



CASE ITN

A Research and Training Programme on Marine Biotic Indicators of Recent Climate Changes in the High Latitudes of the North Atlantic.

Kick-Off Meeting

19-20 May, 2010

EPOC (CNRS/Université Bordeaux 1), Talence, France

List of attendants*:

Management structure: Jacques Giraudeau (Coord., PI, EPOC – CNRS/U. Bordeaux 1), Morten Hald (co-PI, U. Tromso), Katrine Husum (PI, U. Tromso), Hans Renssen (PI, U. Amsterdam), Robert Spielhagen (PI, IFM – GEOMAR), Guillaume Masse (PI, U. Plymouth), Jean-Claude Gascard (EAB, LOCEAN – U. Paris VI).

External to the Management Structure: Anne de Vernal (VS, UQAM – GEOTOP), Florent Goiffon (CNRS, Délégation Aquitaine-Limousin), Xavier Crosta (CNRS Researcher, EPOC – CNRS/U. Bordeaux 1), Frédérique Eynaud (Associate Professor, EPOC – CNRS/U. Bordeaux 1), Jennifer Garcia (Graduate student, EPOC – CNRS/U. Bordeaux 1).

NB - Disruption of air traffic from the Icelandic volcano ash cloud prevented three key participants to attend the meeting: Jochen Knies (PI, NGU), John T. Andrews (EAB, INSTAAR – Univ. Boulder), Jolynn Carroll (AP, Akvaplan Niva).

* PI: Principal Investigator / Work Package leader; EAB: External Advisory Board; VS: CASE Visiting Scientist; AP: Associated Partner.

Short Report:

Members of the Steering Committee have access to pdf documents of some presentations given during the kick-off meeting via the “Members only” restricted page of the CASE website (<http://caseitn.epoc.u-bordeaux1.fr>).

This two days meeting was the first occasion for all members of the CASE management structure to meet and review both the administrative and scientific launching of this Initial Training Network.

1 - Management, structure and finance:

The meeting took place one month before the EC signing of the grant agreement, the funding by EC to EPOC, and the subsequent money transfer to the five other beneficiaries (U. Tromso, U. Plymouth, IFM GEOMAR, NGU). Given the anomalously short negotiation phase (1st November – 15th December 2009), contacts between the beneficiaries about administrative and financial aspects of the project were limited. The kick-off meeting was therefore a perfect occasion to review EC ITN rules, benefits to the beneficiaries, and obligations.

After a quick review of the history and structure of the CASE network, ample time was given to a description of the management structure (and associated steering committee and boards) and training programme. Among important aspects agreed by all parties was the respect of the training and event schedule according to the plan given in Annex I of the Grant Agreement. The setting of the first training event at EPOC was confirmed for Feb-March 2011, as well as the joint training event and progress meeting hosted at NGU (Trondheim) around May 2011.

Presentations and discussions on reports and monitoring as well financial aspects benefited from the input of the local CNRS European Project Manager Florent Goiffon who worked closely with the CASE coordinator during the negotiation phase. A detailed description of the various funding categories was given to the participants. Both the EPM and the coordinator insisted on the obligation made to the beneficiaries to respect those categories when using their share of the funding, and to keep track of all proofs of expenditure, in order to facilitate the preparation of the periodic financial reports and the claim for eligible costs. While the recruitment of a CASE Project manager (*scheduled on September 15, 2010*) will ease the administrative and financial management of the ITN, all beneficiaries will have to deeply rely on their local administrative facilities for the day-to-day running of their contribution to the project.

Recruitment aspects were also discussed on the second day of the meeting. While information was given on the steps already made toward advertising the ESR positions (CASE website, Euraxess, EGU job fair), all partners agreed on trying to communicate as much as possible within their local institution in order to facilitate the potential recruitments of their recent MSc student in partner institutions. Given the training schedule, care will be taken to complete the recruitments of the 12 CASE PhDs during fall 2010 (before end of October at best). A reminder was made to partners on the obligation to officially declare ESR recruitments to the REA Project Officer, via the coordinator, through the “Declaration of Conformity”, a form which at the moment is only made available to the coordinator (SESAM application). Each recruited fellow must get his own copy of the GA together with the Annex I (description of work), II (general conditions) and III (specific provisions for ITN). These documents are available online on the CASE website within the “Members only” page.

Following a proposition made by Florent Goiffon, and in order to follow a special recommendation by the EC Research Executive Agency, it was agreed to prepare and validate a Consortium Agreement which specify or supplement binding commitments among partners in addition to the provisions of the Grant Agreement. *A draft version of this consortium agreement was sent to the beneficiaries for comments and signature by mid-July 2010.*

2 - Science implementation:

Jean-Claude Gascard (LOCEAN – UPMC), coordinator of the DAMOCLES FP6 integrated project (Developing Arctic Modeling and Observing Capabilities for Long-term Environmental Studies), and member of the CASE external advisory board, provided the audience with a very interesting return of experience as the coordinator of one of the most important EC contribution to the 2007-2008 International Polar Year. This 16 millions € project gathered ca. 48 partners around experiments designed for observing, understanding and quantifying climate changes in the Arctic. Field works included the now famous 2007-2008 *Tara* drift across Arctic, as well as a series major cruises onboard several ice-breakers. A clear connection between the researches developed within Damocles and those planned in CASE lays on the theme of the respective part of deep water convection vs. brine water formation in the mode ocean overturning at high latitudes.

All partner institution (but NGU, unable to attend the meeting) made a quick presentation of researches planned within their respective Workpackage. Though already described in the core Science

Plan of the CASE project (Annex I), this review of the WP objectives, methods and deliverables was fruitful by pointing specific common key-questions such as :

- The spatial heterogeneities in marine biotic proxies linked (or not) with heterogeneities in physical-chemical characteristics of bottom and surface water masses and circulation processes.
- The importance (cf predictive modelling) of quantifying the recent (pre-instrumental) history of sea-ice extent.
- Unravelling the mechanisms and Holocene history of brine water formation.
- Documenting the Holocene history of the balance between the poleward Atlantic inflow (and its pathways to the Arctic Ocean) and the Polar Water outflow, and defining the timing of the initiation of modern circulation in the Nordic seas.

While the Barents Sea and the shelf of Spitzberg remain the marine regions from which most of the CASE field works and sediment analyses will be conducted, Norwegian fjords (northern Norway + Trondheim Fjord) will be given a special attention in WP1, WP2, and WP5. The study locations might also be extended to the marine realms off Eastern Greenland and Northern Iceland for proxy calibrations, given the peculiar settings and processes taking place there.

Finally, all CASE partners agreed on the connection of our research objectives with those implemented within the FP7 large scale integrated project PAST4FUTURE. The participation of some CASE partners (VU University Amsterdam, EPOC, GEOTOP) will ensure a good communication and enhanced collaboration between both EC funded project.

Social evening :

On the evening of May 19, all participants of the CASE kick-off meetings were invited to a visit and wine tasting experience at the Pessac-Léognan “Luchey Halde” wine estate (<http://www.luchey-halde.com>), under the guidance of its technical director Pierre Darriet. This was followed by a dinner within a typical “brasserie”-like restaurant in downtown Bordeaux. Pierre Darriet is warmly thanked for his patience and dedication in sharing his love of Bordeaux wine with the CASE scientists.