IMPORTANT INFORMATION RESOURCES IN THE FIELDS OF AQUATIC SCIENCES, FISHERIES, OCEANOLOGY AND OCEANOGRAPHY IN ITALY
CD-ROMS: INTERNATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATABASES IN A RESEARCH LIBRARY SPECIALISED IN OCEANOGRAPHY

M. Filippi
CNR Istituto Sperimentale Talassografico-Via Roma 3-74100
Taranto-Italy

ABSTRACT: The author describes the importance of information resources like CD-ROM databases in the field of aquatic sciences, fisheries, oceanology and oceanography in Italy, where technical problems in having good telephone lines in order to connect peripheral research and university libraries to an online service are still a sad reality. Specific international databases on CD-ROM give researchers access to worldwide research archives collected and indexed by international bodies and agencies, with a minimum expense and usually with a short-notice updating, mostly a quarterly one.

ASFA (AQUATIC SCIENCES AND FISHERIES ABSTRACTS) ON CD-ROM.
A database used in our library.

This database is also available online.

Recognized as the best database in marine and aquatic sciences, ASFA gives researchers access to worldwide research archives, collected and indexed by four United Nations agencies, plus a network of international research centres. It is issued quarterly. Backfiles go back to 1978. It is divided into three sections:

Part 1: Biological sciences and living resources.
Part 2: Ocean technology, policy and non-living resources.
Part 3: Aquatic pollution and environmental quality.

It is edited by Cambridge Scientific Abstracts (7200 Wisconsin Avenue, Bethesda, MD, USA) and for the online services by Cambridge Scientific Online Services.

The CD-ROM distributor is Silver Platter Inc. (100 River Ridge Drive, Norwood, MA, USA).

ASFA Part 3 is devoted entirely to the unique contamination problems of oceans, seas, lakes, rivers and estuaries.
ASFA collects worldwide information on biology, ecology, living aquatic resources, oceanography, limnology, geosciences, ocean technology, non-living resources, pollution and related sociopolitical issues. Each section focuses on specific subject areas individually. All together the three sections furnish a non-overlapping coverage of the entire ASFA database, a unique piece of global information for specialists working in the science, technology and management of marine and freshwater environments. The database is compiled in cooperation with:

- The United Nations Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the sea;
- The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations;
- The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission;
- The United Nations Environment Programme;
- A global network of national research centres.

The software programme to make the CD-ROM run is PC-SPIRS, which is the official device used by Silver Platter to make CD-ROMs readable.

The ASFA Aquaculture Abstracts are not on CD-ROM yet. Our library has the paper volumes. It is worth mentioning anyway. It is a bimonthly publication plus an annual index. Normally 3,600 abstracts are included in the database per year.

Indexes included are author, subject, taxonomic, and geographic.

It provides information to all aspects of sea-farming, providing also comprehensive information on cultivating marine, freshwater and brackish water species. Considering ASFA’s importance for research, it is worth considering each part of the database in detail.

PART 1- BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES AND LIVING RESOURCES

ASFA 1 describes all aspects of marine, freshwater and brackish water organisms and environments, including information on biology and ecology of aquatic organisms, exploitation of living resources and related legal, policy and socioeconomic issues.

As natural resources are an important feature of ASFA 1, fisheries receive great attention. In particular, the latest fishing methods, statistics, aquaculture, food technology, productivity, conservation and marketing are described.

Abstracts cover laboratory studies of aquatic organisms and research in the field. All types of documents concerning aquatic organisms and issues affecting their environments are surveyed. The controlled vocabulary of indexed terms resulting from the journal’s hierarchic subject classification makes it easy to find specific information.

BIOLOGY: Biology; General; Microbiology; Botany, Invertebrate Biology; General; Malacology; Carcinology; Entomology; Chordate Biology; General; Ichthyology; Ornithology; Mammalogy.

ECOLOGY AND ECOSYSTEMS: Aquatic Ecology; Autoecology; Population Studies; Aquatic Communities; Productivity; Ecosystems; Species Interactions; Fouling and Boring.

FISHERIES: Practical aspects of fisheries; Aquaculture; Fishable stocks; Aquatic products and their utilization; Marketing and Economics of Aquatic products.

