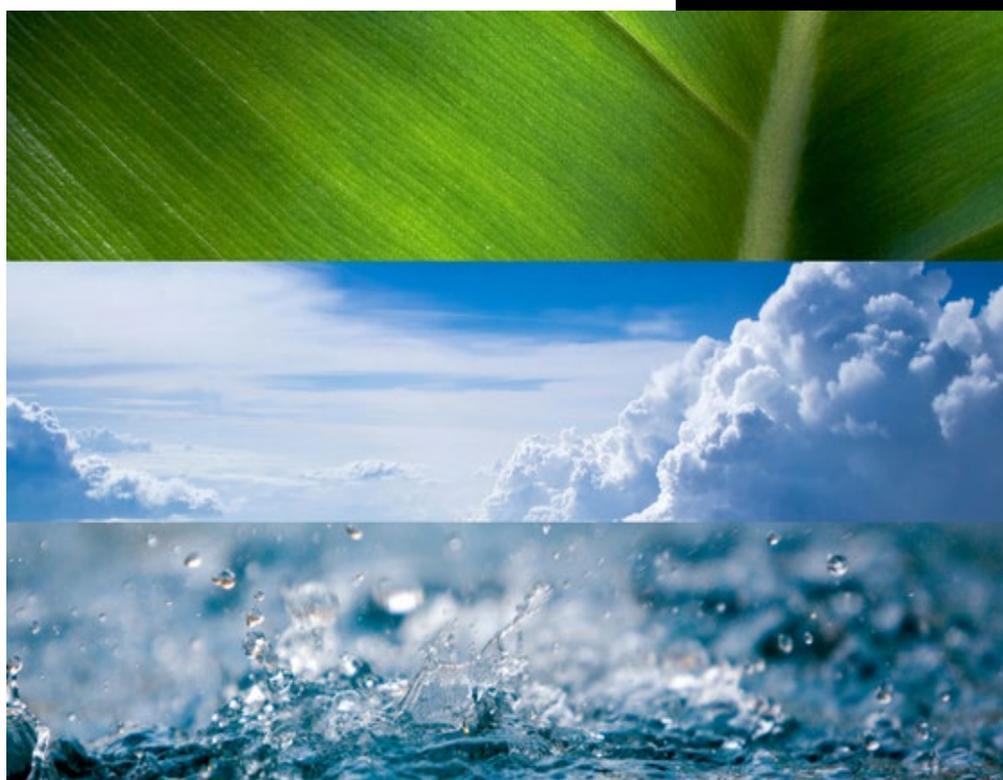


D6.16

Overview report of all annual meetings, General Assembly and Executive Board meetings



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Deliverable Review Checklist

A list of checkpoints has been created to be ticked off by the Task Leader before finalizing the deliverable. These checkpoints are incorporated into the deliverable template where the Task Leader must tick off the list.

- √
- Appearance is generally appealing and according to the RINGO template. Cover page has been updated according to the Deliverable details. x
- The executive summary is provided giving a short and to the point description of the deliverable. x
- All abbreviations are explained in a separate list. x
- All references are listed in a concise list. x
- The deliverable clearly identifies all contributions from partners and justifies the resources used. x
- A full spell check has been executed and is completed. x

DISCLAIMER

This document has been produced in the context of the *project* Readiness of ICOS for Necessities of integrated Global Observations (RINGO)

The Research leading to these results has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 730944. All Information in this document is provided "as is" and no guarantee or warranty is given that the information is fit for any particular purpose. The user thereof uses the information at its sole risk and liability. For the avoidance of all doubts, the European Commission has no liability in respect of this document, which is merely representing the authors view.

Amendments, comments and suggestions should be sent to the authors.

Executive Summary

This document is a report of all the Annual meeting, General Assembly (GA), and Executive Board (EB) meetings. Two different types of reports were prepared because of unforeseen changes in the legislature during the project; hence it was necessary to prepare one copy which also contains the names and signatures of the participants, which cannot be public document due to GDPR regulation but is needed for reporting and one copy where this GDPR sensitive information is removed.

This report explains the duties and responsibilities of these different managerial bodies of the RINGO project. The second part of the document explains when and where these meetings were organized. The ICOS ERIC, a RINGO coordinator, is keeping the detailed programmes and signed participants' sign-up forms of the Annual meetings as supporting documents in case of internal and external reviews and audits.

