

Communications

From Mike Reich:

Dear colleagues,

I would like to use this occasion to inform you of our "7th European Conference on Echinoderms". The pre-registration form can now be downloaded via <http://www.ece2010.uni-goettingen.de/> (main page or registration page). Please pre-register by February 1, 2010 to help us plan the conference size and other details. It would be helpful if you could also comment on future volumes of the proceedings of our echinoderm conferences. An active discussion pertaining to this topic took place on the echinoderm list server in September and October 2009, where the pros and cons of our current publisher A.A. Balkema / Taylor & Francis Group were considered. One alternative would be to publish the volume in the journal "Zoosymposia", issued by Magnolia Press (www.mapress.com; Auckland, NZ), which, for example, recently released the proceedings volume of the "Ninth International Polychaete Conference", including a wide spectrum of articles. As in "Zootaxa", within the sister journal "Zoosymposia", faster printing, an impact factor as well as reprints and open access, is possible. I regret that we cannot make any specifications regarding conference fees before more details are known. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me, or our organisational team (tstegem@gwdg.de). The second circular will be issued in March 2010, and will contain all details of the event.

From Chantal Conand:

The WIOMSA 6th International Symposium was held in La Reunion in September 2009. The publications will appear in several journals in 2010. The oral presentation in the beche-de-mer session included:

The effects of fishing on the population structure and reproductive output of the commercial sea cucumbers *Holothuria fuscogilva* and *H. scabra* in Kenya – by Muthiga N.A.

Sea cucumber fisheries in the Western Indian Ocean, learning from the South Pacific – by Eriksson H., De La Torre Castro M. and Friedman K.

Sea cucumber Aquaculture – Promising opportunity for sustainable sea cucumber fishery in the Indo-Pacific region – by Giraspy D.A.B. and Ivy W.G.

Sea cucumber fisheries and mariculture in the Indian Ocean: present status and perspectives – by Conand C.

The poster session included:

Diversity of the holothuroid fauna (Echinodermata) in La Reunion (Western Indian Ocean) – by Conand C., Michonneau F., Paulay G., Bruggemann H.

Effect of food quality and rearing density on survival and growth of endobenthic juveniles of *Holothuria scabra* – by Lavitra T., Rasolofonirina R. and Eeckhaut I.

Sea cucumber fishery structure, management and importance in Zanzibar – by de la Torre-Castro M., Raymond C., Eriksson H and Jiddawi N

How much is known about sea cucumber fisheries in Mozambique – by Macamo C. and Muaves L.

Dr Claude Massin has retired as Curator of Malacology, Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences. Claude's impeccable scholarship has immeasurably enriched our field with a large body of authoritative work. We wish him well in his new adventures and take comfort that his considerable passion for our science may yet grant us his continued professional presence.

The Aspidochirote Working Group (AWG) is a team of systematists from around the world who are revising the taxonomy of aspidochirote sea cucumbers. This work is amply funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) under the program Partnerships for Enhancing Expertise in Taxonomy (PEET). This program aims to "support competitively reviewed research projects that target groups of poorly known organisms. This effort is designed to encourage the training of new generations of taxonomists and to translate current expertise into electronic databases and other formats with broad accessibility to the scientific community." Complementary funding to European Union members of AWG has been provided through Synthesys and the Global Taxonomy Initiative (<http://www.guammarinelab.com/peetcukes/index.html>)