

Monthly Update

February 2013

I. Overview

1. Key achievements: February 2013

- Tsitsikamma MPA field trip
- Continuous Monitoring Platform maintenance schedule reasonably up to date
- 1 x PE-LTERMP research trips successfully completed
- Tipping Point Documentary filmed during Algoa Bay field trip
- Data management meeting with Wim at Elwandle Node
- Land has been made available on the NMMU campus where SAEON Elwandle could in the future build additional garages and storerooms

2. Key activities proposed: March 2013

- 1 x PE-LTERMP research trip
- 2 x CMP maintenance trips (Port Alfred and St Francis Bay)
- 1 x Estuaries RSET field trip
- 2 x Gully Probe servicing field trips
- 1 x St Lucia Estuary CMP field trip
- SAEON Management meeting

II. Achievements: February 2013

1. Management, Student and Staff Relations

- 1 February: Tommy and Nozi met with Bernadette Snow at the Missionvale Campus, NMMU, to discuss the funding application to Murray and Roberts.
- 4 February: Tommy attends the national (South Africa) consultative workshop on the ASCLME Strategic Action Plan at Oceans and Coasts, DEA, Cape Town.
- 5 – 6 February: Wim Hugo visits Elwandle Node and meets with Shaun and Tommy to discuss data management.
- 8 February: Tommy meets with the Coastal and Marine Research Unit, NMMU, to discuss SAEON's data sharing policy and registration of projects.
- 8 February: Tommy meets with Prof Eileen Campbell, Head of the School of Environmental Science, NMMU, to discuss the Algoa Bay Pelagic Ecosystem Project.
- 11 February: Tommy attends the ACEP Programme initiation meeting at SAIAB, Grahamstown.
- 12 February: Tommy and Shaun attend the ACEP Phuhlisa Programme meeting at SAIAB, Grahamstown.
- 15 February: Tommy meets with Andrew Leitch, Dean of the Faculty of Science, NMMU, to discuss the use of garages and space on campus for Elwandle's boats, vehicles and equipment.
- 18 February: Staff meeting
- 19 – 21 February: Tommy attends the ASCLME Steering Committee meeting in Johannesburg.
- 24 February: Tipping Point Documentary film crew (7) onboard during a CMP servicing field trip.

- 25 February: Meeting with Prof Maarten de Wit (AEON) regarding earth system sciences research in collaboration with SAEON in Algoa Bay. Monthly meetings between SAEON, AEON and Geology Dept. planned.
- 25 February: Tommy attends the Research Associates function at NMMU (apologies from Wayne Goschen and Albrecht Gotz).

2. Monitoring Platforms

a. Algoa Bay LTMRP

- 1 February: Tommy and Nick service gully probes in Port Elizabeth
- 5 February: UTR's Bird Island inner & outer was serviced by Nick.
- 7 February: Monthly PE-LTEMRP Plankton sampling trip terminated due to equipment failure experienced at Site 7.
- 8 February: PE-LTEMRP Plankton sampling trip resumed and concluded successfully.
- 8 February: UTR's 80m Algoa Bay Mouth and 60m Central were serviced by Nick.
- 13 February: Tommy, Sean and Shaun service gully probes in Port Elizabeth
- 15 February: Tommy and Paul-Pierre (NMMU) deploy a Star Odi CT logger in a stromatolite formation in Sardinia Bay as part of a research project with NMMU.
- 15 February: Tommy deploy the Humewood data logger on the slipway in Port Elizabeth.
- 24 February: Bird Island ADCP was serviced and moored CTD's removed by Sean, Tommy, Shaun.

b. St Francis Bay LTMRP

- Thermistor strings and gully probes only due for servicing in March/April 2013.

c. Estuaries LTMRP

- 15-17 February: Shaun Deyzel undertook a sampling trip for the Sunday's River / Estuary Trophic Study in collaboration with SAIAB and Rhodes University.

3. Marine Protected Areas

- Albrecht applied for funding from NRF Innovation Bursary Programme for Y-rated researchers
- The following papers were accepted:
 - WATT-PRINGLE, P.A., P.D. COWLEY and A. GÖTZ (accepted) Movement behaviour of three endemic sparid fishes in their rocky intertidal nursery habitat, South Africa. *Afr. Zool.*
 - BERNARD, A.T.F., A. GÖTZ, S.E. KERWATH and C.G. WILKE (accepted) An independent double-observer approach to assess observer bias in underwater visual census fish counts. *J. Exp. Mar. Biol. Ecol.*
- Undertook the following fieldtrips during February:
 - 04.02.13 - 12.02.13 - Tsitsikamma MPA research fishing and stereo-BRUV fieldtrip – SAEON, SAIAB & Rhodes University (RU).
 - 23.02.13 - 01.03.13 - Tsitsikamma MPA research stereo-BRUV and diving fieldtrip – SAEON & RU.

4. Data Management

- 5-6 February: Elwandle Node hosted Wim Hugo for a data management workshop.
- 12 February: Shaun Deyzel started negotiating a data sharing agreement with Anchor Environmental Consultants CC, ACEP/SAIAB, DAFF and SAEON.

