

SwissCollNet

Information workshop, May 2021



Welcome message

Jürg Pfister



SwissCollNet 2021-2024

Christoph Scheidegger



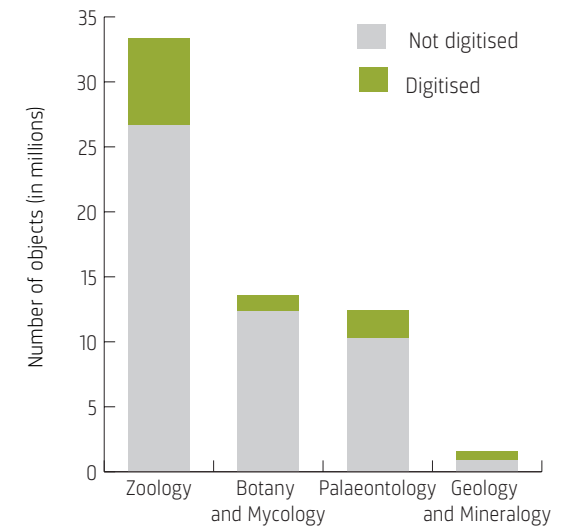
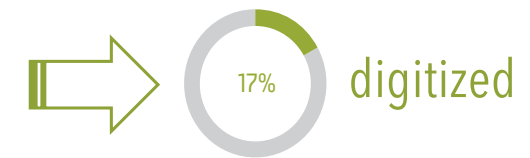
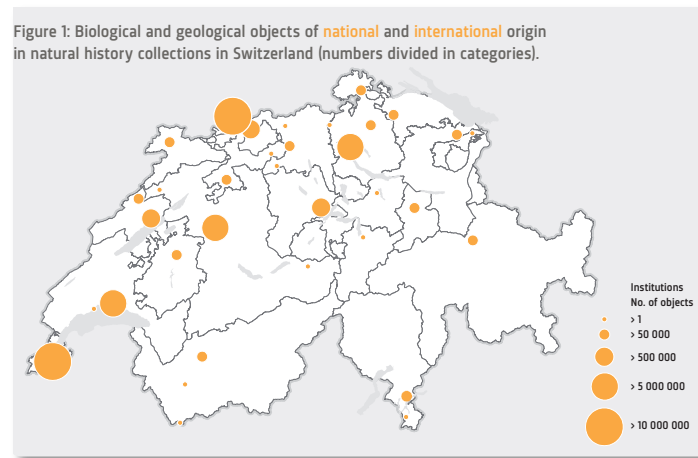
Workshop objectives

- Inform about the implementation of SwissCollNet 2021-2024
- Give **preliminary information** about the upcoming call for project proposals (October-December)
- Gather feedback and information for SwissCollNet
- Allow networking and idea exchanges

Situation in 2018



⇒ 60'906'373 Objects
192'116 Types



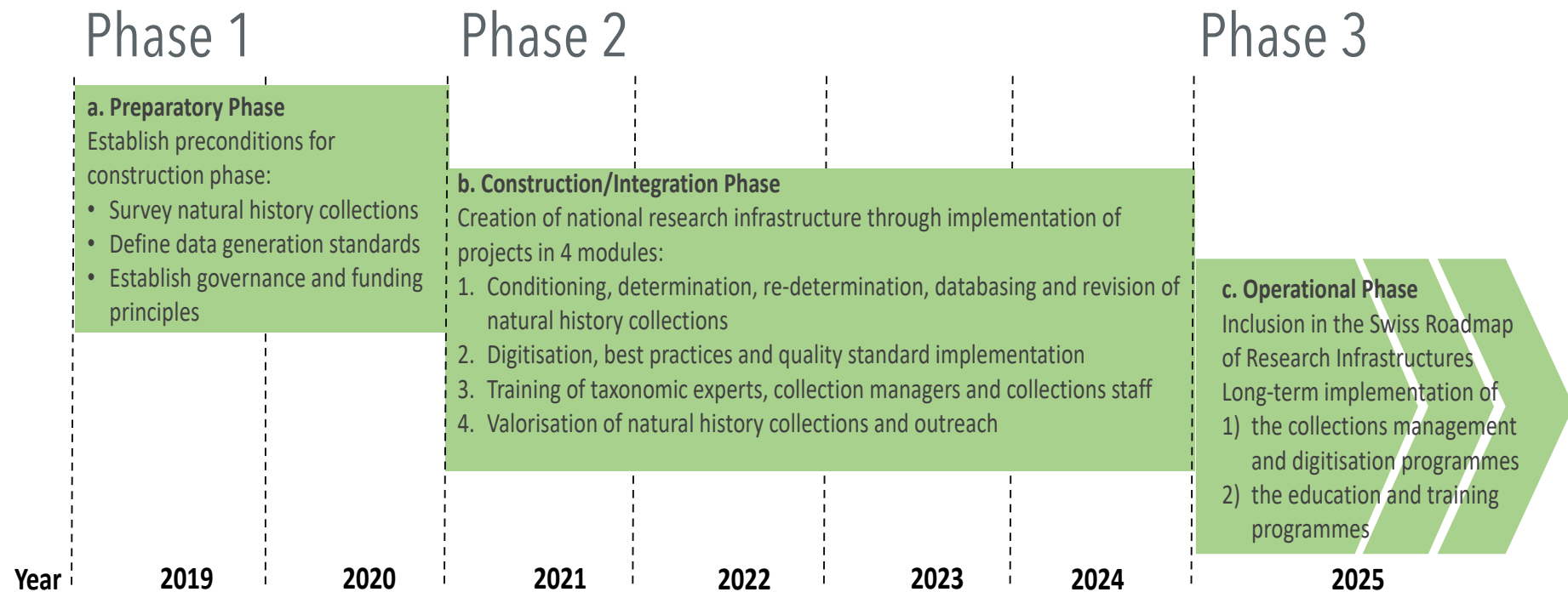
Creation of SwissCollNet to...

