



# GEOHAB

Marine Geological and Biological  
Habitat Mapping

## Minutes GeoHab 2011 Annual General Meeting

5th May, 2011. Helsinki (~17-18hr)

Participants: 30-40

Scientific committee: Aarno Kotilainen, Gary Greene, Andrew Heap, Michael Haldin, Kirsi Kostamo, Geoffroy Lamarche (Chair), Johanna Mattila, Tersje Thorsnes, Brian Todd

General: Congratulations to Aarno and his team for superb organisation!

### GeoHab 2011 report (Aarno)

- 136 participants from 22 countries
- 38 from Finland; 9 from Australia; 6 from Italy
- Several new GeoHab countries: Russia, Brazil, Taiwan
- 53 presentations and 39<sup>1</sup> posters

Total expenses: 43,600 EUR (12,500 sponsorship)

Total income: 50,100 EUR

Net surplus: 6,500 EUR

### Finances (Gary)

- Conferences are organised by host institutions on a voluntary basis;
- Circum Pacific Council (CPC: [www.circum-pacificcouncil.org](http://www.circum-pacificcouncil.org)), a non-profit organisation, facilitates the finances of GeoHab conferences, through a fund  
*Purpose of the fund* is to support students and buffer for the organisation of conferences: backing-up of conference organisation and payment advancement

CPC Account #9581 GeoHab; Balance as of March 1, 2011:

<i>Income</i>		<i>Expenses</i>	
Savings	6,078.41 USD	Elsevier*	-20,000 USD
Checking's	63,221.58 USD	Student awards	-13,690 USD
Total	69,299.99 USD		
<b>Overall balance (1/3/2011)</b>			<b>30,609.99 USD</b>
		<i>Other expenses</i>	
		Website (paid out since last GeoHab meeting)	871.00 USD
		Recent billing to be paid	201.65 USD

\*hard copy Special Issue GeoHab, Cont. Shelf Research)

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<sup>1</sup> Not confirmed

## Student Committee (Geoffroy)

- Chairman of previous year conference becomes chairman of the "students grant committee" of the forthcoming meeting; takes care of advertisement to local universities; a set of rules are available on GeoHab website enabling easy decisions;
- In 2011: 14 applications of which 2 applications from professionals;
- Budget for students awards is around 10,000 EUR; fees are being paid for;
- General rules (see website): representativity around the world, plus priority for students from the previous conference
  - Requirements: Proposal with abstract, short CV and motivation; early stage research is given priority, as also first talks;
  - Fully funded students have to present orally and attend entire conference
- Decisions are made by the Scientific Committee. This year, a conference call on this topic was held.
- Student awards 2011 (6): 3 New Zealand; 1 Italy, 2 Australia (3 fully funded, 3 partly funded). Decision is given one month before. Because of good budget, all costs could be paid, but this is not a general rule.

## Student award (Gary)

Proposal to name the student award after Ron McDowell. Over the years, Ron has been very supportive to the foundation, especially towards students. He passed away recently. Everyone agrees with the proposal of launching the name McDowell GeoHab Student award!

## Forthcoming meetings (Geoffroy)

### *GeoHab 2012*

Vaughn and Gary offered Orcas Island (US) for next meeting.

- Timing: first week of May
- Venue: Rosario Resort, a beautiful place with facilities right on the bay
- Transport: easy
  - You can fly in right at the dock or hire car; flights via Seattle, Victoria or Vancouver; local transportation can be taken care of;
- Costs: relatively inexpensive. Large conference facility; housing on the hill, great pub!
- Theme: not decided yet, but session will be organised on renewable energy. Main goal: stimulate discussion between biologists and geologists
- Participants: same amount of participants (+/- 140) is aimed for
- Comments audience: stimulate participation of policy makers; this would favour interaction between science-industry and policy makers
  - Geoffroy and Gary agree and will take actions to get good people in
  - Gary already invited NOAA as a major regulatory agency. A series of additional regulatory agencies and public utilities will be asked for. Announcements will be made as to convince your own regulators to participate;
- Field trip: organisation with the help of Kim Picard

## GeoHab 2013

1. Offer from Italy, 2 yrs ago (Andrea Fiorentino, Geological Survey of Italy-ISPRA)
  - Venue: Rome
  - Participants: invitations will be sent to the marine geology/biology community of the Mediterranean (e.g. Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey, Greece, Middle East countries, Iran, Asia)
  - Field trip: Proposal to have a 2 days field trip to Ischia island (e.g. thermal baths)
  
