

Monthly Update
FEBRUARY 2012

Key Achievements in February

Management

- o 2 February: Orange River Mouth Interim Management Committee meeting in Alexander Bay.
- o 2 February: World Wetlands Day at Orange River estuary.
- o 6 February: NMMU Research Associate meeting with the Dean of Science at NMMU.
- o 16 February: MESOBIO Research meeting with Dr Mike Roberts (DEA) & Dr Sven Kaehler (Rhodes).
- o 20 – 22 February: SAEON Management meeting & SAEON Story book launch in Stellenbosch.
- o 23 February: ASCLME technical meeting to discuss the *Regional Alliance Long-term Monitoring* cruise.
- o 24 February: Meeting with the Dean of Science regarding the SAEON/SAIAB/NMMU MoU & collaboration.
- o 27 – 29 February: South Africa / Poland co-operation programme visit at the University of Szczecin, Poland.

Proposed activities for March

- o 1 – 9 March: SA/Poland co-operation programme visit in Poland.
- o 13 – 14 March: CSIR/DAFF/DEA Ocean Acidification Workshop in Cape Town.
- o 1 – 31 March: Final quality test of the South African Estuarine Information System to selected CERM (Consortium for Estuarine Research and Management) members.
- o 16 March: ACEP Capacity Building meeting.

Algoa Bay LTMRP

- o Conditions for the month of February were reasonably good with the exception of a few seasonal storms, strong easterlies and swell sizes exceeding 3 m.
- o The monthly plankton sampling was conducted on 14 February 2012 with all stations and parameters sampled successfully despite a shortage of participants on fieldtrip.

Stakeholder relations:

Dr Matt Dicken was not able to conduct his monthly monitoring of Great White sharks in Algoa Bay this month due to uKwabelana not being available.

Data Management

- o Project registration with Ms. Renae Logston and colleagues at UCT is in its final stages. Registration is expected to be completed by early March.

- o Project registration ongoing with Anchor Consultants CC.
- o Mr. Shaun Deyzel is currently facilitating and negotiating sharing of CMP data with Dr. Matt Dicken.
- o Mr. Bruce Donovan represented SAEON Elwandle Node at the 10th SIMSC meeting held in Cape Town on 23 February 2012.

Laboratory Parataxonomy Interns

- o It has been an incredibly busy month for the Laboratory Interns. They are currently working on three different projects, one of which is linked with Dr. Lara Atkinson of Egagasini Node.

Proposed activities for March

- o PE-LTEMP monthly sampling 9-20 March.
- o Facilitate Dr. Dicken's monthly shark monitoring trip to Bird Island, 9-31 March.
- o Finalisation of Mr. Luzuko Dali's PhD registration administration with UWC.

Marine Protected Areas:

Tsitsikamma National Park (TNP)

- o 1-8 and 16-18 February: Dr. Albrecht Gotz embarked on the Tsitsikamma Fieldtrip.
- o 20-21 February: Dr. Gotz with Mr. Ryan Palmer of ACEP embarked on an ROV fieldtrip in Port Elizabeth.

Proposed activities for March

- o 1-9 March: Tsitsikamma field trip.
- o Dr. Gotz will be working on the Annual progress report to NRF for incentive funding.

CMP's Maintenance / Diving / Boating

- o The 2 UTR's located at Bird Island inner and outer were dived out on 31 January and redeployed on acoustic releases.
- o 80m UTR-Bay Mouth and 60 UTR-Cen were also serviced on the same day.
- o The 5 St. Francis Bay UTR's have been made up which leaves only 1 more to be done.
- o Elwandle dive team participated on a dive in Tsitsikamma for Ms Elodie Heyns work.
- o The ROV and uKwabelana are currently in Tsitsikamma for SAEON's MPA monitoring fieldtrip.

Joint ACEP Marine Platform Operations:

- o ASCLME/ACEP Alliance cruise is currently underway in Madagascar.
- o ROV camera and light upgrade has been done.

- The ROV has been successfully used in Tsitsikamma for invertebrate collections on the deep reef.
- uKwabelana has successfully been utilised by Elwandle on fieldtrips.
- A new skipper, due to start in April, has been appointed for uKwabelana.
- ACEP III request for research proposals has been made, deadline for submissions 2 April 2012.

Education

- Interaction with schools has been minimal due to a go slow by educators which only ended in February. This resulted in a massive backlog of work and schools are fervently trying to make up for the lost time which in turn has affected our programme at schools.
- Mr Chris McCartney, co-ordinated a workshop at Egagasini, which was reported to be successful by both Chris and Mr Thomas Mtontsi.
- An NRF outreach workshop was held in Pretoria. SAEON Education was represented by Ms Sibongile Mokoena at the workshop.

Proposed activities for March

- 12 March: Education and ACEP PGCE workshops will be held at SAIAB in Grahamstown.
- 13 March: SAEON Education team meeting in Grahamstown.
- 13-20 March: The Sci-fest exhibition and learner workshops taking place.

Staff and Student Matters

- Fort Hare BSc Hon students, co-supervised and mentored by Elwandle Node passed their respective research projects satisfactorily.
- Mr. Luzuko Dali participated in this month's plankton sampling and is currently working on his progress reports and registration with the BCB Department at UWC.
- Mr Tinus Sonnekus is on a research visit to the University of Szczecin in Poland
- Mr Jadon Schmidt is writing up his thesis and plans to hand in at the end of April.
- Mr Bevan O'Reilley is writing up his thesis and is planning to hand in at the end of April.
- Mr Tim Vink managed to sample all 5 productivity stations in February.
- Mr Adrian Evans is busy writing up his dissertation and is still on track to complete it by the end of the year.
- Mr Anthony Bernard is in the final stages of writing up his dissertation and should complete it by the end of May.