

# SASNET

Swedish South Asian Studies Network

## Minutes from Board meeting 14 February 2006, 13.00-17.00

Venue: Conference room, Centre for East- and Southeast Asian Studies, House Alfa 1, Scheelevägen 15D, Ideon, Lund

Members participant: Björn Hettne, Pamela Price, Jan Essner, Jan Magnusson, Bo Lindblad, Birgitta Göransson, Rajni Hatti Kaul and Gunnel Cederlöf.  
Others: Staffan Lindberg and Lars Eklund

### 1. Election of chairperson, secretary and person to verify the minutes

Björn Hettne was elected to chair the meeting, and Lars Eklund to be the secretary. Jan Magnusson was elected to verify the minutes.

### 2. Agenda for the meeting, additional points

No other points were added to the agenda.

### 3. SASNET work report: Staffan Lindberg and Lars Eklund

Minutes from the previous board meeting 30 August 2005: see  
• [30 August 2005](#). Minutes (pdf-file)

#### Overall report, work during fall 2005

- a. Report SASNET's contact journey to Northeast India, Bhutan, Nepal, and Bangladesh during November – December 2005. See <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/journey3.html>, and a short report presented to the meeting (**Enclosure 7**). Several board members suggested institutions and individuals that could be approached to disseminate the information from the journey to a wider audience. Jan Essner suggested seminars for students to be arranged in different places in Sweden.
- b. Internet gateway, new developments, Lars Eklund reported about the updating of the web site, and informed about a coming two-days course on database connected web pages in which he was going to participate 20-21 February.
- c. Five more Newsletters: see, <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasnet.html#newsletters>. Björn Hettne and Pamela Price praised the content of the newsletters.

- d. Financial result for 2005. **Enclosure 5**: SASNET Utfall 2005 (Excel document) and **Enclosure 6**: Balance for 2005 and comments.
- e. Other activities
- NIAS, Asian Century Research School, SARTrain, for South Asia, Pamela Price reported about the reorganisation of NIAS, and how SARTrain has been converted into a new decentralised Nordic research cluster after the Marie Curie application failed.
  - ÖRNAST, see <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/ornast.html>. Staffan reported about the pamphlets being printed in the Fall 2005, otherwise no new developments.
  - Masters course at Uppsala and Lund, oral reports by Gunnel Cederlöf and Jan Magnusson. The Lund programme, now in its third consecutive year, is running well, and will be adapted to the Bologna model. In Uppsala the Masters programme will not start this year. Instead it will be re-launched in September 2008 in a modified form.
  - India/South Asia undergraduate 1-year course at Österlen's folk high school, oral report by Staffan Lindberg
  - Nordic Centre in India (NCI). Gunnel Cederlöf reported on behalf of her colleague in Uppsala, Beppe Karlsson, the NCI Director, about the development of the university consortium. Several new universities have recently joined NCI, and in February 2007 an NCI conference will be held in Delhi. SASNET is welcome to take part in the planning of this conference.
  - Gunnel Cederlöf also informed about a conference on Environmental history that will be organised by Uppsala University in June 2007, as part of the Carl von Linné jubilee. She asked for SASNET's support towards this initiative. She made a final point informing about SALT, the Uppsala University's Forum for Advanced Studies in Arts, Languages and Theology. Since 1 February 2006 Gunnel is the Director of SALT.

*Discussion:* The board had a lengthy discussion about the Masters programmes, the selection criteria for students and the introduction of fees for higher education in Sweden. Bo Lindblad suggested that SASNET should organise a workshop on higher education in Sweden, and this idea was strongly supported by other members.

#### **4. Planning of activities during 2006 and the whole period 2006 - 2008**

*Suggested important additional tasks for 2006:*

- Plan an interdisciplinary workshop in 2007, choice of topic, working group, additional finance, etc. One suggestion of topic is: maternal and child health with about 15 participants from South Asia and Sweden (Nordic countries).
- We need to discuss if we should create a Guest Lecture/research programme, if it can be administered from Stockholm – Uppsala, and the principles for the programme (applications at the same date as for planning grants, max 20 000 per programme, etc.). We suggest that we start with SEK 100 000 for the autumn of 2006. Application deadline 15 June.

