

November - December 2001  
Issue 2

# Newsletter of the IBOY

DIVERSITAS – International Biodiversity Observation Year 2001-2002

## Content:

Feature Stories	1-3
Publications and Presentations	3-4
Upcoming Meetings	4-6
Upcoming Field Expeditions	6-7
Funding and Service Opportunities	7-8
Awards	8
From the Secretariat	9
Recent Activities	9

## Wealth of new species discovered from the abyssal plains of the Atlantic Ocean

Preliminary findings from an expedition last year to the deep-sea of the Angola Basin are revealing a wealth of new information on biodiversity in the poorly known depths of the south Atlantic Ocean. The early results from the project *Latitudinal Gradients in the Deep Sea of the Atlantic Ocean: DIVA* were presented at a workshop at the University of Oldenburg, Germany, on September 18, 2001. The results were the first reports from a team of 39 taxonomists from Germany, Russia, Spain and the USA who have been collaborating to collect and describe fauna from an expedition in June 2000 to survey deep-sea organisms along a 700km transect, at a depth of 5000m, in the Angola Basin.

One of the project leaders, Dr. Wolfgang Wägele of Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany, said the preliminary findings



Research Vessel Meteor

presented in September's workshop reveal a large number of new species from this remote and inaccessible habitat. For example, of 38 Cumacea (small crustaceans, 1 – 10 mm in size) 22 are new species, and up to 90% of the copepods (an extremely diverse group of small crustaceans) are new. A number of new Loricifera species have

- cont. pg 2

## First global-scale assessment of biodiversity beneath our feet

During November and December scientists at 32 sites in 20 countries will gather field collections as part of a global experiment to survey biodiversity in litter (the layer of plant debris on the soil surface) and its role in an important ecosystem function, decomposition. As part of the *Global Litter Invertebrate Decomposition Experiment (GLIDE)*, last August and September the researchers placed mesh bags of leaf litter on the ground of diverse ecosystems, from tropical to boreal forests, and from savannahs to arctic tundra. Over the next two months they will retrieve a subset of these bags for analysis of global patterns of decomposition and the species involved.

The Chair of *GLIDE*, Dr. Diana Wall of Colorado State University, USA, expects the study to significantly advance understanding of large-scale distributions of fauna that dwell in soil and litter. Even at small scales, biodiversity in soils and litter is poorly known. There is not one experimental plot, anywhere in the world, for which all species of soil and litter fauna have been described. The dearth of information on belowground species is partly because of their sheer abundance and diversity. "The species diversity of fauna in litter and soil is likely to be orders of magnitude greater than the more familiar biodiversity aboveground," says Wall. "Furthermore, there may be

- cont. pg 3

## New species discovered (cont.)

also been identified. These are very small invertebrates which, although are now known to be speciose, were for a long-time overlooked with the phylum described only in 1983.

In addition to yielding new species and confirming the diversity of deep sea life, the material collected is helping clarify aspects of the life cycles of these organisms and will provide new information on the species' distributions. At first sight, the abyssal plains look relatively uniform, but *DIVA*'s closer examination is revealing large differences in the structure of the sediments and the composition of the fauna. "We are finding that different groups dominate at different sites and that several species are very rare, with only one specimen collected during the entire expedition," said Wägele. The rare species are, for example, from the genera *Acanthaspida*, *Mesosignum*, *Munna*, *Storthyngura*

(small crustaceans related to woodlice). The factors influencing these differences will only be identified when all relevant data are available. Dr. Wägele estimates that this will take approximately two years, and maybe longer for the more speciose groups. A meeting of all participants is being planned for 2002, to summarize the preliminary observations.

**More Information** on *DIVA* see <http://www.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/spezzoo/diva1.html> and <http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/whatandwhere.html#DIVA>

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## Meetings launch international program to protect food security and conserve biodiversity

Across the world local networks of researchers, development workers and farmers are joining forces in October and November 2001 to launch an innovative project to protect food security and incomes of the world's rural poor, and at the same time, help conserve biodiversity. The project, supported by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD, a Rome-based UN Organization) and the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI, also headquartered in Italy) will help farmers improve and conserve local, traditional crops which are being lost as they are overlooked by major international research and development programs.

