Minutes approved via e-mail – reaction period closed on November 15, 2011

OCA-COUNCIL TELECONFERENCE
Monday August 08, 2011
18h00-19h45
APPROVED minutes

Present: Tankred Stoebe (chair), Sid Wong (18.00–19.15), Meike Huelsmann, Wilna van Aartsen, Pim de Graaf, Bruce Lampard, Mark Creswell (19.20-19.45), Arjan Hehenkamp (19.15-19.45)

Minutes: Paul Carroll

Agenda:

1. The Canadian position, next steps for the OCA, implications of withdrawal and communications with stakeholders
2. AOB
   a. Somalia & the Horn of Africa

1. The Canadian position, next steps for the OCA, implications of withdrawal and communications with stakeholders

A summary of the positions expressed:

Bruce > Canada is dedicated to seeing the partnership strengthened. At the Executive and partnership level there are issues that need to be addressed to achieve this. It is hoped that this decision will kick start improving the OCA platforms.

Withdrawal from Executive platforms as stated in Marilyn’s letter will be permanent changes. Canada has decided to withdraw due to significant bureaucracy and the feeling that the significant amount of energy spent in these platforms was adding limited noticeable value.

Following the experience of the recent Canadian desk process, the Canadian Board and Executive are firm in their resolve to withdraw from Executive platforms. The Board is open to discussions taking place that may lead to a better solution, however, should such a solution not be reached the decision to withdraw will stand regardless.

The place for discussion of improving the Executive platforms should be primarily within the MT. There is openness in the Canadian Board to OCA Council discussions along the same line, but the most functional discussions are expected to be with the Executive level. It should be up to the MT to propose models for the future. The Executive should discuss the practical and the Council the principles.

While the Canadian Board stands behind the content of Marilyn’s letter, they are open to discussing the timeline for implementation. Namely that implementation by August can be reconsidered.

The exact details of the withdrawal and the consequences are not yet known by the Canadian Board and will be further discussed with Marilyn once possible. It is expected that Canada will still be involved around the planning cycles. Information sharing will still exist, but Canadian input will be less and informal communications through the platforms will decrease.

Tankred > Confusion and surprise at the changes in Marilyn’s letter as they came prior to the October retreat where the Council was to decide as partners where the OCA wants to head. With Canada taking a decision now this reduces space for reaching decisions for the common good.
It would be best if each section could put their views on paper for discussion at the October OCA Council meeting. The next German Board meeting will be a week before the October meeting, so the Board will not be able to make a paper until Tuesday the week before.

**Sid** > Discussions are needed at both the MT and Council level. It is difficult to pinpoint which should take place first and the reality is that both will probably take place at the same time. At Council level, we need to reevaluate the founding principles of co-management, co-ownership, shared operationality and synergies, and decide whether they still form the basis of the OCA partnership. We do need to be realistic to what extent we can implement and achieve the principles.

Maybe it is more realistic and honest to have a partnership based on meaningful relationships than on being equal partners.

The English Board welcomes the opportunity to think about improving the Executive platforms. In the UK the Board has begun calling for proposals as to how OCA platforms can be improved.

It would be preferable if each section could put their grievance, preferences and proposals on paper so that they can be discussed together by the Council in October.

Ideally, the OCA Council should have the opportunity to discuss the proposals/options together prior to the October meeting. (Probably via teleconference). Equally as important for the OCA MT to have the opportunity to discuss the executive changes prior to the October meeting.

The Council should be seen to be leading the process. It should propose the October meeting and set what its requirements from the Executive will be. The Council's posture should be proactive and not reactive.

**Pim** > Was under the impression that the October meeting would be used to agree on a new MoU. The letter of Marilyn implicates that significant changes will be needed. It should be noted that during the formation of the OCA it was accepted that a certain amount of inefficiency would exist in the Executive platforms. Reviewing this situation is at once an opportunity, but also a threat to the partnership.

An analysis by the Canadian section of the ways in which the Executive platforms perform poorly would be useful for improving these platforms and beginning discussions.

As the amount of reflection on the four pillars of the OCA required by each section will be significant prior to the October meeting, it may be useful to identify a project Coordinator to lead each section in this review.

**Wilna** > It is important to discuss the consequences of changing the relationships within the OCA. While compromise is likely to be necessary, it is too soon to choose one scenario over another as no analysis has been done or discussion taken place.

**Meike** > Questioned how Canada's withdrawal from Executive platforms will function on a daily basis. Will Canada be able to stay in the loop and what is the benefit to OCA? Proposals for change, instead of moving away, would be most productive.

**Arjan** > Marilyn's letter has not yet been discussed by the OCA-MT and as such has not yet been accepted. Should co-management cease, this will be to the cost of OCA's ability to implement its social mission. It appears the Council will be doing a full renegotiation of the OCA MoU and as such, it is important that the Council give clear and timely directions to the MT in what actions will be required prior to the October meeting. Note: departing on Holidays this Friday.

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It was decided that the Council would take an active lead in renegotiating the OCA MoU. The Council will call for each partner section to provide a summary of current concerns about the functioning of Executive platforms (supported by evidence), proposals for change, and analysis of the consequences.
these changes would bring about. These positions are to be discussed and a new MoU is to be negotiated at the October meeting.

A project manager is to be appointed to lead each section through a review of their position in relation to the current MoU prior to the October meeting. There is the possibility that this person will also lead the October meeting.

The intention of the Council is that prior to the October meeting no sections will make changes to their current involvement in the Executive platforms. This is to ensure that the full realm of possibilities exists for the renegotiation of the MoU in October.

The OCA Council will prepare a communication for the Executive containing these decisions and further clarifying the position of the Canadian Board as explained during this meeting.

2. **AOB**

a. **Somalia & the Horn of Africa**

A brief discussion of the situation in Somalia and the Horn of Africa, focussed on fundraising, information sharing and latest news took place at the beginning and end of the teleconference. In summary:

- Germany has in the last two weeks received 3 million Euro in funding with the possibility that some may be earmarked.
- Germany has engaged in active fundraising, other sections have not.
- While estimates are being revised it appears the entire MSF intervention will likely only require 12 million Euro in funds. The ExCom will make a movement wide position on fundraising on Wednesday to prevent an excess of earmarked funds.
- Concerns were raised as to the effectiveness of field data sharing to date.
- The MT plans to scale up activities in Somalia and in doing so will have to sacrifice the principle that ex-pats are always present when a new project is initiated. Due to the difficulty in operating in Somalia, new activities will be begun by only national staff.
- **Arjan** > The situation in Somalia is critical.

**Action Points**

1. Bruce to discuss change in timeline with Marylin and attempt to delay implementation until after October meeting. To confirm within 24 hours.
2. Bruce to seek analysis/summary of current weaknesses in Executive platforms.
3. Pim to identify project coordinator after liaising with 4 GDs.
4. Pim and Tankred to draft communication for the Executive to be shared with Arjan by Wednesday 10 August.