

What's New with CoML?  
April-May 2003

- **Scientific Steering Committee (SSC).** The next SSC meeting will take place 20-21 June in Southampton, England. Senior CoML consultant Alasdair McIntyre is working with the UK community to maximize the value of the June meetings in the UK, which may include visits to or with organizations such as the National Environment Research Council, World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Sir Alister Hardy Foundation for Ocean Science and the Southampton and Plymouth marine labs.
- **Public Outreach Event.** The CoML outreach event will take place 23 October 2003 in Washington DC at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History. An agenda of the day's events will be available soon. The International SSC, the U.S. National Committee, the OBIS International Committee, SCOR Working Group 118, and the HMAP Steering Group are all planning to meet in conjunction with the event. It is important to have many members of our international community present in Washington, so we ask that all project committees consider organizing your meetings in conjunction with the event if possible and if appropriate.
- **All-Program Meeting.** On 24 October, following the launch event, we will hold a meeting of all CoML Component and Project scientific investigators and outreach coordinators. This will provide our rapidly growing community an unprecedented opportunity to meet at once and learn first-hand about all the goings-on within CoML. It will also provide you with an opportunity to discuss pertinent issues with your international, national and regional committee leaders. On the 25th, the component projects are urged to meet to advance the planning within each component. As you book your travel, please be aware of this activity and plan accordingly. More information will be available shortly. Ron O'Dor welcomes your suggestions for how best to organize the program for 24 October ([rodor@coreocean.org](mailto:rodor@coreocean.org)).
- **Ocean Biogeographic Information System (OBIS).** OBIS held a special presentation for representatives of the U.S. National Oceanographic Partnership Program (NOPP) agencies in Washington DC on 9 May. Karen Stocks, OBIS Fellow from the San Diego Supercomputer Center, demonstrated the scope and functionality of OBIS. OBIS is based in large part on a series of web databases and functions funded by NOPP and the Sloan Foundation in Fiscal Years 2000 and 2002. Since the original awards, OBIS has grown extensively to incorporate research tools and information collected by the Census of Marine Life from around the world. This presentation offered NOPP a chance to review the success of the original awards and consider the future roles of OBIS. It was clear that the agencies were impressed with the success of OBIS thus far and now clearly see its potential. Also in attendance for OBIS and CoML were Fred Grassle, Chair of the CoML International Scientific Steering Committee, Yunqing 'Phoebe' Zhang, Science Director for the OBIS Portal at Rutgers, Jesse Ausubel, Program Officer

for the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, and Ron O'Dor and Kristen Yarincik from the CoML Secretariat at CORE.

- **History of Marine Animal Populations (HMAP).** A redesigned website for HMAP was launched on 9 May. The temporary shadow URL will be <http://www.hmap.cmrs.dk/>. The permanent URL will soon be [www.hmapcoml.org](http://www.hmapcoml.org). The new website contains more detailed project information as well as a password-protected internal project facilities site. The website will also be the entry point to the HMAP database, which is maintained at the University of Hull.

This year's HMAP workshop will be held at the University of Hull on 18-20 August under the theme Realising the HMAP Vision. The workshop will focus on research outputs of work accomplished so far and enhancing project integration. There will be no summer school this year, but this facet of HMAP will be revived next year.

The HMAP Centre at Esbjerg has employed a new research fellow Christine Overgaard, who will study historical cod populations of the North Sea. Earlier this year, the Esbjerg centre hired HMAP Project Coordinator Anne Husum Marboe ([ahm@hist.sdu.dk](mailto:ahm@hist.sdu.dk)).