A series of international meetings are launching the project. Some meetings will be held in November at Chennai, India, and at Katmandu, Nepal, to review the framework of activities on minor millets, such as finger millets and Italian millets, in a number of pilot sites across the countries. Last month, meetings were held in El Arish, Egypt, and San'a, Yemen, to review the details of a work plan developed in conjunction with local communities to enhance the use of medicinal and aromatic plants. Concurrent workshops in La Paz, Bolivia, Ibarra, Ecuador, and Lima, Peru, finalized the details for planned research activities on Andean cereals such as quinoa and amaranth.

Dr. Stefano Padulosi is coordinating the project from IPGRI's Regional Office of Aleppo, Syria. He describes the innovative way the project simultaneously addresses

multiple, but interrelated, problems faced by the world's rural poor, "This work is the very first effort at a global level to cover food security in an entirely new approach, focusing on local nutritious crops and making farmers active players and not just recipients of research outputs. The action will be in the field, where scientists and rural communities will work together in surveying and selecting varieties of these neglected crops. Their seeds will then be multiplied and distributed to farmers along with new technologies for their better cultivation and use. Community-based actions will include the establishment of small processing units that will create added-value opportunities for marketing these crops."

After the first year of this three-year project, researchers and collaborating farmers hope to, among other things, achieve a better understanding of the diversity across the geographic range of these crops, safeguard genotypes particularly those under threat of genetic erosion, identify superior local varieties for crop enhancement, improve knowledge of market potentials of target crops, and disseminate low cost technology for enhancing their use.

**More information** on *Conserving and Increasing Use of Neglected and Underutilized Crop Species* see [http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/iboy/how\\_conserve.html#nus](http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/iboy/how_conserve.html#nus)

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## Biodiversity beneath our feet (cont.)

hundreds of species and thousands of individuals in a handful of soil or litter. Collecting and identifying such large numbers of species poses an enormous challenge to soil taxonomists." Additionally, Wall explains, the majority of these species are not visible to the naked eye since they live in dark underground habitats and many are microscopic. As a result, it is estimated that for many soil and litter taxonomic groups less than 10 percent of species have been described scientifically.

Despite limited knowledge about the identity of individual species of soil and litter biota, soil biologists know that assemblages of the species play crucial roles in the functioning of ecosystems, including decomposing organic matter and recycling nutrients to the soil. However, lack of information on how the identity and diversity of species varies across habitats and influences ecosystem processes limits scientists' ability to assess how changes in habitats, for example associated with deforestation and climate change, may alter communities of litter fauna and vital ecosystem processes.

"The enormous resources required to survey belowground biodiversity has prohibited assessments across multiple biomes in the past," Wall explains, but she and her colleagues are utilizing creative approaches to make this first global scale assessment of litter biodiversity possible. Firstly, they are benefiting from the participation of established international networks that provide extensive geographical coverage, baseline data, expertise and infrastructure. Participating networks include the Canadian

Intersite Decomposition Experiment Team (CIDET), International Long-Term Ecological Research (ILTER) program, Long-Term Intersite Decomposition Experiment Team (LIDET) and the Tropical Soil Biology and Fertility (TSBF) program. Secondly, they will utilize state of the art technology, called *BioTrack*, to accelerate taxonomic identification of the tens-of-thousands of individuals they expect to find. *BioTrack*, directed by *GLIDE* Co-Chair Dr. Mark Dangerfield at Macquarie University Australia, scans each specimen and creates a high resolution image. Computer software then compares the image with a 'virtual collection' to provide a match and identify the specimen. Thirdly, all of the scientists participating in the project are volunteering their time to place the litterbags in the field and collect them.

The researchers expect that within a year *GLIDE* will yield unprecedented data on the animals involved in various stages of litter decomposition across different biomes and latitudes. This information will help answer important questions such as how significant the high diversity of litter fauna is for the functioning of ecosystems and how it is influenced by the environment.

