

# NEWSLETTER

## European Association of Aquatic Sciences Libraries and Information Centres

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### WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear EURASLIC members,


There is a proverb saying “May you live in interesting times” and in recent years the times have been more than interesting. Putting aside natural disasters that occur from time to time, there were two pandemic years, and while the pandemic was slowing down the war started in Europe. All that affects directly EURASLIC as a community and the member libraries.

Despite all the challenges EURASLIC continues its activities. Thanks to the virtual environment that we all became familiar with, there were plenty of opportunities to participation in online events, even though there was no EURASLIC conference in 2022. OpenASFA Workshop in collaboration with ASFA was specially organized for EURASLIC members in March 2022. International Ocean Data Conference was held as a hybrid meeting in Sopot, Poland in February 2022. Members of EURASLIC were present as presenters, participants, and some involved in the conference organization. The FAO ASFA Secretariat and AquaDocs organized also training program and online conference that were available to the EURASLIC members. IAMS LIC first hybrid conference “From streams to oceans: Libraries informing sustainability of aquatic resources” was held in October along with 4<sup>th</sup> Latin American Regional Group Meeting. The EURASLIC members seized the opportunity and participated virtually.

Members also had an opportunity to meet online at a catch up meeting that was held in March. As there was time reserved in the program for a Regional group meeting during the IAMS LIC conference, EURASLIC members that were attending the conference met online again.

The ECET Group continues its work on the development of the new AquaDocs electronic repository and data entry. The group coordinator, in addition to being involved in further development, is also actively involved in training by presenting the project at seminars and conferences.

2023 has several events of interest to EURASLIC members, some in person and some hybrid or online. “International Ocean Data Conference – II” will be held in Paris, France between 20-21 March 2023 as a hybrid event. Right after the conference will start the 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the IOC Committee on International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange and EURASLIC as an organization is invited to participate.



The 49<sup>th</sup> IAMSLIC Conference will be held as an online event, providing yet another opportunity for participation.

Last but not least is **EURASLIC 2023** in-person conference that will be held in **Brussels, Belgium, 3-5 May 2023**. I hope that you all missed in-person gathering and socializing with friends, therefore make your travel plans and come to Brussels.

I would like to express gratitude to all EURASLIC members for their commitment, especially the members of the EURASLIC Executive Board and EURASLIC members that participate in the IAMSLIC committees and activities and also to the editors and contributors to this Newsletter.

For the members and their families in the war zone I wish them to be safe, and that war finish soon.

To all of you I wish a better year that will bring peace and progress. May the year to come be less interesting on the global level but with many nice things in professional and personal life.

Sofija Konjević  
EURASLIC president

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Editor:

Snejina BACHEVA

library@io-bas.bg

Co-Editors

Marina MAYER

mmayer@irb.hr

Sofija KONJEVIĆ

sofija@irb.hr

## Dedicated to the memory of Allen Varley

1932 – 2022



Allen Varley passed away on April 8<sup>th</sup> at home with family around him. Beloved husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather. Formerly Head of Library and Information Services at the Marine Biological Association (MBA) Plymouth Laboratory, United Kingdom. Allen played an important role in the foundation and development of the European Association of Aquatic Science Libraries (EURASLIC).

The early history of EURASLIC is gathered in his publications:

- The European Association of Aquatic Sciences Libraries and Information Centres (EURASLIC): an outline history, 1988-2004 by Allen Varley  
<http://euraslic.org/sites/euraslic.org/files/public/images/stories/EuraslicHistory.pdf>
- EURASLIC: the first ten years. The origins and history of the European Association of Aquatic Sciences Libraries and Information Centres 1988-1997 - by Joan Baron and Allen Varley (in Proc. of the 7<sup>th</sup> biennial meeting of EURASLIC 6-8 May 1998, Athens, Greece)  
[http://www.euraslic.org/sites/euraslic.org/files/public/attachments/article/1/first\\_ten.pdf](http://www.euraslic.org/sites/euraslic.org/files/public/attachments/article/1/first_ten.pdf)
- Varley, Allen. European marine science information centres: towards a European network,  
<https://hdl.handle.net/1912/1303>

More details of his great professional experience are given in the article by Pettman, Ian; Vicary, Tamsin; Kalentsits, Maria, published in the ASFA Magazine, 2022  
<https://www.fao.org/3/cc0722en/cc0722en.pdf>

Rest in peace, Allen!

## 20<sup>th</sup> EURASLIC CONFERENCE!

**Bart Goossens**

Research Institute for Nature and Forest (INBO), Belgium

In 2023 the European Association of Aquatic Sciences Libraries and Information Centres will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> biennial conference. The conference “Sustainability and infodiversity: (aquatic) libraries strengthening biodiversity knowledge” will be held as an in person conference in Brussels, Belgium from 3-5 May 2023.

The conference will be hosted by the Research Institute for Nature and Forest (INBO). INBO is the independent research institute of the Flemish government that underpins and evaluates biodiversity policy and management by means of applied scientific research, data and knowledge sharing. Through its scientific research, INBO supports all agencies dealing with open space in the Flemish government, as well as in organisations involved in nature conservation, forestry, agriculture, hunting and fishery. INBO publishes its results as open data and provides data for international reporting. It participates in (inter)national research networks such as LTER, ALTER-Net, LifeWatch, ...

The conference will take place in the Herman Teirlinck building where INBO has its headquarters. The building is the largest detached passive office building of Belgium and meets the highest standards in terms of sustainability and energy performance.



The Herman Teirlinck is located on the Tour & Taxis site and is 1 kilometer from the Brussels-North train station. A free and regular shuttle service is provided every day of the week for visitors of the Tour & Taxis site.

Brussels is a very compact city. Many places are within walking distance, or a short ride away by tram, bus or metro. And if you're staying near the city center, you can discover historical Brussels easily on foot. Brussels has long been revered for its cuisine and gastronomy. You can choose from 2,500 restaurants. The city has also preserved its local culture, so you'll find street life, traditional markets and folklore, all in a colorful ambience full of good humor.

At the conference we will have keynote speakers, panel discussions, workshops and presentations on the following topics:

- Advancing Open Science
- Strengthen exchange, innovation, and cooperation
- Re-inventing the future: tools and services
- Sustainability challenges for biodiversity libraries
- Ensuring access to knowledge and information
- UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (Ocean Decade 2021-2030)
- Aquatic libraries involved in science communication

The program and all necessary information will be available on the website soon.

**Save the date in your calendar and see you all in Brussels!**

## **International Ocean Data Conference 2022 – The data we need for the ocean we want**

**Sofija Konjević**

Ruđer Bošković Institute, Centre for Scientific Information, Zagreb, Croatia

**Ekaterina Kulakova**

Russian Research Institute of Fisheries and Oceanography (VNIRO), Moscow, Russia

[International Ocean Data Conference 2022](#) – “The Data We Need for the Ocean We Want” organized by IODE (International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange) and hosted by the Institute of Oceanology - Polish Academy of Sciences was held between 14-16 February 2022 in Sopot, Poland.

