

**Upcoming
Events/Meetings:**

USNC Education Workshop
September 18
Washington D.C.

USNC Fall Meeting
October 9-10
Portsmouth, NH

CoML All-Program
Meeting
November 14-16
**Auckland,
New Zealand**

Biological Ocean Observing:
Exploring Components of
IOOS from the Perspective
of CoML Workshop
14-16 January
Washington D.C.

Inside this issue:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| USNC Hosts Panel for CHOW | 1 |
| A Word from the Chair | 2 |
| All Program Meeting, Coming Soon | 2 |
| Dr. Wes Tunnell: Vice Chair of USNC | 3 |
| Indonesia Joins CoML | 3 |
| Education Corner | 4 |
| SSC Meets in Ecuador, Galapagos | 4 |
| Legislative Update | 5 |
| Fun and Games on the USNC Website | 5 |
| Several Questions with Ret. Adm. West | 6 |
| YouTube Video of the Quarter | 8 |

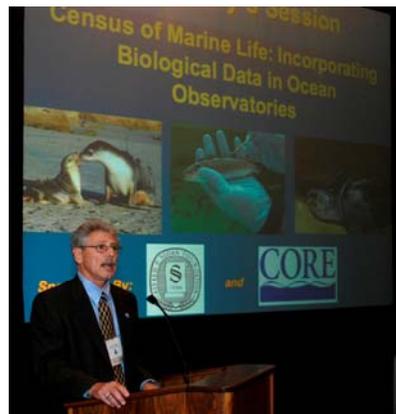
**1201 New York Ave. Suite 420
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USNC Hosts Panel for Capitol Hill Ocean Week



This June marked the seventh annual Capitol Hill Ocean Week (CHOW) symposium. The event brought together a wide range of stakeholders to discuss important ocean and coastal issues. Speakers included Members of Congress, as well as representatives of federal and state governments, industry, academia, and nonprofit organizations.

The U.S. National Committee of the Census of Marine Life scientists took part in a luncheon panel discussion titled: "Census of Marine Life: Incorporating Biological Data in Ocean Observatories." Held in the Cannon Caucus Room in the Cannon House Office Building on Capitol Hill, the session focused upon the importance of biological data as an essential means to understanding the overall health and sustainability of our nation's ocean ecosystems, as well as the entire global marine ecosystem. Long-time U.S. National Committee member Paul Sandifer, of NOAA's National Ocean Service, moderated the session which featured talks by Churchill Grimes, NOAA Southwest Fisheries Science Center, Steven Bograd, NOAA Southwest Fisheries Science Center and Mark Luther, University of South Florida. Panelists specifically highlighted CoML efforts from the Pacific Ocean Shelf Tracking (POST) project (www.postcoml.org/) and the Tagging of Pacific Predators (TOPP) project (www.topp.org/). For more information about CHOW, including copies of presentations, please visit: www.nmsfocean.org/chow2007/.



Left: Dr. Paul Sandifer moderates. Above: Panelists Dr. Paul Sandifer, Dr. Churchill Grimes, Dr. Steven Bograd, and Dr. Mark Luther

A Word from the Chair



Dr. Andy Rosenberg
USNC Chair

Dear Colleagues,

The Census of Marine Life All-Program meeting is coming up this November in New Zealand. This international meeting is an opportunity to showcase the achievements of the Census, get program scientists together to discuss continued development of the Census and to, of course, try to get some notice and attention for the Census in the scientific and public policy communities, as well as by the public. Even for those who can't attend the meeting there should be a lot of interesting reports, webcasts and other material coming out of the All-Program meeting, so please stay tuned!

The next US National Committee meeting will be held in the great state of New Hampshire this fall. The Committee needs to continue to work on the vision and legacy of the Census after 2010, following on from the conclusion of the A.P. Sloan Foundation funding support. Having built a strong and vibrant science program, the critical issue is ensuring that it continues for as long as possible. There certainly are more places, ecosystems, and marine life to explore beyond 2010. For all the great ongoing work, there are still far too many unknowns about the ocean that can be explored and revealed. The Committee is continuing work on the vision for the future of the Census.

Finally, I am happy to announce that Dr. Wes Tunnel has agreed to co-Chair the USNC. I really appreciate Wes taking on this role to help us keep the Committee moving forward.

