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Conference highlights

In addition to the photos and videos that have been posted and linked from the website, I thought those of you not able to attend the conference would like a brief preview of our organization's business.

Both the implementation plan for the regional group proposal and the Aquatic Commons were presented by the Executive Board to the membership and I'm happy to report both were passed by overwhelming majorities. The implementation plan will require some minor modifications to our membership database and renewal processes which will be ably guided by Kit Johnston. The Aquatic Commons task force received three proposals and the Florida Center for Library Automation was selected as the best match for IAMSLIC. An Aquatic Commons Board, to guide the establishment and policies of our repository, will soon be created with Stephanie Haas serving as its Chair. These are very exciting times for our organization and I look forward to involving as many members as possible in these activities.

There will also be changes to both grant cycles next spring. The Aquatic Commons task force received three proposals and the Florida Center for Library Automation was selected as the best match for IAMSLIC. An Aquatic Commons Board, to guide the establishment and policies of our repository, will soon be created with Stephanie Haas serving as its Chair. These are very exciting times for our organization and I look forward to involving as many members as possible in these activities.

You may recall that Dr. James Markham, our proceedings editor for over a decade, recently retired from the University of California at Santa Barbara. This year's proceedings will be dedicated to him as a way to express our appreciation for his efforts which unfortunately too often involved nagging and pleading but always resulted in a superior written product.

And finally, the results of our election were announced. The dues increase for developing country members was accepted by a strong majority. Elizabeth Winiarz of the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth is the New junior president elect and Janine Devereaux of the U.S. NOAA Coastal Services Center Library is the new treasurer. I welcome both to the Executive Board.

I had a wonderful time and was fortunate to have extraordinary local arrangements and program planning committees. Again, my thanks to Barb Butler, Lenora Oftendahl, Andrea Coffman, Janet Webster, Todd Hannon, Bart Goossens, Catalina Lopez and Geoffrey Salanje.

Joan Parker

33rd Annual IAMSLIC Conference 2007

It's not too soon to start making plans to attend the 33rd Annual IAMSLIC Conference hosted by Mote Marine Laboratory, October 7-11th, 2007. The conference theme is "IAMSLIC: Changes on the Horizon" and this will be a joint IAMSLIC and SAIL meeting. We will unveil our website in December and send out a call for paper proposals in January. The conference will be held at the Hyatt Hotel in Sarasota Florida (top left corner of this photo).

Barb Butler (2007 Conference Convener)
Susan Stover (2007 Chair, Local Arrangements Committee)



2000 Conference Photos

Some attendees of the 2000 conference held in Victoria, BC, Canada, reported that they had not received the conference photograph.

Webmaster Steve Watkins has put a link to it on the IAMSLIC site's conference page:
<http://www.iamslc.org/index.php?section=25>

Direct link to the photo:
<http://library.csumb.edu/iamslc/IAMSLIC2000.JPG>

Pam Olson, host of the 2000 Conference
Institute of Ocean Sciences. Fisheries and Oceans Canada

President's Column

For those of you who missed the Portland conference, I thought I would share a few of my personal favorite moments.

- Cyamus' slide-show at the opening reception. Thanks to Maureen Nolan for assembling contributions and adding a sound track. I've heard rumors this might get posted to the Cyamus web site in the near future?
- Kristen Metzger's lively (and laugh out-loud funny) talk on the history of our organization.
- Field trip on the Portland Spirit. The photos on the website document the beautiful weather, and perhaps also the peacefully relaxing environment.
- Dancing returned to the banquet! Enough said, but I'm expecting great things from Sue Stover next year.
- Our first "freshwater" session. David Liberty's talk on indigenous fisheries information was remarkable.

The weeks since the conference have been consumed with progress on both the Aquatic Commons and implementation of the Regional Group proposal, in addition to the regular Executive Board activities.

The contract with the Florida Center for Library Automation will be signed by the time you read this. Stephanie Haas has recommended that our institutional repository be started with ePrints 3.0 which will be released in January. The few weeks remaining between now and then will be put to good use making decisions on standards and other policies. We are slowly moving through the formal process of inviting members to join the Aquatic Commons Board. For those of you interested in participating, Stephanie will be looking for members to serve on a series of ad-hoc working groups.

At this point, the most critical issue relating to implementation of the regional group proposal is re-configuring the membership database and the issuance of renewal notices. As usual, Steve Watkins has been behind the scenes keeping the gears turning. Our membership database coordinator, Kit Johnston, has been burning the midnight oil to ensure as smooth a transition as possible.