- **Future of Marine Animal Populations (FMAP).** FMAP scientists RAM Myers and Boris Worm of Dalhousie University model global fisheries databases to predict historic abundance baselines and present rates of depletion among large predatory fishes. Their work appears on the cover of the May 15, 2003 issue of Nature (423:280-283). Those with online subscriptions can read the entire article at <http://www.nature.com/nature/links/030515/030515-1.html>. This story also caught media attention in newspapers across North America.
- **DNA Barcodes.** The CoML is pleased to announce its new DNA Barcoding Protocol, developed by Mark Stoeckle (Weill Medical College of Cornell University), Ann Bucklin (University of New Hampshire), Nancy Knowlton (Scripps Institution of Oceanography), and Paul Hebert (University of Guelph) and based on the "Taxonomy and DNA" conference held March 9-12, 2003 at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, New York. Mark Stoeckle says, "...CoML is the first organization to officially promote this new approach. DNA barcoding of CoML specimens will provide immediately useful results and will have long-term applications for CoML investigators and the general scientific community." The protocol can be found at <http://www.coml.org/>. Comments, additions and/or revisions are welcome at this time. Contact Mark Stoeckle at [MarkStoeckle@nyc.rr.com](mailto:MarkStoeckle@nyc.rr.com).

## Field Projects

- **Mid-Atlantic Ridge: MAR-ECO.** Planning is underway with Mar-Eco and the NOAA Office of Exploration to conduct dives with the MIR submersibles to two

sites in the Charlie-Gibbs fracture zone of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. Members of the MAR-ECO team from Russia and the U.S. will be joining a cruise on the research vessel Academician Keldysh, which is expected to be over the fracture zone on 10-13 June.

- **Vents & Seeps: ChEss.** The ChEss team will co-host a workshop with Ridge2000, Ocean Exploration and InterRidge on the Biogeography and Biodiversity of Chemosynthetic Ecosystems. This workshop will be held 16-18 June 2003 at Southampton Oceanography Centre, prior to the SSC meeting. For workshop information and registration, go to (<http://ridge2000.bio.psu.edu/devel/WorkshopInfo.php?workshop=england03>). The application deadline is 2 May.
- **Salmon/Coastal Tracking: POST.** Thanks to the hard work of the outreach staff at the Vancouver Aquarium – Carla Sbrocchi and Tara Taylor – the POST project held a successful media launch on April 10. The launch effort engaged the journalists with a description of the project and a dive show in one of the Aquarium’s exhibits that demonstrated the acoustic portion of the POST technology. Principal investigators David Welch (DFO Pacific Biological Station) and George Boehlert (Oregon State University) were pleased with the amount of attention the project received on local television stations and in the newspapers. The POST tracking devices will be demonstrated to visitors at the Vancouver Aquarium throughout April. For more information, go to <http://www.postcoml.org/>
- **Latitudinal/Longitudinal Gradients in Near-Shore Biodiversity: NaGISA.** As many of you know, we missed Yoshihisa Shirayama, NaGISA project leader, in Hobart due to a back injury. In April, Shira underwent surgery and is doing well. We wish him all the best for a speedy full recovery. The NaGISA project, which originated as a DIVERSITAS in the Western Pacific and Asia (DIWPA) International Biodiversity Observation Year project, will have a special session at the upcoming DIWPA international workshop in December 2003 in Japan. NaGISA sampling for the 2003 season has begun. Samples were collected at the beginning of May in Usa, Kochi Prefecture (Japan).
- **Abysal Sediments: CeDAMar.** The CeDAMar group will hold a meeting 5-6 June 2003 in Wilhelmshaven, Germany to discuss strategy and future studies. Other CoML deep-sea projects are invited to attend. Contact Pedro Martinez ([pmartinez@senckenberg.de](mailto:pmartinez@senckenberg.de)) for more information.

## National and Regional Activities

- **Australia.** The National Oceans Office has received funding to serve as the program office responsible for developing the Australian component of CoML. Veronica Sakell, director of NOO, will chair the Australian National Committee ([veronica.sakell@oceans.gov.au](mailto:veronica.sakell@oceans.gov.au)).