... **give a centralised and open access to specimen data** through

- The digitisation of specimen
- The creation of a centralised infrastructure to access the specimen data
- A facilitated access to training for scientific and technical staff
- The connection of the Swiss collections with the international programs
- A long-term strategy for improved collection management

Submission of a business case to SERI

in the frame of the pluriannual plan of the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences



Main achievements during phase 1 (2018-20)

- Creation of a network of collection-holding institutions
- Solid background on the needs of the collections
- Identification of best practices (curation, data management, preservation, training, ...)
- Publication of the Handbook
- Contacts with international initiatives (GBIF, DiSSCo)
- First draft of a national strategy
- SwissBioCollection in the Biology Roadmap (ERI dispatch 2025-2028)
- Federal funding for 2021-2024



2021 - 2024 Governance

Steering Board (SB)

Mission: steering decisions

- Define the funding conditions (regulations, calls, evaluation, allocation of funds)
- Evaluate the annual reporting (planning, progress, finances)
- Communicate within SwissCollNet and with third parties (politicians, administration, Swiss research funding bodies, institutions of higher education)
- Plan the follow up of the initiative

Board of Experts (BoE)

Mission: technical/methodological lead

- Define the required standards for national infrastructure
- Monitor the international development
- Prepare the calls (topics, standards, criteria, duration...)
- Support the SB in proposal evaluations and funding decisions
- Prepare progress reports

Steering Board (SB)



Christoph Scheidegger
(president)



Peter Wandeler



Britta Allgöwer



Felix Althaus



Walter Berendsohn



Ana Casino



Daniel Croll



Christophe Dufour



Stefan Eggenberg



Wibke Kolbmann



Barbara König



Hendrik Vogel

The SB members are appointed by the Executive Board of the SCNAT

Board of Experts (BoE)



Alice Cibois
(president)



Michelle Price



Michael Greeff



Holger Frick



Werner Eugster



Loïc Costeur



Nadir Alvarez

The BoE members are appointed by the Steering Board

Scientific unit (administrative support SCNAT)



Pia Stieger
Head of SwissCollNet



Aline Dépraz
Scientific Collaborator

2021 - 2024 main goal

Set the foundations for the Swiss Virtual Natural History Collection (SVNHC)...

- by agreeing on and applying shared standards in collection management, databasing and digitisation
- by developing the necessary infrastructure for a centralized and open access to specimen data

2021 - 2024 funding principles

The SERI allocated **12.37 MCHF** to SwissCollNet. An equivalent amount in matching funds is expected.

These federal funds will be subdivided into 3 main categories:

1. Management, communication and network development
2. Infrastructure projects to create the SVNHC (service-level agreements)
3. (inter) Institutional projects (calls for project proposals)

2021 - 2024 implementation

- Infrastructure for the SVNHC
 - preparatory phase (selection of the best technical option)
 - creation of the infrastructure
- Modernisation and digitisation of the collections (call for project proposals)
- Collection survey
- Network development
- National and international connections
- Sustainability of the initiative (institution, financing)
- National Strategy 2025-2035

The SVNHC (the Swiss Virtual Natural History Collection)

- **Objective:** create the necessary infrastructure for a centralized access to specimen data of the Swiss natural history collections
- Creation of a Working Group « data management » under the lead of Michael Greeff (ETH-Z)
- Ongoing preparatory phase: evaluation of the potential options for the SVNHC infrastructure

The Collection Survey

- **Objectives:**

- Show and advocate for the diversity and importance of the Swiss collections
- Improve the visibility on a national and international scale
- Share the information to strengthen the network and facilitate collaborations

