

**RARGOM Board Meeting
University of New Hampshire
301 Morse Hall**

6 December, 2004

MINUTES

Present: M. Dionne, K. Friedland, L. Incze, J. Runge, L. Rutter, B. Tripp, G. Wallace. A. Bilgili for a short time in the afternoon.

1. Announcements and member activities

The meeting commenced with announcements and news from member institutions.

UNH (J.Runge):

Dr. Ann Bucklin will leave her position in the Ocean Process Analysis Laboratory in July to become head of the Marine Sciences Department at the University of Connecticut and Director of the Marine Science and Technology Center at Avery Point. Dr. William E. Bemis Professor of Biology at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, has been selected as the Kingsbury Director (Cornell University) of the Shoals Marine Laboratory. The UNH Marine Program website (<http://marine.unh.edu>) provides an excellent overview of UNH marine-related activities. The Marine Program issues a newsletter, called the Saltwater News, in which RARGOM-related activities are announced to the UNH community. J. Runge encourages other board members to continue to find similar avenues to publicize RARGOM activities within their own institutions.

WHOI (B. Tripp)

Bruce Tripp will take on emeritus status in 2005 and Dr. Donald Anderson, Director of the Rinehart Coastal Research Center, will rotate on as the WHOI representative to the Board. The 60' coastal research vessel, Tioga, has started operations. It is available for research missions in the Gulf of Maine (see the website: http://www.whoi.edu/marops/research_vessels/CRV/index.html).

University of Southern Maine (L. Incze)

The Gulf of Maine Census of Marine Life is now providing the Gulf of Maine Biogeographic Information System (GMBIS) online at <http://www.usm.maine.edu/gulfofmaine-census>. The GMBIS system presently includes NMFS and DFO trawl survey information and CPR survey data set.

National Marine Fisheries Service (K. Friedland)

Dr. Kevin Friedland will remain in his position as Director of the UMass/NOAA Cooperative Marine Education and Research (CMER) Program. NOAA, through The National Marine Fisheries Service, is explicitly placing more and more emphasis on the concept of ecosystem based management and the role of climate change for the fisheries. The concept of ecosystem-based management will need development and implementation

for the Gulf of Maine and should be among the priorities addressed by RARGOM in theme sessions in the coming year.

University of Massachusetts (G. Wallace)

U Mass Boston has created a new department (Environmental Earth and Ocean Sciences) and with approximately 20 faculty. It will have an undergraduate major and expects to add four new faculty next year.

Wells NERR (M. Dionne)

The Reserve is part of the Maine Marine Research Coalition, which advocates for marine research in the State of Maine. Research activities at the Reserve include investigation of mercury (how it moves into and through coastal food webs), scientific approaches to coastal marine wetland restoration and long-term monitoring of wetlands. The need for monitoring of the nearshore (including water quality) was discussed in relation to the IOOS ocean observing system for the Gulf of Maine.

2. Introduction of Lynn Rutter.

Lynn Rutter was introduced as the new RARGOM program coordinator. Lynn has a Master's degree in Teaching from UNH. In addition to teaching in public schools, Lynn has worked as activities manager at a resort on Lana'i and as a research assistant for the Pacific Whale Foundation. More recently, she was director of the Harbor Environmental Research Center on Long Island.

3. Theme session reports and planning

2004 Theme Sessions.

RARGOM sponsored or co-sponsored three theme sessions in 2004:

1. Integrated, Multidisciplinary Modeling (U Mass Boston, July 15, 2004, G. Wallace, lead organizer). This meeting was attended by approximately 25 people. There were 10 oral presentations and 4 posters, with a plenary session in the afternoon.
2. Research Priorities for Management of Habitat Change and Land Use and Development in the Gulf of Maine (South Portland, September 20, 2004, D. Keeley and B. Tripp, lead organizers). This session was cosponsored with the Gulf of Maine Council. It was attended by approximately 35 people, with predominance from the coastal management community.
3. Tidal Wetland Restoration (Wells NERR, 28-29 September, R. Konisky, lead organizer). This meeting was cosponsored with the Wells NERR and Gulf of Maine Council. The meeting included an additional half-day session on September 29. It was attended by approximately 30 people, most of whom were sent invitations, although the meeting was open to the Gulf of Maine community. It focused on methodology for monitoring restoration of Gulf of Maine tidal wetlands.