- **Europe.** The ad-hoc European Committee will hold its second formal meeting in Amsterdam on 5 June.
- **New Zealand.** CoML is a major host of the Deep Sea 2003 Conference in Queenstown, New Zealand (1-5 December). The Call for Papers for this conference is out (<http://www.deepsea.govt.nz/>) with abstracts due 30 May 2003. Anyone attending this conference is encouraged to submit abstracts on CoML-related activities. CoML will be the sponsor of Day 1/Theme 1 on “Environment, ecosystem biology, habitat and diversity, oceanography.”
- **Russia.** The next SCOR Executive Committee meeting will be held 15-19 September 2003 in Moscow. There will be a CoML session on the 19th, which will involve CoML project participants in Russia and focus on engaging the greater Russian community in CoML activities. The Russian Academy of Sciences will host the meetings.
- **Canada.** The final report “Three Oceans of Biodiversity: Development of a Science Plan for Marine Biodiversity in Canada (Canadian Technical Report of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences No. 2432),” based on the February 2002 Census of Marine Life/DFO workshop, is now available. These proceedings can be found at the Centre for Marine Biodiversity website (<http://www.marinebiodiversity.ca/mbw/index.html>)
- **USA.** The U.S. National Committee held its second meeting on 21-22 April 2003 in Washington DC. The main goal of the meeting was to begin the development of a vision and strategy document for the U.S. Census program, which will be reviewed by the U.S. scientific community at a major workshop scheduled for 21-23 July 2003. Key representatives from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Science Foundation, the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, and the Environmental Protection Agency attended the meeting to discuss their initiatives and programs relevant to Census research. The USNC members and staff will continue to work within the goals of the Census and the established processes within agencies to build formal connections and identify sources of financial support. As several members of the U.S. Committee are knowledgeable and experienced in the realm of outreach and education, this was another area of discussion. There was consensus among the Committee that the Centers of Ocean Science Education Excellence (COSEE) provide an effective existing mechanism for engaging students and the public in Census activities and issues. CORE, as the coordinating office for COSEE, will work within mutual program goals to build opportunities for coordinated activities.

## Related Activities

- **Arctic/Bering Workshop.** A CoML-KUU Arctic/Bering Workshop, organized by Brenda Konar and Katrin Iken, was held 11-14 April at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The workshop summarized Arctic research from Canada,

Denmark/Greenland, Germany, Norway, Russia, UK and USA. It also focused on increased Russian CoML involvement in anticipation of the 19 September SCOR Symposium in Moscow. Plans were made for a joint US/Russian NSF proposal to extend the inshore NaGISA project in the region and for a second workshop to develop an Arctic database for OBIS and an international Arctic Biodiversity Transect project. The Arctic basins are the most poorly sampled of Earth's oceans and the ice habitat above them is disappearing faster than tropical rain forests.

- **Deep-Sea Sediments.** David Billet of SOC is organizing a global workshop on "The Biodiversity of Deep-Sea Sediments: The Known, Unknown and Unknowable." This workshop will be held at Hatfield Marine Science Center in Newport, Oregon on 21-24 August in conjunction with the 10th Deep Sea Symposium. More information can be found at <http://www.soc.soton.ac.uk/GDD/DEEPSEAS/workshop/index.html>
- **Seamounts & Canyons.** Running parallel to the Deep-Sea Sediments workshop will be a global workshop on the Biogeography of Seamounts and Submarine Canyons, organized by Karen Stocks of San Diego Supercomputer Center ([kstocks@sdsc.edu](mailto:kstocks@sdsc.edu)) and George Boehlert of Hatfield Marine Science Center. This workshop will also be held in Newport, Oregon in conjunction with the 10th Deep-Sea Biology Symposium in Coos Bay.
- **United Nations.** CORE President, Richard West, has been invited by the Division for Oceans Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) to provide a presentation on the Census of Marine Life as part of the open-ended UN Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS). The session will take place on 4 June in New York City, and will relate to the need for sufficient and accessible information and global and regional coordination and cooperation needed to understand and manage marine ecosystems. Participants on behalf of CoML will include Dr. Stephen Brown, U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service, Dr. Yunqing 'Phoebe' Zhang, OBIS Portal at Rutgers, and Mr. Jesse Ausubel, Sloan Foundation.