

**EUR-OCEANS Consortium meeting
25 November 2008, Rome, Italy**

Participants:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Representing...</i>	<i>Country</i>
Louis Legendre	Université Pierre et Marie Curie (Paris VI)	France
Paul Treguer	Université de Bretagne Occidentale	France
Patrizio Mariani	DTU Aqua	Denmark
Cynan Ellis-Evans	British Antarctic Survey	United Kingdom
Kate Larkin	National Oceanography Centre, Southampton	United Kingdom
Tapani Stipa	Finnish Institute of Marine Research	Finland
Maurizio Ribera	Stazione Zoologica Napoli	Italy
Ennio Marsella	Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche	Italy
Danute Uzars	Latvian Fisheries Resources Agency	Latvia
Didzis Ustups	Latvian Fisheries Resources Agency	Latvia
Antoine Dosdat	Ifremer	France
Yngve Borsheim	University of Bergen	Norway
Egil Sakshaug	NTNU	Norway
Geir Johnsen	NTNU	Norway
Svein Sundby	Institute of Marine Research	Norway
Roger Harris	Plymouth Marine Laboratory	United Kingdom
Uli Bathmann	Alfred Wegener Institute	Germany
Mike St John	University of Hamburg	Germany
Sylvain Ghiron	Oceanopolis	France
Constantin Frangoulis	Hellenic Centre for Marine Research	Greece
Marco Zavatarelli	CoNISMa	Italy
Coleen Moloney	University of Cape Town	South Africa
Philippe Cury	Institut de Recherche pour le Développement	France
Pierre-François Baisnée	Institut de Recherche pour le Développement	France
Cyril Moulin	Institut National des Sciences de l'Univers	France
Robert Huber	University of Bremen	Germany
Alessandro Crise	Istituto Nazionale di Oceanografia e di Geofisica Sperimentale	Italy

Member Organisations of the Consortium not represented:

ULCO, USTL, CLS (France), INRH (Morocco), ULPGC, AZTI (Spain), IO PAS (Poland)

Record written by Caroline Gernez.

1) Introduction

P. Treguer recalled the context in which the EUR-OCEANS Consortium is developing, in particular: (a) the report of the Expert Group on the future of Networks of Excellence (NoEs), which was submitted to the European Commission in September 2008, (b) a communication from the EC issued in July 2008, where “joint programming” of research among European organisations is encouraged, and (c) the ‘Aberdeen process’.

P. Treguer stressed that in this context, it is crucial that the activities of the Consortium start rapidly in 2009; this will demonstrate the added value of the Consortium before the end on 2009. With this

in view, the aim of the present meeting is to prepare proposals for the first meeting of the Consortium's Council in January 2009.

P. Treguer also recalled the objectives, activities and structure of the Consortium.

2) Identification of activities to be launched in 2009

Flagship Institutions:

There were two spontaneous proposals for topics of Flagship Institutions, by (1) P. Cury ("Ecosystem-based indicators of ecosystem health"), and (2) T. Stipa ("Policy Support: to develop a coherent process to address the European needs of marine policy instruments building on results of the highest-quality research in EUR-OCEANS").

It was decided to open a call for letters of intent for Flagship Institutions, rather than a call for applications to the 'Flagship status'. Member Organisations interested would submit, in a first step, a letter of intent showing their pre-commitment. A small group composed of T. Stipa, M. St John, C. Ellis-Evans and P. Cury will write the text of this call.

Gordon-like Conferences:

There were six pre-proposals for topics of Gordon-like Conferences:

- by L. Memery, (1) "Role, importance and impact of small scales (smaller than mesoscale) on mixing, transport, behaviour and ecology in the marine environment" and (2) "Ventilation of the main thermocline and distribution of biogeochemical tracers: links between subduction and climate variability, climate change, impact on the biogeochemical cycles, water mass characteristics",
- by P. Cury, (3) "Dynamics and role of mesoscale and sub-mesoscale activity in a global change context" and (4) "Ecological surprises and global change – from anecdotes to drastic ecosystem shifts",
- and by T. Stipa, (5) "Policy support: linking marine with maritime, with a particular focus on the impacts of changing maritime activities on ocean carbon cycles" and (6) "Catchment – open sea interaction".

It was decided that the same group working on the call for topics for Flagship Institutions would also prepare a call for topics for Gordon-like Conferences.

