

What's New with CoML?
August 2003

- **Public Outreach Event.** The CoML Outreach event – Ocean life: The known, the unknown, the unknowable – will take place on the afternoon 23 October 2003 in Washington DC at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History. Preliminary program information is available at the CoML portal (direct link: <http://www.coml.org/medres/medres6.htm>). Formal invitations will be mailed at the end of August or first week in September. Though the CoML Secretariat will not be able to reimburse travel for any invitees to the event, it is important to have many members of our international community present in Washington, so we ask that all projects try to maximize their representation at this meeting and encourage their special invitees to attend as well.
- **All-Program Meeting.** On 24 October, following the Outreach event, we will hold a meeting of all CoML Component and Project scientific investigators, outreach coordinators and committee members. 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 and to discuss pertinent issues with your international, national and regional committee leaders. It will also offer project leaders the chance to address challenges they all face, such as globalization of field projects or sharing of resources. A preliminary agenda and travel information is available on the Secretariat website: <http://www.comlsecretariat.org/>
- **Scientific Steering Committee (SSC).** The SSC enthusiastically welcomes two new members: D. James Baker (President, The Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, USA and former Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) and Meryl Williams (Director General, WorldFish Center, Penang, Malaysia). The next SSC meeting will be in Washington DC on 25 October in conjunction with the Outreach event and All-Program meeting. The SSC will meet again 11-12 February 2004 in Penang, Malaysia, hosted by the WorldFish Center.
- **CoML Website.** The new CoML navigation portal is live at <http://www.coml.org/>. The CoML Education and Outreach Network, coordinated by Sara Hickox at the U. of Rhode Island, developed the new portal. The portal links to other CoML websites and also provides information regarding graphic identity and the upcoming Outreach event. If you have suggestions about the new site, please email sara@gso.uri.edu. The Secretariat website remains online and can be reached through the portal or directly at <http://www.comlsecretariat.org/>. The Secretariat site will serve more for coordination of researchers involved in CoML while the URI portal will serve more in outreach to broader publics.
- **Ocean Biogeographic Information System (OBIS).** Rutgers University has been awarded 3-year funding (effective 1 Sept.) from the National Science

Foundation to continue developing and hosting the OBIS portal. PI: Yunqing (Phoebe) Zhang. Co-investigators: Ann Bucklin, Dale Kiefer, Fred Grassle.

There will be a session on OBIS at the ASLO/TOS 2004 Ocean Research Conference, 15-20 February 2004, Honolulu, HI. The session (SS8.02) falls under the topical theme Pacific Fisheries/Census of Marine Life (<http://www.aslo.org/honolulu2004/sessionlist8.html>). We are welcoming presentations that have to do with biogeographic/ecological databases, new tools or approaches, applications of this kind of data for science or real-world problems, etc. CoML projects that will be creating data for OBIS are also welcome. If you are going to the meeting, please consider putting in an abstract so we can have a strong presentation to the community on what OBIS and OBIS-type data can do! The deadline for abstracts is 1 October 2003. Please contact Kristen Yarincik (kyarincik@coreocean.org) if you have any questions.

The OBIS International Committee will meet 22-23 October in Washington DC in conjunction with the outreach event and All-Program meeting.

The concept of “regional nodes” for OBIS has been evolving fast in recent months. Proposals should soon be ready for 4-5 regional nodes to advance OBIS in the Southern Hemisphere.

- **History of Marine Animal Populations (HMAP).** The 4th HMAP Workshop, “Realising the HMAP Vision,” took place at Blaydes House, University of Hull, UK, on 16-19 August 2003. Attended by some 30 researchers, including members of each of the HMAP research teams, the meeting considered the status and outputs of the current HMAP case studies, and debated the strategies to be deployed to develop the project. It was agreed that substantial progress had been made since the inception of the project in 2000: while two of the initial case studies (south-east Australia and the Benguela Current) are nearing completion, the other five (north-east Atlantic; Baltic; Caribbean; White/Barents Seas; world whaling) are generating valuable data and results. The HMAP data service, moreover, is now fully connected with OBIS. The workshop also examined proposals for new and prospective case studies (North Pacific, south-east Asia, New Zealand Shelf, North Sea, Mediterranean, Black Sea), and plans for projecting the HMAP Vision via the web, the 2004 summer school/workshop, a major conference in 2005, searchable web-based databases, and a series of academic and popular publications. A full workshop report will appear on the HMAP website: <http://www.hmapcoml.org/>
- **Future of Marine Animal Populations (FMAP).** FMAP investigators Boris Worm, Heike Lotze and RAM Myers recently published a paper entitled “Predator diversity hotspots in the blue ocean” in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (19 August). A copy of this paper is linked through the Secretariat website (<http://www.comlsecretariat.org/>). Visit the FMAP website at <http://www.fmap.ca/>

