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**PACIFIC ISLANDS MARINE RESOURCES INFORMATION SYSTEM
– INFORMATION SESSION FOR THE 6th SPC HEADS
OF FISHERIES MEETING, FEBRUARY 2009**

Maria Kalenchits
PIMRIS Coordinator



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6^e CONFÉRENCE DES DIRECTEURS DES PÊCHES DE LA CPS, 9–13 FÉVRIER 2009, NOUMÉA, NOUVELLE-CALÉDONIE

**PACIFIC ISLANDS MARINE RESOURCES INFORMATION SYSTEM – INFORMATION
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by Maria Kalenchits, PIMRIS Coordinator

Abstract: The Information Session focuses on the regional marine information sources developed by PIMRIS participants. Special attention is paid to the ODIN¹-PIMRIS project.

Introduction

Pacific Islands Marine Resources Information System (PIMRIS) is a joint project of FFA, SOPAC, SPREP, SPC, and USP. It was established in 1989 with the financial assistance provided by Canadian International Development Agency as a formal cooperative network of library and information centres concerned with the development of fisheries and other marine resources in the tropical Pacific. PIMRIS regional government participants are marine and fisheries departments in the Pacific Island countries. A Coordination Unit (PIMRIS CU) is based within the School of Marine Studies of USP. The aim of PIMRIS is to improve access to marine information in the Pacific Islands. Participants do this by: (i) acquiring, cataloging and disseminating information in print and electronic formats; (ii) creating new information products (such as reports, journals and newsletters, posters, bibliographies, websites & databases) and services (question and answer & current awareness services); (iii) supporting the development of regional libraries and information centres through training and technical assistance. PIMRIS Steering Committee meetings are held biannually to review progress and establish priorities for the next period.

1. Regional Marine Information Resources

1.1. MOANA database and digital collections

Moana database is developed and maintained by PIMRIS CU for almost 20 years by now. It covers living and non-living marine resources specific to Pacific Island countries and includes library holdings from USP, FFA, SOPAC, SPC and national centres (national marine/fisheries departments). Database contains around 14,000 records and has been expanded recently into a virtual library by the addition of links to full-text. Participants of the 13th PIMRIS Steering Committee Meeting (November 2007) discussed the purpose, scope and coverage of Moana, taking into account the number of similar digital projects in the region (SOPAC, SPREP, SPC Digital library). In order to avoid further duplication the recommendation was made by the participants of the Meeting that Moana shall be re-focused to fulfill the functions of the regional e-repository for published and unpublished documents produced and kept in national marine and fisheries departments and that national partners will follow up relevant publications for inclusion into Moana.

Starting from 2009 onwards PIMRIS CU will maintain two full-text digital collections:

- **USP Aquatic Repository** is a collection of published and unpublished documents on marine and aquatic studies produced by the University of the South Pacific (incl. annual and technical reports, thesis, articles and preprint articles, conference proceedings & other relevant materials).
- **Regional Repository** of published and unpublished documents produced by marine and fisheries departments in the region.

¹ Oceanographic Data and Information Network

1.2. Digital collections by PIMRIS agency participants

Apart from library on-line electron catalogs agency participants also maintain their digital collections (SOPAC Virtual Library, SPC Fisheries Digital Library, PEIN (Pacific Environment Information Network) Virtual Library). Those collections are available on-line from the agencies' websites. SPC Fisheries Information Section in frameworks of collaborated project with the SPC Library produces updated versions of fully-searchable CD/DVD with all publications produced by Marine Resources Division.

1.3. Collections of documents based in national marine/fisheries departments.

All marine/fisheries departments in the region have valuable documents (annual & project reports, articles and other documents produced by the department) that should be preserved in electronic format in order to (i) avoid their degradation; (ii) to avoid loss of library resources due to departure of staff; (iii) to improve access to this information. This can be done through establishing institutional e-repositories of full-text documents in national marine and fisheries departments.

1.4. Other relevant sources

Other sources of information include projects' and organizations' websites, on-line databases (e.g. ReefBase Pacific, PacLii, etc) and repositories (USP Thesis Collection).

In order to simplify access to various marine information sources some other regions (e.g. Africa) developed their Regional Marine Information Portals. Same approach was suggested for the Pacific region by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO in 2007.

