

23rd OFEG meeting, held in Barcelona on the 26th November 2009

Attendees: Helen Beadman, Arturo Castellón, Jean-Xavier Castrec, Juanjo Danobeitia, Colin Day, Terje Hindenes, Erica Koning, Thomas Muller, Per Nieuwejaar, Mike Webb

Absent: Olivier Lefort

- Action**
1. Welcome from Mike. A special welcome to Helen, who will replace Mike and to Arturo. This meeting will be the last attended for both Mike and Thomas. No replacement has been appointed for Thomas yet.
An important item on the agenda is the sharing of capital investment plans. Goal is to find communalities.
 2. **Minutes of the OFEG Spring meeting**
 - A. Actions from the last meeting:
OFEG-TECH: Colin will report later.
Standard letter Principle Scientists: pending
So far there is no record of trial and training activities: should be added to the barter activity documents, even though no barter points are involved.
Output performance measure document: A document has been provided by/for NERC and NIOZ. Such an output document can be used for annual reports. Using this format it was suggested that we all provide such an output performance document, to be evaluated at the next Autumn meeting.
OFEG Website: Most of the input provided has been adapted.
Check and update links and ships schedules. For changes contact Sally.
At the Spring meeting every OFEG member was asked for a contribution of €5000 for upkeep of the website. Check status of this request.
 3. Future management arrangements. With Mike, who has virtually been running OFEG for the last 9 years, stepping back new arrangements need to be made. Someone needs to be responsible for the paperwork and there is need for a recognized chair person, who represents OFEG, goes to meetings.
2 lines of thought: - a chairman who leans on the others for support or –a chair + vice chair, (or even two vice chairs where the OFEG TECH chairman would be one of the vice chairs) construction similar to ISOM and ERVO. The latter construction will guarantee a shared responsibility. A certain amount of continuity is needed as well.
After a lengthy discussion the chair-vice chair model was chosen, with Erica appointed as chair for the next 3 years. For vice chair, Olivier was proposed; he is willing but will be informed of what is expected and the amount of work involved. Alternative vice chair: Terje.
Jean-Xavier will talk to Olivier.
Distribution of tasks between chair and vice chair will be in terms-of-reference document. This document will be discussed at the next meeting
 4. OFEG-TECH report: Colin, see documents provided
Overall, this should read as a very positive document. The decision to create OFEG-TECH as a spin-off of OFEG has been a very powerful initiative. A bottom-up approach with benefits on the ground.
 - trials cruise: has been very important because it has changed the way NIOZ, NERC look at piston coring, with invaluable help from the IFREMER measurements. Spain also shows interest.
 - Sonne: equipment from UK and Spain and airguns from Sonne, with a mixed technical group from all countries.

Overall, the benefits are beyond the initial expectations.

 - use of each others equipment will be extended to smaller equipment, because the size doesn't make any difference for the concept to work.

Agreement NERC – CSIC
Background: NERC needed a new streamer system but didn't have the money to buy it, whereas CSIC had funding to acquire a new system. Both parties agreed on a bilateral agreement to share the equipment: streamers, air-gun systems, compressors.

In 2010 there will be a trials cruise on Sarmiento the Gamboa and 2 science cruises. Also in 2010 there will be access to the equipment on Cook.

The joint technical trials and cruises will be on the NOC marine planning system. NERC will appoint a dedicated 'trans national' technician, if this model works well it may be extended to other areas.

-Future actions CSIC: trial for 6km streamer after a change on the back deck to check the stability of the ship.

Next step: collaboration on Sonne.

DAY

Data acquisition system: at the moment only 1 data acquisition system is available. This limits the options for use because you would like to use the 6km streamer as 2 separate 3km systems. Germany (or maybe others) may step in to add the missing equipment. Colin will list the missing parts for the streamer system.

Partners jointly support each other's cruises. The equipment is not insured, but the owner always has right of veto.

The joint use of this type of equipment is a cost effective way to maintain expensive equipment. No barter points are involved; any financial gain goes into improving the equipment.

OFEG-TECH and the CSIC partnership will be on the 'news' page on the OFEG website.

5. EUROFLEETS

Spain, UK, Norway and the Netherlands have all been approached for support by the French Embassy. Some of us find this worrying.

Per: does not agree, he sees EUROFLEETS as an opportunity, not a threat to OFEG.

The aim of EUROFLEETS is to get regional fleets to work together. According to him OFEG could be used as a role model for EUROFLEETS.

Juanjo: Because EUROFLEETS exists it is possible to generate a stronger lobby in Europe, because of the size and the number of countries participating.

ALL

The question is: does OFEG want to be affiliated with EUROFLEETS, e.g. become an affiliated member?

Action: all, Think about the role of OFEG in EUROFLEETS, if, how and where we want to be involved. This will be further discussed next meeting; depending on the outcome of the discussion OFEG may decide to become affiliated member.

EUROCEAN

EUROCEAN has 12 full members and 2 cooperating members.

Objectives: to identify, update, develop infobases on marine science. Because of its legal status EUROCEAN can now acquire funding (external funding).

