

**RARGOM Board Meeting**  
**University of Massachusetts, Boston**  
**Science Building, 1st Floor, Room 089 (Chemistry conference room)**

**Minutes**  
**24 June, 2005**

In attendance: Michele Dionne, Walt Galloway, Kevin Friedland, Lew Incze, Jeffrey Runge, Lynn Rutter, Marilyn Buchholtz ten Brink, Bruce Tripp, Gordon Wallace

The meeting was called to order at 10:00. In the first hour, brief introductions and news of activities were exchanged. Kevin Friedland has moved to the NMFS laboratory in Narragansett. The board welcomed Walt Galloway, Chief of Monitoring and Assessment, who is an alternate representative for EPA with Steve Hale. Marilyn ten Brink, Chief of the Watershed Diagnostics Branch, EPA Narragansett Lab and former board member, attended the meeting as a visitor.

**Finances update**

J. Runge presented a summary sheet of the RARGOM finances, 2005 year-to-date (see appendix 1). The expenditures reflect expenses for the upcoming RARGOM theme session at the Cliff House (July 6-7). Advance payments to the Cliff House for room reservations and to E. Braasch, who is assisting with the organization of the workshop and preparation of the workshop report, will be reimbursed by funding for the workshop from the NOAA Program for Sponsored Coastal Ocean Research. The membership dues invoices have not yet been sent and the Chair was urged to get those out quickly. The projected, year end balance of \$15, 950 is contingent upon success in collection of dues, including the possibility of 4 new members (USGS, Cornell, URI and GMRI). Brown University and Mass. Office of Coastal Zone Management, which was formerly a member, were also suggested as potential new members. Without the new membership, the year end balance is projected to be \$12, 450.

**Theme sessions 2005**

*Report on upcoming July theme workshop*

RARGOM is organizing a special, two-day theme session on July 6-7 at the Cliff House in Ogunquit, Maine. The session is entitled "Workshop on Modeling Needs related to the Regional Observing System in the Gulf of Maine". This theme is seen as particularly relevant for regional discussion because of the initiation of a regional ocean observing system and the progress in development of integrative, multidisciplinary models in the region. These models can serve to translate observing system data into useful information about Gulf of Maine processes and ecosystems. Over the past several years there has been discussion in the Gulf of Maine community of the possibility of a Modeling Center that could address the need for coordination of modeling activities and for better connection to management. It is hoped that this workshop can make progress toward meeting these needs.

The workshop will be organized by RARGOM in collaboration with GoMOOS, the Gulf of Maine Census of Marine Life and the Coastal Observing Center of the University of New Hampshire. The workshop steering committee includes: J. Runge (lead), Janet Campbell (University of New Hampshire), L. Incze, Jim Manning (National Marine Fisheries Service), and Josie Quintrell, (GoMOOS and presently, Gulf of Maine Regional Association). Funding for the workshop has been secured from the NOAA Center for Sponsored Coastal Ocean Research (B. Turner), to be supplemented by modest registration fees.

#### *Planning for the next theme session*

The next planned theme session is on the subject of linkage between estuaries, nearshore and coastal ocean ecosystems in the Gulf of Maine. A possible title is: "Linkage between estuaries, nearshore and coastal ocean ecosystems in the Gulf of Maine: does coastal human activity have a significant impact on the greater Gulf?"

This theme session would follow up on one held in September, 2004, in South Portland (jointly sponsored by RARGOM and the Gulf of Maine Council), which brought together coastal managers and scientists to discuss high priority management and scientific issues associated with the nearshore, including the prospect of increased land development in the western Gulf of Maine as well as changes to nearshore habitats. Out of that meeting came a description of six research projects put forward as a step toward the development of specific research priorities needed to address these issues (see annexed document). It was recognized that this must be an iterative process and that input from the scientific community was needed to identify what knowledge already exists (but has not been transferred to the management community) and to refine the initial project ideas into research questions and hypotheses that can be feasibly addressed and then implemented in a management context. One of the goals of this proposed theme session would be to further this process.

