

WSU Annual Report - 2011

Report from the World Seabird Union Transition Team

WSU Annual Report

December 2011

Table of Contents

1. Background	2
2. Establishment of the World Seabird Union (WSU)	2
3. Procedures	2
4. Progress with initiatives	2
4.1 World Seabird Conference.....	2
4.2 Communications and seabirds.net	3
4.3 Global seabird colony register	3
4.4 Population and productivity indices	3
4.5 Seabird monitoring database.....	3
4.6 Seabird at sea database	4
4.7 Seabird tracking data	4
4.8 Mortality events.....	4
Annex 1 - List of Organizations and representatives to the WSU Transition Team.....	5
Annex 2 - DRAFT Charter for the World Seabird Union (WSU).....	7
Annex 3 - World Seabird Monitoring Database Regional Coordinating Committee	8
Annex 4 - Seabirds.net Work plan	9

World Seabird Union

Report from the WSU Transition Team for 2011

1. Background

At the inaugural World Seabird Conference (WSC) in Canada in September 2010, representatives of all the seabird groups and organisations present there agreed in principle to try to establish a global seabird body, in order to:

1. Help hold another WSC, if desired.
2. Improve communication: a) between seabird researchers worldwide, especially students and younger scientists; and b) between the various regional seabird groups.
3. Develop global seabird database networks, as scoped in the series of “Legacy Workshops” at WSC.

2. Establishment of the World Seabird Union (WSU)

To take these initiatives forward, the representatives agreed at WSC to establish a “Transition Team (TT)”, now the WSU-TT. The membership of this body (as at December 2011) is set out in Annex 1. This body agreed that the global organisation should be called the World Seabird Union; it developed the terms of reference above into a draft Charter/Constitution (Annex 2). This has been approved in principle by the constituent organisations as a basis for steps towards formally incorporating the WSU as a legally constituted body.

3. Procedures

The WSU-TT has met by Conference call quarterly (January, April, July, October); the agenda for these meetings and the minutes recording outcomes have been freely accessible on seabirds.net, together with copies of any documents under discussion.

All WSU-TT decisions to date have been made by consensus, though provision has been made for voting procedures as necessary. Membership of the WSU will be free to suitably qualified organisations.

Once the WSU is formally incorporated, the WSU-TT would be replaced by a WSU Council and Executive Committee. It is expected that this will happen in early 2012.

4. Progress with initiatives

4.1 World Seabird Conference

The WSU-TT, with support from De Armond Management Ltd (the team responsible for the management of the WSC), sent a questionnaire concerning any future WSC to all who attended and originally expressed interest in WSC. The responses indicated overwhelming support for holding a second WSC. Key aspects of the responses were:

- a) Fully representative response, with 524 replies in total, comprising 52% full attendees, 23% students and 23% non-attendees. Of seabird group members, there were responses from members of all those which sponsored WSC, with most from the Pacific Seabird Group (171), The Waterbird Group (71) and The Seabird Group (61); there were 158 responses from those who are member of no seabird group.
- b) For year of next WSC, no clear preference between 2013 (35%), 2014 (26%), 2015 (37%). Similarly, advice on frequency was almost equally split between 3-year (25%), 4-year (30%) and 5-year (25%).

- c) For time of year of next WSC, clear preference for September/October (52% of first choices, 34% of second and 24% of third). Next most favoured is August, then February but neither much exceeded 10% of any choice.
- d) Conjunction with other international seabird meetings was not especially important, with 74% favouring WSC determining its own schedule independently.

On this basis, the WSU-TT informed all member organisations of this response, solicited expressions of interest for holding WSC2 and established a small committee (Chair Pat Jodice) to provide liaison and advice to prospective applicants to host WSC2. The plan is that interested organisations would express interest in principle by April 2012, and would then consult with the WSU-TT committee to develop a more detailed proposal for review by the WSU-TT.

4.2 Communications and seabirds.net

The Seabirds.net organizational committee has been working in the last year to improve and develop the current website. Since WSC1, the Seabirds.net committee has put together a work plan which outlines the overarching plans for the website, and an approximate time-table (Annex 3). The team has been unable to meet the timeframes as outlined in the work plan but is progressing with the items as outlined. Since the creation of the work plan, the team has been discussing plans for a new design for the webpage which would be more representative of the final product. The webpage, seabirds.net/wsu was created, which houses documentation for the WSUTT business. The creation of the personnel database is also been of high priority and is progressing. The team is working on contracting Dragonfly Ltd. in New Zealand to get the personnel database and website to a level where users can begin updating and making changes to personal profiles. This directory will eventually be linked to a number of the databases that will be accessed through seabirds.net. The committee plans to have a functioning website using the new layout before the Pacific Seabird Group meeting in February, 2012.

