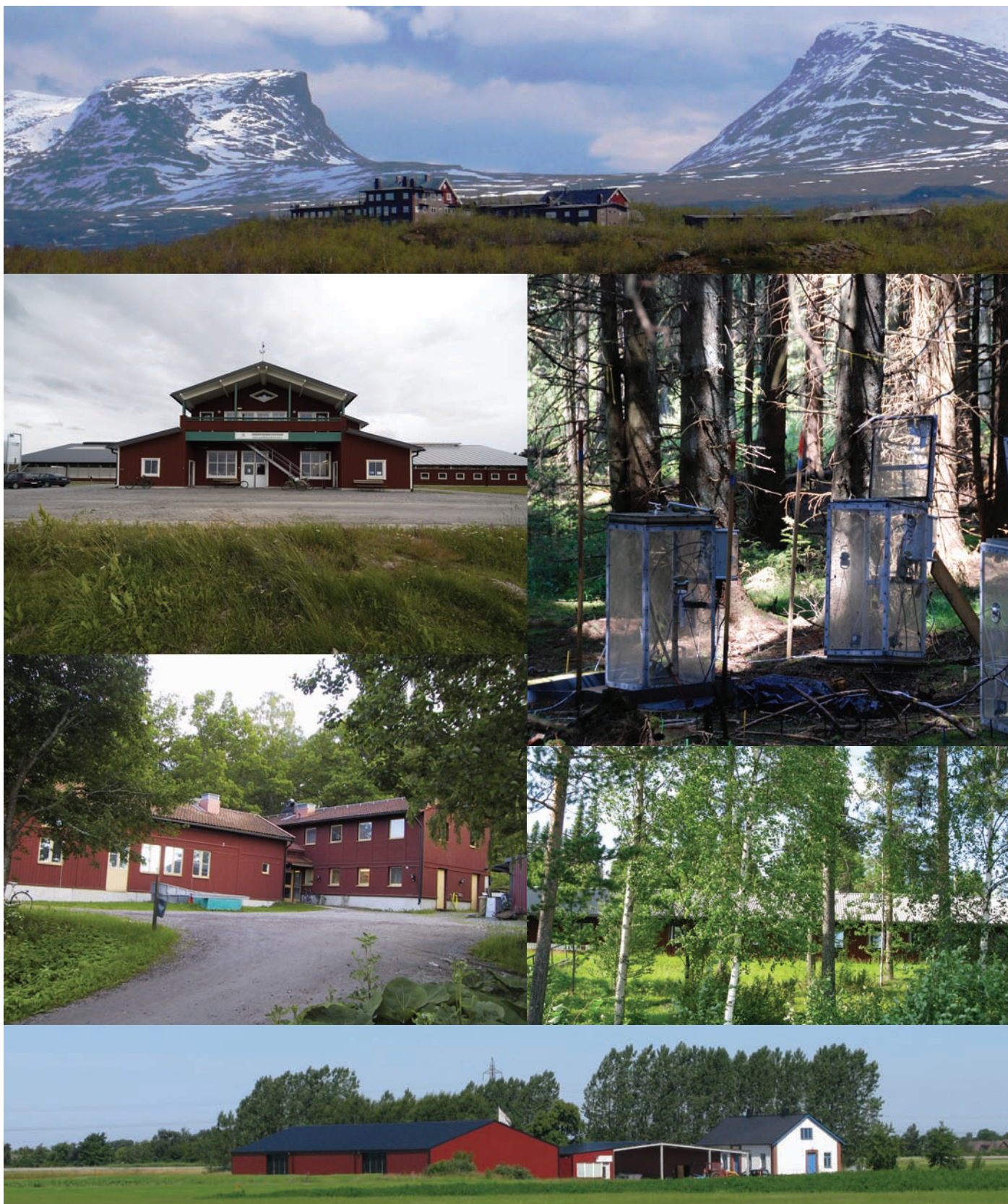


Evaluation of nominations for participation in the “Swedish national infrastructure network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Panel recommendation to the Swedish Research Council, 2012-12-18



Contents

Rationale and Process description	2
Overall recommendation to VR regarding field stations	4
Overall recommendation to RFI/VR regarding host for the network	7
Recommendation regarding a board	7
Budget related recommendations	7

Appendix 1, Brev till rektorer angående utlysning av forskningsstationsnätverk

Appendix 2, Terms of Reference: Evaluation panel for Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities

Appendix 3, Evaluation procedure for the call for “Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Appendix 4, Kallelse till utfrågning

Appendix 5, Hearing Schedule SE field stations

Evaluation of nominations for participation in “Swedish national infrastructure network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Rationale and Process description

For many years there has been awareness in the Swedish research and research management community that coordination and collaboration between facilities for field based terrestrial environmental research has been weak, often even between facilities focusing on the same scientific questions, located close to each other or even managed by the same entities. Despite this, Swedish scientists have often carried out outstanding research in areas depending on these facilities, such as monitoring and experimental research in ecology, limnology, soil sciences, biogeochemistry and many other areas of importance for conservation, natural resources management, climate impact and mitigation studies.

To explore the possibility for better utilizing the large investments in facilities for terrestrial environmental research, made by Swedish universities and other organizations, through increased collaboration the Swedish Research Council (VR) initiated a forward looking investigation. The assignment, which included an evaluation of potential interest from the facility operators and from the Swedish research community to form a national research infrastructure based on existing facilities, was given to Prof. Kjell Danell at SLU. During 2011 Prof. Danell visited 24 research stations and discussed with more than 100 scientists and managers (Danell, VR reports no 1 2012). In addition there was an open hearing including a workshop for station representatives and the possibility for anyone interested to submit views on a web-forum. VR also wrote letters to vice chancellors of all Swedish universities and other representatives of organizations managing terrestrial research stations requesting information on relevant activities and sent questionnaires to station managers. The report and the findings and recommendations therein have been invaluable for the continued process in forming a national infrastructure based on terrestrial and limnology research stations. Based on the findings by Prof Danell, VR launched a call in early 2012 targeting owners and operators of terrestrial and limnology research facilities (see appendix 1 for further details). The call requested:

1. Nominations for stations to join a Swedish national research infrastructure for terrestrial and limnology research, presenting current activities and resources, describing which resources will be available to the national infrastructure, long-term strategies, how additional resources from VR could be used, management structure as well as current and potential future users. Each nomination was given 10 pages.
2. Expressions of interest for hosting a coordinating secretariat, including a vision for the future development, the host organizations relevant activities, cost estimates and host in-kind contributions. Each expression of interest was given 5 pages.

The aim of the call was to create a national infrastructure covering the bulk of Swedish characteristics of terrestrial and limnic environments and the full Swedish climate gradient accessible for high-quality research based on monitoring, sampling, manipulation and large scale experiments.

In total VR received 14 nominations covering 19 individual research stations (see table 1). Together they covered the full climate gradient and represented most of main types of Swedish terrestrial and limnic environments. However, it should be noted that the terrestrial near costal environment was not well represented.

In addition VR received two expression of interest to host the coordination secretariat.

The nominations and the expressions of interests were evaluated by an international panel consisting of:

Anna Ledin (Chair), Secretary General for Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural sciences and Spatial planning (FORMAS) and Professor at the Department of Chemical Engineering, Lund University, Sweden.

Eeva Furman, Professor and Head of the Environmental Policy Centre at the Finnish Environmental Institute (SYKE), Finland.

Mikkel Peter Tamstorf, Senior Researcher at Arctic Research centre, Department of Biosciences, Aarhus University, Denmark.

Taneli Kolström, Professor and Research Director at the Finnish Forest Research Institute (Metla), Finland.

Terry Parr, Section Head in the Natural Environmental Research Council's Centre for Ecology & Hydrology at the Lancaster Environment Centre, United Kingdom.

