



Society for Conservation Biology

A global community of professionals dedicated to science and the conservation of biodiversity

Minutes of the Society for Conservation Biology

Board of Governors Regular Meeting

Held online via Zoom

Meeting Date: December 16, 2021

The Society for Conservation Biology (SCB) Board of Governors held a Members' Meeting online via Zoom on December 16, 2021. The meeting was Presiding by Tony Lynam with Justine Vaz as Secretary.

Start time: 10:00 EST

End time: 12:00 EST

Board of Governors in attendance: Tony Lynam, Justine Vaz, Jennifer Thornhill, Israel Borokini, Eduardo Gallo Cajiao, Rebecca McCaffery, Edward Hind-Ozan, John Piccolo, Erin Poor, Melissa Price, Karla Pelz Serrano, Adina Merenlender

Others in attendance: Tsitsi McPherson (DEI Committee), Jeff Su (nRhythm), Warren Sander (CFO), Nate Spillman (Membership and Communications Director), Danielle Carter (Membership Manager)

Attendees, Approve Minutes, Agenda review

No suggestions/amendments to the Minutes of December 17, 2020 BoG meeting.

MOTION Made by Mark Schwartz to approve the December 17, 2020 Minutes of the regular Board of Governors meeting.

In favor: Unanimous.

Minutes approved.

Report from SCB President (Tony Lynam)

- Tony opened the 2021 Members Meeting by welcoming the group and reflecting on where the Society has come from, where it finds itself today and where it is headed—noting that the first Members Meeting was held on the sidelines of ICCB.
- Tony stated that SCB was founded with a clear mission to advance the science and practice of conserving biological diversity, with a focus on viable population sizes, reserve systems and

corridors. Tony added that achieving this mission is increasingly a challenge due to the impact of the planet altering ape that we call humans. Tony also mentioned that we face a range of challenges as a Society and as conservation scientists and practitioners.

- Tony shared examples of how SCB can stay relevant and how the organization can have an impact: we need to create a global collaborative network and a new business model to support members, we need to improve equity and inclusion in science and conservation practice (more women, more minorities and LGBTQIA), we need to allow for pathways for Members to have a voice and be more involved in decision making, we need greater engagement with the social sciences and other disciplines to facilitate more robust and effective conservation and we need to make SCB a more welcoming place as a professional home. Additionally, SCB also envisions to collaborate with other organizations that share our mission and our vision.
- Tony concluded by stating that working together towards a shared vision for the future and engaging in collaborations with other organizations that share this vision is really our path to future success.

Vision 20226 / SCB Re-Organization Update (Jeff Su and Warren Sander)

- Warren summarized some highlights of the of beginning phases of SCB's re-organization process, which began with two-hour design sessions with a design team composed of a mix of Board and staff. The next step was an organizational health assessment using Nrhythm's OHI report (their organizational health index to assess the collective view of the health and operations of SCB). Board and staff held interviews with key stakeholders—all of this was gathered and analyzed by Nrhythm, culminating with a recommendation for a model which was approved by the BoG.
- Warren stated that from the 2020 design sessions, SCB articulated a shared purpose: we exist to advance science policy and practice in a way that encourages collaboration, community and knowledge exchange so that a diverse and united voice creates.
- Warren shared that there were many motivating factors behind the need for re-organization: climate change, biodiversity loss, decolonization, decolonizing conservation. Additionally, racial and social equity and the relevance of science. A second theme motivation for the transition was the state of Operations and Governance of SCB.
- Warren added that the transition will transform SCB from a hub to a more equitable, decentralized global network—this new global business model creates a governance model that will empower Sections, Working Groups and Chapters and reduce bureaucracy and support traditional underrepresented disciplines within conservation science.
- SCB is exploring new opportunities for New Services and programming to support the transition
- Jeff provided an overview of the four major components of the new governance structure and shared that rather than a single global board, the idea is to lift up and recognize the importance of both regional governance and regional decisions, as well as programmatic decisions such as branding, storytelling, identity, journal choice, disciplinary inclusion—SCB will create two governance bodies both with intersections in between them and empowered to make independent decisions as well as come together to make connected decisions.
- Jeff stated that the SCB global staff is supporting the entire structure and are changing their roles from a central office to thinking of themselves as network leaders empowering the global network.

- SCB envisions each Section becoming stronger and empowered to be able to manage membership and services for members in their Section in a way that is unique and fully supported.
- Jeff closed by stating that the New Services are still to be designed, but will include trainings, webinars, different types of online and in person services that could be created at all levels of the Society and will become another revenue source to be shared through the collaborative revenue sharing model.

Financial Report (Jenn Thornhill)

- Jenn began with presenting the 2020 audited financials: the major sources of revenue for SCB (conferences, journals, memberships, fellowships, grants and donors)—this is what sustains SCB.
- Jenn shared the 2020 audited statement of activities, which shows the Society's actual revenue expenses and net assets for 2020. In 2020, for the 4th consecutive year, SCB engaged Cherry Beckert LLP and received a clean audit with the audit report stating that the financial statements present fairly in all material respects the financial position of the society.
- Jenn noted that in 2020, SCB was the recipient of a Paycheck Protection Program loan in the amount of \$174,000 to help the organization keep their workforce employed during the COVID-19 pandemic and on December 15th, 2020 SCB was granted forgiveness for the entire amount of the loan plus interest.
- Jenn stated that overall, SCB's actual expenses and revenue performed favorably when compared to our budget for 2020. There were two main reasons behind this: SCB's revenue from publications was greater than the budgeted projections and there was an overall reduction of the Society's expenses in 2020.
- Jenn closed by stating that 2021 tracks favorably against SCB's budget and the forecast to year end currently places financial performance in line with the budgeted allocations for the year.