On to the New Hampshire meeting.

-Andrew A. Rosenberg, Ph.D.

CoML Census of Marine Life 3rd All Program Meeting Just Around the Corner...

The third All Program meeting for CoML will convene in just under three months on the 14th of November, at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. Hosted by Mark Costello, the project leader for the Ocean Biogeographic Information System (OBIS), the event will begin with a public symposium day on November 14th. During this time, all the CoML projects will have a chance to share their most exciting discoveries and plans for the future with the public. Following the symposium, all projects and regional committees will meet for two days to discuss program issues, and largely, plans for the synthesis in 2010. The Scientific Steering Committee and many of the individual projects and regional committees will also meet around this time. We are looking forward to reporting on the exciting results of this landmark meeting of the Census of Marine Life in our next issue! For more information on the All Program Meeting, please contact CoML Secretariat Program Manager Kristen Yarincik at kyarincik@coreocean.org.

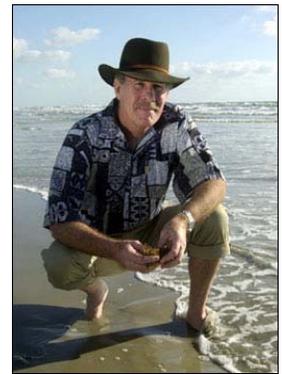


USNC Announces Dr. Wes Tunnell as Committee Vice–Chair

The USNC is pleased to announce Dr. Wes Tunnell as the new Vice-Chair for United States National Committee. Dr. Tunnell has been a very active member of the USNC since 2005, hosting the committee's Fall 2006 meeting at the beautiful new Harte Research Institution (HRI), located on the campus of Texas A & M University, Corpus Christi. "We're all very excited that Wes has taken on the additional responsibilities of Vice Chair. There is no doubt that Wes will be a key catalyst in growing and securing the legacies of the Census of Marine Life program both within the US and abroad," said USNC Program Coordina-

tor, Michael Feldman. Dr. Tunnell leads Gulf of Mexico—Past, Present and Future (GoMx) project, the first officially affiliated project of the CoML. He is the founder of the Center for Coastal Studies (1984), developer and promoter of the co-location concept of environmental and natural resources agencies to the TAMU-CC campus (1980s-90s), and a strong proponent of cooperation and collaboration in the US, Mexico, and Cuba to promote the HRI's mission of sustainable use and conservation of the Gulf of Mexico. He became Associate Director of HRI in 2001 and has played a key role in its development, in

designing the new HRI building and in developing a new Ph.D. program in Coastal and Marine System Science.



Dr. Wes Tunnell

He is also Director of the Center for Coastal Studies and Professor of Biology. He is a broadly trained marine biologist/ecologist with a particular interest in field studies on coral reefs and coastal areas of the Gulf of Mexico.

Indonesia Joins CoML as a National Implementation Committee

The Census of Marine Life in Indonesia (CoML Indonesia) was successfully launched on 24 July 2007 at a meeting held at the Department of Marine Affairs and Fisheries' Agency for Marine and Fisheries Research, Jakarta, Indonesia. As one of the 19 mega-biodiverse countries on earth, Indonesia is an astonishingly rich centre of global marine biodiversity. In the 65 million years since the Gondwanan break-up, Indonesia has evolved a biological diversity that equals or exceeds the top biodiverse countries on Earth and remains one of the world's biodiversity hotspots for new species discoveries.

During the meeting, Prof. Dr. Indroyono Soesilo (Chairman

of Agency Marine and Fisheries Research and inaugural chair of the new NIC) highlighted the opportunity the CoML provides to Indonesia to make accessible, via OBIS, the nation's marine biodiversity data. This would demonstrate Indonesia's place as one of the world's mega biodiverse nations. Of particular interest were the fifteen national data sets, which included geo-referenced species by abundance data for several groups (e.g. sharks and rays and deep-water species), and species check lists for a number of areas in Indonesia.

Their newly established goals include

establishing a CoML Indonesia National Implementation Committee (NIC), incorporating existing accessible Indonesian data into the CoML Ocean Biodiversity Information System (OBIS) and undertaking a marine biodiversity review (MBR) of what used to live, what currently lives, and what might live in the Arafura and Timor Seas.