Discussion at the end of the document explains the evolution of the meetings. The first meeting was agreeing on overall organisation and visual identity, while the second was more focussed towards management and societal impact. Once more results became available more detailed joint scientific exchange of information and discussion of results in the third meeting, where as the fourth annual meeting discussed already the implementation and identified the scientific highlights of the project. New countries training was maintained a fundamental part of the annual meeting to support their interest in joining ICOS ERIC as well as to facilitate their readiness to join. In addition to face to face meetings, sixteen teleconferences of the executive board were also organized at two months intervals. This was not always possible due to fieldwork or the different holiday seasons of the participants. These meetings played a valuable part in securing the ongoing success of the project. This gained experience in organizing these kinds of multidisciplinary, crosscutting science events helped ICOS ERIC head office personnel in organizing other events such as the ICOS Science Conference.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The main aim of the RINGO project was to build the "Readiness of ICOS for Necessities of integrated Global Observations". The organizational structure of the RINGO Project was designed to mimic the established management structure of ICOS RI. Therefore, the overall organization structure of the RINGO project is based on cross-domain matrix model that was considered to support "deeper" integration within the RI. This proposed management structure was shown in the approved application and here as Fig. 1. The most notable difference in the management structure of the ICOS RI and RINGO Project is that the Director General (DG) is not chairing the RINGO EB.