4.3 Global seabird colony register

The WSU-TT agreed that it was appropriate to move forward with this, initially using the data entry fields, provisions and rules of access and use as recently implemented for the Circumpolar Seabird Colony Register, developed by the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) on behalf of the Arctic Council. It was agreed to proceed by entering and soliciting data for areas complementary to those covered by CAFF (and by other existing major regional seabird colony databases). A compilation of appropriate source data has been prepared. In addition, agreement in principle has been reached with BirdLife International that seabird data for sites (some 3000 worldwide) qualifying as Important Bird Areas would be available for and/or linked to the WSU database after BirdLife launches its global marine IBA inventory in October 2012.

4.4 Population and productivity indices

Like with the colony register, the WSU-TT agreed that it was appropriate to move forward with this, initially using the data entry fields, provisions and rules of access and use as recently implemented for the Circumpolar Seabird Colony Register, developed by the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) on behalf of the Arctic Council. It was agreed to proceed by entering and soliciting data for areas complementary to those covered by CAFF.

4.5 Seabird monitoring database

The WSU-TT is sponsoring the work of a 17-member Regional Coordinating Committee (Annex 4) tasked with development and implementation of a World Seabird Monitoring Database (WSMD), modeled initially on the data entry fields, provisions and rules of access and use implemented in the Pacific Seabird Monitoring Database (Pacific Seabird Group). During 2011, the committee undertook code revisions of the PSMD web application to make it suitable to serve online as a pilot version of the WSMD. Programming and deployment of the WSMD online will be completed during 2012, followed by efforts by committee members to solicit data entry on a regional basis. In parallel with its initiative for a world database of seabird monitoring results, the Regional Coordinating Committee is building a database of seabird monitoring effort, past and present, irrespective of whether or when the resulting data are committed to the WSMD.

4.6 Seabird at sea database

Advice on the desired next steps to enhanced links between existing databases of seabird records at sea is still awaited from the working group established at WSC.

4.7 Seabird tracking data

At the WSC workshop it was agreed to investigate developing interoperability between databases such that, should data be stored in one and not the others, links between the databases could allow easy access to tracking data from any of the 'nodes' –avoiding any database trying to become a 'one stop shop'.

Subsequent discussion on the technological issues, regarding developing this functionality and sharing meta-data between databases, resulted in an agreed format of data to share and Movebank set up an example system to test this. The system works well and each of the other websites has been able to read from it.

In March 2011, representatives from Movebank, BirdLife International and OBIS-SEAMAP met in Hobart, Tasmania (during the Biologging IV conference) to discuss next steps and various technical issues. Development of the user interface to read the data has, however, been slow, due to resource constraints. Work is ongoing to complete this, but despite the fact that the interoperability has yet to be fully resolved, each database has grown substantially on its own and is continuing to improve access to tracking data independently.

Movebank has recently developed a number of tools to assist researchers in collecting and analyzing data; they have also been involved in Convention on Migratory Species meetings, improving telemetry data use in policy contexts, mainly in respect of landbirds, especially birds of prey.

During 2011, BirdLife has increased its dataholdings by nearly 20 species and more than 1000 tracks, and has fulfilled requests from a number of external organizations. BirdLife has also been granted access by data owners for analysis to provide inputs to Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) meetings, the Joint Meeting of the Tuna Commissions and several tuna RFMO meetings.

OBIS-SEAMAP has developed an improved system, providing better functionality and data accessibility. It is also providing inputs, via the Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative, to the CBD Ecologically and Biologically Significant Areas process.

4.8 Mortality events

Beached bird surveys within Europe are centered around strandings of Northern Fulmars and Common Guillemots. The former serves as an indicator of the widespread use and discharges of user plastics into the marine environment (associated dissections; Save the North Sea Fulmar-Litter-EcoQO), the latter as an indicator of the risks imposed by chronic oil pollution (Oiled-Guillemot-EcoQO). Most countries around the North Sea have comprehensive beached bird surveys, many other countries provide more incidental data. All stranded seabirds and marine mammals are generally recorded, some recent attempts aimed at using strandings data to highlight the incidences of bycatches in fishing gear. So far, the proposed merge or exchange of data with other continents (as proposed at the first World Seabird Conference) has not materialized.

