GOMINFOEX Action Committee Meeting Minutes – Sept. 13-14th, 2001

Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute, Woods Hole, Massachusetts

Attendees:

Paul Boudreau
Ken Brink
Chris Brehme
Tracey Crago
Bob Groman
Carolyn Levi
Fran Lightsom
Jim Manning
Fausto Marincioni
Steve McDonald
Chris Polloni
Aviva Rahmani
David Remsen
Paul Schroeder
Rob Stevenson
Tom Stone
Bruce Tripp
Thomas Trott
Kate van Dine

Attachments:

1)   Boudreau's list of Activities

1)   Welcome, introductions, announcements and acceptance of agenda:

1.1. Participants were welcomed to the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute by Ken Brink. Bruce Tripp was thanked for his excellent arrangements as host for the meetings.

1.2. Due to the flexible nature of the meeting, participants joined in on the discussions according to their availability. Participants introduced themselves as they arrived. Boudreau, Brehme, Schroeder and van Dine attended all sessions. To respond to the coming and going of participants, agenda items were revisited often depending on those sitting at the table. This gave for a thorough review of all issues.

2. *Roundtable:*

2.1. Participants engaged in a round table of report of events, initiatives and activities related to GOMINFOEX. As a result of the roundtable, the list of activities has been updated and are attached to the bottom of this report.

3. *Technical Sessions:*

3.1. Boudreau had tested the use of http:\\Yahoo.com groups as a communication tool for GOMINFOEX. The group name is "GOMINFOEX" and anyone can subscribe. Although it provides some advanced functions such as a place to share files and a shared calendar, it was felt that it was too difficult to use as a general communication tool for GOMINFOEX participants. It may be useful for facilitating communication by some of the project teams such as the Digital Library or the Constituting Document discussions.

3.2. The newly established GOMINFOEX listserv was accepted as a positive step (http://www.gulfofmaine.org/gominfoex/gominfoex_listserv.htm). Guidelines on how it should be used need to be developed, circulated and posted. Boudreau and Schroeder will work together in writing a

message to the list outlining its intended uses, where alternative communications channels can be found and suggesting when to consider using them, and updating the GOMINFOEX process

3.3. It was proposed that GOMINFOEX facilitate a review and enhancement of a Gulf of Maine Question Place function. This would be the electronic equivalent of the reference library. The first step that was suggested was to query GOMINFOEX participants, using the new listserv, for their input on existing "Ask a question" services for the region. Following that we may be able to post a page on the GOMINFOEX web page with a list of these services, or if they are found to be lacking, implement a more appropriate service.

3.4. Schroeder and van Dine reported on the Digital Library meeting that was held in August in Boston. The idea, originally suggested at the Out of the Fog II Conference was well received by 13 participants during a 4-hour session. Efforts continue to refine the vision, objectives, approaches and funding for the project. The core group, led by Schroeder and James Boxall, were encouraged to continue this work and to report back at the next GOMINFOEX meeting.

3.5. Rob Stevenson and Steve McDonald gave a presentation on their development of an electronic field guide system using XML. (http://www.cs.umb.edu/efg/)

3.6. A number of discussions were had on the possibility of using the Marine Realms Information Bank (MRIB) (http://mrib.whoi.edu/geo-dev/mrib.cgi) that is being developed and supported by the US Geological Survey to test and implement a Gulf of Maine Exchange.

4. *Special Woods Hole Session*

4.1. A special lunchtime session was held for data managers at the Woods Hole Institute. Participants were:
  4.1.1. US Geological Survey: Lightsom, Marincioni, Pollini;
  4.1.2. Woods hole Oceanographic Institute SeaGrant:; Crago;
  4.1.3. Marine Biological Laboratory: Remsen;
  4.1.4. Woods Hole Research Center: Stone; and,
  4.1.5. WHOI/GLOBal ocean ECosystems Dynamics (GLOBEC): Groman.

5. *Proposed Next meeting dates*

5.1. December 6-7th at the Cobscook Bay Marine Resource Center (http://www.cobscook.org/). The decision to have this meeting will be dependent on the support of the Center staff. It was proposed that it should be a session focused on the information exchange requirements from a community-based perspective.

