

ELWANDLE NODE

Monthly Update APRIL – MAY 2011

Key Achievements in April-May

Algoa Bay LTMRP

- SAEON Scuba Dive Unit collected sponges off Riy Banks in Algoa Bay for Microbiology and Biochemistry Departments at Rhodes University on behalf of Prof. Mike Davies Coleman.
- Shaun Deyzel facilitated the annual Bird Island (BI) using the R/V uKwabelana on 10th April 2011 for Mr. Rowen Vaneeden from the Percy Fitzpatrick Institute at UCT and other students of Dr Lorien Pichegru's Penguin Research Group working in Algoa Bay. Two experimental UTR lines were deployed along the 60m contour between Bird Island and Cannon Rocks. The units, managed by Elwandle Node, will supply valuable oceanographic information to be incorporated into Rowen's research on Penguin movements around Bird Island.
- UTR BI outer, UTR BI 80m and UTR BI inner were serviced on 12th April 2011. Data was successfully retrieved and disseminated.
- We failed to carry out the PE-LTEMP monthly sampling for the month of April due to unfavourable sea conditions. Poor weather also prevented Dr. Matt Dicken from conducting his monthly monitoring for April.
- The PE-LTEMP monthly sampling was conducted on the 2nd May. Due to equipment failure only 5 of the 6 stations were sampled. Remedial action was taken to prevent this situation from occurring again.
- 2nd May, Dr. Matt Dicken conducted his monthly Great White Monitoring around Bird Island.
- 17th May, Shaun facilitated a fieldtrip in Algoa Bay using the R/V uKwabelana for Dr. Paul Cowley of SAIAB and the Ocean Tracking Network crew members.

Data Management

- Shaun Deyzel attended the 6th SIMSC Meeting in Cape Town on the 27th April.
- Shaun is currently in the process of negotiating Project Registration and Data Agreements with Dr. Paul Cowley, Dr. Nadine Strydom of NMMU and Dr. Sue Jackson of Stellenbosch University.
- Six projects have been loaded on the SAEON Projects Database.
- Shaun is currently working with Principle Investigators of 14 projects registered through Elwandle, to update and collate the latest information required for uploading to the SAEON Projects Database.

Laboratory Parataxonomy Interns

- Lab Interns are currently conducting sample analysis of benthic samples on behalf of the Oceanographic Research Institute, for Principle Scientist Ms Fiona Mackay.

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Proposed activities for June

- 1st – 20th June, PE-LTEMP monthly sampling.
- 1st June Shaun will be meeting with Prof. Tris Wooldridge regarding the Transkei Estuaries Programme and historical data and will also be meeting with Prof Eileen Campbell regarding the Project Registration and data agreements.

Marine Protected Areas:

- 1 April 2011, Dr. Albrecht Gotz participated on 5 dives on the Rye Banks Sponge collection fieldtrip.
- 4-7 April, Dr. Gotz presented the following at the South African Marine Science Symposium in Grahamstown:
 - Evaluation of delta-models for the standardization of CPUE time series: evidence for spill-over effect from a South African MPA?
 - An investigation of the off-shore reefs on the Agulhas bank.
 - An alternative method for estimating the status of resident reef fish stocks, based on differential fishing effort across a marine reserve boundary.
 - Documenting change on 2 young artificial reefs in sub-tropical South Africa.
 - The development of a volunteer based long-term monitoring programme for subtidal reefs around the Cape Peninsula.
 - The effect of barotrauma on 5 species of South African linefishes.
- 5th April, Dr. Gotz attended the Marine Linefish Research Group annual meeting in Grahamstown.
- 20th April, Dr Gotz had a meeting in Caledon with Peter Chadwick of WWF regarding future development with SAEON.
- The rest of April was spent searching through journals, thesis and projects focusing on Estuarine, Coastal and Shelf Science.
- 12-18th May Dr. Gotz participated on the ACEP ROV fieldtrip to Sodwana Bay.

Tsitsikamma National Park (TNP)

- No work was done on the Tsitsikamma project for April and May.
- Elodie Heyns has been placed in charge of the project and will subsequently report on TNP activities in the next Elwandle report.