Annex 1 - List of Organizations and representatives to the WSU Transition Team

Organization	Location (Country or Region)	Representative to WSU	Alternate Representative to WSU	WSUTT Member	Past Members of WSUTT
African Seabird Group	South Africa	Ross Wanless	None present at	Ross Wanless	
Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP)	Australia	Mark Tasker	None present at	None present at	
American Bird Conservancy, Seabird Program	USA	Jessica Hardesty Norris	George Wallace	Jessica Hardesty Norris, George Wallace	
Argentine Seabird Group	Argentina	Pablo Yorio	Esteban Frere	Pablo Yorio, Esteban Frere	
Australasian Seabird Group	Australia	Peter Dann	Nicholas Carlile	Peter Dann, Nicholas Carlile	
BirdLife International, Global Seabird Programme	UK	Ben Sullivan	Cleo Small or Ben Lascelles	Ben Sullivan, Ben Lascelles	
Dutch Seabird Group	Netherlands	Kees Camphuysen	JA (Jan) van Franeker	Kees Camphuysen JA (Jan) van Franeker	
European Seabirds at Sea Group	Europe	Stefan Garthe	JA (Jan) van Franeker	Stefan Garthe JA (Jan) van Franeker	
Indian Ocean Seabird Group	Reunion Island	Matthieu Le Corre	Nick Dunlop	Matthieu Le Corre, Nick Dunlop	
Japanese Seabird Group	Japan	Yutaka Watanuki	None present at	Yutaka Watanuki	
Medmaravis	Mediterranean Sea	Carles Carboneras	None present at	Carles Carboneras	Xavier Monbaillu
Pacific Seabird Group (PSG)	USA	Pat Jodice	None present at	Pat Jodice	
Circumpolar Seabird Group (CBird)	Arctic Region	David Irons	None present at	David Irons	

Peruvian Association for the Conservation of Nature (APECO)	Peru	Liliana Ayala	Raul Sanchez-Scaglioni	Liliana Ayala, Raul Sanchez-Scaglioni	
Research & Development Group, Department of Conservation	New Zealand	Graeme Taylor	None at present	Graeme Taylor	
Royal Naval Birdwatching Society	UK	Steve Copsey	Mark Cutts	Steve Copsey, Mark Cutts	
Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR)	USA	Mark Hindell	Yan Ropert-Coudert	None at present	
The Northwest Atlantic Birds at Sea Conservation Cooperative	USA	Melanie Steinkamp	None at present	Melanie Steinkamp	
The Seabird Group	UK	Russell Wynn	Linda Wilson	Norman Ratcliffe, Linda Wilson	Norman Ratcliffe
The Waterbird Society (TWS)	USA	Betty Anne Schreiber	None at present	None at present	
Waterbird Conservation for the Americas	USA	Jennifer Wheeler	None at present	Jennifer Wheeler	
Pro Delphinus Peru	Peru	Jeffery Mangel	None at present	None at present	
Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds (SCSCB)	Caribbean	Jennifer Wheeler	None at present	Jennifer Wheeler	
Vice Chair for the World Seabird Union, Transition Team				John Croxall, Vice Chair	
Chair for the World Seabird Union Transition Team				David Irons, Chair	
Treasurer	USA			Ron LeValley	
Secretariat	Canada			Marischal DeArmond	

Annex 2 - DRAFT Charter for the World Seabird Union (WSU)

Proposed Mission Statement

Serve as a global network of seabird organizations to enhance seabird conservation and research.

Proposed Objectives

- Ensure mechanisms are in place to hold World Seabird Conferences at appropriate intervals.
- Establish and develop effective communications between existing seabird organizations and researchers.
- As feasible, establish a global initiative to develop a system of seabird status and trends indices.
- As feasible, establish mechanisms to facilitate, develop and manage global seabird database networks.
- Facilitate the development of seabird initiatives benefitting from global and/or regional coordination/interaction.

Proposed Membership

- Open to regional, national and international organizations with an interest in seabird research and conservation. Subject to approval by a majority of existing member organizations
- Each organization shall nominate one of their members (and one alternate, if desired) to serve as a representative of their organization on the WSU Council. An individual may not serve as a voting representative of more than one organization.