**More Information** on the IBOY Project *Global Litter Invertebrate Decomposition Experiment (GLIDE)* see <http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/projects/glide/> and [http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/goods\\_services.html#bignell](http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/goods_services.html#bignell)

**More Information** on BioTrack see (<http://biotrack.mq.edu.au/index.htm>)

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## Publications and Presentations

**November 5-9, 2001, Playa Del Carmen, Mexico**

### **Iliffe, T. M. 2001. *Endangered Caves and Cave Animals of the Riviera Maya. Riviera Maya ECO '01: To the Safeguard of Fragile Ecosystems in Solidaridad.***

As part of the project *Exploration and Conservation of Anchialine Faunas*, Dr. Thomas Iliffe of Texas A&M University at Galveston, USA, will present the above paper at a conference of diverse stakeholders concerned with the conservation of ecologically important ecosystems on the Yucatan Peninsula, Mexico. The Municipality of Solidaridad on the Yucatan Peninsula contains a diverse array of exceptional ecosystems, including: portions of the Meso-American Coral Reef System, the second longest in the world; part of the Biosphere Reserve of Sian Ka'an, a World Heritage Site; a chain of biodiverse caves, caverns and cenotes, believed to be one of the longest underground systems in the world; and large areas of mangroves and wetlands. The human population of this

area is increasing at 24% annually, largely due to tourism, and environmental damage to these fragile ecosystems is already becoming apparent.

**More information** on the IBOY Project *Exploration and Conservation of Anchialine Cave Faunas* see <http://www.cavebiology.com/> and <http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/whatandwhere.html#anchialine>

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## **December 2-4, 2001, Brussels, Belgium**

# **Report of the Electronic Conference on Marine Biodiversity in Europe (m@rble) to the European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy**

The results of an Electronic Conference on Marine Biodiversity in Europe will be published and presented at the meeting of the European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy in December. The electronic conference was hosted by the European Marine Stations Network (MARS) during October, with the goal of surveying broad opinion on issues important for the development of marine biodiversity research, specifically:

- main issues in biodiversity research (8-12 October)
- implementation and application of biodiversity research in management conservation and science (15-19 October)
- future of marine biodiversity research (22-26 October)

The e-conference was coordinated by Dr.

Carlo Heip, Chair of the MARS Program *Implementation and Networking of Large-scale, Long-term Marine Biodiversity Research in Europe (BIOMARE)*. The findings of the e-conference will provide an overview of current thinking about the issues and goals that *BIOMARE* is addressing.

**More information on the IBOY Project BIOMARE** see <http://www.biomareweb.org> and [http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/how\\_changing.html#feral](http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/how_changing.html#feral)

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## **Upcoming Meetings**

### **November 2-3, 2001, Palma de Mallorca, Spain: BIOMARE Workshop**

# **Marine scientists meet to build capacity for Europe-wide marine research and conservation**

At an international workshop, a collaboration of European marine scientists will review assessments of existing capacity to conduct continental-scale biodiversity research, which they have developed over the past year. The scientists are part of the project *Implementation and Networking of Large-scale, Long-term Marine Biodiversity Research in Europe (BIOMARE)*. They will use the review to launch the next phase of *BIOMARE*, which will make recommendations for implementing Europe-wide marine biodiversity research. The workshop will consider the location and research requirements for a network of sites to provide comprehensive information on the state of Europe's marine biodiversity and

ecosystems, and how to provide information needed by stake-holders including European Union policy-makers, commercial fisheries and international conventions.

