

OMA - The Open Marine Archive: coming of age

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Since the end of 2005, the Open Marine Archive OMA is the central repository for all digitally available publications from Belgian marine researchers. The purpose of this online collection is to give immediate, complete, and permanent access to all the published results of Belgian marine research. We have reported a first time in 2008 (Haspeslagh *et al.*, 2008), and since then, a steady growth in content over the years* illustrates the continued commitment of our community to this initiative, and the support for open access to their scientific output.

The OMA repository is indexed and distributed by various so-called harvesters (web-based tools that search and retrieve specific open-access content on the internet), of which the most important one is Google Scholar. The result of this harvesting is that references to online available publications are almost always found in the top-10 result list of a typical search action in Google, the most widely used search engine today. In this way, Belgian marine research receives extremely important extra exposure on the web.

Although OMA seems to be a success story so far, much work still lies ahead of us. Solving copyright issues, dealing with publishers' policies on open access, informing the researcher on all open-access topics, and digitizing the historical body of Belgian marine scientific literature are the main focal points for the near future. The ultimate goal is to make OMA the flag ship of information on the Belgian marine community.

References

Haspeslagh J., R. T'Jampens and S. Rosseel. 2008. OMA - the Open Marine Archive for Flemish marine research: facts and figures. p.49. In: Mees J. *et al.* (Eds). VLIZ Young Scientists' Day, Brugge, Belgium, 29 February 2008. Book of Abstracts. VLIZ Special Publication 40.

* Since 2005, the mean growth of the OMA-repository has been 941 records per year. At the end of 2011, the total number of OMA-records was 9893 (including 3000 records of retrospective pre-2005 input).