

HISCOM 99

REPORT

Herbarium Information Systems Committee (HISCOM) Meeting

Queensland Herbarium

16-18 August 1999

Participants

Bill Barker (Convener)(State
Herbarium of South Australia)
Peter Bostock (Queensland
Herbarium)
Gary Chapple (National
Herbarium of New South Wales)
Barry Conn (National Herbarium
of New South Wales)
Jim Croft (Centre for Plant
Biodiversity, Australian Capital
Territory)
Peter Neisch (National Herbarium
of Victoria)
Ben Richardson (Western
Australian Herbarium)
Greg Whitbread (Centre for Plant
Biodiversity, Australian Capital
Territory)

Invited Guests

Alan Brooks (KE Software)
Ian Lunt (Charles Sturt University, New South
Wales)(University Representative)
Aaron Wilson (LandCare Research,
Christchurch, New Zealand)
Annette Wilson (Australian Biological
Resources Study, Australian Capital Territory)

PROCEEDINGS

1. Welcome

Gordon Guymer (Chief Botanist, Queensland Herbarium) welcomed participants and invited guests to the Queensland Herbarium. Peter Bostock (Meeting organiser) introduced the group to the facilities available and summarised general arrangements.

1. Review of HISCOM98 Actions

The Meeting reviewed progress on actions. Since the matters arising from *HISCOM98* were also discussed during this meeting, most *Actions* are discussed in Section 3. Those actions that were not discussed further are present here.

2.1: Production of brochure or flier

The need for a brochure or flier to market the *Virtual Australian Herbarium (VAH)* and *HISCOM* was recommended to *CHAH*. Although *CHAH* supported this proposal (Haegi – point 2, 13 August 1999), their decision was not known by *HISCOM* until recently. Therefore, no action has been taken.

ACTION 1: NO FURTHER ACTION

It was agreed that the need for a brochure or flier was not as important as it was last year. Instead, it was agreed to use the *HISCOM* and *VAH* web site to describe, present and promote product.

2.2: Australian Museum On Line (AMOL) launch

Barry Conn attended the launch of AMOL in Sydney on 24 September 1998 (refer report on the *HISCOM* Web site – October 1998).

ACTION 1: Append AMOL report to this Report

(<http://www.rbgsyd.gov.au/HISCOM/REPORTS/AMOL.html>)

(Barry Conn)

Included here:

**Launch of new Website for
"Australian Museums On Line"**

Barry J. Conn

**Royal Botanic Gardens, Mrs Macquaries Road,
Sydney NSW 2000, Australia**

barry@rbgsyd.gov.au

1998

The Heritage Collections Council (HCC) aims to establish widespread access to Australian collecting institutions electronically. The new *Australian Museums On Line* Website (AMOL), which was officially launched 13 October 1998, is the first major step in providing this electronic link. The idea for the project grew out of the recognition of the need for a National database of all collections. It is regarded as the gateway to the nation's culture on the Internet.

In this project, museums are regarded as including natural science and indigenous collections, as well as art galleries. Since the information for people is far broader than the actual collections held by museums, the focus of AMOL is on 'telling stories' rather than on documenting 60 million items held in Australian museums.

AMOL is a collaborative effort involving Commonwealth, State and Territory governments. Therefore, it forms part of Australia's Cultural Network. The result is a trove of data - descriptions, images, stories, articles, opinions - reflecting the richness of Australia's cultural heritage.

The AMOL website offers easy access to cultural information, particularly for remote and regional museums and cultural organisations. Collections from large State institutions can be found alongside collections from regional and community museums and galleries from every region of Australia.

The AMOL website includes:

Guide to Australian Museums (over 1,000 Australian collecting institutions are listed)

Open Collections (search a database of more than 400,000 collection records)

Museum Craft (a unique range of resources for museum workers, including conservation information, a dynamic Australian Museums Forum, an Open Museum Journal, events, information on jobs, training, grants, museum industry contacts).