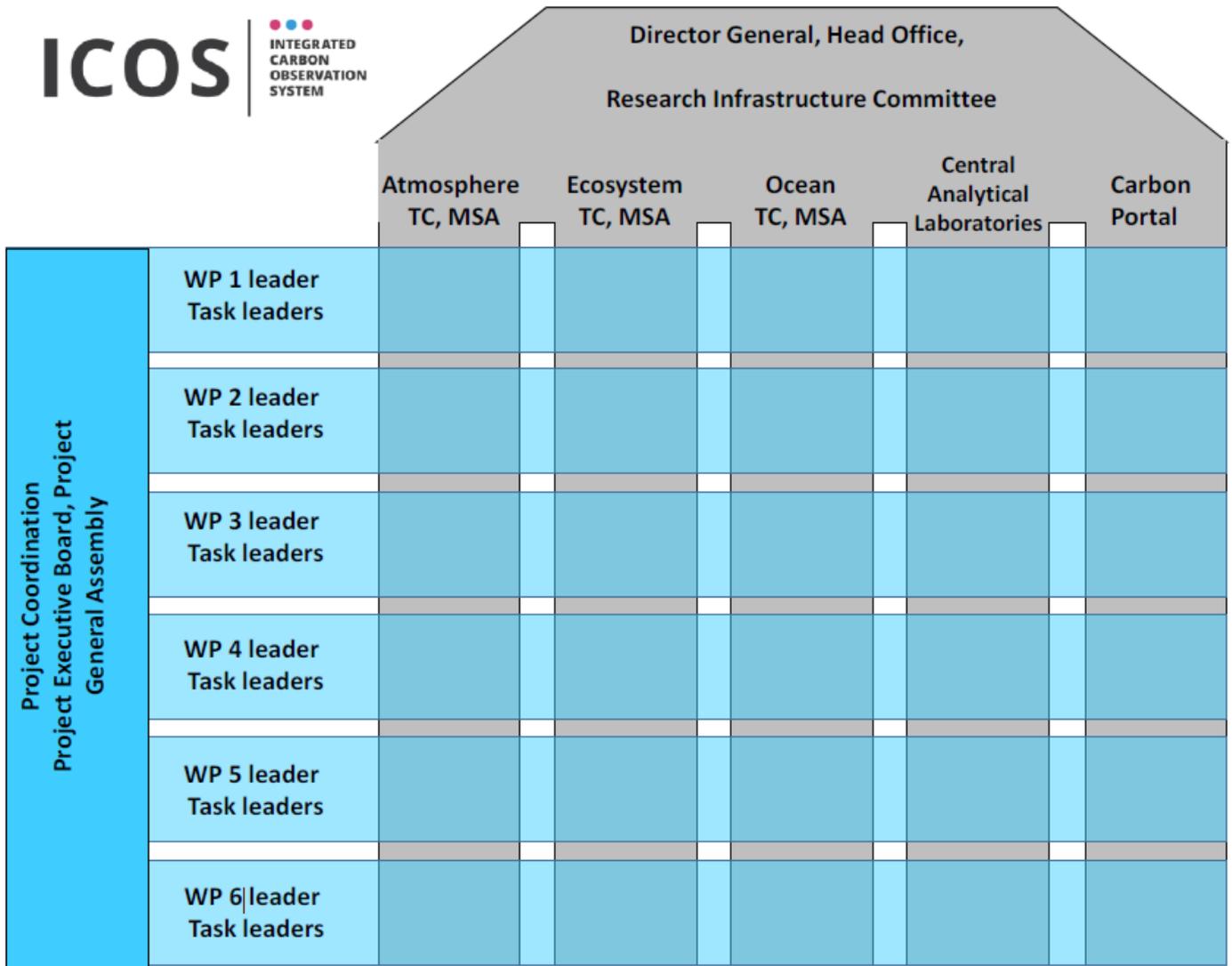


Figure 1. Managerial structure of the project related to the established structure of ICOS RI. The RINGO consortium had two official bodies: the General Assembly (GA) and the Executive Board (EB). GA is the decision-making body of the Consortium, where each beneficiary is responsible for also representing their linked third parties. It is monitoring the project progress, use of resources, intellectual property rights as specified in the Consortium Agreement, and approving and removing consortium members. The EB steers the Consortium and implementation of work based on the GA decisions.

The EB was agreed to have meetings at least quarterly, with one meeting in coordination with annual GA meetings. The EB had the following tasks:

- Collect information at least every six months on the progress of the Project along the Milestones defined in table 3.2a, examine that information to assess the compliance of the Project with the Consortium Plan and, if necessary, propose modifications of the Consortium Plan to the General Assembly;
- Review and approve the internal reports defined in Table 3.2a.
- Review and approve deliverables.
- Prepare the meetings, propose decisions and prepare the agenda of the General Assembly
- Support the Coordinator in preparing meetings with the European Commission and in preparing related data and deliverables;
- Moderating possible disputes among the Consortium Partners and seeking a consensus among the Parties
- Any other tasks specified in the Consortium Agreement or required by the General Assembly.

The RINGO EB consisted of all work package leaders, one additional task leader per work package as a potential substitute of the WP, at least one representative of a linked third party, and the Coordinator.

2 ORGANISATION OF THE MEETINGS

[1st RINGO Annual Meeting, GA and EB meetings](#)

The first Annual meeting, including GA and EB meetings, also known as the "RINGO Kick-off" meeting, was held on February 21st -23rd in Heidelberg, Germany. There were 58 attendees. This meeting focused on securing the future prospects of a successful research project by discussing the project management and risk assessment.

All work packages utilised the 'World' Café' -method', which allowed for informal but focused discussions on the above-mentioned subjects. The third day of the meeting was mainly dedicated to GA and EB apart from the small wrap up from the activities of the previous day. The meeting also agreed on RINGO visual guidelines, such as the logo, which is aligned with the ICOS logo to indicate the project's purpose in further developing the RI.

Including the GA and EB, there were 58 attendees in the 1st RINGO Annual meeting.

[2nd RINGO Annual Meeting, GA & EB face to face meetings](#)

The Second RINGO Annual meeting was held on March 20th - 22nd, 2018, in Antwerp, Belgium. It was hosted by the University of Antwerp. The venue, provided by the host institution, was situated at the heart of the Stadscampus, in a magnificent, historic settings of *Hof van Liere* building. The number of participants was 65.

This meeting provided the Consortium with the possibility to organize separate workshops. The meeting began with the introduction of the ongoing aims and progress of each task. The programme also contained break-out groups that were organized around the ICOS domains (Atmosphere, Ecosystem, Oceans). Again, the coordination team provided the participants with the possibility to organize task-specific workshops. This time only Task 1.2. had a premeeting workshop of their own.

[3rd RINGO Annual Meeting, GA & EB face to face meetings](#)

The 3rd RINGO Annual meeting was held in Southampton, UK, at the National Oceanographic Centre on March 20th - 22nd. It was organized back to back with the Ocean Monitoring Station Assembly (MSA) meeting, one of the ICOS OTC regular meetings. In between these meetings, there were two side-events: Carbon cycling mini-symposium and the Business Science Forum. Again, the coordination team provided the participants with the possibilities to organize task-specific workshops. This time it was Task 1.2. and WP 2 held specific meetings; WP 2. organized special training especially designed to meet the required needs of new countries that might be interested in joining to join ICOS. Sixty-six key participants in the Consortium attended the RINGO annual meeting. The side-events attracted more than half of these since the carbon cycling mini-symposium had 39 participants, whilst the business science forum attracted 37 attendees.

