

THE INDIAN OCEAN BUBBLE

ISSUE NO. 4

JULY 13 1959

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A LETTER FROM Gene LaFond
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I have been interested in the various discussions of the proposed oceanographic studies for the Indian Ocean appearing in "The Indian Ocean Bubble". To me, the problem is not what to do, but rather, who in the Indian Ocean region can be rounded up to do it? Everyone should be reminded that this is the Indian Ocean, not the Woods Hole or Scripps ocean.

To spread the gospel and attain any lasting results, the work has to be carried on partly by the scientists of the Indian Ocean area. This does not mean just coming along for a ride, but actually given a major share in planning, analysis, and reporting. Most Asian students will be enthusiastic about the work if given opportunity to collect data for thesis material. This opportunity and encouragement should be the primary goal of the expedition.

All plans dealing with the expedition and their execution, will progress very slowly in Asia due to lack of authority and the complex restrictions on travel, money exchange, imports, immigration, and numerous other necessities of the program. Thus, planning with Indian Ocean scientists for participation should start early to avoid some of the inevitable delays.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to deal directly with students. It is necessary to go down through the chain of command. The most promising approach would be to contact high-level people, such as heads of scientific organizations, Navy laboratories, fisheries, or universities, explaining the proposed program. Eventually, through these contacts, it may be possible to assemble some good Indian Ocean scientists and get them started in oceanographic research in their ocean.

Sincerely,

Gene LaFond