The conference was held as a hybrid event bringing together around 650 registered participants whether in person or virtually dispersed through various sessions depending on time zone. Among the participants were also some EURASLIC<sup>1</sup> and IAMSLIC<sup>2</sup> members. Apart from being mere participants some EURASLIC members were part of the Organizing Committee and others even have presentations at the conference.

The conference's schedule was very tight with more than 80 presentations and around 34 posters. The posting of questions was possible through zoom chat but also via padlet. During the lunch break the video was showing additional presentations (OBIS, OTG etc.) as well as posters that were also available online (<https://oceandataconference.org/posters/>).

The conference presentations were divided into several sessions: 1: Global strategies and policy, session 2: implementing the digital commons, 3: looking forward; 4: delivering a transformative data eco-system for the ocean decade and 5: conference declaration and closing.

Data Implementation Strategy of the [GOOS](#)<sup>3</sup> Observations Coordination Group opened the conference, followed by [EMODnet](#) (The European Marine Observation and Data Network) network of organisations that work together to observe the sea, process the data according to international standards and make that information freely available as interoperable data layers and data products. EMODnet provides access to European marine data across seven discipline-based themes: bathymetry (water depth), biology, chemistry, geology, human activities, physics, seabed habitats. Some of the themes were presented separately during the conference.

A lot of portals related to marine and oceanography data were introduced. Some of the portals shown were: [Worms](#) – an authoritative classification and catalogue of marine names ; [OBIS](#) – Ocean Biodiversity Information system global platform that provides free access to the world's biodiversity and biogeographic data ; [PacMan](#) – Pacific Islands Marine bioinvasions Alert Network, e. g. invasive species monitoring system and an early-warning decision-support tool ; [WOD](#) – The World Ocean Database – world's largest collection of uniformly formatted, quality controlled, publicly available ocean profile data and many others. To facilitate access to the existing ocean related web-based sources/systems of data and information [ODIS Catalogue of Sources](#) was created.

Although there is proliferation of portals and available data it was stressed out that there is great possibility of federated approach and mutual interoperability between different systems. Some of them were presented. [Ocean Infohub Project](#) which aims to support discovery and interoperability of existing information systems.

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1 European Association of Aquatic Sciences Libraries and Information Centres

2 International Marine and Aquatic Sciences Libraries and Information Centers

3 Global Ocean Observing System

[Blue-Cloud](#) is computing and analytical service resource that federates data in one collaborative platform. Apart from Blue- Cloud that also explores the potential of Open Science for ocean sustainability there were several presentations related to open science, open data, data management, repositories or cloud based systems ([OpenOceanCloud](#), [SeaDataCloud](#)).

The goal of [ENVRI-FAIR](#) is to advance the findability, accessibility, interoperability, and reusability (FAIRness) of the data and services offered by the ENVRI Cluster research infrastructures and to connect them to the emerging European Open Science Cloud (EOSC). Majority of portals and services mentioned implementation of FAIR principles, and its contribution to EOSC.

NASA Open-Source Science Initiative [TOPS](#) (Transform to Open Science) was introduced as one of the initiatives leading to Year of Open Science (YOOS) designated by NASA in 2023 with the aim to promote open science through various events and activities.

The participants became familiar with some repositories and digitalization projects. New ocean and aquatic digital repository [AquaDocs](#) was presented by Sally Taylor, while Ekaterina Kulakova was available virtually for questions. AquaDocs is a joint project of UNESCO/IOC IODE and IAMS LIC with financial support from FAO Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts. The proposal was made for AquaDocs to become a host repository for the Ocean Decade. AquaDocs offers various features such as multilingual interface, user export of metadata, sharing of items through social media, usage statistics and Altmetrics. Users can cast their vote or share information via social media.

Stephanie Ronan from Ireland Marine Institute presented creation of [Interactive Marine Archive](#) from historical rare books. The process of creation of archive is explained on [you tube](#) video as well.

Amanda L. Whitmire demonstrated research on computational methods for extracting biodiversity data from historical collections.

ASFA showed their evolution from paper to digital [subject thesaurus](#) multilingual and controlled vocabulary that covers all aspects of oceanography and aquatic sciences, made in collaboration with the FAO controlled vocabulary AGROVOC (agriculture and adjacent sciences oriented). The thesaurus is used by other systems: AquaDocs, Ocean Best practices; SEAFDEC repository etc.

Results of the survey of UK marine data users were presented. The survey explores pathways through which marine data are used and transformed into actionable information, creating systematised value chains for the first time. Results are also published and available as a paper: [Value chains in public marine data](#).

In addition, several ocean observing, monitoring and forecasting systems were introduced ([Copernicus marine science](#), [CIOOS](#)). Presentation about digital twins showed how virtual representation of physical object or real time counterpart enables real-time predictions and simulation. As marine and oceanographic data are typically big data, it was shown how the data can be unleashed with blockchain technology.



How citizens can contribute to science was shown through the US citizen science program [Litter Intelligence](#) , where citizens, thanks to an app, collect long-term litter data, receive information and take action to prevent litter, while the [Smartfin](#) project in New Zealand developed fins for surf with sensors that measure multiple ocean parameters around the world.

The host institute presented Polish ocean data center called [e-Cudo](#) (Cudo meaning Miracle) and satellite platform [SatBałtyk System](#).

Last day was dedicated to [Ocean Decade Initiative](#) entitled “The Science We Need for the Ocean We Want” along with its framework and activities. In support of the 2030 Agenda, the Decade of Oceans, launched on 1 January 2021, brings together diverse stakeholders to foster partnerships and generate the knowledge needed to maintain a well-functioning, productive, resilient, sustainable and inspiring ocean.<sup>4</sup>



The whole conference and each session were summarized at the end, and the most important issues were emphasized. As a result of the conference, the Sopot declaration with a recommendation for action was presented.

The conference brought many interesting presentation and showed how future hybrid conferences should be organized, although we are all hoping for more in person conferences. After the successfully organized conference, preparation for the second International Ocean Data Conference is in progress. The conference is going to be held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France between 20-21 March 2023 as a hybrid event.

