

Report

16th Plenary Meeting European Scientific Diving Panel
12 May 2016 | Sven Lovén Centre for Marine Sciences | Kristineberg



1. Chair's welcome and adoption of agenda

Martin Sayer welcomed the ESDP members and observers. Agenda was approved.

2. Approval of Minutes from 15th ESDP Meeting

Martin Sayer ran through the minutes of the previous meeting. The decision to collate the size of scientific diving across Europe was discussed. **Alain Norro** suggested looking at certification as a starting point to judge the number, however, not all of them are active. **Martin Sayer** responded that in the UK it's not as straightforward and there would be a lot of gaps, so it may be better to focus on collating the science being done. **Jouni Leinikki** suggested specifying the groups included and which parts of the community are not included to better account for inaccuracies.

Action 1: Collate papers with impact factor of 5 or higher over last 5 years. Send any new papers or missing publication to **Jean-Pierre Feral** so the database can act as a resource to cite how important scientific diving is.

Action 2: **Karen Donaldson** to send National Contact Points (NCP) to **Martin Sayer**, so that he can draw NCP to website and productivity of scientific divers.

Regarding ESDP promotional material, **Maria Asplund** suggested publishing in the Underwater Technology Special Issue. She also mentioned a 2 week PhD course at the end of August 2016.

The Minutes were approved.

3. ESDP Consultation Document 1 revision 1

The following points were discussed:

Section 1.4: There is a possible application from Turkey, so remove requirement to be Member State. Also remove ESF from EMB title.

Section 2. Competencies

- **Massimo Ponti** suggested moving ESD before AESD, but keeping each section full so they can be used independently.
- Who can assess the competency level of the SD. The wording was changed to make it easier to for a diver to find someone to verify them (e.g. for students, freelancers), while ensuring a scientific aspect and contribution is maintained.

- The table of contact points needs to be updated.
- Regarding rope diving (2.2.3.7), what the definition of 'fully competent' is and whether rope diving should be moved to another section or the wording changed. It was decided to leave it in as it's a national requirement in some countries, however, with the awareness that the competencies are based on the country the diver is coming from so it may be a minimum competency.
- **Maria Salomidi** suggested adding a line about the special requirements for different countries/regions.

Action 3: ESDP members to provide updates of emails and names for the contact table.

Regarding Croatia, **Martin Sayer** will make the reply with their information available to everyone.

Action 4: At a later date, come up with a list of regional training/knowledge requirements to aid with scientific diving in different countries.

Action 5: Circulate two copies of the document, one with changes all accepted and another with the track changes which can then be sent to the legal authorities in the different countries for final confirmation.

The Consultation Document 1 revision 1 was accepted.

4. **EMB Panel Review Committee Report**

Martin Sayer presented an overview of the EMB report and recommendations. Specifically, EMB will phase out support until the Spring meeting in 2017. He commented the support has been much appreciated and ESDP will forward any future successes to EMB.

Regarding the recommendation that ESDP use the European Scientific Diving Conference as a vehicle, **Alain Norro** commented that the recommendation is good because a lot of people already travel to the conference, however ESDP was not mentioned. He suggested that future conferences should include a talk on the European landscape of scientific diving.

Martin Sayer agreed, commenting that the conference was a tentative coming together of two different streams. Now that a new association is being proposed, the new group could effectively take ownership, but it would need to dilute some of the ESDP principles to make it more inclusive. Currently, some people may be excluded due to the rigidity of the Terms of Reference.

Regarding collaborations with other organizations, **Martin Sayer** talked to the Society for Underwater Technology and they will host panel similar to how EMB has hosted. They can supply a meeting room and catering if the meeting is in London. EMBRC have proposed a workshop on scientific diving, however, it's existence won't be confirmed until the end of 2016. For AAUS, links exist so could collaborate.

The Recommendations were accepted.

5. Presentation on Asian Scientific Diving

Dr. Leo Lai Chan, Associate Director of the State Key Laboratory in Marine Pollution (SKLMP) in Hong Kong, presented on the development of a programme for scientific diving training in China. There are very few divers in the region because currently the science is very focused on coastal research, however, it has started to grow in the last three years. Most of the focus is on citizen science as they don't need funding and are able to contribute some of the funding themselves. He is currently developing standards with help from the AAUS.

