

## 5. REVIEW OF HUB APPROACHES SUGGESTED BY THE WORKING GROUP

As directed by the SOW (#4), the Project Team reviewed possible hub model sites suggested by the Working Group. Three such sites were suggested for review:

- the Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Co-operative;
- the Ecological Monitoring and Assessment Network (EMAN) North – Information Centre; and
- the Quebec Local Integrated Knowledge System (QLINKS).  
(<http://qlinks.ucs.mun.ca/html/eqlinks.htm>)

The first two sites provided a great deal of valuable information to the Project Team in regards to designing a hub model. However, all attempts by the Project Team to contact the QLINKS site failed – so it was not possible to review it for applicability to this project. That site has either moved or is defunct; and all links generated by web searches proved to be inactive.

### 5.1 The Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Co-operative

The Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Co-operative (<http://www.taiga.net/coop/index1.html>) is run by the Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Society, a non-profit organization incorporated in the Yukon. It has a flat organizational structure, with decisions being reached by consensus at annual gatherings. A board of directors is elected at each annual gathering. Environment Canada (Yukon) serves as co-ordinator. The Co-op's role is to develop and share information about ecosystems for decision-makers to use. Funding is from various sources (currently government and co-management boards and councils), and is acquired on a yearly basis.

The site is a well laid-out, summary level source of ecological monitoring information, written for the general public. It's strengths are that it:

- provides summaries and trends of ecological monitoring information; and
- that it is written at a level that makes it accessible to a wide range of people (researchers; bureaucrats and the general public).

It's weaknesses – in relation to this project (and it's applicability as a possible hub model) – are that:

- it is not a Hub-Node system (i.e. there are no links back to the nodes who provided the CIM information);
- it is not a meta-data system; and

- the raw data that is contained on the site is not in a readily-usable format for other researchers (i.e. it has been translated into summary format and plotted onto graphs, but there are no links to a complete database or spreadsheet).

Due to the weaknesses just outlined, the Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Co-operative - as is - would not serve as a possible hub model for an MVCIMP IMS.

## 5.2 The EMAN North – Information Centre

The northern Ecological Assessment and Monitoring Network (EMAN-North) is a network for the coordination of ecological monitoring in northern Canada. Environment Canada is working in the three northern territories and northern Manitoba in close partnership with many agencies and programs to develop this network. The EMAN-North steering committee includes representatives of seven federal government agencies, three territorial government agencies, two northern research institutes, and university researchers. Environment Canada staff (based in Yellowknife and Whitehorse) chair the committee and act as coordinators.

The following principles, acknowledged by all partners, are integral to the successful operation of the EMAN-North network. EMAN-North is:

- based on voluntary cooperation by partners;
- a collaboration of parties working in relative independence but sharing a common vision;
- operated with limited centralized control, direction, and financial resources;
- built, in large part, on existing programs; few new programs have resulted from the program; and
- focused on standardizing approaches and sharing information.

The EMAN-North Information Centre (<http://www.emannorth.ca/ic/>) site is a well laid-out, in-depth source of ecological monitoring information, written for researchers and the general public. It's strengths are that it:

- is an excellent example of a Hub-Node model;
- is a metadata based system;
- has links back to the Nodes and the raw data; and
- provides status and trends summaries of CIM information (i.e. translates technical, scientific information into plain language).

The only weaknesses in relation to this project (and it's applicability as a possible hub model) – are that:

- the metadata formats should be standardized (see Section 4.2.2.1); and
- the raw data provided by the links should be in a more readily-usable format for other researchers (i.e. it has been translated into summary format and plotted onto graphs for certain days, but there are no links to the complete database or spreadsheet).

The EMAN-North Information Centre could serve as a possible hub model for an MVCIMP IMS, as long as the two weaknesses outlined above were addressed.