Administrative support was provided by **Magnus Friberg**, Research Officer, Research infrastructure for Climate, Environment and Energy, Swedish Research Council (VR), Sweden

The main task was to propose a national research infrastructure consisting of a balanced network that can support different aspects of terrestrial limnic research in Swedish key nature types and climate zones, which also facilitate comparative studies. Facilities in the network should be relevant for high quality research, support long term experiments and data collection, provide access to relevant environmental data, data management and bring in support from their host or other organizations of relevance to the network. The terms of reference for the panel are found in Appendix 2.

The panel was also instructed to have a holistic view on benefits for the relevant Swedish research communities when proposing the composition of the national infrastructure. The panel could propose multiple alternative configurations of the infrastructure that fulfill the tasks.

For each nomination, VR provided the panel with the 10 page proposal for each nomination and the 5 page expression of interest. The panel organized themselves by choosing a reader and a co-reader for each of the nominations, however, the entire panel accustomed themselves with the material from each nomination and took part in the discussions and decisions.

At its first meeting the panel agreed upon how the task should be carried out, how to formulate the evaluation criteria based on the call and terms of reference and which evaluator should be main respectively co-reader of the individual nominations. Both main and co-reader were asked to grade and comment on the proposals. However all panel members read all proposals. The agreed evaluation procedure and criteria are found in Appendix 3.

There was a two-day hearing to where the representatives for the nominations and interested hosts for the coordination secretariat were invited to attend (see Appendix 4 and 5). At the hearing the representatives were asked to give a very brief introduction and to provide additional relevant information not present in their proposals. Most of the allocated timeslots were used by the panel members to clarify outstanding issues regarding the proposals.

Based on the written material and the results from the hearing, the panel rated the stations and the offers for hosting the secretariat and pointed out strengths and weaknesses for each of the proposals. For the stations recommended to be included in the national research infrastructure, the panel also gave specific recommendations to VR and the stations for improving the activities at the stations to better utilize their potential in the national research infrastructure. These evaluations are found in Appendix 5.

Panel members that reported a conflict of interest were not present at the hearing nor in the discussions concerning the specific proposal. The final meeting of the panel was dedicated to finalize the evaluations and the report to VR. The panel's findings were presented by Prof. Anna Ledin to VR:s Council for Research Infrastructures.

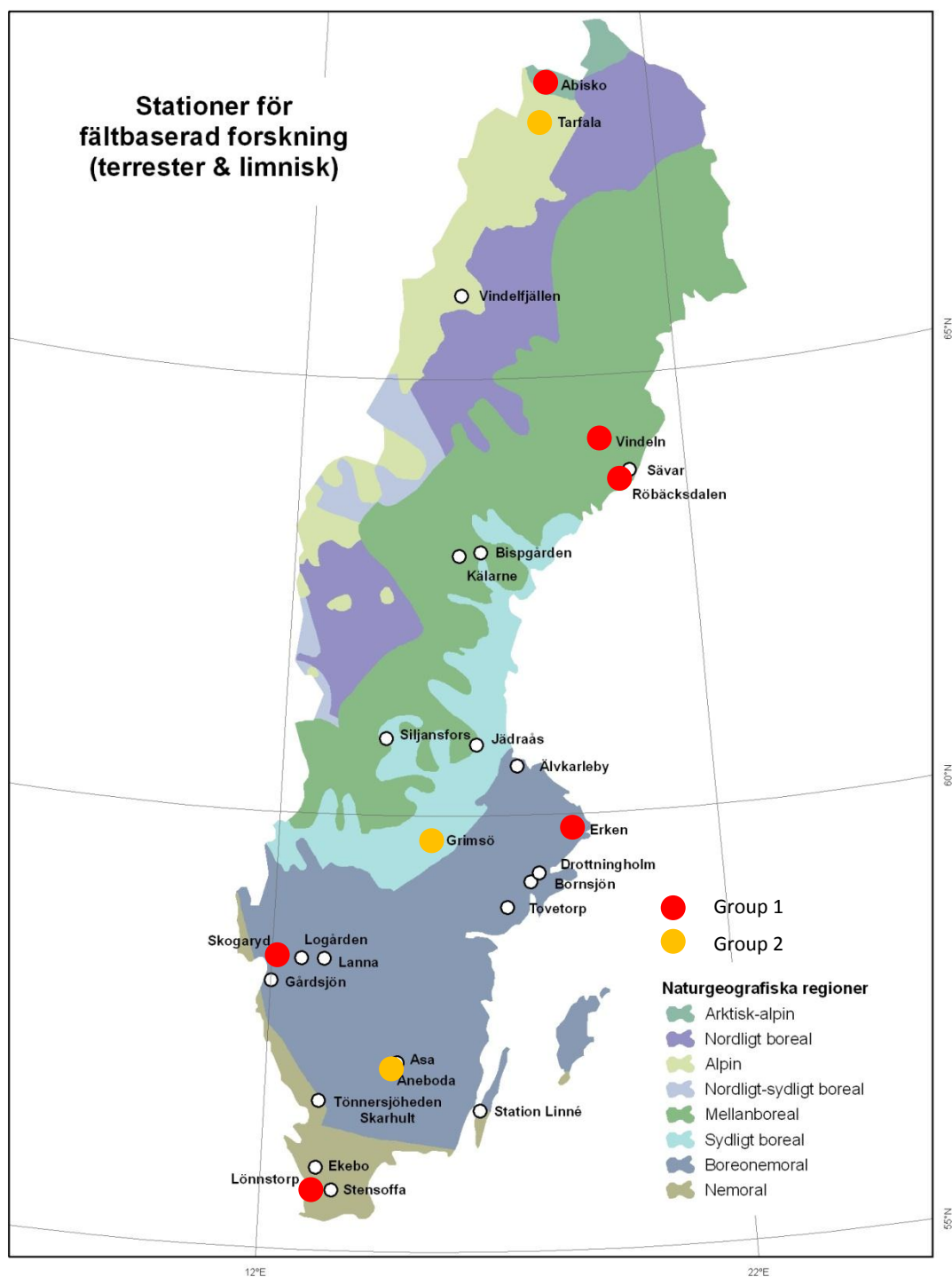
Overall recommendation to VR regarding field stations

Based on the fourteen written nominations (covering nineteen different field stations) and hearings with representatives from all fourteen nominations, the evaluation panel agreed to recommend to VR that nine of the field stations should be included in the national network. Six of these stations are well-established stations that would provide a solid core to a national network. The panel also recommends that these six stations are combined with three additional stations in order to fulfil the aim of creating a balanced network supporting a wide range of terrestrial and limnic research. (Table 1 and Figure 1).

Table 1. List with nominated stations and panel recommendations *Nominated twice

Nomination	Station	Host organisation
<i>Group 1</i>		
Abisko	Abisko	Polar secretariat
Erken	Erken	Uppsala University
Skogaryd	Skogaryd	Göteborg University
Svartberget	Svartberget	Swedish Agricultural University (SLU)
SAFE	Lönnstorp	SLU
SAFE	Röbäcksdalen	SLU
<i>Group 2</i>		
Tarfala	Tarfala	Stockholm University (SU)
IMREF	Aneboda	SLU
Grimsö	Grimsö	SLU
<i>Not suited to include at present stage</i>		
Gårdsjön	Gårdsjön*	Swedish Env. Res. Inst. (IVL)
IMREF	Gammtratten	SLU
IMREF	Gårdsjön*	SLU
IMREF	Kindla	SLU
SAFE	Lanna	SLU
SkogForsk	Ekebo	SkogForsk
SkogForsk	Sävar	SkogForsk
Station Linné	Station Linné	Station Linné foundation
Stensoffa	Stensoffa	Lund University
Tovetorp	Tovetorp	SU
Vindelfjällen	Vindelfjällen	Vindelfjällen research soc.