All presentations are available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgyE6lj0v1UgwWv9dABkjiQ/videos>

<https://oceandataconference.org/programme/>

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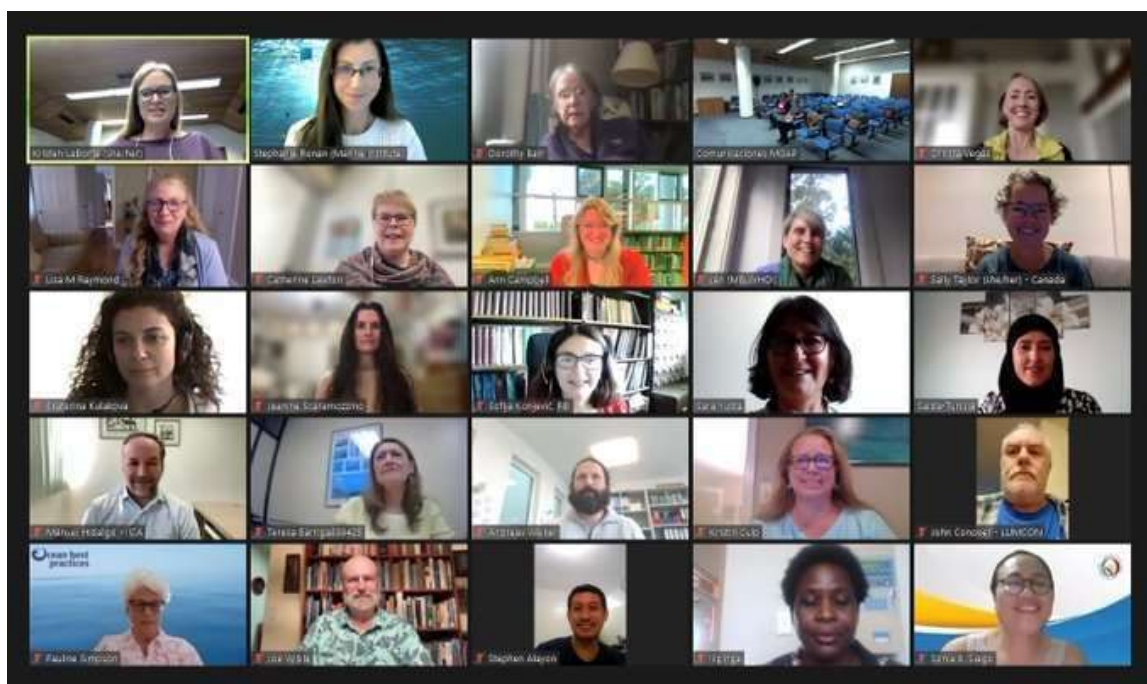
<sup>4</sup> <https://sdg.iisd.org/commentary/guest-articles/un-ocean-decade-an-ocean-knowledge-revolution-in-action/>

## From streams to oceans: Libraries informing sustainability of aquatic resources

Sofija Konjević

Ruđer Bošković Institute, Centre for Scientific Information, Zagreb, Croatia

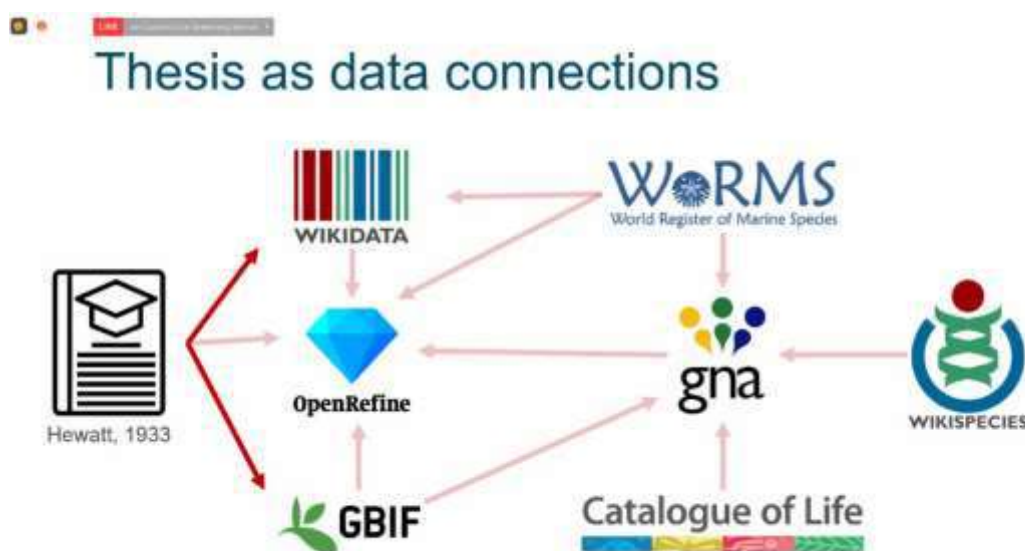
After two virtual conferences held in 2020 and 2021, the first IAMS LIC hybrid conference was held in Montevideo, Uruguay, 18-21 October, 2022. The 48<sup>th</sup> IAMS LIC Conference was held along with the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Latin American group (4<sup>th</sup> Grupo Regional Latinamericano Meeting) under the theme “From streams to oceans: Libraries informing sustainability of aquatic resources”, thus continuing the sustainability subject from the previous conference. Conference sub-themes were covering topics like data science, library administration and leadership, information literacy, and initiatives supporting SDGs. The presentations were in English and Spanish therefore the interpreters were provided thanks to generous support of ASFA.



Pre-conference day was reserved for ASFA workshop on ASFA 3.0 introducing activities in recent few years: 50<sup>th</sup> ASFA anniversary in 2021, ASFA database available on ProQuest platform but also free to use subset of the database on fao.org, a thesaurus of aquatic science terms, ASFA Magazine. Also the training on OpenASFA was provided. Furthermore, Maria Kalentsits and Tamsin Vicary presented the ASFA business model as a part of the regular conference schedule.


The first day after the conference welcome and opening, Dr. Santiago Caro Ros, Director of Institutional Communication, Library and IT gave an overview on behalf of the conference

host DINARA. The activities of the Alliance of Agricultural Information Services (SIDALC), an international alliance of agricultural, livestock, forestry and environmental information services that brought together 22 Latin American Countries were presented. The role of the Library of the National Natural History Museum of Uruguay was presented from a historical perspective along with an overview of other Uruguayan institutions. Even in 2022 the subject of pandemic was addressed and we heard about challenges that libraries from Uganda had to face. During the pandemic The University of Hawaii at Manoa Library received funds to acquire electronic backfiles of their collection as the space for growth of print collection was limited. Very interesting were presentations dedicated to data, voyage from print to electronic and preservation of historical documents. Amanda L. Whitmire, Hopkins Marine Station, Stanford University showed a shift from print to digital on example of thesis library collection. Thesis were not just scanned and put on Internet, a curatorial approach was adopted that reframed library collections as data, extracting data such as graphs, tables and figures separately, making them available for use. The collections are connected to open knowledge bases like WikiData and the Global Biodiversity Information Facility.



The preservation approach was also adopted by the Data Library and Archives (DLA) of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI). Early recordings, spanning the years 1962 to 1970, made by the human-operated submersible Alvin have been restored and made available for viewing. Marine turtles in Cuba were represented by bibliographic analysis on the subject. The Latin American Group of IAMSILIC stressed the benefits for the group of being part of IAMSILIC and its collaboration with the international agencies IODE, ODINCARSA project and ASFA. The inter-library loan is significant activity among members, so it wasn't skipped at the conference as one of the sponsors ProQuest gave an overview on RapidILL interlibrary loan system.