- Form a strategy group to work with the long time planning and funding of SASNET activities. Five persons would be an ideal size.
- Find a new reference group for evaluation of planning grant applications from 2007.
- Introduction of the new coordinator to SASNET's way of working.
- With reduced funds for planning grants, we suggest that such grants are only distributed once a year from 2007 onwards.

*Discussion:* SASNET's application to Sida/SAREC, see **Enclosure 1**. At the time of the board meeting Sida/SAREC had not made its final decision regarding the application, but indicated informally that the 50 % increase in funding we had applied for most probably would not materialise. Our application was based on the positive results of the evaluation report (discussed in detail at the previous board meeting), where the evaluation committee had suggested a 50 % increase. Lund University had already decided to increase its funding to 800 000 SEK per year. When we realised that Sida/SAREC was not going to increase its funding, the main task for the board meeting was to discuss how to change the plan for the coming years, as compared to the proposals brought forward in the application (and also presented in the budget).

The board members discussed what to do in the new situation. Since the Internet Gateway is considered to be a central feature of SASNET, and a proposition by Staffan to reduce the working-time of the Director was rejected, the only option left was to discuss the future of the planning grants.

Some members like Bo Lindblad regretted that the planning grants have to be reduced, as they have played an important role in community building and also have had a high success rate in initiating major research and education projects.

Jan Magnusson on the other hand stressed that planning grants are no sacred cows. They have served a purpose, but now it might be time to try something else for a while – or at least lower the sum of the grants, he argued.

Gunnel Cederlöf pointed out that it is necessary to make priorities. SASNET should emphasize visibility in Sweden, arrange workshops for example on institution building, how to consolidate South Asian studies.

Rajni Hatti Kaul suggested that rules for the remaining planning grants should be more specific, so that grants are given only for interdisciplinary research and network building. Several other members agreed.

The discussion ended in concrete decisions according to the suggestions given, and specifically that SASNET should organise a workshop on India/South Asia in the internationalisation of Swedish higher education, in late 2006.

A strategy group was also discussed, and approved of.

*Decision:* The board decided that the three most important criteria to be emphasized when announcing the planning grants and interdisciplinary workshops should be:

- interdisciplinary projects, especially involving researchers from both the "hard" and "soft" sciences
- networking, that is, new collaboration between Swedish and South Asian researchers
- education cooperation, in which new courses and programmes are developed and in which Swedish and South Asian institutions collaborate

Maximum amount for one **interdisciplinary workshop** could be 150 000 SEK (the same as for planning a programme with many institutions and actors involved). If the reference group does not think that it needs to use all the 200 000 SEK set aside for interdisciplinary workshops, it can use the remaining money for some additional good applications for planning grants.

For the **guest lectures**, it was decided that the invited researcher from South Asia should be a new guest lecturer (who has not previously lectured at the department) and that the inviting department will pay the fee for the lectures given, while SASNET's grant can be used for travel, boarding and lodging. Priority will be given to applications that involve lectures at more than one department and university. The maximum grant should be 20 000 SEK.

The 15/6 2006 planning grants round is handled, as before, by the existing reference group (Pamela Price, Neil Webster and Malin Åkerblom) with a slightly increased remuneration from 5000 SEK to 7500 SEK (total extra cost: 12 000 SEK).

A new round of applications for all the above activities will be 15 June 2007 and from then onwards only once a year. If the new reference group and SASNET's board find that there are many good applications for interdisciplinary workshops, the sum allotted for this may be increased at the cost of ordinary planning grants.

The new reference group will be elected in the board meeting in January-February 2007.

**A strategy group for the long time planning** and funding of SASNET activities was formed. Its members are Camilla Orjuela, Jan Magnusson, Bo Lindblad, Rajni Hatti Kaul and Gunnel Cederlöf.

## 5. Budget for 2006

*Suggestion:* The suggested annual funding is 1.65 million SEK, which is the same as during 2003-2006. The suggested budget is found in **Enclosure 3**. It has to be seen in relation to the activities discussed under point 4 above.