There was general consensus that these meetings were worthwhile. Participants at the Integrative Modeling Meeting expressed the need for information on modeling research activities in the Gulf of Maine and for follow-up meetings to identify research issues, gaps and priorities. The habitat and land use priorities session provided an opportunity for exchange among coastal resource managers, especially at the state level, and representatives of the research community. There was a clear need by managers for more information related to specific habitat and land use issues. The tidal wetlands restoration session provided a forum for presentation and discussion of NERR research on the tidal wetland monitoring.

The proceedings from these three sessions are presently in preparation for placement on the RARGOM web site and are scheduled for posting in time for the annual report at the end of January.

2005 Theme Sessions

Four theme session ideas for 2005 were put forward:

A. Linkage between nearshore and coastal ocean systems in the Gulf of Maine: does coastal human activity have a significant impact on the greater Gulf?

Two of the 2004 Theme sessions focussed on management and scientific issues associated with the nearshore habitat, including the prospect of increased land development in the western Gulf of Maine as well as changes to wetland habitat. During several recent Gulf of Maine workshops and meetings, including the Gulf of Maine Summit, the need for better understanding of the connection between the coastal zone and the Gulf of Maine beyond the nearshore shelf has been expressed. Members of the fishing community have expressed concerns that shifting land use patterns and coastal zone development, including introduction of contaminants, are affecting the life cycle and survival of sensitive early life stages of harvested populations of Gulf of Maine fish and invertebrate species. The scientific understanding of life cycles, habitats for early life history stages and impacts of changes to wetland habitats and land-derived contaminants in the Gulf of Maine, however, is rudimentary. While time series exist for water quality parameters in the GoM, it is unclear whether they have been analyzed with respect to the linkage to the offshore ecosystem and whether the appropriate water quality variables are being measured.

A working group consisting of Michele Dionne (lead), Gordon Wallace and Jeffrey Runge was formed to develop this idea into a theme session, planned for the latter half of 2005. The Census of Marine Life and COOA (UNH) could be approached for co-sponsorship. Participation and potential co-sponsorship by Canadian programs should also be explored. One objective of the theme session is identification of specific gaps and research priorities, which should be written up in the proceedings for distribution on the RARGOM website.

B. Interpretation of ocean observing system data with integrative, multidisciplinary models for Gulf of Maine ecosystems: current status and research priorities

Advances toward the establishment of an ocean observing system for the Gulf of Maine region have spurred the need for development of multidisciplinary models for interpretation of the ocean observing models. These may include statistical models as well as process-oriented models for summarizing, diagnosing and, ultimately, predicting trends in Gulf of Maine hydrography, circulation and ecosystem processes relevant to fisheries and coastal management management. Topics may include status of current physical-biological models for the Gulf of Maine ecosystem, integrating ocean observing data into models, data gaps for model needs, and application to fisheries oceanography or other coastal zone management issues.

A working group consisting of J. Runge as lead and L. Incze was formed to plan for implementation of this theme session idea. The working group will consult with B. Turner (Coastal Ocean Program) and will search for a Canadian colleague for guidance and assistance in the development of the Theme Session program. The session is planned for summer, 2005. A primary objective of the theme session is a proceedings document with a section identifying knowledge gaps and research priorities for posting on the RARGOM website and possible publication elsewhere.

C. Integrating fisheries oceanography into ecosystem-based fisheries management

This theme session, suggested by K. Friedland, is motivated by the initiative, both within NOAA and internationally, to develop ecosystem based management. How ecosystem based management will ultimately be defined, both nationally and regionally in the Gulf of Maine, is still an open issue. There is a need for continued discussion about how recent advances in fisheries oceanography, including development of coupled physical-biological models within the GLOBEC programs, may be incorporated and applied within fisheries management.