2. ODIN-PIMRIS project

In May 2007 UNESCO IOC IODE (International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange Programme) Project Office jointly with PIMRIS Coordination Unit has organized a Training Workshop on Marine Information Management Towards the Ocean Data and Information Network of the Pacific Island Region. During the workshop PIMRIS agency participants discussed the idea of development a regional marine information portal that could bring together existing information sources and came out with the working document for the ODIN*-PIMRIS project. The project, which main objective is to create regional marine information portal will also support development of institutional e-repositories in national marine and fisheries departments. PIMRIS CU is acting as a Project Coordinator. Behalf of PIMRIS, IODE has submitted a small scale project funding proposal (US\$22,000) to the Government of Flanders. This proposal was approved. IODE also will support the project financially.

Summarizing of what is said above, **ODIN-PIMRIS** is a project supported by UNESCO IOC/IODE that contributes to the objectives of PIMRIS by focusing on:

- Establishing a regional marine information portal
- Creating capacity at national and institutional level to use and contribute to the portal
- Promoting of the portal as a valuable information source for managers and decision makers.

ODIN-PIMRIS hopes to achieve the following outcomes:

- Better management of the institution's published and unpublished information;
- Long-term storage and protection of this information;
- Enhanced sharing of published and unpublished information;
- Development of skills and capacity to identify important resources available outside the institution.

While agency participants concentrate their efforts on maintaining their digital libraries and e-repositories, PIMRIS CU develops a standard e-collection structure based on Greenstone software platform for marine and fisheries departments in the region. To secure a stable on-line access to the publications digitized by PIMRIS national participants for their institutional e-repositories as well as for preservation reasons PIMRIS CU will add those documents to Moana regional e-repository as well. In 2009-2010 PIMRIS CU jointly with SPREP partner plans a number of regional training workshops in e-repository input and search techniques, and marine information management.

Developing of capacity building opportunities via library twinning and integrated regional training programs, scholarships and equipment support is also an important part of the project.

Support and understanding of ODIN-PIMRIS goals by regional and national authorities are seen as one of the key factors corresponding to the success of the project. In January 2009, PIMRIS CU jointly with the Project Office for IODE prepared and distributed a letter addressed to Heads of Fisheries (HoF) in Pacific Island countries asking them to support ODIN-PIMRIS project initiatives in their countries and to nominate project contact persons. Heads of Fisheries in Federated States of Micronesia, Samoa, Palau and Vanuatu have already confirmed their interest and support to the project activities (02/02/09).

There will be two main phases of the project:

- Pilot Project Phase (Phase I) - 2009-2010 - five Pacific Island countries involved (Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa and Solomon Islands);
- Phase II - 2010-2011 – other interested Pacific Island countries involved.

Selection of the countries is based on the results of the Survey of Library State and Needs that PIMRIS CU conducted in 2007; it was further discussed at the project meeting in September 2008. However, a formal letter from fisheries authorities in pilot countries confirming their interest to participate in the project is much appreciated by PIMRIS CU.

National commitment will include following activities:

- 1) Participating in one-week E-repository Training Workshop to be held at USP, Suva, Fiji in April 2009 (Pilot countries) and in 2010 (II phase countries), sponsored by UNESCO/IOC IODE;
- 2) Installing Greenstone and Adobe Professional software on a library PC and downloading the institutional collection created for each pilot country by PIMRIS CU (will already contain some full-text documents);
- 3) Identifying relevant documents in the Department for inclusion into the institutional e-repository; Checking copyright and confidentiality issues;
- 4) Preparing document for scanning (remove staples, etc) if original electronic version of the document is not available;
- 5) Scanning and OCRing (Optical Character Recognition – done automatically by Adobe Pro); Saving document as a PDF file;
- 6) Adding document to the institutional e-repository (incl. adding metadata) and submitting PDF file to PIMRIS for inclusion into Moana regional e-repository;

ODIN-PIMRIS project activities planned for 2009 include:

- Structuring of country collections for e-repositories of marine/fisheries departments by PIMRIS CU (be Feb 2009);
- Launching of Regional Marine Repository and Pacific Marine Information Portal (March 2009);
- One-week E-repository Training Workshop for 5 pilot countries (USP, Suva, Fiji);
- Repositories of five pilot countries are up and running (May-Dec 2009);
- Follow up (expert) country visits by PIMRIS Coordinator or USP Digitization Librarian (May-June 2009).

When launched, **Pacific Marine Information Portal** will have links to the following information sources: 1) digital libraries and e-repositories maintained by PIMRIS Agency participants (e.g. SPC Digital Library); 2) regional e-repository of published and unpublished documents produced by marine and fisheries departments in the region; 3) library e-catalogues; 4) relevant websites (organizations, projects, etc.); 5) training and employment information; 6) events (conferences, workshops, etc.); 7) news (e.g. PEIN Digest).