**More information on the IBOY Project BIOMARE** see <http://www.biomareweb.org> and [http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/how\\_changing.html#feral](http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/how_changing.html#feral)

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**December 3 – 7, 2001, Bondy, France**

## **Second Meeting of MACROFAUNA: Synthesis and Analysis of Agricultural Practices on Biodiversity**

An international network of soil biologists will gather for a second meeting of the project *MACROFAUNA*, led by Dr. Patrick Lavelle of the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement, France. *MACROFAUNA* aims to advance understanding of the impacts of different agricultural practices on soil biodiversity. Soil biologists have long known that soil-dwelling fauna are responsible for formation and conservation of the healthy soils that support agriculture, and have attributed the general unsustainability of agricultural systems world-wide, at least in part, to their disappearance. However, there has been no global, systematic synthesis of knowledge on the impact of agriculture on soil biodiversity. In its first meeting in June 2000, members of the *MACROFAUNA* network synthesized information and provided recommendations on standardizing sampling and taxonomic practices,

compiling and analyzing data, and disseminating information. At this second meeting, the researchers will use data and methods selected at the first meeting to analyze information from sites across 32 countries and evaluate the impact of different agricultural practices on soil biodiversity around the world. They will draft papers, a webpage and press releases at the meeting to publicize their findings.

**More information** on the IBOY Project *MACROFAUNA* see <http://www.bondy.ird.fr/lest/iboy/> and <http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/whatandwhere.html#macrofauna>

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**December 5-9, 2001, Bonn, Germany**

## **Status Seminar and Workshop of the BIOLOG and of BIOTA Africa**

During the first part of this meeting, December 5-7, more than 300 researchers and representatives of funding institutions will meet at the Science Center at Bonn, to review the present status of the Biodiversity Program BIOLOG, a program of the German Ministry of Science and Education, and the IBOY project *BIOTA Africa* with its 38 subprojects. *BIOTA Africa*, coordinated by Dr. Norbert Jürgens, will analyze and monitor changes in biodiversity in African biomes using an interdisciplinary and integrative approach. The initial phase of *BIOTA Africa*, taking place during 2001-2003, is establishing a network of Biodiversity Observatories for long-term observation, vegetation mapping and assessment of basic biodiversity parameters and functioning. This will build a foundation for the second phase (2003-2004) that will include assessments of socio-economic components of biodiversity change.

Over the final two days of the workshop, researchers will discuss and review the latest information on the challenges and problems associated with defining standards in biodiversity monitoring. It can be expected that development of standards in biodiversity monitoring will

allow better comparability, extrapolation and modeling of research results. However, the complex interaction of environmental drivers and organisms requires a thorough discussion of: (a) which standards are of scientific value, (b) which standards can be applied in different biomes, and (c) which standards and protocols are acceptable to researchers in different scientific communities and countries. Both meetings will bring together scientists from central Europe and some 30 colleagues from African countries and other continents. Outputs of the meeting will include a report on the *BIOTA Africa* Workshop, which will be published in printed form and also on the *BIOTA Africa* website.

**More Information** on the IBOY Project *BIOTA Africa* see the updated <http://www.biota-africa.org> This will soon contain additional information on the workshop.

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**December 13 – 14, 2001, San Francisco, USA**

**Symposia on Water, Energy, and Carbon Cycles in Terrestrial Systems: Local-Scale Observations Through FLUXNET and Other Micrometeorological Tower Sites**

Members of the international research network *FLUXNET* will gather at the 2001 Fall Meeting of the American Geophysical Union (AGU), for sessions convened by Drs. Dennis Baldocchi and Lianhong Gu of the University of California at Berkeley, USA. *FLUXNET* connects scientists and data from micrometeorological tower sites around the world, to better understand the mechanisms controlling ecosystem exchanges of CO<sub>2</sub>, water vapor and energy across a spectrum of temporal and spatial scales. These data provide a basis for understanding the functional diversity of ecosystems and global environmental change. Acquiring this global picture of ‘the metabolism of ecosystems’ requires constant monitoring of diverse ecosystems, rapid sharing of quality controlled data among the global science community and multidisciplinary synthesis of scientific findings. *FLUXNET* researchers will gather to present their latest data on a variety of

environmental fluxes, from a broad spectrum of ecosystems. They will also share information on latest protocols, advances and opportunities in cross-site synthesis, and development of the global network of flux towers.

