

Servicing the end-user – AlgaeBase and the Internet

E. Nic Dhonncha and M. Guiry

AlgaeBase Centre
Martin Ryan Institute, National University of Ireland, Galway, Ireland

Email: eilis.nicdhonncha@seaweed.ie

AlgaeBase is an internet-compatible source of free information on algae that is rapidly becoming a definitive source (www.algaebase.org). Initially set up in 1996 as an attempt to list all the known species of seaweeds in the world and their nomenclatural authorities, it has been expanded to include other sources (literature references) nomenclatural information (including types), synonyms (often annotated), pictures (over 1000, mainly seaweeds), and common names (over 2,500). Although nearly 45,000 names of species, subspecies, varieties and formae have been entered together with nearly 3,000 generic names, freshwater algae, diatoms and planktonic algae are under-represented. Funding to complete marine phytoplankton has been received from the Irish Government and other support has been forthcoming from the EU. International recognition has been apparent through the incorporation of AlgaeBase data into Species2000 (www.species2000.org), BIOSIS (www.biosis.co.uk) and the CSIRO Australian biodiversity databases with direct links to the Galway servers. Specific users are now citing AlgaeBase in the print literature. Completion of the potential 125,000 names will require further, extensive support.