Second day of the conference also brought some really interesting presentations. Joyce M. Shaw and Megan Le presented books for children and young people about the Deep-Water Horizon (DWH) oil spill and ocean pollution. The reading list was created by the Gunter



Library Art Department of the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory (GCRL) to increase scientific information literacy about ocean pollution. The INVEMAR team presented a pioneering project in Colombia "Ocean in signs", which aimed to create an oceanic dictionary in Colombian sign language and to translate the scientific knowledge that INVEMAR leads and disseminate it in an accessible format for the deaf community.

Ekatarina Kulakova along with her colleagues (Sally Taylor, Pauline Simpson, Jennifer Walton, Maria Kalentsits & Tamsin Vicary) gave an update on the first year of the AquaDocs project. Besides the AquaDocs, ASFA Trust Fund project "Provision of outreach activities, establishment of export from AquaDocs to OpenASFA and creation of OpenASFA records for historic IOC Grey Literature" was introduced. The FAO-SEAFDEC project, which deals with recording studies and datasets from Southeast Asia related to SDG indicator SDG 14.4.1 (Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels) and the Valchetta Stream Library Project, were presented. The aim of the project of the Library of Universidad Nacional del Comahue is dissemination of the relevant information to the community of people who live in the same geographical space where conservation activities are carried out on endemic aquatic species that are in danger of extinction.

Geoff Timms showed results of the survey on graduate student knowledge about libraries and the search strategies. Results showed that students had different library experiences and skills. Some were not good in literature searching, especially in the physical environment, some searched only google scholar, some were not able to find all literature on the subject but on the other side they were very skilled in using data information systems, good in use of reference manager software. Thus, proper library training can improve these skills as learning is an ongoing process and we all live in ever changing environment. The process of one library department's strategic plan to create functional, skill-based teams of librarians was presented by Kristen LaBonte. The very interesting presentation from Majbritt Bolton-Warberg from Marine Institute - Galway, Ireland was on blue bioeconomy, circular bioeconomy chains and activities in regard to Bioeconomy Ireland Week. The blue bioeconomy is defined as use and conversion of living aquatic resources into a wide variety of products like food, medicine, pharmaceuticals, bioenergy but even in the fashion industry. Among the products: wound dressing made from fish skin, bioplastic from seaweed, use of shrimp shells in concrete production, usage of invasive crabs in production of whisky were shown. The role of the libraries in raising awareness not only in blue bioeconomy but on climate change, climate actions and in the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals were targeted. The Woodward Library Climate Action Team at the University of British Columbia – Canada showcased activities undertaken to align their activities with climate change action. The library has increased its holdings on the topic of climate change. To reduce the carbon footprint produced by air transport, they opt for online conferencing. The library engages in advocacy and sustainability education to change library practices and policies. The last day of the conference the audience got familiar with some marine science journals and their transformation to modern ones, copyright/intellectual property issues, inequalities and impediments in publishing in open access journals due to high Article Processing Charges (APCs). The participants got acquainted with the Ocean InfoHub Global project (OIH) that facilitates access to ocean science data and information for management and sustainable development. The interoperability is possible thanks to Ocean Data and Information System (ODIS) architecture. The OIH Project is funded by the Government of Flanders, Kingdom of Belgium,



and implemented by the IODE Project Office of the IOC/UNESCO. The users can access data but at the same time they have the opportunity to become content creators themselves. Additionally, the overview of the pilot Clearing-House Mechanism as the Latin America and the Caribbean Region node for the Ocean InfoHub project was given. The presentation “IODE AIU participation” tried to encourage IAMS LIC members to become Associated Information Units (AIU) and to provide their expertise to IODE projects.

During the conference regional and board meetings were held, among others EURAS LIC Regional group meeting. Apart from the Annual report of EURAS LIC activities the host for the EURAS LIC XX was announced. The 20<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference of the European Association of Aquatic Sciences Libraries and Information Centres will be hosted by the Research Institute for Nature and Forest (INBO) in Brussels, Belgium. The last part of the conference was reserved for the IAMS LIC Business Meeting, and official closure of conference.

Unlike the previous two online conferences where the members could participate free of charge, this time there was a conference fee for the attendance, and the time was according to the Uruguay local time which was not suitable for some online attendees. Anyway the conference brought together more than 80 participants from all over the globe, of which 11 EURAS LIC members.

There were around 35 presentations and two poster presentations. This was the first IAMS LIC hybrid conference which was very demanding from an organizational point of view, therefore some minor obstacles were expected that were immediately solved, thus enabling participants to enjoy listening to interesting topics. Online participants unfortunately were deprived of conference dinner, tango and milonga as well as field trip to Maldonado.

The IAMS LIC 2023 conference will be hosted by the University of British Columbia, Canada. In line with their commitment to sustainable development, the conference will be held virtually, enabling members to participate in large numbers.

## Summary of the joint ASFA-AquaDocs training programme

**Tamsin Vicary; Maria Kalentsits**

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome Italy

Email: Tamsin.vicary@fao.org

*Introduction: ASFA and AquaDocs have been working closely together during 2022 with a number of joint activities now completed. In addition to the joint conference and setting up harvesting of AquaDocs on to OpenASFA, a joint training programme took place from 29 August – 2 September 2022. This article summarises that training programme and includes links to the recorded sessions.*

[OpenASFA](#), the Virtual Research Environment launched in March 2020, is the system used by ASFA partners to create, store and export bibliographic references and abstracts. Although the full text of the publication is not stored on OpenASFA, each record includes detailed metadata (keywords, link to the full text and abstract) which is exported from OpenASFA to the full ASFA database on ProQuest and also to the free to use [search interface](#) on the FAO fisheries and aquaculture website. Creating a record on OpenASFA therefore increases the visibility of a resource by making it searchable at two locations used by students, researchers and policy makers. This service is frequently referred to as an ‘abstracting and indexing’ service and whilst ASFA has no intention to switch to a full text repository, there are times when depositing the full text is necessary. These include when no digital or online copy of a resource exists, or it is stored in an unsecure way, such as on a website or internal network. ASFA has been very interested in [AquaDocs](#), which was formed following a merger of two repositories, Aquatic Commons and OceanDocs. AquaDocs is the joint open access repository of the UNESCO/IOC International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE) and the International Association of Aquatic and Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers (IAMSLIC). ASFA has supported the development of the repository and it was felt that in 2022, both AquaDocs and OpenASFA were sufficiently well established to launch a joint training programme and explore synergies which form the basis of future improvements, encourage IAMSLIC and ASFA members to create records on either system and promote both systems to aquatic science information users.

The joint training programme was given by Tamsin Vicary and Maria Kalentsits of the ASFA Secretariat (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome, Italy) and Ekaterina Kulakova (Russian Federal Research Institute of Fisheries and Oceanography (VNIRO), Moscow, Russia) who represented AquaDocs. A total of five joint virtual training sessions were given from 29 August to 2 September 2022. The sessions covered different aspects of OpenASFA and AquaDocs, including indexing, quality control and adding authors – which can be particularly tricky given the international nature and number of languages present on both OpenASFA and AquaDocs. A total of 72 participants registered for one or more training sessions which were well attended throughout the week. Each session had a quiz that attendees could take and certificates were given if the pass rate was achieved.

