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Author(s)	Eva-Maria Brodte
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Abstract

This deliverable describes the outcomes of the trans-national access programme (TNA) offered at AWI, in terms of: installations available, applications received and user's projects performed (through on-site and / or remote access), users' profile and other stats (country of origin, career profile, type of organization, satisfaction of the services used).



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1. Introduction

Transnational Access in ASSEMBLE Plus is provided to a total of 36 marine stations in 15 countries. In the whole consortium, the stations provide access to a high diversity of marine environments; from the high Arctic (IOPAN) and Antarctic (UKRI-BAS) to the tropics (IUI and NIOZ-CNSI) and the mid-Atlantic ridge (CCMAR and IMAR). Within mainland Europe, access is provided to the Mediterranean, the Atlantic and the Baltic seas. Habitats comprise estuaries (e.g. SZN, ISMAR, CCMAR, AWI, IOPAN, UG), mega-tidal seas (SBR), cold-water coral reefs (KMRS, NUIG, SAMS), brackish seas and sea ice communities (IOPAN, TSZ, ARI, HBS), near-shore deep sea (HCMR, IMEV, NUIG, UGOT, SAMS) and volcanic seeps (high CO₂ – low pH; HCMR, SZN, IMAR). The TA-providing stations (access providers) have modern research laboratories and a wide array of specialized research facilities to support internal and external users. Several of these also have technological backup of nearby university institutions.

This deliverable describes the outcomes of the trans-national access programme (TNA) offered at AWI, in terms of: installations available, applications received and user's projects performed (through on-site and / or remote access), users' profile and their stats (country of origin, career profile, type of organization, satisfaction of the services used).

2. Objective

This deliverable intends to show the outcomes of the transnational access programme executed at AWI, hence contributing to the ASSEMBLE Plus objectives:

- Enhance transnational access to a coordinated set of state-of-the-art European infrastructures for marine biology and ecology;
- Improve service provision by these infrastructures in line with their areas of excellence in marine biology and ecology, with emphasis on developing novel key enabling technologies and data solutions;
- Strengthen complementarity and interoperability within the consortium and with related infrastructures;
- Lay the logistical and strategic foundations to expand the coverage of the European Marine Biological Resource Centre (EMBRC) in both its scope and its geographical distribution and to consolidate its long-term sustainability.

3. Outcomes of the Transnational Access programme

3.1 Overview of the access provider

Helgoland constitutes an isolated, biodiverse, rocky outcrop 70 km offshore from Germany, with access to hard-bottom benthic communities and the open North Sea. Sylt is located in the UNESCO heritage area Waddensea, with access to intertidal mudflats, tidal channels and beaches, mussel and oyster beds. LTER site (Helgoland Roads) since 1962 on phytoplankton & metadata. Research:



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evolutionary-, microbial-, rocky shore & food-web ecology, mari-culture, using molecular approaches, microbial techniques, habitat mapping & management, anthropogenic impacts (microplastics), climate change (LTER). Services offered:

- Biological resources: echinoderms, ascidians, bryozoans, copepods, fish and macroalgae.:
- Ecosystem access: on foot and through small research vessels. BAH provides scientific diving centre and cabled underwater COSYNA observatories @BAH). Biological material can be collected upon request and new devices tested under natural conditions.
- Experimental facilities and platforms: Assisted access to climate-controlled aquaria & rooms, and to services for chemical and microbiological analysis, microscopy & bioimaging, molecular biology and bioinformatics, as well as to general use labs.

3.2 Installations offered

AWI offered access to this installation:

Name of the installation	country	Type of access	Unit of access
BAH/SYLT	DE	Unit cost	working days

4. Applications received

4.1. Origin country of applicants

AWI has received a total of 12 applications in the nine calls of TNA. Among these, 7 applicants were based in European countries while 5 applicants came from other non-European countries.

4.2. Applicants profile

4.2.1. Home institution type

Applicants were mostly based in academic institutes (universities: 61.1%; research organizations: 33.3%, other: 5.6%).

