

# EMBRC HQ Update - N.23

## 15 December 2020 – 15 March 2021

Prepared by: EMBRC HQ

*The present report covers the period from 15 December 2020 to 15 March 2021.*

*Scope: to update the GA on the progress of main items of the work activity at the EMBRC-ERIC Headquarters.*

### General activities

- In February, EMBRC signed a memorandum of understanding with EMBL to strengthen scientific cooperation. Dr Nicolas Pade said EMBRC is “looking forward to supporting EMBL’s new programme and to offering our respective communities new and exciting research, innovation, and knowledge-exchange opportunities”. Since signing the MoU, EMBRC and EMBL have communicated regularly to find new pathways for collaboration.
- Ioulia Santi joined EMBRC on 1 February on secondment from HCMR. Ioulia, who will remain based in Greece, is responsible for implementing the Genomics Observatories initiative. Her work has, so far, involved structuring soft sediment and water column working groups, and writing the handbook for the planned Genomic Observatories which will launch later this year.
- The European Marine Omics Biodiversity Observation Network (EMO BON), EMBRC’s planned ‘omics based observatory, kick-off meeting took place on 15 February, and was an opportunity for EMBRC to explain the observatory initiative to the involved parties. The meeting included an introduction to the EMO BON concept and an opportunity for participants to express their interest.
- EMBRC responded to a request for support on behalf of the Shimoda Marine Research Center (the University of Tsukuba, Japan), for the project “Research Center for Coastal Life and Environment” to be submitted to the Joint Usage/Research Center programme under the aegis of the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. The offer of support serves as an unprecedented opportunity to build collaborative links between Japanese and European marine research and innovation.
- EMBRC advertised for an Administrative and Financial Assistant as Katharine Worley, who currently occupies the role, is leaving for a new position in the research infrastructure landscape. The closing date for applications was 18 March and the aim is to ensure a smooth transition between departure and arrival of our new colleague.
- EMBRC carried out annual reviews for the team in early 2021. The meetings, between HQ staff and the Executive Director and management, were an opportunity to discuss career progression, challenges and successes of the previous year.
- EMBRC responded to the ESFRI Landscape Analysis questionnaire regarding the relevance of EMBRC with regards to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals, as well as an analysis of the capacity of EMBRC to respond to emergencies, such as the COVID-19 crisis.
- Communication continued with Finland, Sweden and the Ukraine who have expressed an interest in becoming members of EMBRC.



- The 1 January 2021 marked the beginning of the UN Decade of Ocean Science, which will help underline the importance of EMBRC's activities in the field of marine science. EMBRC is so far involved in 3 submitted programme proposals.

## Communication

- EMBRC began its 'Marine Scientist Monday' feature on social media, featuring biographical information on groundbreaking marine scientists through history.
- The social media campaign 'Model Organism of the Sea' kicked-off mid-March with a post on sea urchins.
- EMBRC celebrated International Women's Day on 8 March, dedicating the Marine Scientist Monday post to Ida H. Hyde (the first woman to work in a laboratory of the Zoology department at Harvard University), and noting a gender balance among the users of EMBRC services in 2020.
- Organised within the framework of the RI-VIS project, the first communication workshop initiated by Rita Costa Abecasis and Sabrina Gaber kicked off on 16 March. The workshops, which will take place weekly for a period of 8 weeks (with a follow-plenary mid June 2021), are intended to provide research infrastructure Communication Officers with the wherewithall to manage their communication strategies and equip them with the knowledge to communicate in the most efficient ways.
- EMBRC reached 2000 followers on Twitter and continues to grow its social media following.

## Access

- Following work to add EMBRC services to the CatRIS portal over recent months, Davide Di Cioccio presented the onboarding experience from a service provider's perspective at the CatRIS portal online launch event on 11 March.
- ABS Officer Arnaud Laroquette participated in a meeting to organise the EBB final symposium, taking place at the end of March.
- Arnaud Laroquette also participated in a meeting with the research infrastructure MIRRI, in which he presented the EMBRC view on ABS.

## Governance Meetings

- All EMBRC members answered to the written resolution called on 19 February. As no opposition was expressed the finalised Rules of Operations were approved, as well as the templates for the Service Level Agreements in their operator and Node versions. The resolutions will be recalled at the next EMBRC General Assembly.
- CoN 24 meeting took place on 16 December, the discussion focussing on feedback from the EMBRC General Assembly and the Genomics Observatories initiative.
- CoN 25 meeting took place on 13 January and focussed on upcoming Horizon Europe projects and EMBRC Days, later this year.
- CoN 26 was held on 15 February with a focus on Communications. EMBRC Communications Officer Sabrina Gaber presented the communications strategy and noted the milestones already achieved, and upcoming goals.



