

DCMI Membership Task Group Report and Recommendations

August 1, 2012

Agenda

- Charter
- Task Group Members
- Work Process
- Work items
- Implications
- Possible Directions
- Next Steps

Charter

- The Joint OC/AB Task Group on Membership Programs will critically review the current criteria for membership in DCMI's Member & Partner programs to determine whether DCMI should:
 - include organizations based on criteria other than regional representation in the Member category; and
 - enhance opportunities for membership participation by revising the original membership fee structures to better reflect actual member capacity as well as existing and potential return on investment.
 - In addition, the Task Group will explore potential direct DCMI services for membership organizations that could enhance return on investment and spur membership development.

Task Group Members

- **Chairs**
 - Mike Crandall
 - Rachel Bruce
- **Members**
 - Ana Alice Baptista
 - Joseph Busch
 - Keven Liu
 - Emma Tonkin
 - Paul Walk
- **Ex Officio**
 - Raju Buddharaju
 - Stuart Sutton
 - Tom Baker

Work Process

- Task Group met 4 times by Skype
 - 3 January 2012
 - 28 February 2012
 - 3 April 2012
 - 17 May 2012
- Minutes and associated documentation collected on a restricted wiki site hosted by DCMI
- Results summarized in these slides and reviewed/approved by Task Group
- Offered to OC and AB for review and action

Approach

- Defined 4 work items initially, added 3 more for future exploration
- For each work item (in various depth)
 - Reviewed existing materials related to the item in DCMI legal documents and other sources
 - Looked at a number of other membership organizations for comparative examples
 - Where appropriate, did informal polling to explore possible answers to questions

Work Items

- Work Item 1: Potential Value Proposition
- Work Item 2: Current Member Value Proposition
- Work Item 3: Membership Structures
- Work Item 4: Audiences for DCMI Services and Products

Work Item 1: Potential Value Proposition

- The task group felt that DCMI has not been effective in describing the potential value proposition for membership
- Looked to other organizations for models that could be used to articulate value
 - GreyNet
 - Association for Information Systems (AIS)
 - American Society for Information Science and Technology (ASIST)
 - The International DOI Foundation (IDF)
- Used this information to develop a list of DCMI's products and services, and benefits at various levels

Work Item 1: Potential Value Proposition

- DCMI Products and Services
 - Annual event (to attend, or receive publications)
 - Local events
 - Tutorials
 - Webinars
 - Community (to participate in, benefit from) - Communities, Task Groups, Forums
 - Publications (to create, or benefit from)
 - Governance eligibility (Oversight Committee, Advisory Committee, Usage Board)
- DCMI Members Benefits
 - Official representational body and support
 - Eligible for Oversight Committee representation
 - Visibility on DCMI Web site
 - Active link to Partner's Web site
 - DCMI logo use
 - Visibility at annual Dublin Core event
 - Press release announcements
 - Event co-organizer
 - Event presentation

Work Item 1: Potential Value Proposition

- DCMi Partners Benefits
 - Visibility on DCMi Web site
 - Active link to Partner's Web site
 - DCMi logo use
 - Visibility at annual Dublin Core event
 - Press release announcements
 - Event co-organizer
 - Event presentations
 - Networking
- DCMi Individual Benefits
 - Reduced rate for participation in DCMi events.
 - Participation in DCMi community activities.
 - Networking

Work Item 2: Current Member Value Proposition

- The task group also wanted to explore the value that current members gained from their support of DCMI
- Very little response was received by the task group in this area
- However, a DCMI document (Member Commitment and Benefits) spells out the minimum expectations

Background Information-

Member Commitment and Benefits

Section 3: Benefits

While the Membership Agreement is in force, a Member has the following benefits:

1. Voting rights as defined by the Singapore Companies Act, including the acceptance of the annual accounts and appointment of Directors. With these rights, the Member has the opportunity to determine how DCMI is managed and by whom.
2. Appointment of one representative on the DCMI Oversight Committee. This gives the Member early knowledge of proposals for strategic and technical directions and the opportunity to influence the direction that DCMI will be taking including assignment of budget and setting of priorities for the organization.
3. Appointment of one representative on the DCMI Advisory Board, a committee of around 50 metadata experts from around the world that gives advice to the Managing Director on technical issues. This allows the Member to bring requirements and ideas to this group of experts to help shape the technical solutions that DCMI develops.

