Evaluating the impact of professional training in oceanographic observations over 15 years

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Introduction

The Partnership for Observation of the Global Oceans (POGO) and the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR) are two major players in marine science capacity building. They conduct both joint and complementary programmes aimed at training young scientists in developing countries in oceanographic research and observations. To conduct successful capacity building, it is essential to evaluate the long-term impacts of the training, not only on the trainees, but more importantly on the institutional, national and regional capacities for conducting ocean observations and research. The results of the first such evaluation for selected POGO and SCOR programmes are presented here.

The training

- **POGO-SCOR Visiting Fellowships**
  - Scientists from developing countries spend up to three months receiving 1-to-1 training and supervision in ocean observations at a major oceanographic institution.

- **NF-POGO Visiting Professorships (VP)**
  - Scientists visited a developing country to conduct training in ocean observations. Funds were invested in equipment to facilitate the establishment of a new observing system.

- **Austral Summer Institute (ASI)**
  - As part of its strategy to expand ocean observations in the Southern Hemisphere, POGO provided travel support for participants, mostly from Latin America, to attend the ASI.

- **rips Foundation-POGO Centre of Excellence (CoE)**
  - Each year, ten young scientists from ten different, mostly developing countries, study for ten months in an intensive programme on ocean observations.

- **NF-POGO CoE Regional Training Programme (RTP)**
  - An intensive 2.5 week long training course is conducted in conjunction with the CoE, in a different country every year, and is often hosted by an alumnus of the CoE itself.

Impacts on trainees

- **Impacts on mobility**
  - Are you currently living in your home country?

- **Impacts on careers**
  - Did the training have a positive effect on your education/career, in any of the following ways? (scores between 1-5)

- **Impacts on institutions, countries and regions**

Passing on the knowledge

- **POGO-SCOR Fellowships**
  - 82% of respondents who have given seminars/lectures based on the training
  - 85% of respondents who have supervised students
  - 80% of respondents who have mentored colleagues

- **Austral Summer Institute (ASI)**
  - 78% of respondents who have given seminars/lectures based on the training
  - 75% of respondents who have supervised students

- **NF-POGO CoE RTP**
  - 56% of respondents who have given seminars/lectures based on the training
  - 56% of respondents who have supervised students

Most relevant benefits to institutions (as per institution survey respondents)

1. New knowledge and skills passed on through seminars, practical sessions, or mentoring (4.4/5)
2. Broader scope of their oceanographic research (4.2/5)
3. Participation in international or regional projects or networks (4.1/5)
4. Setting up new monitoring or observation programme (3.7/5)

Most relevant benefits to countries/regions (as per institution survey respondents)

1. Improved quality of marine science (4.5/5)
2. Better able to monitor their coastal zone (4.3/5)
3. Increased contribution to international marine science networks (4.1/5)
4. Better able to manage their coastal resources (3.7/5)