- Collaboration with GBIF based on the 2018 survey (situation analysis) and on the structure of the GBIF run Registry of Scientific Collections (GrSciColl)
- Publication on GrSciColl and SwissCollNet websites
- Contact with collections expected late summer 2021

The National Strategy 2025 - 2035

- **Objective:** have a 10-year national strategy for the natural history collections at the end of 2024, ready to be implemented.
- Consolidation of the first draft written after the 2020 questionnaire
- Bottom-up approach with dedicated meetings with the collection-holding institutions

The SwissBioCollection (infrastructure roadmaps)

- **Objective:** support the SwissBioCollection for its inclusion in the federal infrastructure roadmap (financed by the ERI dispatch 2025-28) and contribute to the sustainability of SwissCollNet goals
- **SwissBioCollection (Biology roadmap)** : decentralised infrastructure to assemble, store and manage information on samples and specimens from biobanks and natural history collections.
- **Physical / virtual infrastructures (Geosciences roadmap):** centralized curation and storage facility for unique geosamples / platform to unify the access to the large variety of geoscientific datasets

Call for project proposals - contents

Alice Cibois



All projects funded by SwissCollNet

this is preliminary information, final version in October

- Demonstrate a clear and practical step towards nationwide interoperability of specimen data
- Generate open and FAIR data (findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable)
- Mobilise and strengthen the network between institutions, be collaborative when possible
- Provide a contribution (in cash and/or in kind) to match, at least, the funds provided by SwissCollNet

Important collections

this is preliminary information, final version in October

- Collections that include type specimens or that are of high taxonomic relevance
- Collections of high patrimonial or historical value
- Collections of high value for the knowledge of Swiss or international geo/biodiversity, both past and present
- Collections highly relevant for scientific research

Project contents

this is preliminary information, final version in October

- Conditioning, (re)determination, revision and databasing
ie. conditioning and integrating unaccessioned specimens into the collections and making them available for the SVNHC
- Digitisation and quality standard implementation
ie. making specimen data digitally available for the SVNHC
- Training of taxonomic experts, collection managers and staff
ie. creating opportunities to develop and exchange expertise

Conditioning, (re)determination, revision, databasing

this is preliminary information, final version in October

- Conditioning and integrating of unaccessioned specimens
- (re)determination and/or taxonomic revision of specimens
- Revision of existing databases for enabling the connection with the SVNHC
- The projects should produce data that will be available for the SVNHC

Examples

- Condition and digitise a collection at risk or of national/historical importance
- Revise and digitise a collection that will be integrated into a research project

Digitisation and quality standard implementation

this is preliminary information, final version in October

- Make specimen data digitally available
- Enrich specimen data through imaging

Examples

- Digitize all collections from different institutions of a taxonomic group
- Develop a digitisation technique for a specific type of collection
- Develop a digitisation program based on shared objectives and equipment (collaboration between institutions)

Training - taxonomic experts, collection managers/staff

this is preliminary information, final version in October

- Capacity building in collection management (quality standards, databasing, digitisation, ...)
- Exchange of taxonomic expertise
- The projects should produce data that will be available for the SVNHC

Examples

- Hire a specialist for training and determination on a specific taxonomic group
- Develop a cross-training program (exchange of expertise) with another institution
- Include a training phase in a project developing new digitisation techniques

Call for project proposals - procedures

Peter Wandeler



Caution

this is **preliminary information** that may be modified

the **final** version will be available **when the call opens**

Call for project proposals – 2 calls

this is preliminary information, final version in October

	1 st call	2 nd call
Call timeline	open 1 st of October 2021 close 23 rd of December 2021	open May 2022 close July 2022
Financing period	start spring 2022 end August 2024 (latest)	start winter 2022 end August 2024 (latest)
Project duration	max 2 years	max 1.5 year
Funding available	6 mios	3 mios

Call for project proposals – eligibility

this is preliminary information, final version in October

- **Main applicant and co-applicant** : person from a Swiss public and/or non-profit collection-holding institutions (collaborations are highly encouraged)
- A person can only apply for one project as main applicant, but may be involved in other projects as co-applicant. Several persons from the same institution can submit different projects.
- A person can apply to both calls.
- Applications may involve other partners or include contracts with the private sector.

