

SERPENT science

www.serpentproject.com
issue 7: june 2006

➔ SERPENT on the box...

The film version of the Blue Planet, 'Deep Blue', went to the top of the German box offices last year, and the resulting desire for deep-ocean images and footage is huge. In April, RTL - one of the largest broadcasters in Germany - produced a short documentary on the SERPENT Project that went out to almost 10 million people! It covered our recent findings, and SERPENT PhD researcher Nina Rothe, a German national, discussed her project and future plans.

➔ New Laggan Project!



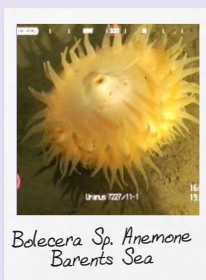
At the end of 2005 we reported on the success of the Total Symposium held at Port Cros, France, launching the new deep-sea biodiversity programme by the Total Foundation for Biodiversity and the Sea. We are now pleased to announce a new project looking at the controls on cold-water species diversity at the Laggan development site, starting this summer! The project will link SERPENT and Total E&P UK as a subsidiary-led project within the Foundation. Over the next three years the project will investigate new species living in the Faroe-Shetland Channel and hopefully unlock some of its secrets!

➔ MSc Research Projects

Our two MSc Research Projects have just drawn to a close after a year of dedication and hard work by our students. Claire Fletcher used data from the Enfield development area, North West Australia, to assess the effects of drilling activity on megafauna in the area. Mike Brewer's project involved an ecological assessment in the Mauritania region. If you'd like to know what kept them both so busy, their reports will be on the SERPENT website within the next few weeks.

➔ Norway update

Our new collaboration with Statoil is off to a flying start, with SERPENT scientists visiting two rigs in a space of a few weeks. The first visit to the Eirik Raude in the Barents Sea served as an introduction to the project for all the partners, and also yielded some exciting footage of the arctic communities. Highlights of the second visit to the West Alpha in the Norwegian Sea included successful trials of a new Ekman style sediment sampler and setting up bioturbation experiments that will be completed during an upcoming visit in June. Visits planned for 2006 include an opportunity to work in the Barents Sea on the Transocean drilling unit Polar Pioneer as well as conducting a larger scale survey at the Faroes Brugdan well.



Boleocera Sp. Anemone
Barents Sea

➔ Outreach activities

Our outreach activities over the last quarter have been numerous and rewarding. At the end of February, Outreach



Coordinator Lis Maclaren visited the Paul B Loyd Junior rig off the West of Shetland to carry out the pilot of a school-rig link programme. Communicating daily over a live video web link, class P6/7 at the Charleston School in Aberdeen and Lis

discussed footage taken using the Pioneer HD ROV. Despite adverse weather conditions, the visit was a success. The class had provided a box of experiments to take to the sea bed (300m) and back using the ROV, that included polystyrene cups, fruit, plastic bottles and eggs. The results were discussed via a follow-up video conference when Lis was back on dry land - full details of the visit are on the website.

Also this quarter, a fabulous new SERPENT exhibit opened in March at the National Marine Aquarium in Plymouth, UK. The interactive exhibit is part of the new 'Explorocean' section and is the culmination of months of hard work by all involved. Initial feedback indicates that it is being received well by visitors and will be a useful tool to raise awareness of the deep ocean.



Our project base, the National Oceanography Centre, Southampton, was inundated in March by 2,500 visitors during Science Week on the Ocean and Earth Day. SERPENT was a key element to the day, with a large exhibit manned by

SERPENT team members and lots of activities for kids in addition to talks given by Lis that were very well attended.

We are also currently in the process of developing a fully searchable, comprehensive database of all our fantastic images and video footage. We anticipate that it will go live in June and are looking forward to receiving any feedback on its functionality.

Send us more...!

Do you have any questions, interesting stories, ideas or observations? Share them with us! Email lkem@noc.soton.ac.uk

Send your images and footage to: images@serpentproject.com