PART 2: OCEAN TECHNOLOGY POLICY AND NON-LIVING RESOURCES

ASFA 2 gives an updating on new legislation affecting management practices. It covers the wide fields of oceanography: physical, descriptive, dynamical, chemical, geological and biological aspects, limnology, ocean engineering and specific resources.

It also covers international legislation for meteorology, climatology, technology and engineering. Other subjects are non-living resources, in particular oil and gas, minerals, chemicals and freshwater; energy resources: wave, current, tidal and wind power; underwater acoustics and optics; vessels, under-water vehicles, buoys, offshore and coastal structure; offshore technology and operations; etc.


THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT: Descriptive Oceanography and Limnology; Chemistry and Geochemistry; Underwater Acoustics; Underwater Optics; Marine Meteorology and Climatology; Geology and Geophysics.

TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING: Marine Technology; Vessels; Underwater Vehicles; Buoys; Offshore and Coastal Structures; Diving: Support Services, Techniques and Equipment.

RESOURCES AND COMMERCE: Resources; Commerce; Trade and Economics.

PART 3: AQUATIC POLLUTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

ASFA 3 is completely devoted to contamination problems of oceans, seas, lakes, rivers and environmental issues including global change, acid rain, eutrophication, radioactive waste disposal, plastic debris, oil spills, coastal zone management, pesticides, international conventions and treaties. The environmental part covers conservation, wildlife management and recreation,
medical aspects (including malaria and other diseases), natural physical and chemical changes in the aquatic environment, and the impact of man-made alterations such as dams and dredging.

CONTENTS: AQUATIC POLLUTION: general; methods and instruments; characteristics, behaviour; effects on organisms; prevention and control.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY: mechanical and natural environmental changes; protective measures and control; conservation; wildlife management and recreation; public health; medicines and dangerous organisms.

OTHER DATABASES ON LINE AND CD-ROMS IN THE SAME FIELD.

OCEANIC ABSTRACTS—(Available on magnetic tape, online and CD-ROM)
They focus exclusively on worldwide technical literature pertaining to the marine and brackish water environment. They are a main source of information on topics relating to the oceans: Marine Biology, Physical and Chemical Oceanography and Meteorology; Fisheries; Environmental, Technological and Legislative Topics; Marine Geology; Geophysics and Geochemistry; Marine Pollution and Environmental Protection; Living and Non-living Marine Resources; Ships and Shipping. This database is comprehensive for living and non-living resources in marine and estuarine environments. Information is abstracted in the following topics:

- marine and estuarine living resources: food and product technology, fisheries and aquaculture;
- wave energy conversion, acoustics, optics, positioning, remote sensing, engineering, diving ships and shipping, physical and chemical oceanography and meteorology, marine geology, geophysics, geochemistry and long-term sea-level fluctuations;
- commercial aspects of fisheries and fishing activities, marine biology and biological oceanography, living and non-living resources, conservation, methods and instruments, aquaculture and legal and governmental policy;
- greenhouse effect, ocean dumping, acid rain, deep-sea mining, pollution effects, control and detection;
- offshore technology and communications; oil resources and mineral deposits, ocean thermal energy conversion, satellite communications, navigation and communication;
- coastal zone dynamics and management.

There are also citations from recent books and conference proceedings to keep up-to-date with worldwide developments in oceanography.

Edited by: Cambridge Scientific Abstracts.
CD-ROM distributor: SilverPlatter inc.

POLLUTION ABSTRACTS (Available online and on CD-ROM).

They cover the following research fields: Air Pollution, Marine Pollution, Freshwater Pollution, Sewage and Wastewater Treatment, Waste Management, Land Pollution, Toxicology and Health, Noise, Radiation, Environmental Action.


An Online User's Manual is available upon request. It is a comprehensive and clearly written one, providing helpful information for online users. A user's manual is foreseen for each online service database by Cambridge Scientific Abstracts.

LIFE SCIENCES COLLECTION ON CD-ROM AND ON-LINE

This is a database designed specifically for life science professionals looking for interdisciplinary coverage. LSC collects abstracts from more than 5,000 journals, books, monographs, conference papers and other sources - covering 21 different fields in life sciences. It is issued quarterly and backfiles are available since 1978.

