

INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
(of UNESCO)

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The Global Directory of Marine and Freshwater Professionals: OceanExpert

(Peter Pissierssens)

1. 1997-2001: GLODIR: The Global Directory of Marine (and Freshwater) professionals

OceanExpert started as the Global Directory of Marine (and Freshwater) Professionals (GLODIR) in 1997 (logo: Fig 2) after the IODE Group of Experts on Marine Information Management (GE-MIM) had noted that the International Directory of Marine Scientists project, developed and maintained in the 1970s and 1980s by several UN agencies had been stopped despite its high appreciation by the ocean research community.



Figure 1

The first version of the new GLODIR was launched in 1997 as a web product enabling experts to enter and edit their information. Whereas the first version used the full ASFA subject descriptor set to enable experts to define their expertise, this was quickly dropped as experts showed little enthusiasm to spend the time required to pick descriptors from this extensive list. It was therefore decided to use a far more limited list of subject descriptors.

In 1999 a number of IASMLIC members agreed to cooperate in GLODIR as national or regional 'input coordinators'. This led to a rapid increase (doubling!) in the number of entries and GLODIR passed the cape of 10,000 records at the end of 1999. At that time we decided to add the citation field enabling experts to include short descriptions of their most important and/or recent scientific publications. This also proved to be a success as within a year over 15,000 citations were added.

Once a year all experts registered in GLODIR received an email inviting them to update their record. On average 30-40% of the experts responded to this request. A big problem turned out to be the password required for editing records: in many cases the registered experts forgot this password and needed to obtain it from us.

Another problem was that experts who had not provided an email address (or who had been registered by the national/regional coordinators without an email address): although we attempted to send out printed update requests to over 3000 experts this proved to be an impractical, expensive and time consuming exercise that could not be maintained. By the year 2002 the number of records reached 13,500, of which 3000 did not have an email address.

2. 2002: The birth of OceanExpert

Early 2002 we assessed the need to re-engineer GLODIR. We found that the technical solution on which GLODIR was based until then (Filemaker database served over the internet with Lasso as middleware) had reached its limits with response times of up to 2 seconds. In addition the mailing function of GLODIR (sending out email to all or part of GLODIR addresses) caused crashes or serious slowdown of the server when the number of addressees exceeded 1000. It was therefore decided to migrate GLODIR to a more robust and flexible solution. A contractor was hired to re-engineer GLODIR during the summer of 2002.

We specified the following new features:

- (i) easy registration with 'forgot my password' function that emails the forgotten password;
- (ii) enable registered expert to send emails to others in the same country and/or with the same research interest ("community subscribe" function to receive such mails and "community mail" function to send such mails);
- (iii) citation alert: to receive an email alert when an expert with your research interest submit a citation. In addition, to respond to the request to also provide a 'directory of research institutions' the system now uses a 'controlled' institution list whereby new experts can choose from a list of institutions previously entered.

The technology solution chosen is based on the open source MySQL database management system and PHP programming language. Last but not least we decided to rename GLODIR to a more intuitive 'OceanExpert' and we registered the domain name www.oceanexpert.net. The new OceanExpert has been launched officially on 1 November 2002. We also removed the 3000 addresses that do not have an email address.



