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InterRidge News

Promoting international cooperation in ridge-crest studies

InterRidge and the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research

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The Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR) has been encouraging international cooperation in, and advancement of, ocean sciences since it was established by the International Council of Science in 1957. Thirty-five nations provide Nominated Members to international SCOR, which conducts its work through a variety of mechanisms.

Sponsorship of large-scale ocean research projects

SCOR sponsors five large-scale ocean research projects:

1. the Global Ocean Ecosystem Dynamics (GLOBEC) project (with the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme [IGBP] and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission [IOC]),
2. the Global Ecology and Oceanography of Harmful Algal Blooms (GEOHAB) project (with IOC),
3. the Surface Ocean – Lower Atmosphere Flux Study (SOLAS: with IGBP, the World Climate Research Programme and the Commission on Atmospheric Chemistry and Global Pollution),
4. the Integrated Marine Biogeochemistry and Ecosystem Research (IMBER) project (with IGBP),
5. and the GEOTRACES project.

The most recently established of these projects is GEOTRACES, which is an international study of the global marine biogeochemical cycles of trace elements and their isotopes. It includes studies of hydrothermal systems in terms of their input and removal of trace elements and their isotopes (see www.geotraces.org) and thus is an area of potential cooperation between SCOR and InterRidge. Toshitaka Gamo and Chris German from the InterRidge community participated on the GEOTRACES Planning Committee that produced the GEOTRACES Science Plan.

Sponsorship of working groups

The purpose of a SCOR working group may be to synthesize the state of an area of science, make recommendations about research priorities, conduct method development, and/or conduct intercalibration exercises. Presently, SCOR does not have any working groups related to ridge processes, but sponsored three previous groups related to InterRidge, which produced two documents:

- Holm, N.G. 1992. Marine Hydrothermal Systems and the Origin of Life. Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, The Netherlands. (from WG 91 on Chemical Evolution and Origin of Life in Marine Hydrothermal Systems)
- Parson, L.M. and M. Sinha. 1997. Linked Mass and Energy Fluxes at Ridge Crests and BRIDGE Research Results. Southampton Oceanography Centre Report No. 3. (from WG 99 on Linked Mass and Energy Fluxes at Ridge Crests)

SCOR accepts working group proposals from many sources and some groups are conducted in cooperation with other organizations or research projects. SCOR is seeking new working groups on geological topics, so would be open to proposals on topics of interest to InterRidge. Information about working groups and how to propose them can be found at http://www.jhu.edu/scor/WGs.htm.

Project affiliations

Recognizing that some important ocean science activities are conducted by projects not involved with SCOR and that SCOR could provide a service to the international ocean science community by encouraging such projects, SCOR created a mechanism for project affiliations in 1995. Currently, five projects — InterRidge, the Census of Marine Life (CoML), International Antarctic Zone Program (iAnZone), International Marine Global Change Study (IMAGES), and International Ocean Colour Co-ordinating Group (IOCCG) – are affiliated with SCOR. InterRidge has been affiliated with SCOR since 1996. InterRidge has been represented at three of the past four SCOR annual meetings. Agnieszka Adamczewska gave an extended presentation of InterRidge's achievements and plans at the 2002 SCOR General Meeting in Sapporo, Japan. Meeting participants were impressed by the quality and scope of InterRidge activities. Colin Devey attended the 2004 and 2005 SCOR meetings, most recently representing the German SCOR committee as well as InterRidge.

SCOR does not provide financial support to affiliated projects, but affiliation may increase a project's international visibility and access to scientists in SCOR member nations, as well as providing the benefit of SCOR advice on project committees and activities. Each affiliated project is reviewed for continued affiliation at each SCOR General Meeting. SCOR has also provided opportunities for chairs of affiliated projects to meet with other projects to discuss common opportunities and challenges (see http://www.jhu.edu/scor/ProjCoord.htm). Affiliated projects can apply to SCOR for funds to help developing country scientists attend their scientific meetings; SCOR provided support for one individual to attend the InterRidge Theoretical Institute on Back-arc Spreading Systems in South Korea in 2004.

Information about all SCOR activities can be found on the SCOR Web site at www.jhu.edu/scor or by contacting Ed Urban, SCOR Executive Director, at Ed.Urban@jhu.edu.