

Charting a course for coastal oceanography in BC

Submitted by Lindsay Wallace Mon, 2015-02-23 15:16

BC Coastal Marine Sciences Workshop
Victoria, February 16 & 17, 2015

Over two days in mid-February, Ocean Networks Canada hosted a Coastal Marine Sciences Workshop where more than 30 active researchers in B.C.'s marine science community came together for an open and progressive discussion on future directions for coastal oceanography.

The workshop provided participants with the opportunity to share coastal research plans and highlight topics needing attention. The community assessed regions of common interest, issues that might be addressed with focused research efforts, and potential areas of collaboration.



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The first day established a background canvas of the current active science programs and future plans along the coast of the North East Pacific Ocean. Breakout discussions on ecological issues, sampling methods, and research opportunities filled the second day. These sessions helped identify a variety of strategies and a framework to coordinate and collaborate across disciplines, geographic regions, and between organizations.

According to workshop facilitator, Dr. Richard Dewey, the group recognized that the research community's ability to predict marine conditions, from healthy salmon returns to the impacts of El Niño on coastal communities, depends critically on the fundamental understanding of the entire marine system over a range of time and space scales.

While some areas such as the southern Strait of Georgia have received sufficient research efforts over the last few decades to make preliminary predictions possible, Dewey noted that, "for many coastal regions of B.C., this remains a long-term goal." ONC's Smart Ocean? installations planned for the northern Strait of Georgia to Prince Rupert will provide a platform for increased research in these critical coastal regions.

One clear directive emerged from the workshop: The idea of exploring a centralized database of metadata related to all the marine observations and information available to the community. Such a resource would facilitate efficient exploration, minimize redundant effort and avoid the potential for data loss.

A list of other directives, as well as broader outcomes, will be compiled into a workshop report for review by workshop participants, and then posted on the Ocean Networks Canada website.

"Overall, workshop delegates responded with appreciation for the opportunity to connect with colleagues and see the progress their partner organizations are making in advancing B.C. marine sciences," said Dr. Dewey. "I'd like to thank the 12 organizations who brought their extensive expertise and guidance to bear on this collective opportunity to chart a new course

for coastal ocean oceanography.?

Attendees at this year's 2015 Coastal Marine workshop included:

- [ASL Environmental Sciences](#)
- [Capital Regional District](#)
- [Coastal Ocean Research Institute](#)
- [Department of Fisheries and Oceans](#)
- [Hakai Research Institute](#)
- [Jasco Applied Sciences](#)
- [Ocean Networks Canada](#)
- [Pacific Salmon Foundation](#)
- [University of British Columbia](#)
- [University of Victoria](#)
- [Vancouver Aquarium](#)

Looking to the future, an annual workshop ensuring inclusive participation of the coastal oceanography community will continue to foster ongoing collaboration and coordination of coastal B.C. marine sciences.

If you are interested in coastal research themes and the data available at Ocean Networks Canada, please contact: [Dr. Richard Dewey, Associate Director, Science Services.](#)

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