

Report of the eleventh meeting of the Marine Facilities Tripartite Group (MFTG), held on 14th November 2003 in Texel, the Netherlands.

Attending: Jacques Binot, Colin Day, Andy Louch, Jacques Paul, Marieke Rietveld (Chair), Mike Webb, Geraint West, Uli Wolf

Apologies: Juanjo Danobeitia, Thomas Mueller, Jean Xavier Castrec

1. Welcome & introductions

1.1 The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and introduced Dr Ulrich Wolf who would be representing the interests of the BMBF.

2. Approval of minutes & matters arising

After a brief discussion it was agreed that minute 7.2 would be re-drafted after the meeting and the revised minutes would be circulated to members for approval by the end of the November, after which they would be put on the MFTG website. (**Action: Webb**)

2.2 Matters arising:

2.2.1 Action 2.2.1 'ship-time exchange protocols': This item would be discussed under Agenda Item 5

3. Report of the activities of each country since the last MFTG meeting

The Group briefly provided feedback on past and proposed barter cruises and updated the barter 'bank' balances.

4. Possibilities for 'new' barter cruises.

4.1 The Group discussed the plans for future deployment of its ships in 2004 and the barter opportunities that these deployments provided.

4.2 The Group was informed that a 7-year contract was due to be signed in December for ship-time on the *Sonne*. The new contract will provide 500 working days per two-years, starting from March/April 2004. The two main focal points for the *Sonne* are expected to be Indonesia and the China Sea in 2004 and 2006, and west of Chile in 2005.

4.3 The Group was informed about the BONUS ERANET for the Baltic Sea States. BONUS had 3M Euros funding over 4-years, which would amongst other things facilitate the creation of a coastal seas barter fleet and the pooling of facilities of the 8 partners, which includes Germany.

4.4 IFREMER informed the Group that it had a difficult year in 2003 with 4 cruises being cancelled. In future IFREMER was planning to have a 2-year planning process for cruises, with programming occurring in the 1st year and pre-programming occurring in the 2nd year. The aim was to keep real flexibility in the programme whilst providing the scientists with a

pre-programme to allow them an opportunity to add on science to cruises and take advantage of the anticipated positioning of the ships.

5. Up-dating the MFTG booklet

- 5.1 The Group briefly discussed the draft 'ship-time exchange protocols' and it was agreed that they would be added to the booklet without amendment.
- 5.2 The possibility of renaming the MFTG was discussed and it was decided that the Group should be renamed, as it was no longer appropriate to have 'tripartite' in the name of a Group that had more than three members. After some discussion it was agreed that the new name of the Group should reflect what its primary purpose is and, given this, the most appropriate name appeared to be the 'Ocean Facilities Exchange Group (OFEG)'.
- 5.3 A number of revisions of the booklet were identified and it was agreed that the Secretariat would put the revised booklet on the Group's webpages. (**Action: Webb**)

6. Dates and venues of future meetings

- 6.1 The Group noted the following dates and venues for its future meetings: Friday 30th April 2004, London, UK; Friday 5th November 2004, Barcelona, Spain; Spring 2005, Kiel, Germany; Autumn 2005, France

Action Sheet arising from MFTG meeting on the 14th November 2003

Action 2.1: Approved MFTG minutes to go on the WWW [**Webb: By the end of November**]

Action 5.3: Up-date MFTG booklet and put it on the WWW [**Webb: Following the meeting**]