**More information:** The *FLUXNET* sessions at the AGU Fall Meeting are B41A and B42D, in the morning and afternoon, of December 13. The *FLUXNET* poster session is B51A on Friday, December 14. More information on the AGU Fall Meeting can be found at <http://www.agu.org/meetings/fm01top.html>

**More information** on the IBOY Project *FLUXNET: The Metabolic Diversity of Terrestrial Ecosystems* see <http://daac.ornl.gov/FLUXNET/> and [http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/goods\\_services.html#baldocchi](http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/goods_services.html#baldocchi)

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**Rescheduled Meeting “Assembling the Tree of Life: Science, Relevance and Challenges”**

This international conference at the American Museum of Natural History, New York, was postponed in September because of the attacks in New York and has been rescheduled for 30 May – June 1, 2002.

In September, prior to its rescheduling, the meeting was featured in *Science* magazine:

Pennisi, E. 2001. Preparing the Ground for a Modern ‘Tree of Life’. *Science* 293: 1979 - 1980

**More information** on the symposium, including registration, see: [http://www.amnh.org/programs/conference/tree\\_of\\_life/](http://www.amnh.org/programs/conference/tree_of_life/)

**More information** on the IBOY Project *Assembling the Tree of Life* see <http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/whatandwhere.html#treeoflife>

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**Upcoming Field Expeditions**

**November 30 – December 7, 2001, Sweetings Cay, Grand Bahama**

**January 1–17, 2002, Admiral’s Cave, Bermuda**

**Expeditions to Survey Anchialine Cave Fauna**

Two expeditions, led by marine biologist Dr. Thomas Iliffe of Texas A&M University at Galveston, USA, will survey the fauna of anchialine caves, in the Caribbean. Anchialine habitats are flooded inland marine caves and ground waters that lack any direct surface connection with the open sea. They are inhabited by remarkable but poorly known animals; long-term survivors of ancient lineages, which are threatened by changes in their fragile habitat.

For the first of these expeditions, Iliffe and his colleagues will explore Sweetings Cay in Grand Bahama Island. They will survey fauna from the Zodiac Caverns, relatively shallow caves with crystal formations and abundant marine life, and deep fracture caves at Deep Creek and Lightbourn Cay.

- cont. pg 7

## Anchialine Cave Expedition (cont)

In the first two weeks of 2002, Iliffe will lead a team of graduate students, cave divers and GIS specialists in Bermuda, for the first phase of a project to develop a Bermuda Cave and Karst Information System (BeCKIS). The researchers will survey Admiral's Cave, one of the largest and most significant dry caves in Bermuda. Admiral's Cave is threatened by blasting and excavation in an adjacent quarry, and by water pollution from sewage leaking into the Cave's anchialine lakes. They will survey the dry and wet portions of the caves and convert and map the data using GIS techniques, measure water quality, and

inventory cave fauna. The results of the study will be posted on [cavebiology.com](http://cavebiology.com).

**More information** on the IBOY Project *Exploration and Conservation of Anchialine Cave Faunas* see <http://www.cavebiology.com/> and <http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/whatandwhere.html#anchialine>

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## December 9, 2001 – January 1, 2002, East Pacific Rise

### Expedition to survey mussel beds in a deep-sea hydrothermal vent field

Marine biologist Dr. Cindy Lee van Dover of the College of William and Mary, USA, will lead an expedition to the Northern East Pacific Rise with DSV Alvin and ROV Jason to study mussel beds surrounding deep-sea hydrothermal vents. The communities at the hydrothermal vents are chemosynthetic, based on chemical, rather than light energy. This expedition marks a return to mussel beds at the 9°N hydrothermal vent field that the researchers last sampled in 1999. It will advance understanding of how diversity in mussel beds in this extreme environment changes over time. The expedition is part of an ambitious global study to understand patterns in diversity and community structure at deep-sea chemosynthetic ecosystems. In September, as part of this study, van Dover led an expedition to chemosynthetic mussel beds of

Blake Ridge, east of South Carolina, USA, which made the first submersible visit to these beds. Information, including a log and photographs from the Blake Ridge Expedition is at

<http://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/explorations/deepeast01/deepeast01.html>

