

IPMEN Draft Action Plan

3-5 years

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Prepared by: The Whitener Group, LLC

Introduction

The International Pacific Marine Educators Network (IPMEN) hosted a 3-hour Strategy Forum on September 3, 2020, with technical and facilitation support from The Whitener Group (TWG). Prior to the meeting, TWG administered a survey to the people identified by IPMEN as invitees to the Forum. The IPMEN Planning Committee invited over 50 participants from the network to participate. Within the 3-hour meeting span, over 30 people joined the meeting and offered their feedback.

The format of the meeting was a Welcome by the IPMEN Planning Committee and a brief overview of the objectives of the meeting, followed by an overview of the survey results. Then participants were asked to join a breakout room where a TWG Facilitator guided the group in answering “how can IPMEN be more effective?” in the context of the first three topic areas (listed below), which were generated by the survey data. The fourth topic area in the list below was added because there are necessary actions within *Organizational Operations* to be considered by the IPMEN Planning Committee as IPMEN evolves.

- Conferences
- Building Networks
- Marine Education & New Initiatives
- Organizational Operations

The draft action plan summarizes the **action items** identified by the breakout groups for IPMEN to be effective in each of the topic areas discussed. TWG has added content to the goal associated with operating IPMEN that is typical to nonprofit operations along with action items that were mentioned in the breakout sessions. The draft action plan also provides the basis for a 3-year Strategic Action Plan that the Planning Committee can use to move IPMEN closer to achieving its mission.

Next Steps

The steps outlined below are recommended by TWG as the actions to take to complete the strategic planning process. Typically, a strategic planning would take a day of breakout sessions and an additional meeting with the core team to refine the plan. The steps listed below are for the IPMEN Planning Committee's planning purposes as they consider the Draft Action Plan.

- The action items under each objective are not yet prioritized. The next step for this action plan is for the Planning Committee to **prioritize the action items** with a timeline for completion (i.e. July 2021, July 2022, and July 2023), a responsible party assigned to each item and a metric for success.
- TWG recommends that the IPMEN Planning Committee considers **revising the mission**. The current mission of IPMEN is incomplete according to the typical definition of a mission.

An organizational Mission defines the purpose of the organization and should answer the following 3 questions:

- What do you do? – IPMEN creates resources, programs, training and leadership
 - Who do you do it for? – every level of society in the Pacific Region
 - How do you do what you do? – this part is unclear.
 - For Example Only #1: IPMEN fosters the collaborative relationships that lead to the creation of resources, programs, training, and leadership necessary to build ocean literacy at every level of society in the Pacific region by....?
 - For Example Only #2: Through fostering collaborative relationships, IPMEN creates the resources, programs, training, and leadership necessary to build ocean literacy at every level of society in the Pacific region.
- **Incorporate the Action Plan** into your Planning Committee meetings and use it as a living document that adjusts to current circumstances. Use the action plan to guide the meeting and keep each other accountable to the plan.

Draft IPMEN Action Plan

Vision of IPMEN:

To nurture a fuller understanding of the ocean's value, leading to informed, responsible and creative decisions that seek to conserve and restore the integrity of the ocean's ecosystems in the Pacific.

Mission of IPMEN:

To become a leader in fostering the collaborative relationships that will lead to creation of resources, programs, training, and leadership necessary to build ocean literacy at every level of society in the Pacific region.

Goal Summary:

- 1) Operate IPMEN.
- 2) Build the International Pacific Marine Educators Network into a stronger network.
- 3) Maximize learning and networking at conferences and in between conferences.
- 4) Leverage new initiatives to maximize ocean literacy in the Pacific Region.

Goal 1: Operate IPMEN

Objective 1.1 Organize and manage the administrative tasks of IPMEN

Action Items:

- *Update the website on a consistent schedule*
- *Standardize administrative tasks*

Objective 1.2 Plan for succession and handoff to younger generation of marine educators

Action Items:

- *Organize conference planning files and resources so they are easily accessible and understood*
- *Establish procedures for management of member contact info*
- *Establish written procedures and records to guide incoming members of the planning committee in administrative tasks: accounting, license/permit applications, password storage, etc.*

Objective 1.3 Explore funding options for expansion plans and/or new initiatives

Action Items:

- *Determine best use for fundraising (i.e. should IPMEN fundraise like a typical nonprofit and hire some support? Should fundraising/sponsorships only support the conference or should IPMEN expand?)*

Goal 2: Build the International Pacific Marine Educators Network into a stronger network

Objective 2.1 Solidify the concept of “Membership” in IPMEN

Action Items:

- *Clear up the confusion within IPMEN on what “member” means*
- *Explore the pros and cons of becoming an “official” organization*

Objective 2.2 Implement a plan for managing social media for IPMEN

Action Items:

- *Ask for volunteers from more media-savvy delegates to help with social media management*
- *Create a calendar for social media outreach*
- *Explore management tools to allow collaboration on project and share ideas – i.e. Slack, What’s App*
- *Consolidate and manage the 4 Facebook pages and other social media currently being used by IPMEN so they all have the same messages*
- *Share stories of the past, present and future on social media*
- *Manage the IPMEN contact list in central location*

Objective 2.3 Engage Youth in IPMEN

Action Items:

- *Use social media, video platforms, share stories, INSPIRE!*

Goal 3: Maximize learning and networking at conferences and in between conferences

Objective 3.1 Incorporating COVID-19 Restrictions

Action Items:

- *Form a Conditional Policy (“if this, then that”) to follow based on the reality of COVID in July 2021*
- *Plan for a robust remote participation option*
- *If the 2021 Conference is completely remote, make sure to incorporate TEK and cultural learning online somehow*