Questions about change in nearshore habitats and the need for understanding the connection with the offshore Gulf of Maine ecosystems have also been expressed during several recent Gulf of Maine workshops and meetings, including the Gulf of Maine Summit, and by members of the fishing community. There is a concern that shifting land use patterns and coastal zone development, including introduction of contaminants, are affecting the distribution of harvested populations of Gulf of Maine fish and invertebrate species, their life cycles and survival of sensitive early life stages. The scientific understanding of life cycles, habitats for early life history stages and impacts of changes to wetland and coastal habitats and to land-derived contaminants in the Gulf of Maine, however, is, perhaps surprisingly, still 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 better understanding of the transport and mixing of water between estuaries, the nearshore and offshore environments is also needed.

This theme session would bring together natural and social scientists, coastal managers and members of the fishing community to discuss these issues. In addition to identifying basic ecosystem measurement and experiments, a unifying theme is also the need for multidisciplinary model development to describe linkages between estuaries, nearshore waters and the deeper waters of the Gulf, as well as linkages between the land and nearshore with respect to watershed discharge, stressor response and habitat change. The main objective of the theme session is the identification of specific questions, gaps, data needs and research priorities, which will be written up in a report for broad distribution in the community.

At present, there is no theme session leader identified for this project. J. Runge will work with M. Dionne to find a leader and potential funding sources. Several possible names were discussed.

#### **Discussion and vote for adoption of RARGOM Operations Committee**

J. Runge expressed a need to establish a small operations committee to assist in setting Board meeting agendas, and provide advice on budgetary and work program matters, including theme sessions, in the interim between Board meetings. The Operations Committee would be composed of up to five members including the Chair, the Vice Chair, the Program Coordinator and one or two other members. The chair of RARGOM would chair the Operations Committee. This structure is based on a strawman concept put forward by L. Incze and D. Keeley two years ago.

The board voted in favor of establishing an operations committee, as described in Appendix 3. Members are: J. Runge, L. Rutter, G. Wallace and K. Friedland.

#### **Planning for theme sessions for 2006**

A number of ideas were put forward for future theme sessions:

1. Ecosystem metrics and indicators. K. Friedland expressed interest in following up on this idea. M. ten Brink suggested potential funding sources at EPA.
2. Seal populations in the Gulf of Maine. History of change in seal and other marine mammal populations in the Gulf. Evidence for burgeoning populations of seals and their interaction with humans (e.g. fisheries)
3. Offshore aquaculture (Rich Langan and Porter Hoagland were suggested as possible leads)
4. Climate change in the Gulf of Maine (Andy Pershing suggested as possible lead)
5. Invasive species in the Gulf of Maine (L. Harris as possible lead)
6. The ecology of euphausiids in the Gulf of Maine (J. Runge or P. Wiebe as possible leads).

The discussion emphasized that theme sessions should have an identifiable product. The format for reporting is at present flexible, apart from a requirement that the workshop

report is posted on the RARGOM website and all session reports should have a section that lists and discusses research priorities for the subject of the session. The two day session in July will have a written workshop report.

### **Website update**

Based on a conference call of the Website Committee (J. Runge, L. Rutter, B. Tripp, G. Wallace) on Feb. 28, B. Tripp wrote up a 2005 Workplan. A listing of tasks is provided in appendix 4.

The existing MBL-served website format is functional and we need to focus on inserting additional content. The content and “look” will continually evolve to meet current RARGOM needs. One task set for 2005 is a “makeover” to give the website an updated face. B. Tripp noted that RARGOM will not have the resources to independently produce new original web material ; the addition of new content material will only be accomplished by spreading the workload. This can be accomplished by our linkage to resource managers (most effectively accomplished through partnering with other organizations, e.g., GoM Council). In the end, board members and member institution staff are the ultimate source of research results and we need to encourage them to be more personally involved in RARGOM and the website. As new content and links are added, maintenance will become an increasingly important task. Methods need to be put in place to conduct maintenance automatically (e.g., dated material automatically removed) or to delegate to Web Committee (student?).

B. Tripp is pursuing a web partnership with USGS in 2005 to bring supplemental resources to the RARGOM web content. With Sea Grant support, B. Tripp is developing a database of Gulf of Maine research projects. He has submitted a proposal for a WHOI-USGS cooperative agreement to assemble and distribute these Gulf of Maine Coastal research results via the RARGOM website.