TableMountainNational Park (TMNP)

- Anthony Bernard has completed all work on this project and for the coming months will be focusing on the writing of his thesis.

Isimangaliso

- Sean Bailey will continue working on the invert data and fish video data collected from the 2010 and 2011 fieldtrips respectively.

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- He is also working on updating the iSimangaliso database and focusing on the analyses of all data collected over the past 3 years.

Proposed activities for June

- In Port Elizabeth, Dr. Gotz will be attending a life raft course from the 6th – 9th June and a 1st Aid at Sea course from the 21st - 24th June.
- The rest of the month he and Elodie will be focusing on preparations and planning for the upcoming Tsitsikamma fieldtrip in July.

ACEP:

- 4-7 April, 37 ACEP researchers presented at the SAMSS conference which took place at Rhodes University.
- 2-6 May, the ASCLME staff attended the Data Buoy Co-operation panel meeting in Mauritius.
- 3-9 May, Ryan Palmer, Elodie Heyns and Bruce Donovan transported the ROV to Durban.
- 11-12 May, the ROV was installed on MY ANGRA PEQUENA and flashed up.
- 12 May, Dr. Thomas Bornman, Dr. Gotz, Matt Dicken, Rik Nuelens and Denham departed from Grahamstown for Sodwana Bay.
- 13-22 May, 16 scientists and ROV pilots participated on the ACEP ROV fieldtrip at Sodwana Bay.
- On the 21st and 22nd May, the expedition yielded the very exciting discovery of 3 and 4 coelacanths respectively.
- 23-24 May, participants returned to Grahamstown due to inclement weather.
- 25-31 May, Dr. Bornman focused on writing his report and prepared press releases of the expedition.

Proposed activities for June

- Dr. Bornman will be completing his >9m skippers course.
- Dr. Bornman, Elodie, Sean and Ryan will be focusing on obtaining their Code 10 license.
- ROV practices will be conducted at Algoa Bay.
- Dr. Bornman focusing on plans for ACEP III.

Education

- Nozi Hambaze is currently in negotiations with schools to establish when workshops can be held as part of an outreach component to local primary schools in order to use up all the material that was bought using the Murray and Robert funding.
- Schools are required to follow the pace setter.
- 15 educators attended an educator workshop held on the 19th April at the Grahamstown Education District office. Due to the teacher union meeting on the same day the turn out of teachers was less than expected.
- Feedback was asked from teachers regarding the workshop's programme, time and facilitation.

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- Based on this feedback the workshop went well but most comments focused on the overall activity at the workshop even though time was the biggest handicap due to some educators not being computer literate and as a result not all activities and discussions were covered.
- A follow up workshop has been scheduled to cover all issues.
- Elwandle Node in collaboration with Egagasini Node manned the SAEON exhibition stand at Sci-fest in Grahamstown.
- Egagasini brought a Magic Planet which proved very popular with learners.
- Plans are being put in place for next years Sci-fest to make the SAEON exhibition stand even more practical in nature to attract the interest of more learners.

Proposed activities for June

- A Murray and Roberts workshop will be held at Ndlovu Node in July, the exact date to be confirmed.
- Grade 10 learners, selected from various schools in Grahamstown, will be attending a science camp at Assegai Trails, situated just outside Grahamstown, during the June holidays. Murray and Roberts activities will also be incorporated at the camp.

Staff and Student Matters

- Ntuthuko Masikane and Luzuko Dali received their MSc degrees during Graduation Ceremonies at the Nelson Mandela Metro University and Rhodes University respectively.
- Ntuthuko is now pursuing a PhD at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and is currently working on one of two publications resulting from his MSc research conducted at Elwandle Node.
- Luzuko has successfully registered a PhD research programme through the University of the Western Cape. The research programme will be focused around Bay and Shelf scale dynamics of Mesozooplankton of the Agulhas Bank and will be co-supervised by Shaun Deyzel and Prof. Mark Gibbons of UWC.
- Luzuko and Shaun are finalizing the MOU with Prof Gibbons around data ownership and work plan agreements.