[reprinted from HISCOM Web site: <http://www.rbgsyd.gov.au/HISCOM/REPORTS/AMOL.html>]

1. *HISCOM99 Agenda and Actions*

SECTION A

Functioning of *HISCOM* – Actions and recommendations

3.1: *HISCOM's* Strategic Plan (Project 16, *HISCOM98*)

The latest version of the *HISCOM's* Strategic Plan (version 2.3.f) was discussed. Although *CHAH* supported the need for *HISCOM* to have a Strategic Plan and the Plan's general direction (Haegi – point 1, 13 August 1999), it was felt that some aspects required further discussion.

ACTION 1: THE CURRENT STRATEGIC PLAN TO BE DIVIDED INTO TWO SECTIONS:

- a brief Strategic Plan that summarises our vision and major objectives, and
- a more detailed Operational Plan that outlines the proposed projects for the next three years

Bill Barker (to divide Strategic Plan – September 1999)

(All members to comment – September 1999)

SECTION B

Virtual Australian Herbarium – Actions and recommendations

(Projects 1–6, *HISCOM98*)

3.2: Presentation of *Virtual Australian Herbarium* (VAH) to respective institutions, with comments collated for further discussion by *HISCOM*

The *VAH* concept had been presented to staff of respective institutions. Although general support for the concept had been attained, *VAH* was insufficiently advanced to generate specific recommendations from user groups.

The prototype *VAH* was presented to the Meeting (Projects 1 & 2, *HISCOM98*). As a proof of concept, this web site dynamically links the *Acacia* accession information held at AD, PERTH, and NSW. It returns these data as an Australia-wide distribution dot map.

This is a major breakthrough for *HISCOM* and it is important to acknowledge the:

- generous support of *KE software* for providing the original code
- enthusiastic efforts of AD and computing team for completing the code
- willing cooperation of PERTH and NSW, together with AD, to make the *VAH* a reality

The *VAH* is hosted at:

- <http://143.216.198.138/~texweb/VAH.html> (AD – a temporary site);
- <http://florabase.calm.wa.gov.au/test/vah/vahtest.html> (PERTH)
- <http://plantnet.rbgsyd.gov.au/VAH/WWW/VAH.html> (NSW)

ACTION 1: Demonstrate VAH at all member institutions
(<http://143.216.198.138/~texweb/VAH.html>)

- Account: VAHuser
- Password: demonstration

(All members – September 1999)

This was originally regarded as a project (Project 3, *HISCOM98*), but it now here treated as an action.

3.2.1: Name of *VAH* web site

The meeting had some reservations about the suitability of the name, *Virtual Australian Herbarium*, for the web site. Although, it was thought that it might be appropriate as a subtitle. Although a single name was required for the *VAH*, multiple names would be required to brand the various products, as they became available.

The name *LEAF* was tentatively suggested as more appropriate title for the *VAH*, representing ‘Linked Electronic Australian Flora.’

[Since the Meeting, AD has proposed the working title *GumLEAF*. The suitability of this name requires further discussion.]

ACTION 1: HISCOM Members to consider other possible titles for the VAH that

clarify the focus of the site

(All members – September 1999)

It was agreed that the VAH is an electronic publication medium for products as they become available. Therefore, it is better to present these individual developments as separate projects, under the umbrella of the VAH.

3.3: Registration of domain names www.hiscom.net.au and www.flora.net.au for HISCOM

Alan Brooks reported that HISCOM is unable to use the domain name 'net' and are unable to use the domain name 'gov' free of charge.

ACTION 1: It was agreed that the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney, would host HISCOM and VAH web sites.

ACTION 2: Find out if the following domain names are available:

- o www.hiscom.gov.au, and*
- o www.flora.gov.au*

(Barry Conn – September 1999)

ACTION 3: Find out the annual cost of the above domain names or alternative names

(Barry Conn & Jim Croft – September 1999)

It was agreed that there was a need to have a domain name for both the HISCOM and VAH web sites so that web search engines would readily find them.

Recommendation 1 to CHAH: That CHAH fund the annual cost of registering the recommended domain names for the HISCOM and VAH web sites.

