

# EMBRC HQ Update - N.22

## 15 September 2020 – 15 December 2020

Prepared by: EMBRC HQ

*The present report covers the period from 15 September to 15 December 2020.*

*Scope: to update the GA on the progress of main items of the work activity at the EMBRC-ERIC Headquarters.*

### General activities

- In October, EMBRC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with CCMAR in support of the further development of MarineTraining.eu by starting to develop virtual tours of some of our facilities.
- EMBRC has been meeting with the European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) team, to explore how EMBRC may support the EIT Food topic, particularly on aquaculture and future foods.
- Alexandra Vasic and Nicolas Pade met with M & A Audit as part of the annual audit of EMBRC accounts.
- Davide Di Cioccio presented at the workshop on 'Transnational Access: guidelines and procedures' for IS\_MIRRI21, a Horizon 2020 project that will implement MIRRI as a sustainable entity housing the broadest catalogue of non-marine microbial resources in Europe.
- EMBRC responded to the first stage of the EU Consultation on Ocean Observation, stating that EMBRC welcomes the European Commission's initiative to organise and coordinate marine observation efforts in Europe, as well as noting the challenges threatening effective ocean observation, and the need for a combination of regional and national funding.
- The projects for the joint EMBRC-EuroMarine call have been selected and project activities are due to take place at the ECIMAT marine station soon.

### Communication

- EMBRC was delighted to launch our new website on 2 November. The new site aims to clarify what EMBRC does, reduce the heavy use of jargon and abbreviations used by RIs, and improve the user experience by presenting a clean design and improved menu structure. The new website also has a searchable service catalogue where users can browse over 430 services.
- In the run up to Christmas, EMBRC launched a "12 Days of EMBRC Christmas" social media campaign to run alongside the regular "Sea and Me" feature.
- EMBRC introduced an Image Consent package to ensure the proper use of images produced by EMBRC and those used by EMBRC in publications, social media and advertising.



- EMBRC moved from a personal LinkedIn page to a company page, the link to which can be found here: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/embrc>
- A newsletter signup page was created to build EMBRC's mailing list (sign-up can also occur via the footer of the EMBRC website): <https://mailchi.mp/f9d91c5dc4ef/embrc-news-sign-up>
- Communications Working Group meetings, held on 10 November and 10 December (4th and 5th meetings, respectively), addressed the 2021 communications strategy, social media campaigns, and alignment between HQ and nodes, in particular.
- During the second COVID-19 lockdown in France, the team at EMBRC-HQ continued to collaborate virtually:



*Merry Christmas from the EMBRC HQ team*

## Access

- Davide Di Cioccio chaired the second EMBRC Access Workshop on 1-2 October. The meeting served as an opportunity for EMBRC nodes to validate the Key Performance Indicators established by the ESFRI Forum ([https://www.esfri.eu/sites/default/files/ESFRI\\_WG\\_Monitoring\\_Report.pdf](https://www.esfri.eu/sites/default/files/ESFRI_WG_Monitoring_Report.pdf)). The workshop included an update on the progress towards the introduction of the online access platform ARIA (expected mid-December 2020); and an update of the database of EMBRC services.
- An ABS Working Group Meeting took place on 12 November, facilitated by Arnaud Laroquette. The discussion covered operating rules of the ABS Working Group; feedback from Nicolas Pade regarding discussions of Marine Genetic Resources of areas beyond national jurisdiction with the European Commission; EMBRC compliance; and ABS in projects.

## Governance Meetings

- The EMBRC Advisory Board met on 30 November ahead of the 7th EMBRC General Assembly. The board were asked for their input on the 2021 Work Programme and budget, as well as key items in the EMBRC Science Strategy. The Advisory Board members include Philippe Cury, Felicity Huntingford, Erik Steinfelder and Antonio Villanueva.



- EMBRC-ERIC General Assembly VII took place on 2-3 December by video conference. Discussions focussed on the EMBRC Rules of Operation and Service Level Agreements, the initiation of a Genomics Observatory Initiative and the 2021 Work Programme and Budget.
- CoN meeting 22 took place on 22 October by videoconference. The meeting's principle focus was the Work Programme 2021.
- CoN meeting 23 took place on 4 November by videoconference. The meeting was an opportunity to present the European Marine Omics Biodiversity Observation Network (EMO BON).

## Projects

- Nicolas Pade attended the 8th EOSC-Life Executive Board meeting on 9 October. Furthermore, the EOSC-Life mid-term review took place on 8-10 December, attended by Sidonie Gras on behalf of EMBRC. The first periodic report for the EOSC-Life project was submitted to the European Commission in October.
- The ASSEMBLE Plus General Assembly took place on 13-15 October, involving Davide Di Cioccio and Nicolas Pade. The event included presentations on the project Work Packages, including Management, Communication and Transnational Access progress, and advisory board feedback to PIC members. The GA agreed to request a 12 month extension to the project, due to the impact of COVID, in order to be able to deliver all allocated Transnational Access projects.
- Nicolas Pade participated in the RI-VIS Steering Group on 26 October.
- The general assembly for the Interreg project EBB took place on 27-28 October. The Best Practices for Collections for complying with Access and Benefit Sharing regulations was presented and will be implemented across EMBRC.
- Two meetings took place on 10-11 November to address Microbiomes Omics Analysis Protocols and Microbiomes Sampling & Imaging Analysis Protocols as part of the AtlantECO project.
- On 15 December EMBRC received notification that the project proposal DOORS – Towards a productive, healthy, resilient, sustainable and highly-valued Black Sea, passed the evaluation phase. The project is part of the H2020-BG-2020-2 call. Work will now start on grant preparation.

## Recent events

- Sidonie Gras participated in the European Research & Innovation Days on 22-24 September. The virtual event was an opportunity to present current and future objectives for research and innovation in Europe. As part of the event, EMBRC produced a short video explaining its activities: (<https://embrc.eu/newsroom/multimedias/meet-embrc-overview-our-work-and-impact>)
- Sidonie Gras participated in the webinar: “What future for the Blue Economy?”, hosted by the European Commission on 27 October. The event included presentations on the challenges threatening a sustainable blue economy. Representatives of regions, clusters and NGOs, as well as scientists and finance experts, presented their outlook on challenges to be confronted and opportunities to be seized.
- On 11 November, Sidonie Gras and Alexandra Vasic participated in the “Journée aspects financiers”, in the context of the Horizon 2020 programme. The objective of the event was to



inform participants of the correct financial practices when managing Horizon 2020 projects within a French framework.

- EMBRC, AWI, and SZN organised a consultation event on “European Regional Genomic Observatories: operationalizing omics & eDNA in regional ocean observation” in the context of the EuroSea project. Nicolas Pade was invited to chair the breakout session on funding & management models.
- Nicolas Pade participated in the 6-monthly General Assembly of IBISBA research infrastructure, presenting on how EMBRC and IBISBA can complement each other and collaborate on biotechnology research and innovation.
- EMBRC was invited to participate in a brainstorming workshop with the European Commission and other experts on accessing and sharing benefits from biodiversity from Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ).
- Nicolas Pade was invited to become a member of the European Ocean Observation System implementation board.

## Upcoming events

- EMBRC CoN meeting 24, 16 December 2020, online
- ASSEMBLE Plus Conference, 28-29 January 2021, online
- RI-VIS Africa-Europe Symposium, 31 January – 2 February 2021, online
- EMBRC-ERIC General Assembly VIII, 4 April 2021, online
- EMBRC Community Days, 31 May – 4 June 2021, TBC

The next HQ Update will be available by Friday 19 March 2021.