

**Minutes**  
**Internal Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**National Center for Caribbean Coral Reef Research**  
**April 13, 2005**

**Members present: Peter Swart (Chair) (PS), John McManus (JM), Jay Blaire (JB), Joseph Serafy (JS), Robert Ginsburg (RNG), Peter Glynn (PG), Tyler Smith (TS), Margaret Miller (MM), Chris Langdon (CL), Rod Zika (RZ), Thomas Lee (TL),**

Meeting started at 9:35am.

1. Approval of Minutes

The members approved minutes of IAC meeting, February 7, 2005.

2. Ocean Research Interactive Observatory Networks (ORION Project)

PS invited RZ to speak on the ORION Project.

a. Background

RZ advised that the project was proposed during the Clinton administration to re-look at ocean science. It involved developing observatory programs to gather an extensive array of measurements. After about eight years and a series of workshops, they convinced the government that this was the way for the future. The expectation was not to use core NSF funding but to have a supplemental budget. PS and RZ are both on the panel. There are a number of initiatives already underway, e.g. Neptune (global observatory using buoys).

b. RSMAS involvement

Up to this point, RSMAS has done very little to get involved in the project. Several weeks ago an announcement was made for observatory science proposals (due May 23, 2005). RZ has organized a working group of twenty RSMAS faculty members (including Jerald Ault, Robert Cowen and Sharon Smith) and persons from NOAA, to make a conceptual proposal (there is no budget) for an observatory for RSMAS.

RZ advised that this was not a closed group but interested person must act quickly to be involved. The first planning meeting was held last week. The proposal is to have an observation facility to cover the region from the south east coast of Florida straight out to the Dry Tortugas and Bahamas. This would fit in well with coral reef study at RSMAS.

After the NCORE symposium, we have a greater opportunity for research related to coral reef, the everglades and climate change.

NOVA University (NOVA) and Florida Atlantic University (FAU) would like to join us however they are proposing to have the observatory placed north of the area we selected. JB pointed out that it would be useful to join forces with NOVA and FAU, and the groups should consider adjusting their proposed areas to accommodate each other. RZ agreed.

### c. Questions and answers

RNG asked about the science issues involved in the proposal. RZ answered that the group was addressing this without environmental data to interpret them.

PS noted that most of the chemical measurements were useless and the observatory would provide the wealth of data that was not now available.

TL noted that scientific objective could include several themes such as the effects of large mesoscale eddies. RZ agreed that there was a need for increased sampling frequency.

They also propose to use Aquarius and the seaman's station outfitted with sensory arrays.

JS asked how about the funding to maintain the observatories. PS advised that there was a facility and infrastructure for maintenance.

### d. Other comments

RNG noted that this was a great idea but would take years to implement. He asked if there was a pioneer project needing little money (probably coral reef related) that could be looked at now.

RZ advised the meeting the he would not be able to lead this project because of other responsibilities. He noted that the project would need the right person to be the Principal Investigator.

### 3. Future Direction.

PS noted that fisheries area, especially modern molecular studies and fish dispersal modeling, was one of the areas identified at the NCORE forum.

PG also noted another theme from the forum: the significance of deep water refugia. This may be an interesting area to monitor.

PS noted that it was important to take the initiative and write proposals but noted that the observatory would be vital to determine the causes of the problems of the coral reefs and how to solve them.

### Introduction and welcome

PS introduced Dr. Margaret Miller of NOAA and also welcomed both Dr. Miller and Rod Zika to the NCORE IAC.

### Financial status of NCORE

Jm advised the meeting that about one and a half a year ago, Congress approved \$250,000.00 for the center. We expect to get \$242,000.00 by August '05. This would cover:

JM - 1 month's salary

CL - 6 months salary

Felimon Gayanilo - 6 months salary.

Almost all field work funding has finished. At the end of the year we will have no funding from EPA and will be one third funded for next year. CL raised some other funding but needs to find about 50% more.

NCORE vision

JM advised the meeting that he had prepared a letter that would be sent to all NCORE associates concerning the vision and mission of NCORE.

Meeting ended 10:33 am