

September 17, 2021

Annual Report of the International Association for Biological Oceanography (IABO)

Activities summary for 2020 - 2021

The IABO leadership continues to advance the Association's goals with the support of nine Executive Committee members including the current and past President, and Executive Secretary, and Chairs and Co-Chairs of each of *Science*, *Recognition*, and *Communications* Task Groups (TG), with member representing 14 countries from the Americas, Asia, Oceania, and Europe. Details about affiliations and area of expertise of the Executive Committee (EC) and TG members are available on the IABO [website](http://www.iabo.org/).

During the 2020-2021 performance cycle, IABO activities focused on seven key areas: 1) website improvements; 2) bid selection for upcoming World Conference on Marine Biodiversity (WCMB) meetings planned for 2023 and 2026; 3) reviewing of SCOR Working Group proposals; 4) providing support to students and early career to attend the 5th WCMB virtual conference; 5) building a collaboration with PeerJ to enhance IABO's reach; 6) IABO's participation in the 5th WCMB meeting; and 7) communications. Details about each of these activities are provided below.

1. IABO Website - <http://www.iabo.org/>

IABO continues to improve the Association's website by reformatting and enriching its content with information relevant to the organization's structure, past and future WCMB conferences, Carlo Heip Excellence Award recipients, and new functionality to collect expressions of interest by individuals who would like to volunteer for IABO. Specific changes made to the IABO site include:

- Adding award-winning photographs of the WCMB 2020 photo and video contest to the [Home](#) slider.

- Adding information about the upcoming General Assembly of IABO during the selected 6th WCMB in Penang, Malaysia, to the [Home](#) page.
- Adding instructions to enroll on the MARINE-B email list to the [Home](#) page.
- Adding news items to the [Home](#) page; i.e. Homage to Alain Crosnier (1930-2021) and WCMB 2020 Carlo Heip Excellence Award ceremony.
- Reformatting the [About](#) section.
- Reformatting the [Partner Organisations](#) section.
- Adding instructions for nominations for the 2021 Carlo Heip Excellence Award to the [Carlo Heip](#) section.
- Adding the new page [Join our Task Groups](#) to collect expressions of interest in joining IABO's Task Groups. Here, interested community members can apply to contribute to specific TG by filling out this online [form](#).
- Adding the new page [Upcoming WCMB](#) containing information about the next IABO General Assemblies to be held in Penang, Malaysia, in 2023 followed by the conference in Ghent, Belgium, in 2026.

The website will continue to be updated with information about research opportunities posted on the MARINE-B listserv and other relevant communications from the Marine Biodiversity Observation Network ([MBON](#)) of the Group on Earth Observation BON ([GEO BON](#)), the Global Ocean Observing System ([GOOS](#)) and [SCOR](#) Working Groups.

2. Bid Selection for WCMB Meetings in 2023 and 2026

IABO evaluated two bid proposals to host WCMB conferences in 2023 and 2026 from the Centre for Marine & Coastal Studies (CEMACS) of Universiti Sains Malaysian, and the Flanders Marine Institute of Belgium, respectively. After a careful review of the bid submitted to IABO, the Executive Committee approved both proposals. Final bid proposals are publicly available on IABO's [website](#).

The World Conference on Marine Biodiversity VI will be held in Penang, Malaysia, in 2023, and hosted by the Centre for Marine & Coastal Studies (CEMACS) of Universiti Sains Malaysian. Take a [tour](#)!



Download the approved bid proposal for the 2023 WCMB conference in [Penang](#).

The World Conference on Marine Biodiversity VII will be hosted by the Flanders Marine Institute of Belgium in 2026.



Download the approved bid proposal for the 2026 WCMB conference in [Ghent](#).