**More information** on the IBOY Project *Biodiversity in Deep Sea Chemosynthetic Communities* see <http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/whatandwhere.html>

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## Funding and Service Opportunities

### Request for Proposals for Declining Amphibian Populations Task Force (DAPTF) Seed Grants 2002

DAPTF is pleased to announce a new round of Seed Grants for 2002. These are intended as one-time awards of between \$500 and \$2000 for the support or initiation of research that furthers the DAPTF's mission to determine the nature, extent and causes of amphibian population declines. There are three categories in this year's round, reflecting generous financial support from Conservation International (CI) and the U.S. Department of the Interior's Amphibian and Reptile Monitoring Initiative (ARMI). DAPTF will accept applications in Spanish, Portuguese and French, as well as English.

Full information on all Award categories is available from a downloadable Adobe Acrobat Document at <http://www.open.ac.uk/daptf/news.htm>. Applicants should indicate which of the three categories they have in mind. Proposals of no more than 4 pages should be addressed

to Tim Halliday, at the address below. Do not hesitate to contact Tim Halliday if you need clarification or advice.

\*\*The closing date for applications is 15th December, 2001.\*\*

**More information** about the IBOY Project *Declining Amphibian Population Task Force (DAPTF)* see <http://www.open.ac.uk/daptf/index.htm> and [http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/how\\_changing.html#daptf](http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/how_changing.html#daptf)

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## Millennium Ecosystem Assessment seeks nominations for experts or reviewers

The *Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA)* is seeking nominations of social and natural scientists to participate as experts or reviewers in the *MA* process. The deadline for receipt of author nominations is December 15, 2001. Nominations for reviewers will be accepted through August 1, 2002.

The *MA* is a path-breaking international assessment that will meet decision-makers' needs for scientific information on the consequences of ecosystem change for human well-being and on the response options available to address undesired changes. As a 'multi-scale' assessment, the *MA* will seek to inform the global findings with information and perspectives from the local, national and regional scale, and inform local findings with a global context. The *MA* is designed to meet a portion of the

assessment needs of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Convention to Combat Desertification, Wetlands Convention and other users including the private sector, civil society, and indigenous peoples.

**More information** on the nomination requirements and on the roles of the experts and reviewers in the *MA* process, please see the detailed documentation available at <http://www.millenniumassessment.org>. This site and [http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/goods\\_services.html#millenium](http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/goods_services.html#millenium) also contain general information on the IBOY Project *Millennium Ecosystem Assessment*.

**Contact:**

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## Awards

### *Ocean Oasis* wins award at the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival

The giant-screen film, *Ocean Oasis*, directed and produced by Summerhays Films, Inc. of San Diego, in collaboration with the San Diego Natural History Museum, and Mexico's PRONATURA, was a winner at the prestigious 2001 Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival.

*Ocean Oasis* received the "Best Theatrical Program Award." This award is given every two years "to the program produced for large-format or conventional motion picture theaters that most effectively advances an appreciation of the natural world." Director/Producer Soames Summerhays of San Diego, was at the Festival to receive the award, presented on Saturday evening, September 30 in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, USA.

Michael Hager, executive producer of the film and director of the San Diego Natural History Museum said, "*Ocean Oasis* is one of many important results from our long-standing research work in Baja California and the Sea of Cortés." In the past decade alone, Museum researchers have discovered more than 15 new species in the uniquely abundant region.

On June 27, 2001, Mexico's President Vicente Fox attended the premiere of *Ocean Oasis* at El Papatote Museo del Niños in Mexico City. After viewing *Ocean Oasis*, President Fox asked the Mexican Secretary of the Environment and Natural Resources and the President of the Institute of Ecology to complete the documentation and studies required to elevate the islands in the Sea of Cortés and their surrounding waters to the status of a bio-reserve.

Sponsored by Sempra Energy, the film has been endorsed



Producer/Director of *Ocean Oasis*, Soames Summerhays and Underwater Cinematographer Bob Cranston holding the "Best Theatrical Program" award.

by international conservation organizations: Conservation International, Fondo Mexicano para la Conservación de la Naturaleza, The Nature Conservancy, and IBOY.

