

Middle America Workshop Follow-up Meeting

Background

On October 24 through 27, 2010, the IRIS consortium organized the workshop “Geophysical Hazards and Plate Boundary Processes in Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean” in Heredia Costa Rica. The goals of the workshop were to bring together seismologists and other stakeholders from the public, private and development sectors to plan and coordinate initiatives that will contribute to geophysical research and hazard mitigation in the region through international collaboration. Through three days of interdisciplinary discussion, workshop participants identified priorities for capacity building and hazard mitigation in the region, and designated five working groups and respective chairpersons, charged with the responsibility of promptly outlining concrete actions that will address these priorities with a regional perspective.

The five Working Groups and their provisional chairs are

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|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Hazards and risks | Carlos Valdés |
| 2. Preparedness and response | Christa von Hillebrandt |
| 3. Monitoring and Data Management | Victor Huérfano |
| 4. Education and Outreach | Bill McCann |
| 5. Research: | Jay Pulliam |

Carlos Valdés was selected to serve as initial “Chair of Chairs”

The Final Outcome Statement from the Middle America Workshop is attached.

Rationale for Follow-up meeting

Capturing the remarkable enthusiasm generated during the workshop is essential to ensure optimal return on NSF and USAID financial investment, as well as to leverage efforts initiated by U.S. and regional investigators and officials. To this end, we propose to reconvene the Working Group chairs to facilitate their coordinated efforts, and to establish a framework for ongoing communication among them, and with the Working Group Members.

The goals of the proposed meeting are to:

- 1) identify and prioritize specific regional information gaps,
- 2) define concrete infrastructure, educational, and capacity regional and national needs to be addressed within defined terms,
- 3) ensure that these needs are coordinated across sectors,
- 4) identify potential appropriate funding sources to address each identified need.

Format and Agenda

Conducting this proposed meeting in association with the UNAVCO COCONet workshop in Puerto Rico, in early February provides a unique opportunity to explore the possibility of regional coordination on capacity building and development efforts between the UNAVCO and the IRIS communities in the region. To optimize this interaction, we propose to convene the MAW Working Group chairs on the day preceding the COCONet workshop, allowing the drafting of a Working Plan. We anticipate that this working plan will inform the MAW chairs’ participation in the COCONet workshop. All participants from the MAW will be encouraged to fully participate in the COCONet workshop, especially on the breakout on Capacity Building.

MAW participants will reconvene briefly at the completion of the COCONet workshop, allowing the opportunity to revise the working plan incorporating the workshop's outcomes. This proposed scheme will extend the stay of the MAW Follow-up meeting participants by only one night at the Workshop venue for most of the attendees, and maximizes the interaction among participants of both events.

Participants

The participation of the following individuals is considered important to the success of this meeting. Budgetary considerations are included for clarity:

a) Working Group Leaders

1. Jay Pulliam - *support requested*
2. Christa vonHillebrandt - *registered for COCONet Workshop - Local – minimal cost*
3. Carlos Valdes-Gonzalez - *support requested*
4. Victor Huerfano – *Local – minimal cost*
5. Bill McCann - *support requested*

b) MAW Steering Committee

6. Olga Cabello – *no cost – IRIS support*
7. Ray Willemann – *no cost – IRIS support*
8. Karen Fischer – *no cost – IRIS support*

c) Additional Key Regional Participants

9. Mauricio Mora - Costa Rica - *support requested*
10. Marino Protti - Costa Rica - *registered for COCONet Workshop – one additional night lodging requested*
11. Michael Schmitz - Venezuela - *support requested*
12. Angelica Muñoz - Nicaragua - *support requested*
13. Richie Robertson – Trinidad and Tobago - *registered for COCONet Workshop – one additional night lodging requested*

d) Additional Key U.S. Participants

14. Eric Calais – UN, Haiti - *registered for COCONet Workshop – one additional night lodging requested*
15. Art Lerner-Lam – Lamont – Columbia University - *support requested*
16. Wayne Pennington – Michigan State – Jefferson Fellow - *support requested*
17. Meghan Miller – UNAVCO – COCONet Convenor
18. Tim Dixon – University of Miami – COCONet Convenor

Budget Components

Support requested to conduct this MAW Follow-up meeting in association with the UNAVCO COCONet workshop includes:

Participant support

- Participation in the COCONet workshop plus 1-2 additional nights for 8 people
- Additional lodging for one night for 3 people already accounted as COCONet workshop participants
- Meals for 2 local participants
- No support is requested for MAW Steering Committee members

Meeting facilities

Funding is requested to defray cost of meeting facilities and catered dinner at the Workshop venue for 25 people from 3:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the afternoon of February 2, and the evening of February 4.

If requested, IRIS is also prepared to work with UNAVCO and NSF to arrange for the participation of selected key US agency representatives or members of the development community who participated in the Costa Rica MAW and/or have shown an interest in encouraging the work of IRIS and UNAVCO in the region (eg, Tim Callaghan, Senior Regional Advisor Latin America and the Caribbean, OFDA, USAID). These guests could be invited to participate in concluding sessions of the COCONet meeting and the Friday session of the MAW follow-up.