Excerpted from Member Commitment and Benefits:

[http://wiki.dublincore.org/images/8/87/Member Commitment and Benefits.pdf](http://wiki.dublincore.org/images/8/87/Member_Commitment_and_Benefits.pdf)

Work Item 3: Membership Structures

- While technically not part of the Task Group charter, membership structures proved to be an important aspect of our discussions
 - Definition of “member” is bound up in the structure
 - Potential benefits vary by type of member (individual, institutional, partner)
 - Holds implications for funding models and sustainability

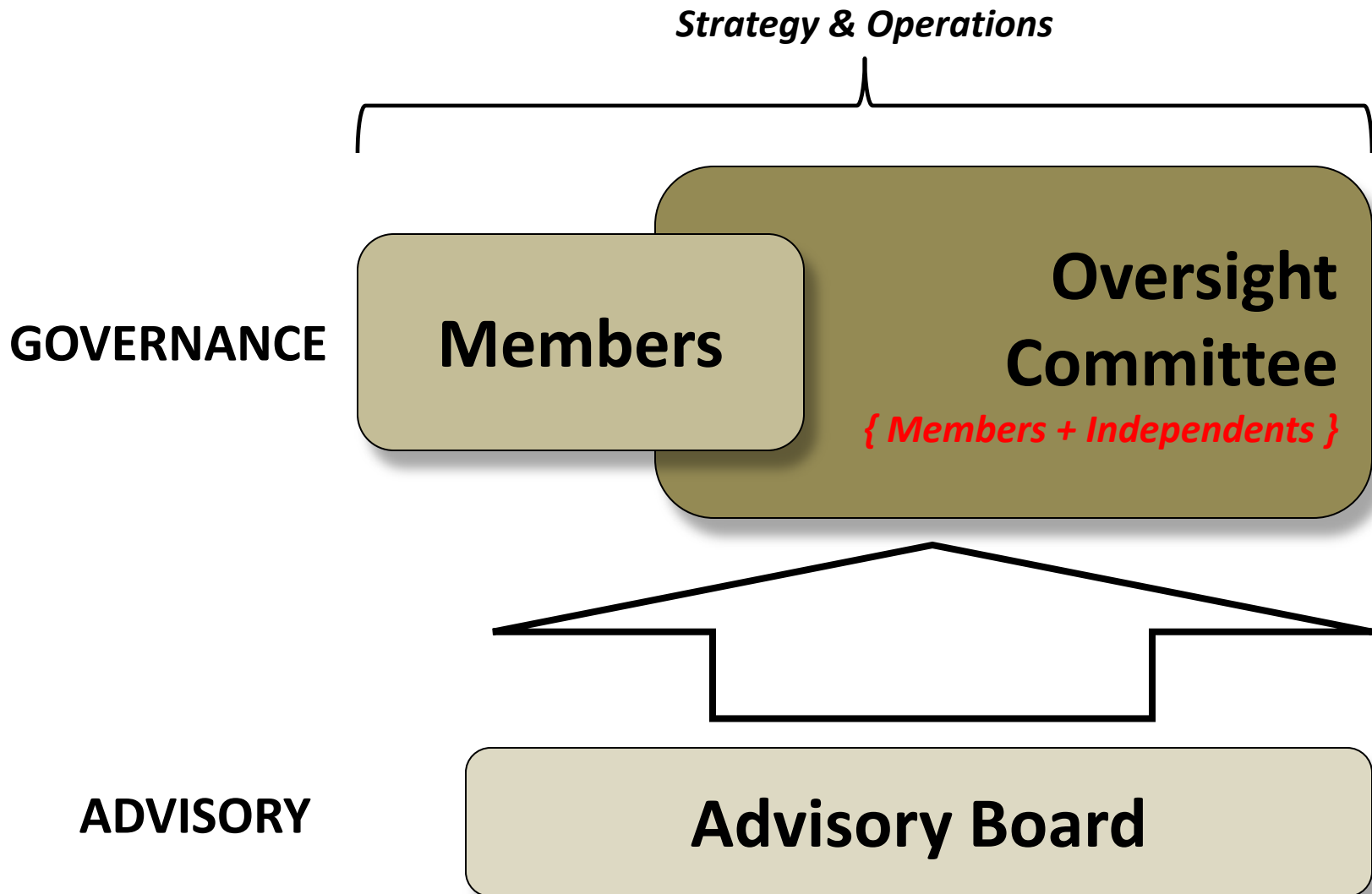
Work Item 3: Membership Structures

- The task group found that the organizations investigated for other models had multiple membership levels
- Benefits and services were articulated for each member level separately
- The task group examined DCMI documents to ascertain restrictions and limits on current members
 - By-Laws
 - Articles of Association
 - Member Agreement
 - Partner Agreement
 - Membership and Partner Fee Structures

Current DCMI Governance/Advisory Structure

- ***Governance***—Oversight Committee
 - Legal Members + 4 Independent Appointments
 - Decisions reserved under Singapore law to legal Members (currently 6 regional Members):
 - Approval of annual audit & auditor reappointment
 - Appointment of Directorate personnel
 - Decisions on dissolution as Singapore Company Limited by Guarantee
 - Decisions of the Oversight Committee sitting as a whole:
 - DCMI strategy & operations in all matters not reserved to the to legal Members under Singapore law
- ***Advisory***—Advisory Board (app. 65 members)
 - Advisory to DCMI governance bodies (Oversight Committee and Directorate)

Current DCMI Governance/Advisory Structure



Background Information- Articles of Association

