

From: Hellou, Jocelyne <HellouJ@mar.dfo-mpo.gc.ca>
Sent: Friday, November 7, 2008 12:51 PM
To: Ross, Peter (Pacific) <Peter.S.Ross@DFO-MPO.GC.CA>
Cc: Lebeuf, Michel <Michel.Lebeuf@DFO-MPO.GC.CA>
Subject: RE: cohesion

Hi Peter,
I have to thank Michel for sending the email over.
The items mentioned by Michel are missing from your email, they are also in mine.

I do not know of a near retirement person who would stand up to speak with our input. It might be expecting too much.
The 2nd choice seems more likely and starting?

Have a good week end
Jocelyne

Dr. Jocelyne Hellou
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Adjunct: Chemistry and Oceanography Departments, Dalhousie University

From: Ross, Peter (Pacific)
Sent: November 7, 2008 3:13 PM
To: Lebeuf, Michel; Hellou, Jocelyne
Cc: Couillard, Catherine; Macdonald, Robie; Burridge, Les E; Fairchild, Wayne; Hamoutene, Dounia; Roy, Robert-IML
Subject: RE: cohesion

Hello Jocelyne and Michel:

Jocelyne, I did not receive either of your two emails as they were sent to the other Peter Ross (Maritimes); my email is peter.s.ross@dfo-mpo.gc.ca. Luckily Michel forwarded your email chain to me this morning. I have included Robie Macdonald as well as the others that were present at the meeting at the recent ATW meeting in Saskatoon.

A re-cap of that meeting: Catherine Couillard, Robert Roy, Les Burridge, Dounia Lamontagne, Wayne Fairchild and I were present. We spent approx. 1.5 hours chatting about the status and fate of the DFO contaminants file.

We all agree that the 'programme' no longer exists (as under Green Plan, Toxic Chemical Plan and ESSRF).

A summary of recent events/concepts:

- there is no core, peer-reviewed budget for contaminant research (loss of \$5.2 million from ESSRF phase-out);

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- DFO contaminant scientists were brought together in two workshops:

1) Ottawa, March 8-9 2005 Chaired by Sylvain Paradis: "DFO National Meetings on Toxics Research" where the group was instructed to 're-invent' the programme through the formation of breakout groups and the preparation of a series of 'white papers'.

2) Toronto, May 10-12 2006, Chaired by Darlene Smith: "Toxic Chemicals Program Future Workshop" where four draft White Papers were presented to the group and defended. Results of this peer-review were used to improve the papers as they went forward and were later published in the technical and peer-reviewed literature.

- LEACA was formed to streamline analytical side of contaminant research, but this was clearly viewed as a means of supporting DFO's priority on *biological effects in aquatic biota*. It was understood at the time that funding would support biological effects and that LEACA would provide an in-kind service in support of biological effects.

- neither has transpired: there is no dedicated funding for biological effects work within DFO, and LEACA charges on a cost-recovery basis for all samples submitted.

- access to other departmental funds is constrained as Centers of Expertise are poorly funded and have their own central 'mission'; contaminants are simply an added 'priority' for these centers.

- collaborations with external partners and OGDs continue, and represent the source of most support for DFO biological effects works and contaminant research.

- despite the fact that our national working group actively participated in two formal workshops organized and chaired by Ottawa, and a series of smaller, less formal meetings (ATW Jasper Oct 1-4 2006 and ATW Saskatoon Oct 2-5 2008), and has produced deliverables as requested, there has been no formal or informal response or follow-up from NHQ.

- other than the establishment of a cost-recovery analytical LEACA operation, the contaminant research file and its biological effects orientation have stalled within DFO.

- regional contaminant crises have generated friction with internal and external partners and clients, media controversy and embarrassment for the DFO Minister and for regional science and management representatives (examples: the sinking of the Queen of the North ferry in BC with the loss of 400,000 litres of diesel; oil spills related to several sunken fishing vessels; the Burrard Inlet pipeline burst and impacts on crabs, fish, and marine mammals; xxx).

- participants at the recent ATW meeting in Saskatoon expressed their frustration about the current state of affairs, and their desire to formalize a request to NHQ for a response to the efforts made to re-launch the programme.

-there has been no clarification between DFO and EC as to which agency is responsible for conducting contaminant/effects work in aquatic/marine environments, such that no agency presently admits responsibility for this activity.

- many retirements are looming and there is concern that contaminant scientists will not be hired in the current paradigm.

- we discussed two options:

-a senior (near retirement?) member of our working group to spearhead a letter to NHQ on behalf of the entire Working Group requesting a response and/or re-launch of the programme, consistent with the terms of reference provided to our working group at the initial Ottawa workshop chaired by Sylvain Paradis.

-or a letter expressing a more focussed occupational health and safety set of arguments due to the present climate of uncertainty: stress- and / or health related issues related to the loss of support, reduced morale, extra work needed to find funds, etc.

It would be good to get comments from those present at the ATW meeting, and from those who participated at the Ottawa and Toronto workshops. Emails are fine to start, but we may wish to hold a conference call before Christmas.