It could also be envisaged to allocate some distinct support to already planned conferences relevant to the Consortium, e. g. Chapman Conferences or future IMBER IMBIZO conferences.

3) Review of proposals for hosting the Project Office and of applications to the role of Scientific Coordinator

So far, one proposal was put forward by P. Cury, supported by IRD and Ifremer, and preliminary discussions were held with ICES, although no firm decision could be made by that organisation before January 2009.

P. Treguer recalled that formally, the role of Scientific Coordinator is not mentioned in the Consortium's agreement, but it is implicit that such a person would be essential to the success of the Consortium.

In their offer, IRD – Ifremer are proposing office space and salaries for a full-time secretary and a quarter-time webmaster in Sète, France, with P. Cury as Scientific Coordinator. It was felt by the meeting's participants that a third person with the role of Executive Director would also be needed. This position might perhaps be funded by the Consortium's budget. The IRD – Ifremer offer would be valid for at least 2 to 3 years.

The possible ICES offer, presented during the meeting by S. Sundby, would consist in office space in Copenhagen for the EUR-OCEANS Project Office. This offer comes from the ICES Bureau and seems to have received support from several ICES Delegates, but it requires a final decision by the new Science Committee, which is to meet on 6-8 January 2009. According to S. Sundby, the benefits would be coordination between EUR-OCEANS and ICES, which have an important overlap in their tasks, and from a scientific viewpoint, the opportunity to 're-vitalise' ICES, which used to be a multidisciplinary group, but has today a great emphasis on fisheries.

Several questions were raised related to the choice between the two offers. Some participants suggested a pragmatic approach, by favouring the IRD – Ifremer offer, which is ready to be implemented. It was suggested that this offer could be accepted for an initial period of 2 years, after which a rotation could be examined. Other participants suggested to wait until ICES is able to make a firm offer. The cost of the ICES offer for the Consortium is still unclear. The question of the independence of the Consortium from ICES was also raised.

It was eventually decided to inform ICES that the deadline for making a firm offer is mid-January. The Consortium Council will make a choice during its first meeting.

4) Budget of the Consortium

The contributions from the Core Members will range between 5 and 40 kEuro, corresponding to 1 (5 KEuro) to 8 (40 kEuro) voting rights. For the time being, the total amount of planned contributions is 211 kEuro for in-cash contributions, and 74 kEuro for in kind contributions.

These contributions could either be transferred to the Coordinator, or kept by the contributing Member Organisation and used for the Consortium's expenditure.

In-kind contributions could include salaries, management of databases, costs for hosting a Gordon-like Conference, etc. These contributions will be defined and accounted in a way to be established by the Council.

It was stressed that given the relatively low total in-cash contributions, it would be highly preferable to support the Project Office through in-kind contributions rather than through cash money.

5) 'Any other business'

- P. Treguer presented a proposal to be prepared and submitted to the European Commission as a 'Coordination and Support Action' for public outreach ("Climate change impacts on the marine environment: research results and public perception"). This proposal is currently prepared by a group lead by MarBEF. The deadline for submission is 8 January 2009, and the announced European contribution is 1 million Euro. Concerning the proposal to join forces put forward by MarBEF, some Members of the Consortium have already agreed to be involved in that preparation, and others are welcome to join. Little information about the progress of the proposal has been communicated by MarBEF in the recent weeks. It was suggested to involve the communication offices of the Member Organisations in this action.

- P. Cury proposed to launch a new doctoral network in Quantitative marine ecology and modelling, similar to the existing doctoral network MENTOR. The idea for such a network arose during EUR-OCEANS summer schools, where it was realised that a lot of expertise on this topic existed, but no doctoral training was offered. Several Member Organisations of the Consortium are already

interested, and others are welcome to join the initiative, to which the Consortium would provide a European background, facilitate exchange of teachers and students, and contribute courses.

This doctoral network could be a Cluster Activity of the Consortium, with some support from it, and it was also suggested that it be a base to search for additional European funding.

6) Next meeting of the Consortium

The EUR-OCEANS Network secretariat in Brest, France, will serve as Secretariat for the Consortium until 31 March 2009.

It was proposed to organise the first meeting of the Consortium's Council during the week of 19 January 2009, in a location central to most participants, e.g. at the Amsterdam Schipol airport. The best date for the meeting will be investigated among potential participants, as well as the availability of a meeting room at Schipol.