- The Member category of DCMI membership is the only category required by Singapore law and the [DCMI Articles of Association](#). By statute, the *Member* category is the set of legal voting entities of DCMI. Individual *Member* representatives are members of the Oversight Committee through DCMI by-laws; and, by default, *Member* representatives are members of the Advisory Board.
 - "Member needs to be an incorporated public entity, a not-for-profit organization, a governmental agency, or a supra-governmental agency." Section 8(a)
 - "Member may represent a consortium or group of organizations or agencies." Section 8(b)
 - "Member has exclusive coverage within the Locale of Influence agreed to by the Member and DCMI..." Section 8(c)
 - "Members may adopt business models that include individual or institutional memberships or other types of funding through grants, contributions or institutional sponsorship..." Section 8(d)
 - "Fee structure and levels will be regularly reviewed allowing for change in economic circumstances and budget developments." Section 14

http://wiki.dublincore.org/images/9/9b/Articles_of_Association_2008.pdf

Background Information- Articles of Association

- **Relevant Definitions:**
 - ***Member:*** The members of DCMI for the time being and from time to time as defined by these Articles.
 - ***Locale of Influence:*** The region or political boundary in which a *Member* is chartered. Typically this will be defined by national boundaries; however organizations from more than one country may find it expedient to create a *Member* that spans national boundaries but is unified by common language, culture or other interest.
- **Category: Partner**
 - The *Partner* category is not part of legal structure of DCMI. *Partner* rights are determined by partnership agreement and [published schedule](#). Fee structure is determined and periodically reviewed by Oversight Committee at the recommendation of the Board. Appointment at discretion of the Board. The *Partner* program has not been particularly successful (one likely reason: ROI even more murky than with the *Member* program).