3.4: Cost Recovery for certain data available on VAH

(refer following discussion)

3.5: Develop a discussion paper for developing a MOU on reciprocal free data access

Since CHAH has a long-standing agreement to readily share information between member institutions (Haegi – point 5, 13 August 1999), it was agreed by Meeting that there was no need to prepare a discussion paper on either issue.

HISCOM acknowledged that CHAH's policy of freely sharing data between its member institutions was pivotal:

- *to helping each agency meet their regional responsibilities, frequently on reduced resources*
- *to developing the VAH as a single seamless National interface to CHAH's plant, fungal and algal data*

The recognition of CHAH's important role in providing core data for government, non-government and community-based conservation and environmental management decisions required both of the above criteria.

ACTION 1: All member herbaria are encouraged to fully implement HISPID transfer standards as a matter of urgency

(All relevant members – September 1999)

[Since the Meeting, CHR has transferred collection data in HISPID3 format to NSW]

It was agreed that the successful functioning of the VAH for CHAH's members was based on the philosophy of readily sharing data.

ACTION 2: Develop procedures to facilitate the ready transfer of specimen-based data to member herbaria on the Internet

(Barry Conn & Bill Barker – April 2000)

It was agreed that the level of information provided to external users is best decided by individual herbaria. As mentioned above (point 3.2), the VAH will only present plant distribution data as an Australia-wide distribution dot map.

Recommendation 2 to CHAH: To ensure that the VAH can be launched as soon as possible, it was agreed that only specimen-based information will be supplied to external users in the form of an Australia-wide distribution dot map.

Recommendation 3 to CHAH: The current arrangements concerning the availability of data to external users are most appropriately managed by each herbarium according to their policies.

It was agreed that only certain types of information would be released through the VAH to external users.

Although it was felt that individual herbaria were best placed to decide on the availability of data held by them, it was agreed that it would be useful to collate the current policies and protocols used by the member herbaria.

ACTION 3: Develop discussion paper on the issues involved with making data available to external users via the VAH Internet site, with particular reference to the needs of each

*member herbarium**(Barry Conn – April 2000)**ACTION 4: Herbaria capable of implementing VAH technology were encouraged to do so from their own site.**(HISCOM Members – April 2000)**It was agreed that the primary assumption of the VAH was only to present information that had been traditionally provided by Australian herbaria.**Therefore, the VAH does not intend to present any information that is not normally available traditionally.**The following table summarises the traditional exchange protocols of herbarium data:*

Traditional Exchange of Herbarium Data		
Types of Information	Herbaria & <i>bono fide</i> Researcher	External Clients
Plant Distribution – Dot Maps	YES	CONDITIONAL
Plant Distribution – specimen-based spatial data	YES	CONDITIONAL
Plant Descriptions – published	YES	YES
Plant Descriptions – unpublished	CONDITIONAL	CONDITIONAL
Plant Keys – published	YES	YES
Plant Keys – unpublished	CONDITIONAL	CONDITIONAL
Plant Images – published	YES	YES
Plant Images – unpublished	CONDITIONAL	CONDITIONAL
Plant Names – published	YES	YES
Plant Names – unpublished	CONDITIONAL	CONDITIONAL
Accession-based Data – published	YES	YES

Accession-based unpublished	Data	–	YES	CONDITIONAL
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3.6: Administrative support for project management of VAH

Jim Croft presented the need for administrative support for the project management of VAH to CHAH. They recommended that a formal document stating required duties should be prepared and submitted to CHAH for their consideration (Haegi – point 3, 13 August 1999).

ACTION 1: No further action required until sufficient funding is available to fully implement the VAH project

3.7: Investigate GifFly and other options for mapping distributions on Web for VAH

A GifFly application has been developed as part of the prototype of VAH (Project 4, HISCOM98) and at the State level by NSW (in PlantNET). Although GIS functionality should be considered in the future, the high cost of implementation of full GIS capability made it an unlikely option in the short-term.

It was agreed that individual herbaria would need to decide which products to use. However, the Meeting was reminded of the need to ensure that appropriate data, access and export standards were maintained when implementing various products.