Figure 1. Map of Research stations with panel recommendations
(Modified from original produced by Mats Högström, SLU)



Group 1, with the already well-functioning stations includes three stations (Skogaryd, Erken and Svartberget) with high focus on water related monitoring and experimental work located at different climate zones and with different types of soils. They have all well-functioning, but somewhat different, procedures for handling of data in open access systems and different experiences from being open to scientists coming from outside of their most narrow network of collaborators. Their different experiences from handling and storing data can be highly valuable for the network, if it is used appropriately. The priority group one also includes Abisko which is a station with a somewhat broader spectrum of activities located in the mountains area. Abisko has long lasting experience from being an internationally well recognized field station, hosting scientists from all over the world. That experience will be highly valuable to share with those stations that lack that experience. Furthermore, two stations with extensive agricultural experimental research are included. They add to the network access to large areas with soils for experimental work and have both extensive databases related to relevant soil and weather parameters. Lönnstorp is located in the south and Röbäcksdalen is located in the north, by that also covering different soil and climate zones.

The second group includes three stations that are somewhat weaker, from different aspects, but they will be very important to include in order to fulfil the requirements for a broad Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research stations including the different zones of climate, types of soils, etc. Tarfala is a mountain station, which will be a very good supplement to Abisko with respect to alpine and glacial issues. If Tarfala is not included then there is an obvious risk that the network would not be fully representative of this kind of climate conditions. However, it is important to stress that the collaboration between Abisko and Tarfala needs to be developed to gain benefit from the network. Aneboda, which is a monitoring station located in the south forests in Sweden, will constitute a very important supplement to Skogaryd, Erken and Svartberget, due to its type of soil and surrounding forest. However, it needs to be open for experimental research, which is not the case at present. Finally, the panel recommends to VR that it includes one of the ecologically focused stations: Grimsö. A network like this needs to have at least one station that is focused on studying higher animals or vertebrates and can share with the other stations its knowledge regarding that. However, Grimsö has to develop their policies and practices regarding data handling and data access in order to be a useful member of the network.

Several of the ten remaining stations included in the nominations, have potential to develop in a direction that could make them interesting and relevant to include in the network at a later stage. For example, Ekebo and Sävar are both field stations for forest related research, including breeding of trees, etc. that have extensive databases with monitoring data and large areas available for experimental research. The network would also be stronger if more ecologically focused stations were included such as Tovetorp, Station Linné and Stensoffa. However, all these three need to develop strategies and policies for how the stations should be working and how they could be useful for a national network of field stations, before they can be considered to be included.

Overall recommendation to RFI/VR regarding host for the network

The evaluation panel has, based on the two written letters of interest submitted and after the hearings with representatives from both potential coordination hosts, agreed to recommend to VR that the Swedish Agricultural University (SLU) should be the coordination host.

SLU has good experience in coordinating national networks, i.e. Swedish LifeWatch and LTER-Sweden. SLU has also experience in establishing and maintaining data bases for environmental data, including making them open to potential users (open access). The five main activities that have been identified and described in the nomination are all highly relevant and if these are complemented with a strategy for support of data compilation and storing within the network (open access), as well as a plan for how this Swedish infrastructure can contribute to relevant European infrastructures, they will be very well suited to coordinate the network.

It should, however, also be emphasized to SLU that one of the aims for the host is to promote and stimulate collaboration within the network.

Recommendation regarding a board

The panel recommends that a board is appointed as soon as possible, including national and international experts in the field (5-7 persons). The board cannot have members involved in the work in any of the stations included in the network. The board should have the full responsibility for part of the funding (see below) and should report to VR. The board should, based on the different competences and needs at the stations, prepare a strategy and yearly action plans for the coming four years. Based on this strategy and action plans yearly tentative budgets for both the individual stations and the host should be prepared.

The host should be responsible for administration related to the board and act as secretariat also for the board.

Budget related recommendations

The panel recommends that all nine stations included in the network get 1 000 000 SEK/station for the first year to start their activities within the network. The stations should prepare a plan for the first year that covers high prioritized activities and includes a detailed budget for how the VR funding, as well as the corresponding co-funding will be used. The corresponding co-funding should also be 1 000 000 SEK. The plan should be approved by the board as soon as the board has been settled.

Among the eligible costs during this first year are activities related to:

- Staff – mainly technical staff that is needed in order to initialize highly prioritized activities at the station
- Equipment – that is needed to develop the station into an internationally interesting field station. Can be on-line monitoring devices, experimental equipment, etc.
- Staff – for developing tools for data handling and securing open access of data that has been produced in the past and data that will be produced in the future
- Servers and programmes related to data handling and open access of data
- Activities related to development of the network and collaboration between the stations

Among the eligible cost the following years the following activities can be recommended in addition to those mentioned above:

- Staff – mainly technical staff that is needed in order to increase the support to new, external scientists working at the station.
- Increase in existing monitoring programs to make sure that the stations have similar basic monitoring programmes of relevance for the users of the stations.

The funding cannot be used for stations or activities outside the network and new stations can only be added to the network after an open call by VR.

Finally, we thank you for the opportunity to be acting on this VR panel. It has been a great experience and we wish the network good luck!

Stockholm, Helsinki, Lancaster and Roskilde 2012-12-18

Anna Ledin (Chair)



Eeva Furman



Mikkel Peter Tamstorf



Taneli Kolström



Terry Parr



Magnus Friberg (Secretary)





Vetenskapsrådet

Datum

2012-02-20

Diarienummer

811-2010-7240

Handläggare

Magnus Friberg

Till rektor eller motsvarande vid universitet,
högskolor och andra berörda organisationer

Utllysning från Vetenskapsrådet:

- **Nominering till nationellt infrastrukturnätverk av fältbaserade forskningsanläggningar och forskningsstationer för terrester och limnisk ekologi- och miljöforskning, samt**
- **Intresseanmälan till värdskap för nätverkets samordningssekretariat.**

Bakgrund

Syftet med utlysningen är att förstärka fältbaserad infrastruktur för terrester och limnisk ekologi- och miljöforskning som är av långsiktigt gemensamt intresse för svensk forskning. Detta avser Vetenskapsrådet göra genom att i samverkan med huvudmännen stödja ett nationellt nätverk av forskningsstationer och andra fältbaserade forskningsanläggningar (båda anges härnäst som stationer) med god tillgång till kvalificerad forskningsinfrastruktur.

Bakgrunden till utlysningen är att Sverige har ett stort antal stationer med potential att utgöra nationella infrastrukturer för forskning kring terrestra och limniska ekosystem. På uppdrag av Vetenskapsrådet utredde professor Kjell Danell under 2011 möjligheten att samordna nationell infrastruktur för fältbaserad forskning (*Infrastrukturer för fältbaserad ekologi- och miljöforskning, VR-rapport 1:2012*). Rapporten lyfter fram behovet av ökad samordning mellan stationer och samtidigt att ge dem ökade förutsättningar att stödja kvalificerad forskning, främst från alla lärosäten i Sverige men även utomlands. Förutom att visa på möjligheterna med ett sådant nätverk, identifierade Kjell Danell behov av stöd till infrastruktur för långsiktig experimentell forskning, samt i viss utsträckning även stöd till långa mätserier och tillgängliggörande av data.

Utllysning och villkor för medverkan i stationsnätverk

Utllysningen gäller två delar, dels nominering av de forskningsstationer som bör ingå i ett nationellt nätverk, dels en intresseanmälan till värdskap för nätverkets samordningssekretariat.

De fördelade medlen ska bidra till finansieringen av ett nätverk bestående av ett begränsat antal stationer. Verksamheten kan sedan komma att utvidgas om ytterligare behov identifieras. Verksamheten beräknas starta under hösten 2012. Samordningen av nätverket kommer

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Vetenskapsrådet

att ledas av en oberoende styrelse.. Till styrelsen kommer det att knytas ett sekretariat.