3. Review of SCOR Working Group Proposals

IABO's Executive Committee and the Science Task Group completed the evaluation of the following Working Group proposals submitted to SCOR in 2021:

- [Coupling of ocean-ice-atmosphere processes: from sea-Ice biogeochemistry to aerosols and Clouds \(CIce2Clouds\)](#)
- [Harnessing global pELagic FISH biochemical data to address Sustainability challenges under climate change scenarios \(ELFISH\)](#)
- [Advancing standardisation of COastal and Nearshore demersal fish visual CENSUS techniques \(CoNCENSUS\)](#)
- [Mixotrophy in the Oceans – Novel Experimental designs and Tools for a new trophic paradigm \(MixONET\)](#)
- [From the Ocean to the Lab to the Ocean: best practices for ecologically sound inferences in fluctuating habitats \(OLO\)](#)

Reviews were sent to SCOR's Executive Director in September 6th, 2021.

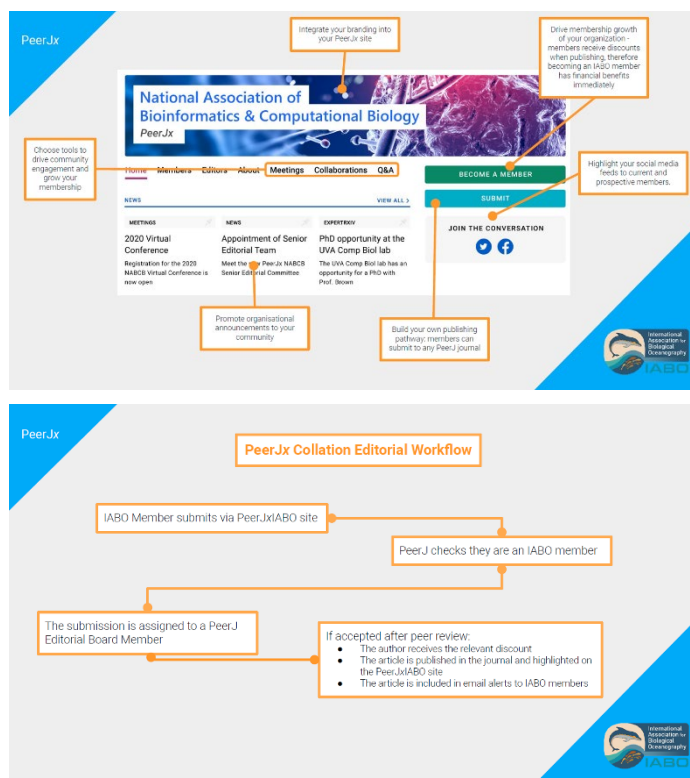
4. Student and Early Career Travel Grant to Attend the 5th WCBM

IABO submitted a successful proposal to SCOR to support students and early career scientists from developing countries to attend ocean science meetings and training workshops. As a result, IABO received \$5,000 USD originally intended to cover travel costs for 3-5 participants to attend the 5th WCBM to be held in Auckland, New Zealand. Due to travel restrictions from the Covid-19 pandemic these funds were used instead to cover registration costs for attending the 5th WCBM in its virtual format. This grant opportunity was posted on the conference [website](#). After a thorough selection process led by IABO these funds provided support to 24 participants from 14 countries in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Recipients of registration grants are listed in Table 1 below.

5. Partnership with PeerJ Publishing Group

IABO was contacted by PeerJ to consider a partnership with this publishing group under the novel PeerJx scheme. PeerJx seeks to provide professional societies, research communities, and scientific organizations access to PeerJ's portfolio and online platform and infrastructure to lower the costs of publishing in their open-access journals (including discounts and full fee waivers for selected countries), and enable member organizations to build their own publishing outlet and social media platform.