The abstracts contained in these CSA journals are: Animal Behaviour Abstracts; Biotechnology Research Series; Medical and Pharmaceutical Biotechnology abstracts; Agricultural and Environmental Biotechnology Abstracts; ASFA Marine Biotechnology Abstracts; Bioengineering Abstracts; Calcium and Calcium Tissue Abstracts; Chemoreception Abstracts; Ecology Abstracts; Genetic Abstracts; Human Genome Abstracts; Immunology Abstracts; Microbiology Abstracts Series; Section A: Industrial and Applied Microbiology; Section B: Bacteriology; Section C: Algology, Mycology and Protozoology; Neuroscience Abstracts; Nucleic Acids Abstracts; Oncogenes and Growth Factor Abstracts; Toxicology Abstracts; Virology and AIDS Abstracts.

CD-ROM distributor: Silver Platter Inc.

SPIRS COMMANDS, used for all CSA databases.

The commands described here refer to the ASFA database, but there is almost no substantial difference from the other databases.

To get the programme started type CD space SPIRS, then press Enter. Then type SPIRS and press Enter. The programme will be started.
The main SilverPlatter functions are as follows:

- **F1 Help** - provides help with system functions
- **F2 Find** - searches for words or phrases you specify
- **F3 Guide** - gives information on current database
- **F4 Show** - displays search results
- **F5 Index** - lists all searchable terms in all fields except the limit field
- **F6 Print** - prints search results
- **F7 Restart** - begins or ends a search session
- **F8 Xchange** - allows switching to another disk
- **F9 Thesaurus** - lists controlled vocabulary terms. It is not available on all databases. For ASFA it is not available. We use the paper volume of the Thesaurus.
- **F10 COMMAND MENU** - displays the command menu
- **F10 D-Download** - saves search results to disk
- **F10 O-Options** - changes options for show, print, download and history
- **F10 H-History** - saves or restores (runs) a search history
- **F10 C-Clear** - clears all or part of the current search history
- **F11 Download** - on extended keyboards
- **F12 Clear history** - on extended keyboards

If there are more drives using F8 Xchange, you can use another disk.

**SEARCH**

Searches can be made in the following ways: searching with free text; searching directly from the index; lateral searching and searching for classification.

**FREE TEXT** - It is the easiest way to search, using keywords. The risk is in retrieving too many records. Pressing F2 will display all the records searched.

If you want to search a second keyword concept, for example you can type *acid* and press enter. Using the AND operator combines the results automatically with the previous search.

Using the truncation symbol (*) retrieves all variants of the root *acid* are retrieved. F4 (Show) displays the first record.

The index search can be used to search for authors too. Pressing F5 (Index) displays the Index prompt. Example: We want to find articles by R.O. Brinkhurst. Type the name Brinkhurst and press Enter; you can move the cursor (arrow) to Brinkhurst RO, pressing S(Select Terms) you highlight the term; F(Find) searches the highlighted term.
SEARCHING DIRECTLY FROM THE INDEX

F5 (Index) displays the index prompt, and selects the terms already indexed by the database. Find shows the records found, which can be marked using M(ark) and then you can go on with printing if you want to.

LATERAL SEARCHING

You can select terms directly from a record and search for them by using lateral searching. F4 (Show) displays the records found. Using the PgDn and PgUp (page down, page up) keys move the cursor on the term you select from the record, for example Chrysophyceae in the DE field. Press S(Select Search Term) to select the term. Press F(Find) to search for the selection. Press F4 (Show) to display the first record.

SPIRS will search each selected term from displayed records separately (combined with the OR operator), except for adjacent terms, searched as a sentence.

SEARCHING FOR CLASSIFICATION

Classifications correspond to the index categories in the Cambridge Scientific Abstracts journals, and are used to group documents by subject. Your search must be made in the Classification (CL) field for the Classification heading or Code of that subject. For example, to search the effects of pollution on organisms, we have to type:

POLLUTION EFFECTS IN CL OR 1504 IN CL

To broaden your search: if we want information on pollution in general, then we type:

POLLUTION IN CL OR 150* IN CL

OPERATORS USED FOR SEARCH:

a) the Boolean search operators: or, and, with, near, in
b) the limit fields: less than <; greater than >; less than or equal to; greater than or equal to; - indicates a range.

TRUNCATION

Truncating a root word with an asterisk makes you retrieve all variants- Example: taxon* retrieves taxon, taxonomic, taxonomy, etc.
REFERENCES