Proposed Governance

- The Council of the WSU shall comprise representatives of all member organizations. Each organization shall be entitled to one vote.
- Decisions by the WSU council shall be taken by simple majority of those representatives voting; changes to the charter shall require a 2/3 majority.
- The Council shall elect an Executive Committee to be responsible to Council for executing the business of the WSU.

Proposed Meetings

- Council shall meet at least annually, including by conference call.
- The Executive Committee and Subcommittees shall meet at least quarterly and report to council twice a year.

Proposed Expenses

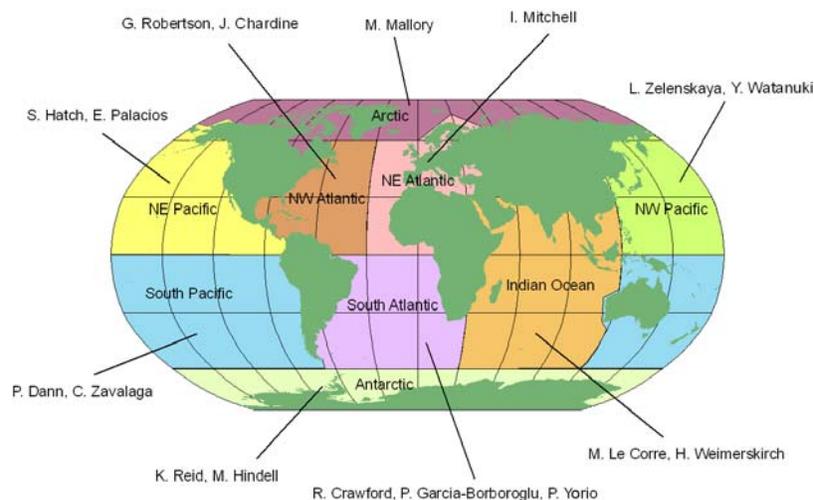
- Unless there is prior agreement, participants in WSU meetings are responsible for their travel and per diem expenses.

Annex 3 - World Seabird Monitoring Database Regional Coordinating Committee

Coordinator	Region	Affiliation	Email
Greg Robertson	NW Atlantic	Canadian Wildlife Service, St. John's, NF	Greg.Robertson@ec.gc.ca
John Chardine	NW Atlantic	Canadian Wildlife Service, Sackville, NB	John.Chardine@ec.gc.ca
Mark Mallory	Arctic	Canadian Wildlife Service, Nunavut	Mark.Mallory@ec.gc.ca
Ian Mitchell	NE Atlantic	JNCC, UK	Ian.Mitchell@jncc.gov.uk
Larisa Zelenskaya	NW Pacific	IBPN, Magadan, Russia	lzelenskaya@mail.ru
Yutaka Watanuki	NW Pacific	Hokkaido University, Japan	ywata@fish.hokudai.ac.jp
Matthieu Le Corre	Indian Ocean	University Reunion, Reunion Island	mathieu.lecorre@univ-reunion.fr
Henri Weimerskirch	Indian Ocean	CNRS, France	henriw@cebc.cnrs.fr
Rob Crawford	South Atlantic	University of Capetown, So. Africa	crawford@deat.gov.za
Pablo Garcia-Borboroglu	South Atlantic	Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Cientificas y Técnicas, Argentina	pgborbor@cenpat.edu.ar
Pablo Yorio	South Atlantic	Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Cientificas y Técnicas, Argentina	yorio@cenpat.edu.ar
Mark Hindell	Antarctic	University of Tasmania	Mark.Hindell@utas.edu.au
Keith Reid	Antarctic	CCAMLR	Keith@ccamlr.org
Peter Dann	South Pacific	Phillip Island Nature Park, Australia	pdann@penguins.org.au
Carlos Zavalaga	South Pacific	University of North Carolina, Wilmington, NC	cbz3724@uncwil.edu
Scott Hatch	NE Pacific	USGS, Alaska	shatch@usgs.gov
Eduardo Palacios	NE Pacific	CICESE, Ensenada, BC, Mexico	epalacio@cicese.mx

World Seabird Monitoring Database

Regional Coordinating Committee



Annex 4 - Seabirds.net Work plan

March 2011 – December 2011

Abstract

This document is a detailed work plan for the development of seabirds.net, a website that will be managed by the World Seabird Union for the global seabird community. The importance of such a website is clear in the 21st century where telecommunications and internet are the primary form of interaction and data transfer. This website will encourage global collaborations between seabird researchers, which are particularly important considering the distribution of most seabirds includes multiple countries. We list nine objectives that we plan to accomplish in the next nine months, and include available resources, and strategies to obtain these goals. Also included are a current organizational staff list for seabirds.net, a budget, and work schedule. By following these guidelines, the seabirds.net organizational team will be able to create an active website that will act as an important communication tool for the entire seabird community.

