DISCOVERING AND SHARING INFORMATION ON THE USE OF E-RESOURCES TO ENHANCE THE USE OF SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE: CASE STUDY OF THE KENYA MARINE AND FISHERIES RESEARCH INSTITUTE LIBRARY, KENYA

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Abstract: The Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI) Library is guided by our vision "to be a one stop provider of user focused quality library services and develop collections in support of aquatic research and promotion of sustainable utilization of Marine and Freshwater resources." The provision of documents, bibliographic searches and compilation provided by the current awareness product KMFRI CURRENT remains one of the core services we offer to researchers/scientists and relevant institutions. We have moved from the era when documents came courtesy of former RECOSCIX-WIO and later ODINAFRICA, most of which were hard copies and difficult to store. The library is now able to service 70% of the requests through its collection, in the building of which both RECOSCIX-WIO and ODINAFRICA played parts. Besides filling requests from within, we have also been able to service requests from outside, mostly for published papers by local scientists. The library has its own internal databases such as ASFA, KENYAN WATERS and SAMAKI, and also maintains the directories KENDIR, AFRIDIR and GLODIR. Collaboration with IAMSLIC, AFRIAMSLIC and ODINAFRICA has made it much easier to access documents that are not locally available. Online access to AGORA, HINARI, OARE, INASP and DOAJ has also enabled the library to meet some of its requests.

Keywords: marine science, fisheries, aquatic sciences, Kenya.

The Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute was established in 1979 from the defunct East African Marine and Freshwater Research Organization (EAMFRO). The institute is charged with responsibility of conducting research and making management recommendations essential for the national exploitation of aquatic resources in the marine and freshwaters in the hinterland. There are nine research and field stations countrywide with the mandate of undertaking research in marine and freshwater fisheries, aquatic sciences, biological, chemical and physical oceanography, limnology, pollution, natural products and marine geology.

The KMFRI Library serves both marine and freshwater sectors with books, pamphlets, periodicals and reprints; this includes publications deposited by the government and international organizations and other institutions dealing in marine research work. The library inherited its initial collection from EAMFRO but the period 1979-1984 saw little growth in terms of information resources due to budgetary constraints. In 1985 a joint Kenya/ Belgium program in marine science was launched. Among the preliminary problems that faced the research team during the initiation of the program was the lack of relevant literature about aquatic resources of the region. The Limburg University Centrum was approached, conducted a feasibility study and came up with these findings:

1. Lack of relevant bibliographic information by the researchers;
2. Lack of communication between KMFRI researchers and the rest of the world;
3. Lack of infrastructure for information dissemination and exchange;
4. Lack of or inadequate funding for the Library.

The Limburg University Centrum (Luc) and Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute made informal arrangements to supply documents to the researchers and a route to greater inter-library cooperation was initiated giving birth to RECOSCIX-WIO and later ODINAFRICA.

Regional Cooperation in Scientific Information Exchange in the Western Indian Ocean region was effectively launched in 1989 with funding from IOC of UNESCO while the KMFRI Library hosted and provided infrastructure and staff. RECOSCIX-WIO worked towards establishing a lasting network of marine and aquatic institutions in the western Indian Ocean region, with the regional dispatch centre in Mombasa as its central node; this was aimed at promoting the scientific capabilities of the region.

The cooperation between the Limburg University Centrum (LUC) and KMFRI had these objectives:

1. Provision of bibliographic on scientific information to marine Scientists in the region and make full use of scientific literature available in the region;
2. Promote and facilitate communication between marine scientists in the region and other regions;
3. Promote scientific activities within and outside the region;
4. Provide scientific information, equipment, software and training to make full use of the information.

Upon the winding up of RECOSCIX-WIO, the Ocean Data and Information Network for Africa (ODINAFRICA) was launched as its follow up which covered most of Africa's coastal states which was to enable the states of Africa to:

- Get access to data available in other centers.
- Develop skills for manipulation of data.
- Prepare data and information products.
- Develop infrastructure for archival analysis.
- Disseminate data and information products.
- Develop AFRILIB (a catalog of library holdings in the cooperating institutions).
- Document delivery services.

