

“Collaboration with other EC funded projects: EDIT, MarBEF, Life Watch, SYNTHESYS and CATE.”

biological resources, including pest control, habitat protection, legislation and species conservation.

A prerequisite of these initiatives is the support of scientists and infrastructures that provide standardised and authoritative taxonomic information.

Therefore, each of these initiatives is a potential user community of the PESI species directory infrastructure. However, technology does not work in isolation and requires parallel development in contributor and user practices. PESI will explore the user needs, allowing the user to comment and provide feedback on the system performance and also to communicate on the quality of the taxonomic data.

PESI will coordinate the delivery of this

information through the interoperation of the existing data infrastructures and the networks of experts.

Pan-European

PESI unites experts from 36 organisations from 26 European countries with an aim of improving the European e-infrastructure through the strengthening of the respective scientific, social, political, technological and information capacities in Europe, vital for a proper biodiversity assessment.

Geographic expansion of the European networks to eventually cover the entire Palaearctic biogeographic region is one of the objectives of the PESI project. As an important first step, the cooperation is intensified with

“The development of national and regional focal point networks in PESI will assure an efficient access to local expertise.”

partners from Turkey, Georgia, Ukraine and Russia.

PESI Action Plan

PESI defines and coordinates strategies to enhance the quality and reliability of European biodiversity information by integrating the infrastructural components of four major community networks on taxonomic indexing and their respective knowledge infrastructures, namely those of **marine life, terrestrial and freshwater plants, fungi and animals**, into a joint work programme. This will result in functional knowledge networks of taxonomic experts and regional focal points, which will collaborate in the establishment of standardised and authoritative taxonomic (meta-)data and the development of approaches on their long-term sustainability.

Yde de Jong

Zoological Museum (UVA-ZMA),
Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Email: yjong@uva.nl
Website: www.eu-nomen.eu/pesi

FEATURES

Species uncovered



The Jewel Anemone *Corynactis viridis*. (Photo: © Fiona Crouch)

By Jon Parr, Guy Baker and Harvey Tyler-Waters

The MarLIN programme of the Marine Biological Association (MBA) is celebrating 10 years of providing marine life information through the internet. Set up in 1998 to provide marine life information for environmental management, protection and education, MarLIN continues to flourish and has become a comprehensive source of marine information on the web.

MarLIN concentrates on three areas: Biodiversity and Conservation Science; Education and Recording; and access to marine life data. The last function has now been taken on by DASSH, a data archive centre for all marine life (www.dassh.ac.uk). The MarLIN

website is changing and improving and will be relaunched in December 2008.

MarLIN's Biodiversity and Conservation Science programme provides peer-reviewed online species and habitat review information. The site now covers 830 species reviews and 130 habitat reviews, supported by 2,500 species images and 230 habitat images. Review information includes an exhaustive assessment of the species or habitat's tolerance (sensitivity) to manmade and natural events. The reviews target species and habitats designated under the UK Biodiversity Action Plans and under the Habitats Directive.

The MarLIN database has been used as a major source of information to support marine stewardship. Examples of online resources include:

- Searchable database on the "Effects of fishing activities on European Marine Sites"
- Searchable database on "Seabed indicator species" to support the Water Framework Directive
- Marine topic notes on biodiversity, climate change and marine activities

- Dossiers on the structure and functioning of major habitats for the recent report on "Ecosystem Structure and Functioning," prepared for English Nature, which are now available individually online and free to download (<http://www.marlin.ac.uk/sah/ESFdossiers.php>).

The website also hosts the Biological Traits Information Catalogue (BIOTIC) which provides information on *ca* 40 traits' categories for *ca* 300 marine species and genera. Users can select traits for selected species and download the traits for use in their analyses. BIOTIC will grow through use, and scientists are invited to upload and share traits' information via BIOTIC, a free resource.

The MarLIN Education and Recording programmes provide marine-life information in an easy-to-use format and encourage sightings data to be recorded across Europe. MarLIN has pioneered online recording and now has nearly 5,000 surveys and 10,000 records. The team have an extensive outreach programme across the UK, providing materials to encourage all to get involved. MarLIN developed the



© Fiona Crouch

The Short-snouted Seahorse *Hippocampus hippocampus* in eelgrass.



Screen grab of the "Shore Thing" website showing locations of surveys (© MarLIN).

"Shore Thing" project, which engages 17 to 19-year-olds in shore surveys and asks them to upload their data to a central database. The MarLIN team are currently looking to expand that project along the European Atlantic Coast.

As MarLIN celebrates 10 years, it is time to reflect on how much has been done, but also on what needs to be done. The MarLIN team are looking to work within the MarBEF community to deliver marine-life information across Europe and hope to engage with partners. If you haven't already done so, please have a look at the MarLIN website, get involved and send us your comments. Thank you.

Websites

www.marlin.ac.uk
www.dassh.ac.uk
www.marlin.ac.uk/biotic/
www.marlin.ac.uk/shore_thing
www.mba.ac.uk

Guy Baker

The Marine Biological Association,
 Citadel Hill, Plymouth,
 Devon PL1 2PB, UK
 Email: guba@mba.ac.uk