Grant Humphries
Centre for the Study of Agriculture, Food and Environment
University of Otago, Dunedin, NZ

Seabirds.net Work plan

Table of Contents

1. Introduction/Background.....	11
2. Objectives.....	12
2.1 Template creation and approval.....	12
2.2 Seabirds.net discussion forum.....	12
2.3 World Seabird Personnel Directory.....	12
2.4 Database linkages.....	12
2.5 Content model revision and implementation.....	12
2.6 News feed and updates.....	12
2.7 seabirds.net/WSU.....	12
2.8 Update procedure and approval process.....	12
2.9 Website Coordinator position.....	12
3. Resources.....	133
3.1 Financial.....	13
3.2 Personnel.....	13
3.3 Computational.....	13
3.4 Organizational.....	13
4. Strategy.....	13
4.1 Template creation and approval.....	13
4.2 Seabirds.net discussion forum.....	13
4.3 World Seabird Personnel Directory.....	13
4.4 Database linkages.....	14
4.5 Content model revision and implementation.....	14
4.6 News feed and updates.....	14
4.7 seabirds.net/WSU.....	14
4.8 Update procedure and approval process.....	14
4.9 Website Coordinator position.....	15
5. Concluding remarks.....	15
<i>Appendix A - Seabirds.net Committee.....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Appendix B - Budget.....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Appendix C - Work Schedule.....</i>	<i>17</i>

1. Introduction/Background

The seabirds.net initiative was originally proposed to seabird researchers in March 2008 by Scott Hatch (US Geological Survey) at the Pacific Seabird Group meeting in Blaine, Washington. Hatch outlined the formation of this website, which could act as a “one-stop shop” for all things seabird related. Seabird information and data are currently spread amongst various sources found on the World Wide Web (herein referred to as “the web”), potentially slowing the transfer of information due to search time. Seabirds.net could therefore simplify the transfer of information, as well as act as a host for open access databases with interfaces designed for use by the general seabird community. The current generation of emerging scientists has developed in a world that is dominated by the internet and telecommunications. These tools have become commonplace, but have yet to be applied sufficiently, actively, and widely in the seabird research community. With the formation of the World Seabird Union, this is particularly important as the success of such an organization will rely on fast, easy information transfer and communication that is available through the web (see joomla.wildlife.org, www.conbio.org, www.aou.org for examples of successful web tools).

The seabirds.net domain name (www.seabirds.net) was purchased in 2007 by the Pacific Seabird Group, and since the 1st World Seabird Conference has been conveyed to the World Seabird Union. The static content of seabirds.net was housed in Anchorage, Alaska at Axiom Consulting & Design, where work is currently being undertaken to construct various seabird databases that will be accessible through seabirds.net. These applications can be viewed at axiom.seabirds.net. The static content was moved from Axiom to a new host (www.bluehost.com) as of 1 March 2011. Currently seabirds.net has a template website that hosts the seabird metadata survey portal, a template portal for the North Pacific Seabird Data Portal¹, the Circumpolar Seabird Data Portal² and links to Google forum discussions around the creation of the databases and the content/layout of seabirds.net.

1 Compiled by US Fish and Wildlife Service, Pacific Seabird Group, US Geological Survey, North Pacific Research Board and Axiom Consulting, Anchorage, Alaska

2 Compiled by US Fish and Wildlife Service, Environment Canada, Circumpolar Seabird Group, Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program, Conversation of Arctic Flora and Fauna, United Nations Environmental Program-World Conservation Monitoring Centre and Axiom Consulting

At the 1st World Seabird Conference (Victoria, Canada September 2010) the seabirds.net initiative was revisited with increased enthusiasm from the general seabird community. Hatch coordinated a workshop on seabirds.net, in addition, many other database-related workshops were held (see www.seabirds.net/seabird_conference_abstracts.php for workshop materials) During the course of the conference, Hatch was approached by a small group who expressed interest in coordinating efforts to continue the work on seabirds.net to make it a useful global tool to enhance communication among people involved in the conservation, management and research of seabirds. (See Appendix A for Seabirds.net Committee current membership).

