

# International eDNA Standardization Task Force (iESTF)

## Meeting Notes

Tuesday, March 19, 2024 @ 1pm EST

### Meeting participants

(CA) Cathryn Abbott

(DB) Donald Baird

(JD) John Darling

(NF) Nicole Fahner

(MH) Mehrdad Hajibabaei

(SH) Shana Lee Hirsch

(GJ) Genevieve Johnson

(DJ) Devin Jones

(RK) Ryan Kelly

(KK) Katy Klymus

(TL) Tiina Laamanen

(FL) Florian Leese

(FM) Filipa Martins

(BM) Beverly McClenaghan

(KM) Kristian Meissner

(VN) Veera Norros

(PR) Prabir Roy

(GS) Gernot Segelbacher

(ST) Susie Theroux

(HY) Hiroki Yamanaka

(AW) Alison Watts

### Agenda Items:

- 1: iESTF Charter (JD)
2. ISO Activities (KM)
3. MBMG Special Issue – “Towards standardized molecular biodiversity monitoring” (MH)
4. IWEG Workshop (MH)
5. iBOL Conference (MH)
6. SSUNGA79 (KM)
7. Project Leader Meeting Updates
8. Member Engagement

### 1: iESTF Charter (JD)

- The draft charter is posted to the iESTF website.
  - <https://iestf.global/charter/>
- The most complicated components to write were those regarding funding and finances – to address the independence of this group relative to our host institutions.

- Members are encouraged to review the charter to ensure the language is suitable to meet any requirements of their host institutions.
- We do not have a framework for how we will formally “accept” this document
  - In the absence of a formal process, we could use a consensus approach (MH)
  - (JD) We want to have a period for everyone to review and provide comments, then we can circulate a final draft before the next quarterly meeting. We’ll formally accept the document during the next quarterly meeting.
- Question from (PR) – It would help to have a clearer statement of the mission and vision for the task force, outlining where we are and what we want to achieve. Will we have an executive committee to carry out actions with the guidance of the steering committee?
  - (JD) We want to keep this document simple and streamlined, rather than providing all the specific goals that we plan to achieve. There is a section about Working Groups in the document, and how we will set up working groups, which covers a lot of the actual work of the Task Force, but that section does not have a lot of detail about what those working groups will actually do, but we see this evolving over time. So it is worth considering if we should add more detail to that section.
  - (MH) The Task Force is not representative of any organization and we don’t have a membership at large. Every member can volunteer and take on roles depending on their expertise and interests, so it is not necessary at this point to have a prescribed structure.

## 2. ISO Activities (KM)

- There will be a meeting of ISO TC147 in October
- There were comments made by Japanese representatives on the standard for eDNA sampling of water that we are working to address in the upcoming weeks.
- There is an upcoming meeting of CEN next month in Brussels at CEN-CENELEC. The meeting will be an opportunity to discuss the ISO group with respect to the CEN group.
- Question from (SH) – What countries are involved in the ISO standard at this point?
  - 30 members from France, Austria, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, Finland, Sweden, and Canada

## 3. MBMG Special Issue – “Towards standardized molecular biodiversity monitoring” (MH)

- The deadline for submission was extended. Anyone who wishes to submit can contact Terri Porter for more information.
- Approximately a dozen articles have been submitted and are in preparation, which are relevant to standardization

#### 4. IWEG Workshop (MH)

- This is an annual workshop series hosted in St. John's, NL. The idea was to bring together users of environmental genomics from industry, academia, and regulatory groups.
- This year the theme of the workshop will be on nature impact reporting. We would like to have a session of the workshop that is dedicated to the activities of this task force.
- The meeting will also provide a good opportunity for several iESTF members to meet in-person. All iESTF members are invited to IWEG and will receive an email invite shortly.
- The reports from previous workshops can be found here: [IWEG reports](#)

#### 5. iBOL Conference (MH)

- The meeting will be in Brazil in September and may be another good opportunity for some iESTF members to meet in-person
- (NF) We submitted a proposal for a panel on commercial applications and standardization, but we haven't heard back about whether the proposal was accepted
- (SH) We also proposed a panel workshop to get perspectives from the Global South.

#### 6. SSUNGA79 (KM)

- The organizer included biodiversity as one of the themes of this year's program.
- We're brainstorming a theme to pitch to SSUNGA. If anyone has ideas please email KM.
- Question from (RK) – Who is the target audience of that meeting, and are you seeing impacts from the meeting?
  - (KM) Much of the target audience is made up of the representatives that are attending the General Assembly. With each stage, we're making more progress toward getting the right people participating.
  - (RK) If you're interested in showcasing perspectives from the Global South, we (RK & SH) have been working with people who are already forming networks in the area.
    - (KM) Yes, that would fit under the goals of the meeting.

#### 7. Project Leader Meeting Updates

- (KM) Schedule for upcoming project leader meeting:
  - April 18
  - June 20
  - August tbd (a Thursday)
- (CA) Measuring Quality and Quantity of Extracted DNA

- Our group met and identified existing ISO standards that could inform the structure of our standard, and now we are planning to purchase some of those.
- We may need to discuss a scope change for our group, so we need to schedule a meeting to further discuss.
  - This will be discussed at the April 18 project leader meeting. CA will schedule a meeting before then to discuss with project leaders who would be directly impacted by a scope change.
- (KK) Target Species Detection
  - Our group met. We went over the standards that are available for target detection. During the next meeting we will go over a couple of those standards.
  - P. Beja joined our meeting, but the topic wasn't a good fit, so he is still looking for a group to join.
- (DB) Metabarcoding to Survey Biological Communities
  - Our group met. We are planning to look at the existing pyrosequencing standard.
  - Goal is to have a draft standard by end of April.
- Multiple group leaders mentioned time zone issues causing scheduling complications. One solution has been to record the meetings for members who cannot attend due to meeting timing.
- There is still space in several groups for more members.
  - We also created an iESTF webpage with project team summaries and a form that people can use to inquire about joining project groups: <https://iestf.global/working-groups/>
- We will coordinate a shared google drive for group notes and reference documents.

## 8. Member Engagement

- (MH) I would like to put together a perspectives piece about this task force and our goals. The piece should highlight the importance of standardization in the context of eDNA. Please contact me if you have ideas and examples to include.

Other relevant meetings mentioned in the chat:

- [3<sup>rd</sup> Workshop on Marine eDNA hosted by Johns Hopkins and the National Museum of Natural History](#) will take place June 3-4 in Laurel, MD and June 5 in Washington, D.C.
- GEDWG (Government eDNA Working Group) meeting will be mid-September in Cincinnati, OH

## Action Items

- Members should review the charter to ensure the language is suitable to meet any requirements of their host institutions. We will formally accept the charter at the next meeting.
  - <https://iestf.global/charter/>

- CA will schedule a meeting to discuss a possible scope change for quality/quantity group
- GJ will send IWEG invitations to iESTF members
- GJ will coordinate a shared google drive folder for group notes and reference documents