

Agenda/Minutes for 2022 ADMB Foundation meeting

28 April 2022 at 8:30am Honolulu, 11:30am Seattle, 8:30pm in Copenhagen, and 5:30am the next day (29 April) in Nouméa

Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/kxv-rrfx-nvv>

Or dial: (US) +1 315-596-2146 PIN: 273 017 798#

More phone numbers: <https://tel.meet/kxv-rrfx-nvv?pin=6657653989557>

Background

- [Minutes from the previous meeting](#) (January 2020)

Attending:

- Allan Hicks (IPHC Seattle),
- Andrea Havron (ECS/NOAA Corvallis),
- Arni Magnusson (SPC Noumea),
- Christine Stawitz (NOAA S&T Seattle),
- Christoffer Albertsen (DTU, Copenhagen),
- Cole Monnahan (NOAA Seattle),
- Erik Franklin (University of Hawaii, PI for ADMB grant, ADMB Foundation Treasurer),
- Gavin Fay (UMass Dartmouth, New Bedford),
- Ian Taylor (NOAA Seattle, ADMB Foundation president),
- Jim Ianelli (NOAA Seattle),
- Johnnoel Ancheta (ADMB Developer, U of Hawaii),
- Kasper Kristensen (DTU Copenhagen),
- Mollie Brooks (DTU Copenhagen),
- Vanessa Trijoulet (DTU Copenhagen, ADMB Foundation secretary),

Potential topics [see minutes below]

- Update on changes to ADMB since the previous meeting
- Impact of NOAA funding for ADMB coming to an end
- Update on tax status
- Future directions for the ADMB project and ADMB Foundation

Tasks

- Update ADMB mailing address (still seems to go to John Sibert's old place).

- Request funds to pay for apple developers membership ~\$90 USD. The membership is needed to create signed MacOS installers. Currently, the unsigned ADMB macOS installers are blocked by the operating system.

Minutes

Meeting started around 11:35am (Seattle time)

ADMB updates (Johnnoel)

ADMB 13.0 to be released soon and will be the last release of the project (hopefully by the end of May). The new release will have threaded capabilities and has about 2x improvement in speed. Now also an option to run ADMB without going through a TPL. Also, work with Cole on improving console output.

- Output changes: only to the console (should not break any code), the MCMC and optimization algorithms and output files are unchanged. Modified output.txt which dumps the console output to a file. All will be documented and the old console output format will be available via a command-line command.
- ADMB 13.0 branch is available for testing (see <https://github.com/admb-project/admb/tree/admb-13.0>)
- Note: C++ 20 will break old versions of ADMB. 13.0 will be compiled with C++ 17, older versions were in C++ 14.
- Erik suggests a workshop/meeting for rollout of new release

NOAA funding (Ian Taylor)

Christine: NOAA grant ends in 1.5 years, a year of development and 6 months of an “orderly shutdown,” defined as a stable version that

- Works with big dependencies (e.g. SS3)
- Supported on a virtual machine (for backward compatibility)
- Cleaned up repository

Ian T.: The Foundation finances are separate from the ADMB project (the grant from NOAA to UH which has paid for Johnnoel’s salary). We could try to find new funding to extend the ADMB project. The reason why the project is stopped is that NOAA is investing in FIMS platform which is built in TMB. There is therefore a shift in focus from ADMB to TMB. ADMB project funding ends March 31, 2024. NOAA staff were also developing a third AD software [ATL](#) (MAS model developed from it) but is not a priority at this time.

Clarification from Erik: The end date for the project is March 31 2024, not 1.5 years from today.

Clarification from Christine: ADMB will not die, just that funding for further development by UH/CIMAR (i.e., Johnnoel) will end. All code will remain publically available, and a VM can be set up to compile updates to models like SS3 which will be used long after 2024.

Ian T. asked Arni regarding the models used in SPC.

Arni: MFCL used for Eastern Tropical Pacific tuna assessments by SPC depends on a fork of autodif which Dave Fournier has continued to support as a consultant until just a few months ago. Nick Davies has worked closely with Fournier and will continue to keep MFCL active. No exact plan. Development of new features will slow down after this year. All further development is unlikely after Nick Davies retires. Not clear how different the autodif fork used by MFCL is. MFCL is not currently fully open source, but Arni thinks that it should become so. There is interest at SPC in collaboration with FIMS development.