Since WSC, the Seabirds.net Committee (the Committee) has made several steps to advance seabirds.net:

- 1) Google discussion forums were created to facilitate communication between people interested in contributing to the content and layout, and the databases.
- 2) A template “World Seabird Personnel Directory” (WOSPED) was created through Google Sites.
- 3) The World Seabird Union Transition Team (WSUTT) was petitioned and agreed to support the Committee.
- 4) Lisa Ballance (employed by the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA) agreed to allow Annette Henry (also with NOAA) to be the webmaster of seabirds.net so that it is now part of her official duties.
- 5) Permission to use the World Seabird Conference logo was granted as a placeholder for the World Seabird Union logo until one is determined.
- 6) Seabirds.net was moved from the Axiom servers to BlueHost (www.bluehost.com) and is being paid for by funds from the WSU
- 7) Templates for the website are under construction by Henry

This document outlines the objectives for seabirds.net for the next nine months, resources that are currently available for website construction, and a strategy for implementing the resources to complete these objectives (actions to complete these objectives are underlined in section 4). Appendices include a staff list, budget and schedule that will guide the Committee.

2. Objectives

2.1 Template creation and approval

Henry is currently in the process of creating template designs for review by those interested and involved with the content discussions. A decision on which of the templates to use must be made either via vote or popular demand, and modifications to the chosen template must be made based on input from the community.

2.2 Seabirds.net discussion forum

Discussions are being held through Google Groups, but due to the nature of certain restrictions in some countries, this may not be adequate for the end goal of a “Global” discussion about the website content. In order to alleviate this, a forum must be set up under seabirds.net as a subdirectory which will give all countries access to the discussions.

2.3 World Seabird Personnel Directory

As part of an initiative to increase global communication between seabird researchers, WOSPED is under development and is housed (for the time being) on a Google site: (<https://sites.google.com/a/alaska.edu/seabirds-net-directory/>). As of March 1 2011, WOSPED has 368 members from ~ 280 unique institutions around the world, and is quickly developing into a truly global directory. In order to further this initiative, WOSPED must be integrated into seabirds.net with a defined structure that will allow users to update their profiles and add extra information as they require it. The level of detail of WOSPED must also be determined, as well as a system that determines who can create a profile in WOSPED. A discussion of a suitable name for the database (in order to attract users) must also be held.

2.4 Database linkages

Open access databases are becoming more widespread in the scientific community, and have been vital in many important analyses (see NOAA’s World Ocean Atlas, and various NASA Satellite derived datasets). For the seabird community to remain up-to-date scientifically, and for the transparency of the scientific method, databases must be easy to use and accessible through a single hub (e.g. seabirds.net). Axiom Consulting & Design is currently working on various database applications, and eventually these applications must be linked through seabirds.net.

2.5 Content model revision and implementation

Seabirds.net currently contains a content model as proposed by Hatch during the initial construction of the website. This can be visited at <http://www.seabirds.net/content-model.php>. This model must be revisited by the organizational committee to determine any changes to be made, and to decide on a final website structure.

2.6 News feed and updates

When seabirds.net is up and running, it will be important to have a way of keeping up to date with the latest seabird news. A section for this and methods for viewing this news must be developed.

2.7 seabirds.net/WSU

In order to avoid the creation of competitive websites, the WSU webpage for communications about the business of WSU should exist as a subdirectory of seabirds.net.

2.8 Update procedure and approval process

As updates and changes are made to seabirds.net by Henry, a general approval process must be created which eventually goes through the WSUTT (and future WSU).

2.9 Website Coordinator position

Henry is currently acting as “website coordinator” for the technical aspects of seabirds.net, but it is recommended that she be officially recognized by the WSUTT/WSU as the Webpage Coordinator, and that this position be created permanently in the WSU.

3. Resources

3.1 Financial

For the upkeep and development of seabirds.net, most work will be done “pro-bono” by the organizational committee. Work being performed by Henry is being funded by NOAA and supported by Lisa Ballance. Other financial support is available through funds remaining from the World Seabird Conference, which can be accessed by approval from the WSUTT. Finances from the WSC are currently being cared for by Ron LeValley (RL; Treasurer, Pacific Seabird Group). A budget for operating costs of seabirds.net is provided in Appendix B. The proposed budget requires approval from the WSUTT.