### **Evolving infrastructure for RARGOM as a regional organization for the Gulf of Maine**

There was a brief discussion on this ongoing topic. Board membership can be reinvigorated by reestablishing terms for board members and encouraging new representatives. Students could be engaged more in theme sessions. The suggestion was made that students could also participate in board meetings and become involved in RARGOM activities.

Source of funding for RARGOM were also discussed. As an organization devoted to the development of regional coordination and cooperation in research and stewardship of Gulf of Maine ecosystems and resources, foundations and government agencies (e.g. EPA and NOAA) could be approached as sponsors.

### **Next meeting dates and venue for next meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled to be held at GMRI in Portland, tentatively for October 7, 2005. Announcements of the meeting to the board will be made in September.

**Appendix 1: 2005 Year to date budget- see attached excel file**

## Appendix 2: RARGOM Modeling and the Observing System Workshop Agenda

### Wednesday, July 6, 2005

*The management-research connection in relation to the observing system: meeting user needs and critical modeling issues.*

- 08:30 Arrival and Registration, Name Tag Pickup, Coffee
- 09:00 **Welcome, Introductions, Meeting Format and Objectives (Jeff Runge, UNH)**
- 09:20 **The Relevance of Modeling to Coastal Management in the Context of an Ocean Observing System for the Gulf of Maine (Josie Quintrell, GoMOOS)**
- 9:50 **Gulf of Maine Circulation Modeling: Prospects for Skill and Critical Issues (Dan Lynch, Dartmouth)**
- 10:30 Break
- 11:00 **Incorporating Fisheries Oceanography into Ecosystem Based Management for Fisheries (Ken Drinkwater, Institute for Marine Research, Norway)**
- 11:40 **Coastal Management Issues: Water Quality (Bob Chen, UMass Boston)**
- 12:15 Lunch followed by **Poster Session**
- 14:00 **Working Groups Identified and the Charge to Working Groups Discussed (Jeff Runge, UNH)**
- 14:15 **Working Group Meetings: Habitat, Fisheries, Water Quality**
- 16:15 **Summaries of Working Group Discussions**
- 17:15 **Poster Session** continued
- 18:30 Dinner
- 20:00 **Coupled Physical Biological Models and the Observing System: the Rhomboid Approach (Peter Wiebe, WHOI, with Doug Spiers, Univ. Strathclyde, UK, and Marina Chifflet, DFO Canada)**

### Thursday, July 7, 2005

*Critical modeling issues and model-data needs: priorities for development of interdisciplinary model capabilities and identification of data gaps in relation to observing system needs*

- 09:00 **Ocean Observing and Operational Oceanography in Canadian Waters (David Brickman, DFO Canada)**
- 09:30 **Coupling Basin Scale to Gulf of Maine Models (Bob Beardsley, WHOI)**
- 10:00 **Present Status of Observing System Sample Collection and Data Acquisition (David Mountain, NEFSC)**
- 10:30 **Working Group Meetings: Data Needs and Critical Issues for Models in the Context of Observing System: Physical Circulation Modeling, Coupled Physical-Biogeochemical Modeling, Coupled Physical-Zooplankton, Larval Fish and Ecosystem Based Models**
- 12:30 Lunch
- 13:30 **Working Group Meetings: Visions for a Regional Modeling Center: Rationale, technical activities/services, data and model performance, administrative structure, outlining a process for establishment, strategies to achieve this goal**
- 16:00 **Plenary Session for Working Group Reports and Discussion**
- 17:30 **Meeting Wrap-up, Next Steps, Adjournment**

### **Appendix 3: Operations Committee framework (adapted from Keeley and Incze)**

#### **RARGOM Operations Committee**

The Operations Committee shall be composed of up to five members including the Chair, the Vice Chair, the Program Coordinator and one or two other members. The chair of RARGOM will chair the Operations Committee.

The Committee will assist in setting Board meeting agendas, advise on budgetary and work program matters, including theme sessions, in the interim between Board meetings, and prepare and recommend budgets and work programs for consideration by the Board. In short, they make the organization go and assure follow-up between meetings.