Does anyone have anything to add regarding the above? I need some more examples of contaminant hot topics that DFO has been unable to respond to, see xxx above...

Peter S. Ross, PhD

Note new email: peter.s.ross@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

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Conducting science in support of healthy oceans and healthy marine mammals

-----Original Message-----

From: Lebeuf, Michel

Sent: Friday, November 07, 2008 7:44 AM

To: Hellou, Jocelyne

Cc: Couillard, Catherine; Ross, Peter (Pacific)

Subject: RE: cohesion

Bonjour Jocelyne,

Je suis bien obligé d'être en accord avec toi sur plusieurs aspects. La recherche en chimie (contaminants et autres composés chimiques) au MPO est en chute libre. En plus de la disparition des fonds spécifiques (programme sur les produits toxiques) il y a l'avènement de la réorganisation des laboratoires d'analyses (cad le LEACA, pesticide à Winnipeg et HAP à BIO). Cette réorganisation, via les centres d'expertise qui offrent des services analytiques, a un impact majeur sur les activités de recherche des chimistes. La perte d'installation et le manque de renouvellement des instruments sont des exemples. La perte d'employés spécialisés (migration vers centre d'expertise) est un autre exemple. La difficulté accrue des chercheurs en chimie de diriger des étudiants gradués, faute d'installation et d'instruments, fait aussi partie des contraintes. Il faut aussi réaliser que les autres chercheurs (p ex les spécialistes en toxicologie) qui ont des besoins en services analytiques sont beaucoup moins perdants. À mon avis, les analyses chimiques dans le cadre d'un service où les chercheurs en chimie sont peu présents (voire absent) ne favorisera pas les collaborations entre chimistes environnementalistes et chercheurs des autres disciplines et par conséquent la réalisation de travaux de recherche multidisciplinaire.

L'avenir est sombre pour les Ikonomou, Hellou, Tomy et Lebeuf de ce monde. Mais pas beaucoup plus rose pour tous les scientifiques qui oeuvrent en environnement au sein du MPO. La protection de l'environnement me semble de plus en plus perçue au MPO comme un frein au développement des pêcheries.

Désolé d'être aussi sombre, ça doit être la température, c'est couvert à Mont-Joli aujourd'hui.

Je suis certainement disposé à me joindre à un effort de groupe pour faire part des nos préoccupations.

Bye,

Michel

De : Hellou, Jocelyne

Envoyé : 6 novembre 2008 12:52

À : Ross, Peter

Cc : Fairchild, Wayne; Burrige, Les E; Couillard, Catherine; Lebeuf, Michel; Palace, Vince; Tomy, Gregg; Ikonomou, Michael; Payne, Jerry F

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Objet : cohesion

Hi Peter:

I just saw Les in the hallway at BIO yesterday, and today, it reminded me that I have not heard from you about the inquiry below.

Les will be retiring in a year if he wants to, he is section head at SABS and Kats is leaving in Dec, Phil Yeats is retiring and staying emiritus working on pH and nutrients this Dec, Jerry must have enough years, but doubt he would leave?

I hopefully could retire in 6-7 yrs, something I never thought I would be thinking of when I arrived here in 96-97, I was looking forward to more interactions with the rest of the "toxic" DFO community than when in Nfld (85-95), since closer in space, but it has only been downward in chemical facilities for the past 12 yrs at BIO vs the NWAFAC, while the ability to do any work over the last 3yrs is just outrageous. When I came at BIO, I ended up having a CH-2 retiring in a yr (Doug Willis), another who was tranferred to Ken Lee (Tom King), one who retired 2-3 yrs ago (Jim Leonard), I went through numerous hoops to hire an EG in 98 or so and he tried to find greener pastures for the last 3-4 yrs, so the "organic group" has 1 head only.

I would be very happy to contribute to a letter about our state of affairs especially COMPLETE LACK OF EQUIPMENT SUPPORT FOR THE PAST 12 YRS, 13 yrs backward relative to what it was like in Nfld in 1995. One third hand GC-MS died 2 yrs ago, one 20-yrs old HPLC is in intensive care, paliative care.

See, I am ready to write, give us instructions.

I did not cc my section head or division head, will any of you do it? Should we be cc'ing Sylvain Paradis with our correspondence??

Thanks to each and all.
Jocelyne

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Adjunct: Chemistry and Oceanography Departments, Dalhousie University

From: Hellou, Jocelyne
Sent: October 27, 2008 4:37 PM
To: Ross, Peter
Subject: SETAC and letter?

Hi Peter:

I was just talking to Catherine about ATW, she was nice enough to take a couple of posters there for me. She told me about the get together of a few in-toxic(-ated) people of DFO and your proposal to write a letter about our depressing state of affairs.

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I would be happy to help explain how things are affecting us across the regions.

On another note, I am looking for someone who would like to share a room with Daniel Beach, an MSc student giving a presentation at SETAC. Do you know of someone who would need a room or like to share?

We started looking a bit late, but I was lucky finding a room-mate, still looking for a male to do the same with Dan. Hope to hear from you.

Dan parle en francais aussi, tres bien a mon avis.

A + tard
Jocelyne

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