- CoN 27 took place on 15 March, this time with a focus on Access and Benefit Sharing. The meeting served as an opportunity to raise awareness and understanding of the work EMBRC is doing on ABS.

## Projects

- The ASSEMBLE Plus Conference 2021 took place on 18-19 January. The conference, titled “Marine biological research at the frontier”, included keynote speakers, lectures by ASSEMBLE Plus users, round tables with policy makers and industry, and ASSEMBLE Plus service demonstrations. The event is available to watch again on the EMBRC YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/c/EMBRC> and includes input from Nicolas Pade, Arnaud Laroquette and Davide Di Cioccio.
- ERIC Forum held an online meeting on 26-27 January, attended by Nicolas Pade and Sidonie Gras. The meeting was an opportunity to discuss ERICs’ role in the new European Research Area, ERICs and the new ESFRI Stakeholder forum, the ERIC guidelines, opportunities for ERICs at the European Innovation Council, and more.
- EMBRC submitted the RI-VIS mid-term financial report and received the first grant payment for the project.
- Nicolas Pade, Sidonie Gras and Sabrina Gaber all participated in the RI-VIS Africa/Europe symposium held virtually on 1-2 February 2021.
- Nicolas Pade participated in the ERIC Forum Cross-Domain workshop on Research Quality and Reproducibility 10-11 February.
- Sidonie Gras participated in an EOSC-Life Translator meeting on 29 February, during which attendees worked through the main points of the working groups and identified areas for improvement.
- The General Assembly for RI-VIS took place on 8 March, attended by Nicolas Pade.

## Recent events

- Davide Di Cioccio and Sidonie Gras attended a webinar on Impact Assessment, Evaluation and Monitoring of Research Infrastructures on 16-17 December.
- Nicolas Pade participated in the EMSO advisory board meeting on 29 January.
- Nicolas Pade participated in the EOOS Operational Committee meeting on 9 February. A further meeting took place on 10 March.
- Nicolas Pade participated in a meeting with AnaEE (Analysis and Experimentation on Ecosystems) on 12 February, providing input and recommendations in the establishment of this soon-to-be ERIC.
- Nicolas Pade and Ioulia Santi participated in the INTAROS meeting on 16 February. INTAROS is an EU-funded H2020 project having the overall objective to develop an integrated multidisciplinary (atmosphere, ocean, cryosphere and terrestrial) Arctic Observation System by extending, improving and unifying existing systems in the different regions of the Arctic.
- Ioulia Santi participated in the workshop, organised by SEARICA, “Sharing responsibility – a coherent approach to European ocean observation”, on 23 February. The meeting discussed the upcoming legislative initiative on behalf of the European Commission, to achieve a common EU approach to improve the efficiency of measuring and using data for multiple purposes.



- Davide Di Cioccio participated in the webinar “Strengthening the Science-Policy Interface for Ocean Sustainability” on 1 March. The objective of the webinar was to raise awareness of the importance of the science-policy interface for ocean governance at all levels, as well as reinforcing the understanding of the role of citizen science, as well as local knowledge.
- Nicolas Pade participated in the LS RI Strategy Board membership meeting on 1 March. The meeting included introductions to IBISBA and AnAEE, as well as promotion of the CatRIS launch event and upcoming workshop on Common challenges and actions for distributed research infrastructures in Europe.
- Ioulia Santi participated in the first DNAQUA International Conference on 9-11 March. The conference provided the opportunity to scientists and stakeholders to present and discuss the latest research outputs on DNA-based monitoring from DNAqua-net and beyond.
- Several members of the team participated on the webinar “Common challenges and actions for distributed RIs in Europe” run by ESF in collaboration with EuroPlanet Society, on 17-18 March.
- In March, Nicolas Pade participated in a meeting about the outcomes of the EuroSea (EuroGOOS) workshop and future practical steps to improve the coordination of biological observation in Europe.
- Nicolas Pade participated in the Marine Training advisory board meeting.

## Upcoming events

- EBB final meeting, 23 March 2021, online
- EOSC-Life AGM, 25-26 March 2021, online
- “Blue Growth in the Eastern Mediterranean: Challenges and opportunities” web conference in the context of CMBR project, 12-13 May 2021, online
- EMBRC-ERIC General Assembly VIII, 19-20 May 2021, online
- EMBRC Community Days, 31 May – 4 June 2021, online
- EMBRC will be taking part in the MASTS webinar series in June, online
- RI-VIS Latin America - Europe Symposium on Research Infrastructures, 15-17 June 2021, online
- EU Innovation Days, 23-24 June 2021, online

The next HQ Update will be available by Friday 18 June 2021.