Infobase:

- makes use of databases, available to decision makers, scientists, students etc.
- on ships, under-water equipment, other large equipment
- statistics

EUROCEAN's core business is to keep infobases up to date.

Therefore, EUROCEAN could run OFEG's website, it would be cheaper because it will be based in Portugal and this would be a solution if it is a burden to keep the website up in terms of cost and time. Liaise with Southampton.

Nieuwejaar/
Day

Action: Per / Colin: Check the options for a transfer of the OFEG website to EUROCEANS.

6. Capital investment plans, see papers provided.

This issue will continue to be discussed in OFEG, not OFEG-TECH.

Large differences between countries because the individual systems differ widely. Some major developments are listed here:

Germany: MARUM is developing a simulator for ROV pilots (Tim Freudenthal).

IFREMER: major refit I' Atalante: ◻M 15 , Victor modernisation: ◻M 3.5, some regulation refits.

With the cost of renovation of Victor and a similar issue coming up in the UK, it becomes more urgent to think about what is needed in terms of ROV's. Issues to be looked at:

- how many dives are performed each year for each depth-class ROV.
- What type of dives: monitoring, sampling etc.
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ALL

The key individuals from each group should sit together and discuss this openly, even if it may appear potentially sensitive.

Action: All: Provide feedback to Colin.

7. Fleet and major equipment changes

IMR: -Mocness is finally delivered

- Fibre optic cable
- Ice going vessel project: A political battle is going on about who should be the owner.
- Fridjoff Nansen: upgrade / new ship?
- Jan Mayen: goes out in mid-2012.

Germany: - fleet renewal: a lot is going on, but all is waiting for advice from science counsel.

- Sonne replacement: the tender is out: in service end 2013-2014.
- Merian: OK, but not ice going.
- Poseidon and Polarstern: yes, replacement has already been decided, but if the science counsel advice is negative it will be difficult.

Spain: - an old supplier is being refitted.

- lowest ice class.
- Cables: looking at interoperability for cables too. At present, everybody uses different cables.

NIOZ: - Pelagia mid-life refit.

- New mooring winch.
- New Kevlar cable: 9.6km, to be ready after the mid-life refit.

NERC/SOC: - Discovery replacement procurement restarted. More tenders this time, even British ones. The full decision will be made in March.

ALL

Action: All: send size, manufacturer, diameter and length of CTD cable to Colin.

8. Barter news

IMR would like to barter Shackleton: 7 days needed.

Germany: barter cruises on Sonne (for IFREMER and NERC)
2 cruises and a mooring turn-around for NIOZ on METEOR.

IFREMER: barter cruise on Sarmiento the Gamboa (using Victor)

Spain: there are plans to use Jago on a GEOMAR cruise on Sarmiento de Gamboa.
2009: a technician spent 30 days on METEOR (training activity).

NIOZ: request for a recovery of MOVE (1 day) near Mallorca end of July: Sarmiento the Gamboa is available and could do this on a transit to Vigo.
2011: NIOZ cruise on James Cook.

NERC: no additional info, all barterers have been mentioned.

9. Cruise plans

Germany: METEOR: gap in early 2011 after La Valetta.

Merian: fully booked for 2011, all Southern Ocean.
Poseidon: second part of refit; end 2010 (?) transfer to Jeddah, then booked.
Sonne: fully booked until end 2010.

IMR: Sars: to Kopenhagen for climate conference, fully booked 2010.
All vessels are fully booked for 2010.

IFREMER: 2009: Pourquoi Pas: shas spend 3 months searching for missing Airbus.
L' Atalante: refit and trials.
2010: PP: booked until October. Mid November PP will go to Africa.
L' Atalante: Brazil, Pacific.
Suroit: certificates, some cruises.

CSIS: Sarmiento de Gamboa: nearly full for 2010.
Herperides: booked all year.
Garcia del Cid: is booked for the full 7 months (1 crew only).

NERC: Discovery: N. Atlantic, Cape Town for Germany,
Cook: Caribbean, Southern Ocean, refit, back to SO. 2011: barter for NIOZ, ROV cruises.

NIOZ: Pelagia: midlife refit until end of April then transects Reykjavik to Brazil, charter, E. N. Atlantic and possibly Mediterranean. More or less flexible after September.

10. No additional info on barter and training berth opportunities

11 Activity and barter balances documents/ ship deployment paper.

12.

ALL

All: please send updated activity and barter balances to Erica. Same for point 12.
The training and exchange activities also need to be included in the activity document even though no barter points are involved. For the moment the exchange of technicians in the NERC-CSIC agreement is a special case.

13. Other business/ future meetings

Danobeitia

Clearance issue for Spanish waters. Recently forms needed to be in Spanish. Is this now the normal procedure? Juanjo will get information from the authorities.

ALL

Future meetings:
Spring 2010: Bergen, 11-12 May (or 27-28 April as requested). Please check dates.
November: Kiel. OFEG-TECH also expressed a preference for Kiel.