

Monthly Update
MARCH 2012

Key Achievements in March

Management

- o 1 – 9 March: SA/Poland co-operation programme visit to the University of Szczecin in Poland.
- o 13 – 14 March: CSIR/DAFF/DEA Ocean Acidification Workshop in Cape Town.
- o 15 March: Agulhas Current Research workshop, Department of Oceanography at University of 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.
- o 26 March: Potential project presentations to selected departments of the University of Fort Hare as part of the ACEP / SAIAB / SAEON Capacity Building project.
- o 26 – 27 March: Upwelling productivity experiments in Port Alfred and Algoa Bay.
- o 28 March: Meeting with Prof Martin Hill regarding the way forward for the SAEON / Working for Water / Rhodes disabled programme.
- o 30 March: Elwandle Staff meeting.

Proposed activities for April

- o 2 – 4 April: Service UTR thermistor strings in Algoa Bay and deploy new instruments in St Francis Bay.
- o 9 – 13 April: Deploy estuarine CT probes in the St Lucia / Mfolozi estuarine system.
- o DST intern, Alexis Olds, to start estuarine long term monitoring programme in the following selected Eastern Cape estuaries: Kromme, Swartkops, Sundays, Bushmans, East Kleinemonde and Mbashe.
- o 16 – 20 April: Data Buoy Cooperation Panel meeting in Mombasa, Kenya.

Algoa Bay LTMRP

- o uKwabelana was unavailable for use until 10 March.
- o Dr Matt Dicken made a special request for the first available sea day after this date and his request was approved.
- o This resulted in the PE-LTEMRP plankton run only being conducted during the last week of March because inclement sea and weather conditions gave rise to several storms, east and west bound, hampering chances for fieldwork in Algoa Bay for the rest of the month.
- o A major objective for March was to use the Niskin Rosette and SeaBird CTD for water sample collection and physicochemical data recording respectively.
- o Unfortunately, several technical issues were experienced with the above, which meant the Elwandle team had to revert back to using conventional gear and techniques.
- o Elwandle, in conjunction with the SAIAB technical staff have already scheduled a workshop and fieldtrip aimed at resolving this issue. The aim is to use the Niskin Rosette and SeaBird CTD during the April sampling trip.

- o Productivity study was also conducted at Port Alfred by Elwandle and at Algoa Bay by the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University team on Tuesday, 27 March.

Stakeholder relations:

- o Dr Matt Dicken conducted a dive operation using uKwabelana around Bird Island on 22 March.
- o The objective was to service eight VR2 units before tagged Great White Sharks are to return to Bird Island from the end of March.

Data Management

- o The project registration with Ms. Renae Logston and colleagues at UCT has been finalized.
- o The Project registration with Anchor Consultants CC are ongoing.
- o Shaun Deyzel currently facilitating the project registration with Dr. Albrecht Gotz's students.

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 Egagasini Node for Dr. Lara Atkinson.

Proposed activities for April

- o PE-LTEMP monthly sampling 17-20 April.
- o Servicing of UTR's in Algoa Bay scheduled for 2-5 April.
- o Practice run with Niskin Rosette and SeaBird CTD scheduled for 5 April.
- o Trip to St Lucia planned for either 10-13 April or 17-20 April.

Marine Protected Areas:

Tsitsikamma National Park (TNP)

- o 27 February – 10th March: Dr. Albrecht Gotz accompanied Ms Elodie Heyns on the ACEP Tsitsikamma National Park Fieldtrip.
- o 23-24 March: Dr. Gotz attended the Dwesa-Chebe Resolution Process workshop in East London.

Proposed activities for April

- o From the 16 – 20th April, Dr. Gotz will be attending the Marine Linefish Research Symposium in Langebaan.

CMP's Maintenance / Diving / Boating

- uKwabelana & Honckenii were used in Tsitsikamma earlier this month by Ms. Elodie Heyns and Dr. Albrecht Gotz.
- Sean Bailey co-ordinated the servicing of the Port Alfred thermister strings during March.
- Equipment for the estuary moorings has been purchased.
- The Port Alfred UTR 80m unit was successfully retrieved on 22 March but unfortunately, the shallower PA 30m UTR could not be found. This is among several units deployed with Subsea Sonics acoustic releaser devices.
- 27 March, SAEON and SAIAB divers managed to find the anchor system the PA 30m UTR was attached to but with no sign of the unit. Investigations are ongoing to determine how this could have happened, although the most likely reason was that the unit was fouled by an anchor rope from a commercial fishing boat, which caused the connection between the acoustic releaser and anchor strop to break.

Proposed activities for April

- CT logger deployments in St Lucia are planned for early April.
- Diving in Algoa Bay to service 3 UTR moorings are also planned for April as well as the St Francis UTR deployments.

Joint ACEP Marine Platform Operations:

- Ryan Palmer has put a call out for the ACEP III open research. Due date for submissions is 2 April 2012.
- Elodie Heyns undertook a successful ROV/uKwabelana trip to Tsitsikamma during March.
- The monthly platform provisions for SAEON projects using uKwabelana is ongoing.
- A new full time skipper for uKwabelana, who will be based in Port Elizabeth have been appointed and he will commence the beginning of April with his duties.

Scientific output

Papers accepted

SOLANO-FERNÁNDEZ, S., C.G. ATTWOOD, R. CHALMERS, B.M. CLARK, P.D. COWLEY, T. FAIRWEATHER, S.T. FENNESSY, A. GÖTZ, T.D. HARRISON, S.E. KERWATH, S.J., LAMBERTH, B.Q. MANN, J.M. SMALE, and L. SWART (2012)

Assessment of the effectiveness of South Africa's Marine Protected Areas at representing ichthyofaunal communities.

Papers published:

JAMES, N.C., A. GÖTZ, W.M. POTTS and P.D. COWLEY (2012)

Temporal variability of a temperate fish assemblage in Africa's oldest marine protected area. *Afr. J. Mar. Sci.* 34: published online March 2012

Education

- SAEON education team received data portal training from Wim Hugo on the 20 and 21 February at SAIAB, Grahamstown.
- Scifest was a huge success, with UCT students joining the team and taking part in learner workshop and manning of the exhibition stand. All SAEON workshops were fully booked throughout the duration of the festival.

Proposed activities for April

- Learner workshops are being planned for April. The dates and venue are still to be decided on.

Staff and Student Matters

- Tommy and Shaun attended a very successful meeting with the University of Fort Hare (UFH) and Walter Sisulu University staff on the 16 March.
- The meeting was aimed at discussing a collaboration between SAIAB/ACEP/SAEON and UFH/WSU to establish a PDP post-graduate research development programme. A follow up visit to UFH was made on the 26 March where several research themes or titles was presented to the Chemistry, Biochemistry, Microbiology, Geology and GIS departments. All projects are orientated around Marine Science, coastal and inshore, and some could potentially be integrated into Elwandle Node's Sentinel Site Monitoring and Research framework.
- Mr. Luzuko Dali has regrettably informed us of his decision to terminate his registration of his PhD. Mr. Dali cited personal reasons for wanting to move on to alternative career options. His departure is a great loss to Elwandle and he will be greatly missed. We wish him well in his future career endeavors.