Figure 3

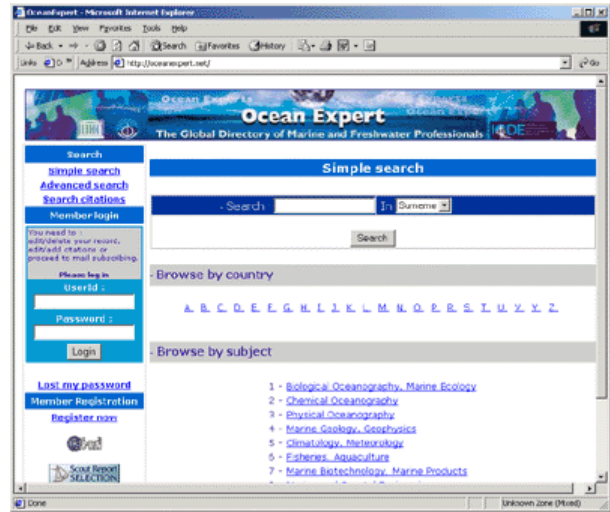


Figure 4

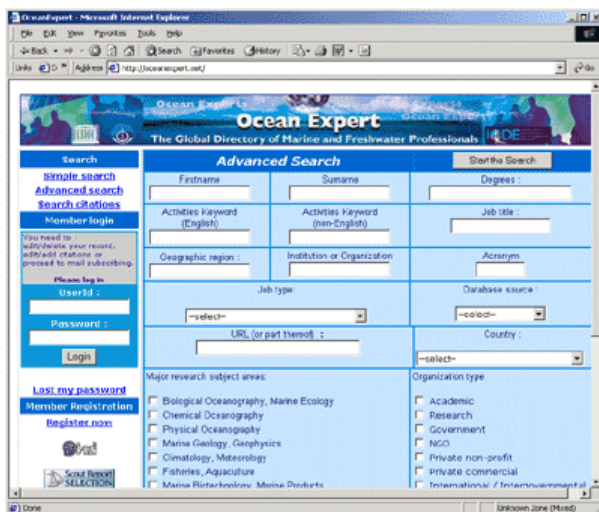


Figure 5

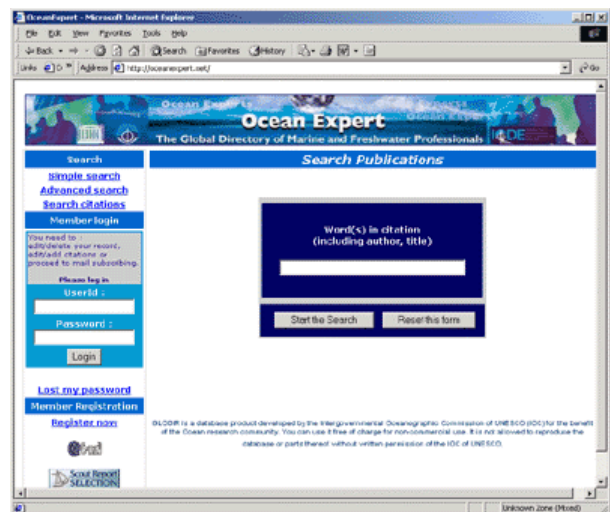


Figure 2

Figure 2: Homepage of OceanExpert

Figure 3: Simple search page allowing search by surname, country, institution or subject, as well as browsing by country

Figure 4: Advanced search page allowing searching by any field

Figure 5: Citations search

3. Input strategies for OceanExpert

1.1 Current awareness for OceanExpert on the Web

To the secretariat's knowledge very few Member States have actively advertised OceanExpert at the national level.

The following 5 web pages refer to OceanExpert:

1. [POGO - Current Activities](#)
2. [iamslic_log0202: \[IAMSLIC:1413\] \[IOC\] NEW OCEANPORTAL SERVICE](#)
3. [Whalenet Information Archive 2002: IODE: EASILY FIND OCEAN DATA](#)
4. [Marine and Environmental consultants and Research Workers](#)
5. [NOAA Seattle Library >Guide to Online Libraries & Scientific ...](#) –

A total of 571 webpages refer to 'GLODIR'. We list here the first 100 of these:

1. [glodir global directory of marine \(and freshwater\) professionals](#) –(Freshwater Biological Association of the UK)
2. [NABS - Classified ad- GLODIR: Global directory of marine \(and ...](#)
3. [IAMSLIC: GLODIR & IDALIC Directories](#)
4. [GLODIR Individual details](#) (IMAR - MARES Marine Ecology Research Group, Portugal)
5. [SILNEWS 27](#) – (www.limnology.org)
6. [seafood_log0005: FAO Corporate Roster of Experts](#)
7. [The MPA Library: MPA Web Sites](#) –
8. [what's new?](#) (IZWO, Belgium)
9. [AISA - URL Ricerca](#)
10. [The Scout Report - March 3, 2000](#)
11. [Google Directory - Science > Earth Sciences > Oceanography > ...](#)
12. [BBC - Nature - Blue Planet Challenge](#)
13. [FAO Fisheries Library - Directories](#)
14. [People](#) (www.marine.gov.uk)
15. [AFSA Gateway](#) (NOAA Library)
16. [Excite UK - Directory](#) –
17. [Directorios de Investigadores Marinos](#) (Spain)
18. [experts](#) (www.meteo.ru)
19. [Hello, friends!!!](#) (www.meiofauna.org)
20. [itt - Weekly Updates - 10 Mar 2000](#) –
21. [www.infomag.ru:8082/dbase/B005E/000320-079.txt](#) -
22. [Marine Science](#) – (library.ust.hk)
23. [www.ecoline.ru/news/FEB00/00021103.TXT](#)
24. [EE Link: EE Organizations and Projects - Marine](#) –
25. [Web site addresses](#) (www.meds-sdmm.dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