Over twenty certificates have been distributed so far, with the quiz for day 1 having received 43 responses with an average score of 88%. Recordings of all sessions were made available to both ASFA and IAMSLIC networks (see table below). Session one has been viewed over fifty times and had 8 downloads.

Date and time	Session	Overview	Link to recording
Monday, 29 August 13.00–15.00 (UTC/GMT)	Introduction to OpenASFA	Introduction to AquaDocs and OpenASFA and differences between two systems. Detailed look at OpenASFA; How to create a Journal Article record on OpenASFA. <i>Training given by: Tamsin Vicary, FAO ASFA Secretariat.</i>	Recording: <a href="#">here</a> Passcode: i=6ze^xn
Tuesday, 30 August 13.00–15.00 (UTC/GMT)	Introduction to AquaDocs	Creating a collection and submitting records to AquaDocs repository. <i>Training given by: Ekaterina Kulakova, VNIRO.</i>	Recording: <a href="#">here</a> Passcode: g?s\$w3^v
Wednesday, 31 August 13.00–15.00 (UTC/GMT)	Keywords	Purpose of subject, geographic and taxonomic keywords. How to select keywords on OpenASFA and AquaDocs. <i>Training given by Maria Kalentsits (FAO ASFA Secretariat)</i>	Recording: <a href="#">here</a> Passcode: 6#qc4#0A
Thursday, 1 September 13.00–15.00 (UTC/GMT)	Advanced cataloguing 1	Ensuring records are error free; advanced features for AquaDocs and OpenASFA (Generator for sub/superscript; duplicating records). Common mistakes, hints and tips. <i>Training given by Maria Kalentsits (FAO ASFA Secretariat) and Ekaterina Kulakova, VNIRO).</i>	Recording: <a href="#">here</a> Passcode: 7pJE+mTh
Friday, 2 September 13.00–15.00 (UTC/GMT)	Advanced cataloguing 2: Author and Institution names	Importance of entering authors correctly, particular reference to non-English languages; <i>Maria Kalentsits (FAO ASFA Secretariat) and Ekaterina Kulakova, VNIRO).</i>	Recording: <a href="#">here</a> Passcode: %4e.c5jJ

### What next for joint ASFA-AquaDocs activities?

Having assessed the appetite for joint training, ASFA and AquaDocs would be happy to repeat the training programme next year. If you attended and have any feedback, we'd love to hear from you, please use [ASFA-Secretariat@fao.org](mailto:ASFA-Secretariat@fao.org) to get in touch. At present, OpenASFA is in the final stages of testing the harvesting of records from AquaDocs on to

OpenASFA. Completing this will mean ASFA partners will no longer have to create duplicate records on OpenASFA as they will be automatically harvested. It will also mean that other AquaDocs records will be included on OpenASFA and searchable on the fao.org interface (they will not be sent to the full ASFA database on ProQuest without prior agreement and editing on the OpenASFA platform). Harvesting presents the opportunity not only to increase the number of records on OpenASFA but to form closer ties to AquaDocs, for example creating an ASFA community on AquaDocs may be appropriate to allow ASFA's partners to easily deposit full text documents. Being able to deposit the full text could be a useful option for the fisheries and aquaculture projects that ASFA supports. Typically, these projects look to record hard to reach grey literature which may be available in print only format or not stored on a stable repository. The ASFA Secretariat looks forward to developing its relationship with AquaDocs in 2023, though there is significant overlap between the two products in terms of subject scope, each has a specific purpose so there is no competition and any enhancements to one system will also benefit the other.

## Impact of military operations on marine ecosystems of Ukraine and ways of their restoration

**Galina Minicheva<sup>5</sup>**

Marine Biology of the NAS of Ukraine, Odesa, Ukraine

In order for Ukraine to comply with the terms of the Bucharest Convention, specialists from the Institute of Marine Biology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (Odesa) prepared and submitted to the Black Sea Commission the National Report «The state of biological communities of the Ukrainian sector of the ecosystem of the Black Sea in 2021/2022» on the biological diversity of the Black Sea. In addition to the mandatory structure, the report contains information on the methodology for assessing the impact of military actions on the biological component of marine ecosystems and, based on remote data and partial coastal survey data and taking into account the climatic conditions of 2022, provides a realistic assessment of the current environmental state of the national sector of the Black Sea.

Read below for a brief summary of the main provisions contained in this document.

### **MILITARY IMPACT**

As the sad experience of military impact on the Black Sea marine ecosystem (since February 2022) has shown, this type of anthropogenic threats has 2 objective components:

1 - **Negative**, associated with direct military operations in the sea area (and rocket fire, crash of ships and aircraft, mining of water areas, etc.)

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<sup>5</sup> Submitted by Olena Mykhalechko



2 - **Positive**, associated with an unprecedented decrease in the intensity of anthropogenic impacts in peacetime (fishing, ship traffic, recreational load, construction in the coastline, etc.).

Possible consequences of negative impact:

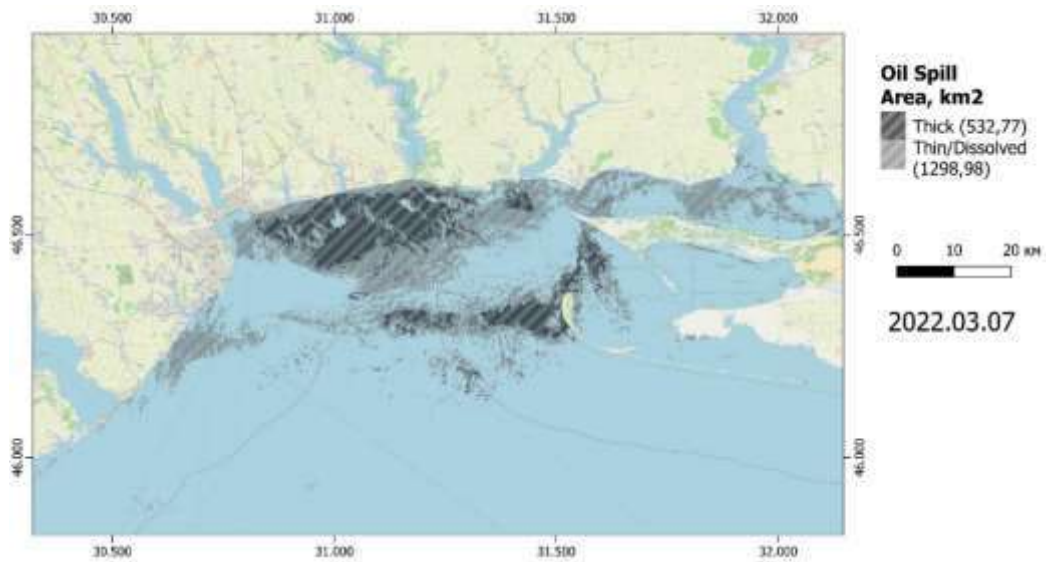
- spills of oil products in large areas, including protected ones;
- accumulation of heavy metals in aquatic organisms, including lead (Pb), which is included in large quantities in military equipment;
- transfer of chemical contaminants through food webs from areas of military operations to adjacent water areas;
- hydroacoustic impact, causing injury to hydrobionts and, first of all, to such highly organized ones as dolphins;
- termination of the MPAs protection regime;
- uncontrolled fires in the adjacent coastal zone and washout of combustion products and other hazardous chemicals from active hostilities into the coastal zone;
- non-observance by military water transport of the rules for the exchange of ballast water, which can lead to the outbreak of invasive species;
- the coverage of large transboundary territories with negative consequences due to the hydrodynamic properties of the aquatic environment, which carries matter and energy over long distances.

