

Monthly Update
March 2013

I. Overview

1. Key achievements: March 2013

- Monthly PE-LTERMP plankton run
- SAEON Management meeting, Cape Town.
- St Francis Bay thermistor strings serviced
- St Lucia CT Loggers serviced and handed over to GFW Node
- Kromme, Gamtoos, Swartkops estuaries CT Loggers service and Kromme LTERMP
- Two manuscripts published
- Final SAEIS Report submitted to WRC
- Sci-Fest, Grahamstown
- NRF Scarce skills post-doc bursary awarded to Anthony Bernard

2. Key activities proposed: April 2013

- Tommy attend the New Managers Development Programme in Johannesburg
- Anthony Bernard and Shaun Deyzel to receive their doctorates from RU and NMMU respectively. Two SAEON MScs graduating from NMMU.
- Various field trips planned (PE-LTERMP, *In situ* LTERMP, Estuarine LTERMP, West Coast Diatom field trip, etc.)

II. Achievements: March 2013

1. Management, Student and Staff Relations

- 1 March: Tommy gave the key-note address to the SANCOR Eastern Cape Student Workshop, Rhodes University, Grahamstown.
- 5 March: Tommy met with Dr David Aubrey of Woods Hole Group, the external auditor of the ASCLME Programme, to assess the success of the programme.
- 8 March: Tommy met with the Dean of Science and Angus to finalise the MoU between SAEON, NMMU and SAIAB.
- 12 and 13 March: Sean Bailey attended the Supply Chain Management (SCM) workshop in Pretoria.
- 15 March: Tommy and Shaun attend the ACEP Phuhlisa Programme inception workshop.
- 15 March: Tommy attends the M&D meeting at NMMU to discuss SAEON students graduating in 2013.
- 18 – 20 March: Tommy attended the SAEON Management Meeting, Cape Town.
- 26 March: Tommy and Juliet attend the Agulhas Current System Array meeting at DEA, Cape Town.
- 28 March: Staff meeting

2. Monitoring Platforms

a. *Algoa Bay LTMRP*

- 22 March: Monthly PE-LTEMRP plankton sampling trip successfully completed with 4 SAEON staff on board: Shaun Deyzel, Tommy, and DST-NRF interns Mfundo Bizani and Athi Mfikili.

b. *St Francis Bay LTMRP*

- 30 March: 5 UTR's serviced in St Francis Bay.

c. *Estuaries LTMRP*

- 4-6 March: 6 of the CT loggers in St Lucia were serviced. One logger was buried in sediment in the Mfolozi. The servicing of these loggers has been handed over to Sue van Rensburg, Grasslands Node.
- 6 March: Nick serviced the CT loggers in the Kromme and Gamtoos.
- 13 March: Tommy, Nick, Ntando and Athi sample the sediment accretion of the Swartkops Estuary.
- Manuscript published: SE Bailey & NC James (2013): Fish sampling in the marine-dominated Kariega Estuary, South Africa, using a demersal otter trawl: day/night effects, African Journal of Aquatic Science, 38:1, 115-120

3. Marine Protected Areas

Papers published:

- BERNARD, A.T.F., GÖTZ, A., KERWATH, S.E. and C.G. WILKE (2013). Observer bias and detection probability in underwater visual census of fish assemblages measured with independent double-observers. *Journal of Experimental Marine Biology and Ecology* 443: 75-84.

Scientific presentations delivered:

- GÖTZ, A. A long-term monitoring strategy for South Africa's reef ecosystems - Separating climate change from anthropogenic impacts. Departmental Seminar Series, Zoology Department, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth, 27th March 2013.

Meetings/Workshops attended:

- 11-14 March: ACEP Walter's Shoal Technical planning meeting with DEA and DAFF, SAEON Elwandle, Foretrust Building, Cape Town, South Africa

Funding applied for:

- March 2013: NRF - Incentive Funding
- March 2013: WIOMSA - MARG I funding programme

Research reports and science plans:

- March 2013: SANP Annual Progress Report Tsitsikamma National Park monitoring programme
- March 2013: SANP Annual Progress Report Tsitsikamma National Park food-web study
- March 2013: NRF Annual Progress Report Incentive Funding for Rated Researchers

Other:

- March 2013: Appointed Research Associate at the Department of Zoology, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, South Africa
- March 2013: NRF scarce skills post-Doctorate bursary awarded to Anthony Bernard for stereo-BRUV research
- March 2013: PhD awarded to Anthony Bernard.

4. Data Management

- 11 March: SAEIS/SAED Final Report, including 5 copies of the Standalone Version of SAED on flash drives, submitted to Water Research Commission: "Deyzel SHP, Bornman TG, Goschen WS, Paterson AW, Bernard KS, Grant T, Gordon N and B Donovan 2013 – *South African Estuaries Information System (SAEIS) and Database (SAED)*. WRC Report No. K8/840".
- Data sharing negotiations between Anchor Environmental Consultants CC, DEA and SAEON is currently on hold. ACEP/SAIAB has retracted their application for access to Anchor / DEA data and will no longer be involved in negotiations going forward.
- Sentinel Site project registration with SANParks has been delayed due to changes affected to initial scope of application documents.
- Data sharing agreement between the White Shark Research Group and SAEON Elwandle Node is on-going. The working group was very pleased with the outcome of the first meeting held in Mossel Bay on the 22 February 2013 and has since provided some conditions of participation serving as platform for further negotiations around data sharing agreements.
- An updated version of Elwandle/Egagasini CMP data has been received from Dr Wayne Goschen for distribution to registered Sentinel Site scientists.

