



The European Marine Research
Stations Network

MARS Executive Committee meeting **19 March 2002, Amsterdam.**

The meeting was organised by MARS under the auspices of the KNAW (Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences).

Present: Friedrich BUCHHOLZ, Anastasios ELEFThERIOU, Jean-Pierre FERAL, Stephen HAWKINS, Carlo HEIP, Herman HUMMEL

Apologies: Erik BONSDORFF, Pierre LASSERRE, Alenka MALEJ

Absent: Giorgio BERNARDI

The agenda was accepted.

1/Remarks on the minutes of the previous meeting (10 February 2001, Paris: executive committee) and approval.

MARS teaching activities must be activated and should be advertised on the web. No news was received from the proposed summer school in Naples on molecular biology. Due to the over-commitment of the potential organisers, the summer school on modelling proposed by Yerseke was delayed but will be reconsidered in the framework of the programs that are running.

A summer school is planned in May-June 2003, in Poland (H. Hummel).

The MARS list server is hosted by the CNRS in Paris (co-owners J-P Féral / G. Boucher). This is a private mailing list dedicated to MARS business. The executive committee must accept inscription. Anybody may unsubscribe at any time. Messages posted to <mars.insu@cnrs-dir.fr> are distributed to all members of the list.

The number of new members of MARS is increasing. The action goes quite well, but it should be permanent.

EU and Biodiversity:

The visibility of marine biodiversity has greatly increased starting with the EPBRS meeting organized in Brussels under the presidency of Belgium (meeting in December 2001). Spain will organise a meeting on the biodiversity in Mediterranean ecosystems (11-13 May 2002). A Danish meeting is planned for October 2002.

EU and the 6th framework program and relationship with the ESF marine board
A number of points were coming back on the present agenda.

Internal business

The executive committee approved the synthesis made in the previous minutes.

Reminder

Membership includes:

- **Regular members:** Regular members are laboratories, institutes, or university departments primarily devoted to fundamental marine science and possessing coastal research facilities.
- **Associated members:** Associated members are scientific organisations without research facilities at the coast but with marine research interests. Such organisations need to appeal for MARS associated membership through a regular member to which they become associated.

Only directors, or their delegates, from **regular members** do have **voting rights** at general and director meetings.

The Executive Board can co-opt members for specific purposes. One of the co-opted members shall be the Executive Secretary to be proposed by UNESCO Venice (this rule will have to be amended).

Co-opted members can be appointed on the basis of being: 1) editor of the Newsletter, 2) co-ordinators of major MARS related scientific projects, 3) responsible for other duties strongly related to MARS.

Co-opted members have, once invited, the same rights and duties as the regular members of the steering committee.

Membership subscriptions are:

- 150 euros for labs with less than 20 total personnel
- 250 euros for labs with between 20-50 total personnel
- 500 euros for labs with more than 50 total personnel

There is no membership fee for associated members.

Membership subscription:

The fee for 2000 and 2001 is due as well as the fee for 2002.

Eastern European members

Many members and potential members from Central and Eastern Europe have difficulties paying the membership fee. A proposal was submitted to UNESCO-ROSTE to cover those fees. However no special sponsoring to support Eastern countries membership came forward in 2001. C. Heip will remind P. Lasserre about this.

Honorary MARS fellows

The Executive has invited Professor Otto Kinne, former director of the Biologische Anstalt Helgoland, to become the first honorary MARS fellows. Professor Kinne has accepted the fellowship that will be awarded at the next Conference of Directors.

Newsletter and web page / secretariat

The situation concerning the Newsletter and the Web Page has not changed significantly since the last meeting. However, a link between MARS and BIOMARE is proposed in order to publish the newsletter together.

The situation is partly due to the lack of an executive secretariat. The support offered by UNESCO-ROSTE was significantly lower than expected. There was no candidate for this position. It is proposed that H. Hummel acts again as executive secretary for the time being.

MARS conference of directors

The minutes were approved. They will be published in the newsletter and on the web page. On the thematic discussions primarily individual reports were received. A booklet will soon be published. A rewritten questionnaire on the present and future research in the marine stations in Europe will be sent around again. This is necessary to have an updated picture of the research at the European marine labs.

Results will be disseminated through BIOMARE WP3.