There were the usual additions and subtractions to standing committees as well. It's never too late to volunteer so please look at our committees and speak up if you'd like to help. For the first time a site selection committee will be constituted using the new membership requirements i.e. one member from each regional group plus an at-large representative. The Executive Board recently endorsed a charge for this committee: To investigate and recommend to the Executive Board by May 2007 conference locations for 2009 and 2010, paying close attention to the Site Selection Guidelines. For the 2009 year, the committee should especially examine a joint meeting with Euraslic and for 2010 a joint meeting with Afriamslic or the Latin American regional group. And finally, we have a new task force on Responses to Disasters chaired by Sue Stover. They will be suggesting possible ways that IAMSLIC and its members can provide useful assistance to libraries and librarians affected by disasters.

With the help of our recently elected President-elect (2008-2009), Liz Winiarz, we are working to keep our website as current as possible as this is the place where the organization's business can be tracked. Draft minutes from the most recent executive board meetings have already been posted.

Thanks to all for their efforts to keep IAMSLIC moving forward. This promises to be a busy, but exciting year.

Joan Parker

From the IAMSLIC Membership Committee. October 2006

The 2005/2006 Annual Report of the Membership Committee was posted on the IAMSLIC web site just prior to the Portland Conference, where it was presented to the Exec. <http://www.iamslc.org/index.php?section=17>. The report includes a statistical overview of the membership and regional groupings.

Following on from discussions with Exec. and members in Asia about a regional group, we decided to recruit Murari Tapaswi of the National Institute of Oceanography, Goa, India, to the Membership Committee. Murari has many years experience as an IAMSLIC member and he will help to build up the membership in that region as well as providing a channel of communication until such time as Regional Group status is requested.

The opportunity was also taken in Portland to issue a **Call to all members:**

- Even with an expanded Membership Committee, we still need all IAMSLIC members to help with recruitment and to advertise the benefits of joining in any appropriate forum;
- The messages of welcome and 'how to..' for new and sponsored members are available in English, French and Spanish. It would be good to have this material in more languages and anyone willing to translate should contact the Membership Committee.

The incoming President, Joan Parker, requested that the Committee makes a concerted effort to increase the membership in Freshwater institutions and organizations – so this is high on the priority list for the near future. Existing 'freshwater' members will be drafted in to share ideas and strategies.

Please join the Membership Committee in welcoming the following new members:

Shelley Arvin

Rivers Institute at Hanover
College
U.S.A.

Mr. Andrew Fabro
Environment Canada Library
Canada

Mlle Bouchra Bazi

Institut National de Recherche
Halieutique (INRH)
Maroc (Morocco)

Prof. Barry Brown
University of Montana, Mansfield
Library
U.S.A.

Diane Rielinger

Marine Biological Laboratory
U.S.A.

Lisa Raymond
MBL/WHOI Library
U.S.A.

Ann Holland

NOAA Coastal Services Center
U.S.A.

Florence T. Edwards
Marshall Islands Marine Resources
Authority (MIMRA), Library
Marshall Islands

Ximena Silva

Universidad de Magallanes
Chile

Emma Suryati
Research Institute for Coastal
Aquaculture, Library
Indonesia
Zenaida Pamulaklakin
Philippine Council for Aquatic and
Marine Research and Development
Philippines

Kodjo Elolo Atiso

Animal Research Institute, Council
for Scientific and Industrial
Research Ghana
Jennifer Walton
MBL/WHOI Library
U.S.A.

Jean Collins, FAO Fisheries Library

Jim Markham – on his retirement

The time has come... After 20 years as Aquatic Sciences/Biology Librarian, German Librarian, and Science/German/Atlas Cataloger at the University of California, Santa Barbara, I will retire on September 15, 2006, from my second career and my first library position. This has been my first permanent position, and has been considerably more stable and settled than my first career. As a marine botanist, first as a graduate student, and then for many years afterward, I was supported by research grants for seaweed research in Seattle, WA; Friday Harbor, WA; Oslo, Norway; Vancouver, BC; Halifax, NS; Vancouver again; and finally, 7 years on the German North Sea island of Helgoland, the longest time I spent in one place in my entire 20-year career as a marine botanist.

Compare this with 20 years as a librarian, all in Santa Barbara.