Ian T.: European assessments use a mix of software but the majority are in TMB.

Mollie: glmmADMB development has stopped, switched to glmmTMB.

Arni: My experience at ICES and FAO making reproducible assessments is that ADMB applications are the most reproducible (10-20 years later). More than e.g., R packages. Mainly due to the fact that ADMB does not depend on other libraries. Some discussion with Ian T. about the development of TAF in ICES. Arni explains that there is no source code embedded in TAF and that it is a way to structure scripts to source that are written by stock assessors.

Mollie: will there be money to support the website to archive and distribute e.g. old executable files? Johnnoel suggests moving everything to github, the domains for the ADMB and TMB projects will expire if not paid (e.g. admb-foundation.org, admb-project.org, and tmb-project.org). This would break URLs in published papers and other locations (TMB to a lesser degree). Ian T. mentioned possibilities for NOAA to still pay for the domains. To be decided later.

ADMB foundation tax status (Allan Hicks)

Detailed email from Allan received on Thursday 14 April 2022:

“Dear present and past ADMB Foundation members,

I would like to update you with regard to the tax status of the ADMB Foundation. When I became treasurer in 2016, the Foundation had last filed taxes for 2013. I talked with EJK Accounting and Tax Services in Seattle about helping to catch up on taxes, and due to changes in their staff and my failures, the tax filings were not caught up. After three years of not filing taxes, the non-profit status of an organization is revoked until corrected.

I recently talked with EJK and they noted that the penalty for a non-profit organization not filing is about US\$10,000 per year. This would have bankrupted the Foundation in 2016 and certainly now. I'm not sure why that was not explained to me then. However, they were very helpful recently and suggested two paths forward.

- 1) We can file the 990 forms, and plead for a waiver of the penalties given changes in the Foundation since 2013. This has worked for some non-profits, but is not guaranteed.*
- 2) The ADMB Foundation can be closed and restarted as a new Foundation. This would likely not be an issue given there has been no activity in the last three years, and the Foundation could be restarted with the same name.*

There are other issues with the Foundation, such as the business license is in Hawaii under Sibert's name and former address, I have never been able to gain access to the bank account in Hawaii, the bank account in Seattle has many members on the account which they told me could not be removed without them being present, and the current address for the Foundation is the IPHC offices in Seattle and I have been asked to change that.

I would like to discuss this with the Board and Foundation members and determine a best path forward for the Foundation. I am leaning towards a restart with the help of EJK (the person I talked to is the managing partner of EJK and was very helpful). This would allow the Foundation to determine the best location for a physical license, bank accounts, and other necessities. It may be a useful path to formally include TMB as part of the Foundation as well.

I deeply apologize for not fixing this sooner, and for letting down the Foundation, especially the founding members who put a lot of effort into making ADMB and the Foundation a success. I hope that you all can forgive my apathy and allow me to help fix this and set up a successful Foundation for years to come.

I look forward to talking with you all at the end of this month and answering any questions that you may have. However, I am not an expert on non-profits (I will learn as much as I can before the meeting), and I invite any of you to bring your insights as well. Please contact me if you would like to discuss anything before or after the meeting.

*Sincerely,
Allan Hicks*

Note: the project is separate from the foundation. How does NCEAS relate (if at all)?

Summary given by Allan during the meeting: Originally John Sibert formed the foundation (503c charitable org), including a business license using his previous address in Hawaii. Taxes were done as a favor by a friend of John, filed last in 2013 and are not in "good standing". Allan took over as treasurer in 2016 and contacted the friend of John who was doing the taxes and he was not interested in helping more with that. In 2017 Allan started the process to file for taxes. He paid a deposit to a tax firm, which did not mention anything about penalties for not filing taxes since 2014. Allan had issues getting information about taxes and pathways forward from the tax firm. There may be hefty penalties resulting. There were little taxes to pay, but the IRS wants donor records etc. Allan has been in contact with the tax firm recently.

ADMB foundation future (Allan Hicks)

First, we need to think about the purpose of the foundation. We need to understand the bylaws by looking at the archive documents. After 3 years of not filing the taxes the foundation lost its tax exempt status. One option is to dissolve the foundation as the IRS will only consider the last 3 years for audit.