Background Information-DCMI By-laws

- **Article I: Participation Categories**

- **A. Members**

- DCMI Members are national or regional organizations that represent stakeholder communities within their region. Members are established on a contractual basis and have rights and responsibilities as designated in a Membership Agreement executed between the Member and DCMI. The Member fee structure and levels are decided by the Board of Directors in consultation with the DCMI Oversight Committee, taking into account economic factors related to the locales covered by Members and the overall budget requirements of DCMI. Fee structure and levels will be regularly reviewed allowing for changes in economic circumstances and budget developments.

- **B. Partners**

- DCMI Partners are organizations that contribute financially to DCMI or its activities. They have rights and obligations as designated in a Partnership Agreement executed between the Partner and DCMI. Partnership categories and associated contribution levels are decided by the Board of Directors in consultation with the DCMI Oversight Committee.

- **Article II: Governance**

- ...

- The DCMI Board of Directors establishes an Oversight Committee that advises on operational, strategic and other issues. The Members accept the decisions of the Oversight Committee as binding unless they are in conflict with legal requirements.

<http://dublincore.org/about/bylaws/index.shtml>

Background Information: Singapore Companies Act

- "a company may by special resolution alter or add to its articles". (Chapter 50, Section 37)
- nothing that says a "member" of a company **must be** an incorporated entity

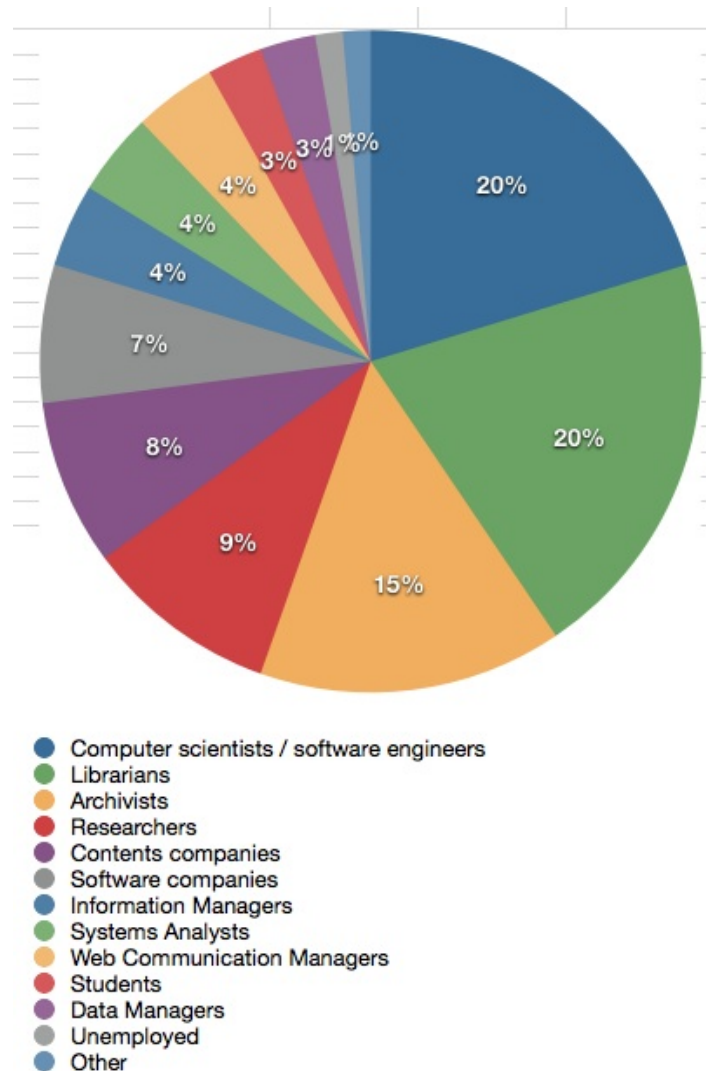
Background Information: Current Fee Structure

- Members
 - Based on UNDP country rankings
 - 4 tiers, from \$1500- \$30,000
 - Only pricing option is as a country
- Partners
 - Complex tiered structure based on fees paid and/or services rendered
 - <http://dublincore.org/about/partnership/>

Work Item 4: Audiences for DCMI Services and Products

- To further explore the types of audiences that might benefit from the services and products identified in Work Item 1, a brief survey was conducted by Ana Alice Baptista on Facebook
- While indicative only, the results do reflect the types of potential audiences DCMI has, and may offer some guidance for future exploration in this area

Work Item 4: Investigate audiences for DCMI services and products



- Question: What are the potential DCMI audiences?