This time the registration was done using the electronic system available at the NOC. The registration also required payment of dinner, and hence it was linked with bank identification as it included a participation fee collected to cover part of the cost from the conference dinner. For this reason, the signatures of the participants are removed from the public document. The host institute had a professional team to help the ICOS ERIC HO organizing team.

We also had a sudden new opening in the middle of the week, as one of the guests, Alex Cowan, who had signed up for the Business science Forum, had also been invited by NOC to give a guest lecture about citizen science. He represented the Polar Science Collective. The Polar Collective (<http://www.polarcollective.org/>) is a consortium of tourism vessels operating in polar regions and would like to expand their work portfolio in the citizen science space. They have an impressive set of collaborators already but feel that they have a capacity for more. Dr. Alex Cowan presented his experience in the expedition cruise industry and shared his view on its potential as a data collection platform in polar regions. The platform is currently under-utilized, but the industry is extremely open to research projects and science support. There was a keen interest to this, and it clearly shows how the RINGO community is actively seeking and grasping every possibility that there is to expand the carbon observing system.

The collected feedback from the Annual meeting was generally very positive. We received some ideas about how to improve. For example, some considered that posters were not needed because the community prefers to talk. Here are some examples of the feedback collected:

"No time needed for cross-domain discussion, but we would like to give our talk to all WPs and teams, as the tools that we have developed will be very useful for other WPs. They will allow everyone to use a common set of tools for calculating air-sea gas fluxes and net integrated values. This will ensure that all RINGO results are internally consistent."

"No posters, we prefer to give a talk!"

[4th RINGO Annual Meeting, GA & EB face to face meetings](#)

The 4th RINGO annual meeting was hosted by one of the ICOS candidate countries, Poland. The local host institution, which is also among the beneficiaries in the RINGO Consortium, the Laboratory of Bioclimatology, Department of Ecology and Environmental Protection at the Poznan University of Life Sciences, had negotiated a picturesque venue from the Poznan Branch of Polish Academy of Sciences in Działyński Palace, Stary Rynek 78/79 in the heart of Poznań.

This meeting had two hidden goals planned by the organiser. It was designed to encourage the finalisation of the delayed deliverables and strengthening the communities' sense of belonging, which is needed to sustain future collaboration once the RINGO project has ended. Thus, instead of just focusing on the

pending deliverables, it was necessary to spend a substantial amount of time focusing on successes. This information was also used to attract new countries to join, and during the Annual meeting we received insight information from the Polish representatives related to their potential joining. This news was warmly welcomed by the ICOS community.

This 4th annual meeting was organized at the onset of the early spreading of the COVID-19 pandemic in Europe. Hence, many of the registered participants cancelled their physical participation as the organizers were able to provide the possibility to participate via teleconferencing tools.

3 EVOLUTION OF THE MEETINGS

This chapter gives an overview of suggested topics discussed, the coordination team's ability to maintain motivation indicated as a number of participants; observed successes, and things to improve.

The 1st RINGO meeting was more oriented toward getting to know each other and getting familiar with the project itself. It also set boundaries and was important in preparing the Risk Management plan. This was useful as it was often reflected during the virtual/ online EB meetings, where delayed deliverables were discussed.

In the 2nd RINGO annual meeting in March 2018, the coordination team was happy to receive negative feedback from the break-out sessions organized around topics formed by thematic centres. The grouping was recognised to be unfunctional because many topics are cross-discipline. This was a strong indication that the integration in ICOS had already progressed to the next level of integration where scientists from different TC were working closely together to find the best solutions instead of in workshops being siloed within the thematic centres.

The 2nd meeting also received feedback that contained lots of criticisms for being too focused on management and the societal impact of ICOS. The audience requested bringing science back to ICOS. Yet, this was somehow expected and maybe even somewhat necessary, as part of the 'Coordinator's responsibility to keep the Consortium informed about reporting guidelines, and any large scale developments that ICOS needed to undertake, such as the Impact Analysis that was part of WP1 in the project and that was carried out around the time of the 2nd Annual meeting

Based on the received feedback, the 3rd RINGO annual meeting was designed to focus more on science. It was much appreciated by the community, and this was also seen in the collected feedback, which was generally overly positive. The feedback gained further evidence that the ICOS coordination team has been successful in further enhancing integration among domains and cross-domains. Yet, the balance between time allocated for general and more specific task- or work package-wise working was found challenging. Yet developing "political readiness" was considered something that is a truly cross-cutting topic for all work packages.