Field Projects

- **Gulf of Maine: GoMe.** The GoMe team has begun to collaborate with Craig Venter (The Institute for Genomic Research) performing a microbial census in the Gulf of Maine. The Gulf of Maine Policy Committee will meet 22 October in Washington DC in conjunction with the outreach event and All-Program meeting.
- **Mid-Atlantic Ridge: MAR-ECO.** Michael Palmgren of Klokkargårdens Film AB (<http://www.klockargardensfilm.se/>) has produced a promotional video on the MAR-ECO project. The video is based on the RV Johan Hjort trials cruise in November 2002, and is available for viewing on the MAR-ECO website (<http://www.mar-eco.no/sci/>). In other MAR-ECO outreach news, representatives from schools in 11 countries have been invited to a meeting in Bergen 3-7 November 2003 to discuss preparations for a proposal that will allow students to virtually join MAR-ECO research cruises, have direct contact with scientists to acquire new knowledge of the deep sea and adapt this to cross-curricular projects.
- **Chemosynthetic Ecosystems: ChEss.** The report of the June workshop on chemosynthetic ecosystems held at Southampton Oceanography Centre is available online at: <http://www.soc.soton.ac.uk/chess/workshop.html>
- **Tagging of Pacific Pelagics: TOPP.** This has been a very busy summer for TOPP, with very successful tagging expeditions for bluefin tuna in southern California and salmon sharks in the Gulf of Alaska. They have also begun to get several returns from tuna tags, deployed a year ago, which are providing some very exciting and new information! TOPP colleague Bill Gilly just departed to tag Humboldt squid in the Sea of Cortez, and a team left on 3 September to tag ocean sunfish (*mola mola*). If you flew on Alaska Airlines in August, you may have noticed that an article in their in-flight magazine featured the TOPP project, as well as well as some other exciting research projects.
- **Salmon/Coastal Tracking: POST.** The POST project's new Scientific Steering Committee met for the first time at Vancouver Aquarium on August 8th, chaired by Professor Scott McKinley, Biotelemetry Research Chair at the University of British Columbia and Head of Canada's national AquaNet program. The meeting included potential funders and users of the POTENT system and focused on strategies for moving from local to full continental scale arrays. The POST project was also featured in the August Alaska Airlines in-flight magazine article.
- **Latitudinal/Longitudinal Gradients in Near-Shore Biodiversity: NaGISA.** The NaGISA steering group will meet 22 October in Washington DC in conjunction with the outreach event and All-Program meeting.
- **Abyssal Sediments: CeDAMar.** Visit the CeDAMar website at <http://www.cedamar.org/>

National and Regional Activities

- **Europe.** The ad-hoc Euro-CoML committee plans to hold a workshop in October to formalize a larger committee and solicit community input. More information will be available shortly.
- **Indian Ocean.** A workshop to examine the known, unknown and unknowable about marine biodiversity in the Indian Ocean is scheduled for 12-15 December 2003. This workshop, co-sponsored by the Partnership for Observation in the Global Oceans, is organized by Mohideen Wafar (National Institute of Oceanography, India) and Shubha Sathyendranath (POGO).
- **New Zealand.** CoML is a major host of the Deep Sea 2003 Conference in Queenstown, New Zealand (1-5 December). CoML will be the sponsor of Day 1/Theme 1 on “Environment, ecosystem biology, habitat and diversity, oceanography.” CoML participants will include Odd Aksel Bergstad and Mike Vecchione (Mar-Eco), Karen Stocks (Seamounts/OBIS), Andy Rosenberg (HMAP, FMAP) and Kristen Yarincik (Secretariat). Members of the New Zealand and Australian CoML communities will also attend. This will be an excellent opportunity to engage the South Pacific community as well as share the results and next steps of August’s deep-sea workshops (Sediments, Seamounts and Canyons). Early registration deadline is 16 October 2003. For more information, visit the conference website at <http://www.deepsea.govt.nz/>
- **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, sharing early results from Russian scientists engaged in CoML and aimed to deepen Russian participation in CoML. Speakers include Daniel Alexandrov (HMAP), Vladimir Kasyanov (NaGISA), Andrey Gebruk (Mar-Eco, ChEss, CeDAMar), Annelies Pierrot-Bults (University of Amsterdam) and Ulf Lie (Chair, Euro-CoML committee). CoML will host a luncheon following the session. The Russian Academy of Sciences will host the meetings.
- **Sub-Saharan Africa.** The Sub-Saharan African regional workshop will be held 24-26 September 2003 in Cape Town, South Africa. Representatives will present reports on 21 countries. The workshop will also focus on related initiatives and themes such as algae, biogeography of estuarine fishes, Western Indian Ocean Project on marine fish, and coastal and seabirds. This effort is led by Charles Griffiths (U. Capetown). Other workshop organizers include Kim Prochazka (U. Western Cape and (International Ocean Institute of Southern Africa), Carmen Ras (International Ocean Institute of Southern Africa), Alan Whitfield (Rhodes University), Paul Skelton (Rhodes University & South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity), and Cynthia Decker (on behalf of the CoML program).
- **USA.** The U.S. National Committee held a major workshop on 21-23 July 2003 in Salem, Massachusetts to elicit community input on a research strategy for the national CoML program. Representatives of the scientific community and federal agencies discussed the priorities for biodiversity research in the U.S., including new project ideas and existing programs on which to build. This workshop was a

major step in strengthening U.S. support in the international CoML program and implementing a national CoML initiative. A report should be available shortly, and the strategy will be released in October in conjunction with the outreach event.

