

Proposal for the establishment of a joint IAMSLIC-IODE Group of Experts on Marine Information Management (IAMSLIC/IODE GE-MIM)

IODE

The programme "International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange" (IODE) of the "Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission" (IOC) of UNESCO was established in 1961. Its purpose is to enhance marine research, exploitation and development, by facilitating the exchange of oceanographic data and information between participating Member States, and by meeting the needs of users for data and information products.

The IODE system forms a worldwide service oriented network consisting of NODCs (National Oceanographic Data Centres). During the past 50 years, IOC Member States have established over 80 oceanographic data centres in as many countries. This network has been able to collect, control the quality of, and archive millions of ocean observations, and makes these available to Member States. Since 1984 IODE added marine information management to its mandate.

The IODE programme is governed by a Committee. This Committee is composed of IODE National Coordinators: one for data management and one for marine information management (Since 2002, each IOC Member State -of which there are now 144- has been requested to designate an IODE National Coordinator for Marine Information Management). Today there are 84 national coordinators for data management and 54 national coordinators for marine information management. The Committee meets every two years. During its Sessions, the IODE Committee reviews progress during the past two years and defines a work plan and budget for the next two years.

The IOC Assembly which is the main governing body of the IOC also meets every two years and is composed of high-level representatives of the 144 Member States. The Assembly reviews progress of all IOC programmes and decides on the budget of each programme. The Assembly therefore also reviews and approves the proposed work plan and budget submitted by the IODE Committee.

IODE GE-MIM

The IODE Committee has established a number of small groups that provide expert advice to the IODE Committee, called Groups of Experts. To compose the Groups of Experts, the IOC/IODE Secretariat, at regular intervals, invites the IOC Member States to nominate suitable (on the basis of the Terms of Reference of the Group and of the Agenda of the next planned meeting) candidates for the Groups. The Executive Secretary then selects a number, usually not exceeding 8.

In 2007 the objectives of Groups of Experts were redefined as follows:

- IODE Groups of Experts will undertake detailed scientific and technical studies and/or co-ordination tasks, by subject or region, as identified by the IODE Committee;
- IODE Groups of Experts, including the JCOMM/IODE ETDMP, will monitor scientific and technical developments, and identify needs to be addressed by IODE, as pertaining to their IODE subject area and propose a work programme with clear priorities, for consideration by the IODE Committee;
- To facilitate implementation of the Groups of Experts work programme, the Groups of Experts will (i) seek cooperation from IODE national coordinators; (ii) develop and implement projects with clear objectives and deliverables, and take responsibility for the coordination and management of such projects.

The membership was redefined as follows:

- The total number of Members of IODE Groups of Experts should not exceed 8;
- The Groups should be composed of not more than 4 long-term members; and not more than 4 short-term members;
- The long-term members will be selected by the Executive Secretary, based upon nominations from Member States and further based upon individual expertise as relevant to the concerned IODE Group of Expert. Long-term members can remain a member of the Group during not more than 4 inter-sessional periods;
- The short-term members shall be selected by the long-term members of the Group, based upon their specific expertise, documented in the OceanExpert system, related to specific tasks or projects and will remain a member during, preferably, not more than two inter-sessional periods;

The IODE Group of Experts on Marine Information Management (GE-MIM) was established in 1984. Since its establishment the GE-MIM has had 11 meetings.

IAMSLIC

The International Association of Aquatic and Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers (IAMSLIC) is an association of individuals and organizations interested in library and information science, especially as these are applied to the recording, retrieval and dissemination of knowledge and information in all aspects of aquatic and marine sciences and their allied disciplines. The association provides a forum for exchange and exploration of ideas and issues of mutual concern. Established in 1975, IAMSLIC “belongs to its members”¹. Over the years IAMSLIC has developed 4 core areas of activity: conferences (IAMSLIC meets annually, either in the USA or overseas), grants (for travel support and project-related funding), and resource sharing. Under resource sharing IAMSLIC has developed (i) the Z catalog that allows the simultaneous searching the online catalogs of a number of member libraries and then brings together the results of

¹ <http://www.iamslc.org/about-us/our-story> (26/8/2012)

this search for review; (ii) the duplicate exchange service to share information about duplicates that are available to send to other libraries and also to post lists of desiderata, items sought for library collections. In 2007 IAMSLIC developed "Aquatic Commons", a thematic digital repository covering the natural marine, estuarine /brackish and fresh water environments. It includes all aspects of the science, technology, management and conservation of these environments, their organisms and resources, and the economic, sociological and legal aspects. Since 2012 Aquatic Commons is hosted by the IOC Project Office for IODE, Oostende, Belgium as a contribution by IODE to IAMSLIC.

Cooperation between IODE and IAMSLIC

Since 1989 there have been linkages between IODE and IAMSLIC, initially through making available its resource sharing service to marine libraries in Africa (through the ODINAFRICA project), later by participation of IODE in IAMSLIC Conferences, sponsoring by IODE of IAMSLIC memberships in developing countries and through travel grants provided by IODE to participants from developing countries. In August 2011 a Memorandum of Understanding was concluded between IOC/IODE and IAMSLIC: "The purpose of this agreement is to strengthen cooperation between both organizations in the field of marine information management through (i) providing training and support to build human capacity related to marine information management; (ii) promoting networking of marine information managers; and (iii) promoting the capacity of libraries and information centres to disseminate and provide access to, marine scientific literature for the benefit of marine scientists and other relevant users."

The Proposal

As described above the IODE programme has been able to develop a global network of data centres, but has been able to reach only part of the information centres and activate them (one reason being that each IOC Member State usually has only one IODE national coordinator for MIM whereas there may be many more marine libraries). It has therefore been difficult for IODE to really connect with marine information managers and to clearly identify the needs of, and priorities for marine librarians.

Through the establishment of a joint IAMSLIC-IODE Group of Experts on Marine Information Management (IAMSLIC/IODE GE-MIM) the following mutual benefits can be achieved:

- IAMSLIC will have access to high-level policy makers at the national level to communicate needs and priorities of marine librarians;
- IAMSLIC will be able to connect with IODE national coordinators for marine information management who are currently not IAMSLIC members;
- IODE will have direct access to a global marine librarian community;
- IAMSLIC and IODE will have a joint mechanism to develop and implement global marine information management services and products;
- IAMSLIC will be able to raise its international profile through the participation of IOC and its IODE in international events.

In order to achieve balanced membership of the two partners in this joint group, it is proposed that IODE and IAMSLIC will contribute four (4) members of the Group. The IODE members will be designated through the procedure outlined under IODE-GEMIM above. IAMSLIC will designate its four members in accordance with a procedure that they will decide upon independently of IODE.

The Joint IAMSLIC/IODE GE-MIM will meet either once a year or once every two years, depending on the availability of funding. If desired and possibly the Group may decide to alternate group meetings with webex meetings. For group meetings IODE (or the Member State contributing the member) will bear the cost of participation of its members. Cost of participation of IAMSLIC members may be born by IAMSLIC, by the employing institution of the designated member, or by IODE.

IAMSLIC will be invited to co-draft the terms of reference of the Joint IAMSLIC/IODE GE-MIM in preparation for the 22nd Session of IODE (Ensenada, Mexico, March 2013) and will be invited to send representation to IODE-XXII. At IODE-XXII the Terms of Reference of the Group will be submitted in the form of a "draft recommendation". If adopted the recommendation will be submitted, together with other recommendations and the session report, to the June 2013 Session of the IOC Assembly for approval. The Group can then be established immediately after the Assembly and a meeting can be planned as from that time, taking into account the availability of funds (or the meeting can be held by Webex).

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