

Indian Ocean – Census of Marine Life (IO-CoML)

Chairperson

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Project Manager

None at the moment

Education and Outreach Network Liaison

None at the moment

<http://www.iocoml.org>

1. 2006 ACCOMPLISHMENTS & SCIENTIFIC HIGHLIGHTS

1. Guidelines for utilization of the grant received from Sloan Foundation were drawn.
2. The first meeting of the Steering Committee was held in Sep 2006. This was held in conjunction with the SC meeting of Sub-Sahara CoML in order to develop synergy and minimize duplication of efforts.
3. Confirmed species entries in IndOBIS stands at 35,000, from 22,000 last year.
4. Three workshops for IndOBIS data managers were held.
5. One Data providers' workshop for IndOBIS was held.
6. Dr. Lokabharathi inducted in the Steering Committee of ChEss.
7. Dr. Baban Ingole inducted in Steering Committee for biodiversity – sea mounts
8. Dr. Baban Ingole assumes responsibility for the team on anthropogenic impacts on continental margins under CoMarge project.
9. Dr. Judith Gonsalves participated in workshop on international Census on Marine Microbes in the Netherlands.
10. Dr. Ingole participated in the Tsunami cruise. His findings were diffused in Discovery Channel.
11. Dr. Chandramohan participated in workshop on Bar-coding of marine life and International Census on Marine Microbes.
12. Dr. Wafar participated in the Indian Ocean NaGISA workshop in Mombasa, Kenya.
13. Securing funding from a Corporate Sector for coral reef and whale shark conservation is progressing well. This shall be the first affiliated project.

14. Scientists from the IO region participated in the CMarz cruise in Atlantic Ocean
15. IO-CoML website has been registered (www.iocoml.org)
16. Organization of one session on Bar-coding of Life in the Asia Pacific Marine Biotechnology Conference, India

2. SOCIETAL BENEFITS, IMPACT & APPLICATIONS

1. Getting a corporate sector involved in coral reef and whale shark conservation is an example of marine industry setting example for marine conservation.
2. Coral reef monitoring with local people's participation has both operational and societal elements
3. CoML needs to provide technological support, lacking in the regions for getting involved in realm projects.

3. WORK PLANNED FOR 2007

1. Two Data provider's workshops fro IndOBIS planned (Thailand and Oman).
2. Holding the SC meeting in conjunction with Data Providers' workshop and the CoML regional workshop in Oman.
3. Strengthening website as forum for attracting more involvement
4. Attracting at least 5 affiliated projects
5. Holding a hands-on training workshop for Bar-Coding.
6. Enabling wider participation from the countries in the region in India's deep sea cruises
7. Establishment of NaGISA sites in India and assistance to other countries in the region for establishing new sites
8. Improving outreach

4. EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Target audience for current year was mainly scientific. Diversification is planned for next year.

5. GEOGRAPHIC EXPANSION

Efforts are on. IO-CoML will support the initiative of Dr. Kimani (Kenya) in strengthening Indian Ocean NaGISA. Linking of sub-Sahara African CoML with IO-CoML will enlarge geographic coverage. Indian scientist also participated in Cmarz cruises in Atlantic and would continue to do so. Making India's expertise, technological and infrastructure available for countries in the region is one measure suggested by SC.

6. PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION

a. Partnerships

Organization Name	Point-of-Contact (Name)	Nature of Relationship
Wildlife Trust of India	Dr. P.S. Easa	Developing a filed project on whale sharks.

b. Links to CoML Ocean Realm Projects

Project Name	Liaison or Cross-over personnel	Nature of Relationship
NaGISA	Dr. Edward Kimani	Strengthening NaGISA in IO region
Cmarz	Dr. Mrs. Nair	Cruise participation and taxonomy
CoMarge and deep sea	Dr. Baban Ingole	Cruise participation

c. Links to other CoML National and Regional Implementation Committees (NRICs)

NRIC	Liaison or Cross-over personnel	Nature of Relationship
Australia		
Canada		
Caribbean		
China		
Europe		
Indian Ocean		
Japan		
South America		
Sub-Saharan Africa	Prof. Charles GRIFFITHS	Synergy between western IO and the IO islands with the rest of IO.
USA		

d. Liaisons to CoML Cross-Cutting Groups

Project Name	Liaison Name & Institution	Nature of the Relationship
OBIS	Mr. Viswas Chavan	Steering Committee of OBIS
HMAP		
FMAP		
SCOR Tech Panel		
E&O		
Bar-coding, ICOMM	Dr. Chandramohan	Promoting implementation in the IO region

e. Effectiveness of the Partnerships and collaborations

Strengthening is in progress

7. APPENDIX: MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the
Joint IO-CoML and Sub-Saharan Africa Meeting
Faculty of Aquatic Sciences and Technology, University of Dar es Salaam
9 September 2006

Present:

Dr. Mohideen Wafar
Prof. Charles Griffiths
Dr. P.A. Lokabharathi
Dr. D. Chandramohan
Prof. Yunus D. Mgaya
Dr. Mitrasen Bhikajee

Invitees:

Dr. Edward Kimani, Co-ordinator, Indian Ocean NaGISA
Dr. Greg Wagner, Chairman, IO-GOOS coastal projects

1. Prof. Mgaya welcomed the participants. After customary introductions, Dr. Wafar and Prof. Griffiths gave brief accounts of what has been happening in their respective CoML units. Dr. Chandramohan's role as liaison between IO-CoML and the SSC was acknowledged and appreciated. His suggestion that the RICs should become more pro-active in getting the countries in the region involved in existing field projects and the proposed new initiatives was taken note of.

