



Census of Marine Life
South Atlantic MAR-ECO
Interim Steering Committee Meeting
Florianópolis, Brazil, 16-17 April 2007

Minutes

Participants

Interim Steering Committee

- José Angel Alvarez Perez (Brazil, Chair)
- Ricardo Serrão Santos (Portugal)
- Débora Pires (Brazil)
- Pablo Muniz Maciel (Uruguay)
- Malcolm Clark (New Zealand)

Obs: Viviana Alder (Argentina) and Johann Augustin (South Africa) were not able to attend.

Representing MAR-ECO

- Filipe Porteiro (Portugal)

Representing CoML

- Ron O'Dor (USA)

Representing the African Scientific Community

- Titus Iilende (Namibia)

Invited participants - Scientific Community

- André Barreto (Universidade do Vale do Itajaí – UNIVALI – Brazil)
- Antônia Cecília Zacagnini Amaral (Universidade Estadual de Campinas – UNICAMP – Brazil)
- Eduardo Hajdu (Museu Nacional/UFRJ – Brazil)
- Helena Passeri Lavrado (Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro - UFRJ – Brazil)
- Luiz Fernando L. Fernandes (Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo - UFES – Brazil)
- Mônica Muelbert (Fundação Universidade Federal do Rio Grande – FURG – Brazil)
- Paulo Ricardo Schwingel (Universidade do Vale do Itajaí – UNIVALI – Brazil)
- Tatiana S. Leite (Fundação Universidade Federal do Rio Grande – FURG – Brazil)

Invited participants – Government

- Carlos Frederico Simões Serafim (SECIRM – Brazilian Navy – Brazil)
- Aloysio Vianna da Silva Jr. (SECIRM – Brazilian Navy – Brazil)
- Guarani de Hollanda Cavalcanti (CENPES – PETROBRAS)
- Teresinha Andréa Silva (CENPES – PETROBRÁS)
- Cláudia Zagaglia (Secretaria Especial de Aquicultura e Pesca – SEAP/PR)

Aims of the Meeting

To plan the project proposal and discuss partnerships, specific goals, sampling strategies, mobilization of ship time and equipment, and funding possibilities

Program – See Appendix I

15 April 2007

The session was included in the XII COLACMAR Program as a round table entitled: “Patterns and Processes of South Atlantic Mid-Oceanic Ecosystems – SA MAR-ECO” (www.colacmar.com). This event was convened by José Angel A. Perez (Brazil) and Ricardo Serrão Santos (Portugal) and was opened to COLACMAR general public. Approximately 100 people attended this session that was composed of two main presentations followed by an open discussion.

On behalf of the group chaired by Odd Aksel Bergstad, Ricardo Serrão Santos presented the talk entitled “The MAR – ECO Program in North Atlantic: History and Achievements” which covered ideas, vision, phases, key factors and achievements of MAR-ECO between 2001 and 2006. A special attention was paid to the sampling technologies developed for MAR-ECO in the North Atlantic.

On behalf of the South Atlantic MAR-ECO Interim Steering Committee, José Angel Alvarez Perez presented the talk entitled “The MAR – ECO Program in South Atlantic: Scope and Goals”. In this talk, general considerations on geomorphology, hydrology, biological production, biodiversity and biogeography of the Mid-oceanic South Atlantic were presented as a theoretical framework upon which specific questions were formulated for the SA MAR-ECO. The general structure of the draft proposal and the progress plan were also highlighted.

A general discussion followed these presentations where questions regarding the scope of MAR-ECO and the processes of integrating scientists in the program were discussed.

16 April 2007

The session gathered representatives of CoML, MAR-ECO and SA MAR-ECO Interim Steering Committee, as well as invited scientists and members of Brazilian Government. After a brief welcome, the chair explained the objectives of the meeting which was followed by a round of introductions.

1. SA MAR-ECO and Brazilian's policy concerning the AREA.

- Capt. Carlos Frederico Simões Serafim (SECIRM – Brazilian Navy – Brazil) was invited to present a talk about the vision of SECIRM (Interministry Secretariat for Marine Resources) regarding the exploration of the AREA and biodiversity-oriented scientific programs such as MAR-ECO.
- It was pointed out that CIRM is in the process of defining the national policy for the AREA which should be concluded in 2007. This process will include a seminar with the International Seabed Authority (ISA) that will be held at “Escola Naval” (Naval School) in Rio de Janeiro when activities related to the biodiversity and mineral resources at the AREA will be discussed. In this policy, Brazil is evaluating the possibility of claiming the right to explore mineral resources in AREA. In order to conduct the necessary scientific research in these areas, Brazilian Navy is equipping one hydrographic ship named “Sirius” with a multibeam sonar that will enable detailed descriptions of deep seafloor features. In addition a research vessel (Surveyor) is being purchased in Singapore, and will also be available to operate in deep waters in a short term. A third research vessel has been commissioned but it is still in a planning phase.
- Brazil's intention to conduct both mineral and biological research in deep areas, including features outside the EEZ such as the mid-Atlantic ridge and seamount chains, meets the interests of MAR-ECO and, in that sense, Brazilian's vessels were made available for SA MAR-ECO providing that efforts were made in the direction of combining both the Government and SA MAR-ECO agendas. In other words, CIRM suggests that SA MAR-ECO is somehow integrated into the national policy for the AREA. Capt. Serafim and also Capt. Aloysio Vianna Jr., also present in this meeting, stated their will to continue negotiations with the chair of SA MAR-ECO.