Under this collaboration PeerJ would provide the Association with the *PeerJx-IABO* online platform for IABO members to submit their contributions to the *PeerJx-IABO* journal. Members of IABO would be encouraged to join the editorial board and all submissions from IABO members would be handled by an IABO editor or invited editors (see figure below). The online interface would drive membership growth of IABO, highlight social media feeds for the current



and prospective members of the Association, promote IABO announcements (e.g. Carlo Heip Excellence Award notifications, WCMB conferences, community workshops), and collect funding from publishing fees that could be used to cover publications costs of IABO members from developing and least developed nations, or to provide travel grants to early career researchers to attend ocean science conferences including WCMB meetings. Other benefits to IABO members from this partnership would include:

- Discounted, high-quality peer-reviewed publishing.
- Highlighting their research - and their personal profile - to their community.
- Networking and collaboration

opportunities via the PeerJx site and a bespoke instance of expertRxiv.

- An opportunity to share their news, views and impact with members of their community.
- Launch Calls for Papers and publish Conference Collections in visible, high impact journals.

The IABO Secretary is currently collecting reactions, questions and concerns from the EC about this partnership. Next steps include advancing discussions with the PeerJx team in January 2022 and, if approved by the EC, developing a Memorandum of Understanding with PeerJx in the first semester of 2022.

6. IABO Participation in the 5th World Conference on Marine Biodiversity (WCMB 2020)

During the [5th WCMB](#) conference, IABO presented an overview of the Association and its new structure in a dedicated session led by Montes (President), Chavanich (Secretary), and Shah Esmaeili (Communications Task Group) as an opportunity to engage with current and new members, discuss future directions and ways in which IABO can support the community. The topics included the annual report and overview on past activities (2018-2020), development of the Volunteering [form](#) to join IABO's Task Forces, reporting on submissions of bids to host WCMB conferences planned for 2023 and 2026, ratification of President and EC, and requirements and deadlines for Carlo Heip Excellence Award nominations for 2021 and 2022.

In the closing ceremony the IABO President gave a summary report on the Association's accomplishments and ongoing activities during 2019-2020 cycle and announced the recipients of

the [Carlo Heip Excellence Award](#). The awardees for the 2019 and 2020 were Prof. Graham Edgar of the University of Tasmania and Prof. Steve Hawkins of the University of Southampton, respectively, as a recognition of their outstanding contributions to marine ecology and biodiversity science.

Graham Edgar receives 2019 Carlo Heip Excellence Medal from Mark Costello at the WCMB VI!



Finally, IABO organized a photo competition to recognize participants submitting images and video that conveyed messages regarding marine biodiversity or about new or rare species or phenomena discovered, curious species associations or behaviors, something amazing or beautiful that contributes to ocean literacy, or how biodiversity contributes to a UN Sustainable Development Goal. Only registered delegates to the conference were eligible to apply, and only original photographs or videos were accepted. Winners had their WCMB registration fee reimbursed and were profiled within New Zealand and internationally by Conservation International, NZ Dive Pacific and ECO magazines respectively, and through a media release by the WCMB. A prize fund of NZ\$4,000 was established by Conservation International and UNESCO-IOC/WESTPAC to be split between the winning entries.

The jury for this competition was composed by:

- Mark Erdmann (Conservation International, South-East Asia), Chair
- Suchand (Apple) Chavanich (Chulalongkorn University, Thailand)

- Gilbert Petersen (Dive Pacific magazine, New Zealand)
- Tina Molodtsova (P.P. Shirshov Institute of Oceanology, Russia)
- Graham Edgar (University of Tasmania, Australia)

The winners of the contest are shown below.

Racing hydrothermal vent snail
Katrín Linse and Solvín Zanki

British Antarctic Survey, UK

highly commended



Plagiobrissus grandis, burrowing sediment urchin
Antar Mijail Pérez-Botello

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico

Runner-up



Enigmatic bioluminescent anemones,

Anne-Nina Loerz Cenak, NZ

Highly commended



Sassy eyed, long legged, Arctic, amphipod

Anne Helene Solberg Tandberg Solvín Zanki

University Museum of Bergen, Norway.