SCB Publications Report (Mark Burgman and Mark Schwartz)

- Mark Burgman stated that *Conservation Biology*'s submissions are steady, with an acceptance rate of about 20%—the median time between acceptance and appearance online is two days.
- In 2020, *Conservation Biology* went to a new format that was predicated by their publication partner, Wiley and no longer have a paper version of the journal
- Mark Burgman reminded the group that *Conservation Biology* is still a hybrid journal and they are hanging on to that classification for as long as possible—there has been significant pressure internationally for Open Access.
- Marc Schwartz shared that *Conservation Science and Practice* is still a relatively new journal and as a consequence of it being established just three years ago with Wiley, it is an Open Access journal.
- Mark Schwartz stated that 2021 was the journal's first fully indexed year in the ISI Web of science and the editors recently learned that *Conservation Science and Practice* is being taken up by Scopus and as a consequence of having been indexed by ISI Web of science, we received an impact factor in 2021. It was 3.233, placing the journal in the top quartile.
- *Conservation Science and Practice*'s submissions are growing quite rapidly, increasing from 284 in 2019 to over 400 this year and expects more growth next year

- *Conservation Science and Practice* added two senior associate editors this year because of the increased workload—Carla Cook and Jenny Glickman and are in the process of adding a third one for 2022, Martin Strauss from South Africa
- *Conservation Science and Practice* has a variety of special issues in the pipeline and published one of the firsts in 2020.

Policy Committee Report (Melissa Price)

- Melissa introduced herself and outlined her primary responsibilities within the Society: publications and policy.
- Melissa noted that the Policy Committee had a few changes in 2021, the key one being that they have added both Working Groups and program representatives on the Policy Committee to ensure they have expertise in those areas.
- Melissa stated that some of the Working Groups are still working on designating a person to sit on the Policy Committee if they don't already have a Policy Committee. As part of the Working Group, they'll develop that and contribute to SCB review of global level policy statements.
- The Policy Committee also had a need for changing the way that they handle things that are not statements, but instead their comments, technical comments, not those provided on collaborative global processes—in the past the committee required GCC approval on these comments, which was a very clunky process. As such, the Policy Committee has modified it so that Working Groups and Programs are able to provide technical comments on collaborative global processes.

Education and Awards Report (Ed Gallo Cajiao)

- Ed shared what the Education and Outreach Committee has been working on during 2021 and stated that that their work will continue in 2022 and very likely into 2023.
- The first project was a memorandum of understanding between *Current Conservation* magazine and the Society for Conservation Biology. Ed explained that the magazine previously existed under the Conservation and Practice umbrella and was unfortunately lost—the thought was to bring the magazine back to reach a wider audience.
- Ed stated that in January 2021, a partnership was created with *Current Conservation*, an existing magazine produced in India. The idea was to create synergies between the magazine and SCB—as for SCB, we are working on eliciting submissions in recruiting potential early career researchers as handling early editors, as well as promoting *Current Conservation*
- Ed noted that there was a piece on science communication featured in *Current Conservation* and is now included on their website as part of the family of affiliate publication, and with this they have plans to extend the current MU into 2022 to keep growing their readership and submission rate.
- Ed announced that the Distinguished Service Awards would be presented at the Congress Closing and invited the group to join the ceremony.

DEI Committee Report (Tsitsi McPherson)

- Tsitsi stated that the DEI Committee's composition has changed recently looking to bring together the Programmatic Council and the Section Council, and also members at large. Their

current composition includes representatives from Sections from Working Groups, Smith Fellows, two Task Force and also Members at Large.

- Notable in the last year and a half, the committee has been involved in a Global DEI statement in response to Black Lives Matter and Minority Lives Matter, and has also been integral in the SCB transition, with a representative on the Transition Implementation Group.
- Current work for the DEI Committee includes increasing awareness of how DEI works for the betterment of the membership, a January newsletter submission and a journal article on how SCB can contribute to DEI for its members and for the larger conservation community.
- Tsitsi stated that most of their work has been focused on recent subcommittees, one of the key things they're looking at is adoption of phase two of the sexual harassment task force
- Tsitsi shared that the committee has had extensive discussions about how to formalize the issues within the Society and expressed a critical need for a DEI strategic plan and also for DEI staffing—much of what is done within the eye is done on a volunteer basis and for not only streamlining across the membership but for effective engagement of membership for institutional memory purposes.

Chapters Committee Report (Erin Poor)

- Erin provided a brief overview of our SCB Chapters and their activities.
- Erin stated that SCB currently has 32 officially registered Chapters, most of which are associated with universities, and many of them are in North America. Erin shared that the Chapters Committee is interested in expanding the number of Chapters that they have.
- Erin stated that SCB Chapters are in a good position financially and will be providing grants in 2022 to help fund those chapter activities. Activities can range from field work like tree planting to more academic activities like presentations and knowledge sharing. Chapters will likely be providing two rounds of small grants and are currently working on identifying the timeline for those two different calls while simultaneously working on simplifying and streamlining the granting process.

Conference Committee Report (Vanessa Adams)

- Vanessa introduced herself to the group and briefly provided her background
- Vanessa reminded the group of SCB's plans for 2023, stating that we will have an opportunity to meet in-person in Kigali for ICCB 2023
- Vanessa mentioned that there will soon be an open up their call for proposals for anyone who's interested, both in terms of local support and conference venues across the Oceania region—proposals will be evaluated by the Conference Committee
- The Conference Committee is working on choosing the future destination for 2025 and will hopefully have an update in the Section meetings in 2024.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm EST.