The ODINAFRICA Information Services Centre in Mombasa provided a document delivery service to experts from the ODINAFRICA institutions. The documents were sourced through a network of more than 13 marine science libraries worldwide. The most active of the collaborating libraries included Limburg Universitair Centrum (Belgium), IFREMER (France), Fresh Water Institution (Canada), the National Museum (Kenya), the National Institute of Oceanography (India), FAO Fisheries Branch Division (ITALY), University of Nairobi (Kenya), the International Centre for Insect Physiology and Ecology (Kenya), International Centre for Living Aquatic Resources and Management (Malaysia), Southampton Library (UK), Oregon State University (USA), Rosentiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science (USA) and the National Centre for Marine Research Library (Greece). The ARIEL electronic document delivery software was used at the regional to reduce delays in delivery. The project office coordinated the participation of information centers in Kenya, Senegal, Seychelles, and Tanzania in trials of electronic document delivery using PROSPERO. This software and ARIEL were then free; budgetary restrictions in the institutions had previously been unable to supply them. The second phase of ODINAFRICA was developed to address the requirements that had been identified, taking into account the work already done by RECOSCIX-WIO, in particular aiming at enabling member states from Africa to get access to data available in other data centers, developing skills for manipulation of data and preparation of data and information products, and developing infrastructure for archival, analysis and dissemination of the same. AFRIPUB (a catalogue of scientific journals, articles and monographs published by Africa Ocean Scientists) and AFRICURRENT (an awareness tool based on user's profiles of specific subject interests) were some of the services offered.

Fig.1 Map showing countries that participated on ODINAFRICA activities marked in red.

The Internet and the Web are constantly influencing the development of new modes of scholarly communication in the way information is gathered, store, organized, accessed, retrieved and consumed. Their potential for delivering goods is quite vast, as they overcome successfully the geographical limitations associated with the print media. Some of the online databases used at the KMFRI library are AGORA, HINARI, OARE, INASP, DOAJ, making the delivery of documents much faster compared to earlier days when mail was the main means of communication; there are of course some challenges that must be addressed to make the process is complete. Electronic resources present the user with vast amounts of information, but there are concerns about the stability of the Internet connection, the need to sort through information to find out which are legitimate sources, and a need to train researchers in the use of e-resources. Some are not satisfied with the existing IT infrastructure within the organization. Some of the impacts of the use of e-resources to the scientists are:

1. The use of e-resources is very common among the researchers.
2. Researchers are dependent on e-resources to get the desired and relevant information.
3. E-journals have become a basic need for the researchers every day.
4. E-resources, are found to be less expensive and more useful for easy access.

KMFRI REPOSITORY

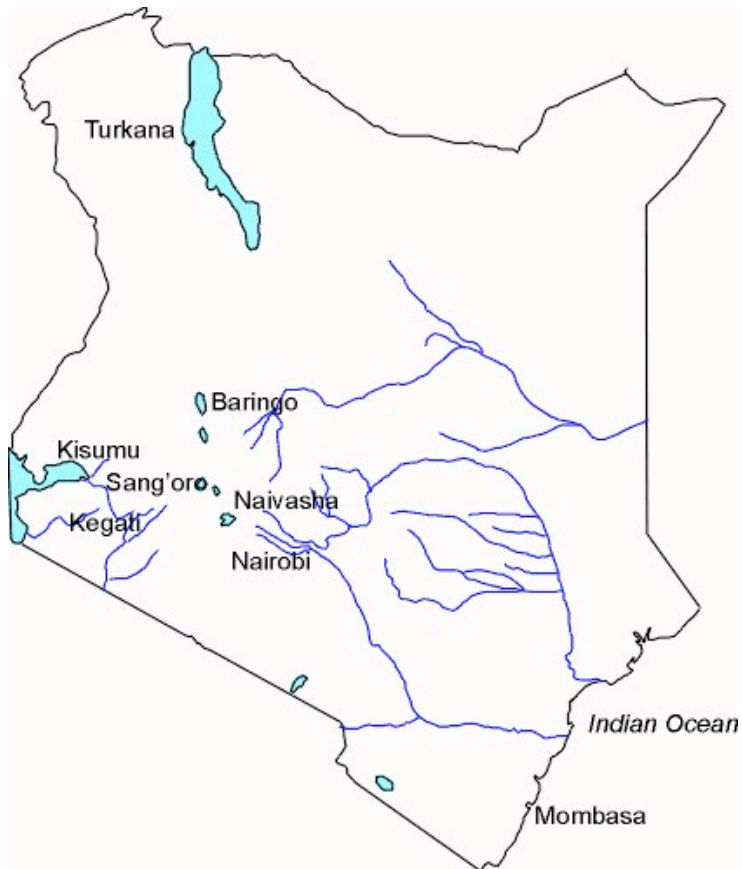
Fig 2. KMFRI Repository online library.

Fig. 3. Map showing the KMFRI inland research centers and headquarters in Mombasa where the main library is based.

References
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