Portrait Winner



Xanthos snake in ambush posture

Brooke Bessenes University of Reading, UK

Runner-up



The battlefield

Ohad Peleg University of Auckland, New Zealand

Story Winner



Eunice deep-sea worm from Iceland
by Karlotta Kürzel, U Hamburg, Germany

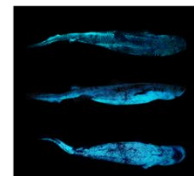
Peoples choice co-winner



Deep sea shark (*Dalatias licha*) bioluminescence

by Jerome Mallefet, UC Louvain, Belgium

Peoples choice co-winner

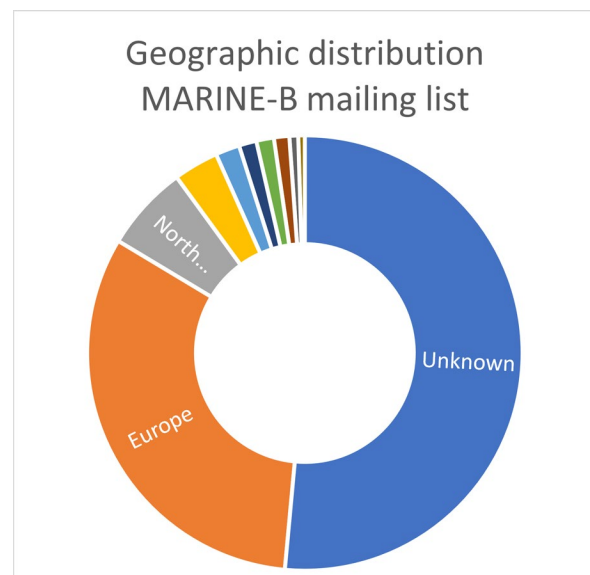


Winner photographs are now shown in the home slider of the IABO [website](#).

7. Communications

The IABO email list, MARINE-B, has over 1,200 subscribers from all continents. While the majority uses .com email addresses and their origin therefore cannot be traced down, the ones using national ip addresses are predominantly European and North American.

The Facebook page was launched in May 2018 and by 2019 had 310 followers, currently has ~ 2,600 followers. The geographic distribution of members is dominated by European, Asian, North American, and African members. There is a gender ratio close to 50/50 and for both sexes, the majority is between the age of 25-34. Both MARINE-B and the Fb group provide news and



relevant information related to biological oceanography, marine biology and biodiversity, including funding, job and studies opportunities, relevant papers and reports, and conferences.

The IABO Facebook page is quite active and new posts are shared daily.