Possible consequences of a positive impact:

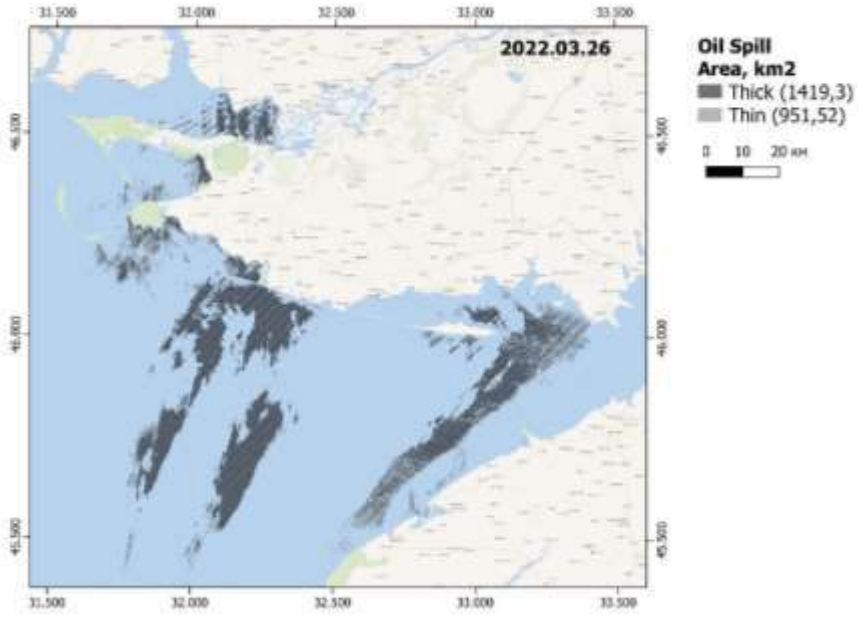
- -the unprecedented experiment of depopulation of a long coastline (mining and prohibition of military authorities) which allows restoring the life cycles and natural behaviour of a large number of aquatic organisms, as well as inhabitants associated with the coastal zone (seabirds, invertebrates, vegetation);
- stop fish industrial and recreational underwater fishing;
- significant decrease in the movement of commercial vehicles;
- stop underwater hydrotechnical works, including dumping in navigable channels.

Example of negative impact

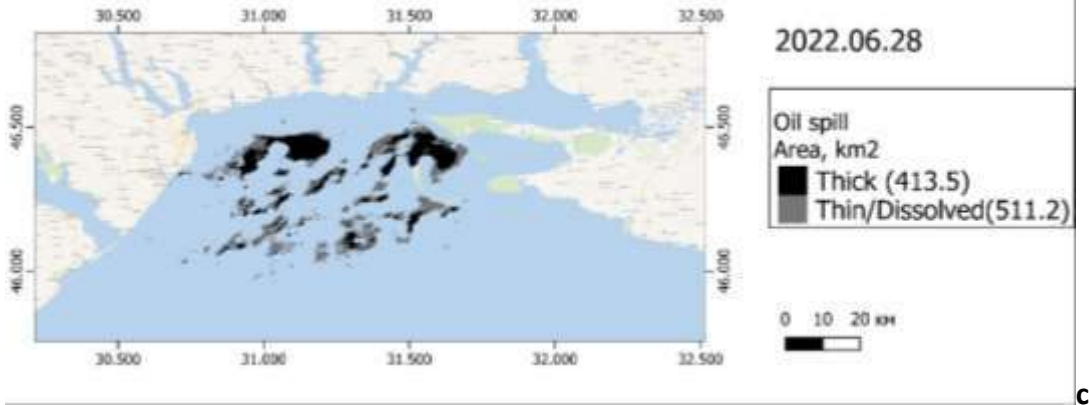
During February-October 2022, there were many incidents related to military aggression, the areas of all three Marine Protected Areas (MPA) were covered with oil products many times, almost up to 100%, because of the destruction of naval ships and the destruction of military aircraft (Figure 1). At the national level, information was collected on the areas of oil spills at the MPAs using satellite technology. This information was officially transferred by the Institute of Marine Biology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine to the Operational Headquarters under the State Ecological Inspection of Ukraine. The availability of such information will allow, analysing the consequences of the military impact on the biological of the MPAs and determine possible ways of intensive recovery.



a



b



c

Figure 1. Examples of covering the Ukrainian water areas including the water areas of the MPAs with oil products as a result of military actions: National Natural Park Biloberezhia Sviatoslava (a); Chornomorsky Biosphere Reserve (b); Nationally Important Reserve (botanical) Zernov's Phyllophora Field (c)

## Example of positive impact

### *Climatic background*

Estimated for the first half of 2022 - the 2.5 times less precipitation was observed compared to the long-term regional level and not high water temperatures. The average temperature was 8.3 C°, which allows us to attribute 2022 to cool periods. This combination of climatic conditions contributes to the natural increase in ecological status. Thus, the conditions of an abnormally dry and cool year influenced the decrease in the intensity of the primary production process and the improvement of the ESC. Based on the morphofunctional indicator of phytobenthos - the Surface Index for 2022, the lowest value was obtained - 6 units (Figure 2). Thus, the prevailing climatic conditions under other negative military influences compensated for the situation and the marine environment was in good ecological conditions.