Call for project proposals – eligibility

this is preliminary information, final version in October

Our definition of « natural history collections »

- Mineral and sediment samples, rocks and meteorites
- Specimens of extant and extinct animals, plants, fungi and microorganisms, including paleontological, archeozoological and anthropological collections

Are excluded: biomedical and veterinary-oriented collections

Call for project proposals – application

this is preliminary information, final version in October

Applicants will:

1. Provide a project plan (scientific and technical objectives, means and collaborations, calendar, data quality, long-term sustainability ...)
2. Provide a budget, including the matching funds and a description of the respective contributions in case of collaborations
3. Submit in English

Call for project proposals – matching funds

this is preliminary information, final version in October

- Matching funds can consist in cash or in-kind contributions
- **Cash:** funds dedicated to the project (internal budget, third-party...)
- **In-kind:** costs generated by the project in terms of salaries, usage of existing infrastructures, consumables (excluding costs explicitly funded by SwissCollNet)
- No guidance defines the relative cash/in-kind proportions in the project budget
- A cash contribution is highly encouraged

Call for project proposals – procedure

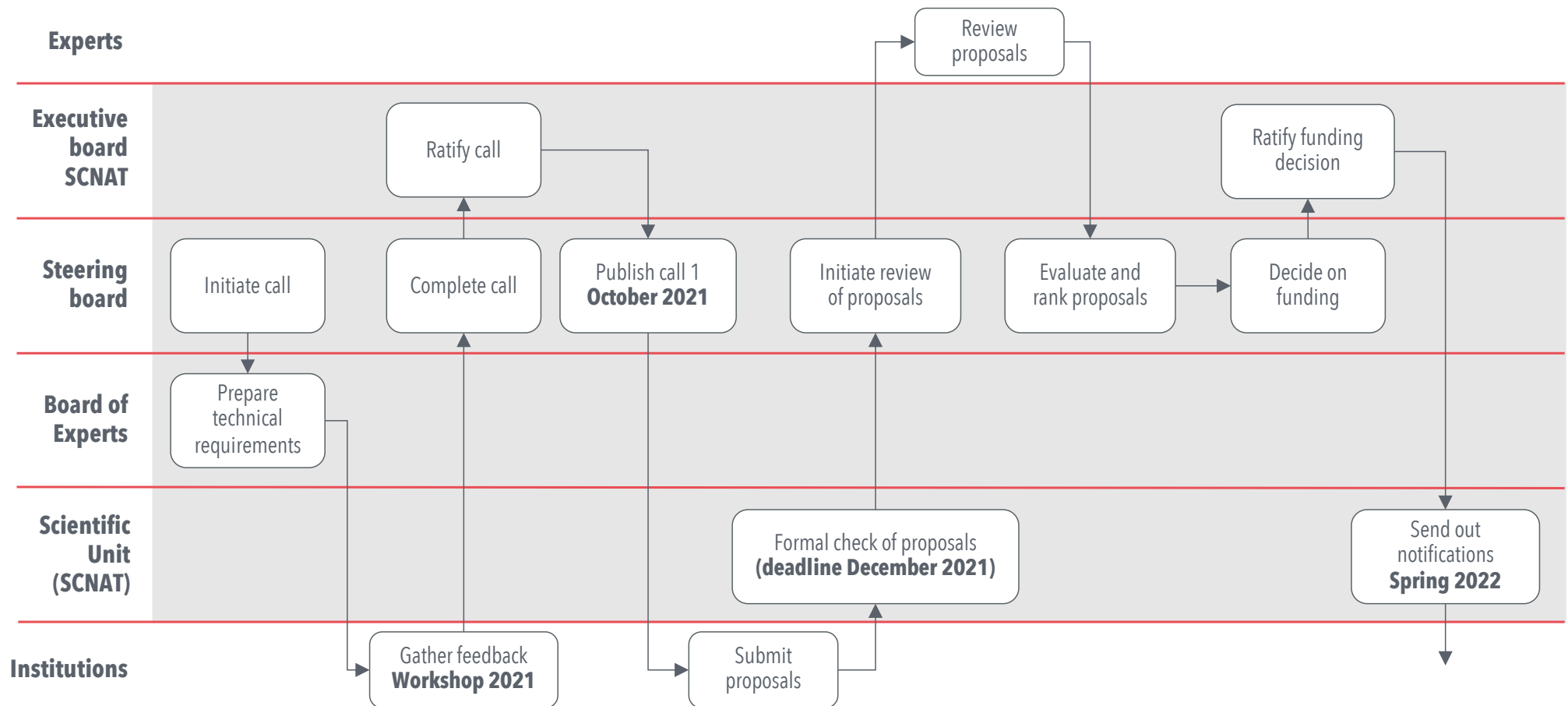
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Main steps after submission:

1. Formal check of the application (SCNAT)
2. Evaluation by international experts
3. Decision for fund allocation by the Steering Board and ratification by the Executive Board of the SCNAT
4. Notification by the SCNAT

Call for project proposals – procedure

this is preliminary information, final version in October



Call for project proposals – after decision

this is preliminary information, final version in October

Funded projects:

- Start date between April and September 2022 (latest)
- End date August 31st 2024 (latest)
- Annual and final reports (progress, finances)

Rejected projects:

- Possibility to submit a revised version at the 2nd call

Break



Questions



Group discussions