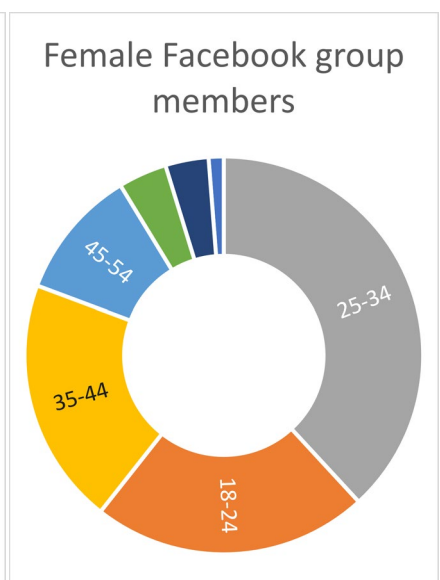
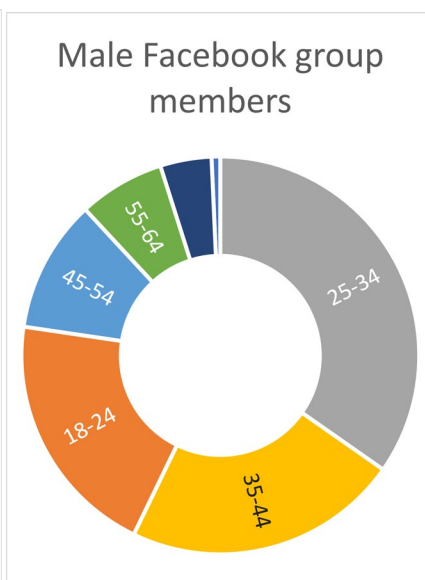
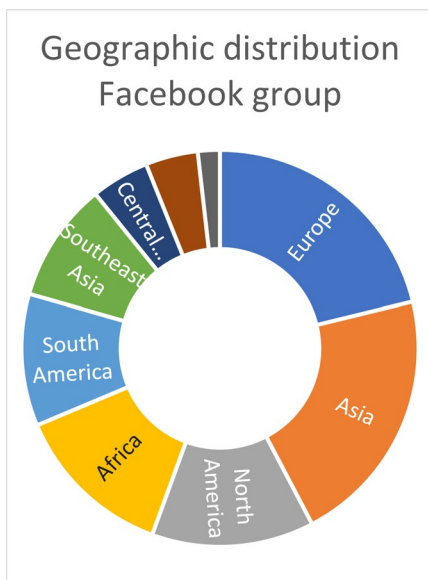
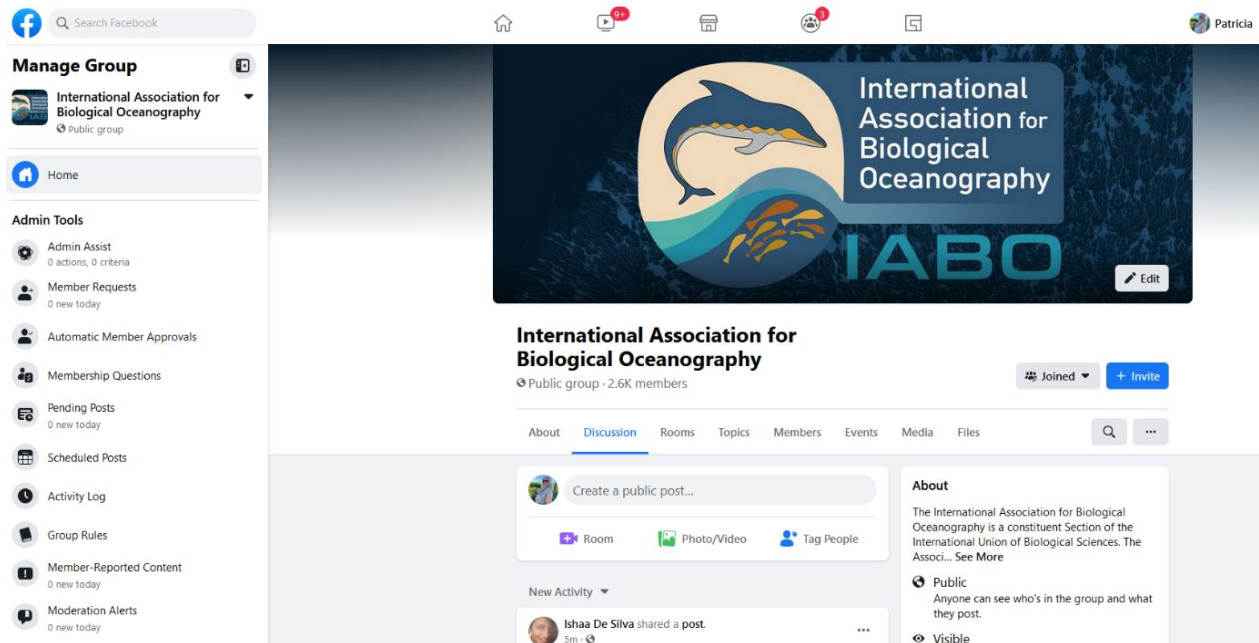


Table 1. Recipients of SCOR WCMB 2020 grants.

Name	Country	Abstract Submitted	Email
Ariadna Nocera	Argentina	Poster	anocera@cenpat-conicet.gob.ar
Antar Mijail Perez Botello	Mexico	Full	antarmijail@comunidad.unam.mx
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