2. PETROBRAS and SA MAR-ECO

- PETROBRAS (Brazilian State Oil Company) supports a research department called CENPES. Through this department PETROBRAS conducts scientific and technological research as well as supports important projects conducted by universities and research centers throughout the country. Some of these projects have focused on biodiversity and ecology of deep areas of Brazilian EEZ including basin areas where drilling activity has been conducted or will be conducted in the near future. Representatives of PETROBRAS present in this meeting committed to present the general ideas of SA MAR-ECO to CENPES and commented that the fact that SA MAR-ECO was oriented to an area outside Brazilian EEZ did not exclude it, *a priori*, from the scope of PETROBRAS deep water programs. They stated that PETROBRAS does not have a vessel available to conduct research as proposed by SA MAR-ECO, but can provide other types of support such as oil for the Navy ships and research scholarships.

3. SA MAR-ECO Strategy for the way ahead

- The Steering Committee introduced the discussion of the SA MAR-ECO formal science proposal defining the need for the establishment of component themes. Each of these components would justify the formation of a working group whose task would be to define a specific working plan to attend SA MAR-ECO general questions.

- Following MAR-ECO general structure the proposed working groups were: Demersal Nekton; Pelagic Nekton; Zooplankton; Macrobenthos; Microbiology and Bioprospection. In addition, support projects were also proposed including Environment (bathymetry, substrate, oceanography); Data Mining (including related ongoing projects) and Shiptime (including combining Government and MAR-ECO agendas). The following names were assigned to develop the working plans:
 1. WG – Data Mining – André Barreto (Brazil) , Hashali Hamukuaya (Namibia)
 2. WG – Shiptime – José Angel A. Perez (Brazil), Aloysio Vianna da Silva Jr. (Brazil)
 3. WG Demersal Nekton – Tatiana (Brazil), Paulo Costa (Brazil), Filipe Porteiro (Portugal)
 4. WG Pelagic Nekton –Mônica Muelbert (Brazil), Paulo Ricardo Schwingel (Brazil)
 5. WG Zooplankton – Luiz Fernando L. Fernandes (Brazil), Viviana Alder (Argentina)
 6. WG Macrobenthos – Débora Pires (Brazil), Pablo Muniz Maciel (Uruguay),
 7. WG Environment – José Henrique Muelbert (Brazil); José Gustavo Natorf (Brazil)
 8. WG Microbiology - undefined
 9. WG Bioprospection - undefined
- Angel Perez, Ricardo Serrão Santos, Filipe Porteiro and Malcolm Clark will distribute, by the end of April, a framework upon which the working groups should structure their working plans.
- The deadline for the working plans is the 30th of June 2007.
- Once the working plans are submitted, the Interim Steering Committee will organize a workshop of experts with the objective of discussing the plans and structure the science proposal.

4. Summary of Plenary discussion

- A Brazilian leadership of SA MAR-ECO was proposed and supported by members of MAR-ECO and CoML. The Chair of the Steering Committee, nevertheless, pointed out that the meeting was highly unbalanced and that it was very important to increase the participation of scientists of South America (mainly Argentina and Uruguay) and West Africa.
- The importance of the National Museum (UFRJ) was highlighted as a potential depository of biological collections derived from SA MAR-ECO.
- The capacity of Brazilian vessels to operate equipments used by MAR-ECO such as ROVs was questioned and required further investigations.
- A possible presence of “GO Sars” in Brazil in 2007-08 was also informed following its activities related to the IPY.
- Associations with ongoing actions of the programs CenSEAM and COMARGE were emphasized as to increase the efficiency of SA MAR-ECO, considering that 2007 – 2010 is a short period in comparison with the time spent by MAR-ECO program in the North Atlantic. This short period ahead was a matter of concern of the Interim Steering Committee. It was pointed out, however, that the P. Sloan Foundation will see positively the constructions of programs that can operate beyond the 2010 deadline of the CoML.