



UNCOVER – The News 1

July 2006



Note from the Coordinator

Welcome to the first issue of the UNCOVER newsletter!

Now we are on our way to improve the knowledge about the biology and ecology of overfished stocks as well as to develop and evaluate recovery strategies based on this knowledge. I am sure the next four years will be a busy but also exciting time. And I am confident that we – the UNCOVER scientists – are a very good team to fulfil these tasks and deliver what we promised to the European Commission. It was a great pleasure meeting most of you personally during the kick-off meeting here in Rostock. As a matter of fact, I was very impressed by your engagement and the working spirit.

As I mentioned at the kick-off meeting, I will be very busy in the near future. Therefore, Christopher Zimmermann will support me in my coordinating tasks. Christian will handle the day-to-day business and will practically manage the project. I will closely follow the process of UNCOVER, as the work will be very interesting

The activities have already started, so let's bring the proposal to life!

Nils

Management News

As planned, the UNCOVER project started officially on the 1st of March. One of the first management tasks was the preparation of the kick-off meeting and the first steering committee meeting. Both events took place in Rostock during the last week of March.

The **Steering Committee** on Monday the 27th of March, agreed on the following issues (for a full report see the UNCOVER intranet):

Consortium Agreement (CA): Although the EU did not request a CA for this call, such an additional agreement between the project participants is strongly recommended by the EU. As some participants are requested by their administrations to have a CA, it has been decided to prepare a CA for UNCOVER. A first draft will be sent out to the participating institutes in September.

Communication: Within the project, different ways of communication will be used. The website will be ready for internal communication within the next 2-3 months. For the distribution of data and information between the workpackages and case studies direct communication will be used. This website as well as an irregular newsletter every three months will be the main pathway to ensure sufficient information flow among the participants. The preparation of the first project leaflet, based on the text from the proposal but aiming for a broader public, has been delayed until September.

Publications in journals, presentations at conferences or other broader disseminations will not need an internal review process. However, the coordinator and the project manager should be informed about

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planned publications and dissemination activities. This information is also needed with regard to the report of project activities to the EU. In any case individual property rights should be respected. Especially persons who delivered data providing the basis for the publication, should be asked prior to the publication and listed as authors. Each publication, presentation and other written information must mention EU funding, as stated in the Technical Annex on page 17.

Financial Issues: It was agreed upon to distribute the budget for each reporting period (two years) in two annual instalments to allow for possible adjustments or corrections. The latter will only take place after consultations with the Steering Committee.

Time & Venues of Workshops: The workshops will take place at the times provided for in the Proposal. Participants from AZTI, IFM-DK, Uni HH and CEFAS expressed their willingness to host one of the UNCOVER workshops. The workshops concentrating on modelling issues should be hosted by AZTI and CEFAS, as several scientists from these institutes are working on modelling issues within UNCOVER.

The **kick-off meeting** was held at the IOR from Tuesday 28th to Thursday 30th of March. The first day was used to learn about the participating institutes as well as the specific objectives and activities within the workpackages and case study areas. These presentations can be found on the UNCOVER intranet (for access, send a mail to christian.dorrien@ior.bfa-fisch.de).

The following two days were used to plan the activities in more detail and to identify any further issues that need to be addressed within the first months of the project.

During the discussions within the breakout groups and plenary sessions it became obvious, how important the exchange of data between the different workpackages and case study areas is. For workpackage 3

for example, it is important to find the linkages between the different models in use as well as between the workpackages 3, 4 and 6.

It was commonly agreed, that a workpackage is not seen solely to deliver its data to other workpackages and reaped of the benefits to take credit for its work. Rather, a central task will be to work on the specific objectives and deliverables while at the same time concentrating on putting together the relevant parts to create the joint results that will be the success of UNCOVER.

The internal linking and transfer of results will be discussed and the iteration process will be started at the planned workshop concentrating on modelling questions in project month 8 (October 2006 at AZTI, San Sebastian, Spain - for details see below). In addition, some case study area groups agreed to hold smaller, focussed workshops before that date.

It was agreed, that 'management plans' that have been set up with the aim to rebuild relevant stocks, will be considered by UNCOVER when looking at specific examples.

When is a stock 'recovered'? One suggestion is that this answer has to come from the managers and that a decision table should be used for this purpose. To answer this question and to find relevant performance criteria will be a task within workpackage 6. The persons involved will also concentrate on the facilitation between the different workpackages, including the task how to form and organize the needed groups and clusters.