26. [Fachbibliographien und Online-Datenbanken \(FabiO\) \(www.bsz-bw.de\)](http://www.bsz-bw.de)
27. [Supplement 1. Web Sites in the Virtual Library \(mpa.gov\)](http://mpa.gov)
28. [Internet Resources Newsletter, Issue 50, November 1998 \(SECTION B ...\)](#)
29. [Mail lists, resources/searches \(www.asfb.org.au\)](http://www.asfb.org.au)
30. [SZN - Library - Bibliographic Researches \(alpha.szn.it\)](http://alpha.szn.it)
31. [What Was New: SIO Library](#)
32. [BiologyBrowser](#)
33. [Worldwide Non-Bibliographic DB:??](#)
34. [March 2000 iMP WH \(www.cisp.org\)](http://www.cisp.org)
35. [CSI Whales Alive! Vol. VIII No. 4 Cetacean News](#)
36. [HMSC Newsletter, Mar 1997](#)
37. [1998 Biaslic Minutes](#)
38. [AnsMe Directory - Science > Earth Sciences > Oceanography > ... -](#)
39. [Poynter Marine Science Resources -](#)
40. [NOAA Miami Regional Library -](#)
41. [Directories / All \(UNESCO\)](#)
42. [European Cetacean Society -](#)
43. [NW/AFSC Library - General Online Tools -](#)
44. [Other Links Local Libraries SC Museums SC 2yr College Libraries ... - \(mrl.cofc.edu\)](#)
45. [Open Directory - Science: Earth Sciences: Oceanography: ... -](#)
46. [envirotransacroG30](#)
47. [Links \(algeinfo.imr.no\)](http://algeinfo.imr.no)
48. [Fundgrube - \(www.mpimet.mpg.de\)](http://www.mpimet.mpg.de)
49. [Aquae.com Institutional Links](#)
50. [DEEPSEAS Links \(www.soc.soton.ac.uk \)](http://www.soc.soton.ac.uk)
51. [NOL | Websites | Projects \(www.soc.soton.ac.uk \)](http://www.soc.soton.ac.uk)
52. [Home \(www.whale-foundation.org\)](http://www.whale-foundation.org)
53. [The DEEPSEA Research Newsgroup](#)
54. [delphys: the Oceanic Page](#)
55. [Cadet Hand Library - Reference Shelf - directories \(www.bml.ucdavis.edu\)](http://www.bml.ucdavis.edu)
56. [AOCEANO - Associação Brasileira de Oceanografia](#)
57. [Advice on Remote Sensing applications \(www.pgcons.nl\)](http://www.pgcons.nl)
58. [Some More Interesting Links \(www.sdafs.org\)](http://www.sdafs.org)
59. [IOW Bibliothek - Ozeanographie im Internet \(www.io-warnemuende.de\)](http://www.io-warnemuende.de)
60. [MARINE ENGINEERING AND SCIENCES \(lib.dlmu.edu.cn\)](http://lib.dlmu.edu.cn)
61. [FROTA NEWS ONLINE - OFICINA LITERÁRIA VIRTUAL](#)
62. [WHAT'S NEW ARCHIVES \(www.dal.ca\)](http://www.dal.ca)
63. [BIOSIS | Resource Guide | Organizations - G](#)
64. [WWW pages - International marine related organizations and ... \(www.extech.msk.su\)](http://www.extech.msk.su)
65. [T. Wilson \(www.evolutionsbiologie.uni-konstanz.de\)](http://www.evolutionsbiologie.uni-konstanz.de)
66. [UCL Subject : Marines Sciences - Internet Resources \(www.lib.uconn.edu\)](http://www.lib.uconn.edu)
67. [galahlinks.com: Science/Earth Sciences/Oceanography/ ...](#)
68. [Selección de enlaces de AMPHIBIA](#)
69. [Global Directory of Marine and Freshwater Scientists \(144.16.65.194\)](#)