**More Information** on the IBOY Project *Ocean Oasis* can be seen from the full press release about the award [http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/pdf/oasis\\_award.pdf](http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/pdf/oasis_award.pdf) and from <http://www.oceanoasis.org/toc.html> and <http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/whatandwhere.html#oasis>

**Contact:**

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## From the Secretariat

**November 17 - 18, 2001, Colorado State University, USA:**

## Workshop to plan a US-Wide Biodiversity Observation Event

The US National Research Council's Committee on DIVERSITAS is sponsoring a meeting convened by the IBOY Secretariat to plan a USA-Wide Biodiversity Observation Event, to mark IBOY. Leaders in biodiversity research and education will attend, from institutions including the National Museum of Natural History of the Smithsonian Institution, Conservation International, All Species Foundation, World Wide Fund for Nature, National Geographic Society, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, University of Connecticut Museum, Biological Sciences Curriculum Study and Earth Day Network. They

will develop a program to take place in 2002 as part of IBOY that will increase science-based awareness of the importance of biodiversity among the American public. We hope to engage researchers and educators from museums, botanic gardens, schools and libraries in the ensuing national event.

**More information** on National Biodiversity Events, including the Australian Biodiversity Month September 2001, coordinated by the Australian Community Biodiversity Network, see <http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/biodevents.html>

## New on the Kids Webpage!

We invite schools from around the world to send us information on the biodiversity exploration activities they are doing for IBOY. We have published a new site on the IBOY Kids Webpage to highlight these activities and help schools share information. This page was inspired by Karen Jones a teacher at Kempsey West Public School in New South Wales, Australia who sent us information on a Potato Trap project they are doing in collaboration with a school in Wales. Their project is the first entry in the *Your Webpages* section on the IBOY Kid's webpage.

**More information** and instructions on how to add your schools activities to the site see <http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/kids/webpages.html> Or contact the IBOY webmaster Lily Huddleson [lily@nrel.colostate.edu](mailto:lily@nrel.colostate.edu)

### Contact:

For more information on these and other activities of the IBOY Secretariat, Gina Adams, Program Director, DIVERSITAS-IBOY, Natural Resource Ecology Laboratory, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523-1499, USA. Tel: (+1) 970 491 1984, Fax: (+1) 970 491 3945, Email: [gadams@nrel.colostate.edu](mailto:gadams@nrel.colostate.edu)

## Recent Activities

**October 26 – October 30 2001, New York, USA**

## Meeting to develop Report on *Biodiversity: Its importance to Human Health*

The Center for Health and the Global Environment at the Harvard Medical School, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), and the World Health Organization (WHO) are jointly coordinating a project to review state of the art information on the importance of other species to human health. They will produce a book, to be published by Cambridge University Press, and a report for the United Nations on their findings. Chairs of the seven working groups developing the chapters for the book, and other stakeholders including representatives from the publishers

and international biodiversity organizations, met to review first drafts of chapters and develop the detailed structure and messages for the book.

**More information** on the IBOY Project Biodiversity: Its importance to Human Health see [http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/goods\\_services.html#who](http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/IBOY/goods_services.html#who)

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## About IBOY



The IBOY is an initiative of DIVERSITAS. Intellectual sponsorship is provided by the International Union of Microbiological Sciences (IUMS), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). IBOY has been endorsed by the Sixteenth International Botanical Congress (IBC) and the Second World Conservation Congress of the World Conservation Union (IUCN). The Fifth Conference of the Parties to the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) invited parties to participate in the IBOY. Financial sponsorship of IBOY is provided by the US National Science Foundation (NSF) (under Grant No. DEB-0122141), the International Council for Science (ICSU), Center for Applied Biodiversity Science at Conservation International (CABS), the International Group of Funding Agencies (IGFA), DIVERSITAS, and two anonymous US foundations. We acknowledge the support of the US National Committee for DIVERSITAS and the Board on International Scientific Organizations of the National Research Council.