Vetenskapsrådets stöd beror på inkomna förslag, men är max 12 miljoner kronor för 2012 och max 25 miljoner kronor per år under 2013 – 2016. *Huvudmännen förväntas gemensamt bidra med motsvarande finansiering.*

Satsningen kan förlängas efter en utvärdering av hur nätverket bidrar till svensk forskning inom relevanta områden.

1) Nominering av terrester och limnisk fältbaserad infrastruktur till nätverk för fältbaserad ekologi och miljöforskning.

Vetenskapsrådet öppnar genom denna utlysning för huvudmännen att nominera stationer till nätverket. Främsta kriterium för urvalet av stationer är förutsättningar för att skapa, vidmakthålla och utveckla forskningsinfrastruktur som bedöms ha stor relevans för ledande forskning kring terrestra och/eller limniska system och som är öppet tillgänglig för alla väl kvalificerade forskare inom relevanta forskningsområden. Vid urvalet kommer även hänsyn att tas till:

- geografisk spridning och att olika naturtyper ska vara representerade
- möjliga synergier mellan olika stationers bidrag till nätverket
- verksamhetens koppling till relevanta internationella vetenskapliga nätverk
- vilka data, såväl från pågående och framtida verksamhet som historiska, som görs tillgängliga
- medfinansiering från respektive huvudman
- vilka resurser vid stationerna som ställs till förfogande

Vetenskapsrådet förutsätter att de resurser vid respektive station som ingår i nätverkets verksamhet ställs till förfogande för öppen användning som nationell infrastruktur. Vid konkurrens om dessa resurser prioriteras användningen genom peer-review. Likaså ska huvudmannen godta principen om öppen tillgänglighet till data som samlas in inom ramen för denna satsning.

Vetenskapsrådet avser främst att bidra till den del av verksamheten som ger möjlighet till stöd för externa användare, upprätthållande av långsiktiga experiment och andra tidsserier av nationellt intresse, koordinering inom nätverket samt öppen tillgång till insamlade data.

2) Intresseanmälan om värdskap för nätverkets samordningssekretariat

Den organisation som utses till värd för samordningssekretariatet ska vara mottagare av medlen från Vetenskapsrådet och fördela dessa till stationsnätverket. Detta ska ske under överinseende av en oberoende styrelse som utses av värdorganisationen i samråd med Vetenskapsrådet och efter nominering från svenska lärosäten. Vid sekretariatet ska det finnas en föreståndare (50-75% av en heltid) som också utses i samråd med Vetenskapsrådet. Sekretariatet ska tillsammans med styrelsen verka



Vetenskapsrådet

för att nätverket utvecklas till en internationellt konkurrenskraftig forskningsinfrastruktur, samt sprida kunskap om det såväl nationellt som internationellt. Informationsspridningsfunktionen kan även inbegripa stationer som inte får egna medel från denna satsning. Framtida samordning med relevanta nätverk som t.ex. LTER, och europeiska infrastruktursatsningar som t.ex. ANAEE, ICOS och LifeWatch är eftersträfvansvärd.

Vad ska nomineringar och intresseanmälan innehålla?

Se specifikation om vad som ska ingå i ansökan nedan. Det ska tydligt framgå vad huvudmannen avser bidra med för att stödja verksamheten. Alla underlag ska skrivas på engelska då internationella granskare kommer att anlitas.

Till **nominering av terrester och limnisk fältbaserad infrastruktur** enligt punkt 1 ovan ska bifogas:

- Redogörelse för befintlig verksamhet vid infrastrukturen och dess betydelse för forskningen. Särskild tonvikt ska läggas på den verksamhet som bedöms kunna vara av nationellt intresse.
- Vårdorganisationens långsiktiga strategiska mål för verksamheten vid infrastrukturen och vad man avser att bidra med för att uppfylla målen. Särskild tonvikt ska läggas på den framtida verksamhet som bedöms vara av nationellt intresse.
- Föreslaget nyttjande av tillkommande medel enligt denna utlysning.
- Vilka resurser som ställs till förfogande inom nätverket.
- Beskrivning av befintlig och planerad vetenskaplig och administrativ ledning för verksamheten.
- Andra intressenter som idag är verksamma vid eller bidrar till verksamheten vid infrastrukturen samt hur dessa kan bidra till den nationella satsning som denna utlysning avser. Det bör också framgå om det finns möjlighet att knyta ytterligare intressenter till infrastrukturen. Om möjligt ska detta styrkas med stödjbrev eller motsvarande.

Varje enskild nominering ska omfatta högst 10 A4 sidor.

Till **intresseanmälan om värdskap** för nätverkets samordningssekretariat enligt punkt 2 ovan ska bifogas:

- En beskrivning av hur verksamheten är tänkt att bedrivas, samt en vision för utvecklingen av densamma.
- Förslag till hur samordningssekretariatet organisatoriskt kan ingå i vårdorganisationen men samtidigt ledas av en oberoende styrelse.
- En beskrivning av vårdorganisationens verksamhet inom berörda områden och hur detta kan bidra till att stärka sekretariatets utveckling.
- En kostnadskalkyl, samt uppgift om vårdorganisationens egen medfinansiering.

Varje intresseanmälan ska omfatta högst 5 A4 sidor.



Vetenskapsrådet

Bedömning och beslut

Intresseanmälningar och nomineringar kommer att granskas av oberoende experter och beslut om sammansättning av nätverket och värdskap för sekretariatet fattas av Vetenskapsrådet. I en första omgång kommer ett begränsat antal stationer att väljas ut. När beslut kan fattas beror på när diskussionerna mellan Vetenskapsrådet och huvudmännen är slutförd men målet är att det ska ske i november 2012.

När och hur ska nomineringar och intresseanmälan skickas in?

Nomineringar och intresseanmälningar enligt punkt 1 och 2 ovan ska undertecknas av rektor eller motsvarande och vara VR tillhanda senast den 15 augusti 2012.

Skicka per epost till: charlotta.bergvall@vr.se

Kontakt

Ytterligare upplysningar kan lämnas av:

Magnus Friberg
Forskningssekreterare
Vetenskapsrådet
Infrastrukturenheten
Tel: 08-546 44 122
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Vetenskapsrådet

Datum
2012-06-18

Diarienummer
811-2010-7240

Handläggare
Magnus Friberg

Terms of Reference: Evaluation panel for Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities

The aim of this initiative from the Swedish Research Council (VR) is to enhance Swedish field based terrestrial and limnic environmental research. This should be achieved by strengthening local infrastructure, user support and data management at selected facilities and coordinate them into a national network that can act as a national and distributed large scale research infrastructure. See below for the definition of National Research Infrastructures adopted by VR.

The process

During 2011, Prof. Kjell Danell investigated the possibilities for creating a national network of facilities for limnic and terrestrial research (*Infrastrukturer för fältbaserad ekologi- och miljöforskning, VR-rapport 1:2012 – see below for English summary*). Based on Prof. Danells findings, the VR invited owners and operators to:

- i) nominate facilities to the network, and
- ii) host a coordinating secretariat.

Through its Council for Research Infrastructures (RFI) VR has allocated maximum 12 MSEK for 2012 and 25 MSEK/year for 2013-2016 for this purpose. VR sees this as a long-term commitment and aims at continue its financial support beyond this period if future evaluations show that the network brings substantial and cost efficient benefits to Swedish research.

In the call VR asks for matching funds from the facility owners and operators. This could be on in-kind basis but the pre-requisite is that it should be resources that support access to the facilities, logistic support for external users and/or other relevant support for external projects. Similarly, VR asks for matching funds for the hosting of the secretariat.

