

SCOR (Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research)

Activities' Report - Year 2018

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1. Introduction

SCOR (Scientific Committee for Oceanic Research) has been established by ICSU (International Council for Science) in order to foster Ocean scientific researches. SCOR aims at identifying emerging relevant themes and main challenges in Ocean research, promoting international cooperation. Special attention is given to activities that promote oceanic research in the developing countries.

My activity as Italian SCOR Delegate during 2018, together with the other Delegate Leonardo Langone, are summarized in the following

2. Main activities carried on by SCOR during 2018 relevant for Italy and for CNR

During 2018, SCOR carried out a number of activities summarized in the following

- As every year, SCOR issued a call for Working Groups (WGs) on emerging topics to be addressed at international level, creating the basis for further projects and common activities. In April 2018, a total of 9 proposals have been presented, and they have been evaluated first at the national level (for each SCOR participating country) by the Delegates and by the National Committees. These evaluations have then been discussed at the Annual Meeting held in Plymouth (UK) in September, and 2 proposals have been selected. One of these proposals, MetaZooGene, involves an Italian Associate Member, Maria Grazia Mazzocchi (Stazione Zoologica Anton Dohrn).
- SCOR has also issued a call for Capacity Building projects, with programs for Visiting Scholars in Institutions in developing countries. A total of 6 new Visiting Scholars have been elected.
- A new SCOR Committee has been launched in Namibia with a dedicated Symposium. One of the members of the Italian Committee, Luigi Cavaleri (CNR) participated and presented at the Symposium.
- SCOR selected one Early Career Scientist (ECS) to be part of the Executive Committee (EC). The selection process involved candidate nominations from the National Committees
- Partial modifications to the SCOR Constitution have been approved, as suggested by the Council for Science (ICSU) and previously discussed by the National Committees, in order to improve SCOR role and visibility
- Finally, SCOR provided a mechanism to develop and participate to international projects such as IMBER, GEOTRACES, SOLAS, IIOE-2.

All these activities provided important opportunities to the Italian oceanographic community and to CNR.

3. Activities carried on by the Delegate within SCOR during 2018 and impact on the Italian scientific community

During 2018, the following Delegate activities have been carried out:

- Consolidation of the Italian National Committee for SCOR, that has been established in 2017, and includes members formally designated by the Commissione Oceanografica Italiana (COI), as well as other scientists involved in SCOR activities.
- Coordination of the National Committee to review the WGs received by SCOR in April 2018.
- Participation to the Annual Meeting held in Plymouth (UK) September 4-6. During the meeting, the best 2 WGs have been identified for support. One of them, MetaZooGene (Toward a new global view of marine zooplankton biodiversity based on DNA metabarcoding and reference DNA sequence databases), has an Italian Associate Member, Maria Grazia Mazzocchi (Stazione Zoologica Anton Dorn)
- Coordination of the National Committee during the process of identification of a ECS for the SCOR Executive Committee. Very high level Italian candidates have been identified, but unfortunately they have not been selected for the EC.
- Coordination of the National Committee to draw a list of young Italian researchers (ECS) that can be interested in national meetings to provide information and coordination regarding SCOR and other international body activities.
- Coordination of the Italian participation to the Symposium to Launch Namibian SCOR Committee, thanks to the participation and presentation of Luigi Cavaleri (CNR).
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4. Evaluation of the participation in terms of benefits and membership cost

The advantages of participating to SCOR are mostly in terms of ties to the international community and information and opportunities on emerging themes in oceanographic research.

This is reflected in the active Italian participation to WGs. In 2018, the MetaZooGene WG with an Italian Associate Member, Maria Grazia Mazzocchi (Stazione Zoologica), has been approved. Also, the FLOTSMAM WG, approved in 2017 with Italian PI Stefano Aliani (CNR), has reported excellent progresses.

Both WGs involve very relevant themes in terms of both science and societal problems, since they target monitoring techniques and scientific understanding of ocean biodiversity and transport of plastic pollution. Both themes and associated results have significant implications at the national level.

Also, results by SCOR WGs provide references for the community regarding several research practices, providing “best practice” tools in synergy with specific actions by the IODE

5. Evaluation of Italians' attendance and how to improve interest and involvement

During the last two years, the Italian participation to SCOR activities has improved, thanks to a few mechanisms that have facilitated the involvement of the community.

The main mechanism is the establishment of the National SCOR Committee (partially informal)

that includes members from all the main Italian Institutions dealing with marine science, also thanks to the COI support.

The Committee provided support to the review of WGs, the nomination of Italian ECS candidates, and in general to the participation to international events.

Regarding ECS, the Committee, thanks mostly to Nadia Pinardi (Università Bologna), carried out an important networking activity creating a reference e-mailing list to be used for information and coordination meetings regarding activities by SCOR and other international bodies.

These meetings, that are targeted to young researchers, have not been held yet, but we envision that this initiative will lead to interesting developments in the next few years, making SCOR activities more useful and vital for the Italian community.

6. Italian experts with important roles within the Union or within related Commissions and Programs (if known)

Stefania Sparnocchia (CNR) is Secretary General in the framework of the related IAPSO Program.

7. If Union with CNR Commission, short summary about the 2018 CNR Commission activities

See point 5.

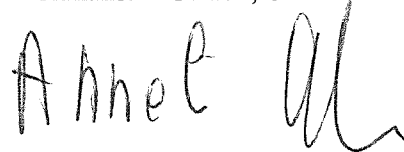
8. Conclusions

In conclusion, SCOR activities provide an important contribution to the Italian community and the national involvement has increased in the last few years, thanks to the COI support and the establishment of a National Committee.

Further developments are envisioned, especially to involve young researchers.

Signature

Annalisa Griffa, CNR-ISMAR

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Annalisa Griffa', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lerici, July 18 2019