External relationships

ESF / ESF Marine Board

Since the departure of Laurent d'Ozouville, the ESF marine board has organized a Hanze Konferenz in Bremen to prepare a Marine Science Plan in anticipation of the Sixth Framework Programme of the EC. During that meeting one of the four subgroups was devoted to marine biodiversity, and the subject will be an important chapter in the final document.

The proposed association between MARS and the Marine Board has been discussed during the meeting of Marine Board meeting in Hamburg in August 2000 where it was received with mixed enthusiasm. The idea seems to have just disappeared, but perhaps should be reinvigorated.

Now, L. d'Ozouville with whom good working relationships had been established, is leading a new governmental organisation (France + Portugal), with goals that are to some extent overlapping with those of the ESF/Marine Board.

At the level of ESF, a paper on biodiversity by C. Heip, C. Lévêque and A. Troumbis has been presented in Stockholm in January 2002 during the ESF Forward Looks Meeting.

The Eurocores project proposal on marine biodiversity is finished and submission can be made when the time is ripe. Eurocores has a difficult start and the mechanism has still not received widespread approval among ESF member organizations.

As a co-opted MARS member, and as a member of the ESF marine board, Silvana Vallerga can be an efficient link to the Marine Board as well as to Eurogoos.

Census of Marine Life (CoML)

CoML is an international program for research to assess and explain the diversity, distribution, and abundance of marine organisms throughout the world's oceans. Pilot field projects should take place in 2002-2004. The main field projects should occur in 2005-2007. Analysis and integration of information should culminate in 2008-2010.

At the moment, three projects have European project leaders: MAR-ECO (Patterns and Processes of Ecosystems in Northern Mid Atlantic Ridge (Odd Aksel Bergstad, Norway); ChESS (Chemosynthetic Ecosystems in the Arctic and Northern Atlantic Oceans) (Paul Tyler UK), and HMAP (History of Marine Animal Populations) (Poul Holm, Denmark).

The National Association of Marine Laboratories (NAML) <<http://www.naml.org>>

A meeting of NAML took place in October 2001. MARS was invited, but unfortunately no one could go. C. Heip is on the mailing list of NAML and receives the information. The contacts with NAML deserve further support because scientific contacts between the EC and the NSF are increasing. A joint area of interest that was proposed to the NSF in the US was monitoring.

The minutes of the MARS executive committee meeting will be sent to NAML.

DIVERSITAS <<http://www.icsu.org/DIVERSITAS/>>

There were 2 years of nearly complete silence but now the programme is restarted. Anne Larigauderie is the new executive director and she is housed at the ICSU building in Paris. The Chairman of the Scientific Committee is Michel Loreau. Contact: Anne-Hélène Prieur-Richard <prieur_richard@icsu.org>.

DIVERSITAS is an international global environmental change research programme sponsored by the International Council for Science (ICSU), SCOPE (Scientific Committee on

Problems of the Environment), IUBS (International Union of Biological Sciences), IUMS (International Union of Microbiological Societies) and UNESCO-MAB (Man and the Biosphere).

DIVERSITAS's missions are:

- ✍️ to promote integrative biodiversity science, linking biological, ecological and social disciplines in an effort to produce socially relevant new knowledge ;
- ✍️ to provide the scientific basis for an understanding of biodiversity loss, and to draw out the implications for the policies for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

As one of four international global environmental change research programmes, DIVERSITAS works towards its objective in close collaboration with the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP), the International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP), and the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP).

The next scientific committee meeting will be held in Paris on the 12-13 April 2002. Carlo Heip will contact Michel Loreau about possible overlap between his network and the MARS network.

International Association of Biological Oceanography (IABO)

IABO recently organised a joint meeting with IAPSO (International Association for Physical Sciences of the Ocean) 2001, *an ocean odyssey* in Mar del Plata (Argentina) / 21-26 October 2001. A symposium was dedicated to CoML (convenors F. Grassle and Y. Shirayama). The future role of IABO has been discussed. MARS may help to increase the activity of IABO.