The call for nomination and for host the secretariat will close on August 15th 2012 and the aim is to have the secretariat and network agreement ready before December 31st 2012.

The Network

Though each of the facilities included in the network must provide outstanding capabilities for research, it is important that the network is greater than the sum of individual parts. Also, it should serve a common

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long-term interest for Swedish research. The network must be balanced so that it supports many aspects of terrestrial and limnic research. It should cover key Swedish nature types and be present in the main Swedish climate zones. The network should also facilitate comparative studies.

Facilities in the network should bring:

- relevance for cutting-edge Swedish research projects in several fields of science
- support long-term experiments and research data collection
- access to existing and new time-series and other research relevant data
- e-infrastructure capabilities for data storage and dissemination of data collected as part of this network
- co-financing and/or other support of relevance to the network

The Network Board and coordinating secretariat

The network and its activities will be coordinated by an independent board appointed jointly by the host institution for the secretariat and the Swedish Research Council, after nominations by Swedish universities. The board will set the long term priorities for the development of the network and decide on the distribution of common resources.

The coordinating secretariat should be hosted at a Swedish research institution conducting research relevant to the network and led by a scientist with a strong background in relevant research area/areas. The secretariat shall support the coordinated activities. It should also:

- manage the common administration of the network
- inform researchers in Sweden and abroad about the resources offered by the network
- facilitate memberships in, and contacts with relevant international networks

The Task

The panel should evaluate all submitted proposals on the above criteria and propose which facilities to include in the network based on a holistic view. The panel should also propose which support should be given to each facility in the network and for what purpose. Since VR will have to find agreements with facility owners and operators, the panel should propose alternative solutions, and rank them according to its preferences. The pro's and con's for each solution should be clearly stated.

The panel should also provide a priority list of host institutions for the secretariat, with clear motivations for each of the proposed hosts.

The panel should give written statements on all submitted nominations and hosting offers, where it is clear on which grounds they were proposed or not proposed to be included in the network or be secretariat hosts.



Vetenskapsrådet

The panel's findings should be reported both in written form and as a presentation to RFI.

The evaluation panel's report will be the basis for VR/RFIs decision on the composition of the network, the initial distribution of funding, its general purpose at the selected facilities and the hosting of the secretariat.

The final composition of the network and secretariats host organization will depend on the out-come of negotiations between VR, facility owners and potential secretariat hosts.

Evaluation procedure for the call for “Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

The evaluation will be performed in a two-step procedure where the panel members first make individual evaluations of the proposals and where the final recommendation regarding funding is prepared at a panel meeting.

1) Individual evaluation of the proposals

Each proposal/facility is evaluated by three panel members according to the following criteria:

- Have relevance for cutting-edge Swedish research projects in several fields of science
- Support long-term experiments
- Support research data collection
- Give access to existing and new time-series and other research relevant data
- Have e-infrastructure capabilities for data storage and dissemination of data collected
- Have co-financing and/or other support of relevance to the network
- Shown successful collaboration with national and international field facilities and/or major national and international research programmes.

Each grade is given on each individual criteria on the scale 1-10, where:

10	Outstanding
8	Excellent
6	Very good
5	Good
4	Acceptable
2	Insufficient
0	Poor

The scores given are explained by short comments and accomplished with questions to be given to the proposers at the interview.

Finally, is each proposal also given an overall grade where:

A	= well suited facility
B	= suited facility
C	= not suited facility

The scores, comments, questions and overall grades are aiming in facilitating the interviews with the proposers and the discussion at the panel meeting. DEADLINE for submission of scores, comments, questions and overall grades is MONDAY 12 November. Magnus will compile them and send them out Tuesday 13 November in time for the TelCon meeting.

2) Panel meeting no 1: 15-16 November in Stockholm (9 am -5 pm)

- a) Interview with the proposers, followed by a discussion.
- b) The proposals are discussed and the panel members agree on overall grades for all proposals/facilities.
- c) A first draft of three recommendations for networks is prepared; including proposal/facilities that got an overall grade A or B, while proposals/facilities getting C is disregarded. The recommended networks should fulfill the following criteria:
 - The network is greater than the sum of individual parts
 - The network may serve a common long-term interest for Swedish research
 - Be balanced with capacities to supports many aspects of terrestrial and limnic research
 - Cover the key Swedish nature types
 - Be present in the main Swedish climate zones
 - Being able to facilitate comparative studies

A host for the coordination secretariat should also be suggested.

3) Panel meeting no 2: 17-18 December in Stockholm (12 am-12 am) (will maybe (=hopefully) be a TelCon meeting on 17 December in the afternoon)

- a) Discussion and decision regarding the three recommendations for networks are made according to above.
- b) Final written material is prepared. Overall scores and comments will constitute the background material for the panel recommendation and will be used by RFI/VR for the decision on funding, and constitute the feedback to the applicants.



Vetenskapsrådet

Datum

2012-10-01

Diarienummer

811-2010-7240

Handläggare

Magnus Friberg

Till företrädare för stationer nominerade till nationellt nätverk för terrestra forskningsstationer och värdskap för samordningssekretariatet

Kallelse:

Utfrågning angående medverkan i nationellt nätverk av terrestra forskningsstationer och samordningssekretariat

Tid: Torsdagen den 15 november eller fredagen den 16 november (för schema se nedan)

Plats: Rum Kameleonten, Vetenskapsrådet, Stockholm

Vetenskapsrådets kallar härmed företrädare för nominerade stationer och företrädare för intresseanmälningar om värdskap för samordningssekretariatet till en utfrågning. Varje insänd nominering kommer att kunna företräddas av två personer oavsett antal stationer som ingår i nomineringen. Tillika kan varje organisation som anmält intresse för värdskap för samordningssekretariatet förträddas av två personer.

Företrädare för varje nominering och intresseanmälan kommer att utfrågas enskilt av en panel med internationella granskare i cirka 25 minuter. Panelen är tillsatt för att rådge Vetenskapsrådet om nätverkets sammansättning, sekretariatets placering och nätverkets organisation.

Syftet med utfrågningen är att ge panelen möjlighet att ställa frågor för att belysa oklarheter i nomineringarna. Ni ges dock en möjlighet att mycket kort presentara er och er verksamhet (max 5 minuter, helst mindre, och inga powerpoint-presentationer). Förutsatt vid denna presentation att alla närvarande har läst er nominering.

VETENSKAPSRÅDET
SWEDISH RESEARCH COUNCIL

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Bekräftelse

Vänligen bekräfta er närvaro till Magnus Friberg senast fredagen den 19 oktober. Epost: mf@vr.se

Logistik:

Vetenskapsrådet ligger på Klarabergsviadukten mycket nära Stockholms Centralstation. Enklaste sättet att nå oss är via tåg eller Arlanda Express. Anmäl er i VRs reception och vänta där tills ni blir hämtade.

Då det ofta blir förskjutningar i tidsschemat vid denna typ av tillställningar ber vi er att räkna med vissa förseningar i förhållande till nedanstående program.



Vetenskapsrådet

Programme:

Thursday November 15th

09.00 Panel pre-meeting
09.30 Vindelfjällen
10.00 Erken
10.30 - 11.00 Break
11.00 Gårdsjön
11.30 Grimsö
12.00 – 13.00 Break
13.00 IMREF
13.30 SAFE
14.00 Svartberget
14.30 Station Linné
15.00 – 15.30 Break
15.30 Proposed hosts of Coordinating Secretariat
17.00 Meeting ends

Programme continued:

Friday November 16th

09.00 Skogaryd
09.30 SkogForsk
10.00 Tarfala
10.30-11.00 Break
11.00 Tovetorp
11.30 Abisko
12.00 – 13.00 Break
13.00 Stensoffa

14.00 Hearing ends
Panel aft-meeting until 18.00

Välkomna till utfrågningen!