A working group consisting of K. Friedland, L. Incze and J. Runge will initiate the development of this theme session. Participation from NMFS and DFO colleagues in the development and organization of the program will be sought. Potential leads from within NMFS at Woods Hole were mentioned. There is the potential for linking this theme session with the previous theme session on ocean observing data for a two-day workshop in summer. The theme session objective is to produce a proceedings with sections on current status, potential application and research needs and priorities with focus on the Gulf of Maine for posting on the RARGOM website and possible publication elsewhere.

D. Development of metrics and indicators for ecosystem-based management in the Gulf of Maine.

This session idea was also suggested by K. Friedland. There is a need to identify and develop new metrics and indicators for ecosystem based management concept. J. Runge brought to the board's attention that a session on development of indicators for the state of GoM fisheries (following up on results of a working group study) was held during the Gulf of Maine summit in St. Andrews in October. The Gulf of Maine

Council is moving forward with plans to develop an annual, State of the Gulf Report with identification and reporting of major indicators for Gulf of Maine fisheries.

The importance of this idea was noted but there was no action taken to develop this idea into a theme session for 2005. There is the possibility of including this idea into the previous two theme sessions (B and C above) with the goal of developing this idea into a full theme session for implementation in late 2005 or 2006.

Reporting of RARGOM theme sessions

The need for effective reporting of theme session proceedings was discussed. Website listings of proceedings now have a citation number, but guidelines for proper referencing to theme session proceedings should be explicitly provided on the website. K. Friedland recommended that, wherever possible, theme session organizers should seek an external outlet for publication of the proceedings, for example in a scientific journal. This would augment exposure, significance and credibility of the theme session proceedings. K. Friedland will write up suggested guidelines for publication and distribution of RARGOM proceedings (see annex), which can be added to the present website guidelines. The possibility that RARGOM should sponsor a scientific periodical for the Gulf of Maine was raised, but this suggestion was set aside due to present constraints of the association budget.

An important function of the theme sessions is the identification of research priorities for each of the theme subjects. There should be an explicit section in the Theme Session proceedings that addresses research priorities and knowledge gaps. These could then be compiled on the website under Research and Policy Issues. Cumulatively, this would represent a compilation of issues and research priorities for the Gulf of Maine that have been identified by the RARGOM community.

Website

B. Tripp gave an overview of website accomplishments for 2004. The website can now be accessed by www.rargom.org. Two new features have been recently added:

- Regional Opportunities provides a bulletin board for meeting announcements, employment and research opportunities, funding announcements, etc.
- The bibliographic database has been linked to the Scirus.com search engine with the assistance of the MBL-WHOI library staff, who are gratefully acknowledged for this contribution. This provides the opportunity to search for Gulf of Maine citations in a number of categories. Testing of this link shows that it is not yet able to search past year 2000. Bruce will check with Dave Remsen about this.

J. Runge expressed appreciation for the contribution that Bruce and D. Remsen have made to establishing the website and for developing the content of the site. He offered that the new fiscal year in 2005 offers the opportunity to review the "look" and accessibility of the website in addition to content. Because the website is the most important means of communication of RARGOM activities and its services to the world

as well as to its member institutions, the Association needs to pay attention to the give the website a modern look with easy and efficient access to its information and services. The budgetary carryover resulting from the delay in hiring a program coordinator during the office transition from U Mass Boston to UNH has provided a source of funding for additional website development (as reflected in the proposed 2005 budget below). J. Runge has recommended that Lynn Rutter look into possibilities for contracting out for website design and maintenance to compare with and or supplement the services presently provided by D. Remsen at MBL/WHOI.

Budget

The balance sheet for 2004, with revisions according to questions and comments from the board, is attached. The total expenses exceeded the total income from dues. This reflects the decision of the board to reduce the previous year's carryover, which resulted from the postponement of hiring of the program coordinator, by a one-time reduction in dues for full members. The difference was offset by a net revenue from the theme sessions. The carryover balance for 2004 (\$21,144) may change change upward as dues from four members are still outstanding.