One result of a specific workshop during the kick-off referring to workpackage 4, was the need to create a detailed overview of the different stock assumptions and Harvest Control Rules in place; many of these can be found in grey literature. This includes a couple of ongoing modelling exercises that could be used within UNCOVER.

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It was decided to synthesise key information in each workpackage to facilitate communication within and among workpackages and case study areas. Relevant tables were developed and filled out for example by workpackage 3 during the meeting and sent around by Jens Floeter (jfloeter@uni-hamburg.de) for completion.

Workpackage 2 decided to collect information on available time-series data for eggs, larvae and age-0 juveniles of UNCOVER target species in each region. Relevant tables were sent out by Myron Peck (Myron.Peck@uni-hamburg.de) in April and June.

UNCOVER activities

Expert workshop on recovery plans:

As the first task of workpackage 5, MRAG has developed the report “**A multi-disciplinary evaluation of regional fish stock recovery plans: factors associated with successful recovery**” (R. C. Wakeford, D. J. Agnew & C. C. Mees). The draft of this report was forwarded to four internationally experts working on stock recovery issues to gather their comments. Members of this expert panel are:

1. Susan S. Hanna,
Oregon State University, USA
2. Kent Smedbol, Fisheries and
Oceans Biological Station, Canada
3. Carlo Pipitone, CNR-IAMC, Italy
4. Ralf Döring,
Universität Greifswald, Germany

The authors and experts met at a workshop, held during a special session at the Thirteenth Biennial Conference “Rebuilding Fisheries in an Uncertain Environment” of the International Institute of Fisheries Economics and Trade (IIFET), organized by the UNCOVER partner CEMARE in Portsmouth, UK. The workshop was led by Doug Wilson (IFM-DK), who gave a short overview about the

UNCOVER project. Chris Mees from MRAG presented the report to the 20 participants of the workshop.

The draft report was well received, and valuable comments for its improvement were made both, by the experts in their contributions, as well as during the following open discussion. Based on this additional input, the report will be finalized within the next months.

Communications:

Website launched: Since April, UNCOVER is online! Up to now, only a preliminary website is accessible under the following addresses:

<http://www.uncover.eu>
<http://www.uncover-fish.eu>
<http://www.uncover-project.eu>
<http://www.uncover4fish.net>

From now on, www.uncover.eu will be used as the main internet address.

The development of the final web page started only recently after difficulties in the administrative process to select a subcontractor. Within the next 2-3 months, the webpage will be developed and re-launched, offering more information and possibilities for internal exchange of information.

Outreach

The project was presented by Christian v. Dorrien at the recent meeting of the Deutsche Wissenschaftliche Kommission für Meeresforschung (*German Scientific Commission for Marine Research*) in Rostock, 21st June. As a follow up, the representative of the Deutscher Fischereiverband (*German Fisheries Association*) expressed his interest to learn more about the project and to exchange information during the project's process.

Outlook

ICES ASC 2006: The UNCOVER project will be presented by an oral presentation (C. v. Dorrien & Cornelius Hammer) at Session R (ICES advice in a changing world!) of the coming ICES Annual Science Conference in Maastricht, Holland from 19th to 23rd September.

First Modelling Workshop: A first joint workshop with Workpackages 1-3 & 6 is scheduled for October regarding:

"Specification of technical requirements for input into FEMS, and the priority for evaluation. Modelling strategies and common goals defined"

There should be participation by relevant scientists from the workpackages 1-3 and 6 as well as by key persons from the case study areas.

Hilario Murua and AZTI kindly offered to host this meeting in San Sebastián. The workshop will run for 1.5 – 2 days, most probably from 16-20 or 23-27 of October. A first registration form will be sent out soon.

Wanted: Your Contribution

If you have any **information** about

- relevant achievements, first results, etc. within UNCOVER, or
- interesting news about other projects, developments, etc. that are relevant for our project work,

please send a short text to me (christian.dorrien@ior.bfa-fisch.de), so that it can be presented to all, either on the website (intranet) and/or the next issue of this newsletter.

For the design of the website and other UNCOVER publications, it would be very helpful to have a collection of **photos** of the relevant species and areas. So if you have such photos that could be used free of charge (credits and copyrights will be mentioned, of course), please send them to me.

In addition, for the description of partners in UNCOVER, I need a good copy (file) of the **logo of your institute**.

Finally, I would like to get your **feedback** and your comments, amendments and tips for future issues of the newsletter,

Thanks and enjoy the summer!

Christian