3.2 Personnel

For a list of personnel (staff) who are actively involved in seabirds.net, see Appendix A. Other personnel from the global community are encouraged to join in discussions, and communications will be via email and the Google forum (until the seabirds.net forum is developed)

3.3 Computational

Bluehost has an unlimited storage capacity, and therefore we are not constrained by this. Website updates can be performed from any computer, by anyone with an internet access and appropriate login.

3.4 Organizational

The process of creating seabirds.net will be overseen by the Committee, comprised currently of the individuals in Appendix A. The Committee will include as many people as possible via the forum to gain insight on content/layout, but will report directly to the WSUTT.

4. Strategy

4.1 Template creation and approval

Template designs are under construction by Henry. When templates are created, they will be posted to the seabirds.net discussion forum where peers will be able to review the content, and discuss changes or choose a template which they feel will work best. Once a template is chosen, Henry will work on incorporating the changes/recommendations from the broader community, and then will be forwarded to the WSUTT to examine and approve.

4.2 Seabirds.net discussion forum

Upon the “activation” of seabirds.net, a forum will enable people from the entire global seabird community to voice their opinion on the content of seabirds.net. This forum will be available for all those who have created a username and password for access to seabirds.net. To implement the forum, a username and password style structure for “members” must be established which will be done by:

- A. giving a username and temporary password to people who have already submitted to WOSPED, and
- B. Inviting the global seabird community via email and word of mouth to create a profile, giving them access to the forum.

These steps are linked to strategy 4.4. Once a username and password profile is set up, the forum will act as a way for people to communicate quickly about issues pertaining to the website (initially), and will then begin to act as a tool for discussions on field methods, data collection, and other seabird-related issues. This will be implemented by Henry and Schmid.

4.3 World Seabird Personnel Directory

As stated in strategy 4.2, a username and password profile will be given to all those who have submitted their information to WOSPED via the Google Site. All profiles that have been given so far will be manually input into the website by Henry & Moritz Schmid. Because WSU will be acting under a free membership scheme initially, there is currently no way of determining criteria for those people who should be permitted to have profiles on seabirds.net (i.e. any member of the general public could create a profile). Two options are available here:

- A. Open access profile creation, where anyone can create a profile and keep it active (seabird professionals or seabird enthusiasts).
- B. A “referencing” system where the user gives a list of 1 – 2 seabird professionals that they are affiliated with or have worked with to determine their identity.

Option A is easier to implement and is more representative of the open access nature of the seabird data and information we wish to distribute. Option B is harder to implement, but reflects a system where only professionals have profiles (thus a more „official“ setup). At the upcoming WSUTT conference call, this motion will be put forth to a vote to determine which option is preferred. The level of detail that will be incorporated into WOSPED is also to be discussed through the forum. It will be decided how much detail is required for a user profile, whether the option of uploading a picture should be available, and if the user can select a box that subscribes (or un-subscribes) them to receiving updates about WSU and its activities. The end result should be a database of seabird professionals / personnel that can be queried. This query would allow students to search for potential supervisors based on their research interests, or to encourage important global collaborations between researchers and managers.

In order to aid in the successful use of the directory, a name which is easy to remember and use should be delineated. It is recommended that the directory be named “*Petrel*” to attract users (i.e. the *Petrel* directory/database). At the upcoming WSUTT conference call, this name will be recommended and put to a vote.

4.4 Database linkages

Following the Legacy workshops at WSC, many databases have begun to form which will be linked into seabirds.net as applications that are being developed by Axiom Consulting. These applications are currently housed at axiom.seabirds.net, and are still under construction. As these databases are formed and applications created, Henry will create web links that will guide users to axiom.seabirds.net for data access. The nature of the databases will be discussed in forums outside of the content/layout discussions.

4.5 Content model revision and implementation

The current content model as proposed by Hatch will be reviewed by members of the organizational committee to determine if this is suitable for seabirds.net, or if changes and additions are warranted. For instance, the current model has a “careers” section, which could be helpful for students, but it is not a clear-cut “students” section for emerging scientists. Once reviewed, the new content model will be posted on the forum for revision by the public for a short period of time (~ 1 – 2 weeks), and then implemented by Henry.

4.6 News feed and updates

A news section will be added to seabirds.net which will be updated by the website coordinator (Henry), or other delegated people with access to the website. News items will be submitted to an email address by the general public, which will be reviewed by the website coordinator or others, and then posted to the news feed. News will be updated once every week.