6. *Action Items:*

6.1. Continue to work on information sharing - **all**
6.2. Need to revise web page to reflect changes - **Brehme, Schroeder and Allan Gillis**
6.3. Write up minutes from meeting - **Boudreau and Schroeder**
6.4. Update Action Item list and post to web – **Boudreau and Gillis**
6.5. Engage the Gulf of Maine Council's Public Education and Participation Committee in addressing the output needs of GOMINFOEX – **Boudreau**
6.6. Develop guidelines for GOMINFOEX list serv use - **Boudreau**

Boudreau's GOMINFOEX Registry of Information Exchange – September 2001

1. Activities (underway):

1.1. Gulf of Maine Environmental Information Exchange (GOMINFOEX)
    1.1.1. co-ordinator/organisational structure
    1.1.2. Silly-Word (http://www.gulfofmaine.org/gominfoex/silly_word.htm)
    1.1.3. E-Atlas (http://www.islandinstitute.org/eatlas.html).
    1.1.4. Association with GeoData Alliance (http://www.geoall.net/6p-principles.htm)
    1.1.5. Participants Map (http://www.spatial.maine.edu/~schroedr/gom/participants.html)
    1.1.6. Proposal development for Digital library
    1.1.7. Proposal development for Sustainable Communities information.
    1.1.8. Fishers web page (http://www.gfwa.org/~gfwa/default.htm)
    1.1.9. Out of the Fog Conference Series
    1.1.10. GOMINFOEX List Serv (http://www.gulfofmaine.org/gominfoex/gominfoex_listserv.htm)

1.2. Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment Website (www.gulfofmaine.org)
    1.2.1. People Finder (http://www.gulfofmaine.org/cdb/index.html).
    1.2.2. On-the-fly mailing groups (http://www.gulfofmaine.org/cdb/index.html)
    1.2.3. Discussion Forum (http://www.gulfofmaine.org/cgi-bin/forum.cgi)
    1.2.4. Gulf of Maine Times (http://www.gulfofmaine.org/times/)

1.3. Marine Invertebrate Diversity Initiative (http://www.fundyforum.com/MIDI/)

1.4. Gulf of Maine Ocean Observing System (GoMOOS) – (http://www.gomoos.org/)

1.5. Department of Fisheries and Oceans
    1.5.1. Virtual Data Centre
    1.5.2. Ocean Sciences Data Centre (http://www.mar.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/ocean/home.html)
    1.5.3. International Council on the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) Marine Habitat Mapping Working Group (http://www.ices.dk/COMMITTE/MHC/WGMHM.HTM)

1.6. Census of Marine Life (http://core.ssc.erc.msstate.edu/censhome.html)
    1.6.1. Gulf of Maine Biogeographical Information System (GMBIS) (http://kiefer4.usc.edu/gmbis/index.htm)
    1.6.2. Benthic mapping

1.7. Gulf of Maine Aquarium (http://octopus.gma.org/)
    1.7.1. Fish and scientist web page (http://www.Fishresearch.org)
    1.7.2. Circuit Rider (http://octopus.gma.org/circuit_rider/index.html)
        1.7.2.1. Vital Signs – distributed monitoring technology and framework

1.8. GOMPAS Marine Protected Areas list server (http://www.gulfofmaine.org/MPAListWelcome.htm)

1.9. Massachusetts aquaculture system (MORIS)

1.10. Fishermen and Scientist Research Society (FSRS) (http://www.fsrs.ns.ca/index_files/slide0001.htm)
    1.10.1. Hook Line and Thinker newsletter (http://www.fsrs.ns.ca/FSRSWeb/HLT.html)

1.11. National Ocean and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA)
    1.11.1. Distributed Oceanographic Data System (http://www.unidata.ucar.edu/packages/dods/)

1.12. Other.

2. Proposals (under development):
 2.1. FGDC/Geoconnections framework development
 2.2. National Virtual Ocean Observing System
 2.3. Digital Library

