**Structure and operating guidelines for US LTER International Committee**

The International Long-term Ecological research network (ILTER) was founded in 1993 during an All Scientist Meeting at Estes Park Colorado.  Initially the chair of the US –LTER served as the chair of the ILTER (Jerry Franklin followed by Jim Gosz). After ten years of growth and development the international network had matured and expanded to the point that it made sense to decouple leadership of the US and ILTER networks.  The current US LTER International Committee was established in September 2003 with responsibility for coordinating US involvement in the ILTER network.

***Vision and Mission***

***Vision:***

**To create an atmosphere in which participation in the ILTER network is seen as a central component of each US LTER site’s activities.** The committee strives to develop an environment in which ILTER activities are important to the US LTER network, and provide opportunities to ask important and timely questions that cannot be addressed through US perspectives and research alone.

***Mission:***

* **To facilitate the development and maintenance of long-term projects and collaborations between US-LTER scientists and ILTER colleagues**.

Many US-LTER scientists already have on-going and successful international ties.  Therefore, the added value of the US-LTER international subcommittee should be to facilitate the initiation of new projects that will contribute to the strengthening of the ILTER network and/or of its individual country member networks.  In addition the committee can act as a clearinghouse for knowledge about how to successfully initiate and maintain collaborations and funding as well as help solve institutional problems as they arise. When appropriate the committee can function as a matchmaker, connecting interested scientists from either abroad or the US with suitable potential collaborators.

* **To facilitate and coordinate the involvement of US-LTER scientists in strengthening and developing a strong regional network in the Americas and support collaboration with other ILTER regional networks.**

Strategic planning, program development, and/or transfer of technology and knowledge should all be employed to develop an effective regional network for the Americas.

* **To facilitate the collaboration of US-LTER scientists in maintaining  effective data/information management infrastructures**.

Availability of data and information from a diversity of ecological sites is one of the central missions of the ILTER network. Given the depth of experience of US-LTER information managers and LTER researchers, the committee should facilitate development of accessible and useful data at the global scale. **To facilitate cooperation between the ILTER and other global science programs**, e.g. International Geosphere–Biosphere Programme (IGBP), the International Human Dimensions Programme (IHDP), and DIVERSITAS.

***Composition and governance of the US LTER International Committee***

**Membership –**

Members of the US LTER International Committee will serve staggered three-year terms, renewable once.  Membership of the committee should reflect connections with US-LTER sites and involve people with international experience.  The committee shall have ten members, including the two co-chairs.

New members will be solicited via an email to the all-LTER email list.  Interested persons will submit a statement of interest to the co-chairs, who will select in collaboration with current committee members new members based on site representation and ILTER regional connections.  After a three-year term, former members can re-apply to be on the committee for a second term.

Membership composition shall to the extent possible broadly represent sites/biomes of the US LTER Network. At least one member should have a background in data science.

**Leadership –**

Co-chairs will be elected by the committee to serve staggered four-year terms.  The co-chairs should represent different US LTER sites and have experience with different geographic regions of the ILTER network.  Given the broad diversity of member networks more varied experiences in the leadership team will ensure greater connections and experience across the ILTER network.   The senior co-Chair provides institutional memory and overall oversight of the IC activities. The first year, the new co-chair serves as incoming with senior co-Chair presiding. The second and third years, both senior and incoming chair co-preside. At the end of the third year, a new incoming co-chair is recruited. The fourth year, the senior co-chair serves in ex-officio capacity with former incoming serving as senior co-chair in their third year and new incoming serving their second year, co-presiding (FIgure 1).

Figure 1. please revise



**Responsibilities** -

In order to fulfill the mission of the committee the following tasks will be undertaken:

* The committee will strive to meet once during each year
* Conference calls will be held at least bimonthly
* The co-chairs will participate in the annual ILTER meeting and represent the US at the Coordinating Committee (CC) of the International LTER
* Provide regular updates on international opportunities for US LTER scientists and students
* Solicit funding to support the work of the committee
* Develop mechanisms to enhance and strengthen linkages among scientists and networks
* Lead/support a standing subcommittee

**US LTER International Standing Subcommittees** -

**New Initiatives**: Assess opportunities and facilitate US LTER participation or leadership in international initiatives

**Governance & ILTER Executive Board:** 2 co-chairs and third incoming or ex-officio; may also include US LTER participants on ILTER committees (e.g., Science committee)

**US LTER-ILTER Exchange**: Ideas included regular webinars to share new opportunities and research between US LTER and other international LTER networks

**Science-policy Exchange**: Specific to developing science products for layman audience on research of the international LTER network, dedicated to increasing the influence of science on environmental policy, conservation, and natural resource management (e.g., https://dev.science-policy-exchange.org/about)

**Regional Americas:** US regional network liaison; supports strong leadership and coordination within the Regional Americas network

**Others?**

**Role of the Network Office in support of the committee –**

There are several types of activities that the committee needs to facilitate, some of which are administrative and routine in nature e.g. coordinating possible ILTER participation in US LTER All Scientist Meetings, and processing of notices of research or travel opportunities.  The US LTER Network office has historically handled such activities.

***Use of US International Committee Funds***

Should funding become available from NSF to support ILTER, these funds will be used for the following priorities:

* Pay US dues to ILTER
* Support travel of both co-chairs to the annual ILTER meeting
* Support travel to attend the annual ILTER meeting of any committee member serving as chair or co-chair of an ILTER EB committee or US International LTER standing subcommittee
* Support travel of committee members to workshops or symposia organized by the US International committee for the purpose of developing research relationships with ILTER scientists