Education Corner



Last month, the U.S. Census of Marine Life (CoML) made an appearance at the July 23-27, 2007 National Marine Educators Association (NMEA) conference in Portland, Maine, where marine educators from the U.S., Canada, and other countries gathered to exchange ideas, experiences and teaching techniques, as well as discuss the latest research. The conference's Wednesday, July 25th keynote presentation was given by Dr. Ron O'Dor, chief scientist for CoML. Additionally, we used this conference as an opportunity to distribute a survey to the participants so as to gain feedback on what a CoML-based education component might look like to an audience of both formal and informal educators. The majority of educators were particularly interested in activity and lab outlines, lesson plans and media materials. Surprisingly, educators were equally interested in exploring with their students the entire range of CoML research topics, including marine sampling technologies, tagging of marine life, and the microscopic ocean (plankton, microbes). These results should prove to be beneficial as we prepare for a workshop this September in Washington, DC to develop and grow an education component as a major element of the U.S. CoML program.



★ EDUCATION LINK OF THE QUARTER

Our friends at the European Census of Marine Life Regional Committee (EuroCoML) have an excellent website, including a great collection of materials for both students and teachers. Take a look at their 'Education and Outreach' section which offers a collection of biology, chemistry, geology and physics lesson plans, all organized by age group from experts at NOAA, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, and others. Students and teachers can also download posters on different chemosynthetic environments (hydrothermal vents and cold seeps) found in the deep sea. If you have some time, give their colorful jigsaw puzzles from the Kids section a try. Please visit www.eurocoml.org/ to see the fun and educational resources EuroCoML offers!

CoML SSC Meets in Quito, Ecuador and Galapagos Islands to Celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Vent Discovery with ChEss

The international Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) of the Census of Marine Life (CoML) met in Quito, Ecuador on 26 June 2007. Representatives from the CoML South American Regional Committee were present, as well as additional guests from CoML in Ecuador. Discussions focused primarily on CoML activities in South America and synthesis efforts for the year 2010. Following the meeting, the Secretariat and members of the SSC traveled to the Galapagos Is-

lands to meet with the Scientific Steering Committee of the Biogeography of Deep-Water Chemosynthetic Ecosystems (ChEss) Project to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Vent Discovery with a public symposium. SSC Chair Fred Grassle gave the first talk of the event, sharing memories of being chief scientist on one of the earliest biological cruises to the vent site in 1979. The event was a great success with over 200 people attending the talks and exhibit activities in Puerto Ayora. For

more information and photos, please go to www.noc.soton.ac.uk/chess/galapagos.html.



Dr. Fred Grassle cuts the celebratory cake.

Legislative Update by Cliff Mintz, Communications and Policy Assistant, CORE

As the government's fiscal year end draws near (September 30), a major battle between Democrats and the Administration has developed. President Bush has issued a veto threat if the discretionary domestic spending bills exceed \$933 billion. Democrats are looking to spend roughly \$22 billion more than the President's request. To date, neither side seems to be backing off. The House completed its work on the spending bills in late July and the Senate is expected to take up the spending bills when Congress returns from recess after Labor Day. It remains to be seen if Congress will deliver each of the spending bills to the President on an individual basis, lump several bills together in a minibus, or send all the bills together in an omnibus.

In July, the House passed the Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations bill by a margin of 281-142. The vote falls just short of the 2/3rds necessary to override a presidential veto, which has been threatened because the bill spends \$2.3 billion more than the President requested in his budget. The bill provides healthy increases for NOAA, NSF and Earth Sciences at NASA.

The Department of Defense

spending bill passed the House just before the August recess. The legislation funds basic research within the Navy significantly above the FY08 budget request and just below the FY07 level. The bill also includes language very problematic to the university community -- limiting the amount of overhead costs that can be covered in basic research contracts to 20%. The House has also passed an Energy spending bill that includes provisions for an Integrated Ocean Observing System.

These spending bills will be taken up by the Senate in September and any differences between the House and Senate versions will be ironed out in Conference. It will then be decided if the bills will be sent to the President on an individual basis or lumped together in a minibus or omnibus.