URL: <<http://www.olympus.net/IAPSO/>>

EU

For the last call of the 5th framework program, 7 projects succeeded: see annex 1

European Environment Agency EEA

EEA invited MARS to present the list of indicators, which will result from BIOMARE

URL: <<http://org.eea.eu.int/>>

UNESCO

An International Conference of Experts on the *Reconstruction of Scientific Cooperation in South East Europe* has been held in Venice (24-27 March 2001)

The International Conference of experts, co-organised by UNESCO and the European Science Foundation brought together representatives from 20 European Countries including 11 from South Eastern Europe, who met in order to discuss and exchange ideas. The major problems and need concerning the situation of S & T at national and regional levels were identified both from the presented papers and ensuing discussions during the Conference. These focused on the overall lack of clear science and technology policies, the weak involvement of decision makers in supporting research activities and programmes, the rather high heterogeneity in integration and participation in international projects and cooperative programmes, the shortage of competence and skills exacerbated by a large brain drain, the insufficient capacity of the communication works and the shortage of the information available to researchers. In the spectrum of expertise marine sciences were practically absent and the MARS

representative (A. Eleftheriou) had the opportunity to describe the existing community funded programmes in Environmental Sciences with emphasis on Marine related research and to describe the aims and objectives of MARS and the BIOMARE project and its significance in Marine Biodiversity. As significant interest was expressed by many participants in marine sciences, it was decided to establish a Web Side to inform and allow exchanges between researchers and organisations in SE Europe. (report by A. Eleftheriou)

Conferences

Euroconference on coastal marine biodiversity, Corinth, 5-10 May 2001

This Euroconference was a big success with many exciting contributions. The report will be soon published. A new proposal will be submitted for the second conference in the series (this has in the mean time been accepted, the meeting will be held in Renesse, the Netherlands, in May 2003).

Two participants from Eastern countries have been supported by MARS and eight participants have been supported by UNESCO-ROSTE.

Marine biodiversity forum

This forum was planned to be held in Naples in 2002 but have apparently not materialized. N

Other initiatives

- TV series: contact by J.-P. Féral with producers did not lead to something concrete.
- Due to the departure of the programmer, MDREF: the marine diversity reference data base project is cancelled.

2/ Financial situation

Accumulated balance in €

accumulated balance 01/01/1999	24115,28	travel/accomodation/symposia	-17336,14
contributions received	21197,12	printed matter	-299,34
interest	399,38	other costs	-6407,71
other income	12688,81	bank costs*	-472,50
	58400,59		-24515,69

Balance 28/02/2001 in € 33884,90

The minutes and the financial report were approved.

3/ MARS awards and MARS medal of honour

Two awards of 2000 € for Young Scientists have been awarded to:

- Maria Salomidi of the University of the Aegean, related to the Institute of Marine Biology Crete, Greece, on the topic "*Hard Bottom Benthic Communities: Towards a New Concept in Assessing and Monitoring Marine Biodiversity*" to be studied at the Centre d' Océanologie de Marseille, France.
- Lara Arroyo of the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain, on the research topic "*Effect of drifting algal mats on meiobenthic communities in the northern Baltic Sea: Implications on Harpacticoid copepod diversity and dispersal*" to be studied at the Hüsö Marine Laboratory and the Åbo Academy, Finland.

At least, two other awards will be attributed in 2002. This only concerns young scientists (max 35 years old) of regular members (full payment institutes).

The announcement will be made as soon as possible. The dead line for application is the 1st of October 2002.

Whether awards for the “best thesis” should be given was discussed at some length. It was finally decided that it would take too much effort and the idea was abandoned.

The MARS medal of honour will be attributed every 2 years. As already mentioned, the 2002 and first medal was awarded to Professor Otto Kinne.

4/ EU Fifth framework programme: BIOMARE and MARBENA

BIOMARE news can be found on line at <<http://www.biomareweb.net>>

Contract negotiations have been started on MARBENA : Creating a long term infrastructure for marine biodiversity research in the European Economic area and the Newly Ascending States (cf. annex 2 for objectives)

Members of the MARS executive committee constitute the MARBENA advisory committee.

The first initiatives are an e-conference in Spain in May (will be organized by Carlos Duarte) and one in Denmark in October.

Contacts by C. Heip.

The list of all proposed projects are in annexe 1. Most proposals are relevant to the objectives of the MARS network.

Some countries, like France, organise part of the activities of the marine laboratories within a network of ecological observatories (project FORMICCA).

The question is now how MARS will be able to support proposal in the next framework programme.

5/ Eurocores

see minutes of last meeting

6/ DIVERSITAS

see § 1

7/ CoML

The CoML had its last SSC meeting in the Netherlands (Leiden) and is looking for active cooperation with European scientists and the EU. A delegation has visited the EC in Brussels to explain the programme. Possibilities within the 5th and 6th FP will have to be further explored. The next SSC meeting will be in Europe as well (Aberdeen).

