

Joint meeting of the IMOS and TERN boards

After the IMOS Board meeting on 14 September this year, the IMOS and the Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network (TERN) boards held a joint meeting.

This joint meeting of TERN and IMOS Boards was very useful in terms of improving understanding, sharing experience, and exploring opportunities for closer collaboration, particularly in the coastal zone.

We identified a few areas of current activity that can be more closely aligned, committed to bringing our collective knowledge of international developments into the discussion, and agreed to look at identifying a small number of areas in which there is clear need for national scale data sets that both Capabilities can contribute to.

These actions will be followed through in the coming months, and provide an excellent example of the type of cooperation and coordination that becomes possible with a national, collaborative, research infrastructure program in place.



Back row (L-R): Dr Peter Rogers (IMOS), Professor Jason Middleton (IMOS), Professor Lee Astheimer (IMOS), Dr Bruce Mapstone (IMOS), Mrs Jo Neilson (IMOS Board Secretary), Professor Andrew Lowe (TERN Board Observer), Professor Stuart Phinn (TERN Director), Professor Stephen Walker (TERN), Dr Neville Smith (IMOS), Professor Stephen Williams (TERN), Professor Mark Westoby (TERN), Mr Geoff Richardson (TERN), Professor Rob Lewis (IMOS).

Front row (L-R): Mr Tim Moltmann (IMOS Director), Dr Nick D'Adamo (IMOS), Professor Paddy Nixon (IMOS), Dr Margaret Byrne (TERN), Dr Ian Poiner (IMOS Board Chair), Professor Andrew Campbell (TERN Board Chair), Dr Lauren Rickards (TERN), Dr Peter Woodgate (TERN). Absent: Dr Neil McKenzie (TERN), Dr Steve Rintoul (TERN), Mr John Gunn (IMOS).

Introducing the Southern Ocean Observing System (SOOS)

The Southern Ocean is changing. Limited observations indicate that the region is warming more rapidly than the global ocean average; changes in precipitation and ice melt are effecting upper and lower abyssal ocean salinity; basin-wide ocean acidification is occurring due to uptake of anthropogenic CO₂; and ecosystems are responding to changes in the physical and chemical environment.

Given the central role that the Southern Ocean plays in global ocean circulation, and its influence on climate patterns, and nutrient and carbon cycling, changes in this environment have global ramifications.

Sustained, long-term multidisciplinary observations are therefore required to accurately detect, interpret and respond to change.

The Southern Ocean Observing System (SOOS) was launched in August 2011 with the mission to *establish a multidisciplinary observing system to*

deliver the sustained observations of the Southern Ocean that are needed to address key challenges of scientific and societal relevance (e.g., climate change, sea-level rise, impacts of global change on marine ecosystems).

The SOOS effort will be run from an International Project Office (IPO), which is hosted by the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (University of Tasmania), with additional support from the Australian Antarctic Division.

As a first step in the development of the SOOS, the international Southern Ocean scientific community drafted an *Initial Science and Implementation Strategy*, which is to be published in December. Using this strategy as a solid foundation, the objective of the SOOS is now to forge ahead and identify clear steps to achieving the SOOS mission. Towards this goal, the SOOS Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) has been selected from an international pool of nominees.

This committee will meet at the inaugural SSC meeting in February 2012 in Salt Lake City (Utah, USA) alongside the Ocean Sciences Meeting, to decide on the next steps in the implementation of the SOOS. Committee and meeting details will be announced on the SOOS website (www.soos.aq), which is currently being developed and will be up and running by the early 2012.

For more information on the SOOS, or to receive a copy of the *SOOS Initial Science and Implementation Strategy*, please contact the SOOS Executive Officer Louise Newman (Louise.Newman@utas.edu.au).



SOOS
SOUTHERN OCEAN
OBSERVING SYSTEM