The budget projections for 2005 were discussed. The 2005 budget reflects the full year salary distribution for the part-time program coordinator. J. Runge also proposes a one-time increase in the website budget (up to \$6,000) in order to support design and content development in order to bring the website up to fully operational status. Funds are also allocated for scanning of RARGOM documents, to be done by a student assistant. Income is based on dues from 9 full members and 9 associate members. Based on experience from 2004, \$1,000 is allocated for each of three theme sessions; additional expenses are projected to be covered by registration fees and co-sponsor support for each session. This leaves a deficit of approximately \$4,500, which brings the carryover to 2006 closer to the target annual carryover of \$12-15,000.

K. Friedland expressed concern that the budget for the association cannot be perpetually in deficit. It was recommended that the budget also be projected out to 2006. This projection is also attached. It shows a balanced budget, on the assumption of stable dues income and a maintenance website budget of \$2,000.

There was considerable discussion about the need for augmentation to the website budget for improvements to the design and accessibility of the website in addition to its content. Should extra funds instead be added to the theme sessions in order to assure high quality (e.g. by offering travel and financial incentive to invited speakers and participants) rather than to the website, which is functional? J. Runge argued that the website is a reflection of RARGOM to the world and needs to be comparable in appearance and functionality to other organizations. The production of high quality theme sessions is also very important, but hopefully the needed financial support will also come from co-sponsors.

In the end, it was left that the 2005 budget for website development will be decided by the website committee (B. Tripp, G. Wallace, I. Babb and J. Runge) with input and recommendation from Lynn Rutter. She is scheduled to meet with D. Remsen and B.

Tripp on January 10. Before preparation of the annual report to the RARGOM member institutions, she should have a conference call with the website review committee (B. Tripp, G. Wallace, J. Runge and I. Babb) to discuss options and establish an action plan and budget for the website for 2005.

There was also discussion about registration fees for the Theme Sessions.

Gulf of Maine Summit

J. Runge attended the Gulf of Maine Summit, held in St. Andrew's during the week of the World Series. He brought to the Board's attention that the Gulf of Maine Council is working toward the development of an annual "State of the Gulf" report, which will focus on the reporting of indicators of the health of the Gulf of Maine, especially in three areas: land use and development, contaminants and water quality and fisheries. The report is modeled to some extent on the Great Lakes Research Consortium report (www.esf.edu/glrc/). Workshop sessions were held during the summit to discuss and revise previous working group reports identifying specific indicators for each of the three broad categories.

Special recognition

Bruce Tripp and David Keeley (in absentia) were gratefully recognized for their many years of contribution to the Association. They were each presented with a framed photograph from Joseph Barnett of Kennebunkport, Maine. Ata Biligili, who is departing for a position in Turkey in January, was also recognized for his contributions.

Date and venue of next meeting

The chair, with the assistance of the Program Coordinator, will conduct most of the RARGOM business by email over the next several months. In March, Lynn Rutter will send out an inquiry to board members as to the best time to hold a meeting in late spring/early summer.

The meeting was adjourned at 15:20.

Annex 1

Theme Session Proceedings

Theme Session conveners are asked to report on the outcome of theme sessions to the RARGOM Board. This report can be a memorandum to the board that highlights the organization, participation, and findings of the theme session. Theme session conveners are asked to consider identification of research priorities and knowledge gaps as one of the Theme Session objectives, and to provide in a separate section of the report a list and discussion of these research priorities and knowledge gaps. This report will be posted to the RARGOM website as a record of the meeting. Conveners are also encouraged to seek other publishing outlets for the results of theme sessions. If the synthetic findings of a theme session are significant, primary journals may welcome an overview or perspective paper reflecting the findings. If the theme session attracts a series of talks on new and

original findings, a series of papers could be submitted to a primary journal. The Board considers publication of theme session results in the primary literature as highly desirable and will work with the conveners to help facilitate the process.

Annex 2: 2004 Budget (see attached spreadsheet)

Annex 3: 2005-2006 Budget Projections (see attached spreadsheet)