MARS could be part (connected in some way) of the Census. Links to oil industry and fisheries are also possible. Both going deeper and deeper are interested by marine biology and ecology.

During the discussion S. Hawkins underlined the necessity to make a “field supported” update of the fauna and floras of Europe.

More information can be found on the CoML web site (<http://www.coml.org>)

8/ DIWPA

F. Buchholz participated in a 3-day workshop at Seto Marine Lab (Univ. of Kyoto, Japan), headed by Prof. Y. Shirayama and introduced “Aims and Procedures of BIOMARE”, in June, 2001. As a CoML – core project and for the purposes of IBOY, monitoring of three co-dependent gradients in the coastal zone throughout the DIWPA region (Siberia to New

Zealand, 45°N to 45°S every 10° of lat.), to a depth of 10 m (15 and 20 m are optional) were agreed upon. These are latitudinal and related gradients or clines; gradients induced by human impacts; and temporal gradients (long-term monitoring). Some protocols/procedures related to BIOMARE were harmonized, e.g. questionnaires of sites and indicators. The wish was clearly expressed to further coordinate research with MARS and BIOMARE. F. Buchholz will provide further information.

9/ NAML

cf. § 1

10/ UNESCO-ROSTE

C. Heip will contact P. Lasserre to discuss what will be the future interactions between UNESCO and MARS.

11/ MARS future activities

During the conference of directors in Venice in 2001 (cf. minutes and the report) the future activities of MARS were discussed. Five groups will discuss the future MARS strategy concerning:

- Model organisms (A. Picard)
- Genomics (J.-P. Féral)
- Pelagial in shelf sea ecosystem, including meroplankton (F. Buchholz)
- Transition to deep sea (D. Billet)
- Long-term ecological observations (S. Hawkins)

A sixth group may discuss on land-ocean exchanges.

12/ MARS business: secretariat, web site, newsletter, inventories, elections

The lack of a secretariat during last year as well as the many activities and commitments related to MARS (Euroconference, Biomare, Marbena) had again caused a delay in updating the web page and editing the newsletter. To improve on this situation it was decided to invite the VLIZ (Flemish Institute of Sea Research) to become responsible for the web page. The cost will be 2000 € per year. The secretariat will for the time being move back to Yerseke, with the president. Herman Hummel will again be the executive secretary. A **scientific officer** will be engaged to help the executive secretary and the president. On a base of 2 days a week, the cost is estimated at 16000 € per year (**to be checked**).

Roles of the

- executive secretary: editor of the Newsletter, leads selection procedures for awards, develops new initiatives (own initiatives or from executive meeting), contact point for information on MARS activities.
- secretary-treasurer: controller of the financial affairs, final responsible for notes on meetings. Co-owner of the MARS list-server. Helped by the scientific officer to control finances and producing minutes and reports of MARS meetings.
- scientific officer (acting secretary) assists the MARS President and executive secretary, sends invoices, administration, works out and updates relevant MARS databases (on MARS members, facilities of MARS institutes), works out notes of meetings in co-operation with secretary-treasurer.

The executive committee thanks Herman Hummel for his support of MARS even at times when he did not have the official function.

An electoral committee consisting of A. Eleftheriou, J.-P. Féral and C. Heip will prepare the election of members of the next steering committee, by inviting nominations. H. Hummel will present next year the list of the vacant positions. The future president will be elected at

the next Conference of Directors and must have a high profile in Europe to assume his lobbying role.

13/ Conference of the directors 2003

The next conference will be held in Amsterdam or Paris on 17-19 October 2003.

14/ EU Networking

MARS will propose and eventually support a network of excellence together with other partners, but is not going to be a network by itself. MARS is more concentrated on the shelf than on the deep sea but has several member laboratories, which are principally interested in deep-sea research.

15/ Miscellaneous

UNESCO gave 35000 US\$.

25000 US\$ will be used to organise the summer school in Poland: *Comparison of biodiversity in different seas in Europe* in May-June 2003 (H. Hummel). This sum is enough for 5 teachers and 20 students.

