

COST Action TD0902: SPLASHCOS

Scientific Report on the Meeting of 26–28 September 2012, Rome, Italy

Aims

This was the sixth major meeting of SPLASHCOS and had five principal aims: (1) A workshop on sea-level change; (2) An MC meeting to review progress and confirm future plans; (3) Meetings of the four Working Groups; (4) A meeting of the Deukalion Planning Group (DPG); (5) A one-day field excursion to visit coastal archaeological sites and sea-level markers

Organisation

The meeting took place over 3 days at the Department of Earth Sciences of the University of Rome 'La Sapienza', with the participation of 57 SPLASHCOS members.

- Day 1: Sea-level workshop with presentations by 14 speakers including 2 invited experts. This attracted a full audience including a group of ESRs and specialists from the local scientific community, including a keynote speech and a summary of the outcome of a coordinated workshop held the day before the SPLASHCOS meeting at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, focused on submarine prehistory archaeology along the Italian coasts. We also saw the Alpha Zoulou film of the Atlit Yam Training School.
- Day 2: Parallel meetings of all four WGs, plenary discussions about WG progress and the progress of the regional research groups set up at Amersfoort, which met in June and early July; an MC meeting, and an informal discussion of the DPG about long-term strategy
- Day 3: Field excursion to Monte Circeo and Gaeta, on the Latium coast south of Rome, to visit the famous archaeological coastal caves of Riparo Blanc and Grotta delle Capre, and to observe transgressive-regressive land forms, and palaeoindicators of sea-level change.

Results

- The sea-level workshop provided an opportunity to bring together specialists from the many different disciplines represented in SPLASHCOS, to promote SPLASHCOS interests more widely, and to consider the challenges of inter-disciplinary collaboration on a topic of major, world-wide importance.
- The meetings on Day 2 show that completion of the major MoU deliverables is on target for completion by the end of the Action. A contract for the publication of the two-volume report compiled by WG1 and WG2 has been offered by Wiley-Blackwell. Work on the compilation of databases of seabed data and underwater archaeological sites has resulted in interest from EMODnet and Geo-Seas, and the submission of bids to the recent funding call of EMODnet. SPLASHCOS members organised two conference symposia over the summer: one at the annual meeting of the *European Association of Archaeologists* in Helsinki, Finland, the other at the *34th International Geological Congress*, Brisbane, Australia. Both will result in publications, respectively a special issue of the *Journal of Maritime Archaeology*, and a volume in the Special Publication Series of the *Geological Society of London*.
- Key outcomes of the MC meeting were: to approve the budget for the rest of the Action; to confirm plans for the Workshop with the North Sea Offshore Industry at the March 2013 meeting, and for the Final conference in Szczecin, September 2013; and to agree training programmes
- The DPG focused on the issue of Horizon 2020 funding, and on how to sustain the momentum and energy of the network created within SPLASHCOS after the end of the Action in 2013.
- The field trip provided an excellent opportunity to continue informal discussions, and to see the results of recent fieldwork on the Italian coast relating to sea-level change (mainly tidal notches and their relation with similar features having different sea level proxy potential), as well as examples of coastal archaeological sites with potential for underwater discoveries.

Conclusion

The Action continues to work on a broad front, to highlight the intellectual challenges of working across multiple disciplinary frontiers, and to generate widespread enthusiasm for addressing those challenges.