Date: 28/Feb/2012

Number of respondents: 25

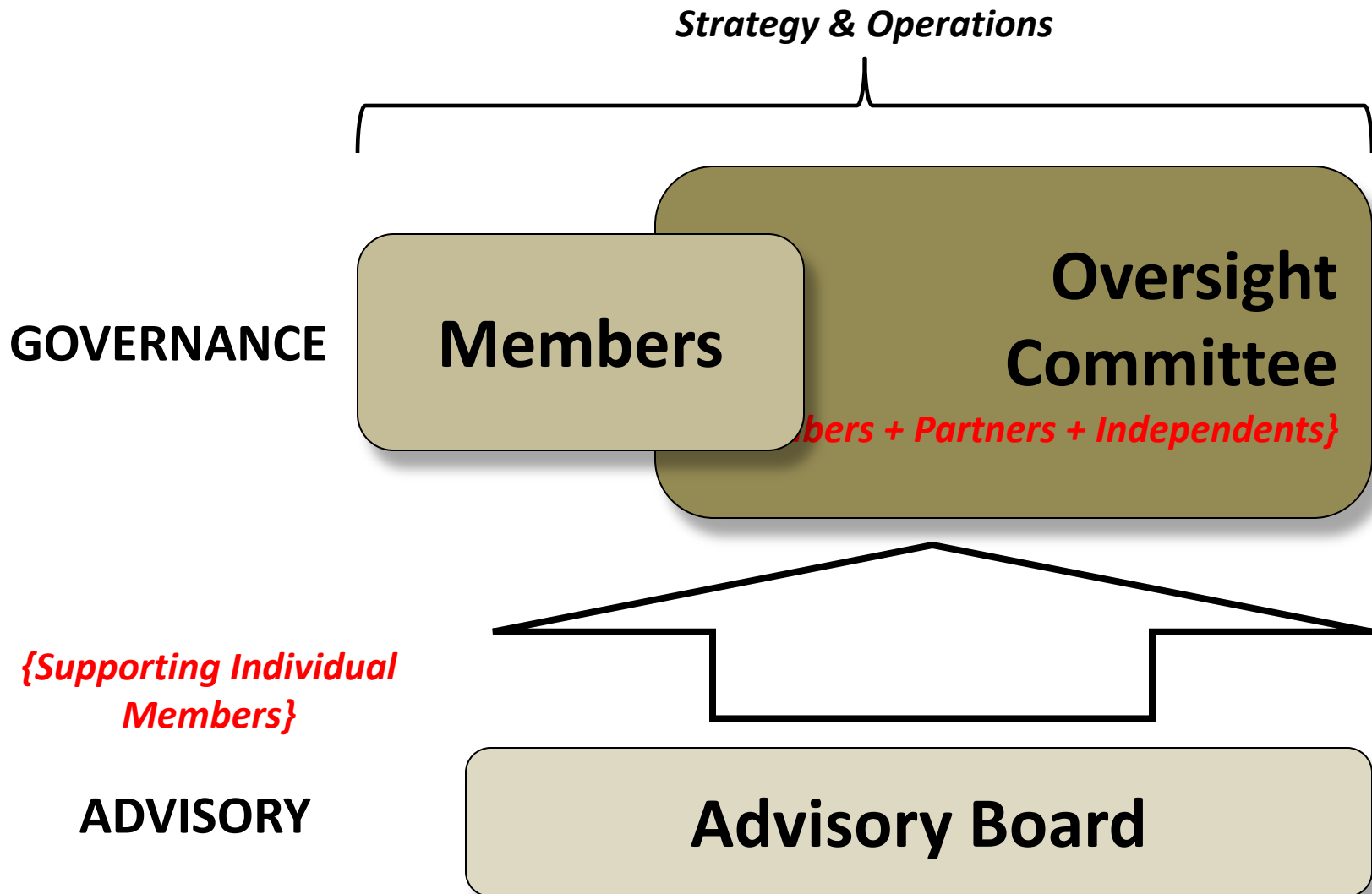
Additional Future Work Items

- Additional work items were identified but not pursued:
 - Work Item 5: Investigate what works for other organizations—lessons learned
 - Work Item 6: Investigate partnership options as an alternative to an independent DCMI
 - Work Item 7: Develop use cases for services and products

Implications

- Since the *Member* category of DCMI membership is the only category mandated by statute and defined in the [DCMI Articles of Association](#), DCMI is at liberty to:
 - Create any new categories it deems useful (e.g., Individual Supporting Membership (see below));
 - Modify the existing *Partner* program; and
 - Change fee structures as required from time to time by the Articles with consideration given to better aligning fees to both intangible and tangible ROI and other economic circumstances.
- If DCMI chooses to modify the criteria for *Member* status, then modifications to the Articles may be necessary (but doable). Possible Article modifications might include:
 - Extending *Member* status to include "domain influence" as well as the current "locale influence" with the goal of diversifying and increasing the size of the *Member* category (obviously with a suitable definition of "domain influence" that provides for future developments).
- Membership program modifications needing revisions to the By-Laws but not the Articles of Association:
 - Modifying the existing *Partner* program including extension of rights; and
 - Instituting a non-voting *Individual Supporting Member* program possibly with "premium" access to defined sets of resources (etc.) and with possible representation at the *Oversight Committee* (governance) level based on some formula.

Possible DCMI Governance / Advisory



Possible Directions_[1]

- Based on the work of the task group, three propositions and one major change were posed for discussion by the Advisory Board and Action by the Oversight Committee:
 - **DCMI should work to:**