Additionally, the House passed the Ocean and Coastal Mapping Act which directs NOAA to establish an integrated Federal ocean and coastal mapping plan for the Great Lakes and coastal waters and the territorial sea, the exclusive economic zone and the Continental Shelf. This bill serves as an important step in accomplishing one of the goals set forth by the U.S. Commission

on Ocean Policy. The Senate will address these issues when it takes up the Ocean Exploration Bill.



The Senate's Ocean Exploration Bill (S.39) seeks to accomplish several critical goals for the ocean research community. The bill will codify a coordinated national ocean exploration and undersea research program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and requires an Ocean Exploration Technology and Infrastructure Task Force and inter-agency financing. Additionally, the bill allows for exploration voyages to survey and explore little known marine environments; conduct scientific voyages to locate and document historic archaeological sites; develop and implement a process for merit review and funding of proposals for ocean exploration activities; promote oceanographic research, communication, navigation, and data collection systems; and encourage partnership among various interest groups to enhance ocean science.

New! Fun and Games on USNC Website

In our continued effort to introduce CoML to a younger audience, we are happy to announce a new 'Fun and Games' section of our webpage, www.CoML.us. Enjoy playing games such as Matching, Memory, Hangman, and Word Search on a variety of difficulty levels. Tested extensively by the USNC Program Office, the online activities are based on CoML research and important central themes, such as biodiversity. You can access the games through the education page of the U.S. CoML website or www.coml.us/Dev2Go.web?Anchor=us_fun_games



Remember hangman? It's just one of the fun games you can play on our website!

Seven Questions with Rear Admiral Richard West (Retired)

As a regular feature of the US CoML Newsletter, we ask a member of the CoML Community seven (or so) questions. This edition features an interview with the President of the Consortium for Oceanographic Research and Education (CORE) and the PI for the CoML Secretariat and U.S. Program Office, Rear Admiral Richard West (Retired).



Heather Mannix: What has been the biggest change with Census since you started as PI for the Program Office?

Richard West: I came to CORE in 2002, when we were just starting the international and the U.S. National Committee, and I think the biggest change has been the tremendous growth of both of the programs, from understanding what the Census is all about, to the investment in the research programs, to the growth of our program management here at CORE, which I'm very proud of.

HM: What do you think will be the greatest legacy for the Census?

RW: I think the greatest legacy for the Census will be exactly the stated purpose of the Census; defining what has lived in the oceans, and what lives there now, and most importantly, where we're going in the future. This has really been the single largest effort to understand the biodiversity of the oceans. What we do

know about the oceans has been relegated to mostly physical oceanography and this has been a big effort to understand a missing piece, the biological piece, which has a big impact on our survival on this planet. So, that's the biggest legacy, that it started the biodiversity classification of the oceans.

HM: In your opinion, what do you think is the greatest challenge the Census faces as we look towards the year 2010, the end of the first census, and beyond?

RW: Well, we all know here at CORE the big challenge is to keep the funding and the program going. Thanks to the strong support of the Sloan Foundation and lots of other folks who have invested over the years, such as other foundations and the federal government, the program has seen a lot of growth, so the challenge will be to keep up this growth with the ending of Sloan support in 2010. This is, and will be, one of the major program management efforts to come out of CORE in the next few years.

HM: Again, looking at the years leading up to the end of Sloan support in 2010 and beyond, how do you think Ocean Biogeographical Information System (OBIS), the information and data component of the Census, fits in?

RW: OBIS is an important tool that ocean policy people will have to use to determine the policy to manage the resources in our ocean. It is the right mechanism to use for the biological status of our oceans and it should be used by the federal government to manage ocean resources. In order to be used by the federal government, the data has to

be validated and it has to have the right geospatial information datum so it matches up with all the other models the federal government uses. It's a tremendous tool – a library and source of data for managing our oceans.

"THIS (CoML) HAS REALLY BEEN THE SINGLE LARGEST EFFORT TO UNDERSTAND THE BIODIVERSITY OF THE OCEANS."
-R. WEST

HM: Right now there are a number of efforts going on to ensure CoML has long term, sustained support. Do you think that putting it into a U.S. Federal Agency undermines the international aspect of the Census of Marine Life?

RW: I don't think so. NOAA is the nation's operational ocean agency and that's the right place for the U.S. commitment to maintain a long term investment in Census and OBIS. It has to be lead by a federal agency to ensure long term secure funding for any program with public money. It should encourage the international community that the U.S. is committed to Census and OBIS.