Anna Ledin
Ordförande i panelen
Huvudsekreterare Formas

Magnus Friberg
Forskningssekreterare
Infrastruktur för forskning om planeten jorden och dess nära omgivning



Vetenskapsrådet

Datum
2012-11-13
Handläggare
Magnus Friberg

Diarienummer
811-2010-7240

Hearing SE field stations

Programme:

Thursday November 15th

09.00 Panel pre-meeting
09.30 Vindelfjällen- *Björn Jonsson, Michael Schneider*
10.00 Erken – *Hans Ellegren, Lars Tranvik*
10.30 - 11.00 Break
11.00 Gårdsjön – *John Munthe, Filip Moldan*
11.30 Grimsö- *Henrik Andrén, Gunnar Jansson*
12.00 – 13.00 Break
13.00 IMREF – *Stefan Löfgren, Lars Lundin*
13.30 SAFE - *Kerstin Huss-Danell (Röbäcksdalen), Bo Stenberg (Lanna) och Erik Steen Jensen (Lönnstorp)*
14.00 Svartberget – *Hjalmar Loudon, Thomas Lundmark*
14.30 Station Linné – *Fredrik Ronquist, Dave Karlsson*
15.00 – 15.30 Break
15.30 Proposed hosts of Coordinating Secretariat
SLU – *Lena Sennerby-Forsse, Tomas Lundmark*
Station Linné – *Fredrik Ronquist, Dave Karlsson*
17.00 Meeting ends

Programme continued:

Friday November 16th

09.00 Skogaryd – *Leif Klemendtsson, Deilang Chen*
09.30 SkogForsk – *Bengt Andersson*
10.00 Tarfala – *Anders Karlhede, Gunhild Rosquist*
10.30-11.00 Break
11.00 Tovetorp – *Anders Karlhede, Sven Jakobsson*
11.30 Abisko – *Björn Dahlbäck, Christer Jonasson*
12.00 – 13.00 Break
13.00 Stensoffa – *Rachel Muheim*
14.00 Hearing ends
Panel aft-meeting until 18.00

Evaluation panel members:

Anna Ledin, Formas – Chair
Terry Parr, NERC, Centre for Ecology & Hydrology
Eeva Furman, Finlands miljöcentral (SYKE), Miljöpolicentrum
Mikkel Tamstorf, Department of Bioscience, Aarhus University
Taneli Kolström, Metla

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Evaluation of nominations for participation in “Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Nomination: Abisko

Overall grade (Well suited/Partly suited/Not Suited): A - Well suited

Participation in the network (Yes/No): Yes

If the nomination is a network, please specify which parts are recommended to be included:

The Swedish Polar Research Secretariat has nominated Abisko and suggested an alpine network including Abisko, Tarfala and Vindelfjällen. However, only Abisko and Tarfala are recommended for the national network.

Strong points in the Nomination

Abisko is one of the major research and monitoring sites of Sweden. It has a lot of research driven monitoring as well as cutting-edge independent research within both terrestrial and limnic areas.

Abisko is the only station with integrated monitoring in the subarctic Sweden and is therefore important for the national network.

Abisko can deliver much to the network in terms of generic character (data management, experience from running infrastructures etc.).

Weak points of the Nomination:

No clear strategy exists for future developments of the monitoring and research activities. Unclear how long-term monitoring is kept from influence of on-going experimental research.

The nomination from Abisko is focused on the smaller proposed network and no thoughts have been given to the larger, national network.

If the nominated station/stations are recommended for participation in the network, please give recommendations for improvements of the nomination here.

Scientific leadership and strategies for the development of the station should be clarified as soon as possible.

Data accessibility should be strengthened. Data from independent research projects should be secured.

Evaluation of nominations for participation in “Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Nomination: Erken

Overall grade (Well suited/Partly suited/Not Suited): Well Suited

Participation in the network (Yes/No): YES

Strong points in the Nomination

Well established field station with long term ecosystem (limnological and meteorological) monitoring as well as experimental activities. The evaluation panel largely acknowledged the combination of monitoring and experimental research. The field station is active in national and international ecological networks and has an international reputation to be an attractive field station. The station is certified by SWEDAC which is important for quality assurance and part of the GLEON network which is securing data storing and data availability (open access).

The station has strong support from Uppsala University, and will also receive funding from local organizations and municipalities.

Weak points of the Nomination:

The station is somewhat limited with respect to what kind of data that is included in the monitoring, lacks for instance carbon fluxes and energy balances. Very closely connected to Uppsala University and Swedish Agricultural University and but very limited national cooperation. The nomination lacks information regarding plans for how Erken will contribute to the national network and what activities that will be established to make it a well-known and attractive field station for Swedish researchers outside Uppsala University.

If the nominated station/stations are recommended for participation in the network, please give recommendations for improvements of the nomination here.

The nomination includes ideas regarding an increasing monitoring activity in surrounding lakes. The evaluation panel is not convinced that this is a good priority and would like to encourage the nominators to instead make benefit from being a member of the network and utilise that to get access to data (and sites) from other types of lakes.

Evaluation sheet for the call for “Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Nomination: Gårdsjön

(Note: Anna Ledin reported Conflict of Interest – Terry Parr chaired the interview.)

Overall grade (Well suited/Partly suited/Not Suited): B- Partly suited

Participation in the network (Yes/No): No

If the nomination is a network, please specify which parts are recommended to be included:

Strong points in the Nomination

The Gårdsjön site supports research on a wide range of scientific issues backed-up by some long-term datasets and nationally and internationally important experiments. It is a productive site with a good level of well-cited research outputs.

Gårdsjön is operated by IVL, an independent research organization with no governmental core funding and relies 100% on external funding. Some initial concerns over this funding model and security of the site, particularly in relation to its long-term ability to support network activities, were well addressed at the interview although the lack of a detailed budget to back this up was a problem for the panel (see below).

Weak points of the Nomination:

Although the site has a long history of ecological and environmental research it was not clear how much of the data from past work could be made available to the network. The lack of any clear data policy and a future plan for developing data management was also a weakness. There was a lack of specific ideas on the added value of the site to the network or about how the site would benefit from engagement with other sites in the network. No budget details were included in the application and this made it impossible to judge whether the use of VR funding was appropriate and would provide value for money. The site obviously has potential for inclusion in the national network but the case was not clear enough to enable it to be included at this stage.

If the nominated station/stations are recommended for participation in the network, please give recommendations for improvements of the nomination here.

Evaluation of nominations for participation in “Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Nomination: GRIMSÖ

Overall grade (Well suited/Partly suited/Not Suited): B - Partly suited

Participation in the network (Yes/No): Yes

If the nomination is a network, please specify which parts are recommended to be included:

Strong points in the Nomination

The proposal describes good existing site-based infrastructure and facilities and provides some clear aims and research goals around which the site would be developed in the future. Ongoing monitoring of a wide range of charismatic species and a few other attributes is well presented. The data are available to external users although systems for making the mechanism more “user friendly” need to be developed.

An important strength of the proposal is that it shows that the site is already well used by many national and international visitors and has a lot of stakeholder engagement. It also has good connections with several national and international research programmes.

The site already has some connections with other potential sites in the Swedish network and there seems to be good potential for developing these further.

In summary, it's a site with some good wildlife data, an organised and outward looking approach and a lot of potential to contribute to the network.

Weak points of the Nomination:

Although there are some weaknesses in the current activities at Gromsö these have been recognized and the proposal indicates how the VR funding would be used to address them. These include:

- (i) lack of data management, data policy and mechanisms for providing easy access to data;
- (ii) a narrow focus of the current monitoring on wildlife ecology and management.

Little evidence is provided of experimental approaches or potential for field-scale manipulations.

