

## **EURASLIC - European Association of Aquatic Sciences Libraries and Information Centers – twenty years of activity (1988-2008)**

### ***Summary***

The year of 2008 marked the twentieth anniversary of the formation and work of the European Association of Aquatic Sciences Libraries and Information Centers (EURASLIC), an association that was initiated by two British librarians, Allen Varley and David Moulder. The first Association meeting in 1988 in Plymouth Marine Laboratory, United Kingdom, was attended by 35 librarians from 8 European countries (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Monaco, Portugal and United Kingdom). The idea of creating an European network linking aquatic and marine sciences libraries and information centers originated from the United States, due to an initiative of Carol Winn and Jane Fessenden who in 1975 formed the East Coast Marine Science Librarians (ECMSL) which, some years later, was transformed into International Association of Aquatic and Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers (IAMSLIC). The IAMSLIC in 1984 included 148 members from 16 countries, also from Europe.

Since its formation, the EURASLIC meetings have been held in various countries. Thus, 2<sup>d</sup> meeting was in Institut Oceanographique, Paris, France in 1990; 3<sup>d</sup> in Lelystadt, Holland in 1991. The 4<sup>th</sup> meeting in Bremerhaven, Germany in 1991, was held jointly with 18<sup>th</sup> Annual IAMSLIC Conference. The following, 5<sup>th</sup>

meeting, was the first one that was hosted by an Eastern European country i.e., the Sea Fisheries in Gdynia, and was organized by Henryk Ganowiak in 1994. In the years that followed the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, the EURASLIC had grown and became stronger gathering many European libraries and information centers. The Association meetings provided a venue to exchange professional experience and to introduce new trends in the modernization of library work. One of many valuable EURASLIC initiatives was formation of an inter - library exchange network via email called „Submit ill request”, which is quite helpful and sometimes priceless in getting access to literature that is not available in a specific country.

Starting with the 7<sup>th</sup>, each EURASLIC conference was organized every two years, and had addressed specific topics which titles are shown in the Table below.



EURASLIC 10, Kiel, Germany

### **List of 7-12th EURASLIC Conferences in 1998-2007**

<b>Nr</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Title of the Conference</b>
<b>7th</b>	6-8 May 1998	Athina (Greece)	<i>People and technology. Sharing knowledge and shaping the future of aquatic information in Europe</i>
<b>8th</b>	3-5 May 2000	Aberdeen (United Kingdom)	<i>New skills for the millennium</i>
<b>9th</b>	14-19 Oct. 2002	Brest (France)	<i>Managing resources in a sea of change</i>
<b>10th</b>	7-9 May 2003	Kiel (Germany)	<i>Smooth sailing crossing the boundaries in aquatic sciences information management</i>
<b>11th</b>	4-8 May 2005	Split (Croatia)	<i>Open waters– open sources</i>
<b>12th</b>	2-4 May 2007	Sevastopol (Ukraine)	<i>From treasures of the seas – to treasures of the libraries</i>

With each conference more and more time was devoted to electronic sources of information and feasibility of using electronic journals. The topics of many discussions that took place included digitalization of library resources, positive and negative sides of graphics of research institutions displayed on the web, internet resources, and a free access to information. The last conference held in Sevastopol, Ukraine, entitled “From treasures of the seas – to treasures of the libraries” showed vividly how an enormous progress has been made in the last decade in respect to electronic sources of information, and that despite the progress there are many users of traditional paper - printed books and documents.

It is foreseen that future EURASLIC conferences will provide new opportunities to develop even further the cooperation and information exchange. Here, we would like to express our appreciation to the members who, in all those 20 years, were actively involved in the EURASLIC work and contributed significantly to the formation of cooperation among the European libraries and information centers in the field of freshwater and marine sciences and fisheries. These are: Allen Varley, David Moulder, Nicole Momzikoff, Bent Gaardestrup, Barbara Schmidt, Marcel Branneman, Sophia Goulala, Joan Baron-Varley, Henryk Ganowiak, Jan Haspeslagh, Sofija Konjevic, Marina Mayer, Michelle L'Excellent, Agnes Masoneau, Jacqueline Prod'homme, Olga Akimova, Snejjina Bacheva, Ian Pettman and many others. It has to be also mentioned that EURASLIC and IAMSLIC joint conferences are important because they allow for a broader exchange of information and experience.

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