#### Notes:

1. This approach is different from an Executive Committee that sets policy and provides general guidance.
2. It is the expectation the Management Committee will conduct 90% of its business by conference calls and e-mail. Calls should be both need-based and expected to occur at least monthly.
3. Members with an expressed desire and commitment to “managing the organization” should be encouraged to participate.
4. The former Chair should be asked to participate to assure institutional memory persists.
5. Initially the OC should publish its conference call agendas to the full membership and allow the broader membership to participate as needed. In this manner two things occur. First, the members see the scope of the OC agenda and don’t become paranoid that key decisions are being made behind their backs. Second, members know who the leaders of the organization are and know the level of commitment people are making. This approach makes things transparent.

## Appendix 4

### **RARGOM Website: Tasks and Goals**

Developed by RARGOM Web Committee

#### Website Goals:

- Serve as RARGOM's face to the world, and providing "one stop shopping" to RARGOM members and the Gulf of Maine management community.
- Provide an outlet for announcements of RARGOM events (e.g., Theme Meetings, Board Meetings, etc.), including registration and logistical information.
- Serve as the primary source for official RARGOM documents and materials (e.g., Board meeting minutes, technical reports).
- Catalyze the communication of research results between scientists at RARGOM member institutions to enhance research collaborations
- Provide objective, technical information on issues of regional concern that is relevant and of use to researchers and managers, including RARGOM documents (e.g., Theme Meeting proceedings) and opportunity for on-going discussion.
- Provide services and tools that are useful to individual staff of our member institutions, including announcements of regional opportunities, contact information for researchers, links to web sources of information.
- In concert with other regional agencies and organizations, develop a new section on regional research priorities that are based on researcher interests and manager information needs.

#### Website tasks (\* tasks for 2005)

1. \*Develop a communication method to ensure that all scheduled events are loaded to the website in a timely manner and that all old notices are promptly removed.
2. \*A database of research project summaries and PIs is being developed under separate funding (separate Tripp/WHOI SeaGrant project). BTripp will seek reviewer comments prior to finalizing database structure & content. Upload this searchable database to website before end-of-year.
3. \*Redesign the website to make it visually more attractive. Reorganize structure as needed and clarify all entry titles. Work with MBL webmaster to ensure that design changes will work with existing content and is compatible with MBL server. Funding will be provided from dues.
4. \*Expand existing bibliographic database to a) ensure that citation entries are alphabetized, b) the bibliography is complete through 2003, c) request MBL library to run a 2004 search as done before, d) create a template for individual researcher citation additions to the bibliography.

5. \*Get all member institutions to “fill out” the contact page template and to identify the appropriate organizational link (at each member institution) to point to. This will be important as we initiate the internal search engine.
6. Provide an improved overview to “research & policy issues” page. Seek USGS support to focus on loading new technical content. Flesh out “research & policy issues” page by:
  - a. Selecting & loading components of old R Signell “gomaine” web content for recycle (Tripp has CD, will copy for committee to review and select specific components to use)
  - b. Prep prior theme meeting materials (report plus ancillary docs) for inclusion on appropriate issue pages.
  - c. Initiate collaboration with USGS to accelerate the identification, preparation and loading of technical content material.
  - d. Use links to relevant websites to supplement/complement RARGOM-produced material.
7. “Incentivize” increased participation by member institution staff in acquisition of new web content (i.e., research results, useful links, regional opportunities). Develop a mechanism to identify and acquire new web materials from member organizations; use links where appropriate; use previously prepared materials as useful.
8. Develop a RARGOM peer review process to assess web content and to approve web content to assure scientific credibility. Include caveat in all individual-loaded content that material reflects individual, not necessarily RARGOM; develop a review process to assess controversies.
9. Add new webtools (e.g., interactive comments for theme meetings, mapping tools for data visualization, etc.) as need is identified and as resources (or partners) are available.
10. The GoM R/V database was completely rehabbed in '04 and is updated as changes become known (to bwt) but the database is not surveyed regularly. This is a “freebie” and maintenance is provided by WHOI-COI. This is one of the “useful services & tools” we are trying to make available to members.

	<b>2005</b>
<b>Carryover</b>	<b>21,144</b>
<b>Income</b>	
<b>Dues</b>	
Full	18000
Associate	4500
<b>Total income</b>	<b>22500</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
<b>Personnel</b>	
chair	6000
vice chair	1000
program coordinator	9000
<b>Operations</b>	
Theme sessions	3000
Website-related	6000
Scanning documents	1000
Office related expenses	1000
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>27000</b>
Carryover	16644
Deficit	-4500