I have really had a great time in both careers (and all the places I lived), and starting a new career did not mean a sharp break with the past, rather one career merged into the next. As a librarian, I was able to bring along and utilize almost all of what I had done as a marine botanist. This transition was helped tremendously by the continuity provided by IAMSLIC. So many IAMSLIC librarians work with marine biologists like me, so it was easy to do more of the same things, but from a different perspective. I am a member of too many library organizations, but IAMSLIC is by far the most relevant, useful, and interesting for me. Without IAMSLIC it would be much more difficult to function effectively as a marine biology librarian.

I have enjoyed all the things I was able to do with IAMSLIC, especially editing the Proceedings. This was something I wanted to do for some time, especially after cataloging many poorly-edited conference proceedings that lacked basic information catalogers need.

IAMSLIC also provided continuity in a geographic sense, as we met in 4 of the 6 places where I had carried out research. I attended IAMSLIC in Halifax and Seattle, and Cyamus in Friday Harbor and Vancouver. And, providing more continuity, Marcel Brannemann is Library Director of the Alfred Wegener Institute, which is the parent institute of the Biologische Anstalt Helgoland, where I worked.

Thank you, IAMSLIC, for all the help, advice, and networking over the years. You people are great. I will attend IAMSLIC in Portland, close to my second home on the Oregon Coast, and Cyamus in San Pedro, close to my permanent home in Santa Barbara. Attendance at future meetings somewhere in the world is definitely possible.

I hope to see many of you in Portland.

Cheers,
Jim

Dr. James W. Markham
Aquatic Sciences/Biology/German Librarian
Science/German Cataloger
Davidson Library, University of California, Santa Barbara

ARL Institutional Repositories SPEC Kit

The Institutional Repositories SPEC Kit is now available [1] from the Association of Research Libraries (ARL [2]). This document presents the results of a thirty-eight-question survey of 87 responding ARL members in early 2006 about their institutional repositories practices and plans. The survey response rate was 71% (87 out of 123 ARL members). The front matter and nine-page Executive Summary [3] are freely available. The document also presents detailed question-by-question results, a list of respondent institutions, representative documents from institutions, and a bibliography. It is 176 pages long.

Here is the bibliographic information: University of Houston Libraries Institutional Repository Task Force. Institutional Repositories. SPEC Kit 292. Washington, DC: Association of Research Libraries, 2006. ISBN: 1-59407-708-8.

The members of the University of Houston Libraries [4] Institutional Repository Task Force who authored the document were Charles W. Bailey, Jr.; Karen Coombs; Jill Emery (now at UT Austin); Anne Mitchell; Chris Morris; Spencer Simons; and Robert Wright.

The creation of a SPEC Kit [5] is a highly collaborative process. SPEC Kit Editor Lee Anne George and other ARL staff worked with the authors to refine the survey questions, mounted the Web survey, analyzed the data in SPSS, created a preliminary summary of survey question responses, and edited and formatted the final document. Given the amount of data that the survey generated, this was no small task. The authors would like to thank the ARL team for their hard work on the SPEC Kit.

Although the Executive Summary is much longer than is typical (over 5,100 words vs. about 1,500 words), it should not be mistaken for a highly analytic research article. Its goal was to try to describe the survey's main findings, which was quite challenging given the amount of survey data available. The full data is available in the "Survey Questions and Responses" section of the SPEC Kit.

Here are some quick survey results:

- Thirty-seven ARL institutions (43% of respondents) had an operational IR (we called these respondents implementers), 31 (35%) were planning one by 2007, and 19 (22%) had no IR plans.
- Looked at from the perspective of all 123 ARL members, 30% had an operational IR and, by 2007, that figure may reach 55%.
- The mean cost of IR implementation was \$182,550.
- The mean annual IR operation cost was \$113,543.
- Most implementers did not have a dedicated budget for either start-up costs (56%) or ongoing operations (52%).
- The vast majority of implementers identified first-level IR support units that had a library reporting line vs. one that had a campus IT or other campus unit reporting line.
- DSpace [6] was by far the most commonly used system: 20 implementers used it exclusively and 3 used it in combination with other systems.