HM: So you think NOAA is the best place for CoML?

When it comes to managing the oceans in general, NOAA has to take the lead. They are tasked with doing weather forecasting and weather is generated over our oceans. So an ocean observing system combined with an atmospheric observing system is what we should be striving for. NOAA should be the "Environmental Forecasting Agency." And, while NOAA

Continued on next page

Several Questions with RADM West, continued

should take the lead, management should be done through the National Ocean Partnership Program to ensure that the other 15 federal agencies, who have an interest in the oceans, are a part of the solution.

HM: Switching gears a bit, you've had a long career working in the ocean community. So far, what aspects have you enjoyed the most?

RW: Going to sea. I've worked there all my life and you can't go to sea all the years that I have and not be absolutely fascinated with it. I thoroughly enjoyed the ten years that I was the Oceanographer of the Navy and had a chance to look at the science part of the ocean. And then to work here at CORE and continue learning about the science with the academic and private research institutions has been great. A close second has been working with people who also share the love of ocean. I enjoy being around people like that.

HM: Do you miss going to sea?

RW: Oh absolutely. My time at sea and my ships were a highlight of my Navy career. But that's for the young folks now.

HM: Speaking of younger folks, what do you think we need to focus on to build the next generation of ocean scientists and leaders?

RW: There's a huge need to have youngsters get involved now in science and math and then continue into the ocean sciences all the way up to the Ph.D. level so we can better understand our largest resource. My experience in the last few years has been that there are many positions in the federal government that should be filled by those who have a strong background in the ocean sciences. That void has to be filled. As

we learn more and more about our oceans and the need to preserve them, those positions will grow. We need to have a new generation that's motivated to study the oceans.

"I AM ABSOLUTELY CONVINCED THAT IF WE HAD AN OCEAN LITERATE SOCIETY...THE INVESTMENT IN OUR OCEANS WOULD BE MUCH GREATER THAN WHAT WE HAVE NOW, AND WE WOULD HAVE MUCH BETTER POLICIES IN PLACE TOWARDS THE PRESERVATION OF OUR OCEANS"
-R. WEST

The "3Rs" – reading, writing and math, throughout high school has really limited the exposure of our youngsters to ocean sciences. There are a lot of biological, physical and chemical sciences taught in high school, but they mostly relate to atmospheric and terrestrial topics. The ocean sciences aren't a part of the curriculum. At one point, I think I was told in a survey we did for the Ocean Commission that the single most popular science elective at Rutgers University is Marine Biology. So, that shows that there's a lot of curiosity about what's in the ocean - but it's not being fulfilled until the college level, and that's too late. We need get the kids interested at a much younger age, probably junior high.

The more practical problem is that the science standards are set by the state, so it's hard to change them. You have to do it through other means, through exciting things like Ocean Exploration and the National Ocean Science Bowl.

HM: If you had a few million extra dollars to put towards any project or any program within

the ocean community, what would you use it for? Where do you think it would do the most good?

RW: There are a lot of places I could put it, but I think that I would use it for something that we have not invested in yet and that's ocean literacy. I am absolutely convinced that if we had an ocean literate society-and I'm not sure what that means exactly-but if we all had an understanding and therefore concern for the preservation for the oceans, at this point the investment in our oceans would be much greater than what we have now, and we would have much better policies in place towards the preservation of our oceans.

HM: With the merger of CORE and JOI into the Consortium for Ocean Leadership, you'll be leaving us. Any big plans after you leave CORE and the Census of Marine Life?

RW: I am leaving after five and a half years that I have thoroughly enjoyed. I retired as Oceanographer of the Navy on a Friday and I joined CORE on a Monday and I've enjoyed every minute of being involved in the ocean research and education community. This is the right time for me to leave. The new organization is standing up and it's time for a new president/CEO to take on the challenge. So, I leave very pleased with what we've done at CORE. I will definitely miss the staff. I've enjoyed growing with the staff and I'll miss them. In the future I'll probably try to stay engaged with the ocean community, somehow. I'm not exactly sure what it is yet, I don't have any definite plans, but when I see the right plan I'll have a smile on my face. ©