Action 6: Send a copy of ESD standards to **Dr. Lai Chan**.

6. The future organization of scientific diving in Europe

a. Future Routes of ESDP

Martin Sayer presented a strawman of different governance and funding options, with goal of having a consensus of a rough approach that can go out to the national representatives. Important to aim for one representative body, as it holds a lot more weight.

The following points were discussed:

- The certification scheme should be preserved and guaranteed.
- Important to keep national bodies and national representatives, because the diving rules are within the law.
- The roles of ExCom and the Board, and the importance to have elected members to ensure the group is more inclusive of the community.
- **Alain Norro** recommended having a Secretariat within the group, someone with scientific diving experience.
- Funding required, both the fee and how it would be collected (e.g. at national level?). **Martin Sayer** suggested having different fee levels similar to AAUS, and work it into the cost of the conference. However, if paying, members would have to see the added benefit, what services would they get. **Massimo Ponti** suggested collecting membership fee at national level, including a small fee to deliver to the international body. Could also see if manufacturers could provide funding, similar to AAUS.
- **Martin Sayer** suggested that each national body that's on the Board pays an annual fee, for example €200/year. This would gain the country's membership on the Board. **Alain Norro** asked that a detailed budget be provided, in order to convince national bodies to pay.
- **Massimo Ponti** suggested the European membership could also give membership to international bodies. Also important to bring in governmental and intergovernmental organizations.
- Need to give opportunity for people who don't have a national body to be a member. **Maria Salomidi** suggested a hybrid approach that gives access to other representatives (e.g. more than one national representative).
- The group will need a lot more legal instruments, such as Articles of Association, country in which it's based etc.

- Possibility to have national body pay a certain amount, which includes membership for 50 members, and then for any members of that, the body has to pay extra.
- **Jean-Pierre Feral** commented that the AAUS model gives a diluted image that should be avoided. Martin Sayer responded that currently there is a conflict in AAUS between the people who want to promote training and people who want to promote science, however it does work.
- The use of an application procedure, as not every group can be accepted.
- It will need to be ensured that the structure will fit the country systems already in place.
- Could have a consultation at 3rd ECSD to present the new structure and ensure people are aware of the changes.

Action 7: Martin Sayer to provide budget, preferentially with funding for projects built in and ring-fenced.

Action 8: Martin Sayer will flesh out the governance structure, then give the ESDP 6 weeks for comments, before getting agreement. The agreement won't be final, but something everyone accepts as a generic type of proposal, which can then be taken to the national committees. At next meeting (Brussels) more details will be determined.

b. Funding opportunities

- a) COST Action
- b) Horizon2020
- c) EuroMarine 2016
- d) Assemble+

7. Updates on previous and upcoming events

- a) 3rd European Conference on Scientific Diving, 22-23 March, 2017 – Funchal, Madeira, Portugal
- b) 4th ECSD, Heriot Watt University, Orkney, UK
- c) 5th ECSD, IOPAN, Sopot, Poland

Regarding the conference dates, it was suggested that a conference every year is too often and every 2 years would be better. It was suggested to monitor attendance levels and if they start to go down, adjust the timing. **Pedro Neves** also stated he'll try to postpone the abstract deadlines.

8. National Updates

- a) Finland did not apply for membership in the Finnish Divers Association (sports diver) as it was determined not to be a good deal.
- b) Bulgaria wish to apply for Panel status at next meeting and will present on how their national body is organized.
- c) Greece is not yet ready to apply.
- d) Philipp Fischer should have a draft of the German book on scientific diving ready for the next meeting.

Action 9: Karen Donaldson to send previous applications and presentations of ESDP members to Bulgaria.

9. **New Chair at October meeting**

Action 10: Karen Donaldson to find ToR for elections and send them to ESDP.

10. Date and location of next meeting

Action 11: Karen Donaldson to send a doodle poll for dates of October meeting (Brussels).

11. **AOB**

a. Mailing list

Massimo Ponti set up a mailing list for the scientific diving community. Currently it's just ESDP, but could expand out to Conference members. Could also make a facebook group.