2. Alternative proposal of Portugal is being made (Rosa Freitas, University of Aveiro)
  - Motivation:
    - University of Aveiro ([www.ua.pt](http://www.ua.pt)) organises the MESHAtlantic conference in May 2013. Since the same audience is being targeted, it would be good to organise both conferences in Portugal.
    - Good opportunity for Portugal to grow in the topic of habitat mapping and stimulate marine biologists to work with marine geologists
    - Experience in organisation: [eurolag.web.ua.pt](http://eurolag.web.ua.pt) (150 people)
    - Booster for the southern European countries
  - Venue: Aveiro, the Portuguese Venice (1hr from Porto);
  - Costs: Not expensive; some of the expenses can be covered by the University (support of Rector)
  - Participants: Attract South American and African countries (bring in Portuguese speaking people)

### Discussion on holding GeoHab 2013 in Rome or Aveiro

- It was decided to go for Rome, on a first come, first serve basis. The Italian offer was made 2 yrs ago (GeoHab Trondheim), confirmed in Wellington and therefore was accepted.
  - This decision was agreed upon by the audience.
- Additional comments from the audience:
  - Andrea Fiorentino: Italy would be the first venue in the Mediterranean. It is an important stimulus to foster cooperation within the Institute (biology/geology), but it is also a boost for Italy.
  - Alessandra Savini: At present, there is no management structure on habitat mapping. GeoHab can promote a new vision on how to manage the Mediterranean Sea.
- Portugal offers to organise *GeoHab 2015*; a confirmation is expected 2 yrs before the meeting
- Mention is made by Geoffroy about Ifremer having offered to host GeoHab in 2015. Jean-François Bourillet to discuss with Jacques Populus when back in Brest.

Comment by Geoffroy: The multiple offers to host GeoHab is demonstrating the success of the meeting, which is good. There is however, a need to set some simple rules for selecting future hosts, to avoid frustration from some communities. An email-based discussion should be initiated soon to discuss such rules.

## *GeoHab 2014*

In South America or Australia. Possibly Chile, but this needs confirmation.

(Note: Since the meeting, Ifremer has confirmed its interest hosting GeoHab in 2015; Australia has confirmed that they could host GeoHab 2014 in South Australia).

Therefore, the consensus now is:

- 2012 - Orcas Island, Washington State, USA
- 2013 – Rome, Italy
- 2014 - Chile or South Australia
- 2015 - Brest or Aveiro

### Website (Geoffroy, on behalf of Brian Todd)

Brian is looking after the website; a contractor was hired for the set-up and maintenance

#### *Content:*

- GeoHab 2010: PDFs will be made available;
- GeoHab 2011: Aarno will provide PDFs of presentations and posters
- Rules of Student award
- All participants are invited to provide additional information (contact Brian)

### Publications (Andrew)

- Number of publications out (see website):
  - 2007: Book “Mapping the seafloor for habitat characterization”: ordering is still possible
  - 2010/2011: Special Issue Continental Shelf Research: CSR 31/2: 10 papers
  - 2011: Atlas of Seafloor Geomorphology (eBook of Elsevier): will be out by December: summarises the concepts of habitat mapping, provides 57 case studies and a synthesis chapter
  - Other: A glossary of terms led by Mark Costello, Univ. Auckland has been initiated. Committee was set up. Consistency in terms is verified and other terms to add are being discussed. Translation into different languages is underway. The glossary will be published on the web, only.
    - Offer from Fernando Tempera to translate into Portuguese
- Future initiatives
  - From workshop Monday (2/5/11): proposal to write up a review paper on what GeoHab can do towards renewable energy (initiative Andrew)
  - Others?
- Other media?
  - A Facebook page and a group have been open as a potential tool for generating discussion and communication.

## Other issues? – Audience responses

- Katrien Van Landeghem: special rates to post-PhDs who are unemployed?
  - Geoffroy: Fair comment, but decision is up to the host, no general rule
  - Gary: highlights history of registration fee; GeoHab started off without registration fee with 60 participants. Fees enabled student awards. Fee amount is weighed, but ideally, the price remains around 250 USD. This is a very democratic price, also thanks to sponsorship
- Brenton Chatfield: merit to have the broad direction (e.g. lessons learned; key issues; future directions) of GeoHab posted on the website?
  - Geoffroy: verification with Brian is needed; we have to take care not turning the website into a wiki. Still, if documents are prepared, they could be uploaded. Key publications are listed anyway. Issues could be discussed also on Facebook.
- Anna-Leena Downie: Facebook page is undervalued; should be upgraded and used!
  - Geoffroy: people with interest in maintaining Facebook page can be made administrator
- Jean-François Bourillet: GeoHab is a very nice forum to discuss between geologists and biologists, though physical oceanographers are missing. People should be attracted, working in that field.
  - Geoffroy: suggestion to broaden the community is welcomed
- Massimo Di Stefano: proposal to put common datasets on the website. This would allow to discuss on technical performances of software and would bridge the gap between engineers and other scientists (Ariell Friedman)
  - Geoffroy: welcomes this concept (ref. Shallow Water conference). It would involve some technicalities on the website. Massimo can provide server link. Gary and Geoffroy will take-up this discussion.

Closing of the meeting