direct marketing plans on the board agenda, the president encouraged word-of-mouth marketing by all the members in the community.

Initiatives

ICOM NATHIST has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) in the early 2015. The two organizations have been promoting "Biodiversity is US" project in which any NATHIST members can have the documentations and the collateral for free in public exhibitions. NATHIST has also supported the conservation

strategies published by WAZA. Strategic plans to connect natural history museums and WAZA are coming up and will be informed via website and e-news.

The board has started engaging in the MOU with The Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC). The based work form is in process and a MOU can be anticipated in the near future.

Working Groups

There are currently two working groups, Wildlife Trafficking Working Group (WTWG) and ICOM NATHIST Ethics Working Group. WTWG was established in 2013. Members in the working group can only meet once a year but are communicating actively via email. In the WTWG meeting this year, the group has come up with the draft of the White Papers. Anyone interested in the topic may access to updated information about the working group on the WTWG website: <https://icomnathisttraffic.wordpress.com/2015/01/14/welcome/>.

The Ethics Working Group was formed in 2006. Now it's focusing on the translation of ICOM Code of Ethics for Natural History Museums for the international community. After the completion of the Czech version, Czech Republic has included the document in their national legislation. At present, Portuguese and Japanese versions are almost finished, French version is underway and a Mandarin Chinese version is on the agenda.

Current Projects

Platform 2022

In view of the addressing issue of climate change and sustainable development and based on the Vienna Statement, NATHIST has initiated the project of Platform 2022 which allows NHM community to promulgate their current work and can act as a part of the relationship with WAZA. Platform 2022 includes an open-source database that will engage the public in exhibitions of biodiversity and climate change. National Taiwan Museum has promised to host Platform 2022.

ICOM NATHIST Student Bursary

To encourage participation from young natural history scholars, ICOM NATHIST provides students with bursary covering traveling cost, admission fee and accommodation for the triennial ICOM General Meetings.

Upcoming Events

2017 NATHIST Annual Meeting The 2017 annual meeting will be held in the Carnegie Museum of Natural History. The Museum holds 22 million objects which focus on paleobiology and local natural history, including the type specimen for *Tyrannosaurus. rex* & *Diplodocus* (which the Dippy in Natural History Museum in London was cast from) . There also spectacular minerals and gems exhibitions.

The location of the meeting, Pittsburgh, has been transformed from an industrial city to one of the most livable city in the US with abundant medical, recreational and educational facilities and beautiful scenery.

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