 - Increase the size of the Member category through reduced annual fees for institutions.
 - Extend criteria for Member status beyond geographic representation to include other cultural and special interest factors (e.g., linguistic with some consortium of Ibero-American institutions).
 - **DCMI should enhance the Partner category by:**
 - Eliminating (or greatly reducing) the current complexity of the category.
 - Extending membership on the Oversight Committee to institutional Partners.
 - **DCMI should create:**
 - A non-voting *Supporting Member* category for individual memberships in DCMI
 - A program of vetted, attractive privileges reserved to *Supporting Members* while maintaining long-term open access to DCMI assets.

Possible Directions_[2]

- Fee-based membership programs are only one part of DCMI's long-term fiscal sustainability
 - Therefore, the Task Group further recommends that DCMI investigate opportunities for an institutional partnership (as opposed to DCMI's current independent legal status) that reduces DCMI's current administrative and financial overhead
 - Investigate partnership opportunities that:
 - are compatible with DCMI's mission, goals and objectives;
 - provide an institutional "umbrella" and institutional services;
 - provide a fiscal arrangement based on services rendered and mutual partner benefit;
 - provide for sustaining current member benefits as well as future additions/modifications based on DCMI decisions; and
 - provide DCMI with autonomy within institutional and legal constraints.

Next Steps

- Review current Member fee structure (and fee structures in general) and make appropriate fee re-alignment decisions
- Revision of the bylaws to simplify the institutional Partner category and enhance return on investment by possible membership on the Oversight Committee
- Revision of the Articles of Association to open the possibility of non-geographic entities as Members
- Agreement for the directorate to move ahead on exploring partnership possibilities with other organizations to ensure long-term organizational sustainability