

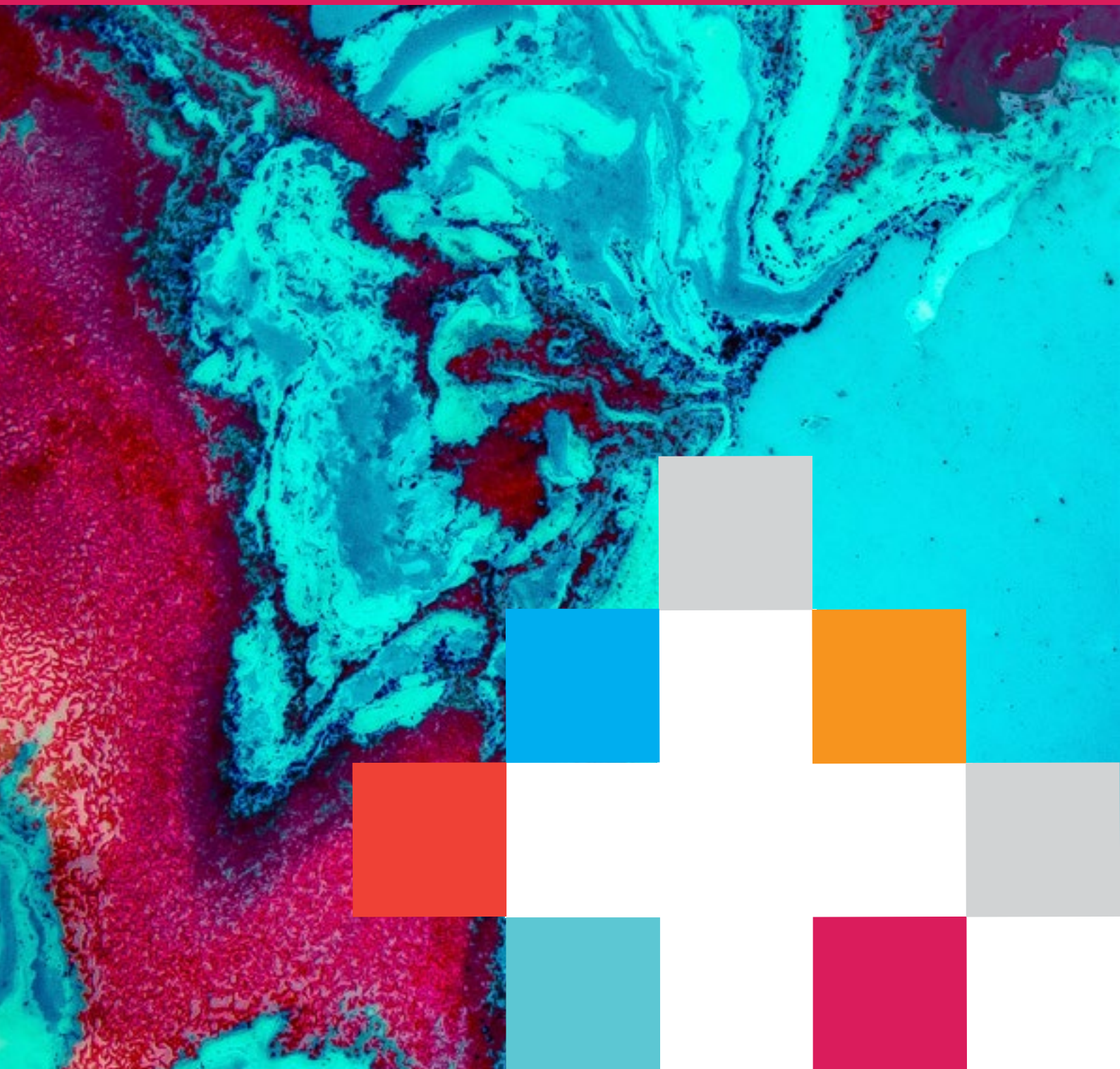
ASSEMBLE



ASSOCIATION OF EUROPEAN MARINE BIOLOGICAL LABORATORIES EXPANDED

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NEWSLETTER



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This newsletter has been developed to inform and update **ASSEMBLE Plus** partners of project activity. This is the first of five editions. External news items will be shared on the website, www.assembleplus.eu.

If you have an event report, news items or article that you would like to see appear on the website or in the next issue, please contact Georgia Bayliss-Brown (georgia@aquatt.ie).



Workshop: Improving Transnational Access Provision in ASSEMBLE Plus, 7-8 February 2018, Naples, Italy by Wiebe Kooistra

The provision of Transnational Access (TA) is one of the cornerstones of the **ASSEMBLE Plus** project, allowing external users to access the marine services and facilities of partners within the consortium. To maximise the efficiency of this process, a workshop (hosted by Work Package 3 - Networking Activity 1; NA1) was held at the Stazione Zoologica Anton Dohrn in Naples, Italy, on 7 and 8 February 2018 to familiarise relevant **ASSEMBLE Plus** personnel with TA procedures.

