MARINE SCIENCE INFORMATION:
AN INTERNATIONAL COMMODITY

EDITORS
R.L. Grundy, R.T. Ford
and
Mary Jane Beardsley

International Association of Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers
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International Association of Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers
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PREFACE

"Marine Science Information, An International Commodity"

Knowledge does not become information until it can be transferred to other people. Even the perception of what constitutes information depends upon the education of an individual. Whether it be expressed in terms of time, education, work, facilities, or materials expended; the gathering, interpreting, documenting, storing, and disseminating of information carries a price.

Should marine information be treated as a commodity? Clearly, marine research is hardly cheap. Suppose the cost of educating the researcher, the direct project costs, plus all the publishing and library storage/processing costs were assessed, then evenly divided among only those who ask for the results. Could any of those readers afford to pay the price? "Cost recovery" becomes an interesting concept when viewed in this manner. Though libraries and information centers benefit from increasingly sophisticated technology for information storage and retrieval at a consistently decreasing unit cost, they are being pushed to initiate "cost recovery" programs. How far do we go in assessing cost?

At the 11th annual meeting of the International Association of Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Williamsburg, Virginia, USA, October 1985, participants from eighteen countries discussed the problems involved when treating marine information as a commodity. This, the second volume of IAMSLIC Proceedings, is a record of that conference.
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to thank all of those who helped make the 11th IAMSLIC conference a wonderful experience. First of all, there cannot be enough thanks for the local arrangements committee: our hosts Susan Barrick and Janice Meadows plus all their colleagues at Virginia Institute of Marine Science. Their care for our comfort and enjoyment was evident every hour of our stay. Our five days at Williamsburg were indeed a delight. Second, a 'thank you' to Robert Freeman and the other members of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission's Marine Information Committee for funding a combined training/conference experience for many participants from around the world. As a result, this was our most 'international' conference, providing a wonderful opportunity to share our professional concerns with our counterparts from around the world. Third, to Ruth Grundy, who not only combined the role of Proceedings Editor and President last year, but also agreed to continue as Proceedings Editor this year. Her support during my time as conference coordinator and this year as IAMSLIC President has been invaluable. Finally, I wish to thank the IAMSLIC membership who trusted me to take charge of their conference and their organization for the year 1985/86. It has been an extremely enriching experience for me both personally and professionally. I am glad to have had the opportunity to make this token repayment for the encouragement IAMSLIC members have given me in pursuing a marine information career.

Mary Jane Beardsley
IAMSLIC President, 1985/86
CONTENTS

Preface  iii

Acknowledgement  iv

Contents  v

Marine Science Information Networks and Library Cooperation  Allen Varley  1

Institution Building with Development Aid - The Role of IDRC  Kieran Broadbent  7

Improving the State of the Art in International Marine Information Transfer (Plenary Address)  J. Watson  13

Fishing for Facts in Atlantic Canada: Information Sources for Social Scientists  Cynthia Lamson and Judy Reade  21

Peoples of the Sea and Coastal Zone: An anthropological Perspective  Richard Pollnac  37

Sources for Aquaculture Information in the United States  Judith Brownlow  55

Aquaculture Information and the National Agricultural Library  Deborah T. Haftman and Jean Bellows  71

Communication Marine Science: A Selective List of Guidebooks  Kay K. Hale  77

Publication Control in IAMLIC Libraries  Norman Howden  89

Communication Wetlands Information through the Parent Agency's Publication List  Mary P. Sullivan and Catherine Edwards-Spratley  97

Marine Data and Information Resources of World Data Center A for Oceanography  Richard J. Abram and Ronald E. Moffatt  103
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development of a Library-Based Tropical Fisheries Information Center: The ICLARM Experience</td>
<td>Rosalinda M. Temprosa</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Overview of Marine Information Systems in Latin America</td>
<td>Pedro Alfredo Galvan Pompa</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified Problems, Constraints and Deficiencies in Marine Sciences Information Systems and Services</td>
<td>Deborah A. Turnbull</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automating our Cataloging, from Manual to an Easy Screen Technique</td>
<td>Rowena Hill</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reprint File Collections: Development, Maintenance and Policy</td>
<td>Kathleen Heil</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Planning for Marine Science Libraries</td>
<td>Constance B. Cooke</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past and Present International Cooperation on Marine Research in the Mediterranean</td>
<td>Cecile Thiery</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Mediterranean Network and Center for Environmental Information</td>
<td>Athena Davaki</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CICH, the Experiences of the ASFIS Latin America Input Centre</td>
<td>Pedro Alfredo Galvan Pompa</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laser Videodisc Technology for Storing and Disseminating Information</td>
<td>Deborah T. Hanfman</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Advanced Technology Satellite</td>
<td>Cheryl Sloan</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources for Information on Shipping</td>
<td>John Etchingham</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Coming Revolution in Library Sciences</td>
<td>Thomas J. Benner</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Marine Information Programmes in Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Lalitha D. Bandaranayake</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Participants</td>
<td></td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>