

First Ocean Acidification Coordination Meeting in Africa

By

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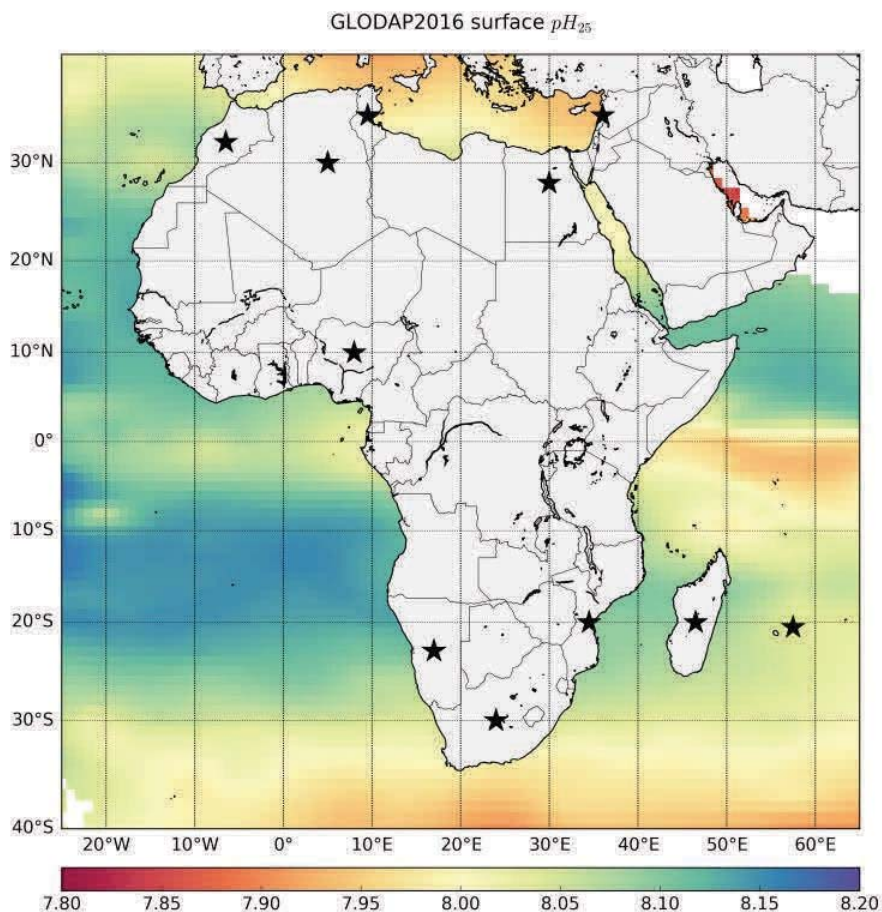
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In an effort towards coordinating an Ocean Acidification (OA) networking initiative in Africa, the first coordinating meeting hosted by Warren Joubert (CSIR, South Africa) and Chibo Chikwililwa (UNam, Namibia) and facilitated by the NOAA Ocean Acidification Program and the Ocean Foundation was held on 20 October 2016. The meeting comes on the back of recent training workshops held in Africa in 2015 (Cape Town) and 2016 (Mozambique and Mauritius) hosted by local and international partners. A short video of the Cape Town workshop can be found [here](#).

The meeting format comprised of an interactive webinar with roughly 40 participants, where a panel of OA researchers introduced the aim of an OA-Africa network facilitated a discussion based on inputs from the participants. The African countries represented



Participating countries in the inaugural Ocean Acidification Africa Network webmeeting, overlain on the GLODAP 1 degree climatology of surface ocean pH at standard temperature and pressure (Lauvset et al., 2016).

included Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Madagascar, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria and South Africa.

The overall objective was to initiate an OA-Africa Network, in order to coordinate and advance OA

observations and research in Africa. Furthermore, the ambition of the OA-Africa Network, is to build an observation based network of OA research, identify and share current research activities and experiences, highlight potential training and funding opportunities, collaborate on research projects, expand OA observational and experimental capacity,

promote awareness of OA activities, improve coordination in the region and contribute to the Global Ocean Acidification Observation Network (GOA-ON, <http://www.goa-on.org/>) initiative. Moreover, the network aims to address policy requirements supported by robust scientific support to inform appropriate management action at national and international levels.


A presentation by Cristian Vargas of University of Concepcion, Chile, highlighted their recent experience in setting up the Latin America Ocean Acidification Network (LAOCA). Alex Harper of NOAA Ocean Acidification Program also introduced the scientific mentoring opportunities for emerging OA researchers provided through Pier2Peer initiative. Two such mentors (Jan Newton and Chris Sabine) were used as examples and they highlighted their scientific background as well as their current research interests and support for the OA-Africa initiative.

The interactive poll questions revealed that a steering committee should comprise of a representative from each participating country. The group showed particular interest in chemical observations and biological experimentation, along with facilitating policy development in respective countries. A questionnaire is currently

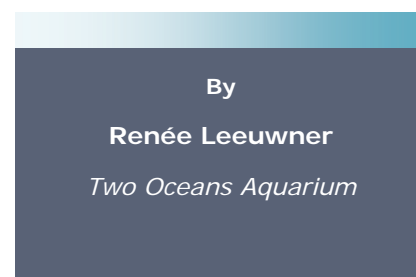
being finalised by Andrew Dickson (USA) and Sam Dupont (Sweden) under the umbrella of the IAEA INT7019 project to evaluate opportunities and challenges for OA research throughout Africa. It will be distributed to all participants to assess the current state of research and priorities in the respective countries. An overwhelming interest in professional networking and collaboration outweighed funding as a priority for participants. Training and access to infrastructure were also identified as a factor inhibiting progress in certain countries.

Going forward, OA-Africa aspires to foster observational and experimental networking opportunities to enhance collaboration internally and with international partners to advance ocean acidification research in Africa.

References:

Lauvset, S.K., R. M. Key, A. Olsen, S. van Heuven, A. Velo, X. Lin, C. Schirnick, A. Kozyr, T. Tanhua, M. Hoppema, S. Jutterström, R. Steinfeldt, E. Jeansson, M. Ishii, F. F. Perez, T. Suzuki, S. Watelet., (2016). A new global interior ocean mapped climatology: the 1°x1° GLODAP version 2, Earth Syst. Sci. Data Discuss., doi:10.5194/essd-2015-43 

Two Oceans Aquarium awarded prestigious Diamond status



The Two Oceans Aquarium has been awarded the prestigious Diamond status by the Heritage Environmental Rating Programme. This classification is awarded to participants in the Heritage Programme who have maintained Platinum status for 5 consecutive years and have shown continued improvement in their sustainability efforts. There are currently only two other Diamond status properties in South Africa – the Table Mountain Aerial Cableway (2015) and Tsogo Sun's Drakensberg Sun Resort (2013).

"I am extremely proud of the Two Oceans team which has made this a reality and in particular the handful of people who drive our sustainability programmes daily. We are on a sustainability journey and this award is