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INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
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Project report: Marine Environmental Data Inventory (MEDI)

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Marine Environmental Data Inventory (MEDI) is a catalogue system for marine datasets within the framework of the IODE programme. MEDI provides a reference point for locating marine and coastal datasets and is populated with metadata descriptions of marine datasets from IOC member states. MEDI became a permanent programme of IODE at the Sixteenth Session of the Committee (Recommendation IODE-XVI.1).

2. PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE PAST INTER-SESSIONAL PERIOD

2.1 IODE Steering Group for the MEDI Project

The Third Session of the Steering Group for the MEDI Project (SG-MEDI) was held from 11-13 September 2006 at Drexel University, Philadelphia, USA. Issues discussed by the Steering Group included:

Marine Metadata Profile. At its eighteenth session, the IODE Committee recommended the development of a marine profile of ISO19115 (IODEXVIII.3). The Steering Group discussed the Marine Community Profile of ISO 19115 developed by the Australian Ocean Data Centre Joint Facility and agreed to circulate the Marine Profile for further comment on its suitability for use by the international community. Subsequently, a metadata discussion list was established by the Project Office and a short explanatory document describing the marine profile was produced.

Vocabularies. The Steering Group agreed that governance of vocabularies used by MEDI should be the responsibility of the MarineXML.

MEDI Authoring Tool. The current authoring tool is not maintained and does not support the ISO 19115 standard. The Steering Group agreed to monitor developing metadata authoring tools that will support the requirements of the marine community.

Cooperation. The Steering Group agreed to cooperate with the JCOMM Water Temperature Metadata (META-T) Pilot Project which is aiming at provide an international standardization framework for collecting SST and water temperature profile instrumental metadata from a number of marine observational systems, including drifting and moored buoys, observing ships, sea level stations, sub-surface profiling floats, ocean reference stations, and ODAS.

2.2 Capacity Building

The MEDI authoring tool is not currently used in IODE training activities. Metadata is still an integral part of the training curriculum for data managers and, until a replacement authoring tool is available, a paper-based form is used for training purposes. The new authoring tool will be incorporated into future training programmes.

3. WORKPLAN FOR 2007-2009

The following activities are planned for the intersessional period:

Participate in the proposed Ocean Data Portal Project. Metadata will be an integral component of the proposed IODE Ocean Data Portal project. The Portal will be metadata driven and all data and information service must have a metadata record. The integrity of the Portal will be based on the quality of the metadata. SG MEDI can provide leadership in defining the metadata requirements for the Ocean Data Portal and will work closely with the proposed development project.

Cooperation with other initiatives. SG MEDI will continue to work with other metadata initiatives, such as JCOMM META-T and the MMI project, to ensure metadata interoperability across the marine domain.

Capacity building. MEDI will continue to be used for metadata training in IODE data management workshops and in capacity building products.

Metadata authoring tool. SG-MEDI will not develop a replacement metadata tool but will work with other communities who are developing metadata tools. SG-MEDI will monitor progress for the development of a compliant metadata authoring tool and will test and recommend the use of a suitable metadata tool. Metadata records currently recorded in MEDI will be converted to the new format.

Steering Group. A meeting of the Steering Group is proposed for the intersessional period. This meeting should take place in 2008 to discuss the metadata requirements for the Ocean Data Portal and to evaluate and recommend a suitable metadata authoring tool.

4. BUDGETARY REQUIREMENTS

Budget requirement for the project is to hold a session of the Steering Group for the MEDI Project. Funding required for period 2005-2007 is $15,000 to come from the IODE Regular Programme.

5. REQUESTED ACTIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE

The Committee is requested to:

- Adopt the summary report of the Third Session of the IODE Steering Group for MEDI, and
- Provide funding for the concerned actions: US$ 15,000 for the period 2007-2009.

ANNEX I SISTER Workplan Sheet

Element type: ACTIVITY
Code: 32132301
Heading: **Globally accessible portal to distributed ocean data and information sources: development of technological framework and exchange standards (mXML, MEDI)**
Link to previous level: **ER-1: Globally accessible portal to distributed ocean data and information sources**

Justification/ identification of needs: The rapid development of web-based data and information services by a wide variety of national institutions (data centres, universities, research facilities) makes that data users are now faced with a data/information discovery problem that cannot be addressed by search engines (eg Google). Emerging technologies like distributed databases, xml etc will enable to resolve this problem.

The MEDI project will contribute to this activity with the following expected results:

Expected Result N° 2	**Provide the metadata component of the IODE Ocean Data Portal project.**		
	Performance Indicator(s)	Means of Verification (data source) (Optional)	Programmed Benchmark (where available baseline data so permit)
1	marine metadata standard agreed	published metadata standard	publications available
2	metadata authoring tool	metadata authoring tool available to the community	authoring tool used by NODCs to describe datasets
3	in collaboration with SG-MarineXML, develop vocabularies to describe marine resources	published vocabularies	vocabularies available to the community
4	define the metadata requirements for the Ocean Data Portal	agreed metadata design to provide information services to be deployed via the Ocean Data Portal	metadata design and management plan to support the functionality of the Oceans Portal.

Monitoring/reporting information:

Date	Overall progress assessment (progress in achieving the expected result with reference to performance indicator(s) and associated programmed benchmark(s))
13/09/2006	Meeting of the SG-MEDI. Action plan agreed.
30/10/2006	Marine metadata discussion list established.
30/06/2007	Marine profile published
31/12/2007	Metadata authoring tool available
31/12/2007	Agreed vocabularies integrated into the metadata authoring tool
31/06/2008	Metadata component for the Ocean Data Portal documented

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