Throughout the two-day workshop, 34 representatives from all 32 marine stations in the **ASSEMBLE Plus** consortium were present to discuss strategies to ensure the success of the TA programme, as well as strategies to provide an invaluable experience for the user through high quality services. Participants discussed best practice, harmonisation of access procedures, and reviewed rules and regulations.

The participants also gave input regarding the improvement of the Access Policy Document (the rule book) used within **ASSEMBLE Plus**, and the information on the website, leading to the delivery and approval of updated versions. The document includes information for applicants, users and access providers as well as various templates and letters needed to ensure the TA process runs smoothly.

Upon the conclusion of the workshop, attendees were hosted in a fine restaurant to sample the various culinary delights of Naples and experience its rich culture.



Workshop: The ASSEMBLE Plus Data Management Plan, 1-2 March 2018, Oostende, Belgium by Klaas Deneudt

On 1 and 2 March 2018, the **ASSEMBLE Plus** Data Management Plan Workshop was held at the Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ), Oostende. The aim of this workshop was to discuss the Data Management Plan (DMP), the first version of which was completed by 30 March.

Participants included partners of Work Package 4 – Networking Activity 2 (NA2), “Improving virtual access to marine biological stations data, information, and knowledge”, and the Work Package leaders of the Joint Research Activities (JRAs).

Experts from related initiatives and partnerships were also invited: LifeWatch, ELIXIR, European Marine Observation and Data Network Biology (EMODNet Biology), the European Marine Biological Resource Centre Working Group on E-Infrastructure (EMBRC WGEl), Digital Curation Centre (DCC), International Oceanographic Data Exchange network (IODE) and Ocean Biogeographic Information System (OBIS).

The meeting commenced with presentations framing the **ASSEMBLE Plus** project and NA2. Specific focus was placed on the design of the DMP and its interoperability with related e-infrastructure (NA2.1). A presentation followed on what Horizon 2020 “Open Research Pilot” data means, and what its Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR) data policy encompasses. The DMP of EMBRC was presented

as a side-by-side comparison to the information required for the **ASSEMBLE Plus** DMP.

A discussion on the most critical points of the DMP was carried out, including: the types of data expected, data file sizes, where data will be stored, open access (or not), and clarifications on the EU template, along with four JRA presentations. The management of TA project data was discussed, as was the format of the spreadsheet that the JRAs need to fill in with information that will allow an **ASSEMBLE Plus** data inventory to be created.

On the second day the discussion points continued, and JRA representatives filled in a template form to provide specific information that is required for the DMP. Overall, the meeting was successful due to the gathering of information for the DMP.

Important future action points will be the management of very large data files, the Open Access and the FAIR policy in relation to TA project data, whether more harmonisation (file types, databases used, naming conventions etc.) is possible, and the storage of **ASSEMBLE Plus** data products in the first Flemish marine data bank (IMIS) and the Marine Data Archive.

Meeting: Genomics Observatories, 13-14 March 2018, Faro, Portugal

by Georgios Kotoulas

The first Work Package 7 – Joint Research Activity 1 (JRA1) meeting “Genomics Observatories”, was held by CCMAR at the University of Algarve, Faro, Portugal on the 13 and 14 March 2018. The meeting was organised in tandem with the first User Selection Panel (USP) and first Project Implementation Committee (PIC) meeting held on 15 March 2018. This allowed two work package leaders to attend the meeting (Klaas Deneudt for NA2 and Ibon Cancio for NA4) and allowed the participants to present its plan of actions to the PIC for approval.”

Genomics Observatories is a distributed long-term activity that demands close interactions and community spirit. The intended goal has been to launch, coordinate and fine-tune the next steps towards standardised DNA-based monitoring in European waters and refine a strategy for achieving the objectives of JRA1 within **ASSEMBLE Plus** and as a part of a much broader international community.

The event was attended by partners of Work Package JRA1. Professor Adelino Canario director of CCMAR acted as host, with his colleagues at CCMAR offering great local organisation.

In addition to those present, several partners attended and contributed to the meeting via teleconference: Dr. Moshe Kiflawi (BGU, IL), Dr. Adriana Zingone (SZN, IT), Dr. Raffaella Casotti (SZN, IT), Dr. Lionel Guidi (OBS-VLFR, FR), Dr. Fabrice Not (SBR, FR), Dr. Frédérique Viard (SBR, FR), Dr. Laurence Garczarek (SBR, FR), Dr. Thierry Comtet (SBR, FR) and Dr. Matthias Obst (GU, SE).

ASSEMBLE Plus, through JRA1 offers a vehicle for the support and implementation of Genomic Observatories within EMBRC-ERIC. It builds on an expanding international network of marine and molecular biological scientists developing infrastructure, standards, protocols, and applications to support long-term

monitoring of life in the seas. The network has close links with the Genomic Standard Consortium (GSC) as well as non-molecular global oceans monitoring networks.