Recommendation 4 to CHAH: Data presented on the VAH web site can only be used at the single scale provided. Herbaria are not allowed to ‘zoom’ in on other herbaria’s data because of the possible sensitivity of this information.

SECTION C:

Review IT capabilities at each CHAH herbarium

Since little information forwarded to Jim Croft (as collator of this Action) since HISCOM98:

ACTION 1: Provide each Herbarium a form for completing the IT capability details in each herbarium

It was agreed to integrate the IT capabilities with information held by the Australian Herbarium Resources database, held on CHAH’s Web site. This information should also be linked to the HISCOM Web site.

Recommendation 5 to CHAH: CHAH to expand their Web-based database to include HISCOM

information, and to display this information on the CHAH Web site.

ACTION 2: Update each herbarium's IT capabilities and notify CHAH of useful data elements to include in the Australian Herbarium Resources database

(Jim Croft – September 1999)

SECTION D:

Review of HISPID Interchange Standard (Projects 10 & 11, HISCOM98)

3.8: Conversion of geodetic datum to WPS84 and GDA94

It was agreed that the conversion to the new World Geographic Datum was not a problem for exiting herbarium collections since the inherent inaccuracies of these data may mean that conversion does not improve their usefulness.

ACTION 1: To satisfy ANZLIC standards, all spatial data transferred via the HISPID standard would always include appropriate geodetic descriptors.

ACTION 2: Encourage institutional databases to include a field that identifies the geodetic datum or map grid reference being used for spatial coordinates of each record.

3.9: Update spatial (location group) fields in HISPID

Proposed changes to the Location Group fields circulated to HISCOM members prior to this Meeting.

ACTION 1: Comments, corrections to be sent to Hispid Editor

(All HISCOM Members – September 1999)

Several other proposed changes to HISPID3 were briefly discussed. It was agreed that these should be summarised and circulated to HISCOM members for comments and ratification. Once approved, these changes would form part of HISPID4.

ACTION 2: Summarise and circulate HISPID changes to HISCOM members

(Barry Conn – November 1999)

It was agreed that a HISCOM Listserver would be useful.

ACTION 3: Develop HISCOM Listserver

(Ian Lunt, Ben Robertson – December 1999)

FUTURE OF HISPID

Concern was expressed at the lack of progress that had been made towards the regular transfer of HISPID-formatted data between Australian herbaria since the publication HISPID3. The issues concerning each herbarium not participating in the electronic exchange program were discussed.

ACTION 4: CANB to implement HISPID exchange protocols immediately

(Jim Croft, Greg Whitbread – September 1999)

ACTION 5: BRI to implement HISPID exchange protocols immediately

(Peter Bostock – December 1999)

ACTION 6: NSW to send HISPID programming scripts to PERTH so that PERTH can evaluate their capability of implementing HISPID exchange protocols as soon as possible

(Gary Chapple, Ben Robertson – December 1999)

ACTION 7: DNA and HO to be contacted to identify issues preventing regular exchange of data from these herbaria

(Barry Conn – December 1999)

ACTION 8: Seek ways of expediting DNA's and HO's participation in the regular transfer of data in HISPID format

(Barry Conn – December 1999)

ACTION 9: CHR to implement HISPID exchange protocols immediately

(Aaron Wilson – Completed September 1999)

[The exchange of data in HISPID3 format between CHR and NSW is an extremely significant event, representing the first interchange between another country and Australia. Congratulations to all those

involved. Prior to this, HISPID3 formatted data has only been exported from Australia.]

Recommendation 6 to CHAH: CHAH to support the regular transfer of data between herbaria as part of the exchange and loans programs.

3.10: Use of ‘{’ and ’}’ as formatting notation in HISPID transfer file

Since ‘{’ and ’}’ are not part of any known formatting standard, it was agreed that users of various codes should be consulted to ascertain what standard (eg. SGML, XML, HTML) formatting notation should be incorporated into the HISPID standard for transferring text-based formatting codes.

The use of other formatting conventions, such as curly braces, may be used within an institution’s database.

