



GEOHAB

**Marine Geological and Biological
Habitat Mapping**

The Annual GeoHab Conference

Guidelines for selecting the host and conference organization

Document created May–June, 2011

1. Frequency and time of year

GeoHab conferences are held annually, usually in the first week of May.

2. Location

GeoHab conferences are held in different continents, and often different hemispheres, each year.

3. Background

GeoHab is a non-profit organisation established in 2001 and has since held annual conferences in various locations around the world (see geohab.org for a list of the meeting locations). These conferences have grown in popularity with an increase in the numbers of delegates and a growing desire from the community to host the conference.

Until now, the selection of the host country was decided two years in advance at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held immediately after each GeoHab conference. This was an informal process with an offer from a delegate from one institution, who would then become the chair of the conference in two year's time.

The organisation of the conference has been entirely up to the conference chair and a local organisation committee. The success of the GeoHab conference is testimony that this arrangement has worked well up until now. However, over the last three AGMs several candidates have offered to host GeoHab. This is extremely positive, as it demonstrates that GeoHab will continue to attract new delegates and countries.

However, it has become apparent that the GeoHab community would benefit from some clarity around the processes governing the selection of conference hosts and utilisation of GeoHab assets (e.g. email distribution list, website, etc.). As such, at the 2011 GeoHab conference (Helsinki, Finland) AGM it was agreed that some simple guidelines be drafted, as follows:

4. Selection of the GeoHab Host

- Guideline 1.** Expression of interest to host a GeoHab conference should be made at the AGM and noted in the minutes; A short (5 minute) presentation may be made by the proponents but this is not required; The offer must appear in the minutes of the meeting ;
- Guideline 2.** Expression of interest to host, and selection of the next two, GeoHab conference locations (and their respective institutions) should be discussed at every AGM and appear in the Agenda ahead of the conference;
- Guideline 3.** Preference will be given to a different continent each year: North America, South America, Australia/Oceania, Europe, Asia, Africa;
- Guideline 4.** Confirmation in writing of the conference host should be sent to the successful host by the GeoHab committee two years in advance and no more; offers beyond the two year period will be noted in the minutes but will not be considered as a commitment;
- Guideline 5.** In case of several offers to host GeoHab for the same year, two years before the conference, discussion should be held at the AGM to find a solution; if no solution is found, a hand vote from the audience should be held;
- Guideline 6.** The host location and conference chair(s) should be confirmed at the GeoHab conference in the previous year.

5. Guidelines for GeoHab Conferences

These guidelines have been drafted to help the GeoHab conference chair and local organising committee maintain the spirit of the GeoHab conference from one year to the other.

These guidelines are meant to be minimum standards only and positively enhancing them is at the discretion of the conference chair.

This is a living document and should be discussed at each AGM and revised accordingly.

Committees: The conference chair is free to call a local organisation committee and a scientific committee separately or jointly; one person is to chair both committees; Sub-committees (social, field trip, etc) are at the discretion of the local organisation committee; A student committee is set separately (see below);

Scientific committee: Each GeoHab conference should have Scientific Committee to provide support to the current Chair on production of the conference and overall scientific direction. The size of the Scientific Committee is at the discretion of the current chair but should include at least:

- 1) two international GeoHab members with more than four years experience in GeoHab;
- 2) the Chair of the previous year conference; and
- 3) the Chair of the following year conference.

Conference theme: The theme of the GeoHab conference is to be decided by the Scientific Committee after proposition from the Chair;

Session: A single session format is the norm for the GeoHab conference; to facilitate this format, the number of delegates should be limited to no more than 150;

Social program: Traditionally, the social program has included a conference dinner and a field trip; However, providing these is at the discretion of the local organising committee;

Web Site: The geohab.org website advertises the next GeoHab conference but is not the conference website. Each local organising committee must create and manage their own conference website; A link to the conference website should be provided as early as possible to geohab.org;

Registration Fee: Originally, the conferences did not require a registration fee, but after a number of conferences it was decided to establish a registration fee to offset costs associated with producing the conference; registration costs should be set to more than fully cover anticipated expenses. Any surplus funds from the registration fees are deposited into the GeoHab reserve account managed by the Circum-Pacific Council (see Budget below).

Budget: The budget for the conference is managed by the local organising committee; the Circum-Pacific Council will facilitate advance funding and student grant payment from the GeoHab reserve account; any surplus funds from the GeoHab conference will be credited to the GeoHab reserve account held and managed by the Circum-Pacific Council; reserve account funds are used to offset any unplanned expenditures; a financial statement outlining total revenue, expenditures and net position will be presented at the AGM by the GeoHab treasurer.

Student grants: A student committee shall be set up; The Chair of the previous year's GeoHab conference will preside over it and nominate a selection committee that reviews applications based on established criteria; Budget should include an amount at the discretion of the organising committee for student sponsoring; the amount available for student sponsoring should be decided by the beginning of the year of the conference; The criteria for providing student grants are available on the GeoHab website;

Email list: The email list supplied and managed by geohab.org must only be used for matters related directly to the production of the GeoHab conference.

Upcoming GeoHab Conferences

2012	Orcas Island, Washington state	USA	Gary Greene	greene@mlml.calstate.edu
2013	Rome	Italy	Andrea Fiorentino	andrea.fiorentino@apat.it
2014	Chile	Chile:		
		Australia:	Dan Ierodiaconou Andrew Heap	daniel.ierodiaconou@deakin.edu.au andrew.heap@ga.gov.au
2015	Aveiro	Portugal	Rosa Freitas	
	Brest	France	Jean-Francois Bourillet Jacques Populus	Jean.Francois.Bourillet@ifremer.fr jacques.populus@ifremer.fr
2016	Woods Hole	USA		
2017	Aveiro	Portugal		

GeoHab Steering Committee - 2011

Name	Role	Country	email	Ph.
H. Gary Greene	Treasurer; host of upcoming conference	USA	tombolo@centurytel.net	831-332-3627
Andrew Heap		Australia	Andrew.Heap@ga.gov.au	(02) 6249-9790
Terje Thorsnes		Norway	terje.thorsnes@ngu.no	47 (-73) 90 40 00
Geoffroy Lamarche		New Zealand	g.lamarche@niwa.co.nz	64 4 386 0465
Vaughn Barrie		Canada	Vaughn.Barrie@NRCan.gc.ca	250-363-6424
Brian Todd	Web content	Canada	Brian.Todd@NRCan.gc.ca	902-426-3407
Jean-François Bourillet		France	jfb@ifremer.fr	33 (0)2 98 22 42 43
Alan Stevenson		UK	agst@bgs.ac.uk	44 131 650 0376
Aarno Kotilainen	Host of past conference; upcoming student chair	Finland	aarno.kotilainen@gtk.fi	+358 (0) 20 550 11