4.7 seabirds.net/WSU

Seabirds.net is a web portal that acts not only as a data access system, but as a way of informing people of the business of the WSU. Instead of creating a competing website (e.g. worldseabirdunion.org), the main webpage for WSU will be seabirds.net/WSU. This website will be maintained by the Website coordinator and will report on all business by the WSU. Though seabirds.net/WSU will contain business of WSU, the WSU logo and affiliation will be prominently displayed on all subpages of seabirds.net as seabirds.net is a product of and maintained by WSU. Seabirds.net is therefore the main site for WSU, but business and information about WSU will be under seabirds.net/WSU.

4.8 Update procedure and approval process

A procedure to make updates to seabirds.net must be created in order to apply any major changes to the website once it is complete. A general outline for such a procedure would be a proposal by one (or many) members of WSU, which is then submitted to the WSU and approved (or overturned). A formal procedure should be discussed when the WSU is formally convened.

4.9 Website Coordinator position

In lieu of the formation of the WSU, it is highly recommended that a website coordinator position be officially recognized and formed as a member of the executive council. The website coordinator would play an integral role in communications for WSU as delivered over the internet. Duties of the website coordinator would include:

- Maintaining and updating seabirds.net.
- Updating the news section of seabirds.net.
- Reporting to WSU any pertinent information about seabirds.net.
- Dealing with user issues in case of website crashes or errors.
- Playing an active role in the proposal and approval process for changes to seabirds.net.
- Actively discusses business with WSU during meetings and conference calls to ensure seabirds.net is up to date with WSU business.

Assets for such a position would be:

- Knowledge of PHP web programming.
- Active in the seabird community.
- Easily accessible via email or other communications.

During the upcoming WSUTT conference call, Humphries will recommend this action.

5. Concluding remarks

This document outlined the general work plan for seabirds.net for the upcoming nine months, wherein the expected outcome is a fully operational website by the end of this time. Many of the initial constraints to developing seabirds.net (i.e. ownership, physical location, accessibility) have been overcome, and initial construction has begun. Appendices A through C show a staff list, budget and work schedule for seabirds.net. Through this work plan we aim to create a successful webpage that will accurately represent the goals and requirements of the entire seabird community.

Appendix A - Seabirds.net Committee

Name		
Institution/Country	Committee Role	Position description
Scott Hatch US Geological Survey, US	Seabirds.net initiator	Initiator of seabirds.net concept
Grant Humphries University of Otago, NZ	Coordinator	Coordinating content and layout discussions, Reporting to WSUTT
Michelle Kappes US	Member	Aiding with design and content discussions Other duties where required
Peter Kappes Oregon State University, US	Member	Aiding with design and content discussions Other duties where required
Sjúróur Hammer Natural History Museum of Denmark, DK	Member	Aiding with design and content discussions Other duties where required
Annette Henry NOAA, US	Website coordinator	Primary technician for seabirds.net
Moritz Schmid Lincoln University, NZ	Assistant to Website coordinator	Aiding Henry with technical aspects of seabirds.net

Appendix B - Budget

Activity	Cost/Month (USD)	Cost/Year (USD)
Domain name ownership	\$20.00	\$240.00
Hosting	\$6.95	\$83.40
Total	\$26.95	\$323.40

Funding for Henry comes from her position at NOAA and should be recognized as well. All others are donating their time as necessary.

Appendix C - Work Schedule

Objective	Timeframe	Personnel
2.1 Template creation and approval	End of March for templates, decision by mid April	Creation by Henry, approval by committee and public
2.2 Seabirds.net discussion forum	To be implemented by end of April	Henry / Schmid
2.3 World Seabird Personnel Directory	April – August and ongoing	Creation by Henry/Schmid
2.4 Database linkages	Work to begin in May/June, but will be ongoing	Axiom Consulting / Hatch
2.5 Content model revision and implementation	Mid April	Revision by Committee, implementation by Henry/Schmid
2.6 News feed and updates	July and onwards	Henry and future webpage coordinators for WSU
2.7 seabirds.net/WSU	July through December for major design, onwards for minor changes	Henry/Schmid; via requirement of WSU
2.8 Update procedure and approval process	Procedure determined by October for implementation	Humphries & Committee; to be approved by WSU
2.9 Website coordinator position	To be determined by WSUTT/WSU	Recommended by Humphries; to be approved by WSU