

Minutes of the General Assembly of BONSAI 2017-05-23 15:00 CEST via GoToMeeting

1) Opening

Bo Weidema opened the General Assembly on behalf of the Board, noting that the General Assembly had been called via LinkedIn and direct mail to the members on 20th of April 2017, and that the General Assembly therefore is validly constituted.

2) Activity report from the Board and management

Bo Weidema gave the following report on the activities since the last General Assembly:

Since November 1st 2016, we have had an Executive Manager, Dr. Michele De Rosa, sponsored by 2.-0 LCA consultants (60% time for 1 year).

Also additional scientific staff, Dr. Stefano Merciai and Dr. Marie de Saxcé, has been committed by 2.-0 LCA consultants, for a total of 640 hours.

We have made several applications for EU funds during the last year – unfortunately without any success whatsoever.

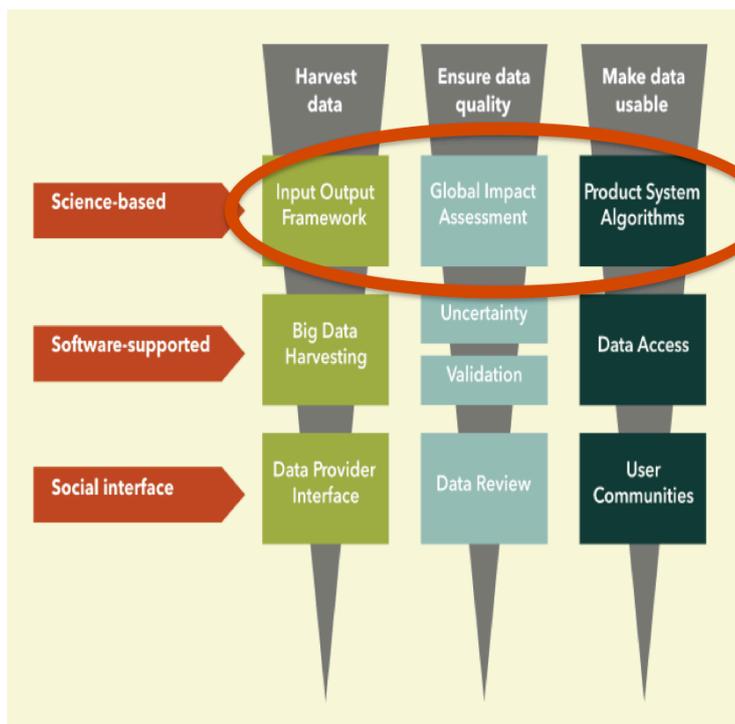
BONSAI has been presented as part of the scientific programme at the Conferences of SETAC in Nantes, May 2016, and Brussels, May 2017. We also have an upcoming presentation at the LCM 2017 conference in Luxembourg in September.

On the technical side, we have continued working on the database architecture and software specifications, the current state of which is given on our wiki, which has now been moved to GitHub: <https://github.com/BONSAMURAI/bonsai/wiki> - Members that wish to contribute can obtain editing rights by writing to our Executive Manager. The text on the wiki has improved during the year, but it is still not sufficiently detailed to be used for inviting larger groups of “outsiders” to take part in the work and to use it as a basis for e.g. hackatons.

Michele De Rosa and Marie de Saxcé have been in contact with CKAN to see if we could obtain any help from them to use their services for a beta version. Michele will attend the EUDAT summer school in July and will continue to investigate the offers of other service providers. We will also investigate if we can piggy-back on neighboring research communities that have more experience with similar issues, see also the below mentioned report from the RDA Plenary Meeting.



Out of the 10 planned Working Groups, there is still only the top three for which there has been any activity:



- The Input-Output Framework WG has not been active in 2016. There is a decided set of objectives, but the group is currently lacking an active coordinator.
- The Global Impact Assessment WG is working on a taxonomy for impact pathway modelling (to ensure completeness in this area too): Some unpublished progress has been made on the impact pathways for the Global Burden of Disease and for ecosystem services, the latter in cooperation with UNEP/SETAC.
- The Product System Algorithm WG has not been established yet,

but some work is on-going in the Ocelot project at <https://ocelot.space/>. Pascal Lesage has participated this development on behalf of BONSAI, and Pascal reported that there has been made good progress also on the so-called consequential system model, which is the one most relevant for decision-oriented footprints.