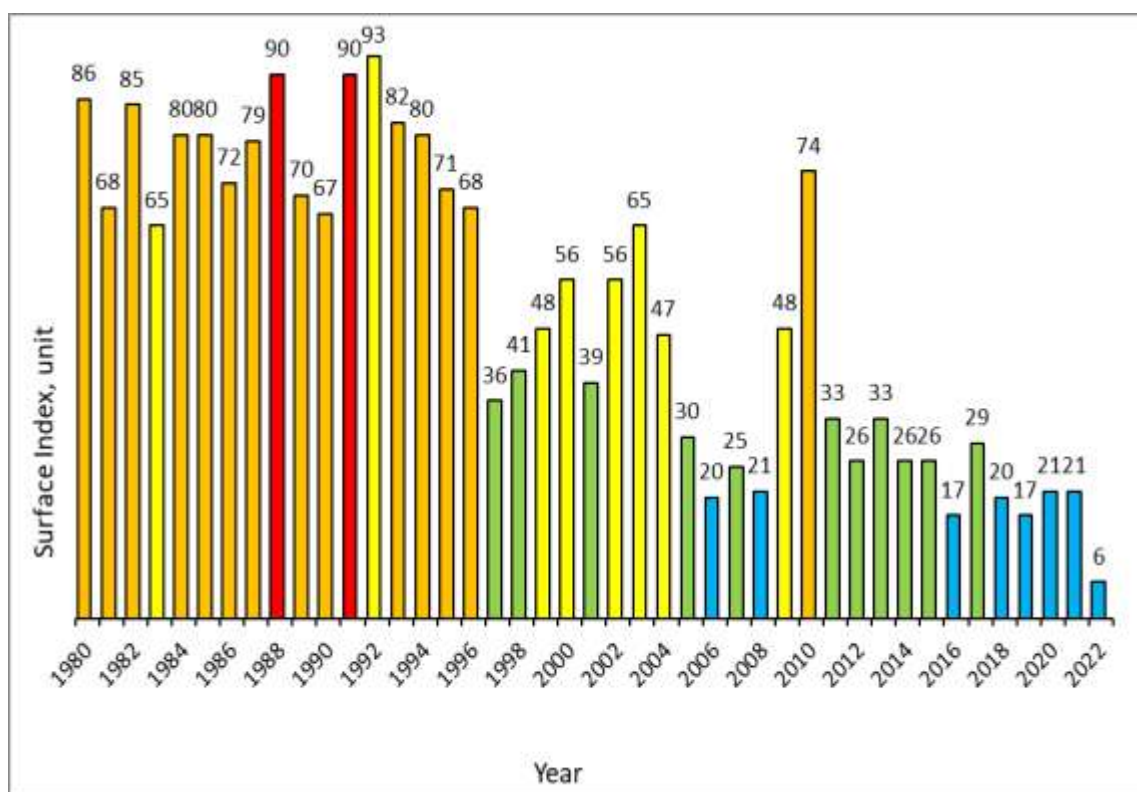


Figure 2. Long-term dynamics of the ESC of the Odessa coast, obtained on the basis of the morphofunctional indicator of phytobenthos - the Surface Index red - category «Bad»; orange – «Poor»; yellow – «Moderate»; green – «Good»; blue – «High»

In addition to favorable weather conditions in 2022, the positive components also include the complete removal of the recreational load on many kilometers of the coastline. Due to the danger of hostilities, the civilian population was not allowed to the coastal zone during the entire period. As a result of the removal of the anthropogenic load, the coastal zone has been transformed. Restorative plant succession began to occur on sandy beaches.

Seabirds have gained free access to the coastal zone, as well as many hydrobionts that use the coastal zone in their life cycles (Figure 3).





Figure 3. View of Odessa beaches in October 2022

Another confirmation that, despite the negative military impact, the ecological situation in general improved in 2022, is the long-term dynamics of the average specific surface area (S/W) of the floristic composition of macrophytes, which characterizes the ecological activity of autotrophs, compared to September. Figure 4 shows that in September 2022 the value is 40 units - the lowest compared to previous years.

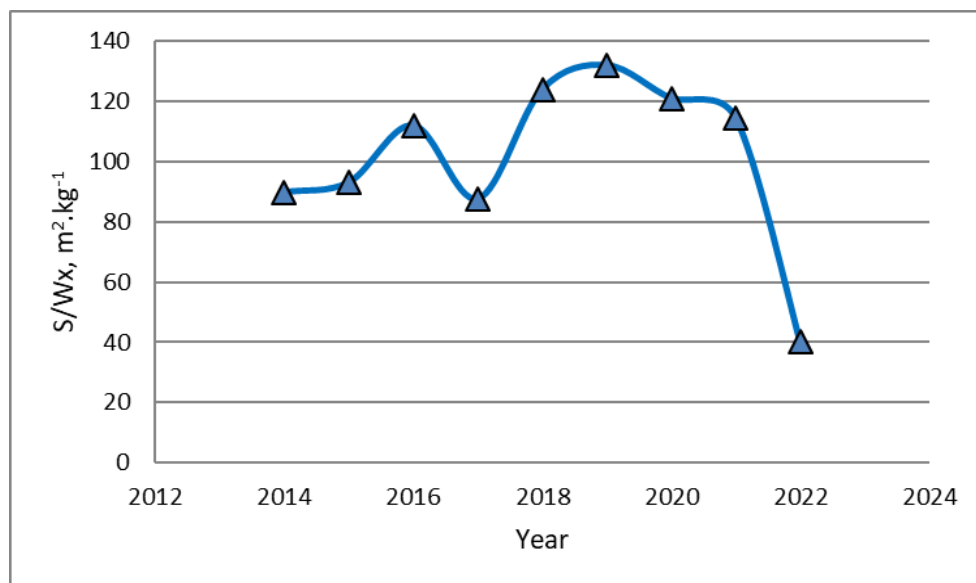


Figure 4. Decrease in the indicator of ecological activity of macrophytes (S/W<sub>x</sub>) in 2022 on the Odessa coast for the period of October

Thus, it can be concluded that 2022 is the year of active hostilities, in addition to the negative impact, the consequences of which will need to be assessed, there was a general improvement in the environmental situation associated with favorable weather conditions and the complete absence of recreational load on the multi-kilometer coastal zone.

In addition to the military impact on the ecosystem of the Ukrainian sector of the Black Sea, the National Report provides information on invasive species that have been introduced into

the ecosystem, including as a result of military operations. For example, in October 2022, in the littoral of the Sukhyi Liman (on muddy and mixed substrates in the area adjacent to the water area of the port of Chornomorsk), a new species for the Black Sea was discovered - the small crawling anemone *Nematostella vectensis* (Fig. 5), originating from the coast of North America.



Figure 5. Anemone *Nematostella vectensis*, found this year in the Sukhyi Liman. Author of the photo - senior researcher, of the Department of Quality of Aquatic Environment of the Institute of Marine Biology of the NAS of Ukraine, PhD Oleksandr Koshelev

For the timely provided information (National Report), the Black Sea Environmental Commission sent an official letter of gratitude to the administration of the Institute of Marine Biology of the NAS of Ukraine (IMB) with congratulations on the International Black Sea Day, which is celebrated annually on October 31. In this letter, the Commission also thanked the staff of the IMB for many years of cooperation and especially for their courage and professional work in wartime.

## Ireland's new research vessel RV *Tom Crean*

**Stephanie Ronan**

Marine Institute, Galway, Ireland

- *Named the RV Tom Crean, after the Irish Explorer from Kerry who undertook three ground-breaking expeditions to the Antarctic in the early years of the 20th Century.*
- *The vessel will enable Ireland to undertake cutting edge scientific surveys that deepen our understanding of the ocean and place the Marine Institute as a leader in marine science.*


2022 has been an exciting year for Ireland's Marine Institute. In July, the institute received the new state-of-the-art multi-purpose marine research vessel RV *Tom Crean*. It will be used by the Marine Institute and other State agencies and universities to undertake fisheries research, oceanographic and environmental research, seabed mapping surveys; as well as maintaining and deploying weather buoys, observational infrastructure and Remotely Operated Vehicles.