4.2.2. Career status

The most recurring career profile of the applicant was postdoc (44.4%), followed by early career scientist (27.8%), senior researcher (16.7%) and PhD student (11.1%).



5. User hosted and their stats

5.1. *Projects completed*

Overall, AWI has hosted 6 projects for a total of 8 users. 5 projects were carried out on-site, 1 in remote access. The list of projects completed at AWI is available in "[Appendix 1 – List of user-projects completed](#)" further below.

5.2. *User satisfaction*

Overall, users have positively evaluated the services offered (Very good: 50.0%; Good: 33.3%, Fair: 16.7%).

5.3. *Projects not completed or cancelled*

The project with the project ID 12111_SIC-SMS by Gilad Antler was cancelled because after the need of postponing the project due to the global Pandemic situation the responsible scientist did not replied several attempts of contact.

The project IDs 19282.2_UlvaHost, 19558.2_MeioVision and 20167_SPAM were cancelled due to financial issues. Although we as a station offer them free berth and labspaces, we were told that these projects were cancelled due to financial issues.

6. Use of resources

Beneficiary / Linked Third Party	PM	short name of the installation(s)	explanations of tasks
AWI	2	BAH/Sylt	Coordinating user – station interactions

7. Conclusion

Experiences gained regarding giving access to users

One major outcome was that inner institutional the ways of reimbursement should be improved and had to be easier and quicker. The shipment cost for instrumentation and device even in the European area can be surprisingly high, which is maybe because of our island situation. The

Difficulties encountered and overcome

The coping with the challenging situation during the COVID pandemic situation is a common difficulties all station had to cope with. The work on specific topic is related to seasonal availability of species etc, therefore a good ahead planning is necessary.



Reflections on collaborations or strict service use in terms of benefits for institute and in-house scientists, future collaborations with users:

Hosting guest researchers and scientist – as well before the ASSEMBLE plus project the on –site scientist are used to guest researchers and new impulses. Nonetheless, the collaboration was improved especially with postdoc and senior scientist which stayed more than a week and use the infrastructure of the station. Their contribution was from an institutional point of view very beneficial. In future I expect to have here further cooperation's evolved.

Other impacts

If the visiting scientist are at a very young career state and not so familiar with field work the station can assist good and effective, if the aim of the research is clear enough. By this station are still be an important partner in education concepts and early career scientists.



8. Appendices

8.1. *List of user-projects completed at AWI*

- Project title: Acoelomorph evolution and diversity (ACED). Users: Ulf Jondelius, Siri Englund (Naturhistoriska riksmuseet, SE). Services used: Coastal research vessels; Sampling equipment;
- Project title: Does seaweed-pathogen interaction vary across populations and seasons? (DIPS). Users: Mahasweta Saha, (Plymouth Marine Lab, GB).
- Project title: Functional morphology in mouth structures of brittle stars (Echinodermata: Ophiuroidea) as a contribution towards improvement of their taxonomic classification, and implications for feeding ecology (BRITTEMORPHO). Users: Martin Brogger, (Instituto de Biología de Organismos Marinos (IBIOMAR - CONICET), AR). Services used: Aquaria and tanks; Coastal research vessels; Dry laboratories; Sampling equipment; Wet laboratories;
- Project title: Investigation of solitary Monobryozoon ambulans (Monobryozoon). Users: Thomas Schwaha, (University of Vienna, AT). Services used: Aquaria and tanks; Coastal research vessels; Sampling equipment; Organisms collected in the wild; Wet laboratories;
- Project title: Molecular development of the phoronids Phoronis muelleri and Phoronis pallida (PhoroDev). Users: Naveen Wijesena, Carmen Andrikou, Tsai-Ming Lu, Ludwik Gasiorowski (University of Bergen, Sars International Centre for Marine Molecular Biology, NO). Services used: Coastal research vessels; Sampling equipment; Wet laboratories.
- Project title: The Holobiont system in Saccharina latissima (HOSALA). Users: Bertille Burgunter-Delamare, (CNRS Station Biologique de Roscoff, FR). Services used: Organisms collected in the wild; Wet laboratories.