BONSAI members have also followed or been closely involved with several related developments:

- The product data platform of Everycs @ <http://everycs.com/makersite/> - we have had contacts to explore options for cooperation, but have been waiting for a public version to be ready to evaluate to which degree the site will accommodate our requirements for promoting open data. With the current beta-version it should be possible to make an assessment, but we have not found time to do that yet. Andreas Ciroth also expressed the reservation that the site apparently does not use input-output data in the background.
- Both Llorenç Milà i Canals, Andreas Ciroth, and Bo Weidema have contributed to the development of GLAD, the UNEP-led government initiative on LCA data interoperability, especially on the minimum list of metadata descriptors. Llorenç Milà i Canals said that coding will start in June and is expected to be ready by the end of the year. The initiative, at this point in time, focuses on interoperability of the data within existing LCA databases. Later, and maybe more relevant for a cooperation with BONSAI, there may be interest in looking at integration with data that currently reside outside the LCA databases.
- Andreas Ciroth reported on three developments: 1) An IO-model builder, an open source Python library (<https://github.com/USEPA/IO-Model-Builder>) for creating environmentally extended input-output models (EEIO models) from CSV files including functions to calculate different result types (e.g. LCA results, direct and upstream contributions, etc.) and



convert them into JSON-LD data packages that can be imported into OpenLCA, 2) openLCA itself (<http://www.openlca.org/>), which is relevant in connection to the Ocelot project, and 3) a project by GreenDelta for the German Umweltbundesamt to build an “LCA data machine”, taking raw data from outside the LCA domain, seeding with a predefined process type pattern and applying “artificial intelligence” tools (using constraints, entropy rules, data quality information, partitioning rules, balancing rules) to produce a “core” dataset which can be placed in a specific geographical context and to which specific nomenclatures or modelling requirements may later be added (see presentation at http://www.greendelta.com/fileadmin/user_upload/GD/SETACBrussels_datamachine.pdf). It has not yet been decided if or how much of this will become open source.

Bo Weidema and Michele De Rosa participated in the 9th Plenary Meeting of the Research Data Alliance in April 2017. Their full (20-page) report from this is available from the BONSAI website (<http://bonsai.uno/wp-content/uploads/Report-from-9th-RDA-plenary-April-2017-in-Barcelona.pdf>) containing reflections of the relevance of RDA recommendations, Working Groups and Interest Groups for BONSAI, as well as a short state-of-the-art summary of the technologies for virtual research environments. Out of the 620 participants at the 9th RDA Plenary, the large majority were natural scientists and data scientists. One a small group of social science people participated, and these were mainly from sociology and archaeology. Apparently none, or very few, from economics and none from industrial ecology, although the data sharing issue for these sciences have many parallels to those of the other sciences. BONSAI may have an important role to play as ice-breaker for these communities to be involved in RDA and the open data world in general. Michele intends to follow the group on “disciplinary interoperability framework” and Bo will follow the group on “domain vocabulary”. We will propose a new investigative group (a “Bird of Feather (BoF)” in RDA jargon) for the next RDA plenary in Montreal 19-21st September 2017 on the topic of creating an industrial ecology and economic science domain interest group within RDA. Michele De Rosa and Pascal Lesage are expected to be able to attend the next RDA plenary. The following will be in Berlin in March 2018, so this should be an option for Andreas Ciroth to attend.

The activity report was approved.

3) Review and approval of accounts 2016

BONSAI still has only few formal (paying) members. The income from membership fees was 3400 Euro. Expenditures were mainly to cover travel costs and amounted to 950 Euro. The equity ultimo 2016 is 4652 Euro.

The accounts were approved.

4) Membership fees for 2018

It was decided to maintain the same membership fee level for 2018 as in 2017, namely 150 Euro.

5) Discussion and adoption of recommendations for the Board on priorities on funding, personnel, member communications, and working groups

To obtain funding is still the most important objective for the coming year, but for this it is necessary to have a convincing beta-version of the database that can demonstrate its planned



features and usability, and to ‘package’ the deliverables so that they become more attractive for both developers and sponsors.

6) Any other business

A short discussion was raised on the use of the term Open Source Database. It was agreed that the terms “Open source software” and “Open access data” should be distinguished (“open source data” does not make sense), but since a database is both software and data, it is an open question how to call a database that is both based on open source software and contains open access data that are editable in a Wikipedia-like fashion. Members were encouraged to consider suitable alternatives to “open source database”.