The 4th annual meeting suffered from the spreading of COVID-19. Yet this gave the coordination team another possibility to test their abilities to provide remote participation. The coordination team put up WebEx and provided the participants with the opportunity to give oral presentations remotely. Despite some difficulties, this was highly appreciated by those participants who had a talk but who did not want to travel.

The devotion of the key members of the project and the entire community is seen in the number of participants that has maintained almost the same throughout the RINGO Project (Fig. 2.)

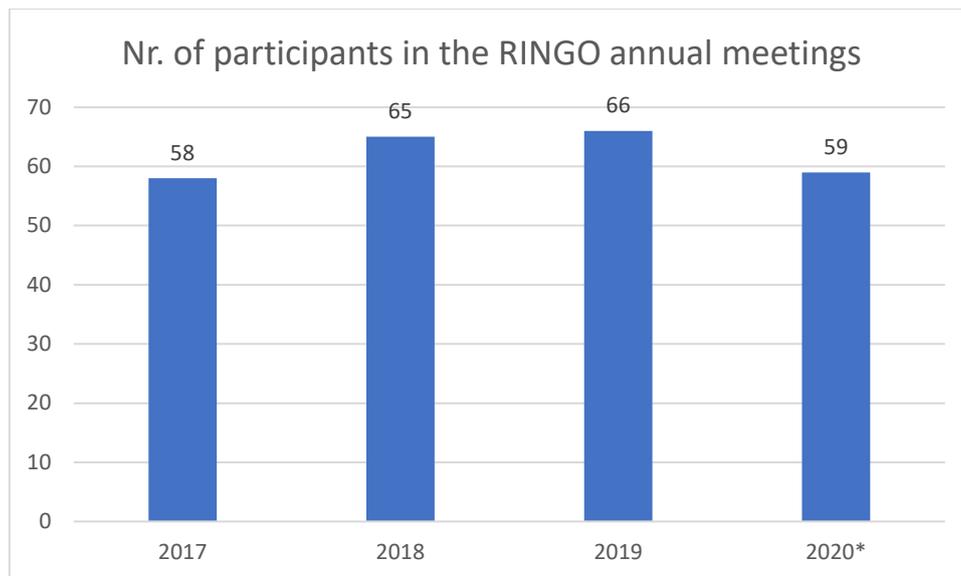


Figure 2. The number of participants present in person at the organized annual meetings. * 2020 indicates that this number is biased because participation didn't require physical presence.

The coordination team is positive that they have succeeded in organizing events that the community obviously highly values since the number of participants has actually grown steadily if remote participants in the 2020 meeting are included. Some of these remote attendees also gave a presentation. This gave the coordination team confidence to start exploring new methods, which were needed later on during 2020 when the ICOS Science Conference had to be organized completely virtually. As part of the conference, the coordination team organized a special RINGO session since it became evident that due to COVID-19, it would be impossible to organize a final event for the RINGO Project. The science Conference was a huge success with its 1000 participants to whom the RINGO project was introduced, and the RINGO logo was advertised.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The RINGO project succeeded in strengthening the community's sense of belonging and maintaining the scientists' motivation to keep working to reach the project goals. These meetings provided the Consortium with a platform to discuss all the relevant issues related to the potential risks and also to identify and celebrate project highlights, as well as to promote the ongoing success of the project. The annual, GA, and EB-meetings provided an opportunity for the ICOS ERIC HO coordination team to gain valuable experience in organizing high-level scientific events. This experience and information have been further used i.e. in organizing bi-annual ICOS Science Conferences.

5 DEFINITIONS, ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------|---|
| DG | ICOS Director General |
| EB | Executive Board is the supervisory body for the execution of the Project, reporting to and being accountable to the GA. |
| GA | General Assembly is the decision-making body of the Consortium. It is responsible for monitoring the progress of the Consortium, use of resources, intellectual property rights and the evolution of the Consortium (adding and removing members). |
| ICOS | Integrated Carbon Observation System |
| MSA | Monitoring Station Assemblies for ICOS ERIC Member countries' Atmosphere station, Ecosystem station and Ocean station networks |
| RI | Research Infrastructure |
| RINGO | Readiness of ICOS for Necessities of integrated Global Observations |
| TWC | The World Cafe is a discussion method, which makes use of an informal cafe setting for participants to explore an issue by discussing it in small table groups. Discussion is held in multiple rounds of 20-30 minutes, with the cafe ambiance intended to allow for more relaxed and open conversations to take place. More elaborated description of this method can be found here . |