



**EUR-OCEANS Network of Excellence
Network's Steering Committee meeting
Rome, 28 November 2008**

Participants:

- Representative of the European Commission
C. Fragakis (DG Research, Directorate I)
- Leaders and directors
M. Barange (PML, United Kingdom)
C. Gernez (CNRS, France – Executive Director, non-voting)
S. Ghiron (Oceanopolis, France)
S. Halloui (FIST, France – representative of the Administrative and Financial Coordinator)
R. Harris (PML, United Kingdom)
L. Legendre (Pierre & Marie Curie University, France – Deputy Scientific Director)
C. Le Quéré (NERC-BAS, United Kingdom)
F. Thingstad (University of Bergen, Norway)
P. Tréguer (University of Brest, France - Scientific Director)

Excused:

- O. Aumont (IRD, France)
P. Cury (IRD, France)
M. Diepenbroek (University of Bremen, Germany)
C. Duarte (CSIC, Spain)
C. Fox (SAMS, United Kingdom)
P. Fréon (IRD, France)
F. Joos (University of Bern, Switzerland)
A. Körtzinger (IfM-GEOMAR, Germany)
F. Köster (DIFRES, Denmark)
R. Lampitt (NERC-NOC, United Kingdom)
E. Murphy (NERC-BAS, United Kingdom)
J. Ruiz (CSIC-University of Cadiz, Spain)
I. Siokou-Frangou (HCMR, Greece)
M. St John (University of Hamburg, Germany)
S. Sundby (IMR, Norway)
D. Turner (University of Göteborg, Sweden)

Absent:

- K. Richardson (University of Aarhus, Denmark)

- Assistants

- P.-F. Baisnée (IRD, France – Assistant to WP6 and to the Upwellings System)
O. Bonilla (Oceanopolis, France)
P. Buckley (CEFAS, United Kingdom – Assistant to the Shelf Seas System)
C. Enright (NERC-BAS, United Kingdom)

I. Grigorov (CNRS, France – Assistant to WP3.1)
S. Hartman (NERC-NOCS, United Kingdom – Assistant to WP2.1)
J. Heard (PML, United Kingdom – Assistant to WP9 and to the North Atlantic Ocean System)
W. Koeve (IfM-GEOMAR, Germany – Assistant to WP1.1)
K. Larkin (NERC-NOCS, United Kingdom – Assistant to WP2.1)
M. Lhuillery (CNRS, France – Assistant to the Scientific Director and Web editor)
S. Pesant (CNRS, France – Assistant to the Deputy Scientific Director and to WP2.2)
C. Tancell (NERC-BAS, United Kingdom – Assistant to the Southern Ocean System)

Excused:

Y. Borsheim (University of Bergen, Norway – Assistant to WP5)
R. Huber (University of Bremen, Germany – Assistant to WP2.2)
L. Laglera Baquer (CSIC, Spain – Assistant to WP8)
M. Llabres (CSIC, Spain – Assistant to WP1.2)
A. Olsson (University of Göteborg, Sweden – Assistant to the Baltic Sea System)
G.-K. Plattner (University of Bern, Switzerland)
E. Stenevik (IMR, Norway – Assistant to the Arctic and Nordic Seas System)
T. Tschumi (University of Bern, Switzerland)

1. Welcome and introduction

C. Le Quéré welcomed all the participants and presented the main objective of the last NSC meeting, which was to review the completion of the obligations stated in the European contract, agree on a timeline for the final tasks and wind up the Network.

C. Le Quéré recalled that draft versions of the Activity Reports (Final and Periodic) were submitted to the European Commission on 17 November 2008. The final versions of these Reports will be submitted by 31 December 2008, and the review process will start with the submission of the Management Reports (Final and Periodic) in February 2009.

2. Review of actions from past NSC meetings

All the actions recorded during the NSC meeting in Bremerhaven in May 2008 were implemented. Concerning the final reports, C. Fragakis asked whether it would be possible to provide a document on the “lessons learnt” from running the Network of Excellence. A draft document will be circulated to the NSC and sent to the Commission as a separate letter.

3. Update on the EUR-OCEANS Consortium

P. Treguer recalled that the Consortium currently includes 31 Member Organisations from 14 countries. The membership is open until 31 December 2008.

Several pre-proposals have been received for Flagship Institutions and Gordon-like Conferences (to be called “EUR-OCEANS Conferences”), as well as a proposal for a doctoral network on quantitative marine ecology and modelling. A call for letters of intent will be open before January 2009, and one of the first tasks of the Council will be to organise a selection of these activities.

The Project Office of the Consortium will rotate after a certain number of years. For the time being, one formal offer was presented by IRD and Ifremer to host the Project Office in Sète, France, and another offer may be confirmed soon by ICES to host the Project Office in Copenhagen, Denmark. The first meeting of the Council will most likely be organised during the third week of January 2009, in a location central to most Members.

It was stressed that the hiring of an Executive Director was essential to the good start of the activities, and suggested that a budget be allocated to this in order to hire someone without delay, at least for the first year.

4. Budget

C. Gernez presented (i) a summary of the budget showing the total expenditure made in 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008, (ii) a more detailed table showing the expenditure by category over the four years, and (iii) the financial situation in November 2008. The last payments to the Member Organisations were only 53% of the planned amounts, and the remaining funds will be transferred in 2009 after the Commission has made the final payment to the Financial Coordinator.

C. Fragakis asked whether it would be possible to provide a detailed table of the distribution of the ten-million Euro grant among the activities of the Network. This table will be included in the final version of the Activity Report.

5. Winding-up of the Network

The winding-up of the Network will consist in completing the following tasks:

- preparation and submission of the final versions of the Activity Reports: the last deliverables missing were recalled to the participants; all these documents should be provided by 10 December 2008;
- preparation and submission of the Management Reports to the European Commission by 15 February 2009 (mandate given by the General Assembly to the Scientific Directors);
- review process: reports and deliverables forwarded to the external reviewers as soon as all are ready, exchange by email with the NSC (likely to last until or beyond March 2009);
- analysis of the Financial Reports by the European Commission (from their reception on);
- expected last payment to EUR-OCEANS by the European Commission by the summer 2009, redistribution of the funds by FIST to the Member Organisations.

6. 'Any other business'

L. Legendre suggested to synthesise in a document the various activities of the Network that may be carried on by the Consortium, indicating their costs in terms of budget and manpower, so that informed choices could be made by the Consortium.

C. Le Quéré suggested to upload on the EUR-OCEANS website a short synthesis of the Network, describing the state of the Network as it is at its end and including a 'wish list', for anyone interested in the achievements.

P. Treguer stressed that the Consortium could be a 'niche' to experience joint programming among organisations from different countries, as encouraged by the European Commission. L. Legendre added that Gordon-like conferences could be used to prepare joint proposals to respond to European calls.

7. Conclusions of the meeting

C. Le Quéré gave special thanks to the WP and System assistants, who did most of the hard work and were responsible for the delivery of the work. Special thanks were also given to C. Gernez. Congratulations and thanks were given to P. Treguer and L. Legendre.

The European Commission was thanked for its support to the Network.

Thanks were also given to the WP and System Leaders.

Long life to the EUR-OCEANS Consortium!