Godmother

Designed by Norwegian ship design consultants Skipsteknisk AS and built by Spanish shipyard Astilleros Armon Vigo S.A., the vessel will enable 300 operational days at sea each year, and up to 3000 scientist days per year.

The RV *Tom Crean* will also enable the Marine Institute to continue to lead and support high quality scientific surveys that contribute to Ireland's position as a leader in marine science.



The research vessel is a modern, multipurpose, silent vessel (designed to meet the stringent criteria of the [ICES](#) 209 noise standard for fisheries research), capable of operating in the Irish Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The *Tom Crean* can go to sea for at least 21 days at a time and is designed to operate in harsh sea conditions.

In October 2022, the RV *Tom Crean* was commissioned at a special event in Dingle Harbour, Co. Kerry. Ireland's latest marine research vessel has been named the RV *Tom Crean* after the legendary Irish Explorer from Kerry, who undertook three ground-breaking expeditions to the Antarctic in the early years of the 20th Century.

**Dr Paul Connolly, CEO of the Marine Institute, speaking about the RV Tom Crean said:**

*“We are delighted to name our new research vessel after Tom Crean as it gives recognition to an Irish explorer of international renown whose life was packed with amazing feats of Antarctic bravery, determination and courage. The Institute appreciates the support of the descendants of Tom Crean in this decision. Our new multi-purpose research vessel will enhance Ireland’s capacity to undertake international collaborative research to acquire the ocean data and knowledge essential to managing our vast marine resources.”*

The new research vessel will be based in Galway, Ireland and will replace the RV *Celtic Voyager*, which was Ireland’s first purpose-built research vessel which arrived in 1997. The vessel makes much less underwater noise than traditional vessels, reducing the effect of noise on fish populations while surveying and sampling, so that a more accurate stock assessment can be made.

**Dr Connolly continued:**

*“The ocean is essential to life on earth. It produces half the oxygen we breath and is a major driver of our weather. We need the best quality data, science and advice to inform decisions on the big challenges facing society – mitigating the impacts of climate change, protecting and restoring ocean biodiversity, and realising the full potential of our ocean economy. The new vessel will be used by the Marine Institute, other state agencies and universities to gather essential data that will be used to deliver the scientific advice for fisheries assessment, offshore renewable energy, marine spatial planning, marine protected areas and addressing the challenges of climate change.”*

The vessel design incorporates the latest proven technologies to ensure that it operates as efficiently as possible, with reduced fuel consumption and minimising the vessel’s environmental impact and carbon footprint.

**You can track the progress of the vessel and the research it is undertaking on the Marine Institute website [here](#).**





RV Tom Crean Marine Institute\_Photo Andrew Downes

To get all the latest updates on the new vessel and find out about the exciting work of the Marine Institute follow us on Twitter @MarineInst Facebook @MarineInstitute and Instagram @MarineInstituteIreland.

The Marine Institute is the Irish State agency responsible for marine research, technology development and innovation in Ireland. It provides scientific and technical advice to Government to help inform policy and to support the sustainable development of Ireland's marine resource.



RV Tom Crean\_Marine Institute\_Photo Andrew Downes

## Participation of EURASLIC Members in IAMS LIC committees and activities

- Sofija Konjević: Regional Representative in the IAMS LIC Exec Board (2021-2023), Member of IAMS LIC Membership Committee (2021-2023)
- Bart Goossens: Conference Site Selection Committee (2021-2023, 2<sup>nd</sup> term)
- Ekaterina Kulakova: Member of IAMS LIC Membership Committee (2020-2022, 2<sup>nd</sup> term)
- Stephanie Ronan: Member of the IAMS LIC Website and Communicatons Committee (2018-2020, 2<sup>nd</sup> term), Conference Committee
- Heike Lust: member of the Joint IODE/IAMS LIC GE-MIM
- Maria Kalentsits, Tamsin Vicary: FAO-IAMS LIC joint activities

## EURASLIC Executive Board

2021 -2023

### President, website editor

**Sofija KONJEVIĆ**

Ruđer Bošković Institute (RBI)  
Bijenička cesta 54  
10000 Zagreb  
CROATIA  
Email: [sofija@irb.hr](mailto:sofija@irb.hr)

### Vice-President,

**Stephanie RONAN**

Marine Institute  
Rinville, Oranmore,  
Co. Galway.  
H91 R673  
IRELAND  
Email: [Stephanie.Ronan@Marine.ie](mailto:Stephanie.Ronan@Marine.ie)

### Executive secretary

**Marina MAYER**

Ruđer Bošković Institute (RBI)  
Bijenička cesta 54  
10000 Zagreb  
CROATIA  
Email: [mmayer@irb.hr](mailto:mmayer@irb.hr)

### Member representative 1

**Ingrid ČATIĆ**

Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries  
Setaliste I. Mestrovica 63  
21000 Split  
Croatia  
Email: [catic@izor.hr](mailto:catic@izor.hr)

### Member representative 2, Newsletter editor

**Snejina BACHEVA**

Institute of Oceanology  
P.O. Box 152  
9000 Varna  
BULGARIA  
Email: [library@io-bas.bg](mailto:library@io-bas.bg)

### Past President

**Bart GOOSSENS**

Research Institute for Nature and Forest  
Gaverstraat 4  
B-9500 Geraardsbergen  
BELGIUM  
Email: [bart.goossens@inbo.be](mailto:bart.goossens@inbo.be)

### Environment Librarians' Representative

**Anne-Laure ACHARD**

National Research Institute  
of Science and Technology for Environment  
and Agriculture (IRSTEA)  
FRANCE  
Email: [anne-laure.achard@irstea.fr](mailto:anne-laure.achard@irstea.fr)

### Euraslic Archivist

**Malgorzata GRABOWSKA-POPOW**

National Marine Fisheries Research Institute  
ul. Kołłątaja 1  
81-332 Gdynia  
POLAND  
Email: [mpopow@mir.gdynia.pl](mailto:mpopow@mir.gdynia.pl)

### ECET Representative

#### (European Countries in Economic Transition)

**Ekaterina KULAKOVA**

Russian Research Institute of Fisheries and  
Oceanography (VNIRO)  
2 Sverdlov Street  
8300 Kerch  
CRIMEA  
Email: [katia\\_faust@mail.ru](mailto:katia_faust@mail.ru)

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The Editorial staff of the Newsletter expresses its gratitude to all contributors to this issue. There is nothing more authentic and exciting than the information presented firsthand. We would like this to encourage everyone to not hesitate sharing the events being involved and personal professional experience, because sharing is a source of knowledge and maintains the integrity of the community.

Happy New Year!