5. Education

- 4 March: Expo workshop held at T.E.M Mrwetyana High School.
- 6 March: Expo workshop held at SAIAB for Ntaba Maria, Ntsika and Nombulelo High Schools and SDA.
- 11-12 March: Education Team meeting held at SAIAB. Also present was Ndlovu Node, Egagasini and Elwandle education officers and the national education co-ordinator, Ms Sibongile Mokoena.
- 16-17 March: Ten grade 9 learners were selected to attend Scifest workshops. Tickets, lunch and transport was sponsored by SAEON.
- 13-19 March: Elwandle Node staff interns made themselves available assisting in manning the Node's exhibition stand during Sci-fest "Water World".
- 22 March: Expo developmental feedback given to all learners.

6. Parataxonomy Laboratory

- Quality Assurance checks of ACEP-ORI benthic samples are now complete and ready for transport to Durban.
- Vleesbaai sample analysis is nearing completion and Laboratory Interns are currently conducting Quality Assurance checks.

7. Technical: CMP Maintenance/SCUBA Diving/Boating

- Eleven CT loggers were returned to CW Price for battery replacements. The quote came back at R4200 to replace a battery per logger. It was decided to return the loggers and to source and replace batteries ourselves.
- Honckenii experienced battery charging problems on the recent Tsitsikamma trip. The regulator / rectifier incorporated into the computer control housing is faulty. An attempt was made to circumvent the computer box with an external regulator / rectifier but this pumped too much voltage through the computer box and the only solution is to replace the computer box at a cost of R21 000.

8. Stakeholder Relations

a. Joint ACEP Marine Platform Operations

- uKwabelana has had a busy month with the commencement of another ACEP open call project.
- Trips for March were:
 - 24hr plankton pump trip in Algoa Bay – ACEP, Francesca Porri
 - 2 day/night plankton pump trips in Algoa Bay – ACEP, Francesca Porri
 - SAEON monthly Plankton run
 - SAEON CMP servicing St Francis Bay.

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

- 13 March: Shaun Deyzel held project planning meeting with Dr Francesca Porri regarding a study on the nursery function of Mangrove estuaries.
- 25 March: Shaun Deyzel held project planning meeting with Ms Abongile Sobekwa (ACEP/SAIAB Phuhlisha MSc student) regarding field sampling protocols related to her MSc research project.

9. Challenges and corrective measures

- Core funding has not significantly increased for 2013/14 and budgets for all core functions will be limited. No new projects will be taken on unless fully funded from external sources. External funding will be applied for.

10. Risks description, impacts and mitigation

- One of the outboard motors on R/V *Honckenii* needs a new computer that will cost R21,000. This expenditure was not budgeted for. An attempt was made to fix the problem, but this proved ineffective and the computer needs to be replaced. Mitigation: The motors have done more than 1500 hours each and we must start considering replacing the engines in 2014.
- Over subscription of R/V *uKwabelana* remains a problem for CMP maintenance and plankton runs. R/V *Kadouw* has not been handed over yet from SANParks to SAIAB. The reduced platform availability for SAEON operations was mitigated by sampling on a potential long weekend when demand was low.

III. Proposed Activities: April 2013

1. Scheduled appointments

- 2–4 April: Tommy will attend the New Managers Development Programme course in Johannesburg.
- 4-5 April: Shaun Deyzel to meet with East African Marine Transect Expedition representative, Dr Rhett Bennett regarding hand over of equipment and samples as well as for discussing data management options.
- 5 – 18 April: Tommy will participate in a field trip up the west coast of South Africa and Namibia to collect diatoms as part of a large international research project.
- 19 April: Tommy and Shaun will attend the graduation ceremony at NMMU. Shaun to receive his PhD and two of Tommy's MSc students graduating.

2. Monitoring Platforms and CMP Maintenance

- UTR's PA & 80m PA are due to be serviced during April.
- The Eastern sector gully probes are also due for servicing in April.
- 1-15 April: PE-LTEMRP monthly sampling fieldtrip in Algoa Bay
- 1-5 April: Kromme/Kariega monthly sampling

3. Marine Protected Areas

Training:

- 8–12 April: Albrecht and Anthony to undergo *1st aid level 3 course* at St Johns Ambulance.

Students graduating:

- Anthony Bernard - *PhD degree, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa.*

Papers to publish:

- WATT-PRINGLE, P.A., P.D. COWLEY AND A. GÖTZ (in press). Movement behaviour of 3 endemic sparid fishes in their rocky intertidal nursery habitat, South Africa. *African Zoology 48*.

Meetings/Workshops to attend:

28–29 April: *Cape Nature MPA monitoring workshop*, Goukamma, South Africa.

4. Data Management

- Update SAEON's Project Registration database
- Complete and submit SANParks Project Registration documents
- Design PE-LTEMRP Zooplankton data capturing framework
- Start project registration with Dr Francesca Porri (SAIAB/ACEP)
- Continue with data sharing agreements with Anchor Environmental/DEA
- Continue with data sharing agreements with White Shark Researchers Group
- Shaun to facilitate distribution and completion of internal project proposals.

5. Education

- 21 April: Expo presentations and developmental feedback to be held at SDA.

6. Stakeholder Relations

(a) *Joint ACEP Marine Platform Operations*

- 2 day/night plankton pump trips in St Francis Bay – ACEP, Francesca Porri.
- SAEON Plankton fieldtrip.
- Shark project equipment servicing at Bird Island.