70. [Oceanography](http://knjiznica.irb.hr) (knjiznica.irb.hr)
71. [Última actualización 16 octubre 2000](http://biblioteca.udg.es) (biblioteca.udg.es)
72. [Links...PO and others](http://www.unc.edu) (www.unc.edu)
73. [Link's](http://www.terravista.pt) (www.terravista.pt)
74. [New March 2000 - Donald W. Craik Engineering Library](http://www.umanitoba.ca) (www.umanitoba.ca)
75. [ENLACES DE INTERÉS ICTIOLÓGICO](http://www.icm.csic.es/rec/gim/enlaces.htm) (www.icm.csic.es/rec/gim/enlaces.htm)
76. [Science/Earth Sciences/Oceanography/Oceanographers](http://www.science-and-research.com/Science/Earth_Sciences/Oceanography/Oceanographers/) (www.science-and-research.com/Science/Earth_Sciences/Oceanography/Oceanographers/)
77. [Untitled](http://members.tripod.com/~gerson_lodi/sfc.htm) (members.tripod.com/~gerson_lodi/sfc.htm)
78. [Oceanografija](http://knjiznica.irb.hr/hrv/znanost/oceanografija/) (knjiznica.irb.hr/hrv/znanost/oceanografija/)
79. [freshwater links](http://library.ceh.ac.uk/html/freshwater.htm) (library.ceh.ac.uk/html/freshwater.htm - 12k)
80. [stunning.com - Oceanographers](http://dir.stunning.com/directory/category/283440) (dir.stunning.com/directory/category/283440)
81. [Servidores en Mundial](http://aquatic.unizar.es/comun/www/MU.) (aquatic.unizar.es/comun/www/MU.)
82. [Servidores sobre Centros de Documentación](http://aquatic.unizar.es/comun/www/T_DOC.) (aquatic.unizar.es/comun/www/T_DOC.)
83. [Links](http://www.ambra.unibo.it/links.htm) (www.ambra.unibo.it/links.htm)
84. [Coral Reef Ecology](http://www.ecolynx.com/coral_reef_ecology.htm) (www.ecolynx.com/coral_reef_ecology.htm)
85. [Conexões - Busca](http://www.uff.br/biomar/conexoes_busca.htm) (www.uff.br/biomar/conexoes_busca.htm)
86. Global directory of marine (and freshwater) professionals
www.library.adelaide.edu.au/erc/G/1394414.html -)
87. [Worldwide Free of Charge Databases on the Web - English edition](http://www.asahi-net.or.jp/~gb4k-ktr/freedb3e.htm)
www.asahi-net.or.jp/~gb4k-ktr/freedb3e.htm - 70k -
88. [WHAT'S NEW ARCHIVES](http://www.dal.ca/aczisc/new-4) (www.dal.ca/aczisc/new-4)
89. [PHOENIX - ICAMEhomepage](http://www.phoenix-icame.nl/html/body_links.html) (www.phoenix-icame.nl/html/body_links.html -)
90. [Aaise - Oceanographers Category](http://www.aaise.com/html/Science/Earth_Sciences/Oceanography/Oceanographers/) (www.aaise.com/html/Science/Earth_Sciences/Oceanography/Oceanographers/)
91. [SEACAM UpdateLinks to Related Sites](#)
92. [SFI: Liste des adresses envoyees par les membres](http://www.mnhn.fr/sfi/annuaire/email.html)
(www.mnhn.fr/sfi/annuaire/email.html)
93. [Trouver des informations](http://sdis.inrs.quebec.ca/infosphere/choisirinformations.html) (sdis.inrs.quebec.ca/infosphere/choisirinformations.html)
94. ["The Birnberg & Associates Home Page" \[Oceanography\]](http://www.birnberg.com/oceanography.html)
(www.birnberg.com/oceanography.html)
95. [http](http://www.solutions.iq.unesp.br/marine3.htm) (www.solutions.iq.unesp.br/marine3.htm)
96. [Whales on the Net - World News Archive](http://www.whales.org.au/news/news1999.html)
www.whales.org.au/news/news1999.html
97. [Express Diesel Service Ltd. Maritime Links Directory.](http://www.edspro.com/mlinks/index.php?category=74)
www.edspro.com/mlinks/index.php?category=74 -
98. [Suchmaschine Acoon - Webkatalog](http://www.acoon.de/cgi-bin/showcat.exe?cat=Top/Science/earth_Sciences/Oceanography/Oceanographers)
www.acoon.de/cgi-bin/showcat.exe?cat=Top/Science/earth_Sciences/Oceanography/Oceanographers -
99. [Links](http://www.tri.chula.ac.th/link/link04.htm) www.tri.chula.ac.th/link/link04.htm -
100. [Mermayde | Mermayde's Links](http://www.mermayde.nl/links.html) (www.mermayde.nl/links.html)

A full analysis of these links reveals that very few IODE data centers included a link to GLODIR or OceanExpert. Ocean Libraries that created a link did so mostly based upon

information provided by IAMS LIC (International Association of Aquatic and Marine Science Libraries and Information Centres).

