

An occasional newsletter to update members of SWIOFP on current developments.

There continues to be good progress with the development of SWIOFP as several of the Theme Working Groups have now finalised plans to hold their workshops. The products of these Theme Workshops will be collated into the overall GEF proposal.

Administration

- The SWIOFP secretary has been appointed. She is Ms Paula Boane. We all welcome her to the programme. She is contactable via swiofp@moziip.org or pboane@moziip.org
- A Maputo-based company has been appointed to develop the SWIOFP web site. This should be up and running by the end of August.

Programme development

The first three of the Theme Working Groups are now being developed. The first is the *Science Plan* group that is being hosted by South Africa. Dr. Johan Groeneveld from MCM is the focal point for this and he has already finalised arrangements for the workshop to be held in Cape Town from 26 to 28 August 2003. In addition to the member country experts, it was decided that representation from Mauritius and Seychelles would considerably enhance the workshop. There will also be a number of other experts present and some have offered to critically review the final plan. Without an agreed and sound *Science Plan* SWIOFP cannot proceed.

A second Theme Working Groups is that of *Operations and Procurement*, which is being spearheaded by Tanzania and hosted by TAFIRI. This task will pave the way for streamlining the operational activities relating to the data collecting surveys, including the complex issues of procurement of vessels, etc.

The third Theme Working Group being planned concerns that of *Information and Data Management*. Hosted by KMFRI in Kenya, this task involves the development of approaches to data capture, processing, sharing of data and associated technical capacity.

The *Legal Working Group*, to be hosted by France, remains to be developed following a change in focal point appointment.

Programme Progress

An update of programme progress is tabulated below, reflecting status of tasks and an update of several deadlines.

<i>Task</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
Secretarial support.	Appoint	Achieved	-
Three main theme working group activities	Finalise plans and budgets for working groups;	All three well advanced.	All completed by end November 2003
<i>Science Plan</i> workshop	Workshop in Cape Town - MCM	Plans finalised for 26-28 August 2003	Plan complete by end September 2003
Create basic SWIOFP Website	Design and host, Compile content - send out for review	Web Company selected. Draft of content designed	By end August 2003
Interface with other WIO programmes, including LME	Document other programmes; circulate - establish links.	Part complete - e.g. French WIO initiative	By end July 2003 and ongoing.
Maputo Workshop for presentation and discussion of the outputs of the Working Groups.	Preparation.	Being planned	1 st week of December 2003.

Events and activities

The South African research ship the RV Algoa, recently undertook a comprehensive scientific survey to several regions of the SWIOFP study area in collaboration with member countries. Although the initial primary focus of this cruise revolved around the biophysical features associated with coelacanth, it was possible to include a range of sampling and survey activities of direct benefit to SWIOFP. More about this cruise in later newsflashes.

Contact us!

We have received encouraging response to the newsletters and numerous inquiries from different institutions. We urge you to contact us at the SWIOFP secretariat with ideas, advice and comment. This programme remains one of the finest opportunities our collective countries will have to ensure long-term sustainable development of the West Indian Ocean.

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