ACTION 1: Include chapter on transferring formatting features in hispid transfer files

(Barry Conn – December 1999)

3.11: Review HISPID according to ANZLIC data standard

It was suggested that HISPID was a transfer format, not a database. Therefore, the ANZLIC standard did not apply, but rather it was only relevant to the databases from which the data were exchanged. Since there was some confusion amongst HISCOM members, it was agreed that this decision should be checked.

ACTION 1: Consult with ANZLIC experts concerning the need for HISPID to comply with ANZLIC data standards

(Barry Conn – December 1999)

3.12: Transfer of Nested Tables (relational data)

Although the transfer of nested data is not handled by HISPID, it was agreed that no direct action would be taken. However, it was regarded as important to monitor advances in transferral of relational data, such as determination histories, collecting events with multiple collections, and collections with multiple components.

ACTION 1: Maintain a ‘watching brief’

(Jim Croft, Greg Whitbread – April 2000)

3.13: Place HISPID3 on Internet with a searchable index

Barry Conn reported that HISPID4 was being prepared in a database format so that it was fully searchable. Therefore, a searchable index to HISPID3 would not be required once HISPID4 was available.

ACTION 1: Continue development of HISPID4 as a searchable database on Internet

(Barry Conn, Gary Chapple, Alan Brooks – April 2000)

3.14: Proposed Changes to HISPID3

Barry Conn circulated proposed changes to the 'Location' fields of HISPID3 and briefly discussed proposed changes to HISPID3.

ACTION 1: All proposed changes to be circulated to HISCOM Membership

(Barry Conn – November 1999)

SECTION E

Review of TypePhoto Database on Internet (Project 9, HISCOM98)

3.15: Notify CHAH of availability of TypePhoto database

Although the work on this database is strongly supported by CHAH (Haegi – point 7, 13 August 1999), the lack of usage of this database during 1999 is disturbing.

TypePhoto Usage Statistics - 1999

***Records Created = 0
Insertion Form Opened/Closed (without use) = 7
Records Searched = 242
Database Visited from 40 different sites***

Since this database was created, it has proved difficult to convince botanists in scattered institutions to enter data using the Internet. The reasons why ABLO did not access TypePhoto requires further investigation because it was specifically developed for the ABLO use.

ACTION 1: The ABLO's perception of the value of the TypePhoto database to canvassed

(Ben Richardson – September 1999)

It was agreed that the Australian plant systematic community had a moral obligation to index the many photographs of types that European institutions (particularly, BM, LINN, & K) had provided over many years. Most of these photographs had been organised by the ABLO. It was also recognised that the database was essential to ensure that the Australian botanical community was aware of the presence of photographs of types held in non-Australian herbaria.

ACTION 2: CHAH to be informed of lack of use of the TypePhoto database

(Barry Conn – September 1999)

3.16: Ability to search the TypePhoto database on institutional identifier, and link to type specimen image and protologues

These features have not been developed because the lack of usage did not warrant the additional expenditure required for further development.

ACTION 1: No further action at this stage

3.17: HISCOM membership to demonstrate TypePhoto to staff of member herbaria

ACTION 1: It was agreed that further encouragement was required to ensure that staff are aware of the TypePhoto database and are encouraged to use it.

(All HISCOM Members – September 1999)

3.18: Establish PERTH as a mirror site of the TypePhoto database

It was agreed that there was no need to mirror this site at this stage because the database was not being used enough.

ACTION 1: No further action at this stage

3.19: HISCOM members to provide email address for requests of copies of type photos

ACTION 1: No action taken

Recommendation 7 to CHAH: Notify CHAH of the minimal usage of TypePhoto since the beginning of 1999.

Recommendation 8 to CHAH: Although TypePhoto was under utilised, there was an on-going maintenance cost to NSW. However, since this cost has remained minimal, NSW is prepared to continue to cover these costs. Usage of the database would be a welcomed outcome for NSW.

SECTION F

Development of APNI (Project 8, HISCOM98)

3.20: Develop a read-only Web functionality to APNI

Completed by CANB.

