

Eric Karsenti

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TARA OCEANS: A global picture of plankton ecosystems distribution and organization

The TARA OCEANS consortium has sampled plankton ecosystems end to end from viruses to zooplankton in almost all oceans at 250 stations at the surface, the 'deep chlorophyl maximum' (DCM) and in the meso-pelagic zone. The presentation will show the sampling principle and strategy, some movies about the expedition and initial results and implications.

"It is important to communicate to the public that life probably started in the oceans, that it has produced the present earth atmosphere over millions of years and that we all would not exist without plankton organisms because they are our ancestors."

Eric Karsenti obtained a PhD in Immunology and Cell Biology at the Pasteur Institute in Paris in 1979. Then he moved to the University of California in San Francisco until 1984, before establishing his own group at the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) in Heidelberg in 1985. He contributed largely to the understanding of the cell cycle clock and mitosis. Over the past 15 years, he developed and directed the Cell Biology and Biophysics unit at EMBL in which he hired an interdisciplinary team of group leaders including cell biologists, geneticists, physicists and imaging developers. They all had in common an interest in the understanding of cell and organisms morphogenesis. Besides being a Senior Scientist at EMBL, Eric Karsenti is also Research Director at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), a member of EMBO and the French Academy of Sciences, and since 2009 he is the Scientific Director of the TARA OCEANS expedition.