Objective 3.2 Explore online trainings and meetings

Action Items:

- *Use the time between now and July 2021 to do 2-3 online trainings offered out to IPMEN’s network – get creative about how to make them experiential.*
- *Explore possibility and interest in mini field trips/nationwide mini-conferences every 3-4 months*
- *Possibly ask for a small conference fee for people to participate in the expectation that it will encourage active participation (small fee puts a “value” to the conference instead of “free”)*
- *If small trainings go well, explore the idea of offering remote conferences in the future – smaller travel footprint, more affordable for limited budgets*
- *Involve delegates as helpers/organizers in the smaller trainings and meetings*

Objective 3.3 Marketing of IPMEN’s “brand”

Action Items:

- *Explore the idea of an IPMEN “mascot”*
- *Establish an IPMEN “look and feel” for the website and any communications*
- *Reinforce the TEK cultural learning as part of what makes IPMEN unique*

Objective 3.4 Improving conference format

Action Items:

- *Curate conferences to specific topics – these can be led virtually and pre-recorded*
- *Reinforce the Vision of IPMEN and Walk the Walk*
- *Continue to facilitate network building at conferences and be creative as to how to do it virtually*
- *Offer incentives for participation*

Goal 4: Leverage new initiatives to build ocean literacy in the Pacific Region

Objective 4.1 Leverage the UN Decade of the Ocean Science for Sustainable Development

Action Items:

- *Use the UN Decade of the Ocean for Sustainable Development to build and strengthen the IPMEN network through a more powerful online presence and perhaps connecting to global Ocean initiatives (e.g. UN)*
- *Clarify our mission and understanding of what we can do as a group to further this idea even if we can't meet in person.*
- *Use the Decade of the Ocean as a way to encourage institutions and orgs to do more in marine education*
- *IPMEN has opportunity to coordinate a campaign between all organizations and get everyone at the table -i.e. this month, lets focus here, the next month, lets focus on this important*
 - *Pitch Fest – pitch an idea to share the info and help other countries*
 - *Hack-A-Thon – everyone all over the world works on one problem for 7 hours – gets University students involved.*
 - *IPMEN could connect youth as part of the UN Decade of the Ocean – members of IPMEN are doing this already, could IPMEN highlight what is already happening?*
 - *TED-X or a TED Talk on a specific topic – hosted by IPMEN*

Objective 4.2 Partner with other Resource Portals to share TEK

Action Items:

- *Research and approach viable “clearing houses” of marine education resources to incorporate IPMEN’s traditional knowledge resources*
- *List reputable clearing houses of information on the IPMEN website*

Objective 4.3 Use IPMEN’s expertise in TEK to make current marine education more robust and engaging for all people

Action Items:

- *Explore the idea for a Traditional Ecological Knowledge Literacy Guide (note: participant in breakout session mentioned a possible grant opportunity in motion)*
- *IPMEN committee members should determine IPMEN’s focus in marine education:*
- *should IPMEN focus on providing research and expanding to all countries/regions in the Pacific where IPMEN does not have representation?*
- *Prioritize the most important ocean literacy resources for all Pacific countries and translate those resources for student use*
- *Translate other identified marine education resources from other (non-US) countries for student use*

Objective 4.4 Address IPMEN’s approach to advocacy

Action Items:

- *IPMEN is getting big enough that there are divergent ideas and opinions on advocacy at the international level. The idea of advocacy and IPMEN’s thoughtful approach should be discussed by the IPMEN planning committee to decide IPMEN’s position or if it should have a position.*

- *Explore if IPMEN can support a discussion platform (virtual and in-person) for networking ideas for solutions – being careful not to endorse any one specific solution – simply offering a robust exchange of ideas*
- *Dig into the question of why there are not more Latin American people and by extension, other underrepresented countries involved in IPMEN*
- *Perhaps because people are not being reflected at IPMEN. How can we involve more people who are not involved now? From other countries that we have no representation?*

Objective 4.5 Engage the next generation of Pacific marine educators

Action Items:

- *Build IPMEN’s social media footprint*
- *Recruit from member network for specific help in social media*
- *Explore leveraging youth to help with social media needs – our youth know what is happening in our oceans and IPMEN can be a resource and guide for these youths to be ocean advocates.*
- *Tap into the strong youth engagement effort at NMEA to learn from NMEA and to reach out to Youth Ambassadors who are part of the Trans-Atlantic Ocean literacy effort. These young people are incredibly savvy in understanding politics, communications, what is needed generationally to cultivate the society we are wanting in the future.*

Objective 4.6 Share Traditional Knowledge

Action Items:

- *Identify and highlight traditional knowledge*
- *Make sure that we, as educators, are not the “owners” of the TK. – if there is a resource built on TEK, then those communities should be involved and be asked for permission.*

Objective 4.7 Address the COVID-19 Impacts on the marine environment in the Pacific Ocean

Action Items:

- *Address on the website/email communications/mini trainings/etc. how COVID has impacted marine education because many education centers have been shut down*
 - *Show how COVID 19 affects marine life both in positive and negative ways*
 - *More people are getting outdoors and camping, seeing nature – this is positive and could be an opportunity*
 - *Show if COVID 19 has made the Pacific Ocean cleaner due to less human activities?*
 - *in Oahu, the bay is cleaner*
 - *it’s a wait and see approach*
 - *seeing face masks in the ocean as a new source of pollution*
 - *no source of funding to analyze this, BUT there are other groups who have been able to adjust. SBA grants can go to nonprofits. Mark Friedman can zoom into classrooms from the boat – it is relatively affordable because of the online technology*