- Proquest DigitalCommons [7] (or the Bepress software it is based on) was the second choice of implementers: 7 implementers used this system.
- While 28% of implementers have made no IR software modifications to enhance its functionality, 22% have made frequent changes to do so and 17% have made major modifications to the software.
- Only 41% of implementers had no review of deposited documents. While review by designated departmental or unit officials was the most common method (35%), IR staff reviewed documents 21% of the time.
- In a check all that apply question, 60% of implementers said that IR staff entered simple metadata for authorized users and 57% said that they enhanced such data. Thirty-one percent said that they cataloged IR materials completely using local standards.
- In another check all that apply question, implementers clearly indicated that IR and library staff use a variety of strategies to recruit content: 83% made presentations to faculty and others, 78% identified and encouraged likely depositors, 78% had library subject specialists act as advocates, 64% offered to deposit materials for authors, and 50% offered to digitize materials and deposit them.
- The most common digital preservation arrangement for implementers (47%) was to accept any file type, but only preserve specified file types using data migration and other techniques. The next most common arrangement (26%) was to accept and preserve any file type.
- The mean number of digital objects in implementers' IRs was 3,844.

[1] <http://www.arl.org/pubscat/pr/2006/spec292.html>

[2] <http://www.arl.org/>

[3] <http://www.arl.org/spec/SPEC292web.pdf>

[4] <http://info.lib.uh.edu/index.html>

[5] <http://www.arl.org/spec/>

[6] <http://dspace.org/>

[7] http://www.umi.com/products_umi/digitalcommons/

Charles W. Bailey, Jr., Assistant Dean for Digital Library
Planning and Development, University of Houston Libraries

Two New Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) Bibliographies on Wetlands, Environment Now Available

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has published two more in a series of current literature surveys covering agricultural conservation programs and the effectiveness of agricultural conservation practices.

The two new bibliographies, both available on the Web (www.nal.usda.gov/wqic/ceap/index.shtml), were published by the National Agricultural Library (NAL), part of USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS).

The first new bibliography is "Environmental Effects of Conservation Practices on Grazing Lands," a guide to recent scientific literature covering environmental effects of conservation practices on grazing lands. This information is useful in designing policies and on-the-land conservation systems that foster practical and environmentally sound grazing practices.

The second bibliography is "Wetlands in Agricultural Landscapes," a guide to recent scientific literature covering environmental aspects of wetlands in agricultural landscapes. The bibliography highlights research findings in two main areas: (1) the effect of conservation practices and other agricultural activities on wetlands, and (2) the environmental effects of wetlands as conservation practices, including constructing and restoring wetlands.

This bibliography will also facilitate the identification of knowledge gaps regarding effects of conservation practices on ecosystem services provided by wetlands in agricultural landscapes, and will help identify where research is needed.

The two new publications are in addition to four CEAP bibliographies published by NAL in 2004 and made available on the Web. See story (www.ars.usda.gov/is/pr/2004/041006.2.htm) for details.

Altogether, the six bibliographies contain more than 5,200 citations with abstracts, where available, and with URLs when the documents are freely available online.

The series of bibliographies has been prepared by the NAL's Water Quality Information Center, in support of the USDA Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP). Through CEAP, USDA is studying the environmental benefits of conservation practices implemented through various USDA conservation programs.

ARS News Service
Agricultural Research Service, USDA
Len Carey, (301) 504 6778, lcarey@nal.usda.gov
October 11, 2006

--View this report online, plus any included photos or other images, at www.ars.usda.gov/is/pr

The Complete Works of Charles Darwin Online

This great URL provides the full-text of all the books and papers, and many of the manuscripts by Charles Darwin

<http://darwin-online.org.uk/>

Dam Removal Clearinghouse

The Dam Removal Clearinghouse, went public so here it is, check it out!

If you do not see the gray literature on a particular dam you are working on, please work with UCB to add to the database - this achievement is only as good as the practitioners make it. If we all contribute, this will become a valuable resource for all!

Clearinghouse for Dam Removal
Information

<http://lib.berkeley.edu/WRCA/damremoval/>

Economics of Ecology Journals

In case you haven't yet had a visit from your local ecologist(s), there's an article in the November issue of "Frontiers in Ecology" written by an ecologist and an economist on journal pricing. Obviously their intended audience isn't librarians (good thing since their understanding of publishing trends is a bit dated) but their bottom line message is a familiar one -- think before deciding in which journal to publish. If any of you are anxious to read but don't have access let me know.

Joan Parker

Heidorn's online class on Biodiversity Informatics

For any of you wanting to learn about the ways people go about planning to include biodiversity data in their data models (marine or not), you might want to think about Heidorn's online class on Biodiversity Informatics given this fall and next through the University of Illinois at Urbana (or through a special agreement with Syracuse University). I think the syllabus looks great.