If the nominated station/stations are recommended for participation in the network, please give recommendations for improvements of the nomination here.

The proposal lacks a clear budget and justification for the use of resources – this must be provided.

The evaluation panel fully support the plans for improving data management and access to the existing long-term data. These plans should be explained in more detail including information on what, when and how data will be made available. Definitively the ownership of the data should be clear. The use of e-technologies and existing data sharing standards should also be included.

The range of data provided for the site should also be expanded to enable the site to be put in its environmental context and to draw in a wider range of research users. As mentioned in the proposal, this should include climate measurements. It could also be considered to include geo-spatial data on vegetation and soils.

A strategy should be developed for opening up the site to include measurements and experimental manipulations proposed by other sites in the network (although it is accepted that funding for the actual measurements would need to be provided from other sources).

Similarly, research plans for developing the contribution of the site to the network by promoting the use of Grimsö's wildlife monitoring protocols at other sites should also be developed.

Evaluation of nominations for participation in “Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Nomination: IMREF

Overall grade (Well suited/Partly suited/Not Suited): A/B – Well/Partly suited

Participation in the network (Yes/No): Yes

If the nomination is a network, please specify which parts are recommended to be included:

Aneboda alone is recommended for participation in the network. The other three stations are not recommended as other, stronger, stations in the network will cover these areas.

Strong points in the Nomination

IMREF has a strong monitoring program that is up and running. The location of Aneboda with the on-going program complements the other proposed stations in the network. SLU has proposed 50% co-funding if included in the network.

Weak points of the Nomination:

Limited to monitoring, i.e. at the moment not much on-going research. The current available data could have been used to complement research. Monitoring seems very static and only open for including new parameters – not changing existing. Can Aneboda go from a monitoring driven to a research-driven station?

If the nominated station/stations are recommended for participation in the network, please give recommendations for improvements of the nomination here.

Aneboda should open up for a broader research focus including experimental research although ensuring that the existing monitoring is not disturbed.

Consider implementing new areas in the monitoring that will complement ongoing work at other proposed stations in the network (e.g. carbon studies at Skogaryd, Svartberget and Abisko).

The monitoring should be made more adaptive allowing for changing sampling methods, intervals etc. to recent knowledge (e.g. no need to continue manual high frequency sampling for periods where variables are known not to change).

Evaluation of nominations for participation in “Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Nomination: SAFE

Overall grade (Well suited/Partly suited/Not Suited): Partly suited

Participation in the network (Yes/No): YES

The recommendation is that two of the station included in SAFE will be included in the national network: Lönnstorp and Röbbäcksdalen.

Strong points in the Nomination

Two very well established field stations for experimental research within agriculture and ecosystem studies. They both have strong potential for a useful contribution to the national network for terrestrial and limnological field stations. Both are experimental sites with conventional and organic agriculture represented and with relatively large areas available for experimental work.

Meteorological data are available, as well as soil characteristics, etc. The evaluation panel sees a very good potential for developing these field stations to other areas than agriculture, due to the long term monitoring that has been carried out in the past. Both national and international collaboration is well established with researchers and companies.

Weak points of the Nomination:

Not fully clear from the nomination how researchers outside agricultural sciences can benefit from using these stations for their research. An open database has to be established to collate data, both already available data and data that will be produced in the future. However, some knowledge regarding how to configure such a data base is available with group of nominators.

If the nominated station/stations are recommended for participation in the network, please give recommendations for improvements of the nomination [here](#).

The major challenge for the nominators is to make these stations attractive for a wider community of researchers outside the agriculture sciences. It is therefore strongly recommended that plans are developed for how to make these two stations attractive for other fields of research and data available for a wider research community.

Evaluation of nominations for participation in “Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Nomination: Skogaryd Research Catchment

Overall grade (Well suited/Partly suited/Not Suited): Well suited

Participation in the network (Yes/No): YES

Strong points in the Nomination

The SRC is built on the integrated and interdisciplinary research approach where different ecosystems and habitats are studied together. The station has initiated a number of important research activities some of them being already in full pace, some are only starting. The most important activity is the studies of organic soils of forests.

SRC is connected to several important international networks. The SRC has a clear plan to facilitate long term experiments in particular in the areas where the station has well developed equipment. It has high level set-ups. This includes in particular the carbon observatory (ICOS), greenhouse gases and biologically produced volatile organic compounds.

Data management is one of the strongest assets of the SRC. There is a clear and complete open data access policy. The research that someone would like to carry out at the station is screened and a decision of acceptance is carried out against its suitability to the infrastructure and its research policy.

The land use history of the area is well documented for the last 200 years which is useful for integrated analyses. The management of the facility is very much focusing on supporting new research activities. The facilities at the station are planned to help visiting scientists: technicians are offered to external researchers.

The facilities are new, from 2005. The upcoming DbNECC-facility is, however, very sophisticated electronic and automatized data collection and management equipment in the remote study sites. This will be very useful and cost-efficient.

Weak points of the Nomination:

The spectrum of sciences carried out at the station and included in the systemic modeling is narrow. While the physico-chemical processes are emphasized, the biological components in a broader sense are studied in less detailed manner.

Co-funding and support is mainly salaries and only one update of equipment.

If the nominated station/stations are recommended for participation in the network, please give recommendations for improvements of the nomination here.

Open up to a broader range of science; integrate to the present research profile biodiversity research on a broader spectrum; build models with a broader range of components and functions of the ecosystems including higher animals and plants.

Evaluation of nominations for participation in “Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Nomination: Skogforsk

Overall grade (Well suited/Partly suited/Not Suited): Partly suited/Not suited

Participation in the network (Yes/No): No

If the nomination is a network, please specify which parts are recommended to be included:

-

Strong points in the Nomination

The evaluation panel believe that the data available at the suggested field sites could be very useful for a broader perspective of science. There are results from field experiments and managed trials.

Weak points of the Nomination:

The Nomination fails in explaining how data are made available to potential users. For example the climate change research could benefit a lot from the data but this was not shown in the application.

Poorly written application. Practically nothing on science in the application showing the value of the experiments and data or any proof that the applicant is capable to organise high value scientific research alone or in collaboration with other institutes. There was no real plan what to do with the data they are making available. No budget or plan for the nursery facilities and laboratories.

Applied funding was not specified and co-funding is in kind funding of the institute.

If the nominated station/stations are recommended for participation in the network, please give recommendations for improvements of the nomination here.

-

Evaluation of nominations for participation in “Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Nomination: Station Linné

Station Linné

Overall grade (Well suited/Partly suited/Not Suited): Not Suited

Participation in the network (Yes/No): NO

If the nomination is a network, please specify which parts are recommended to be included:

Strong points in the Nomination

The Station Linné has a strong-willed and skillful manager and an engaged staff which played a key role in the establishment of the Station Linné Foundation. The Swedish Malaise Trap Project, a nationwide inventory of insect flora, has generated valuable collection and data set for long term biodiversity research in Sweden, providing excellent data with open access. Through this inventory, the Station Linné has important links to the Swedish Museum of Natural History as well as to the international infrastructure actors such as LifeWatch, GBIF and EU-BON.

Weak points of the Nomination:

Apart from the activities and infrastructure around the Swedish Insect Fauna Archive, the research activities, databases and facilities at the Station Linné are limited and unstructured. The outputs from the scientific activities are not brought together for display which makes it difficult to assess its quality, by the evaluation panel but also by anyone considering using the facilities. Furthermore, it is not obvious how this station would contribute to the national network of stations constituting an infrastructure. The plan to build more sophisticated barcoding facilities to the station is not in line with the national plans in relation to the molecular laboratory facilities. Finally, comprehensive strategic planning of the station and a research agenda are missing.