Action: RIC chairs

2. Brief presentations of all CoML field projects were made. The discussion following these took into account imbalances in human capacities of the countries within the regions, differences in the level of technological development of the region and the rest of the world, and the need for a new field project suited to the region vs more involvements in existing field projects. It was agreed that **both RICs** should provide support in every possible way (capacity building, techniques, participation in cruises, especially for abyssal and continental margin studies, provision of samples to scientists capable of studying them even if they have no means of collecting them, assistance in establishing NaGISA sites etc) for the countries within the regions to get involved in field projects. Taking note of the presentation by Dr. Wagner on joint IO-GOOS and IO-CoML project on participatory monitoring of keystone ecosystems and acknowledging the suggestion from Dr. Lokabharathi that a new initiative suitable for the region could be rewarding, it was agreed that development of such a project could be envisaged.

Action: RIC chairs, Dr. Lokabharathi

3. The question of how much the region can get involved in all field projects was also discussed, especially in the context that some of them could be highly technology-dependent. Dr. Wafar suggested that projects like NaGISA and Census of Marine Microbial Life where prospects of data generation are excellent and cost of involvement is minimal should be advocated and supported. Dr. Chandramohan pointed out that some technologies such as needed for bar-coding of life could be made available to the region at low cost and that this should be explored and taken advantage of. It was

agreed that RICs could also take steps to enable scientists to participate in various field projects, like preparation of lists of deep-sea biologists, publicize opportunities in multi-institutional projects like CoMarge in their websites, opportunities for training in technology etc. Websites of RICs could be focal points to post needs and capabilities.

Action: RIC chairs, Dr. Chandramohan, secretariats

4. Prof. Griffiths pointed out the need to rationalize the composition of the committees. It was agreed that the main committee may be comprised of regional co-ordinators and that each such co-ordinator interacts with national co-ordinators within his/her region. Such a composition could give a geographic balance as well as cost-effectiveness in function. It was also agreed that the composition of the committees can be reviewed every 2-3 years.

Action: RIC chairs

5. Dr. Bhikajee suggested that some of the objectives could be easily achieved by out-sourcing. He cited as an example compilation of studies on tagging of migratory animals in the region as a contribution to projects like TOPP when they are taken up regionally.

Action: RIC chairs?

6. Dr. Kimani spoke on steps he is taking to have NaGISA implemented in the IO region. The RICs agreed to provide all support within their reach including token support for establishment of sites in countries where such support is needed and also in CB needs. The RICs also suggested to Dr. Kimani that maintenance of NaGISA sites should be built into teaching programs (ex. Dissertations for M.Sc. courses) in order to ensure continuity.

Action: Dr. Kimani

7. Dr. Wafar presented the concept of affiliated projects and mentioned that this is a good concept where data of the CoML nature can be accessed at minimal cost. After having evaluated the merits of this, the members agreed that attracting affiliated projects to CoML-fold could be pursued.

Action: RIC chairs

8. Guidelines for utilizing the grants the RICs received from Sloan Foundation were discussed, in reference to the mail sent out earlier by Dr. Wafar to members. It has been tentatively agreed that the funds at hand could be utilized in equal proportions to meet expenses related to participation in meetings, attracting affiliated projects, support to capacity building and maintenance of the secretariat.

Action: Respective secretariats

9. Prof. Griffiths mentioned that looking after CoML activities is demanding on his time, especially when he has tight schedules in teaching responsibilities (see also action indicators against each heading above). He was of the view that a full time scientific assistant to the chair (different from the Secretary who is at a level higher than a paid assistant) is a must. Dr. Wafar concurred with his observations, since he also has to share his time between his duties in the laboratory and his role as chairperson of IO-CoML. The members considered the requirement of a full time assistant as deserving and conceded that the chairs could take steps towards this.

Action: RIC chairs, Secretariats

10. On the question of when and where to hold the next meeting of the SC, Prof. Griffiths suggested that next meeting could be convened when there are serious issues to be discussed and that

until then, electronic mail and the websites could be relied upon for exchange of views and information.

11. The suggestion that PERSGA (Program for the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden), the Regional Organization for Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, that they could be the regional contact for Gulf countries was discussed. Prof. Griffiths said that he has already been in touch with Dr. Michel Claereboudt at Sultan Qaboos University in Oman. It was decided that the regional co-ordinator among these two can be identified during the regional meeting of CoML at Oman in January 2007.

12. Having transacted all the items in the Agenda and having no other matter presented to the committees for discussion, the sessions were concluded with a vote of thanks from the local host, Dr. Yunus Mgaya.

Agenda

Welcome – (YM)
Introductory remarks (MW)
Io-CoML – overview (PAL)
Afro-CoML – overview (CG)
Remarks from SSC (DCM)

Way forward:

Involvement in field projects (MW)

TOPP (MW)
Coral reefs (MB)
CoMarge (PAL)
CheSS (PAL)
Census of marine microbial life (DCM)
Deep Sea (PAL)
Nagisa (CG/EK)
Bar coding (DCM)
Outreach (??)

Linkages to Gulf Region (Khulood)
Linkages IO-CoML / Afro CoML (YM)
AfrOBIS/IndOBIS (CG/ Marten)
IOGOOS/ IO-CoML (GW)

Attracting affiliated projects (YM/MW)
Guidelines for supporting regional/national projects (CG/PAL)
Suggestions from SSC (DCM)
Specific fund requirements (CG/PAL)
Messages to SSC (all)
Other issues (anyone?)
Vote of thanks (YM)

YM = Yunus Mgya, MW = Mohideen Wafar, PAL = P.A. Lokabharathi, CG = Charles Griffiths,
DCM = Chandramohan, M B = Mitrasen Bikhajee, GW = Greg Wagner