



Summary

Meeting of the U.S. National Committee for the Census of Marine Life May 9-10, 2007

**Consortium for Oceanographic Research and Education
1201 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 420
Washington, D.C. 20005**

The U.S. National Committee (USNC) of the Census of Marine Life (CoML) recently held its biannual meeting May 9-10, 2007 at the Consortium for Oceanographic Research and Education in Washington, DC. Led by chair Dr. Andy Rosenberg, the major theme of this meeting revolved around the future of CoML, not only in the United States, but as a global program, beyond 2010.

CORE President RADM (ret) Richard West kicked the meeting off by talking about the importance of promoting CoML and its biodiversity research value to the entire US marine community. Outreach efforts are critical to accomplishing the USNC's primary goals of ensuring a sustained long term CoML program and supporting an OBIS that supports US science, management, and educational needs. Members spent a significant amount of time discussing the structure, location, and mechanism in which a sustained CoML program might be possible. Other key issues discussed included a presentation by Dr. Jo-Ann Leong on the difficulties and challenges to undertaking research in Hawaii, an update on the US Regional OBIS node (RON) and a new OBIS strategy document, and a status report on the planned 2007 workshop on the importance of biological ocean observing. In addition, the entire U.S. National Committee was invited to a reception for the public launch of the on-line Encyclopedia of Life Project at the National Academy of Science Building (<http://www.eol.org> for more information).

Members of the USNC were joined in discussion by a number of federal representatives, including special presentations by Dr. Bonnie J. Ponwith, Deputy Director of NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, to discuss common goals of NOAA and CoML, and by Dr. Julie Morris, Division of Ocean Sciences Director of The National Science Foundation, who talked about the Ocean Research Priorities Plan and other activities of the Joint Subcommittee on Ocean Science and Technology (JSOST). Other meeting participants included representatives from the US RON, NOAA's office of Ocean Exploration, NOAA's IOOS Program Office, NSF's Office of Polar Programs,

Ocean.US, CORE CoML Education and Outreach, the CoML Scientific Steering Committee, and the CoML Secretariat.

The meeting adjourned early on the second day so as to provide an opportunity to go up to Capitol Hill to visit with the staff of each USNC members' local Senatorial Representative. Concluding a long day, USNC members had six meetings in all, to educate Senate staff on the importance and the scope of the science that Census of Marine Life program undertakes. Overall, the spring meeting helped build momentum for the CoML program within the United States while developing the foundation for the future of the entire CoML program post 2010. The next meeting of the USNC will be held in the fall in New Hampshire, hosted by Chair Andy Rosenberg.