You can find the Syllabus for the course at <https://hive.lis.uiuc.edu/display/FA06LIS590/EI/Home>

Cynthia Dietz

ISBNs and OCLC Numbers

Technical Bulletin 253: /ISBN and OCLC Number Changes/ is now available in both HTML and PDF formats.

It covers these topics:

The OCLC implementation of thirteen-digit ISBNs. The International Standard Book Number (ISBN) is currently ten digits. Starting on January 1, 2007, the ISBN will be thirteen digits. Some publishers have already switched to the new, longer numbers. After January 1, 2007, they all must use them.

The expansion of the OCLC number from eight to nine digits.

Currently, the OCLC control number is a fixed-length, eight-digit number. However, OCLC will soon reach the last eight-digit number. On November 12, 2006, WorldCat records will be able to have nine-digit OCLC numbers. The 100 millionth WorldCat record will be the first nine-digit number.

This technical bulletin describes the implications of these major changes and what you need to do to prepare for the changes. It is available at:

<http://www.oclc.org/support/documentation/worldcat/tb/253/default.htm>

Peter Insabella

Manager, Product Documentation Content OCLC

Latin Working Committee 2006-2008

GL 06-190 9 Nov.2006

I am pleased to introduce you the new IAMSLIC REGIONAL LATIN Working Committee 2006-2008 that has accepted this challenge:

Secretary- Alexandra Smith (Shoa- Chile)

Finances- Andrea Cristiani (Iip-Uruguay)

Vowel 1 Irene Beltran Rodríguez
(Cinvestav- Méjico)

Vowel 2 Enma Fonseca (Cip- Cuba)

Vowel 3 Patricia Muñoz Palma (Ifop- Chile)

Vowel 4 Clara Ramírez (Icmyl,Unam- Méjico)

Informatic Support For Latin Group Website
- Juan Manuel Incaugarat (Inidep- Argentina)

Informatic Support For Z39.50- Germán
Ramírez (Icmyl,Unam-Méjico)

ASFIS/REDIPES INIDEP - Biblioteca y Servicio de Documentación Mar del Plata - Argentina

According to the answers and opinions received from the former Working Group based on the experience they had, I propose for this period to reduce the amount of the committee members, and continue working with the former Coordinator to count on her experience. We are very grateful to the ICMYL-UNAM for allowing us to still have our IAMSLIC Latin Group website within the server of their institution.

We are all committed to do our best to grow professionally together in this Association and in order to be able to give the best service to our users.

Guillermina Cosulich
IAMSLIC - Coordinadora Regional
Latinoamericana Nodo Sistema de
Información ASFA -

MPA Virtual Library

A project to cluster the bibliographic records in the MPA Virtual Library into browseable theme bins is now complete. See figures below for numbers of records grouped under each theme, current as of end of July 2006. Please note that some records are in multiple theme bins due to multiple topics covered by the cited work, and that these figures will change over time as records get added or the database is refined. See the MPA Virtual Library Theme Bins page to browse these categories: http://www3.mpa.gov/mpa_lib/themebins.aspx

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) Introduction to MPAs - 26 records | 11) MPA Science - 295 records |
| 2) MPA Management - 272 records | 12) Stakeholder Participation - 84 records |
| 3) MPA Design - 206 records | 13) MPA Systems and Networks - 271 records |
| 4) Effectiveness - 118 records | 14) Challenges & Issues - 39 records |
| 5) Enforcement - 14 records | 15) International - 656 records |
| 6) Fisheries - 684 records | 16) Education & Public Awareness - 69 records |
| 7) Monitoring - 85 records | 17) Social Science/Economics - 249 records |
| 8) Cultural Resources - 50 records | |
| 9) Marine Managed Areas - 30 records | |
| 10) Policy & Legal Analysis - 272 records | |

Please note that in addition to the new browseable theme bins, the Library remains searchable via the MPA Virtual Library search page: http://www3.mpa.gov/mpa_lib/virtual_library.aspx

Kathy Kelly, MLS, C.A.
NOAA Central Library

NOAA Libraries

The NMFS Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) has launched a new unified web site.

SWFSC home page: <http://swfsc.noaa.gov/>

SWFSC Libraries:
<http://swfsc.noaa.gov/textblock.aspx?id=1128&ParentMenuId=121>

This new site replaces the separate web sites previously maintained for each SWFSC lab (La Jolla, Pacific Grove, and Santa Cruz). Please be sure to update any bookmarks you may have pointing to these old sites.