- 22 February: Shaun Deyzel and Wim Hugo attended the annual White Shark Researchers Group meeting at Oceans Research in Mossel Bay. Elwandle Node was approached by the White Shark Research Group to assist with generation and future maintenance of a National Shark Photo Identification Database. Negotiations regarding data sharing agreements are on-going, but should be finalised soon. The group has also shown intent to share additional databases depending on the success of the National Shark Photo Identification Database.
- 22-28 February: Bruce Donovan, Tommy and Shaun Deyzel are in the process of finalising the South African Estuaries Information System (SAEIS) and Database (SAED) report to be submitted to the Water Research Commission. The report will be accompanied with 5 stand-alone versions of the SAEIS as well as a link to the online version (visit <http://www.saeonmarine.com/saeis>; password: saeon).
- 22-28 February: Shaun Deyzel started working on the registration of all Sentinel Site run projects with SANParks.
- 27-28 February: 2 UPS units purchased and installed, offering security to: 1) telephone lines and 2) IT infrastructure.

5. Education

- DAFF & Elwandle Node Aqua quiz did not work according to plan therefore it did not take place but plans are being made to hold it in the near future.
- All weather stations at the schools are operating smoothly.
- 21 February: Mini science expo workshop was held with few learners of Mary waters.
- 28 February: Meeting on expo was held with Dr Ken Ngozoa at Rhodes.

6. Parataxonomy Laboratory

- Laboratory Interns are progressing very well with the analysis of the Vleesbaai samples conducted on behalf of Egagasini Node.
- Shaun Deyzel and Mfundo Bizani (SAIAB/SAEON Zooplankton Intern) have set up the SAEON Laboratory for zooplankton sample analysis, which will enhance turnover of biomass sample estimates related to the PE-LTEMR Programme.

7. Technical: CMP Maintenance/SCUBA Diving/Boating

- 8 February: DWA boat was serviced in Port Alfred.
- 13 February: Tommy, Sean and Shaun serviced the Algoa Bay Gully Temperature probes.
- 24 February: Tommy, Sean and Shaun serviced the Bird Island ADCP and CTD units.
- Profiling CTD comms problems were resolved and the unit is working well.

8. Stakeholder Relations

a. Joint ACEP Marine Platform Operations

- 6 trips have been done on uKwabelana during February including:
 - Ocean Tracking Network equipment servicing.
 - SAEON Plankton run
 - SAEON CMP servicing
 - ACEP shark project equipment servicing
- Trips planned for March include the start of the ACEP larval connectivity project as well as on-going monthly scheduled work.

b. SAIAB-ACEP/SAEON/UFH/WSU Collaboration

- 11 February: ACEP Phuhlisa meeting with supervisors, DST and NRF delegates.
- 8 Honours and 7 Masters students were secured for Phuhlisa research projects.

- 3 additional HBU supervisors on board. G Bradley (Biochemistry), N Vine (Zoology) and H Hamandawana (GIS).
- Prof Songca (Executive Dean of Science at WSU) is back in office.
- Field trips - WSU students, Phakama & Abongile with Angus, Ryan and Nikki to Kariega Estuary.

9. Challenges and corrective measures

- Lack of funding to conduct and maintain basic monitoring and research. Core Grant funding will be supplemented by applying to Murray & Roberts for educational outreach and Angus Paterson funded equipment infrastructure for MPA research from his own research account.
- The SAIAB coastal platform, R/V *uKwabelana*, is oversubscribed and ACEP projects take preference, resulting in a reduced number of possible sea-days in which to conduct our work. Corrective measure: Make more use of R/V *Honckenii*. Look for opportunities on other vessels.

10. Risks description, impacts and mitigation

- Good weather from January to April results in increased numbers of recreational divers and poachers diving in the vicinity of our gully probes. We have lost two and an additional logger was removed and reported to the Police. We have lost in total over 1 years' worth of data from the two loggers and the one site had no logger in for two weeks. Mitigation: Regular checking on loggers (once a month) and moving loggers to less conspicuous areas.

III. Proposed Activities: March 2013

1. Scheduled appointments

- 1 March: Tommy to give a key-note address to the SANCOR Eastern Cape Student Workshop, RU, Grahamstown.
- 1-15 March: PE-LTEMPR monthly sampling fieldtrip in Algoa Bay.
- 12-13 March - Supply Chain Management workshop, NRF in Pretoria – Sean Bailey
- 18 – 20 March: Tommy to attend SAEON Management meeting, Cape Town.
- 25 – 26 March: Tommy to attend Agulhas Current Sustained Array meeting in Cape Town

2. Monitoring Platforms and CMP Maintenance

- St Lucia CT loggers to be serviced early March
- UTR's PA & PA 80m to be serviced
- St Francis UTR's to be serviced
- RSET stations sampled in Swartkops, Kromme and Knysna estuaries

3. Marine Protected Areas

- 11th - 14th March: ACEP meeting in Cape Town.
- 27th March: presentation at Seminars at NMMU.
- General: work-up data of past fieldtrips and source BRUV housings and cameras.

4. Data Management

- Supply Algoa Bay CMP data to Ms Paige Potter (MSc, Zoology Dept. NMMU).

- Formulate and distribute Data Sharing Agreement Document to White Shark Research Group for comments.
- Continue data sharing negotiations between Anchor Environmental Consultants CC., ACEP/SAIAB, DEA and SAEON.
- Finalize and submit SAEIS and SAED Final Report to Water Research Commission.
- Update SAEON's Project Registration database.
- Finalise Sentinel Site project registration with SANParks.

5. Education

- 6 March: Workshop for learners.
- 11-12 March: Education team meeting and video conferencing with Wim at SAIAB.
- 13-19 March: Sci-fest Elwandle and Egagasini to exhibit at SAIAB whilst Ndlovu and National Office will be based at the Grahamstown Foundation.