The U.S. National Committee will meet next on 21-22 October in Washington DC. Other meetings with congressional staffers and agency representatives are also being scheduled for 22 October.

Cross-cutting and Other Related Activities

- **SCOR Working Group 118 on New Technologies.** The SCOR WG118 will meet in October in Washington DC in conjunction with the outreach event and All-Program meeting.
- **Deep-Sea Sediments.** A global workshop on “The Biodiversity of Deep-Sea Sediments: The Known, Unknown and Unknowable” took place 21-24 August in Newport, Oregon. David Billett (Southampton Oceanography Centre) and George Boehlert (Oregon State University) organized and led the workshop. A PowerPoint presentation summarizing the workshop results can be found at <http://ftp.hmsc.oregonstate.edu/ftp/CoML/SedimentsSummary.htm>. The workshop participants organized themselves into “ocean margins” and “abyssal plains” groups. The abyssal plains group will be an extension of the CeDAMar project.
- **Seamounts & Canyons.** A global workshop on the Biogeography of Seamounts and Submarine Canyons, organized by Karen Stocks (San Diego Supercomputer Center) and George Boehlert (Hatfield Marine Science Center), was held parallel to the Deep Sea Sediments workshop on 21-24 August in Newport, Oregon. A PowerPoint presentation summarizing the workshop results can be found at <http://ftp.hmsc.oregonstate.edu/ftp/CoML/SeamountSummary.htm>. The canyons group determined it would be more appropriately linked with the continental margins group of the Sediments Workshop.
- **Microbes.** The CoML is sponsoring a workshop 19-21 November at the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute on the known, unknown and unknowable about diversity of microbial species in globally distributed marine environments. This international workshop will outline key scientific questions about the diversity and activities of microbes in ocean environments, specify the kinds of data required to address these questions, and identify gaps in our analytical frameworks that must be bridged to successfully interpret a census of marine microbes. Other workshop objectives include the identification of synergies between a microbial census and established CoML field projects. Mitch Sogin of Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole leads this effort.
- **Museums and Specimens.** A workshop to discuss and recommend protocols for specimen collection associated with all CoML field projects will be held 5-7

September 2003 in Philadelphia. Gary Rosenberg, Academy of Natural Sciences, is the convenor (rosenberg@acnatsci.org).

- **Study to Assess the Economic Benefits of CoML.** James Sanchirico of Resources for the Future, one of the world's top centers for environmental economics, has been funded to assess social and economic benefits of CoML. Dr. Sanchirico will interview several of the CoML PIs during the course of his study, which should be completed by the end of December 2003. A copy of the proposal is available through the CoML Secretariat.
- **Coral Communities.** The Australian Institute for Marine Sciences (AIMS) has taken the lead on a global workshop on coral communities on behalf of the CoML. Following the July U.S. CoML workshop in Salem, MA, the U.S. community has expressed interest in organizing coral (including deep corals) research and activities prior to the international workshop. Plans are in development.
- **Gulf of Mexico.** The Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies (<http://www.hri.tamucc.edu/>) is starting an initiative entitled The Gulf of Mexico – Past, Present, and Future, with the mission of the long-term sustainable use and conservation of the Gulf of Mexico. The initiative includes key components such as: an internet accessible database on the Gulf of Mexico; annual exploratory expeditions; a biodiversity checklist for the Gulf of Mexico; a “State of Knowledge Workshop” and other symposia; and a 50-year update of Bulletin 89 – The Gulf of Mexico – Its Origin, Waters, and Marine Life (USFW Service, 1954). Dr. Wes Tunnel presented this initiative to the participants of the July U.S. CoML Workshop, and it has since been endorsed by CoML as a regional survey like that of the Gulf of Maine.
- **DNA Barcodes.** The 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) is still available at the CoML website (<http://www.comlsecretariat.org/Dev2Go.web?id=255158>) for comment. A follow up workshop to the March 2003 “Taxonomy and DNA” conference will be held 10-12 September 2003 at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory.

General News

- **ICES annual meeting.** The ICES annual meeting will be held 24-27 September in Tallinn, Estonia.
- **PICES annual meeting.** The PICES annual meeting will be held 10-18 October in Seoul, South Korea.
- **New Scientist.** A New Scientist article on seamounts quotes CoML researcher Karen Stocks and refers to her 21-24 August workshop. This article can be found online at: <http://www.newscientist.com/news/news.jsp?id=ns99994097>

- **Foreign Affairs article.** The September/October 2003 issue of the quarterly magazine Foreign Affairs features an article entitled “What Future for the Oceans?” by John Temple Swing, which includes a nice paragraph referring to the Census of Marine Life (p. 149). A PDF copy of this article is available on the CoML Secretariat homepage (<http://www.comlsecretariat.org/>)

Calls for Proposals

- **NOPP.** The National Oceanographic Partnership Program has released a Broad Agency Announcement. New Topic M. Marine Mammals provides opportunity for CoML related activities, including OBIS. Proposal deadline is 1 October (letters of intent due 5 September).