Three possibilities then:

- 1) Make an apology for not filing the taxes and hope it is accepted and get the tax exemption back
- 2) Dissolve it and restart it. The IRS would only look at the last 3 years of taxes so not a big issue. More important would be starting the new one which can have legal expenses.
- 3) Dissolve the foundation and not reform it

We need to make a decision on how to move forward. The tax firm still has the deposit so it can help us if we decide to file the taxes, help dissolved the foundation, or we can get the money back.

Ian T.: If the foundation did not exist, given that the project is dying, would we make the effort to start the foundation?

Allan: A benefit is to support ADMB/TMB in the future through for e.g. workshops, training, domains, etc. The downside is that an enormous amount of work has been done to get that started and it is a lot of work to train people to take over. In moving forward we need to learn how to maintain a foundation. For instance, there's also a bank account we can't access in Hawaii, and would prefer to transfer it to a Wells Fargo account in Seattle. When Steve was treasurer, he started a bank account in Seattle that Allan has access to. It is the main account. The problem is that this account has 4 owners and the bank cannot remove owners without them being present. As a result, this type of problem needs to be considered in the future. More effort should be made to pass the relay over to new people on the board.

Johnoel: Try to see if Anders Nielsen has access because he's coming to Hawaii in July.

Kasper: The foundation would be useful for TMB. I have 2 months of NOAA funding annually, but that's not much. Would like to have developer workshops to do documentation, software testing, writing examples, development of teaching courses, etc., and some funding for those would be really helpful. There are many important aspects of software development beyond just writing code.

Arni: Regarding workshops, this is where Kasper introduced the first versions of TMB, so it was useful. Agree with Kasper's view on the importance of these meetings. Good to have everyone in the same room for 1 week. It was possible to pay for the developers to come to the meeting as the value of their work.

Could we do these without the Foundation? Maybe? One-off events with different PIs? Johnoel notes that there's a high overhead to do these through universities or other third parties.

Counterpoint: John Sibert was doing the overhead pro bono previously. Maybe it's better to pay the overhead and avoid maintaining the foundation.

The main problem without the foundation is that we cannot accept donations and will have to apply for fundings.

Christine: Stan-dev uses <https://numfocus.org/> along with other open software projects. Github Sponsors is also an option - there is a waitlist so should probably try to join now: <https://github.com/sponsors/accounts>

What is the point of the foundation? Do we dissolve it? What is the business entity? What address?

Foundation Public documents (articles of incorporation, bylaws, etc):

https://admb-foundation.org/?page_id=8

Direct bylaws link:

<http://admb-foundation.org/wp-content/uploads/ADMB-Foundation-Bylaws.pdf>

Allan sees the foundation's role to support future workshops, funding developers, training, website management, overhead costs, etc. The downside is the taxes and accounting services required for it to run smoothly.

Erik: ADMB project is coming to an end and the foundation was created for it. The continuity is maybe to close the foundation given all the problems with legal status.

Allan: There are also more tools nowadays to host this type of projects (see chat and above).

Ian T.: There are specific requirements in the bylaws for a meeting (4 weeks notice with termination as a topic) to do this so we need to have a separate meeting to be determined later. Aim for 10/2023 to coincide with orderly shutdown.

Allan to talk to the accountant about tax implications of termination and how to proceed.

Unanimous support for holding a meeting between October 2023 and March 2024 for the purpose of terminating the ADMB Foundation. No objections.

Meeting adjourned around 1:09pm Seattle time.

Screenshot of attendees (at the end, after some others left)

Christopher Albertsen

Christine Stawitz - NOAA Federal

Allan Hicks

Andrea Havron - NOAA Affiliate

Johnnoel Ancheta

Kasper Kristensen

Gavin Fay

Vanessa Trijoulet

Mollie Brooks

Edwin Franklin

Aroni Magnusson

You

1:06 PM | ADMB Foundation meeting

In-call messages

Let everyone send messages

Messages can only be seen by people in the call and are deleted when the call ends.

agenda, nope that reips

Vanessa Trijoulet 1:04 PM

Thanks @Cole, very appreciated. I will populate with my notes

Christine Stawitz - NOAA Federal 1:05 PM

we could have it at the joint ICES/PICES meeting in Seattle

oct 23

Cole Monnahan - NOAA Federal 1:05 PM

gotta run good to see everyone thanks

Gavin Fay 1:05 PM

wait, joint ICES/PICES is in Seattle? 2023?

Send a message to everyone