10000 US\$ will be used for MARS (salary of the scientific officer).

Other propositions for summer schools:

2004 – Helgoland: shelf seas ecology (sediments and rocks), F. Buchholz

2005 – Marseille: model organisms, J.-P. Féral

***The next meeting of the MARS Executive Committee will be held on
Saturday 1st March 2003***

Jean-Pierre Féral, Banyuls-sur-mer
23rd March 2002

Annex 1: List of project - proposals submitted under the late FP5 - Programme

- Centred at Biodiversity issues, partly referenced to BIOMARE -

Successful/under negotiation:

- CHARM: **Characterisation of the Baltic Sea Ecosystem: Dynamics and Function of Coastal Types.** Coordinator: Bo Rieman, NERI, DK
- BIOCOMBE: **The Impact of Biodiversity Changes in Coastal Marine Benthic Ecosystems:**
Coordinator: Herman Hummel, NL
- COSA: **Coastal sands as biocatalytical filters:** Markus Hüttel, Max Planck Inst. Bremen
DE
- MAFCONS: **Effects of beamtrawl fisheries on benthic fauna (macro, meio and epibenthos);**,
Contact persons: Simon Greenstreet, John Lancaster, UK
- COST – IMPACT: **Costing the Impact of demersal fishing on marine biodiversity:** M.
Austen, PML, UK
- BIOCASE: **Biological Collections Access System in Europe:** Walter Berendson DE
- MARBENA: **Creating a long-term infrastructure for marine biodiversity research in the
European Economic Area and the Newly Associated States:** Carlo Heip, NL
- OASIS: **Oceanic Seamounts: An Integrated Study:** Dr. Christiansen, University of
Hamburg, DE
- EUROGEL: **European Gelatinous Zooplankton: Mechanisms behind Jellyfish Blooms and
their Ecological and Socio-Economical Effects:** Norway

Rejected:

For the sake of discretion, only acronyms are given. Contact details to project participants are available through Fred Buchholz, fbuchholz@awi-bremerhaven.de

BARACA
BIOCLIMA
BIOCLIME
CAVES
IMPORTAL
LIMPET
LITUS/SANDY
MARISK
NABIS
SENSMARE
VIRTUOSO
ZEBRA

total: 21 (9 successful)

Annex 2. MARBENA

Marbena: Creating a long term infrastructure for marine biodiversity research in the European Economic Area and the Newly Ascending States

Co-ordinator: C. Heip

Assistant Co-ordinators: Pim van Avesaath, Herman Hummel

Problem definition

Concertation and co-ordination at European scale is urgently required to implement long-term and large-scale marine biodiversity research. Several activities have already been deployed within this respect: BIOMARE (Implementation and networking of large-scale long-term marine biodiversity research in Europe) will produce recommendation for a network of flagship and reference sites and a review of indicators, and M@RBLE (Electronic conference on marine biodiversity in Europe) produced the first appearance of marine biodiversity on the EU policy scene through the e-conference and the link to EPBRS (European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy). Both projects are already, or soon will be, concluded. The realisation of the European Research Area in the sixth framework programme of the EU that will start in 2002 makes the prolongation of these efforts essential. The next series of activities should be used to create a lasting network for marine biodiversity research in Europe. Such a network must adequately prepare and exploit the possibilities of the next framework programme and the European Research Area, must improve the infrastructure for marine (biodiversity) research and its accessibility and utilization by European scientists, and must increase the visibility of marine biodiversity issues for science managers, politicians and other end users, including the public at large.

Objectives

The present project is being proposed with the following overall objectives:

- A. To create the infrastructure for marine biodiversity research in Europe by creating a pan-European platform (network) of marine scientists, with strong links to the different stakeholders in Marine Biodiversity Issues, from the EU-EEA and the Newly Ascending Nations, and that covers the European seas from the Arctic to the Atlantic, the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.
- B. To create awareness on the issues at stake and enlarge the visibility of marine biodiversity research in Europe, the platform will make the issues - the scientific questions and the relevance of the outcome of the scientific research - clear to a non-scientific audience, it will communicate with EU policy makers and politicians, with global organisations and programmes, national and other EU biodiversity platforms and disseminate relevant information to the public at large.

NIOO-CEME will act as the coordinator of the project. The project lasts from 2002 to 2005.

Planning 2002

The first year of the project will be used to establish a network of marine research institutes and other stakeholders involved in the European marine biodiversity issues, and to provide its required research infrastructure. For this, the market of 'supply and demand' of marine biodiversity information will be mapped, RTD catalogues will be made and several workshops will address bottlenecks of the future development of marine biodiversity research at a pan-European scale. To increase the visibility of the marine biodiversity issues, electronic conferences will be organized that can feed the discussions at the EPBRS meetings that will be hosted and organised by Spain and Denmark in 2002.