3. Committees/Organisations:
 3.1. Regional Association for Research in the Gulf of Maine (RARGOM) (http://www-nml.dartmouth.edu/rargom/)
 3.2. Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment (GoMC) (www.gulfofmaine.org)
  3.2.1. Data and Information Management Committee (DIMC)
   3.2.1.1. On line database of community/volunteer groups
  3.2.2. Public Education and Participation Committee (PEPC)
   3.2.2.1. Gulf of Maine Times
 3.3. Gulf of Maine Marine Educators Association (GoMEA)
  3.3.1. Users survey
 3.4. Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership (BOFEP) (http://www.auracom.com/~bofep/bofep.htm)
  3.4.1. Survey of volunteer groups
 3.5. Atlantic Coastal Zone Information Steering Committee (ACZISC) (http://www.dal.ca/aczisc/)
  3.5.1. Data directory/metadata
  3.5.2. High resolution mapping in Annapolis Basin

4. Other Resources:
 4.1. Bay of Fundy Resource Centre (http://www.bfmrc.ns.ca/)
 4.2. Cobscook Bay Resource Centre (http://www.cobscook.org/index.html)
 4.3. ACAP Saint John (http://user.fundy.net/acapsj/)
 4.4. CARP (http://fox.nstn.ca/~carp/)
 4.5. Fundy Forum (http://www.fundyforum.com/)
  4.5.1. Timed discussions

5. Meetings:
 5.1. Gulf of Maine Council – May 23-24th, Bar Harbour, Maine
 5.2. CoastGIS 2001 – Managing the Interfaces – June 18-20 – Halifax, Nova Scotia (http://www.coastgis.org)
 5.3. Digital Earth – June 24-27th, 2001 – Fredericton, New Brunswick (http://www.digitalearth.ca/digital_live/html/)
 5.4. Out of the Fog III, Fall 2002 - USA – Portland???

Gulf of Maine Environmental Information Exchange (GOMINFOEX)

Constituting Documentation

(Development of this document was begun in response to a request from participants at the Out of the Fog II conference in November 2000. It is under active discussion and development. Paragraphs not otherwise identified, have been prepared as a basis for discussion by Paul Boudreau, Chief Info-Nag. The objective of this exercise is to present a well-reviewed document to the Out of the Fog III meeting in the fall of 2002 for final discussion and approval. Comments should be sent to boudreaupr@mar.dfo-mpo.gc.ca.)

Vision:

To promote effective exchange of available environmental information to maximize the social, cultural and economic benefits to coastal communities of the Gulf of Maine. (*approved November 2000*)

STATEMENT OF NEUTRALITY OF PROCESS AND INCLUSIVENESS

GOMINFOEX seeks to benefit those who are interested in the welfare of the Gulf of Maine region through initiating and strengthening information sharing partnerships. While working toward this goal the Exchange seeks to establish processes and relations that are inclusive, trusted, neutral and nonpartisan in nature. GOMINFOEX recognizes but does not seek to reconcile the many different values, interests, approaches and goals of participating individuals and organizations. The Exchange does not authorize any particular organization or information source. Agreeing to participate in the GOMINFOEX process does not imply endorsement of any other partner's individual or organizational goals. (*approved March 2001*)

Principles:

As a group, GOMINFOEX will:
Promote a participatory exchange of environmental information
Welcome everyone willing to participate and contribute
Promote distributed actions in distributed geographic locations and by appropriate individuals at the most local level
Identify and promote appropriate collaborations among participants.
Work to identify required efforts not being adequately addressed by other initiatives
Attempt to devise innovative solutions and application of appropriate technologies
Work to ensure economic sustainability, environmental integrity
Build capacity in information exchange through education and communication

Participants agree to:
Be Collaborative - success will result from combined efforts among partners
Co-operative - partners working together towards common goals
Minimise duplication - financial and people resources must be used to their maximum effect

Participants:

There are many ways to participate. Participants are all people who ensure their up-to-date contact details are posted in the PeopleFinder (www.gulfofmaine.org); who subscribe to the GOMINFOEX mailing list; who attend a meeting; who participates in an on-line event, who identify themselves in the Participants map, etc.

Concept:

A group of Gulf of Maine citizens to identify and promote effective information exchange among all interested and affected citizens. This group will make use of all available means to affect this exchange, including newspapers, libraries, museums, meetings, etc. A particular interest of this group is to work creatively with Internet web tools to achieve goals.

