Identification of deep-sea corals from imagery data

Workshop 1st April 2012

A workshop 'Identification of deep-sea corals from imagery' focusing on deep-water coral identification from imagery, convened and organised by Ifremer in association with the French Marine Protected Areas Agency, CoralFISH, NOAA and the University of Plymouth will take place on Sunday 1 April in the Artis conference premises.

Overview

The use of optical imagery as a non-destructive sampling tool is now widely used and essential in deep-sea research. Systems ranging from Remotely Operated Vehicles to towed cameras, with varying quality digital imagery acquired, pose the advantage of a more rapid, less destructive means of expanding our knowledge of deep-sea ecology.

It is not always possible to use traditional taxonomy during analysis of optical imagery and thus a level of expertise/training is necessary. The identification of species from images is difficult and in some cases impossible without physical specimens; although it is possible to identify organisms as distinct morpho-types. To allow consistency in identification it is important to keep a visual species catalogue of morpho-types (species) used; an example will be presented during the workshop.

A previous workshop was hosted by MBARI (classification and identification of marine organisms from image and video) in 2009 and covered all taxa and regions, this workshop will focus on Atlantic deep-water corals.

Format

The aim of the workshop is to bring together international coral taxonomy experts and professionals working in the field of image analysis to take an applied approach to using imagery for coral identification. Focusing particularly on those morphological features which can be recognised from imagery and where possible use taxonomy in combination to make identification more robust and thus consistent. The workshop will involve presentations from coral experts covering each coral group highlighting the main morphological features which can be used to identify coral species from imagery, as well as specific diagnostic features that may be used to differentiate between similar taxa. Participants are encouraged to bring example images to the workshop which they require help to identify or show useful diagnostic features for the identification of a species.

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Registration

Participants must register through the ISDSC website (www.deepseacoral.nl) and costs are €100. The workshop is open to all but spaces are limited to 40 participants, and registration of ISDSC is necessary.
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