Kit Johnston
National Marine Fisheries Service

Nunavik Bibliography (from Pollib-L)

The Nunavik Bibliography has doubled in size in the three years since it was first made public. The bibliography now describes more than 4300 publications and is available for free from a bilingual website at: <http://www.aina.ucalgary.ca/nunavik>

The Nunavik Bibliography is a cooperative long-term project to build a comprehensive bibliographic database about northern Quebec. The bibliography is a joint project of Makivik Corporation, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, the Canadian Circumpolar Institute, the Arctic Institute of North America and the Centre d'études nordiques. Additional partners are welcome.

During the past year the project participants have added publications held by the Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Departmental Library, journal papers and theses produced by the Centre d'études nordiques at Laval University, publications from the library of Makivik Corporation's Nunavik Research Centre in Kuujuaq, and publications from the DVD "Inventory of Public Makivik Documentation 1975-2005". The Nunavik Bibliography now provides URL or DOI links to more than 725 publications that are available online as PDF files.

For more information, please contact Elaine Maloney (elaine.maloney@ualberta.ca) or Ross Goodwin Arctic Science and Technology Information System (ASTIS), Arctic Institute of North America, University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada

oneFish Marine and Coastal Fisheries CD ROM

A prototype oneFish CD ROM Product is being developed reflecting the Marine and Coastal Fisheries Worldview in oneFish. The CD ROM will have English and French interfaces, however the majority of knowledge is currently in English.

The primary purpose of the CD ROM is to provide individuals who have slow or intermittent access to the Internet the ability to browse the knowledge in oneFish offline. The CD ROM will contain the full-text versions of all relevant documents uploaded to oneFish, and users will be able to access other items of knowledge, e.g. websites, via a low bandwidth connection, or send for these via email using the oneFish WebViaMail service.

The collaboration of Iamslic members is sought to identifying appropriate recipients

who will use the CD ROM and send us their comments. To send CD ROMs directly to individuals we will need their full postal address, alternatively if a Librarian is willing to coordinate this activity, multiple CD ROMs can be forwarded to their library.

Please contact the oneFish Chief Editor if you can assist with this exercise.

Contact information: Joan Baron Varley, Chief Editor and Information Manager, oneFish Community Directory Project, c/o FIRM - Marine Resources Service, FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, Rome 00100, Italy. Email: joan.baron@fao.org <<mailto:joan.baron@fao.org>> ; Web: <http://www.onefish.org> <<http://www.onefish.org>>

Technical report on Open Source Repositories

This is the most detailed technical evaluation of repository software that I have seen. It is not a vanity parade, but had a real purpose: "To choose a system that can aggregate published metadata and offer a bureau/hosting service referred to here as The Hosted Solution and the National (New Zealand) Hub."

The report evaluates EPrints, DSpace and Fedora in a series of categories. So which won, if the report could be said to concede such a prize? Well, Fedora looks like the recommendation. But note also how it goes on to conclude the case for EPrints:

"EPrints is the best candidate for a self-configuring solution for institutions wanting to set up and host their own repository. Publication to the national network would be accommodated through the OAI harvester at the national hub retrieving the metadata from these institutions."

Probably just as we would put it ourselves, and even-handed enough to defy easy headlines but to justify wider awareness and consideration of the report.

Steve Hitchcock
IAM Group, School of Electronics and Computer Science
University of Southampton, UK

Sea urchin gene map filled with surprises : Shares more than 7000 genes with humans

Excerpt from Washington, Nov 9 Reuters

Sea urchins may be blind, but they have the same genes that help people see, as well as genes for a sense of smell and one of the most complicated immune systems in the animal world, researchers reported on Thursday.

They also have genes associated with diseases such as Huntington's and muscular dystrophy, offering new routes to understanding illnesses, the researchers write in Friday's issue of the journal Science.

The sea urchin - a pincushion-shaped animal found at the bottom of the sea and perhaps best known for its long, sharp spines - shares more than 7000 genes with humans, the international team of researchers found.

It was long known to be more closely related to humans and other vertebrates than other creatures favoured by biologists for research, such as fruit flies and *C. elegans* roundworms.

Comparing human genes to their counterparts in other species can help scientists figure out why they evolved, and find ways to help when things go wrong.

The series of studies published in Science confirm this relationship and also make some surprising findings, such as genes for sight found at the bottom of their feet ...

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DISCLAIMER

IAMSLIC assumes no responsibility for the statements and opinions advanced by contributions to IAMSLIC publications. Editorial views do not necessarily represent the official position of the organization.

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