Conceptual Model 1: Registry of Exchanges - just as the registry of land deeds is a place and a process to document agreements on the exchange of land, GOMINFOEX will play the role of documenting exchanges,

activities and process of exchange of environmental information. As with the registry of deed, GOMINFOEX will help minimise conflicts and promote collaboration.

Conceptual Model 2: Stock Exchange - just as the World's financial stock exchanges provide a framework and mechanism for the purchase and selling of stocks, GOMINFOEX will play a role as a central meeting place for people interested in acquiring and or making use of available environmental information. As the World's stock exchanges make use of appropriate technologies from phones, computers, internet, etc. and busy transactions occur around the World, GOMINFOEX will use appropriate technologies to allow exchanges to occur throughout the region using phones, face-to-face meetings, internet, e-mail, etc.

Conceptual Model 3: Waste Materials Market - where byproducts/waste products are redirected to productive processes. The analogy was drawn with the common practice of generating scientific reports, project reports, map products, etc. that neither fully use data/information nor adequately secure it for future use or use to address other needs. GOMINFOEX might act as a broker to "recycle" information from one product stream to another, or as a collector of "intermediate" information products for use by others. It may support a "place" where information can be placed when no longer needed for its primary purpose and were others can look for material useful for their needs. In any case, technologies will have to be applied to efficiently manage the incoming information stream so that minimal burden is placed on the "supplier" and to efficiently realise benefits through its presentation to the "next user". (*suggested and discussed June 2001)*

Practice:

It is recognised that although the Internet tools provide great potential to support the actions of GOMINFOEX, those tools are neither sufficient nor adequate. They are not sufficient in terms of the requirement for people to meet face-to-face to present, talk, discuss and agree. They are not adequate in terms of the limits on some citizen's Internet access and limited time, commitment, training and funding to ensure equal participation through the available tools. This group will strive for a proper balance between all of the available communications tools.

The different types of decisions requiring GOMINFOEX attention will determine the balance.

Out of the Fog Conference:

For significant organisational decisions, such as the change in this document, the name and the Terms of Reference, decisions will be made at the bi-annual Out of the Fog Conferences of all interested participants.

On-Line Input and GOMINFOEX Meeting

To define such organisational decisions, and for decisions on the setting of the priorities, selection of focused GOMINFOEX commitments of people or resources, decisions will be made using a two step process. This process will be carried out at least once in every quarter. The first step will be the posting of a resolution to the website. Resolutions include adding a project to the action list, convening meetings and minor modification of this document. All participants are free to submit resolutions to the CIN (chief info-nag) for posting at any time. Posting will be for no less than 30 days accompanied by a e-mail to the GOMINFOEX mailing group announcing the posting and advising participants to provide their input on-line.

At any point, the CIN (chief info-nag) will accept comments by any and all other means of communication.

The second step of the process will be an open discussion by all interested participants at a meeting to be held no less than 7 days after the final day of posting, nor more than 30 days after the final day of posting. The date, place and time of the meeting will be posted no later than of the beginning of the posting period. Participants in attendance will select a chair for the meeting, make decisions and plans for action by developing a consensus as much as possible.

For issues where 10% of the participants, as registered on the day of posting, have provided input and there are not dissenting opinions, the attendees at the meeting will, without significant consensus and agreed counter views, accept the resolution.

For resolutions with 10% response from participants that includes dissenting or questioning opinions, the participants will discuss and make a decision on appropriate action.

For resolutions with less than 10% input, the participants will attempt to determine the level of interest and possible steps to solicit additional input or to remove the resolution from additional consideration.

All decisions for the meeting will be posted to the web no less that 7 days after the close of the meeting. Dissenting opinions will be posted. The CIN will accept and decide on any significant challenges to the meetings outcome for a period of 7 days following the posting of the results. Upon the decision of the CIN, all attendees may be contacted to consider challenges and revise decisions. Revisions will require approval by all attendees. The final arbitration on any and all challenges will take place at the bi-annual Out of the Fog Conference.

Constitution:

Not yet developed

Appendix 1 – Other relevant principles:

Under and within the GOMINFOEX principles, the Geodata Alliance principles (http://www.geoall.net/6p-principles.htm) are to be considered.