*Discussion:* See under Point 4

*Decision:* The board decided to approve the budget for the coming years. Regarding those parts that relate to basic root node activities (salaries for the director and webmaster, the Internet gateway costs, etc) without changes. For the 930 000 SEK in the budget left to be used for activities outside the root node, it was decided to use the available funding in the following way:

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| 1. Planning Grants                           | 500 000 |
| 2. Interdisciplinary workshops               | 200 000 |
| 3. Guest lectures                            | 100 000 |
| 4. Focussed meeting(s)                       | 118 000 |
| (including administrative fee at 18 % at LU) |         |
| 5. Increase in fee for reference group       | 12 000  |

For the year 2006 it was decided that SEK 300 000 should be distributed to 6 or 7 projects from the current round of planning grants applications.

A new round of applications for planning grants, interdisciplinary workshops (new) and guest lectures (new) will be announced with a final date of 15 June 2006. The grants should be distributed as follows:

1. Planning Grants	200 000
2. Interdisciplinary workshops	200 000
3. Guest lectures	100 000

## 6. Distribution of Planning Grants

*Suggestion: Enclosure 4:* List of applicants. The evaluation made by the Reference group, consisting of Pamela Price, Neil Webster and Malin Åkerblom, was available at the meeting.

*Decision:* The board approved the following six projects:

### Planning grants for research projects/programmes:

- Pernille Gooch, Division of Human Ecology, Lund University: "Mangrove conservation as a sustainable life insurance for coastal Tamil Nadu communities." The committee decided to fund the project with SEK 45 000.
- Marc Katz, Dept. of Religious Studies, Karlstad University: "The Vitality and Role of 'Sporting Clubs' in the Multi-Cultural Community: A Study of the Traditional Youth Organizations of Banaras." The committee decided to fund the project with SEK 50 000.
- Sten Widmalm, Dept. of Government, Uppsala University: "Tolerance in Challenging Political Environments in Uganda, Kenya, India and Pakistan." The committee decided to fund the project with SEK 50 000.
- Madelene Ostwald, Earth Sciences Centre, Göteborg University: "Climate Change and Climate Collaboration between Peradeniya and Göteborg University. The Potential of using CDM in land and vegetation recovery after the 2004 tsunami in southern Sri Lanka." The committee decided to fund the project with 50 000 SEK.

### Planning grants for educational projects/programmes:

- Anders Björkman, Dept. of Medicine, Karolinska Institutet Medical University, Stockholm: "Rational use of antimalarial drugs in Pakistan." The committee decided to fund the project with SEK 60 000.
- Jim Walch, Dept. of Curriculum Studies and Communication (UKL), Stockholm Institute of Education: "Teacher education in the field: Facilitating thesis work in South India." The committee decided to fund the project with SEK 50 000.

## **7. Announcement of the position as Director of SASNET during 2007 – 2009**

*Suggestion:* We announce the position in the same way as we announced it in 2001 with a closing date of 1 June 2006:

### Invitation for applications to the position of Director for SASNET

#### **Description of the position**

Arvoderat uppdrag 50 %)

The Director will organise the meetings of SASNET's board and manage the work at the root node. The Director should plan and carry out various activities in close collaboration with the board, the co-ordinators of SASNET supported programmes, as well as South Asian, Swedish and international network partners. Given the idea of an open and dynamic network of activities her/his main role should be that of a 'mediator', connecting people and resources, starting new activities and supporting the programme co-ordinators in their work.

#### **Qualifications**

The Director should be a highly qualified South Asia researcher, university, teacher, supervisor, administrator and programme builder, with well established research contacts in, and familiarity with the South Asian region. Experience of work in a research council is desirable.

The position is part time, 50 %, and the duration is from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2009.

*Decision:* The position as Director will be announced.

## **8. New SASNET board for the period 2007 – 2009: Appointment of an election committee with a majority of members from outside the board**

According to the Directions for SASNET: At the time of elections for a new board, the board will appoint an election committee with a majority of members from outside the board. The election committee will put forward candidates to the vice-chancellor.

*Decision:* The following persons will constitute the election committee:

Prof. Bo Lindblad, Karolinska Institutet, Prof. Staffan Lindberg, SASNET, and Assoc. Prof. Malin Åkerblom, International Science Programme, Uppsala University.

## **9. Any other business (should be announced at the start of the meeting)**

None

**10. Date for next board meeting**

The next board meeting should be held on Tuesday 29 August 2006.

Lund, 2 March 2006

*Lars Eklund*

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Lars Eklund, secretary

*Björn Hettne*

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Björn Hettne, chairman

Verified by:

*Jan Magnusson*

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Jan Magnusson