ACTION 1: Link APNI Web site to HISCOM Web site, namely:

'www.anbg.gov.au/cgi/bin/apni'

'www.anbg.gov.au/cgi/bin/apninaes' (names only)

(Barry Conn – December 1999)

3.21: CHAH approval for participating herbaria to share States/Territory Census data – CHAH endorses the existing practice of freely sharing data between member herbaria (Haegi – point 5, 13 August 1999).

3.22: Herbaria with digitised censuses to provide a full bulk load of names for inclusion in APNI

Distributing Oracle run-time application to State herbaria was no a viable option because there was not local support for the product. It was also noted that if local operators were to be used to help maintain APNI, then they would require intensive training to use APNI applications effectively. It was agreed that there was a need to combine State censuses as an integrated National census and cross-reference these with existing APNI records. Although there was a suggestion that a distributed State-focused database model should be used to present a list of Australian Plant Names, it was agreed that a centralised approach would be used in the interim.

ACTION 1: Define specifications and protocol for transferral of State Census data

(Jim Croft, Greg Whitbread – December 1999)

Since CHAH agrees with HISCOM recommendations on the free sharing of State and National plant census data (Haegi – point 5, 13 August 1999), it was agreed that:

ACTION 2: Each State to make available their State census data, either by making available an URL for standard export of census data or by direct transfer using some other appropriate mechanism

(HISCOM Members – February 2000)

ACTION 3: Create a combined census of Australian Plant Names under VAH, with acknowledgment to contributing herbaria

(Jim Croft, Greg Whitbread – April 2000)

ACTION 4: The official logos of each participating herbarium to be included on the combined Australian Plant Name web site

(Jim Croft, Greg Whitbread – April 2000)

ACTION 5: Development of a State-based distributed Australian Plant Name Census database to be investigated

(Barry Conn – April 2000)

3.23: Provide test sites to report back in other herbaria

ACTION 1: No action taken during 1998/1999.

3.24: APNI Test sites to report back to HISCOM members at implementation stage

ACTION 1: No action taken during 1998/1999.

SECTION G

Review of Development of Electronic Collectors Fieldbook

(Project 12, HISCOM98)

3.25: Development of MAX as a generalised electronic collectors 'Fieldbook'

MAX is a tool for gathering plant collection data while in the field, with the ability to export these data to the herbarium's database. No action was taken during 1998/1999. Regarded as easier to develop separate Microsoft Access electronic 'Fieldbook' as required rather than modify MAX – the Western Australian electronic 'Fieldbook'. Other similar products were readily developed in AD and MEL, also based on

Microsoft Access.

Appreciation was expressed by the Meeting for PERTH's leadership in this area.

ACTION 1: Development of MAX to cover all situations will not be pursued by HISCOM – project halted.

ACTION 2: AD's electronic 'fieldbook' to be made available on the Web

(Bill Barker – December 1999)

SECTION H

Review of HISCOM98 Projects

3.8: Develop Project Plan

Completed and approved by CHAH in time for presentation to be considered by ABRS. The projects presented were discussed and the progress of each was reviewed by the Meeting (see below). In retrospect, the development of the Project Plan to satisfy the requirements of a single potential funding source, namely ABRS funding, was perceived as unwise.

A re-focussing of the project plan into a few core areas, divided into subprojects, was recognised as necessary to ensure the continued development of the VAH. It was also agreed that an active commitment to seek potential funding was necessary to successfully implement several of these projects.

Project 1: Develop an interim Internet VAH – prototype VAH completed (refer point 3.2, above) for presenting all Acacia collections as an Australian dot distribution map.

The completion of the data capture and validation of all specimens held by Australian herbaria (by 2002) is now regarded as an unrealistic aim without the active involvement of CHAH in seeking sponsorship.

ACTION 1: This component of this project is transferred to Project 7.

Project 2: Develop a fully functional, integrated Internet VAH – (refer point 3.2, above).

Project 3: Initiate and train herbarium and systematist users on capability of the VAH – (refer point 3.2, above).

Project 4: Develop capability for presentation of spatial data on the Web for the VAH – completed (refer point 3.7, above).