Evaluation of nominations for participation in “Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Nomination: STENSOFFA

Overall grade (Well suited/Partly suited/Not Suited): Not suited

Participation in the network (Yes/No): No

If the nomination is a network, please specify which parts are recommended to be included:

Stensoffa covers a good range of largely undisturbed habitats in a Natura 2000 site that provides a guarantee for its future use. It has undertaken many long-term studies on birds and some long-term experiments and has some potential for providing focus for bird-related research across the whole network.

Weak points of the Nomination:

The main emphasis of the existing research activities is relatively narrow with a focus on bird and disease research. Although the site has a good range of useful habitats, the lack of broad range of environmental data and limited experimental work means that the value of the site to the overall network is limited. The proposal also lacked sufficient information about its data policy and data management processes and lacked clarity about how data will be made available to the outside community.

There was no clear research strategy for developing the site or for attracting external users. Although a budget was presented this did not make it clear how the funding from VR would be used to develop the site infrastructure in a way that would provide good value for money and added value to the network as a whole.

If the nominated station/stations are recommended for participation in the network, please give recommendations for improvements of the nomination here.

Evaluation of nominations for participation in “Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Nomination: Svartberget Field Research Infrastructure (SFRI)

Overall grade (Well suited/Partly suited/Not Suited): Well suited

Participation in the network (Yes/No): Yes

If the nomination is a network, please specify which parts are recommended to be included:

-

Strong points in the Nomination

Svartberget has a very well suited proposal covering the broad scale of possible research and monitoring in the boreal regions. For example ICOS, KCS, Degerö, Flakaliden etc. are all well known monitoring and experimental research sites in the scientific world. . In addition to these sites in the nomination include approx. 1400 long-term forest management experiments all over the Sweden. Svartberget wants to be world leading RI on landscape basis – data and infrastructure.

The nomination is well structured and present a plan with focus on making existing and future valuable data available and give technical support for potential users. Co-funding from SLU is new money, not in kind funding.

Weak points of the Nomination:

The nomination is very ambitious, especially the extent of the database. There some risks in this since implementing a database that should have both long-term monitoring data as well as data from individual research projects is a huge task. Can be very complicated and costly.

If the nominated station/stations are recommended for participation in the network, please give recommendations for improvements of the nomination here.

Activities *SFRI information and data management center (IMC)* and *Technical support for field measurements and experimental manipulations (TFS)* are both well justified. What is the role of the third activity *Maintain and develop the analytical capacity of the most important variables*? Are all the items in activity 3 needed?

Evaluation of nominations for participation in “Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Nomination: Tarfala

Overall grade (Well suited/Partly suited/Not Suited): A/B – Well/Partly suited

Participation in the network (Yes/No): Yes

If the nomination is a network, please specify which parts are recommended to be included:

Tarfala was nominated as one of three suggested stations in a small alpine network, however with each of the three stations nominated individually.. Only Abisko and Tarfala are recommended for participation in the national network, while Vindelfjällen is not.

Strong points in the Nomination

Tarfala has a strong and unique time series in glaciological studies. It is the only station in Sweden with glaciological research. In collaboration with Abisko there is great potential for gradient studies.

Weak points of the Nomination:

Tarfala currently have a very narrow scientific profile. Data from previous research projects only exist as meta-data. No new money is allocated by Stockholm University to support Tarfalas participation in the network.

If the nominated station/stations are recommended for participation in the network, please give recommendations for improvements of the nomination here.

Tarfala is recommended for participation in the network. However, it is important that the funding for the network is used primarily to strengthen newer areas of research (e.g. biogeochemistry of water, carbon balance, gradient studies etc.) instead of continuing “business as usual”.

Emphasis should be put on implementing data from new areas in freely accessible databases and ensuring that individual research projects allow their data to be distributed through that database.

Evaluation of nominations for participation in “Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Nomination: Tovetorp

Overall grade (Well suited/Partly suited/Not Suited): Not suited

Participation in the network (Yes/No): No

If the nomination is a network, please specify which parts are recommended to be included:

-

Strong points in the Nomination

The main topic for the research at this station is animal behavior. (Actually, the panel identified potential for different kinds of manipulation experiments in ecology, but that was not supported by the written application or by the station representatives during the hearing).

Weak points of the Nomination:

There was no forward looking strategy for how to develop the station in the future and there was no added value shown for the network to include this station. No datapolicy or e-infrastructure capabilities shown in the application. It was claimed that no research strategy would be needed since the science should be curiosity driven. Consequently no short or long-term plan for development of this research infrastructure could be prepared..

Only in kind funding from the University.

If the nominated station/stations are recommended for participation in the network, please give recommendations for improvements of the nomination here.

-

Evaluation of nominations for participation in “Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Nomination: Vindelfjällen

Overall grade (Well suited/Partly suited/Not Suited): C – Not suited

Participation in the network (Yes/No): No

If the nomination is a network, please specify which parts are recommended to be included:

Vindelfjällen is part of a suggested alpine network together with Abisko and Tarfala, however with each station nominated individually. Vindelfjällen is not recommended for participation in the national network

Strong points in the Nomination

Vindelfjällen have a broad scale of biotic research with some long-term data sets (e.g. on birds) published through the LUVRE project. Vindelfjällen is the only station with so broad biotic research and focus on biodiversity located in the southern Swedish mountains. The position of the station on the border to the Vindelfjällen Nature Reserve indicate a possibility for long-term monitoring and research without much risk of land-use changes.

Weak points of the Nomination:

The research and monitoring until now does not include abiotic variables like climate, etc. Further, only limited data from the current research and monitoring is available as open access. Therefore no data sets will be readily available for the established network.

No specific plans exist for how to create new developments within research and monitoring.

There is no real strategy for data handling and distribution.

Unclear what the level of co-funding is (if any).

If the nominated station/stations are recommended for participation in the network, please give recommendations for improvements of the nomination here.

Evaluation of nominations for participation in “Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Nomination: Linné Coordination host

Overall grade (Well suited/Partly suited/Not Suited): Partly suited

Coordinating the network (Yes/No): NO

Hosting the secretariat at Station Linné is only recommended if VR cannot reach an agreement with SLU.

Strong points in the Nomination

The nominators will mainly focus on this coordination task and seems to be very motivated and enthusiastic. Station Linné is run by an independent non-profit organization – the Station Linné Foundation and this can be seen an advantage in coordination. Important activities are mentioned on general level like exploring collaboration and joint activities between the stations, as well as lobbying internationally to make the network known and attractive to visit

Weak points of the Nomination:

The presented plan for activities is rather limited and lacks detailed information. No clear strategy for how the coordinator will support the stations in the network regarding i.e. data collection and storing as well as approaches of making the data open in an open access system, which will be an important task.

No shown experience from this kind of coordination tasks.

Evaluation of nominations for participation in “Swedish national network of terrestrial and limnology research facilities”

Nomination: SLU Coordination host

Overall grade (Well suited/Partly suited/Not Suited): Well suited

Coordinating the network (Yes/No): Yes

The panel recommends that SLU will get that task to coordinate the network

Strong points in the Nomination

Swedish Agricultural University (SLU) has good experience from coordinating national networks, i.e. Swedish LifeWatch and LTER-Sweden. SLU has also experience in establishing and maintaining data bases for data, including making them open to potential users (open access).

Five main activities have been identified and described in the nomination. All of them were found to be highly relevant and showing the SLU is well suited to coordinate the network.

Weak points of the Nomination:

There is no strategy or activity related to data collection and storing as well as approaches of making the data open in an open access system.

If the nominated station/stations are recommended for participation in the network, please give recommendations for improvements of the nomination here.

The evaluation panel strongly recommends that SLU develop a plan for how they as a coordinator can support data compilation and storing within the network, as well as supporting the individual stations in their work to make all data available in open access systems.

The evaluation panel also recommends that a plan is prepared on how to make this Swedish infrastructure can contribute to the European infrastructure.