1.2 Coordinated strategies within IODE programmes

Coordinated input strategies for OceanExpert have been developed in the framework of ODINAFRICA and, more recently for ODINCARSA.

Africa

Within the framework of ODINAFRICA a regional directory has been developed named AFRIDIR. This is a sub-set of OceanExpert representing 400 records. This directory is maintained on a regular basis by the ODINAFRICA Information Services Centre (Mombasa, Kenya). Funding is provided for this maintenance on an annual basis from extrabudgetary sources.

Caribbean and South America

During the First ODINCARSA Training Course in Marine Information Management (hosted by the Unidad Académica Mazatlán del Instituto de Ciencias del Mar y Limnología, U.N.A.M.), Mazatlan, Mexico, 29 September – 4 October 2002 the following was included in the ODINCARSA-MIM work plan 2003:

EXPERT LOCATOR

Item	Action to be taken and by whom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop ODINCARSA regional directory of ocean experts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IOC to establish ODINCARSA sub-directory of OceanExpert with its own homepage (and bilingual English/Spanish user interface); • ODINCARSA national partners to promote ODINCARSA OceanExpert at institutional and national level and ensure substantial coverage for their country; • ODINCARSA national partners to quality control institutional and individual records;

It is expected that the ODINCARSA regional directory will be available around half 2003. Some funding will be allocated for this purpose in the ODINCARSA project budget 2003 (UNESCO regular Programme).

4. Recommendations of GEMIM-VII related to OceanExpert

GEMIM-VII requested to make sure that editors receive an e-mail notification when new records have been added that fall under their responsibility.

GEMIM-VII requested to include an 'export' function for administrators/editor enabling listing of individual records for a given institution.

GEMIM-VII noted that OceanExpert still contains marine, freshwater and brackish water experts. The option was mentioned to split the end user interface into marine or freshwater/brackish. However, it was felt that this is not a priority for GEMIM.

GEMIM-VII Action 18: (i) the Group will review and evaluate the new system; (ii) the Group will, in co-operation with IAMSLIC and EURASLIC, promote OceanExpert; (iii) the Group will, in co-operation with IAMSLIC and EURASLIC, recruit institutional, national and/or regional editors.

18	4.4	OceanExpert: - review & evaluate the new system - in co-operation with IAMSLIC & EURASLIC, promote OceanExpert - in co-operation with IAMSLIC & EURASLIC, recruit editors	Feb. '03	-	S. Davies & members
			Cont.		
			Mar. '03	-	S. Davies

The Chair GEMIM will report on progress of this Action Item.

5. The Future

We invite Member States to utilize OceanExpert for the management of their ocean related human resources information. OceanExpert is designed to enable institutional as well as national 'editors' who can edit records. OceanExpert can also be used as a mass mailing tool.

OceanExpert has the potential to be used as a mass communication tool to inform the ocean research and observation community about IOC's activities. The current 10,000 records cover probably only 1/10th to 1/20th of the total ocean research community.

If IOC member States approve of OceanExpert as an appropriate tool to advertise IOC then national awareness will need to be created by IOC Action Addresses, IODE National Coordinators and other experts involved in IOC activities about OceanExpert.

6. Work Plan, Timing & Budget

As detailed above currently two regional ODIN projects have allocated funding for a coordinated OceanExpert input strategy. However, in order to ensure comprehensive geographic coverage of OceanExpert additional efforts will be required, especially in areas not relevant to ODIN networks.

Some funds will also be needed to ensure maintenance and further development of the OceanExpert system and to ensure that the service is available. In view of the Internet bandwidth difficulties at UNESCO Headquarters this may imply relocating the server and connecting to a high-bandwidth ISP.

US\$5000 has been allocated under the 2003 UNESCO regular Programme for the further development and maintenance of OceanExpert.

7. Actions required from the Committee

Requested actions from the Committee

The Committee is requested to:

- Comment on the OceanExpert product and decide on its usefulness and possible continuation
- Make recommendations for future development
- Recommend ways means to further develop OceanExpert (2003-2005) including financial support for 2003-2005

[end]