Project 5: Develop capability for accessing and presenting distributed data sets

relating to identification tools, descriptive data sets, images, etc – no progress at the National level; however, individual State and Territory herbaria are developing capabilities.

Project 6: Publish VAH metadata in appropriate places – all herbarium data sets being accessed by the VAH should have metadata descriptions according to the ANZLIC protocols. It was agreed that these descriptions, together with the VAH metadata description, should be lodged on the CHAH web site.

ACTION 1: Institutional Metadata descriptors for accession databases accessed by VAH to be lodged on CHAH Web site

(Jim Croft – December 1999)

Project 7: Complete capture and validation of data associated with specimens in Australian herbaria – the need for the completion of the digitisation of all herbarium collections is well recognised. It was agreed that the full implementation of the HISPID transfer protocol, by all herbaria, would significantly assist all herbaria to completely digitise their collections. To digitally capture the remaining specimens will require considerable external funding.

ACTION 1: Explore external funding sources to assist in the capture of the National collection of herbarium specimens

(All HISCOM Members – April 2000)

Project 8: Australian Plant Names Index accessible on the Web maintained by specialists and the Australian herbaria as a shared resource – the meeting acknowledged the efforts of CANB for making APNI available on the Internet. However, State representatives stressed the need for full incorporation of the State plant name censuses as they are actively being maintained and collectively represent the list of all Australian Plant Names. (refer Point 3.22, Action 5)

Project 9: Complete development of Australian TypePhoto Database – Barry Conn stated that NSW believed that it was not appropriate to invest further resources into this database because of the lack of use of TypePhoto since HISCOM98. This was recognised as a major concern (refer Points 3.15–3.19, and associated actions and recommendations to CHAH).

Project 10: Upgrade the data interchange standard HISPID on an ongoing basis – continuing (refer Points 3.8–3.14)

(Coordinated by Barry Conn)

Project 11: Establish protocols and edit herbarium spatial data according to new world-aligned geodetic datum (GDA94) – the relevant spatial data fields in HISPID3 have been corrected (refer Point 3.9, Action 1).

ACTION 1: HISCOM Members to comment

(Barry Conn – September 1999)

ACTION 2: Herbarium accession databases to be corrected

(All HISCOM Members – April 2000)

Project 12: Upgrade WA Herbarium's field data management tool MAX to meet needs of Australian herbaria – project deleted (refer Point 3.25 and Actions).

Project 13: Create and fill Project Manager and Administrative Support positions for the development of the VAH – no action (refer Point 3.6)

Project 14: Develop alliances of mutual benefit with external bodies – no action.

Project 15: Herbaria (CHAH) to reach agreement on data access costs and charging mechanisms – no action required at this stage (refer Points 3.4 & 3.5, Action 1–4, Recommendations 2 & 3).

Project 16: Review Strategic Plan – this is best regarded as a continuing action rather than a project that needs resourcing (refer Point 3.1).

SECTION I

HISCOM Member Reports

- 1. CANB**
- 2. CHR**

There have been a number of changes at Landcare Research with Ilse Breitwieser now the herbarium Keeper. Peter Heenan and Aaron Wilton are now responsible for managing the Herbarium and related databases respectively.

The specimen database recently passed 100 000 records, which equates to approximately 20% of the specimens held at CHR. The database is still based in Paradox, but a company wide database

integration program is expected to result in a change to a new database in the next few years. In preparation for the next database system new standards were recently implemented in the existing database to bring it into line with herbarium policy and the company wide data standards being developed.

Also in preparation for the new database a taxonomic names module has been developed, and is currently being populated. We expect all names currently accepted at CHR to be entered towards the end of the year.

The New Zealand Grass Flora by Henry Connor and Elizabeth Edgar is now in preparation for printing, and is expected to be available in early 2000.

- 1. CSU**
- 2. BRI**
- 3. DNA**
- 4. HO**
- 5. MEL**
- 6. NSW**
- 1. PERTH**

SECTION J:

1. Next Meeting:

Venue: DNA.

Clyde Dunlop agreed to host the meeting in Darwin.

Time: April-May 2000

Coordinator: Barry Conn

CHAH Representative: Bill Barker