The **ASSEMBLE Plus** Genomic Observatories strategy will take the leading role in the following actions:

- transfer and hosting coordination of long-term Ocean Sampling Day (OSD) events;
- deployment of Autonomous Reef Monitoring Structures (ARMS) as a standardised means to monitor benthic communities;
- optimisation of meta-Transcriptomic protocols; and
- systematising DNA barcoding and enrichment of reference databases based on specimens accessible at marine stations.

The strategy also comprises the development of a short and mid-term roadmap for Genomic Observatories to expand monitoring to additional ecosystem and community types, and to follow evolution of related technologies. For roadmap development, depending on expertise and special interest of partners, sub-groups have been suggested for addressing ARMS deployment, DNA barcoding, metatranscriptomics, zooplankton sampling, and other areas.

The OSD for this year will be held on 21 June 2018, and will be secured for partners of JRA1, including sampling, sample processing and data production. Other OSD partners are encouraged to participate in the sampling; however, such samples will be processed in conjunction with the 2019 event. The OSD on 21 June 2019 will be held as a global event aiming at all OSD partners of the Seventh Framework Programme’s Micro B3 (<http://microb3.eu/>) and beyond.



Attendees of the WP7-JRA1 meeting in Faro, Portugal. Dr. Daniela Rute Duarte Fazenda (CCMAR, PT), Dr. Roman Wenne (IOPAN, PL), Dr. Louise Allcock (NUI Galway, IE), Dr. Alice Stécy Jombert (Sorbonne Un., FR), Dr. Roberta Piredda (SZN, IT), Dr. Andreja Ramšak (NIB, SI), Dr. Nathan Christmas (MBA, UK), Dr. Pascal Hablutzel (VLIZ, BE), Dr. Manolis Mandalakis (HCMR, GR), Dr. Ibon Cancio (EHU, ES), Dr. Ivaylo Kostadinov (Jacobs Univ., DE), Dr. Klaas Deneudt (VLIZ, BE), Dr. Georgios Kotoulas (HCMR, GR), Dr. Ester Serrao (CCMAR, PT), Dr. Tania Aires (CCMAR, PT) and Dr. Rodrigo da Silva Costa (Tecnico Ulisboa, PT).

Event: EU-Latin America and the Caribbean Working Group on Research Infrastructures, 14 March 2018: Brussels, Belgium *by Florence Guillout*

The European Marine Biological Resource Centre (EMBRC) was recently invited to an event held by the EU-Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) Working Group on Research Infrastructures, in Brussels on 14 March 2018. The group's objective is the establishment of a bi-regional Working Group on Research

Infrastructures (WG RI), which would support policy making in the Research Infrastructures dimension and would facilitate multilateral initiatives leading to a better use and development of Research Infrastructures amongst the two regions.

News

ASSEMBLE Plus announces its first winners to gain access to Europe's top marine installations

In December 2017, **ASSEMBLE Plus** launched its first call for TA; a programme where researchers from academia or industry could apply to gain access to 39 marine installations to conduct research projects or work with samples held at the marine stations, not simply for training, workshops or outreach activities.

On 15 March 2018, **ASSEMBLE Plus**' expert panel gathered to review 71 applications and have selected 50 projects to support. The applicants of the winning projects, coming from 15 countries, will gain access to 16 marine biological stations. The next TA call will open later this year and information on future calls will be provided on the project website when it becomes available (www.assembleplus.eu/access).

The winning projects are listed at: www.assembleplus.eu/newsroom/assemble-plus-announces-first-awardees-whom-will-gain-access-europe%E2%80%99s-top-marine.

Future ASSEMBLE Plus events

Long-term sustainability in ASSEMBLE Plus, 23 May 2018, Piran, Slovenia

On 23 May 2018, the **ASSEMBLE Plus** NA4 workshop will take place at Marine Biology Station Piran of the National Institute of Biology, Slovenia. For further information, please contact Ibon Cancio (ibon.cancio@ehu.eus) and to register, please visit: <https://goo.gl/forms/FJBsmupY6GDLoZLQ2>.

Next ASSEMBLE Plus General Assembly, 10-12 October 2018, Galway, Ireland

The next partner meeting, **ASSEMBLE Plus** General Assembly, will take place on 10-12 October in Galway, Ireland. Details will follow in due course.

EMBRC-ERIC publication

On 20 February 2018, it was announced that the European Marine Biological Resource Centre would be established as a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) by the European Commission. A celebration is currently being organised and more information will follow soon. This makes EMBRC-ERIC the 18th ERIC. With this decision, the European Commission enables the onset of the Operational Phase of EMBRC-ERIC. Publication of the decision has been placed in the EU Official Journal: OJ L 51, 23.2.2018, p. 17–22 (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32018D0272>).



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Contact us:
COORDINATION & MANAGEMENT:
amt@embrc.eu
COMMUNICATION & PRESS:
georgia@aquatt.ie



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