

The Register for Antarctic Marine Species, and the Register of Antarctic Species: Going beyond the Sea

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The Register of Antarctic Marine species (RAMS) is an authoritative taxonomic list of species occurring in the Antarctic marine environment. The register was launched in 2004, as part of the SCAR-MarBIN project and forms an important contribution to the last International Polar Year.

To support and encourage scientific research on biodiversity and ecosystem functioning, Europe recently launched LifeWatch within the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI). Within this framework a central taxonomic backbone (TB) will be created to facilitate the standardization of species data and the integration of the distributed biodiversity facilities.

In this framework RAMS will enter a new phase, getting an additional portal the Register of Antarctic Species (RAS) that will allow creating authoritative taxonomic list of terrestrial Antarctic and sub-Antarctic species. But also a wider list of species information services (taxonomy access services, a taxonomic editing environment, species occurrence services and catalogue services) and integrates different component databases and data systems. Next to taxonomic information (taxonomic databases, species registers and nomenclators), the Lifewatch TB will also include biogeographical data (species observations), ecological data (traits), genomic data and links to the available literature.

Here we provide an overview of the most important new features and how Antarctic researcher can use them and can contribute to them.